WRITINGS OF LEON TROTSKY [1932-33]
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[1932-33]
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This volume is dedicated to
KAROLYN and TOM KERRY

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Natalia Sedova, Leon Trotsky, and Jan Frankel on December 12, 1932, the day they returned to Turkey from Copenhagen.
PREFACE

After his expulsion from the Soviet Union in February 1929, Leon Trotsky and his companion Natalia Sedova lived in Turkey for four and one-half years. The only interruption in their Turkish residence came in November 1932, when they traveled to Denmark where Trotsky made a public speech. The present volume covers the last eight months of his Turkish period—from December 1932, when he returned to the island of Prinkipo, until July 1933, when he left Turkey for the last time to live in France.

The whole world at that time was in the grip of crisis. In the major industrial countries the deepest and longest depression the capitalist system had ever known had disrupted old political patterns and produced powerful new movements of both a reformist and fascist character. In the United States Franklin D. Roosevelt had just won election as president and in Germany Adolf Hitler was about to be appointed chancellor. In the Soviet Union the results of forced collectivization and the uprooting of millions of families were still being felt in economic dislocation and misery, accompanied by ever-fiercer repression of all dissent. The German Nazi victory strengthened the tendencies toward dictatorship in Austria and upset diplomatic plans and maneuvers throughout the world. In the Far East Japanese imperialism, having seized large parts of China without reprisals from the League of Nations, was preparing to seize more.

Of all these developments the Nazi victory early in 1933 had the most far-reaching consequences. Ever since 1930 Trotsky had been warning that the fate of the international revolutionary movement depended on the outcome of the struggle against the growing fascist threat in Germany, and that
the Communist Party of Germany (KPD), following an ultra-left policy dictated by the Stalinist bureaucracy in Moscow, was playing into the hands of the Nazis. Instead of applying the Leninist tactic of the united front toward the Social Democratic Party (SPD), which was the largest working-class party in the country, the KPD denounced the SPD as "social fascist," that is, a variety of fascism, and prevented the joint workers' struggle that could have stopped the Nazis.

Trotsky's criticisms of the KPD, his tireless appeals for a change of policy, and his explanations about the need for united-front action (which the Stalinists also denounced as a variety of fascism) fill most of a large book, collected under the title *The Struggle Against Fascism in Germany* (Pathfinder Press, 1971). That book contains eight pamphlets, articles, and letters about Germany after Hitler's victory, written between February and June 1933, which are not reprinted in the present volume. However this volume contains an even greater number of articles about Germany during this period which adequately present the main lines of Trotsky's thinking and the new elements that he introduced into it.

The Left Opposition (Bolshevik-Leninists) was formed by Trotsky and other Russian Marxists in 1923 to fight for the restoration of revolutionary internationalism and proletarian democracy in the Soviet Communist Party and the Soviet Union. After its defeat by the Soviet bureaucracy and Trotsky's expulsion from the Soviet Union, the fight for Leninism and against Stalinism was continued and extended in the form of the International Left Opposition, created in 1930. From 1923 on, Trotsky and the Left Opposition were adamant on one point—their aim was to reform the Communist International and its affiliated national parties from which they had been expelled, not to replace them. This aim flowed consistently from their conviction that the Comintern and its affiliates were basically revolutionary and the only force capable of leading the workers to the abolition of capitalism; and that it was possible, despite the misleadership of the dominant Stalin faction, to win them back to genuine Leninist policy and practice.

Therefore the Left Opposition continued to call itself a "faction" of the Comintern, demanding readmission on the basis of democratic centralism, and strongly rejected all proposals, whether they came from members of the Left Opposition or from other radical organizations, for the establishment of an independent International or independent national parties. As late as December 1932, Trotsky in two major documents included here—"On the State of the Left Opposition" and "The
International Left Opposition, Its Tasks and Methods”—urged that this position be retained as the fundamental orientation of the Opposition.

Even after Hitler was appointed chancellor at the end of January 1933, an international conference of the Left Opposition, meeting in Paris a few days later, reaffirmed the "faction, not party" policy. This was not because Trotsky and the Left Opposition underestimated the meaning of Hitler's appointment but because they did not yet consider his victory to be definitive; they viewed the German working class as still capable of powerful resistance and believed that such resistance would lead to civil war in Germany. But the KPD, like the SPD, capitulated ignominiously, without even a token battle, and Hitler was able to chop them to bits and assume total power in the space of a few weeks.

Then Trotsky found himself compelled to draw the conclusion that the KPD had degenerated beyond the point of no return. In March, therefore, he proposed a sharp turn: the International Left Opposition and its German section should cease their efforts to reform the KPD and proclaim the necessity to replace it with a new party. The change, he emphasized, should for the time being apply only to the KPD; "reform" should remain the approach to the Comintern as a whole and all its other affiliates.

This proposal was at first opposed and resisted by some German and other leaders of the Left Opposition, and a vigorous debate took place in both the organization's internal bulletins and public press. Trotsky took the lead in favor of the change, and by the summer he had won the support of the great majority of the Left Opposition.

But by this time the entire question of "reform" demanded a new review. The Stalinist leaders of the Comintern had not recognized the significance of the Nazi victory or the part their own policy had played in making it possible; instead, they reaffirmed the correctness of the KPD policy and asserted that the proletarian revolution was not far off in Germany. The sections of the Comintern had not questioned Moscow's analysis or even proposed a discussion about what had happened in Germany; instead, they acted like the obedient stooges Stalin had encouraged them to become. It was not an easy thing for one of the founders of the Communist International to do, but in July 1933, just before embarking for France, Trotsky called on the Left Opposition to take the next step away from the "reform" policy and begin working for the creation of a new International and new revolutionary parties throughout the world. Thus during his last days in Turkey
he took the first step that led to the foundation of the Fourth International in 1938.

In addition, during his last eight months in Turkey, Trotsky wrote about the economic crisis and political repression in the Soviet Union; the suicide of his daughter, Zinaida Volkova; the implications of Hitler's foreign policy; the end of democracy in Austria; Japan's role in China; an international conference against fascism in Paris; the repercussions of the German defeat on the Social Democratic ranks in other countries; internal problems of the Left Opposition in the United States and elsewhere; the dangers of ultraleftism in trade-union work; the Marxist attitude toward philosophical differences; etc. His interviews included in this volume concern the United States banking crisis that followed Roosevelt's inauguration; the operation of the laws of uneven and combined development; the racist ideology of Nazism; the dialectical relationship between dictatorship and democracy; and the advantages of U.S.-Soviet trade and normal diplomatic relations.

More than one-third of the articles here are translated into English for the first time or have appeared in English previously only in internal bulletins with restricted circulation. Several articles were unsigned when first published or were signed by pen names, usually for security reasons. The date preceding each selection indicates when it was completed; if that is not known, its date of publication is supplied. Translations originally done in the 1930s have been revised slightly to correct obvious errors and achieve uniformity in spelling of names, punctuation, etc. Acknowledgments about the articles and translations, and explanatory material about the persons and events mentioned in them, will be found in the section entitled "Notes and Acknowledgments." "Other Writings of 1932-33" lists the books, pamphlets, and articles from that period which are not included in this volume because they are in print and available elsewhere.

The Editors
November 1971
CHRONOLOGY

— 1932 —

December 11—Trotsky returns to Turkey after his trip to Copenhagen and begins to write a report on discussions he held with other Left Oppositionists in Denmark and a programmatic document for an international conference to be held in February.

December—Unemployment is shown to have reached unprecedented heights in the major capitalist countries, as much as one-quarter to one-third of the labor force, according to a report on "The Length of the Working Day and Unemployment" issued by the International Labor Office of the League of Nations.

December—The Soviet government announces the introduction of an internal passport system, to be enforced by the GPU.

— 1933 —

January 1—Former leaders of the Russian Left Opposition, including Smirnov, Smilga, and others who had capitulated to Stalin, are arrested.

January 5—Zinaida Volkova, Trotsky’s daughter, commits suicide in Berlin.

January—Japanese military forces launch a lightning campaign to seize the Chinese province of Jehol, which they then annex to their puppet regime in Manchuria, called Manchukuo.

January—A dissident group in the German Left Opposition, led by Roman Well, splits and goes over to the German Communist Party (KPD).

January 30—President Hindenburg appoints Hitler chancellor and head of a coalition cabinet of the Nazis, Nationalists, and other ultraright forces.
February—Hitler arranges new Reichstag elections for March 5, and uses the powers of his office to begin destroying his opponents: The German Social Democratic Party (SPD) and the KPD fail to put up any serious resistance.

February 2—A world disarmament conference convenes in Geneva.

February 4-8—The Left Opposition's international preconference meets in Paris.

February—The League of Nations protests the Japanese invasion of China. Japan's first reaction is to ignore the protest; its second is to quit the League of Nations.

February 27—The Nazis set the Reichstag on fire, blaming the KPD and using the incident to suspend constitutional guarantees a week before the elections.

March 4—Franklin D. Roosevelt is inaugurated president of the United States in the midst of a severe banking crisis.

March 5—The Nazis and their coalition allies get a majority of the vote in the Reichstag election, providing Hitler with the "legal" pretext to demand total dictatorial power. The Reichstag vote later in the month granting him this power marks the end of bourgeois democracy in Germany.

March 7—The Austrian cabinet, headed by Chancellor Dollfuss, responds to the growth of Austrian Nazism by suspending various democratic and labor rights provided in the Austrian constitution; on March 31 Dollfuss dissolves the Schutz bund (Republican Defense Corps), the antifascist organization headed by the Social Democrats.

March 12—Trotsky says the KPD is dead as a revolutionary force and calls on the Left Opposition to work for a new German party.

April 1—The Executive Committee of the Communist International, meeting in Moscow, approves the policy of the KPD "up to and including the coup d'etat" that brought Hitler to power.

April—Trotsky answers Left Oppositionists who disagree with his proposal to work for a new party in Germany.

May—Zinoviev and Kamenev capitulate to Stalin again, and are released from banishment in Siberia.

May 26—Dollfuss bans the Austrian Communist Party.

End of May—A plenum of the International Left Opposition endorses Trotsky's proposal for a new German party.

June 2—In "Hitler and Disarmament" Trotsky explains the foreign-policy tactics the Nazis must follow until they have secured the power to act decisively on their own.

June 4-6—An antifascist congress is held in Paris by the Stalinists and their pacifist allies.
June 7—A four-power peace pact is signed in Rome by Britain, France, Germany, and Italy.
June 12—A world economic conference begins in London.
July—Tass, the Soviet news agency, prints a dispatch denying that Trotsky will be allowed to return to the USSR.
July 15—Trotsky urges the Left Opposition to abandon its efforts to reform the Comintern and to work for the creation of a new International and new revolutionary parties throughout the world.
July 19—The Trotskys, granted visas by the Daladier government of France, leave Turkey for the last time.
"WITH BOTH HANDS"1
The Stalin Bureaucracy and the USA

December 1932

The internal condition of the Soviet Union is making a new political turn inevitable and increasingly urgent, a turn that must be more extreme than all those that preceded it. Everybody feels it. Many see it clearly. The bureaucratic leadership, at the focal point of the difficulties and dissatisfaction, maintains an obdurate silence. Perhaps because it does not yet know what road to tread? Or perhaps because it prefers to keep still about the already-trodden road until it has become an irrevocable fact?

To "drive" the duped, lulled, and half-stifled party, unnoticed by it, upon a path it does not want to take—that is the tactical method of Stalin.2 The transition from the "dry" system to "wet" in alcoholic beverages was never decided by the party; the bureaucracy simply continued to raise the alcoholic content of light beverages in order to increase state revenues and in this way took the country from 4 to 40 percent. The same method is applied by Stalin in every field. All the more necessary is it now to pay sharp attention to the maneuvers of the bureaucracy, which is silently preparing a new "surprise" for the working masses. Symptoms even of a secondary order must be checked on attentively and distrustfully; by taking everything into consideration, it may help to block the bureaucratic leaders long before they have carried the new turn up to 40 percent, after which it may no longer be possible to reverse it.

The eminent American specialist in agricultural-machinery construction, Thomas Campbell, worked for a period of time as a technical adviser of the Soviet Union. After his return to the United States he published a book, Russia: Market or Menace? The high point of this book, at least politically speak-
ing, is its report of an extended conversation of the author with Stalin. This conversation, about whose authenticity there can be no doubt, as we shall see, deserves not only to be reprinted but also to be submitted to a careful examination.

"As soon as we were seated I explained to Mr. Stalin through the interpreter that before we entered into any business negotiations I wanted to speak to him frankly and without offense in regard to my trip to Russia and several other matters which were on my mind. He immediately agreed to this and with one motion of his arm pointed towards the door, upon which his secretary left the room in about three steps. I then said to Mr. Stalin, 'I am very anxious, Mr. Stalin, that you should know that I am here without any intent of giving you any false impressions. I am not a Communist, I do not believe in the Soviet form of government; I am not a disciple of Bill Haywood or Emma Goldman, and I resent many of the things which I hear about your government. Nevertheless, I am much interested in your agricultural development as I am an agricultural mechanical engineer and have spent most of my life trying to develop mechanized agriculture in the United States. We had a poor crop in Montana this year, and the work which your government has offered me is interesting. I will not, however, make any kind of working agreement with your government if it cannot be done absolutely independently of my political beliefs and strictly on a business basis.' Whereupon Stalin arose alertly from his chair, crossed to my side of the table, took my hand in both of his, looked me straight in the eye, and said, 'Thank you for that, Mr. Campbell. Now I know that I can believe you. Now I know that we can respect each other and perhaps we can be friends.'

"He then motioned me to sit down and asked me to continue. I went on to explain that we in the United States resented many things which we had heard about the Soviet government, such as the confiscation of property, elimination of personal rights, nationalization of women and children, repudiation of debts and religion, and above all what we thought was an attempt to interfere with our own government. I told him that neither he nor his government could expect the friendship, cooperation, and recognition of our government if they ever did try to interfere with our affairs.

"Mr. Stalin immediately replied that he realized this and he too wanted to speak with the same frankness and without offense. He said that he knew there were such unfavorable reports in our country, and took considerable time to explain the true conditions in Russia. He unhesitatingly admitted, with disarming frankness, that under Trotsky there
had been an attempt to spread communism throughout the world. He said that was the primary cause of the break between himself and Trotsky. That Trotsky believed in universal communism while he wanted to confine his efforts to his own country. He explained that they had neither the time nor the money to try to communize the world, even should they wish to do so, and that his own chief interest was to improve the conditions of the people in Russia, without any interference whatsoever in the government of other countries.

"We discussed the Third International and other reports of Soviet propaganda, and I must admit that Mr. Stalin convinced me that there is no attempt now on his part, or on the part of officials of the Soviet government, to interfere with the government of the United States. We discussed politics, economics, banking, business, trade with the United States, transportation, agriculture, and education. I was amazed at Mr. Stalin's knowledge of general affairs. He reminded me of many of our big industrial leaders who must have a general knowledge of practically all affairs to hold their positions. His words, as they were transferred to me through the interpreter, were carefully chosen, and I was particularly surprised at his knowledge of the Constitution of the United States. In fact, my own lack of knowledge of this same Constitution caused me considerable embarrassment, and the first thing I did, upon reaching London, was to find a bookstore and buy a copy.

"The conference lasted until well after dark, as the sun sets early in the northern country. Upon leaving, he told me that the interpreter would prepare a typewritten copy of our conversation, which I received two weeks later in London, signed 'J. Stalin,' and with this note—'Keep this record, it may be a very historical document some day.'"

The authenticity of the interview, as is clear from the circumstances described, is beyond any doubt. Campbell is no lightminded journalist seeking sensationalism, but an energetic Yankee businessman, an important American man of wealth and builder of machinery. He is quite kindly disposed towards Stalin. In reporting the interview, Campbell relied not only on his memory but also on the official report supplied to him. Finally, Campbell's report has nowhere and never been denied. These facts sufficiently confirm the authenticity of the interview from the formal side. But much more important is the inner political logic of the conversation, its accordance with the spirit of the participants and the circumstances. No journalist, moreover, could have thought up that double handshake or that excellent description of the true es-
sence of the differences of opinion between Stalin and Trotsky.

The Yankee remains true to himself to the very end in this conversation. The solid bourgeois, who has had a bad harvest this year and is therefore all the more inclined to do a stroke of business with the godless nationalizers of women, sticks his leg upon the Soviet table and slaps the leader of the Bolsheviks on the shoulder half-patronizingly, half-warn-

No one will reproach Stalin for attempting to utilize the meeting with Campbell to facilitate an agreement with the American government and market. But why this "sudden" rise to his feet, this gripping of Campbell's hand with both of his, and this proposal not only of "mutual respect" but also of "friendship"? Does this resemble the conduct of a representative of the workers' state who is carrying on business negotiations with a representa-tive of the capitalist world? Alas, no resemblance at all! But it does resemble the crawling conduct of a petty bourgeois before a big bourgeois. This little occurrence, which, frankly, it nauseates one to read, is very characteristic. It makes it possible to discern the true political consciousness of Stalin, who is so resolute and relentless in struggle against Opposition Communists and dissatisfied workers.

Fifteen years after the October Revolution, Stalin speaks with the American capitalist in virtually the same tone in which Miliukov and Kerensky once spoke with Buchanan in the not-

The resemblance lies not only in tone but also in content. "The necessity is openly preached amongst you in the press and in public for concluding the war," Buchanan cuttingly reproached the February powers-that-be. "Not us," Miliukov, Tereshchenko, and Ker-

Stalin's position, of course, is essentially different, for the October Revolution is a historical fact and the "apparatus" bases itself on its social consequences. But the political task of the bureaucracy does not consist in spreading the October Revolution throughout the world; it is for this program that Trotsky was exiled from the USSR, Stalin respectfully reports to the American bourgeois. His, Stalin's, task consists in im-

Unfortunately, it is precisely Stalin's policy in the field of "improving the position of the people" that leads to constantly sadder results.
Perhaps a pundit will be found to contend that by his assertions about international revolution, etc., Stalin simply aimed at deceiving the American as to his real opinions. What's wrong with that? Is it worth making a point of it? Only a completely hopeless idiot could possibly believe such an explanation.

To begin with, is it permissible to seek to deceive an adversary by such declarations which must inevitably confuse and demoralize friends? For what Stalin plainly declared to the whole world was that, in contradistinction to the Left Opposition, his faction has renounced the theory and practice of the international revolution. May one play with such things in the interests of diplomacy? Even within the limits of diplomacy such a game would be doomed to a miserable fiasco. A private conversation, even if it lasts till sunrise, is not enough to exercise any influence upon the ruling class of the USA. The Yankees are serious businessmen. They will not buy a pig in a poke. Assertions must stand on facts and lead to facts. The declaration of Stalin is no maneuver and no trick; basically it flows from the theory of socialism in one country. It was prepared by the entire policy of recent years. In the near future, too, it may become the doctrine of the new course on which the bureaucracy is entering more directly every day, thanks to its blindness and its failures.

Can it really be forgotten that the Soviet government, to everyone's surprise, supported the Kellogg Pact? The motivation, dictated by Stalin and intended only for home consumption, stated: even if the Kellogg Pact does not go far enough, it is nevertheless a step forward. Soviet diplomacy, of course, is under no obligation to say out loud everything it is thinking. It must not, however, without undermining the ground beneath its feet, make any declarations or moves which help the enemy deceive the workers and weaken their vigilance. The Kellogg Pact is not a step forward to peace, but a diplomatic cover for the mightiest and most dangerous of all the imperialist bandits. The matter is not merely confined to the pact. Litvinov recently supported the American proposal for "partial disarmament." In this connection the Soviet press did not expose Hoover's demand, but only those imperialists who did not want to go along with it. Hoover's proposal, just like the Kellogg Pact, has as its aim neither disarmament nor prevention of war, but the concentration of control over war and peace in the hands of the USA. The preparation of favorable moral and material points of departure for the coming war—that is the one task of the American imperialists.

If it is assumed that Soviet diplomacy could not express itself openly—that is not our opinion—then the press should
have spoken for it. But when Stalin-inspired diplomacy clings to the proposals of Hoover and Kellogg "with both hands," it is deceiving the world proletariat and weakening the Soviet state. Whereas the centrists\(^\text{13}\) in Amsterdam based themselves entirely on petty-bourgeois pacifism, which is honestly meant for the most part and is at all events still rooted in the masses, in Geneva they joined hands on the "left" with imperialist pseudopacifism, whose roots are to be found in the banks and trusts. On the question of war, the epigones\(^\text{14}\) break openly and demonstratively with the revolutionary tradition of Leninism. Their immediate objective is to win the trust of American capital. The nocturnal conversation in the Kremlin constitutes irreplaceable commentary on the speeches of the Soviet delegates at Geneva.

Yet diplomacy does not exhaust the question, and in this field it cannot claim first place. Where does the Communist International fit in? For four and a half years now no congress of the Comintern has been called and nobody knows when it will be called, if ever. Stalin does not so much as find time to appear at the plenum of the Executive Committee of the Communist International and leaves the leadership to people who for the most part need leading themselves. Is it not a deliberate demonstration of contempt for the Comintern? Does it not signify that in actuality, and not only in conversation with the American bourgeois, Stalin has completely given up the policy of international revolution? No, he did not deceive Campbell. He only described, with rare frankness, the situation as it really is.

Still another question, and the most essential of all, was clearly illuminated in the Stalin-Campbell dialogue: the question of socialism in one country. In spite of all the half-baked prophecies, the five-year plan\(^\text{15}\) did not increase the economic "independence" of the Soviet Union. On the contrary, the advances in industrialization have extended and deepened the connections of Soviet economy with world economy and consequently have increased their mutual dependency. The double handshake of Stalin and his deferential reassurance to American capital of his differences with the Left Opposition are, in the last analysis, nothing but the political expression of the economic dependency of the Soviet Union on the world market. The humiliating character of this "expression" is determined by the psychology of a very highly situated but nonetheless petty-bourgeois bureaucrat, whom great events always find unprepared.

The more the Stalin faction turns its back on the international revolution, the more it will feel its dependency on world
capital, the more it will cling to it convulsively "with both hands." Stalin's handshake is not only a symbolical act—it is almost a program. While he thoughtlessly and flatly accuses the Opposition of aiming to turn over Soviet industry to foreign capital, Stalin is obviously preparing for a change in the international as well as the internal political course.

Caught in a vise, the bureaucracy is capable of engaging in any adventure, including treacherous ones. To trust it blindly is to be an accessory to treason. Today more than ever we are duty-bound to watch Stalin's conduct in the field of foreign political relations not only with tireless attention but also with sharp distrust.

On guard! Be prepared!
The most important result of the trip to Copenhagen undoubtedly was the gathering of Oppositionists from many countries. The original intention was to call together a dozen comrades from points nearest Denmark in order to take the necessary safety measures. In point of fact, however, twenty-four comrades (of whom two were delayed) arrived, among them the most responsible functionaries of several sections. Including sympathizers, a total of thirty. If Stalin informed the capitalist police by radio of a "Trotskyist" conference in Copenhagen, that was a lie. Since it came about by accident, the trip to Copenhagen necessarily caught the Left Opposition by surprise. The preparatory work for the conference was still in its early stages. There could be no question of accepting a platform or programmatic theses in Copenhagen. Even the European sections were far from completely represented, and not all the comrades who arrived had plenary powers. Unfortunately a conference did not take place and under the circumstances could not have taken place.

It is needless to say, however, that the comrades who came there took full advantage of the opportunity to get to know each other and to discuss in private consultations the most urgent and burning problems. The unforeseen, hastily improvised meeting of two dozen Bolshevik-Leninists from seven European countries will undoubtedly be recorded as an important achievement in the history of our international faction.

The Left Opposition has grown considerably. The cadres of functionaries know the history of the Left Opposition in the various countries, orient themselves freely in theoretical and political questions, and embody all together, and each separately, considerable political experience. The consultations,
which lasted several days, solidly fused the comrades together, a fact which will have fruitful effects on all our future work. Without falling victim to official optimism, we can say with assurance that all who participated in the consultation took home from it a fresh supply of strength and confidence.

The Spanish Section

One question threw a shadow over the consultation: the state of the Spanish Opposition. If we could observe certain nuances within the International Left Opposition with regard to the sicknesses and mistakes of the Spanish Opposition, these nuances fell completely into the background in the course of our meeting before the feeling of common concern. All the participants were completely in accord with the view that we must have an open and complete discussion with the Spanish comrades and that this discussion must not be limited this time to the leaders of the Opposition. Only if all the members of the sections become familiar with the questions in dispute can the Spanish Opposition be brought on the right road.

It would be criminal to close our eyes any further to the real situation or to palliate it. If we do not succeed in obtaining clarity completely and in time through an open discussion on all disputed questions, and too many of them have piled up, then the thrust of events may divide us into different camps.

Unfortunately the Spanish section was not represented at the meeting. At the last minute certain obviously accidental circumstances proved an obstacle, but I take the liberty of expressing my certainty that the leading Spanish comrades, if they locked themselves less into their environment and showed more interest in their international organization, would have found the way to Copenhagen without difficulty.

But that is precisely the chief misfortune of the Spanish Opposition. Its leaders have persistently kept their organization away from the internal life and the internal struggles of the other sections, and thereby have shut it off from access to irreplaceable international experience. Insofar as the Spanish section through its official position was after all compelled to involve itself in international questions, its leaders, bound up neither with the experience of the other sections nor with the public opinion of their organization, let themselves be guided by personal connections, sympathies, and antipathies. All too often, we must say it openly, they substituted petty-bourgeois psychologizing and sentimentalizing in place of a Marxist analysis of the situation and the differences of opinion. So it was in the case of the Catalanian Federation (Maurin), where the hopes of several comrades from Barcelona in "friendly
personal relations" for a long time took the place of principled struggle against petty-bourgeois nationalism, and thereby put a brake on the development of the Left Opposition in the most decisive period. So it was in the case of Landau, whom *Comunismo* surprisingly listed as a collaborator after Landau had shown his utter inadequacy, had remained in the minority, and finally had left the Left Opposition. So it was in the differences of opinion within the French section, where the Spanish comrades privately agreed that Rosmer's ideas and methods were worthless but in public supported Rosmer, indirectly if not directly, on the ground that Rosmer "appealed to them" more than his opponents. So it was in the question of Mill, whom the leading Spanish comrades thought it possible to choose as their representative on the International Secretariat after Mill's political worthlessness had been completely shown. In all these cases, we have not heard from Madrid or Barcelona even a sound of principled grounding or political explanation.

The same features revealed themselves in no less sharp and painful a form in the inner life of the Spanish organization. The crisis which broke out in its leadership caught not only the International Opposition but also the Spanish section by surprise. The members of the Central Committee resigned, one after the other. The whole leadership was concentrated de facto in the hands of Lacroix alone. Then, just as surprisingly, it appeared that Comrade Lacroix was outside of the Central Committee, in fact for a time outside of the Opposition, with the leadership transferred to Barcelona. Why? What do the differences of opinion consist of? What are the grounds of the crisis? Nobody knows, at least nobody outside of the narrow circle of the initiated. Such a regime is absolutely impermissible in a revolutionary organization and can bring it only defeats. By refraining from participation in the struggle over principled questions, by substituting personal evaluations for political differences of opinion, the Spanish comrades themselves fall victims to inevitable personal conflicts and "palace revolutions."

Such subjective arbitrariness in politics would be completely impossible if the Central Committee of the Spanish section worked under the control of their own organization. But this is not the case. In their own defense, several leaders of the Spanish Opposition pointed more than once to the insufficiently high theoretical and political level of the Spanish Oppositionists. Obviously an objection that will not hold water! The level of a revolutionary organization rises all the faster, the more immediately it is brought into the discussion of all questions, the less the leaders try to think, act, and behave as guardians for the organization.
The first condition for party democracy consists of all-sided information. The beginning must be the international documents on the Spanish Opposition: the Spanish Central Committee must obligate itself to circulate these documents among all members of the Opposition; every Spanish Bolshevik-Leninist must study, think through, and judge not only the experience with Mill but also the essence of the crisis of the Spanish Central Committee itself. Through this the Spanish Oppositionists will learn much more than through a dozen abstract articles on democratic centralism and the correct relation to "human beings."

The Bordigists

At the consultation the question of the Italian Prometeo group (Bordigists) was subjected to a thoroughgoing discussion. It was not a case of a principled estimation of this faction. The experience of many years has proved that the differences between the Prometeo group and the International Left Opposition are completely irreconcilable. On such questions as the revolutionary application of democratic slogans or the policy of the united front, the Bordigists are in agreement not with us but with the Stalinists (insofar as the Stalinists pass through an ultraleft and not an opportunistic phase). To take upon ourselves so much as a shadow of responsibility for the tactical views of the Bordigists would mean for the International Opposition, and in the first instance for our German section, to hang a stone around its neck. Unity by no means signifies absolute salvation. Under certain circumstances an open and honest split, i.e., one carried through on a principled basis, proves to be necessary not only to free the hands of both sides, but also to prepare the possibility for real, and not fictitious, unification in the future.

No one at the consultation denied that the Bordigists represent a serious revolutionary group which must not be placed on the same level as the rotten cliques of Landau and Co. But it is a fact that the conditions of emigre existence permit this group to safely hold onto views that we, on the basis of our collective international experience, hold to be sectarian and most profoundly injurious. Association with the Bordigists for three years has shown absolutely no positive results. The Bolshevik-Leninists, in the form of the New Italian Opposition, have not succeeded in penetrating the Bordigists in spite of numerous attempts. On the other hand, the Bordigists have not been able to win over anyone within the International Left Opposition. This fact is most instructive. If in spite of constant contact between two factions there is no kind of fusion of ideas, i.e., no reciprocal interpenetration and influence, then
there remains only the conclusion that we have before us two different and sharply distinguished groupings. In common work they can only paralyze each other.

From the Marxist standpoint the fact that the Bordigists have no one who shares their views outside of Italy, and thereby represent a purely national sect, casts an annihilating verdict on the value of this group. The policy of the international revolution cannot be carried out "in one country." The Bordigists feel this themselves. Just for this reason they hang on tightly to the signboard of the International Left Opposition; their fictitious membership helps them mask their own national isolation. But we cannot have the slightest reason to keep up the mask. On the contrary, here, as in so many other cases, we must proclaim openly that which is. This follows also from the well-known interview of the Bordigist faction itself.

Where criticism of ideas does not help, the test of events is needed. Instead of obstructing each other, paralyzing each other, and complicating profound differences of opinion with daily friction and organizational quarreling, it is incomparably better to separate in time, peacefully and without enmity, and thus leave the examination of the two lines to the further course of revolutionary struggle.

To wait for the official conference in order to finally separate from the Bordigists would be superfluous and harmful formalism. In view of the unusual difficulties to which the International Left Opposition is exposed, we cannot state with assurance whether the conference will be able to meet in the next immediate period. In Germany it is possible that serious events can develop before we succeed in calling the conference together. It would be inexcusable to leave hanging in midair a question which is so ripe and clear to everybody.

The consultation had sufficient authority in the sense of reflecting the true views of the International Left. It expressed itself in favor of immediate liquidation of the fictitious tie between the Bordigists and the Bolshevik-Leninists. We hope that the national sections will express their agreement with the view of the consultation and thereby transform it into a final decision.

The French Section

The major part of the preparatory work for the consultation lay as usual upon the French League, which was broadly represented in Copenhagen. If the French sections in the Second and Third Internationals display features of national limited-
ness, the French section of the Left Opposition, on the contrary, is marked by very great international initiative. The League took an active part in making contact with almost all the other sections and contributed to their development by illuminating all questions of the International in the pages of its organs.

The internal development of the League itself in the meantime has proceeded until very recently under great difficulties. All attempts to assimilate the numerous old split-up groups, which are especially numerous in France, have led to nothing. The latest attempt of this kind was wrecked by the resistance of Treint. 26 Certainly it is to be deplored that Treint has recently shown a lack of political perspective, i.e., the ability to distinguish the important from the unimportant, the episodic from the permanent, as well as a lack of the necessary persistence to work his way into the organization and occupy that place in it which would correspond to his indisputably positive qualities. Only the further growth of the League itself, and first of all the expansion and consolidation of its base among the workers, will create the conditions for the utilization and assimilation of such obstinate and undisciplined elements as Treint. As far as the present Treint group is concerned, it is just as fruitless and hopeless as the groups of Rosmer, Souvarine, Landau, Spartakos, Weisbord, 27 etc. All accidental formations of this kind, without having an independent principled basis under their feet, are condemned by their very existence to remain outside of the workers' movement. They have the same relation to revolutionary politics as amateur theater to art, i.e., they serve exclusively for the diversion of the participants themselves and their nearest relatives.

The League itself in any case has passed the period of uninterrupted internal struggle and has worked out an indispensable unity of ideas and methods. Without wishing to minimize this achievement in the least, we must still remember that with so narrow a base in the working class political unity cannot be distinguished by great permanence. Security against a relapse into the destructive inner disease can lie on only one road: to direct all attention, all efforts, below, to the workers in the party, in the trade unions, and in the shops.

The leading comrades of the League are well aware of the fact that they must concentrate in the next period on the social questions in France and the French labor movement. This refers to theoretical as well as practical work. The League, which has welded together valuable cadres, must now acquire at all costs a solid proletarian foundation.
Again on "Faction" and "Second Party"

In the British section the question under discussion is whether one ought to limit oneself to internal work within the Communist Party or create independent ties with workers outside of the party. This question, which at various times has arisen before all the sections, is not one of principle. The attempt to derive the scope and character of our activity from the concept of "faction" would be purely doctrinaire. The transition from "propaganda," i.e., the education of cadres, to "agitation," i.e., the influencing of the masses through cadres, has always provoked difficulties and differences of opinion within young revolutionary organizations, without their being faced by the dilemma "faction or party?" The decision of the question must depend on the real forces and situation. But since all our sections, including the youngest, the British, have taken over very valuable cadres from the party, we must endeavor as quickly as possible to find our own points of support in the workers' organizations, naturally without giving up even for a minute the struggle for the unification of the Communist ranks.

The inclination of certain comrades (as in France) to interpret the role of the faction in such a sense that the Opposition must not take a single step outside of party limits is completely false. Our actual relation to the Comintern finds its expression not in abstaining from independent action, but in the content and the direction of such action. It would be ridiculous to behave as if we belonged, in fact, to the official organizations of the Comintern. We must carry out such policies as will open the gates of the Comintern to us. For this, we must become stronger, which cannot be achieved if we tie our hands as against the Stalinist bureaucracy by artificial and false discipline. We must turn to the workers where they are, we must go to the youth, teach them the ABC of communism, build cells in factories and trade unions. But this work must be carried on in such a manner that ordinary Communists can see that for us it is a question not of building a new party, but of reviving the Communist International.

Urbahns constantly proclaims a new party in Germany, only to call for votes at election time for the Communist Party, which in his words has "finally disintegrated." Who can understand this? The contradiction is all the more blatant since Urbahns, in former years, when he had not yet broken with the International Left and had not yet proclaimed a second party, set up independent lists of candidates at elections of all kinds. With such startling "maneuvers," Urbahns knows how to
blockade the road to the existing Communist Party as well as to a new and unknown one. It is no wonder that in a few years he has completely destroyed his organization, whose best elements have come over to the ranks of our German section. But nothing can influence this strategist, who shouts with all the more determination for a new party the less the ground remains under his feet.

Our Belgian comrades, who are consistently strengthening their position, on the eve of the last elections to Parliament proposed to the official party to set up lists of candidates in common, at the same time being prepared to occupy the uncertain positions on these lists. The political purpose of the proposal consisted in supporting the official Communist candidacies with the votes of those workers who have confidence only in the Opposition. That was a perfectly correct tactical step, whose meaning is easily explained to every Communist worker. Although the party rejected the proposal, the Belgian Opposition called upon the workers to vote for the official candidates. Needless to say this second step was just as correct as the first. If the official party could not obtain the votes of many a worker who trusted Lesoil but not Jacquemotte,29 that was not the fault of the Opposition but of the official party.

Our Spanish comrades, in this field too, have not utilized the experiences of the International Left. At their last conference they most unexpectedly declared themselves in favor of independent participation in the elections. From what has been said above, it is sufficiently clear that on this question as well we are not inclined to fetishism. Under certain circumstances, the Left Opposition can and must put up its own candidates. But this must come not as a result of a false hunt for "independence," but out of the real relation of forces and must be correspondingly made clear in the course of the agitational work; it is not a question of snatching elective offices away from the official party but of raising the banner of communism where the party is not in a position to do so. It is clear that under the present relation of forces independent Oppositional candidacies can have only the character of an exception and not of the rule.

But perhaps the peculiar conditions in Spain justify the tactics of the Spanish Opposition, i.e., the course, in effect, toward a second party? Let us assume this is so. Why then don't the Spanish comrades attempt to explain these conditions to us and enrich us with their experience? Surely they do not believe that Spanish conditions cannot be understood outside of the borders of Spain? For in the latter case we would have to ask, "Why do we have an international organization at all?"
The German Section

In the discussion of the report of the German section, the question of our relation to the RG0 occupied first place. We hope to make our position on this exceptionally important question clear in the near future in a separate article. The differences of opinion in the leadership arose—or at least became evident—in connection with the strike of the transit services in Berlin. Whether the dispute has a purely episodic character, or whether deeper differences are hidden under it, is hard to judge as yet. In any case, all the participants in the consultation were inclined to think that the leading German comrades were too hasty in bringing the question onto the pages of Die Permanente Revolution and giving the discussion an unnecessarily sharp character.

Naturally in the presence of serious and lasting differences of opinion an open discussion is inevitable and indispensable. Although it weakens the organization temporarily, it is immeasurably more fruitful than an organizational struggle behind the scenes or half-concealed "allusions" in the press, which bring no results to anybody and only poison the atmosphere. But we must still regard it as completely impermissible to enter the path of public discussion without actual political necessity. Die Permanente Revolution is an organ intended first of all to influence circles outside of the organization. The discussion can and must be opened in an organ destined exclusively for internal distribution (a bulletin, discussion paper, etc.). The interests of internal democracy are not in the least hurt by this; at the same time unnecessary weapons are not placed in the hands of opponents and enemies. We must not forget for a moment the unusual, we can boldly say historically unprecedented, difficulties under which the Left Opposition labors. Suffice it to recall that the Stalinist staff over the radio denounced the "Trotskyist conference" in Copenhagen to the capitalist police. Such a situation lays double and triple responsibilities on the leaders of the Opposition. The experience of preceding internal strife, which all too often took on the character of personal bickering, has seriously weakened the authority of the German Opposition, and this burdensome inheritance has not yet completely disappeared. All the greater is the duty to be concerned about the maintenance of the unity of the organization and the solidarity of the leadership, and to avoid as much as possible such methods of discussion as will artificially sharpen the differences of opinion and tend to poison the atmosphere.

The reports of the German comrades, as well as the composition of the delegation, have proven beyond a doubt that in
the ranks of the German section there exists a serious cadre of working-class Communists who are adequately qualified politically and at the same time are connected with mass organizations. That is a very great achievement from which we must start and build further. In the first place, we must assure a composition of the leadership which is more proletarian and more bound up with the masses.

Thanks to the special conditions of its origin, the Left Opposition was composed during a certain period (the period of decay) of individuals and little grouplets, predominantly of intellectual or semi-intellectual character, without clear political views and without roots in the working class. Accustomed neither to serious work nor to responsibility, closely tied up to nothing and nobody, political nomads without baggage, who carried some cheap formulas, smart critical phrases, and practice in intrigue from town to town and from country to country, such "Oppositionists"—Landau is their most complete representative—for a long time put a brake on the development of the Opposition and compromised it in the eyes of the thinking workers. The cleansing of the Opposition of "Landauism" has taken no little time in the last four years, and the success in this field, as well as in others, is indisputable. But the real victory over the spirit of intrigue and petty quarreling is conceivable only through the creation of a leadership out of firm proletarians who are linked with the masses and feel themselves to be the masters in their own organization. Our German section is completely ripe for such serious internal reform. All that remains is to wish that the coming conference of the German Opposition will be called and will be carried through under these auspices.

The Left Opposition in the USSR

In the past year very important changes took place in the status of the Russian Opposition. Their general direction can be characterized by the word "ascent."

Many hundreds, perhaps even thousands, of former capitulators, particularly workers, have returned to the path of the Opposition; these are the elements which in the spring of 1928 honestly but prematurely believed in the principled change of the official course. The places of exile and imprisonment are constantly being filled with such "backsliders." It is unnecessary to say how much this fact strengthens the authority of those Oppositionists who never abandoned their banner for a single hour.

Among the older generation of Bolsheviks, including those who only yesterday were ardent Stalinists, can be observed the complete decay of the authority of Stalin and his group
and a decided turn toward greater attention and estimation of the Left Opposition. It is most significant that precisely the Old Bolsheviks, who took an active part in the life of the party under Lenin but later let themselves be scared by the specter of "Trotskyism," now, after their experience with the Stalinist regime, begin to discover where the truth lies. That is a very important symptom!

But incomparably more important is the process which is going on among the workers, especially the youth. Just as in its time the czarist bureaucracy called all dissatisfied workers, protesters, and strikers "socialists," sent them to prison or to Siberia, and made it possible for them to meet real socialists there, so the Stalinist bureaucracy now arrests and exiles in ever-increasing numbers dissatisfied and protesting workers, declaring them "Trotskyists" and pushing them onto the road of the Left Opposition.

As far as the illegal organization of the Bolshevik-Leninists in the USSR is concerned, only the first steps have been taken toward its reorganization. Whereas in the West most of the Oppositionist sections have important and well-knit cadres which have not yet conquered the necessary mass base, in the USSR, on the contrary, where there is a powerful base, the cadres of the Left Opposition are still exposed to the merciless blows of the apparatus which make the creation of a centralized leadership more difficult. But the clear and indisputable growth of the influence of the Left Opposition, the broadening of the circle of its adherents in the working class, the influx of sympathy even on the part of the apparatus, are the best assurance that the restoration of a centralized organization is a matter of the immediate future.

All foreign sections have the possibility of collaborating directly and indirectly in the renewal and strengthening of the organization of the Russian Bolshevik-Leninists. We must make contact with Soviet citizens living abroad, particularly with young students; all opportunities and possibilities for the sending of Oppositionist literature, especially the Russian Biulleten, to the USSR must be utilized; contacts must be made with foreign workers traveling to the USSR or living there; foreign tourists must be utilized to transmit literature, to maintain correspondence, to collect political information; contact must be made with Russian sailors in port cities, with a view to direct political influence on them as well as to transmit literature. All these kinds of work naturally require exceptional attentiveness and caution; the intermediaries must be carefully chosen so that police agents, class enemies, or Stalinist provocateurs are not mixed in among them. Systematic work in the directions indicated above can be of inestimable value to our comrades in
On the State of the Left Opposition

the USSR. And it is scarcely necessary to explain the impor­
tance to all sections of the Left Opposition the rapid growth
of the Bolshevik-Leninists in the USSR will assume!

The Historic Role of the Left Opposition

In a previous letter the thought was expressed that under
*certain* historical circumstances the proletariat can conquer
even under a left-centrist leadership. Many comrades were
inclined, I have been informed, to interpret this thought in the
sense of minimizing the role of the Left Opposition and of
mitigating the mistakes and sins of bureaucratic centrism. Need­
less to say how far I am from such an interpretation.

The strategy of the party is an exceedingly important element
of the proletarian revolution. But it is by no means the only
factor. With an exceptionally favorable relation of forces the
proletariat can come to power even under a non-Marxist leader­
ship. This was the case for example in the Paris Commune and,
in a period which lies closer to us, in Hungary. The depth
of the disintegration of the enemy camp, its political de­
moralization, the worthlessness of its leaders, can assure deci­
sive superiority to the proletariat for a certain time even if its
own leadership is weak.

But in the first place, there is nothing to guarantee such a
"fortunate" coincidence of circumstances; it represents the excep­
tion rather than the rule. Second, the victory obtained under
such conditions remains, as the same two examples—Paris and
Hungary—prove, exceedingly unstable. To weaken the struggle
against Stalinism on the ground that under *certain* conditions
even the Stalinist leadership would prove unable to prevent
the victory of the proletariat (as the leadership of Thaelmann
could not prevent the growth in the number of Communist
voters) would be to stand all of Marxist politics on its head.

The theoretical possibility of a victory under centrist leader­
ship must be understood, besides, not mechanically but dialec­
tically. Neither the official party as a whole nor even its ap­
paratus represents something immovable and unchangeable.
If the original attitude of Neumann-Remmele-Thaelmann,"First the fascists, then we," had remained in force, it is entirely
possible that the fascists might be in power today. Weak as
the resistance was which the party developed later, still it created
the perspectives of a civil war, frightened the big bourgeoisie,
and compelled Hitler to enter upon the "constitutional" road
which has obviously weakened him. At the same time, it is
completely indisputable that in the party's change of position
the decisive role was played by the Left Opposition, if only
through the fact that it posed the problem of fascism clearly
and sharply before the working class. To change this course
Writings of Leon Trotsky (1932-33)

of ours, to adapt ourselves to the prejudices of the Stalinists instead of appealing to the judgment of the Communists, would mean to imitate the desperate centrists of the SAP, who pass over from Rosenfeld to Thaelmann, then burn their fingers and pass over to somebody else.

If what has been said above is true of Germany, where the extraordinary pressure of circumstances temporarily overcomes the Stalinists' policies of failure, what shall we say of those countries where the official Communist Party is in a condition of constant decay, as in France or in Great Britain? (The British Communist Party has dropped in ten months from fifteen thousand to three thousand dues-paying members.)

We all agree that to counterpose the adventuristic slogan of a second party to the existing party, as the Stalinists accuse us, would mean to block our way to the Communist workers themselves. But to blur our difference with centrism in the name of facilitating "unity" would mean not only to commit political suicide, but also to cover up, strengthen, and nourish all the negative features of bureaucratic centrism, and by that fact alone help the reactionary currents within it against the revolutionary tendencies.

If recent years have proven anything, it has been the principled correctness of the Left Opposition, its fitness to survive, its right to a great historical role. The accidental, unprepared consultation in Copenhagen has shown that the cadres of the Opposition have fully grasped its mission and see their road clearly. We can firmly hope that the consultation will give a serious impulsion to the further development of the sections.

P. S. Because of the great distance, our Greek section could not take part in the consultation. But on the way, many comrades were able to meet with a substantial number of Athenian Bolshevik-Leninists and obtained a very favorable impression of them. Suffice it to say that the Greek organization has assumed the task of changing their paper, the Pali ton Takseon, into a daily newspaper in the nearest future. How far from this are the other sections unfortunately!

For similar reasons—the great distance and for many, too, material and police difficulties—representatives of the American League, the Czechoslovak, Bulgarian, Swiss, Polish Oppositionists, and other groups could not take part in the consultation.

The calling of a real conference, which will include representatives of all sections of the International Left Opposition, therefore remains a matter for the future.
A LETTER TO BULGARIA

December 19, 1932

To Osvobozhdenie

Dear Comrades:

1. The news of the death of Christian Georgievich is false. We recently received a photograph of Rakovsky and his wife from Barnaul. Despite difficulties and privations and advancing age, Rakovsky appears extremely energetic. You get the impression of a positively youthful sparkle in his eyes. Loyalty to ideas keeps people well. A large number of copies of the photo will be reproduced in Paris. You will receive some.

2. You will read of the most important episodes connected with the visit to Copenhagen in La Verite or the next issue of the Russian Biulleten, which is appearing shortly.

3. It is not the second volume of The History of the Russian Revolution which is being sold in Bulgaria, but only the first part of the second volume. [The two parts have already reached Bulgaria.—Ed. (Osvobozhdenie)] The whole second volume (about 750 pages) has appeared in German. The second part in Russian is appearing shortly. In my opinion my work on the history of the Russian Revolution is now completed.

4. Great events are taking place in the Soviet Union. The Stalinist group is completely isolated politically. Total confusion reigns inside the party apparatus. Stalin is bolstering himself through the GPU. The arrests are reaching unheard-of proportions. They are arresting members of the Central Committee, former people's commissars, Old Bolsheviks, etc. The most skeptical among our comrades and sympathizers write about the exceptional increase in the Left Opposition's authority and influence.
5. The temporary difficulties of *Osvobozhdenie* are no grounds for pessimism. In the special conditions of political development in Bulgaria over the last eight-nine years, the appearance of the Left Opposition coincided with a wave of sympathy and votes for the official party. That wave has a generally radical, partly oppositional, partly revolutionary character, unconscious, unthought-out, undifferentiated. In such conditions the working masses feel temporary satisfaction in the mere fact of their awakening and in the mere possibility of expressing their feelings by voting for workers' deputies. Taking power in the Sofia city council gives new satisfaction to the workers. *Osvobozhdenie*'s criticism "dampens" these moods and appears unnecessary, unintelligible, even hostile. This stage is completely unavoidable.

However, things will not stop at platonic satisfaction with the election results. Questions of strategy and tactics will arise, and probably have arisen already, all the more sharply the more the party's circle of influence spreads. Much of what has already been said by *Osvobozhdenie* has sunk into people's minds, and under the influence of the demands of the class struggle they will take on new life and acquire more strength, and that will lead to a renewal of *Osvobozhdenie*.

6. In Copenhagen I had an opportunity to see some thirty comrades who came from various countries, and I received a very favorable impression. In particular, there are fine workers in Germany; however, there are also some elements of the past—skeptics, whiners, intriguers. On the eve of the German conference a crisis in the leadership is being observed there; this need, however, cause no confusion among the German Opposition. On the contrary, its strengthening is to be expected.

A warm handshake and a militant greeting.

L. Trotsky
THE BELGIAN OPPOSITION AND ITS NEWSPAPER

December 20, 1932

To the Belgian Section

Dear Comrades:

You recently transformed your publication into a weekly. Now you are enlarging its format. An excellent achievement. We must rejoice all the more in that your journal depends not on occasional contributions but exclusively on a proletarian organization. In this connection, the Belgian section can and must become an example for many others.

After a period of decline, the Belgian Opposition, having purged itself of intellectual dilettantism, has begun a consistent rise. Of course by that I don't in any way mean that our movement does not need intellectuals. Such a point of view would be evidence of narrow prejudice. Revolutionary intellectuals who put themselves entirely at the disposal of a workers' organization can render it very useful assistance, thanks to their special knowledge. But amateurs who come around the revolutionary movement from time to time, kindly consenting to lead the working class during their leisure hours—such "leaders" can only do harm.

Your organization is closely linked with the working masses. It demonstrated this anew during the recent strike. You are testing the ideas and methods of the Opposition through the experience of the class struggle, by which those ideas and methods penetrate the consciousness of the workers. In general this is absolutely necessary for the vitality of a revolutionary tendency and for its systematic growth.
You are following, I hope, the discussion which is now developing in the German Left Opposition. Despite its undoubted achievements during the last year, our German section is obviously not completely free of the methods of intellectual dilettantism which introduce intolerable hesitation into its leadership. The task is for the German section to be taken in hand by the advanced workers linked to the mass organizations. Through their example and advice our Belgian comrades can, in this connection, provide them with considerable aid.

Our press cannot rely on the capitalist apparatus for its distribution. Our apparatus consists in the devotion of the workers to their cause, to their organization, and to their press. Your experience demonstrates that only this road assures a serious success.

Best wishes with communist greetings,
L. Trotsky
To the Leadership of the German Left Opposition

Dear Comrades:

The crisis in the German section called forth by Comrade Well and his group makes the following communication necessary in order to clarify the matter.

When I met Comrade Senin in Copenhagen, he stated that Comrade Well complained that I corresponded only with his opponents and not with him. I was completely surprised by this news since the numerous interruptions of our correspondence always came from Comrade Well and occurred each time I made some critical remark or did not agree with him on one question or another. In agreement with Comrade Senin, I then addressed a letter to Comrade Well to clear up the "misunderstanding" on the question of correspondence. The purpose of my letter was to contribute to the alleviation of conflicts within the German Left Opposition, conflicts which, in my opinion, were mostly called forth by Comrade Well with insufficient cause.

I proposed in my letter to call a calm, harmonious conference of action, without having a suspicion of the differences of opinion recently formulated by Well. That a policy based on principle is the best, as Lenin said and Well quoted, is correct. Besides, Lenin always supported himself on the basis of the necessity for a principled policy. But Lenin also taught us to shove aside other, secondary, differences at a critical time. From Well's letters, conversations, and many articles, in any case, I have long ago seen that he takes a vacillating position on many questions. I have often insisted that Comrade Well formulate his misgivings, replies, etc., in a precise
manner. He has never done this. I have presented the questions of Thermidor and dual power in the form of a letter and a dialogue (published in our German press). Well never went into these questions. Since they have an importance which may affect the whole future, I must assume from his persistent silence that he still has not gone beyond the stage of doubt. And political experience a hundred times has shown me comrades who vacillate as long as they live but still more or less "come along."

That the vacillations of Well have condensed into an explosion surprised me all the more since Comrade Senin, who takes approximately the same standpoint, assured me in Copenhagen of complete agreement, and in the course of a two-hour discussion we went through practically all the important questions. Since then, from my whole experience with Well (Landau question, French question, Mill question, Spanish question), I have become convinced that he is unfortunately much too inclined to put purely personal factors ahead of political and principled ones. I have tried to propose to him that in this most acute situation he should not disturb the activity of the German Opposition and the harmony of the coming conference through insufficiently thought-out ideas and premature actions. But since then I have found out that Well's vacillations in the past three years have taken on, obviously under the influence of the "successes" of the KPD [Communist Party of Germany], that pathological form which we must describe as the urge to capitulate. All the symptoms, "ideas," and forms of expression repeat in stereotyped form the analogous pathological symptoms of many others from 1923 to 1932. Naturally because of this my proposal to call a unified conference became out of the question. On the contrary, the most determined struggle is needed. What Well is now putting in question is nothing else than the right to existence of the Left Opposition. He, Well, thinks everything will go well enough even without Bolshevik-Leninists, and that between Stalin and the Kremlin and Trotsky and Barnaul there exist little misunderstandings because all of them fail to understand his, Well's, ideas. Because of the same misunderstandings the GPU killed Butov, Blumkin, Silov, Rabinovich, and others.

Actually I do not believe that a fruitful "discussion" can arise on this basis since, as I have said before, Well only repeats what Zinoviev, Radek, and others formulated more thoroughly in the past at a certain stage of their retrograde development. But this mood, of course, cannot be tolerated in the ranks of the Left Opposition. Whether Comrade Well personally will learn better and make a turn, I do not know. For my part
I would only welcome such a turn. But what the German Opposition needs is a leadership which is made up of workers who are firm in their convictions and which is not subject to the changing mood of eternal political nomads. That, it seems to me, the recent experience has in any case proven.

With best communist greetings,
Leon Trotsky
ON THOSE WHO HAVE FORGOTTEN
THE ABC

Against Roman Well and Others

December 28, 1932

The protest of several German comrades against the article "With Both Hands" can be interpreted in two ways: first, as a search for a suitable excuse to capitulate; second, as a principled error of a confused but honest Oppositionist. I leave aside the first variant, it has no theoretical interest. The second case deserves to be examined.

The article "With Both Hands" warns that Stalin's policies on the most important questions have approached decisions which may become irrevocable. The article recalls the fact that the Stalin faction had adhered to the Kellogg Pact and the American disarmament program. There were never any differences of opinion among us as to the evaluation of these exceptionally important transactions. The article cites the scandalous conversation of Stalin with the American, Campbell, which glaringly illuminates the road on which Stalin has entered.

"But do you really believe that Stalin is capable of treachery?" comes the objection. An astonishing argument, which proves that many a comrade in spite of his age has reached the point of forgetting his Marxist ABC. Do we then estimate policies as depending on previously decided confidence or distrust with respect to this or that person? The political line results from the pressure of class forces and the objective conditions and develops its own logic.

In the year 1922 the Soviet Union went through a severe economic crisis. At the November plenum of the Central Committee, Stalin and others adopted a resolution which essentially abolished the monopoly of foreign trade. How shall we characterize such a resolution? As a betrayal, or not as a betrayal? Subjectively, it is certain that Stalin did not desire to
betray the socialist future. But abolition of the monopoly, in its inevitable and moreover immediate consequences, is in no way different from abolition of the nationalization of the means of production. Not for nothing, in the first years of the Soviet regime, did the whole capitalist world exert every effort to obtain an "alleviation" of the monopoly of foreign trade. Objectively, the resolution of the plenum of November 1922 was an act of betrayal of socialism. Subjectively, it was possible because Stalin and the others did not possess sufficient powers of resistance, theoretical and political, against the pressure of the economic crisis.

The historical example of the monopoly of foreign trade best illustrates the present dispute. Since then we have been able to observe Stalin's policies in a whole series of the most important historical developments. How shall we describe his policy in China, that is, his alliance with Chiang Kai-shek against the proletariat? We have always described it as one of betrayal. In this case, the right turn of bureaucratic centrisism was carried to its ultimate logical consequences. Or can we find a single Oppositionist to deny that Stalin's policy in China served the bourgeoisie against the proletariat? Let us recall the fact that Stalin supplemented this policy by crushing those Russian Bolsheviks who wanted to help the Chinese proletariat against the bourgeoisie. What is this but betrayal?

Since November 1922 more than ten years have passed. The economic situation of the USSR has reached a period of exceptionally sharp crisis. In the world situation, too, there are not a few dangers which can suddenly come to a head with a further sharpening of the internal difficulties. The criminal policy of collectivization to the limit and of the adventuristic tempo of industrialization has finally landed up a blind alley. As long as one stays within the framework of bureaucratic centrism there is no way out. The only possibility is a search for palliatives and postponements. Foreign credits could undoubtedly bring about an alleviation of the internal crisis. America says it is not prepared to give up its claims on war debts without compensation. It demands compensation for new credits too. The program of its demands is sufficiently well known to us from the past: recognition of the prewar and war debts; "alleviation" of the monopoly of foreign trade; a break, in effect, with the Communist International; support of the American policy in the Far East; etc.

Certain concessions (with respect to the debts, for instance) are entirely permissible. However, this is precisely the form of compensation which interests the United States least. But how do matters stand with respect to the Comintern? For the fifth year
now no congress has been called. Is that an accident? Undoubt-
edly one of Stalin's motives is the thought: there is no reason
to irritate Hoover; the international proletarian vanguard will
get along somehow without a congress. But what remains then
of the Comintern in Moscow? Miserable plenums under the
leadership of Manuilsky, whose worth Stalin well knows.
Would it be difficult to give up these "remains"?

The monopoly of foreign trade as "compensation" presents
more difficulties. But even here there can be no question of an
absolute guarantee. If ten years ago, when Soviet industry was
in a state of utter decay, Stalin was willing to make the greatest
concessions to foreign capital on this question, today, after
industry has grown considerably, we must fear a surrender
all the more. "We are so strong," the apparatus will tell the
workers, "that we can afford an alleviation of the monopoly
of foreign trade." Its weakness for capitulation to world capi-
talism, in this case as in many others, will be concealed under
an appearance of strength.

In point of fact, on what do the confused protesters base
their objections? On their faith in the good intentions of Stalin.
On that alone and nothing more! "After all," they say or think,
"Stalin has not yet betrayed the Soviet republic." What remark-
able profundity! In the first place, we answer, one reason Stalin
was forced to stop halfway in his policies has been the energetic
activity of the Left Opposition, which never depended on
miracles but called on the workers to be alert and determined at
every critical moment. In the second place, Stalin's policy in
China did develop to its ultimate conclusion and led to a com-
plete collapse of the second Chinese revolution.

At this, the hopelessly confused protester, caught at a dis-
advantage, will take up a new position. "All these are your
suspicions," he will say, "you cannot prove them." That is
correct: in order to prove them one must wait for the events,
i.e., the collapse of the Soviet fatherland, the result of carrying
out to its logical conclusion the policies of bureaucratic cen-
trism.

If the apparatus were under the control of the party, if the
workers could test questions of policy and the executive bodies,
we would have serious guarantees that policies would be con-
sistently carried out. But that is precisely what is lacking. No
one outside the narrow and ever-narrowing circle of Stalin
knows what measures are being prepared to get out of the
crisis. Can one take a serious attitude to that "revolutionary"
who, in a situation like this where powerful historical factors
are at work, builds up his perspective on psychological guess-
work or on a moral estimation of this or that person? When
Ustrialov expressed the hope that the NEP would lead the Bolshevik Party to the bourgeois regime, Lenin said, "Such things as Ustrialov speaks of are possible. History knows overthrows of all kinds; to depend on conviction, devotion, and other similar excellent spiritual qualities is in politics anything but a serious attitude." Lenin said this about the party in the year 1922; what shall one say now?

Many of the protesters, in connection with our article, conjure up the specter of Urbahns; it would appear, allegedly, that we have approached his evaluation of Stalinism. It is painful to have to analyze such an argument at the end of December 1932. The dispute between Urbahns and us centered on the nature of the Soviet state. Everything depends on the degree, on the relation of the opposing forces, on the stage which the contradictory development has reached. Bureaucratic centrism weakens the proletarian dictatorship, puts obstacles in the way of its development, and like a disease undermines its basic structure, the proletariat. But—disease is not yet death. Sickness can be cured. Urbahns declared the dictatorship liquidated, while we fought for the revival and strengthening of the dictatorship, living, still existing, even if badly undermined by Stalinist centrism.

But what shall we say about these unfortunate Oppositionists who conclude, from the existence of the proletarian dictatorship, that we should have confidence in the bureaucratic centrism which undermines this dictatorship? What shall we say about these "doctors" who unexpectedly discover that the best thing for the welfare of the patient is to overlook the symptoms of his disease, to cover up his situation, and, instead of systematic treatment, content themselves with the hope that with the help of God the sick man will get well by himself?

Our protesters reveal as profound a lack of understanding of the reciprocal relations of the Soviet state and bureaucratic centrism as Urbahns; they merely color their lack of understanding with a different dye than his.

Only the terrifyingly low level on which the Stalinist bureaucracy keeps the Communist movement can explain the most disturbing fact that comrades, who have learned for many years in the school of the Opposition, can fall into such wretched and compromising errors. Nothing to be done! We will waste a few hours repeating the ABC. If that does not help, we shall stride onward and forward over those who obstinately remain behind.
THE INTERNATIONAL LEFT OPPOSITION, ITS TASKS AND METHODS

December 1932

The task of the coming conference of the Left Opposition (Bolshevik-Leninists) is to adopt a clear and precisely formulated platform and organizational statutes, and select its leading bodies. The preceding theoretical, political and organizational work of the Left Opposition in various countries, especially in the last four years, has created sufficient premises for the solution of this task.

The fundamental programmatic and political documents of the Left Opposition are issued in no less than fifteen languages. The Left Opposition publishes thirty-two periodicals in sixteen countries. It has reorganized and strengthened its sections in nine countries and has created new sections in seven countries in the past three years. But its most important and most valuable achievement is the undeniable raising of the theoretical level of the International Left Opposition, the growth of its ideological solidity, and the expansion of its revolutionary initiative.

Origin of the Left Opposition in the USSR

The Left Opposition arose in 1923, ten years ago, in the land of the October Revolution, in the ruling party of the first workers' state. The delay in the development of the world revolution necessarily called forth a political reaction in the land of the October Revolution. Complete counterrevolution means displacement of the rule of one class by that of another; reaction begins and develops while still under the rule of the revolutionary class. The bearer of the reaction against October was the petty bourgeoisie, particularly the better-off elements of the peasantry. The bureaucracy, which is closely connected with the petty bourgeoisie, put itself forward as the spokesman
of this reaction. Supported by the pressure of the petty-bourgeois masses, the bureaucracy won a large measure of independence from the proletariat. After replacing the program of international revolution by national reformism, it made the theory of socialism in one country its official doctrine. The left wing of the proletariat fell under the blows of the Soviet bureaucracy in an alliance with the petty-bourgeois, predominantly peasant, masses and the backward strata of the workers themselves. That is the dialectics of the replacement of Leninism by Stalinism.

After the organizational defeat of the Left Opposition, the official policy became definitively a policy of empirical maneuver between the classes. The dependence of the bureaucracy upon the proletariat meanwhile expressed itself in the fact that, in spite of a series of blows, it did not dare or was not able to overthrow the essential achievements of the October Revolution: nationalization of the land, nationalization of industry, the monopoly of foreign trade. Still more—when the party bureaucracy in 1928 felt itself endangered by its petty-bourgeois allies, particularly by the kulaks [rich peasants], its fear of entirely losing its support among the proletariat led it to carry out a sharp turn to the left. The final results of this zigzag were the adventurist tempo of industrialization, the wholesale collectivization of the land, and the administrative defeat of the kulaks. The disorganization of the economy brought about by this blind policy led at the beginning of this year to a new turn to the right.

Thanks to its privileged position and conservative habits of thinking, the Soviet bureaucracy has many features in common with the reformist bureaucracies of capitalist countries. It is far more inclined to trust in the "revolutionary" Kuomintang, the "left" bureaucracy of the British trade unions, petty-bourgeois "friends of the Soviet Union," and liberal and radical pacifists than in the independent revolutionary initiative of the proletariat. But the need to defend its own position in the workers' state forces the Soviet bureaucracy over and over again into sharp collisions with the reformist lackeys of capital. In this way, under unique historical conditions, a faction of bureaucratic centrism was separated out of proletarian Bolshevism, and has laid a heavy hand on a whole epoch of development of the Soviet republic and of the world working class.

Bureaucratic centrism signifies the worst degeneration of the workers' state. But even in its bureaucratically degenerated form, the Soviet Union remains a workers' state. To transform the struggle against the centrist bureaucracy into a struggle against
the Soviet state is to place oneself on the same level as the Stalinist clique which declares, "the state is I."

Unconditional defense of the Soviet Union against world imperialism is such an elementary task of every revolutionary worker that the Left Opposition tolerates no vacillations or doubts on this question in its ranks. As before, it will break ruthlessly with all groups and elements which attempt to occupy a "neutral" stance between the Soviet Union and the capitalist world (Monatte-Louzon in France, the Urbahns group in Germany).

The Left Opposition in Capitalist Countries

The Third International arose as the direct result of the experience of the advanced workers in the epoch of the imperialist war and postwar upheavals, particularly that of the October Revolution. This determined the leading role of Russian Bolshevism in the Third International, and therefore, also, the influence of its internal struggles on the development of other national sections. Yet it is absolutely false to regard the evolution of the Comintern during the last ten years as a mere reflection of the factional struggle within the Russian Communist Party. There were reasons rooted in the development of the international workers' movement itself which drove the young sections of the Comintern to the Stalinist bureaucracy.

The early postwar years were years of expectancy everywhere, particularly in Europe, of imminent overthrow of bourgeois rule. But by the time the internal crisis of the Soviet party broke out, most of the European sections had suffered their first great defeats and disappointments. Particularly depressing was the impotent retreat of the German proletariat in October 1923. A new political orientation became an inner necessity for the majority of the Communist parties. When the Soviet bureaucracy, exploiting the disappointment of the Russian workers in the delay of the European revolution, set forth the national-reformist theory of socialism in one country, the young bureaucracies of the other sections breathed a sigh of relief; the new perspective offered them a road to socialism independent of the process of international revolution. In this way, the reaction within the USSR coincided with the reaction in the capitalist countries and created the conditions for successful administrative repression of the Left Opposition by the centrist bureaucracy.

But in their further move to the right, the official parties collided with the real Kuomintang, the real bureaucrats of the trade unions and the Social Democracy, just as the Stalinists collided with the real kulaks. The new zigzag to an ultra-
left policy that followed led to the split of the official Comintern majority into the ruling center and the Right-Oppositionist wing. In the camp of communism, therefore, during the past three years it has been possible to follow clearly three fundamental groups: the Marxist wing (Bolshevik-Leninists); the centrist faction (Stalinists); and finally the right, or properly speaking, right-centrist wing (Brandlerites), which leads directly to reformism. The political developments in almost all countries without exception have confirmed and daily confirm in life the correctness of this classification.

It was and continues to be completely characteristic of centrism to work hand in hand with the right as the current most nearly akin to it in principle, but never to make a bloc with the Bolshevik-Leninists against the right. As for the right wing on the international scale, like all forms of opportunism, it is marked by extraordinary differences and contradictions among its national constituents, while they all have in common hostility to the Bolshevik-Leninists.

In the USSR, under the conditions of the dictatorship and the absence of legal opposition parties, the Right Opposition inevitably becomes the instrument through which class forces hostile to the proletariat exert their pressure. In this consists the main danger of the Right Opposition. On the other hand, the consciousness of this danger paralyzes those leaders of the Right Opposition who are bound up with the party through their past.

In the capitalist countries, where all types of reformism to the right of the Communist parties can operate, the right wing has no field of activity. Insofar as the Right Opposition has mass organizations, it turns them over, directly or indirectly, to the Social Democracy (Czechoslovakia, Sweden), with the exception of the revolutionary elements who find their way to the Bolshevik-Leninists (Czechoslovakia, Poland). The Brandlerite elements who have remained independent here and there (Germany, USA) place their hopes on being called back and pardoned sooner or later by the Stalinist bureaucracy; with this perspective, they carry on a campaign of lies and slander against the Left Opposition quite in the spirit of Stalinism.

**Fundamental Principles of the Left Opposition**

The International Left Opposition stands on the ground of the first four congresses of the Comintern. This does not mean that it bows before every letter of its decisions, many of which had a purely conjunctural character and have been contra-
dicted by subsequent events. But all the essential principles (in relation to imperialism and the bourgeois state, to democracy and reformism; problems of insurrection; the dictatorship of the proletariat; on relations with the peasantry and the oppressed nations; soviets; work in the trade unions; parliamentarism; the policy of the united front) remain even today the highest expression of proletarian strategy in the epoch of the general crisis of capitalism.

The Left Opposition rejects the revisionist decisions of the Fifth and Sixth World Congresses and considers necessary a radical restatement of the program of the Comintern, whose Marxist gold has been rendered completely worthless by centristic alloy.

In accordance with the spirit and the sense of the decisions of the first four world congresses, and in continuation of these decisions, the Left Opposition establishes the following principles, develops them theoretically, and carries them through practically:

1. The independence of the proletarian party, always and under all conditions; condemnation of the policy toward the Kuomintang in 1924-28; condemnation of the policy of the Anglo-Russian Committee; condemnation of the Stalinist theory of two-class (worker-and-peasant) parties and of the whole practice based on this theory; condemnation of the policy of the Amsterdam Congress, by which the Communist Party was dissolved in the pacifist swamp.

2. Recognition of the international and thereby of the permanent character of the proletarian revolution; rejection of the theory of socialism in one country and of the policy of national Bolshevism in Germany which complements it (the platform of "national liberation").

3. Recognition of the Soviet state as a workers' state in spite of the growing degeneration of the bureaucratic regime; the unconditional obligation of every worker to defend the Soviet state against imperialism as well as against internal counterrevolution.

4. Condemnation of the economic policy of the Stalinist faction both in its stage of economic opportunism in 1923 to 1928 (struggle against "superindustrialization," staking all on the kulaks) as well as in its stage of economic adventurism in 1928 to 1932 (overaccelerated tempo of industrialization, 100 percent collectivization, administrative liquidation of the kulaks as a class); condemnation of the criminal bureaucratic legend that "the Soviet state has already entered into socialism"; recognition of the necessity of a return to the realistic economic policies of Leninism.
5. Recognition of the necessity of systematic Communist work in the proletarian mass organizations, particularly in the reformist trade unions; condemnation of the theory and practice of the Red trade-union organization in Germany [RGO] and similar formations in other countries.

6. Rejection of the formula of the "democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry" as a separate regime distinguished from the dictatorship of the proletariat, which wins the support of the peasant and the oppressed masses in general; rejection of the anti-Marxist theory of the peaceful "growing-over" of the democratic dictatorship into the socialist one.

7. Recognition of the necessity to mobilize the masses under transitional slogans corresponding to the concrete situation in each country, and particularly under democratic slogans insofar as it is a question of struggle against feudal relations, national oppression, or different varieties of openly imperialistic dictatorship (fascism, Bonapartism, etc.).

8. Recognition of the necessity of a developed united-front policy with respect to the mass organizations of the working class, both of trade-union and political character, including the Social Democracy as a party; condemnation of the ultimatistic slogan "only from below," which in practice means a rejection of the united front and, consequently, a refusal to create soviets; condemnation of the opportunistic application of the united-front policy as in the Anglo-Russian Committee (a bloc with the leaders without the masses and against the masses); double condemnation of the policy of the present German Central Committee, which combines the ultimatistic slogan "only from below" with the opportunistic practice of parliamentary pacts with the leaders of the Social Democracy.

9. Rejection of the theory of social fascism and of the entire practice bound up with it as serving fascism on the one hand and the Social Democracy on the other.

10. Differentiation of three groupings within the camp of communism: the Marxist, the centrist, and the right; recognition of the impermissibility of a political alliance with the right against centrism; support of centrism against the class enemy; irreconcilable and systematic struggle against centrism and its zigzag policies.

11. Recognition of party democracy not only in words but also in fact; ruthless condemnation of the Stalinist plebiscitary regime (the rule of usurpers, gagging the thought and the will of the party, deliberate suppression of information from the party, etc.).

The fundamental principles enumerated above, which are
of basic importance for the strategy of the proletariat in the present period, place the Left Opposition in irreconcilable hostility to the Stalinist faction which currently dominates the USSR and the Communist International. Recognition of these principles, on the basis of the decisions of the first four congresses of the Comintern, is an indispensable condition for the acceptance of single organizations, groups, and persons into the International Left Opposition.

**Faction and Not Party**

The International Left Opposition regards itself as a faction of the Comintern and its separate national sections as factions of the national Communist parties. This means that the Left Opposition does not regard the organizational regime created by the Stalinist bureaucracy as final. On the contrary, its aim is to tear the banner of Bolshevism out of the hands of the usurping bureaucracy and return the Communist International to the principles of Marx and Lenin. That such a policy is the only correct one under the given conditions is proven both by theoretical analysis and historical experience.

Although the special conditions of Russian development had brought Bolshevism to a final break with Menshevism as early as 1912, the Bolshevik Party remained in the Second International until the end of the year 1914. The lesson of the world war was necessary to pose the question of a new International; the October Revolution was necessary to call the new International into being.

