

HOOVER

OCT 29 1970

INSTRUMENT

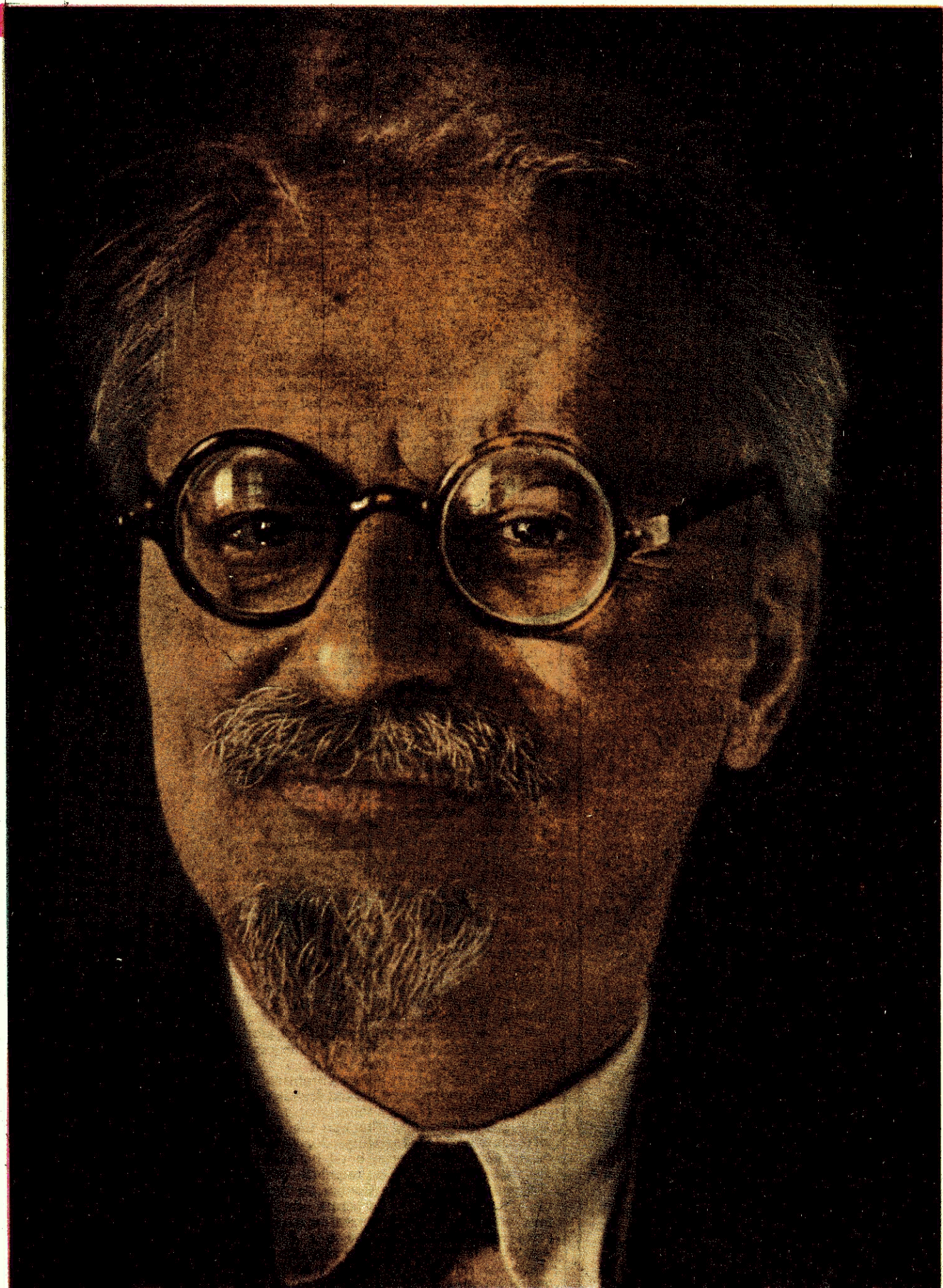
Workers press keep left  
TROTSKY ANNIVERSARY SUPPLEMENT AUGUST 1970

