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Trotskyism and an evaluation of the L.O. - I.L.O. - I.C.L.

I - Trotskyism

1- The political life of Leon Trotsky has three distinct phases; first, from the beginning of his activity in the labor movement up to the time he joined the Bolshevik Party of Russia; Second, from the end of the first period up to the time of his so-called "French turn"; third, from the "French turn" to the present day.

Of these three phases the first and the third constitute the two periods of Trotskyism, a system of theoretical, strategical and tactical concepts characteristic of Trotsky and his followers, belonging to the category of centrism.

2. Sentimentally Trotsky was always a revolutionists. He never identified himself with the Bernsteinian revision of Marxism, the theory of peaceful evolution from capitalism into socialism within the frameworm of bourgeois legalism. But while he rejected the theoretical basis of the reformist parties in the 2nd Intl, he failed to draw from their theoretical basis the conclusion that these parties can never be the instruments of the proletarian revolution and must inevitably land in social patriotism. As a reverse side of this failure, he did not recognize as a fundamental Marxian principle the need for a revolutionary Marxist Party, separate and independent from all other parties, centrist or reformist. This twofold failure was the source from which the Trotskyism of the first period flowed, endeavors to reconcile the reformist and Marxist currents in one party.

3. The powerful and merciless attacks Lenin made on Trotskyism were undoubtedly of great help but it was rather empirically that Trotsky arrived at the conclusion that his position is untenable.

He recognized the treason of the social reformist parties after their betrayal of the working class. He recognized the need for a new international after the collapse of the Second. He recognized the irreconcilableness of reformism and Marxism after seeing the revolutionary role of the Bolshevik Party and the counter-revolutionary role of the Menshevik Party. Being sentimentally always a revolutionist, the head-on collision of Menshevism and Bolshevism, that is, social reformism and Marxism, in the Russian Revolution left for Trosky no alternative but to abandon his centrist position, his line of conciliation and to join the Bolshevik Party. The first period of Trotskyism thus came to an end.

The sincerity and completeness of his acceptance of Marxism was fully borne out by his close collaboration with Lenin, by the role he played in the revolution, by the splendid contributions he made to the task of working out the theoretical foundations of the Third Intl. at the first four congresses.

the decay of capitalism. The capitalist world, after a period of stabilization following a recess of the revolutionary tide between 1917 and 1924, was plunged into a new crisis by the ever growing and sharpening inherent contradictions of the capitalist system of production, amounting to a permanent paralysis of the productive forces on a world wide scale. For capitalism the twin issues out of the crisis are:

internally, class collaboration in various forms (New Deal measures, Peoples Fronts) subordinating the working class to the bourgeoisie, lowering the standard of living of the toilers, or fascism, an extermination of all independent working class organizations, the unmasked dictatorship of the capitalist class, also lowering the standard of living for the workers, both class collaboration and fascism striving for the achievement of "national unity" in preparation for the war,

externally, a redivision of the world, a new world war.

In this situation the Second Intl. continues to play its historical role as a brake on the proletariat, as a bulwark against the proletarian revolution. The Communist Intl. completely Stalinized after the expulsion of the Left Opposition, became subordinated to the foreign policy of Stalin: maintenance of the status quo of imperialism, by holding in check the international proletariat, a policy calculated to assure the undisturbed application of the theory of socialism in one country.

After the German defeat Trotsky was fully convinced that the Communist Intl. is hopelessly lost as an instrument for the proletarian revolution. He declared his complete break with it and posed the task of transforming the ICL from the Marxist faction of the C.I. into an independent revolutionary world party. He made some attempts in this direction, but the German defeat weighed heavily on him. It shook his confidence in himself, in the ICL and in the masses. As in 1917 the revolutionary upsurge swept him away from his centrist position, so the current of retreat following the German and Austrian defeats swept him away from the Marxist position back to centrism. With the proposition of the French turn, - a liquidation of ICL into the parties of the Second Intl. he broke with Marxism and returned to centrism. Thus began the second period of Trotskyism.

5. For a time Trotsky vacillated on the concretization of his old formula, the merger of two parties in order to correct both. For a while he was inclined to propose the organic unity of the Second and Third Internationals as a means for reforming both. Finally, without a clear-cut rejection of the idea of organic unity, he decided to concentrate upon the Second Intl., the carrying out of the "French turn" on an international scale.

After collaborating with Lenin in working out the application of his formula in the epoch of imperialist wars and proletarian revolutions, after being identified for years with a revolutionary Marxist party as one of its outstanding leaders, Trotsky could not have made his turn without creating a theoretical formula to serve as a basis for reconciliation.

his turn with Marxism. He gave his theoretical formula in the false evaluation of contemporary social-democracy.

Since social democracy is waging an armed struggle against fascism, it is not what it used to be, its historical role has changed, therefore all that is needed is to get hold of it, guide it and use it as an instrument for the proletarian revolution. The fallacy of this theory lies in the all important fact that social democracy fights against fascism to save bourgeoisie democracy, that is, it is playing under different circumstances, its old historical role. Trotsky had to give this false evaluation of social democracy in order to justify his claim that entry into the S.P. is a tactical question and as such, could not mean the isolation of Marxian principles. But - while the entry itself violated a fundamental Marxian principle, the independence of the revolutionary Marxist Party, it is the theoretical motivation from which further deviations and a complete break with revolutionary Marxism must inevitably flow.

6. The forms and circumstances in which Trotskyism reappears, are different from those of the first period. Its essence is the same. Now, as then, Trotskyism rejects as a fundamental principle of Marxism the idea that for the success of the proletarian revolution the existence of a revolutionary party and its independence from all centrist and reformist parties is indispensable. When this Marxian principle is rejected, a break with Marxian principles on other questions is inevitable. Some of the mile-stones on the road away from Marxism:

- Defeatism. ("Our generation is too weak, for the overthrow.")
- Peaceful change of a social system. ("Counter-revolutionary can be peacefully achieved".)
- A shift to a centrist position on revolutionary defeatism.
- Abandonment of the proposition for a revolutionary party in the Soviet Union.
- Propositions for a review of the Moscow trials before capitalist courts. (an approach to the Kautskyan theory of the impartiality of the capitalist state.
- Trotskyism is a centrist movement, an obstacle on the road to power.