Such a historical catastrophe as the collapse of the Soviet state would, of course, sweep away with it the Third International too. Similarly, the victory of fascism in Germany and the smashing of the German proletariat would hardly allow the Comintern to survive the consequences of its disastrous policies. But who in the camp of the revolution will today dare to say that the collapse of the Soviet power or the victory of fascism in Germany cannot be avoided or prevented? Not the Left Opposition, in any event. On the contrary, its policies are directed toward defending the Soviet Union against the danger of Thermidor, which has been brought closer by centrism, and toward helping the German proletariat not only to defeat fascism but also to conquer power. Standing on the foundation of the October Revolution and of the Third International, the Left Opposition rejects the idea of parallel Communist parties.

The entire responsibility for the splitting of communism lies on the Stalinist bureaucracy. The Bolshevik-Leninists are prepared, at a moment, to return to the ranks of the Comintern
and to observe strict discipline in action, while at the same time, on the basis of party democracy, carrying on an irreconcilable struggle against bureaucratic centrisms. Today, under the conditions of the split, our adherence to the Communist International cannot be expressed by organizational self-limitation, by refusal to assume independent political initiative and to engage in mass work, but must be expressed by the content of our policy. The Left Opposition does not adapt itself to the Stalinist bureaucracy, does not pass over its mistakes and crimes in silence; on the contrary, it subjects them to irreconcilable criticism. But the aim of this criticism is not to set up competitive parties against the existing Communist parties, but to win over the proletarian nucleus of the official parties and in this way to rebuild the parties on a Marxist foundation.

This question is put more clearly and more sharply in the USSR than anywhere else. The policy of a second party there would mean a policy of armed insurrection and a new revolution. The policy of the faction means steering a course toward internal reform of the party and the workers' state. Despite all the slanders of the Stalinist bureaucracy and its admirers, the Opposition remains solely and completely on the ground of reform.

Our relation to the Communist International is defined by the name of our faction: Left Opposition. The content of our ideas and methods is characterized with sufficient clarity by the name Bolshevik-Leninists. Every section must bear both of these complementary designations.

Cleansing the Ranks of the Left Opposition and the Composition of the International Conference

The Left Opposition can grow and strengthen itself only by cleansing its ranks of accidental and alien elements.

The revolutionary upsurge after the war not only seized the young generation of the proletariat but also revived a great variety of sectarian groups which sought a way out on the roads of anarchism, syndicalism, pure propaganda, etc. Many of them hoped to find an arena for their confused ideas in the Communist International. Petty-bourgeois bohemian elements, thrown out of their ruts by the war and the post-war upheavals, also flocked under the banner of communism. A part of this many-hued army of partisans dispersed itself in the Communist movement and entered its apparatus; poachers often make the best gendarmes. The dissatisfied ones, on the other hand, either immediately turned away from politics or attempted, on the way, to attach themselves to the Opposi-
tion. Such elements are prepared to accept the best principles, in words, on condition that they not be prevented from remaining good bourgeois (Paz and Co.), and that they not be obliged to observe discipline of thought and action (Souvarine) or to give up their syndicalist and other prejudices (Rosmer).

In approaching the task of assembling its ranks on the national as well as the international scale, the Left Opposition had to begin with the various groups that actually existed. But from the very beginning it was clear to the basic nucleus of the International Left Opposition that a mechanical combination of separate groups which count themselves among the Left Opposition is permissible only as a starting point, and that later on, based on theoretical and political work as well as internal criticism, the necessary selection must be made. In fact, the last four years were for the International Left Opposition a time not only of clarification and deepening of theory on the ground of the individual countries, but also of its cleansing of alien, sectarian, and adventurist bohemian elements, without a principled position, without serious devotion to the cause, without connection with the masses, without a sense of responsibility and discipline, and for that, all the more inclined to listen to the voice of careerism (Landau, Mill, Graef, Well, and other varieties of the same general type).

The principle of party democracy is in no way identical with the principle of the open door. The Left Opposition has never demanded of the Stalinists that they transform the party into a mechanical sum of factions, groups, sects, and individuals. We accuse the centrist bureaucracy of carrying on an essentially false policy which at every step brings them into contradiction with the flower of the proletariat and of looking for the way out of these contradictions by the strangling of party democracy. Between the organizational policy of bureaucratic centrism and its "general line" there is an inseparable connection. In contradistinction to Stalinism, the Left Opposition is the bearer of the theory of Marxism and of the strategic achievements of Leninism in the world labor movement.

As far as principled methods are concerned, the International Opposition has never broken with any group or with any individual comrade without exhausting all methods of ideological persuasion. Exactly for that reason, the work of selecting cadres that has been accomplished possesses an organic and permanent character. By checking over each and every one on the basis of performance, the Left Opposition must carry through to the end the cleansing of its ranks of alien
elements since only in this way, as experience has shown, can it expand and educate its proletarian cadres. The international conference can rest only on the work that has already been done, and deepen and consolidate the results of this work.

The proposal to call a conference with each and every group that counts itself in the Left Opposition (the groups of Landau and Rosmer, the Mahnruf,78 Spartakos, the Weisbord group, etc.) represents an attempt to turn the wheel backward and shows a complete lack of understanding of the conditions and laws of development of a revolutionary organization and of the methods of selection and education of its cadres. The pre-conference not only rejects but condemns such an attitude as being in radical contradiction to the organizational policies of Marxism.

**On Party Democracy**

The sections of the Left Opposition, originating out of small propaganda groups, gradually are being transformed into workers' organizations. This transition puts the tasks of party democracy in first place. Regular organizational relations must finally replace the kind of regime in which a few comrades, who are closely connected and understand each other even by the most informal indications, make all their decisions in a casual manner.

The foundation of party democracy is timely and complete *information*, available to all members of the organization and covering all the important questions of their life and struggle. *Discipline* can be built up only on a conscious assimilation of the policies of the organization by all its members and on confidence in its leadership. Such confidence can be won only gradually, in the course of common struggle and reciprocal influence. The iron discipline which is needed cannot be achieved by naked command. The revolutionary organization cannot do without the punishment of undisciplined and disruptive elements; but such disciplinary measures can be applied only as a last resort and, moreover, on the condition of solid support from the public opinion of the majority of the organization.

The frequent practical objections, based on the "loss of time" in abiding by democratic methods, amount to shortsighted opportunism. The education and consolidation of the organization is a most important task. Neither time nor effort should be spared for its fulfillment. Moreover, party democracy, as the only conceivable guarantee against unprincipled conflicts and unmotivated splits, in the last analysis does not increase
the overhead costs of development but reduces them. Only through constant and conscientious adherence to the methods of democracy can the leadership undertake important steps on its own responsibility in truly emergency cases without provoking disorganization or dissatisfaction.

The preconference directs the Secretariat to observe the carrying-out of the principles of party democracy in content as well as in form, within each section as well as in the reciprocal relations between the Secretariat and the sections, particularly and above all in the preparation for the international conference.

The Left Opposition in Italy
(Relations with the Bordigists)

The so-called left faction of the Italian Communists (Prometeo group or Bordigists) has its own traditions which are sharply distinguished from the traditions of the Bolshevik-Leninists. The Bordigists, who had originated in the struggle against the opportunism of the old Italian Socialist Party, at one blow put themselves on the ground of antiparlamentarism and of ultimatism, and persisted in their opposition to the Comintern in the early period of its first four world congresses. Their formal abandonment of antiparlamentarism, which took place after the Second World Congress, changed nothing essential in the policies of the Bordigists. Rejection of the struggle for democratic slogans under any and all conditions and of the united-front policy with regard to the Social Democracy—today, in the year 1933, after the enormous experience in all the countries of the world—sufficiently proves the sectarian character of the Prometeo group. The Bordigist faction, while claiming the role of an independent Marxist current, has proven its complete inability to exercise any influence on the development of the official Italian party. Within the latter, there has arisen a new Marxist grouping, the New Italian Opposition (NOI), based entirely on the ideas of the Left Opposition. Just as glaring a mark of the sectarian character of the Prometeo group is its complete inability, in spite of its existence of more than ten years, to extend its influence to other countries. The national limitations of Bordigism, from the standpoint of Marxism, represent its harshest and most bitter condemnation.

The International Opposition, in this case as in others, has made every attempt to allow the integration of the Bordigists with the Bolshevik-Leninists. The gigantic events which have taken place in the last few years in China, Spain, and Germany have been an exhaustive test of the differences of opinion
on the question of democratic slogans and of the policy of the united front. Every critical blow which the Left Opposition struck against the Stalinists rebounded equally against the Bordigists. The three years of existence in common, the criticism of ideas and the test of events, have brought them no nearer to us. Now the necessary conclusions must be drawn.

Within the framework of a mass party it would be possible to live together with the Bordigists—under the condition of firm discipline in action. But within the framework of a faction it is completely impermissible, especially after the entire experience we have gone through, to support the fiction of unity with an alien group which remains ideologically rigid and isolated in a sectarian manner.

The Bordigists themselves have never assumed a loyal attitude toward our international organization. By compelling all their members, regardless of their individual opinions, to speak and vote at meetings and conferences of the International Opposition in no other way than in the spirit of the majority of their faction, the Prometeo group has placed its national discipline higher than the international. It thereby violated not only the principles of democratic centralism but also those of internationalism. This alone proves that the Bordigists were never actually an organic part of the Left Opposition. If, in spite of this, they still cling to their formal adherence to the International Left Opposition, it is only to disguise the character of their group as a purely national sect. But a policy of disguise is not the policy of Marxism.

While giving due recognition to the honesty and revolutionary devotion of many Bordigists, the Left Opposition believes that the moment has arrived to declare openly: the Prometeo group does not belong to the International Left Opposition.

The only section of Bolshevik-Leninists for Italy is the New Italian Opposition.

The Left Opposition in Austria

The Austrian Frey group first joined our international organization, then left it, again attempted to enter, but refused to supply information about its internal condition, and then took the initiative in breaking off negotiations. Through its actions it has shown that the tasks and aims of the Left Opposition are completely alien to it, and that it needs the international banner of the Bolshevik-Leninists only as a cover for its hopeless stagnation. The preconference openly states that the International Left Opposition bears neither direct nor indirect responsibility for the Frey group.

The Secretariat is directed to take steps, with the help of
the German section, to develop and strengthen an independent section of the Left Opposition in Austria.

On the Spanish Section of the Left Opposition*

The Spanish revolution created exceptionally favorable objective conditions for the rapid development of communism. But the lack of cadres who were in any way trained made it very difficult for the Left Opposition as well as for the official party to take advantage of a truly historical situation. Although the Spanish section surpasses a number of other sections in the number of its members (this must be credited to the revolutionary upsurge) its ideological consolidation and the character of its leadership present a most unsatisfactory picture.

In order to understand the reasons for this, we must establish the most important mistakes of the leading cadres of the Spanish Opposition:

In Catalonia, whose proletariat offers a natural milieu for the rapid growth of Bolshevik-Leninist influence, the leading comrades lost time in an inexcusable manner; instead of coming out openly under their own banner at least as a small nucleus, they played hide-and-seek with principles during the most critical months of the revolution, engaging in diplomacy with and then hanging on to the tail of the petty-bourgeois nationalist and provincial phrasemaker, Maurin.

Things were not much better in the other parts of Spain, where the Left Opposition, while ignoring the official party and substituting revolutionary sentimentalism for the Marxist education of cadres, failed for a long time to draw the necessary borderline between itself and the Right Opposition.

No less harmful was the fact that the leading comrades submitted to the influence of the worst side of the Spanish revolutionary tradition, turned their backs on the international experience and, while declaring in words their solidarity with the Left Opposition, in actual fact supported, directly or indirectly, all the muddleheads and deserters (Landau, Rosmer, Mill, etc.).

On the question of faction or independent party the Spanish section at its last conference took a position which is ambiguous, to say the least, by declaring itself in favor of setting up its own list of candidates at parliamentary and other elections. This decision, which is contrary to the policy of the Left Opposition and was in no way prepared for in practice,

*Important note: for publication only in internal bulletins.
remained a platonic but nonetheless harmful demonstration.

On the road of alienation from the Bolshevik-Leninists the leaders of the Spanish Opposition went so far as to consider it possible to change the name of their organization. By assuming the name of "Left Communists"—an obviously false name from the standpoint of theory—the Spanish comrades put themselves in contradiction with the International Left Opposition and at the same time approached the name taken by the Leninbund, the Rosmer group, etc. No serious revolutionary will believe that such an important step was taken by accident, without a political reason. At the same time no Marxist will approve a policy which does not openly declare its aims but takes refuge on principled questions in diplomacy and maneuver.

By its demand that the international conference be opened to all groups declaring themselves adherents of the Left Opposition, including those that split away as well as those that were expelled, the Spanish Opposition shows how far removed it has been and is from the real development of the International Left and how little of its internal logic it has acquired.

While accusing the other sections of wrong organizational policies, without attempting to justify their accusations, the Spanish comrades at the same time have in fact proven the entire falsity of their own methods. The struggle that suddenly broke out between the two groups in the Central Committee has led the Spanish section to the verge of a split. The organization as a whole was taken utterly by surprise since neither of the two contending groups has been able up to now to formulate the principled foundations of this bitter struggle.

On its present ideological foundation the Spanish section cannot develop any further. Taking clear account of the fact that the correction of the mistakes which were made and the creation in Spain of an organization firm in principle and organized in a revolutionary manner can only be the result of long and systematic work, the preconference proposes the following immediate measures:

a. All important international documents on the questions in dispute must be translated into Spanish and be brought to the knowledge of all the members of the section. Concealing of facts must be stopped. What is said here refers particularly to the Mill case, where the leaders of the Spanish section not only supported an obviously unprincipled person against the International Opposition, but even now, in defense of the mistakes which they have made, permit themselves completely inappropriate insinuations against the International Opposition.

b. Both contending groups within the Central Committee must
give up the idea of an unprincipled split and of organizational measures, and make the necessary provisions so that the discussion on the disputed questions will run through normal channels and be participated in by all of the members of the organization without exception.

c. The internal discussion must be carried on in a bulletin whose editorial staff must guarantee the most complete impartiality toward each of the contending groups.

d. All the principled questions of the International Left must be placed on the agenda, and sympathies, antipathies, and personal insinuations must not be allowed to become substitutes for the taking of clear political positions.

e. An all-sided discussion must prepare the way for a new national conference.

The preconference directs the Secretariat to follow the internal development of the Spanish section with special attention, to help it carry out the measures stated above and other suitable measures in full agreement with the tasks and methods of the Left Opposition.

**On the Crisis of the German Section***

The preconference declares that in spite of exceptionally favorable conditions and correct initial positions, the German section has not utilized all the possibilities that were open to it. The crisis connected with the capitulation of Well and Co. has shown that the cadres of the German Opposition need a serious renovation. While the overwhelming majority of the rank-and-file members of the organization, after getting the first serious information about the crisis, immediately took the correct attitude toward Well's clique, expressed in the word "Outside!", the leadership and the editorial staff, on the other hand, showed impermissible vacillation and lost time, failing to provide adequate information to either their own local organizations or the foreign sections. With such methods on the part of the leadership a revolutionary organization cannot win. The Bolshevik-Leninists are being bitterly persecuted not only by all the forces of the old society, including the Social Democracy, but also by the Stalinist bureaucracy. The Left Opposition can open a road to the masses only through the greatest energy, absolute dedication to its ideas, and constant readiness to defend its banner to the end. To tolerate in the leadership those who are vacillating, passive, tired, or candidates for capitulation is an out-and-out crime. In the leader-

* Important note: for publication only in internal bulletins.
ship it is necessary to assure a predominance of revolutionary workers who are closely connected with the masses and completely permeated with consciousness of the great mission history has placed on the Left Opposition. The approaching conference of the German Opposition must be carried through from this point of view.
A LETTER TO PROMETEO

Published January 1, 1933

You know my opinion on the question of relations between your group and the International Left Opposition. Events have shown that unity between us would be nothing but a mistake on both our parts. By the logic of events it has become a pure fiction. Sustaining fictions is not revolutionary politics. It is necessary for us to separate in order to clear up the situation. Separation from an honest revolutionary group like yours need not necessarily be accompanied by animosity, personal attacks, or veiled criticism. I hope on the contrary that by eliminating organizational frictions, the inevitable result of fictitious unity, we shall be able to create favorable conditions by mutual criticism based on the lessons of events. That at least is the conclusion I draw as of today from the experience of these last years.

My best communist greetings,
L. Trotsky
THE MISTAKE OF THE
INTERNATIONAL SECRETARIAT

January 4, 1933

To the International Secretariat and to All Sections of the
International Left Opposition (Bolshevik-Leninists)

Dear Comrades:

Through an accidental and unfortunate chain of circum­
stances it is only today, January 4, that I have come into pos­
session of the minutes of the International Secretariat of De­
cember 15. I hope all the sections have read attentively the
statement of Well and the answers of Comrades Witte and Kin
(for lack of time Bauer could only join himself to their
statement). But I find that Comrades Witte and Kin have
spoken far too mildly and have not drawn the necessary con­
clusions from their analysis.

Exactly what did Well say? Let us enumerate his statements:

1. That the leading group of the German Left Opposition
which supports the views of the International Left Opposition
is a clique.

2. This "clique" (which means, in fact, the International Left
Opposition) is distinguished by the fact that it maliciously
minimizes the "successes" of the Stalinist bureaucracy.

3. "Bauer gave Trotsky lying and slanderous information." 
Exactly the same statement was made by Landau before the
split, by Mill and the others before their capitulation. The worst
information about Well was always given by Well himself, in
his letters. I declare that Comrade Bauer in all his communica­
tions was most objective, conscientious, and careful, in com­
plete contrast to Comrade Well, who always appeared in a
vicious, personal, and disloyal manner.

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4. Well objects to our political accusation against Stalin because we consider his international policy antiproletarian. Well becomes a defense lawyer for Stalin who, after all, in addition to his main occupation, is an executioner of the comrades who share our views.

5. Well is against the theory of Bonapartism.

6. Well is against the theory of Thermidor.

7. Well declares the forthcoming cleansing of the party to be a step forward. This cleansing begins and ends, however, with the repression of the comrades who share our views and with the destruction of all criticism and all Marxist thinking within the party.

8. Well states that nobody talks any more about the second five-year plan, which is his own discovery.

9. Well states that no one talks any more about "social fascism," which, however, is in frightful contradiction to the decisions of the Twelfth Plenum of the Executive Committee of the Communist International.

10. Well proclaims, "We must get closer to the party." By that he means the Stalinist bureaucracy and this getting closer he purchases by giving up all Marxist thinking.

11. He states on top of this that the five-year plan was "almost" realized.

12. He states that the Russian Opposition no longer exists.

13. He distributes the statement of the Stalinists that Zinoviev and Kamenev voluntarily chose the hole in which Stalin stuck them.

14. In the statement which he originally signed and which brings out his real thoughts without concealment, Well states that the leadership of the Russian Opposition in the article on Stalinist foreign policy capitulates to "Urbahns, Korsch, Sapronov, and other enemies of the party and the Communist International." Capitulation to the enemies of the party means the same thing as stepping over into the camp of counterrevolution.

I hope this enumeration will suffice. Zinoviev, Radek, and the others too, twenty-four hours before their own capitulation, accused Trotsky of capitulation to Sapronov. That those just mentioned made their accusations in a more clever and decent form is hardly an extenuating circumstance for Well. While accusing the journal of the Russian Opposition of crossing over into the camp of the enemy of the party, he declares Stalin's proletarian policy to be above all suspicion and actually above all criticism. He is against the theory of Thermidor. What then is he for? In his enumeration of the points which sharply separate him from the International Left Op-
position, Well has forgotten only one thing, namely, to mention those points which still connect him with the Left Opposition.

Imagine for a moment that the thousands of imprisoned, exiled, persecuted Bolshevik-Leninists in the Soviet Union have Well's speech before their eyes, what could they think or say about it? Only one thing—"Well is an outspoken enemy, a Stalinist agent." We can hardly speak here of a mask, since he carries his Stalinist wisdom quite openly. The question imperatively arises: "If we are engaged in the most bitter fight with the Stalinists, who persecute us through their diplomacy and the capitalist police of all countries, can we tolerate secondary Stalinists in our ranks?" I do not think so.

It is no secret that Well is most confused in his opinions. All attempts to help him to a clearer insight in innumerable letters were in vain. The confusion in his case finally crystallized into a completely Stalinist form. And no accident; cen-trism after all is nothing but crystallized confusion. But precisely because of his clear and open formulation of Stalinism, Well has proven that there is no basis for further discussion. And in that, in my opinion, consists the mistake of the International Secretariat. It is not sufficient that two members expressed their opinion and a third member joined them. It was their duty at once as the Secretariat, as the highest institution, to declare that the present views of Well are incompatible with membership in the Left Opposition. And it was this decision, not only the minutes, which the International Secretariat should have laid before all the sections for examination and confirmation.

I for my part do not hesitate for a moment, in the name of the Russian Opposition, which in spite of all the Stalinist slander exists, grows, struggles, and gains in influence, to declare: "If Well holds onto the opinions which he expressed in the minutes of December 15, he must not stay in our ranks another twenty-four hours." That is the formal proposal which I make to the International Secretariat and to all the sections.

With communist greetings,

G. Gourov [L. Trotsky]
To the Editorial Board of The Militant

Dear Comrades:

During the recent period I have repeatedly had occasion to become convinced that Max Eastman is carrying on a systematic fight against materialist dialectics, the philosophical foundation of Marxism and scientific communism. In its content and its theoretical tendency this fight does not differ in any way from the other varieties of petty-bourgeois revisionism, beginning with Bernsteinism (in its philosophical-theoretical parts). If at the same time Eastman retains his fervent support for the October Revolution and even for the Left Opposition, this is a credit to him; but this crying inconsistency does not raise by one iota the value of his criticism of Marxism.

I could have left this Croton variety of revisionism silently to its proper fate if I had not been bound for a long time to Eastman himself by personal and literary ties. Eastman recently translated my History of the Russian Revolution into the English language in three volumes. As is generally acknowledged, he carried out this big task in an excellent manner. I have expressed my sincere gratitude for this to him and am prepared to repeat it here. But as soon as Eastman attempts to translate Marxian dialectics into the language of vulgar empiricism, his work provokes a feeling in me which is the direct opposite of gratitude. For the purpose of avoiding all doubts and misunderstandings, I consider it my duty to bring this to the knowledge of everybody.

With communist greetings,
L. Trotsky
MY DAUGHTER'S SUICIDE

An Open Letter on the Death of Zinaida Volkova

January 11, 1933

To All Members of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the USSR
To the Presidium of the Central Executive Committee of the USSR
To All Members of the Central Control Commission of the Communist Party of the USSR

I deem it necessary to inform you how and why my daughter committed suicide.

At the close of 1930 at my request you authorized my tubercular daughter, Zinaida Volkova, to come to Turkey temporarily, for treatment, with her five-year-old son Vsevolod. I did not suspect that behind this liberalism of Stalin lurked an ulterior motive.

My daughter arrived here in January 1931 with pneumothorax of both lungs. After a ten-month sojourn in Turkey we finally obtained—despite the constant resistance of the Soviet foreign representatives—permission for her to go to Germany for treatment. The child remained with us in Turkey so as not to burden the invalid. After some time the German physicians thought it possible to cure the pneumothorax. The invalid began to recover and dreamed only of returning with her child to Russia where her daughter and her husband, who is a Bolshevik-Leninist kept in exile by Stalin, remained.

On February 20, 1932, you published a decree by which not only my wife, my son, and I, but also my daughter
Zinaida were deprived of Soviet citizenship. In the foreign country where you gave her permission to go with a Soviet passport my daughter occupied herself only with her treatment. She did not and because of her health could not take part in any political life. She avoided anything that might throw a shadow of "suspicion" upon her. Depriving her of her citizenship was only a wretched and stupid act of vengeance against me. For her, this act of personal vengeance meant a break with her little daughter, her husband, her work, and all her customary life. Her mental condition, already disturbed by the death of her younger sister and by her own illness, was dealt a fresh blow, all the more atrocious as it was quite surprising and not provoked in any way by her. The psychiatrists unanimously declared that only a return to her normal environment with her family and her work could save her. But your decree of February 20 removed precisely this possibility of saving her. All other attempts, as you know, were in vain.

The German physicians insisted that at least her son be brought to her as quickly as possible; in that they still saw the chance of restoring the emotional equilibrium of the mother. But as the six-year-old child was equally deprived of Soviet citizenship, the difficulties of his departure from Istanbul to Berlin were multiplied. A half year passed in constant but fruitless efforts in several European countries. Only my unexpected trip to Copenhagen gave us the opportunity to bring the child to Europe. With the greatest difficulty he made the trip to Berlin in six weeks. He was hardly near his mother for a week when General Schleicher's police, in collusion with Stalinist agents, decided to expel my daughter from Berlin. Where? To Turkey? To the island of Prinkipo? But the child had to attend school. My daughter needed continuous medical attention and normal conditions of work and family life. The new blow was more than this sick person could bear. On January 5 she asphyxiated herself with gas. She was thirty years old.

In 1928 my younger daughter Nina [Nevelson], whose husband has been locked up in solitary prison by Stalin for the past five years, was bedridden and then hospitalized for a short time after my exile to Alma-Ata. The diagnosis was galloping consumption. A purely personal letter addressed to me, without the least relation to politics, was held up by you for seventy days so that my answer did not find her alive. She died at the age of twenty-six.

During the stay in Copenhagen, where my wife began treatment for a serious illness and where I prepared to begin
Trotsky's daughters: Zinaida Volkova (above) at Prinkipo in 1931. Nina Nevelson (below) with her father in Paris during World War I.
treatment, Stalin, through the Tass agency, issued a lying denunciation to the European police that a "Trotskyist conference" was meeting in Copenhagen! That was enough for the Danish Social Democratic government to do Stalin the favor of expelling me with feverish haste, interrupting the necessary treatments for my wife. But in this case, as in many others, Stalin's unity with the capitalist police at least had a political aim. The persecution of my daughter was devoid of even a shred of political sense. Depriving her of Soviet citizenship, a loss of her only hope to return to a normal environment and to recovery, and her expulsion from Berlin (a service indisputably rendered to Stalin by the German police) are acts without a political aim for miserable and stupid revenge and nothing more. My daughter was quite clear about her position. She understood that she could not be safe at the hands of the European police, persecuting her at the request of Stalin. Conscious of that, her death followed on January 5. Such a death is called "voluntary." No, it was not voluntary. Stalin imposed this death upon her. I limit myself to this information without drawing conclusions. The time will come for this. The regenerated party will do it.

Leon Trotsky
THE DANGER OF THERMIDOR

On Stalin’s Speech to the Central Committee

January 11, 1933

The Soviet system rests on the alliance of the proletariat with the peasantry. The proletariat is a minority of the population, the peasantry the overwhelming majority. However, the means of production are concentrated mostly in the hands of the proletariat. On the other hand, the strength of the peasantry is scattered by the conditions of its economy. It is not, besides, homogeneous. So long as there has been no fundamental change in technique, economy, and culture in the village—and for that, under the most favorable conditions, the work of an entire generation will still be needed—the peasantry will throw up a layer of kulaks who inevitably aspire to capitalism. The mechanical destruction of the present-day kulaks settles nothing. After the so-called “liquidation of the kulaks as a class,” the Soviet press—which has gone over from materialism to idealism (bureaucrats are always idealists)—continues to complain of the power of kulak "ideology," the survival of kulak "psychology," etc. In reality, under these complaints is concealed the fact that the middle peasant, though enclosed in kolkhozes [collective farms], sees no other way out when faced with the present economy and technique than to raise himself to the level of kulaks.

In the October upheaval two revolutions were combined: the end of the democratic revolution and the beginning of the socialist revolution. The democratic revolution saved the peasantry close to half a billion gold rubles by freeing it from land rent. The fruits of the socialist revolution are evaluated by the poor peasant according to the quantity of industrial products he can get in exchange for a given quantity of grain. The peasant is not a utopian: he does not demand that socialism be built for him in one country and, at that, in five years. But
he does want socialist industry to supply commodities under conditions no worse than those of capitalist industry. Under such conditions the peasant is prepared to grant the proletariat and its party an unlimited credit of political confidence. The Soviet state then would have the possibility to maneuver in accord with internal conditions and the world situation, and of drawing the peasantry gradually into a socialist economy.

The basis of mass collectivization can only be the equivalent exchange of the products of industry and agriculture. Without going into theoretical-economic details, we have to consider as equivalent exchange that which encourages the peasants, individual and collectivized alike, to sow as much land as possible, to harvest as much grain as possible, and to sell the greatest part of it to the state while getting the largest quantity of industrial products possible. Only such an economic relationship between town and country—in Lenin's term, a smyotch-ka [alliance of town with country]—can free the workers' state from the need to take measures of compulsory exchange against the villages. It is only when voluntary exchange is assured that the dictatorship of the proletariat becomes unshakable.

An assured smyotchka means the closest political alliance of the poor peasantry with the urban worker, the firm support of the decisive masses of the middle peasants and, consequently, the political isolation of the rich peasants and in general of all the capitalist elements in the country. An assured smyotchka means the unshakable loyalty of the Red Army to the dictatorship of the proletariat which, in view of the successes of industrialization and the unlimited human reserves, principally among the peasants, will give the Soviet state the possibility of resisting any imperialist intervention whatsoever.

Industrialization, as the Left Opposition has pointed out since 1923, is the fundamental condition for the advance to socialism. Without the growth of industrialization the peasants cannot be given either textiles or nails, not to speak of tractors. But industrialization must be conducted at such temps and according to such plans that systematically if slowly there will be an improvement in the exchange between the quantities of urban and rural goods, and the standard of living will rise for the workers as well as for the peasants. This main condition for the stability of the whole regime sets a limit to the tempo permissible for industrialization and collectivization.

It is stupid to ask: Has the five-year plan abolished classes and introduced socialism? But on the contrary it is absolutely necessary to ask: Has it strengthened the smyotchka between industry and agriculture? The answer is: No, it has weakened and shaken it. In his latest speech to the plenum of the Central
Committee, Stalin boasted that the collectivization plan has been fulfilled threefold. But who needs these figures, who but the bureaucratic boasters? Statistics on collectivization are no substitute for bread. The kolkhozes are numerous, but there is neither meat nor vegetables. The towns have nothing to eat. Industry is disorganized because the workers are hungry. In its relation to the peasant, the state has gone from semivoluntary exchange through a tax in kind to compulsory expropriation, that is to say, to the methods of War Communism.93

The hungry workers are discontented with the party's policy. The party is discontented with the leadership. The peasantry is discontented with the industrialization, the collectivization, and the town. A part of the peasantry is discontented with the regime. What part? We cannot measure it; but clearly under the present conditions it can only be a growing one.

"The collectivization plan has been fulfilled threefold." There precisely lies the trouble. Forcibly built collective farms do not lead to socialism but on the contrary undermine the bases of the proletarian dictatorship by becoming organized formations for peasant strikes against the state. By hiding grain from the state, or deliberately restricting the sowing, the peasantry takes the kulak road: Allow me, it says, to sell and buy freely. To whom and from whom? To him and from him who offers the right price, be it the state, a private dealer, or a foreign capitalist. The peasant strike for the freedom of internal trade leads directly to the demand for the abolition of the monopoly of foreign trade. That is the logic of the mistakes of the first five-year plan.

In his speech, Stalin drew up the balance sheet. We shall speak about this speech again in a special article. But in a planned economy the statistical balance sheet corresponds to the economic balance sheet only when the plan is correct. On the other hand, a wrong plan can compromise the greatest gains and even annul them. The five-year plan has brought immense gains in technique and production. But its economic results are extraordinarily contradictory. The figures of the political balance sheet show a clear and maximum deficit. Politics is concentrated economics. Politics decides. Socialist construction which drives a wedge between the peasant and the proletariat and which sows discontent in the proletariat is constructing wrongly. No figures can alter this vital objective estimation. The real balance sheet is not given in the pages of the newspapers but in the fields of the peasants, in the barns of the collective farms, in the warehouses of the factories, in the dining rooms of the workers, and finally in the heads of the workers and peasants.
With all its zigzags, restraints and leaps forward, bureaucratic centrism has not strengthened the dictatorship of the proletariat but on the contrary has enormously strengthened the danger of Thermidor. Only cowards can be afraid of giving aloud a name to this outcome. Facts are stronger than words. To struggle against hostile facts it is necessary to give them their names. It is also necessary to name the guilty: Stalin and his clique.

Why do we speak precisely of Thermidor? Because, historically, it is the best known and most complete example of a counterrevolution which is masked, which still retains the outer forms and the ritual of the revolution, but which changes irreversibly the class content of the state. Here the clever ones will interrupt us to display their wisdom: in eighteenth-century France we had a bourgeois revolution, in twentieth-century Russia we have a proletarian revolution; social conditions are greatly changed, the world situation is changed, etc., etc. With such commonplaces any philistine can assume the air of having an extraordinarily deep mind—without any trouble. For us, too, the difference between the October Revolution and the Jacobin Revolution offers no mystery. But that is no reason for turning one's back on history. In 1903 Lenin wrote that the Bolsheviks were the Jacobins unbreakably attached to the working class. I answered Lenin at the time, pointing out to him in detail how a Marxist was distinguished from a Jacobin. My argument, correct in itself, completely missed the mark. Lenin knew very well that a Marxist and a Jacobin were not the same thing; but it was necessary for him, for a specific purpose, to extract their common feature. Without using such methods one can in general learn nothing from history.

In the same sense that Lenin called the Bolsheviks the proletarian Jacobins, one can extract the features of Thermidor from the reaction against the dictatorship of the proletariat. Not every counterrevolution can be compared to Thermidor: neither Kornilov, nor Denikin, nor Wrangel had anything in common with Thermidor. In all these cases we had an armed struggle by capitalists and property-owners for the restoration of their domination. The proletarian state repelled this danger. Can it happen again? As an independent factor, hardly. The Russian big bourgeoisie has been destroyed to the roots. The survivors can only reappear on the scene either at the tail of some foreign military intervention or at the tail of Thermidor.

Of all prior counterrevolutionary movements in the Soviet Union, the nearest type to Thermidor was the Kronstadt uprising of March 1921. All the proletarian elements of the
Kronstadt garrison had been withdrawn during the previous three years for Soviet construction and the civil war; the best had died. On the ships and in the barracks remained only the half-starved peasant element. Many of these sailors thought of themselves as Bolsheviks, but they wanted no Commune; they were for the Soviet, but without Communists. It was a rebellion of the peasantry, hurt, discontented, and impatient with the proletarian dictatorship. Had the petty bourgeoisie triumphed, on the very next day it would have shown itself to be bankrupt, and in its place would have come the big bourgeoisie itself. Under the conditions of the present period, that is to say, in the twentieth century and not in the eighteenth, years would not have been needed for that to happen; months, even weeks, would have been enough. The petty-bourgeois counterrevolution, which genuinely thinks it is revolutionary, which does not want the domination of capital but inevitably prepares it—that is Thermidor.

In the Soviet Union only the peasantry can become a force for Thermidor. For that to happen, it would have to separate itself thoroughly from the proletariat. The destruction of normal relations between town and countryside, the administrative collectivization, the expropriation by force of the products of the rural economy, now bring the peasantry into confrontation with the Soviet state in a way no less sharp than that in the winter of 1920-21. It is true that the proletariat is now much more numerous; therein lies the success of industrialization. But the proletariat completely lacks an active, attentive, and capable party. The pseudoparty lacks a Marxist leadership. In addition, the peasantry has acquired from the Soviet state an organization for resistance in the form of the kolkhoz. The ruin of the smyutchka which was beginning to be established threatens to break the political alliance between the proletariat and the peasantry. Here precisely lies the source of the danger of Thermidor.

One should not see the picture as if the break follows a very clear social line: on the one side the peasantry, on the other the workers. The peasant masses surround and envelop the proletariat from all sides. Among the proletariat themselves are millions who have recently come from the villages. And too the obvious falsity of the policy of the leadership, the wreck-age of the bureaucracy's adventurism, the complete stifling of workers' democracy—all this makes even the genuine workers susceptible to petty-bourgeois ideas. Therein lies the second source of danger of Thermidor.

Nor should one imagine that the line of the break passes somewhere between the party on the one side and the peas-
antry and part of the working class on the other. No, the line of Thermidor inevitably cuts through the party itself. Lenin wrote in his testament, "Our party rests on two classes, and for that reason its instability is possible, and if there cannot exist an agreement between those classes its fall is inevitable... In such an event no measures would prove capable of preventing a split [in the party—L. T.]. But I trust that is too remote a future and too improbable an event to talk about."

In those days Lenin expressed the certainty that ten to twenty years of correct policy toward the peasantry would ensure the triumph of the proletarian revolution on a world scale. That is precisely why he—and all of us with him—considered the prospect of Thermidor not only distant but hardly likely.

Of the ten to twenty years indicated by Lenin, ten have already passed. In this period the Comintern has known only defeats in the arena of international revolution. Today, despite exceptionally favorable conditions, communism, and consequently international revolution, is weaker than when Lenin wrote his testament. In the same period the danger of a split between the two classes on which the USSR rests has become excessively sharp.

Despite the great difficulties there is nothing irreparable in the country's economy. Only something is needed to repair it. What is needed is a party. There is no party in the true sense of the word now. There is an organization which formally includes millions of members and candidates. But both alike are deprived of their rights. Within the framework of the same organization are the terrorized elements of two parties: the proletarian and the Thermidorean. Above stands the bureaucracy. It bears the responsibility for the economic mistakes, for the smytchkka being undermined. It bears the still-weightier responsibility for the stifling of the party. At the same time that, through its policy, it set the peasantry in opposition to the state, it disarmed the proletariat politically. Not only do the workers wander physically from factory to factory, but they don't find a place for themselves politically.

It would be a mistake to assume that the line of the Thermidorean split goes between the Stalinist apparatus and the right wing of the party. No, it passes through the apparatus itself. What percentage of Bessedovskys and Agabekovs does it contain? Even tomorrow's traitors don't know. Everything depends on the relation of forces outside the apparatus. It only needs a sufficient blow from the petty bourgeoisie for the Thermidorean bureaucrats to recognize themselves and to jump over the wall separating them from the class enemy. Therein lies the third source of danger of Thermidor.
But, one of the Stalinists or their followers will say, don't you see that the Central Committee is making ready to purge the party of its rightists and that means precisely that Stalin is taking measures against Thermidor. No, we reply, the bureaucratic "purge" only facilitates the work of Thermidor. The new purge, like all those of the last ten years, will be directed against the Left Opposition and others, in general against the proletarian elements who think and criticize. Despite the official slogan "The main danger is on the right"—Rykov too repeats this formula today—the prisons and places of deportation are being filled primarily with Left Oppositionists. But even where the blows fall on the right wing they do not strengthen the party but weaken it. In the right wing, alongside of genuinely Thermidorean elements, there are others—hundreds of thousands, perhaps millions—who are deeply hostile to capitalist restoration but demand the revision of the entire policy from the point of view of the town and country workers. The program of these rightists is confused. They may become provisionally a prop for Thermidor; but they may also support the revival of the party along the revolutionary road. The Stalinist bureaucracy prevents them from understanding the situation. By its purge it tends primarily to stifle critical thought. In this way it only strengthens the right wing.

And who will do the purging? In Paris Bessedovsky headed the commission which "purged" Rakovsky. Let us not forget it. Since then the degeneration of the apparatus has progressed still further. In all the letters we receive from the USSR the most tragic note is this: no one trusts anyone else; everyone is afraid that at his side is a class enemy carrying a party card. More loudly than anyone else the careerists, the adventurers, the Bessedovskys and the Agabekovs, proclaim the need for the purge. Who will purge the party of these purgers? Not the apparatus, but the implacable foes of the absolutism of the apparatus.

Is the situation hopeless? Such words are not part of our vocabulary. Struggle will decide. On the side of the proletarian revolution are many negative historical possibilities: the horrible decay of capitalism, the furious conflicts among the imperialists, the bankruptcy of reformism; as well as positive ones: tempered cadres of Bolshevik-Leninists, an understanding of the course of developments, a clear perspective. Struggle will decide. It is absolutely beyond question that the danger has grown and come nearer. But the poison of Thermidor carries in itself also the elements of the antidote. The closer and more immediate the danger, the stronger grows the necessity for resistance. The more the bureaucracy loses its head and
the more the omnipotence of the Stalinist clique is shown to be fictitious, the more loudly will the advanced workers demand a Bolshevik leadership.

Stalin's latest speech—we shall return to it—signifies a turn to the right. Every phrase of his bureaucratic boasting is only a masked admission of the falsity of the whole "general line" which has brought the dictatorship nearer to Thermidor. Stalin is preparing to treat the maladies and dangers by a new bureaucratic zigzag and redoubled bureaucratic terror. We shall answer with redoubled struggle against Stalinism.
I am not in possession of the Bolshevik with Stalin's refutation of my article "'With Both Hands.'" The semiofficial communication in Das Berliner Tageblatt [the Berlin Daily News], however, suffices to get an adequate picture of this denial.

Stalin did not react to Campbell's book until the Left Opposition took it up. Didn't Stalin deem the book sufficiently important? Yet he did grant Campbell an interview which, according to the report of the American, lasted until the early hours of the morning and, according to Stalin's refutation, lasted "no more" than two hours. Even two hours are enough to confirm the importance of this conversation. Campbell received the stenographic report of this interview: Stalin confirms this. Campbell is no journalist but a big agrarian bourgeois. Is it possible that Stalin took no notice of this man's book? Out of the question. The Soviet press bureau must have furnished him with the most important excerpts, especially those which concern Stalin himself, immediately after the appearance of the book. Nevertheless, Stalin was silent. The article in Biulleten Oppozitsii first loosened his tongue. This shows what Stalin's denial amounts to.

In 1925, when the course toward the kulak was in full swing, Stalin began to prepare for the denationalization of the land. He arranged for an interview by Soviet journalists. To a question asked at his suggestion: "Would it not be expedient in the interest of agriculture to deed over to each peasant for ten years the parcel of land tilled by him?", Stalin answered: "Yes, and even for forty years." The people's commissar of agriculture of Georgia, after meeting with Stalin in the Caucasus, introduced the draft of a law denationalizing the land. The Left Opposition conducted a vehement campaign against it. In
connection with this it brought up the already partially forgotten interview on the suspension of nationalization of the land "for forty years." Stalin found it necessary to beat a retreat. He declared that the journalist had "misunderstood" him. He could not explain, however, why he had remained silent about the printed interview for several months.

In 1926 Stalin began to prepare for entrance of the Russian trade unions into the Amsterdam International. In the new edition of membership books of the trade unions, the section concerning adherence to the Red International of Labor Unions was simply stricken out. At the same time, Kaganovich gave a speech in Kharkov, naturally in agreement with Stalin, in favor of entrance into the Amsterdam trade-union international. The Left Opposition once more raised its voice in vigorous protest. Stalin retreated. The new text of the membership books was explained away as a "misunderstanding." Kaganovich declared that the stenographer in Kharkov had bungled the meaning of his speech. The fact was established by the Kharkov Oppositionists, however, that the stenographic report had been carefully corrected by Kaganovich himself.

Back in 1930, in conversations with Lominadze and others among his cronies, Stalin launched the argument: "The Comintern represents nothing and it ekes out its existence only because of our support." But when Lominadze, in struggle against Stalin, threw this up to him, Stalin had no difficulty in repudiating his own words.

So it's not for the first time that Stalin, under attack by the Left Opposition, has resorted to denying his own words. One can say that this procedure is part of the iron arsenal of his policy. At every new zigzag, Stalin moves cautiously, sends up trial balloons, frequently has others send them up, but holds open the possibility of a retreat as long as he can. To repudiate one of his own declarations has never offered him any difficulties.

Besides, the conversation with Emil Ludwig—published by Stalin himself—differs in no essential from the disavowed conversation with Campbell. And what is more important: the denial does not alter by one iota either the Kellogg Pact policy or the tactic of Stalin-Litvinov in Geneva. This is what's important.
To the Editorial Board, *Die Sozialistische Arbeiter Zeitung*

Dear Comrades:

In the two issues of your paper, January 11 and 12, there appeared an article on my pamphlet, *The Soviet Economy in Danger*. As it deals with an extremely important question about which every revolutionary worker sooner or later must form a clear opinion, I'd like the opportunity to clarify for your readers as briefly as possible in this letter aspects of the question that I believe were given a false interpretation.

1. The article repeats a number of times that you are "not in agreement with everything" and "far from agreeing with everything" in Trotsky's conceptions on the Soviet economy. Differences of opinion between us are to be expected, especially since we belong to different organizations. Nevertheless I must express my regret that, with one single exception dealt with below, you did not indicate which conceptions you are not in agreement with. Let us recall how Marx, Engels, and Lenin condemned and censured evasiveness on fundamental questions, which finds expression usually in the empty formula "far from agreeing with everything." What every revolutionary worker can demand of his organization and his paper is a definite and clear attitude on the question of socialist construction in the USSR.

2. On only one point does your article attempt to demarcate itself more concretely from my conceptions. "We believe," you write, "that Trotsky considers matters somewhat one-sidedly when he ascribes the main blame for these conditions to the Stalinist bureaucracy." (!) . . . Further on the article states that
the main blame does not lie on the bureaucracy but in the circumstance that goals of too great dimensions are placed on the economy for the fulfillment of which the necessary qualified forces are lacking. But who set up these exaggerated goals if not the bureaucracy? And who warned beforehand against their exaggerated dimensions if not the Left Opposition? Therefore, it is precisely your article that "ascribes" the entire blame to the bureaucracy.

Your reproach to me is wrong also for a deeper reason. To place the responsibility for all the difficulties and all the phenomena of crisis upon the ruling faction could be done only by one who believes in the possibility of a planned development of a socialist society within national boundaries. But this is not my view. The main difficulties for the USSR arise out of its economic and cultural backwardness which forces the Soviet state to solve many of the tasks that capitalism has already solved in advanced countries, and out of the isolation of the workers' state in an epoch in which the division of labor between the states of the whole world has become the most important prerequisite for the national productive forces.

3. We don't blame the Stalinist faction for the objective difficulties, but for its lack of understanding of the nature of these difficulties, its inability to foresee the dialectic of their development, and the continual mistakes of leadership flowing from that. We are far from the idea, naturally, of explaining this "lack of understanding" and this "inability" by the personal qualities of individual leaders. It is a question of the system of thinking, of the political tendency, of the factions which have grown out of old Bolshevism. We observe one and the same methodology in the economic leadership of Stalin as in the political leadership of Thaelmann. You cannot fight successfully against the zigzags of Thaelmann without understanding that it is a question not of Thaelmann but of the nature of bureaucratic centrism.

4. Elsewhere your article recalls that the Left Opposition, especially and primarily Rakovsky, from the beginning warned against overaccelerated tempos of construction. But right next to this you write of allegedly analogous warnings by Bukharin, Rykov, and Tomsky. Your article refers twice to the perspicacity of the latter without a single word on the irreconcilable antagonisms between the Right and Left Oppositions. I consider it all the more necessary to clarify this point because it is precisely the Stalin faction that makes every attempt to cover up or to deny the deep antagonisms between the opportunist and the Marxist wings in the camp of Bolshevism.
Since 1922 the Left Opposition, more accurately its future staff, carried on a campaign for developing a five-year plan, the axis of which was industrialization of the country. As early as that we proved that the tempo of development of nationalized industry could, in the very next years, exceed the tempo of Russian capitalism (6 percent annual increase) "two, three, and more times." Our opponents called this program an industrial fantasy. If Bukharin, Tomsky, and Rykov distinguished themselves from Stalin and Molotov, it was only in the fact that they fought even more resolutely against our "super-industrialization." The struggle against "Trotskyism" was theoretically nurtured almost exclusively by Bukharin. His criticism of "Trotskyism" also served as the platform of the right wing later on.

For years Bukharin was, to employ his own expression, the preacher of "tortoise-pace" industrialization. He continued in that role when the Left Opposition demanded the initiation of a five-year plan and higher tempos of industrialization (in 1923-28), and in the years of the Stalinist ultraleft zigzag, when the Left Opposition warned against the transformation of the five-year plan into a four-year plan and especially against the adventurist collectivization (in 1930-32). From Bukharin's mouth came not a dialectical appraisal of Soviet economy in its contradictory development, but an opportunistic attitude from the very beginning — economic minimalism.

5. How much your article misses the point by equating Bukharin's criticism with Rakovsky's criticism is shown by the following event: on the same day that your paper called attention to the apparent perspicacity of Bukharin in the past, Bukharin himself categorically and completely renounced all his former criticisms and all his prognoses as fundamentally false at the plenum of the Central Committee (Pravda, January 14, 1933). Rakovsky, however, renounced nothing at the plenum, not because he is chained to Barnaul as an exile but because he has nothing to renounce.

6. Right after the appearance of my pamphlet The Soviet Economy in Danger, a reversal in Soviet economic policy occurred that throws a bright light on the problem engaging us and provides an infallible test of all the prognoses of the various factions. The story of the reversal in two words is the following:

The Seventeenth Conference of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in January 1932 approved the principles of the second five-year plan. The tempo of growth of industry was established at approximately 25 percent, with Stalin declaring at the conference that that was only the minimum lim-
it, and that in the working out of the plan this percentage must and would be raised.

The Left Opposition characterized this perspective as a product of bureaucratic adventurism. It was accused, naturally, of striving for counterrevolution, for the intervention of Japan, and for the restoration of capitalism, if not feudalism.

Exactly one year has passed. At the last plenum of the Central Committee, Stalin introduced a new proposal for the second five-year plan. Not a single word from him about the tempos approved the year before as the minimum. Nobody volunteered to remind him of them. This time Stalin proposed a 13 percent annual increase for the second five-year plan.

We do not at all conclude from this that Stalin plans on calling forth Japanese intervention or the restoration of capitalism. We draw the conclusion that the bureaucracy arrived at this moderation of the tempos not by Marxist foresight but belatedly, after its head had collided against the disastrous consequences of its own economic adventurism. That's exactly what we accuse it of. And that's exactly why we think its new emergency zigzag contains no guarantees at all for the future.

Even more glaring do the distinctions in the three conceptions (the right, the centrist, and the Marxist) appear in the field of agriculture. But this problem is too complex to be touched upon even fleetingly within the limits of a letter to the editorial board. In the course of the next few weeks I hope to issue a new pamphlet on the perspectives of Soviet economy.
The news that the pamphlet *The New Course* is to appear in Greek came as a surprise to me. I will not try to hide that this surprise made me happy. What is involved here is a collection of articles written ten years ago, when the Left Opposition (Bolshevik-Leninists) was only just emerging. Today the book will be of historical rather than of topical interest. The fact that it is being published in Athens shows that the advanced Greek workers entertain a lively interest in the old Left Opposition. It is impossible not to see in this a very important indication of the seriousness of our movement. Ideas and slogans do not descend from heaven. They are worked out in the course of long struggle. It is impossible to understand correctly either scientific or political ideas without knowing the history of their development. Tradition plays a great role in the historical movement of mankind, both negatively and positively. The conservative classes and parties make use of tradition in order to preserve the existing order, i.e., first and foremost, oppression and exploitation. Tradition is necessary to the revolutionary class for it is a rich arsenal from which arms can be borrowed for the struggle against existing evils.

The Left Opposition, which considers with full justification that it continues the work of Marx and Lenin, has existed as an independent tendency for about ten years. On the clock of history this is a short period. But during these ten years great events have unfolded in many countries. The Left Opposition invariably gave answers to all the problems arising from these events. Were its analyses correct? Has the course of events confirmed its prognoses? The answers to these questions can be given only from a study of the history of the
Left Opposition in the light of these very important events. I have no doubt that such a study can only strengthen the confidence of the Greek Bolshevik-Leninists that they were correct historically to defend what they did.

The pamphlet *The New Course* is devoted exclusively to internal problems of the USSR. The problem of party democracy occupies a large place in it. But this problem is not put idealistically or abstractly; it is put materialistically, i.e., in indissoluble link with the mutual relations of the classes in the country and the political groupings in the proletariat. (See, in particular, the chapter "Bureaucratism and the Revolution." ) Party democracy is not necessary in itself but as a means of educating and uniting the proletarian vanguard in the spirit of revolutionary Marxism. Democracy in no way means, however, that doors are open for all and sundry. A revolutionary organization can grow and become stronger only by constant self-purging and enlargement of its proletarian base. A correct class policy is the main condition for healthy party democracy. Without this, all talk of democracy and discipline remains hollow; worse, it becomes a weapon for the disorganization of the proletarian movement.

In the same autumn months of 1923 when this pamphlet was written and discussions were unfolding in the USSR about party democracy, industrialization, the attitude toward the peasantry, and planned economy, gigantic revolutionary events were being prepared in Germany which kept the international proletarian vanguard in suspense. The Russian workers were expecting that Soviet Russia would shortly be joined by Soviet Germany. This would have opened up boundless prospects for socialism. But, paralyzed by the opportunist leadership (Stalin-Zinoviev-Brandler), the German Communist Party proved unable to exploit a supremely revolutionary situation. With the help of the Social Democracy, the German bourgeoisie maintained and for a long time even strengthened its supremacy. A revolutionary ebb began to flow throughout the whole world. Disappointment and disillusion in international revolution gripped even the Russian workers. At this very moment the Stalinist bureaucracy advanced *the theory of socialism in one country* and initiated a furious struggle against the Bolshevik-Leninists as proponents of the program of permanent proletarian revolution. This large question, however, is completely outside the limits of the present article.

The organization of the Archio-Marxists originated in the special conditions of Greece and up to three years ago developed separately from the Left Opposition and independently of it. But at a certain point, as has happened more than once
in history, our paths came together. Will this last? For how long? I think it will last, and forever. Thanks to its militant proletarian composition, the organization of the Archio-Marxists has proved more able to absorb and apply politically the ideas of the Left Opposition than have certain older sections. The Greek section of the Bolshevik-Leninists can hold its organization more firmly on its chosen path the more it can give its young proletarian cadres serious theoretical training. To my warm greetings to all Greek friends I add the wish that this little book will help them, if only partially, to understand the past of our international tendency that they may go to meet the future the more securely.
SERIOUS LESSONS FROM AN INCONSEQUENTIAL THING

January 28, 1933

It would be substantially incorrect to pass by the Well case in silence and merely refer to the fact that a dozen lazy fellows have gone astray and have taken with them two or three dozen dead souls who for a long time have taken no part in the organization. We really have no reason to exaggerate the extent of the loss. But it is quite indispensable to clearly take account of the event.

Well, like his twin Senin, remained always a strange figure in the ranks of the Opposition. More than once we had to ask: "What keeps these inflated petty bourgeois in the Opposition?" They formerly belonged to the party, then joined the Right Opposition, then came to the Left Opposition and immediately on different occasions began to talk on this or that point of our platform, understanding it halfway or not at all. Yet not once, in spite of repeated proposals, did they try to formulate their real position. This is explained by the fact that they had no position.

They belonged to the type pretty well divided between the wavering intelligentsia and semi-intelligentsia, for whom ideas and principles occupy second place and in first rank stands the concern for personal independence, which in a particular case turns into anxiety for one's personal career. So long as such a nomad has not found a final haven, he never comes to a complete understanding in anything and always holds the door halfway open. Such types are met with, naturally, also among the progressive workers, but rather as exceptions. But in that petty-bourgeois milieu of "revolutionary" semi-intellectuals they constitute, we must admit, not less than 51 percent.

The petty bourgeoisie of old Russia threw up from its midst
a significant number of revolutionists. Most of them, however, remained revolutionists only to the end of the university, then to become officials, or simple nobodies. Only a very limited percentage were won over to the proletarian cause and remained on the path of the revolution to the end.

The Jewish intelligentsia and semi-intelligentsia, most numerous on the periphery of old Russia (Poland, Lithuania, Ukraine), were spared the way of the official. Hence the rather higher percentage of Jewish revolutionists in old Russia. But mainly they grouped themselves in the petty-bourgeois parties, the Mensheviks, the Bund. In the October Revolution the majority were on the other side of the barricades. After the victory they began readily to join the Bolsheviks. To this type belong today many of the dignitaries and likewise the Soviet ambassadors: Khinchuk in Germany, Maisky in London, etc.

But in still more significant numbers than the old Mensheviks, the young generation of the petty bourgeoisie and especially of the Jewish intelligentsia of the border districts rushed into the door of the Bolshevik Party after the October victory and especially after the end of the civil war. Without connection with the native population, peasant as well as proletarian, without serious insight into the affairs of the proletariat, these elements hastened to take over the official posts in the state, party, and union apparatus. I remember that after my first trip in the Ukraine under war conditions, I told Lenin how the petty-bourgeois intellectual, thanks to his flexibility and his (not too high) culture, was here and there shoving aside the worker-Bolsheviks with serious training in struggle. We agreed to determine upon certain measures for the cleansing of the party and the Soviet apparatus of such newcomers.

This heterogeneous crowd, which has many claims and many dissatisfactions, later joined any opposition, even if not for long. But as soon as it became plain that it was a question of a serious struggle demanding sacrifices, the petty-bourgeois bureaucratic oppositionists quickly returned to the benediction of the party and generally transformed their repentance into a means for careerist ends. So it was also in the beginning with the Left Opposition. In 1925 thousands of Wells rushed under its banner. It was only in the course of the following year that the proletarian kernel of the Left Opposition could rid itself of these compromising companions. These gentlemen then became the most furious persecutors of the Opposition; the apparatus made use of them, not without, however, showing a certain contempt for them.

Although in Western Europe the struggle of the Left Oppo-
sition is carried on under difficulties, still it is not under such terrible pressure as in the Soviet Union. In Germany, France, and other countries the fellow travelers could hold out longer. Let us recall the most "colorful" collapses of the deserters of the Opposition into Stalin's camp within the last year or two: in Austria, Graef; in France, Mill; in Germany, Well and Senin. All of them are different variations of one-and-the-same social type who came from the border cities of old czarist Russia, from a petty-bourgeois environment, without serious convictions but endowed with an aptitude to seize upon a couple of ideas in flight and with them to operate without ability—until their substitution by other ideas just as fertile but more promising. Each of the above-mentioned belonged to one of the foreign parties, but did not find the promised recognition, left them or were expelled, looked for other ways, joined the Right, then the Left Opposition, as the passerby jumps in the trolley car, and then left the Opposition as the passenger leaves the trolley when he wants to get off at a certain street. These people are considerably more dangerous for the organization to which they belong than for that one against which they struggle. A half hour before their capitulation, all of them, Graef and Mill and Well and Senin, drew back with indignation at the mere thought of the possibility of their return to Stalin's camp. And thirty minutes after their last oath, they broke with the Opposition in the most impudent and noisy manner in order to immediately raise their price in the market of the Stalinist bureaucracy. At the mildest estimate, we can call these people nothing but the garbage of the revolution.

And nevertheless they played a significant role in some sections. How can this be explained? A part of the explanation is already given through the hint of the Ukrainian experience. Even within the proletarian revolutionary organization the intellectuals descended from the bourgeoisie enjoyed their social advantages at least to a certain degree and up to a certain point of time. The worker is bound to the job. Unless he is unemployed he generally does not tear himself from his roots. To move into a country or from one country to another is hard for him. He does not know foreign languages. Even in his native tongue he does not write so easily. The composition of articles and resolutions causes him much trouble. The result is that the mobile intellectual, who is neither with experience nor with knowledge but therefore knows all things and all people and is present everywhere and ready to write with his left foot, frequently sits on the neck of the workers' organizations. Naturally such a state of affairs to a considerable degree characterizes the youthful stage of the organization. But
this stage must be passed. It is time to become mature. The workers in greater numbers than hitherto must take the whole work into their hands. It is understood that this does not mean driving away intellectuals—on the contrary, intellectuals who have knowledge, who work and are devoted, are very necessary to us—but this means at all events a serious test of little-known intellectuals in work, and slow, very slow advancement to leading posts. We only need such intellectuals as place themselves tirelessly and to the end at the disposal of the workers' organizations.

The Bolshevik-Leninists must seriously pose the question of the training and education of new cadres of the proletarian youth. The Left Opposition has its own revolutionary conceptions, its own history and tradition. Only on this basis can a serious proletarian revolutionist be educated. Two or three vulgarized slogans like "mass work," "democratic centralism," "united front," etc.—that is sufficient for the Brandlerites and for the SAP, but not for us. Hand in hand with the political struggle, systematic theoretical training must be carried on. The munition must be prepared for a whole historical epoch.

The "Well case" has more of a scandalous than a tragic character. But that does not in the least decrease its lessons. From the episodic struggle with little deserters we must get the most for the revolutionary training of cadres. What takes place today within the framework of a small organization will be often repeated later on a larger scale, not only before the revolution but after the victory as well.

The Well type occupies a big place in the apparatus of the Stalinist bureaucracy not only in the USSR but also in the capitalist countries. The "revolutionary" petty bourgeois is always torn between anarchy and barracks discipline. But even the disciplined variety is not worth much. They keep their hands on the seam of their trousers until the first serious lesson or the first serious danger; but they will continually find sufficiently important grounds to avoid the struggle. After the final victory of the proletariat they will come back again and probably organize the "Society of Old Bolshevik-Leninists." There have been examples of that. We must learn to test people in little shake-ups, in second-rate crises, in order not to be surprised at the sharp turns of history.

There is another important practical lesson which arises from the Well case. The Stalinist apparatus even on an international scale means above all a certain number of jobs. This is no unimportant political factor, especially in the years of the world crisis. Graef, Well, Mill, and the others are not in a position to claim a responsible post, since the competition
is keen and each bureaucrat hangs on to his own post with tooth and nail and looks upon the newcomer with suspicion. But the situation is immediately changed if the candidate previously breaks into the Opposition, brings about a certain disintegration in its ranks, and then leaves it—as a hero of the struggle against "counterrevolutionary Trotskyism." The stock of such a candidate will immediately rise. I will not say that Graef or Well entered the Opposition with the ready-made intention of betraying it (although in the USSR we have observed hundreds of such cases). But it is enough that the disposition to betrayal is part of the nature of such people, who are lacking in any revolutionary moral base. The constant doubt and dissatisfaction on the one hand as to their own insufficiency and on the other the exceptional temptations of the powerful apparatus—that is quite enough. In the Comintern, in the GPU, in each national section, there is a special apparatus for the disintegration of the Left Opposition, composed for the most part of deserters of the Opposition or of Stalinist agents who make themselves out to be Oppositionists. If the German comrades take the necessary trouble, they will surely discover the connection of such agents which leads from Well and Graef to Manuilsky and Menzhinsky. How many Agabekovs are engaged in the struggle against the "counterrevolutionary" Opposition? It stands to reason that no agent can destroy a historically progressive tendency embodied in the tradition of revolutionary Marxism. But it would be unpardonable frivolity to ignore the actions of the Stalinist agents for the introduction of confusion and disintegration as well as direct corruption. We must be attentive and watch out!

And from this point of view it is of the utmost importance to reinforce the cadres of the Opposition by revolutionary proletarians, who live before the eyes of the masses and are under their continual control. Naturally the workers also are no angels. The whole history of the Social Democratic cadres proves this, as does the history of Bolshevism after the seizure of power. Nevertheless the Left Opposition at present is passing through a much earlier stage. A worker in the Left Opposition cannot seek bureaucratic posts. To go through the Opposition as a passage towards becoming a Soviet official or a journalist under Thaelmann does not enter the worker's mind. Just now, in its period of critical offensive, the Opposition can and must win over the best representatives of the young generation of the proletariat, those who are tested in struggle, the most unselshif ones, the most farsighted. The cleansing of the Opposition of revolutionary garbage makes this task easier.
One would be a coward or half-blind to minimize the extent of the danger—catastrophe looms over the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks), the ruling party of the first workers' state. It can be prevented only by the self-sacrificing struggle of the advanced workers.

The situation is so rife with danger that to confine oneself to phrases and hints means to share in the activities of the ruling faction that is undermining the October Revolution. Under the Stalinist regime, class enemies are better informed than the working class about all that takes place or is about to be undertaken. Possible attempts on the part of counter-revolutionists to make use of our outspoken criticism do not present one one-hundredth part of that danger which results from the malicious misinformation spread by the bureaucracy and the enforced silence of the proletarian vanguard.

In a broad historical sense the situation of the Soviet Union cannot be as hopeless as the situation of world capitalism, which faces an absolute impasse. This general historical perspective not only completely justifies the October Revolution, insofar as it requires justification, but it also dooms beforehand as utterly reactionary all programs of petty-bourgeois democracy (Mensheviks, Social Revolutionaries, etc., etc.), which inevitably come down to the restoration of "democratic" capitalism. Even in the event of the victory of the counter-revolution, the Soviet hydra will grow a new head in the place of each one that is chopped off. But this does not at all mean that one may with an easy conscience permit the Stalinist bureaucracy to bring ruin upon the present, living Soviet regime. In the given case, historical reckoning is a reckoning in terms of decades. Ultimately, the downfall of the Soviet state would
express itself only as a historical episode. But should this happen, it would be one of the most terrible episodes in all history. Our sole task lies in preventing it. Meanwhile the danger approaches closer and closer. *Sound the alarm! We must sound the alarm!*

**Bureaucratic Sabotage of Socialist Construction**

**Under the Guise of Infallible Leadership**

By dint of unbelievable exertions on the part of the toilers, at the cost of innumerable privations and sacrifices, gigantic technical forces have been created and extraordinary productive victories have been won. The October Revolution has demonstrated to mankind the potentialities inherent in socialism in terms of steel, cement, and kilowatts of electrical energy. But during this same period the bureaucratic leadership, self-sufficient and irresponsible, incapable of foresight and intolerant of criticism, blinded by the mirage of socialism in one country, has brought the national economy to the brink of absolute chaos. Industrial conquests and technical achievements are devoured by disproportions and gaps. No one bothers to consult the workers and peasants for their opinion on the most fundamental question in the life of the nation—how much should be used and how much put away for the future. Rejecting the objective criteria of achievements, recognizing no laws other than the laws it arbitrarily decrees, supplanting plans with commands and balance sheets with coercion, the bureaucracy takes stock at a glance and proceeds to act. The task that is most complex, the task that not only was never before solved but never even undertaken—to achieve by means of advance plan and regulation the mutual congruity between the branches of a growing economy of an enormous country—this task, which by its very nature is insoluble without the daily experience of millions, without their critical review of their own collective experience, without their expression of their needs and demands, this gigantic, all-embracing, nationwide, historical task is solved within official sanctums, in the secretariat of the Central Executive Committee, all depending on how the spirit moves it, and on what this or the other *spetz* [specialist] buzzes. What could be more monstrous?

Even if the Politburo consisted of seven universal geniuses, of seven Marxes or seven Lenins, it would still be unable, all on its own, with all its creative imagination, to assert command over the economy of 170 million people. This is precisely the gist of the matter. The Politburo of Marxes and Lenins never would have even posed such a task for itself. But the present Politburo consists of second-rate bureaucrats who
are drunk with the power they have wrested from the party, who have lost the ground from under their feet, and who are most of all concerned with preserving their inflated personal prestige.

Is it so long ago that these small men repeated their badly thought-out formula of the alliance between workers and peasants as the foundation of foundations? How long ago is it that they worshiped the middle peasant? How long ago did they ignore the very existence of the kulak? How many ages is it since they rejected the program of planned industrialization in the name of, presumably, preserving the "link" between city and village? Frightened by the consequences of their own negligence, they threw themselves into the adventure of 100 percent collectivization. Twenty-five million isolated peasant egos, which yesterday had been the sole motive force of agriculture—greedy, weak as the peasant's nag, but forces nevertheless—these millions the bureaucracy tried to replace at a single blow by the commands of two hundred thousand collective-farm administrative offices lacking technical equipment, training, and the support of the peasants themselves.

The excessive shift in the apportionment of national income—from the village to the city, from light industry to heavy industry; the ominous disproportions within industry, light as well as heavy—has excessively lowered the efficient functioning of labor power and capital expenditures. The economic link between state industry and the peasantry turned out to have been broken prior to its having been achieved. The chervonets [gold monetary unit] in the pocket of a peasant fell into the same relation to commodities as a lottery ticket stands in relation to the prize. The new form of the link so important in the perspective of transforming the village, namely the productive link, which is realized by tractors and farming machinery, lost at once all its force of attraction in the eyes of the peasant insofar as its actual fruits were unrealized by him. Fifteen million peasant farms have been collectivized; and ten million private enterprises have been deliberately placed under such conditions so as to hide the superiority of primitive small-scale farming over purely bureaucratic collectivization. Thus by means of combined methods the bureaucracy succeeded in weakening, if not in killing, all stimulus for work among the peasantry. The harvest of crops, even previously extremely low, began to drop ominously. From season to season the supply of raw materials to industry and of food to the cities worsens catastrophically. Unbearable working conditions cause a turnover of labor within the factories, malingering, careless work, breakdown of machines, damaged products, and gen-
eral low quality in the grade of production. The entire planned economy falls under the blow.

Money Inflation

The bureaucracy has freed itself not only from the political control of the masses but also from the automatic control exercised by the chervonets. All the draft figures pertaining to the economic budget, to the quality of production, to basic costs and the productivity of labor—all these swirled away like so much dust when inflation completely liquidated the stable unit of value. In this case as well, bureaucratic supervision tried to supplant economic reality; the gospel of "Stalin's six conditions" was designated from then on to fulfill the function of a stable system of currency. This amounts to the same thing as feeding excerpts from a cookbook in place of proper food.

Money inflation means an ever-increasing tax upon the living standards of the masses. By killing the interest of the worker in piecework wages, by arousing the indignation of the peasant against fixed prices for agricultural products, inflation sets a frenzied premium on speculation and the speculator.

He lies who affirms that under socialist construction there is nothing to fear from inflation. On the contrary, during the first steps of planned economy—and this covers a series of five-year plans— inflation becomes especially dangerous, not to say ruinous. That is precisely how a plan checks itself—by being compelled to make both ends meet without inflation. To proclaim that the very existence of a plan nullifies the danger of inflation is approximately the same thing as to insist that the presence of a compass on a ship eliminates the danger of an existing leak. Money inflation becomes the source of credit inflation. The gaps within the plan are stuffed with printed paper. Real criteria give way to fictitious criteria. Planned economy is ravaged from within. Signs should be hung in all the offices of the State Planning Commission where the contradictory specifications of the Political Bureau are translated into statistics, each sign with the warning: "Inflation is the syphilis of planned economy."

Who Will Prevail?

The costliness of premature, rudimental, bureaucratic collective farms and the break in the link between agriculture and industry lead to the paralysis of the peasant's will to economic activity. In order to partially restore the peasant's personal interest, the Stalinist leadership has legalized free markets within well-known limits, screening them with the jesuitical name of
collective-farm trade. The exclusion of traders—middlemen—in the legalization of private trade signifies a monstrous instability of prices in speculation which is atomized and therefore more insane. The prices on the markets at once rose ten, fifteen, and twenty times over the fixed government prices.

Naturally enough the collectivized farmer sent bread and other products into the channels outside of the state. "This constitutes the negative side of collective-farm trade," asserts Stalin, without, however, drawing any further conclusions. "Negative side!" But this very fact, the fact that the collectivized peasant prefers the channels of private trade and speculation to planned trade with the state, means nothing else but that the economic link between the state and the peasantry has still not even been attained.

Free trade, by raising the column of mercury that gauges prices to the most excessive heights, has exposed the malignant condition of the economic organism. The struggle against this disease demanded a radical reexamination of economic plans and a no-less-radical revision of management methods. The bureaucracy, frightened by the facts recorded by the rise of the mercury, decided, however, to direct its activities towards the thermometer itself. Molotov proclaimed the impending "regulation" of market prices. It appears that the economic centers have already taken to this course. As if it is possible to reduce the temperature of a sick organism by lowering the zero point on the scale of the thermometer! The economy must be cured. One must begin with open acknowledgment that the question Who will prevail?, despite official boasting, remains not only still unsolved but also that the very conditions for its solution have excessively worsened as a result of the incessant and uncoordinated bureaucratic coercion of the living tissues of the economy.

The piling up of fixed prices, those set conventionally and the prices in the free market; the transition from planned collection of farm products, that is, the semblance of trade between the government and the peasantry, to grain, meat, and milk taxes; the struggle not for survival but against death itself, against mass pillage of collective-farm property and against mass concealment of pillage; the out-and-out military mobilization of the party for a struggle against kulak sabotage, after the "liquidation" of the kulak as a class; and simultaneously with all this the undernourishment in the cities, the return to the card system and rations, and finally the restoration of the passport system—what do all these measures mean, independently of the question whether or not they are correct, if not the return of that cruel struggle between capitalist and
socialist tendencies which in 1932 revived a number of the features of 1918-19?

The bureaucracy leans harder and harder upon the administrative lever instead of pulling asunder the framework that restricts the personal interest of the peasant in conformance with the real condition of agriculture. It has been decided "to place" Communists who will obey the orders of the ruling center in charge of the collective farms, which supposedly are voluntary-producing cooperatives. Simultaneously, the Central Executive Committee testifies that the village Communists are becoming soaked with the spirit of peasant opposition and must undergo a mass purge. In the meantime no less than one and a half million Communists are required to fill the commanding collective-farm positions by party members. Where will they come from?

To force economic leadership on the peasant collectives in accordance with party wishes means to undermine not only the collective farms but also the authority of the party; it means to substitute a new dose of administrative coercion for the task of economic competition; it means not to go ahead of NEP but to retrace one's steps back away from it to "War Communism," even if on a higher economic plane.

The Balance Sheet of the First Five-Year Plan

The conclusion of the first five-year plan coincided with an extreme sharpening of economic difficulties which had not occurred since the period of civil war. But the bureaucracy leads a double life, one for display and the other—in reality. This duality it transfers everywhere, among others, into the sphere of economic statistics. With a stopwatch in his hands, Stalin insists that if the plan is fulfilled only 93.7 and not 100 percent, it is only because the threat of Japanese intervention, which could not have been foreseen at the time the plan was formulated, swallowed up 6.3 percent. In other words, the blueprints of the CEC have been confirmed to the dot by the fulfillment of a gigantic plan which constitutes the first experiment of mankind in that sphere, which encompasses on all sides the life of a nation with 170 million people, and which, moreover, was drawn up five full years beforehand!