# 30 YEARS SINCE THE ASSASSINATION OF

# L.D. TROTSKY

1879

1940



## BRIEF CHRONOLOGY OF MAJOR EVENTS IN TROTSKY'S LIFE

- 1879 November 7: Born in the district of Kherson, S Ukraine.
- 1897 Spring: Joined and active in the Revolutionary Movement. Helped to found 'Southern Russian Workers' Union'.
- 1898 January: Arrested by Tsarist police. Reads Marxist works for the first time while in jail. (Lenin's *Development of Capitalism in Russia*.)
- 1900 Exiled to Siebrija. Reads Marx's *Capital*. Joins Siberian Social Democrats.
- 1902 Summer: Reads Lenin's *What is to be Done?* Decides to escape and link up with *Iskra* group led by Plekhanov, Lenin and Martov.
- 1902 October: Escapes from Siberian exile, arrives in London at Lenin's Finsbury home. Begins to write for *Iskra* under the name 'Pero'. Praised by Lenin, who proposes to Plekhanov that Trotsky be brought on to the board of *Iskra*.
- 1903 August: Supports Martov against Lenin at Second Party Congress in London. Beginning of Bolshevik and Menshevik factions.
- 1904 Leaves Mensheviks, spends next period up to 1917 trying to unite the two factions—repeatedly attacked by Lenin for 'Conciliationism'.
- 1905 February: Returns to Russia after outbreak of revolutionary struggle against the Tsar. Elected chairman of the St Petersburg Soviet, which led the general strike in October.
- 1905 October: Arrested. While awaiting trial, develops further his theory of the 'permanent revolution', later confirmed by the events of 1917 in Russia and 1925-1927 in China.
- 1907 Early: Sentenced to deportation for life by Tsarist court.
- 1907 February: Escapes. In Vienna up to outbreak of First World War.
- 1915 September: Attends first Zimmerwald conference against the war. Drafts Zimmerwald Manifesto calling on workers to end war.
- 1916 Advocates the slogan 'United states of socialist Europe'.
- 1916 September: Expelled from France for anti-war activities. Flees to neutral Spain. Again expelled.
- 1917 January 13: Arrives in New York.
- 1917 March: Revolution overthrows Tsar. After being detained and jailed by British authorities in Canada, returns to Russia.
- 1917 May: In Russia. Elected to Executive of Petrograd Soviet. Arrested with Bolshevik leaders after 'July Days'.
- 1917 July: Joins Bolshevik Party, is elected to its Central Committee at 6th Congress while in a Kerensky prison. Only Lenin (133) and Zinoviev (132) received more votes than Trotsky (131).
- 1917 November 7: In charge of preparations for uprising on this date. Appointed Commissar for Foreign Affairs. Leads Soviet team for talks with Central Powers at Brest-Litovsk.
- 1918 July: As newly-appointed Commissar for War, crushes Socialist-Revolutionary uprising.
- 1918-1920 Leads Red Army to victory over White Guard forces and their imperialist backers. Military works published in five volumes 'How the Revolution Armed'.
- 1919 March: Writes Manifesto of the Founding Congress of the Third, Communist, International.
- 1919-1924 Drafts nearly all the major policy statements of the International, including the manifesto of four out of its first five Congresses. Serves on Praesidium of the International until removed by Stalin faction in 1926.
- 1922 Late: The ailing Lenin begins fight against bureaucracy. Turns to Trotsky for support against Stalin on his chauvinist treatment of Georgia and retreat from the monopoly on foreign trade.
- 1923 Early: Concludes pact with Lenin to fight bureaucracy. Lenin calls for removal of Stalin from Party leadership in his *Testament*. Lenin breaks off all relations with Stalin. Another stroke in March, dies January 1924.
- 1923 Summer: Trotsky completes *Literature and Revolution*. Late: Trotsky delivers his first full-scale blow against the Party bureaucracy in his series of articles *The New Course*. Triggers off the first open attacks by Stalin's faction (Stalin, Zinoviev and Kamenev) against Trotsky.
- 1924 The so-called 'literary discussion' begins. Trotsky writes *The Lessons of October*, attacks centrism within the Russian and German Communist Parties.
- 1924 December: Stalin puts forward theory of 'socialism in one country' in new edition of his *Problems of Leninism*, which quickly becomes official Party doctrine.
- 1925 May: Trotsky writes *Where is Britain Going?* Anticipates the struggles which led to the May 1926 General Strike.
- 1925 December: 14th Party Congress. Formation of United Opposition, which Trotsky and Zinoviev as chief figures.
- 1926 July: Zinoviev expelled from Politbureau.
- 1926 October: Trotsky and Kamenev expelled from Politbureau.
- 1927 April: Chiang Kai-shek stages coup in Shanghai. Kills thousands of communists. Struggle over Stalin's China policy intensifies. Trotsky writes series of articles later published as *Problems of the Chinese Revolution*.
- 1927 May: Declaration of the 83 Opposition leaders. *Platform of the Left Opposition*—a Bolshevik programme against the Stalinist course.
- 1927 November 7: March of Oppositionists in Moscow and Leningrad for 10th anniversary of the Russian Revolution.
- 1927 November 23: Trotsky, Zinoviev, Kamenev and other Oppositionists expelled from Party.
- 1927 December: 15th Party Congress: rout of Opposition; Zinoviev, Kamenev and others capitulate to Stalin.
- 1928 January: Trotsky exiled to Alma-Ata (Turkestan).
- 1929 January: Trotsky expelled from the Soviet Union. Lives in Prinkipo Island, Turkey. Publication of the *Bulletin of the Left Opposition* begins.
- 1930 Trotsky exposes the theoretical errors of 'socialism in one country' and attacks the policies foisted on the foreign Communist Parties in a series of writings beginning with *The Third International After Lenin* and *The Permanent Revolution* (written 1928-1929).
- 1930-1933 Rise of fascism in Germany. Trotsky warns against threatening disaster from the 'Third Period' ultra-left policies of the Comintern.
- 1931 Trotsky's *Germany the Key to the International Situation* and other writings (now published under the title 'Germany 1931-1932' New Park Publications, August 1970) call for a united front against fascism. While in Prinkipo, writes his autobiography *My Life* and his epic *History of the Russian Revolution*.
- 1932 February: First Conference of the International Left Opposition held in Copenhagen.
- 1933 February: Hitler comes to power 'legally' without opposition from the Communist or Social Democratic Parties. All workers' organizations smashed. Trotsky calls for the building of new revolutionary parties and a new international and for a political revolution to overthrow the Stalinist bureaucracy.
- 1933 July: Trotsky leaves Prinkipo for France.
- 1934 January-February: 17th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. Complete adulation of Stalin begins.
- 1934 December 1: Assassination of Kirov. First mass trials and executions in the Stalin purge.
- 1935 January: Trial of Zinoviev, Kamenev and 17 others; sentences of imprisonment. Trotsky exposes this frame-up in *The Stalinist Bureaucracy and the Assassination of Kirov*.
- 1935 June: Forced to leave France. Sails to Norway.
- 1935 August: 7th (and last) Congress of the Communist International: confirms the turn towards the Popular Front. Speeches by hand-picked leaders of the Stalinised Communist Parties. Stalin hailed as great Marxist.
- 1936 May: Popular Front government elected in France; mass strikes with occupation of factories.
- 1936 July: Outbreak of Spanish Civil War.
- 1936 August 19-24: Trial of the Sixteen—Zinoviev, Kamenev, etc. All defendants executed. Trotsky writes *The Revolution Betrayed*, the classic analysis of the degeneration of the first workers' state and the rise of the Stalinist bureaucracy as a privileged ruling caste.
- 1936 July 29-31: First International Conference to prepare the Fourth International.
- 1937 January 23-39: Trial of 'the anti-Soviet Trotskyist Centre'—13 of defendants executed.
- 1937 June: Purge in Red Army. Tukhachevsky and seven other generals shot on Stalin's orders.
- 1937 January: Arrives in last place of exile—Mexico.
- 1938 February: His son Sedov assassinated while undergoing treatment in a Paris private hospital by GPU agents disguised as doctors.
- 1938 March 2-13: Last of the big Moscow show trials: 'the anti-Soviet Bloc of Rights and Trotskyites'. 18 defendants executed, including Bukharin.
- 1938 September 3: Founding Conference of the Fourth International. *The Death Agony of Capitalism and the Tasks of the Fourth International* adopted as its programme.
- 1939 August 23: German-Soviet Pact signed in Moscow.
- 1939 September 1: Germany invades Poland.
- 1939 November 29: Soviet-Finnish War begins. Struggle against the Burnham-Shachtman opposition in the American Socialist Workers' Party.
- 1939-1940 Trotsky's analysis of the situation continued the fight for dialectical materialism and for the view that the Soviet Union remains 'a degenerated workers' state'. His articles and letters make up the book entitled *In Defence of Marxism*.
- 1940 May 24: First attempt to assassinate Trotsky, led by Mexican painter Siquieros, fails.
- 1940 August 20: Trotsky assassinated by GPU agent Ramon Mercader.