VI On the ILO - ICL

1. The Left Opposition in its struggle against the block of the center and the right wing represented Marxism. It stood for the defense of the conquest of the October revolution. It stood for the extension of the October revolution. It demanded the industrialization of the Soviet Union for the purpose of strengthening the dictatorship of the proletariat at a time when the centrists and right wingers denied any possibility of industrialization. For the safety of the Soviet Union it relied on the international proletarian revolution while the centrist and the right wingers sought safety against invasion and counter-revolution in the good will of social reformist leaders in the European countries, in agreements and treaties with imperialist governments. It rejected the false theory of socialism in one country. It fought against the subor-

ination of communist parties to bourgeois leadership. It fought against the bureaucratization of the party and the soviets. It fought for party democracy and against the corruption of the social composition of the party. It had a Marxist program and a Marxist position on all disputed questions. It represented the Marxian trunk of the Comintern.

2. A temporary stabilization of capitalism, following the defeat of the revolutionary proletariat of Europe (Italy, Hungary, Bulgaria, Finland, Germany, from 1919 to 1924) gave a new lease of life for opportunism and exerted a powerful pressure on the block of the centrist and right wingers in the Russian Comm. Party, driving it steadily to the right, the same time creating a favorable strategical position for it in the struggle against the Left Opposition. It had another immense advantage in the unique fact that it held the control in a party through which dictatorship of the proletariat was materialized in a workers' state. These were not the only factors in the defeat suffered by the Left Opposition. Other factors were several fatal tactical errors:

a. For a long time the struggle was carried on by the Left Opposition in the S.U. as if the issues were nothing but strictly internal party affairs of the C.P. of Russia. For years, before it was crushed, it was powerful enough to break through isolation, to inform the as yet un-Stalinized section of the Comintern on the issues. It made no serious efforts in this direction; it failed, because it did not care, to extend the struggle on an international scale. Valuable time was lost during which the Stalinist leadership of the Comintern remade the leadership of the various Sections of the Comintern, replacing leaders of revolutionary background and character with servile unprincipled bureaucrats

b. A split perspective should have been posed long before the actual and the formal break was made with the Comintern. The actual split, in the form of expulsions, begun with the expulsion of the Left Opposition in Russia and was completed through a series of expulsions in other countries long before the German defeat, after which the independence of the ILO was formally declared. The posing of the split perspective was in order when the Comintern broke with Marxism on such fundamental questions as the permanent revolution, the independence of the safety of the Soviet Union and the establishment of socialism in the Soviet Union on the international proletarian revolution, the independence of the Communist party and the dictatorship of the proletariat. Instead of a declaration that Stalinism and Marxism are irreconcilable, that they can not live in the same party, it kept on pledging its loyalty to the party ("nothing can tear us away from the Party", "we need no scil other than that of the Comintern", "you can expel us but cannot prevent us working for our party", etc.) Thus, while the Left Opposition in reality was breaking away, was moving away from the Comintern, it had a false perspective in respect to its organizational status, contradicting the actuality. This contradiction became a source of confusion, an obstacle to ideological and organizational crystallization. This perspective of adherence to "the Party" at any price, though contradicted by the actu-

process of breaking away from the Comintern and assumption of independence, could not but be conducive to large scale capitulations. This perspective of reforming the Comintern even after the Comintern broke completely with Marxism and the Left Opposition actually broke with the Comintern, slowed down the process of setting up independent revolutionary parties amidst world events demanding the utmost speed. It gave support to conservative leaders of the Cannon type in their resistance to independent action and it drove into false channels organization of great promise such as that of Urbans and Landau. It was instruments in preventing the crystallization of the Left Opposition in the Soviet Union into a new communist party; illegal and underground in the circumstances. It prevented putting the formation of the 4th Communist Intl. on the order of the day. It prepared the way for the reappearance and victory of Trotskyism in 1934.

What is the explanation for this grave error and the long persistence in it?

Two main factors must be taken into consideration, an objective and subjective.

The objective factor: If the struggle would have taken place in a revolutionary party existing in the soil of capitalism, a marked deviation from Marxism would have posed almost automatically a split perspective. Not so in this case, where the battle-ground was a Workers' State and the party was closely interwoven with the dictatorship of the proletariat. In such an unprecedented case it was not an easy matter to foresee that the party cannot be saved from degeneration and a split is inevitable.

The subjective factor: The leading stratum of the Left Opposition consisted, with very few exceptions, of old Bolsheviks, founders and builders of the party which led the Russian proletariat to victory and was the main organizer of the 3rd Intl. Their whole being was one with the party which successfully defeated many serious deviations from Marxism and reestablished Marxism as a guide to action in the period of imperialist wars and proletarian revolutions. For them it was not an easy matter to pose a split perspective in such a party. Keeness of foresight was easily blunted by precious traditions and deep-rooted loyalty. Political acumen, while it was easy to make the error, it was difficult to correct it.

Trotsky's membership was not so long-standing but it should be taken into consideration that it was under the joint leadership of Lenin and himself that the party led the revolution to triumph, he was one of the founders of the C.I. and he made valuable contribution in formulating the principles embodied in the thesis of the first four congresses. It was not entirely the resurrection of his old inclination to reform that prevented him from posing a split perspective, though it may have had a subconscious role in the struggle.

c. Due to the first error (not extending the struggle on an international scale at the very beginning) the Left Opposition was caught in the vise of this contradiction: the struggle in the largest and

dominant section of the Comintern matured to the point of a break, while in the other sections the issues were obscure and far from being fought out therefore a split was out of the question. To overcome this contradiction, and even up the uneven development of the struggle, a formula was devised: faction of the Comintern, inside where possible, outside where it can't be helped. This formula, lacking the split perspective, contradictory to the actual process, became a netweb from which the Left Opposition could not easily extricate itself.

The correct tactic would have been - complete organizational independence, independent role in the class struggle, as the main line; faction work within the Comintern with a split perspective as an auxiliary to the main line. The actual break began with the expulsion of the L.O. in Russia and was completed long before the German defeat.

d. Another grave error, of which nothing or very little was said, had been committed in the sphere of organization. Here the organizational aspect of Trotskyism ran wild. For years no international center was organized. Trotsky, the individual, was the substitute for it. After a center was organized, it played the role of a rubber stamp instead of being a core of collective leadership. It was dependent on and responsible to Trotsky.

For years no international conference was called. No proposition, no discussions, no decisions by the factions. Decisions were made by Trotsky, proclaimed, not to the organization but to the public in general, committing the organization. Instead of a closely knit organization, purely personal, individual connections.

All principles of democratic centralism were constantly violated. Such organizational methods, typically Trotskyist, could not but prevent the correction of the political errors, more than that, they aggravated them.

A number of other errors must be recorded. Maintenance of a block with Z-K group at the price of a principle concession, - a source of weakness. Contradictions in political prognosis, - failure of the 5 year plan will weaken Stalinism, the success of it also will weaken Stalinism. Thermidor after the L.O. was defeated. Thermidor years before Stalin's line was adopted and so on.

