

T H E B U L L E T I N

OF THE WORKERS LEAGUE FOR A REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

EDITORIAL NOTES:

**HUNGARY; THE MARSHALL PLAN,
FRANCE, ITALY, GREECE, INDONESIA,
THE TAFT-HARTLEY BILL**

THE TROTSKYITE "UNITY" NEGOTIATIONS

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PART 8—THE SELL-OUT OF THE AUTO WORKERS

—ARTHUR BURKE

Documents From The Archives Of Trotskyism

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* EDITORIAL NOTES *

HUNGARY AND THE MOUNTING WAR CRISIS

The Teheran and Yalta agreements, negotiated in secrecy by Stalin and the imperialists, provided the basis for a permanent political crisis in Hungary as in other countries in Eastern Europe and the Far East. Stalin's troops were given a legal basis for occupying key territories in the Balkans, except Greece. But at the same time, the Yalta agreement established a condition for "free elections" along with vague phrases about "democratic rights." In Hungary specifically, an Allied Control Commission was provided to supervise Hungarian affairs. The chairmanship of the commission and the occupation of the country was assigned to the Soviet Union.

The Hungarian reality under the jackboot of Stalin's military machine was bound to conflict with the rosy words of the Yalta deal. The imperialist propagandists have taken ample advantage of the inevitable breach in the Yalta agreement to brand Stalin as a double-crossing violator of treaties and of the rights of small nations. The latest events in Hungary added more grist to the imperialist propaganda mill.

In February 1947 the Stalin forces arrested Bela Kovacs, general secretary of the bourgeois Small Holders Party of Hungary. This move had been preceded by a long Stalin campaign against this party which had won 57 percent of the total vote in the elections of November 1945. This arrest of Kovacs was the necessary preliminary to an old Stalinist game. As in the Moscow Trials, a self-implicating confession was soon forthcoming from Kovacs who also involved the other political leaders of the Hungarian bourgeoisie. The Hungarian capitalists and landlords have truly been guilty of the most infamous crimes against the masses, but it was not this class angle which Stalin chose to utilize. Although the Small Holders Party secured a decisive majority in the November 1945 General Election and formally headed the government, Stalin's GPU hurled the charge of an "anti-Republican conspiracy" to shakeup the Hungarian government. Accordingly, new elections were set for September of this year. A leading organ of the bourgeoisie has already shown what vein of propaganda the imperialists will pursue toward further events in that country:

"The Communist coup d'etat in Hungary is now apparently complete except for the rigged elections in September called to confirm it. From now on Hungary takes her place with Poland, Rumania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia as a police state and a Russian satellite. To make it so has been the settled purpose of the Soviet Government." (The New York Times, 6/1/47 Edit.)

The American and British imperialists are now making a hullabaloo about this new breach in the Yalta agreement and a series of strong notes have been dispatched to Stalin's gang. On June 5, 1947 Truman denounced the Stalin machinations in Hungary as an "outrage" and there the matter stands from the imperialist side at this writing. On the Stalin side, the set reply to all the imperialist protests is that they constitute interference in Hungarian affairs. The hypocrisy in both camps is quite transparent. This "right" to interfere in Hungarian affairs was established by the very provisions of the Yalta agreement. The Stalinist machinations in Hungary were prepared by the imperialist policy makers themselves when they invited Stalin's occupation of that country.

The "Peace" Pact for Hungary provides for the withdrawal of the Stalin occupation troops within 90 days after ratification. The provisions of the Pact are not yet legally in effect due to the technicality of ratification which has not yet been completed at this date by all the powers concerned. However, even when the formality of ratification is completed, Stalin still has the right to maintain a supply line to his troops in Austria and Germany. But

history has shown, as in Manchuria, that even where the Russian uniformed troops withdraw, native Stalinist troops step into the breach. In this connection, as a result of the Paris gab fest, the imperialists were enabled to insert phrases about "human rights" in the Hungarian and other treaties. Obviously, just as the phrases in the Yalta pact about "democratic rights" were and are being used to line up sentiment against Stalin, so will the deliberately vague words about human rights and liberties in the new "peace" pacts be utilized by the imperialists in the future.

The imperialist campaign against Stalin is based on the accusation that Russia is an "expansionist" power threatening "peace." Concealed from the masses, however, is the fact that the imperialist powers themselves gave Stalin the green light to enlarge the sphere of his rule via a series of secret agreements from 1943 to 1945. The present diplomatic warfare by American-British imperialism against Stalin's Soviet Union shows why the imperialist policy makers opened the door for Stalin's expansion in Europe and Asia. During the period of the war situation, Stalin's prestige with the masses was enormous. Had he confined his forces to the pre-1939 borders of Russia, it would have been manifestly impossible for the Anglo-American rulers to transform Stalin from a loyal "ally" to a Hitlerite "aggressor" threatening the peace of the world and thereby to prepare the masses ideologically for a war against the Soviet Union.

Interestingly, in the period immediately following the war situation, when the campaign to build up a war atmosphere with Russia swung into high gear, it was established that Eastern Europe outside of Greece, was Stalin's domain. The term "iron curtain" was coined by the imperialist spokesmen to characterize the sphere of territory under Stalin's rule. But since Stalin is not apparently adding any significant territory to that given him by the imperialists in the period of the war situation, attention has to be focussed back on such countries as Hungary, Rumania etc. Whereas previously, the Balkans, except Greece, were established as Stalin's sphere, the whole issue is reopened to give substance to the idea that Russia is an expansionist power and it is charged that Stalin is an aggressor in the very territories opened to him at Tehran and Yalta. This is the reason for the outcry about Hungary. The same applies to Rumania and eventually to the entire Balkans, the Baltic and in the Far East.

In the other camp are the international sections of the Stalin force which defend every Stalin crime against the masses and palm off the criminal Stalin diplomacy as being in the interests of world peace. The crooked machinations of the Stalin clique and its bureaucratic terrorist rule remain an indispensable factor in the imperialist war plans against the Soviet Union. Only an uncompromising exposure of both the imperialists and Stalin forces can awaken the revolutionary workers to the reality of the impending holocaust. And only with the exposure of the imperialist-Stalin forces and the unmasking of all the direct and indirect supporters, can the workers move forward on the path of real Socialist liberation.

June 29, 1947

A NOTE ON THE "MARSHALL PLAN"

On March 12, 1947 came the statement of the "Truman doctrine" which proclaimed openly that the power of American imperialism would be used against the Stalin forces. As a logical sequence, on June 5, 1947, State Secretary Marshall announced an economic program involving three steps; first, a survey to determine the supposed needs and resources of the European powers; second, the drawing of a "blueprint" for what is called coordinated self help; third, the presentation of a detailed plan by which the United States rulers can "help" Europe presumably to aid itself. Behind these seemingly harmless

phrases is concealed a plan to organize the European capitalist powers with American funds for a war with the Soviet Union.

Of course, the imperialist leaders knew that Stalin would reject the plan. Fully aware that war is being prepared against the Soviet Union by the American-British imperialists, he cannot accede to any proposition whereby the imperialists get the right to pry into his domain. Thus, during a meeting of the French, British and Russian Foreign Ministers called to discuss the Marshall Plan, Stalin had Molotov walk out and denounce the Plan as interference in the internal affairs of "sovereign governments." Immediately upon Stalin's withdrawal the British and French Foreign Ministers invited a conference of twenty-two nations to act on the Marshall Plan.

On his part, Stalin is moving forward to consolidate his own sphere in Europe. By a series of treaties with his Balkan satellites Stalin has succeeded in reorienting the economy of the Balkans toward Russia, excepting Greece. In effect, Stalin is meeting the offensive of the big imperialist powers by establishing an economic blockade to keep them out of Eastern Europe.

The effect of the so-called Marshall and the Molotov plans is to widen the cleavage between the Soviet Union and the imperialist powers. Diplomacy does not exist in a vacuum; it is based on force. The diplomatic war between the capitalist world and the Stalin-ridden Soviet Union is now openly brought out in the economic sphere:

"Up until now the West and Russia have made a least a pretense of settling Europe's problems on a Continent-wide basis. But with the withdrawal of the Russians the break is open. Two rival economic systems are launched on the Continent and the issue between Russia and the West is drawn." (The New York Times, July 13, 1947)

War is a continuation of politics by other means. Ideologic, diplomatic, political and economic war is now raging between the capitalist world and the Soviet Union. The extension of this war to the military sphere is only a matter of time unless the workers act against both the Stalin and imperialist camps. Only international revolutionary action by the working class can arrest the clash of arms now brewing. Such action will overthrow the hold of all reactionary forces and organize a Socialist economy, the only possible basis for forward progress.

Under the hypocritical humanitarian words of the Marshall Plan lies the intent for a terrible war, a war which will invariably turn the world into a shambles. Were plans for war revealed openly and plainly, the alarmed masses would inevitably move forward to prevent the impending catastrophe. Therefore the plans for war have to be disguised, and one such disguise is the current Marshall Plan for the "rehabilitation" of Europe.

July 1947

THE TURN IN FRANCE AND ITALY

In May 1947 the Stalinist Ministers were eliminated from the French cabinet, ostensibly over the issue of the wage freeze. In June 1947 the Italian bourgeois cabinet was reorganized and the Stalin party was excluded as in France.

These moves are determined by the current international situation with the imperialist world lining up against the Soviet bureaucracy. In the present relation of forces it would be inconceivable for the large imperialist powers to attempt a new intervention against Russia without first consolidating the bourgeois power in such key countries as France and Italy. The

enormous strength of the Stalin gang in these latter countries was and is a reflection of the tense internal situation confronting the French and Italian capitalists. There is no question but that the bulk of the workers have broken subjectively from the capitalist system and desire a fundamental social change. A decisive indication of the unstable bourgeois rule in these countries was the very fact that the Stalin gang had to be admitted into key posts in the Cabinet.

In France as elsewhere the Stalin party sabotaged any forward movement of the working class. It broke strikes, voted credits for the bloodletting of oppressed colonial masses in Indo-China and elsewhere, and enabled the French bourgeoisie to effect a tighter grip on the masses. Although physically out of the French bourgeois cabinet, the Stalin party continues in the same path of keeping the workers from struggling for socialism:

"When the Communist party, quarreling with Ramadier's policy over wages, left the Cabinet early in May, Jacques Duclos, its astute policy manager, proclaimed that the Communists would not be 'stupid enough' to plunge into opposition. He said they would collaborate with the Government wherever they possibly could." (The New York Times, July 13, 1947)

In Italy as well as France, the policy of the Stalin leaders has enabled the bourgeoisie to consolidate its forces and power. Despite the obvious meaning of the capitalist political manipulations to exclude them from key governmental positions in France and Italy, the Stalin forces continue to prevent any serious development against the bourgeoisie.