If nothing else, this astonishing precision in identity between the design and the realization must arouse the acutest distrust in the entire report on the part of anyone familiar with the ABC rudiments of the question. It is sufficient to remark that, according to the casual admission of Molotov, the productivity of industry in 1932 grew only 8.5 percent against the 36 percent which was set by the yearly plan! Where has this enor-
mous lag, as well as the lags of preceding years, disappeared? Stalin can produce falsified figures, consciously misleading the workers and peasants. The report is necessarily drawn in rubles. Within this supple implement of the report there is to be found the key to the secret of the astonishing coincidence between the initial and final figures. Thus the tremendous over-expenditures in construction are set down as overfulfillments of the plan, when as a matter of fact the material results of construction, despite the billions of overexpenditure, lag behind the plan several times 10 percent.*

We least of all are inclined to look upon the fulfillment of the economic plan as a hit-and-miss affair and would have considered the fulfillment of the five-year plan within six, seven, or eight years a grandiose success, under the condition that simultaneously the disproportions were mitigated and the standard of living of the masses was raised. But it is precisely on these more important criteria that we have the most unfavorable evidence.

The composers of the plan proclaimed that it was their task "to lift up the country to a new and hitherto unseen high level of material and cultural development." Even during the first two years a mitigation of the famine in commodities was to have been attained; the next two years were to have initiated the superabundance of goods. In the fifth year, the consumption of industrial products should have increased, according to various categories, one and a half, two, and two and a half times. The increase in meat consumption was specified at 25 percent, in dairy products at 50 percent, etc., etc. In actuality, the shortage in commodities has become unbearably acute, the supply of bread has sharply decreased, meat and dairy products have become rarities. But in reply to this, the theory has been created that socialism is not a consumers' organization of society. The consolation bears too close a resemblance to mockery! In the midst of newly constructed factories, plants, mines, electric stations, collective and Soviet farms, the workers and peasants begin to feel more and more as if they are in the midst of gigantic phantoms indifferent to the fate of humans. An acute feeling of disillusionment has possessed the masses. The populace, as consumers, can no longer understand to what end they strain their energies as producers.

*We shall consider in detail the question about the balance sheet of the first five-year plan in a book on the Soviet economy that is now in preparation.
Had Stalin openly confessed: "The results obtained did not match our expectations because we neglected much, overestimated a great deal, and failed to fulfill a great deal more," the toiling masses, of course, would not have been ecstatic about the leadership, but they would have taken the confession into account and in all probability would have granted the leaders an additional respite. But Stalin said the plan was marvelous, the leadership scaled the heights, the design was fulfilled to the nth degree. In that case, what about the lamentable results? Stalin is imposing on the masses the idea that it is not he, Stalin, who is rotten, but the very elements of the plan. The bureaucracy identifies its own blindness with socialism and, while saving the reputation of its own infallibility, besmirches socialism in the eyes of the workers and especially the peasants. It would seem as if the bureaucracy were consciously striving to force the masses to find a way out other than socialism.

The Second Five-Year Plan

The Seventeenth Party Conference, in February 1932, approved the directives of the second five-year plan. Its annual coefficient of growth of industry was set at 25 percent. Stalin explained that this coefficient would even be surpassed in the process of configuration and fulfillment. The Left Oppositionists cautioned against record-breaking leaps in industrialization. They were accused of counterrevolution and placed in solitary confinement.

Eleven months later, in January 1933, Stalin unexpectedly proclaimed that the coefficient of growth during the second five-year plan would be, in all probability, around 13 percent. No one dared to contradict him or to refer to the decision of the year before. Thus the actual results of the first five-year plan buried the fantastic projection of the second five-year plan before the latter could be replaced by a new one. At present, there is no second five-year plan at all. Nor is there any possibility of one in view of the chaotic condition of the economy at the close of the first five-year plan. The January plenum sketched out only hazy directives. Considerable time will yet be spent in formulating the second five-year plan and it will undergo more than one change.

The current year 1933 turned out, in effect, to be divorced from the second five-year plan. The control figures for it have been designated apart from the general perspective. Obviously, the concocters of the plan for 1933 sought only to ease those disproportions and to plug up those yawning gaps which were inherited from the first five-year plan.
In their reports, Molotov and Ordzhonikidze tried to ridicule our proposal that 1933 be set apart as the year of "capital reconstruction of the Soviet economy." The reporters cited as a fact that during 1933 new enterprises would also be launched. As if we had excluded this, as if we had made a point of patching up old shoes and not of the "reconstruction" of the economy as a whole. The struggle to restore the disrupted balance presupposes, necessarily, also new construction, but under the head of correcting mistakes made in the past and not under the chapter of piling up new mistakes.

Thus under the blows of the crisis, which it did not foresee and which it does not openly admit even now after it has broken out, the leadership has been forced to retreat in the sphere of industrialization even as it had begun to retreat earlier in the sphere of collectivization. It is, however, executing its maneuvers of retreat stealthily, partially, without a plan, hiding the significance of its own actions from others as well as from itself, and preserving completely thereby, even redoubling, its methods of barefaced bureaucratic command. The new zigzag in Stalinist policies is unmistakable proof of the profound dislocation of the Soviet economy, but it is absolutely incapable of leading to a way out of the great wreckage.

**Bonapartist Tendencies in the Party**

Against the background of enforced silence and irresponsibility, the economic crisis becomes a double, triple danger. The more bankrupt and despotic the leadership is, the more widespread becomes the resistance of persons as well as things. The ruling clique assumes that all the disharmony, opposition, resistance, dissatisfaction, passivity, and friction, engendered by the objective obstacles and the miscalculations and privations, are a manifestation of the activities of the class enemy alone. The bureaucracy, which up to 1928 proclaimed the kulak danger was a canard originated by the Left Opposition, now uncovers, after "the liquidation of the kulak as a class," the kulak danger here, there, and everywhere, within the Soviet and collective farms, in tractor-and-machine stations, in plants, factories, and state institutions, in party organizations, even within the Central Committee itself. The bureaucracy, while staring into mirrors, fails to recognize in its image the "saboteur" against which it stumbles at every moment. On the other hand, the disruption of economic relations and the growth of universal discontent actually do provide a breeding ground for the germs of bourgeois counterrevolution.

Violently driven inward, the economic disproportions—first
of all the break between the city and the village and last of all the commonplace kulak "reminders" or "survivals" of bourgeois psychology—increase the absolutely unbearable tension in the political relations of the country, impelling the bureaucracy to take the road of further suppression of all Soviet social functioning and thus breeding the malignant embryo of the Bonapartist regime.

Repression becomes the chief method of economic management. The collection of seed and preparations for spring sowing take place with all the earmarks of civil war. The struggle against slackness, which is bred from an apathy caused by starvation, proceeds in the form of savage penalties. Shortage of food is met by mass expulsions from cities. Introduction of the passport system is celebrated as a socialist victory by the press.

The helmsman of the October Revolution, the builder of the Bolshevik Party and the Soviet state, is crushed, bulldozed, trodden underfoot, demoralized, or driven underground. The dictatorship of the apparatus that smashed the party has been supplanted by personal dictatorship. Within the apparatus are handpicked those who are trustworthy; from among the trustworthy are chosen the most trustworthy. No one, in effect, any longer trusts the "leader" whose infallibility has brought about a series of frightful fiascoes. Everybody knows and sees that Stalin's own policies have driven him into a blind alley and that Stalin does not know today what he will do tomorrow. But the more the apparatus loses its support among the masses, the more those who are trustworthy and most trustworthy isolate themselves from the apparatus, the more reverent is the homage paid the sagacity of the "beloved leader." The personal oath of allegiance has completely superseded loyalty to program. Only those articles and speeches are permitted which rehash the oracular maxims of the leader. The voice of the entire Soviet press has become the voice of swinish and loathsome sycophancy. One cannot, without blushing with burning shame, look upon the defiled covenants of the party and the trampled-down banner of the October Revolution!

**Defense of the USSR**

It is self-evident how important the successes of industrialization are from the viewpoint of the technical reinforcement of the Red Army and the Red Fleet. The worldwide situation imposes a role of exceptional importance on the armed forces of the Soviet Union both in the West and the East. But it is precisely within this sphere that a policy of illusion would prove most dangerous and criminal. The Red Army is not
reducible to military technique alone. In war, bread and meat play no less a role than ammunition for artillery; the horse occupies no less a place than does the tractor. The workers and peasants are the reserves for the living forces of the army. The mood of the workers determines the mood of the army. Taken on the scale of a major war, military technique itself is a function of the entire economy, demanding from the latter inner cohesiveness and ability to operate without a hitch.

If Stalin seeks to justify the material privations of the toilers as a sacrifice they place upon the altar of defense of the state, this explanation is as false as are all the bureaucratic totals of the first five-year plan. In point of fact, the breach between agriculture and industry hits directly at the army and saps the will power of the Soviet government on the international arena. Without the acute disorganization of the Soviet economy, the extraordinary insolence of the Japanese imperialists as well as free play for the activities of German fascism would have been impossible. The Stalinist religion of pacifism, of the Geneva as well as the Amsterdam brand, is the religion of weakness. Today the chief defense of the proletarian state lies in the disintegration of world capitalism. While that is very important, it is still an insufficient means of defense. In order to conquer the initiative on the world arena, it is necessary to rehabilitate the economic foundation of the Soviet state.

The Stalinized Comintern

Leaving aside the conscious and unconscious damage done by the bureaucracy, the onerous internal condition of the Soviet Union is rooted in the economic backwardness of the country and the international isolation of the workers' state. But its present isolation is the result of the policies of the Comintern. The boastful overestimation of the internal successes achieved in the USSR is just as criminal as the underestimation of the tasks of the international revolution. It is absolutely essential that the Soviet economy be built up, step by step, thus reinforcing the foundation of the dictatorship of the proletariat and preparing the elements of the future socialist society—but that is not enough. Should the European bourgeoisie batter down the workers with the club of fascism and retard the revolution for decades, no economic success whatsoever can save the Soviet Union. The problem of capitalist encirclement puts us face to face with the strategy and tactics of the Communist International, its chain of mistakes and crimes.

Within the USSR, where the Stalinist bureaucracy has at its
disposal the mighty resources of the state, the bankruptcy of its policies could still be masked for a number of years; squandering the basic capital of the revolution but not leading directly to catastrophic consequences. On the world arena, where open struggle is compulsory against the Social Democracy and all other forces of bourgeois society, the policies of bureaucratic centrisms have already been exposed in all countries and in all quarters of the globe as systematic, even if unconscious, sabotage of the proletarian revolution. For the past ten years the Stalinist leadership has contributed nothing to the struggle of the international proletarian vanguard except mistakes, confusion, demoralization, and defeat. Bulgaria, Germany (1923), Estonia, once again Bulgaria (1924), China (the period of the bloc with Chiang Kai-shek as well as all the subsequent policies), England (the Anglo-Russian Committee), Spain (the period of revolution)—such is the far from complete geographical inventory of the genuine damage perpetrated by the centrist bureaucracy in the sphere of international revolution. The growing isolation of the Soviet Union cannot be compensated for whatsoever by any "nonaggression pacts."

Not one viable spot remains on the body of world capitalism. Reformism has drained its cup of beggarly and slavish sagacity to the dregs, and it stands before the proletariat exposed in its impotency and branded by its treachery. In the Soviet Union—as the Stalinists insist—the five-year plan has been fulfilled and socialism has been absolutely guaranteed. What other conditions are required for the Comintern to overthrow the organizations of reformism that have rotted to the core, and to collect around itself the proletarian masses and lead them to the conquest of power? Despite this, official communism everywhere is at this time losing positions and influence, is becoming isolated from the masses, and is being forced out of the trade unions. At best, sections of the Comintern now serve as thoroughfares for the unemployed.

Its course of action in Germany is the tragic culmination of the Stalinist faction's international defeatism. Were one to set as one's conscious goal: to save the crime-spattered Social Democracy from disintegration and to open the shortest road to power for fascism—none could have devised a tactic more direct than that employed. Stalin placed General Chiang Kai-shek in the saddle with the friendly hand of an ally; he made Hitler's road to power easy by guaranteeing the division of labor between the Social Democratic and Communist bureaucracies. Screening themselves behind different phrases, they both have led and still lead in the policy of retreat, dissipation of
forces, and cowardice. The results are an open book. To serve its class enemy under the guise of waging irreconcilable struggle against it—this is the curse that hangs heavy over centrism!

**Groupings in the CPSU and the Comintern**

The course of events within the Communist Party of the Soviet Union shows that the economic crisis has turned into a crisis of the revolution, and that it is forcing its way more and more decisively from below to the tops, through the state and party apparatus.

The exclusive Stalinist faction that is mustered around the plebiscitary "leader," whom it has ceased to trust, desperately exerts its efforts to maintain itself. The first condition required for this is to prevent the party's awakening. Repressions against opposition have now assumed a mass character such as did not occur even in 1928, when promises were given and taken that all opposition would be "liquidated" once and for all. The chief blows, naturally, are directed against the Bolshevik-Leninists, the only faction whose authority has grown immeasurably and continues to grow.

Two most recent facts are particularly significant of the state of the party: the arrests and deportation of the leaders of the Left Opposition who capitulated about four years ago, and the complete and final capitulation of the leaders of the Right Opposition. A few months after the quite notorious deportation of Zinoviev and Kamenev to Siberia, Stalin arrested I.N. Smirnov, Preobrazhensky, Ufimtsev, Ter-Vaganyan, and about a hundred former Left Oppositionists connected with them. The significance of this fact must be plumbed to the bottom. Those concerned are Old Bolsheviks; they had built the party, carried it on their shoulders during the years it was driven underground, participated in the October Revolution and the civil war, and together with us created the faction of Bolshevik-Leninists. When Stalin under the pressure of food shortages made a sharp turn to planned industrialization and struggle against the kulak (in February 1928), an influential section of the Left Opposition became frightened by the perspective of a split, took the turn at face value, and capitulated to the bureaucracy. This had a major political impact in that it strengthened the position of the Stalinist bureaucracy and for a long period retarded recruitment to the ranks of the Left Opposition. Today we have the balance sheet of the experiment made by the honest, sincere, and not careerist, capitulators: after deporting Zinoviev and Kamenev, Stalin arrested Smirnov, Preobrazhensky, Ufimtsev, and the rest! This blow at
the top had been preceded during the past year by the arrests of several hundred rank-and-file capitulators who had anticipated their leaders in returning to the road of the Left Opposition. Within the last two years a truly gigantic shift has occurred in the consciousness of the party, for regroupings at the top are only belated and diluted reflections of the profound processes that occur among the masses. Here we have an extraordinarily clear illustration of the power that is latent in a correct and undeviating line of politics: isolated individuals and groups, outstanding even in regard to their revolutionary qualities, may drift at times into the camp of the enemy under the influence of temporary conditions, but they are forced ultimately, by the march of events, to return to the old militant banner.

There is an altogether different, but in its kind no less symptomatic, significance in the 100 percent capitulation of Rykov, Tomsky, and Bukharin. The political cohorts of these leaders spread far into the camp of class enemies. We had predicted more than once that the sharpening of the crisis of the revolution must inevitably throw the tiny Bolshevik head of the Right Opposition against its hefty counterrevolutionary tail. The moment for this has arrived. Alarmed by the mood of their own followers, leaders of the Right Opposition crawled on their knees to the official leadership. They were able to go through with this surgery all the more easily because no matter how acute the fight became from moment to moment, it nevertheless remained a fight between left and right shadings in the camp of bureaucratic centrism.

In this manner, the capitulation of the right-wing leaders reflects the differentiation within the Right Opposition which had remained amorphous but which indubitably was the largest of all groupings of the last period. Workers by the tens of thousands, party members among them, dismayed by the economic adventurism of the bureaucracy and hoodwinked by the entire preceding anti-Trotskyist demagogy, gravitated all the more naturally to the side of the right-wing leaders the more sincerely they were inclined to interpret Stalin's policies as the direct application of "Trotskyism." The differentiation within the right wing means freeing these proletarian elements from Thermidorean influences, and their inevitably drawing closer to the Left Opposition whose true features in the light of their personal experience are only now becoming distinct.

The political groupings in the party are becoming clear-cut, the levels of reserves are coming into clear view. Concurrently, the "Workers' Opposition" and "Democratic Centralism" have
in effect disappeared from the political arena. The proletarian elements from among the intermediate groupings in the opposition of the last years are gravitating toward the Bolshevik-Leninists, the only faction that has a clear program tested in the furnace of events and that has not lowered its banners for an instant.

Even though not quite so clearly, an analogous process is to be observed also on an international scale. During the time when ruling centrism, incapable of even posing the question of an international congress, stopped giving any answers whatever to the most burning questions of the world revolution; during the time when the right wing (Brandlerites), because of the centrifugal laws that govern opportunism, completely ceased to exist as an international tendency—the Bolshevik-Leninists, and they alone, proved capable of holding an international conference under the present and most difficult conditions and at this conference they gave a clear answer to the most important and debatable problems of the world proletarian movement for the entire post-Leninist period.

No matter what course the development of the world proletarian revolution takes in the next few years—and this depends directly on the outcome of the struggle against fascism in Germany and on the change of the course in the USSR—an epoch of upsurge has assuredly opened for the Left Opposition on an international scale. The fiftieth anniversary of Marx's death is honored by official celebrations in two camps, reformism and centrism. But from now on the fate of revolutionary Marxist, i.e., genuine Bolshevik policies is inextricably tied with the fate of the Communist Left Opposition.

The Capital Reconstruction of the Economy

In their appraisal of the possibilities and tasks of the Soviet economy, Bolshevik-Leninists take as their point of departure not the vapid abstraction of socialism in one country but the real historical process in its world relations and living contradictions. Only the foundations that have been laid by the October Revolution can guard the country from the fate of India or China and assure, in the present transitional epoch, serious successes on the road of transforming capitalist society into socialism. The discussions concerning our supposed "denial" of the proletarian character of the October Revolution are a hodge-podge of scholasticism, ignorance, and lies. The gist of the matter is that it is possible to pursue various policies upon the social and political bases of the Soviet Union. What still remains to be decided is—precisely which one?

In order to cure the economy which has been disorganized
by the epigone leadership, i.e., to mitigate the disproportions, strengthen the link between city and village, create a stable unit of currency, and improve the condition of the toilers, it is necessary, first of all, to break away from bureaucratic muddling and lying. The general character of economic measures which are dictated by the situation today may be most correctly denoted by the word *retreat*. It is precisely because the collective farms have been spread over too extensive a field at one blow that the workers' government cannot find sufficient means to counteract their breakdown. Measures of repression must inevitably disclose their impotence. The only correct course lies in sacrificing quantity to a gain in quality. On the political plane this same task may be formulated otherwise: sacrifice space in order to gain time.

It is necessary to check the strength of centrifugal tendencies in the collectives and to open up an economically rational outlet for these tendencies by turning to the peasant poor, the farm worker, and the best collective farmers. It is necessary to preserve and develop those collective farms which have demonstrated their viability, or which may prove viable in the near future, in accordance with their available resources and the personal interest shown by their members.

The Stalinists, of course, will resume their din that our readiness to retreat from 60 percent collectivization to 40 percent, and maybe even to 25 percent (the percentage must be economically determined by actual test and not set bureaucratically beforehand) signifies "capitulation," "the restoration of capitalism," etc., etc. If so, why then did these bravos desist from completing their collectivization 100 percent as they set out to do? Why was it decreed sacred to hold to that line at which adventurism stalled at the well-known moment and already is well in the process of retreat? One must not be alarmed by the pseudorevolutionary bogies muttered by the bureaucracy. Retreat without battle from revolutionary conquests is equivalent to betrayal. Retreat from bureaucratic adventurism is demanded by revolutionary realism. In relation to the rural economy it is necessary first of all and regardless of everything else to restore the rule: *Leadership and not bulldozing!*

The differentiation in the peasantry is still inevitable for a protracted period; there will be well-to-do collective farms as well as poor ones; within isolated collectives considerable social distinctions will not only be preserved but will grow with the development of the productive forces. And over and above that, there exist ten million individual enterprises! Such a correlation must be established with the peasant mass as would eliminate the "declassed" kulak from leading the peasantry against the Soviet state. One must come to an understanding
with the peasant. Concessions must be made to the middle peasant. And the village poor must be economically strengthened by the tax, credit, and cooperative systems, by the policies of machine-and-tractor stations, etc., etc., without at the same time depriving either individual peasants, or the prosperous collectives, or the more well-to-do collective farmers, of the stimulus to further accumulation. The insanity of mechanical liquidation of the kulak must be rejected decisively, completely, and unconditionally. It is necessary to understand and admit that the kulak exists not in the guise of "remainders" or "psychological survivals" but as an economic and social factor. A return must be made to the policy of systematically limiting the exploiting tendencies of the kulak, in a serious manner, for a prolonged period, practically until the victory of the proletariat in the West.

Such a system of combined activities can be applied successfully only if the pauperized layers of the peasantry are organized in a union of the village poor, the chief support of the party in the village.

The tempos of industrialization must be subordinated to the task of restoring the dynamic equilibrium of the economy as a whole. One must reject perpetuation of mistakes in the plan merely because they were declared holy in the specifications of yesterday. The program of capital undertakings must be gone over radically, and all those which are obviously beyond the forces of the country must be stopped immediately. The inevitable loss of billions today will safeguard against the future loss of tens of billions. It can be a safeguard against the worst thing possible, against catastrophe.

Even at this point it may be said with assurance that industrial growth of 16 percent for 1933, set for the sole purpose of not breaking too sharply with the adventuristic first stages of yesterday, will turn out to be absolutely unfeasible. In 1932 industry grew only 8.5 percent instead of 36 percent as was stipulated in the plan. The point of departure must be these actual attainments in 1932 in order that still-higher coefficients may be attained by gradually reinforcing the groundwork.

Those resources which are freed by the lowering of the tempos must be immediately directed into funds for consumption and into light industry. "The condition of the workers must be improved at any price" (Rakovsky). During the construction of socialism people must live like human beings. What is proposed here is a perspective of decades, and not a military campaign, or "a Saturday," or an isolated case of extraordinary intensification of forces. Socialism is the labor of future generations, but today it must be organized so as to permit the living generations to carry it on their backs.
A stable currency system must be restored as the only reliable regulator of planned economy at the present stage of its development. Without it, the locomotive of planned economy will inevitably fail to make the grade.

For an Honest Party Regime!
For Soviet Democracy!

No new revolution is necessary to save and strengthen the dictatorship. Profound and all-sided and fully thought-out reform will completely suffice. The whole question lies in who will carry it through. This question touches not persons or cliques but the party.

It is absolutely self-evident that the ruling party in the USSR is in extreme need of a purge from agents of the class enemy, careerists, Thermidoreans, and ordinary candidates for a meal ticket. But this is not the job for the bureaucratic clique. Only the revived party itself, to be more exact, only its proletarian kernel, is capable of ridding itself of alien and inimical elements.

The strangling of the party which has taken place during the last ten years is the reverse side of the interminable attacks on the Left Opposition. It is impossible to revive the party without the return of the Opposition to its ranks. This is the first demand that we put forward and that we call upon all Communists, Young Communists, and all class-conscious workers to support.

We direct this slogan to the Right Opposition as well. We do not trust the selections of Stalin-Menzhinsky-Yagoda; they have as their criteria not the interests of the proletarian revolution but the interests of the clique. The purge from the party of real opportunists, to say nothing of the Thermidoreans, must be carried out freely and openly, by the will of the party masses.

What is at stake is the fate of the party and of the Soviet regime. Lenin saw the democratization of the administration as the most important task of the dictatorship. "Every cook must learn how to govern." The process that has taken place is quite the reverse. The number of administrators did not grow to include "every cook"; it constricted instead to a single chef, and at that a specialist in peppery dishes only. The political regime has become unbearable to the masses, even as the name of its leader is becoming more and more hateful to them.

As far back as 1926, Stalin was told that he was clearly grooming himself as a candidate for the post of gravedigger of the party and the revolution. For the past six years, Stalin
has come very close to fulfillment of this role. The slogan "Down with Stalin!" is spreading everywhere throughout the party and outside of it. The causes for the origin and growing popularity of this "proverb" require no explanations. But we consider this slogan incorrect. The question touches not Stalin personally, but his faction. It is true that in the last two years it has become extremely constricted in its scope. But it still includes many thousands of apparatus functionaries. Other thousands and tens of thousands whose eyes have been opened as regards Stalin nevertheless continue to support him from fear of the unknown. The slogan "Down with Stalin!" may be understood, and inevitably would be understood, as a slogan for the overthrow of the faction now in power, and even more—the overthrow of the apparatus. But we do not want to overthrow the system but to reform it by the efforts of the best proletarian elements.

Of course, an end must be put to the Bonapartist regime of a single leader whom everyone is forced to worship—an end must be put to this shameful perversion of the idea of a revolutionary party. But what matters is not the expulsion of individuals but the change in the system.

The Stalinist clique assiduously spreads the rumor that the Left Opposition will not return to the party except with sword in hand, and that its first job will be to wreak ruthless revenge on its adversaries. This poisonous lie must be refuted, repudiated, and exposed. Revenge is not a political sentiment. Bolshevik-Leninists were never guided by it in the past; least of all do they intend to be guided by it in the future. We know all too well the historical reasons that have driven tens of thousands of party members into the blind alley of bureaucratic centrism. We are motivated by considerations of revolutionary expediency and not by revenge. We make no exceptions beforehand. We are ready to work hand in hand with everyone who is willing to reconstitute the party and prevent a catastrophe.

For an honest party regime! This means a regime that allows members of the party to speak out what they think; that eliminates duplicity, the label of the Stalinist monolith; that has no leaders who inherit leadership for life; that freely reelects all the leading bodies during congresses of the party; that has an apparatus which serves the party and a party which serves the working class.

For Soviet democracy! This means that the party directs the proletarian dictatorship but does not strangle the mass organizations of the toilers; on the contrary, it encourages their initiative and independence. As one of the most impor-
tant means to discipline the entire apparatus and subordinate it to the party, *the secret ballot* must be introduced within the trade unions and Soviets, during elections of executive bodies—this is to be done gradually and regularly, widening the scope on the basis of what experience demonstrates.

The historically created groupings within the Bolshevik Party must carry on all their activities within a framework of regulations, and by means of serious discussion free from personal persecution and calumny prepare for an emergency congress of the party. This can be attained only by struggle. Bolsheviks by the hundreds and thousands must raise their voices in protest against the usurping clique that tramples upon the party and leads the revolution to ruin. "We demand an honest party congress!" Let this slogan unite the Left Opposition with all party members who are worthy of the name.

This same activity must be extended to include the Comintern. The Third International can be saved from further degeneration and complete collapse only by a radical change of all its policies, first of all that in Germany. The political turn, here as well, is inseparable from a change in the regime. The readmission of the Left Opposition into all sections must be the first step. Democratically prepared congresses of the national sections compose the second stage. A world congress of the Communist International is the consummation.

The platform of the Left Opposition on the questions of the world proletarian revolution has been expounded in numerous documents, and has been consolidated in the programmatic theses of the international preconference of Bolshevik-Leninists in the beginning of February of this year. It is with this platform and not with a sword of vengeance that the Left Opposition will return to the ranks of the Comintern. This platform shall place upon the table of the next world congress.

Two and a half years ago, the Left Opposition sounded the alarm because of the danger from German fascism. The Stalinist bureaucracy, conceited and blind as usual, accused us of "overestimating" National Socialism, and even of "hysteria." Events have brought their merciless verification.

Today—not for the first time but with tenfold force—we sound the alarm because of the situation in the USSR. Here the immediate danger threatens not from without but from within. Bureaucratic centrism has become the chief source of danger.

We call upon all true revolutionists, all class-conscious workers, all Leninists who have remained Leninists, for the struggle against it. The task is difficult, and the struggle will cost lives. But it must be pursued to the end. Ranks must be closed,
cadres must be strengthened, and connections must be spread wider. No repressions, no provocations, no persecutions will paralyze our efforts, for an atmosphere of sympathy more and more envelops the work of the Left Opposition in the party.

Bolsheviks of the Soviet Union, Bolsheviks of the world! The Soviet economy is in danger! The dictatorship of the proletariat is in danger! The international revolution is in danger! Upon all of you, upon all of us, there is placed an incommensurate responsibility before history.
UNEVEN AND COMBINED DEVELOPMENT AND THE ROLE OF AMERICAN IMPERIALISM

Minutes of a Discussion

March 4, 1933

Comrade Trotsky: I find this material excellent. It contains certain formulations which are not entirely clear to me or which appear to me not to be entirely exact. But they are of little consequence. In connection with the main thoughts presented I want only to touch upon the following questions:

The document is built upon the law of uneven development. This unevenness during certain periods offered advantages to the United States; but it has now commenced to become unfavorable for the U.S.

I believe it will be to our interest to define this law a little, especially because the Stalinists have treated it scandalously and still do so today. As a law it is rather vague; it is more of a historical reality. It represents the idea that not all countries simultaneously pass through the same development but that they pass through this development in different forms and tempo, etc. The law can have a thousand different interpretations.

One of the most important interpretations which leads to misunderstandings is the following: up until the imperialist epoch England had hegemony. (Stalin says that the law did not exist then and that Marx and Engels did not know it!) During this epoch the unevenness was much greater than today; we need only remember the contrast England—India of that time. The differences were then ten times as great as today. The development of India was an entirely different one from England, America, etc. But through uneven and different forms of development the capitalist world has become more uniform.
We do not need to deny the existence of the law but we must explain it. In one case I have attempted to do so by the formula of "combined development." Uneven development consists in the main in the fact that the different countries pass through different epochs. Advanced and backward countries—that is the most elementary expression of the law. Evolution, however, has also shown that the backward countries supplement their backwardness with the latest advances. From this emerges the combined development which I have proved for Russia as an example in the History.

In America we have another kind of combined development. We have the most advanced industrial development together with the most backward—for all classes—ideology.

The internal colonization, which is not developed in the draft material, was the basis on which the retarded consciousness of the workers existed. When we develop our theses attentively we will proceed from the law of uneven development and also arrive at the law of combined development.

It seems to me that the agrarian question does not come fully to its right in this draft, particularly in its connection with the aims and methods of American imperialism. Let us suppose that there will not be a revolution in Europe, that is, that the Social Democracy with the aid of the Stalinists so demoralizes the proletariat that fascism becomes the ruling power. It is not written anywhere that Europe must develop further forward; it can also decay. We believe that the possibilities for revolution are great. Taken abstractly, Hitler of course will not overcome the crisis. Nevertheless the decay can last for decades.

The United States displaces Europe on the world market, it becomes dominant in China and in India: as a historical perspective, as a variant, and especially as a theoretical analysis, this can be accepted just as well as other variants. China and India still offer great exploitation and expansion possibilities and represent almost half of humanity. But what will happen when capital commences its work there? These countries immediately become exporters of agricultural products. They will completely displace the American farmer. When American capital develops China and India economically, it simultaneously condemns the American farmer to death. It will produce a revolution in the agricultural world market. The cheapening of raw materials and foodstuffs will immediately increase—thanks to the great labor power within the Asiatic continent which can remain satisfied on a much lower standard of living.

England sacrificed her farmers in the interest of her cap-
italist development. Why should not America do the same? It cannot afford to do that. We have the example of Germany: agriculture is the barrier to finance capital. If the German bourgeoisie had left the doors wide open for the agricultural products of the world market, it would have very much increased the competitive ability of German industry and offered German capitalism immeasurable possibilities for profits. But the social balance in the country could not have been maintained. Hence the German capitalists need the farmers, not because of their products, but because of their rural idiocy.

That is also the case in America. When the revolution begins, American capitalism will be compelled to hang on to maintaining the farmers. But in order to broaden and deepen its development America will have to sacrifice its farmers. That is the great contradiction.

Must America pass through an epoch of social reformism? This question is touched on in the draft and answered in the sense that it cannot yet be definitely decided but that it to a large extent depends upon the Communist Party. By and large that is correct, but not sufficient. Here we come once more to the laws of uneven and combined development. In Russia the fact that the proletariat had not yet gone through the democratic school which could finally lead to the seizure of power was advanced in rebuttal to the permanent revolution and the proletarian seizure of power. But the Russian proletariat passed through the democratic period in the course of eight months; if we count from the time of the Duma, in a period of eleven to twelve years. In England it is centuries and in America also the dirty mess lasts quite long. The unevenness expresses itself also in the fact that different stages are not just jumped over but are experienced in very rapid tempo, as the democratic stage in Russia.

We can assume that when fascism in Italy expires, the first wave to follow will be a democratic one. But that condition could only last months; it will not remain for years.

Since the American proletariat as a proletariat has not made any great democratic struggles, since it has not gained or fought for social legislation, and as it remains under growing economic and political pressure, it is to be assumed that the democratic phase of the struggle will require a certain period of time. But it will not be as it was in Europe, an epoch of decades; rather, perhaps, a period only of years or, by feverish developments, of months. The question of tempo must be clarified, and we must also admit that the democratic stage is not inevitable. We cannot predict whether the new working-class stage will begin next year, within three years, five years, or
perhaps not until after ten years. But we can say with certainty that the moment the American proletariat constitutes itself as an independent party, even if at first under a democratic-reformist banner, it will pass quite rapidly through this stage.

About the Communist Party: one can assert that the contradiction between the technical-economic base and the political superstructure finds its expression in the fact that we have in this country the smallest, the most foolish, and the most backward Communist Party. That is the crowning height of this contradiction. And while capitalism in America united all the advantages of world capitalism up until the very recent period, the Socialist Party has united within itself all the negative sides of reformism without having any of its advantages. (They are scoundrels without a mass base.) The American Communist Party has taken over the worst traits of Stalinism. That means that the Communist Party belongs more to the past than to the future and that the Left Opposition steps on the scene as the herald of the future. It is not precluded that the Left Opposition in America will be the first to be compelled to assume the function of the second party. We do not need to proclaim that today positively, but as a perspective we must take it into consideration.

**Comrade Swabeck:** The criticism will help us very much. It is not our opinion that a possibility will exist for a special development of reformism and particularly not in view of the tempo of present general developments. The perspective of European decay appears to me rather improbable, especially when we take into account that the revolution will develop in America and have its effect upon Europe simultaneously.

**Comrade Otto:** In Germany we have discussed this question several times in connection with the formula: advance to socialism or degenerate into barbarism. This question is still being discussed with great interest.

**Comrade Trotsky:** It is a question of whether we pose this perspective for centuries or for decades. If for centuries, it passes beyond historical comprehension. But if posed for decades, arguments can be found—if we assume that capitalism remains; if we further assume that fascism becomes victorious, the working class is beheaded, is demoralized, and its vanguard bleeds to death in some unsuccessful putsches; the Soviet Union falls because of economic contradictions, the crimes of the bureaucracy, and the moral effect of the victory of the German counterrevolution. We can hardly grasp what impression the breakdown of the Soviet Union would have on the proletariat. It would become frightfully demoralized. Disillusionment would possess the working class for whole generations. Anarchist
putsches and terrorist acts would flare up, but the planned, organized struggles of the working class would be suppressed and disappear for decades. Large sections would famish and perish, the standard of living would be brought down to a frightfully low level. It is a decaying capitalism. We do not know how far the process can go. In this decaying capitalism there will be found forms of advancing capitalism, but reappearing in crippled fashion. The farmers become half-barbaric and masses of the unemployed are thrown on the land as agricultural laborers. However, production as a whole continues on a capitalist basis; enlarged reproduction remains, only the coefficients will not be 2, 3, or 4, but merely 1/2, 3/4, etc. In other words, negative enlarged reproduction, that is, diminished reproduction on a capitalist basis. Capitalism can return to a precapitalist basis. How long a time that would require one can, of course, not say. When Europe is thrown backward to become the continent of decay, that would naturally not mean the impossibility of socialism in America. A socialist victory in America would again have a returning effect on Europe. Combined development would, so to speak, begin a new historical chapter.

Look at Germany. In 1923 the possibility for a seizure of power existed. Since the October defeat ten years have passed by; the capitalist system experiences a terrific crisis, unemployment, agrarianization of the proletariat, pauperization of the farmers. And at the end of these ten years stands the emergence of the fascist power. This is how, so to speak, the rebound of an aborted revolutionary development appears.

Later additional remarks: The growing contradictions and difficulties of American imperialism within the world arena will not tend to weaken its power, its domination, and its economic weight as against the other rival powers. On the contrary. As in the period of growing capitalism the other nations were in a large measure dependent upon England, more so in the stage of decay will the other powers be dependent upon America.
HELP IS NEEDED AT ONCE

March 6, 1933

To All Friends of the October Revolution:

In the prisons and in the places of deportation of the Soviet Union there are thousands of Bolsheviks who built the party during its illegal period, who took an active part in the October Revolution, who fought during the civil war, who laid the foundations of the Soviet state. Even now, all of them remain absolutely devoted and firm soldiers of the proletarian revolution. In time of danger to the Soviet state they will constitute the surest detachment in its camp. They were subjected to persecution only for having criticized the policy of the leading faction—within the limits of internal criticism that had constituted the vital element of Bolshevik Party democracy. Among the deported Bolsheviks of the Left Opposition, the figure most widely known throughout the world is Christian Rakovsky, former member of the Central Committee of the party, president of the Council of People's Commissars of the Ukraine, Soviet ambassador to Paris and London.

A great many in the Left Opposition tried to be reinstated into the party in 1928-29 at the price of renouncing their right to criticism. There were several thousand individual capitulations of this kind, bound up to a certain extent with exaggerated hopes in the five-year plan. The experience of the past four years has resulted in the majority of the "repentant" becoming again the object of ferocious persecutions. Suffice it to say that among those arrested and deported during the last few months and above all during the last few weeks are: Zinoviev, one of the founders of the party, permanent member of the Central Committee, president of the Communist International and of the Petrograd Soviet; Kamenev, one of
the closest collaborators of Lenin, permanent member of the Central Committee, assistant to Lenin in the position of president of the Council of People's Commissars, president of the Moscow Soviet; I. N. Smirnov, one of the indefatigable founders of the party during the years of czarism, member of the Central Committee, leader of the struggle against Kolchak, member of the Council of People's Commissars; Preobrazhensky, one of the oldest members of the party, one of its best-known theoreticians, member of the Central Committee, who carried out until recently important diplomatic functions abroad. One could also cite scores of names of the best-known revolutionary Bolsheviks (V. Kasparova, L. S. Sosnovsky, B. M. Eltsin, V. Kossior, N. I. Muralov, F. Dingelstedt, V. M. Smirnov, Sapronov, Grunstein, Mrachkovsky, Ufimtsev, Perevertsev, and others) who during the most difficult years constituted the core of the party, and along with them hundreds and thousands of the younger generation (V. B. Eltsin, the son; Solntsev, Magid, Yakovin, Nevelson, Stopalov, Poznansky, Sermuks, and others) who went through the years of the civil war, the years of enormous difficulties and of grandiose victories of the proletarian regime.

The state of the imprisoned and deported Oppositionists, the majority of whom have been separated from their work and their families for the past five years, is absolutely unprecedented. They represent the left wing of the Bolshevik Party and the world labor movement. That is why they were struck down during the years of political ebb in the USSR and of successful counterrevolution in the whole world. Their repression becomes more difficult as the events confirm the correctness of the criticism and warnings of the Left Opposition.

The famine of supplies in the USSR makes the existence of all strata of the population exceedingly difficult, even in the industrial and cultural centers of the country. It is not difficult to imagine the unbearable physical privations of the thousands of opponents of the ruling faction, scattered throughout prisons and in the most distant isolated points of Siberia and Central Asia. Never before have the deported suffered such privations as today. In the years of revolutionary high tide, the liberal and radical bourgeoisie gave substantial assistance to the deported and the imprisoned. In the years of world revolutionary ebb, of world crisis, and of famine in the USSR, the vanguard of the October Revolution can expect support only from its most devoted and surest friends.

This extract from a letter from Moscow which I have just received attests to the necessity and urgency of this support:

"I want to write to you especially with regard to the deportees
and their difficult situation. Difficult is the least one can say about it. Their situation is frightful. The comrades are literally left to their fate—hunger and the elements. They are not given work. They are deprived of rations and sufficient warm clothing; they are never free of cold and hunger. Yesterday—a rare event—a letter came from V.: 'They want to get us through hunger. We will not capitulate. We are right. We will die of hunger, but we will not recant.'

"We make collections, but it is very risky: to help the Oppositionists with a chervonets means to land on the list of enemies and to be deported. And money does no good. It is impossible to buy anything in the places of deportation and from here we can send practically nothing. We need Torgsin\textsuperscript{128} coupons, we need foreign exchange.

"Do whatever you can abroad. Undertake a campaign on behalf of the deported Oppositionists. This is a matter of the physical destruction of our comrades, sincere and devoted revolutionists. Many of them have proved their fidelity to the revolution, to Bolshevism, to the Soviet state for decades."

In appealing to you for help, I am fulfilling an elementary duty toward my friends, my companions in ideas and in arms. I hope that you will fulfill your duty toward the fighters of the October Revolution. Modest as the help of each one may be, we must make sure of it, for the need brooks no delay.

Subscriptions can be sent to the following address: Sidney Hook, Treasurer of the American Committee, 234 Lincoln Place, Brooklyn, N. Y. An accounting of the sums received and of their distribution will either be published in the press or sent periodically to all subscribers.

L. Trotsky
THE SITUATION
IN THE AMERICAN LEAGUE

March 7, 1933

To the International Secretariat

Dear Comrades:

The situation in the American League demands, as you have already indicated, a prompt and decisive intervention on the part of our organization. To the extent that I have been able to judge from the minutes of the Secretariat and the correspondence, we haven't any differences with your evaluation of the situation in the American League. Nevertheless I consider it my duty to explain to you as clearly as possible how I, after very detailed conversations with Comrade Swabeck and a study of the documents, regard the situation in the League and what measures appear to me to be necessary from our side.

1. For several years the action of the League bore mainly a literary propagandist character. The number of members hovered around the same figures, varying according to the improvement or the worsening of the work at the center. The lack of progress in the movement which has been the case aroused all sorts of personal antagonisms, group antagonisms, or local antagonisms. The same lack of progress in the movement does not permit these antagonisms to take on a political character. This has given and still gives the struggle an exceedingly poisoned character in the absence of a principled content clear to everybody. Members of the organization do not learn anything from such a struggle. They are forced to group themselves according to personal attachments, sympathies and antipathies. The struggle of the groups becomes in its turn an obstacle to the further progress of the movement.
2. It is quite possible that in this struggle there are contained valid principled differences in embryonic form. Nevertheless it is unfortunate that the two groups anticipate too much and sharpen the organizational struggle between the groups and the members altogether out of proportion with the development of political work and of the questions raised by the latter. In the impatient organizational maneuvers which in a disruptive fashion are agitating the entire League by bringing prejudices to bear upon each group separately, it is impossible not to see the harmful influence of the methods and the procedure of the epigone Comintern, which has accustomed an entire generation to seek a way out of all sorts of difficulties through apparatus combinations at the expense of the whole organization. Therein lies one of the worst traits of bureaucratism!

3. A genuine solution to the internal difficulties can only be found along the path of expanding mass work. The League has taken that path. It is developing magnificent energy in this work in three directions: (a) campaign on the subject of the victory of fascism in Germany and the capitulation of the Communist International; (b) participation in the unemployed movement; (c) participation in the independent miners union (Illinois). In all these fields, the League has already achieved moral successes. But—and that is the most important feature of the present situation—these first successes are accompanied not by a lessening but by an aggravation of the internal struggle. What does this signify?

4. Of course it is theoretically possible that with the transition to broader work, the potential differences can assume an open and active political character. But up to now this has not at all been expressed in anything. More or less fully developed, serious, and firm differences have not been revealed in any of the three fields of work mentioned above. There remains another explanation: the aggravation of the crisis has been called forth by the very mechanics of the transition from one stage of work to another. This does not exclude the birth of serious differences in the future, but those do not necessarily have to correspond with the lineup of the present groupings.

5. A solution is impossible except by broadening and deepening the mass work, by drawing to the League fresh proletarian elements, by drawing all the centers of the League into the mass organizations. The beginnings have been made for this work. But the struggle of the groups has taken on such sharpness that a split is being put on the order of the day automatically. A split under these conditions would have a purely
a priori character, a preventive one, so to speak, one that is incomprehensible to all except those who initiate the split. If it is difficult for us, the leading members of the International Left Opposition, to grasp the motives of the ferocious struggle, the American workers, including the members of the League itself, would be all the less capable of understanding the causes of a split. This kind of split at the top would infinitely shatter the authority of both groups and compromise the cause of the Left Opposition in America for a long time. It would suffice today for the Stalinist bureaucracy to publish the numerous declarations of the two groups fighting each other in order to poison all sources of sympathy for the Left Opposition. In case of split, the situation would become a hundred times worse.

The two groups should fully understand that in case of a split neither of them could nor would be recognized as a section of the International Left Opposition. The two halves, condemned to impotence for a long time, would find themselves in a situation similar to that of the present groups in Czechoslovakia, who are not now members with full rights in the international organization but only sympathizing groups.

6. The preparation for the national conference of the League is taking place under the sign of the struggle between the two groups. At present one can already to a certain degree picture the perspectives of the conference: more or less unanimous acceptance of the principled political resolutions side by side with a poisoned struggle on the questions of approving the mandates and the composition of the future central committee. If we assume that the two groups are more or less the same size, the changes at the conference would be reduced to the group possessing 49 percent obtaining 51 percent and vice versa, and with the further application of the same methods that would mean a split.

7. The task of our international organization is, it seems to me, quite evident: not to permit a split in any case at present, on the threshold of the transition of the League to mass work; to explain to all the members of the League that the leaders of the two groups are sharpening the struggle by means of impermissible organizational methods and by poisoned polemics; to condemn these methods resolutely; and to call upon the members of the League for the defense of its unity.

8. Independently of the possible opinions of any one of us separately on which of the two groups in the League will acquire a serious and genuine preponderance in mass work, we must as an organization leave the solution of this question to the future (it is quite possible that the leadership, after some
regroupments, will be constituted from elements of both the present groups). But the next conference cannot in any case assure the domination of one group, due to the absence of political ground in preparation for this as well as of objective criteria. The task of the next conference should consist of saving the League from a preventive split imposed from the top and of preserving the authority of the League and its combativity for the near future. It is necessary to pose this task in quite an imperative form before all the local groups involved in the struggle of the central committee.

9. To the extent that it is possible to judge from correspondence, a considerable number of the members of the League, perhaps a majority, do not belong to either of the two groups and speak with indignation of the danger of a split. Given the absence or at least the nonobviousness of the principled basis of the struggle between the groups, conciliationism is quite justified and progressive in the League's internal life. It is necessary now, at the present stage, to support this tendency with all the authority of the international organization.

10. The preparation of the conference should, it seems to me, be conducted in the spirit of the considerations made above. That means:

a. All the local organizations should demand of the leaders of the two groups that they reduce their clashes within such limits that their speeches, declarations, etc., on both sides, cannot become a weapon in the hands of the enemy.

b. All the theses, countertheses, and amendments should be sent out in time, not only to all the members of the League but also to the International Secretariat so that a discussion of all the phases can take place before the eyes of all the sections and under the control of the latter.

c. The final time of the conference should be designated in agreement with the IS so that the latter will have the opportunity, in case of need, to delegate its representative to it.

d. Up to the time of the conference the present central committee, which of course remains in office, should enjoy the entire support of all the members of the organization. On its part, the central committee will abstain from artificial organizational manipulations within the committee which bear a factional character.

e. The local organizations should be guided in the election of delegates by consideration of sufficient firmness and independence in their representatives on the question of safeguarding the unity of the League; the instructions to the delegates should be voted upon in the same sense.

f. The forthcoming central committee should of course in-
clude leaders of both groups now engaged in the struggle; but along with them should be placed some solid comrades, possessing authority, not having engaged in the struggle of the two groups, and capable of bringing about a healthier atmosphere inside the central committee. To this end the size of the committee should be considerably enlarged.

g. In case of need, the Secretariat should call a special plenum devoted to American problems with the participation of representatives of both groups.

Historical developments place exceptional tasks before the American League. Tremendous possibilities are opening for it. Our American friends must be aware that we are following their work with the greatest attention, that we are ready to bring them our support with all the forces at our command and with all our means, and that we firmly hope that they will put an end to the internal malady and that they will issue forth upon a broader path.

G. Gourov [L. Trotsky]
A GREAT SUCCESS

On the Preconference of the Left Opposition

March 1933

The international conference of the Left Opposition held in Paris at the beginning of February was modestly called a "preconference." In essence, however, it was a very authoritative conference. True, not all the organizations could take part in it, but all the major sections were represented. The very fact that in the conditions of severe unemployment today, which create considerable hardships for proletarian organizations, there was not a single "emigre" at the conference mandated through the mail sufficiently demonstrates the live character of the preconference. From different ends of Europe and from America too, genuine leaders of the Left Opposition met for a few days.* The decisions of the conference presented the international experiences of the Bolshevik-Leninists at first hand.

The conference did not produce any new revelations out of an inkpot. Neither was it engaged in the literary reconciliation of different points of view. In the area of the fundamental principles of revolutionary strategy, the conference noted, confirmed, and legitimized all the gains that had been solidly won by the sections and by the whole International Left Opposition in the course of the preceding year's critical work and political struggle.

The conference did not adopt a finished program. But it approved the principal theses which themselves offered the

*At the party conference were representatives of Oppositionist organizations from twelve countries: the USSR, Germany, France, Britain, Belgium, the United States, Greece, Italy, Spain, Bulgaria, and Switzerland.
directives for a platform. The importance of this document does not require explanation. In the last years not a few documents have been written, including an official Comintern program which had one single aim: to gloss over ideological contradictions, reconcile irreconcilable opinions, justify total errors, and conceal the oscillations of the leadership, not to speak of its formulas.\textsuperscript{132} The programmatic theses offered at the conference were of quite a different kind. The purpose of the theses—which distinguishes the Left Opposition from all the other currents and groups in the Communist camp—was to show why it opposes them as particular organizations and, moreover, show it not in abstract, theoretical formulas which permit of differing interpretations, but with concrete references to revolutionary experiences in all countries of the world. In the eleven paragraphs of the theses there were not the slightest political "improvisations"; every line presented only the headings of the definite chapters of past fights in which the views of the Bolshevik-Leninists came implacably into collision with the views of bureaucratic centrism.

The deepest significance of the work of the conference is precisely that it was not engaged in repeating commonplaces of Marxism and strategic projects but that it summarized concisely the conclusions of the real workers' movement and the tasks of its Communist vanguard. Here precisely lay the difference between the Marxist faction (however small it is today) and all and every kind of sectarianism.

We do not consider ourselves summoned to give the workers new commandments drawn from the mind of a dozen saviors. We draw our "commandments" from the movement of the working class itself. We remain fully in the historical tradition of Marxism and by this pave the way for its future development.

The elaboration of a platform for the Bolshevik-Leninists remains a very great and responsible task. For it to be done, much will depend on collective work. But difficulties in this direction are mainly of a theoretical and literary-technical character. \textit{The political orientation of the platform is already determined}. Before the elaboration and adoption of its final texts, the International Left Opposition is sufficiently equipped with documents which take the place of a platform for the most immediate problems of the proletarian revolution.

Till the adoption of its ill-fated program by the Sixth Congress, blinded by the light from the eyes of Bukharin and Stalin, the Comintern had based itself on the document worked out by Lenin, known as "the twenty-one points."\textsuperscript{133} In contrast to that program which is suitable only for the scrap heap, the Lenin document today preserves not only its his-
torical but also its political significance, particularly where it deals with the delimitation of and struggle against all varieties of centrism of Social Democratic origin. The "eleven points" adopted by the preconference were based on Lenin's twenty-one points and supplement them in line with new experiences, arming the proletarian revolutionaries with criteria for delimiting and struggling against centrism of Communist origin. In that sense, the eleven points present "eleven commandments" for adoption by the ranks of the Left Opposition.

The theses approved by the conference must be thoroughly checked, corrected, and supplemented by the active participation of all the sections. This cannot and must not, however, limit itself to a once-for-all criticism of the text as a document. The theses must be continuously and daily checked in the light of political struggles. The editors of our papers, our speakers and propagandists must have the text of the theses always in their hands and consult it on each and every important occasion. Only in such a way will it be possible collectively to correct individual inaccuracies and fill in substantial omissions. Only in this way—and this is not less important—will it be possible to arrive at genuine organic unity of viewpoints on all fundamental problems of the struggle.

Uniform, literary, ostentatious "declarations" are not needed by the Left Opposition. Such declarations abound in the Comintern whose allegiance already sworn to "the general line" and the "leaders" ties its hands when it comes to unexpected vacillations and maneuvers. We do not counterpose the holy "general line" to its sinful "application" as the Christians counterpose the spirit to the flesh. Only through the flesh does the spirit become manifest. Only through the application does the real value of the general line become manifest. The conference very well and firmly recalled this to those groups and individuals in our own midst who attempted to bring to us a regime of double bookkeeping—the organic peculiarity of every kind of centrism. The Left Opposition uncompromisingly demands unity of thought and action.

The Paris conference carried out its work on the eve of a decisive turn in Germany, which was reflected inevitably in the entire world working class and in the first place in the fate of the Comintern. Thus, however future developments will go, though the way is both heavy and wearisome, the proletarian vanguard will grow stronger under blows and reach its full height for the fulfillment of its historical mission. But the Stalinist bureaucracy cannot be righted and will never rise up. It can still retain the strength of its material resources and its apparatus. But as a creative force in the workers'
movement, it is dead. It is all too evident and beyond question that Stalin's policy supplements that of Wels\textsuperscript{134} because it ensures the success, though temporary, of Hitler's policy. The warnings from the Left Opposition were all too clear and persistent. The maneuvers of the centrist bureaucracy were all too clumsy. The consequences of its crimes were all too tragic not only in the eyes of the whole world but in the very heart of Europe! No, it will not go unpunished. The death agony of bureaucratic centrism has already begun. The sooner it can be replaced by revolutionary Marxism the better the chances for securing the Comintern's survival and, what is more important, the nearer will be the moment when the October Revolution— not in potential but in fact—will spill over to permanent revolution in Europe and the whole world.

The Paris conference represents a modest but extremely important step along this road. The Bolshevik-Leninists of the whole world can congratulate themselves on a considerable success.
HITLER'S VICTORY

March 10, 1933

The old view about the backwardness of countries seized by dictatorship can no longer be maintained. Though it was possible with some exaggeration to apply it to Italy, it cannot possibly be applied to Germany, which is a highly developed capitalist country in the very heart of Europe.

There is one common reason for the collapse of democracy: capitalist society has outlived its strength. The national and international antagonisms that break out in it destroy the democratic structure just as world antagonisms are destroying the democratic structure of the League of Nations. Where the progressive class shows itself unable to take power in order to reconstruct society on the basis of socialism, capitalism in its agony can only preserve its existence by using the most brutal and anticultural methods, the extreme expression of which is fascism. That historic fact appears in Hitler's victory. In February 1929, I wrote as follows in an American journal: "In an analogy with electricity, democracy may be defined as a system of safety switches and fuses to guard against the violent shocks generated by national or social struggles. No other epoch in the history of man has been so filled with antagonisms as our own. The overloading of the current shows itself more and more at various points in the European system. Under the too-high tension of class and international antagonisms, the safety switches of democracy fuse or break. This is the essence of the short circuit of dictatorship."

My opponents relied on the fact that the process had only laid hold of the fringe of the civilized world. But I replied: "Internal and world antagonisms, however, are not declining but growing. . . . Gout begins with the big toe, but, once it has begun, it reaches the heart."
For many the choice between Bolshevism and fascism is rather like a choice between Satan and Beelzebub. I find it difficult to say anything comforting about this. It is clear that the twentieth century is the most disturbed century within the memory of humanity. Any contemporary of ours who wants peace and comfort above all has chosen a bad time to be born.

Hitler's movement has been lifted to victory by 17 million desperate people; it proves that capitalist Germany has lost faith in decaying Europe, which was converted by the Treaty of Versailles into a madhouse without being provided with straitjackets. The victory of the party of despair was possible only because socialism, the party of hope, was unable to take power. The German working class is both numerous and civilized enough to achieve this, but the party leaders have shown themselves incompetent.

The Social Democrats with their peculiar conservative limitations hoped, along with the other parliamentary parties, to "educate" fascism gradually. They gave the position of chief drill sergeant to Hindenburg, the field marshal of the Hohenzollerns; they voted for him. The workers had the right instincts and wanted to fight. But the Social Democrats held them back, promising to give the signal when Hitler should have finally abandoned legal methods. Thus the Social Democracy not only summoned the fascists to power through Hindenburg but allowed them to carry out the governmental revolution by stages.

The policy of the Communist Party has been thoroughly wrong. Its leaders started from the absurd axiom that the Social Democrats and National Socialists represented "two varieties of fascism," that they were, in Stalin's formula, "not opposite poles but twins." It is undoubtedly true that the Social Democracy, like fascism, stands to defend the bourgeois regime against the proletarian revolution. But the methods of the two parties are entirely different. The Social Democracy is unthinkable without parliamentary government and mass organizations of the workers in trade unions. The mission of fascism, however, is to destroy both. A defensive union of Communists and the Social Democrats should have been based on this antagonism. But blind leaders refused to take this approach. The workers were left divided, defenseless, without plans or prospects before the attacking enemy. This position demoralized the proletariat and strengthened the self-confidence of fascism.

Two and a half years ago, in September 1930, I wrote as follows:

"Fascism in Germany has become a real danger, as an acute
expression of the helpless position of the bourgeois regime, the conservative role of the Social Democracy in this regime, and the accumulated powerlessness of the Communist Party to abolish it. Whoever denies this is either blind or a braggart." ["The Turn in the Communist International and the Situation in Germany," reprinted in The Struggle Against Fascism in Germany, p. 60]

I expressed this idea in a series of pamphlets which have appeared during the last two years in Germany. Thus in November 1931, I wrote:

"The coming to power of the National Socialists would mean first of all the extermination of the flower of the German proletariat, the destruction of its organizations, the eradication of its belief in itself and in its future. Considering the far greater maturity and acuteness of the social contradictions in Germany, the hellish work of Italian fascism would probably appear as a pale and almost humane experiment in comparison with the work of the German National Socialists." ["Germany, the Key to the International Situation," ibid., p. 125]

The Stalinist faction said that this was panic-mongering. Out of the vast political literature devoted to this question I shall only refer to a speech made by the official leader of the German Communist Party, Thaelmann, before the Executive Committee of the Communist International in April 1931, when he exposed so-called pessimists — i.e., people who were capable of foresight — in the following words:

"We have not allowed panic-mongering to divert us from our path. . . . We are convinced that September 14, 1930 (when the Nazis won 107 seats in the Reichstag), was Hitler's best day, and that now he cannot expect to do better, only worse. Our estimate of the development of that party has been confirmed by events. . . . Today the fascists have no reason to be pleased."

That quotation is enough!

Thus, while bourgeois democracy was collapsing, fascism was assisted to power by the united efforts of the leaders of both workers' parties.

Hitler's government has lost no time in setting a fast pace. It announces that it will educate the Communists in concentration camps. Hitler promises to exterminate the Social Democrats, that is, to achieve, in much harder conditions, the task which was beyond the strength of Bismarck and Wilhelm II. Hitler's political army is made up of officials, clerks, shopkeepers, tradesmen, peasants, all the intermediate and doubtful classes. In point of social consciousness, they are human dust.
It is a paradox that Hitler, for all his antiparliamentarism, is much stronger on the parliamentary than the social plane. The fascist dust remains dust after each new counting of heads. On the other hand, the workers are united by the process of production. The productive forces of the nation are strongly concentrated in their hands. Hitler's struggle for control is only beginning. His main difficulties are before him. Changes in trade and industry are altering the relation of forces, not in Hitler's favor, but in favor of the proletariat. The mere fact of the reduction of unemployment will increase the self-consciousness of the workers. The spring which has been too tightly compressed must ease itself. After the extraordinary decline of the workers' standard of living during the years of crisis, a period of widespread economic struggles can be confidently expected.

Hitler's principal difficulties are before him, like his principal struggles. In the international arena, further gestures and phrases cannot be expected from Hitler in the immediate future. He has too long and sanguinary a war to fight out inside Germany for him to think seriously of war against France. On the other hand, he will try with all his strength to prove to France and the other capitalist states the necessity of supporting him in his providential mission of fighting Bolshevism. Allowing for every diversion, the foreign policy of fascist Germany is essentially directed against the Soviet Union.
KPD OR NEW PARTY? (I) 140

March 12, 1933

To the International Secretariat

Dear Comrades:

German Stalinism is collapsing now, less from the blows of the fascists than from its internal rottenness. Just as a doctor does not leave a patient who still has a breath of life, we had for our task the reform of the party as long as there was the least hope. But it would be criminal to tie oneself to a corpse. The KPD today represents a corpse.

The scorn of the vanguard of the German workers for the bureaucracy which has deceived them will be so great that the slogan of reform will seem false and ridiculous to them. They will be right. The hour has struck! The question of preparing for the creation of a new party must be posed openly.

In what form shall this work be done? It will of course have to be based on those elements that were created by the preceding development. But the new perspective and the new slogan will open new possibilities for the Left Opposition. It is necessary to state that the split with the Stalinist bureaucracy in Germany is a fact. This sharp turn in our policy, provoked by the turn in the situation (the Fourth of August is an accomplished fact), will not be absorbed all at once by all our comrades. That is why it is necessary to analyze the question in our own ranks and, above all, among the German comrades. This task will be made easier if the Secretariat immediately adopts a firm and resolute position.

The Stalinist bureaucracy is organizing a new "Amsterdam congress," this time against fascism. If the congress is called, we must utilize it to better advantage than the antiwar congress. All sections without exception will have to find a way
to be represented at the congress. Transfer of authorizations to the comrades in the country where the congress will be held is one of these means. Declarations of principle will have to come from all sections (not in their own name but in those of various workers' organizations).

Since it is a question of appearing before the congress as opponents of the centrist bureaucrats and of the liberal anti-fascists, we will have to try to make agreements with organizations such as the party (and the trade unions) of Sneevliet in Holland, the SAP in Germany, and other similar organizations. To this end, along with our own declaration which should call on the German workers to create a new party, it will be necessary to work out in advance a shorter and simpler document with which, after preliminary conversations, our allies will be able to associate themselves (unmasking the mistake of this congress as a fundamental theme). This is a very important tactical step in view of the fact that it will promote the political self-determination of our allies and should facilitate the creation of the new party in Germany.

Differences on this or that special point cannot be significant and will be pushed aside by the progress of our work if we are in agreement on the principles, that is, on the necessity of carrying out a sharp turn in our attitude toward the KPD.

The turn obviously does not consist in "proclaiming" ourselves the new party. There can be no question of that. But we declare the following: The official German party is politically liquidated, it cannot be reborn. The vanguard of the German workers must build a new party. We Bolshevik-Leninists offer them our collaboration.

Here it is natural to ask how we act toward the other sections of the Comintern and the Third International as a whole. Do we break with them immediately? In my opinion, it would be incorrect to give a rigid answer—yes, we break with them. The collapse of the KPD diminishes the chances for the regeneration of the Comintern. But on the other hand the catastrophe itself could provoke a healthy reaction in some of the sections. We must be ready to help this process. The question has not been settled for the USSR, where proclamation of the slogan of the second party would be incorrect. We are calling today for the creation of a new party in Germany, to seize the Comintern from the hands of the Stalinist bureaucracy. It is not a question of the creation of the Fourth International but of salvaging the Third.

The internal situation in Germany and above all the situation of the KPD dictate the conclusion. We must aim far, without spending ourselves on details. In practice this means
that we must first of all create a German theoretical and political organ abroad for the Left Opposition. We must do this immediately in order to give the thinking of the advanced workers a point of support in this time of general turmoil. We must agree as quickly as possible with the German comrades on this publication.

G. Gourov [L. Trotsky]
KPD OR NEW PARTY? (II)\textsuperscript{143}

March 1933

To the International Secretariat
(Extract from a letter)

For a certain period, many elements in the party will attempt to revive the party; there are already efforts at conspiratorial work. But this is nothing but the convulsion of a dying organism. The pogrom of the Hitlerites against the party has barely started. The cells exist and it is natural that they should try to persist and continue. But these efforts are doomed to failure because they are taking place on the old basis of principle, method, and selection of personnel. After inevitable failure, which is not far off, a new crystallization, very slow and very painful, will begin.

More or less symmetrical or analogous processes will take place among the workers in the Social Democracy, the SAP, etc. The workers' movement will enter into a period of turmoil and confusion. To present ourselves as the guardians of the coffin of the Stalinist organization would be absolutely fatal in this situation. On the contrary, to proclaim in time that the Fourth of August has been reached means to prepare for our merger with the best elements in the party after the failure of their efforts to revive the party.
A LETTER TO THE POLITBURO

March 15, 1933

SECRET
To the Politburo of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolshevik)

I consider it my duty to make one more attempt to appeal to the sense of responsibility of those who are presently in command of the Soviet state. The situation in the country and the party is no less obvious to you than to me. If the domestic developments continue along their present track, disaster is inevitable. There is no need in this letter to give an analysis of the actual situation. This was done in Number 33 of the Biulleten, which is just coming out. It is absolutely futile and disastrous to hope to control the present situation by means of repression alone. It will not work. In a struggle there is a certain dialectic, and you have long since passed the critical point in this one. Repression will only produce results opposite to those intended, and the further it goes, the more that will be the case. Rather than frighten the foe, it will arouse him to resist more than ever, with the strength of desperation. The most pressing and dangerous problem is mistrust of the leadership and the growing hatred for it. You are no less well informed about this than I am. But you are being propelled down a gradual slope by the inertia of your own politics. Nevertheless, where the slope ends, there is the abyss.

What must be done? Above all, revive the party. This is a painful process but it must be passed through. The Left Opposition—of this I have no doubt—will be willing to offer the Central Committee full cooperation in returning the party to the track of normal existence without upheavals or with the minimum of upheaval.

In regard to this proposal there may be some among you who say: The Left Opposition wants to get back into power
through this device. To this I reply: There is a far, far greater issue at stake than that of power for your faction or for the Left Opposition. The fate of the workers' state and of the international revolution for many years to come is involved. Of course, the Opposition can help the Central Committee restore an atmosphere of trust within the party—a condition inconceivable in the absence of party democracy—but it can only help if the opportunity for normal work within the party is restored to it. Only the open and honest collaboration of the two historically rooted factions with the aim of transforming them into tendencies within the party, and ultimately of having them dissolve into the party, can reestablish confidence in the leadership and revive the party in the present concrete circumstances.

There are no grounds for any fear of attempts on the part of the Opposition to turn the knife-edge of repression back against those who have wielded it; such a policy has already been tried and found wanting. The real task is to eliminate the consequences of that policy through joint efforts.

The Left Opposition has its own program of action, both for the USSR and for the international area. Naturally there can be no question of renouncing this program. But as for how it could be presented to, and defended before, the Central Committee and the party, not to mention how it could be realized in practice, a preliminary agreement can and should be reached with the aim of preventing disturbances and a rupture. No matter how tense the atmosphere, its explosiveness can be removed through several successive stages provided there is goodwill on both sides. And the extent of the danger calls for such goodwill or, more precisely, dictates its necessity. The purpose of this letter is to make known the existence of goodwill on the part of the Left Opposition.

I am sending only one copy of this letter, without any duplicates, exclusively for the attention of the Politburo, in order to allow the necessary freedom in the choice of methods if, in view of the existing situation, it is considered necessary to enter into preliminary talks without any publicity.

L. Trotsky

**Explanation**

A month and a half ago the above letter was sent to the Politburo of the All-Union Communist Party (B). No reply followed, or rather, the reply was given in a whole series of actions on the part of the Stalin clique: a new orgy of arrests in the USSR, approval of the ruinous policies of the Com-
intern in Germany, etc. Under different historical conditions and on a different social base, Stalin demonstrates the same bureaucratic blindness shown at one time by Kerensky and by Primo de Rivera on the eve of each one's downfall. The Stalin clique is marching toward its own destruction with seven-league boots. The one question is whether it will drag the Soviet regime into the abyss along with it.

We are sending this document to responsible (party and government) personnel on the assumption—in fact, with full assurance—that among the shortsighted, the cowardly, and the careerist elements, honest revolutionaries are to be found as well—those whose eyes cannot remain closed to the real state of affairs.

We urge such honest revolutionaries to link up with us. Where there's a will, there's a way.

Editorial Staff, Biulleten Oppozitsii

Paris, May 10, 1933
Istanbul, Turkey, March 17 (AP)—Leon Trotsky, exiled Russian revolutionary leader, believes that recent financial developments in the United States will result in ultimate centralization of the banking system and that the United States will soon emerge from the crisis more the master of world capital than ever.

"When America's economic organism weakened under the world crisis, the obsolete character of the banking system was sharply revealed," M. Trotsky said in French today in an interview on Prinkipo Island, his place of exile. "The result undoubtedly will be a grandiose centralization of the banking system, ultimately merely reinforcing United States financial hegemony."

The Russian exile said that since 1917 he frequently had affirmed that world capital would develop "under the increasing hegemony of the United States, especially under the hegemony of the dollar over the British sterling."

"America's excessive and precipitate growth gave the country's economic structure a mixed character—inheritances from the backwoods state, with the mingling of human strength's greatest conquests. The banking system especially evinces contradiction," he said.

"American capital became a world factor, nevertheless, and it still leans on a scattered system of provincial banks, recalling the epoch of 'Uncle Tom's Cabin.'"

"France," he said, "with the franc reduced to one-fifth of its value, will more than ever learn the difficulty of preserving its provincial system from the torrents of world economy. I do not wish to intimate that a calm and regular development is assured the United States after surmounting the actual
dollar crisis, the second bank crisis, and even the whole present industrial crisis. No. If it is difficult to depend on 20,000 unstable little banks, it is no less difficult to depend on several thousand unstable political and economic organizations of Europe, South America, and Asia.

"The American hegemony's future inevitable growth will signify nothing but this—the penetration of all our planet's contradictions and diseases into American capital foundations.

"It is sufficient to cite two facts. First, Japanese banditry's attack on China, which inaugurates a whole series of Far Eastern wars; second, Hitler's arrival in power, which promises a year's civil war and inevitable international shocks.

"But this perspective is beyond the limits of your question."
Dear Comrade,

Otto Bauer calls for the defense of democracy with the argument that Hermann Mueller is better than Adolf Hitler. He gives the impression that the Austrian workers have a choice between Hermann Mueller's might and Hitler's dictatorship. Such a formulation is typical of the hide-and-seek politics of Otto Bauer and such people—politics which are schematic, passive, and sterile. What does it mean, concretely, to defend democracy in Austria today? Does it mean the defense of the present chaos of forces which conflict with and neutralize one another? Or the power of the Christian Socialists which hails and upholds this chaos? "To defend democracy" in Austria today means to defend Dollfuss and the chaos he has created. This is just about the most impossible, the most fanciful policy one could wish to find. Democracy in Austria needs not to be defended but to be built anew on a different basis. Democracy has to be revitalized, it has to be won, and that can only be done through the conquest of power by the working class. Such a conquest would immediately constitute Austria as the representative of the most revolutionary and progressive driving forces of the German nation. That is a gigantic and historic role which carries with it difficulties, of course, but also immense possibilities.

The policy of the Austrian Social Democracy, now passive, now threatening, does nothing but prepare the way for the victory of fascism. Seen from the capitalist point of view, the
justification for the fascist dictatorship lies precisely in the fact that the opposition of the working class further weakens capitalism, which is already caught in a historical blind alley; it grinds capitalism down, paralyzes it, but at the same time proves itself incapable of seizing power and opening up a way out of the chaos and corruption.

Continued opposition, which under the present circumstances looks like treason, provokes the class enemy and brings ever-new layers and groups of people over to its side. Abstention from revolutionary means of struggle gives the enemy courage to make the final decision: at all costs.

This is the current situation in Austria. It can last for months at most. Then all the splendor of Austrian Social Democracy will be swept aside, and Otto Bauer will prove in newspaper articles somewhere in Paris or London that an Austria under Chancellor Renner\textsuperscript{152} really was better than an Austria under fascism. And all this is a result of the defense of democracy.

With communist greetings,
Your L. Trotsky
The situation in Austria is not qualitatively different from the situation in Germany; it only lags behind in its development. With political life in Austria under the pressure of the fascist victory in Germany, the culmination in Austria is drawing closer not by days but by hours.

Austria is passing through a period that is analogous to the period of Bruening-Papen-Schleicher in Germany, or to the period of Held in Bavaria, that is, the period of semi-Bonapartist dictatorship which maintains itself by mutual neutralization of the proletariat and fascist camps. For Austria, too, we prefer the term Bonapartism (in contradistinction to all other purely descriptive and absolutely meaningless formulations such as clerical-fascism, legitimistic fascism, etc., etc.) as a very clear characterization of a government that veers between two irreconcilable camps; a government that is forced to an ever-increasing degree to substitute the military-police apparatus for the social support that is ebbing away from under its feet.* Expressed in the tendency toward Bonapartism is the urge of the possessing classes, by means of military-police measures that are kept under cover in the reserve paragraphs of democratic constitutions, to avoid an open break with legality, a long period of civil war, and a bloody fascist dictatorship.

There are periods in history when the social foundation of a government "above all classes" grows at the expense of the extreme wings—during these periods Bonapartism can place

*Arbeiter Zeitung itself disturbed the ghost of Bonaparte when it wrote about the "19th Brumaire of Dollfuss"; but the Social Democratic sheet uses this only as a literary rattle. We would seek in vain from the Austro-Marxists, in general, for an analysis of politics from the class viewpoint. They require Marxism only to explain the past; but they motivate themselves in actual politics by second-hand psychological combinations and the hope that everything will turn out somehow in the end.
its seal upon an entire historical epoch. But the Austrian "Bonapartism" of today, like the German of yesterday, can have only an episodic character, filling the short interval between the democratic regime and the regime of fascism.

It is true that the "Bonapartists" in Austria have a much wider parliamentary base and that the fascists are much weaker than was the case in Germany. But the Christian Socialists are melting away while the Nazis are growing apace, and behind the backs of the Nazis stands fascist Germany. The question is settled by dynamics. Theoretical analysis as well as the fresh experience in Germany equally bespeak the fact that the Viennese police-and-bureaucratic dictatorship cannot long maintain itself. Matters are rapidly coming to a head. Power must be taken either by the fascists or by the workers.