Trotsky at the age of 11. 1897. The founders of the South Russian Workers' Federation, including Trotsky and A. Sokolovsky, his first wife.



1897. Trotsky at the age of eighteen. Secret police photographs of Trotsky.



Trotsky during his first exile to Siberia.

# 30 YEARS SINCE THE ASSASSINATION OF L.D. TROTSKY

1879

1940



## BRIEF CHRONOLOGY OF MAJOR EVENTS IN TROTSKY'S LIFE

- 1879 November 7: Born in the district of Kherson, S Ukraine.
- 1897 Spring: Joined and active in the Revolutionary Movement. Helped to found 'Southern Russian Workers' Union'.
- 1898 January: Arrested by Tsarist police. Reads Marxist works for the first time while in jail. (Lenin's *Development of Capitalism in Russia*.)
- 1900 Exiled to Siberia. Reads Marx's *Capital*. Joins Siberian Social Democrats.
- 1902 Summer: Reads Lenin's *What is to be Done?* Decides to escape and link up with *Iskra* group led by Plekhanov, Lenin and Martov.
- 1902 October: Escapes from Siberian exile, arrives in London at Lenin's Finsbury home. Begins to write for *Iskra* under the name 'Pero'. Praised by Lenin, who proposes to Plekhanov that Trotsky be brought on to the board of *Iskra*.
- 1903 August: Supports Martov against Lenin at Second Party Congress in London. Beginning of Bolshevik and Menshevik factions.
- 1904 Leaves Mensheviks, spends next period up to 1917 trying to unite the two factions—repeatedly attacked by Lenin for 'Conciliationism'.
- 1905 February: Returns to Russia after outbreak of revolutionary struggle against the Tsar. Elected chairman of the St Petersburg Soviet, which led the general strike in October.
- 1905 October: Arrested. While awaiting trial, develops further his theory of the 'permanent revolution', later confirmed by the events of 1917 in Russia and 1925-1927 in China.
- 1907 Early: Sentenced to deportation for life by Tsarist court.
- 1907 February: Escapes. In Vienna up to outbreak of First World War.
- 1915 September: Attends first Zimmerwald conference against the war. Drafts Zimmerwald Manifesto calling on workers to end war.
- 1916 Advocates the slogan 'United states of socialist Europe'.
- 1916 September: Expelled from France for anti-war activities. Flees to neutral Spain. Again expelled.
- 1917 January 13: Arrives in New York.
- 1917 March: Revolution overthrows Tsar. After being detained and jailed by British authorities in Canada, returns to Russia.
- 1917 May: In Russia. Elected to Executive of Petrograd Soviet. Arrested with Bolshevik leaders after 'July Days'.
- 1917 July: Joins Bolshevik Party, is elected to its Central Committee at 8th Congress while in a Kerensky prison. Only Lenin (133) and Zinoviev (132) received more votes than Trotsky (131).
- 1917 November 7: In charge of preparations for uprising on this date. Appointed Commissar for Foreign Affairs. Leads Soviet team for talks with Central Powers at Brest-Litovsk.
- 1918 July: As newly-appointed Commissar for War, crushes Socialist-Revolutionary uprising.
- 1918-1920 Leads Red Army to victory over White Guard forces and their imperialist backers. Military works published in five volumes 'How the Revolution Armed'.
- 1919 March: Writes Manifesto of the Founding Congress of the Third, Communist, International.
- 1919-1924 Drafts nearly all the major policy statements of the International, including the manifesto of four out of its first five Congresses. Serves on Praesidium of the International until removed by Stalin faction in 1926.
- 1922 Late: The ailing Lenin begins fight against bureaucracy. Turns to Trotsky for support against Stalin on his chauvinist treatment of Georgia and retreat from the monopoly on foreign trade.
- 1923 Early: Concludes pact with Lenin to fight bureaucracy. Lenin calls for removal of Stalin from Party leadership in his *Testament*. Lenin breaks off all relations with Stalin. Another stroke in March, dies January 1924.
- 1923 Summer: Trotsky completes *Literature and Revolution*. Late: Trotsky delivers his first full-scale blow against the Party bureaucracy in his series of articles *The New Course*. Triggers off the first open attacks by Stalin's faction (Stalin, Zinoviev and Kamenev) against Trotsky.
- 1924 The so-called 'literary discussion' begins. Trotsky writes *The Lessons of October*, attacks centrism within the Russian and German Communist Parties.
- 1924 December: Stalin puts forward theory of 'socialism in one country' in new edition of his *Problems of Leninism*, which quickly becomes official Party doctrine.
- 1925 May: Trotsky writes *Where is Britain Going?* Anticipates the struggles which led to the May 1926 General Strike.
- 1925 December: 14th Party Congress. Formation of United Opposition, which Trotsky and Zinoviev as chief figures.
- 1926 July: Zinoviev expelled from Politbureau.
- 1926 October: Trotsky and Kamenev expelled from Politbureau.
- 1927 April: Chiang Kai-shek stages coup in Shanghai. Kills thousands of communists. Struggle over Stalin's China policy intensifies. Trotsky writes series of articles later published as *Problems of the Chinese Revolution*.
- 1927 May: Declaration of the 83 Opposition leaders. *Platform of the Left Opposition*—a Bolshevik programme against the Stalinist course.
- 1927 November 7: March of Oppositionists in Moscow and Leningrad for 10th anniversary of the Russian Revolution.
- 1927 November 23: Trotsky, Zinoviev, Kamenev and other Oppositionists expelled from Party.
- 1927 December: 15th Party Congress: rout of Opposition; Zinoviev, Kamenev and others capitulate to Stalin.
- 1928 January: Trotsky exiled to Alma-Ata (Turkestan).
- 1929 January: Trotsky expelled from the Soviet Union. Lives in Prinkipo Island, Turkey. Publication of the *Bulletin of the Left Opposition* begins.
- 1930 Trotsky exposes the theoretical errors of 'socialism in one country' and attacks the policies foisted on the foreign Communist Parties in a series of writings beginning with *The Third International After Lenin* and *The Permanent Revolution* (written 1928-1929).
- 1930-1933 Rise of fascism in Germany. Trotsky warns against threatening disaster from the 'Third Period' ultra-left policies of the Comintern.
- 1931 Trotsky's *Germany the Key to the International Situation* and other writings (now published under the title 'Germany 1931-1932' New Park Publications, August 1970) call for a united front against fascism. While in Prinkipo, writes his autobiography *My Life* and his epic *History of the Russian Revolution*.
- 1932 February: First Conference of the International Left Opposition held in Copenhagen.
- 1933 February: Hitler comes to power 'legally' without opposition from the Communist or Social Democratic Parties. All workers' organizations smashed. Trotsky calls for the building of new revolutionary parties and a new international and for a political revolution to overthrow the Stalinist bureaucracy.
- 1933 July: Trotsky leaves Prinkipo for France.
- 1934 January-February: 17th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. Complete adulation of Stalin begins.
- 1934 December 1: Assassination of Kirov. First mass trials and executions in the Stalin purge.
- 1935 January: Trial of Zinoviev, Kamenev and 17 others; sentences of imprisonment. Trotsky exposes this frame-up in *The Stalinist Bureaucracy and the Assassination of Kirov*.
- 1935 June: Forced to leave France. Sails to Norway.
- 1935 August: 7th (and last) Congress of the Communist International: confirms the turn towards the Popular Front. Speeches by hand-picked leaders of the Stalinised Communist Parties. Stalin hailed as great Marxist.
- 1936 May: Popular Front government elected in France; mass strikes with occupation of factories.
- 1936 July: Outbreak of Spanish Civil War.
- 1936 August 19-24: Trial of the Sixteen—Zinoviev, Kamenev, etc. All defendants executed. Trotsky writes *The Revolution Betrayed*, the classic analysis of the degeneration of the first workers' state and the rise of the Stalinist bureaucracy as a privileged ruling caste.
- 1936 July 29-31: First International Conference to prepare the Fourth International.
- 1937 January 23-39: Trial of 'the anti-Soviet Trotskyist Centre'—13 of defendants executed.
- 1937 June: Purge in Red Army. Tukhachevsky and seven other generals shot on Stalin's orders.
- 1937 January: Arrives in last place of exile —Mexico.
- 1938 February: His son Sedov assassinated while undergoing treatment in a Paris private hospital by GPU agents disguised as doctors.
- 1938 March 2-13: Last of the big Moscow show trials: 'the anti-Soviet Bloc of Rights and Trotskyites', 18 defendants executed, including Bukharin.
- 1938 September 3: Founding Conference of the Fourth International. *The Death Agony of Capitalism and the Tasks of the Fourth International* adopted as its programme.
- 1939 August 23: German-Soviet Pact signed in Moscow.
- 1939 September 1: Germany invades Poland.
- 1939 November 29: Soviet-Finnish War begins. Struggle against the Burnham-Shachtman opposition in the American Socialist Workers' Party.
- 1939-1940 Trotsky's analysis of the situation continued the fight for dialectical materialism and for the view that the Soviet Union remains 'a degenerated workers' state'. His articles and letters make up the book entitled *In Defence of Marxism*.
- 1940 May 24: First attempt to assassinate Trotsky, led by Mexican painter Siquieros, fails.
- 1940 August 20: Trotsky assassinated by GPU agent Ramon Mercader.