In the light of the diplomatic war between Stalin and the imperialists at the present juncture, it is highly revealing that the Stalin gang, outside the Balkans, functions to break up any threat to seize power. Yet it is an indubitable fact that with the huge forces at his command in Italy and France, that Stalin could throw these important capitalist countries into turmoil by a mere order to his henchmen.

Yet the Stalin parties in Italy and France act consistently to restrain the workers. Stalin understands only too well that if the workers move forward against the class enemy in such countries as Italy and France, the situation would rise beyond his control. Such a movement would necessarily involve the workers of other countries, including the Soviet Union, and would topple the power of the Stalin bureaucracy itself. Stalin fears the workers infinitely more than he does the imperialists. It is possible to bargain and haggle with the imperialist bandits, as long as they are not ready to attack. It is also possible for the Stalin bureaucracy to counter the pressure of the imperialists, as the oppressive nature of the capitalist class makes it an easy target for criticism. But it would be impossible for Stalin to bargain with a revolutionary development, since such a development must be based on overthrowing all forms of oppression including Stalinism.

Paradoxically, by preventing proletarian revolution, Stalin necessarily strengthens the hand of the imperialists who in turn are enabled to build up a military force for war against the Stalin-ruled Soviet state. The Stalin line in France and Italy stands as an irrefutable answer to those who like the Shachtmanite Workers Party claim that Stalin is an imperialist, that the Stalin parties aim to take power and expand Stalin's domination throughout the world. As we see, except for Stalin's direct sphere agreed to by the imperialists themselves at the Teheran, Yalta and Potsdam conferences, the native Stalin forces are operating to prop up the capitalist power.

When the Stalin crew was in the French bourgeois cabinet, the French imperialists had pretended to play the role of a "compromiser" between the Soviet Union and the American-British imperialist powers. In the diplomatic

conflict which developed rapidly upon the termination of the war situation, the French imperialist politicians feigned a neutral role. Now the French imperialists can act more openly in the international diplomatic war between the imperialist world and the Soviet Union. The French capitalists have cast off the mask of neutrality and have openly lined up with the American-British imperialists in what is called the West-European bloc. Commenting on the endorsement of the Marshall Plan by the French Assembly, The New York Times gleefully commented editorially as follows:

"This development may be accepted not only as a symbol of France's Western orientation, which became pronounced after the failure of the last Moscow Conference, but also as a token that France is emerging from the wartime psychosis of fear and frustration and is beginning to talk like the leading European Power that she should be." (July 28, 1947)

Inside France the DeGaulist and other reactionary rightist forces are raising their heads. As the war development moves forward, so will the bourgeois rightist forces in France and Italy. All those in any way rendering support to the bourgeois forces from the extreme Rightists to the Social Democrats, and those aiding the Stalin camp share responsibility for this development. Those, who like the Cannon and Shachtman Trotsky leaders, preach support to a CP-SP government in France, Italy and elsewhere, are aiding both the Stalin and capitalist reaction and greasing the path for the current war development.

July 1947.

THE IMPERIALISTS IN GREECE

The bourgeoisie has been making a great to-do about Stalin's aggressions in Europe and Asia. What have the imperialists themselves been doing in Greece while laying down their anti-Stalin propaganda barrage?

The line of the imperialists in Greece is to use that country as a pawn in the preparations for the war against Stalin. As Stalin continues consolidating his power in the territories he occupied by the grace of the imperialists, they have been, in turn, raising the cry of Stalin's threat of aggression against Greece. Meanwhile, they themselves have been promoting action against Stalin's forces. That this is the imperialist policy was best illustrated by Washington columnist Drew Pearson, when he told, in his March 22, 1945 column, of a Colonel Shepherd of British Army Intelligence, who had been killed in Greece while functioning as an UNRRA official. In Shepherd's rooms were found receipts for money he had paid to various Greek rightist leaders in return for which they agreed to conduct an armed struggle against the Stalinist led EAM-ELAS. The receipts were dated a few days before the fight against the EAM-ELAS broke out, showing clearly that the British policy was to instigate and subsidize the armed conflict.

The latest events in Greece follow the same pattern. First, there was the announcement by the Greek government that it had foiled a planned "Communist coup" to seize the country. Under the pretext of forestalling this "coup", widespread arrests and repressions were carried out. Shortly thereafter the government announced that an international brigade of guerillas had crossed the border into Greece from Albania. This story burst like a bomb on the front pages of the bourgeois press and gave rise to a tremendous anti-Stalin propaganda campaign. The story of an international brigade was subsequently retracted but it was done comparatively unobtrusively and the flood of propaganda which had originally been released did not subside.

It would be the height of political naivete to imagine that the Greek

government is an independent regime, that the moves which it is making are independently conceived. It's policies are controlled lock-stock and barrel by the Anglo-American imperialists who installed it and propped its shaky foundations from the very first. The British virtually ruled the country by force of arms and are now apparently planning a withdrawal to let American arms take over. The policy of these two imperialist powers is to use Stalin's machinations in Greece as an additional incitement to stir up the sentiments of the masses against the Stalin bureaucracy.

The masses must not be taken in by the bourgeois propaganda, or by the Stalinist propaganda. They must analyze the world situation clearly in order to combat effectively the game that Stalin and the imperialists are playing.

July 1947

THE ROAD TO LIBERATION IN INDONESIA

With the termination of the war period, a unique situation was created in Indonesia. A revolutionary upsurge from below by the Indonesian workers and peasants threatened to shake up the entire colonial system in the Far East.

Into the vacuum created by the termination of the war situation, stepped the bourgeois nationalist republican government of Indonesia headed by Soekarno. Tied hand and foot to the imperialists by economic and political bonds and frightened by the strength shown by the masses, the bourgeois leaders tried to strangle the revolutionary sentiments of the masses. Haunting the bourgeois "Republican" leaders was the presence of 100,000 armed Indonesians filled with sentiments of revolutionary struggle. The task set by the treacherous bourgeois leadership was to break up the movement from below. To do that, aid from the imperialists was necessary and the chronological development shows how this was manipulated.

On Sept. 16, 1945, 1,000 Dutch soldiers debarked, and this tiny force was allowed to occupy Batavia unopposed. On Sept. 27, 1945 Lord Mountbatten announced that British troops were being dispatched to aid in the establishment of what the imperialists cynically call "law and order". The Japanese troops remaining in Indonesia were charged by the imperialist rulers with keeping the Indonesian masses in check. The murder of a few Indonesian Republican leaders by the Japanese set the spark for an uprising by the masses. The Japanese garrison was easily overpowered and disarmed by the aroused workers and peasants. As the revolutionary situation intensified, British troops began to pour into Batavia in early October and the Dutch leaders announced that 10,000 troops were being sent to quell the Indonesian masses. All the imperialist rulers were solidly unified to suppress the Indonesian masses. Intimately involved with the British and Dutch interests in economic domination of these very rich islands were the American imperialists who furnished the wherewithal in money, arms and equipment for the punitive war against the Indonesian workers. With unabashed hypocrisy, the American rulers asked the Dutch rulers simply to remove the United States labels from the lend lease weapons which were to be used for suppression of the rising natives.

By late October 1945 the Allied command felt strong enough to extend control beyond Batavia. A token British force was dispatched to Surabaya and due to the collaborationist policy of the Indonesian bourgeois nationalist leaders, this imperialist force was allowed to land unmolested and take over the key points in this strategic city. When the British officials demanded the surrender of all Indonesian arms under penalty of death and made threatening gestures to carry this order out, the masses rose against the

British troops. The small British forces were in real danger of being eliminated entirely; accordingly, President Soekarno was flown to British headquarters. Convinced that the British forces were actually on the verge of being wiped out, Soekarno got into a British truck and carrying a white flag, persuaded the armed Indonesians to call off the attack. This extricated the imperialists from a highly inflammable situation and enabled them to get a breathing spell to land more forces. This was done and in the early part of November 1945, the British opened a brutal assault on the city by air, sea and land. Through the criminal sabotage of the bourgeois nationalist Indonesian leaders, Surabaja was reopened for imperialist exploitation as Batavia had been before.

The masses showed dissatisfaction with Soekarno and to pacify them, he stepped out from power and a "socialist" Sjahrir became Premier of the "Republic" on November 13, 1945. Sjahrir, however, continued in the same path as Soekarno and worked together with the imperialists. The resistance of the Indonesian masses was bitterly denounced by this tool of the imperialists. A stage of dilatory negotiations then began between the Dutch imperialists and the Sjahrir government. This was a pure stalling device arranged by the imperialists to consolidate their gains and give them an opportunity to bring in more forces.

By July 20, 1947 the imperialists began the next phase in the war against the Indonesian masses. Equipped from the arsenals of American imperialism, 120,000 Dutch troops were ordered to attack the Indonesian workers and peasants. From the port cities originally yielded to the imperialist troops by the Indonesian bourgeois leadership, the Dutch troops fanned out in the mainland and occupied many strategic points. In the previous "negotiations" the Dutch imperialists pretended to recognize the Indonesian Republic, and to agree to independence of this Republic by January 1, 1949. The negotiations proved to be a hollow mockery; they were never intended to be serious to begin with. However, the bourgeois nationalist Indonesian leaders played up these negotiations and paralyzed the fighting will of the armed masses. The present imperialist slaughter was prepared from the beginning by the Indonesian leaders themselves. There will be more "negotiations" and more phoney agreements as a matter of course. As long as the present bourgeois leadership remains, and as long as the opportunist leadership prevails within the ranks of the Indonesian masses, the grip of imperialist exploitation will continue to tighten on the necks of the exploited Indonesian workers and peasants.

In the working class movement, the Trotskyites are calling for support to the Indonesian Republic. In the minds of the revolutionary workers this seems to be a slogan directed against the imperialists. However, calling for support in the abstract to the Indonesian Republic ties the masses to the treacherous bourgeois leadership and through them to the very imperialists directly oppressing the Indonesian masses.

We have already indicated how the British imperialists directly intervened to fasten the brutal Dutch rule in Indonesia. This British action was ordered by "His Majesty's Labor Government" which was elected to power with the vociferous support of the Trotskyites. Without the aid of the socialist and Stalinist forces in Europe and in Holland particularly, the assault of the Dutch in Indonesia would have been impossible. Yet the Trotskyites (both Cannon and Shachtman) are urging these very "socialists" and Stalinists into power. In short, the imperialist powers are not the only enemies in the field against the colonial masses. There is the traitorous bourgeois leadership tied with unbreakable bonds to the leading imperialist powers. Then there are the opportunist "socialist" and Stalin forces propping up this bourgeois leadership and the imperialist terror. Finally there is the Trotsky force giving support directly to the opportunists and thus preventing any progressive movement of the proletariat. A real struggle against imperialism is impossible without a consistent exposure of the opportunist forces within the proletariat. The

bourgeois nationalist and other opportunist forces in Indonesia tie the masses to the imperialist oppressors and prevent any genuine struggle to drive them out. Only the proletariat, following a revolutionary policy, can expel the imperialists and lead the Indonesian masses on the path of liberation.