The Possibility of Postponement

We do not know what is going on backstage. But there cannot be any doubt that the governments of those countries which surround and oppress Austria have brought all levers into action. Not a single one of these governments, not even Italy, has any interest in seeing the power in Austria pass into the hands of the fascists. The leaders of the Austrian Social Democracy indubitably see in this situation the highest trump of the whole game; in their eyes, financial and other pressures that can be brought by the nations of the former Entente can take the place of revolutionary activity by the Austrian proletariat. This reckoning is the most fallacious of all. The hostility on the part of the victor nations toward National Socialism was one of the reasons for its explosive growth in Germany. The closer that the Austrian Social Democracy will link itself with the policies of France and the Little Entente, whose task consists in keeping Austria in a state of "independence," that is, isolation and impotence, the greater will be the rate at which fascism will turn into a party of national liberation in the eyes of the petty-bourgeois masses. Along this line, only the armed intervention of the Entente, outright occupation, could keep fascism from the conquest of power. But here the question of Austria merges with the question of fascist Germany. If Hitler finds a modus vivendi with France—and there is hardly any reason to doubt it—then France will find a modus vivendi with fascist Austria. In both cases—on the bones of the proletariat, German and Austrian. To think that fascist Austria would immediately destroy those barriers which separate it from fascist Germany is to place much too great significance on "national" phrases and to under-rate the capacity of fascism to wag its tail before those who
are stronger than it. It can be said with assurance that of all strategic calculations the most ill-fated, degrading, and ruinous for the proletariat is to bank on the cooperation of the imperialist governments of the countries surrounding Austria.

Even if we were to allow that because of the traditional flabbiness of all Austrian parties as well as the influence of external, temporary causes (the pressure of France and the Little Entente, the apprehension of the Hitlerites to push matters to the end just now)—allowing this, the culmination, even in this case, would turn out to be postponed by means of some kind of moth-eaten Austrian Bonapartist compromise. A postponement of this kind would have an extremely unreliable and very temporary character. The process thus checked would burst out in the course of the next few months or even weeks with a redoubled force and at a tenfold tempo. To build its policies upon checks, masquerades, patching of cracks, and petty political moratoriums would mean for the proletariat to extend more time for still-weak Austrian fascism to achieve its murderous mission.

The "Struggle for Democracy"

Otto Bauer confines himself to empty moralizing on the subject of the "superiorities" of bourgeois democracy over fascist dictatorship. As if it were a struggle between two schools of state laws! Engels aptly remarked that every state is reducible to armed detachments with material appendages in the nature of jails, etc. At present, this "essence" of the state has been completely revealed in Austria. The political struggle which had developed in the course of years on the basis of democracy has sharpened to the clash between armed detachments. It is necessary to call this fact by its name, clearly and precisely, and to draw all the necessary practical conclusions.

Instead of this, the Austrian Social Democracy demands an admission on our part that the struggle is being carried on "for democracy." As if this were the question at present! It goes without saying that we are not about to make any concessions whatsoever to the Austro-Marxists as regards the theoretical and historical appraisal of democracy. In fact, if democracy was indeed above the social regime that engendered it, if it was indeed capable of reconstructing bourgeois society into socialist society, then this should have been revealed first of all in Austria, where the constitution was created by the Social Democracy, where the proletariat comprises the decisive force in the nation, and the Social Democracy represents the decisive force in the proletariat. Yet today, what Austria is living through demonstrates in action that democracy is flesh of the
Austria's Turn Next

flesh of capitalism, and decomposes with it. The Austrian crisis is the expression of the decay of democracy. The gentlemen of democracy need expect no other appraisal on our part.

We understand only too well, however, that theoretical diagnosis alone is altogether insufficient for the purpose of replacing democracy with a soviet regime. The matter touches the living consciousness of a class. If in the course of a joint struggle against the fascists the majority of the proletariat understands the need for a soviet dictatorship, there will be no stopping the Communists. But if, despite all the lessons it has received, the majority of the workers, even after smashing the forces of counterrevolution, decides to repeat once more the experiment of formal democracy, the Communists will be compelled to go along with the experiment in the form of an opposition.

Today at any rate the overwhelming majority of Austrian workers follows the Social Democrats. This means that there cannot even be talk of the revolutionary dictatorship as a present task. What is on the agenda today is not the antithesis of bourgeois and soviet democracy but the antithesis of bourgeois democracy and fascism. We accuse the Austro-Marxists not of fighting for democracy but of not fighting for it.

Capitalism resorts to fascism not out of caprice but because it is driven into an impasse. If the Social Democracy is capable only of criticizing, grumbling, curbing, threatening, and biding time but is incapable of taking the fate of society into its hands, when it is a matter of life and death for the nation and its culture, then this party which represents one-half of the nation itself becomes the instrument of social decomposition and compels the exploiting classes to seek salvation in fascism.

Applying the ancient juxtaposition of Ermattungsstrategie and Niederwerfungsstrategie, the strategy of exhaustion and the strategy of assault, one is compelled to say that the strategy of exhaustion, which was applicable after a fashion in certain situations, is impossible of application now when for capitalism nothing remains except a strategy of assault. The reformist strategy today is exhausting not the class enemy but its own camp. The policies of Otto Bauer and Co. lead fatally to the victory of the fascists, imposing the least sacrifices and difficulties upon them and the greatest sacrifices and misfortunes upon the proletariat.

The Austro-Marxists
Are Chloroforming the Proletariat

Despite the experience of Italy and Germany, the leaders of the Austrian Social Democracy do not understand the situation. In order to live and breathe these people must fool them-
selves. This they cannot do without fooling the proletariat.

Bauer puts the blame for the defeat in Germany on the Communists. We are not the ones to defend the German Stalinists! But their chief crime consists in having given the Social Democrats, despite all the crimes and betrayals committed by the Social Democracy, the possibility of preserving their influence on the basic part of the German proletariat and imposing on it the debasing and fatal tactic of capitulation. In essence Bauer's policies are no different than the policies of Wels-Stampfer.\footnote{158 But there is a distinction. Bauer will be unable to shift the responsibility onto the Austrian Stalinists, who have managed to doom themselves to complete impotence. The Austrian Social Democracy is not only the leading party of the proletariat but it is the strongest, in proportion to the population, Social Democratic party in the world. Political responsibility lies on the Austrian Social Democracy, solely and entirely. All the more fatal will the consequence of its present policies prove to be.}

The Austro-Marxists say \textit{if} we are deprived of liberty, then we shall fight to "the end." By such subterfuge they want to "gain" time for their vacillations, when in reality they are losing most precious time for the preparation of defense. After the enemy deprives them of liberty, it will be a hundred times more difficult to fight, for the liquidation of rights will be accompanied by military-police destruction of the proletarian press and apparatus. The enemy prepares and acts while the Social Democracy bides its time and whines. \textit{Vorwaerts} [Forward] also repeated innumerable times: "Woe to fascism if it ventures against us!" The events have demonstrated the value of such rhetoric. The party which proves incapable of giving battle when it holds in its hands almost impregnable positions and powerful resources will crumble into dust when it is completely expelled from the legal arena.

By their seemingly dreadful but in reality pathetic chorus of "if we are attacked," the Austro-Marxists reveal their genuine distress: they still hope that they will be left in peace, that things, God help us, will not go beyond mutual threats and waving of fists. What this means is that they are chloroforming the proletariat to facilitate fascist surgery. A genuine proletarian politician, on the contrary, would be duty-bound to explain to the Austrian workers that their class enemy, itself, has been caught between the jaws of history; that no other way out remains for it except to destroy the proletarian organizations; that in this instance there is no escape from mortal struggle; and that this struggle must be prepared for in accordance with all the rules of revolutionary strategy and tactics.
The General Strike

Otto Bauer has been hinting that in the event of a direct attack by the enemy, the workers will resort to a general strike. But this too is an empty threat. We have heard it more than once in Germany. A general strike cannot be produced out of one's vest pocket. The workers may be led to a general strike, but to do so one must fight and not play hide and seek with reality: a call to battle must be issued. One must organize for the struggle, arm for the struggle, widen and deepen the channels of struggle, not confining oneself to the legal forms of struggle, that is, the framework dictated by the armed enemy. And, first of all, the party itself must be permeated through and through with the idea that unless it engages in a decisive battle, it is lost.

It is quite possible that the Central Committee will actually issue a call for a general strike, after the "open" (that is to say, the decisive) blow has been dealt. But this would mean that after leaving the stage one calls the masses to a barren protest, a manifestation of impotence. Just so did the liberal opposition, after the monarch had told them to go to the devil, call upon the people not to pay their taxes. As a rule nothing ever came of it. In all probability the workers will not respond at all to the belated and hopeless appeal of a party already smashed.

But let us allow that the fascists will give the Social Democracy time enough to call for a general strike at the last minute, and that the workers will respond solidly to the call. What then? What is the goal of the general strike? What must it achieve? In what forms must it develop? How should it defend itself against military and police repressions, and against the fascist pogroms? Wiseacres will reply that it is impossible to answer such questions beforehand. This is the usual subterfuge of people who have nothing to say, who hope in their hearts to get along without fighting, and who consequently shy away in cowardice and fear from questions of military resources and methods.

The general strike is only the mobilization of revolutionary forces but still not the war. To utilize a general strike successfully as a demonstration or a threat, that is, to confine oneself only to the mobilization of forces without engaging in battle—that is possible only within strictly defined historical conditions: when it is a matter of an important but still partial task; when the enemy wavers and waits only for a push in order to retreat; when the possessing classes are still left with a wide field for retreat and maneuver. None of this prevails at present,
a time when all the contradictions have reached their highest intensity and every serious conflict puts on the agenda the question of power and the perspective of civil war.

A general strike could prove to be a sufficient means for repelling a counterrevolutionary seizure only if the enemy is unprepared and lacks sufficient forces and experience (the Kapp Putsch). But even in the latter case, after having repelled the adventurist onset, the general strike only fundamentally restored that situation which existed on the eve of the conflict and consequently gave the enemy an opportunity to utilize the experience of his own defeat and better prepare for a new attack. But the general strike turns out to be completely insufficient even for defensive purposes in the event that the enemy is powerful and experienced, all the more so if he leans upon the state apparatus, or even has at his disposal its benevolent "neutrality." No matter what the basic reason for the conflict may be, under the present conditions, the general strike will close the ranks of bourgeois parties, the state apparatus, and the fascist bands, and in this united front of the bourgeoisie the preponderance will fall inevitably into the hands of the most extreme and determined elements, the fascists. When face to face with the general strike, the counterrevolution will be compelled to stake all its forces on one card in order to smash the ominous danger with a single blow. Insofar as the general strike remains only a strike it inevitably under these conditions dooms itself to defeat. In order to snatch victory, the strategy of the strike must grow into the strategy of the revolution, it must elevate itself to the level of resolute actions, replying to every blow with a double blow. In other words, under present conditions the general strike cannot serve as a self-sufficient means for the defense of an impotent democracy but only as one of the weapons in the combined struggle. The strike must be accompanied with and supplemented by the arming of the workers, the disarming of fascist bands, the removal of the Bonapartist from power, and the seizure of the material apparatus of the state.

Once again we repeat: If the establishment of a soviet regime cannot be realized without the seizure of power by the Communist Party—and we admit that this is altogether excluded in the immediate future by the unfavorable correlation of forces—then the restoration of democracy, even temporarily, is already unthinkable in Austria without the previous seizure of power by the Social Democracy. If the leading workers' party is not prepared to bring the struggle to its conclusion, then the general strike, by sharpening the situation, can only hasten the crushing of the proletariat.
The Austro-philistine will snatch up these words in order to immediately deduce reasons for "moderation" and "cautiousness." For is it permissible for a party to take upon itself the gigantic "risk" involved in revolutionary methods of struggle? As if the Austrian proletariat has the freedom of choice! As if millions of workers can depart for their villas in Switzerland as Otto Braun! As if a class can duck mortal danger without incurring any danger! As if the victims of a Europe turned fascist, with its perspective of new imperialist wars, will not surpass one hundred times the sacrifices of all revolutions, past and future!

Today, the Key to the Situation

Is in the Hands of the Austrian Proletariat

Otto Bauer welcomed with ecstatic amazement the fact that the German workers gave seven million votes to the Social Democracy in the election [of March 5, 1933] despite the closing down of the newspapers, etc., etc. These people suppose that the emotions and the thoughts of the proletariat are created by their piddling articles. They have memorized Marx and the history of Europe but they have not the slightest inkling of the inexhaustible reservoirs of power, enthusiasm, perseverance, and creativeness the proletariat is capable of unfolding when it is assured of a leadership which to any degree corresponds to the historical moment.

Isn't it obvious right now that had there been a farsighted revolutionary policy, the German workers would have long since overthrown all the barriers blocking their road to hegemony, and moreover that they could have done so with immeasurably and incomparably less sacrifices than the inevitable sacrifices of the fascist regime? The same must also be said about the Austrian proletariat.

Of course the policy of the united front is obligatory at present also for Austria. But the united front is no panacea; the crux of the matter lies in the context of the policies, in the slogans, and in the methods of mass actions. With the right to preserve complete freedom of mutual criticism—and this right is unalterable—the Communists must be prepared to make an alliance with the Social Democracy for the sake of the most modest mass activities. But in so doing the Communists must give themselves a clear accounting of the tasks that are posed by the march of developments in order to disclose at every stage the incongruity between the political goal and the reformist methods.

The united front cannot merely signify a summation of Social Democratic and Communist workers, for beyond the confines
of the two parties and outside of the trade unions there still remain Catholic workers and unorganized masses. Not a single one of the old forms of organization which are laden down with conservatism, inertia, and the heritage of old antagonisms can suffice for the present tasks of the united front. A real mobilization of the masses is unthinkable without the creation of elected organs which directly represent the trade, industrial, and transport enterprises, corporations and factories, the unemployed and the contiguous layers of the population which gravitate toward the proletariat. In other words, the situation in Austria calls for workers' soviets, not so much in name as in their nature. The duty of the Communists is to persistently bring forward this slogan in the process of struggle.

The circumstance that Austria is separated governmentally from Germany and lags behind the latter in its internal evolution could play a decisive role in the salvation of Germany and of all Europe—under a bold and virile policy of the proletarian vanguard. Proletarian Austria would immediately become the Piedmont for the entire German proletariat. The victory of the Austrian workers would provide the German workers with what they lack at present, with a material drill-ground, a comprehensible plan of action, and hope for victory. Once set in motion the German proletariat would immediately prove itself to be immeasurably more powerful than all its enemies taken together. On the parliamentary-democratic plane, Hitler with his 44 percent of human dust appears much more imposing than he would on the plane of the actual correlation of forces. The Austrian Social Democracy has behind it approximately the same percentage of votes. But whereas the Nazis lean upon the social by-products which play a secondary and to a major degree a parasitic role in the life of the country, there is behind the Austrian Social Democracy the flower of the nation. The actual relative weight of the Austrian Social Democracy exceeds over ten times the relative weight of all the German fascists. This can be completely revealed only in action. The initiative for revolutionary action can come at present only from the Austrian proletariat. What is there necessary for it? Courage, courage, and once again, courage! The Austrian workers have nothing to lose but their chains. And by their initiative they can conquer Europe and the whole world!
WHAT ABOUT RAKOVSKY?  

March 23, 1933

Stalin is still silent. No news from Christian Rakovsky. The embassies keep still. In spite of numerous news items that have appeared in the press, the wreckers of the German revolution refuse to let go of their secret. If they have assassinated Rakovsky, they do not dare to say so! If he is still alive, they are afraid to admit it! This alone gives the measure of their panic, their fear of the action of the Bolshevik-Leninists.

Let us speak frankly. By what right do the Stalinists complain that the Hitler embassy refuses to give out word of the fate of Thaelmann, when they refuse to say what has happened to Christian Rakovsky? Yes, in the name of what revolutionary conception?

Let us develop our campaign. The centrists will have to answer for their past. Raise the question of Rakovsky at every meeting!

Victor Serge has just been arrested in Leningrad. Once again the Stalinist police are acting under cover. It has been impossible for us up to now to obtain definite information of his fate or the reasons for his arrest. Back in 1928, Victor Serge was arrested shortly after his expulsion from the party as an Oppositionist. He was released after two months, under the pressure of the campaign which was carried on at the time. Again we must rise up, demand an accounting, help our comrades who are struggling in the vanguard against those who are preparing the ruin of the October Revolution.

Ryazanov has just died in deportation at Saratov, where the vengeance of Stalin had exiled him. This Bolshevik, this Marxist scientist, underwent the fate of all intransigent Communists who struggle against the Stalinist bureaucracy. He died at his post as a faithful disciple of Marx and Engels.
Christian Rakovsky, in Siberian exile, 1929.

Victor Serge, in France shortly after his release from the Soviet Union, 1936.
in the service of whose ideas he had spent his life. Stalin did everything to shorten his life, for his purpose remains the same: to destroy the Bolsheviks physically. After trying to defile Ryazanov by implicating him in the "Menshevik trial," Stalin chased him out of the Marx-Engels Institute, which he had entirely organized and created, and banished him under police surveillance. And Ryazanov died in deportation, while Messrs. Ramzin and Co., free, have again become engineers at Magnitogorsk.

Vladimir Smirnov,\(^{165}\) former leader of the old group of "Decemists," who was close to the Opposition in the years 1926-27, has also just died in exile.

And how many other revolutionary workers, how many of ours, are falling today, when more than ever their firmness and their experience are indispensable to the revolution?

A tenacious and persevering campaign in support of our imprisoned and deported comrades is needed. We are at present considering the formation of a relief committee, about which we shall say more later.
The necessity for an explanation if not a justification for the expulsion and exile of Zinoviev and Kamenev becomes sufficiently clear since Molotov has found himself forced to turn to Zinoviev in connection with the planning figures for 1933. In this matter, Molotov quoted the evidence given by Zinoviev in his report to the Central Control Commission on the Riutin-Slepkov case. "So far as I can judge," said Zinoviev, according to Molotov, "of late, a fairly significant proportion of party members has been gripped by dangerous, vague deviationist ideas" (*Pravda*, January 12, 1933).

Later on, Molotov quotes Trotsky, or rather refers—without quoting—to Trotsky... as the high priest of "deviation." "Not even a memory remains of the former superindustrialization. Now he can think of only one thing: deviation, deviation, deviation. From such sources G. Zinoviev has drawn his sustenance." The concluding phrase (underlined by us) comes as a complete surprise. So Trotsky is "preaching" deviation. Zinoviev at least only referred to the fact that "dangerous, vague deviationist ideas" had gripped a significant proportion of the party members. In other words, if we are to believe Molotov (which, generally speaking, is not recommended), Zinoviev asserts that preacher Trotsky is dangerous, i.e., he gives the high priest of deviation the same rating as does Molotov.

If Molotov wanted to prove that detestable arbitrariness was shown by the Stalinist clique in the Zinoviev affair then he has fully proved it, for we must admit that Molotov has quoted that part of Zinoviev's evidence that is least advantageous to himself. Rather than get involved in argument, Molotov need only have said: Dizzy with success, we cannot tolerate in the party any person who can see what we cannot.
The renunciation of the slogan for "reform" of the KPD may provoke doubts in the minds of many comrades. Let us foresee some of the possible objections:

a. We have always affirmed our devotion toward the official party, now we will turn our back to it—that will push the Communists away from us.

b. The party is now illegal, it has nuclei and organizations active everywhere—we must support them.

c. Urbahns and others will say that they were right as against us when they declared the KPD to be dead.

d. We are too weak to undertake the task of building a new party.

All these objections are untenable. We started out from the proposition that the key to the situation was in the hands of the KPD. That was correct. Only a timely turn on the part of the KPD could have saved the situation. Under such conditions to oppose the party and in advance to declare it to be dead would have meant to proclaim a priori the inevitability of the victory of fascism. We could not do that. We had to fully exhaust all the possibilities of the old situation.

Now the situation has changed fundamentally. The victory of fascism is a fact, and so is the breakdown of the KPD. It is no longer a question of making a prognosis or a theoretical criticism, but it is a question of an important historical event which will penetrate ever deeper into the consciousness of the masses, including the Communists. One must build the general perspective and the general strategy upon the inevitable consequences of these events and not upon secondary considerations.

It is unquestionable that many subjectively revolutionary elements of the old party will attempt to save it without giving...
up the old principled basis. In the near future, that is, as soon as the first consternation has disappeared, we can expect an acceleration of illegal Communist activities. However, without a fundamental revision of all the ideological baggage, without the elaboration of new methods, and without a new selection of persons, etc., the total of these activities will have no future. The efforts and the sacrifices on the old basis will not be the signs of a regeneration but the convulsions of agony. During legal conditions the policy of bureaucratic centrism, based upon falsity, apparatus, and finances, could for a long time mislead through an appearance of strength. It is the opposite for an illegal organization. It can maintain itself only through the utmost devotion of its members, and this devotion can be nourished only through correctness of policy and ideological honesty of the leadership. In the absence of these prerequisites the illegal organization will inevitably die (example: Italy).

It would be inadmissible to have any kind of illusions as to the illegal perspectives for the Stalinist apparatus or, in meeting it face to face, to be guided by sentimental instead of political-revolutionary considerations. This apparatus is corroded by paid functionaries, adventurists, careerists, and yesterday's or today's agents of fascism. The honest elements will have no compass. The Stalinist leadership will institute in the illegal party a regime even more contemptible and disreputable than in the legal party. Under such conditions the illegal work will be only a flash, although a heroic one; the result, however, can only be rottenness.

The Left Opposition must place itself entirely on the basis of the new historical situation created by the victory of fascism. There is nothing more dangerous, at the time of sharp turns of history, than to hang on to the old customary and comfortable formulas; this is the direct road to decay.

Urbahns and company will say: We have always declared that a new party is necessary. But the so-called KAPD 169 said that long before Urbahns, during the years when Urbahns was still occupied as they were, against us, in ruining the party. The foundation of sectarianism consists precisely in its estimating the historical processes with the measure of its own group. The new party begins for Urbahns at the moment when he has broken with the bureaucracy. The Marxist, however, judges all organizations and all groups through the measure of the objective historical processes. During the last two years we have written more than once that our position toward the party does not have a dogmatic character and that great events which may radically change the situation
of the working class could also compel us to change our position. As examples of such great events, we named most often a victory of fascism in Germany and a breakdown of the Soviet power. Thus there is nothing subjective or arbitrary in our turn. It is dictated entirely by the course of developments in which the policies of the Stalinist bureaucracy were the decisive element.

"We are too weak to proclaim the new party." But no one proposes this. How and when the new party will be created depends upon many objective circumstances and not only upon us. But it demands the pursuing of a correct course. To the extent that we support illusions about the vitality of the old party, to that extent we hinder the creation of the new party.

Moreover one must not forget for a moment that processes of decomposition will set in not only in the official party but also in the Social Democracy, in the SAP, and in all organizations, groups, and sections which cannot stand the test of historical catastrophe. Under these conditions, it is necessary to create an independent axis for the crystallization of all revolutionary elements regardless of their party past.

Perhaps the reply to us will be: The logic of this position will lead to a break with the Comintern. Possibly in formal logic. The historical processes, however, do not develop according to formal logic, they develop dialectically. We do not give up our efforts to save the Soviet power from the ruin to which it is being driven by the Stalinists. We cannot know in advance what the reaction inside the other sections of the Comintern will be to the victory of fascism. To this belongs the test of the events—with our active assistance.

The question of the open break with the Stalinist bureaucracy in Germany is at the present moment of enormous principled importance. The revolutionary vanguard will not pardon the historical crime committed by the Stalinists. If we support the illusion of the vitality of the party of Thaelmann-Neumann we would appear to the masses as the real defenders of their bankruptcy. That would signify that we ourselves veer toward the road of centrism and putrefaction.
WE NEED AN HONEST INNER-PARTY AGREEMENT

March 30, 1933

Among the bureaucrats of the CPSU, as our correspondents have informed us more than once lately, there is now widespread a type who concedes all positions except the question of the party regime. While rejecting Stalinism in private conversation, these people still continue to defend Stalin—but how? With hatred and gnashing of teeth. Here are two verbatim quotations from recent letters:

"They all speak of Stalin's isolation and the general hatred for him... and at the same time they often add: if it wasn't for that (we omit a colorful term), everything would fall apart; it's only he who holds everything together."

And again:

"Basically, they say, Trotsky is right in almost everything (they now adduce as an example of correctness the proposal to make 1933 a year outside the five-year plans)—but he makes one mistake: he sees in front of him the proletariat of 1917-23. But this proletariat no longer exists. The majority of the present-day workers left the countryside only yesterday. You can't give them democracy. They have to be kept firmly in check."

These two quotations, which coincide with others of the same type, characterize very clearly the situation in the country and especially inside the Stalinist faction itself. Especially instructive is the date indicated for the end of normal party life: 1923, the time of Lenin's final withdrawal from work, the beginning of the struggle against the Opposition—the opening of the period of pure bureaucratism and the rule of the epigones. The Left Opposition, on the admission of the liberal bureaucrats—and it must be said that the overwhelming majority of the Stalinists have fallen into "rotten liberalism"—is correct on all basic questions except one: it has confidence in a party
We Need an Honest Inner-Party Agreement

in which you cannot have confidence. Ten years of "proletarianization" and "Bolshevization" of the party of Lenin have brought about a situation where the apparatchiki say with complete sincerity and conviction that the composition of the party is so crude, unreliable, nonparty, and even antiparty that party democracy cannot even be thought of. This is the main result of the decade. We emphasize: Stalinism has liquidated the party.

But, say the liberal bureaucrats with forced candor, you have to face facts. It's precisely because the party has been stifled that everything rests on the apparatus. And the apparatus is kept from decay by Stalin. If that linchpin breaks, everything will fall to pieces. Such is decadent Bonapartist philosophy: Stalin's policy is false, he himself has become hated, but he holds the "regime" together and therefore we, the enlightened bureaucrats, will continue to be the tools of a false policy.

What is this "regime" maintained by Stalin? The same one as stifled the party and undermined the proletarian dictatorship. That the Stalinist regime is maintained by Stalin is indisputable. But even if we admit that Stalin is capable of maintaining his own regime for a long time yet—and we consider this out of the question—it is not at all possible to admit that Stalin's regime can give anything to communism but defeats and humiliations.

The terrible confusion in the Soviet economy, the dreadful gulf between town and country, the deep cleft between the proletariat and the state it created, the catastrophic defeats on the international arena, culminating in the vast historical disaster of Germany—these are the results of the policy of Stalinism. The centrist bureaucracy does not deny this account, since it admits the political correctness of the Opposition. But it adds: nevertheless, we must keep behind Stalin, since neither the proletariat nor the party deserves any confidence.

Both our friends and our enemies know that we are not inclined to embellish the existing situation, especially now, after the coup in Germany. But in contrast to the liberal officials, we do not consider the situation hopeless. Sorry sophisms about how despite the perniciousness of Stalinism it is necessary to support Stalin's autocracy are dictated not by the highest wisdom of state but by petty fear of changes and shifts which might unexpectedly shake... the liberal bureaucracy itself.

It is perfectly true that Stalin has destroyed the party, smashed it in pieces, scattered it in prison and exile, diluted it with a crude mass, frightened it, demoralized it. It is perfectly true that the party as such no longer exists. But at the same time, it remains a very real historical factor. This is
proved by the continuing arrests of Left Oppositionists; by the Stalin clique’s fear of Rakovsky, whom it has driven off to the far north; by the return to the road of opposition of Old Bolsheviks who had tried to cooperate with Stalin (the arrests and exiles of Zinoviev, Kamenev, I. N. Smirnov, Preobrazhensky, Mrachkovsky, Perevertsev, and many others). Finally, the admission by the bureaucrats themselves that the Opposition is basically correct in everything is in itself an extremely clear symptom of the fact that the party exists, forms its own opinion, and in part even forces it on the apparatus.

When we speak of a revival of party democracy, we mean precisely the need to gather together the scattered, fettered, frightened elements of the real Bolshevik Party, revive its normal work, give it back the decisive influence on the life of the country. To solve the problem of awakening and gathering together otherwise than by the methods of party democracy is unthinkable. It is not the Stalin clique who will carry out this work, nor the liberal bureaucracy which supports Stalin, whom it hates out of fear of the masses (how typical, by the way, of liberal bureaucracies in general!). The party can only be revived by the party itself.

The platform of the Left Opposition, of course, does not talk of some self-sufficient, absolute democracy, standing above social and political realities. We need democracy for proletarian dictatorship and within the framework of that dictatorship. We do not shut our eyes to the fact that an approach to the revival of the party, only thinkable by the method of party democracy, will inevitably mean for a transitional period that freedom of criticism is allowed to the whole of the present motley and contradictory official party, and to the Komsomol [Young Communist League]. The Bolshevik elements in the party will not be able to find each other, link up, reach agreements, and come out actively unless they differentiate themselves from the Thermidorean elements and from the passive mass; and this differentiation is unthinkable in turn without open criticism, without a platform, without discussions, without factional groups, i.e., without all the internalized sicknesses of the present official party being brought out to the surface.

The transitional period will without a doubt be the most critical and dangerous. But if we are not mistaken, Machiavelli already said that you cannot avoid mortal danger by avoiding all danger. Stalin’s regime leads to destruction, nowhere else. The revival of the party by democratizing it involves undoubted risk, but it still opens the only thinkable way out.
Already in the process of revival the party is measuring the force of resistance of the Thermidorean tendencies. The spread of democracy to the trade unions and the Soviets, which in itself is absolutely necessary, will take place in forms determined by the political environment, and under the constant leadership of the party. Soviet democracy is elastic. If there are real internal and international successes, the framework of democracy will expand rapidly. The limits of expansion in any given period can only be shown by experience. Political evaluation of experience and correct application of it can only be carried out by a party living a healthy life. There is no reason for it to have two million people in it. It may become two, three, or four times smaller, but it must be a party.

The liquidation of the Stalin regime, which is historically absolutely inevitable and what is more not far off, may however take place in different ways. The internal logic of the centrist apparatus, including the liberal bureaucracy, will without fail lead to the downfall of the regime as a whole. The general line is preparing a general catastrophe. If things were allowed to take their own course, the liquidation of Stalin's autocracy would be the penultimate episode in the liquidation of all the conquests of October. But overthrowing the Soviet regime is fortunately not so simple. Deep down in, there are great creative forces. Their conscious, fully thought-out and confirmed expression is the Left Opposition (the Bolshevik-Leninists). In the process of struggle with the Thermidorean groupings, in the process of purging the party of the raw material, the ballast, the relations between the faction of the Bolshevik-Leninists and the centrist faction, to the extent that it wishes to and is prepared to fight against Thermidor, may take different forms. What form they take is not at all irrelevant for the fate of the revolution. It may be said that the degree of risk in passing over to the path of democracy depends in great measure on how precisely in the immediate future the relations between the Stalinists and semi-Stalinists on the one hand and the Left Opposition on the other take shape. As far as we are concerned, we are prepared today just as we were ten years ago to do everything to give the inner-party development as calm and peaceful a character as possible and prevent it from growing into a civil war.

Of course we cannot refuse to criticize centrist in the way centrisism has refused to criticize the Social Democracy. Such a refusal would mean, we think, nothing but the renunciation of the goal (saving the dictatorship) in the name of the means (agreement with the Stalinists). But mutual criticism,
in itself unavoidable and fruitful, may have a different character, depending on the extent to which it is consciously prepared by both sides and in what organizational framework it takes place. In this field, the importance of which does not require proof, the Left Opposition is prepared at any moment to come to an agreement in which it will ask for itself only the restoration of its right to fight in the common ranks.

The struggle for a particular party policy has nothing in common with the struggle for the seizure of the apparatus with the aim of destroying and expelling the faction which was ruling yesterday. This is not our policy. On the contrary, we wish the party to put an end to it. It is a matter of something immeasurably higher than the claims of cliques or individuals. We need a loyal party regime. The easiest, truest, and most painless way to reach it would be through an inner-party agreement. In view of the immeasurable dangers crowding in on the Soviet republic, the Bolshevik-Leninists again propose to all the groupings of the ruling faction an honorable agreement before the eyes of the party and of the international proletariat.
THE ECONOMIC ONSLAUGHT OF
THE COUNTERREVOLUTION
AND THE UNIONS

March 30, 1933

Declaration of the Delegates Representing the
International Left Opposition (Bolshevik-Leninists)
to the Congress Against Fascism

All modern history is evidence of the fact that the proletariat is nothing without its class organizations. At the same time, experience shows that the workers' organizations often become a brake on the revolutionary struggle. Many a time has the proletarian movement smashed over this contradiction. The most tragic example is the German catastrophe in which the leading organizations, each in its own way, paralyzed the proletariat from above and handed it over, disarmed, to fascism.

The Communist party sets as its aim to lead the proletariat to power. It can carry out its revolutionary mission only by winning over the majority of the proletariat and thereby its mass organizations, primarily the trade unions.

The party's struggle to win influence over the trade unions must be carried out in such a way as not to put a brake on the current tasks of mass organization, not to split it, and not to create in the workers the idea that the Communists disorganize the class movement. The principles of this kind of struggle were already traced out in The Communist Manifesto, were developed by the later theory and practice of the workers' movement, and found their highest expression in the work of Bolshevism.

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The party signifies the flower of the class, its revolutionary selection. The trade union embraces broad masses of workers, at different levels. The broader these masses, the closer is the trade union to accomplishing its task. But what the organization gains in breadth it inevitably loses in depth. Opportunistic, nationalist, religious tendencies in the trade unions and their leadership express the fact that the trade unions embrace not only the vanguard but also heavy reserves. The weak side of the unions thus comes from their strong side. The struggle against opportunism in the trade-union organizations means, basically, persistent and patient work in order to join the reserves to the vanguard.

Those who detach the revolutionary workers from the trade unions, who build alongside the mass organizations revolutionary, "pure"—to use Lenin's ironic term—but tiny, and therefore puny trade unions, do not solve the historic task but abandon its solution; worse still, they create direct obstacles in the struggle to influence the working class.

The initiators of the present congress are organizations of the oppositional Red International of Labor Unions (RILU). The history of these organizations is a history of criminal violation of the fundamental principles of Marxist policy in the sphere of trade unions. The RILU is nothing more than a Communist party, or part of a Communist party, only under another name. This organization does not bind the party to the unions; on the contrary, it separates the party from the unions. Being, because of their small numbers, absolutely incapable of replacing the trade unions in the sphere of mass action, the RILU is at the same time incapable of influencing them from outside because it is hostilely opposed to them as rival organizations.

To justify the policy of the RILU, as to justify the theory of social fascism, the Stalinist bureaucracy now appeals to the fact that the heads of the German trade unions have shown their readiness to be lackeys of Hitler as they had been, in the past, lackeys of the Hohenzollerns. Pointing a finger at the abject role of Leipart and Co., the French Stalinists come out against a fusion of the two union organizations in France. They agree to accept unity only on one condition: if at the head of the joint unions there would be revolutionary fighters, not traitors.

By this the Stalinists once more demonstrate that like the Bourbons of France they have learned nothing and forgotten nothing. They demand that they be given ready-made mass organizations with a revolutionary leadership. In such unions they condescend to agree to take part. In other words, they
are waiting for someone else to carry out the historic task which should constitute the fundamental content of their own work.

The leaders of the German trade unions, like those of the British and American trade unions and of the reformist French unions, are "the greatest scoundrels in the world"—Rosa Luxemburg said it many years ago. The most important task since the founding of the Comintern has been to drive out these scoundrels from the mass unions. But on each occasion, in carrying out this task, the Stalinist bureaucracy betrayed complete bankruptcy.

That the RGO did not go over to Hitler in Germany is a purely negative merit which, in general, it is improper to flaunt in revolutionary ranks. But the impotence of the RGO, the impotence of the KPD, the impotence of the Comintern, lies in this—that the scoundrels like Leipart and Co. still remain even today the bosses of the mass unions. As for the RGO, even before the great events it showed itself to be a castle of playing cards.

The place of Communists is in the mass trade unions. Communists must go into them, with banners furled or flying, to work there openly or under cover, according to the political and police conditions of the country. But work they must, not fold their arms.

Concerning their participation in the trade-union movement, Communists, in general, cannot lay down any conditions to the working class or to the reformist bureaucracy. If the working class understood in advance the advantages of Communist policy they would not tolerate reformist traitors at the head of their organizations. As for the reformist bureaucracy, it is consistently interested in having the Communists stay outside the trade unions, and so it refuses any conditions which could possibly facilitate the work of the Communists. The proletarian revolutionary does not make up arrogant but absurd ultimatums to serve as his justification for deserting the union; he penetrates the union in spite of all obstacles and barriers. It is not from the hands of the trade-union bureaucrats that the Communist gets conditions favorable to his work; he acquires them gradually, to the extent that he acquires influence inside the trade union.

The circumstance that the present congress, calling for preparation of resistance to the onslaught of capital and fascism, has been convoked by organizations which are sectarian by their very own principles—the organizations of the RILU in Germany, Poland, and Italy—this circumstance compels us to call with redoubled force on all genuine Communists for
a struggle against the fatal methods of the Stalinist bureaucracy which isolate the proletarian vanguard and bar its way to victory.

Comrade-Communists, conscious workers! Establish in their full force the Marxist principles in trade-union policy formulated in the first four congresses of the Comintern. Shake off from your shoes the dust of Stalinism. Back to the road of Marx and Lenin. Only this road leads forward!
A DECLARATION TO
THE CONGRESS AGAINST FASCISM174

From the Delegates of
the International Left Opposition
(Bolshevik-Leninists)

April 1933

The victory of Hitler in Germany shows that capitalism cannot live in conditions of democracy, cannot even cover itself with democratic tatters. Either the dictatorship of the proletariat or the open dictatorship of finance capital! Either the workers' soviets or the armed bands of the desperate petty-bourgeois populace!

Fascism has not and cannot have any program for solving the crisis of capitalist society. But that does not mean that fascism will automatically fall a victim of its own contradictions. No, it will maintain capitalist exploitation by ruining the country, by degrading capitalist civilization, and by continually introducing greater savagery into the culture. The victory of fascism is the result of the inability of the proletariat to take the fate of society into its own hands. Fascism will live as long as the proletariat does not rise.

Social Democracy delivered the proletarian revolution of 1918 to the bourgeoisie and thus, once again, saved declining capitalism; it is the Social Democracy and it alone which gave the bourgeoisie the possibility to lean on fascist banditry in the following stage. Descending from one step to the other in pursuit of the "lesser evil," the Social Democracy ended by voting for the reactionary field marshal, Hindenburg, who in his turn summoned Hitler to power. Demoralizing the proletariat by illusions of democracy in decadent capitalism, the Social Democracy deprived the proletariat of all its powers of resistance.
The attempts to cast this fundamental historic responsibility on communism are absurd and dishonest. Without communism the left wing of the proletariat would have, a long time ago, taken the road of anarchism, of terrorism, or would have simply swelled the fighting troops of fascism. The example of Austria shows only too clearly that where communism is extremely weak and the Social Democracy reigns unchallenged in the ranks of the working class within the framework of the democratic state which it created, its policy prepares, step by step, the triumph of fascism.

The top layers of the German Social Democracy are now trying to adapt themselves to Hitler's regime in order to preserve the remainder of their legal positions and the benefits that accrue from them. In vain! Fascism has brought with it a swarm of starved and ravenous locusts who demand and will obtain the monopoly of jobs and sinecures for themselves. The destitution of the reformist bureaucracy, a secondary result of the defeat of the proletarian organizations, represents the payment for the uninterrupt ed chain of treachery of the Social Democracy since August 4, 1914.

The leaders of the other Social Democratic parties are now trying to separate themselves from their German brothers-in-arms. It would be impermissible lightmindedness, however, to believe the words of the "left" critics of the reformist international, all of whose sections find themselves on different junctures of the same road. As in the time of the imperialist war, in the process of the fall of bourgeois democracy each section of the Second International is ready to rebuild its reputation on the back of another national party. But basically they do the same work. Leon Blum supports the militarist-imperialist French government. Vandervelde, president of the Second International, has not withdrawn, as far as we know, his signature from under this same Versailles peace which has given German fascism its present dimensions.

All the fundamental principled theses of the first four congresses of the Communist International—on the decadent character of imperialist capitalism, on the inevitability of the decomposition of bourgeois democracy, on the impasse of reformism, on the necessity of the revolutionary struggle for the dictatorship of the proletariat—have found their irrevocable confirmation in the events in Germany. But their correctness has been demonstrated "ad absurdum": not by victory but by catastrophe. If despite almost fifteen years of existence of the Comintern, the Social Democracy has succeeded in carrying the policy of the "lesser evil" to its final conclusion, that is, to the worst evil that can be conceived of in modern history, we must look
for its cause in the fact that the communism of the epigones has shown itself incapable of fulfilling its historic mission.

Up till 1923 the Comintern marched forward in all countries almost without a halt, weakening and ousting the Social Democracy. In the last ten years, not only did it not make any new quantitative conquests, but it suffered a profound qualitative degeneration. The shipwreck of the official Communist party in Germany is the fatal culmination of the "general line," which passed through the adventures of Estonia and Bulgaria, through the capitulation to the Kuomintang, through the no-less-infamous capitulation to the trade-union bureaucracy in England, through the Canton adventure, through the convulsions of the "third period," through the break with the mass trade unions, through the theory and practice of "social fascism," through the policy of "national liberation" and "people's revolution," through the rejection of the united front, through the banishment and persecution of the Left Opposition, and finally through the complete stifling of the independence of the proletarian vanguard by the replacement of democratic centralism with the omnipotence of an unprincipled and dullwitted apparatus.

The essence of bureaucratism lies in distrust of the masses and in the tendency to replace their conscious revolutionary activity by combinations from above or by naked commands. In Germany as well as in other countries the Stalinist bureaucracy continually put ultimatums before the working class. From above, it arbitrarily set the dates for strikes or "conquest of the streets," for "red days" or "red months"; it ordered the working class to accept all its slogans and zigzags without criticism; it demanded that it recognize its leadership in the united front in advance and without question. On this monstrous ultimatism it based its struggle, false from beginning to end and impotent against fascism.

Errors are inevitable in the struggle of the proletariat. Through their own errors the parties learn, select the cadres, and educate the leaders. But in the present Comintern these are not errors but an erroneous system which renders a correct policy impossible. The social agents of this system are a large bureaucratic stratum, armed with enormous material and technical means, independent of the masses and conducting a furious struggle for self-preservation at the price of the disorganization of the proletarian vanguard and its weakening before the class enemy. Such is the essence of Stalinism in the world workers' movement.

In recent years the Left Opposition, before the eyes of the entire world, followed the fascist tide in all its stages and traced a policy of true revolutionary realism. As early as the autumn
of 1929, that is, three and a half years ago at the very beginning of the world crisis, the Left Opposition wrote:

"Just as revolutionary situations developed more than once out of the conflict between liberalism and the monarchy, which later went over the heads of both opponents, so a revolutionary situation can develop out of the clash between the Social Democracy and fascism—two antagonistic agents of the bourgeoisie—which will pass over the heads of both of them.

"The proletarian revolutionist would be worthless if he did not understand, in the epoch of the bourgeois revolution, how to estimate the conflict between the liberals and the monarchy, and instead of utilizing the struggle in a revolutionary manner threw the two opponents into one pot. The Communist is not worth a copper who in the face of the collisions between fascism and the Social Democracy shouts down this formula with the barren formula of social fascism, which has no content at all."

The policy of the united front should have been built on this general strategic perspective. Step by step in the course of the last three years the Left Opposition followed the development of the political crisis in Germany. In its periodicals and in a series of pamphlets it analyzed all the stages of the struggle, unmasked the ultimate character of the formula "only from below," took upon itself where it could the initiative of united defense committees, supported the initiative of the workers in this direction, and incessantly demanded the extension of this initiative throughout the country. If the KPD had resolutely set out on this path, the reformist bureaucracy would have shown itself impotent to restrain the pressure of the workers for the united front. Smashing up against a new barrier at each step, fascism would have opened all its wounds. The local defense bodies would have grown irresistibly, in fact transforming themselves into workers' councils. Marching on this path, the German proletariat would have dealt a decisive blow to fascism and with one last stroke would have swept away the whole top oligarchy. The entire situation laid the basis for the revolutionary victory of the German proletariat.

The Stalinist bureaucracy, however, took the path of unconscious but nevertheless actual sabotage of the revolution. They forbade agreements of Communists with the Social Democratic organizations, destroyed the common organs of defense created by the workers, and under the name of "counterrevolutionaries" expelled all the defenders of a correct revolutionary policy from its ranks. It could be said that such a manner of acting was especially created to isolate the Communists, to consolidate the bonds between the Social Democratic workers and their leaders, to sow confusion and disintegration in the
ranks of the proletariat, and to prepare the unobstructed ascension of the fascists to power. The results are apparent!

On March 5, when the fate of the proletariat was already decided, the Executive Committee of the Comintern not only declared itself ready for the united front from above—true, on a national and not on an international scale—but consented, so as to satisfy the reformist bureaucracy, to renounce mutual criticism during the period of the united front. A jump from incredible bluntness and ultimatistic presumptuousness to characterless concessions! The Stalinist bureaucracy, having stifled criticism as such within its own party, has evidently lost its understanding of criticism in the political struggle. Revolutionary criticism determines the attitude of the proletarian vanguard, that is, of the most critical party in contemporary society, towards all classes, parties, and groupings. A real Communist party can no more renounce criticism, not even for a day, than a living organism can renounce respiration. The policy of the united front does not exclude mutual criticism in any case; on the contrary, it demands it. Only two bureaucratic apparatuses, one of which is weighed down with betrayals and the other with a fatal chain of errors, can be interested in the suspension of mutual criticism, thereby transforming the united front into a silent conspiracy behind the masses, the aim of which is their own preservation. We Bolshevik-Leninists say that never and under no conditions will we join in such a conspiracy; on the contrary, we will unremittingly denounce it to the workers.

At the same time that it consents to renounce criticism, the Stalinist bureaucracy seizes upon the repulsive boot-licking of Wels, Leipart, and Co. before Hitler to revive the theory of social fascism. Actually this theory remains as false today as it was yesterday. Those who were only recently the masters of Germany, fallen under the boot of fascism, are licking this boot in order to gain indulgence from the fascists; that corresponds to the miserable nature of the reformist bureaucracy. But that does not at all signify that there is no difference for the reformists between democracy and the fascist boot, and that the Social Democratic masses are not capable of struggling against fascism when an issue is opened for them on the arena of struggle.

The policy of fascism rests on demagogy, lies, and slander. The revolutionary policy can build only on truth. That is why we are obliged to resolutely condemn the organization bureau for the convocation of the present congress, which in its appeal, speaking of the powerful development of the antifascist struggle, has given an optimistically false picture of the state of
things in Germany. In reality, for the moment, the German workers are retreating without fighting in complete disorder. Such is the bitter fact which cannot be blurred by words. In order to stand on its feet, to regroup, and to concentrate its forces, the proletariat, represented by its vanguard, must understand what has happened. Away with illusions! They are precisely the illusions which led to the catastrophe. We must say what is clearly, honestly, openly.

The situation in Germany is profoundly tragic. The butcher has only begun his work. The victims will be legion. Hundreds and thousands of workers in the KPD are imprisoned. Severe tests await those who remain faithful to their banner. The honest workers of the entire world are giving their whole-hearted sympathy to the victims of the fascist butcher. But it will be the height of hypocrisy to demand silence on the fatal policy of Stalinism because its German representatives have now become its victims. Great historic problems are not settled by sentimentalism. The supreme law of the struggle is to conform to the end goal. Only the Marxist explanation of all that has happened can imbue the vanguard with self-confidence. It does not suffice for it to express its sympathies for the victims; it must become stronger in order to overthrow and strangle the butcher.

German fascism slavishly follows the Italian example. That, however, does not signify that power is assured to Hitler for a series of years, as was the case with Mussolini. Fascist Germany starts out on its course in conditions of very advanced capitalist disintegration, of mass misery unprecedented in modern history, and of threatening tension in international relations. The denouement can come very much sooner than the masters of the day think. It will, however, not come of itself. A revolutionary shock is needed.

The Social Democratic press places great hopes in the existence of cracks in the German government bloc. Along this same path, fundamentally, marches Pravda of Moscow, which only yesterday denied the existence of antagonism between fascism and the Social Democracy but today counts on the antagonisms between Hitler and Hugenberg. Contradictions in the ruling camp are undeniable. But in themselves they are powerless to arrest the victorious development of the fascist dictatorship which is dependent upon the whole situation of German capitalism. We must not expect miracles. Only the proletariat can put an end to fascism. So that the workers may proceed onto their broad historic path, a decisive turn is necessary in the field of revolutionary leadership. It is necessary to return to the policy of Marx and Lenin.
We Bolshevik-Leninists don't come to the congress to entertain any illusions whatsoever or to save false reputations. Our aim is to clear the road for the future. Naturally, we do not doubt that tens and perhaps hundreds of thousands of workers who are seriously prepared for struggle will be represented at this congress. No less are we inclined to believe that the delegates will be seriously disposed in their majority to do everything possible to crush fascism. Nevertheless the congress itself, in the manner in which it has been conceived and called together, cannot, we are profoundly convinced, bear serious revolutionary significance. Fascism is a formidable enemy. To struggle against it, we need compact masses of millions and tens of millions of workers well organized and well directed. We need a firm base in the shops and in the unions. We need the confidence of the masses in a leadership that has been tested by the experience of struggle. The problem is not solved by solemn meetings or sensational speeches. This congress, hastily improvised, represents isolated groups without any links between them, who after the congress will be just as isolated as before it from the millions of proletarians.

"Isolated" individuals from intellectual-bourgeois circles will color the antifascist congress as they colored the Amsterdam [antiwar] congress. It is not a very permanent color. The advanced workers, it is true, greatly appreciate the sympathy which the best representatives of science, literature, and art have for them. But from that it does not at all follow that radical scientists or artists are capable of replacing the mass organizations or of undertaking to lead the proletariat. And yet this congress pretends to leadership! Those representatives of the bourgeois intelligentsia who really desire to participate in the revolutionary struggle should begin by clearly defining their program and by attaching themselves to a workers' organization. In other words, in order to have the right to vote at a congress of the fighting proletariat, the "isolated" must cease to be isolated.

Neither the work against war nor the march against fascism requires any special art which lies beyond the general struggle of the proletariat. The organization which is incapable of analyzing the situation precisely, of leading the daily defensive and offensive battles, of gathering about it the broadest masses, of achieving unity in defensive actions with the reformist workers, freeing them at the same time of their reformist prejudices—such an organization will inevitably suffer shipwreck in the face of war as well as of fascism.

The Amsterdam congress has already shown its inconsistency in the course of the offensive of the Japanese bandits
against China. Even in the domain of agitation, the alliance of the Stalinist bureaucracy with the isolated pacifists has not achieved anything substantial. It must be said openly: the antifascist congress, which in its international composition is rather an accidental meeting, is called to create an appearance of action just when there has been a default of action. If the congress, conforming to the project of its organizers, contents itself with a barren appeal, in the history of the struggle against fascism it risks becoming not only a zero but a negative quantity, for the most serious crime in present conditions is to lead the workers into error about their actual forces and the real methods of struggle.

Only on one condition can the Congress of Struggle Against Fascism play a progressive although modest role: if it shakes off the hypnosis of the bureaucratic impresarios who stand behind the scenes and puts on the agenda a free discussion on the causes of the victory of German fascism, on the responsibility of the leading proletarian organizations, and on a true program of revolutionary struggle. It is by taking this path and this one only that the congress will become a factor of revolutionary revival.

The platform of the International Left Opposition gives the only correct directives for the struggle against fascism. As the most immediate and most pressing measures, we Bolshevik-Leninists propose the following:

1. to immediately accept the proposals of the Second International for an agreement on an international scale (such an agreement does not exclude but demands the concretization of the slogans and the methods for each particular country);

2. to condemn in principle the formula of the united front "from below only," which means the rejection of the united front generally;

3. to reject and to condemn the theory of social fascism;

4. in no case and under no condition to renounce the right to criticize temporary allies;

5. to reestablish freedom within the Communist parties and all organizations that are under their control and those that make up the antifascist congress;

6. to renounce the policy of independent Communist trade-union organizations; to participate actively in the mass trade unions;

7. to renounce the infamous competition with fascism under the slogans of "national liberation" and "people's revolution";

8. to renounce the theory of socialism in one country, which nourishes petty-bourgeois nationalist tendencies and weakens the working class in the struggle against fascism;
9. to mobilize the European proletariat against Versailles and anti-Versailles chauvinism under the banner of the Soviet United States of Europe;

10. to prepare through an open and honest discussion and to convene an emergency congress of each section of the Comintern within the period of one month, in order to examine the experience of the struggle with counterrevolution and elaborate a program of action for the future;

11. to convene a democratically prepared congress of the Comintern within a period of two months;

12. to reinstate the Left Opposition into the ranks of the Comintern, its sections, and all the organizations that it controls.

It is necessary to begin to undertake the discussions between the Second and Third International by putting the question of Austria in first place. Everything has not yet been lost in that country. By starting immediately on the road of active defense the Austrian proletariat, supported by the proletariat of all the countries of Europe, could by consistent and courageous development of the offensive wrest the power from the hands of the enemy—the internal relation of forces in Austria assures victory. A Red Austria will immediately become a source of strength for the German workers. The whole situation will change abruptly in favor of the revolution. The European proletariat will feel that it represents an invincible force. And only this consciousness is necessary for it to wipe out all its enemies.

It is the USSR which occupies the central position in the struggle with world counterrevolution. In this domain, we Bolshevik-Leninists, less than ever, subscribe to the policy of official optimism. In the bureaucracy all is well five minutes before the catastrophe. Such was the case in Germany. The same method is being applied to the Soviet Union, but the situation in the first workers' state has never been so tense as at present. The basically false policy of the uncontrolled bureaucracy has thrown the country into unbearable privation, has brought the peasantry into conflict with the proletariat, has sown discontent among the working masses, has tied the hands and feet of the party, has weakened all the pillars and props of the dictatorship. The October Revolution has no need of "friends" who sing false hymns and repeat each word of the ruling bureaucracy in chorus. The October Revolution has need of militants who speak the truth, even if it is harsh, but who on the other hand maintain an unshakable loyalty in the hour of danger.

We sound the alarm before the world proletariat: the Soviet
fatherland is in danger! Only fundamental reform of the entire policy will save it. The program of such reform is the program of the Left Opposition in the USSR. Thousands of its best fighters, at their head Christian Rakovsky, at the present time fill the prisons and the places of deportation of the Soviet Union. From the tribune of this congress we send our fraternal greetings to our valiant comrades-in-arms. Their number is growing. No amount of persecution will shake their courage. In the difficult days to come the proletarian dictatorship will find in them not only wise counselors but also devoted soldiers.

The development of the international workers' movement, and above all the European, has reached a decisive point. The KPD is smashed. To think of reestablishing it on the old basis and under the old leadership is a hopeless utopia. There are defeats that are unpardonable. The German Communist party will now be built on a new basis. Only those elements of the old party who have freed themselves from the heritage of Stalinism can take their place among the builders. Will this organizational succession be repeated in the development of the other sections of the Comintern? History has apparently not rendered its final verdict on that. One thing is certain: very little time remains to correct the monstrous errors. If this time is lost, the Communist International will go down in history with the glorious Leninist beginning and the infamous Stalinist end.

We Bolshevik-Leninists propose to make the experience of the collapse of German communism a point of departure for the rebirth of all its remaining sections. We are ready to concentrate all our forces to that end. In the name of this task we extend our hand to our fiercest adversaries of yesterday. It is unnecessary to say that in the battle against fascism, in the defensive as in the offensive, the Bolshevik-Leninists will occupy their places of struggle in the common ranks as they have occupied them everywhere and always.

Under the banner of Marx and Lenin, forward to the world proletarian revolution.
Everyone digests his food and oxygenates his blood. But not everyone will dare write a thesis about digestion and blood circulation. Not so with the social sciences. Since every person lives under the influence of the market and of the historic process in general, it is considered sufficient to possess common sense in order to write exercises on economic and especially historic-philosophic themes. As a general rule only "objectivity" is demanded of a historical work. In point of fact, whatever bears this high-sounding title in the language of common sense has nothing to do with scientific objectivity.

The philistine, especially if he is separated from the fighting arena by time and space, considers himself elevated above the fighting camps by the mere fact that he understands neither of them. He sincerely takes his blindness regarding the working of historical forces for the height of impartiality, just as he is used to considering himself the normal measure of all things. Notwithstanding their documentary value, too many historical papers are being written according to this standard. A blunting of sharp edges with even distribution of light and shadow and a conciliatory moralizing with a thorough disguise of the author's sympathies easily secure for a historical work the high reputation of "objectivity."

Insofar as the subject of investigation is a phenomenon as poorly reconcilable with common sense as revolution, this historical "objectivity" dictates in advance its immutable conclusions: the cause of the disturbances lies in the fact that the conservatives were much too conservative, the revolutionaries much too revolutionary; the historical excesses called civil war can in the future be avoided if the private owners will be more
generous, and the hungry people more moderate. A book with such tendencies has a good effect on the nerves, especially during an epoch of world crisis.

The demand of science, and not parlor-philistine "objectivity," really is that one should expose the social conditioning of historical events, no matter how unpleasant they may be for the nerves. History is not a dumping ground for documents and moral maxims. History is a science no less objective than physiology. It requires not a hypocritical "impartiality" but a scientific method. One can accept or reject the materialistic dialectic as the method of historical science, but one must reckon with it. Scientific objectivity can be and must be lodged in the very method itself. If the author did not manage its proper application, it must be pointed out exactly where.

I attempted to base my History [of the Russian Revolution], not on my own political sympathies, but on the material foundations of society. I considered the revolution as a process, conditioned by all the past, of the direct struggle of classes for power. The center of attention for me was the change in the consciousness of the classes taking place under the effect of the feverish tempo of their own struggle. I considered political parties and political agents in no other light than that of mass shifts and clashes. Four parallel processes conditioned by the social structure of the country thus formed the background of the whole narrative: the evolution of the consciousness of the proletariat from February to October; the change of the moods in the army; a growth of peasant vindictiveness; the awakening and insurgence of the oppressed nationalities. By revealing the dialectic of the consciousness of masses thrown out of equilibrium, the author sought to give the nearest immediate key to all the events of the revolution.

A literary work is "truthful" or artistic when the interrelations of the heroes develop, not according to the author's desires, but according to the latent forces of the characters and the setting. Scientific knowledge differs greatly from the artistic. But the two also have some traits in common, defined by the dependence of the description on the thing described. A historical work is scientific when facts combine into one whole process which, as in life, lives according to its own internal laws.

Is the depiction of the classes of Russia true? Do these classes, through their parties and politicians, talk their own language? Do the events—naturally, without being forced—go back to their social source, i.e., to the struggle of living historic forces? Does the general conception of the revolution conflict with actual facts? I must admit with gratitude that a large number
of critics have approached my work precisely from the standpoint of these really objective, i.e., scientific criteria. Their critical remarks may be right or wrong, but the great majority of them are fruitful.

It is not accidental, however, that those critics who miss "objectivity" neglect completely the problem of historic determinism. They are really complaining about the "injustice" of the author toward his opponents, as if it were a question not of scientific research but of a school report card with marks for good conduct. One of the critics is offended for the monarchy, another for the liberals, a third for the compromisers. Since the sympathies of these critics got neither recognition nor indulgence from the actual reality in 1917, they would now like to find consolation in the pages of history, just as some people seek shelter from the blows of destiny in romantic literature. But the last thing the author had in mind was to console anybody. He merely wished to interpret in his book the verdict of the historical process itself. The offended persons themselves, by the way, in spite of the fifteen or sixteen years which they have had at their disposal, have never attempted to explain the causes of what happened to them. The White emigration has not produced one single historical work worthy of the name. The cause of its misfortune it still tries to find in "German gold," the illiteracy of the masses, the criminal plots of the Bolsheviks. The personal irritation of the apostles of objectivity—I trust this is indisputable—must necessarily be the sharper, the more convincingly the historical narrative reveals the inevitability of their destruction and their want of any hope for the future.

The more cautious of these politically disappointed critics often disguise the source of their annoyance in complaints to the effect that the author of the History permits himself to use polemics and irony. That, they seem to think, is beneath the dignity of the scientific guild. But revolution itself is a polemic that has become a mass action. Nor is irony lacking in the historical process; during a revolution it can be measured in millions of horsepower. Speeches, resolutions, letters of those taking part, as well as their subsequent recollections, have necessarily a polemical character. There is nothing easier than to "reconcile" all this chaos of bitter struggle of interests and ideas according to the method of the golden mean; there is also nothing more fruitless. The author strove to define the true relative might in the course of the social struggle of all opinions, slogans, promises, and demands by means of a critical (or, if you wish, polemical) sorting and cleaning. He reduced the individual to the social, the particular to the gen-
eral, the subjective to the objective. In our opinion, this is exactly what history consists of as a science.

There exists a quite special group of critics who are personally offended for Stalin, and for whom history outside of that question does not exist. These people consider themselves "friends" of the Russian Revolution. In reality, they are merely attorneys for the Soviet bureaucracy. That is not the same thing. The bureaucracy grew stronger as the activity of the masses grew weaker. The power of the bureaucracy is an expression of the reaction against the revolution. It is true that this reaction is developing on the foundations laid by the October Revolution, but even so it is a reaction. The attorneys of the bureaucracy are often the attorneys of the anti-October reaction. This is not altered by the fact that they perform their functions unconsciously.

Like shopkeepers grown rich who create for themselves a new and more suitable genealogy, the bureaucratic caste which grew out of the revolution has created its own historiography. Hundreds of rotary presses are at its services. But its quantity does not make up for its scientific quality. Even to please the most disinterested friends of the Soviet authorities, I could not leave untouched those historic legends which are perhaps very flattering to the vanity of the bureaucracy, but which nevertheless have the misfortune of contradicting facts and documents.

I shall confine myself to one single example which, it seems to me, well illustrates the matter. A number of pages in my book are devoted to refuting the fairy tale created after 1924 to the effect that I attempted to postpone the armed insurrection until after the congress of Soviets, while Lenin, it seems, backed by a majority of the Central Committee, succeeded in having the insurrection carried out on the eve of the congress. By adducing numerous evidences, I tried to prove—and I think I undeniably did prove—that Lenin, cut off by his illegal status from the theater of struggle, was too impatient to begin the insurrection, separating it completely from the congress of Soviets. I, on the other hand, backed by the majority of the Central Committee, tried to bring the insurrection as near as possible to the congress of Soviets and cover it with the latter's authority. With all its importance, the disagreement was of a purely practical and temporary character. Later Lenin frankly admitted that he had been in the wrong.

While I was working on my History I did not have on hand the collection of speeches delivered at the Moscow anniversary meeting of April 23, 1920, celebrating Lenin's fiftieth birthday. One of the pages in that book reads verbatim as follows: "We
in the Central Committee decided to go ahead with reinforcing the Soviets, to summon the congress of Soviets, to open the insurrection, and proclaim the congress of Soviets the organ of state power. Ilyich [Lenin], who was then in hiding, did not agree and wrote, [in the middle of September—L. T.] that . . . the Democratic Conference\(^{186}\) must be dissolved and arrested. We understand that things were not so simple . . . All the holes, the pitfalls on our course were more visible to us . . . In spite of all Ilyich's demands we went ahead with reinforcement, and on the 25th of October confronted the picture of an insurrection. Ilyich, smiling, slyly looking at us, said: 'Yes, you were right'” (Fiftieth Anniversary of V. I. Ulyanov-Lenin, 1920, pp. 27-28).

The above quotation is taken from a speech given by none other than Stalin, some five years before he put into circulation the poisonous insinuation that I attempt to "belittle" the role of Lenin in the revolution of October 25. If the just-quoted document, which fully confirms my story (in cruder terms, it is true), had been in my hands a year ago, it would have relieved me of the necessity of adducing indirect and less authoritative proofs. But, on the other hand, I am content that this small book, forgotten by all, poorly printed on poor paper (1920, a heavy year!) happened into my hands so late. By this very fact it brings additional and very striking proof of the "objectivity," or, more simply, the truthfulness of my narrative even in the sphere of those disputed questions of a personal character.

Nobody—I shall allow myself to state this in a most categorical manner—nobody has so far found in my narrative a violation of truthfulness, which is the first commandment for historical as well as other narratives. Particular errors are possible. Tendentious distortions—no! If it were possible to find in the Moscow archives even one single document directly or indirectly refuting or weakening my narrative, it would have been long ago translated and published in all languages. The adverse theorem is not hard to prove: all the documents in the least degree dangerous to the official legends are carefully kept out of sight. It is not surprising that the advocates of the Stalin bureaucracy calling themselves friends of the October Revolution have to make up for this lack of arguments by a surplus of zeal. But this type of criticism worries my scientific conscience least of all. Legends dissolve, facts remain.
The victory of German fascism closes a distinct epoch of political history and opens a new one. In the course of the past year the Stalinist bureaucracy did all that was possible, without wishing it, to make the fascist victory easier. Addressing itself to the proletariat of the world, the Left Opposition (Bolshevik-Leninists) implacably criticized the policies of the Stalinist bureaucracy and gave answers to all the problems as they were posed by the events.

No proletarian revolutionist can close his eyes to the conflict between the two factions raging within the camp of communism. Comrade Oskar Fischer has performed an important and instructive task by collecting and classifying according to subject the clearest and most inclusive answers that were given to the theoretical and practical questions by the Stalinist bureaucracy on the one hand and by the Left Opposition on the other. I hope that this rare collection of citations will soon find its way to every thinking worker. There will be no advance forward unless we learn by the tragic mistakes and defeats of the past.
THE COLLAPSE OF THE KPD AND
THE TASKS OF THE OPPOSITION

April 9, 1933

The question of the fate of German communism stands now at the center of attention of all our sections. So far as can be judged, the majority of comrades are inclined to the belief that in Germany the question of communism is a question of a new party. There are others, however, who consider such a formulation of the question incorrect and maintain that the old slogan of a "reform" of the party along Leninist lines should be retained. This is the position, for instance, of two Spanish comrades, of two German comrades, who speak in the name of whole groups, and of one Russian comrade. I do not doubt that their objections reflect the mood of quite a considerable part of the Opposition. It would be unnatural if the need for such a serious turn did not produce in our midst different shadings and disagreements. It would be unworthy of the Opposition if we were incapable of discussing in a comradely yet matter-of-fact fashion the disagreements which have arisen. Such a discussion can result only in the further growth of the Opposition and in the strengthening of inner democracy. In what concerns the essence of the objections themselves, I cannot agree with them although I can understand them psychologically. The mistake of the above-mentioned comrades consists in their proceeding from the formulas of yesterday and not from the facts of today. We must learn how to correct and replace formulas in the light of new events.

During the last three years our calculations have been based on the ability of the KPD to make a change in policy in time under the pressure of the masses. If our prognosis of yesterday was defined more sharply, it would be expressed as follows: "We cannot know as yet to what degree the German
working class is weakened by past mistakes, zigzags, and defeats, and to what degree the sabotage of the Stalinist bureaucracy in combination with the capitulation of the Social Democracy have paralyzed the energies of the proletariat."

We have frequently expressed the hope that the very approach of the fascist danger would close the ranks of the proletariat and give rise to a power of resistance which would not allow Hitler to capture all positions at once. And every setback in the advance of Hitler, even though he were already in power, would inevitably release a greater flow of confidence among the workers. The beginning of civil war in its turn should have engendered a decomposition in the government camp and in the fascist army itself. Vacillations in the camp of the enemy should have, in their turn, again heightened the offensive force of the proletariat, etc., etc. Such was the dialectical perspective which we considered probable; at any rate, not excluded. And because of that we had to, it was our duty, exhaust all possibilities contained in the situation of yesterday.

Now it would be insane, however, to be ruled by an old perspective that has been overruled by events. The Spanish comrades ask: "Is it possible that these few weeks can replace the perspective of long months of civil war?" Of course they have replaced it. A few weeks, even days, have destroyed completely the possibility of that more favorable variant on which we counted. Hitler seized the material apparatus of power. He routed without the least resistance the apparatus of the KPD, deprived the German workers of their press, and forced the reformists to break with the Second International and submit to the fascist regime.

The sharp change in the situation is clearly revealed in the question of the united front. To propose a united front in Germany between the two parties now would be doctrinaire stupidity. There was a period when the Social Democratic apparatus found itself under the yoke of advancing fascism on one side and the pressure of its own masses on the other—that time should have been utilized. Now, after the defeat, the Social Democracy licks the boots of Hitler and sees in that the only means for its salvation. If two years ago Breitscheid\(^9\) considered it necessary to scare the bourgeoisie by a bloc with Communists, now Wels and Co. are interested in recoiling demonstratively not only from the Communists but from the Second International itself.

The proposal of a united front now would only place the Communist Central Committee in a ridiculous position and would be of service to the Social Democratic Party admin-
The Co
collapse of the KPD

istration. Politics knows no absolute formulas. Its slogans
are concrete, that is, timed to definite circumstances. (What
has been said above does not, of course, exclude, even today,
agreements between the Communist and the Social Democratic
organizations in the factories, in the districts, etc., as well
as agreements with other left-wing groups which will inevi-
tably break off from the official Social Democracy.)

The average German worker as well as the average Com-
munist feels like a traveler who has suffered shipwreck. His
organizations, press, his hopes for a better future—all are
drowned in the waves of fascism. The thoughts of the ship-
wrecked are not directed toward building a new ship but to-
ward getting shelter and a piece of bread. A depressed spir-
it and political indifference are the inevitable consequences
of such gigantic catastrophes. But the political awakening of
the more enduring, of the firm and courageous, will inevita-
bly be tied up with the thought of a new ship.

As for characterizing the present situation in which the deep-
est layers of the German proletariat find themselves, I consid-
er most important the report that the majority of the old shop
committees have been ousted and replaced by cells of Nazis.
This "reform" took place so quietly that not even the foreign
press reported it. But this is not a matter of the editorial
board of a newspaper, or of Liebknecht House [KPD head-
quartes], or even of a parliamentary faction; that is, it is
not a matter of distant heights, but of the very base in pro-
duction of the proletariat—the shop. The lack of resistance
against the ousting of shop committees denotes an acute pa-
ralysis of the will of the masses under the influence of treach-
ery and sabotage at the top.

During the last years the KPD had gathered up to six mil-
lion votes. Yet it did not draw into the struggle even one
hundred thousand. Even the members of the party did not
respond to the appeals of the Central Committee. This fact
alone indicates the frightful isolation of the apparatus. With
each day this isolation will grow. The masses are not inter-
ested in shadings and trifles. They take events as a whole.
The masses will inevitably turn their back on the party that
quieted their anxiety with empty formulas, with boasts of the
victories of tomorrow, and then led headlong to a catastroph.

The situation of the KPD changed so radically within the
two or three weeks of March as in "normal," "peaceful" times
it could not have changed in two decades. The imperialist
epoch in general is an epoch of sharp turns. One must learn
to follow them attentively so as not to trip and crack one's
head. We must not delude ourselves; we must give ourselves
a full account of the extent of the catastrophe—of course, not to become tearfully downcast, but to start the long and stubborn work required according to a new plan on a new historic base.

Nearly all those opposing object to the comparison of August 4, 1914, with March 5, 1933: the Social Democrats, you see, betrayed the proletariat consciously and by that came nearer to the seats of power; the Stalinists, however, "did not know" how to defend the proletariat and landed in jail. The difference is, of course, very essential and not accidental. But we don't have to exaggerate its political significance. In the first place, the majority of the Social Democracy, even in 1914, did not want to carve out a career, but to "save" the proletarian organizations, just as the leaders of the KPD, blindly obedient to the commands of the Moscow bureaucracy, think first of all of their apparatus. In the second place, if in 1914 the Social Democracy came nearer to the seats of power, in 1933, despite all its baseness and degradation, it came nearer to the jails. We need not doubt that in the end it will be crushed and will yet have its Matteottis. But does this change our general estimate of reformist policy?

We condemn the apparatus of the KPD, not for "stupidity" or "inability" (as certain comrades express themselves absolutely incorrectly), but for bureaucratic centrism. It is a matter of a particular political current that bases itself on a definite social stratum, first of all in the USSR, and adapts its policy to the needs of this stratum. Until the latest events, the question of which factor would win out in the KPD—the interests of the Stalinist bureaucracy or the logic of the class struggle—remained open. Now the question is completely answered. If events of such gigantic import could not correct the policy of the KPD, it means that bureaucratic centrism is absolutely hopeless. And from this follows the need of a new party.

"But the question is solved on an international scale!" object the opponents, who turn a correct historic thought into a superhistoric abstraction. The question of the victory of the proletariat—and not only of its defeat—is also solved on an international scale. This does not prevent the proletariat of Russia which attained its victory in 1917 from still waiting for the victory in other countries. And the opposite process can also develop unevenly: while the official KPD is liquidated politically, in other countries, and primarily in the USSR, the party has not yet been subjected to a decisive test. Historic events unfold themselves, irrespective of the chessboard of the Comintern.

But is it not the Comintern that bears the responsibility for
the German defeat? Absolutely true. In the court of history, however, just as in an ordinary bourgeois court, liability is placed not on the one who bears the principal responsibility, but on the one who has been caught. Now, alas, the apparatus of the KPD has been caught between the tongs of history. The distribution of the punishment is really "unjust." But justice generally is not an attribute of the historic process. And there is no appeal from it.

However, let us not slander the court of history; it is much more serious than the bourgeois court. The liquidation of the KPD is only a stage. It will not stop there. If other sections of the Comintern will learn the German lesson, they may rightfully deserve the leniency of history. Otherwise they are doomed. In this way, the march of history gives the other sections still some time to reconsider. We, the Left Opposition, are only the historic interpreters of the march of development. That is why we do not break with the Third International.

"But how can we build a new party in Germany without breaking with the Comintern?" rejoin the ones who, despite all, would like to force the contradictions of the historic process into the framework of formal statutes. We must say that this side of the question seems to us least important. Why, even at the time we were excluded from the Comintern and declared ourselves a faction thereof, the matter of the statutes was not of highest standing. For us it is a question of a political course, not of bookkeeping. If any section of the Comintern will yet succeed in rebuilding itself on a healthy basis, we will of course use this as a point of departure to hasten the rebuilding of the whole Comintern; then our formal relations will also become much improved. If, however, the Stalinist bureaucracy will bring the USSR to ruin, then no one will recall the statutes—it will be necessary to build a Fourth International.