In spite of all these errors, the L.O.-ILO-ICL was a Marxist current, the only Marxist current in the Labor movement in the period of 1924-1934. It represented Marxism, as pointed out in p.1 - Against overwhelming odds, it carried on a bitter struggle against reformism and centrism. It crystallized itself into a Marxist opposition at the very beginning of the C.I.'s deviations from Marxism. It widened the rift between itself and the C.I. as the deviations became more and more fundamental. When Marxism was completely abandoned by the C.I., it actually broke with the C.I. It was too slow to realize that the C.I. is lost as an instrument of the proletarian revolution, but when that realization came it abandoned the fictive status of a "faction of the C.I." It has split when Trotsky together with other leaders, recoiled from the enormous task and after a sojourn of 17 years in the Marxist movement, reverted to Trotskyism, to the role of reforming reformism.

7
Trotskyism

Statement of the points of agreement and disagreements drawn up after the submission of documents to the PolCom Subcommittee by comrades Basky and Stamma, with the aim of providing the framework for the discussion of the question and looking toward the clarification of the question and the resolution of the differences.

Points of Agreement

I

Importance of the Problem

1. Our primary aim is to build a party. None exists in this country; nor in any other country.
2. Trotskyism is an obstacle to the construction of such a party. It is a unique genus of opportunism. The central axis of the revisionism of the social democracy was the state. The central axis of Stalinist revisionism is the international character of the proletarian revolution (nationalism). The central axis of Trotskyist revisionism is the revolutionary party. But with its predecessors, as it develops, it involves or will involve all spheres of the class struggle. To combat it we must know it not only in the present but in its genesis and evolution.
3. Our movement, as an organization, originated in the movement led by Trotsky. It separated from Trotsky's movement over the question of the liquidation into the 2nd Intl. In spite of this separation it may not have been able to rid itself of Trotskyist influence. It is, therefore, an important task for us to investigate our ideological and theoretical inheritance to determine whether are in it, and if there are to correct, errors, weak points in our theoretical structure which, under some future stress, may cause it to collapse, as was the case with the Trotskyists, and derail our movement from Marxism to opportunism.

How the Problem Arose.

1. The problem arose out of our split from the Trotskyists. In the first period of the struggle - the formation of the left wing in the CLA and in the WP - we fought against Trotskyist political and organizational liquidation to reestablish theoretically as the principled basis for the organization of the Marxists, Lenin's line of the political and organizational independence of the revolutionary Marxist party. Concretely the axis of the line for which we fought was the independence of the international Communist League and the creation of independent Communist parties and an independent Communist Intl, the Fourth International; the line against which we fought was liquidation into the Second International.
2. In the second period of our struggle - the formation of the Revolutionary Workers League - we have been fighting to establish our line in action in the class struggle and make it the basis for building a revolutionary Marxism organization. This was a logical and necessary extension of our line and has resulted in new theoretical contributions and tactics. The struggle against the Trotskyists has been continued both internally and externally around two axes: capitulation

to reformism and sectarianism.

3. It was logical and necessary as a result of the struggle that the League should utilize its new standpoint to investigate its origin, its parent body, to determine what errors and weaknesses prepared the majority to accept so decisively and in such a quick time the new orientation of Trotsky.

4. The first comrade to investigate the problem was comrade Gehler who submitted a document to the PolCom in December, 1935 which he withdrew at the request of other members of the PolCom who wanted time to study the question and his document. The second investigation was made by comrade Eiffel who submitted a document to the PolCom in June or July, 1936. The third investigation was made by comrade Stamm who made a verbal statement of his position to the PolCom in January, 1937. As a result of all this work the PolCom appointed a subcommittee of Basky, Streeter and Stamm to study the question and submit a document to the PolCom for the plenum. This is, therefore the fourth investigation made into this important problem.

Standpoint from which we approach the Problem.

1. A study of this question, of necessity, has to be an occasion for us to apply and test theoretically the principled line of Lenin for constructing the revolutionary party which, it is our contention we have succeeded in reestablishing in theoretical and practical struggle against the Trotskyists and all other revisionism. Concretely our problems, therefore to measure the line and course of the Left Opposition, as the Moscow Opposition, as the Left Opposition, as the International Left Opposition, in the light of Lenin's line as it was or should have been applied to the circumstances and conditions which the Left Opposition confronted, to determine:

- a. whether the line of the Left Oppositions as it was worked out and developed in struggle was an application of Lenin's line to the new historic circumstances which it confronted;
- b. if it was to determine what the shortcomings were which prepared for the debacle of the new orientation; and, in that case, what should have been done;
- c. if the line of the LO was not an application of Lenin's line, to determine what its line was; and to account for the genesis and development of the line;
- d. in the event of c to say what the line for the organization of the Marxists and the defense of revolutionary Marxism, the proletarian dictatorship should have been - concretely - in the given circumstances.

2. The standpoint from which we approach the problem are the principles of Marx which Lenin applied to the present epoch in the construction of the Bolshevik party and the CI. For our purpose we may condense his conception into the following formulae:

- a. This is the period of the decay of world capitalism, the epoch of imperialist wars and proletarian revolutions;
- b. In this period the independence of the working class depends on

political and organizational independence of its vanguard, the revolutionary Marxian party;

- c. The party is constructed by the unification of the Marxists through their political and organizational separation from opportunism.
- d. The same applies to the party after its construction in the event of its break with Marxism;
- e. The unification of the Marxists proceeds at all times on the line of their independent agitation of the workers and their organization for the overthrow of capitalism;
- f. The application of these principles assumes numerous tactical forms. These tactical forms are made necessary by different and changing objective circumstances. But each tactical form must be a concretization of the principled line, not a cover for the application of an opportunist line or a wedge for its introduction.

3. In evaluation the course of the Left Opposition we must bear in mind that we, like it, confront in the Soviet Union and in its Stalinist degeneration, new social forms, new problems for which there are no precedents or analogies in the world's history, which are not fixed but are evolving, are in continuous motion, and on which the final word has not been said. The principles of Marxism apply to these phenomena of society as well as to the phenomena of capitalist society but with profound, practical differences which must be clearly stated and considered in our evaluation.

The Evaluation

Both comrades Basky and Stamm, as their separate and this joint document show, are in agreement in essential respects on the periods from 1903 to 1917, 17 to 24, 24 to 28 and 34 to date. Differences on the first two periods and on the last have their importance but are not vital for this investigation. Both the points of agreement and of disagreement therefore, are omitted from this joint document, whereas the substance of the agreement of the period from 1924 to 28 is included.