July 31, 1947

THE TAFT-HARTLEY STRAITJACKET

Parallel with the war drive against the Soviet Union, the American imperialists have unleashed a sustained offensive against the trade union movement. First, through a series of provocations the American bosses whipped up a hysteria against the "abuses" of the unions and as a result have now successfully rammed through the vicious Taft-Hartley anti-labor act. This piece of legislation outlaws the closed shop, restricts the union shop, and establishes a broad range of restrictions on union activity in economic and political spheres.

The success of the bosses campaign is due principally to the opportunists in the leadership of the labor movement. The Murrays and Greens, the old line labor fakers dominating the trade unions, continued their role of preventing any serious struggle against the bosses. These bureaucrats have never even bothered to disguise their attachment to the capitalist system and their policy of class collaboration.

With such treacherous enemies of the working class in key positions of the trade union movement, and with the politically conscious workers under the spell of the Stalin, Social Democratic and other betraying forces, the capitalists have a free hand to intensify their repressive drive against the workers. Manifestly, the first step that must be taken to turn the tide in favor of the working class is an uncompromising exposure of the treacherous enemies within the working class ranks. It is these enemies lurking within that prevent the real struggle against the class enemy without. Significantly, the opportunist political forces dominating the more advanced workers fear such an exposure and divert attention from this task. Thus, during the campaign around the Taft-Hartley bill, the Stalin organ in the United States came out for a Murray-Green led "national protest strike:"

"This is an emergency and requires emergency measures. From all parts of the country trade unions are demanding that the AFL and CIO jointly call a one-day national protest strike. Such a stoppage would be the most decisive act to turn the tide against the Taft-Hartley Bill." (The Worker, June 8, 1947. Original Emphasis)

The word strike is calculated to play on the emotions of the class conscious workers who identify this word with a class struggle policy. But history has shown that there are all kinds of strikes. The intrinsic political character of a strike is determined by the nature of the leadership which formulates the aims and controls the policy.

Specifically, in the United States many large-scale strikes were led by the Stalin force, and demonstrations led by the same counter-revolutionary force around the issues of Sacco-Vanzetti, Unemployment, the Scottsboro Case, etc., were on a mass scale. This activity, while it did not shake the bourgeoisie, added prestige to the most potent betrayer in the working class movement, the Stalin international. In China, the Stalin force has gone further than simple strikes or demonstrations and actually leads the workers arms in hand in civil war in certain sections of the country. It is not the methods which are determinant but the fundamental role of the political force guiding the workers. Similarly, many large scale strikes have been headed by Social Democracy and by the old line labor fakers who naturally used the position of leadership only to betray the

workers more effectively. Any such movement, when led by reactionary political forces, does not and can not further the interests of the working masses.

The Stalinist leaders know that to call for a "national protest strike," with the trade unions under the thumb of the labor fakers, is the sheerest demagogy. Indeed, in such sharp issues of the class struggle the true character of all political forces emerges into the light of day. Thus the Cannonite Socialist Workers Party which shouts day in and day out of its "struggle" against the Stalin force, advocated the exact line of action proposed by Foster-Dennis & Co. The Cannon leadership adds that the formation of a labor party would ensure a defeat for the bosses and secure a victory for the workers. In Britain a labor party has actually come into political power, with the support of the Trotskyites. This party has simply carried on the policy of the bosses with a strikebreaking policy in England itself and a line of bloody colonial repression abroad. The Attlees and Bevins are only the English equivalents of the Greens, Murrays, Lewises, etc., with the difference that the American labor fakers are openly anti-Socialist in ideology. Cannon and Co. are only preparing further defeats and demoralization for the workers when they preach that a labor party is the only alternative to capitalist reaction.

Marching alongside the Cannon Trotskyites is the Shachtmanite Workers Party. If anything, the propaganda line of the latter organization is even more crass in its appeals to the labor fakers to do something for the workers:

"The AFL and the CIO can demand that Congress meet in joint session and hear what labor has to say. Green and Murray can tell these scoundrels not to pass that bill; that labor will not submit to this bill even if it is passed." (Labor Action, June 23, 1947 p. 4 Original Emphasis)

This bootlicking of the labor fakers is palmed off on the Trotskyite workers as a necessary feature of a so-called mass line. The reality is that the masses are chained to a variety of opportunist forces ranging from the openly pro-capitalist AFL and CIO leaders to the disguised reactionary political forces concealed behind socialist and revolutionary phraseology. Therefore, to put their line across, the Trotsky leaders have to pretend that under reactionary leadership progressive class actions are possible for the workers. Thus the Trotsky leaders shout for national protest strikes, marches on Washington, and other actions under the AFL and CIO leaders, with the formation of the labor party as political insurance. The line of the Stalin and Trotsky leaders functions to keep the workers tied in one way or another to the present reactionary trade union leadership and prevents any revolutionary development against capitalism.

July 1, 1947

THE TROTSKYITE "UNITY" NEGOTIATIONS -
A CASE STUDY IN POLITICAL DISHONESTY

On March 11, 1947 a statement was jointly issued by the National Committee of the Socialist Workers Party and the Workers Party recommending unification of the two organizations. An Extraordinary Party Convention was projected for the fall of this year; but no definite date was set. After reciting the above and providing that while the "negotiations are in progress, neither party will admit into its ranks, ^{and} individuals or groups who are now or have been members of the other party, except by agreement" the two National Committees went on to recommend unification in the following words:

"On the basis of the agreements and conditions outlined above, the two National Committees are recommending the unification of the two parties. If this recommendation is approved by the members of the two parties, as preliminary consultation indicates is most probable, the formal unification will take place as soon as the discussion now proceeding in the ranks of the two organizations is concluded. In the meantime a joint committee of the two organizations has been established, which is empowered to organize and arrange a program of cooperation and joint activities of the two parties in all possible fields of the class struggle, designed to lead up to and prepare the way for the formal unification." (Labor Action, March 24, 1947, my emphasis TFH.)

The statement is signed by James P. Cannon for the SWP and Max Shachtman for the WP.

In the light of subsequent events it will be well to recapitulate and evaluate some of the highlights of this document. One can not fail to be struck with the fact that this entire "unity" document revolves around the organizational points. The statement is made that previous discussions on unification were discontinued because no basis could be found for unification "given the existence of the recognized disagreements on a number of important questions." What these questions were and how important we shall examine later.

Then, literally without a single word as to the resolution of these differences, the statement goes on to the organizational details of the Extraordinary Party Convention and the nature of the discussions in preparation for it.

Let us pause a bit and analyze this. Here are two organizations whose leaders conclude a previous series of discussions without arriving even at a basis for going on with the discussions, according to their own statements. Then without anything to indicate that there has been a rapprochement in views a recommendation is made for "unity."

"The joint committee of the two organizations" referred to in the last paragraph of the statement was supposed to function as a temporary National Committee in effect, or, at least as an active Contact Commission. One would expect this committee to be very important. Nowhere do we find the slightest allusion in the columns of the MILITANT or LABOR ACTION to meetings or activities of this joint committee, whose constant day-to-day action was supposed to lay the basis for unification in reality.

Let us summarize at this point. Two organizations, which have just recently agreed that they have important differences, without having resolved these differences, without a word as to the mitigation of such differences in the joint statement, recommend "unity" on the basis of purely organizational measures designed in the final analysis to settle the distribution of posts.

But the thing becomes more and more mysterious. Months pass after the "unity" statement without a single word being heard from either side with the exception of sly digs known to the initiate, and directed in the columns of each paper against the other.

Suddenly, with a bang, in the July 5 issue of THE MILITANT in the form of a book review of a year old pamphlet, there appears a vicious attack on the Shachtman Trotskyites. This is followed a week later by the appearance of a column in THE MILITANT by J.R. Johnson, a former member of the Shachtman party, and but recently conducting a column in LABOR ACTION.

The careful reader will remember that both parties in the March 11 statement agreed that former or present members of one party would not be admitted into the other except by agreement. The July 28, 1947 issue of LABOR ACTION carries an article admitting that J.R. Johnson, member of the National Committee of the Workers Party had split away from that party with a group and that the group had announced its intention of applying for membership in the Socialist Workers Party. In this issue LABOR ACTION finally abandons its petitioning role, stigmatizes the "unprincipled" bloc of Cannon, defender of Stalinist Russia, leader of "those who seek to transform the revolutionary movement into the left wing of reactionary Stalinism," and J.R. Johnson, leader of the group which has "been known in particular as the champions of the theory that Russia is a fascist capitalist state."

This same article sings the swan song of "unity" in the last two paragraphs:

"The split from the Workers Party is accompanied by repeated protestations by the Johnsonites that they are still in favor of the unification of the Workers Party and the SWP, to which the two parties are still formally committed in a joint statement for unity they signed last March. It is clear, however, that if Johnson actually looked forward to an early unification between the two parties, he would not have precipitated a split at this time but would have waited to make his political alliance after the unity was achieved.

"It is equally clear that the same holds true for anyone who encouraged the split at this time. If the split leads to the admission of the Johnsonites into the SWP, a step to which the WP cannot and will not offer any objection, it will plainly show that the SWP leadership, which has already in practice ruled out unity with the WP, has decided to nullify even the paper existence to which it has reduced the joint agreement on unity."

Several questions literally demand answers. Why was there a "unification statement" in the first place? What were the forces for "unity"? What were the forces against "unity"? To the answers to these questions we shall devote the remainder of this article.

FORCES FOR UNITY

In considering the question as to why there was any move toward "unity," we have to differentiate sharply between the motives of the rank and file and the leadership of both organizations. In view of the fact that most of the recent membership of both organizations was brought in on the basis of support to the Labor Party, or work in the trade unions, or anti-fascist demonstrations, and in further view of the fact that this same rank and file of both organizations saw only minute and hairsplitting distinctions on these points, it is easy to see that they were wondering why there should be two organizations.

But as the subsequent events show, these motivations played no

decisive role with the leadership. Shachtman and Cannon and Johnson and Goldman and all the rest of the experienced bureaucrats in both organizations were aware of the fact that the 1940 split occurred on an absolutely unprincipled basis on the part of both factions. This is most clearly shown on the one hand by J.P. Cannon's "History of American Trotskyism" and on the other by the documents of Shachtman-Burnham-Abern and company at the time of the split, particularly "The War and Bureaucratic Conservatism."