Let us, however, return to Germany. In the first days of March, the KPD still had a centralized apparatus, tens of newspapers, thousands of units, tens of thousands of members, millions of votes. We declared ourselves a part of this party and by that took responsibility for the party as a whole before the outside world; of course, not for the sake of the Stalinist apparatus but for the sake of the lower units. With their aid, we hoped in time, that is, prior to a catastrophe, to renew the leadership of the party. Now, when the official apparatus, bound by ultimatism and illegality, must transform itself completely into a Stalinist agency, there can be no thought of influencing it through the lower strata from which it is completely cut off.
True, the Stalinist press of the whole world talks of the "re-generation" of the KPD underground (the illegal *Rote Fahne* [Red Flag], leaflets, etc., etc.). That the local organizations would start to stir after a temporary daze was clear in advance. That the apparatus of such a large party, commanding widespread personnel and large amounts of money, can issue a considerable quantity of literature illegally and semilegally—there is nothing surprising in that. But we must repeat again: the KPD has no illegal apparatus connected with the masses. What it has are the remains of the old organization which by the will of Hitler found themselves in an illegal state. This is not one and the same thing. If the KPD is active today, it is due to the fact that Hitler has just started his executioner's job and that the reaction has not yet penetrated deeply into the party. Both these processes, however, are on the order of the day. They will proceed parallel to each other, nourishing and accelerating each other.

For an illegal Communist party, a special selection of people is necessary who understand the extent of the catastrophe and have a clear perspective and confidence in their banner. Such a selection can be made in no other way than on the basis of an irreconcilable criticism of the past. The collapse of the organization of the Stalinists, inevitable in itself, will release elements and clear the ground for the creation of an illegal revolutionary party.

"But," one of the German comrades objects, "politically the party is, of course, a corpse; organizationally it is alive." This formula reveals best of all the erroneousness of the position of my opponent. A party which is dead politically cannot have a "live" organization, since an organization is only a tool of policy. If the party is dead, however, we must make the diagnosis openly, to all the workers, with all the necessary conclusions. What part of the old heritage will be transferred to the new party, what will be the forms of the transfer, what will be the stages in the development of the new party, what will be the relations between the builders and the remains of the old organization—all these are very important questions which will have to be answered depending on the development of the whole situation. But in order that the answer shall not be false, not illusory, we must start from what is irrevocably established by history: the Stalinist party is dead politically. Ambiguities and subterfuges are impermissible; they would only throw us off our own path.

The same comrade writes: "The slogan of reform is meaningless as we do not know now what and how to reform; but we are also against the slogan of a new party since we do not
consider that the fate of the old party is finally decided." One contradiction is piled on top of another, despite the fact that the writer is an observant and keen comrade. If the party is "politically dead," that means that its fate is decided. The apparatus will not resuscitate it; as testified by experience, an apparatus can kill the living but not resuscitate the dead. If the slogan of reform of the old party is "meaningless," then nothing remains but the slogan of a new party.

The opponents are mainly frightened by the relation of forces: we Bolshevik-Leninists declare as liquidated a big organization which is still capable today of issuing ten times as much literature and spending a thousand times more money than we, and yet we "proclaim" a new party in the name of the small Left Opposition. To pose the question in this manner is to be steeped through and through in apparatus fetishism. Today, as yesterday, our main task is to form cadres. But this is not merely an organizational problem, it is a political problem: cadres are formed on the basis of a definite perspective. To again warm up the slogan of party reform means to knowingly set a utopian aim and thereby to push our own cadres toward new and ever-sharper disappointments. With such a course the Left Opposition would only become the appendage of a decomposing party and would disappear from the scene together with it.

Agreeing with the fact that the old party is liquidated and even admitting in essence the inevitability of creating a new party, one of the opponents strives for delay, for a moratorium of a kind. His arguments are of the following nature: only 10 percent of the party members, although the most valuable ones, are critically inclined and listen to us; the remaining 90 percent, mainly new recruits, have not yet understood at all the mistakes of the party. From this it follows that we must explain to these 90 percent, step by step, what has occurred, and only after that start to build a new party. This is an abstractly propagandist and not a political—or speaking philosophically, a rationalistic and not a dialectical—approach to the problem.

It would of course be splendid if we could place 90 percent of the young Communists into a big school and give them a full study course. But, alas, these 90 percent fell into the school of Hitler. Already today, they are not only half-torn from the party but from politics in general. A part will go over to fascism, a more considerable part will become indifferent. These processes will develop within the next few weeks and months: counterrevolution, just as revolution, works fast. Under the influence of the decomposition of the party, the
ebbing away of the masses, the political sterility of the apparatus, all the best elements of the old party will keep on asking themselves and others: What to do? In this situation, to provide them with the slogan of "reform" would simply mean to mock at them. In moments of greatest crisis we must proceed, not from the quickly changing moods of the party mass, but from objective changes in the political situation. Many of these Communists who today are still afraid to break with their bureaucracy will blame us tomorrow for deluding them, for keeping up the fiction of the old party; drawing away from us, they will go to the Brandlerites or to the anarchists. The Brandlerites, as is reported, are already calling for a new party; this shows that, although opportunistic, they are politicians. If we, with our revolutionary platform, should prove ourselves doctrinaire, then opportunistic politicians will always succeed in pushing us aside.

What *practically speaking* will be our relations with the Stalinist organization in Germany in the next period? This question naturally interests the comrades most. Must we, ask our opponents, break with the local organizations of the old party? No, that would be absurd. We must recruit the revolutionaries in all workers' organizations and primarily in the units of the old party insofar as they exist. When the Third International proclaimed the complete break with the Second, this did not prevent the Communists from working for a considerable period of time within the Social Democratic parties and even conquering the majority of the French party together with *l'Humanite*. All the more, our course towards a new party cannot and must not prevent our working in the units of the old party.

But, we hear the objection, the very slogan of a new party will antagonize the rank and file against us. Conflicts are possible. But we also had conflicts in the past despite the slogan of "reform." We need not doubt, however, that in the life of the active units of the old party much more time will be given to the relations with their own Central Committee than to the question of our new perspective. Here we may expect ever-sharper conflicts. The Central Committee will defend Stalin and itself; therein lies its main objective. The worker-Communist will demand honest answers and clear perspectives. When we held the position of reform, we did not advocate the breaking of discipline. Now the situation is radically changed. We will propose in the units an end to the distribution of worthless official literature, a boycott of the apparatus, a break with the Central Committee. It is understood that we will do all this tactfully and sensibly, considering the lev-
el of each unit and the circumstances. But our main line will be that of a new party. And we need not doubt that in spite of this line our relations with the revolutionary party units, in a new situation, in illegality, will be incomparably more friendly than in the preceding period when we wanted to be only a faction.

We must not forget also that it is not a matter of the KPD alone. The political collapse of the Social Democracy makes the appearance of a new "independent" party from its midst very probable. Can we suppose even for a moment that the Stalinist apparatus will be capable of attracting the left Social Democracy to its side, or even of influencing it in a revolutionary fashion? This is excluded beforehand. By their ultimatism, as well as their past, which they do not want to and cannot renounce, the Stalinists will only slow up the development of the Social Democratic opposition, playing, in the service of Wels, the role of a garden scarecrow. From this point of view also, the perspective of a new party places itself imperatively on the order of the day.

Behind the majority of the political and logical objections, there really lurks an unexpressed sentimental consideration: the Stalinist apparatus is under the blows of fascism; many devoted and unselfish comrades are trying with all their might to save the organization— is it permissible to discourage the fighters under such conditions? This argument can be best expressed by two lines from a verse of a Russian poet: "Elevating illusion is more precious to us than the darkness of bitter truth." But the philosophy of Pushkin is not the philosophy of Marxism. When at the beginning of the century we struggled against the petty-bourgeois illusions and adventurism of the Social Revolutionaries, many good people, not only in the Narodnik camp but even in our midst, indignantly broke with the Leninist Iskra which, you see, allowed itself to criticize terror unmercifully at the time when the terrorists were perishing in the hangman's noose. We replied: the aim of our criticism consists precisely in tearing away the revolutionary heroes from individual terrorism and in leading them to the road of mass struggle. The illegal apparatus, appended to Manuilsky-Stalin, can bring nothing to the German proletariat save new misfortunes. We must say this openly and without delay in order to save hundreds and thousands of revolutionaries from a fruitless waste of their energies.
BLIND OBEDIENCE, REVOLUTIONARY DISCIPLINE, AND THE YOUTH

April 10, 1933

Declaration of the International Left Opposition (Bolshevik-Leninists) to the Youth Conference at Paris

The workers of the world stand at a turning point. After a series of victories of imperialist reaction, particularly fascism, the proletariat will have to pass through years of hard tests and difficult struggle. The continuity of the revolutionary movement can be assured only on the condition that new troops of convinced and tested fighters emerge from the younger generation.

The Social Democracy, as its flight before Hitler conclusively shows, is able to educate lackeys, not fighters. The young workers have nothing to learn in the school of this party. The school of Marx and Lenin alone shows them the way to break through the imperialist and fascist hell into a socialist society.

Although we appeal to the workers to rally around the banner of the Comintern, we believe it mandatory to clearly point out that its revision of the principles of communism and the bureaucratic degeneration of its regime enormously hamper the influence of the Comintern on the young workers and make their correct revolutionary education difficult.

The revision of principle has found its worst expression in the theory of "socialism in one country," which undermines proletarian internationalism and covers up all types of petty-bourgeois, reactionary, utopian, and nationalist tendencies in the workers' ranks.

The International Left Opposition (Bolshevik-Leninists), in a series of programmatic documents based on the experience
of the last ten years, has denounced the fatal distortions introduced by bureaucratic centrism into the theory and practice of communism. It is necessary here at this youth conference to strenuously protest against the bureaucratic regime instituted in the party which stifles the internal life of the Communist vanguard and closes the road to an independent development of the youth.

Blind obedience is a virtue in a soldier of a capitalist army but not in a proletarian fighter. Revolutionary discipline is rooted in collective thought and will. A supporter of the theory of scientific communism does not take anything on word. He judges everything by reason and experience. The youth cannot accept Marxism on command; it must assimilate it for itself through an independent effort of thought. This is precisely why the youth should have the opportunity not only to educate itself but also to make mistakes in order to rise through its own errors to a Communist conception. Bureaucratic and artificial discipline has crumbled to dust at the moment of danger. Revolutionary discipline does not exclude but demands the right of checking and criticism. Only in this way can an indestructible revolutionary army be created.

The young worker needs leadership from the party. But this should not be leadership by command. When at every step coercion is substituted for persuasion, the breath of life disappears from the organization, and with it, the people.

Not only must we reject but also mercilessly destroy the use of repression, slander, and physical methods in the struggle of the different groups and factions inside the workers' movement. These invidious methods have nothing in common with the arsenal of Communist education. Brought into the workers' movement during the last ten years by the Stalinist bureaucracy, they have poisoned the atmosphere of the proletarian vanguard, particularly among the youth, and isolated the organizations from the broad working masses.

We must free the revolutionary program and the internal regime from Stalinism and return the Comintern to the path of Marx and Lenin.
To Sidney Hook

Dear Professor Hook:

I read with interest your article in *The Nation* and it provoked in me some doubts.

1. The title of your article, Marxism—Dogma or Method? provokes a certain disquietude. The alternative does not cover the question. Marxism is not a dogma, but it is not only a method; it is also a doctrine. The materialist dialectic is a method. Marx, however, not only formulated this method, but applied it in two domains, by creating the theory of capitalist economy (science) and the theory of the historical processes (the "philosophy of history"—more exactly, a science).

2. The concluding phrase of your article declares that "it [Marxism] is neither dogma, myth, nor objective science, but a realistic method of class action." What means here the word "realistic"? Obviously it means based upon the true knowledge of the objective—in that case, social—processes; the knowledge of the objective is a science. The Marxian policy is realistic insofar as it is based upon Marxism *as a science*.

3. You say that the Marxian doctrine can no more be understood independent of its revolutionary aims than the prescriptions of a physician independent of the concern of health. Within certain limits it is possible to accept this comparison. But the only physician capable of giving useful prescriptions is one who bases his action upon anatomy, physiology, pathology, and a series of other positive sciences. How is it possible to detach the realistic practice from the scientific theory? In the final analysis all scientific knowledge—not only regarding medicine—grows from practical needs and serves these needs.
4. You write: "From the theoretical postulates of this science of Marxism, it followed that revolutionary opposition to the world war in 1914 was utopian, because the war and the war psychology inevitably flowed from the objective constellation of socio-economic forces of the time." This counterposing, it seems to me, is not understandable. The struggle against war would be "utopian" because the war flows inevitably from the objective circumstances. In the first place, the utopian ideas flow also from the objective circumstances. Secondly, the struggle against the "inevitable" events is not necessarily utopian, because the inevitable events are limited in time and space. Particularly, the war, being a historical "inevitability," proved "utopian" as a means of issuing out of the imperialist impasse.

5. You state: "Marx's gravest mistake was in not assigning greater values to the temporal coefficients of the process." This remark is just when applied to a great number of vulgar Marxists, especially of the epoch of the Second International, but it is absolutely false in relation to Marx himself.

When conditions permit, I will return to this question in more comprehensive form; meanwhile, I remain, with comradely greetings,

L. Trotsky
GREETINGS TO
THE CHILEAN OPPOSITION

April 15, 1933

Dear Comrades,

I cannot but cordially welcome the adherence of your party to the International Left Opposition (Bolshevik-Leninists). I received the documents you sent, and with the help of a French comrade who can read Spanish I shall attempt to acquaint myself with the internal life of your organization. I think that the trade-union question plays a very great part, for you as everywhere else, in your struggle against Stalinism. I am sending you a proposed declaration on the topic of the antifascist congress being initiated by the Stalinists. The declaration does not examine the problem as a whole, but merely proclaims the most elementary principles of Marxist policy in the trade-union field. It may be of some use to you. Are there comrades among you who know foreign languages? If so, who? We could send you documentation in French, German, and Russian, but unfortunately not in Spanish.

With best communist greetings,
Leon Trotsky
MORE ON
THE AMERICAN DISPUTE\textsuperscript{197}

April 17, 1933

To the International Secretariat
(Copy to the Central Committee of the American League)

Dear Comrades:

It has appeared to you that my letter could be interpreted as being more favorable to the minority than to the majority of the central committee of our American section. If this is your impression, that shows that I have expressed myself badly. In intervening in this question, I strove to discount completely our experiences on an international scale (case of Comrade Shachtman)\textsuperscript{198} and to follow step by step, without the least interference on our part one way or the other, the development of the internal conflicts and differences in the American section.

It seemed to me—and it still seems to me—that the minority is exaggerating enormously the importance of the national conference: not as a regular political meeting of a revolutionary organization, but as the means of solving the internal struggle by organizational means, that is to say, by an eventual small majority of several votes. For me, the whole of political wisdom is that, at the present stage, there is no organizational means of bringing about a decision favorable for the development of the organization itself. Quite the contrary, it is necessary to advance policies by guarding sharply against rushing things too much.

It also seemed to me that the majority, as the leading faction in the central committee, showed a certain impatience and applied or attempted to apply organizational measures which, without giving permanent results, could not help but sharpen the conflict.
I notice with satisfaction that the majority has withdrawn on its own initiative one of the measures which consisted in depriving Comrade Abern199 of a deciding vote in the committee in the absence of Comrade Swabeck. And if I understand the sense of the latest minutes the reaction of the minority seems to me quite disquieting.

There is the matter of our possibilities in the miners federation in Illinois. Cannon200 is well known down there; he enjoys a certain authority there based especially on his past trade-union activity. Everything appeared to indicate that it was he who should have gone there again with a situation that is promising enough. The continuity of the work already begun also demands it. But the minority opposed it with the candidacy of Comrade Shachtman and it is to be feared that the central committee will remain undecided.

Such a measure on the part of the minority cannot be justified except by deep differences about our work among the miners. I do not get the impression that the minority is correct in its criticisms. Far from it. Comrade Allard201 is reproached for not sufficiently emphasizing the point of view of the Left Opposition in the trade-union paper of which he is the editor. Comrade Cannon is reproached for as a representative of progressive workers and not as a representative of the League. I cannot see any good grounds for the first reproach; I have only read two issues of the paper in question. In one of them, the editors played up the speech of Comrade Cannon quite big, which is of course of great importance for us. It is quite possible that Comrade Allard does not utilize all the possibilities; but he was quite alone—or at least he was up to very recently. And then, it is a question of a trade-union paper, the editing of which requires a great deal of prudence. The reproach against Comrade Cannon appears to me to be dictated by a purely formalistic intransigence. I do not think that it was the task of Comrade Cannon to present himself as a delegate of the League, the latter being a political organization. Not much is accomplished with political demonstrations inside of the trade unions; it is important to get into them, to gain authority within them, to work inside, to create a fraction there, which in its turn must not abuse the name of the League on every occasion, especially not as long as it remains a tiny minority. The mass union is not a meeting called by some political organization. Naturally, for such things there are no cut-and-dried rules; it is a matter of concrete circumstances. But it appears to me—I can very well be mistaken from afar—that there is in the objections of the minority a certain spirit of sectarian
formalism. In any case, these objections do not at all appear to me to be sufficient to prevent Comrade Cannon from fulfilling so important a task as that among the miners.

Since I have decided to follow the development of the internal struggle from step to step, I beg you not to consider this letter as "final." Its purpose is to supplement the preceding letter in the light of new experience.

L. Trotsky
The draft resolution, unfortunately undated, cleared up some differences (real and imaginary, that is, based on misunderstandings) but at the same time left others untouched. The task of the present criticism consists in defining as exactly as possible the real character of the differences today.

1. The resolution asserts right at the beginning that "the collapse of the KPD has deprived the slogan of its reform of all content"; in other words, that the KPD cannot be regenerated. Needless to say, this declaration which signifies the renunciation of the position that we all held up to March 5 bears a tremendous significance for all of our activity.

Paragraph 3 of the resolution says: "The development is in the direction of a new party." This thesis completes the preceding one and thus extremely restricts the sphere of differences. The leading comrades of the German section recognize that the Stalinist party in Germany is politically liquidated and that a German Communist party will reconstitute itself as a new party, outside of the Stalinist organization.

2. But let us quote more extensively from paragraph 3: "Although the development is in the direction of a new party, the slogan of the creation of the latter would be premature and false." The meaning of this sentence lies in the content that one gives the term "slogan"; it may be interpreted both as an open proclamation of our new position with regard to the official party and, in addition, as an appeal for the immediate creation of a new party with the existing elements. Insofar as the second interpretation is concerned, it would be the most ridiculous type of adventurism. No one among us has made such a proposal. If at the opening of the discussion such misunderstandings could arise, the exchange of opinion.
during the last few weeks has created absolute clarity on this score. It is not a matter of our decreeing bureaucratically the creation of a new party, but of proclaiming openly our position towards the old party and our new perspective for work. It would be impermissible to diminish or to mask the significance of this turn. Our course is one of propaganda for a new party and preparation for it. It is necessary to speak out clearly and openly about this change. Are we agreed on this? The draft resolution does not offer the necessary clarity.

3. After a correct point of departure, the resolution then falls into a number of contradictions, obscures its fundamental declarations, and does not give any practical directives. The slogan of the "new party," says the resolution, will repel all critical or semicritical Communists. Why? Obviously because they still believe in the reform of the old party. These devoted but shortsighted revolutionists, who at the cost of great sacrifices will attempt to reestablish the Stalinist party illegally, will naturally appear hostile to our contention that the "perspective of the reform of the KPD no longer bears any content" and that "the development is in the direction of a new party." But it is precisely on these two theses that we find agreement with the German leadership. What shall we do about it? Shall we keep these ideas to ourselves without expressing them out loud in order not to repel the partisans of reform? Such a position would be altogether unworthy of Marxists and I don't believe that the German comrades have this in mind. The utopians of reform, under the blows of experience, will become convinced that we are correct. The more firmly and the more swiftly we establish our position, the greater will be our political authority.

4. The draft resolution poses the question of the creation of cadres. In itself this slogan is absolutely irreproachable. But it is also necessary to reply to the question: cadres for what purpose? For the reform of the old party or for the construction of the new one? If we take the course of diplomatic silence, the Stalinists will demand an answer just the same, and we shall appear before the rank-and-file Communists like those oracles who have two doctrines: one for themselves and one for the uninitiated. It is clear that the authors of the resolution cannot and do not want such duplicity.

5. In the draft resolution as well as in other documents the idea is often repeated that the perspective of a new party is correct, but that the advanced workers are not prepared "psychologically." If it's a matter of creating a new party immediately, then the workers are unprepared not only "psychologically" but also politically and theoretically. The necessary
cadres are lacking and the existing cadres lack the masses. It is impossible to understand the reference to "psychology" other than as follows: our own partisans and even our sympathizers and friends are not prepared "psychologically" for the sharp change of perspective. The authors of the resolution quite obviously confuse two questions: the preparation of the proletarian vanguard for the creation of a new Communist party and the preparation of our own organization for a courageous and decisive change in our own orientation on the question of the old and the new party. Here we are concerned only with this second task. It does not flow from any "psychology," that is to say, from the state of mind of various layers of the proletarian vanguard, but from the objective conditions, the victory of fascism and the collapse of the policy and the party of the Stalinists. The state of mind of the workers can still change—especially in the sense of an ever-clearer understanding of this historic fact. But the political attitude (perspective) of the Left Opposition should have as its point of departure, not the fluctuating sentiments of the heart, but the objective changes in the situation.

6. To interpret the slogan of the new party as a mechanical unification with elements from the decomposition of the old party (Brandlerites, SAP, Leninbund) would not only be an absurdity but simply a mockery of our entire past. With regard to one group or another, we can only speak of taking some steps together, steps dictated by the situation. So, for instance, at the antifascist congress we should seek an understanding with the Sneevliet group, the SAP, etc., against the bloc of Muenzenberg with Barbusse and the Hindu bourgeoisie. There is not the slightest reason for confusing tactical understandings of this order with the question of the new party. Only one thing can be said: skillful tactical agreements on the basis of a correct strategic line can accelerate the process of the formation of cadres for the Communist party.

7. In the German documents, the slogan of the "new party" is compared to the slogan of a "new Zimmerwald." It is absolutely impossible to understand this comparison. Zimmerwald represented a temporary bloc of Marxists and centrists. The former marched under the slogan of the Third International; the latter under the slogan of reform of the Second International. There were, to be sure, some participants who avoided answering the question "For the Second or the Third International?" by hiding their hesitation under the banner of Zimmerwald "in general."

The accord proved to be an episode, whereas the slogan of the Third International has determined the revolutionary
policy of the whole new epoch. There is a similarity at this point. An accord, let us say with the SAP, can become an episode (much less important than that of Zimmerwald) on the road to a new party. But these are two different questions.

8. By the way, how does the question of the SAP pose itself today? In the struggle for their own preservation, the leaders of the SAP, without giving an answer to any of the programmatic questions, disassociated themselves from the Left Opposition, alleging that we still nurtured illusions about the KPD. This fundamental argument has since been eliminated by the course of events. Addressing ourselves to the SAP, we say: "After March 5, we also are concerned with the creation of a new party. But a party is created on the basis of a program. What is your program?" We must utilize the advantage of our new position. If the leaders of the SAP reply that they are only now in the process of elaborating their program, we can quite openly offer our participation in their discussion and even propose the creation of a common theoretical discussion organ, naturally fully preserving our organizational independence and our own political journal. The question of the SAP is not, obviously, the decisive question. Neither do we want to substitute it for other questions, but only to place it alongside of them as a serious subordinate question.

I will sum up. The discussion has already brought this result: it has cleared up a number of obvious misunderstandings and has thus restricted the sphere of the differences. Nevertheless, before getting a clear and distinct reply from the leading German comrades to the questions raised above, it would be premature to say that the differences have been overcome. We must not only recognize the perspective of a new party formally but also draw the necessary practical conclusions from this perspective and fight in common agreement for them.
Dear Friend,

I have received your letter of April 20 in which you inform me of your discussion with the leading comrades of the SAP. Your information clarifies the resolution of the SAP's last conference, especially of the parts in which relations with you are concerned.

Until March 5 the leaders of the SAP reproached us for still having hope in the regeneration of the KPD. Today this difference is resolved by the very course of events. We consider the Stalinist apparatus in Germany doomed and call for the assembling of cadres for a new party. In the field of relations between us and the SAP, therefore, the problem should reduce itself to that of the program, the policy, and the regime of this new party. We need, obviously, not general abstract formulas, but the affirmation on paper of the experience of the recent years in which both organizations, the Left Opposition and the SAP, have participated. The fundamental conclusions from that experience have been stated in telegraphic language at our preconference of February this year (in fact, we must make corrections to those theses on the problem of our attitude towards the KPD). From the leaders of the SAP, we should have expected corrections, supplements, or counterpropositions of a programmatic character.

Instead, we hear quite different arguments from them. I admit that I approach this point with reluctance for it concerns me personally. But problems of revolutionary policy are above personal considerations; it is necessary to take arguments in the form in which they are presented by potential allies or enemies. The Left Opposition, according to the SAP leaders, is too closely linked with the personality of Trotsky,
depends too much on him, etc. . . . The German section, it appears, undertakes nothing without the guidance of T., etc. . . . The concentration of an organization around a single individual presents great dangers, etc. . . .

First of all, I want to correct this picture of the internal life of the Opposition. I shall not speak of the past experience of the German section and of its serious differences and sharp internal crises in relation to which it happened that I personally played the part, at the most, of an outside adviser. On the order of the day now is the problem of a new party in Germany. The Left Opposition is the only organization that openly discusses this problem before the eyes of all. The majority of the leadership of the German section have differences on this question with the International Secretariat and with me and energetically conducts its campaign, accusing me of "sophisms" in accordance with the rules of the game in such a struggle. I firmly hope that the discussion will end in the elaboration of a common point of view. But in any case, neither in the SAP nor in the KPO (Brandlerites) does one polemicize as openly and decisively against Walcher-Froelich or Brandler-Thalheimer as in our German section one polemicizes against me or the International Secretariat of the Left Opposition. I by no means wish to idealize the Left Opposition as it is. The principal fault of our organization is that it is weak. Its weakness and its inadequate contact with the masses create conditions under which it is possible, even inevitable, that individual personalities have an excessive influence. For this, however, there is but one remedy: to construct a stronger, a more massive organization. If the basic positions and methods of the Left Opposition are fundamentally correct, then the creation of such an organization is assured, or at least fully realizable. Let us concentrate, therefore, on the programmatic, strategical, tactical, and organizational problems.

Against what, basically, do the comrades of the SAP defend themselves: the influence of a definite personality or the influence of definite ideas with which the personality is connected? On this point there is not yet all the necessary precision. In the resolution of the SAP's conference it is said that the SAP is in agreement on many points with the Left Opposition and with the KPO. One is at once struck by the lack of precision in the expression "on many points."

resolution of an organization responsible to the vanguard of the workers is required to say clearly and exactly on what problems it is in agreement with other organizations and on
what problems it differs. There can be no revolutionary pol-
icy without clearness and exactness in the formulation of
ideas. The situation is complicated by the fact that the resolu-
tion proclaims at the same moment solidarity with us Bolshevik-Leninists and with the Brandlerites. This lessens
evermously the value of the declaration since the Brandlerites
are separated from us by irreconcilable differences.

During the last two years the key to the international sit-
uation was in Germany. In connection with tactical problems
(but not with those of strategy), it might have seemed at times
that the differences between us and the Brandlerites were not
great. The German proletarian vanguard has since allowed
the key to escape its hands. Austria is now the center of atten-
tion. But the problem of Austria has, in spite of everything,
an episodic character. The principal key to the situation of the
international proletariat is really in the USSR. We assume
that the policy of bureaucratic centrism and the dangers it en-
genders are known to the comrades of the SAP. Are they in
agreement with us? If they are in agreement even in general,
how can they be in agreement at the same time with the
Brandlerites, who support the Stalinist policy in the USSR
(which in practice means—in the entire world) and who have
more than once treated us as counterrevolutionaries? In not
taking a stand on the most important and urgent problems,
the leaders of the SAP give the impression that they desire to
have the Bolshevik-Leninists on their left, the Brandlerites on
their right, and, by separating the two flanks, to conserve
their independence (which is not a calamity) and their lack
of precision (which is very bad!).

Such a tactic can appear very "clever.
ruinous. It would signify the continuation of the policy of
Seydewitz in a new situation. I really do not say this for
polemical purposes. For my part, I am ready to do every-
thing to facilitate mutual understanding and collaboration with
the comrades of the SAP. But the first condition for this is an
honest political understanding.

The leaders of the SAP sometimes complain that the Left
Opposition poses the problem of the centrist policy in China,
of the Anglo-Russian Committee, of the course of the Comin-
tern in Spain, of the policy of Stalin in the USSR, etc., too
mechanically. In reality, the question is not one of arbitrary
criteria on our part or of different creeds of the faith. The
question is a single and unique problem: that of the policy
of the directing centrist faction in different countries and under
different conditions. We have put in the forefront the most
important events of the last ten years in order to most sharply
The Left Opposition and the SAP

counterpose, on the basis of these experiences, the policy of Marxism to that of centrism. Obviously we put living political facts and problems in first place. But continuity of revolutionary thought is necessary for the education of revolutionary cadres. From the experience with the Kuomintang, the Canton adventure, the bloc with the English strikebreakers, etc., etc., runs an uninterrupted line of centrism to the German catastrophe.

In the SAP, as in other organizations, there are thousands of workers to whom this connection is not obvious, who have never studied or thought about the policy of Stalin in China, in Bulgaria, in Spain. To demand of these comrades that they recognize in a purely formal fashion the correctness of our position towards the problems enumerated above would be, in any case, senseless. A long work of propaganda cannot be accomplished at a single stroke. But it is correct for us to demand that those leaders who take upon themselves the responsibility and the initiative of forming an independent proletarian party indicate now their attitude towards the fundamental problems of proletarian strategy and to do that, not in general and abstract form, but on the basis of the living experience of the present generation of the world proletariat. Nor do we pose these problems mechanically to the leaders. We say: "Be before deciding definitely on the possibility of our collaboration, which we desire to be the closest possible, it is necessary to be quite sure that we share the same attitude toward the fundamental problems of proletarian strategy. Here are our opinions formulated at the end of the struggle in different countries. What is your attitude towards these problems? If you have not yet defined your attitude toward them, let us try to examine them in common, beginning with the sharpest and most burning political problems." I sincerely believe that the posing of the problem in this fashion does not have a shade of sectarianism. Marxists in general have no other way of posing the question. It is necessary to add to this that we are ready, of course, for practical collaboration without waiting for the definite solution of all the problems under discussion.

The comrades of the SAP believe that an early convocation of a conference of all the organizations, existing Communist groups, which would respond to such an appeal, is indicated. If such a conference is convoked, the Left Opposition would, I believe, participate in it in order to explain its point of view; but to expect serious results for the launching of Communist work from such a conference would be wrong. If it were a question of helping emigres, of defending their interests, or of some such partial political campaign, the conference would
be able, perhaps in all these cases, to take on a practical function. But on the agenda is the question of developing the fundamentals of revolutionary policy for a long period. Such problems have never been solved by motley conferences called together in an improvised manner. On the contrary, the lack of political preparation, the hasty convocation of the conference in a helter-skelter atmosphere, would only be to run the risk of increasing the ideological chaos and the mutual exasperation of the different groups.\textsuperscript{208}

The leading centers of the German revolutionary movement in the period which is now opening will necessarily be found among the emigres. But the expelled German comrades still feel as though they were merely camping out. Even those among them who understand the significance of the catastrophe that has taken place theoretically have not yet adapted to the new situation psychologically. Within Germany, the different groups continue to live in the inertia of yesterday. That applies also to the SAP, the largest but the least firm of all the Communist oppositional organizations. The left wing of the SAP, in spite of the fact that the leaders have no organ of their own, has won over the majority of the party, removing the Seydewitz faction. This fact is the best demonstration of the general direction of development of the SAP, where we have already seen the beginning of a "living current." Nor can we be blind to the fact that the SAP represents even now the raw forces of communism. Moreover, the situation has radically changed: on the order of the day are not tasks of immediate combat but a long task of preparation under conditions of illegality. The less the organization is formed ideologically, the less it is able to resist the factors of destruction (disillusionment, fatigue, repression, agitation of other groups, etc.). Only ideologically tempered cadres will be able to endure the counterblows of adverse forces in the coming period!

The Left Opposition, there can be no doubt on this score, is ready to do everything in its power to facilitate a mutual understanding with the SAP. The technical forms for the examination of contentious or unresolved problems are not difficult to find: discussion bulletin, common theoretical journal, a series of discussions at the center and within the groups.

I think it is necessary to pose these problems with perseverance to each member of the SAP.

\textbf{L. Trotsky}
Socialism developed to completion (communism) means a society without a state. But the transition period from capitalism to socialism demands an extreme strengthening of the functions of the state (dictatorship of the proletariat). This historic dialectic of the state has been sufficiently illuminated by the theory of Marxism.

The economic basis for the withering away of the workers' state is the high development of economic power so that productive labor no longer needs to be driven and the distribution of consumer goods no longer needs any juridical control.

The transition from revolutionary dictatorship to classless society cannot be accomplished by decree. A state cannot be dissolved by special order but gradually disappears from the scene, "withering away" to the extent to which the powerful and culturally higher socialist society conquers all the living functions with the aid of its manifold and flexible institutions, which no longer stand in need of coercion.

The Withering Away of the State

The process of the liquidation of the state takes place along two different roads. To the extent that the classes are being liquidated, that is, dissolved in a homogeneous society, coercion withers away in the direct sense of the word, dropping out forever from social use. The organizational functions of the state, on the contrary, become more complex, more detailed. They penetrate into ever-new fields which until then remained as if beyond the threshold of society (the house-
hold, children's education, etc.) and for the first time subject them to the control of the collective mind.

The general manner of posing the question does not change whether it concerns a single country or the whole planet. If we should assume that a socialist society is realizable within national boundaries, then the withering away of the state could also occur within the framework of a single country. The necessity of defense against capitalist enemies threatening from without is in itself entirely compatible with the weakening of state coercion from within: the solidarity and conscious discipline of the socialist society should yield the greatest results on the field of battle as well as on the field of production.

The Stalinist faction declared as far back as two years ago that the classes in the USSR are liquidated "in the main"; that the question who will prevail? is decided "completely and irrevocably"; more than that: that "we entered into socialism." From this, according to the laws of Marxist logic, it should have followed that the necessity of class coercion was "in main" of the state had begun. But such a conclusion, insofar as it has been attempted by some indiscreet doctrinaires, was immediately declared to be "counterrevolutionary."

However, let us leave aside the perspective of socialism in one country. Let us proceed, not from bureaucratic construction already brought to an absurdity by the course of development, but from the actual state of affairs. The USSR is of course not a socialist society but only a socialist state, that is, a weapon for the building of a socialist society; the classes are as yet far from abolished; the question of who will prevail is not decided; the possibility of capitalist restoration is not excluded; the necessity of a proletarian dictatorship therefore retains its full force. But there still remains the question of the character of the Soviet state, which does not at all remain unchangeable throughout the whole transitional epoch. The more successful the economic construction, the healthier the relation between town and country, the broader therefore should be the development of Soviet democracy. This does not constitute as yet the withering away of the state since Soviet democracy is also a form of state coercion. The capacity and flexibility of this form, however, best reflects the relation of the masses to the Soviet regime. The more the proletariat is satisfied with the results of its labor and the more beneficial its influence on the village, the more the Soviet government attempts to be—not on paper, not in a program, but in reality, in everyday existence—the weapon of the growing majority against the diminishing minority. The rise of So-
viet democracy, while as yet not signifying the withering away of the state, is equivalent nevertheless to the preparation for such a process.

The problem will become more concrete when we take into consideration the basic changes in class structure for the period of the revolution. The dictatorship of the proletariat as an organization for the suppression of exploiters was necessary against landlords, capitalists, generals, and kulaks insofar as they gave support to the higher possessing strata. Exploiters cannot be drawn to the side of socialism. Their resistance had to be broken, no matter at what cost. The years of civil war marked the greatest exercise of the power of the dictatorship by the proletariat.

With regard to the peasantry as a whole the task was and is an entirely different one. The peasantry must be won over to the side of the socialist regime. We must prove to the peasant in practice that government industry is capable of supplying him with goods on much more advantageous conditions than under capitalism and that collective farming is more advantageous than individual farming. Until this economic and cultural task is solved—and we are very far from it, especially as it is solvable only on an international scale—class frictions are inevitable and consequently also state coercion. But if in the struggle against landlords and capitalists revolutionary violence served as the basic method, in relation to the kulaks, the problem was a different one; while crushing unmercifully the outright counterrevolutionary resistance of the kulaks, the state was ready to compromise with them on the economic field. It did not "dekulakize" the kulak but merely limited his exploiting tendencies. With regard to the peasantry as a whole, revolutionary violence should have played only an auxiliary and what is more an ever-diminishing role. The practical successes of industrialization and collectivization should have expressed themselves in the moderation of the forms and methods of state coercion, in the growing democratization of the Soviet regime.

The Political Regime of the Dictatorship and Its Social Foundations

On January 30, 1933, Pravda wrote: "The second five-year plan will liquidate the last remnants of capitalist elements in our economic life." It is clearly evident that from the standpoint of this official perspective the state should wither away completely during the second five-year plan, since where the "last remnants" (!) of class inequality are liquidated, there is no room for the state.

In reality, however, we witness processes of a diametrical-
ly opposite character. The Stalinists do not dare to assert that the dictatorship of the proletariat has assumed more democratic forms in recent years but, on the contrary, try tirelessly to prove the inevitability of a further sharpening of state coercion. Reality itself is more important than all the perspectives and prognoses.

If we evaluate Soviet reality through the lens of the political regime—such an evaluation, although insufficient, is absolutely justifiable and extremely important—we get not only a gloomy picture but a thoroughly ominous one. The Soviets have lost the last remnants of independent significance and have ceased being Soviets. The party does not exist. Under the cover of the struggle with the right deviation, the trade unions are completely crushed. The problem of the degeneration and stifling of the party and the Soviets has been discussed many times. Here we find it necessary to take up in a few lines the fate of the trade-union organizations during the period of the Soviet dictatorship.

The relative independence of the trade unions is a necessary and important corrective in the system of the Soviet state, which finds itself under the pressure of the peasantry and bureaucracy. Until the classes are liquidated, the workers must defend themselves, even in a workers' state, through their trade-union organizations. In other words: the trade unions remain trade unions while the state remains a state, that is, an instrument of coercion. The "statification" of the trade unions can only run parallel with the "destatization" of the state itself: to the extent that the liquidation of classes deprives the state of its functions of coercion, dissolving it in society, the trade unions lose their special class tasks and dissolve themselves in the "withering-away" state.

This dialectic of the dictatorship, imprinted in the program of the Bolshevik Party, is recognized in words also by the Stalinists. But the actual relations between the trade unions and the state develop in a diametrically opposite direction. The state not only does not wither away (despite the heralded liquidation of classes), not only does not moderate its methods (despite the economic successes), but on the contrary becomes ever more openly the instrument of bureaucratic coercion. At the same time, the trade unions, transformed into offices of functionaries, have completely lost the possibility of fulfilling the role of buffers between the state apparatus and the proletarian masses. Worse than that: the apparatus of the trade unions themselves has become the weapon of an ever-growing pressure on the workers.

The preliminary conclusion from the above is that the evo-
lution of the Soviets, the party, and the trade unions does not follow an ascending but a descending curve. If we were to accept on faith the official estimate of industrialization and collectivization, we would have to admit that the political superstructure of the proletarian regime is developing in a diametrically opposite direction to the development of its economic basis. Does it mean that the laws of Marxism are false? No, the official estimate of the social foundations of the dictatorship is false, and false to the core.

The problem can be formulated more concretely in this fashion: Why was it possible during the years of 1919-21, when the old possessing classes still fought with weapons in hand, when they were actively supported by the interventionists of the whole world, when the armed kulaks sabotaged the army and the provisioning of the country—why was it possible then to discuss openly in the party the sharp questions of the Brest-Litovsk peace, the methods of the organization of the Red Army, the composition of the Central Committee, the trade unions, the transition to the NEP, national policy, and the policy of the Comintern? Why is it impossible now—after the end of intervention, after the rout of the exploiting classes, after the successes of industrialization, after the collectivization of the overwhelming majority of the peasantry—to allow discussion of the tempos of industrialization and collectivization, of the correlation between heavy and light industry, or of the policy of a united front in Germany? Why should any member of the party who demands the calling of the next congress of the party in accordance with its constitution be immediately expelled and subjected to persecution? Why should any Communist who openly expresses doubt as to the infallibility of Stalin be immediately arrested? Where does such a terrible, monstrous, unbearable exercise of the political regime come from?

Reference to outside danger from capitalist governments does not in itself explain everything. We do not wish of course to underrate the significance of capitalist encirclement for the inner regime of the Soviet republic: the very necessity of keeping up a powerful army is a great source of bureaucratism. However, hostile encirclement is not a new factor, it has accompanied the Soviet republic from the first days of its existence. Under healthy conditions within the country, the pressure of imperialism would only strengthen the solidarity of the masses, especially the welding together of the proletarian vanguard. The penetration of foreign agents, such as sabotaging engineers, etc., in no case justifies or explains the general intensification of the methods of coercion. A social body
of common interests should be able to eject hostile elements with greater ease, as a healthy body ejects poisons.

An attempt might be made to show that the external pressure has grown and the correlation of forces on the world scale has changed to the advantage of imperialism. Leaving aside the question of policy of the Comintern as one of the causes for the weakening of the world proletariat, the incontrovertible fact remains that the intensification of pressure from outside can lead to the bureaucratization of the Soviet system only to the extent that it is coupled with the growth of inner contradictions. Under conditions in which the workers must be squeezed in the vise of the passport system and the peasantry in the vise of political departments, the pressure from without must inevitably weaken inner cohesion even more. And vice versa, the growth of contradictions between town and country must incontrovertibly sharpen the danger from the outside capitalist governments. The combination of these two factors pushes the bureaucracy along the road of ever-greater concessions to the external pressures and ever-greater repressions against the working masses of their own country.

The Official Explanation of Bureaucratic Terror

"Some comrades," Stalin said at the January plenum of the Central Committee, "understood the thesis on liquidation of classes, creation of a classless society, and withering away of the state as justification for laxity (?) and placidity (?), justification for the counterrevolutionary theory of the slow extinguishing of the class struggle and weakening of state power." Vagueness of expression serves Stalin in this case, as in so many others, to cover up the logical gaps. A programmatic "thesis" not mean as yet, it is understood, the extinguishing of the class struggle in the present. But it is not a question of a theoretical thesis but of an officially proclaimed fact of the liquidation of classes. Stalin's sophism consists in the fact that he ties the idea of the inevitable strengthening of state power in the transitional epoch between capitalism and socialism—an idea which, following Marx, Lenin advanced for the explanation of the necessity of the proletarian dictatorship in general—to a definite period of the dictatorship, after an allegedly already-accomplished liquidation of all capitalist classes.

To explain the necessity for the further strengthening of the bureaucratic machine, Stalin said at the same plenum: "The kulaks are routed as a class but not finished off." If we should accept this formula, it would seem that to finish off the routed kulaks a more concentrated dictatorship is necessary, in the
literal expression of Stalin—"to finish off the remnants of the dying classes." The finished expression is, in its way, given to this paradox of bureaucratism by Molotov, who has, in general, a fatal inclination to develop the ideas of Stalin to completion. "In spite of the fact," said he at the January plenum, "that the forces of the remnants of the bourgeois classes of our country melt, their resistance, anger, and fury grow, knowing no bounds." The forces melt, but the fury grows! Molotov does not suspect, it seems, that the dictatorship is needed against force and not against fury: fury which is not armed by force ceases to be dangerous.

"It cannot be said," Stalin admits on his part, "that these former people could change anything in the present situation of the USSR by their damaging and thieving machinations. They are too weak and impotent to resist the measures of the Soviet power." It seems clear that if all that is left from these former classes are "former people"; if they are too weak "to do anything (!) to change the situation in the USSR"—that from this should have followed both the extinguishing of the class struggle and the easing of the regime. No, Stalin argues: "the former people can play us some tricks." But revolutionary dictatorship is needed not against impotent tricks but against the danger of capitalist restoration. If in the struggle with powerful class enemies it was necessary to put into use steel-clad fists, against "tricks" of former people the little finger will do.

But here Stalin introduces still another element. The dying remnants of the routed classes "appeal to the backward strata of the population and mobilize them against the Soviet power." . . . But have the backward strata grown in the period of the first five-year plan? It would seem not. Does it mean that their attitude toward the state changed for the worse? That would mean that the "maximum strengthening of state power" (more correctly, repression) is necessary for the struggle against the growing discontent of the masses. Stalin adds: "through the mobilization of the backward strata of the population, 'fragments' of counterrevolutionary opposition elements from the Trotskyites and right-wingers may again stir and come to life." Such is the final argument: since the fragments (only fragments!) may stir (so far they only may) . . . the greatest concentration of the dictatorship is necessary.

Entangled hopelessly in the "fragments" of his own ideas, Stalin unexpectedly adds, "Of course, we have no fear of that." Then why be frightened and frighten others, if "we have no fear of that"? And why introduce a regime of terror against the party and the proletariat if it is only a matter of impotent
fragments incapable of "changing anything in the USSR"?
All this piling up of confusion leading to pure nonsense is a consequence of the inability to tell the truth. In reality, Stalin-Molotov should have said: Due to the growing discontent of the masses and an ever-stronger gravitation of the workers to the Left Opposition, the intensification of repression is necessary for the defense of the privileged positions of the bureaucracy. Then everything would easily fall into place.

The Withering Away of Money and the Withering Away of the State

The knot of contradictions in which the theory and practice of bureaucratic centrist got itself hopelessly entangled will become clear to us from a new side when we draw an analogy between the role of money and the role of the state in the transitional epoch. Money, just like the state, represents a direct heritage of capitalism. It must disappear but it cannot be abolished by decree, it withers away. Different functions of money, like those of the state, expire by different deaths. As a means of private accumulation, usury, exploitation—money disappears parallel to the liquidation of classes. As a means of exchange, standard of measurement of labor value, regulator of the social division of labor, money is gradually dissolved in the planned organization of social economy, it finally becomes an accounting slip, a check for a certain portion of social goods for the gratification of productive and personal wants.

The parallelism of both processes of withering away, that of money and that of the state, is not accidental; they have the same social roots. The state remains a state so long as it has to regulate the relations between various classes and strata, each of which draws up its accounts endeavoring to show a profit. The final replacement of money as a standard of value by the statistical registration of live productive forces, equipment, raw materials, and needs will become possible only at the stage when social wealth will free all the members of society from the necessity of competing with each other for the size of the dinnerpail.

This stage is still far off. The role of money in the Soviet economy is not only not completed but in a certain sense is only about to be developed to completion. The transition period, in its entirety, means not the curtailment of the turnover of goods, but, on the contrary, an extreme expansion thereof. All branches of economy are transformed, are growing, and must determine their relation to each other qualitatively and quantitatively. Many products which under capitalism are
accessible only to the few must be produced in immeasurably greater quantities. The liquidation of the peasant economy, with its internal consumption and closed-family economy, means the transition to the field of social (money) turnover of all that productive energy which is now being used up within the limits of the village and the walls of a private dwelling.

Taking complete stock of all the productive forces of society, the socialist state must know how to apportion and use them in a manner most advantageous for society. Money as the means of economic accounting evolved by capitalism is not thrown aside but socialized. Socialist construction is unthinkable without the inclusion, in the planned system, of the personal interest of the producer and consumer. And this interest can actively manifest itself only when it has at its disposal a trustful and flexible weapon: a stable monetary system. Increase in the productivity of labor and improvement in the quality of goods, in particular, are absolutely unattainable without an exact measuring instrument which penetrates freely into all the pores of the economy, that is, without a stable monetary unit.

If capitalist economy, which reached its unstable proportions through wasteful conjunctural fluctuations, needs a stable monetary system, the more so is such a system necessary for the preparation, organization, and regulation of planned economy. It is insufficient to build new enterprises; an economic system must familiarize itself with them. This means testing in practice, adapting, and selecting. The mass, nationwide check-up of productivity can mean nothing else but a test by means of the ruble. To erect a plan of economy on a slipping valuta [foreign exchange] is the same as to make a blueprint of a machine with a loose compass and a bent ruler. This is exactly what is taking place. The inflation of the chervonets is one of the most pernicious consequences and also instruments of the bureaucratic disorganization of the Soviet economy.

The official theory of inflation stands at the same level as the official theory of the dictatorship analyzed above. "The stability of Soviet valuta," said Stalin at the January plenum, "is guaranteed first of all by the tremendous quantity of goods in the hands of the state, which are put into circulation at fixed prices." If this phrase has any meaning at all it can only be that Soviet money has ceased being money; it no longer serves to measure values and by that to fix prices; "stable prices" are fixed by government power; the chervonets is only an accounting tag of planned economy. This idea is entirely parallel and equivalent to the idea of the "liquidation
of classes" and "entry into the realm of socialism." Consistent in his equivocation, Stalin does not dare, however, to reject the theory of a gold reserve completely. No, a gold reserve "also" does no harm but its importance is only a secondary one. At any rate it is needed for external trade, where payment must be made in specie. But for the well-being of the domestic economy, stable prices fixed by the secretariat of the Central Committee or by its assignees are sufficient.

That the rate of decline of the purchasing power of bills of exchange depends not only on the number of revolutions of the printing press but also on "the quantity of goods" is known to any student of economics. This law is applicable to capitalist as well as to planned economy. The difference is that in planned economy it is possible to hide inflation, or at any rate its results, for a much longer period. The more terrible therefore will be the day of reckoning! In any case, money regulated by administrative prices fixed for goods loses the ability to regulate such prices and consequently the ability to regulate plans. In this field as in others, "socialism" for the bureaucracy consists of freeing its will from any control: party, Soviet, trade union, or money.

The Soviet economy today is neither a monetary nor a planned one. It is an almost purely bureaucratic economy. Exaggerated and disproportionate industrialization undermined the foundations of agricultural economy. The peasantry tried to find salvation in collectivization. Very early experience showed that collectivization of despair is not yet socialist collectivization. The further decline of agricultural economy struck a hard blow at industry. To support unreliable and disproportionate tempos, a further intensification of pressure on the proletariat became imperative. Industry, freed from the material control of the producer, took on a supersocial, that is, bureaucratic character. As a result it lost the ability to satisfy human wants even to the degree to which it had been accomplished by the less-developed capitalist industry. Agricultural economy retaliated on the helpless cities with a war of attrition. Under the constant burden of disproportions between their productive efforts and the worsening conditions of existence, workers, collective farmers, and individual peasants lose interest in their work and are filled with irritation against the state. From this and from this alone, and not from the malicious will of the "fragments," flows the necessity for the introduction of coercion into all cells of economic life (strengthening of the power of shop managers, laws against absentees, death penalty for spoliation of collective-farm property by its members, war measures in sowing campaigns and
harvest collections, forcing of individual peasants to lend their horses to the collectives, the passport system, political departments in the village, etc., etc.).

Parallelism between the fate of money and the fate of the state looms up before us in a new and brilliant light. Disproportions in the economy lead the bureaucracy to the road of expanding paper-money inflation. Discontent of the masses with the material results of economic disproportions pushes the bureaucracy on the road of open coercion. Economic planning frees itself from value control as bureaucratic fancy frees itself from political control. The rejection of "objective causes," that is, of material limits for the acceleration of the tempos, as well as the rejection of the gold basis of Soviet money, represents the "theoretical" ravings of bureaucratic subjectivism.

If the Soviet monetary system withers away, it withers away not in a socialist sense but in a capitalist one: in the form of inflation. Money ceases to be a working tool of planned economy and becomes a tool of its disorganization. It can be said that the dictatorship of the proletariat withers away in the form of bureaucratic inflation, that is, in the extreme swelling of coercion, persecutions, and violence. The dictatorship of the proletariat is not dissolved in a classless society, but degenerates into the omnipotence of bureaucracy over society.

In the sphere of money inflation as in that of bureaucratic despotism is summed up all the falseness of the policy of centrism in the field of the Soviet economy as well as in the field of the international proletarian movement. The Stalinist system is exhausted to the end and is doomed. Its breakup is approaching with the same inevitability with which the victory of fascism approached in Germany. But Stalinism is not something isolated; as a parasitic growth it has wound itself around the trunk of the October Revolution. The struggle for the salvation of the dictatorship of the proletariat is inseparable from the struggle against Stalinism. This struggle has reached the decisive stage. The climax is approaching. And the last word has not yet been spoken. The October Revolution will yet know how to fend for itself.
WHAT MUST THE AUSTRIAN SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC OPPOSITION DO? 211

May 3, 1933

Several Austrian Social Democrats, opposed to their leadership, have done me the honor of asking for political advice or answers to several concrete questions. I am wholly ready to answer the questions, within the limits prescribed by my absence from the scene of immediate struggle.

1. The idea is apparently widespread among the Austrian left Social Democrats that already all is irretrievably lost. Such a pessimistic manner of judging a priori is theoretically false and politically impermissible. True, the most favorable moment for struggle has been allowed to slip by. Nevertheless the struggle can be carried on in less favorable conditions and victory obtained. The pessimists invoke the unfavorable state of mind of the masses. True, everything that could have been done from above has been done to discourage and demoralize the workers. But the spirit of the masses is a variable magnitude. If a fighting and inspiring left faction raises its voice in time, the state of mind of the masses can change. The conflict between the Nazis and the government can present a favorable situation for the intervention of the workers. A revolutionary should not give up a position for lost so long as it is not in the hands of the enemy.

2. The Social Democratic leadership, true to its traditions, has completely capitulated before Dollfuss, that is, before fascism.212 Only the Social Democratic Opposition can call forth a sharp turn in the state of mind of the toiling masses. But for that it must first of all rise to the height of its historic task. Is that possible? It is useless to speculate. Action decides.

3. One of the correspondents writes: "You will no doubt demand that we join your organization." No, today the question is not posed so abstractly. The organization of the Left
Opposition (Bolshevik-Leninists) stands on the ground of a definite international program which has been tested in great historical events in a series of countries (USSR, China, Great Britain, Spain, Germany, etc.). We will, of course, be very happy if the further development of events brings the Social Democratic Opposition closer to us. On our part, we are ready to do everything to facilitate and hasten this rapprochement through means of comradely discussion, reciprocal criticism, etc. But this demands a relatively long perspective. In the appreciation of the next, immediate tasks of the Austrian Social Democratic Opposition, we must above all analyze the present situation in Austria and in the Austrian Social Democracy.

4. The Social Democratic Opposition can bring about a change in the state of mind of the workers on the condition that it immediately shows that it is not inclined to confine itself to literary criticism and that it is not getting ready to capitulate before the party leadership, which in turn capitulates before Hitler. In other words, it must break away from the opposition traditions of Max Adler, whose impotent "left" criticism only strengthens and supports Otto Bauer and Co. An opposition is needed for a revolutionary struggle which will not hesitate in carrying out this task out of consideration for the discipline, statutes, and unity of the party.

5. The Opposition poses for itself the task of "saving the party." What are we to understand by that: the tradition of Austro-Marxism, its political course, its bureaucratic apparatus? On the contrary, we must put an end to all of this as rapidly and as thoroughly as possible. It is impossible to save the Social Democratic masses from disintegration and political degeneration without the proclamation of an uncompromising struggle against Bauer and Co. This struggle must inevitably lead to split. The task is how to consummate this split with the greatest advantage for the proletarian revolution.

6. Does that mean that the Austrian Social Democratic Opposition should immediately leave the party and create a new one? No, that is not my opinion. Today, when the Opposition has not yet appeared before the working masses, such a split would only help Bauer and Co. Here, also, the first step should be: to speak out what is.

7. From this point of view, the draft declaration of the Social Democratic Opposition which has been sent to me is altogether inadequate. This document criticizes the party leadership instead of announcing an uncompromising struggle against it to the party masses. The word betrayal must be spoken. It may be said that this word has been much abused. In the new situation the Austrian workers will examine this word in a
new light, particularly when it comes from the left Social Democrats. It is necessary to state that Bauer, Danneberg, Seitz, and Co.\textsuperscript{214} (all of them must be called by their names) have betrayed the Austrian proletariat just as Wels and Co. betrayed the German proletariat. Only such a candid and categoric declaration will make the independent intervention of the Opposition clear to the workers and at the same time inspire confidence in the seriousness of its intentions.

8. The fundamental political formulations of the document are unclear, have a tendency toward compromise, and risk the danger of causing confusion among the workers.

a. The declaration demands that the bourgeois republic be replaced by a workers' democracy. What is a "workers' democracy"? A fight can be conducted either for the reestablishment of the bourgeois democracy or for the proletarian dictatorship. The slogan "workers' democracy" is an impermissible enigma in revolutionary politics.

b. The declaration nowhere says that whatever the political slogan may be (democracy or dictatorship), it can be realized under the present circumstances only with the help of the armed strength of the workers.

c. The declaration does not raise the slogan of workers' and soldiers' councils; the sabotage by the official apparatus of the Social Democracy and the trade unions can only crush the workers' councils; the slogan of soldiers' councils would open the way to the army for the workers.

The situation can change rapidly. Many things said above can quickly alter. But one thing can be said with certainty: all half-measures, every word left unsaid on the part of the Social Democratic Opposition will inevitably benefit the party leadership, and, in the last analysis, fascism also.
Dear Comrades,

Naturally I can only welcome your intention to publish in a separate pamphlet my work, "Socialism in One Country," produced as a supplement to the last volume of my History. This work does not really exhaust the problem theoretically. It has, however, been elucidated in sufficient detail by history. This has shown how Lenin's party really looked at the international character of the revolution and how the Stalinist bureaucracy imperceptibly changed its viewpoint into its opposite.

Today's crisis in the Soviet economy and in the Stalinist regime has arisen from the theory of socialism in one country. For this reason, this work is not concerned with an abstract and dogmatic discussion but with life-and-death questions for the Soviet regime and the world working class.

L. Trotsky
LESSONS OF MAY DAY IN AUSTRIA

Reflections from Afar

May 7, 1933

On the First of May the workers of Vienna showed that in spite of all the deception, treachery, and disappointment, they do want to fight. Once again it became apparent how easily all the bureaucrats and semibureaucrats, the official ones as well as those of the halfhearted Opposition, disguise their own lack of decision as a "depressed sentiment" among the masses. The workers want to fight. This is the most important conclusion from which we must proceed.

The policy of the Social Democratic Party on May Day consisted in creating an alibi for itself: before the government, in case the masses entered into struggle and suffered defeat; before the masses, in case the masses entered into struggle and achieved a victory. It is hard to conceive of a more disloyal and outrageous policy. It is disloyal because it leaves the masses with the illusion that they have a party and a leadership. It is outrageous because, in their most difficult hour, it leaves the masses, who are accustomed to a centralized leadership, to seek a way out on their own hook.

The policy of the Social Democratic Party excludes the possibility of a victory of the proletariat. At the same time it excludes the possibility of any kind of stabilized regime. The proletariat will remain in a state of turmoil and of hope for a revolutionary solution. The bourgeoisie lives in constant dread of civil war. The petty-bourgeois masses are becoming more and more nervous. The military-police measures reveal their unreliability more and more every day. The big bourgeoisie is becoming more and more convinced that without the dictatorship of fascism it will not be able to maintain its system. In this way the Social Democracy paralyzes the proletariat with its doubly disloyal, loquacious, and cowardly policy and pours grist to the mill of fascism.
The semi-Oppositionists of the type of Max Adler (can Otto Bauer still be counted among them?) cover up and protect this policy of disloyalty "from the left." Among the working masses there still is hope that everything will be made good again from above, that the Opposition will soon decide to point out the way of struggle. In this manner irretrievable weeks and months are lost.

The left wing of the Social Democratic Opposition made its first attempt to act when it called on the masses to demonstrate in the center of the city. The call had no effect. It could not have any effect because leadership cannot come from an anonymous organization. The workers want to know with whom they are dealing.

It is not a question of persons but of the banner, the program, the slogan, the organization. Several left Social Democrats who want to fight are disturbed because they have no "names." The name is created in the course of the struggle. As long as the left Social Democrats do not come out with a platform of struggle, their calls will get no echo.

The Communist Party is paralyzed by the criminal policy of the Stalinist bureaucracy in Germany, by the theory and practice of social fascism, the hopeless muddle on the question of the united front, the regime of simulation and falsehoods.

The Bolshevik-Leninists must look for connections with the genuine revolutionary elements in the KPD and the Social Democratic Opposition. It is not true that everything is lost in Austria. The workers want to fight. Great shake-ups, transformations in the masses, are still possible. A small organization which knows what it wants can play a historic role under such circumstances.
ON THE FOREIGN POLICY OF
THE STALINIST BUREAUCRACY

May 12, 1933

In the East the Soviet government is prepared to sell its rights in the Chinese Eastern Railroad. In the West it is renewing the old German-Soviet treaty over Hitler's signature. In the two opposite directions of its foreign policy, the Stalin-Molotov government is bowing before imperialism and fascism.

The abandonment of the Chinese Eastern Railroad does not signify simply the loss for the workers' state of an important economic and strategic position, but the direct transfer into the hands of Japanese imperialism of an important instrument which the next day will be directed against China and also against the Soviet Union.

Stalin's agreement with Hitler strengthens the position of Hitler and cannot help reacting painfully on the morale of the German workers. "If the powerful workers' state is obliged to seek friendship with fascist Germany, that means the position of the Nazis is solid." This is what every thinking German worker inevitably says to himself. At the same moment that the bureaucracy of the Comintern presents the Hitler victory as a passing incident and puts on the agenda a general strike and insurrection (on paper), the Soviet bureaucracy finds it indispensable to establish "normal" relations with the fascist dictatorship in Germany. The actions of Litvinov-Khinchuk characterize much more exactly the viewpoint of the Stalinists than the cheap literature of Manuilsky-Kuusinen.

A revolt has taken place in European revolutionary circles over the latest moves of the Stalinist bureaucracy in foreign policy, not only in the opposition groups, by the way, but also in the official parties. The word "treason" is found more often, if not in the articles then at least in letters and conversations.
Such protestations are not difficult to understand psychologically; but we cannot associate ourselves with them politically. The question of the relations between the Soviet state and imperialism is, in its essence, a question of the relationship of forces. After the Chinese revolution in the East and the powerful vanguard of the European proletariat in the West were crushed, the relationship of forces became brusquely modified to the detriment of the Soviet state. To this must be added the disastrous domestic policy, the weakening of the bonds between the proletariat and the peasantry, the party and the proletariat, the apparatus and the party, the apparatus and the personal dictator. Every one of these political causes forces the centrist bureaucrats to batter down the Opposition and to beat a retreat before the Mikado and Hitler.

The Stalinist bureaucracy is wholly responsible for this opportunist and adventurist policy. But the consequences of this policy no longer depend on their wishes. It is impossible to withdraw at will from an unfavorable relationship of forces. What policy towards fascist Germany could be expected of the Soviet government? A severing of relations? Boycott? These measures would not make any sense except as preludes for military operations. We put forward this kind of perspective two years ago, not isolated from but in direct connection with a radical change of policy in the USSR and in Germany, that is to say, counting on a reinforcement of the workers' state and of the German proletariat. Developments took the opposite road. Today, when the German workers are crushed, when the Soviet state has been weakened, the course toward revolutionary war would be the purest type of adventurism.

Without such a course, that is, without direct preparations for revolutionary war and insurrection in Germany, breaking off diplomatic relations and an economic boycott would only be impotent and pitiable gestures. The absence of Russian orders from Germany would, it is true, increase somewhat the number of the unemployed there. But has there been a lack of unemployed for a revolutionary situation up to now? What was lacking was a revolutionary party and a correct policy. That is doubly lacking at present. We cannot avoid examining the question as to whom economic reprisals would benefit in Germany now: the fascists or the proletariat. It is clear that the conjunctural problem is not solved by Soviet orders. On the other hand, the severing of economic connections with Germany would hit the Soviet economy heavily and consequently the workers' state even more.

We repeat. The Stalinist faction bears a direct and immediate
responsibility for the collapse of the Chinese revolution, for the destruction of the German proletariat, and for the weakening of the workers' state. The struggle against it must be conducted along this fundamental line. It is necessary to rid the world labor movement of the leprosy of Stalinism. But it is necessary to fight against the roots of the malady and not against the symptoms of its inevitable consequences.

As Marxists we remain on the ground of revolutionary realism in the struggle against bureaucratic centrism. If the Left Opposition were at the head of the Soviet state today, in its immediate practical actions it would have to start from the existing relationship of forces resulting from ten years of epigone Stalinist policy. It would be compelled, in particular, to maintain diplomatic and economic connections with Hitler's Germany. At the same time it would prepare for retaliation. This is a great task, requiring time—a task that cannot be solved by a spectacular gesture but demands a radical change of policy in every field.
AN EXPLANATION

May 13, 1933

Your information about negotiations concerning my return to Moscow is, I suppose, an echo of the letter I sent to Moscow on March 15 to the Politburo of the Soviet Communist Party. In that letter I repeated afresh what I and my friends, headed by Rakovsky, had more than once declared in the course of these years of repression against our faction. We are conducting a struggle against the policies of the Stalinist bureaucracy, but we were and we still are entirely at the service of the Soviet republic, and we are prepared to carry out any work in its interests on the condition that we retain our right to defend our point of view within the limits of the party statutes and Soviet constitution. I considered it necessary to repeat this statement once more not only because of the domestic difficulties of the USSR (produced not by the methods of planned economy as such but by the false leadership of the Stalinist bureaucracy), but also because of external dangers; on the one hand from rabid Japanese militarism and on the other from fascist Germany. If the enemies of the Soviet Union are including in their calculations our internal differences, they are making a mistake. That was the meaning of my letter, and it retains its force absolutely independently of the present leading group's attitude to it.
GREETINGS TO THE RED FLAG

May 19, 1933

Dear Comrades,

You have begun publication of a little monthly, *The Red Flag*. This is a modest step forward. We must hope that other steps will follow.

The advance of communism in Great Britain in no way corresponds to the rate of decay of British capitalism. The conservative traditions of British politics, including the politics of the working class, are in themselves obviously insufficient to explain this. We only declare what is true and cannot be refuted when we say that above all, and, alas, with greater effect than any other factor, the progress of communism during the last years has been hindered by the leadership of the British Communist Party. It of course has not acted independently, but has only blindly followed the orders given by the leaders of the Comintern. But this does not free the British Communist bureaucracy from its responsibility or lessen the damage it has done.

A critical examination of the policy of the British Communist Party during the last eight or ten years constitutes a most important task in the education of the Left Opposition itself. You should study the official publications of the party throughout this period carefully, digest them, and reveal the party line on the main strategical problems: its attitude towards the Labour Party, the trade unions, the Minority Movement; the colonial revolution; the united-front policy; the ILP; etc. The mere selection of the most striking quotations and the presentation of them in chronological order would expose not only the glaring contradictions of the "general line," but also the inner logic of these contradictions, that is, the violent oscillation of the centrist bureaucracy between opportunism
Greetings to The Red Flag

and adventurism. Each one of these tactical zigzags pushed Communists, sympathizers, and potential friends to the right, to the left, and finally into the swamp of indifference. We can say without the least exaggeration that the British Communist Party has become a political thoroughfare and retains its influence only in that section of the working class which has been forcibly driven to its side by the decomposition of both capitalism and reformism.

Along with the new printed publication, you have at your disposal a hectographed (excellently hectographed!) bulletin, *The Communist*. It would be extremely desirable to devote the greatest possible space in this publication to an examination of the policy of the British Communist Party along the lines indicated above, and also to a discussion of controversial questions within the Left Opposition itself. While persistently striving to widen our influence among the workers, we must at the same time concentrate on the theoretical and political education of our own ranks. We have a long and laborious road ahead of us. For this we need first-class cadres.

With all my heart I wish you success.

Leon Trotsky
Number 5 of *Gegen den Strom* [Against the Stream], the publication of the Brandler-Thalheimer group now appearing in Strasbourg, contains theses on the struggle against fascism and other programmatic declarations. This issue is very important for determining the character of this group. What have the Brandlerites learned from the catastrophe? Have they moved forward?

Let it be said right at the outset: the theses do contain a number of fundamental ideas, principally in the area of criticism of the party regime, the policy of the "united front only from below," and the theory of social fascism. But apart from these critical ideas (which, despite their elementary character, must be insistently repeated), *Gegen den Strom* remains a document of opportunism as much by what it says as by what it fails to say.

1. The theses justly accuse the Stalinist bureaucracy of deliberately minimizing the importance of the defeat. But from their own evaluation of the catastrophe, the Brandlerites do not draw the necessary conclusions with regard to the party. As in the past, they express the desire to return to the party, that is, they act as if no catastrophe had taken place. In this manner, the Brandlerites help the Stalinists to cover up the significance and dimensions of the defeat politically.

2. "It is not communism that has been defeated," they write, "it is the ultraleft tactic that has been defeated, the bureaucratic regime that has been defeated, the method of leadership pursued up to now that has been defeated." . . . The question is not put politically but in doctrinaire fashion, as if the struggle were between abstract principles and not between living political forces. Communism as a doctrine has of course not
been defeated; what has been defeated, however, is that party in Germany which had a false tactic and a bureaucratic regime and which pushed the proletariat to the catastrophe.

3. The "ultraleft course" has been shipwrecked. Where does it come from? What is its social content? Who promotes it? On this score, just as in the past, not a single word. Yet the Brandlerites acknowledge that the false policy of the Communist International, which led to its ruin, has lasted for ten years. What does the unprecedented perseverance in a disembodied "ultraleft course" stem from?

4. Is it true, however, that the course of the epigone Comintern has always been "ultraleft"? Was the five-year-long subjection of the Chinese Communist Party to the Kuomintang ultraleft? How shall we characterize the policy of the Anglo-Russian Committee that ruined the very promising Minority Movement in the British trade unions? Was the policy of the Comintern ultraleft in India? in Japan? (workers' and peasants' parties). Isn't it obvious that the program of "national emancipation" was and remains a gross opportunistic adaptation to the chauvinist psychology of the German petty bourgeoisie? Can one regard as ultraleft the current policy of blocs with bourgeois pacifists, with individual democrats, etc.: the antiwar congress, the antifascist congress, the anti-imperialist league, and in general all the work directed by Muenzenberg's department for masquerade and charlatanry? Can one charge with "ultraleftism" the March 5 declaration of the Comintern which proclaimed its readiness to refrain from criticism of the Social Democracy all during the period of the united front?

5. The theses declare that the ultraleft policy of all the foreign sections is executed at the command of the Political Bureau of the Soviet Union. And what about the policy in the USSR itself? Doesn't the ultraleft course have its excesses there as well? Are not 100 percent collectivization and exaggerated industrialization expressions of an ultraleft course? And can it be denied that the period of economic adventurism in the USSR was preceded by years of economic opportunism?

6. The Politburo of the CPSU, according to the theses, is not in a position to give direct leadership to the policies of several dozen countries. In and by itself this is incontestable, but it fails to explain the character of the disease which is ravaging the Comintern. Were it simply a question of the remoteness of the Politburo, of the lack of time, of information, of knowledge of the situation in the various countries, the mistakes would be of the most diversified character. But it is not a question of isolated empirical mistakes but of a rad-
ically false tendency. What is the essence of it? What determines its persistency and its comparative constancy?

7. What about the system itself whereby the secretariat of the Politburo is in command of several dozen parties? Is this accidental, or an aberration? The Brandlerites talk a great deal about bureaucratism, but they do not clearly understand the meaning of the term. Bureaucratism, to the extent that it is a question not of isolated accidental aberrations but of a powerful system, is the method of thinking and acting of a bureaucracy, that is, of a special social stratum which may and does come into conflict with the proletarian vanguard. What is the principal source of bureaucratism in the Comintern if not the Soviet bureaucracy?

8. The Brandlerites are compelled to evade this central question because in character and spirit they are only a proscribed, insulted little detachment of this same bureaucracy. They fight against "ultraleftism," but they say nothing about the opportunism of the bureaucracy, for they themselves shared and still share in all its rightist mistakes.

9. The theses declare that the beginning of the false policy of the Comintern coincides roughly with the withdrawal of Lenin from work. But don't the Brandlerites know that the shifting of the general line—to the right and to the left of Marxism—was accomplished with the aid of one single ideological lever: the struggle against Trotskyism? If one puts aside the personal details, the falsifications, the baiting campaign, etc., and grasps the essence of the matter, the revision of the methodology of Marx and Lenin took place under the aegis of the struggle against Trotskyism. The Brandlerites have not understood this to the present day. They think that the struggle against Trotskyism was "in and by itself" correct, but that under cover of this struggle which constituted the principal content of the party's ideology for many years past some miracle or other caused a backsliding from the line of Leninism to the line of the "ultraleft" course (in actuality, to the line of bureaucratic centrism).

10. Were the Brandlerites Marxists, internationalists, they would be unable to declare the policy of the centrist bureaucracy in the USSR inviolate and demand the same inviolability for themselves in Germany. It is not at all a question here of the autonomy of the national sections (we fully acknowledge the necessity of such an autonomy), but of a false evaluation of the international groupings within the ranks of communism.

11. The theses declare that outside of the Brandler organization no forces exist that are able to reconstruct the German
party and the Comintern. Even if one were to recognize this inordinate claim with regard to Germany (we are, as everything we have said shows, far from such a recognition), then what about the Communist International? The Brandlerites are right in saying that for the last ten years the Comintern has been systematically decomposing. But why has the International of the Brandlerites themselves [IVKO] decomposed in the last two or three years? In 1929 they represented an appreciable force, but today all that is left of them is fragments. The reason for it is that in the epoch of imperialism, an opportunistic current is not capable of creating any sort of virile international organization and consequently is equally incapable of regenerating the Communist International.