1. The Moscow Opposition under Trotsky's leadership continued the struggle which Lenin, with Trotsky's help, began in defense of the conquests of the October Revolution against the opportunist policies Stalin and the growing bureaucracy in the CP, Soviets and other institutions.

2. Inasmuch as the CP controlled the Soviet State the struggle within the party was, of necessity, a struggle over state policy; and inasmuch as all social forces in soviet society were compelled to seek political expression through the CP, profound and prolonged differences had to develop into class lines, reflecting through the prism of the party, the struggle between the capitalist and soviet sectors of society and the struggle of the classes in the SU. Such a struggle, therefore, had to develop, at some point into a struggle for control of the state, for state power.

3. The Moscow Opposition began its struggle on a higher plan than that on which Lenin opened it. Opportunism and bureaucracy had advanced. On the theoretical side the Opposition was equal to the task. It made new contributions to Marxism around the big issues of the day in the Soviet Union and in the capitalist world. This was, in essence, a concrete application to new problems and circumstances of the line of the Permanent Revolution. This was the basis capital of the Opposition. It was a Marxist force representing the interests of the proletariat. It analyzed correctly, during the struggle, its own role and that of the Stalinist tendency and the latter's allies.

4. Whereas Lenin had already appealed openly to the Soviet masses through the press against the bureaucracy, and the Stalinists, after his death, fought the Moscow Opposition openly in the Soviet press and state institutions and in the CI, the Moscow Opposition fought only as a national, inner-party faction. It wanted to avoid a split, a violent struggle for power and the possibility, thereby, of civil war and imperialist intervention. Its over-respect for party legality prevented it from extending its struggle outside of the CPSU to the CI and to the workers of the SU. As a result, to avoid exceeding the bounds which it set for its fight it made a series of capitulatory concessions to Stalinism such as disavowal of Eastman's exposure of Stalin and the resignation of Trotsky as Commissar of War.

5. The contradiction between the political and tactical lines of the Moscow Opposition increased as the economic and social struggle in the country and abroad developed unfavorably for the proletariat, as workers democracy was strangled by the growth of the bourgeois aspects of the Soviet state, and as all this found its reflection in the struggle in the CPSU. The result was that while the Opposition was forced to extend its struggle to the workers in the SU the previous tactical capitulations were extended into a capitulatory vein manifested in the principled concessions to Zinoviev and Kamenev in the program of the Left Opposition and in its policy for the Chinese Revolution, resulting finally in its deliberate retreat from open mass conflict with the state and party apparatus and its conscious lack of resistance to its suppression, amounting objectively to capitulation.

6. The struggle of the class lines reached a culmination with the events immediately preceding and in the 15th congress of the CPSU in Dec. 1927, and the 6th World Congress of the CI in July 1926. Three main aspects may be distinguished:

- a. The betrayal of the British workers in their General Strike, and the betrayal of the Chinese Revolution;
- b. The split in the CPSU by the expulsion of the Left Opposition, the arrest and exile of thousands of its leaders and members, its decimation as an organized force;
- c. The endorsement and adoption of nationalism and revisionism as the program, of the CI and the Soviet State at the 6th World Congress of the CI by the adoption of the Theory of Socialism in one Country.

These events were marked:

- a. The victory of Stalinism over Marxism, of the representatives of the interests of non-proletarian and anti-proletarian forces in the SU and of the world bourgeoisie over the representatives and interests of the proletariat;
- b. The establishment of the precondition for the definite retrogression of Soviet society towards capitalism;
- c. The triumph of "bourgeois law" over workers democracy in the Soviet state;
- d. The transformation of the CI into an instrument of the retrogression of Soviet society, an instrument for checking and fighting proletarian revolutions in the capitalist world, for the disorganization of the revolutionary workers, for their systematic confusion by the dissemination of revisionism, for the liquidation of Marxism.

8. The Left Opposition predicted the historic consequences which would follow from the adoption of the theory of Socialism in One Country. But it misjudged the economic policy which was instituted on the heels of its expulsion as a partial correction of the past course, and on the basis of its first results declared the Soviet Union was advancing towards Socialism, and held forth the perspective of a further such advance which it made dependent on a further "correction" which it, in turn, made dependent on the same causes and the same policy by itself. It continued to support the CI as a Marxist party, called upon the world working class to support and follow it, fought as before, to change its policy by criticism and propaganda with the perspective of reintegration into it.

9. At the same time it extended itself into a number of countries on six continents. In this extension it made the central axis of the platform of each national section an uncritical restatement of the issues as defined from 1924-28 including the errors made, ignoring the decisiveness of the events which immediately preceded the creation of the ILC, and adding criticism of the havoc wrought by Stalinism in each country. The same perspective of changing the policy of the CI was imposed on each section, as was reintegration into the CI. In no case did a section make its axis the application of the principles of the Left Opposition to the problem of agitating and organizing workers for the overthrow of its "own" bourgeoisie. Politically independent action in the class struggle was rejected as incompatible with the line of the Left Opposition and the policy of the creation of a Fourth International was condemned until 1934.

10. Grave errors were committed in the sphere of organization. For years no international center was organized. Trotsky the individual was the substitute for it. After a center was organized it played the role of a rubber stamp instead of being the core of a collective leadership. It was dependent on and responsible only to Trotsky. For years no international conference was called. Decisions were made by Trotsky and then proclaimed, not to the organization, but to the public in general, omitting very often notice to the organization. Instead of developing a closely knit organization, purely personal, individual relations were established. All principles of democratic centralism were violated. These organizational errors aggravated the political errors.

11. The Left Opposition in the CPSU should have declared that Stalinism and Marxism are irreconcilable; that they cannot live in the same party; should have extended its fight into the entire CI; should have approached the masses directly much earlier than it did. It should have pressed the struggle in 1926-27, when it involved the masses, to its necessary conclusions, even if it meant an organized mass struggle to oust the Stalinists from control of the state and the party.

If victorious, it would have had to continue the struggle against Stalinism on the perspective of eliminating it like all other manifestations of capitalism through the advance to Socialism on the basis of the success of the proletarian revolution in other countries. If defeated, they should have begun the organization underground of a new Communist Party.

POINTS OF DISAGREEMENT

(The following are the main points of disagreement in the positions of comrades Basky and Stamm. As can be seen from the following, the differences revolve around the evaluation of the course of the ILO from 1928 to 1934. There is no difference over facts. Important implications flow from the differences. These are drawn separately by the comrades.)