On the part of the Shachtman group the "unity" maneuver was dictated by a pressure on the part of the rank and file but still more by the fact that the Shachtman Workers Party was declining in membership, funds, number of union contacts and size of its paper. In a discussion preceding the New York City convention of the Workers Party in 1945, one of their national leaders, Ernest Erber stated: "If everyone agrees that the morale of the membership is terribly low, that the members do not have much confidence in the leading committees, that significant numbers are beginning to lose confidence in the future of our party, that recruiting has all but stopped, that a serious financial problem is developing, if everyone agrees to this as the state of affairs today, I will not quibble with those who shy away from the word 'crisis.'" (Ernest Erber, "Comments on NY City convention discussion, City Committee Bulletin, Dec. 31, 1945. My emphasis, TFH)

Splitting from the official movement in 1940, the Shachtman group still attempted to base itself on the name and prestige of Leon Trotsky. But in this contest as to who should hang on most desperately to Trotsky's mantle Shachtman was tremendously handicapped by the fact that Trotsky himself had been compelled to disavow him and that this disavowal was of course known to the membership of both organizations. Faced with the prospect of gradual disintegration of his organization Shachtman was compelled to approach the official Trotsky organization for "unity", no doubt figuring that it was better to be Cannon's "partner" once more than not to appear in "mass" politics at all.

So far as Cannon was concerned one can be sure that he was not desirous of having a permanent factional opposition installed in his "monolithic" organization. But to oppose this openly would mean that many of his duped rank and file might wonder as to opposition to "unity" when the Shachtman group was making signs of readiness to all kinds of capitulations. Shachtman originally started off with a demand for a separate factional organ in the "united" party, but in the process of dickering between Cannon and himself, agreed to insist only on the abstract right to publish such an organ without exercising that right. Also the Cannon rank and file must have been impressed by the fact that after Cannon had pointed out on April 9, 1946 eleven differences between the two parties, that Shachtman came back on April 30, admitting the differences, but saying that he did not think they would or should prevent "unification." The cynical nature of this is shown by one sentence, which we quote in full.

"However, inasmuch as it cannot be maintained that the leadership of the SWP is unacquainted with the position of the Workers Party on the questions in dispute, it seems to us that it is its obligation, as a party leadership, to take a position on the question of unity and to recommend it to the membership." (Letter from the Political Committee of the Workers Party to the National Committee of the Socialist Workers Party, April 30, 1946, quoted in Internal Bulletin, SWP of August 1946, entitled "Revolutionary Marxism or Petty Bourgeois Revisionism?")

In view of the capitulatory gestures of the desperate Shachtman, Cannon found it difficult to shake off the persistent beggar with his cries of "Unity, unity!" Despite the open war, even though somewhat one-sided, that broke out with the publication of the Internal Bulletin referred to above, Shachtman continued to hold out his tin cup for any "unity" alms that Cannon

might drop in it. So persistent was the prodding that Cannon was finally forced to sign the unification statement of March 11, 1947, at which time, or shortly thereafter, it is most likely that he began to collaborate with J.R. Johnson in the task of splitting the Shachtman organization.

It is obvious from the above that Cannon never had any serious intention of unity. And why should he? With a membership four times the size of the Workers Party, with many more trade union contacts, with a press enjoying a circulation twice as great as that of the Shachtmanites, there was no reason for Cannon to permit a thorn in his bureaucratic side. He temporized until such time as he could stick a political knife in Shachtman's back.

FORCES AGAINST UNITY

It is more than likely that were the above the only factors involved they would have favored "unity" rather than otherwise. But, in the meantime, since the 1940 split, there had been an evolution in the Workers Party which was very important. Our readers will be familiar with our brochure: "Cannon's 'Struggle for a Proletarian Party'" in which we went at some length into the question of the 1940 split and showed irrefutably that it was not based on "the Russian question", but on a struggle for power between rival cliques. In this connection we shall here just cite the one fact that in the bloc of Shachtman-Burnham-Abern against Cannon, each of the three had a different position on the Russian question and were only animated by their bureaucratic hatred of Cannon. But, having once rigged up some sort of a difference on Russia, and Shachtman having thereafter concocted a theory of "Bureaucratic Collectivism", there began to develop an actual rift. On the one hand Cannon maintained his original position, traditional to Trotsky of being a left wing tail to Stalin. On the other, the internal evolution of the ideas of the Shachtmanites, in the world situation of sharpening antagonism between imperialism and the Stalin bureaucracy brought them into a position of a left wing of imperialism. A softening of the international antagonisms would have furnished a probability of the success of Shachtman's effort to get back into the official Trotsky organization. A sharpening has had the opposite tendency. It is time now to take a look at the political differences.

The best material for the establishment of these differences is to be found in the Internal Bulletin of the Cannonites already referred to, "Revolutionary Marxism or Petty Bourgeois Revisionism?", published August 1946, just about a half year before the "unity" statement of March 11, 1947. This 32 page pamphlet is a declaration of war on the Shachtmanites. The document lists the points of difference between the two Trotskyite groups. It also includes a letter of the SWP to the WP of April 10, 1946, and a reply of April 30. The latter is a weak, diffident attempt at a reply to the accusations of the pamphlet, admitting the differences but stating, as we have quoted above that Cannon should recommend "unity" anyway. The main thing that was established by the interchange was that in April 1946, there was already a polarization, one pole being occupied by the SWP as a defender of the Stalinist-controlled Soviet Union and an apologist for the Soviet bureaucracy, the other pole being occupied by the WP against defense of the Soviet Union and for support to bourgeois democracy. The Cannon statement reads:

"The role of the bureaucracy, however, is a contradictory one. On the one hand it undermines, weakens and deals blows to the economic foundations of the Soviet State. On the other hand, in its own way, by its own bureaucratic methods, it defends the social basis of the October Revolution from world imperialism." (p. 6)

The Shachtmanites counter this position with their own.

"We do not consider Russia a workers' state in any sense whatsoever. We

consider it a reactionary social order which we characterize as bureaucratic-collectivism. We are against the defense of the Stalinist state." (Letter of Political Committee of the WP to SWP, April 30, 1946)

"The struggle for national freedom is now on the order of the day in advanced capitalist countries... an indispensable prelude of the struggle for socialism." (Resolution, WP- Now International, Jan.-Feb. 1943)

From the above citations we can see the following. The Cannonites not only reaffirm their slogan of "unconditional defense of the Soviet Union" but ascribe a progressive role to the Stalinist bureaucracy in that defense. This is clearly a position of political support. That all this is coupled with the usual "criticism" goes without saying. The important point is that Cannon aids the Stalinist bureaucracy and acts as an apologist for this reactionary force.

The Shachtmanites, on the other hand, not only reject any defense of the Soviet Union, but go to the other camp and embrace the thesis that a bourgeois national period is on the order of the day.

Now it is obvious that either the SWP or the WP would have to change its position on the international situation in order to favor "unity." Certainly with the international situation developing towards war between imperialism and the Stalin-controlled Soviet Union, with Cannon remaining a stooge to Stalin with Shachtman leaning towards the imperialists, all talk about "unity" became ludicrous. Let us therefore see: 1. On the international scene has there been a lessening or strengthening of the antagonisms between the imperialist world and the Soviet Union? 2. Has there been any change or even tendency to change on the part of either the Cannon or the Shachtman leaders?

As to the first question all the evidence shows a sharpening of the antagonisms between the capitalist world and the Soviet Union. This is not denied by either The Militant or Labor Action.

In regard to the second question there has been no change on the part of the Cannonites or the whole official "Fourth International" in their policy of "unconditional defense of the Soviet Union" or the following of the Trotsky heritage of painting the bureaucracy in "contradictory" and "progressive" colors.

There has been a change on the part of the Shachtmanites but it is in the direction of greater and greater orientation to the imperialist camp as the "lesser evil" to the Stalinists. We have already cited in The Bulletin how Labor Action "hailed" an electoral victory of German Social Democracy at the same time acknowledging the German Social Democracy to be a tool of German and world capitalism. (Labor Action, Nov. 4, 1946)

In another situation the Shachtmanites have also clearly indicated their imperialist orientation. When Poland fell into the hands of the Stalinists, there remained in that country a considerable bourgeois opposition grouped around Mikolajczak. Upon this bourgeois opposition world imperialism counts in the coming war. For a real proletarian revolutionist there could be no question of support to either Stalin or Mikolajczak. But in a series of articles by one Rudzinski in their press, the Shachtmanites again came out for support to the Mikolajczak camp as the "lesser evil."

But the classic example and best proof of the Shachtmanite imperialist orientation is on the question of Trieste. Around this strategic city a terrific diplomatic struggle raged last year between the Stalinists and imperialists. In this situation what was the position of the Shachtmanites? We quote from

LABOR ACTION of December 9, 1946, page 7:

"The real choice is, therefore, between adherence to Yugoslavia or to Italy. Remaining consistent democrats, the Marxists favor adherence to Italy. Questions of ethnic majority are not decisive in this instance. What is decisive is that Yugoslavia is a dictatorship that is rapidly becoming totalitarianized in the complete Russian pattern, while Italy is a bourgeois democracy, wretched and unstable, but a bourgeois democracy nevertheless."

With Cannon remaining adamant in his support of the Stalinist bureaucracy, while Shachtman moved right into the imperialist camp in all but name, the prospects of unity grew remote. Not that matters of principle bother either the Cannon or Shachtman bureaucrats. This is most palpably illustrated by the bloc of Johnson and Cannon right at the present time in spite of the fact that Johnson speaks of the Soviet Union as a fascist capitalist state and Cannon adheres to the Trotsky formula of a "degenerated workers' state." But Johnson, after all, is a minor cog in the political machine, and it would be much more difficult to effect "unity" in the case of the main organizations than for Cannon to pull a deal with Johnson.

It is amusing to note that in attempting to hit back at Johnson, the Shachtman leaders castigate his "unity" position as unprincipled because it leaves the Russian question in the background and elevates agreement on immediate questions in the United States as primary:

"In doing so, the Johnsonites have found themselves obliged to shove into the background and reduce to trivialities the vital and fundamental political and theoretical questions that have divided and still remain unresolved in the international Trotskyist movement; and to hide their own views on these questions. In their place, they have announced in their document the anti-Marxist and essentially nationalistic theory that the revolutionary party in the United States can be based solely upon the perspective of the American revolution." (Labor Action, July 28, 1947)

The WP leaders seized upon a very effective point to demonstrate the opportunism of the Johnson faction. The Russian question can not be compartmentalized or ignored; it is integrally related to an entire political line. Only one essential feature was omitted in the Shachtman attack on Johnson's unprincipled unity move. The truth was that the WP leaders themselves were willing to utilize the exact same excuse peddled by Johnson later. Goldman boldly stated in so many words as a proposal for unity precisely what Johnson was to do later when he unified forces with Cannon:

"As convinced as I am that defending Stalinist totalitarianism in any way, shape or form is a crime against the socialist revolution, I am of the opinion that a split is not justified on this issue, primarily because it does not directly concern the American working class. The American workers will not be set into motion by any slogan for or against the defense of Russia or Stalinist Poland.....The American workers will be mobilized on questions that deal with the American scene or they will not be mobilized at all." ("Unity - Will it Work?" The New International, April 1947, p 107)

It was Shachtman's line which gave Johnson the out he needed, and he seized it. It was only Cannon's attitude which prevented Shachtman and Co. from carrying out this fraudulent "unity" themselves.