The theses contain a number of erroneous or ambiguous tactical considerations to which we may still have the occasion to refer. For the moment, we wished only to demonstrate that the German catastrophe has unfortunately taught the Brandlerites nothing. In the domain of tactical questions they are right only insofar as it is a question of the fight against ultra-left zigzags; but they share all or almost all the mistakes of the right-wing zigzags of Stalinism and, what is much worse, they are incapable of raising themselves from the questions of tactics to the questions of strategy. The policy of the International is to them a sum of national policies. Even now they are incapable of understanding the fundamental currents in the world labor movement and to take their place among them. That's why the current of the Brandlerites has no future.
So they have once more capitulated. The Soviet press reports it triumphantly and Tass communicates the capitulation to the whole world. It is hard to conceive of a fact that more mercilessly compromises not only the capitulators but also the regime which requires such sacrifices. Broken backbones can serve as props no longer. The Stalinist apparatus has become a machine for crushing backbones.

Zinoviev and Kamenev were subjected to expulsion and exile a few months ago, not because of any opposition activity of their own, but because of "knowledge of and failure to report" oppositional activity of the right wing. This was only the formal reason. The real reason was that in an atmosphere of general discontent, Zinoviev and Kamenev constituted a danger. They did, it is true, capitulate back in January 1928. But to whom? To the anonymous bureaucracy which passed for the party. Today such a capitulation has lost all value. Today one must acknowledge the infallibility of Stalin in order to have the right to live and breathe politically. Zinoviev and Kamenev simply could not force themselves to such moral prostration. They had been associated with Lenin too long, and they knew Stalin too well, his past role and his caliber. The oath of personal fidelity to Stalin stuck in their throats. That was why they were expelled.

It is not hard to imagine what took place afterwards behind the scenes. For some time now the apparatus itself has been calculating that Stalin's leadership is taking too high a toll in the party. Even Stalin felt this. Their capitulations didn't come off, of course, without mediation and intercession on the one hand and cynical exhortations on the other by the so-called "Old Bolsheviks." "Acknowledge his genius— that costs
very little nowadays—and come back to Moscow: after all, it is better to be in the party." And Zinoviev and Kamenev "acknowledged," that is, they finally sank down into the depths. Their personal fate is profoundly tragic. If the future historian will try to show how pitilessly the epochs of great convulsions destroy people, he will give the example of Zinoviev and Kamenev.

At the time of their first capitulation, they could still foster the illusions: "work in the party," "contact in the party," "influence the masses." Today there is not a trace of these illusions left. Zinoviev and Kamenev do not return from opposition to the party, but merely from exile to Moscow. Stalin needs their return for the same reason he needed the appearance of Bukharin and Rykov on the tribune during the celebration of May Day: to fill the void around the "leader"; if not to fill it, at least to conceal it.

The failure of Zinoviev's and Kamenev's first capitulation, which had a political character, proved to be a harsh and thereby all the more effective demonstration of the correctness of the Left Opposition: the party can be served only by serving its ideas, not its degenerated apparatus. Their second capitulation, which has a purely personal character, strengthens that conclusion from another side. Like Gogol's hero, Stalin gathers together dead souls for want of the living. The salvaging of the heritage of Bolshevism, the training of new revolutionary cadres, remains not only the historical task but also the lofty privilege of the Left Opposition.
WHAT'S HAPPENED TO RAKOVSKY? 228

May 25, 1933

The question of the fate of Rakovsky is enveloped in tragic mystery. Rakovsky is no longer at Barnaul, the site of his former deportation. On the basis of information from two different sources, one Opposition and the other "official," that is, connected with the Stalinists, it may be stated with certainty that Rakovsky, ill, was taken from Barnaul to Moscow. The Opposition source also communicated that Rakovsky had died in a Kremlin hospital. According to the "official" source, Rakovsky is said to have undergone an operation and to have been cured. Through l'Humanite, in an obscure manner, Stalin denied the report of Rakovsky's death. But the leading circles say nothing about his subsequent fate. A Reuter dispatch, sent from Moscow, said that "Rakovsky is practicing medicine in the Yakutsk district." The Reuter agency could not have invented that; it undoubtedly got the tip in Moscow.

How should these facts be tied together? The moving of Rakovsky from Barnaul to the Kremlin hospital would indicate that he is receiving extraordinary attention. In that case why was Rakovsky, after the operation, not sent to the southern region as the doctors have been demanding for some time now or returned to Barnaul, but instead deported to the polar circle, to conditions which are fatal to him? We have no information to explain this contradiction. We are obliged to expound a hypothesis that requires verification. In any case it seems to flow from the whole situation.

The time of Rakovsky's illness coincided with a new wave of anti-Trotskyist fury on the one hand and with the negotiations behind the scenes that led to the latest capitulation of Zinoviev and Kamenev on the other. From the content of the declarations of Zinoviev and Kamenev, it is clear that Stalin
badly needs authoritative testimony against the Left Opposition. It is hard to say this—the Stalinists probably utilized Rakovsky's illness to extort some declaration or other from him. It is probably towards this end that Rakovsky was brought to the privileged Kremlin hospital and accorded conditions which are beyond the dreams of a deportee. The operation, as is reported, was successfully accomplished. Then—and this is quite in harmony with Stalin's character—he must have presented Rakovsky with the political bill. Rakovsky—and this is quite in harmony with his character—must have indignantly rejected the reckoning presented him. That is why the old warrior did not return to Barnaul but was sent to the polar circle.

We can find no other explanation. The Stalinists have every possibility to deny our hypothesis. We will await the denial with impatience, or perhaps our hypothesis is too . . . optimistic, and the Stalinists will find it more to their advantage to remain silent.
Diplomatic routine has its advantages as long as events move in old ruts. Faced with new great facts it is lost. It is most dangerous to underestimate an enemy just because his system goes beyond the limits of routine. Simply to say that Hitler is a demagogue, a hysterical person, and an actor is to shut one's eyes so as not to face the danger! It takes more than hysteria to seize power, and method there must be in the Nazi madness. Woe to those who do not awaken to this fact in time! The leaders of German working-class organizations refused to take Hitler seriously: considering his program as a reactionary and utopian one they proved incapable of estimating its force of action. Today, as a result of their ghastly mistake, their organizations have been shattered to bits. The same error might be repeated in the field of world politics.

On May 17 Hitler replied to Roosevelt and the powers in his peace speech to the Reichstag. Up to that time many thought that Hitler would violently attack the Versailles Treaty, attempting to deal with Europe as he had done with the Reichstag building, Marxian literature, and the Jewish department stores. Nobody really knew where the lightning would come from and where it would strike. Would anyone have predicted twenty-four hours in advance the crushing of the trade unions according to all the rules of a gangster assault upon a bank? What was to be expected now? Then, of a sudden, the cooing of a dove.

Hitler's speech in the Reichstag staggered everybody with its unexpected pacifism, and so attained its most immediate aim. It is always advantageous to take an opponent by surprise. Hitler there developed his first success and fairly embarrassed his adversaries. Highly experienced diplomats al-
allowed themselves to be at least halfway assuaged by a few well-calculated pacific sentences after they had been frightened to death by Papen's blood-and-iron shouting. John Simon gratefully noted in the chancellor's speech the moderate tone of a statesman. So did Austen Chamberlain.230 Contrasting Hitler to Papen, the Morning Post discovered in the declaration the "soft accent of the South," and the entire press declared that the whole atmosphere had suddenly become less tense. At the same time they analyzed and explained these unexpected soft accents in something like these terms: the shrewd diplomat Mussolini had brought Hitler to reason, the pressure from Washington had doubtlessly not been without influence, and consequently the chances of the disarmament policy have manifestly improved. What a flagrant blunder! The psychological secret of the hubbub is simple: whoever expects to meet a madman brandishing an axe and encounters instead a man with a Browning hidden in his hip pocket cannot fail to experience a feeling of relief. But that does not prevent the Browning from being more dangerous than the axe.

There is no lack, on the other hand, of distrustful people who see in Hitler's declaration only an episodic maneuver occasioned by the unfavorable echo to the speech of Papen: it is enough, at least for a few weeks, to deceive public opinion, and then one will see. An all too simple explanation! The menacing harangue of Lord Hailsham231 provoked by the speech of Papen may, it is true, have served as the impulsion to Hitler's intervention. But all this relates to the order and to the tone of political declarations; that is, it touches only the technical side. Behind the diplomatic fencing, however, are concealed much deeper factors and plans. It would be just as false to take Hitler's pacifism at its word as it would be to dismiss the declaration of a "demagogue" without penetrating into its sense. The political problem consists in establishing the inner relationships between Hitler's declaration and his real plans, that is, to try to understand by what ways fascist Germany hopes to attain those ends which it cannot and will not name. The past must already have adequately shown that if there is fantasy and delirium in the policy of National Socialism, this does not mean that Hitler is incapable of weighing realities: his fantasy and delirium are in expedient conformity with his real political aims. That is our point of departure in the appraisal of the internal as well as the foreign policy of National Socialism.

The guiding philosophical and historical ideas in Hitler's disarmament speech are truly pitiful in their pretentious mediocrity. The idea proclaimed by Hitler of the necessity of
readapting the state frontiers of Europe to the frontiers of its races is one of those reactionary utopias with which the National Socialist program is stuffed. Present-day Europe is decomposing economically and culturally not because its national frontiers are imperfect but because the old continent is cut up in every direction by customs prison walls, separated by the disorder of inflated monetary systems, and crushed by the militarism which Europe requires to insure its dismemberment and its decadence. A shifting of the internal frontiers by a few dozens or hundreds of miles in one direction or another would, without changing much of anything, involve a number of human victims exceeding the population of the disputed zone.

The assurances given by the National Socialists that they renounce "Germanization" do not signify that they renounce conquests, for one of the central and most persistent ideas in their program is the occupation of vast territories in "the East" so that a strong German peasantry may be established there. It is not by accident that the pacifist declarations, having suddenly and unexpectedly left the ground of the "ideal" separation of the races, warns in a half-threatening tone that the source of future conflicts may arise out of the "overpopulation of Western Europe." Hitler indicates only one way out of the overpopulation of Europe, primarily of Germany, and that is the East. When, lamenting the injustice of the German-Polish frontier, he declared that one could without difficulty find "in the East" the solution capable of satisfying alike the "claims of Poland" and the "legitimate rights of Germany," he simply had in mind the annexation of Soviet territories. The renunciation of Germanization signifies, in this connection, the principle of the privileged position of the Germanic "race" as the seignorial caste in the occupied territories. The Nazis are against assimilation but not against annexation. They prefer the extermination of the conquered "inferior" peoples to their Germanization. For the time being, fortunately, this is only a matter of hypothetical conquests.

When Hitler asserts with indignation that the great German people has been transformed into a second-class nation, and that this conflicts with the interests of international solidarity and the principle of equal rights for all peoples, he is simply talking for effect. The whole historical philosophy of National Socialism proceeds from the supposedly fundamental inequality of nations and the right of the "superior" races to trample upon and to extirpate the "inferior" races. Needless to say, the Germans occupy a preeminent place among these superior peoples. Taken as a whole, the Hitler program for the recon
struction of Europe is a reactionary-utopian medley of racial mysticism and national cannibalism. It is not hard to submit it to an annihilating criticism. However, the realization of this program is not the first aim of the fascist dictatorship, but rather the reestablishment of the military power of Germany. Without this it is impossible to talk of any program whatsoever. It is only from this standpoint that Hitler's disarmament speech offers any interest whatever.

Hitler's program is the program of German capitalism, aggressive but bound hand and foot by Versailles and the results of the world war. This combination of potential strength and actual weakness accounts for the exceedingly explosive character of the aims of National Socialism and explains the extreme prudence of the most immediate steps towards the attainment of these aims. Hitler may speak today of loosening and gradually untying the knots, but not of cutting them asunder.

Any revision of the treaties, especially of the system of armaments, would signify a change in the present relationship of forces: Germany would have to grow stronger, France weaker. Outside of this, the very question of revision has no meaning for Germany. On the other hand, it is quite clear that the rulers of France will accept no changes that would weaken its position to the benefit of Germany. That is why the Nazis regard as illusory and fantastic any policy calculated upon an improvement of the international position of Germany through agreement with France. It is from this conviction which, as will be seen farther on, runs through all the political activity of Hitler that flows the inevitability of a new conflict between Germany and France. But not today, nor yet tomorrow. It is precisely this "correction" with regard to time that Hitler makes in his declaration and, in this sense, it is not a mere "deception." When Goering set fire to the Reichstag he risked nothing but the heads of his agents. The premeditated firing of Europe is a more ticklish enterprise. In its present state Germany cannot make war. It is disarmed. This is no phrase; it is a fact. Bespectacled students and unemployed wearing a swastika band are no substitute for the Hohenzollern army. To be sure, here and there Hitler can partially violate the obligations dealing with armaments. But he will not resolve upon any open measure on a large scale which would involve him in a direct and flagrant conflict with the proscriptions of Versailles. Only some "fortunate" circumstances, in the form of complications between the heavily armed states of Europe, could permit National Socialism to take drastic steps in foreign policy in the near future. In their absence, Hitler will be forced to
confine himself to grand diplomatic combinations abroad and to petty military contraband at home.

The struggle of the Nazis in Austria and in Danzig does not, in spite of all its sharpness, conflict with the program of action outlined above. In the first place, the growth of National Socialism in Austria is an inevitable fact, especially after the victory in Germany. The reactions abroad against the Hitlerization of Austria will only strengthen the fascist tide. In winning Austria from within, Hitler creates for himself a fairly important auxiliary support. The international complications that will grow out of it will not easily be reconciled with the Versailles Treaty. Hitler evidently knows that besides arguments out of a text, there can also be set up against his policy arguments of force. He must be able to beat a retreat in case of need and he will always have time for that, converting his positions in Austria and Danzig into money of exchange for international agreements.

Potential strength does not liberate Germany from her present weakness. If the Germany of the Hohenzollerns set itself the task of "organizing Europe" in order thereafter to undertake a new partition of the world, present-day Germany, thrown far back to the rear by the defeat, is forced to set itself once more those tasks which Bismarck's Prussia solved long ago: the attainment of the European equilibrium as a stage in the unification of all the German territories. The practical program of Hitler today is bounded by the European horizon. The problems of continents and of oceans are beyond his field of vision and can be of practical concern to him only insofar as they are interwoven with the internal problems of Europe. Hitler speaks exclusively in defensive terms: this corresponds entirely to the stage through which renascent German militarism must pass. If the military rule—the best defensive is the offensive—is correct, then the diplomatic rule—the best preparation for the offensive is to take care of the defensive—is no less correct. In this sense, Brockdorff-Rantzau,233 who had a taste for paradox, told me in Moscow: *Si vis bellum para pacem* [If you wish war prepare for peace].

Hitler is counting upon the support of Italy and, within certain limits, this is assured him, not so much because their internal governments are similar—the purely German Third Reich is, as is known, a frankly Latin plagiarism—as because of the parallelism in many of their foreign aspirations. But with the Italian crutch alone, German imperialism will not rise to its feet. Only under the condition of support from England can fascist Germany gain the necessary freedom of movement. Therefore, no adventures, no declarations which
smack of adventure! Hitler understands that every blow against the West (a blow against Poland would rebound against the West) would promptly bring closer together England and France and would oblige Italy to show great caution. Every imprudent, premature, risky act of revenge politics would lead automatically to the isolation of Germany and—given its military impotence—to a new humiliating capitulation. The knots of the Versailles Treaty would be drawn still tighter. An agreement with England demands a self-limitation. But Paris—and Paris is just what is involved—is well worth a mass. Just as the agreement with Hindenburg, through the medium of Papen, permitted Hitler to accomplish his coup d'etat in the form of an interpretation of the Weimar Constitution, so an agreement with England, through the medium of Italy, is to permit Germany "legally" to ravage and to overthrow the Versailles Treaty. It is within this framework that the chancellor's pacifist declaration to the Reichstag on May 17 must be viewed. Hitler's pacifism is not a fortuitous diplomatic improvisation, but a vital part of a grand maneuver which is to change radically the relationship of forces in favor of Germany and to lay the bases for the European and the world offensive of German imperialism.

However, this is but one part of Hitler's program and only the negative part. To refrain from premature attempts at revenge is in essence the continuation of the Stresemann policy; it does not suffice to guarantee the active support of England. The declaration of May 17 contains a clear indication on the other, the positive, side of the Nazi program: the struggle against Bolshevism. This does not concern the dissolution of the German proletarian organizations but rather means war against the Soviet Union. In close connection with the program of the drive towards the East Hitler takes upon himself the protection of European civilization, of the Christian religion, of the British colonies, and other moral and material values, against Bolshevik barbarism. By assuming this crusade he hopes to obtain for Germany the right to arm itself. Hitler is convinced that on the scales of Great Britain the danger of German fascism to Western Europe weighs less than the danger of the Bolshevik Soviets in the East. This evaluation constitutes the most important key to the whole foreign policy of Hitler.

The most important, but not the only one. The National Socialist dictatorship will not only play upon the contradiction between the West and the East, but also upon all the antagonisms of Western Europe and there is no lack of them. In opposition to the resurrection of Austria-Hungary, Hitler pledges
the special attention of Germany to the "young national states of Europe." He seeks auxiliary levers to reestablish the European equilibrium, proposing that the small and feeble states rally around the vanquished and not the victor. Just as in its domestic policy National Socialism has assembled under its banner the ruined and the desperate in order all the more surely to subject them to the interests of monopoly capital, so in his foreign policy Hitler will strive to create a united front of the vanquished and the injured in order all the more pitilessly to crush them in the future under the weight of German imperialism.

If Hitler has so eagerly accepted the English plan for disarmament reduction, it is only because he counted in advance and with full certainty upon its failure. He did not need to take upon himself the odious role of the gravedigger of pacifist proposals; he prefers to leave that function to others. For the same reason Hitler is not niggardly with his "warm thanks" to the American president for his declaration in favor of disarmament reduction. The more broadly and extensively the program of disarmament is presented before the whole world, and the more inevitably it ends in a collapse, the more incontestable will be Germany's right to rearmament. No, Hitler is not preparing to overthrow Versailles by violence—for violence one must have power! But he is counting firmly upon the prospect that, after the failure of the British program which he "supports," England, together with Italy, will support with all their might the right of Germany to strengthen its defense... against the East. Nothing but defense, and only against the East!

A skeptical or simply cautious reader will object that our interpretation of Hitler's program is at best a hypothesis which might be possible but surely cannot be verified. To this we say: the program flows from the unavoidable logic of the circumstances, and in important policy you should assume that your adversary will make the strongest move. The difficulty of textually proving the hypothesis we developed above is that the oppositional literature of National Socialism is extremely abundant and contradictory, while government practice is at present short-termed and scanty. The author was fully aware of this difficulty when he set to work. But at just the right time, a fortunate accident has supplied a political document of extraordinary value.

We refer to an "Open Letter" of Hitler to Papen, published in pamphlet form on October 16, 1932. Rather sharply controversial in tone, the "Letter" remained unnoticed outside of Germany. The leaders of National Socialism talk and write too much! Still, it should have found a place on the table of every
diplomat or journalist who occupies himself with the present-day foreign policy of Germany. Let us recall the political situation at the time when this pamphlet appeared. Papen was then chancellor. Hitler was in expectant opposition—between August 13, when Hindenburg refused to appoint him head of the government, and January 30, when the field marshal was forced to yield the command of Germany to Hitler. The "Open Letter" was not intended for the masses, but for the ruling classes, and had as its aim to prove to them that the social regime of Germany could not be saved solely by bureaucratic methods; that only the National Socialists had a serious program in foreign policy; finally, that he, Hitler, was as far removed from spineless resignation as he was from adventurism. The letter was anything but sensational, but on the contrary was a most sober document. Today, it may be assumed, Hitler would gladly burn his pamphlet in the furnace. All the more attentively should his adversaries examine it.

"It is absurd to think," Hitler explained to Papen, "that the power which disarmed us will today seriously also disarm itself without being forced to do so." In other words, it is just as absurd to wait for France to agree some fine day or other to the rearmament of Germany. Its enormous military preponderance relieves France of the necessity of an entente with a vanquished foe on the basis of equality of rights. Any attempt to propose a military agreement to France in return for armaments will not only be very coldly received but will immediately be brought to the attention of the state against which it might be aimed: Hitler is alluding of course to the Soviet Union. It is possible for Germany to gain the right to arm itself only by means of "a genuine reestablishment of the European equilibrium." England and Italy are interested in the realization of this goal, but in no case and under no conditions is France. "It is inconceivable to think that the lack of intimacy and of concordance with England and Italy can be made up for by the establishment of better relations with France!" The fundamental thesis of the foreign policy of Hitler, which dismisses as moribund the ideas, or if one prefers, the illusions of Locarno, leaves nothing to be desired in the way of clarity. In the declaration of May 17 we shall not of course find so clear an exposition. But the declaration in no way contradicts the "Open Letter"; on the contrary, it develops and applies its program for a definite stage.

The goal of German policy is the reestablishment of the military sovereignty of the state. Everything else is only a means thereto. But it is not at all necessary that the means be constructed in the image of the goal. Under no circum-
stances must Germany present itself to the world with a re-
armament program of its own, even less so to this disarm­
ament conference. For two reasons: no conference is able to
adopt a decision which would radically change the material
relationship of forces; the very demand for the right to arma­
ments, while remaining a purely platonic demonstration, will
nevertheless permit France to suppress the question of its own
disarmament and, what is worse yet, bring England closer
to France.

This latter result, according to Hitler, is already obtained
to a certain degree as a result of the thoughtless policy
of Papen. England is forced to support France much more
than it wants to. It must be recognized that the criticism ad­
dressed by Hitler to the "Gentlemen's Club" and to the chan­
cello r of the Reich himself as a dilettante and an adventurer
is not merely biting but also quite convincing. The "national"
barons and bureaucrats have no foreign policy at all. The
rattling of a nonexistent weapon is dictated to them by domestic
considerations: they are ready to utilize the nationalist movement
while arresting at the same time its further growth. Undoubtedly
taking his inspiration from Bismarck, Hitler does not recoil
from a blow at the last Hohenzollern: Papen and his colleagues
are only the inheritors and imitators of the theatrical policy of
Wilhelm II, with this fundamental difference, that the kaiser had
a first-class army whereas they have only the memory of it.
Hitler hits a bull's-eye here.

It is not hard, after this, to understand how badly mistaken
was that part of the press and of diplomacy which sought to
discover the real program of the present German government
in the rhetoric of Papen on the peculiar charm of death on the
field of battle. It must not be lost sight of that Papen, whom
the Nazis during the brief period of his rule treated as a cap­
tain of the dragoons, feels himself among them like a man who
is constantly on probation. On May 13 he adopted an
unusually loud tone so as to put himself in harmony—but he
was mistaken in his calculations. One may have his own
opinion about the tastes of an elderly captain of the dragoons
who, between taking a dose of urodonal and drinking down
a glass of Huniadi-Janos water, propagates among young
people the advantages of shrapnel over arteriosclerosis; but
one thing is indisputable: behind Papen's discourse is concealed
no program. The "pacifism" of the present chancellor is much
more dangerous than the bellicose flights of the vice-chancellor.

In passing, we find the explanation for the sharp contra­
diction between Hitler's declaration and the previous policy
of Neurath, Nadolny, and others. Hitler became chancellor
Hitler and Disarmament

at the cost of accepting a ministry of barons and privy councillors. The camarilla round Hindenburg consoles itself with the idea of pursuing also its policy under Hitler. In all likelihood it is only the threatening repercussions abroad of Papen's speech that gave Hitler the possibility of finally taking into his hands the helm of foreign policy. It is not Wilhelmstrasse which dictated the declaration of May 17 to the new chancellor. On the contrary, it is Hitler who subdued the fantasies of the barons and the privy councillors of Wilhelmstrasse.

But let us return to the "Open Letter." With unusual brusqueness it attacks the slogan launched by Papen on naval armament. Even if Germany had the means—and it hasn't, the pamphlet declares—it would not be permitted to convert them into warships and it would be powerless to violate the prohibition. The slogan of military armament alone drove England to the side of France. There, says the pamphlet, you have the results "of your truly fatal leadership in foreign policy, Mr. von Papen!"

The struggle for the arming of Germany on sea and on land must be based upon a definite political idea. Hitler calls it by its name: the need of "strengthening the defense against the latent dangers of the East is comparatively easy to motivate." Sympathy for such a program is guaranteed in advance on the part of "clear-visioned persons" in the West—obviously not in France. It is only from the standpoint of "the defense necessary for us in the East," with regard to the Baltic Sea, that England can be persuaded to accept "corrections" also in the naval paragraphs of the Versailles Treaty. For it must not be forgotten that "at the present time it is important for the future of Germany to have an attitude full of confidence towards England."

The German national movement can and should demand armament, but the German government must in no case expound this demand. Today it must insist only and exclusively upon the disarmament of the victors. Hitler considered it self-evident that the disarmament conference is condemned to failure. "There would be no need at all," he wrote three months before his advent to power, "for the German delegation to participate interminably in the Geneva disarmament comedy. It would suffice to expose clearly before the whole world the wish of France not to disarm for us thereupon to quit the conference, stating that the peace of Versailles has been violated by the signatory powers themselves and that Germany must reserve for itself under these circumstances the drawing of the corresponding conclusions."

The declaration of Hitler, as chancellor, only serves to de-
velop this melody. The refusal of the victors to disarm would signify the "final moral and real liquidation of the treaties themselves." Germany would interpret such conduct as the desire "to remove it from the conference." In that case it would be hard for it "to continue to belong to the League of Nations." Truly, the "Open Letter" is indispensable as the key to the strategy of Hitler!

The departure of Germany from the League of Nations would be accompanied by a disaffection between France, on the one hand, and England and the United States, on the other. The first preconditions would be created for the reestablishment of the "European equilibrium" in which Germany must occupy a growing place. With the concordance of Italy and England Hitler would acquire the possibility of rearming Germany, not by petty contraband measures but by big "corrections" in the Versailles Treaty. Parallel to this would be developed the program of "defense" against the East. In this process a critical point must inevitably supervene: war. Against whom? Should the line against the East not prove to be the line of least resistance, the explosion might take place along a different direction. For if it is still possible to discuss to what degree offensive means are distinguished from defensive means, it is already beyond dispute that the military means suitable for the East are equally suitable for the West.

Hitler is preparing for war. His policy in the domain of economics is dictated primarily by concern over the maximum economic independence of Germany in case of war. To the aims of military preparation must also be subordinated the service of obligatory labor. But the very character of these measures indicates that it is not a question of tomorrow. An attack upon the West in the more or less immediate future could be carried out only on condition of a military alliance between fascist Germany and the Soviets. But it is only the most turbulent sections of the White Guard emigration that can believe in the possibility of such an absurdity or can seek to make a threat out of it. The attack against the East can take place only on condition of the support of one or several powerful states of the West. This variant is, at all events, the more likely one. But here too the preparatory period will not be measured by weeks or by months. The four-power pact, deciding nothing fundamental in advance, can only organize the mutual contact of the largest states of Western Europe. It is a guarantee against hazards of a secondary order, but not against fundamental antagonisms. Hitler will strive to extract from the pact all the advantages for the at-
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Tack against the East. The regulations of the pact predetermine no more than ten percent of its future destiny. Its real historical role will be determined by the actual relationships and the groupings of its participants, their allies, and their adversaries.

Hitler is prepared for the next ten years not to undertake any military actions against either France or Poland. In the declaration he fixed five years as the term during which genuine equality of rights for Germany in the matter of armed forces must be accomplished. These terms need not, of course, be invested with a sacred significance. But they outline the bounds in point of time within which the leading circles of fascism confine their plans of revenge.

Domestic difficulties, unemployment, the ruination and the distress of the petty bourgeoisie, may, of course, push Hitler to premature actions which he himself by a cool analysis would regard as harmful. In living politics one must base himself not only upon the plans of the opponent but also upon all the entanglements of the conditions in which he is placed. The historical development of Europe will not meekly obey the order of march worked out in the Brown House of Munich. But this order of march, after the seizure of power by Hitler, has become one of the greatest factors in European development. The plan will be altered in conformity with events. But one cannot understand the alterations without having before him the plan in its entirety.

The author of these lines does not consider himself called upon to mount guard before the Versailles Treaty. Europe needs a new organization. But woe betide it if this work falls into the hands of fascism. The historian of the twenty-first century will, in that case, inevitably have to write: The epoch of the decay of Europe began with the war of 1914. Called the "war of democracy," it soon led to the domination of fascism which became the instrument concentrating all the forces of the European nations towards the aim of "the war for liberation"... from the results of the preceding war. Thus, fascism, as the expression of the historic blind alley of Europe, was at the same time the instrument of the destruction of its economic and cultural acquisitions. Let us hope, however, that this old continent still has sufficient vital strength left to open up to itself a different historical road.
When people cannot answer basic arguments, they hide behind secondary ones. The Brandlerites as well as the Stalinists are clinging with their fingertips to the comparison of March 5, 1933, with August 4, 1914. If we leave aside the outbursts of moral indignation, or mere insults, the objections reduce themselves to the following: (a) in 1914 the Social Democracy supported the government of Wilhelm II; the Stalinist bureaucracy has not even given the slightest indication of support to the Hitler government; (b) the KPD continues to work, to publish, in a word, to struggle; it would be a mistake to "underestimate" its forces; the Social Democracy did not die after August 4, it continued to exist, even came to power.

No historical comparison retains its validity if it does not confine itself to certain justifiable limits. We are very well aware that the Stalinist KPD is distinguishable from the prewar Social Democracy, and that March 5—as much by its character as by its results—is distinguishable from August 4. We simply want to say by our comparison that in the same way the party of Bebel finally terminated its progressive role on the threshold of the war, so the KPD has finally terminated its revolutionary role on the threshold of the fascist dictatorship. To complicate this analogy by considerations which have no bearing on the question shows an incapacity for concrete historical reasoning, that is, of dialectical thinking.

Lenin compared the peace of Brest-Litovsk with the peace of Tilsit. It is not difficult to object to this comparison by bringing up dozens of elementary truisms: for Prussia it was a question of national independence, for the Soviets it was a question of safeguarding a new social regime; there the peace
was signed by the monarchy, here by the party of the proletariat, etc., etc. But all these fine commonplaces do not tell us anything about the essence of the question which interests us. We were forced to sign the peace of Brest-Litovsk in order not to completely succumb before the enemy but to reassemble our forces for freedom. It is in this sense that one can speak of a peace of "Tilsit."

The Stalinists and Brandlerites also rose up against the analogy between the prefascist regime in Germany ("presidential" cabinets) and Bonapartism. They enumerated dozens of features in which the Papen-Schleicher regime differed from classical Bonapartism and always ignored this fundamental characteristic that makes them similar: the preservation of equilibrium between two irreconcilable camps. There is nothing worse than pseudo-Marxist thinking which, full of conceit, stops at the point where the question first begins. The analogy with Bonapartism, precisely defined and concrete, not only further clarifies the role of the last Giolitti\textsuperscript{243} cabinet maneuvering between the fascists and the socialists, but also illuminates the present transitional regime in Austria. Now one can already speak of the profound logical necessity of a period of "Bonapartist" transition between parliamentarism and fascism. The example of Austria demonstrates the enormous importance that an exact demarcation between Bonapartism and fascism has for the aims of practical politics or, more exactly, should have. But formalistic thinking repeats ready-to-hand criteria instead of making a social analysis, and discards analogies rich in content and very concrete for pale platitudes which do not teach us anything. It is punished for this in every new historic situation like the ox in the Russian fable who always finds himself before a new door.

"The Social Democracy did not die after August 4." Do the quibblers mean to say that the slogan of a new party, proclaimed after August 4, was false? Obviously they do not, but that is precisely the question. The Social Democracy continued to exist after the Fourth of August but only as the democratic labor party of the imperialist bourgeoisie. Its historical function had changed. It was just that which justified the birth of the Third International.

Do they want to tell us that the KPD, despite the catastrophe which has finished it off forever in the minds of the proletariat as a revolutionary party, will nevertheless continue to exist as a mass organization? We think that nothing justifies such a hypothesis: it rests on an abstract and formal analogy with the fate of reformism. The old Social Democracy united within its ranks elements with a revolutionary perspective and those
of opportunist practice. The Fourth of August finally eliminated the revolutionary tendencies and determined its transformation into a conservative democratic party. The KPD posed a revolutionary task for itself and for the masses, which it always advanced and emphasized in bitter struggle against the Social Democracy. It is precisely in this task that the KPD proved bankrupt in the decisive test. It will not be regenerated as a revolutionary party. Can it continue to exist under another form, with other political functions? If it can, it will not be as a mass organization of the German proletariat, but as an agency of the Stalinist bureaucracy, pure and simple. No other political place remains for it.

Already on the morrow of March 5 one could have and should have formulated this prognosis on the basis of an understanding of the catastrophe in connection with the policy that had caused it. Only one valid objection to this could have been raised at the time: perhaps the party will save everything if, under the influence of the terrible defeat, it clearly and sharply changes its policy and regime, beginning with an open and honest admission of its own mistakes. For our part, we believed even then, on the basis of all that had happened, that it was impossible to expect the miracle of its critical awakening; but even if that had happened it would not have saved the KPD as an organization: there are political crimes which are unpardonable. But it is fruitless today to speculate on this theme. The test has already taken place. There can be no question of a political awakening of the official party any longer. On the contrary, the last sparks of critical thought have been stifled. Nothing gives a better picture of the collapse of the KPD than the fact that on the day after the great catastrophe, instead of making a theoretical clarification of the events, it has exerted every effort to sweep away all trace of a clarification by all sorts of insinuation, calumny, incitement, and persecution.

In the guise of an objection, the example of 1923244 might be cited, where the party also defaulted but did not collapse. We do not deny the importance and the lesson of this example: it is only necessary to draw the correct conclusions from it. First, the defeat of 1923 is comparable neither in its form nor in its extent nor in its consequences with the catastrophe of 1933. Second, the workers do not forget the past; now the party will pay for all its crimes, among which is also the capitulation of 1923. Finally, and from the political point of view this is most important, the KPD required a general change of its leading apparatus in 1923. It is not a question of whether the new Central Committee was better or worse
than the old but the fact that the presidium of the Comintern was forced to respond to the discontent and revolt in the party by throwing out the Brandlerite leadership as a sop to the revolutionary workers. Such a maneuver is not possible now: the apparatus is completely separated from the masses and there can be no question of its correction through elections; the presidium of the Comintern is itself too closely connected in the eyes of the masses to the Thaelmann apparatus because of its struggle against the Opposition. The fact that the Stalinist bureaucracy not only denies its mistakes in the defeat, but also the defeat itself, only aggravates its mistakes and condemns it to an infamous decline.

It is not a question now of the reactionary and utopian task of preserving an apparatus cut off from the masses, but of saving the best proletarian elements from despair, from grief, from indifference, and from the morass. It is absolutely impossible to attain this result by vainly trying to inspire hope of a miracle, the hopelessness of which becomes clearer every day. It is necessary to present an honest balance sheet of the past and to lead the forces of the advanced workers towards the organization of a Bolshevik party for a new historic stage.
AN INTERVIEW
BY GEORGES SIMENON

June 6, 1933

Questions by Georges Simenon

Do you think the race question will be the primary factor in determining the events that will follow the present unrest? Or will it be the social question? The economic question? The military question?

Can the group of dictatorships be considered the beginning of a regroupment of the peoples, or is it only a passing phenomenon? How about the group of Western democracies?

Do you think that development can be achieved simply by drifting along, or do you consider a violent upheaval necessary?

How long do you think the present situation can remain in a state of flux?

Answers by Leon Trotsky

1. No, I do not believe in the least that race will be a decisive developmental factor in the coming period. Race is a raw anthropological factor—heterogeneous, impure, hodgepodge (mixtum compositum)—the material from which historical development created the nations as half-finished products. . . . Classes, social groupings, and the political currents based on them will decide the fate of the new era. I certainly do not deny the significance of racial characteristics and racial differences, but in the presence of development they are overshadowed by the technology of labor and thought. Race is a static and passive element, history is dynamic. How can a relatively fixed element determine action and development? All distinctive racial features are obliterated in the face of the internal-combustion engine, not to mention the machine gun.
When Hitler prepared to establish a form of rule suited to the North-German race, he could think of nothing better than to plagiarize from the South-Latin race. Mussolini, at the time of his fight for power, used the social theory (although standing it on its head) of a German, the German Jew Marx, whom one or two years earlier he had called "our immortal teacher." If today, in the twentieth century, the Nazis propose to ignore history, social dynamics, and culture in order to revert to "race," why not go back one step further? Isn't anthropology just a part of zoology? Who knows, maybe the racists will find the most exalted and indisputable inspirations for their creative work in the kingdom of the anthropoids?

2. I do not believe that nations can be grouped under the classifications democracy and dictatorship. Except for a small layer of professional politicians, nations, peoples, and classes do not live off politics. Governmental forms are merely means for definite, predominantly economic, tasks. Naturally a certain similarity in forms of state rule tends toward and facilitates comparison. But ultimately material considerations are decisive: economic interests and military calculations.

3. Do I regard the group of dictators, both fascist (Italy, Germany) and quasi-Bonapartist (Poland, Yugoslavia, Austria) as episodic and short-lived? Alas, I cannot share such an optimistic prognosis. Fascism was called into existence not by a "psychosis" or "hysteria" (as salon theoreticians like Count Sforza comfort themselves in thinking) but by a profound economic and social crisis that gnaws mercilessly at the body of Europe. The present cyclical crisis will undoubtedly give way to a conjunctural revival, although it will be less of a recovery than is hoped for. The over-all position of Europe will not get much better. After every crisis the smaller and weaker companies become still weaker or collapse altogether; the stronger ones become even stronger. Contrasted with the economic giants of the United States, fragmented Europe represents a combination of small, mutually hostile enterprises. Europe's position is at this time very difficult; the dollar itself is down on its knees. The consequences of the present crisis, however, will change the worldwide relation of forces in favor of America and to the disadvantage of Europe.

The fact that the old continent as a whole is losing the privileged position it once occupied leads to an enormous aggravation of the antagonisms between the European nations and between the classes within these nations. Of course, in different countries this process attains a different tension. But I am speaking about a general historical tendency. The growth of
social and national contradictions explains, in my opinion, the origin and relative stability of the dictatorships.

To illustrate my thoughts I will take the liberty of referring to what I had the occasion to say a few years ago to the question: Why and for how long would the democracies give way to dictatorship? Allow me to give a literal quotation from an article I wrote on February 25, 1929:

"It is sometimes said that in these cases it is a question of backward nations, or of those lacking maturity. This explanation hardly fits Italy. But even in cases where it fits, it explains nothing. In the nineteenth century it was considered a law that backward nations were climbing the steps of democracy. Why then does the twentieth century push them along the road to dictatorship? . . . Democratic institutions show that they cannot withstand the pressures of contemporary antagonisms, which at one moment are international, and at another internal, and most often international and internal simultaneously. Is this a good thing or an evil? Anyhow, it is a fact.

"In an analogy with electricity, democracy may be defined as a system of safety switches and fuses to guard against the violent shocks generated by national or social struggles. No other epoch in the history of man has been so filled with antagonisms as our own. The overloading of the current shows itself more and more at various points in the European system. Under the too-high tension of class and international antagonisms, the safety switches of democracy fuse or break. This is the essence of the short circuit of dictatorship. The first to give way, of course, are the weakest switches."

When I wrote these lines, Germany still had a Social Democratic government at its head. It is clear that the further development of events in Germany, which no one can call an underdeveloped country, can in no way shake my assessment.

True enough, at that time the revolutionary movement in Spain swept away not only the dictatorship of Primo de Rivera but the monarchy as well. Such opposing currents are inevitable in the historical process. But internal equilibrium is far from being established on the Iberian Peninsula. The new Spanish regime has yet to prove its durability.

4. Fascism, above all German National Socialism, undoubtedly threatens Europe with the upheaval of war. Speaking from the sidelines, perhaps I am wrong but it seems to me that the extent of this danger is underestimated. If one takes a perspective not of months but years—and not of decades
An Interview by Georges Simenon

in any case—then I consider an outbreak of war from fascist Germany as absolutely inevitable. It is precisely this question that can become decisive for the fate of Europe. I hope, however, to express myself on this theme in the press very soon.

You find, perhaps, that I paint the situation very darkly? I only draw conclusions from facts, allowing myself to be led not by the logic of sympathies or antipathies but by the logic of the objective process. That ours is not a time of peaceful and calm prosperity, and of political comfort—that, I trust, need not be proved. But my evaluation can appear pessimistic only when one measures the course of history with too short a yardstick. All great periods of history have appeared gloomy when viewed from close by. The mechanism of progress, one must admit, is very imperfect. But there is no reason then to assume that a Hitler or a combination of several Hitlers will succeed forever, or even for a dozen years, in making this mechanism run backward. They will strip many gears, they will bend many levers. They can throw Europe back for a number of years. But I do not doubt that in the end humanity will find its way. The whole of past history will vouch for that.

[After Simenon's written questions were answered by Trotsky in writing, the following exchange was reported by Simenon:]

"Do you have other questions to ask me?" Trotsky inquired politely.
"Just one, but I'm afraid that it might be indiscreet."
He smiles, and with a wave of the hand encourages me to continue.
"Some newspapers claim you have been visited recently by agents sent from Moscow to request your return to Russia."
His smile broadens.
"That's not true, but I know the source of that bit of news. It is an article of mine that appeared in the American press two months ago. I would say, among other things, that given the present situation in Russia, I would be ready to serve again should any danger whatsoever threaten the country."
He is calm and quiet.
"You would take up active service again?"
He says yes with a nod of his head. . . .
THE LATEST FALSIFICATION OF THE STALINISTS

Published June 9, 1933

A new bit of gossip emanating from Moscow was put into circulation during the past year: Lenin had declared that Trotsky was a "Judas." When? Where? Why? At first, the European Stalinists were a little disturbed about repeating this filthy rot before the advanced workers. But when the defeat of the German proletariat entered another crime, the most terrible of all, into the inventory of the exploits of the Stalinist bureaucracy, they had to resort to stiff measures. They now began to circulate the gossip about a "Judas" with increasing frequency.

What is it based on? Two years before the war, in one of the moments of accentuation of the emigrant struggle, Lenin angrily called Trotsky a "yudushka" in a note that he wrote. Whoever is acquainted with Russian literature knows that "Yudushka" (Golovlev) is a literary type, the hero of the Russian satirist Saltykov-Shtchedrin. In the emigrant struggle of those days one could find "digs" borrowed from Saltykov in almost every polemical article. In the case before us, it was not even an article, but a note written in a moment of anger. At all events, Yudushka Golovlev has no relation at all to the Judas of the Evangel.

In connection with the unavoidable exaggerations in the polemical letters of Lenin, Stalin, taking up the defense of the attitudes of Zinoviev and Kamenev in October 1917, wrote in 1924: "Lenin sometimes deliberately runs ahead in his letters, pushes into the foreground such possible mistakes as may be made, and criticizes them in advance with the aim of warning the party and insuring it against mistakes, or else he sometimes puffs up trifles and makes 'an elephant out of a gnat' towards the same pedagogical aim. . . . To draw
from such letters of Lenin (and there are not a few of such letters by him) a conclusion about 'tragic' differences of opinion, and to make a big to-do about it, means not to understand Lenin's letters, not to know Lenin" ("Trotskyism or Leninism?"—1924). These deductions of Stalin, which stand up very badly as a justification for the conduct of Zinoviev and Kamenev in October 1917—it was not a question of a "trifle" at that time or a "gnat"—can nevertheless be completely applied to that third-rate episode which produced Lenin's note from exile on Yudushka Golovlev.

That Lenin had violent encounters with Trotsky in the years of emigration is known to everyone. But all that was a number of years before the October Revolution, the civil war, the building of the Soviet state, and the founding of the Communist International. The true relations between Lenin and Trotsky are, it would seem, set down in later and more authoritative documents than that of a note resulting from a conflict in emigration. What do the professional calumniators want to say when they throw the comparison with "Judas" into the debate? That Lenin did not trust Trotsky politically? Or that he did not trust him morally? Out of hundreds of utterances of Lenin, we can cite two or three.

On November 1, 1917, Lenin said at a session of the Petrograd party committee: "I cannot even speak seriously about it. Trotsky has long said that the unification (with the Mensheviks) is impossible. Trotsky has grasped this and since then there has been no better Bolshevik."

In the days of the civil war, when Trotsky had to make decisions of extraordinary scope by himself, Lenin, on his own initiative, handed him a blank sheet of paper with the following inscription at the bottom: "Comrades: Knowing the strict character of Comrade Trotsky's orders, I am so convinced, so absolutely convinced, of the correctness, expediency, and necessity for the success of the cause of the order given by Comrade Trotsky, that I unreservedly endorse this order—V. Ulyanov/Lenin."

If the first of these two declarations cited above gives a clear enough political evaluation, the second one reveals the degree of moral confidence. It is hardly necessary to quote the dozens of citations from the articles and speeches of Lenin where he expresses his attitude toward Trotsky, or to reproduce here once more the correspondence of Lenin and Trotsky on the national question or on the question of the monopoly of foreign trade. We will confine ourselves only to recalling that letter which N. K. Krupskaya, Lenin's companion for so many years, addressed to Trotsky a few days after Lenin's
death. "Dear Lev Davidovich, I write to tell you that about a month before his death, as he was looking through your book, Vladimir Ilyich stopped at the place where you give a characterization of Marx and Lenin, and asked me to read it over again to him; he listened very attentively, and then looked it over again himself. And here is another thing I want to tell you. The attitude of V. I. toward you at the time when you came to us in London from Siberia did not change until his death. I wish you, Lev Davidovich, strength and health, and I embrace you warmly. N. Krupskaya."

The overzealous agents of Stalin would have acted more prudently had they not raised the question of moral confidence. Already ill, Lenin urged Trotsky not to come to an agreement with Stalin: "Stalin will make a rotten compromise, and then he will deceive." In his testament, Lenin urged the removal of Stalin from his post as general secretary, giving as his motivation the disloyalty of Stalin. Finally, the last document dictated by Lenin the day before his second attack was his letter to Stalin in which he broke off "all personal and comradely relations" with him.

Perhaps this will suffice, Messrs. Calumniators?
DIPLOMATIC AND PARLIAMENTARY CRETINISM^{250}

The Struggle Against Fascism in Austria and the Congress at the Pleyel in Paris

June 13, 1933

The strength of Marxism lies in its ability to recognize reality. In the words of a Marxist, "parliamentary cretinism" is not an insult but the characteristic of a political system which substitutes juridical and moral constructions, a ritual of decorative phrases, for social reality. The strength of Bolshevism consisted in that, in the person of Lenin, it applied the materialistic method of analysis with the greatest theoretical honesty—not permitting optimism to prevent speaking out what is, not permitting consoling illusions—to all the problems of our epoch.

On the fundamental questions of revolutionary policy—in the method of this policy—Stalinism represents not only a negation of Leninism but the worst caricature of it. We see this again at the present time in relation to the fate of Austria. The banning of the Communist Party, which has occurred without any protest on the part of the Austrian workers, should have, one would think, forced the Moscow organizers of international defeats of the working class to reflect on the sad results of their previous policies. If the legal Austrian Communist Party, possessing its own press, proved unable to offer any resistance whatsoever to the purely police repres- sions of Austrian Bonapartism, how will it oppose the attacks of the fascist bands? The Moscow Pravda, however, sees in the very suppression of the Austrian section of the Comintern, which took place without resistance, a "victory" or, at least, the immediate prelude to victory. "The antifascist movement in Austria is growing every day" (!) writes Pravda of May 28. "Despite the sabotage of the leaders of the Austrian So-
cial Democracy, broad preparations are being made in all countries for the European antifascist congress" [our emphasis—L. T.]. In precisely the same manner the antifascist movement "grew every day in Germany" only to disappear suddenly on March 5, no one knows where. These people not only have learned nothing but they always fashion their optimism on the same pattern. They are not revolutionists; they are priests who repeat this or that formula, made up of consoling lies, at the bedside of the dying.

However, precisely how does the antifascist movement manifest itself? And why does it pass over the banning of the Austrian Communist Party in silence? It was very busy, this movement "which is growing every day," with a more important task: the preparation of the Barbusse congress in Paris. This is an example of parliamentary cretinism that should open the eyes of the most backward workers! It is wrong to think that a parliament is necessary for parliamentary cretinism; shielded rostrums are sufficient, forums removed from the arena of struggle, where false speeches can be made, barren formulas paraded, and twenty-four-hour "alliances" concluded with journalists, pacifists, outraged radicals, tenors, and baritones.

It is foolish, of course, to believe that there are "broad preparations in every country" for the Paris masquerade. Beaten down by unemployment, the police, the fascist bands, the betrayal of the Social Democracy, and the impotence of the Communist Party, the Austrian proletariat is hardly interested in the lyricism of Barbusse, in the rhetoric of Bergery, and in the petty machinations of Muenzenberg. How can the international meeting in Paris change anything in the Austrian situation, which not in ten years, nor in five, but this very day is moving towards the complete suppression of the proletariat? Isn't it clear that by speaking in its boastful tone about the Paris congress Pravda completely reveals its true significance: to sidetrack attention from reality to fiction, from the conquest of the masses to the parliamentary game, from the irreconcilable clash of the classes to collaboration with the "free-lancers," from the streets of Vienna to a luxurious hall in a rich quarter of Paris, from civil war to an exercise in empty rhetoric. In other words, from the methods of Bolshevism to parliamentary cretinism.

The paper Rundschau, published in Basel by the Stalinist bureaucracy, which seems specially designated to prevent the German workers from drawing the necessary lessons of the catastrophe, in its No. 17 issue quotes the article from Pravda referred to above as a great revelation. Do not lose courage,
Austrian proletarians: Barbusse, allied with your Renner (see Barbusse's paper, Le Monde [The World]), are keeping watch over you! And, as if to complete the picture of political decay, the same number of Die Rundschau prints a leading article on the present relations between Germany and Austria. A "revolutionary" philistine relates that "for the first time" (!) in the relations of the two countries, "Hitler has recourse to reprisals against Austria to force measures of internal policy on that government." For the first time in the relations of the two states! The article concludes with the following remarkable words: "The relations between Germany and Austria have never been, since the existence of the empire, as bad as they are at this moment. Such is the practical result of Hitler's foreign policy." It is somewhat unbearable to read this philosophy which is worthy of a conservative Privatdozent (professor). Hitler is conducting a policy of counterrevolutionary realism in Austria. He wins over the petty-bourgeois masses by digging the ground from under the unstable Austrian Bonapartism. With stubbornness and perseverance, Hitler is changing the relationship of forces in his favor. He does not fear the straining of relations with Dollfuss. In that he distinguishes himself—and distinguishes himself to his advantage—from Otto Bauer and from . . . the Stalinist bureaucracy, which does not view the relations between Austria and Germany from the standpoint of the class struggle but from the standpoint of diplomatic cretinism.

Moscow's enthusiasm for the Paris congress, called to replace the revolutionary struggle in Austria, and the indignation at Basel over the policy of Hitler who does not fear, in the struggle against the Austrian masses, to dispute with Dollfuss himself ("there is no animal stronger than a cat," says the mouse)—this enthusiasm and this indignation complement each other as two forms of parliamentary and diplomatic cretinism. By a very small part, the whole can be judged. In many cases, one can precisely determine the sickness by a symptom. These two articles are enough—one in Pravda, the other in Die Rundschau—to say: perhaps the centrist bureaucracy has adequate means at its disposal to hire expensive halls in Paris and to publish bulky papers in Basel, but bureaucratic centrisin as a revolutionary current is dead; it decomposes before our eyes and poisons the atmosphere.
INTERVIEW BY THE
NEW YORK WORLD TELEGRAM

June 13, 1933

You have asked my opinion of the economic conference. I have not the slightest illusion about its results. If the innumerable conferences of recent years teach anything it is that real contradictions cannot be eliminated by the general formulas which inevitably make the essence of all such conferences. Actions are necessary.

One of these necessary actions should be settlement of relations between the United States and the Soviet Union. Insofar as your new administration launches out on this path, it will take an extremely important step from the standpoint of international politics as well as from the standpoint of economics.

The four-power pact settles nothing. The real plan of Hitler is to find a point of support in Italy and England for war against the Soviet Union. Whoever does not see it is blind.

Establishment of normal relations between Washington and Moscow would deliver a much more decisive blow at Hitler's bellicose plans than all the European conferences put together.

No less important significance may be attached to the collaboration between the United States and the Soviet Union with respect to the Far East. The present conduct of Japan in no wise expresses its strength. On the contrary, the adventurist measures of Tokyo are strongly reminiscent of the conduct of the czarist bureaucracy in the first years of the present century.

But it is precisely these grisly operations of irresponsible military camarillas that may inexorably engender tremendous world convulsions.

Liaison between Washington and Moscow would not be without its effect on Tokyo and with a corresponding policy it
might arrest in time the automatic development of Japanese military adventurism.

From an economic standpoint establishment of normal relations between the Soviets and America would yield positive results. The extensive economic plan of the Soviet Union cannot in the coming period base itself on fascist Germany, with which Russia's relationships will inevitably become extremely unstable.

All the greater significance is thus acquired by economic collaboration of the two republics, European-Asiatic and American, whose combined population runs to nearly 300 million.

Collaboration could have a planned character regulated from above and reckoned on a basis of a number of years to come.

The presence in Moscow of a United States representative would give Washington the possibility of convincing itself that despite the acute transitory difficulties of trade, the Soviet Union is perhaps the surest investment for capital.

I would be very happy if you would communicate these simple observations to the American public.
At the present time the Social Democracy is everywhere experiencing an acute crisis. In a number of countries more or less important left wings have already separated themselves from the Social Democratic parties. This process flows from the whole situation. That it has not yet taken on a more developed character is due to the mistakes of the Stalinist bureaucracy, which puts a brake on the internal differentiation in the ranks of reformism and closes the door of communism to the revolutionary wing. The appearance of independent socialist parties, as well as autonomous organizations, is a vote of direct and deserved defiance directed against the Comintern.

The Stalinist bureaucracy calls the independent socialist organizations "left social fascists," the most dangerous of all. That was especially its attitude towards the SAP. Unexpectedly, and with extraordinary attention, after March 5 the Comintern met with the British "left social fascists" as represented by the Independent Labour Party, once more revealing how great is its confusion in the face of the decomposition of the Social Democracy, which unfortunately coincides with its own decomposition.

The International Left Opposition faces a new task: to accelerate the evolution of the left socialist organizations toward communism by injecting its ideas and its experience into this process. There is no time to lose. If the independent socialist organizations remain in their present amorphous state for a long period of time, they will disintegrate. The political tasks of our epoch are so acute, the pressure of hostile classes so powerful—to this it is necessary to add the intrigues of the reformist bureaucracy on the one hand and the Stalin-
ist bureaucracy on the other—that only a powerful ideological bond on the firm basis of Marxism can assure a revolutionary organization the ability to maintain itself against the hostile currents and to lead the proletarian vanguard to a new revolutionary epoch.

The new situation facing the Left Opposition, unfolding new opportunities, presents it with new tasks. Up till now we have recruited members chiefly on the basis of individual selection. To the degree that the conservative centrist bureaucracy made the direct and immediate influence of our ideas on the Communist parties in their entirety impossible, this was an absolutely inevitable stage. It would obviously be a great mistake to think that we have drawn from the official parties all that can be drawn from them. On the contrary, the recruitment of entire units and local organizations to the Left Opposition is still ahead of us. But our influence on the mass workers' organizations cannot be achieved according to a preconceived order. With a vigilant eye, we must follow the live processes in all the workers' organizations so as to be able at the opportune moment to concentrate our attention in that field which promises the most success.

The independent socialist organizations and the left-oppositionist factions within the Social Democracy are either avowedly centrist organizations or they contain within their ranks strong centrist tendencies or survivals. Their positive side is that they develop in a revolutionary direction under the pressure of the historic blows received by them. For us to seriously approach these organizations on a clear principled basis will signify a new chapter in the development of the Left Opposition and thereby of the rebirth of revolutionary Marxism in the world workers' movement. A great international revolutionary organization inspired by the ideas of the Left Opposition would become a center of attraction for the proletarian elements of the official Communist parties.

It must not be overlooked that this path taken to the end can open up the possibility for the creation of new Communist parties. The question is already resolved as far as Germany is concerned—not by us but by the march of events—in a complete and final manner. The differences that existed on this subject in our ranks, particularly with the German comrades, have either disappeared completely or been reduced to secondary nuances. Everything that has been produced by the bureaucracy after March 5—articles in the Stalinist press, the resolution of the presidium of the Executive Committee of the Comintern on April 1, the course of the KPD as characterized at the antifascist congress in Paris—fully confirm the
prognosis of the definitive and inevitable disintegration of the KPD. What has just been said can clearly be extended to Austria, where on order by the police the Communist Party disappeared from the face of the earth without a sign of resistance. "The oldest party of the Communist International," which so ingloriously disappeared from the scene, will not revive again! There's no need to say how much these events worsen the outlook for the Comintern. This threatening perspective of the complete elimination of the old Communist parties must become an instrument to further arouse the best elements of all the Communist parties. But at the same time, the sections of the Left Opposition should show much greater initiative than up till now, apart from the official parties, in the working-class movement as a whole.

The transition from one stage of struggle to a higher one has never been accomplished without internal friction. Some comrades, homesick for the mass organizations, exhibit a desire to gather fruits that are still unripe. Others, anxious about the purity of the principles of the Left Opposition, regard all attempts to approach the larger mass organizations with distrust. "What good can be expected from Nazareth?". How can one approach organizations at the head of which are centrists? We are quite ready, they say, to unite with the rank-and-file workers, but we do not see any sense in approaching the centrist leaders, etc., etc. Such a purely formal manner of posing the question is erroneous. They are greatly affected by propagandist sectarianism.

The Third International was itself recruited nine-tenths from centrist elements who evolved to the left. Not only individuals and groups but also entire organizations and even parties with their old leadership or a part of the old leadership placed themselves under the banner of Bolshevism. This was absolutely inevitable. Their further development depended on the policy of the Comintern, of its internal regime, etc. In the camp of the workers' movement today, if the fascist, nationalist, and religious organizations are excluded, one observes the predominance of the reformist and centrist organizations; in the latter category we include, with good reason, the official Comintern. It is clear that the rebirth of the revolutionary workers' movement will take place at the expense of centrism. Moreover, not only individuals and groups but entire organizations will place themselves anew under the Communist banner. The further development of reeducation will depend on the general direction of politics, of the regime, and finally on the march of historic events.

We have many times repeated in our literature how heter-
ogeneous centrism is: centrism comprises all the transitory degrees between reformism and Marxism or—which is not the same thing—between Marxism and reformism. It is impossible to understand the centrist movement solely through its declarations and documents of today. We must keep before us the history of its development and the direction of its movement.

The centrism of the Stalinist faction is characterized by a policy of convulsive zigzag or standstill, and it is the most conservative of all the centrist formations that have ever existed in the workers' movement. This is explained by the fact that this time centrism has found a powerful social support in the Soviet bureaucracy; the apparatuses of the Western parties are mere appendages. Whereas the Stalinist bureaucracy in the USSR is forced to defend the workers' state against the bourgeoisie for the sake of its special interests, in the West it has become the instrument for the disorganization and weakening of the proletarian vanguard. Were it not for their slavish dependence on the Soviet bureaucracy, the official parties of the West would long since have found a way to the correct road or they would have crumbled like dust, ceding their place to healthier organizations.

The personnel of the official parties maintain themselves today exclusively by faith in the USSR and its leadership. Many honest Communists have a religious fear of criticism and new arguments in order to keep themselves from losing "faith" in the leadership of the USSR. It is that and only that which can explain the fact that mature people, often sincere revolutionaries, have throughout the years supported monstrous policies which are such a mockery of Marxism, of the advanced workers, and of human thought. Those who free themselves from their fetish of the Soviet bureaucracy usually sink into a state of indifference. As is known, the Communist parties have lost an incomparably greater number of members in the last years than the Left Opposition has won over.

The centrism of Social Democratic origin is characterized by a movement from right to left—in a political situation which makes all equivocal positions difficult. The members of the independent socialist organizations are deprived, in their majority, of that revolutionary signpost that has more or less succeeded in gaining members for the Communist parties. On the other hand, the independent socialists, not corrupted by any fetishism of the Soviet bureaucracy, free from conservatism, are experiencing an internal crisis, are honestly seeking answers to questions posed by our epoch, are evolving to the side of communism. At this time they are much more ame-
nable to the ideas of authentic Bolshevism, according to all indications, than are the members of the Stalinist faction.

Such is the odd combination of historic conditions, in a certain sense "unforeseen," which opens up new opportunities of activity and progress to the Bolshevik-Leninists. We must utilize them all the way.
THE PARTY'S POLICY IN THE FIELD OF ART AND PHILOSOPHY

June 16, 1933

A Reply to the American Comrades Martin Glee, Harry Ross, and M. Morris

Dear Comrades:

Your letter poses very important problems which do not, however, admit, in my opinion, of general and categorical solutions suitable in all cases. As an organization we have as a point of departure not only definite political ideas but certain philosophical and scientific methods. We base ourselves on dialectical materialism, from which flow conclusions not only concerning politics and science, but also art. Still, there is a vast difference in our attitude towards these conclusions. We cannot to any similar degree exercise the same rigorous control over art, by the very nature of this activity, as over politics. The party is obliged to permit a very extensive liberty in the field of art, eliminating pitilessly only that which is directed against the revolutionary tasks of the proletariat; on the other hand, the party cannot assume an immediate and direct responsibility for the declarations of its various members in the field of art even when it accords them its tribune. The maintenance of these two rules—the preservation of the liberty necessary for individual creation, and the nontransmission of the responsibility for all its roads to the party—is especially obligatory in those cases where it is a question not of theoreticians in the field of art, but of the artists themselves: painters, men of letters, etc. In addition, the party must be able to distinguish clearly the line where generalization in the field of art passes directly into the field of politics. Without making here any concessions in principle, the party must, however, confine itself in the case of artists to rectifications,
firm but tactful, of any false political conclusions flowing from their artistic views. Marx expressed this idea in a jocular phrase about Freiligrath:256 "Poets are queer fish" (Die Dichter sind sonderbare Kauze). Lenin applied different criteria to Bogdanov the theoretician and professional politician and to Gorky the artist,257 in spite of the fact that for a certain period of time Bogdanov and Gorky were closely associated in politics. Lenin proceeded from the standpoint that by his artistic activity and his popularity, Gorky could endow the cause of the revolution with benefits far exceeding the harm of his erroneous declarations and actions which, moreover, the party could always tactfully correct in good time.

Viewed from this standpoint, philosophical activity lies between art and politics, closer to politics than to art. In philosophy, the party itself occupies a distinct militant position, which is not the case—at least not to the same extent—in the field of art. Objections to the effect that by the "dogmatization" and "canonization" of dialectical materialism, the party prevents the free development of philosophical and scientific thought do not deserve serious attention. No factory can work without basing itself on a definite technological doctrine. No hospital can treat its patients if the physicians do not base themselves on the established teachings of pathology. It would be sheer folly to permit dilettantes to experiment arbitrarily in the factory or in the hospital, on the pretext that they consider themselves "innovators." Innovators must first prove their right to influence practical technology and medicine. The party must be especially vigilant towards those "innovators" who only warm up stale critical dishes or those who are still in the period of investigating, with uncertain results. But least of all does this signify that in the sphere of philosophy the party can act as if all questions have already been resolved for it, and that it has nothing to expect from the further development of scientific thought. It is not an easy matter to find the correct political line in this field. It is acquired only by experience and by a flexible leadership. Just as in artillery fire, the target is usually hit by a series of shots which fall far and then short of the mark. It is needless to point out that the question: How do the philosophical views of a certain person or a certain group refract themselves in the field of politics and of the organization? always has a tremendous significance for the elaboration of correct control by the party. Thus Lenin fought mercilessly against Gorky in 1917 when above all other considerations stood the necessity of a revolutionary overthrow. On the other hand, it must be considered as the greatest shame that the Stalinist bureaucracy is trans-
forming Barbusse the *novelist* into a leading *political* figure in spite of the fact that it is precisely in politics that Barbusse marches arm in arm with Renner, Vandervelde, Monnet, and Paul Louis.\(^{258}\)

I am very much afraid that I have not given you a satisfactory reply to the practical questions put to me. But what has been said explains, I hope, why I could not give such a reply, which requires a concrete knowledge of the situation and the personal conditions. Just the same, perhaps these brief considerations will at least partially help work out a correct policy in this complicated and responsible field.

With communist greetings,

L. Trotsky
ON THE DIFFICULTIES
OF OUR WORK

A Letter to an Austrian Comrade

June 17, 1933

Dear Comrade,

You complain that the work of the Austrian Opposition is advancing too slowly. You observe completely correctly that one of the reasons is insufficiently systematic work—the absence of good organization, that is, a spirit of precision and willingness to carry things out. By way of example, you cite irregular attendance at meetings, impermissible lateness, etc. I wholly sympathize with you in this for I believe that there is nothing worse than dilettantism and lack of order in any serious business, more so in revolutionary affairs.

In Austria, the matter in this respect is least happy. For reasons which there is no need to go into here, the Austrian Social Democracy has the following of the overwhelming majority of the proletariat until this very day. The Communist Party did not have an independent role in the class struggle but was only an opposition to Austro-Marxism. But an opposition which proceeds from a false theoretical base is doomed to rot away. The Communist Party grouped around itself not a few elements of Viennese bohemia and to a significant degree was impregnated by its morals.

The Austrian Opposition has adopted too much from the official Communist Party. The lengthy struggle of two Opposition cliques—very similar to each other and in many aspects only caricatures of the Communist Party—could only repel serious workers from the Left Opposition in general. Only an influx of real industrial workers can give the Opposition stability and furnish the necessary discipline and systematic work.

The Austrian Communist Party has not gone underground but has departed from the political scene forever; it will not
rise again. Even the Social Democracy will in the near future be demoralized. If the Left Opposition wants to fulfill its historic role it will have to find a way to the young Social Democratic workers.

Some wiseacres shrug their shoulders contemptuously at the Social Democratic Opposition: after all, there are only a few of them, insulted petty officials, discontented careerists, and so on. Such words should come directly from the party administration of the Austrian Social Democracy! Of course the present representatives of the Social Democratic Opposition are few, weak, and for the most part without character. Nonetheless, in the current political situation they have great symptomatic significance. Through them, in a refracted and weakened form, the anxieties of the best Austrian workers are manifested. How can you reach these workers if you contemptuously brush aside these new oppositionists? In any event, for the Left Opposition there is no other way than to make a sharp break with the tradition of bohemian cells which have turned sour, and to transfer all its attention to the industrial plants.

The task in Austria cannot be easy in the coming period. The workers have been too cruelly deceived by the Social Democracy; the Communist Party has compromised itself too much in their eyes; the squabbling between the Opposition groups only manages to arouse disgust in them — no wonder they are in no way disposed to trust the Left Opposition in advance. It is necessary to succeed in winning their confidence by persistent and systematic everyday work. In doing this work, a selection of personnel will take place in the group which takes the initiative. The skeptics and dilettantes will very soon fall behind and leave — so much the better! The serious revolutionaries will attract the young workers and together with them will found a real proletarian organization which will be able to allocate its forces, appreciate time, and work systematically. There is no other formula.

I wish you success with all my heart.

L. Trotsky
A CORRECTION

June 18, 1933

*L'Humanite* of June 18 inserted a dispatch from Moscow entitled "A Maneuver by the Adventurist Trotsky." What maneuver? The readers were left in the dark. Let us then provide a few explanations.

1. First, true to their ways, Messrs. Editors of *L'Humanite* falsified the dispatch from Moscow. In fact, it appeared the same day in *Le Temps*, whose excellent relationship with Litvinov is now known. But according to *Le Temps*, it is said simply that a supposed "declaration by Mr. Trotsky does not correspond to reality." In *L'Humanite*, they add the following: "... and is evidently inspired by the desire of the adventurer to mislead the reader."

2. But what declaration by Trotsky are they talking about? They don't say. It is supposed to be a statement made to some Turkish journalists and reproduced by *Die Vossische Zeitung*, a formerly liberal newspaper turned Hitlerite. There are other statements by Comrade Trotsky, however, that Messrs. Editors of *L'Humanite* cannot ignore: those that he made to a French journalist and which were reproduced by *Paris-Soir* on June 15. What could one read in this interview?

"Some newspapers claim you have been visited recently by agents sent from Moscow to request your return to Russia." And Trotsky replied, "That's not true, but I know the source of that bit of news. It is an article of mine that appeared in the American press two months ago. I would say, among other things, that given the present situation in Russia, I would be ready to serve again should any danger whatsoever threaten the country."

It is clear. But why did Tass agency think itself obliged, *two days after the appearance of this interview*, to publish
a false version of a statement that had never been made? Perhaps a plausible explanation could be found by looking towards the difficulties, coming from his own supporters, that beset Stalin.

3. Almost a month ago, various papers launched new fantasies about a "reconciliation between Stalin and Trotsky." This news was published in France by all the press. Nevertheless, during all this time, Messrs. Editors of l'Humanite did not utter a word. The cowardice and servility of this crew is beyond all praise.
ZINOVIEV ON
THE PARTY REGIME

July 6, 1933

Zinoviev, who for a number of years found himself in open or semimasked opposition to the Stalinist bureaucracy, has finally admitted, after a short stay in exile, that the party regime of Stalin is the best of all. It is therefore all the more enlightening to recall what Zinoviev wrote on the regime in the Communist Party of the Soviet Union just a few weeks prior to the Fifteenth Party Congress. For lack of space we cannot reproduce in its entirety the extensive document directed by Zinoviev to all the leading party institutions—the Central Committee, Central Control Commission, and Executive Committee of the Communist International—and containing a wealth of factual material on the methods of party repression and bureaucratic demoralization. Although we are obliged to confine ourselves to a few of the most essential excerpts, we hope that they will prove sufficient to throw light on the state of affairs in the CPSU as well as on the nature of Zinoviev's repentance.
I. The Myth of Invincibility

The ruling classes of Japan are in a situation that undoubtedly makes their heads spin. They have sought a way out of unheard-of internal difficulties through a policy of foreign conquests and the threat or use of force. And everywhere they have succeeded. International treaties have been cynically violated. Under the guise of an independent state being founded, an enormous country [Manchuria] has been annexed. The League of Nations piles up reports, of use to no one. America maintains a cautious silence. The Soviet Union steers toward concessions. It seems, really, as if Japan were invincible and its masters destined to rule not only over the continent of Asia, but over all the world. But is this so?

Less than four decades ago the little island nation defeated the Chinese giant both on land and sea. The whole world was startled. Fourteen days after the signing of the Treaty of Shimonoseki, the famous German geographer Richthofen wrote that Japan had won "equality" and had risen to the rank of a great power. Ten years later came an even greater miracle: Japan roundly defeated czarist Russia. Not many had foreseen such an outcome, the Russian revolutionaries being foremost among those who had; but who at that time paid any heed to what they said? The prestige of the island empire rose all the higher in proportion to the unexpectedness of its victories in the eyes of civilized humanity—victories over two neighbors whose combined populations outnumbered Japan's ten times over.

The participation of Japan in the world war amounted to no more than grandiose police operations, carried out in the Far East and partly in the Mediterranean. But its very presence in the victors' camp, with the ample booty that that
entailed, was bound to increase still further the feelings of national pride within Japan's ruling classes. The "twenty-one demands" imposed on China at the beginning of the war—just fifteen years after Japan itself had broken free of humiliating treaties—bared the fangs of Japanese imperialism for all to see.

General Tanaka's Memorial of 1927 set forth a finished program in which national ambitions escalated into the most giddy-headed form of megalomania. An astounding document! Official disclaimers do not weaken its compelling power by one iota: that kind of document cannot be forged. At any rate, Japanese foreign policy in the past two years has served as irrefutable proof of the authenticity of the document.

The conquest of Manchuria was carried out by relatively insignificant forces—backed up with air support and bombing; in several quick steps, the Japanese concentrated some four or five divisions in Manchuria, hardly more than fifty thousand men. The operation resembled war games more than actual war. All the greater the "honor" therefrom for the general staff in Tokyo!

Nevertheless, Japan's military invincibility is a pious myth which, though it has certainly paid real dividends, must in the final analysis be shattered against reality. Up to now Japan has not once had occasion to test her strength against the advanced nations. Japan's successes, however brilliant in themselves, have stemmed from the superiority of backwardness over still-greater backwardness. The principle of relativity holds sway in military affairs as in all others. There was a time when the empire of the czars, too, seemed to sail along from one success to another; out of a backwoods principality, Muscovy, it was transformed into one of the world's mightiest states, stretching across two continents, from the Atlantic to the Pacific. The czar's armies, too, were described as invincible in all the schoolbooks. The truth was, however, that old Russia, with its base in a peasantry that was still half-serf, had only won real, lasting victories over barbarian tribes in Central Asia and the Caucasus and over internally decomposing states, such as Poland under its feudal nobility (the Szlachta) or Turkey under the sultans. In general, from the beginning of the French Revolution, the czarist army was the embodiment of crumbling, ponderous impotence. It is true that between 1907 and 1914 the army and navy were significantly reformed and strengthened, with the energetic assistance of the patriotic state Dumas. But the test of the world war brought bitter disillusionment: the Russian army enjoyed tactical successes only so long as it had to deal with the centrifugal forces of the
The coefficients indicating the relative strengths of armies must be determined in each particular case, not on the basis of some unchanging qualities of "the race," but rather from a combination of living social and historical factors: the condition of a country's natural resources; the level of its economic development; the relations between its classes; and the inner qualities of the army itself—the human material from which its soldiers are drawn, its officer corps, its arms and equipment, its command staff. If for convenience we express this in the language of figures—only by way of illustration of course, with no pretense at accurate measurement—we can say that, in fighting qualities, the Russian army of 1914 was to the Russian army of 1904-5, as three to one, at least. But this did not prevent it from being—in relation to the German army—approximately, as one to three. In the same way, if the Japanese army was two or three times better than the czarist army at the beginning of the century, that does not prevent it from being as many times inferior today to the armed forces of the advanced countries.