BASKY

STAMM

After 1928 there stood on the order of the day the political revolutions to overthrow the Stalinist bureaucracy, to preserve the property relations established in 1917-18 and to restore worker's democracy, to reestablish the hegemony of the proletariat in the alliance of the proletariat and peasantry on which the proletarian dictatorship rested and reestablish the policy of world revolutions as the program of the Soviet state. This would have been the concrete application of the line of permanent revolution to the new historical conditions.

The ILO rejected this course.

After 1928 the correct tactic would have been: complete organizational independence, independent role in the class struggle, as the main line, fraction work within the Comintern with a split perspective as an auxiliary to the main line.

After the degeneration of the CI in 1928, there stood on the order of the day the political perspective of the 4th International and the struggle to build it by politically and organizationally independent action in the class struggle in the capitalist countries and in the SU. Fraction work in the 2nd and 3rd with a split perspective as an auxiliary sphere of activity.

BASKY

The perspective of reforming the Comintern even after the CI broke completely with Marxism and the LO actually broke with the CI slowed down the process of setting up independent revolutionary parties. It was instrumental in preventing the crystallization of the LO in the SU into a new Communist Party. It prevented putting the formation of the 4th on order of day.

The ILO-ICL was a Marxist current in the labor movement in the period of 1924-34. Against overwhelming odds it carried on a bitter struggle against reformism and centrism. It crystallized itself into a Marxist opposition at the very beginning of the CI's deviations from Marxism. It widened the rift between itself and the CI as the deviations became more and more fundamental. When Marxism was completely abandoned by the CI, it actually broke with the CI. It was too slow to realize that the CI is lost as an instrument of the proletarian revolution, but when that realization came it abandon the future status of a "faction" of the CI.

STANBY

The rejection of this course in the given circumstances at that time (28-33) and the continuation of the course of a party opposition meant that it had the perspective of victory for the proletariat under the leadership of the CI, the necessary precondition for which was the defeat of Stalinism by Marxism. Hence the axis of the line of the ILO was anti-Stalinist. It made the ILO a tail of the Stalinist mvt.

Formally the line of the ILO was a continuation of the line of the LO. But the qualitative changes in the Soviet state and the CI changed the line of the LO qualitatively. The line of reform of the CI became the line of transforming the degenerated and degenerating instrument of the world bourgeoisie and the non- and anti-proletarian forces in the SU into an instrument of proletarian revolution. (Reform of centrism or reformism into Marxism) The line of being a party opposition, rationalized theoretically as a new phenomenon justified by historic circumstances, extended to six continents, involving as it did the rejection of the line of politically independent action in the class struggle, became a line of theoretical and practical sectarianism. It asserted the theoretical and organizational compatibility of Marxism and sectarianism. The shift from a struggle to preserve the CI from Stalinist degeneration to anti-Stalinism marked the separation of the struggle against opportunism as a manifestation of capitalism from the total line--for the total line, and hence a false line. This course laid the basis for capitulation to Stalinism, to reformism. As a result, the ILO was a revisionist, centrist, sectarian movement. Its objective role was to prevent workers breaking with Stalinism and the 2nd International from building a revolutionary Marxian movement.

BASKY

If the struggle would have taken place in a revolutionary party in a capitalist country, it would have posed the split perspective almost automatically. In this case, the battle ground was a workers state and the party was closely interwoven with the dictatorship of the proletariat. It is not an easy matter to foresee that the party could not be saved and that a split was inevitable.

The subjective factor. The leading stratum of the LO consisted with very few exceptions of old Bolsheviks, founders and builders of the party which led the Russian proletariat to victory and was the main organizer of the 3rd International. Their whole being was one with the party which successfully defeated many serious deviations from Marxism and reestablished Marxism as a guide to action in the period of imperialist wars and proletarian revolutions. For them it was not an easy matter to pose a split perspective in such a party. Keeness of foresight was easily blunted by precious traditions and deep-rooted loyalty. Political acumen. While it was easy to make the error, it was difficult to correct it. Trotsky's membership was not so long-standing but it should be taken into consideration that it was under the joint leadership of Lenin and Trotsky that the party led the revolution to triumph. He was one of the founders of the CI and he made valuable contributions in formulating the principles embodied in the theses of the first four congresses. It was not entirely the resurrection of his old inclination to reform that prevented him from posing a split perspective, though it may have had a subconscious role in the struggle.

STAMM

The formation of the ICL was a result of the impact of events and widening gulf between Stalinism and Trotskyism due to the degeneration of Stalinism. Failure to uncover and correct anti-Stalinist line did not enable ICL to reestablish Lenin's line for instruction of the revolutionary party. Hence it did not transcend its centrist origin and must be set down as essentially an attempt to find a new channel for the struggle to defend Stalinism.

(Comrades Basky and Stamm submitted separate documents to the PE Subcommittee on Trotskyism. Then they submitted the above document of points of agreement and disagreement. Comrade Basky interprets the points of agreement in the light of the line of his document which was adopted by the Polcom and Plenum as their position.

In the voting on positions in the Polcom and the Plenum, comrade Stamm defined his position as 1) the points of agreement and 2) the points of disagreement listed under his name, which, together, are the substance of the line of his document.)

THE SECOND NATIONAL NEGRO CONGRESS

The Second National Negro Congress which was held in Philadelphia from the very beginning to the close was dominated by the Stalinists and their petty-bourgeois Negro organizations. The Stalinist and Socialist line was the same. It did not differ any from the other petty-bourgeois Negro organizations present. The only fight waged by the Stalinists was over posts. The only political struggle was conducted by the Revolutionary Workers League. Although we were an insignificant minority at one place in the Sunday Oct 17 sessions held in Orchestra Hall we were able to get their attention on a class struggle issue.

One of the delegates of the Laundry Workers Union, most likely a Stalinist made a statement that the bosses are not the friends of the workers. Using this as an opening of a speech comrade Roberts showed how the class struggle on the economic field must be tied up with the struggle on the political field. Roberts pointed out how the class struggle must be waged with the purpose of overthrowing the capitalist government.

On this basis when our representative made a motion that this congress go on record for the class struggle, and the overthrow of capitalism as the way to overthrow this lynch government, and the creation of a Workers Government the only kind of a government that can grant economic, social, and political equality the motion was loudly applauded. The great furor however, came when the Stalinists gave a typical reformist speech. "We support all these representatives friendly to labor." The only vote opposed to this line was our vote.

Mary Stalinists tried to create a lynch spirit against our representative but were unable to work up the crowd to this point.

The Congress cannot help the Negroes in obtaining economic, political and social equality, instead it will objectively help tighten the noose of the lynchers and the capitalist government. The Congress was in reality a Peoples Front affair. It was for the defense of the Constitution. By agreeing to the decisions of the state caucuses the Stalinist and Socialists agreed to support the Walk Street Constitution.