Trotsky at the age of 11



1897. The founders of the South Russian Workers' Federation, including Trotsky and A. Sokolovsky, his first wife.

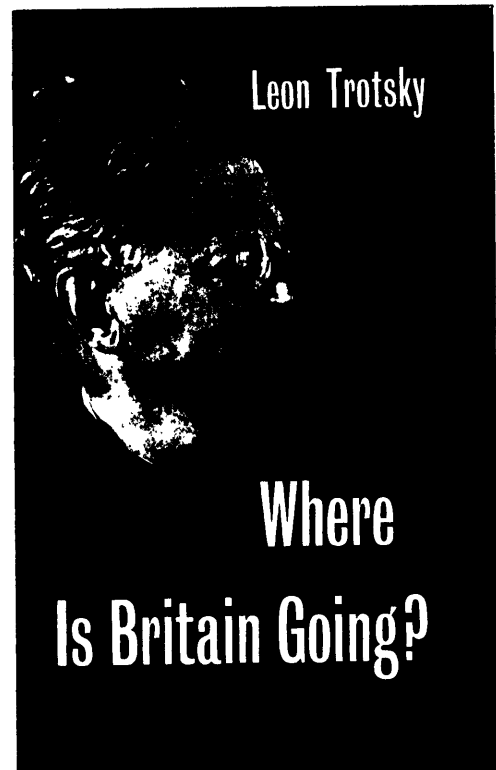


1897. Trotsky at the age of eighteen. Secret police photographs of Trotsky.

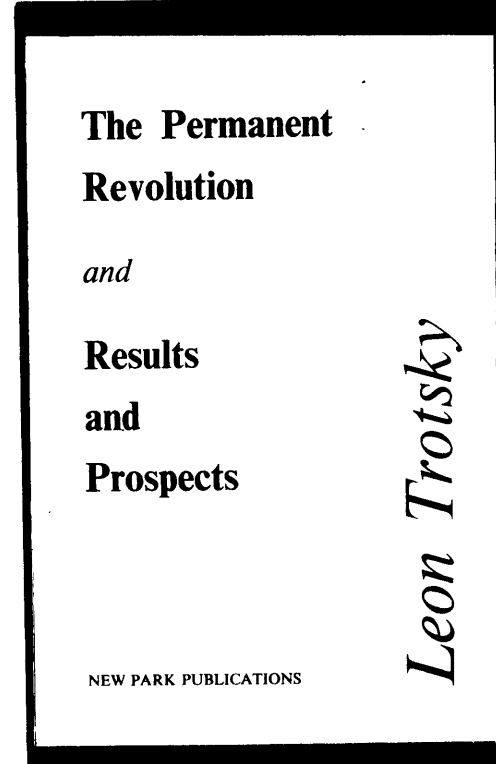


Trotsky during his first exile to Siberia.