Since the time of the war with Russia, Japan has undeniably made sufficient economic and cultural progress to keep its armaments on a level with world technology. Yet taken in isolation this criterion is extremely deceptive. The real military capability of an army is determined not by the weapons shown on parades, nor by those stored in the arsenals, but by those implicit in the productive power of the country's industry. Japanese industry had an extraordinary growth during the war years only to fall back drastically thereafter, with the onset of the postwar crises. Japanese militarism is trying to live off the illusions of the wartime period of boom, ignoring the dislocations in the economy, and devouring half of the national budget. The relations, on the one hand, between Japanese militarism and the national economy and, on the other, between Japanese industry and that of its potential enemies, provide exceptionally important indices, if not completely decisive ones, as regards the prospects for the various sides in a future war. And for Japan, these indices are extremely unfavorable.

According to General Tanaka's Memorial—and also by the logic of the situation—two wars are on the agenda for the empire of the mikado: one against the Soviet Union and one against the United States. The arena of one would be the mightiest of continents; of the other, the widest of oceans. Both wars presuppose operations over vast distances and consequently
for long periods of time. But the more protracted the war, the
greater advantage of an armed people over a standing
army, of industry as a whole over arsenals and munitions
plants, of fundamental cultural and economic realities over
strategic combinations.

The per capita national income of Japan is only 175 yen
[$35 gold at par], several times lower than the European,
leaving aside the American altogether; and it is at least one-
third lower than that of the USSR. Japanese industry is mainly
light industry, in other words, backward: textile workers consti-
tute over 51 percent of the total number of workers, while
metallurgy and machine building together constitute only 19
percent. The United States consumes 572 pounds of steel per
person. The West European countries, 245 pounds; the Soviet
Union over 77 pounds; Japan less than 63 pounds.

And modern war is waged with metal. It may be granted that
Manchuria opens up big prospects for Japanese industry. But
big prospects require large amounts of capital and long periods
of time. And we are speaking in terms of what exists today
and what cannot be radically altered in the next few years.

Moreover, it is men and not machines that fight wars. All
the facts indicate that matters are no better for Japan where
human resources are concerned than in relation to inanimate
materials.

Having been copied in every respect from the old Prussian
model, the Japanese army contains, in exaggerated form, all
the internal defects of the Hohenzollern army without having
any of its virtues. Bismarck himself once said that you could
copy the Prussian military regulations but you couldn't fake
a Prussian lieutenant. It's even more difficult to fake a Prussian
soldier.

Militarism, too, must pay a certain price as a result of the
extremely low standard of living of the mass of the people.
Japan is the land of tuberculosis and all sorts of diseases
from malnutrition. The mortality rate is higher there than
in any other advanced country and, moreover, keeps climbing
from year to year. Modern warfare requires more than just a
readiness to die by the droves; it requires first of all individual
stamina, physical skill, and steady nerves. The qualities that
brought the Japanese victory over the Chinese and Russians
were the virtues of old Japan: a modern, centralized organiza-
tion transformed feudal submissiveness into military discipline.
Such qualities as individual initiative, resourcefulness, and the
ability to make decisions on one's own authority are lacking
in the Japanese army, and it has nowhere to obtain them.
The military-feudal regime never could have promoted the
development of personality. Neither the oppressed and impoverished village nor Japanese industry, primarily textile, with its preponderance of female and child labor, is capable of turning out qualified soldiers who can come up to the level of modern technology. A major war will inevitably show this to be true.

The intent of this brief analysis is least of all to suggest to anyone that a war with Japan would be easy or that it would not be advisable to come to an agreement with Japan. We consider the extremely pacific—and often apparently too conciliatory—policy of the Soviet government toward Japan to be basically correct. But the question of war or peace depends, by the very nature of things, on two sides, not just one. A policy directed toward peace must be based on a realistic appraisal of forces, just as a warlike policy must be. And in that regard, the hypnotic idea of Japan's supposed invincibility has already become an extremely dangerous factor in international relations. In like manner, at the beginning of the twentieth century, the inflated self-assurance of the Petersburg camarilla led to a military confrontation. The mood among the Japanese ruling circles is strikingly reminiscent of the mood among the czarist bureaucracy on the eve of the Russo-Japanese War.

II. War and Revolution

The Japanese epoch of transformations, which opened in 1868—shortly after the epoch of reforms in Russia and the Civil War in the United States—constituted a reflex action on the part of the ruling classes expressing the instinct of self-preservation—it was not a "bourgeois revolution," as some historians say, but a bureaucratic attempt to buy off such a revolution. Even late-developing Russia, which traversed the same historic course as the West in a much shorter length of time, needed three centuries to get from the liquidation of feudal isolation under Ivan the Terrible, through the Westernizing of Peter the Great, to the first liberal reforms of Alexander II. The so-called Meiji Restoration incorporated in a matter of a few decades the basic features of those three major eras in Russia's development. At such a forced pace, there could be no question of a smooth and even cultural development in all fields. Racing to achieve practical results with modern technology—especially military technology—Japan remained ideologically in the depths of the Middle Ages. The hasty mixture of Edison with Confucius has left its mark on all of Japanese culture.

The rather frequently encountered assertions that the Japanese
are "by nature" only capable of imitation and not of independent creation are not even worthy of refuting. Every developing nation, like every young craftsman, writer, or artist, begins by imitating: it is a form of schooling. Still and all, at least for the present, an imitative empiricism does characterize every sphere of intellectual life in Japan. The strength of its statesmen lies in a cynical realism, coupled with an extraordinary poverty of generalized ideas. But here too lies their weakness: any conception of the laws governing the development of modern nations, including their own, remains completely foreign to them. Tanaka's programmatic document is most astounding in its combination of shrewd insight into the empirical aspects of a problem and blindness in regard to the historical perspective. Tanaka takes the imaginary "testament" of the Emperor Meiji as the basis for a "sacred program" of conquests and goes on to conceive of the future development of mankind in terms of a widening spiral of Japanese annexations. In striving for the same goals, General Araki utilizes the moral principles of Shintoism, the religion of the mikado. If people of such intellectual make-up are capable, under certain circumstances, of achieving extraordinary successes, they are no less capable of plunging their country into a disaster of immense proportions.

Not one of the modern nation-states arrived at its present form without a revolution, even a series of them. By contrast, present-day Japan has behind it neither a religious reformation nor an era of enlightenment, nor a bourgeois revolution, nor a real school of democracy. Up to a certain point, military dictatorship provided youthful Japanese capitalism with great advantages, ensuring unity in foreign policy and ruthless discipline at home. But now the persistence of powerful feudal features has become a terrible brake on the country's development.

The feudal bondage of the peasantry has not only been preserved intact; it has monstrously increased under pressure from the demands of the market and the state treasury. Tenant farmers pay landlords about $375 million [3/4 billion yen] annually. For a proper assessment of this sum it is enough to recall that the Russian peasantry, two and a half times more numerous, paid their landlords less than half a million rubles [250 million gold at par] — and that tribute was enough to nettle the Russian muzhik into making an agrarian revolution of enormous scope.

The customs of serfdom have been carried over from agriculture into industry, with its workday of eleven or twelve hours, its workers' barracks, its miserable wages, and the
slavelike dependence of worker on employer. Despite the presence of electric power and the airplane, social relations are shot through with the spirit of medievalism. Suffice it to say that the caste of pariahs still exists in Japan today.

By virtue of historical circumstances the Japanese bourgeoisie entered a phase of aggressive expansion before having cut the Gordian knot of medieval serfdom. Here lies Japan's greatest danger: the structure of militarism has been erected over a social volcano.

In the fall of czarism—and the mikado's advisers ought to study carefully how that came about—the oppressed nationalities played an enormous role, constituting as they did some 53 percent of the population of the old Russian empire. The homogeneity of the mother country might be Japan's greatest advantage if its industry and army were not dependent upon Formosa, Korea, and Manchuria. Counting Manchuria, there are now almost 50 million oppressed Koreans and Chinese as against 65 million Japanese. This mighty reserve of revolution will become especially dangerous for the regime in time of war.

The tenant farmers' strikes, agrarian terrorism, efforts by peasants to join forces with the workers—these are unmistakable signs of coming revolution. There is no lack of other symptoms—perhaps less striking, but nonetheless convincing. There is discontent among the intelligentsia, from whose ranks the officers and government officials are recruited. Illegal organizations have their branches in all the schools and universities. The bourgeoisie is furious with the military men, upon whom it is, however, completely dependent. The generals snarl at their capitalist allies. Everyone is dissatisfied with everyone else.

The professional officers, descendants or imitators of the samurai, seek ties with the rebellious peasantry, using demagogic slogans in the spirit of German National Socialism. But such ties are artificial and cannot last. The samurai want to turn backward. The peasants look forward to an agrarian transformation. In the event of a major war the professional officers would be swamped by a mass of reserve officers and others hastily trained from among the intelligentsia: this is where the revolutionary leaders of the peasantry and of the army itself will come from. What has been said about the ground forces is applicable to the navy as well, but to an even greater degree. Inside the steel hulls of those military vessels, feudal survivals acquire an exceptionally explosive force. It is enough to recall the Russian revolutions of 1905 and 1917 and the German revolution of 1918!
To sum up. Japan is weaker economically than any of its potential adversaries in a major war. Japanese industry is incapable of supplying an army of several million with weapons and materiel over a period of many years. The Japanese financial system, unable to support the burden of militarism even in peacetime, would collapse completely at the very beginning of a major war. The Japanese soldier, on the whole, does not meet the needs of modern technology and modern war. The population is deeply hostile to the regime. The aims of conquest would be insufficient for bringing together a divided nation. With mobilization, hundreds of thousands of real or potential revolutionaries would pour into the army. Korea, Manchuria, and, at their backs, China, would reveal in action their undying hatred for the Japanese yoke. The social fabric of the country has worn thin; the fastenings are coming loose. In the steel corset of military dictatorship official Japan still looks imposing, but war would quickly and ruthlessly sweep away such myths and illusions.

We have said nothing about how the qualities of the Red Army stand up in comparison: that would have to be the subject of a separate discussion. But even if one were to make an obvious distortion in favor of Japan and postulate an equality in material resources on both sides, the profound difference in the morale factor would still remain. History tells us that military defeats give rise to revolution; but it also teaches us that victorious revolutions, having awakened the people and toughened their spirit, imparts to them tremendous dynamism and energy on the field of battle.

In the interests of both peoples, and of civilization as a whole, let us hope that the Japanese militarists do not tempt fate.
1. Is It True That Hitler Has Destroyed "Democratic Prejudices"?

The April resolution of the presidium of the Executive Committee of the Communist International "on the present situation in Germany" will, we believe, go down in history as the final testimonial to the bankruptcy of the Comintern of the epigones. The resolution is crowned with a prognosis in which all the vices and prejudices of the Stalinist bureaucracy reach their culmination. "The establishment of an open fascist dictatorship," the resolution proclaims in boldface type, "accelerates the tempo of the development of a proletarian revolution in Germany by destroying all democratic illusions of the masses and by freeing them from the influence of the Social Democracy."

Fascism, it seems, has unexpectedly become the locomotive of history: it destroys democratic illusions, it frees the masses from the influence of Social Democracy, it accelerates the development of the proletarian revolution. The Stalinist bureaucracy assigns to fascism the accomplishment of those basic tasks which it proved itself utterly incapable of solving.

Theoretically, the victory of fascism is undoubtedly evidence of the fact that democracy has exhausted itself; but politically the fascist regime preserves democratic prejudices, recreates them, inculcates them into the youth, and is even capable of imparting to them, for a short time, the greatest strength. Precisely in this consists one of the most important manifestations of the reactionary historic role of fascism.

Doctrinaires think schematically. Masses think with facts. The working class perceives events not as experiments with this or that "thesis," but as living changes in the fate of the
people. The victory of fascism adds a million times more to the scale of political development than the prognosis for the indefinite future which flows from it. Had a proletarian state grown out of the bankruptcy of democracy, the development of society, as well as the development of mass consciousness, would have taken a great leap forward. But inasmuch as it was actually the victory of fascism that grew out of the bankruptcy of democracy, the consciousness of the masses was set far back—of course, only temporarily. The smashing of the Weimar democracy by Hitler can no more put an end to the democratic illusions of the masses than Goering's setting the Reichstag on fire can burn out parliamentary cretinism.

2. The Example of Spain and Italy

For four years in succession we heard that democracy and fascism do not exclude but supplement each other. How then can the victory of fascism liquidate democracy once and for all? We would like to have some explanations on this score by Bukharin, Zinoviev, or by Manuilsky himself.

The military-police dictatorship of Primo de Rivera was declared by the Comintern to be fascism. But if the victory of fascism signifies the final liquidation of democratic prejudices, how can it be explained that the dictatorship of Primo de Rivera gave way to a bourgeois republic? It is true that the regime of Rivera was far from being fascism. But it had, at all events, this much in common with fascism: it arose as a result of the bankruptcy of the parliamentary regime. This did not prevent it, however, after its own bankruptcy was revealed, from giving way to democratic parliamentarism.

One may attempt to say that the Spanish revolution is proletarian in its tendencies, and that the Social Democracy in alliance with other republicans has succeeded in arresting its development at the stage of bourgeois parliamentarism. But this objection, correct in itself, proves only more clearly our idea that if bourgeois democracy succeeded in paralyzing the revolution of the proletariat, this was only due to the fact that under the yoke of the "fascist" dictatorship, the democratic illusions were not weakened but became stronger.

Have "democratic illusions" disappeared in Italy during the ten years of Mussolini's despotism? This is how the fascists themselves are inclined to picture the state of affairs. In reality, however, democratic illusions are acquiring a new force. During this period a new generation has been raised up. Politically, it has not lived in the conditions of freedom, but it knows full well what fascism is: this is the raw material for vulgar democracy. The organization Giustizia e Liberta (Jus-
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tice and Freedom)\textsuperscript{269} is distributing illegal democratic literature in Italy, and not without success. The ideas of democracy are therefore finding adherents who are ready to sacrifice themselves. Even the flabby generalizations of the liberal monarchist, Count Sforza, are spread in the form of illegal pamphlets. That's how far back Italy has been thrown during these years!

Why fascism in Germany is called upon to play a role entirely opposite to that which it played in Italy remains incomprehensible. Because "Germany is not Italy"? Victorious fascism is in reality not a locomotive of history but its gigantic brake. Just as the policy of the Social Democracy prepared the triumph of Hitler, so the regime of National Socialism inevitably leads to the warming up of democratic illusions.

3. Can the Social Democracy Regenerate Itself?

German comrades testify that the Social Democratic workers and even many of the Social Democratic bureaucrats are "disillusioned" with democracy. We must extract all we can out of the critical moods of the reformist workers, in the interests of their revolutionary education. But at the same time the extent of the reformists' "disillusionment" must be clearly understood. The Social Democratic high priests scold democracy so as to justify themselves. Unwilling to admit that they showed themselves as contemptible cowards, incapable of fighting for the democracy which they created and for their soft berths in it, these gentlemen shift the blame from themselves to intangible democracy. As we see, this radicalism is not only cheap but also spurious through and through! Let the bourgeoisie only beckon these "disillusioned" ones with its little finger and they will come running on all fours to a new coalition with it. It is true, in the masses of Social Democratic workers a real disgust with the betrayals and mirages of democracy is being born. But to what extent? The larger half of seven to eight million Social Democratic workers is in a state of the greatest confusion, glum passivity, and capitulation to the victors. At the same time, a new generation will be forming under the heel of fascism, a generation to which the Weimar Constitution will be an historic legend. What line then will the political crystallization within the working class follow? This depends upon many conditions, among them, of course, also upon our policy.

Historically, the direct replacement of the fascist regime by a workers' state is not excluded. But for the realization of this possibility it is necessary that a powerful illegal Communist party form itself in the process of struggle against fascism,
under the leadership of which the proletariat could seize power. However, it must be said that the creation of a revolutionary party of this sort in illegality is not very probable; at any rate, it is not assured by anything in advance. The discontent, indignation, agitation of the masses will, from a certain moment onward, grow much faster than the illegal formation of the party vanguard. And every lack of clarity in the consciousness of the masses will inevitably help democracy.

This does not at all mean that after the fall of fascism, Germany will again have to go through a long school of parliamentarism. Fascism will not eradicate the past political experience; it is even less capable of changing the social structure of the nation. It would be the greatest mistake to expect a new lengthy democratic epoch in the development of Germany. But in the revolutionary awakening of the masses, democratic slogans will inevitably constitute the first chapter. Even if the further progress of the struggle should in general not permit, even for a single day, the regeneration of a democratic state—and this is very possible—the struggle itself cannot develop by the circumvention of democratic slogans! A revolutionary party that would attempt to jump over this stage would break its neck.

The question of the Social Democracy is closely connected with this general perspective. Will it reappear on the stage? The old organization is irrevocably lost. But this does not at all mean that Social Democracy cannot be regenerated under a new historic mask. Opportunist parties which fall and decompose so easily under the blows of reaction come back to life just as easily at the first political revival. We observed this in Russia in the example of the Mensheviks and the Social Revolutionaries. German Social Democracy can not only regenerate itself, but even acquire great influence if the revolutionary proletarian party should set up a doctrinaire "negation" of the slogans of democracy against a dialectical attitude toward them. The presidium of the Comintern in this field, as in so many others, remains the gratuitous assistant of reformism.

4. The Brandlerites Improve on the Stalinists

The confusion on the question of democratic slogans has revealed itself most profoundly in the programmatic theses of the opportunist group of Brandler-Thalheimer on the question of the struggle against fascism. The Communist party, the theses read, "should unite the manifestations of discontentment of all (!) classes against the fascist dictatorship" (Gegen den Strom, p. 7. The word "all" is underlined in the original).
At the same time, the theses insistently warn: "The partial slogan cannot be of a bourgeois-democratic nature." Between these two statements, each of which is erroneous, there is an irreconcilable contradiction. In the first place, the formula of the unification of the discontentment of "all classes" sounds absolutely incredible. The Russian Marxists did at one time abuse such a formulation in the struggle against czarism. Out of this abuse grew the Menshevik conception of the revolution, later on adopted by Stalin for China. But in Russia, at least, it was a question of the collision of the bourgeois nation with the privileged monarchy. In what sense can one speak, in a bourgeois nation, of the struggle of "all classes" against fascism, which is the tool of the big bourgeoisie against the proletariat? It would be instructive to see how Thalheimer, the manufacturer of theoretical vulgarities, would unite the discontentment of Hugenberg—and he is also discontented—with the discontentment of the unemployed worker. How else can one unite a movement of "all classes" if not by putting oneself on the basis of bourgeois democracy? Verily, a classic combination of opportunism with an ultraradicalism in words!

The movement of the proletariat against the fascist regime will acquire an ever-greater mass character to the extent that the petty bourgeoisie becomes disappointed with fascism, isolating the possessing summits and the government apparatus. The task of a proletarian party would consist in utilizing the weakening of the yoke on the part of the petty-bourgeois reaction for the purpose of arousing the activity of the proletariat towards the goal of winning over the lower strata of the petty bourgeoisie.

It is true the growth of the discontentment of the intermediary strata and the growth of the resistance of the workers will create a crack in the bloc of the possessing classes and will spur their "left flank" to seek contact with the petty bourgeoisie. The task of the proletarian party in relation to the "liberal" flank of the possessors will consist, however, not in including them both in a bloc of "all classes" against fascism, but, on the contrary, in immediately declaring a decisive struggle against it for influence on the lower strata of the petty bourgeoisie.

Under what political slogans will this struggle take place? The dictatorship of Hitler grew directly out of the Weimar Constitution. The representatives of the petty bourgeoisie have, with their own hands, presented Hitler with the mandate for a dictatorship. If we should assume a very favorable and quick development of the fascist crisis, then the demand for the convocation of the Reichstag with the inclusion of all the banished
deputies may, at a certain moment, unite the workers with the widest strata of the petty bourgeoisie. If the crisis should break out later and the memory of the Reichstag should have had time to obliterate itself, the slogan of new elections may acquire great popularity. It is sufficient that such a road is possible. To tie one's hands in relation to temporary democratic slogans which may be forced upon us by our petty-bourgeois allies and by the backward strata of the proletariat itself would be fatal doctrinairism.

Brandlert-Thalheimer believe, however, that we should only advocate "democratic rights for the laboring masses: the right of assembly, trade unions, freedom of the press, organization, and strikes." In order to emphasize their radicalism more, they add: "these demands should be strictly (!) distinguished from bourgeois-democratic demands of universal democratic rights." There is no person more wretched than the opportunist who takes the knife of ultraradicalism between his teeth!

Freedom of assembly and the press only for the laboring masses is conceivable solely under the dictatorship of the proletariat, that is, under the nationalization of buildings, printing establishments, etc. It is possible that the dictatorship of the proletariat in Germany will also have to employ exceptional laws against exploiters: that depends upon the historic moment, upon international conditions, upon the relation of internal forces. But it is not at all excluded that, having conquered power, the workers of Germany will find themselves sufficiently powerful to allow freedom of assembly and the press also to the exploiters of yesterday; of course, in accordance with their actual political influence, and not with the extent of their treasury—the treasury will have been expropriated. Thus even for the period of the dictatorship there is in principle no basis for limiting beforehand the freedom of assembly and the press only to the laboring masses. The proletariat may be forced to such a limitation; but this is not a question of principle. It is doubly absurd to advocate such a demand under the conditions of present-day Germany, when freedom of the press and assembly exists for all but the proletariat. The arousing of the proletarian struggle against the fascist inferno will take place, at least in the first stages, under the slogans: give also to us, workers, the right of assembly and the press. The Communists, of course, will at this stage also carry on propaganda in favor of a soviet regime, but they will at the same time support every real mass movement under democratic slogans, and wherever possible will take the initiative in such a movement.

Between the regime of bourgeois democracy and the regime
of proletarian democracy there is no third regime, "the democracy of the laboring masses." True, the Spanish republic calls itself the "republic of the laboring classes," even in the text of its constitution. But this is a formula of political charlatanism. The Brandlerian formula of democracy "only for the laboring masses," particularly in combination with the "unity of all classes," seems to be especially designed to confuse and mislead the revolutionary vanguard in the most important question: "When and to what extent to adapt ourselves to the movement of the petty bourgeoisie and the backward strata of the working masses, what concessions to make to them on the question of the tempo of the movement and the slogans on the order of the day so as more successfully to rally the proletariat under the banner of its own revolutionary dictatorship?"

At the Seventh Congress of the Russian Communist Party in March 1918, during the discussion of the party program, Lenin carried on a decisive struggle against Bukharin, who considered that parliamentarism is done for, once and for all, that it is historically "exhausted." "We must," Lenin retorted, "write a new program of the Soviet power, without renouncing the use of bourgeois parliamentarism. To believe that we will not be thrown back is utopian. . . . After every setback, if class forces inimical to us should push us to this old position, we shall proceed to what has been conquered by experience—to the Soviet power. . . ."

Lenin objected to a doctrinaire antiparlamentarism with regard to a country which had already gained the Soviet regime: we must not tie our hands beforehand, he taught Bukharin, for we may be pushed back to the once-abandoned positions. In Germany there has not been and there is no proletarian dictatorship, but there is a dictatorship of fascism; Germany has been thrown back even from bourgeois democracy. Under these conditions, to renounce beforehand the use of democratic slogans and of bourgeois parliamentarism means to clear the field for a new formation of the Social Democracy.
On July 7, N. Skrypnik committed suicide. In 1901, Skrypnik, a student, joined the revolutionary movement and soon after became a professional revolutionary, a Bolshevik. He was exiled several times and escaped several times. He spent five years in Siberia. The official biography of Skrypnik states that he took an internationalist position at the beginning of the war and participated actively in the October Revolution. He was a people's commissar in the Ukraine from 1920 until the time of his death. He was not only a member of the Central Committee of the Soviet Union, a member of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of the Ukraine, but also a member of the Executive Committee of the Communist International. Only a few months ago, his sixtieth anniversary was solemnly celebrated in the USSR.

During the entire period of the internal struggle in the party, Skrypnik, together with Kaganovich, Postyshev, and others, belonged to Stalin's closest and most intimate faction which operated in the Ukraine and set the pace in the struggle and the repressions against the Left Opposition. Consequently this is a matter not only of one of the foremost leaders of the Soviet Union but likewise of a member of Stalin's private faction.

Several weeks before Skrypnik committed suicide, a campaign was carried on against him in the press. On June 10 the secretary of the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party, Postyshev, a careerist and one of the most obsequious of Stalin's lackeys, said at the plenum of the Central Committee of the Ukraine, addressing himself to Skrypnik: "The work of Ukrainization rests in the hands of all sorts of dogs.... These enemies are hiding behind your big back as a member of the Political Bureau." Very little is known today of what Skrypnik said or did.
According to Postyshev, Skrypnik answered that the policy that he had carried out up till that time was correct but that the situation was now changing. To this Postyshev replied: "No, what you have done was as rotten six years ago as it is today." One has only to ask how it is that during these six years (!) none perceived or said that Skrypnik had relations with "bourgeois-nationalist" and anti-Soviet elements who carry "party cards in their pockets," that "Skrypnik defended these foreign and hostile elements," that he hid all sorts of dogs behind his back. And all that for six whole years!

If these charges have foundation, then what have the Central Committee, the Control Commission, and the party been doing these six years? (!)

The explanation of the Skrypnik case, which ended with his suicide, can only be made on the basis of the processes that are taking place in the Soviet Union and the Stalinist apparatus. Having lost the last remnants of its authority in the eyes of the masses, the Stalinist leadership is forced still further along the road of repression, of strangulation of the party, which reduces the Leninist vanguard to a soulless and formless mass of mere executers of orders. The growth of discontent and differentiation in the ranks of the party is reflected in the apparatus. The apparatus is no longer sure of itself and therefore cannot fulfill the role which Stalin outlines for it. Stalin is obliged to construct another apparatus within this apparatus, that is, a narrow faction of the faithful. By the logic of its development, the bureaucratic regime constantly undermines its own basis. For each of his mistakes, Stalin sacrifices entire sections of his apparatus. They are branded as culprits, saboteurs, or counterrevolutionaries.

The big as well as the small administrators pay with their heads today for Stalin's policy and mistakes of yesterday—for his leadership is "infallible." It is not enough for him to make scapegoats of culprits in the middle apparatus, he must reach out to the members of the CC and the ECCI. Stalin condemned Skrypnik without taking the least trouble to furnish any evidence at all in proof of the charges made against him. They say of a member of the CC and the ECCI—and this is not just anyone—"bourgeois-nationalist elements, shielded by their membership in the party, were taken into his confidence." That is all the explanation that is made by the CC. The more Stalin tightens the vise, the more the cracks are disclosed. Skrypnik is one of these cracks. The Stalinist machine devours its own creators. And Skrypnik, who had helped not a little in the creation of this machine, was caught in its toils.
IT IS NECESSARY TO BUILD
COMMUNIST PARTIES
AND AN INTERNATIONAL ANEW

July 15, 1933

The Orientation Toward Reforming the Comintern

From the day it was founded the Left Opposition has set itself the task of reforming the Comintern and regenerating the latter through Marxist criticism and internal faction work. In a whole number of countries, especially in Germany, the events of recent years have revealed with overwhelming force the fatal character of the policies of bureaucratic centrism. But the Stalinist bureaucracy, armed with extraordinary resources, has managed not unsuccessfully to counterpose its caste interests and prejudices to the demands of historical development. As a result, the evolution of the Comintern has unfolded not along the line of regeneration but along that of corrosion and disintegration.

But the orientation toward "reform," taken as a whole, was not a mistake: it represented a necessary stage in the development of the Marxist wing of the Comintern; it provided an opportunity for training cadres of Bolshevik-Leninists; and it did not pass without leaving its mark on the working-class movement as a whole. The policy of the Stalinist bureaucracy throughout this period remained under the pressure of the Left Opposition. The progressive measures adopted by the government of the USSR, which acted to check the offensive of Thermidor, were only partial and belated borrowings from the Left Opposition. Analogous manifestations, but on a smaller scale, could be observed in the life of all the sections of the Comintern.

It should be added that the degree of degeneration of a revolutionary party cannot, as a rule, be established a priori, on the basis of symptoms alone. The living verification of events is indispensable. Theoretically it was still impermissible
last year to have considered as absolutely excluded that the Bolshevik-Leninists, basing themselves on the sharpening of the class struggle, could succeed in impelling the Comintern to take the road of actual struggle against fascism. The simultaneous attempt of the SAP in Germany to assume an independent position did not exert any influence on the course of events precisely because the masses were waiting at the critical moment for the political leadership of their old organizations. In conducting the policy of a faction and educating its cadres on the experience of this policy, the Left Opposition, however, did not hide from itself nor from others that a new defeat of the proletariat, resulting from the policy of centrism, would inevitably acquire a decisive character and would demand a drastic review of our position on the question: faction or party?

The Change of Orientation

The most dangerous thing in politics is to fall captive to one's own formula that yesterday was appropriate, but is bereft of all content today.

Theoretically, the collapse of the KPD still left two courses open to the Stalinist bureaucracy: either a complete review of the politics and the regime; or, on the contrary, a complete strangulation of all signs of life in the sections of the Comintern. The Left Opposition was guided by this theoretical possibility when, after advancing the slogan of a new party for Germany, it still left open the question of the fate of the Comintern. It was clear, however, that the next few weeks would bring an answer and there was far too little hope that the answer would be a favorable one.

Everything that has taken place since March 5: the resolution of the presidium of the ECCI on the situation in Germany; the silent submission of all the sections to this shameful resolution; the antifascist congress in Paris; the official line of the emigre Central Committee of the KPD; the fate of the Austrian Communist Party; the fate of the Bulgarian Communist Party, etc.—all this testifies conclusively that the fate of not only the KPD but also the entire Comintern was decided in Germany.

The Moscow leadership has not only proclaimed as infallible the policy which guaranteed victory to Hitler, but has also prohibited all discussion of what had occurred. And this shameful interdiction was not violated nor overthrown. No national congresses; no international congress; no discussions at party meetings; no discussion in the press! An organization which was not roused by the thunder of fascism and which submits docilely to such outrageous acts of the bureaucracy demonstrates thereby that it is dead and that nothing can ever revive it. To say this
openly and publicly is our direct duty toward the proletariat and its future. In all our subsequent work it is necessary to take as our point of departure the historical collapse of the official Communist International.

**Realism Versus Pessimism!**

The fact that two parties, the Social Democratic and the Communist, which arose half a century apart and which both proceeded from the theory of Marxism and the class interests of the proletariat, could have come to such a sad end—the one through base treachery, the other through bankruptcy—can engender pessimistic moods even among the advanced workers. "Where is the guarantee that a new revolutionary selection will not suffer the same fate?" Those who demand guarantees in advance should in general renounce revolutionary politics. The causes for the downfall of the Social Democracy and of official communism must be sought not in Marxist theory and not in the bad qualities of those people who applied it, but in the concrete conditions of the historical process. It is not a question of counterposing abstract principles, but rather of the struggle of living social forces, with its inevitable ups and downs, with the degeneration of organizations, with the passing of entire generations into discard, and with the necessity which therefore arises of mobilizing fresh forces on a new historical stage. No one has bothered to pave the road of revolutionary upsurge for the proletariat in advance. With inevitable halts and partial retreats it is necessary to move forward on a road crisscrossed by countless obstacles and covered with the debris of the past. Those who are frightened by this had better step aside.

But how explain the fact that our grouping, whose analysis and prognosis have been verified by the entire course of events, is growing so slowly? The cause must be looked for in the general course of the class struggle. The victory of fascism seizes tens of millions. Political prognoses are accessible only to thousands or tens of thousands who, moreover, feel the pressure of millions. A revolutionary tendency cannot score stormy victories at a time when the proletariat as a whole is suffering the greatest defeats. But this is no justification for letting one's hands hang. Precisely in the periods of revolutionary ebb tide are cadres formed and tempered which will later be called upon to lead the masses in the new assault.

**New Reverses**

Those attempts which were made more than once in the past to create a "second party" or the "Fourth International" emanated from the sectarian experience of isolated groups and circles
"disillusioned" with Bolshevism and, in consequence, led each time to failure. We take as the point of departure not our own subjective "dissatisfaction" and "disillusionment" but the objective march of the class struggle. All the conditions of the development of the proletarian revolution imperiously demand a new organization of the vanguard and provide the necessary prerequisites for it.

The disintegration of the Social Democracy now proceeds parallel with the collapse of the Comintern. However profound the reaction within the proletariat itself, hundreds of thousands of workers in the whole world must already be asking themselves about the further course of struggle and a new organization of forces. Other hundreds of thousands will join them in the near future. To demand of these workers, a section of whom left the Comintern with indignation, while the majority did not belong to the Comintern even in its best years, that they formally accept the leadership of the Stalinist bureaucracy, which is incapable of forgetting or learning anything, is to occupy oneself with quixotism and to hinder the formation of the proletarian vanguard.

Undoubtedly in the ranks of the Stalinist organizations will be found sincere Communists who will greet our new orientation with fear and even with indignation. Some of them might perhaps temporarily replace a feeling of sympathy with one of hostility. But it is necessary to be guided not by sentimental and personal considerations but by mass criteria.

At a time when hundreds of thousands and millions of workers, especially in Germany, are departing from communism, in part to fascism and in the main into the camp of indifferentism, thousands and tens of thousands of Social Democratic workers, under the impact of the self-same defeat, are evolving to the left, to the side of communism. There cannot, however, even be talk of their accepting the hopelessly discredited Stalinist leadership.

Up till now these left socialist organizations have held against us our refusal to break with the Comintern and to build independent parties. This sharp disagreement has now been removed by the march of development. Thereby the discussion of formal, organizational questions is shifted over to the programmatic, political plane. The new party will rise higher than the old one only if, by taking its stand firmly on the grounds of the decisions of the first four congresses of the Comintern, it is capable in its program, strategy, tactics, and organization of taking into account the terrible lessons of the last ten years.

The Bolshevik-Leninists must enter into open discussions
with the revolutionary socialist organizations. As the basis for discussion we shall propose the eleven points adopted by our preconference (after changing the point on "faction and party" in the spirit of the present theses). We are, of course, prepared to discuss attentively and in a comradely manner all other programmatic proposals. We must and shall demonstrate that principled irreconcilability has nothing in common with sectarian snobbishness. We shall show that Marxist politics consists in attracting reformist workers into the camp of revolution and not in repelling revolutionary workers into the camp of fascism.

The formation in several countries of strong revolutionary organizations, free of any responsibility for the crimes and mistakes of the reformist and centrist bureaucracies, armed with the Marxist program and a clear revolutionary perspective, will open a new era in the development of the world proletariat. These organizations will attract all the genuine Communist elements who still cannot bring themselves today to break with the Stalinist bureaucracy, and, what is more important, they will gradually attract under their banner the young generation of workers.

The USSR and the CPSU

The existence of the Soviet Union, despite the far-advanced degeneration of the workers' state, remains even now a fact of immeasurable revolutionary significance. The collapse of the Soviet Union would lead to terrible reaction in the whole world, perhaps for decades to come. The struggle for the preservation, rehabilitation, and strengthening of the first workers' state is indissolubly bound up with the struggle of the world proletariat for the socialist revolution.

The dictatorship of the Stalinist bureaucracy arose as a result of the backwardness of the USSR (the predominance of the peasantry) and the tardiness of the proletarian revolution in the West (the absence of independent revolutionary parties of the proletariat). In its turn, the rule of the Stalinist bureaucracy has led not only to the degeneration of the dictatorship of the proletariat in the Soviet Union, but also to the terrible weakening of the proletarian vanguard in the whole world. The contradiction between the progressive role of the Soviet state and the reactionary role of the Stalinist bureaucracy is one of the manifestations of the "law of uneven development." In our revolutionary politics we must take this historically given contradiction as our point of departure.

The so-called friends of the Soviet Union (left democrats, pacifists, Brandlerites, and the like) repeat the argument of
It Is Necessary to Build

the Comintern functionaries that the struggle against the Stalinist bureaucracy, i.e., first of all criticism of its false policies, "helps the counterrevolution." This is the standpoint of the political lackeys of the bureaucracy, but never that of revolutionists. The Soviet Union both internally and externally can be defended only by means of a correct policy. All other considerations are either secondary or simply lying phrases.

The present CPSU is not a party but an apparatus of domination in the hands of an uncontrolled bureaucracy. Within the framework of the CPSU and outside of it takes place the grouping of the scattered elements of the two basic parties: the proletarian and the Thermidorean-Bonapartist. Rising above both of them, the centrist bureaucracy wages a war of annihilation against the Bolshevik-Leninists. While coming into sharp clashes from time to time with their Thermidorean half-allies, the Stalinists nevertheless clear the road for the latter by crushing, strangling, and corrupting the Bolshevik Party.

If without proletarian revolution in the West the USSR cannot come to socialism, then without the regeneration of a genuine proletarian International, the Russian Bolshevik-Leninists will not be able, with their own forces alone, to regenerate the Bolshevik Party and to save the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The USSR and the Comintern

The defense of the Soviet Union against the threat of military intervention has now become a task more acute than ever before. The official sections of the Comintern are as impotent in this field as in all others. On their lips, the defense of the Soviet Union has become a ritualistic phrase, bereft of all content. The inadequacy of the Comintern is being covered up by such undignified comedies as the antiwar congress in Amsterdam and the antifascist congress in Paris. The actual resistance of the Comintern to the military intervention of the imperialists will prove even more insignificant than its resistance to Hitler. To nourish any illusions on this score is to head blindfolded toward a new catastrophe. For the active defense of the Soviet Union genuine revolutionary organizations are needed, independent of the Stalinist bureaucracy, standing on their own feet and enjoying support among the masses.

The establishment and growth of these revolutionary organizations, their struggle for the Soviet Union, their constant readiness for a united front with the Stalinists against intervention and counterrevolution—all this will have an enormous importance for the internal development of the Soviet republic. The Stalinists, insofar as they remain in power, will have all the less opportunity to evade the united front as the dangers,
both domestic and foreign, become more acute, and as the independent organization of the world proletarian vanguard becomes a greater force. The new relationship of forces will act to weaken the dictatorship of the bureaucracy, to strengthen the Bolshevik-Leninists inside the USSR, and to open up before the workers' republic as a whole far more favorable perspectives.

Only the creation of the Marxist International, completely independent of the Stalinist bureaucracy and counterposed politically to it, can save the USSR from collapse by binding its destiny with the destiny of the world proletarian revolution.

"Liquidationism"

Bureaucratic charlatans (and their lackeys, like the Brandlerites) talk about our "liquidationism." They repeat senselessly and unconscionably words torn out of the old vocabulary of Bolshevism. Liquidationism was the designation given to that tendency which, under "constitutional" czarism, rejected the need for an illegal party, for it sought to replace revolutionary struggle by an adaptation to counterrevolutionary "legality." What have we in common with the liquidators? It is far more appropriate to recall in this connection the ultimatists (Bogdanov and others) who fully recognized the need of an illegal organization but turned it into an instrument of hopelessly false policies: after the crushing of the revolution they posed as the immediate task the preparation of an armed uprising. Lenin did not hesitate to break with them, although there were not a few impeccable revolutionists among them. (The best of them later returned to the ranks of Bolshevism.)

Equally false in character are the assertions of Stalinists and their Brandlerite lackeys to the effect that the Left Opposition is creating an "August Conference" against "Bolshevism." Referred to here is the attempt of 1912, one of the innumerable attempts to unite Bolsheviks and Mensheviks. (Let us recall that Stalin made such an attempt not in August 1912, but in March 1917!) For this analogy to have even a shadow of meaning, it would be necessary in the first place to acknowledge the Stalinist bureaucracy as the bearer of Bolshevism; and secondly, it would be necessary for us to pose the question of uniting the Second and Third Internationals. There cannot even be talk of either proposition! The charlatan analogy is designed to cover up the fact that the Brandlerite opportunists are trying to curry favor with the Stalinist centrists on the basis of a mutual amnesty, whereas the Bolshevik-Leninists are posing the task of building the proletarian party on a principled foundation, tested in the greatest battles, the victories and defeats of the imperialist epoch.
On the New Road

The task of these theses is to summon the comrades to cross off the completed historical stage and to sketch out new perspectives for work. But what has been said above does not at all predetermine the immediate practical steps, the concrete changes in policy, the tempos and method of shifting to the new road. Only after a principled unanimity has been secured with regard to the new orientation—and our previous experience permits me to think that such a unanimity will be achieved by us—will there be placed on the order of the day the concrete tactical questions applicable to the conditions in each separate country.

In any case, under discussion now is not the immediate proclamation of new parties and of an independent International, but of preparing for them. The new perspective signifies first of all that talk of "reform" and demands to restore oppositionists in the official parties must be put aside as utopian and reactionary. The day-to-day work must assume an independent character, determined by our own possibilities and forces, and not by the formal criterion of "faction." The Left Opposition ceases completely to feel and act as an "opposition." It becomes an independent organization, clearing its own road. It not only builds its own fractions in the Social Democratic and Stalinist parties, but conducts independent work among nonparty and unorganized workers. It creates its own bases of support in the trade unions, independently of the trade-union policy of the Stalinist bureaucracy. It participates in elections under its own banner, whenever favorable conditions for this obtain. In relation to reformist and centrist labor organizations (including the Stalinists) it is guided by the general principles of the united-front policy. In particular, it applies the policy of the united front especially in order to defend the USSR against external intervention and internal counterrevolution.
So! Distinct and incontestable French visas have been affixed to our passports. In two days we depart from Turkey. When I arrived here with my wife and son—four and a half years ago—the light of "prosperity" was shining brightly in America. Today, those times seem prehistoric, almost legendary.

Prinkipo is an island of peace and forgetfulness. The life of the world reaches here after long delays and hushed down. But the crisis found its way here too. From year to year fewer people come from Stamboul, and those who do come have less and less money. Of what use is the superabundance of fish when there is no demand for it?

Prinkipo is a fine place to work with a pen, particularly during autumn and winter when the island becomes completely deserted and woodcocks appear in the park. Not only are there no theaters here, but no movies. Automobiles are forbidden. Are there many such places in the world? In our house we have no telephone. The braying of the donkey acts soothingly upon the nerves. One cannot forget for a minute that Prinkipo is an island, for the sea is under the window, and there is no hiding from the sea at any point on the island. Ten meters away from the stone fence we catch fish, at fifty meters—lobsters. For weeks at a time the sea is as calm as a lake.

But we are in close connection with the world outside, for we get mail. That is the climax of the day. The post brings fresh newspapers, new books, letters from friends, and letters from foes. This pile of printed and written paper holds much that is unexpected, especially from America. I find it difficult to believe that so many people exist in this world who are...
urgently concerned with the salvation of my soul. In the course of these years I have received such a quantity of religious literature as would suffice for the salvation not of a single person, but of a brigade of confirmed sinners. All the pertinent places in the devout books are considerately scored on the margins. However, no fewer people are interested in my soul's perdition, and they express their corresponding wishes with a laudable frankness, even though anonymously. Graphologists demand that I forward my handwriting to have my character analyzed. Astrologists request to be told the day and hour of my birth to draw my horoscope. Autograph collectors wheedle for my signature to add to those of two American presidents, three heavyweight champions, Albert Einstein, Colonel Lindbergh, and of course Charlie Chaplin. Such letters arrive almost exclusively from America. Gradually I have learned to guess from the envelope whether the request will be for a cane toward the home museum, or whether a desire will be expressed to recruit me as a Methodist preacher, or a prophecy forthcoming of eternal tortures on one of the vacant spits in hell. As the crisis sharpened, the proportion of these letters swung decidedly in favor of the infernal regions.

The post brings much that is unexpected. A few days ago it brought the French visa. The skeptics—and there were such in our house too—were put to shame. We are leaving Prinkipo. Our house is already almost empty; wooden boxes stand below, and young hands are busy hammering nails. In our old and neglected villa, the floors this spring were decorated with paint of a composition so mysterious that tables, chairs, and even feet, stick lightly to the floor even now, four months later. It is strange, but it seems to me that during these years my feet have grown a little into the soil of Prinkipo as well.

I have had few ties, really, with the island itself, the circumference of which can be covered on foot in two hours. But for that reason I made more ties with the waters that wash it. During these fifty-three months, with the help of my invaluable tutor, I have become very intimate with the sea of Marmora. His name is Charolambos, and his universe is described by a radius of approximately four kilometers around Prinkipo. But Charolambos knows his universe. To an undiscerning eye the sea seems identical throughout its whole extent. Yet the bottom of the sea enfolds an immeasurable variety of physical organisms, minerals, flora and fauna. Charolambos, alas, is illiterate, but he reads with artistry the beautiful book of the sea of Marmora. His father and grandfather and great-grandfather, and the grandfather of his great-grandfather, were fishermen. His father still fishes even now. The old man's
specialty is lobsters. In summer he catches them not with nets as other fishermen do—as his son and I do—but he hunts them. It is the most enthralling spectacle. The old man discerns the lobster's hiding place under a rock through the water at a depth of five or eight meters and more. With a very long pole tipped with iron he pushes the rock over and the exposed lobster flees. The old man gives an order to the oarsman, pursues the lobster, and with a second long pole to which is attached a small reticular bag upon a square frame, he overhauls the lobster, covers it, and pulls it out. When the sea is disturbed by a ripple, the old man sprinkles oil upon the water with his fingers and peers through the fatty mirror. In a good day he catches thirty, forty, and more lobsters. But everyone has become impoverished during these years, and the demand for lobsters is as low as for Ford's automobiles.

Fishing with nets, being professional, is considered unworthy of a free artist. A superficial and false attitude! Fishing with a net is a high art. One must know the time and place for each kind of fish. One must know how to spread the net in a semicircle, sometimes a circle, even in a spiral, depending upon the configuration of the bottom and a dozen other conditions. One must lower the net noiselessly into the water, unrolling it rapidly from a moving boat. And finally—as the last act—the fish must be driven into the net. Today this is done as it was done ten thousand and more years ago, by means of stones cast from the boat. By this barrage the fish are first driven into the circle and then into the net itself. A different quantity of stone is required for this at different times of the year and under different conditions of sea. From time to time the supply must be replenished on the shore. But in the boat there are two permanent stones on long strings. One must know how to throw them with force and immediately retrieve them from the water. The stone should fall close to the net. But woe to the fisher if it plunks into the net itself and becomes entangled! Then Charolambos chastises one with an annihilating look—and justly. Out of politeness and a sense of social discipline, Charolambos admits that I am generally not bad at casting stones. But I need only compare my work with his, and pride departs immediately. Charolambos sees the net after it is already invisible to me, and he knows where it is when it is no longer visible to him either. He feels it not only in front of him, but behind his back. His extremities are always in contact with that net through some mysterious fluids. Pulling the net up is stiff work, and Charolambos wears a wide woolen scarf tightly wound around his belly, even during the hot July days. One must row without either overpassing
or lagging behind the curve of the net, and that is my job. I was not quick at learning to note the almost imperceptible motions of the hand by means of which the master directs his assistant.

Often after casting fifteen kilos of stone into the water, Charolambos pulls out the net with a lonely little fish the size of my thumb. Sometimes the entire net lives and quivers with captured fish. How explain this difference? "Deniz," replies Charolambos, shrugging his shoulders. Deniz means "sea," and this word resounds like "destiny."

Charolambos and I converse in a new language which has grown up slowly out of Turkish, Greek, Russian, and French words—all violently distorted and seldom used according to their honest connotation. We construct phrases after the manner of two- or three-year-old children. However, I firmly call out in Turkish the names of the more common operations. Chance observers have concluded from this that I command the Turkish language freely, and the papers have even announced that I translate American authors into Turkish—a slight exaggeration!

Sometimes it happens that no sooner have we got the nets lowered than we hear a sudden splash and a snort behind our backs. "Dolphin!" yells Charolambos in alarm. Danger! The dolphin bides his time until the fishermen drive the fish into the net with stones, and then he tears them out one by one, along with big chunks of the net itself by way of seasoning. "Shoot, M'sieu!" yells Charolambos. And I shoot from a revolver. A young dolphin will be scared by this and flee. But the old pirates cherish a complete contempt for that automatic popgun. Merely out of politeness they swim a little way off after the shot, and give a snort and bide their time. More than once were we compelled to pull up our empty net in a hurry and change the fishing ground.

The dolphin is not the only enemy. The little black gardener from the north shore is very expert at cleaning out other people's nets if they are left overnight without surveillance. Toward evening, he pulls out in his skiff as if to fish, but in reality to find a point of vantage whence he can well observe all those who are bringing out their nets for the night. There are people who steal nets (Charolambos and I have lost not a few during these years), but this is risky and bothersome. The net must be altered lest it be recognized; it must be tended, patched, and painted from time to time with pitch. The little gardener leaves all these wearisome cares to the owners of the nets; he contents himself with the fish and the lobsters. Charolambos and he cross glances in passing, sharper than
a knife. We resort to subterfuge; pulling away some distance, we go through the pantomime of casting a net, and then, rounding the little island full of rabbits, we secretly lower our net into the water. In about one case out of three we succeed in fooling the enemy.

The chief fish here are barbonnel and rouget. The chief fisher of rouget is the old man Kochu. He knows his fish, and sometimes it seems as though the fish know him. When rouget abounds, Kochu deals a quick strategic blow to his possible rivals. Going out earlier than anybody else, he works the watery field not from one end to the other, but after the fashion of a chessboard, as a knight jumps, or in some even-more-fancy figure. No one knows except Kochu where the net has already passed and where it has not. Having blocked off in this manner a large section of the sea, Kochu then fills in at leisure the unutilized squares. A great art! Kochu has succeeded in learning the sea because Kochu is old. But even Kochu's father worked until last year with another old fellow, a former barber. In a decrepit skiff they laid nets for lobsters, and they themselves, corroded to the bones with sea salt, resembled two aged lobsters. Both of them are now resting in the Prinkipo cemetery, which holds more people than the little village.

However, it should not be inferred that we restricted ourselves to nets. No, we used all the methods of fishing that promised booty. With hook and line we caught big fish weighing up to ten kilos. While I would be pulling up some invisible monster, now following me obediently and now frantically balking, Charolambos would watch me with unmoving eyes, eyes without a shadow of respect left in them. Not without reason did he fear that I would lose the precious prey. . . . At every awkward move of mine, he would growl savagely and menacingly. And when the fish finally became visible in the water, so beautiful in its transparency, Charolambos would whisper in admonition, "Buyuk, M'sieu" (a big one). To which I would reply panting, "Buyuk, Charolambos." At the boatside we catch up the prey in a small net. And now the beautiful monster, played over by all the colors of the rainbow, shakes the boat with its last blows of resistance and despair. In our joy, we eat an orange apiece, and in a language comprehensible to no one but us, and which we ourselves only half understand, share the sensations of the adventure.

This morning the fishing was poor. The season is over, the fish have gone to deep water. Toward the end of August they will return, but then Charolambos will be fishing without me. He is now downstairs nailing up cases of books, of the utility of which he is obviously not entirely convinced. Through the
open window can be seen the small steamer which brings the functionaries from Stamboul to their summer homes. Empty shelves yawn in the library. Only in the upper corner over the arch of the window does the old life go on as usual. Swallows have built a nest there, and directly above the British "blue books" have hatched a brood which has no interest in French visas.

For better or worse, the chapter called "Prinkipo" is ended.
Two or three weeks ago the official Soviet news agency, Tass, denied the rumor that Trotsky is returning to the USSR. The solemn and categorical tone of this denial indicated that the Kremlin was pursuing some important political aim. But not in the field of domestic politics, for neither the denial nor the newspaper rumor against which it was directed was published in the USSR. The denial was intended wholly and exclusively for foreign consumption.

The sense of this denial will become sufficiently clear when it is recalled that about two years ago Trotsky wrote on the necessity of preparing the Red Army for a struggle against National Socialism. This article, not even mentioned in the USSR, found in time a loud echo in the National Socialist press. We know with what demonstrative friendliness the Stalinist bureaucracy received Hitler's accession to power. Izvestia wrote: "The public opinion of the Soviet Union has never entertained any plans directed against the present current in Germany." These words signified nothing short of a demonstrative disassociation from Trotsky. Can there be any doubt that the article in Izvestia was written after a corresponding diplomatic inquiry from Berlin and that its purpose was to convince Hitler that Moscow holds unswervingly to the doctrine of socialism in one country?

At the time Tass published the categorical statement abroad that Trotsky "will not return" to the USSR, the Berlin paper, Die Vossische Zeitung, directed an official inquiry to Trotsky through its Istanbul correspondent as to whether he is really returning to Russia. The very fact of the inquiry seems unexpected and at the same time very significant, especially if the fact is taken into consideration that Die Vossische Zeitung
Writings of Leon Trotsky (1932-33)

is now completely in the hands of the Nazis. Hitler simply ordered the former liberal paper, through its former liberal correspondent, to check up on the newspaper rumor of the coming return of Trotsky to Moscow and of a corresponding change in the foreign policy of the Soviets.

Thus we see that Hitler and Stalin played a two-handed game in this question. At first it might have been thought that the rumor of Trotsky's return arose accidentally, as happens with many newspaper rumors. But in retrospect, linking together all the stages of the question, it is not difficult to assume that the rumor itself was spread by the Berlin department of "propaganda" with the aim of forcing Stalin to a degrading denial and assurance. The aim, at any rate, has been achieved.

*L'Humanité*, like the rest of the Stalinist press in the West that does not overlook an opportunity to disgrace itself, has seized upon the denial of Tass in order to burst into a rude attack on Trotsky, blaming him for having spread the rumor of his return to the USSR himself—for what purpose? Thus these miserable bureaucratic blind men serve at every step as the tools of foreign aims and under the pretense of serving the revolution compromise and weaken it.
ON SAILING FROM TURKEY

A Statement to the Press

July 19, 1933

Comrade Trotsky, exiled from the USSR by the Stalin faction, has just gained the possibility of staying outside of Turkey. *L'Humanite* has therefore seized upon this bit of news in order to publish a notice worthy of the White Guards. Let us here reestablish the facts and their significance.

Stalin exiled Trotsky from the USSR under the pressure of the enemies of the proletariat. The companion of Lenin, the organizer of the Red Army, was a thorn in the side of the partisans of "socialism in one country." For several years the capitalist governments, *under direct pressure from Soviet diplomats*, refused Trotsky the right of asylum. When he traveled to Copenhagen to give a lecture, he was authorized to stay only seven days, under the pressure of the USSR's ambassador, Kobietsky, and thanks to the denunciations of Tass agency.

The right of asylum for revolutionaries has always been a demand of Communists, particularly in those countries that call themselves "democratic." Thousands of German comrades are presently availing themselves of this right in France: for example, Paul Schwent, Communist deputy in the Landtag, who is authorized to hold meetings; Muenzenberg, who has been authorized to run his publishing business, etc. It is this same right, recognized and trampled on by all the democratic states, always conditional but which can be extended and widened, that Comrade Trotsky has used.

*L'Humanite* would do better to save its criticisms for the reception of Radek by the Polish bourgeois press, for the declarations of Litvinov, etc.
The Stalinists' factional hatred drives them even to pour forth undisguised threats. The workers did not demonstrate against Trotsky either in Piraeus or at Copenhagen. The only Stalinist demonstrations were their base, provocative articles, which complemented those of the White Guards. The Stalin-Turkul\(^{277}\) united front still threatens our comrade. *L'Humanite* is openly provocative. We firmly declare that the Political Bureau, responsible for the party's paper, will bear complete responsibility for its provocations against Comrade Trotsky, who remains under the protection of the international proletarian vanguard.
NOTES AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

1. "'With Both Hands.'" The Militant (weekly paper of the Communist League of America, section of the International Left Opposition), January 7, 1933. Unsigned when first published in Russian. Trotsky was not alone at the end of 1932 in expecting a "turn" by the leadership of the Soviet Union, which was then experiencing great difficulties and unrest; Isaac Deutscher called it "the most dangerous and gloomy moment in Soviet history, when the nation came to feel the full force of the calamity in agriculture and of famine, and when inflationary chaos threatened to disrupt the toilsome industrial advance" (The Prophet Outcast, 1963). Even Stalinists were beginning to question Stalin's policies and to talk about removing him from the leadership. Earlier in 1932, the Kremlin had revoked Trotsky's citizenship on the ground of his alleged "counterrevolutionary activity" (see Writings 32). Trotsky therefore welcomed the publication of a book in which Stalin was quoted as giving other, truer, reasons for his measures against "Trotskyism." The book, Russia: Market or Menace?, was written by Thomas D. Campbell, an American engineer who had worked for the Soviet government in 1929-30 as a consultant on agricultural-machinery projects; although the United States government still refused at that time to recognize the Soviet government established in 1917, it did not prevent a limited amount of trade between the two countries or prevent American citizens from visiting or working in the Soviet Union. Campbell's book contained an account of the interview he had been granted by Stalin on January 28, 1929, shortly before Trotsky was deported to Turkey. The book was published by Longmans, Green and Co. in April 1932, more than seven months before Trotsky wrote about it. It was only after this article was published in Russian and German in December 1932 that Stalin issued a statement denying that he had been quoted accurately by Campbell (see note 100).

2. Joseph Stalin (1879-1953) became a Social Democrat in 1898, joined the Bolshevik faction in 1904, was coopted to its Central Committee in 1912, and elected to it for the first time in 1917. In 1917 he favored a conciliatory attitude to the Provisional Government before Lenin returned and reoriented the Bolsheviks toward winning power. He was elected commissar of nationalities in the
first Soviet government, and general secretary of the Communist Party (Bolshevik) in 1922. Lenin called in 1923 for his removal from the post of general secretary because he was using it to bureaucratize the party and state apparatuses. After Lenin's death in 1924, Stalin gradually eliminated his major opponents, starting with Trotsky, until he became virtual dictator of the party and the Soviet Union in the 1930s. The chief concepts associated with his name are "socialism in one country," "social fascism," and "peaceful co-existence." His biography by Trotsky, uncompleted when the latter was assassinated in 1940, is entitled Stalin, An Appraisal of the Man and His Influence.

3. William D. Haywood (1869-1928) was a militant union leader, a founder of the Industrial Workers of the World (Wobblies), and a leader of the left wing of the American Socialist Party before World War I; he joined the Communist Party and in 1921 went to the Soviet Union as a refugee from political persecution by the United States government. He remained in the Soviet Union until his death. Emma Goldman (1869-1940) was an anarchist who at first sympathized with the Russian Revolution of 1917 but soon became an opponent of the Soviet government and the Communist International.

4. Leon Trotsky (1879-1940) became a revolutionary in 1896 and a collaborator with Lenin on Iskra in 1902. He broke with Lenin the next year over the nature of the revolutionary party and aligned himself with the Mensheviks. He broke with the Mensheviks in 1904 and tried during the next decade to reunite the party. In the 1905 revolution, he was the leader of the St. Petersburg Soviet and developed the theory of permanent revolution. In 1915 he wrote the Zimmerwald manifesto against the war. He joined the Bolshevik Party in 1917, was elected to its Central Committee, and organized the Bolshevik insurrection that made the new Soviet state possible. His first government post was as commissar of foreign affairs. Then as commissar of war he organized the Red Army and led it to victory through three years of civil war and imperialist intervention. He formed the Left Opposition in 1923 and fought for the next decade to return the Soviet Union and the Communist International to Leninist internationalism and proletarian democracy. Defeated by the Stalin faction, he was expelled from the Communist Party and the Comintern, and exiled to Turkey in 1929. In 1933 he gave up his efforts to reform the Comintern and called for the creation of a new International. He viewed his work on behalf of the Fourth International as the most important of his career.

5. The Third International (Communist International or Comintern) was organized under Lenin's leadership as the revolutionary successor to the Second International. In Lenin's time its world congresses were held once a year—the First in 1919, the Second in 1920, the Third in 1921, the Fourth in 1922—despite the civil war and the insecurity of the Soviet Union. Trotsky regarded the theses of the Comintern's first four congresses as the programmatic cornerstone of the Left Opposition and the Fourth International. The Fifth Congress, where Stalin's machine was in control, was held in 1924, the Sixth not until 1928, and the Seventh not until 1935. Trotsky called the Seventh the "liquidation congress" of the Comintern (see Writings 35-36), and it was in fact the last before Stalin announced its dissolution in 1943 as a gesture to his imperialist allies.
6. The Left Opposition (Bolshevik-Leninists) was formed in 1923 as a faction of the Russian Communist Party, and the International Left Opposition was formed in 1930 as a faction of the Comintern. A group of ILO leaders met with Trotsky when he was in Copenhagen in November 1932, and an international preconference of the ILO was held in Paris in February 1933. When the ILO decided to work for the creation of a new International in 1933, it also changed its name to the International Communist League. Trotsky proposed that the Fourth International be founded at an ICL conference held in Geneva in 1936, but the conference disagreed and instead established the Movement for the Fourth International. The founding conference of the Fourth International was held in Paris in September 1938. It held one more conference during Trotsky's lifetime—an emergency conference in the Western Hemisphere in May 1940, which adopted a manifesto on World War II written by Trotsky (see Writings 39-40).

7. "Impotent coalition" and "February powers-that-be" refer to the participants in the Provisional Government, supported by both capitalist and "socialist" parties, that attempted to govern Russia between the February and October revolutions in 1917. Pavel Miliukov (1859-1943) was the leader of the Cadets, the major capitalist party, and minister of foreign affairs in the first Provisional Government. Alexander Kerensky (1882-1970), associated with the Social Revolutionary Party, was prime minister of the government overthrown by the Bolsheviks. George Buchanan (1854-1924), the British ambassador to Russia, 1910-18, was a bitter foe of the October Revolution and the new Soviet government. Mikhail Tereshchenko (1888-1959) was Cadet minister of foreign affairs after Miliukov's resignation.

8. Vladimir Ilyich Lenin (1870-1924) restored Marxism as the theory and practice of revolution in the imperialist epoch after it had been debased by the opportunists, revisionists, and fatalists of the Second International. He initiated the tendency that became known as Bolshevism, which was the first to point the way on how to build the kind of party needed to lead a working-class revolution. He was the first Marxist to fully understand and explain the central importance of the colonial and national struggles. He led the first victorious workers' revolution in 1917, and served as the first head of state of the Soviet government. He founded the Communist International and helped to elaborate its principles, strategy, and tactics. He prepared a fight against the bureaucratization of the Russian Communist Party and the Soviet state, but died before he could carry it out.

9. "Socialism in one country" was the theory proclaimed in 1924 and later incorporated into the program and tactics of the Comintern. It became the ideological cover for the abandonment of revolutionary internationalism in favor of narrow nationalism and was used to justify the conversion of the Communist parties throughout the world into docile pawns of the Kremlin's foreign policy. A comprehensive critique by Trotsky will be found in his 1928 book The Third International After Lenin.

10. The Kellogg Pact (after Frank B. Kellogg, U.S. secretary of state, 1925-9) was an agreement signed by fifteen nations in 1928 to renounce war as an instrument of national policy. It was later ratified by a total of sixty-three countries, including the Soviet Union.
11. **Maxim Litvinov** (1876-1951), an Old Bolshevik, was people's commissar for foreign affairs, 1930-39, ambassador to the United States, 1941-43, and deputy commissar for foreign affairs, 1943-46. Stalin used him to personify "collective security" when he sought alliances with the democratic imperialists and shelved him during the period of the Stalin-Hitler pact and the cold war.

12. **Herbert Hoover** (1874-1964), Republican president of the United States, 1929-33, had just been defeated by Democrat Franklin D. Roosevelt in the November 1932 presidential election. In 1932 he submitted a proposal for specific (rather than general) reductions in armaments to the Geneva disarmament conference.

13. Centrism is the term used by Trotsky for tendencies in the radical movement that stand or oscillate between reformism, which is the position of the labor bureaucracy and the labor aristocracy, and Marxism, which represents the historic interests of the working class. Since a centrist tendency has no independent social base, it must be evaluated in terms of its origin, its internal dynamic, and the direction in which it is going or being pushed by events. Until around 1935, Trotsky saw Stalinism as a special variety—"bureaucratic centrism." The terms "centrists in Amsterdam" and "in Geneva" refer to the Stalinists and the roles they played in 1932 at an international pacifist congress held in Amsterdam and at conferences of the League of Nations in Geneva. After 1935, Trotsky felt that "bureaucratic centrism" was inadequate as a term for the Stalinists. In a letter to James P. Cannon on October 10, 1937, he wrote: "Some comrades continue to characterize Stalinism as 'bureaucratic centrism.' This characterization is now totally out of date. On the international arena, Stalinism is no longer centrism, but the crudest form of opportunism and social patriotism. See Spain!"

14. Epigones are disciples who corrupt the doctrines of their teacher. Trotsky used the term for the Stalinists, who claim to be Leninists.

15. The decision to prepare the first five-year plan was made at the Fifteenth Congress of the Russian Communist Party in December 1927, shortly after the expulsion of the Left Oppositionists, who had been the first advocates of such planning and industrialization. The first five-year plan covered the period 1928-32.

16. "On the State of the Left Opposition." **Internal Bulletin**, Communist League of America, Number 9, 1933. Signed "G. Gourov." When Trotsky was in Copenhagen in November 1932, he made a speech evaluating the Russian Revolution (in *Leon Trotsky Speaks*, Pathfinder Press, 1972), a radio speech to America, and a short propaganda film (*Writings 32*). In addition, he had a chance to meet with several European leaders of the Left Opposition. This letter is his report to the sections of the ILO on the problems discussed in those meetings.

17. Among those present in Copenhagen were Pierre Naville, Denise Naville, Gerard Rosenthal, Raymond Molinier, Pierre Frank, and Jeanne Martin des Pallieres, from France; Leon Lesoil, from Belgium; the Italian emigres A. Feroci and Julien, and Lucienne Tedeschi; Henricus Sneevliet, from Holland; Harry Wicks, from Britain; B. J. Field and Esther Field, from the United States (but not representing the American section); Anton Grylewicz, Eugene Bauer,
Georg Jungclas, Bruno, Hippe, Schneeweiss, Erich Kohn, and three or four Hamburg students, from Germany; and Jan Frankel and Oskar Fischer, Trotsky's secretaries. Trotsky also had a discussion with Senin-Sobolevicius, an East European active in Germany.

18. The reference is to an international preconference, which was held in Paris in February 1933. It was called a preconference because the plan was to hold a larger, better prepared, and more authoritative international conference later in 1933. For various reasons an actual international conference was not held until July 1936 in Geneva.

19. Joaquin Maurin (1897- ), a leader of the Spanish Communist Party who was expelled in 1929 for his sympathies with the Bukharinist Right Opposition, organized the Catalonian Federation which Trotsky considered an obstacle in Spain. Andres Nin, the Spanish Opposition leader, made a long effort to win over Maurin, whom he knew personally. Later Nin split from the ILO and united with Maurin to form the Workers Party of Marxist Unification (POUM). When the civil war broke out in 1936, Maurin, a POUM deputy in parliament, was arrested by Franco's troops and imprisoned. Upon his release, he went into exile and ceased all political activity.

20. Kurt Landau was for a short time a member of the Left Opposition in Austria and Germany; he was assassinated by the Stalinists in Spain during the civil war. Trotsky's analysis of "Landauism" appears later in this report. Comunismo was the journal of the Spanish Left Opposition.

21. Alfred Rosmer (1877-1964) was a revolutionary syndicalist and collaborator of Trotsky in France during World War I. He was elected to the Executive Committee of the Comintern in 1920, and was a leader of the French Communist Party until his expulsion in 1924. He was a Left Opposition leader and member of its International Secretariat until 1930, when he withdrew over differences with Trotsky. Their personal friendship was renewed in 1936. He wrote several books on labor history. His memoir of Trotsky in Paris, 1915-16, appears in the collection Leon Trotsky, The Man and His Work (Pathfinder Press, 1969).

22. M. Mill had been chosen by the Russian Opposition as its member of the Administrative Secretariat of the ILO, largely because of his knowledge of the Russian language; after he was removed from this post in 1932 because of his maneuvers and personal intrigues, he became an agent of Stalinism. Trotsky described him as an East European, but Isaac Deutscher, in The Prophet Outcast, called him an American.

23. Henri Lacroix, one of the Spanish Opposition leaders, quit and joined the Socialist Party at the end of 1933.

24. The Italian Left Faction, or Bordigists (after their leader, Amadeo Bordiga, 1889-1970, who was expelled from the Comintern on charges of "Trotskyism" in 1929), was distinguished by an inveterate sectarianism during and after their association with the Left Opposition. Their publication was named Prometeo (Prometheus).

25. The united front is a tactic utilized by the Bolsheviks in Russia before the October Revolution and elaborated by the Second Congress of the Comintern in 1920. It is designed to give the working class the opportunity to struggle jointly against the common class
enemy, even when the workers are divided into reformist and revolution ary organizations; it also enables the revolutionary party to make contact through joint struggle with the ranks of other working-class organizations and, when successful, win their sympathy. The major condition for the employment of this tactic, according to the Bolsheviks, is that the revolutionary party must at all times preserve its independence and right to criticize other participants in any united front. Trotsky's fullest discussion of the united front will be found in The Struggle Against Fascism in Germany.

26. Albert Treint (1889- ), the leader of the French Communist Party who supported the Joint Opposition led by Trotsky and Zinoviev and was expelled in 1927, collaborated with several Communist groups, including the Communist League of France, to which he belonged for a few years. He later joined a syndicalist group.

27. Boris Souvarine (1893- ) was a founder of the French Communist Party and one of the first biographers of Stalin. He was repelled by Stalinism in the 1920s and turned against Leninism in the 1930s. For Trotsky he was a prototype of the cynicism and defeatism that marked the renegades from Bolshevism. Spartakos (Spartacus) was the paper published by a Greek group that had formerly been recognized as an affiliate of the Left Opposition. Albert Weisbord (1900- ), who was expelled from the American Communist Party in 1929, organized a small group, the Communist League of Struggle, which proclaimed its adherence to the ILO in the early 1930s although its politics vacillated between those of the Right and Left Oppositions. He later broke with Marxism and became an American Federation of Labor organizer.

28. Hugo Urbahns (1890-1946), a leader of the German Communist Party, was expelled in 1928 and helped to found the Leninbund, which was associated with the Left Opposition until 1930.

29. Leon Lesoil (1892-1942) was a founder of the Belgian Communist Party who was expelled with other leaders in 1928 for opposing the repression of the Soviet Left Opposition. He helped to organize the Belgian section of the Opposition, which he led until his death in a Nazi concentration camp. Jean Jacquemotte was a leader of the Belgian CP.

30. RGO were the German initials of the Revolutionary Trade Union Opposition, a small union federation organized by the German Communist Party in 1929 to compete with the ADGB, the major union federation led by the Social Democrats. At the end of 1930 the ADGB had almost five million members, the RGO fewer than 150 thousand. The chief accomplishment of the RGO, the German section of the Moscow-led Profintern (Red International of Labor Unions), was to keep the KPD unionists isolated from the great majority of the organized workers.

31. The Berlin transit workers' strike of November 3-7, 1932, was in response to the latest in a series of wage cuts. Even the Nazis took part in the strike, which began a few days before the last Reichstag election prior to Hitler's appointment as chancellor. The central strike committee, elected by a delegated conference, consisted of members of the RGO, the ADGB, the NSBO (Nazi Factory Organization), and independents. When half the strikers went back to work the day after the Reichstag election, in effect accepting the wage cut, the strike committee called off the strike.
32. **Die Permanente Revolution** was the paper of the German Left Opposition from July 1931 to February 1933, when it was succeeded by *Unser Wort* (Our Word), published in exile.

33. **Old Bolsheviks** were those who joined the Bolshevik Party before 1917, that is, members of the party's "old guard." Although it was an honorific designation, Lenin sometimes used it slightly for party veterans who hadn't learned or relearned anything for a long time.

34. **Biulleten Oppozitsii** (Bulletin of the Opposition) was the Russian-language magazine founded by Trotsky in 1929. After being printed in Paris from 1929 to 1931, it was shifted to Berlin until the beginning of 1933, when the Nazis banned it. Thereafter it was published in Paris until 1934, in Zurich until 1935, in Paris until 1939, and in New York until 1941, when it ceased publication.

35. This refers to a letter to the sections, "Some Ideas on the Position and the Tasks of the Left Opposition," signed "G. Gourov," July 28, 1931 (see *Writings 30-31*).

36. The Paris Commune was the first example of a workers' government. It was in power from March 18 to May 28, 1871, just 72 days, before it was overthrown in a bloody series of battles. Five articles on the Commune are collected in *Leon Trotsky on the Paris Commune* (Pathfinder Press, 1970). Soviet Hungary was proclaimed March 21, 1919, when the capitalist government of Count Karolyi voluntarily turned the power over to the Soviets; it was overthrown on August 1, 1919, by counterrevolutionary armies directed by France and her allies.

37. **Ernst Thaelmann** (1886-1945) was the leader of the German Communist Party, its presidential candidate, and a supporter of the Kremlin policies that led to Hitler's victory. Arrested by the Nazis in 1933, he was executed at Buchenwald in 1945.

38. **Heinz Neumann** (1902-1937?) and **Hermann Remmele** (1880-1937) were part of the Thaelmann leadership in the years when the Nazis rose toward power. In 1933 they fled to the Soviet Union, where Remmele was executed by the GPU in 1937 and Neumann was arrested and disappeared the same year.

39. The aim of **Adolf Hitler** (1889-1945) and his National Socialist Party was to destroy the democratic-capitalist government created at Weimar in 1919, but until Hitler was appointed chancellor in January 1933 the Nazis were careful to insist that they were waging their struggle for power in accord with the Weimar Constitution. On November 6, 1932, the Reichstag elections marked the first weakening of Nazi electoral strength in several years; they got 11.7 million votes, a decline of two million from the previous election, July 31, 1932.

40. The **SAP** (Socialist Workers Party) of Germany was formed in October 1931 after the Social Democrats expelled a number of left-wing Reichstag deputies headed by Max Seydewitz and **Kurt Rosenfeld** (1877-1943), also a well-known civil-liberties lawyer. In the spring of 1932, a split occurred in the German Communist Right Opposition (KPO, also called the Branderites) and a wing headed by Jakob Walcher joined the SAP. When Seydewitz and Rosenfeld withdrew from the SAP, the ex-Branderites became its leaders. The reference about passing over "from Rosenfeld to Thaelmann" concerns the SAP's erratic electoral policy in 1932. In 1933 the SAP
agreed to work together with the Left Opposition in forming a new International, but it soon changed its mind and became an opponent of the Fourth International.

41. **Pali ton Takson** (*The Class Struggle*) was the paper of the Archio-Marxists, then the Greek section of the ILO.