The following leaflet was issued to the delegates of the Congress held in Phila., Oct 15-16-17.

" LABOR IN THE WHITE SKIN CAN NEVER BE FREE IF LABOR IN THE BLACK SKIN IS

BRANDED ----- Karl Marx

THE STRUGGLE FOR RACIAL EQUALITY, that is economic, political and social equality in the United States is similar to the problems which confronted the Jewish people in Russia before 1917. The Czar and his black hundreds incited against the Jewish People and organized pogroms, thus hoping to divide the working class in order to perpetuate their rule over the entire population. In the United States the capitalists and landowners also try to divide the workers. One of its weapons is Jim Crowism. The capitalists try to incite white workers against Negro workers in order to suppress both white and Negro workers and poor farmers

The role of the American Constitution

The Constitution of the United States is based on the oppression of the working class. This very same constitution was based on the slavery of the Negroes, indentured slavery of the whites and wage slavery for the rest of the toilers. Nothing can be gained by amending this constitution as was shown by the 13 th., and 15 th., Amendments. These cannot be carried out under capitalism. Only by overthrowing the capitalist system and its constitution can the working class emancipate itself

and thus give economic, political and social equality to all workers and poor farmers, colored as well as white.

The role of the Capitalist Parties

Although the Negroes are "Freed" from chattel slavery, the capitalist utilize the most brutal attacks upon Negro workers and sharecroppers. Through government agencies Negroes are framed up on trumped up rape charges. And in addition to using legal channels to prosecute the Negro masses the capitalists and landowners organize lynch mobs. Since the Civil War over 5,000 Negroes have been lynched in the United States. Neither the Republican nor Democratic Parties have really tried to stop lynching. Under the rule of both parties lynchings have had free sway. As a matter of fact the lynchings are members of these parties.

The role of the Communist and Socialist Parties

and the N.A.A.C.P.

Neither of these two parties carry on a struggle for the interest of the Negro masses. The Socialist Party has never carried on a mass struggle, and instead have carried on a sham battle by trying to have the 13th., and 15th., Amendment carried out. But as long as the capitalists control the states Negroes can never obtain equality. The Communist (Stalinists) Party which once carried on a struggle for the 9 Scottsboro boys handed over the defense to Lieborwitz a member of the Democratic party, the lynch party of the South. And now instruct its members in the south to join this party. During the Ethiopian invasion, Stalinism, sold oil to Mussolini who murdered the Ethiopian masses. The above two parties as well as the N.A.A. C.P. are for making the main struggle center around legislative measures. The experience of the past shows that such a struggle can only lead the colored masses into a blind alley. Which in practice means to help the lynchings tighten the noose around the Negro masses.

What is the solution.

Instead of relying upon the capitalists or reformist parties the Negro masses must wage a revolutionary struggle as did Nat Turner and John Brown. The Negro masses must unite not only in industrial unions, sharecroppers unions, unemployed organizations, but must also help create a revolutionary party which will lead the masses for the overthrow of capitalism.

Join the Revolutionary Workers League of the United States and help us build such a party.

2159 West Division Street-Chicago.

Barcelona, May 19, 1937-98

COLLECTIVIZATION IN CATALONIA

The July uprising brought with it workers control and seizure of the factories in those parts of Spain where the fascists were defeated. A few months later these seizures were collectivized. These new economic forms have been heralded as a great economic transformation, as gigantic steps toward socialism, and as proof that capitalism has been overthrown.

An analysis of these new forms reveals a different picture. It shows a contradictory pattern, of the great possibilities open to the proletariat, and what the leaders of the working class actually did with these new found weapons. The working class did its share. They established workers control of the factories where the bosses were sabotaging production. And in the July uprising they seized the factories and dispossessed those of the exploiters who had not already fled. And for almost a year now, without proper centralized coordination, with the Generality sabotaged, even within the framework of the capitalist mode of production, these workers have proved that they know how to run industry, that they can do this far superior than the capitalists.

But the organizations of the working class and their leadership have failed miserably. The leadership failed to distinguish between workers control of factories and workers control of production, between "planned" economic local autonomy and planned economy on a national scale under the workers rule, between collectivization under a bourgeois state and planned economy under a proletarian state. In other words, the leadership has undone what the workers accomplished on the road toward the overthrow of capitalism.

WORKERS SEIZURE UNDER DUAL POWER & COLLECTIVIZATION UNDER BOURGEOIS
RULE

From the July uprising to September 26, when the CNT-FAI and POUM entered the Generality government of Catalonia, the workers control of the factories rapidly passed over to the seizure of the factories. This was carried through under the Anti-Fascist Militia Committees and its Central Committee of 15 in Barcelona. This control and seizure was carried out under the developing forms of dual power. In this period the government of the Generality, the bourgeois state, was powerless, and through its impotence was forced to "sanction" these measures.

By October 4th, the CNT-FAI and the POUM, as part of the bourgeois government, agreed to liquidate the Anti-Fascist Militia committees. A few weeks later, on October 24, 1936, with the liquidation of the developing dual power the Generality passed the decree of collectivization, thereby rubberstamping what the workers had carried through by force against the Generality.

First, the bourgeois liquidated the political organs of dual power, and next they transformed the economic organs of the workers into their opposites by the decree of collectivization, thereby liquidating the real danger of the further development of the workers control and seizure of the factories.

Workers control and seizure of factories under developing organs of

dual power, and workers control and collectivization after the liquidation of the Anti-Fascists Committees, after the decree of collectivization, after the rehabilitation of the bourgeois state by the CNT-FAI and POUM are two entirely different things, although the forms look alike. The first was steps toward the overthrow of capitalism, and the smashing of the state; the latter is the canalization of the revolutionary mass pressure within the bourgeois framework.

THE BOURGEOIS CHARACTER OF THE COLLECTIVIZATION DECREE

We have already pointed out the meaning of collectivization under a bourgeois state, which gives the workers "control" in name but not in content. This is the framework of the decree, which is so worded that the bourgeois trade the workers the forms for the economic content.

The collectivization decree, with bourgeois foresight and a "detail" oversight on the part of the CNT-FAI and POUM? does not in any way change the fundamental property relations of the capitalist mode of production; nor does any of the Laws promulgated by the Valencia and Barcelona "Revolutionary Workers Governments" alter the private property laws of Spain prior to the overthrow of King Alfonso.