THE RANK AND FILE

The most disturbing factor in this whole sordid picture is the

passive manner in which the rank and file of both Trotskyite organizations allows itself to be used as dice to be thrown by bureaucratic gamblers. Coming in to one or the other of the Trotskyite organizations because they thereby believe that they can fight for Socialism, the rank and file members are soon caught in the "mass work" trap of the leadership and have their attention and energies taken up with all sorts of Labor Party and trade union activity while the leaders proceed with harnessing them either to Stalin or to the imperialists.

In this deplorable political situation in which the rank and file find themselves, they can get considerable aid by studying the lessons of this whole "unity" business. Particularly as they penetrate into the truth of the matter will they be struck by the unprincipled nature of their bureaucratic leadership. And when they will have realized this and upon examination of the respective political lines also discover that they have been duped into support either of Stalin or the imperialists, ^{who retain elements of their honesty} and those of them who will begin to break from the corrupt leadership. The rank and file have been presented with such a clear exposure of unprincipledness in these "unity" negotiations that they cannot just shut their eyes and refuse to look at the facts. If the rank and file does proceed from an examination of the unprincipled nature of the "unity" negotiations to an examination of the forces militating against unity, if it breaks with the masked supporters of Stalin and imperialism, it can, together with us, form the cadres for a real workers' international and serve as effective fighters for socialism instead of bureaucratic dupes of Wall Street or the Kremlin.

T.F. Harden
July 1947

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take the first step towards the restoration of normal Party life by regarding it as necessary, after this declaration, to reinstate those who have been expelled, to release those arrested for their oppositional activities, and to give us all the opportunity of proving the firmness of this our resolution by our work in the Party.

We do not doubt that similar measures in the Comintern with regard to those really sharing our views - these of course ceasing their fractional activity - will at the same time have the effect of restoring the normal conditions in the other sections of the Comintern.

Before the Party Congress, and during the Party discussion, we defended our views determinedly and energetically. Having resolved to submit to the Party Congress, we shall carry out this resolution with equal determination and energy, as faithful soldiers of the Bolshevik proletarian army.

(121 signatures follow.)

For the genuineness of the signatures:

L. Kamenev

3rd December, 1927.

THE WORK OF CANNON AND SHACHTMAN
IN THE TRADE UNIONS

PART VIII - THE SELL-OUT OF THE AUTO WORKERS

With the termination of the war situation, the American workers stirred restively against the fetters of the no-strike pledge. The rise in living costs accompanied by the fabulous profits coined by the bosses created an automatic strike situation when the excuse that "there's a war on" could no longer be applied.

In this context, the class interests of the bosses produced a seemingly unique line on their part. In contrast to their policy in the early thirties, the bosses did not drive against the workers through paycuts. Rather the bosses generally pursued a policy of offering wage rises, though inadequate as a rule to meet the rising cost of living. In some cases the bosses actually seemed to welcome strike situations, made no effort to reopen plants that were struck and provoked strikes where no strike situation existed. Gradually the overall strategy of the capitalists became clear. A hysteria was organized through all the mediums of capitalist propaganda against strikes and the "irresponsibility of labor." Under the pressure of this stage-managed hullabaloo the capitalists were able to win such a key point as the outlawing of "wildeat" strikes in important contract settlements, tying the workers in an iron vise to the class collaborationist union leadership. Political legislation was created to straitjacket the trade unions as a whole.

A major factor aiding the bosses' offensive was the line of the American trade union leadership. The labor lieutenants of the bourgeoisie knew from first hand experience of the workers dissatisfaction with the no-strike pledge. The labor fakers knew that the no-strike pledge had worn thin and that they had to pretend to put up some sort of fight against the bosses. It was readily understood that the workers could not be gotten to accept inadequate pay rises without some sort of strike action. In this instance, had they tried to cram these raises down the workers' throats, the cry of sellout and collusion with the bosses would have an irrefutable basis in open facts. Being experienced hands in misleading the workers, the union fakers calculated that if the workers felt they were winning these increases through strike action they would be easily fooled into imagining that they had won something through their own efforts. The sellout of the workers now took place behind the noise of strikes and with the slick labor bureaucrats maneuvering the strike pay issues to revolve around figures set by the capitalist government itself.

THE GENERAL MOTORS STRIKE

Spearheading the strike wave after the termination of the war situation was the strike launched at General Motors on November 21, 1945, lasting a total of 113 days. This was a strike of major importance and the ultimate settlement naturally set a pattern for others. The activity of the political forces involved provide a fair measure of the line these forces pursued in the total strike situation.

Heading the United Automobile Workers Union was a set of tried and tested labor swindlers. In a previous section of this series we had occasion to deal with the rotten clique fight in this union in its youthful days. These gang struggles persisted although the bureaucrats contending for power always line up as one when threatened by the rank and file. The no-strike pledge which had been obligingly enforced by the Auto Union leaders was only a formalization of the general line. Strikebreaking, hounding of union militants and connivance with the bosses were the regular stock in trade of

Thomas-Reuther-Addes-Leonard and other bureaucrats of the U.A.W. In the GM strike, the spotlight turned on Walter Reuther, vice-president of the U.A.W., and head of the General Motors Department of the union. Reuther was in the key position of direct leadership in the strike. As we are examining here the trade union work of the Trotskyites, we will first have to establish the policy Reuther had in this strike and then see how the Trotskyites stood in relation to Reuther.

In the negotiations with the General Motors Corporation, the U.A.W. leadership put forth the demand for a 30% wage increase. Armed with voluminous statistics, Reuther and his aides easily showed that the auto barons could raise wages 30% without price increases and still clear more profit than that shown for "normal" periods. This was more or less confirmed in a confidential report of the Reconversion Advisory Board prepared by government economists.

The class collaborationist ideology of Reuther was dinned into the ears of the U.A.W. and other workers. The idea was: it is perfectly all right for the parasitic auto moguls to coin fabulous profits out of the labor of the exploited auto workers; all that is necessary is some sugar coating for the seething workers. The class collaborationist poison pumped into the workers by the Reuther gang and its supporters was an issue of far greater importance to the proletariat.

The boss press made it appear that Reuther was a strike agitator. Actually, the pressure for a strike came not from Reuther but from the ranks, as the Trotsky press observed:

"Not until yesterday, after several GM locals in Flint had proceeded on their own to take local strike votes and submit their own petitions, was Walter Reuther, vice-president of the UAW in charge of all GM locals, finally prodded into filing the week-old petition for a corporation wide strike." (The Militant, Sept. 29, 1945 p.1)

When the strike issue was finally joined, Reuther and the other leaders designed a subtle trap for the striking workers. First they devised the "one at a time" strike strategy. This flimflam pictured the GM, Ford, Chrysler, and other auto companies as "competitors" and that the correct course was to strike one at a time and let the effect of imaginary competition force presumably favorable settlements. Of course, the Auto Companies are highly monopolized as is American industry as a whole. This was not unknown to the U.A.W. bureaucrats, but as the bosses wanted the auto strike confined to GM as a test case, the U.A.W. leaders had to invent some arguments justifying this line of action on their part. The Auto Union leaders distorted the facts on monopoly capitalism to make their line of action plausible to the militant rank and file.

Thus the GM strike began with the other auto companies operating full blast. Having successfully isolated the GM auto workers from the other auto workers, the Reuther leadership went ahead on the second step in its sabotaging line. The huge GM office personnel was allowed to keep working and auto pickets were ordered by the union leaders to stay away from the GM administration building.

Then came the third move by the UAW leaders which clearly showed their crooked hand. While the GM plants were struck, negotiations were held with the Ford Motor Company. The union leadership proposed a "union security" plan; a scheme providing for the fining and firing of union militants who go out on strike without prior authorization from the top. This was prompted by

the so-called wildcat strikes at Ford which were directed against both the bosses and the union bureaucrats. The "union security" plan was an open proposal for a job trust and legalized, ^{the} conspiracy between the union officials and the bosses. The excuse given to the workers for this strikebreaking plan was that this would secure a big wage concession from the Ford Motor Company and that this would set the pattern for GM and other auto corporations. What actually happened was that no substantial wage concession was forthcoming from Ford and a damaging blow was struck at the morale of the GM workers.

President Truman took official notice of the GM strike and appointed a "fact-Finding Commission" to look into the GM case. This was a stalling device and has long been used by the imperialist politicians. Obviously the "facts" were known; but the implication behind the appointment of a Fact Finding body is that the facts are somehow yet to be ascertained. In truth, the real intent behind the "fact finding" trick was to bamboozle the GM workers. After a little noise for the record, Reuther and the other U.A.W. leaders eventually crowned their betraying policy by agreeing to this arbitrary concoction and in effect endorsed the board beforehand. This phase of the affair was understood by the Trotskyites:

"Reuther and the other UAW leaders are being sucked into a position where they will be impelled, under terrific government pressure and manufactured 'public opinion' to accept some miserable 'compromise' proposed by the Fact-Finding Board - a Board which the UAW leaders have, in effect, endorsed." (The Militant, Jan. 5, 1946 p.2)

The Board ultimately finished its pretense at fact finding and came forth with the anticipated compromise: a 19½ cent pay increase. The GM corporation countered with a proposal for an increase of 18½ cents and refused to budge. But Reuther and Company were not so inflexible; the 30 percent "demand" was unhesitatingly dumped and the Truman Board proposition was endorsed. For appearances' sake, the Reuther leadership gave the GM bosses a deadline to "accept." But the GM plutocrats, unlike the misled auto workers, knew the calibre of the Reuthers. The "deadline" came and passed but there was no yielding from the Corporation. Reuther and Co. then went through the farce of "withdrawing" the compromise offering and again advancing the 30 percent "demand." The strike dragged on another few weeks and the estimate made by the GM negotiators of the nature of Reuther et al was vindicated when the UAW leadership in March 1946 capitulated miserably to the stand of the corporation. The 18½ cent increase was adopted as the basis for the settlement. This niggardly boost was, of course, inadequate to meet the rising cost of living.