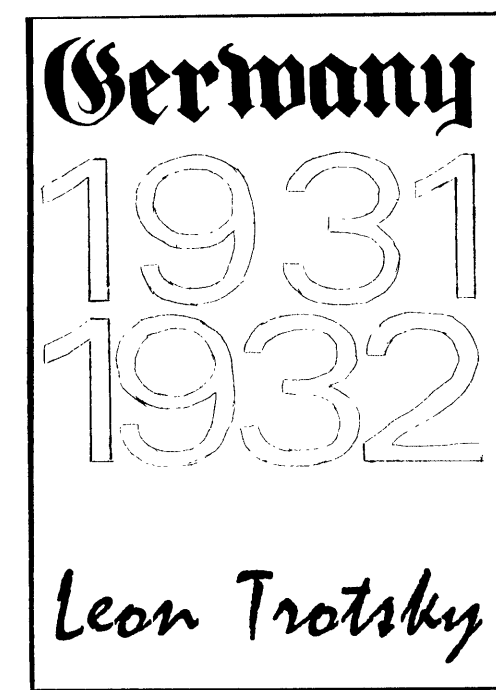
NEW PARK PUBLICATIONS IS THE FOREMOST STOCKISTS OF TROTSKY'S WORKS AVAILABLE IN ENGLISH.



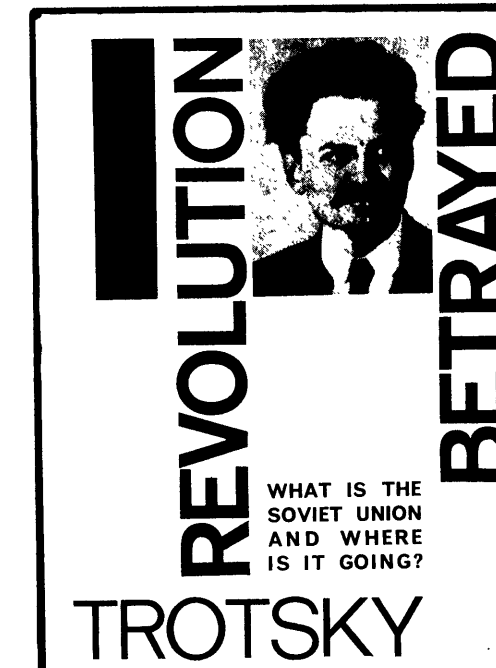
PRICE: 7s 6d



PRICE: 25s



PRICE: 25 shillings (soft cover)



PRICE: 12s 6d (soft) £1 10s (hard)

A comprehensive book list can be obtained on request from New Park Publications Ltd, 186a Clapham High Street, London, SW4.

WHENEVER two comrades who worked together in the year 1918, fought beneath Kazan against the Czechoslovaks and then in the Urals or at Samara and Tsaritsin, chance to meet again many years later one of them is bound to ask after the first few questions:

'Remember Svyazhsk?' and they will clasp each other's hand again. What is Svyazhsk? Today it is a legend, one of the revolutionary legends which still remain unchronicled, but which are being retold over and over again from one end to another of this Russian vastness. Not one of the demobilized Red Army men from among the old-timers, the founders of the Workers' and Peasants' Army, upon returning home and reminiscing about the three years of Civil War will skip over the fabulous epic of Svyazhsk, the cross-roads whence the tide of the revolutionary offensive started rolling on all four sides. On the East—toward the Urals. On the South—toward the Caspian shores, the Caucasus and the borders of Persia. On the North toward Archangel and Poland. Not all together, of course; nor simultaneously. But it was only after Svyazhsk and Kazan that the Red Army became crystallized into those fighting and political forms which, after undergoing change and being perfected, have become classic for the RSFSR.

On August 6 (1918) numerous hastily organized regiments fled from Kazan; and the best among them, the class-conscious section, clung to Svyazhsk, halted there and decided to make a stand and fight. By the time the mobs of deserters fleeing from Kazan had almost reached Nizhny Novgorod, the dam erected at Svyazhsk had already halted the Czechoslovaks; and their general who tried to take the railroad bridge across the Volga by storm was killed during the night attack.

Thus in the very first clash between the Whites who had just taken Kazan and consequently were stronger in morale and equipment and the core of the Red Army seeking to defend the bridge-head across the Volga, the head of the Czechoslovak offensive was lopped off. They lost their most popular and gifted leader in General Blagotich. Neither the Whites, flushed by their recent victory, nor the Reds rallying round Svyazhsk had any inkling of the historical importance that their initial trial skirmishes would have.

It is extremely difficult to convey the military importance of Svyazhsk without having the necessary materials at hand, without a map, and without the testimony of those comrades who were in the ranks of the Fifth Army at that time.

Much has already been forgotten by me; faces and names flicked by as in a fog. But there is something that no one will ever forget and that is: the feeling of supreme responsibility for holding Svyazhsk. This was the bond between all its defenders from a member of the Revolutionary Military Council to the last Red rank-and-file in desperate search for his somewhere extant, retreating regiment who suddenly turned back and faced Kazan in order to fight to the last, with worn-out rifle in hand and fanatic determination in his heart. The situation was understood by everyone as follows: Another step backward would open the Volga to the enemy down to Nizhny (Novgorod) and thus the road to Moscow.

Further retreat meant the beginning of the end; the death sentence on the Republic of the Soviets.