The POUM presented three amendments for the Decree, two of which were not accepted; therefore the POUM did not vote for the decree. But the POUM amendments did not alter the decree fundamentally. The POUM amendments if adopted, would still leave the decree within the framework of the capitalist mode of production. Being members of a bourgeois government, helping liquidate the Anti-Fascists committee their economic measures of necessity fell into this category. The only left amendment the POUM presented was the proposal that the bourgeoisie take over the seizures of the workers with no compensation for the former Spanish owners. But this amendment under capitalism and without the uprooting of capitalist property relations means nothing.

The POUM represented abstained from voting. An opposition vote would have caused a governmental crisis, and far be it from the POUM leaders to cause a governmental crisis in the bourgeois Generality.

SPECIAL FEATURES OF COLLECTIVIZATION

All industrial and commercial enterprises with over a hundred workers are collectivized. Those enterprises with 50-100 workers can be collectivized upon the agreement of three-quarters of the workers. Smaller establishments can be collectivized with general agreement. In all parts of Catalonia, in the manufacturing establishments, in the retail stores and the transportation facilities, the stamp of the collectivization of the individual establishment or the trade union stamp can be seen. Everything is painted "red", leaving the impression that the workers are in full control. The workers in the enterprise have united and together exploit the establishment. This local autonomy leads to all kinds of contradictions. When some firms exhaust the credits the fleeing capitalists left, they are either defunct or at the mercy of the banks which are "regulated" by the bourgeois state. If another establishment makes excellent profits there is nothing to stop them from expanding and to start up a new collective, hire workers, and exploit them.

Each collective functions at its own risk. In many industries where there is no central tie-up each factory has its own difficulties. For example in the textile industry. Although the industry is supposed to be syndicalized instead of collectivized, each plant has its own problems. When factories were seized some had modern machines, others antiquated, some had large stocks of raw material and funds in the banks, and others none. This enabled some textile mills to increase wages while others were hard pressed and needed state aid. In the same industry it was possible to find different standards of living depending upon the economic status of the industry under this local autonomy. collectivization.

SYNDICALIZATION

The large industries inherited from the reactionary and fascist forces were organized on a national scale. This concentration, which eliminated local autonomy they call syndicalization because the unions control production. The syndicalization is mainly concentrated in the Public Service division. Because of the previous monopoly position of these industries in comparison to the others, the workers obtain a higher standard of living. Here there is no competition, prices are regulated and wages can be set accordingly.

The trade union control of each industry is only an enlarged form of the collectivization of each factory and establishments. It results in a narrow outlook and competition between the different industries. Socialist economy demands planned economy with one centralized control of the individual parts.

NATIONALIZATION OF THE BANKS.

Liquid assets are essential for planned economy. This calls for the nationalization of the banks; otherwise, the collectivization and syndicalization can be dominated by the local bourgeoisie and imperialists. In Catalonia and Spain the economic decrees in no way take care of this fundamental question. The banks are regulated, but more antiquated methods are used than by the leading and even second rate capitalist countries.

PEASANT ECONOMY

Although Spain as a whole has 18,740 proprietors occupying 22,250,000 of the 50,182,000 acres of cultivated land, in Catalonia there are a considerable number of small holdings.

The large estates were divided among the peasants after the July uprising, and when the new bourgeois government with the CNT-FAI passed the collectivization decrees and sent anarchists around to "collectivize" the peasant holding, many of them were killed. The peasants insisted upon keeping their small holdings.

Although the landowners have been ousted, planned economy in those areas of Spain where large scale farming can be carried on is still in the formation stage, and under the Generality of Catalonia and the Valencia Government of Spain will never be realized for the proletariat's interests.

BOURGEOIS "PLANNED" ECONOMY

The Collectivization Decrees coordinate all of the economic activity of the country under the Council Economy, which is in turn under the control of the bourgeois Generalitat Government of Catalonia. Under this set up the workers run the industries, produce and distribute the products, and the capitalists CONTROL the entire structure and its economic direction. It falls entirely within the framework of state capitalism that any bourgeois government in crises or war would resort to, especially when the proletariat is knocking at the gates.

The 15% wage increase and reduction of hours carried through after the July uprising was more than taken care of by the 30% or more increase in prices after the promulgation of the Degree of Collectivization. The aim of the democratic bourgeoisie is to subordinate the proletariat through the Peoples Front to prevent a proletarian revolution in order to stave off the fascist bourgeoisie from taking power. The liquidation of the political organs of dual power, the economic measures of "collectivization", and the bourgeois military control at the front are three gigantic steps to stifle and behead the social revolution.

Since the workers think that these collectivizations are "socialized" institutions, and since their leaders tell them that there are no more capitalists, they are in a position where strikes are considered detrimental to the "workers" state. In the war industry and other auxiliary industries an increased exploitation of the masses is carried through under the slogan, "to win the war".

The Stalinsits and Socialists openly support the bourgeois positions on war measures in the political, economic and military sphere. The CNT-FAI talk against it and act for it, and are agents of the capitalists in the workers ranks. The POUM leaders cover their treachery with Marxian phrases, and like all the other parties of the London Bureau play their special role in beheading the proletarian movement.

Yes, workers control of PRODUCTION is needed, the seizure of factories is essential, collectivization is a step forward in transition economy, toward socialist economy; the trade unions must play a decisive part in the ~~forming~~ ^{forming} of society-but all this means nothing without the smashing of the bourgeois state, without political power in the hands of the proletariat, without the nationalization of the banks, without the monopoly of imports and exports, without planned economy, and without a revolutionary Marxian party which can safeguard and extend the social revolution to other parts of Europe and the world.

DIALECTIC OF REVOLUTIONARY DEFEATISM

- 1-Political line- To transform imperialist war into revolution(civil war). This is an immutable principle of Marxism.
- 2-This is facilitated by military defeats
- 3-Work for the military defeats of "our" own imperialist army.
- 4- Work in all spheres of social relations.
 - a-Economy: strikes up to workers control of production and seizure of factories.
 - b- Politically: propoganda, demonstrations up to soviets and armed insurrection.
 - c- military: fraternization on a revolutionary program and soviets (does not include sabotage, unsuccessful military strikes, desertions, as a policy)
- 5- All this contributes to military defeats.
- 6-As transformation into revolution proceeds-which means the appearance and development of dual power, bourgeoisie may resort to active military defeatism to crush the rising revolution in which case military defense of the workers side of dual power against the foreign imperialists and the domestic imperialists promotes the transformation of the imperialist war into a revolution by expanding the workers side of dual power.