From the one-at-a-time hocus pocus to the collaboration with Truman's Board, the Reuther leadership moved in a consistent fashion to betray the strike. With the Reuther leadership at the helm a sell out was inevitable. If there were some advanced workers who were confused on this point before or during the strike, there certainly was no room for debate after the betrayal had been consummated. A truly revolutionary policy would have been to explain the meaning of the GM sell-out to the auto workers and as a basis for exposure would have used the policies ^{advocated by Reuther} and the other leaders during the strike. The lesson would have been drawn that only a revolutionary leadership with a class struggle policy could really combat the capitalist forces and lead the workers to significant victories. What line was pursued by the Trotsky leaders who claim to represent a revolutionary tendency?

THE TROTSKYITE POLICY IN THE AUTO UNION

During the course of the GM strike the Trotskyites criticized the conduct of the UAW leaders, but at the same time were issuing abstract slogans such as

"SUPPORT THE U.A.W." These slogans were voiced by the U.A.W. leaders themselves who naturally identified such slogans with support of their leadership. Reuther's slogan of "Open the Books" was enthusiastically endorsed as a masterpiece of union strategy by the Trotsky press although Reuther made no bones about his pro-capitalist outlook: "Open the Books! An Answer to GM." (The Militant, Jan. 19, 1946 p.2) However, the real substance of the Trotsky line was soon to appear clearly in the light of day. Immediately after the GM strike in March 1946, a convention of the UAW was held. The conduct of the GM strike was very much an issue in the U.A.W. But as is highly typical of the labor fakery a legitimate union issue was converted into a factional football to serve in clique fights for jobs. On the one hand was the Reuther gang and its supporters and on the other hand the Addes, Thomas faction, aided by the Stalin crew. A clear stand had to be taken without straddling; either participation in the crooked inter-union clique politics by support of one or another faction, or the revolutionary road of uncompromising exposure and opposition to both factions and the advocacy of the independent interests of the workers. This latter line would have rescued the issue of strike policy from its factional context and used the valuable lessons of the GM strike to clarify the rank and file on the true nature of their leadership.

The Cannon leadership made clear its opposition to the Addes-Thomas camp. What, then, was its attitude toward the Reuther leadership? That Reuther was an established sell-out artist was freely conceded by the Trotsky writers:

"For instance, the entire UAW Executive Board - and that includes Reuther, voted endorsement of the original and worst 'company security' proposal made by the UAW representatives in the Ford negotiations. He was the author of the 'one-at-a-time' strategy which helped to isolate the GM strikers instead of the General Motors Corporation. He weakened under government pressure and participated in Truman's 'fact-finding' procedure. Nor should Reuther's wartime policy be forgotten. He gave full support to the imperialist slaughter, helped put over and enforce the no-strike policy, and took the lead in selling the fraudulent 'equality of sacrifice' program to the union." (The Militant, March 23, 1946 p.2)

The Cannon party readily acknowledged that there was no basic difference in program between the Reuther gang and the Thomas bunch.

"However, his (Reuther-Ed) program was released in a convention paper issued by his group following the meeting. Except for language and phraseology, it scarcely differs from the program of Thomas-Addes." (Ibid.)

So far did Reuther go in his crooked factional maneuvering, that he even catered to Jim Crow elements in the union. (Fourth International, May 1946 p.151)

Principled considerations, it seemed, dictated an exposure of the rotten Reuther mob as well as the Thomas-Addes leadership. But as we have shown so often in this series, it is not principled considerations which guide the Cannon policy. When the Trotsky leaders had to take their stand, they came out clearly in support to Reuther; naturally identifying themselves with what they called the "advanced militants" in the union:

"This time, however, it is clear that most of the advanced militants, who in 1944 opposed Reuther along with the rest of the top UAW leaders are preparing to back him for the UAW presidency and are associating themselves with his caucus." (The Militant, March 23, 1946 p.2)

And what was the reason given for this switch to Reuther? No less than the alleged fact that his role in the GM strike established him as a

progressive leader:

"As a result of his role in the General Motors strike, Reuther has re-established his reputation as a progressive union leader in the eyes of most UAW militants." (Ibid.)

If it were true that Reuther had become associated with a militant trade union policy in the eyes of many misguided workers, all the more reason to expose and cast out this agent of the bosses. But in the opportunist logic of the Trotsky leaders what was required was simply a little sugar coating to Reuther's program. Perhaps then Cannon would have something to show the "advanced militants" that it was necessary to support Reuther:

"To make the victory of the Reuther caucus a victory for the whole rank and file and not merely for a small individual or a small clique, the UAW militants must establish a program which will correct the deep-going flaws disclosed in the recent strike struggles." (Ibid.)

As in the case of Homer Martin, when the Trotskyites thought they smelled a possibility of a handout and jumped over to this putrid flunkey of the bosses, so now they emerged as choir boys for Reuther. To whitewash such a soiled character, the Trotskyites had to rewrite the history of the 113 day GM strike. Thus Reuther was presented as a fighting leader against the bosses:

"It was the merit of Reuther, that, by and large, he gave the GM strike aggressive leadership." (Fourth International, May 1946)

Due to the subjectively revolutionary character of the Trotskyite membership, the Cannon leaders have to present Reuther in a positive light in order to get their members to support him. He must be shown as an aggressive union leader following what is termed "progressive" policies. On the other hand, the Reuthers, Lewises and other trade union leaders do not have the particular problem of the Cannon leadership and therefore feel free to speak frankly on many occasions. On one such occasion, Reuther admitted his participation in the strikebreaking proposal made by the UAW leaders to the Ford Motor Company:

"On the question whether the union should agree with management to insert union responsibility clauses in future contracts, Mr. Reuther did not deny that as a member of the top strike strategy committee of the UAW he had permitted the inclusion of such a clause in the agreement with the Ford Motor Company. (The New York Times, April 17, 1946)

A short time later, Reuther expressed himself as being very much concerned that the auto output (i.e. the speedup of the auto workers) be increased. Reuther's statement in this connection was in no way distinguishable from similar appeals from the top capitalist bandits:

"An invitation to the heads of the automobile industry to join leaders of the United Automobile Workers, CIO, in a conference on how to increase automobile production was sent out today by Walter P. Reuther, UAW-CIO president." (The New York Times, July 28, 1946)

Yet the Cannon leadership found no difficulty in singing praises of this labor cop for the bosses. The Trotskyite workers were again attached by their leadership to a poisonous labor betrayer and made to serve the cause of an enemy of the working class.

THE SHACHTMAN LEADERSHIP AND REUTHER

If anything, the Shachtmanites are even more blunt in whooping it up

for Reuther:

"We support the Reuther tendency as against the Addes-Thomas-Stalinist bloc and work for its victory in the union." (Labor Action, 4/21/47 p.6)

How does Reuther stand on the issue of a class struggle policy, according to the Workers Party leadership? Alas and alack, he turns out to be nothing but an undisguised defender of the capitalist system:

"Reuther himself is a defender of the 'free enterprise' system, that is of capitalism." (Ibid.)

But perhaps the Shachtman tendency, unlike the Cannonite SWP, has discovered a better argument for supporting Reuther? Is it that Reuther is supposedly "protecting" the union from the Stalin gang a la Homer Martin in 1938? If this is the answer the Shachtman worker hopes to find, then he is in for a rude disappointment:

"How does Reuther expect to protect the union from the Stalinists when his platform is essentially no different from theirs." (Labor Action 5/6/46 p.2)

It would seem that the record clearly establishes Reuther as a labor swindler, if only from the admissions from the Shachtman press. But like the Cannon press, the Shachtman organization caters to advanced workers. To make support to Reuther more palatable, he has to be painted in radical colors. Therefore, when it is felt necessary by the Shachtman writers, Reuther is pictured as a possible convert to some sort of "progressive" policy:

"The 'Reuther caucus' shows the possibility of becoming not merely another union faction but a serious movement within organized labor of profoundly progressive significance. Reuther is rising as the spokesman for this tendency, as the man who articulates and formulates its demands and policies." (Labor Action, June 24, 1946 p.2)

The support to Reuther is another illustration of the reactionary policy which the Trotsky tendencies pursue in the trade unions. Never guided by the independent interests of the toiling masses but always by the paltry considerations of factional expediency, the malodorous record of the Trotskyites in the unions has consisted in hooking the workers to one or another sort of reactionary political force. Depending on the opportunist needs of the moment, such a force may be the Stalin gang whom the Trotsky leaders openly supported, as in the period of Dual Unionism (1928-32), in the Food Workers Union in 1940, etc. or to such labor fakery as a John L. Lewis or a Homer Martin. In this indirect fashion the Trotskyites reveal that were they in positions of union control, there would be no change in sellout policy. And indeed, when the Trotskyites did have an opportunity to play a leading role as in the Minneapolis Teamsters strike of 1934 (See Part II of this series) they put over as neat a sellout on their own initiative as any of the more well-known labor fakery. What there is of Trotsky mass work in the unions is purely of a reactionary character as shown by the documentary record presented in this series.

TO BE CONCLUDED IN THE NEXT ISSUE

THE WORKERS PARTY IN THE CAMP OF REACTION

Since the conclusion of the "Second World War", the world has been more and more solidly divided between the imperialists and the Stalin bureaucracy. The bureaucracy's line is one of consolidating the occupied territories in its own brutal manner and the imperialist policy is one of espousing the cause of "democracy" in these territories, as "guaranteed" at Teheran and Yalta. The imperialists are loudly protesting the suppression of the elements which are in opposition to the Stalin bureaucracy and are protesting Stalin's rigged elections and his puppet regimes as violations of the agreements concluded from 1943 to 1945. In short, the imperialist policy is one of shaping the mind of the masses for support to the forthcoming war.

Insofar as degree of reaction is concerned, there is no choice whatsoever between the imperialists or the Soviet bureaucracy. The policies of both can only mean intensification of reaction against the working class and any support to either of these forces or their agents will lead the proletariat to disaster. The only method of forestalling the "Third World War" is by conscious action of the masses who must be shown the fatal trap into which they are being led when they support either of these forces. Many advanced workers are objectively bent upon such a struggle but there are hidden obstacles in the way of this fight. The hidden obstacles are the various forces within the working class which pretend to be opposing Stalin and the imperialists but who remain attached to one or the other of these reactionary camps. Obviously, if the advanced workers are misled into supporting reaction, that is the only course they can present for the backward masses to follow.

One of the organizations which professes to fight for the proletarian cause is the Workers Party. Its rank and file members realize the need to fight both Stalinism and imperialism but what is the actual line being laid down by that organization's leadership? The Workers Party claims to be uncompromisingly opposed to both imperialism and the Stalin led forces:

"We affirm rather that support of either democratic capitalism or Stalinism in a war means support to the social forces leading humanity to the abyss of barbarism." (The New International, April 1947. p110)

It will be instructive to examine, against the background of the above general affirmation the line that organization actually promulgates for the masses.