How correct this is from a strategic point of view, I know not. Perhaps the Army if rolled back even further might have gathered into a similar fist on one of the innumerable black dots which speckle the map and thenceforth carried its banners to victory. But indubitably it was correct from the standpoint of morale. And in so far as a retreat from the Volga meant a complete collapse at that time, to that extent the possibility of holding out, with one's back against the bridge, imbued us with real hope.

The ethics of the revolution formulated the complex situation succinctly as follows: To retreat is to have the Czechs in Nizhny and in Moscow. No surrender of Svyazhsk and the bridge means the reconquest of Kazan by the Red Army.

### The arrival of Trotsky's train

IT WAS, I believe, either on the third or fourth day after the fall of Kazan that Trotsky arrived at Svyazhsk. His train<sup>1</sup> came to a determined stop at the little station; his locomotive panted a little, was uncoupled, and departed to drink water, but did not return. The cars remained standing in a row as immobile as the dirty straw-thatched peasant huts and the barracks occupied by the Fifth Army's staff. This immobility silently underscored that there was no place to go from here, and that it was impermissible to leave.

'Already in 1918 the train represented a mobile apparatus of administration, it was equipped with its own printing plant, telegraph, radio, electric power station, library, garage and bath. This train which steered all wills and brought victory with it would appear in the most critical moments at the key sectors of the various fronts. During Yudenich's October offensive (1919) the train

<sup>1</sup> Russian Socialist Federated Soviet Republic, the original name of the USSR.—Ed.  
<sup>2</sup> This train was organized on August 7, 1918, at night and the next morning it departed for Svyazhsk.



Trotsky alighting from his train, which was instrumental in turning the tide of the battle on the Kazan front. Trotsky and his staff travelled in this train to most of the major civil war battles.

was sent to Petrograd. Out of its personnel was formed a detachment which manned the armoured train named after Lenin, and another detachment which was incorporated in the Red Army in the region of Ligovo. For its participation in these battles the train received the order of the Red Banner. In the course of the Civil War the train fulfilled 36 missions, covering a total distance of 97,629 versts. (Trotsky—How the Revolution Armed Itself, Vol. II, Book 1, p. 463.)

—Ed. Little by little the fanatical faith that this little station would become the starting point for a counter-offensive against Kazan began to take on the shape of reality.

Every new day that this God-forsaken, poor railway siding held out against the far stronger enemy, added to it strength and raised its mood of confidence. From somewhere in the rear, from far-off villages in the hinterland, came at first soldiers one by one, then tiny detachments, and finally military formations in a far better state of preservation.

I see it now before me, this Svyazhsk where not a single soldier fought 'under compulsion'. Everything that was alive there and fighting in self-defence—all of it was bound together by the strongest ties of voluntary discipline, voluntary participation in a struggle which seemed so hopeless at the outset.

Human beings sleeping on the floors of the station house, in dirty huts filled with straw and broken glass—they hardly hoped for success and consequently feared nothing. The speculation on when and how all this 'would end' interested none. 'Tomorrow'—simply did not exist; there was only a brief, hot, smoky piece of time: Today. And one lived on that, as one lives in harvest time.

Morning, noon, evening, night—each single hour was prolonged to the utmost count; every single hour had to be lived through and used up to the last second. It was necessary to reap each hour carefully, finely like ripe wheat in the field is cut to the very root. Each hour seemed so rich, so utterly unlike all of previous life. No sooner did it vanish than in recollection it seemed a miracle. And it was a miracle.

Planes came and went, dropping their bombs on the station and the railway cars; machine guns with their repulsive barking and the calm syllables of artillery, drew nigh and withdrew again whilst a human being in a torn military coat, civilian hat, and boots with toes protruding—in short, one of the defenders of Svyazhsk would smilingly produce a watch from his pocket and bethink himself.

'So that's what it is now—1.30 or 4.30 o'clock. Or, it is 6.20. Therefore I am still alive. Svyazhsk holds. Trotsky's train stands on the rails. A lamp now flickers through the window of the Political Department. Good. The day is ended.'

Medical supplies were almost completely absent at Svyazhsk. God knows what the doctors used for bandages. This poverty shamed no one; nor did anyone stand in fear of it. The soldiers on their way with soup kettles to the field kitchen passed by stretchers with the wounded and the dying. Death held no terrors. It was expected daily, always. To lie prone in

a wet army coat, with a red splotch on a shirt, with an expressionless face, a muteness that was no longer human—this was something taken for granted.

Brotherhood! Few words have been so abused and rendered pitiful. But brotherhood does come sometimes, in moments of direst need and peril, so selfless, so sacred, so unrepeatable in a single lifetime. And they have not lived and known nothing of life who have never lain at night on a floor in tattered and lice-ridden clothes, thinking all the while how wonderful is the world, infinitely wonderful! That here the old has been overthrown and that life is fighting with bare hands for her irrefutable truth, for the white swans of her resurrection, for something far bigger and better than this patch of star-lit sky showing through the velvet blackness of a window with shattered panes—for the future of all mankind.

Once in a century contact is made and new blood is transfused. These beautiful words, almost inhuman in their beauty, and the smell of living sweat, the living breath of others sleeping beside you on the floor. No nightmares, no sentimentalities, but tomorrow the dawn will come and Comrade G., a Czech Bolshevik, will prepare an omelette for the whole 'gang', and the Chief of Staff will pull on a shaggy stiffly frozen shirt washed out last night.

A day will dawn in which someone will die, knowing in his last second that death is only something among many other things, and not the main thing at all; that once again Svyazhsk has not been taken and that the dirty wall is still inscribed with a piece of chalk: 'Workers of the World Unite!'

### Against the stream

THE RAINY August days thus passed one by one. The thin, poorly equipped lines did not fall back; the bridge remained in our hands and from the rear, from somewhere far away, reinforcements began to arrive.

Real telephone and telegraph wires began to attach themselves to autumn spider-webs flying in the winds and some kind of enormous, cumbersome, lame apparatus began to operate on the God-forsaken railway station—Svyazhsk, the tiny, hardly discernible black dot on the map of Russia, at which in a moment of flight and despair, the revolution had clutched.

Here all of Trotsky's organizational genius was revealed. He managed to restore the supply lines, get new artillery and a few regiments through to Svyazhsk on railways that were being openly sabotaged; everything needed for the coming offensive was obtained.