SLOGAN OF WORKERS AND PEASANTS GOVERNMENTS

Government of workers and peasants is a proper slogan in countries where the majority of the population consists of peasantry, provided that the slogan has the content of the dictatorship of the proletariat as against the concept of a coalition government of workers and petty bourgeoisie (democratic dictatorship of workers and peasants).

M* Hiffel- Recommend to convention that it reject slogan "For a workers and peasants government" for all countries including those with a peasant majority as opposed to the concept of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

MARXISM AND SECTARIANISM

- 1-Marxism and sectarianism are incompatible theoretically, politically, and organizationally.
- 2- This is true at all times and under all circumstances.
- 3- The root of their incompatibility is the principled need of the Marxists to act as a politically and organizationally independent force in the class struggle.
- 4- Whenever circumstances place the Marxist momentarily in a position of isolation they must make the point of departure for their struggle to get out of their isolation on the principled line of the theoretical and organizational irreconcilability of Marxism and sectarianism.
- 5- Organizationally independent political oppositionism to another movement(left oppositionism) is impermissible as a line for building a national or international revolutionary Marxist movement.
- 6- These deviations are always present in one form or the other in a Marxist organization. To determine when such reaches the point of a fundamental revision so the organization is no longer Marxist can only be determined by a concrete analyses of each such organization in relation to its historical and objective surroundings.

RESOLUTION ON SPAIN --- EIFFEL

The events in Spain have put every organization to the test. We have to admit that we have not stood it. Seeing this, our first and foremost duty is to study the roots of our failure; our second duty is to admit our failure in all frankness before the national and international proletariat. Only thus can we hope to rehabilitate ourselves as a Marxist vanguard organization.

The following resolution is very far from being a sufficiently searching analysis of the real significance of the events in Spain and of our attitude towards them. It aims to be nothing more than a first admission of our failure in the face of these events, and an introduction to the discussion which the whole organization must at this late hour begin immediately.

The evolution of the position of our organization with respect to the events in Spain has followed on the whole line which seems to indicate what underlying all our mistakes there is a healthy and solid Marxist base; that line of evolution has steadily, although hesitatingly, moved away from the initial false position and has progressively approached a correct one. But this process has been exceedingly slow and to a large extent shame-faced or even unconscious. Not once during the past seven months, the most crucial months not only in the recent history of the proletariat, but of our organization as well, has the question of the correctness or incorrectness of our fundamental line on Spain been squarely posed by any of the leading comrades as the life or death question for our organization. Those who, like comrade Eiffel, had from the very beginning fundamental differences with the majority of the PC on this question, but did not make this difference the center of a principled struggle for a different line, have failed to carry out one of the most elementary duties of a leading member.

While the gradual evolution of our line on Spain seems to indicate that there is at bottom a really Marxist base in our organization, our initial failure and the false manner in which we have subsequently corrected it in part, are grave symptoms of the youth and immaturity of our organization. If the organization pulls through this crisis, i.e., analyses to the bottom its failure to meet a historical test, and corrects it completely, it will be essentially a new organization, having outgrown the weaknesses of its childhood days. It will then be one of the very few organizations on an international scale that have withered the Spanish storm. In fact it will be stronger than before, as are those who are capable of correcting themselves even when that correction touches the very essential of their position.

The essential significance of the events in Spain is this: the workers' reaction to the attempt of the bourgeois, to shift from corruption to brutal oppression, induced the latter to embark upon a new road of driving the workers off their class line, a method never used before in such a thorough and systematic manner. **WAR!** The struggle

in Spain began as a civil war, but was rapidly converted into a capitalist, i.e. an imperialist war. The whole strategy of the Spanish and international bourgeoisie has consisted in carrying this transformation through without a change in outward appearances and without the workers of Spain and the world noticing it. To achieve its end, the bourgeoisie had by all means at its disposal to keep alive the belief of the workers that they were fighting for their own class interests, i.e. that it was a civil war.

Those who did not recognise in time this transformation had already taken place (who saw it only after many months) or who did not radically change front the moment they recognized this (again we belong to this category), objectively played the game of the bourgeoisie. Radical workers' organizations which combated the open forms of class betrayal, but who at the same time prolonged the illusions of the workers that this war had anything to do with their class interests, that it was "at bottom" a civil war, were in fact indispensable to the plane of the Bourgeoisie. The most concise formula of this objective support to the Spanish and world bourgeoisie is contained in a leaflet published by the PC in the second half of February, that is in the seventh month of the war in Spain: "The Spanish working-class must march together with the People's Front against France, but must prepare to turn their guns against Caballero to-morrow."

To say this at a time when we had already understood and declared openly that civil war had been converted into imperialist war, is the very opposite of what Marxists have to tell the workers during imperialist war; Sabotage! Fraternization with the "enemy"! desert! Revolutionary defeatism! Turn imperialist war into civil war! - It is only necessary to compare these slogans of the Marxists during the world war with our slogans, to see the full depth of our failure to analyse the situation correctly and to draw the correct conclusions from it. To speak of imperialist war (beginning of article in January number of Fourth International) and then to end the same article with the statement; "It is necessary to fight at the front" - is proof that we really did not understand what "imperialist war" means in Marxist language. The following words (in that article mentioned) sound revolutionary, but in reality are left support to the schemes of the bourgeoisie, because they try to bring together what never can be brought together; class war and the imperialist war. ("...if power is not consolidated in the rear... the fight at the front is transformed into a fight to defend private property etc etc.")

It is obvious that power can be won (for it is a question of winning, not "consolidating it) only by strictly class methods, employed both in the rear and at the front; strikes, sabotage, fraternization, desertion, revolutionary defeatism. But not one of their slogans was ever raised by us! Without them our slogans for the creation of soviets and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat (abstracting from the question of the existence or non-existence of a class party of the proletariat) objectively had the same effect as the slogan "Turn imperialist war into civil war" WITHOUT THE SLOGAN

OF REVOLUTIONARY DEFEATISM, - a point we had well understood theoretically and even made a central point in our propaganda, but which we failed to apply in PRACTICE when the first historical test came. In fact we did not even raise the slogan "Turn imperialist war into civil war", which would probably have led us to the logical conclusions: if this is the task, then we must be for the defeat of the People's Front armies just as well as of the armies of France.

Summing up we have to admit that we, just as those we have criticised have fallen victims to the attempt of the world bourgeoisie to use the war in Spain in order to drive the proletariat off its clear class line and that in reality we have acted only as the leftest of the left in the camp of those duped by the bourgeoisie, forgetting during a period of months to mention even once the fundamental class weapon of the proletariat: STRIKE! We, who had built our whole PROPAGANDA on the question of the independence of the proletariat from the bourgeoisie, did not know how to concretize this idea in PRACTICE.