As specified in the agreements of Teheran and Yalta between the imperialists and Stalin, the occupied territories of Europe were "guaranteed" democratic "freely elected" governments. This meant in effect the granting of ^{freedom of} political activity to those elements opposing the stooge governments set up by Stalin in his occupied zone. The very existence of these opposition forces, therefore, was originally guaranteed by the imperialists in the 1943-1945 series of agreements and they are sponsoring and supporting these oppositions now. The remnants of the national bourgeoisie, petty bourgeoisie, Social Democrats etc, the Nagys, the Mikolajczyks and others, are vitally important to the present imperialist machinations. It is because of these elements that the Anglo-American bourgeoisies are able to intervene with protest after protest at the suppression of "democratic liberties" and the "democratic" forces and to thereby paint the picture of Stalin's aggressions against "free" peoples.

In short, the democratic bourgeois oppositions which the imperialists are backing are the very means whereby the peace ideology of the masses is being changed to a war ideology. The struggle in the Stalin occupied territories between the agents of the imperialists and those of the bureaucracy are in actuality the preparatory political skirmishes for the "Third World War."

The political attitude towards these stooge elements of imperialism constitutes the acid test of every tendency within the working class. What, then is the position of the Workers Party on this question? In the case of the Polish opposition to Stalin, that position is stated openly in The New International of July 1947:

"The political line of the Marxists must, therefore, be one of critical support to the Mikolajczyk camp." (p138)

In characterizing the composition of the Mikolajczyk camp, The New International states that "the predominant character of the opposition is that of a bourgeois-democratic movement, mainly composed of peasants, reflecting in the underground the political views of the Peasant Party." (Ibid. p137).. The WP insists, however, that despite the bourgeois democratic composition of the Polish Opposition, the Mikolajczyk camp is not serving imperialism:

"It is a fact that the Anglo-Saxon imperialism tries to take advantage of the Mikolajczyk opposition for its own ends, but this does not mean that the worker-peasant opposition is a mere instrument of imperialism and represents the reactionary Polish bourgeoisie. The proletariat also has the right to take advantage of the inter-imperialist contradictions for its own ends without being bound to either imperialist camp." (Ibid. p146)

This paragraph is a complete distortion of the existing situation in Poland. The political views of the Mikolajczyk-led forces in Poland are those of the Peasant Party, views which are in the interests of the bourgeoisie. It is true that the Polish masses desire political and economic freedom but their desires are no measure whatsoever of the actual line being carried out by the Mikolajczyk camp. The character of the Polish Opposition is pro-capitalist, the policies of Mikolajczyk, therefore, coincide in no way with the interests of the proletariat and the poor peasantry. The Workers Party strengthens the mistaken notion of the masses that they are serving their own interests in some way by backing the agents of the Polish bourgeoisie.

It is naked sophistry for the WP to say that 1- it is true that the Anglo-American imperialists try to take advantage of the Mikolajczyk Opposition for its own ends, 2- to point out that the proletariat "has the right" to take advantage of the Stalin-imperialist conflict, and 3- to come up with the completely false conclusion, from these two entirely separate facts, that as a result the bourgeois democratic Mikolajczyk camp is not tied to the imperialists. Where or when has the Mikolajczyk Opposition declared that its interests are in any way opposed to the interests of Anglo-American imperialism? The imperialists are ostensibly fighting for freedom of political expression in the small nations under Stalin's domination and for the national independence of Poland from the Stalin yoke. These are the very same aims the Polish Opposition claims to espouse. Wherein do the aims of the imperialists and those of Mikolajczyk differ? In what way has the Mikolajczyk camp repudiated the imperialists? In truth, repudiation is

impossible. The imperialists are playing the role of "protector" to the Mikolajczyk Opposition elements. When Stalin takes repressive measures against the bourgeois opposition, the imperialists send notes of protest to the Soviet bureaucracy. For the Opposition to reject the tie with imperialism would mean rejection of the imperialists' support and of the very program for which the Polish bourgeoisie is fighting. It is ridiculous for anyone to imagine a section of the bourgeoisie being independent in the present world situation and particularly so in the case of the Polish capitalists who are under the Stalin heel. The world is divided into two spheres of influence, between imperialism and Stalin, and their satellites. To say that any major social force is independent of either of the two reactionary camps in Eastern Europe, a vital nerve center of the war preparations, where the battle lines of the next war are actually being drawn, is either the height of naivete, a fault of which the WP is hardly guilty, or deliberate misstatement of facts.

The WP spreads the story that the bourgeois democrat Mikolajczyk, whom it supports ("critically", of course), is independent of imperialism. However, an analysis of the role he has played in post-war Poland, and of the social forces composing the Mikolajczyk camp, leads to an altogether different conclusion. For the purpose of elucidation, let us consider the case of Benes in Czechoslovakia. In an article on the Eastern European situation, the July, 1947 New International discusses his role as Czech president and characterizes it as follows:

"When the Russian Armies approached Slovakia, Benes, knowing the drift of the imperialist agreements at Yalta, chose to accept the imperialist dictates and submitted to Stalin. As a consequence, he was spared a struggle, was given the post of president, and succeeded in saving part of the bourgeoisie. But in revolutionary and Marxist language this is not called foresight' but naked, unrestrained and shameless opportunism; it is called the miserable betrayal of the people and the proletariat of Czechoslovakia, the betrayal of its social and national emancipation and of its future." (p.144. Emphasis in original)

Does this characterization apply to Mikolajczyk? On the very next page, The New International gives the answer by showing that Mikolajczyk played the very same Benes role in Poland:

"The 'union' between Mikolajczyk and Lublin was dictated by the imperialists and repudiated by the Polish people." (Ibid. p 145. My emphasis)

In dealing with Benes, the WP talks of his following the dictates of the imperialists as naked opportunism and betrayal of the people and the proletariat. In the case of Mikolajczyk, however, who, according to The New International itself, acted in Poland at the dictates of the very same powers, the WP has an entirely opposite estimate. Benes is an opportunist in the Stalinist camp, therefore he is to be condemned, says the WP. Mikolajczyk, who is also an opportunist but who is in opposition to Stalin, is to be supported ("critically", of course), says the WP.

The statement that Mikolajczyk's "union" with the Stalinist puppet Lublin regime was dictated by the imperialists* is correct. The post-war

* Of course, when the WP talks of imperialists, it includes the Stalin bureaucracy, a formulation with which we disagree and have dealt with in other articles.

Polish government was a coalition of Stalinist and imperialist agents. On the other hand, the statement by The New International to the effect that the "union" was repudiated by the Polish people is not the full story, and in this case, the presentation of the half truth becomes a distortion and a falsehood. As facts have shown, the Polish coalition that the Stalinists and the imperialists agreed upon was never intended to continue indefinitely as the government of Poland. The imperialist stooge, Mikolajczyk, was sent into Poland from London specifically to serve as an opposition to the Stalinist regime. As the bureaucracy can brook no opposition in its territories, it immediately set about suppressing the Mikolajczyk forces. It is true that the Polish masses have been split into two camps, one following the Stalinists, the other hewing to the line of the Mikolajczyk force and rejecting coalition with the Stalin gang. But all talk of "the people" per se having independently repudiated the Stalin imperialist forces is a dangerously misleading falsehood for it presents the totally untrue picture of "the people" having acted independently against both reactionary camps. As a matter of fact, The New International inadvertently repudiates this falsehood by stating unequivocally that Mikolajczyk's services as a leader of the government was rejected, not by the Polish masses, but by Stalin, with whom he was more than willing to cooperate:

"Mikolajczyk was ready to play the part of a Polish Benes, but Stalin required a government that was completely his own in Poland. Poland is not Czechoslovakia; the contradictions between the two imperialist camps make of Poland a sensitive nerve-center, and for this reason, Mikolajczyk, with all his 'good will', who wished to create a government loyal to Moscow, though autonomous, was defeated." (Ibid. pp 145-46. Emphasis in original)

One can see, by the WP's own statements, by its own definition, that Mikolajczyk, whom it is supporting, is a would be Benes, an opportunist who was rejected by Stalin; a scoundrel who desires nothing more than to be allowed to betray the Polish people. The WP supports him for no other reason than that he is in opposition to Stalin. Since the WP states that the coalition of Mikolajczyk with Lublin was dictated by the imperialists, and that he was subsequently spurned by Stalin, it is obvious that he is still operating at the dictates of the Anglo-American imperialists, for they have not repudiated Mikolajczyk nor has he repudiated them. When, and upon what grounds, therefore, according to the WP, did the Mikolajczyk camp adopt a position independent from the imperialists

Despite these contradictions in its position, the WP still maintains that the Polish opposition is independent of the imperialists. We have presented The New International's analysis of the composition of the Mikolajczyk forces as being predominantly bourgeois. The New International amplifies this characterization and specifically points out the political character of the Mikolajczyk gang:

"Behind Mikolajczyk's back an anti-Stalinist, independent Socialist Party has been formed with a centrist-reformist character. It is our duty to fight at their side and to give them a developed revolutionary program. If we isolate ourselves from this movement and declare it 'reactionary' we give aid to the Stalinists and close the road to revolutionary developments in Poland." (Ibid. p 146)

Mikolajczyk's backing, therefore, the element to which the WP would present a "developed revolutionary program," is that old, tried and true agent of the bourgeoisie, Social Democracy. The role of this agent of the capitalists is to suppress proletarian revolution. The members of the WP are undoubtedly quite familiar with Social Democracy's rotten role. The specific point to be examined here, however, is just where the "independence" of the Polish Social Democracy lies. That it is independent of the Stalin bureaucracy will readily be conceded. As to its independence of the Anglo-American imperialists, however, let us take the position of the Workers Party on this aspect of Social Democracy, as presented in its "Resolution on the International Scene," which was adopted at its June 1946 convention:

"The social democracy, by embellishing the 'kernel of truth', by its eulogies of 'American democracy', by presenting American imperialism as a benificent friend, horribly distorts the 'kernel of truth', spreads and deepens the illusions of the people, and conceals from them the big and important truth that the generosity of Uncle Sam is a step necessary for him, in the process of preparing Europe for a tighter yoke around its neck at a later stage,** is the indispensable prerequisite to the eventual mobilization of at least the western part of the continent for service as advanced guard, shock troops, in the Third World War to eliminate the Russian rival, who is the only power standing athwart America's road to global domination- the only power except for the masses themselves.