In addition, it ought to be borne in mind that this work had to be done in the year 1918, when demobilization was still raging, when the appearance on the Moscow streets of a single well-dressed detachment of the Red Army would create a real sensation. After all, it meant to swim against the stream, against the exhaustion of four years of war, against the spring floods of the revolution which swept through the whole country the debris of Tsarist discipline and wild hatred

# SVYAZH

of anything resembling the bark of old officers' commands, the barracks, for old army life.

Despite all this, supplies appeared before our very eyes. Newspapers arrived, boots and overcoats came. And wherever they actually hand out boots, and for keeps, there you will find a really solid army staff; there things are stable; there the army stands firmly entrenched and has no thought of fleeing. That's no joking matter, boots!

The Order of the Red Flag was not yet in existence in the era of Svyazhsk, else it would have been issued to hundreds. Everybody, including the cowardly and the nervous and the simply mediocre workers and Red Army men—everybody, without a single exception, performed unbelievable, heroic deeds; they outdid themselves, like spring streams overflowing their banks they joyfully flooded their own normal levels.

Such was the atmosphere. I remember receiving at that time by extraordinary chance a few letters from Moscow. In them was some talk about the exultation of the petty bourgeois preparing to repeat the memorable days of the Paris Commune.

And in the meantime the foremost and most dangerous front of the Republic hung by a thin railway thread and flamed, setting up an unprecedented heroic conflagration which sufficed for three more years of hungry, typhus-ridden, homeless war.

### The men who did it

IN SVYAZHSK, Trotsky, who was able to give the new-born Army a backbone of steel, who himself sank roots into the soil refusing to yield an inch of ground no matter what happened, who was able to show this handful of defenders a calmness icier than theirs—in Svyazhsk, Trotsky was not alone.

Gathered there were old Party workers, future members of the Revolutionary Military Councils of the Republic, and of the Military Councils of the several Armies to whom the future historian of the Civil War will refer as the Marshals of the Great Revolution. Rosengoltz and Gussev, Ivan Nikitch Smirnov, Kobozev, Mezhlauk, the other Smirnov, and many other comrades whose names I no longer recall.<sup>3</sup> From among the sailors, I remember Raskolnikov and the late Markin.

Rosengoltz in his railway car almost from the very first day sprouted the office of the Revolutionary Military Council; extruded maps and rattled typewriters—obtained God knows where—in short, he began building up a strong, geometrically perfect organizational apparatus, with precise connections, indefatigable working capacity and simple in scheme.

In the days to come, whatever the Army or the front, wherever the work began to sputter, Rosengoltz was immediately brought in like a queen-bee in a sack, placed into the disturbed bee hive and would immediately proceed to build, organize, forming cells, buzzing over the telegraph wires. Despite the military overcoat and enormous pistol in his belt, nothing martial could be discerned in his figure, nor in his pale, slightly soft face. His tremendous force did not lie in this field at all, but rather in his natural ability to renew, establish connections, raise the tempo of a halting, infected bloodstream to an explosive speed. At the side of Trotsky he was like a dynamo, regular, well-oiled, noiseless, with powerful levers moving day after day, spinning the untearable web of organization.

I do not recall just what kind of work I. N. Smirnov officially performed in the staff of the Fifth Army. Whether he was a member of the Revolutionary Military Council or at the same time also head of the Political Department; but apart from all titles and frameworks he embodied the ethics of the revolution. He was the highest moral criterion; the communist conscience of Svyazhsk.

Even among the non-Party soldier masses and those communists who had not known him previously, his amazing purity and integrity were immediately recognized. It is hardly likely that he himself was aware how much he was feared; how everyone feared nothing so much as to reveal cowardice and weakness before the eyes of this man, who never yelled at anyone, who simply remained himself, calm, courageous. No one commanded as much respect as Ivan Nikitch. Every one felt that in the worst moment he would be the strongest and most fearless.

With Trotsky—it was to die in battle after the last bullet had been fired; to die

<sup>3</sup> All these legendary heroes of Svyazhsk and of the Civil War, along with hundreds and thousands of others of their generation, were murdered by Stalin in the Moscow frame-ups and blood purges two decades earlier.—Ed.

enthusiastically, oblivious of wounds. With Trotsky—it was the sacred pathos of struggle; words and gestures recalling the best pages of the Great French Revolution.

But with Comrade Smirnov (so it seemed to us at the time and so we spoke in whispers to each other as we huddled close together on the floor during those already cold autumn nights)—Comrade Smirnov; this was pure calm when 'up against the wall'; or when being gilled by the Whites; or in a filthy prison hole. Yes, that is how one talked about him at Svyazhsk.

Boris Danilovich Mikhailov came a little later, directly from Moscow. I believe, or generally from the centre. He arrived in a civilian coat, with that bright, rapidly changing expression on his face that people have on being freed from prison or big cities.

Within a few hours he was completely overcome by the wild intoxication of Svyazhsk. Changing clothes, he went out

## Larissa

Symbol of the international character of the October Revolution is Larissa Reiserer, daughter of a Polish mother and a German—East Prussian—landowner; she was born May 1, 1905, in Vilna (Poland), educated in Germany and France; before her 22nd birthday she was an outstanding figure in the Russian Revolution.

Trotsky, in 'My Life', writes of her in his chapter on Svyazhsk: Larissa Reiserer, who called Ivan Nikitch (Smirnov) 'the conscience of Svyazhsk' was herself prominent in the Fifth Army, as well as in the Revolution as a whole. This fine young woman flashed across the revolutionary sky like a burning meteor, blinding many. With her appearance of an Olympian goddess, she combined a subtle and ironical mind and the courage of a warrior. After the capture of Kazan by the Whites, she went into the enemy camp to reconnoitre, disguised as a peasant woman. But her appearance was too extraordinary, and she was arrested. While she was being cross-examined by a Japanese intelligence officer, she took advantage of an interval to slip through the carefully guarded door and disappear. After that, she engaged in intelligence work. Later, she sailed on war-boats and took part in battles. Her sketches about the civil war are literature. With equal gusto, she would write about the Urals industries and the rising of the workers in the Ruhr. She was anxious to know and to see all, and to take part in everything. In her few brief years, she became a writer of the first rank. But after coming unscathed through fire and water this Pallas of the Revolution suddenly burned up in typhus, in the peaceful surroundings of Moscow, before she was even 30.



on reconnaissance patrol in the vicinity of the White Kazan and returned three days later, tired, his face wind-tanned, his body crawling with ubiquitous lice. By way of compensation, he was all in one piece. It was a fascinating spectacle to observe the profound inner process taking place in people who arrive at a revolutionary front: they catch fire like a straw roof lit on all four sides, and then on cooling off become transformed into a fire-proof, perfectly clear and uniform piece of cast iron.