42. "A Letter to Bulgaria." **Osvobodzenie** (*Liberation, weekly paper of the Bulgarian Left Opposition*), January 6, 1933. Translated for this volume by Iain Fraser.

43. **Christian Georgievich Rakovsky** (1873-1941), a leading revolutionary in the Balkans before World War I, became chairman of the Ukrainian Soviet in 1918 and later served as ambassador to London and Paris. An early leader of the Left Opposition, he was deported in 1928, where he suffered illness, medical neglect, and isolation. In 1934 he gave up the fight against Stalinism, but his capitulation did not save him. In 1938 he was one of the major defendants in the third Moscow trial, where he was sentenced to twenty years' imprisonment. Barnaul, in Central Asia, Russia, was his place of exile.

44. **La Verite** (*The Truth*) was the paper of the Communist League of France, section of the ILO.

45. **GPU** was one of the abbreviated names for the Soviet political-police department; other names were Cheka, NKVD, MVD, KGB, etc., but GPU is often used in their place.


47. "The Crisis in the German Section." **Internal Bulletin**, Communist League of America, Number 8, January 28, 1933. This letter was Trotsky's reply to information he had received about the outbreak of a factional fight led by Roman Well in the German section and in the International Secretariat. It was not until a week later that he learned about some of the more serious details. In part, the fight began around disagreement with Trotsky's article, "With Both Hands," and an effort to have the Left Opposition repudiate it.

48. **Roman Well** and **Senin** were pseudonyms of the Sobolevicius brothers, originally from Latvia. As Dr. Robert Soblen, Well committed suicide in 1962 when he was under prosecution as a Soviet espionage agent in the United States. Senin, under the name of Jack Soblen, told a U. S. Senate committee in 1957 that he had been a GPU agent while functioning inside "the Left Opposition, although it was not customary for GPU agents to engage in political disputes with Trotsky.

49. Thermidor 1794 was the month, according to the new calendar proclaimed by the French Revolution, in which the radical Jacobins led by Robespierre were overthrown by a right wing within the revolution; although it opened up a period of political reaction that culminated in the seizure of power by Napoleon Bonaparte, it did not go so far as to restore the feudal regime. Trotsky called the conservative Stalinist bureaucracy Thermidorean because he believed that their policies were preparing the way for a capitalist coun-
terrevolution. Trotsky's reference to articles in the German press was to "On Questions of Thermidor and Bonapartism," November 1930, and "An Explanation to a Circle of Friends," September 2, 1931 (both in Writings 30-31). Trotsky modified his theory about the Thermidorean analogy in a 1935 essay, "The Workers' State, Thermidor and Bonapartism" (reprinted in Writings 34-35).

50. Georgy Vasilievich Butov, Trotsky's coworker in charge of the Revolutionary Military Council's secretariat during the civil war, was arrested for refusing to sign false charges against Trotsky, went on a hunger strike, and died in prison in September 1928. Jakob Blumkin (1899-1929) was a Left Social Revolutionary terrorist who became a Communist and a GPU official. He was the first Russian supporter of the Left Opposition to visit Trotsky in exile in Turkey. Bringing back a letter from Trotsky to the Opposition, he was betrayed to the GPU and shot in December 1929. A few weeks later the GPU also executed Oppositionists named Silov and Rabinovich, allegedly for "sabotage of railway transport."

51. Gregory Zinoviev (1883-1936) and Karl Radek (1885-1939) were leading figures of the Comintern in Lenin's time, Zinoviev serving as its first president and Radek as an outstanding propagandist. Zinoviev helped Stalin to launch the crusade against "Trotskyism" but then joined a bloc with the Left Opposition, 1926-27; when he was expelled from the party in 1927, he capitulated to Stalin. Expelled again in 1932, he repented again in 1933. Radek became an early Left Oppositionist, but also was one of the first to capitulate in 1929. Zinoviev was framed up in the first Moscow trial in 1936 and executed. Radek was framed up a year later in the second Moscow trial and sentenced to ten years' imprisonment.

52. "On Those Who Have Forgotten the ABC." Internal Bulletin, Communist League of America, Number 8, January 28, 1933.

53. Chiang Kai-shek (1887- ) was the military leader of the bourgeois-nationalist Kuomintang (People's Party) of China during the revolution of 1925-27. He stood in the right wing of that party, into which the Communists had entered on the orders of the Comintern leadership. The Stalinists hailed him as a great revolutionary until April 1927 when he conducted a bloody massacre of the Shanghai Communists and trade unionists. He ruled China until overthrown by the Chinese Communist Party in 1949.

54. Dmitri Manuilsky (1883-1952) was secretary of the Comintern from 1931 to its dissolution in 1943. Like Trotsky, he had belonged to the independent Marxist organization, the Mezhrayontzi (Inter-District Group), which fused with the Bolshevik Party in 1917. He became a supporter of the Stalinist faction in the early 1920s.

55. N. Ustrialov was a Russian professor and economist who opposed the October Revolution but later went to work for the Soviet government because he believed it would inevitably be compelled to restore capitalism gradually; he supported Stalin's measures against Trotsky as a step in this direction.

56. NEP was the New Economic Policy initiated in 1921 to replace the policy of "Military Communism," which prevailed during the civil war and which led to drastic declines in agricultural and industrial production (see note 93). To revive the economy after the civil war, the NEP was adopted as a temporary measure allowing
a limited revival of free trade inside the Soviet Union and foreign concessions alongside the nationalized and state-controlled sections of the economy. The NEPmen, who benefited from this policy, were viewed as a potential base for the restoration of capitalism. The NEP was succeeded in 1928 by forced collectivization of the land and the first five-year plan.

57. "The International Left Opposition, Its Tasks and Methods." The Militant, March 6, 8, 10, 18, and 25, 1933, and Internal Bulletin, Communist League of America, Number 11, March 31, 1933. Unsigned. A draft of this document was written and edited by Trotsky for the international preconference of the ILO, held in Paris February 4-8, 1933. The preconference adopted the document after adding several parts—on the Left Opposition in the Balkans, the Left Opposition in Czechoslovakia, reorganization of the International Secretariat, preparation of the international conference that was slated to be held in July 1933, additions to the "internal" parts on Spain and Germany, and an "internal" part on the American section—which are omitted here because they were not written by Trotsky. His first draft was written in December 1932 for discussion and adoption in 1933; when it says "this year," as at the end of the fourth paragraph, it means 1932.

58. Reformism is the theory and practice of gradual, peaceful, and parliamentary change (as opposed to revolution) as the best or only means of proceeding from capitalism to socialism. Reformists therefore strive to soften the class struggle and promote class collaboration. The logic of their position leads them to side with the capitalists against workers and colonial people attempting to make a revolution.

59. The Kuomintang (People's Party) of China was the bourgeois-nationalist party founded by Sun Yat-sen in 1911 and led after 1926 by Chiang Kai-shek. For Trotsky's critique of the Stalinist support of the Kuomintang, see his Problems of the Chinese Revolution and The Third International After Lenin. The "left" bureaucracy of the British trade unions joined with Soviet Union representatives to form the Anglo-Russian Trade Union Unity Committee in May 1925. For the British this was a cheap way to demonstrate "progressivism" and shield themselves against criticism from the left, especially useful at that time, not long before the British general strike of 1926. The committee folded when the British members, no longer needing a left cover, walked out in 1927.

60. Pierre Monatte (1881-1960) and Robert Louzon (1882- ) were syndicalists who briefly belonged to the French Communist Party in the 1920s and then left it to found Revolution proletarienne in 1924 and the Syndicalist League in 1926. Trotsky's polemics against them will be found in Leon Trotsky on the Trade Unions (Pathfinder Press, 1969).

61. Social Democracy was the name of various socialist parties. Until 1914, when most Social Democratic parties supported the war, it was synonymous with revolutionary socialism or Marxism. Thereafter it was used by revolutionaries to designate opportunist betrayers of Marxism.

62. The Right Opposition group in the Soviet Union was headed by Bukharin, Rykov, and Tomsky; in Germany a similar tendency
was led by Brandler and Thalheimer; in the United States by Lovestone.

63. **Heinrich Brandler** (1881-1967) was a founder of the German Communist Party and its principal leader when it failed to take advantage of the revolutionary crisis of 1923. Made a scapegoat by the Kremlin, he was removed from the party leadership in 1924. He formed a faction, the Communist Party Opposition (KPO), which aligned itself with Bukharin's Right Opposition in the USSR, and was expelled from the KPD and the Comintern in 1929. In 1930 the Brandlerites organized an international group (IVKO). They continued as an independent organization until World War II.

64. "Dictatorship of the proletariat" is the Marxist term for the form of rule by the working class that will follow rule by the capitalist class ("dictatorship of the bourgeoisie"). More modern substitutes for "dictatorship of the proletariat" are "workers' state" and (a term Trotsky disliked) "workers' democracy."

65. The two-class "workers' and peasants' parties" was a formula used by the Stalinists in the 1920s to justify support for the Kuomintang and other bourgeois parties in the Orient. Trotsky's critique appears in *The Third International After Lenin* and *Problems of the Chinese Revolution*.

66. An international congress against war, initiated by the Stalinists, was held in Amsterdam in June 1932; for Trotsky's critique, see *Writings 32*. Another congress involving the same forces was to be held in 1933, this time against fascism; although it was held in Paris, it is sometimes called an Amsterdam congress too.

67. "Permanent revolution" was the theory and label most closely associated with Trotsky beginning with the 1905 revolution when he first developed his ideas about the leading role of the working class in backward and underdeveloped countries. Although Lenin and the Bolsheviks accepted the conclusions of this theory in leading the revolution in 1917, the Stalinists centered their fire on it in the 1920s, especially after adopting the theory of "socialism in one country." Trotsky's defense, *The Permanent Revolution*, was written in 1928.

68. The German Stalinists developed an agitation for the "national liberation" of Germany in order to compete with the Nazis as champions of German nationalism in opposition to the oppressive Versailles Treaty. Only the Nazis benefited from this competition.

69. The "democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry" was projected by Lenin before 1917 as the form of state which would follow the overthrow of czarism. He envisaged the revolution as bourgeois in character, led by a coalition of the working class and the peasantry which would take power and democratize the country without overstepping the limits of capitalist productive relations. He changed this position with the approach of the revolution, and on his return to Russia in April 1917 he reoriented the Bolshevik Party to a socialist struggle for a proletarian government, the dictatorship of the proletariat. Later the Stalinists revived the discarded formula (and others similar in content, such as the "bloc of four classes") in order to justify class collaboration with the bourgeoisie, especially in the colonial world.

70. Bonapartism was a central concept in Trotsky's writings during the 1930s. He saw two types—bourgeois and Soviet. Bourgeois Bonapartism appears, he said, during periods of acute social crisis,
usually in the form of a government that seeks to raise itself above the nation and the contending classes the better to preserve the capitalist system: "It is a military-police dictatorship . . . barely concealed with the decorations of parliamentarism." Bourgeois Bonapartism, he insisted, must not be equated with fascism, even though both serve the interests of capital. His most extensive writings on bourgeois Bonapartism will be found in The Struggle Against Fascism in Germany. His views on Soviet Bonapartism reached their final form in his essay, "The Workers' State, Thermidor and Bonapartism," reprinted in Writings 34-35.

71. The Comintern blocked the achievement of united fronts with Social Democrats and other working-class tendencies from 1928 to 1934, but throughout this period it continued to assert that it was in favor of united fronts, provided only that they be "united fronts from below," that is, that they be negotiated and consummated with the ranks of the non-Stalinist organizations and not with their leaders. This un-Leninist proviso was enough to torpedo any possibility of actual united fronts. It was a typical example of what Trotsky called bureaucratic ultimatism: the practice of issuing directives and slogans to the masses without regard to their level of understanding, experience, or desires, and implying or threatening Stalinist abstention if these directives or slogans were not accepted.

72. The theory of "social fascism," a brainchild of Stalin, held that Social Democracy and fascism were not antipodes but twins. Since the Social Democrats were only a variety of fascism, and since just about everyone but the Stalinists was some kind of fascist (a liberal-fascist or a labor-fascist or a Trotsky-fascist), then it was impermissible for the Stalinists to engage in united fronts with any other tendency against the plain ordinary fascists. No theory was or could have been more helpful to Hitler in the years leading up to his winning power in Germany. The Stalinists finally dropped the theory late one night in 1934 without the decency of an explanation, and soon were wooing not only the Social Democrats but also capitalist politicians like Roosevelt and Daladier whom they were still calling fascists early in 1934.

73. When Trotsky and the Left Opposition decided in 1933 to abandon efforts to reform the Comintern and to work for a new International, this point 10 of their eleven points was the only one they considered it necessary to amend (see Writings 33-34).

74. Bolshevism and Menshevism were the two major tendencies in the Russian Social Democratic Labor Party, section of the Second International, following its Second Congress in 1903. The Bolsheviks, led by Lenin, and the Mensheviks, led by Julius Martov, eventually became separate parties, ending up on opposite sides of the barricades in 1917. Trotsky sided with the Mensheviks in 1903 but broke with them over political differences in 1904; for the next decade he tried to reunify the party.

75. Karl Marx (1818-83) was, with Frederick Engels, the founder of scientific socialism and a leader of the First International (International Workingmen's Association), 1864-76.

76. The Second International (or Labor and Socialist International) was organized in 1889 as the successor to the First International. It was a loose association of national Social Democratic and labor parties, uniting both revolutionary and reformist elements.
Its progressive role had ended by 1914, when its major sections violated the most elementary socialist principles and supported their own imperialist governments in World War I. It fell apart during the war but was revived as a completely reformist organization in 1923.

77. **Maurice Paz** (1896- ), a French lawyer, was an early Oppositionist, associated with the magazine *Contre le Courant* (Against the Stream). He visited Trotsky in Turkey in 1929 and broke with the Opposition the same year over what he considered its unrealistic perspectives. He joined the French Socialist Party and became part of its leadership, associated with the Paul Faure tendency of the apparatus.

78. **Der Neuer Mahnruf** (The New Call) was the periodical of the Communist Opposition of Austria.

79. **Josef Frey** (1882-1957), a founder of the Austrian Communist Party, was a leader of the Austrian Left Opposition, expelled from the CP in 1927.

80. The *Leninbund* was formed in 1928 by Hugo Urbahns, Ruth Fischer, Arkadi Maslow, and others expelled from the German Communist Party for dissidence. It took positions close to those of the Left Opposition until 1930, when Urbahns took the leadership and expelled the sympathizers of the Opposition.


83. **Witte, Kin,** and **Eugene Bauer** were members of the International Secretariat of the ILO.

84. **Leon Kamenev** (1883-1936), an Old Bolshevik, was, like Zinoviev, an ally of Stalin in initiating the crusade against "Trotskyism" and then an ally of Trotsky against Stalinism until the Opposition was defeated and its leaders expelled. With Zinoviev, he capitulated in December 1927 and was reinstated in 1928; was expelled again in 1932 and capitulated again in 1933. He and Zinoviev were executed after the first Moscow trial frame-up in 1936.

85. **Karl Korsch** (1889-1961), a minister in the Communist-Social Democratic government of Thuringia in 1923, was expelled from the German Communist Party in 1929 for alleged "Trotskyism." He formed a small ultraleft sect. Two books by him have been published in the U.S.—**Karl Marx** in 1938, *Marxism and Philosophy* in 1971. **T.V. Sapronov** (1887-1939) was a leader of the Group of Democratic Centralism, or Decemists (see note 121), who developed ultraleft concepts about the character of the Soviet Union.


87. **Max Eastman** (1883-1969), editor of *The Masses* before World War I, was an early sympathizer of the Russian Left Opposition and translator of several of Trotsky's books. His rejection of dialectical materialism in the 1920s was succeeded by his rejection of socialism in the late 1930s. He became an anticommunist and an editor of *Reader's Digest*.
88. Eduard Bernstein (1850-1932), the literary executor of Engels, was the first theoretician of revisionism in the German Social Democracy. Socialism, he held, would come about through the gradual democratization of capitalism; therefore Marxism had to be "revised" and the workers' movement had to abandon the policy of class struggle for one of class collaboration with the "progressive" capitalists. Bernstein's book, Evolutionary Socialism, was attacked by the noted Marxists of the period, but revisionist theory and practice became increasingly dominant in the most important Social Democratic parties and led to the collapse of the Second International in 1914.

89. Croton-on-Hudson, New York State, was a summer gathering spot for radicals in the 1920s and 30s. Eastman lived and worked there during the time he was Trotsky's translator.


91. Kurt von Schleicher (1882-1934), the Reichswehr's "social" general, was appointed chancellor of Germany in December 1932, and was replaced with Hitler at the end of January 1933. Hitler had him murdered in the June 1934 "blood purge."


93. War Communism, or Military Communism, was the name given to the system of production and distribution imposed on the Soviet Union when it was fighting for its life during the civil war of 1918-20. The Bolsheviks had not planned to nationalize and centralize the economy so soon after the revolution; their original economic plans were much more modest and gradual. But everything had to be subordinated to the military struggle for survival, and almost everything was. One result was growing conflict between the peasants, whose produce was requisitioned or confiscated, and the Soviet state; another was a continuing decline of production, both agricultural and industrial. To the Bolsheviks the Kronstadt uprising of 1921 was a signal that peasant discontent was reaching the point of explosion and the event that led to the replacement of War Communism by the New Economic Policy (see note 56).

94. Jacobins was the popular name for members of the Society of the Friends of the Constitution who provided the leadership of the French Revolution (after the Jacobin Monastery in Paris where they held their meetings). The left-wing Jacobins (the Mountain) were led by Robespierre and Marat; the right-wing Jacobins (the Girondists) by Brissot; and the centrists (the Plain) by Danton.

95. Lavr G. Kornilov (1870-1918), Anton I. Denikin (1872-1947), and Piotr N. Wrangel (1878-1928) were commanders of the White Guard armies that sought to overthrow the new Soviet state with the help of the British, French, American, Japanese, and other imperialists.

96. The Kronstadt insurrection of March 1921, involving sailors at the naval base of Kronstadt and the Baltic fleet, was forcibly suppressed by the Soviet government. Later articles by Trotsky on the meaning of Kronstadt and his own role in its repression will be found in Writings 37-38.

97. Lenin's testament and evaluation of the Soviet leaders, written
shortly before the last stroke leading to his death in 1924, will be found in Leon Trotsky on the Suppressed Testament of Lenin.

98. Bessedovsky and Agabekov were Soviet diplomats who defected to the capitalist world.

99. Alexei Rykov (1881-1938), an Old Bolshevik, was elected commissar of the interior in 1917 and president of the Council of People's Commissars, 1924-30. A leader of the Right Opposition, he was convicted in the 1938 Moscow trial and executed.

100. "Stalin's Denial." The Militant, February 11, 1933. Stalin's article, "Mr. Campbell Stretches the Truth," was printed in the fortnightly Moscow magazine, Bolshevik, and translated at the time in the Stalinist press service, Inprecorr (International Press Correspondence), January 12, 1933; it was retranslated in Stalin's Works, volume 13, published in Russian in 1949 and in English in 1955 (and cited below). In the Inprecorr version Stalin's article is dated December 28, 1932, and the Bolshevik date is given as December 30 (that is, after the publication of Trotsky's "With Both Hands"); the volume 13 version dates Stalin's article as November 23, 1932, and the Bolshevik in which it appeared as November 30 (that is, before Trotsky's article was published). An Associated Press dispatch from Moscow, dated December 29, 1932, which was printed in The New York Times the next day under the title "Stalin Denounces American's Book," reported that Stalin's article "will appear December 30." In the article Stalin characterized Campbell's report of his January 1929 interview with Stalin as "remarkable" because "every sentence is either pure fiction or a sensational piece of trickery with the aim of gaining publicity for the book and its author." Stalin made four points specifically: (1) Campbell gave rein to his imagination when he stated that "his talk with Stalin, which began at 1 p.m., lasted until well after dark, in fact, until dawn." Actually, the talk did not last more than two hours. Mr. Campbell's imagination is truly American." (What Campbell wrote in his book was that the discussion lasted for four hours—"until well after dark.") (2) Campbell stretched the truth about Stalin using both his hands to take Campbell's and saying they might become friends. "As a matter of fact, nothing of the kind happened or could have happened. Mr. Campbell cannot but know that Stalin has no need of 'friends' of the Campbell type." (3) Campbell invented the whole business about Stalin or someone else writing on the record of their conversation a note about its possible historical value: "As a matter of fact, the record was sent to Mr. Campbell by the translator Yarotsky without any postscript at all." (4) And of course Campbell's version of what Stalin had said about Trotsky was also fictitious: "Only people who have deserted to the camp of the Kautskys and the Welses can believe such stuff and nonsense, in which the facts are turned upside down. As a matter of fact, the talk with Campbell had no bearing on the Trotsky question and Trotsky's name was not mentioned at all in the course of it." Then, asking why Campbell hadn't printed the record of the conversation in his book, Stalin appended it to his article as "the surest means of exposing his lies and establishing the facts." But the text, as certified by B. Yarotsky, was neither full nor verbatim. An Associated Press dispatch from Los Angeles, dated December 30, 1932, and printed in the New York Times the next
day, said: "Thomas D. Campbell, agricultural engineer, smiled today at a statement by Joseph V. Stalin, head of the Communist Party, which said Mr. Campbell's recent book about Russia contained inventions. 'There certainly must be some misunderstanding or misrepresentation,' he said. 'I have a very high regard for Mr. Stalin. I consider him a real leader and perhaps the only man in Russia who can bring that country out of its distress and turmoil. My entire contact with the Soviet government demonstrated to me its attitude of fairness and business integrity. My relationship with the Soviet officials has always been of the most friendly nature."

101. The International Federation of Trade Unions (sometimes called the Amsterdam International or "yellow" International), controlled by the reformists, was the name of the major organization in its field until World War II.

102. The Red International of Labor Unions (also known as the Profintern) was the Stalinist-controlled rival of the Amsterdam International. In 1945, the leaders of the two union international s united as the World Federation of Trade Unions, but they split again, when the cold war began, and the reformists created the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions in 1949.

103. Lazar Kaganovich (1893- ) was a crony of Stalin and an undeviating Stalinist in various Soviet governmental and party posts. He was removed from all his posts as an "antiparty" element when Khrushchev took over the Soviet leadership in the 1950s.

104. V.V. Lominadze was a loyal Stalinist in the 1920s, when he helped instigate the ill-fated Canton uprising in China. He was expelled from the Central Committee in December 1930 for the "crime" of having circulated a platform critical of Stalin. He committed suicide in 1934.

105. Emil Ludwig (1881-1948), German writer and biographer, interviewed Stalin on December 13, 1931; the text was reprinted in Stalin's Works, volume 13, under the title "Talk with the German Author Emil Ludwig." When Trotsky said the Ludwig and Campbell interviews were essentially alike, he evidently meant it in the sense that Stalin showed a conciliatory attitude toward U.S. capitalism in both. Ludwig, who subsequently wrote a biography of Stalin, had previously interviewed Trotsky (Living Age, February 15, 1930). Trotsky's critical discussion of Ludwig's biographical method, written in 1932, appears in Leon Trotsky on the Suppressed Testament of Lenin.

106. "A Test of the Three Factions." The Militant, March 3, 1933. After Die Sozialistische Arbeiter Zeitung (Socialist Workers News), the central paper of the SAP, had reviewed Trotsky's recent pamphlet, The Soviet Economy in Danger (see Writings 32), Trotsky wrote this letter to its editorial board. Before he could mail it, the SAP paper printed an article giving credence to Stalinist claims about "the liquidation of the Trotskyists" in the Soviet Union. Angered, Trotsky did not mail the letter; instead he let it be printed in the Left Opposition press.

107. Frederick Engels (1820-95) was the lifelong collaborator of Karl Marx and coauthor with him of many of the basic works of Marxism. In his last years he was the outstanding figure of the young Second International.
108. Nikolai Bukharin (1888-1938) and Mikhail Tomsky (1886-1936) were Old Bolsheviks allied with Stalin against the Left Opposition until 1928. Together with Rykov they were founders of the Right Opposition in 1929, were expelled and capitulated. Tomsky, head of the Soviet trade unions, committed suicide during the first Moscow trial in 1936. Bukharin, who had succeeded Zinoviev as president of the Comintern, 1926-29, was executed after the third Moscow trial in 1938.

109. Vyacheslav M. Molotov (1890- ), an Old Bolshevik, was elected to the Russian party's central committee in 1920 and soon became an ardent supporter of Stalin. He was a member of the presidium of the Executive Committee of the Communist International, 1928-34, president of the Council of People's Commissars, 1930-41, and foreign minister, 1939-49, 1953-56. He was eliminated from the leadership in 1957 for opposing the Khrushchev "de-Stalinization" program.

110. Pravda (Truth) was the official Bolshevik paper starting in 1912; it became a daily in 1917.

111. "Preface to the Greek Edition of The New Course." Biulleten Oppozitsii, Number 33, March 1933. Translated for this volume by Tom Scott. The New Course was the first piece of literature of the emerging Left Opposition in 1923.

112. "Serious Lessons from an Inconsequential Thing." Class Struggle (magazine of the Communist League of Struggle), March-April 1933.

113. The Jewish Bund (the General Jewish Workers Union of Lithuania, Poland, and Russia) was part of the Russian Social Democratic Labor Party until 1903, when it opposed Lenin's concept of a multinational, democratically centralized party. When the party rejected the Bund's demand for a federated party structure, in which the Bund would be in charge of relations with Jewish workers, it split and became an independent organization. In 1917 it sided with the Mensheviks against the Bolshevik Revolution.

114. L.M. Khinchuk (1868-1944) was a Menshevik before the October Revolution and later Soviet ambassador to Germany. Ivan Maisky (1884- ) was a Menshevik who served as a minister for the White Guard Kolchak and later as Soviet ambassador to Britain, 1932-43.

115. Vyacheslav Menzhinsky (1874-1934) succeeded Felix Dzerzhinsky as head of the Soviet secret police in 1926.


117. The Social Revolutionary Party (SRs) became the political expression of the Russian Narodnik (Populist) currents. Prior to the October Revolution it had the largest share of influence among the peasants. Its right wing was led by Kerensky. The Left SRs served briefly in a coalition government with the Bolsheviks after the revolution, but soon moved into opposition "from the left," organizing counterrevolutionary actions.

118. The Political Bureau (Politburo) was the ruling body of the Russian Communist Party, although ostensibly subordinate to the Central Committee. The first Political Bureau, elected in 1919, con-
sisted of Lenin, Trotsky, Kamenev, Krestinsky, and Stalin. It became a committee of seven in 1922. In 1933 its members were Stalin, Andreyev, Kaganovich, Kalinin, Kirov, Kossior, Kuibyshev, Molotov, Ordzhonikidze, and Voroshilov.

119. **G. K. Ordzhonikidze** (1886-1937), one of the organizers of the Stalin faction, was in charge of heavy industry. The circumstances of his death are still not publicly known.

120. **Ivan N. Smirnov** (1881-1936), an Old Bolshevik, played a leading role in the civil war, especially in Siberia. A Left Oppositionist, he was expelled from the party in 1927 and capitulated in 1929. Reinstated and appointed director of auto plants at Nizhni-Novgorod, he was arrested January 1, 1933 and kept in prison until he was tried at the first Moscow trial in 1936 and executed.

**Eugene A. Preobrazhensky** (1886-1937), a secretary of the Bolshevik Central Committee, 1920-21, wrote *The New Economics* in 1926, a creative analysis of the problems facing the Soviet economy. A Left Oppositionist, he was expelled from the party in 1927, readmitted in 1929, expelled again in 1931 and again readmitted. His last public appearance was at the Seventeenth Congress in 1934 where, like other ex-Oppositionists, he apologized for past misdeeds and denounced Trotsky. During the purges, he refused to make a confession and was shot without a trial. **Vagarshak Ter-Vaganyan** (1893-1936), an Old Bolshevik and leader of the Soviet revolution in Armenia, wrote numerous works on the national question and was the first editor of *Pod Znameniem Marxisma* (Under the Banner of Marxism). A Left Oppositionist, he was expelled in 1927, capitulated in 1929, was exiled at the start of 1933. He was executed after the first Moscow trial.

121. "**Workers' Opposition**" and "**Democratic Centralism**" were oppositional groups in the Russian Communist Party in the early 1920s, while Lenin was still active; they were semisyndicalist and ultraleft. They adhered to the Joint Opposition in 1926, and their leaders were expelled and exiled at the same time as the Left Opposition's. The Workers' Opposition was originally led by A.G. Shlyapnikov, the first Soviet commissar of labor, and Alexandra Kollontai. Leaders of the Democratic Centralism group, or Decemists, were Vladimir M. Smirnov and T.V. Sapronov.

122. "**Red Saturdays**" were days of voluntary-labor mobilizations initiated during the civil war, when the volunteers worked in transportation, building, etc., without pay.

123. **Henry Yagoda** was the head of the Soviet secret police. After supervising the organization of the 1936 Moscow trial, he was made a defendant himself in 1938, convicted and executed.

124. "**Uneven and Combined Development and the Role of American Imperialism.**" From an undated and unnumbered internal bulletin of the National Committee of the Communist League of America, 1933. After attending the preconference in Paris in February 1933, Arne Swabeck, a leader of the CLA, went to Prinkipo for discussions with Trotsky. One of these, on February 28, concerned the question of self-determination for Afro-Americans, and is transcribed in the pamphlet, *Leon Trotsky on Black Nationalism and Self-Determination*. Another, on March 4, was transcribed and circulated for members of the CLA national committee in 1933, but until now has never ap-
peared in public in any language. Swabeck had brought with him from the CLA leadership a document ("draft theses") analyzing U.S. imperialism. The discussion began after Trotsky had had a chance to read this document, which the CLA was preparing for both national and international use. Amended, the theses were published under the title, "Position and Perspectives of American Imperialism," as a tabloid supplement to The Militant in September 1933.

125. The Duma (which, like soviet, means council) was the Russian parliament with extremely limited powers, established by Nicholas II in 1905.


127. Alexander V. Kolchak (1874-1920) commanded one of the Eastern counterrevolutionary fronts during the Russian civil war.

128. Torgsin was an official Soviet trading organization handling the sale of goods to Russians on the basis of contributions sent from abroad.

129. "The Situation in the American League." Internal Bulletin, Communist League of America, Number 13, April 29, 1933. Signed "G. Gourov." When Arne Swabeck visited Trotsky in Prinkipo in February-March 1933, they also discussed the factional dispute that had gripped the leadership of the CLA, divided into a majority headed by James P. Cannon and a minority headed by Max Shachtman and Martin Abern. The discussion was continued in another letter by Trotsky on April 17 (see "More on the American Dispute" later in this volume).

130. Arne Swabeck (1890- ) was a founder and leader of the American Communist Party, the Communist League of America, and the Socialist Workers Party. He left the SWP in 1967 after becoming a Maoist.

131. "A Great Success." Biulleten Oppozitsii, Number 33, March 1933. Translated for this volume by A. L. Preston. The international preconference held in Paris February 4-8, 1933, was attended by Left Opposition representatives from eleven countries (not twelve, as the footnote mistakenly said). It adopted the document that Trotsky had written in December, "The International Left Opposition, Its Tasks and Methods," which included the eleven-point theses referred to here. The preconference was held a few days after Hitler's appointment as chancellor, but before it became clear that he was not going to receive any serious struggle from the German workers' movement.

132. The Sixth World Congress of the Comintern (July-September 1928) adopted the official program of the Comintern, written by Bukharin and Stalin. Trotsky's critique is in The Third International After Lenin.
133. The Second World Congress of the Comintern (July-August 1920), held when a number of centrist parties had expressed interest in affiliating to the Comintern, adopted a series of conditions designed to make it difficult for those who had not broken completely with reformism to become affiliates. The conditions of affiliation, originally nineteen and finally twenty-one, were written by Lenin (Collected Works, volume 31).

134. Otto Wels (1873-1939), an SPD leader, crushed the Spartacist uprising of 1919 as military commander of Berlin. As leader of the SPD delegation in the Reichstag until Hitler took over total power in 1933, he was opposed to an antifascist united front against the Nazis.

135. "Hitler's Victory." The Manchester Guardian, March 22, 1933, where it appeared under the title, "On the New Germany." Between his appointment as chancellor on January 30 and the Reichstag elections he called for March 5, Hitler had moved boldly and rapidly to establish Nazi supremacy. Constitutional rights were suspended, the KPD press was banned, thousands of KPD and SPD members were arrested, and their candidates were prevented from campaigning. The Nazis got 44 percent of the vote, giving them and their Nationalist coalition partners a clear majority and the "legal" pretext for demanding that the Reichstag grant Hitler total dictatorial power (granted later that month). Much more significant, in Trotsky's opinion, was the fact that the once-powerful German working-class movement proved incapable of promoting any struggle to preserve its own existence.

136. This article appeared in The New Republic, May 22, 1929, under the title, "Which Way, Russia?" (reprinted in Writings 29).

137. The Versailles Treaty, signed in June 1919, returned Alsace-Lorraine to France, deprived Germany of other territory in Europe plus all of her overseas colonies, limited her military strength, and provided for her payment of war reparations to the Allied powers. It was engineered to accomplish the dismantling of German economic and military strength in favor of the other imperialist powers, but it also had the aim of stemming the revolutionary tide in Germany. It was a major factor in Hitler's coming to power.

138. Paul von Hindenburg (1847-1934) was a Prussian field marshal who fought in the Franco-Prussian War and commanded German forces in World War I. Against Social Democratic opposition he was elected president of the Weimar Republic in 1925, succeeding Ebert, and, with Social Democratic support, he was reelected in 1932. He appointed Hitler chancellor in January 1933. The Hohenzollerns became the ruling family of Germany in 1871; the dynasty ended on November 9, 1918, when Kaiser Wilhelm II abdicated.

139. Otto von Bismarck (1815-98) was head of the Prussian government from 1862, and the first chancellor of the German empire, 1871-90. He unified Germany under Prussia and the Hohenzollerns, and was a vehement enemy of the labor movement. As chancellor he introduced the Anti-Socialist Law of 1878, which banned the Social Democracy. Kaiser Wilhelm II (1859-1941) became emperor in 1888 and abdicated in 1918 when the German revolution began.

140. "KPD or New Party? (I)." International Bulletin, Communist
Left Opposition, Number 2/3, April 1933, English edition published for the International Secretariat by the CLA. Signed "G. Gourov."

This proposal to work for a new party in Germany set off a discussion in the ILO internal and public press.

141. On August 4, 1914, the German Social Democracy voted for the war budget of the imperialist government in violation of its prewar pledges to oppose militarism in war and peace. On the same day the French and Belgian Socialist parties issued manifestoes declaring support of their governments in the war. The Fourth of August is the Marxist term designating the collapse of the Second International as a revolutionary force.

142. Henricus Sneevliet (1883-1942), a founder of the Marxist movement in Indonesia and of the Communist Party in Holland, also founded the Revolutionary Socialist Party in 1929 after his expulsion from the Comintern. In 1933 the RSP joined the ILO, and Sneevliet was one of the signers of the "Declaration of Four," which called for the formation of a new International. He left the Fourth Internationalist movement in 1938, and was executed by the Nazis during World War II.

143. "KPD or New Party? (II)." International Bulletin, Communist Left Opposition, Number 2/3, April 1933. Signed "L. D."

144. "A Letter to the Politburo." By permission of the Harvard College Library. Translated for this volume by George Saunders. This letter repeated the Left Opposition offer for a united front to reorganize the Soviet Communist Party that had been made previously in the long article "Alarm Signal!" of March 3. It was probably motivated in part by the fact that Trotsky had just called on the Opposition to abandon the "reform" perspective in Germany and to work for the construction of a new German party. It was a way of informing the Soviet leadership that the changed perspective for Germany did not represent a change in the Opposition's policy toward the Soviet party, the Soviet state, and the Comintern. The secret character of the letter was publicly eliminated on May 13, 1933, in Trotsky's statement to a journalist (see "An Explanation" of that date, later in this volume).

145. Miguel Primo de Rivera (1870-1930) ruled Spain under Alfonso XIII from 1923 to 1930, when he was ousted by mass pressure.

146. "The U. S. Bank Crisis." An Associated Press dispatch in the New York Times, March 18, 1933. Franklin D. Roosevelt's first inauguration as president, on March 4, 1933, was accompanied by a severe crisis of the banking system, marked by widespread closing of banks and a brief general "bank holiday." By emergency decrees and congressional action, the Roosevelt regime asserted executive power over all banking operations, which it did not return to the states until the end of the year, after the laws governing the banks had been reformed.

147. "How Otto Bauer Poses the Question." From a Dutch pamphlet, Oostenrijk een les voor alleen [Austria a Lesson for All], 1933. Translated for this volume by Iain Fraser. Hitler's victory in Ger-
many triggered an immediate crisis in neighboring Austria, where
the local Nazis intensified their efforts to bring down the government
headed by Chancellor Dollfuss, whose sympathies lay with fascist
Italy rather than fascist Germany. On March 7, 1933, the Dollfuss
cabinet, using the argument that there was no other way to preserve
constitutional government, suspended various constitutional rights.
This was the first of a series of dictatorial decrees used against both
the Austrian Nazis and the largest opposition party, the Austrian
Social Democrats.

148. Otto Bauer (1881-1938), leader of the Austrian Social
Democratic Party after World War I, helped to found the Two-and-
a-Half International (1921-23) and was the chief theoretician of
Austro-Marxism.

149. Hermann Mueller (1876-1931) was Social Democratic chan-
celloff of Germany, 1920 and 1928-30. He was succeeded in 1930
by a series of Bonapartist chancellors who paved the way for Hitler.

150. The Christian Social Party was the major bourgeois party of
the Austrian Republic between the first two world wars, providing
most of the country's chancellors. It had a liberal wing that domi-
nated a Catholic union movement, and it also was the political strong-
hold of the Catholic Church. The right wing of the party dominated
the coalition cabinet headed by Dollfuss from 1932 to 1934.

151. Engelbert Dollfuss (1892-1934) became chancellor of Austria
in May 1932. He was a right-wing Christian Socialist, like a majority
of the coalition cabinet he headed. In February 1934 his government
crushed the workers of Vienna when they resisted repression. He
was killed during an unsuccessful Nazi uprising in July 1934.

152. Karl Renner (1870-1950) was Social Democratic chancellor
of Austria, 1918-20, and president of its national assembly, 1931-33.


154. Heinrich Bruening (1885-1970), the leader of the Catholic
Center Party, was appointed chancellor of Germany in March 1930,
after the dismissal of Hermann Mueller. Bruening ruled by decree
from July 1930 to his dismissal in May 1932. Franz von Papen
(1879-1969) was appointed chancellor in June 1932 and helped
Hitler rise to power by dissolving the Social Democratic government
of Prussia. Replaced by Schleicher in December 1932, he became
Hitler's vice-chancellor in January 1933.

155. Heinrich Held (1868-1938) was a Center Party politician
serving as prime minister of Bavaria, who was driven out of office
by a Nazi uprising on March 9, 1933.

156. Austro-Marxism was the name given to the brand of reform-
ism practiced by the Austrian Social Democrats. Wiener Arbeiter
Zeitung (Vienna Workers News) was their paper.

157. The Entente was the World War I alliance of Britain, France,
Russia, Belgium, and later Italy. The Little Entente was the French-
dominated alliance of Rumania, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia.

158. Friedrich Stampfer (1874-1917) was one of the chief leaders
of the SPD and editor of its daily paper, Vorwaerts (Forward).

159. The Kapp Putsch of March 1920 was a revolt led by two
generals against the Social Democratic government in Berlin; Kapp
was the reactionary Prussian official they installed as chancellor
when the legal government fled the city. The unions called a general
strike which paralyzed the Kapp forces and resulted in the return of the Social Democrats.

160. **Otto Braun** (1872-1955) was Social Democratic prime minister of Prussia, 1920-21, 1921-25, 1925-32. His only resistance to the Papen coup that kicked him out of office was verbal. He went into exile in March 1933.

161. **Piedmont** was the principality of Italy from which the Italian bourgeoisie launched the *risorgimento*, the movement for Italian unification in 1848. The unification was completed in 1861, when Victor Emmanuel II was proclaimed king of Italy.


163. **Victor Serge** (1890-1947) was born in Belgium of Russian parents and became an anarchist in his youth, for which he was sentenced to five years in prison. Attracted to Bolshevism after the revolution, he moved to the Soviet Union and worked for the Comintern. Arrested as an Oppositionist and then freed in 1928, he was rearrested in 1933. Thanks to a campaign by intellectuals in France, he was released and allowed to leave the USSR in 1936. He developed differences with the Fourth Internationalist movement soon after and left it. He wrote several important historical works—including *The Year One of the Russian Revolution* and *From Lenin to Stalin*—as well as *Memoirs of a Revolutionary*, a biography of Trotsky, and several novels.

164. **David B. Ryazanov** (1870-193?), historian and philosopher, was a Menshevik-Internationalist during World War I and joined the Bolsheviks in 1917. He organized the Marx-Engels Institute and withdrew from political activity. But his scholarly and scrupulous attitude toward party history made him offensive to Stalin, who ordered him to be implicated with the defendants at the 1931 trial of a so-called "Menshevik Center," which was accused of plotting to restore capitalism in the USSR. He was dismissed as director of the Marx-Engels Institute and exiled to Saratov. Trotsky gives 1933 as the year of his death; others subsequently have set it as 1935 and 1938.

165. **Vladimir M. Smirnov** was a member of the first Supreme Council of National Economy and a leader of the ultraleft oppositional Group of Democratic Centralism, or Decemists (see note 121).


167. **M. N. Riutin** and **Slepkov** were among the many Soviet officials in the early 1930s who became alarmed by what was happening under Stalin's leadership and put forward proposals to reform the party and the economy through party and constitutional channels. Riutin's "crime" included discussion with members of the Bukharin tendency and with Zinoviev and Kamenev. Riutin was arrested at the end of 1932 and was expelled from the party.


169. The Communist Workers Party of Germany (**KAPD**) was
formed in 1920 after being expelled from the KPD in 1919. It was an ultraleft group tending toward anarcho-syndicalism and opposing work in parliament and reformist trade unions. The KAPD was subsequently recognized as a sympathizing party of the Comintern with consultative voice. Within a few years it lost its best elements and most of its members, and became an anti-Soviet and anti-Comintern sect.

170. "We Need an Honest Inner-Party Agreement." Biuletten Oppozitsii, Number 34, May 1933. Translated for this volume by Iain Fraser.

171. "The Economic Onslaught of the Counterrevolution and the Unions." Biuletten Oppozitsii, Number 34, May 1933. Unsigned. Translated for this volume by A. L. Preston. The organizers of the August 1932 congress against war in Amsterdam began to organize a congress against fascism after Hitler came to power. It was originally scheduled to be held in Copenhagen but the site had to be shifted to Paris. The present document was one of those prepared for the congress by the International Left Opposition, and written or edited by Trotsky.

172. Theodor Leipart (1867-1947) was a conservative German trade unionist and leader of the SPD-dominated German Federation of Labor (ADGB), to which most German unionists belonged. After World War II he favored the "merger" of the Social Democracy into the Stalinist-controlled party ruling East Germany.

173. Rosa Luxemburg (1871-1919) was a founder of the Polish Social Democratic Party and a leader of the left wing of the SPD, where she fought revisionism and the SPD's support of World War I. Jailed in 1915, she and Karl Liebknecht organized the Spartakusbund, which later became the KPD. Freed by the revolution of November 1918, she helped lead the Spartacist uprising, which was crushed in January 1919, when she and Liebknecht were assassinated on the orders of the Social Democratic rulers of Berlin. Some of her writings recently published in English are Rosa Luxemburg Speaks, Selected Political Writings of Rosa Luxemburg, and The Accumulation of Capital.

174. "A Declaration to the Congress Against Fascism," The Miltant, May 20, 1933. Unsigned. Like the previous document, this was introduced in the name of the ILO delegation to the antifascist congress, which was held at the Pleyel hall in Paris June 4-6, 1933. "Trotsky makes fun of the factories that participate and elect delegates to the congress," the Stalinist Rundschau informed its readers. And the Stalinists decided to make sure that the delegates would not learn anything different at the congress. Before it convened, its organizers ruled that the "counterrevolutionary" Left Opposition was excluded from attendance. When Left Oppositionists who had been elected delegates by labor and other mass organizations tried to get in, they were denied admission and thrown out or, if they got in and tried to say anything disapproved by the Stalinists, they were beaten up and thrown out. When the Stalinists were not certain about the identity of certain delegates, they gave them the benefit of the doubt and threw them out too.
175. Although the KPD was in effect outlawed in February 1933, the SPD retained an uncertain legal existence until June. In the interval its leaders tried to win Hitler's tolerance by endorsing his foreign policy, disaffiliating from the Second International, expressing a readiness to accept a reorganization of the unions on the "Italian model," urging the workers to march in the Nazi "National Day of Labor" parade on May 1, one day before Hitler took over the whole labor movement and sent its leaders off to the concentration camps, etc.

176. Leon Blum (1872-1950) was the chief leader of the French Socialist Party after a majority left to form the Communist Party in 1920, and premier in the first People's Front government in 1936.

177. Émile Vandervelde (1866-1938), the Social Democrat who held seats in various Belgian cabinets, was president of the Second International from 1929 to 1936.

178. The Canton uprising of December 1927 was instigated by Stalin, through his agents, Heinz Neumann and V. V. Lominadze, so that he would be able at the Fifteenth Congress that month to "refute" the charges of the Left Opposition that his policy in the Chinese revolution had produced terrible defeats. Since the Chinese Communist Party in Canton was isolated and the uprising unprepared, it was crushed in less than three days at a cost of several thousand lives.

179. The "third period," according to the schema proclaimed by the Stalinists in 1928, was the final period of capitalism, the period of its immediately pending demise and replacement by soviets. Following from this, the Comintern's tactics during the next six years were marked by ultraleftism, adventurism, sectarian "red" unions, and opposition to the united front. In 1934 the theory and practice of the "third period" were discarded and replaced by those of the People's Front (1935-39), but the latter period was not given a number. The "first period" was 1917-24 (capitalist crisis and revolutionary upsurge); the "second period" was 1925-28 (capitalist stabilization).

180. Benito Mussolini (1883-1945), the founder of Italian fascism, was a member of the antiwar wing of the Socialist Party in 1914 but became an agent of the Allied imperialists. He organized the fascist movement in 1919, becoming dictator in 1922, and set the pattern of repression on which the German Nazis modeled their regime. He remained in command of Italy until 1943.

181. Alfred Hugenberg (1865-1951) was a powerful German banker and right-wing politician. An opponent of the Weimar Republic, he became head of the Nationalist Party in 1928, and made an alliance with Hitler, hoping to use the Nazis for his own purposes. He became minister of economy in the Hitler coalition cabinet of January 1933, but was dismissed when Hitler consolidated his power later that year.

182. "What Is Historical Objectivity?" The Militant, July 15, 1933. Translated by Max Eastman. Trotsky also discussed Stalin's 1920 speech on Lenin in "Stalin Again Testifies Against Stalin" (Writings 32).

183. "Compromisers" was the term used to describe the Mensheviks and Social Revolutionaries who supported the capitalist Pro-
visceral Government that tried to rule Russia between the February and October Revolutions in 1917.

184. Whites, White Guards, and White Russians were names used for the Russian counterrevolutionary forces following the October Revolution.

185. The Bolsheviks were accused of being agents of German imperialism, paid with German gold to disrupt Russia so that it would be defeated in the war.

186. The Democratic Conference, like the Preparliament, was an effort by Kerensky and the "compromisers" to find a new base of popular support outside of the Soviets after the Soviets had begun to reject them and turn toward the Bolsheviks in the weeks before the overthrow of the Provisional Government. It proved to be fruitless.

187. "Foreword to Leninism vs. Stalinism." The Militant, July 15, 1933. Leninism vs. Stalinism (Lessons of the German Catastrophe 1933) was a documentary pamphlet presenting in their own words the arguments and predictions made by both the Stalinists and the Left Opposition on all the major questions relating to the Nazi rise to power.

188. Oskar Fischer of Leipzig, a secretary of Trotsky in Prinkipo, compiled Leninism vs. Stalinism. Under the name of Otto, he participated in the Trotsky-Swabeck discussions in 1933. Holding that the Soviet Union had become fascist, he broke with the Fourth International after World War II.

189. "The Collapse of the KPD and the Tasks of the Opposition." The Militant, May 6 and 13, 1933. This was a continuation of the internal discussion of the ILO.

190. Rudolf Breitscheid (1874-1944) was a Social Democratic member of the Reichstag, whose 1931 proposal for an SPD-KPD bloc was indignantly rejected by the KPD. He fled to France in 1933, was handed over to the Gestapo by the Vichy government, and died in Buchenwald concentration camp.

191. Giacomo Matteotti (1885-1924) was an Italian reformist socialist member of parliament who denounced fascist electoral trickery and terrorism, for which Mussolini's henchmen murdered him in June 1924.

192. The Narodniki (Populists) were the organized movement of Russian intellectuals who conducted activities among the peasantry from 1876 to 1879, when they split into two parties: one was extremely anarchistic and was smashed after the assassination of Czar Alexander II in 1881; the other party was led by Plekhanov, and split again, the Plekhanov group becoming Marxist while the other wing evolved into the Social Revolutionary Party.

193. Iskra [Spark] was the paper of the Russian Social Democratic Labor Party which was published abroad by the Russian Marxist emigres. Its first issue appeared on December 11, 1900. Lenin was a founder and editor of Iskra and its chief political inspirer and organizer until shortly after the split in the party in 1903, when it was taken over by the Menshevik faction.

194. "Blind Obedience, Revolutionary Discipline, and the Youth."
The Militant, July 8, 1933. Unsigned. This was another document prepared for the antifascist congress in Paris, particularly for a session of its youth delegates.

195. "Marxism As a Science." The Nation, July 5, 1933. Sidney Hook's article, "Marxism—Dogma or Method?" appeared in the March 15, 1933, issue of The Nation. Hook's comments on Trotsky's letter were also in the July 5 issue.

196. "Greetings to the Chilean Opposition." Boletin Hispano-americano (published by the Spanish Left Opposition), August 1, 1933. The newly constituted Chilean section consisted of people who had long been active as an oppositional faction of the Chilean Communist Party.

197. "More on the American Dispute." Internal Bulletin, Communist League of America, Number 13, April 29, 1933. This continued the discussion of the CLA internal problems which Trotsky began with his "Gourov" letter of March 7. A few years later, B.J. Field printed extracts of letters to him on the subject by Trotsky: On April 13, 1933: "It is necessary at all costs to prevent the sharpening of the internal struggle; the elements who do not belong to either of the two factions must impose a little more patience on the more intransigent comrades. A split at this time would mean an irreparable catastrophe. . . ." On May 5, 1933: "The situation in the League disturbs us all here very much. Inasmuch as there are no clear differences of principle, it is necessary that a buffer be formed to attenuate the shocks and prevent a possible split." (New International Bulletin, January 1936) The dispute was resolved later in the spring of 1933 when a plenum of the ILO called on the majority (Cannon) and the minority (Shachtman-Abern) groups to recognize that their differences did not involve questions of principle and that therefore they should attempt to reduce factional frictions and collaborate in the many areas of fruitful work that were opening up for the CLA. This proposal was accepted by the entire national committee of the CLA (see Internal Bulletin, Number 14, June 29, 1933, for both the ILO and CLA resolutions) and did in fact lead to several years of effective collaboration in party-building. That came to an end in 1939 when Shachtman and Abern, in a bloc with James Burnham, attempted to revive basic tenets of Marxism (see Trotsky's book on the dispute of 1939-40, In Defense of Marxism). Cannon's book, The History of American Trotskyism, based on a series of 1942 lectures, recalls that the factional fights of the early Opposition "weren't fully comprehensible to the membership because the great political issues which were implicit in them had not yet broken through. However, they were not mere personal quarrels, as they so often appeared to be, but, as is now quite clear to all, the premature rehearsal of the great, definitive struggle of 1939-40 between the proletarian and petty-bourgeois tendencies within our movement."

198. Max Shachtman (1903-72), a founder of the American Left Opposition and the Socialist Workers Party, was editor of several books and pamphlets by Trotsky. Trotsky's letters criticizing Shachtman's activity as a delegate to the Left Opposition in Europe appear in Writings 32. After splitting from the Socialist Workers Part-
ty in 1940, he organized the Workers Party, later retitled the Independent Socialist League, whose remnants he led into the Socialist Party and its right wing in 1958.

199. Martin Abern (1898-1949) was a founding member of the American Communist Party and, later, of the Left Opposition and the Socialist Workers Party. Along with Shachtman, he split from the SWP in 1940 and organized the Workers Party, where he remained until his death.

200. James P. Cannon (1890- ) was an IWW organizer, a leader of the left wing in the Debsian Socialist Party and a founder of the American Communist Party. He became an adherent of the Left Opposition in 1928 when he was a delegate to the Comintern's Sixth Congress in Moscow, where he read Trotsky's criticism of the draft program of the Comintern (The Third International After Lenin). Expelled from the CP that year for expressing solidarity with Trotsky, he led in the formation of the Communist League of America, and later the Socialist Workers Party and the Fourth International.

201. Gerry Allard, editor of The Progressive Miner, published by the independent Progressive Miners of Illinois, parted company with the CLA later in 1933. In 1934 he joined the American Workers Party (led by A. J. Muste), which soon after merged with the CLA to form the Workers Party of the United States. Together with most WPUS members, he joined the Socialist Party in 1936, but he remained with the SP when its left wing was expelled in 1937 and went on to form the Socialist Workers Party.

202. "In Reply to the German Draft Resolution." The Militant, July 1, 1933. Signed "G. G." The draft resolution introduced into the ILO discussion by the leadership of the German section was printed in the May 27 Militant.

203. Willi Muenzenberg (1889-1940), an organizer of the Communist Youth International and a loyal Stalinist, founded a whole string of propaganda enterprises with Comintern money, including newspapers, magazines, a film company, a publishing house, etc. He continued his operations for the Comintern in Paris after 1933, until he broke with its People's Front policy in 1937. He was found dead in mysterious circumstances after the Germans invaded France. Henri Barbusse (1873-1935) was a pacifist novelist who joined the French Communist Party in 1923 and wrote biographies of Stalin and Christ. He was a chief sponsor of the Amsterdam antiwar congress and the Paris antifascist congress. The representative of the Hindu bourgeoisie was V. J. Patel (1877-1950), who was president of the Indian Congress Party and became a member of the government after India's proclamation of independence.

204. Zimmerwald, Switzerland, was the site in September 1915 of a conference to reassemble the antiwar and internationalist currents that had survived the debacle of the Second International. Although most of the participants were centrists, it proved to be a step in the direction of a new International. The Zimmerwald manifesto against the war, written by Trotsky, appears in Leon Trotsky Speaks.

205. "The Left Opposition and the SAP." The Red Flag (monthly
paper of the British Left Opposition), August 1933.

206. Jakob Walcher (1887- ) and Paul Froelich (1884-1953) were both founders of the KPD, leaders of the KPO, and then leaders of the SAP. After World War II, Walcher rejoined the Stalinists, holding posts in East Germany, while Froelich, a biographer of Rosa Luxemburg, died in West Germany. August Thalheimer (1884-1948), a founder of the KPD, was expelled with Brandler in 1929 and with him organized the Communist Right Opposition (KPO).

207. Max Seydewitz (1892- ) was an SPD left-wing member of the Reichstag expelled in 1931, and a founder of the SAP, which he led for a short time. He emigrated to Sweden in 1933, and wrote Stalin oder Trotzki? in 1938. After World War II he held several important posts in the Stalinist apparatus and the government of East Germany.

208. The SAP did succeed in organizing an international conference of independent organizations in Paris in August 1933, and the Left Opposition did participate in it, with Trotsky's active collaboration. For the outcome, see Writings 33-34.


210. Brest-Litovsk was a town on the Russo-Polish border where a treaty ending hostilities between Russia and Germany was signed in March 1918. The terms were exceedingly unfavorable to the new Soviet government, and there were sharp differences among its leaders about whether to accept them before Lenin's proposal to accept was adopted. The November 1918 revolution in Germany and the German defeat in the war enabled the Soviet government to recover most of the territory lost through the Brest-Litovsk Treaty.

211. "What Must the Austrian Social Democratic Opposition Do?" The Militant, June 3, 1933. Between March 7 and May 1933, the Dollfuss regime continued to abrogate democratic and labor rights while the Social Democratic leaders opposed resolute counteraction.

212. This formulation ("The Social Democratic leadership . . . has completely capitulated before Dollfuss, that is, before fascism") could be interpreted to mean that Trotsky considered the Dollfuss regime to be fascist. But that was not his opinion at the time of this letter, or later. He insisted that it was a Bonapartist regime, which was preparing the way for fascism, that is, a military-police dictatorship whose repression of the workers facilitated a fascist victory; but that it was imperative to distinguish between military-police dictatorship and fascism.

213. Max Adler (1873-1937) was a leading theoretician and philosopher of Austro-Marxism.

214. Robert Danneberg was the first secretary of the Austrian Social Democratic Party; arrested by the Nazis in 1938, he died in a concentration camp. Karl Seitz (1869-1950) was leader of that party until 1934, as well as mayor of the city and governor of the province of Vienna.

215. "Preface to the Bulgarian Edition of Socialism in One Country." From the pamphlet, Sotsializm v Otd'elna Strana, 1933. Trans-
lated for this volume by Iain Fraser.

216. "Lessons of May Day in Austria." The Militant, June 3, 1933. The Dollfuss government had banned public demonstrations or celebrations on May Day, the traditional labor holiday.

217. "On the Foreign Policy of the Stalinist Bureaucracy." The Militant, June 10, 1933. Unsigned when first published in Biulleten Oppozitsii, Number 35, July 1933. When Hitler came to power, Germany and the Soviet Union were cosigners of nonaggression agreements extending back to the 1920s, and the two governments were confronted with the question of extending or scrapping them. Each, for its own reasons, decided to extend them. When ultralefts denounced the Soviet leadership for this act, Trotsky was careful to demarcate the Left Opposition from them. In this article he reiterated the reasons why Stalinism must be opposed in its foreign as well as its domestic policies, but he insisted that under the unfavorable conditions then prevailing any Soviet government, including one led by the Left Opposition, had the right and the duty to maneuver diplomatically, even to the point of maintaining connections with Hitlerite Germany.

218. The Chinese Eastern Railroad was the portion of the original route of the Trans-Siberian Railroad which went through Manchuria to Vladivostok. In 1929 Trotsky caustically criticized those in the Left Opposition who argued that since the Chinese Eastern Railroad was a czarist, imperialist enterprise, the workers' state should give it to the Chinese capitalist government (Writings 29). In 1932 the Japanese imperialists, through the puppet government they named Manchukuo, consolidated their control over the whole of Manchuria except the CER. Stalin hung onto it until 1935, when he sold it to Manchukuo in an effort to ward off a Japanese attack on the USSR. The railroad came under Soviet control again in World War II. Although the Communist Party took over the Chinese mainland in 1949, Stalin did not cede the railroad to Mao Tse-tung's government until 1952.

219. On May 12, 1933, Hitler's government ratified the extension of the nonaggression treaty between Germany and the USSR which had been negotiated in April 1926 and was first extended in the spring of 1931.

220. Otto Kuusinen (1891-1964) was a Finnish Social Democrat who fled to the Soviet Union after the collapse of the Finnish revolution in April 1918. He became a Stalinist spokesman and a secretary of the Comintern from 1922 to 1931.

221. This refers to Trotsky's theses, "Germany, the Key to the International Situation," dated November 21, 1931, sections 16-19, where he wrote: "It should be axiomatic for every revolutionary worker that the attempt of the fascists to seize power in Germany must lead to the mobilization of the Red Army. For the proletarian state, it will be a matter of revolutionary self-defense in the most direct and immediate sense." The theses are reprinted in The Struggle Against Fascism in Germany, which also contains two short articles written after Hitler's victory ("Germany and the USSR," March 17, 1933, and "Hitler and the Red Army," March 21, 1933), in which he explained why it would be adventurism to call for the mobilization of the Red
Army in the conditions that actually existed at that time. Also see "I See War with Germany," published in April 1932, in which Trotsky said he would favor a Soviet military mobilization as soon as the Nazis took power (Writings 32).

222. "An Explanation." Biulleten Oppozitsii, Number 35, July 1933. Translated for this volume by A.L. Preston. It was preceded by a note stating that Trotsky had given it to a foreign journalist and that it had been retranslated from the French.


224. The Minority Movement was a left-wing caucus in the British Trades Union Congress in the 1920s. Although initiated by the Communist Party, it did not offer a real alternative to the "left" union bureaucrats being courted by Moscow through the Anglo-Russian Trade Union Unity Committee.

225. The Independent Labour Party (ILP), founded in 1893, played an influential role in the creation of the Labour Party, to which it was affiliated and in which it usually occupied a position on the left. In the mid-1920s it provided most of the central leaders of the Labour Party. Expelled from the party in 1931, it was for some years attracted toward Stalinism. It became part of the centrist International Labor Community (IAG) in the mid-1930s, and later returned to the Labour Party.


229. "Hitler and Disarmament." The Manchester Guardian, June 21 and 22, 1933; also published as a pamphlet under the title, What Hitler Wants, by John Day Co., 1933. After the Nazi government extended the 1926 nonaggression treaty with the Soviet Union on May 12, 1933, Vice-Chancellor Papen made a bellicose speech in Dortmund on May 13 that alarmed the democratic imperialist governments. On May 16, President Roosevelt sent a message to fifty-four nations advocating disarmament. The next day, Hitler delivered a speech in the Reichstag quite different from Papen's; he renounced "Germanization" as his aim in foreign policy.

230. John Simon (1873-1954), who organized the National Liberal Party in 1931 and led it until 1940, held many British cabinet posts, including foreign secretary, 1931-35, home secretary, 1935-37, chancellor of the exchequer, 1937-40, and lord chancellor, 1940-45. Joseph Austen Chamberlain (1863-1937), a Tory politician with a strong personal dislike of Trotsky, also held many British cabinet posts, including foreign secretary, 1924-29; it was in this post that he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1926.

231. Lord Hailsham (Douglas McGarel Hogg) (1872-1950), war secretary, responding to Papen's May 13 speech, told the House of Lords that it was his private belief that every attempt on the part
of Germany to rearm itself and to violate the military conditions of the Versailles Treaty would mean a step back from the agreed upon and stipulated sanctions.

232. **Hermann Goering** (1893-1946) was the top Nazi in charge of arranging the Reichstag fire frame-up of February 27, 1933, which was used to create a witch-hunt atmosphere and suspend constitutional rights a week before the March 5 Reichstag election.

233. **Ulrich von Brockdorff-Rantzau** (1869-1928), a German diplomat, was the first German ambassador to the USSR, 1922-28. He played an important part in negotiating the 1926 nonaggression treaty with the USSR.

234. "Paris is well worth a mass" is attributed to Henry IV (1553-1610), king of France, who converted to Catholicism in order to enter Paris which his army had previously failed to subdue. He became a Catholic in 1593, was crowned king and took over Paris in 1594.

235. **Gustav Stresemann** (1878-1929), founder of the German People's Party after World War I, became chancellor and foreign minister in 1923. The Stresemann policy was responsible for the 1925 Locarno Pact, Germany's entry into the League of Nations in 1926, and the German-Soviet nonaggression treaty of 1926.

236. The **Locarno Pact** was a series of five treaties and arbitration conventions signed in December 1925 by Germany, Belgium, France, Italy, Great Britain, Czechoslovakia, and Poland, "guaranteeing" the continuation of peace and existing territorial boundaries.

237. The "Gentlemen's Club" ("Deutsche Klub" which published *Der Ring*), organized in 1924 by a collection of junkers, generals, government bureaucrats, and big businessmen, was a very important prop of the government and supported Hitler in 1932-33; it lost its significance after 1933 and dissolved in 1944.

238. **Konstantin von Neurath** (1873-1956), a member of the "Gentlemen's Club," served as foreign minister under Papen, Schleicher, and Hitler, 1932-38. **Rudolf Nadolny** (1873-1953), German diplomat and ambassador to Moscow, 1933-34, was the head of the German delegation to the disarmament conference in Geneva.

239. A four-power peace treaty was signed by Britain, France, Italy, and Germany in Rome on June 7, 1933.


241. **August Bebel** (1840-1913) was a cofounder with Wilhelm Liebknecht of the German Social Democracy. The party became powerful under his leadership, which formally rejected revisionism but bore responsibility for the growth of the opportunist tendencies that took over the SPD shortly after his death.

242. The **Treaty of Tilsit** was signed by Czar Alexander I and Napoleon, with Napoleon dictating the terms, on July 7, 1807, following the defeat of the Austrian and Russian forces by the French.

243. **Giovanni Giolitti** (1842-1928) was the prime minister of Italy before Mussolini came to power.

244. The "example of 1923" refers to the prerevolutionary crisis that shook Germany, when the floundering of the KPD leadership enabled the government to survive.

245. "An Interview by Georges Simenon." **Die Nieuwe Weg** (The
New Road, published by the Dutch Revolutionary Socialist Party), Vol. 8, 1933. Translated for this volume by Russell Block. Simenon, the Belgian novelist, then 30 years old and special correspondent of Paris-Soir and Voila, visited Prinkipo in the hope of getting an interview with Trotsky for a book he wanted to write about five or six prominent people and the new trends in the world. Trotsky agreed to answer his questions, suggesting that Simenon submit them in writing. Simenon did this, but with the explanation that it was difficult for him to pose precise questions and that his main interest lay in getting Trotsky's opinions about "the new human groups that you see arising from the present period of unrest." When they met at Trotsky's home on June 6, 1933, Trotsky supplied his written answers, and then they had a general discussion. The last part of the interview, which includes part of the spoken exchange, is translated from Paris-Soir, June 16, 1933, where the interview was first printed.

246. Carlo Sforza (1872-1952) was a liberal Italian diplomat who went into exile in 1926 and served as foreign minister after World War II.


248. Zinoviev and Kamenev had opposed the Bolshevik decision to launch the insurrection in October 1917 and had expressed their opposition to it publicly before the insurrection took place.

249. Nadezhda K. Krupskaya (1869-1939) was a leader of the Bolshevik Party and the companion of Lenin.

250. "Diplomatic and Parliamentary Cretinism." The Militant, July 8, 1933. This was written shortly after the banning of the Austrian Communist Party (May 26, 1933) and the holding of the congress against fascism at the Pleyel hall in Paris (June 4-6).

251. Gaston Bergery (1892-1958), a French Radical politician and "friend of the Soviet Union" in the 1930s, became a founder of the People's Front in 1935. Later he turned right and served as an ambassador for Petain.

252. Die Rundschau ueber Politik, Wirtschaft und Arbeiterbewegung (The Review of Politics, Economics and the Labor Movement) was the Stalinist replacement for the German edition of Inprecorr after the latter had been banned by the Nazis.

253. "Interview by the New York World Telegram." The Militant, June 17, 1933. Published in the World Telegram, June 15, 1933. This interview was given on the occasion of a world economic conference which started in London on June 12, 1933. The Left Opposition had been calling for a U.S.-Soviet trade accord for a number of years. A New York Times report about the London conference printed June 15 stated that the chief Soviet delegate, Litvinov, had "urged recognition of the peaceful coexistence of the two systems—capitalism and socialism."

254. "The Left Socialist Organizations and Our Tasks." The Militant, August 5, 1933. Signed "G. Gourov." The new trends in the left socialist organizations that Trotsky pointed to in this article were to become
an important tactical preoccupation of the Left Opposition later in 1933 (see *Writings 33-34*).


256. Ferdinand Freiligrath (1810-1876) was a German poet whose works included lyric and political poems, patriotic war songs, and translations from Victor Hugo, Shakespeare, etc.

257. Alexander A. Bogdanov (1873-1928) became a Bolshevik after the Second Congress in 1903. In 1908 he led a "boycottist" tendency which contended that the party must work strictly through illegal organizations during that period of reaction. He was expelled from the Bolshevik Party in 1909. He created his own philosophical system, empirio-monism, a variant of the subjective idealism of Machist philosophy that Lenin criticized sharply in his *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*. After the October Revolution, he became an organizer and leader of Proletkult, which was a school of artists attempting to create a proletarian culture (discussed in Trotsky's *Literature and Revolution*). After 1921, he devoted himself to scientific and medical work. Maxim Gorky (1868-1936), the Russian author, was a Bolshevik sympathizer before and after 1905. He was hostile to the October Revolution in 1917, but later gave support to the new government until he left the country in 1921, ostensibly for reasons of health. When he returned in 1932, he gave general support to Stalin's policies.

258. Georges Monnet (1898- ) was minister of agriculture in Leon Blum's first cabinet, 1936-37, and in Blum's second cabinet, March-April 1938. Paul Louis (1872-1948), the French journalist and author of books on labor history, was a member of the small centrist group, the Party of Proletarian Unity (PUP).


261. *Le Temps* (The Times) was the unofficial voice of the French government in the 1930s.

262. "Zinoviev on the Party Regime." *The Militant*, July 29, 1933. Unsigned. This was written to introduce a letter Zinoviev had written in September 1927 to protest the way in which the Stalinist bureaucracy was repressing opposition inside the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in the weeks preceding the holding of its Fifteenth Congress. Extensive excerpts from Zinoviev's 1927 letter were printed in the same issue of *The Militant* and reprinted in *International Socialist Review*, April 1972.

263. "Japan Heads for Disaster." *Biuiletten Oppozitsii*, Number 38-
39, February 1934. Translated for this volume by George Saunders. A version that Trotsky considered unsatisfactory appeared in *Liberty*, November 18, 1933 with the title "Will Japan Commit Suicide?" An editorial note in the *Buiuleten* stated that the article "was written over a year and a half ago for the world bourgeois press and has appeared since then in the press of a dozen countries," but the date given at the end of the article was July 12, 1933.

264. The Treaty of Shimonoseki was signed in 1895, ending the Sino-Japanese War of 1894-95.

265. Baron Gi-ichi Tanaka (1863-1929) was prime minister of Japan in 1927 when he submitted his "Memorial" to the emperor outlining in detail a program of Japanese imperialist expansion, starting with Japanese control of Manchuria and leading eventually to domination of all China, Indonesia, the South Sea Islands, the Maritime Provinces of the USSR, India, and the whole Pacific basin. In 1940, shortly before he died, Trotsky wrote an article, "The Tanaka Memorial," telling how Soviet intelligence had secured a copy of the Memorial in the mid-1920s (see Writings 39-40).

266. Ivan IV (the Terrible) lived from 1533 to 1584; Peter I (the Great), 1682 to 1725; Alexander II, 1855 to 1881.


269. Giustizia e Liberta was a movement founded in Paris in 1929 by Italian antifascists, whose main leader and inspirer was Carlo Rosselli, author of *Socialisme Liberal*. Its political ideas were presented in *Quaderni di Giustizia e Liberetta*, which was printed in Paris and smuggled into Italy. It attempted to synthesize liberalism and socialism by advocating a socialism on entirely "new" bases, which would reject Marxism, the necessity of class struggle, and revolution. In April 1943 it joined with other groups to form the Partito d'Azione, which was active in the partisan warfare during the end of World War II.


271. Pavel P. Postyshev (1888-1938) was a secretary of the Ukrainian Communist Party. He was made a candidate member of the Politburo in 1934. In 1938 he was replaced in that post by Khrushchev and then became one of the victims of the executions at the time of the Moscow trial.

272. "It Is Necessary to Build Communist Parties and an International Anew." *Internal Bulletin*, Communist League of America, Number 13, 1933. Signed "G. Gourov." The Left Opposition had voted at the end of May 1933 to support the perspective of a new Communist party in Germany. Now Trotsky proposed that it go further and undertake a fight for a new International.
273. "Farewell to Prinkipo." *The Modern Monthly*, March 1934. Translated by Max Eastman. Trotsky's friends in France had been working hard to try to get asylum for him in that country. On June 29, 1933, Camille Chautemps, minister of the interior in the Daladier cabinet, wrote a letter to Henri Guernut, a member of parliament, informing him that the 1916 "order of expulsion [ousting Trotsky for antiwar activities] which concerned this foreigner [Trotsky] has now been withdrawn, and the interested party [Trotsky] will obtain without difficulty, whenever he shall demand it, a visa for France." On July 7 Trotsky received a telegram from his French comrade, Henri Moli­nier, informing him that the efforts to gain asylum for him in France had been successful. Trotsky's goodbye to the place where he had lived for four and a half years was written in his diary on July 15, which turned out to be four days before he left Turkey.


275. *Izvestia* (News) was the official daily paper of the Soviet government.


277. General Anton W. Turkul, who had commanded White Guard troops in the civil war and then emigrated, was preparing an assas­sination attempt against Trotsky in Prinkipo, the German KPD pa­per, *Die Rote Fahne* (The Red Flag), reported in October 1931. If Turkul succeeded, he intended to put the blame on the Soviet gov­ernment, according to the same report. Apparently it was only the desire not to be blamed which prompted the Stalinist report (see *Writings 30-31*). The White Guard emigres in France raised as vo­ciferous a clamor against Trotsky's asylum in that country as did the French Stalinists.
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In addition to the material in the present volume, the following writings of Trotsky during the period covered here have been published:


**The Struggle Against Fascism in Germany.** 1971. Includes "Before the Decision" (February 5, 1933); "The United Front for Defense: A Letter to a Social Democratic Worker" (February 23, 1933); "The Tragedy of the German Proletariat: The German Workers Will Rise Again—Stalinism, Never!" (March 14, 1933); "Germany and the USSR" (March 17, 1933); "Hitler and the Red Army" (March 21, 1933); "The German Catastrophe: The Responsibility of the Leadership" (May 28, 1933); "What Is National Socialism?" (June 10, 1933); "How Long Can Hitler Stay?" (June 22, 1933).


**Leon Trotsky on Literature and Art.** 1970. Includes "Celine and Poincare: Novelist and Politician" (May 10, 1933, with additions in 1934) and "Silone's Fontamara" (July 19, 1933).

**The Spanish Revolution (1931-39).** 1973. Contains a preface to extracts from Trotsky's correspondence with Andres Nin (February 21, 1933); a letter to Henri Lacroix (March 25, 1933); and a letter to members of the Spanish Left Opposition (April 24, 1933).