"Meanwhile, the social democracy has become, and is increasingly, the 'State Department's socialists' or the Downing Street socialists."
(The New International, April 1947, p 117-118)

Here, at last, is an unequivocal statement of just where the Mikolajczyk camp stands. Social Democracy is helping the American imperialists to lay the groundwork for the forthcoming war. Support to Social Democracy can mean nothing else but support to imperialist war preparations. In Poland, the WP calls for "critical" support to the Socialist-backed Mikolajczyk and is therefore "critically" supporting the camp of imperialism. It would be well to remember and to realize the demagogy of the previously quoted statement by the WP that "we affirm rather that support of either democratic capitalism or Stalinism in a war means support to the social forces leading humanity to the abyss of barbarism" when it characterizes the Mikolajczyk pro-imperialist camp as "the worker-peasant opposition, basically revolutionary against the 'Stalinist reaction.'" (The New International, July 1947, p 145)

This is not the first time that the WP has led the workers into the imperialist camp in its "anti-Stalinist" campaign. Precedents were set in the case of Trieste and in the 1946 elections in Berlin. In the former case, when the question of the disposition of the city was on the order of the day, the WP came out with the position that it be given to the imperialist satellite, Italy, which the American and English bourgeoisie control directly, rather than to Tito, Stalin's Yugoslav puppet. This was direct, naked support to imperialism. In the case of the Berlin elections, Labor Action (November 4, 1946) found comfort in and "hailed" the vote of the German workers for Social Democracy, despite the frank admission in the very same article that Social Democracy is the subservient agent of its national bourgeoisie and of Anglo-American imperialism.

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** Insert in quotation:

... "is the peculiarly American-imperialist way of strengthening reaction in Europe and frustrating the aspirations of the masses;" ...

The WP does not confine itself to supporting the imperialist camp alone. At times it supports the Stalinist camp, or even both camps simultaneously as when it calls for a Stalinist-Socialist government in France. On the one hand, the June 1946 convention of the WP adopted a position against support to the Stalinist betrayers:

"The revolutionary Marxists, therefore, maintain the general rule of no support of Stalinism of any kind and of irreconcilable opposition to any move calculated to strengthen its position." (The New International, April 1947, p119)

On the other hand, in direct contradiction to this line of no support of any kind to Stalinism, the convention adopted the following:

"In those countries where it is indicated by the political situation and the relationship of forces, the revolutionary Marxists must put forward the slogan of a Socialist-Communist Government (or government of the Socialist Party, the Communist Party and the trade unions), as part of the work of breaking the workers away from ideological and political collaboration with the bourgeoisie." (Ibid. p 122)

A revolutionary minded worker will have a hard time in reconciling the contradictory positions of no support to Stalinism in any shape, manner or form, and the slogan for the SP-CP government, which no one, by any stretch of fertile imagination, can deny strengthens Stalinism. The inclusion of the Stalinists in the government of an important imperialist country like France gives the Soviet bureaucracy an important lever in its diplomatic maneuvers with the bourgeoisie, for it then has its own agents in the imperialist camp. An example of this was the flexible position which the French bourgeoisie was forced to take toward Russia in many of the recent discussions held by the big powers due solely to the presence of Stalinists in key positions in the French bourgeois government. When the Stalinists were thrown out of the government, the French imperialists stiffened their position and lined themselves up openly alongside the Anglo-American capitalists. Incidentally, while the Stalinists were holding key posts in the French bourgeois-Socialist cabinet the very Trotskyites who were hollering for an SP-CP government were having their heads cracked ^{by the Stalinists} while shouting the slogan. It is interesting to note that the CP, whom the WP insists should take power with the SP, is an agent of a force which the WP considers imperialist, the Stalin bureaucracy.

On the other side of the coin, the WP's claim that the formation of a CP-SP government will help break the workers away from ideological and political collaboration with the bourgeoisie is directly refuted by that organizations previously quoted position to the effect that Social Democracy is an agent of American imperialism and is collaborating with imperialism in putting a yoke about the neck of the proletariat. Far from helping to break the workers away from the bourgeoisie, Social Democracy very effectively helps to tie them to capitalism, politically and ideologically.

Paradoxically, while in France the WP calls for the masses to break from the bourgeoisie with the Stalinists as the agents of the rupture, in Poland it takes the entirely opposite position and in ostensibly fighting to break the workers from Stalinism would have them do so through the agency of the bourgeoisie.

In presenting its general line of support to reactionary forces, in the form of an SP-CP government, in the form of a Labor Party, and in other ways, the WP advances intricate arguments. Although the WP admits that objectively nothing beneficial can be achieved for the proletariat by that support, it claims that the subjective factor, i.e. the idea in the mind of the worker that he is opposing capitalism, is the key feature. Presumably, once the workers believe that they have broken with the bourgeoisie, they are moving forward to social revolution. Facts refute this "optimistic" theory, however, and show that the subjective view of the masses counts for naught against the objective political line actually pursued. The worker in the CP has subjectively broken with the bourgeoisie and believes that he is supporting a revolutionary organization, whereas in actuality he is objectively supporting black reaction. The Stalinist worker's belief that he supports a revolutionary organization can be nothing but strengthened by the WP line, for it would be unimaginable to him that anyone calling himself a revolutionary would want a reactionary organization in power.

The answer to the WP position is: one reactionary camp cannot be fought by tying the workers to an opposing reactionary camp. The proletariat must follow a genuinely independent line which is against both Stalinism and imperialism. In this period when the world is divided between these two forces in their preparations for the next armed conflict, the only salvation for the proletariat, the only means of stopping the blood bath is to break sharply with, and to expose, both reactions and all those elements within the working class, such as the Workers Party, which try to attach them to either one of these camps under the pretext of fighting the other.

A. James
July, 1947

FROM THE ARCHIVES OF TROTSKYISM

****TROTSKY'S DECLARATION TO THE XV CONGRESS****

Editorial Note

The climax of Stalin's drive against the Trotsky Opposition came at the XVth Congress of the Stalin Party in 1927. It had been prepared by the entire previous development in which Trotsky's policy played a decisive role. Tracing this policy from its starting point, we record a whole series of sharp critical moments for Stalin during which Trotsky always came forward with a plea for peace and unity. A serious situation for Stalin was created by the revelations of Max Eastman in his book "Since Lenin Died," in which Lenin laid down the line to remove Stalin. In the previous issues of THE BULLETIN, we cited Trotsky's statement on Eastman, disavowing the Testament, and his explanation to the Opposition that the reason for this dishonest act was his policy of peacemaking and conciliation with Stalin. We likewise published Trotsky's Declaration of October 16, 1926, where Trotsky pledged to spy on the oppositionists and turn over to Stalin all who carried on anti-Stalin activity.

Another capitulatory document of Trotsky, reproduced in THE BULLETIN, was the Declaration of August 1927, only a few months before the XV Congress.

The document printed below represents a desperate attempt on the part of Trotsky and a hundred and twenty other leading members of the Opposition to assure Stalin of their loyalty to his regime. The tone of the appeal is designed to induce the illusion that Stalin's Party was a revolutionary proletarian organization. We call attention to the first sentence in the fourth paragraph, openly verifying our contention that there were no programmatic differences between the Trotsky Opposition and Stalin. Again a valuable coat of whitewash is given Stalin and his Central Committee, and once more a pledge is given to stop all oppositional activity. As the reader will see for himself, the line is that of abject submission to Stalin.

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International Press Correspondence (Imprecorr), 1928, pp.65-66

DECLARATIONS OF THE OPPOSITION TO THE XV. PARTY CONGRESS OF THE C.P.S.U.

Declaration of the 121

To the Presidium of the XVI. Party Congress of the C.P.S.U.

Comrades!

The unity of the Communist Party is the highest principle in the epoch of the proletarian dictatorship. Without the unity of the Party on the basis of Leninism the dictatorship cannot be maintained, no advance towards the establishment of Socialism can be made, and the development of world revolution cannot be promoted.

The unity of our Party has, however, been openly endangered of late by the development of the inner Party disagreements. Were the further development of our conflict to lead to a split in the Party, and thereby to a struggle between two parties, this would mean the greatest possible danger for Lenin's cause.

We have not the slightest wish to deny our part for the acuteness of the inner Party situation. In the struggle to represent our views we have adopted the methods of fractional conflict, sometimes in very radical forms, and have in a number of cases resorted to means running counter to Party discipline. The impetus urging us to these methods has been our profound conviction that our views are correct and Leninist, our endeavor to bring these views to the knowledge of the masses of the Party members, the obstacles which we encountered on this path, and the accusations, intolerable to Bolsheviki, which have been made against us.

There are no programmatic differences between us and the Party. We have pointed out the growth of the Thermidorian danger in the country and the insufficient measures being taken to guard against it, but we never were nor are we now of the opinion, that our Party or its C.C. have become Thermidorian, or that our State has ceased to be a workers' State; this we declared emphatically in our Platform. We have defended our opinion, and shall continue to defend it, that our Party has been and is the organisation of the proletarian vanguard, and the Soviet State the organisation of the proletarian dictatorship. We allow no doubt or irresolution in the question of the defence of the Soviet Union, the first proletarian State of the world, the Fatherland of all workers. We have never had, and have not now, the intention of appealing to the judgment of non-Party elements in our inner Party conflicts, although we are firmly convinced that in fundamental political questions our Party has nothing to conceal from the non-Party working masses, this class basis of the Party, and that the masses outside of the Party must be kept informed, by means of objective representations of the views held in the Party, of the condition of inner Party affairs, as was the case under Lenin.

The inner Party conflict has, however, become so acute that the unity of the Party, and consequently the fundamental interests of the proletarian dictatorship, are seriously endangered. This cannot go on. This form of struggle must cease. In face of the international bourgeoisie, which is speculating on a possible war against the Soviet Union, and in face of the whole international proletariat, which rightly sees in the unity of the C.P.S.U. the most important guarantee for the success of its revolutionary struggle, we consider it to be our duty to do everything necessary to secure the fighting unity of our Party.

We cannot renounce views which we are convinced are correct, and which we have submitted to the Party in our Platform and our Theses, but in the interests of the maintenance of Party unity, in the interests of securing the full fighting capacity of the Party as the leader of the State and of the proletarian world movement, we declare to the Party Congress that we shall cease all fractional work, disband all fractional organisations, and call upon all sharing our views in the C.P.S.U. and the Comintern to do the same. We hold it to be the undeniable duty of every member of the Party to submit to the decisions of the Party Congress, and shall fulfill this duty. We have worked for years and decades for our Party. We shall not agree to either a split or to the formation of a second party. We categorically reject the idea of a second party. We believe that any attempt in this direction would run counter to Lenin's teachings, and is condemned to failure. In the future we shall continue to work for our Party, and shall defend our views solely within the confines of the statutes and decisions of the Party. This is the right of the Bolsheviki, and this right had been established by a number of fundamental decisions passed by the Party Congresses under and after Lenin.

This declaration is the expression of our firm resolution.

We are convinced that we express the views of all those sharers of our opinions who have been expelled from the Party, and that the Party will

(Continued on page 16)