Youngest of all was Mezhlauk—Valerin Ivanovich. He had a particularly hard time. His younger brother and wife had remained behind in Kazan and, according to a rumour, had been shot. Later it turned out that his brother actually had died, while his wife suffered indescribably. It was not customary to complain or talk about one's misfortunes at Svyazhsk. And Mezhlauk kept an honest silence, did his work, and walked through the sticky autumn mud in his long cavalry coat, all

Trotsky and members of the Red Army general staff.



Trotsky (second from left) and members of the Petrograd Soviet on the way to exile after the 1905 revolution.

Trotsky after escaping from his second Siberian exile.

Trotsky during his sojourn in France.

Soviet delegation to Brest-Litovsk—including Trotsky, then Commissar for Foreign Affairs, and other victims of Stalin's terror.

# SVYAZHISK



mental in turning the tide staff travelled in this train

of anything resembling the bark of old officers' commands, the barracks, for old army life.

Despite all this, supplies appeared before our very eyes. Newspapers arrived, boots and overcoats came. And wherever they actually hand out boots, and for keeps, there you will find a really solid army staff; there things are stable; there the army stands firmly entrenched and has no thought of fleeing. That's no joking matter, boots!

The Order of the Red Flag was not yet in existence in the era of Svyazhisk, else it would have been issued to hundreds. Everybody, including the cowardly and the nervous and the simply mediocre workers and Red Army men—everybody, without a single exception, performed unbelievable, heroic deeds; they outdid themselves, like spring streams overflowing their banks they joyfully flooded their own normal levels.

Such was the atmosphere. I remember receiving at that time by extraordinary chance a few letters from Moscow. In them was some talk about the exultation of the petty bourgeoisie preparing to repeat the memorable days of the Paris Commune.

And in the meantime the foremost and most dangerous front of the Republic hung by a thin railway thread and flamed, setting up an unprecedented heroic conflagration which sufficed for three more years of hungry, typhus-ridden, homeless war.

## The men who did it

IN SVYAZHISK, Trotsky, who was able to give the new-born Army a backbone of steel, who himself sank roots into the soil refusing to yield an inch of ground no matter what happened, who was able to show this handful of defenders a calmness icier than theirs—in Svyazhisk, Trotsky was not alone.

Gathered there were old Party workers, future members of the Revolutionary Military Councils of the Republic, and of the Military Councils of the several Armies to whom the future historian of the Civil War will refer as the Marshals of the Great Revolution. Rosengoltz and Gussev, Ivan Nikitch Smirnov, Kobozov, Mezhlauk, the other Smirnov, and many other comrades whose names I no longer recall. From among the sailors, I remember Raskolnikov and the late Markin.

Rosengoltz in his railway car almost from the very first day sprouted the office of the Revolutionary Military Council; extruded maps and rattled typewriters—obtained God knows where—in short, he began building up a strong, geometrically perfect organizational apparatus, with precise connections, indefatigable working capacity and simple in scheme.

In the days to come, whatever the Army or the front, wherever the work began to sputter, Rosengoltz was immediately brought in like a queen-bee in a sack, placed into the disturbed bee hive and would immediately proceed to build, organize, forming cells, buzzing over the telegraph wires. Despite the military overcoat and enormous pistol in his belt, nothing martial could be discerned in his figure, nor in his pale, slightly soft face. His tremendous force did not lie in this field at all, but rather in his natural ability to renew, establish connections, raise the tempo of a halting, infected bloodstream to an explosive speed. At the side of Trotsky he was like a dynamo, regular, well-oiled, noiseless, with powerful levers moving day after day, spinning the untearable web of organization.

I do not recall just what kind of work I. N. Smirnov officially performed in the staff of the Fifth Army. Whether he was a member of the Revolutionary Military Council or at the same time also head of the Political Department; but apart from all titles and frameworks he embodied the ethics of the revolution. He was the highest moral criterion; the communist conscience of Svyazhisk.

Even among the non-Party soldier masses and those communists who had not known him previously, his amazing purity and integrity were immediately recognized. It is hardly likely that he himself was aware how much he was feared; how everyone feared nothing so much as to reveal cowardice and weakness before the eyes of this man, who never yelled at anyone, who simply remained himself, calm, courageous. No one commanded as much respect as Ivan Nikitch. Every one felt that in the worst moment he would be the strongest and most fearless.

With Trotsky—it was to die in battle after the last bullet had been fired; to die

All these legendary heroes of Svyazhisk and of the Civil War, along with hundreds and thousands of others of their generation, were murdered by Stalin in the Moscow frame-ups and blood purges two decades earlier.—Ed.

enthusiastically, oblivious of wounds. With Trotsky—it was the sacred pathos of struggle; words and gestures recalling the best pages of the Great French Revolution.

But with Comrade Smirnov (so it seemed to us at the time and so we spoke in whispers to each other as we huddled close together on the floor during those already cold autumnal nights)—Comrade Smirnov: this was pure calm when 'up against the wall'; or when being grilled by the Whites; or in a filthy prison hole. Yes, that is how one talked about him at Svyazhisk.

Boris Danilovich Mikhailov came a little later, directly from Moscow, I believe, or generally from the centre. He arrived in a civilian coat, with that bright, rapidly changing expression on his face that people have on being freed from prison or big cities.

Within a few hours he was completely overcome by the wild intoxication of Svyazhisk. Changing clothes, he went out

of him concentrated on one burning point: Kazan.

Meanwhile the Whites began to sense that with its strengthened resistance, Svyazhisk was growing into something great and dangerous.

Intermittent skirmishes and attacks came to an end; a regular siege, with large organized forces on all sides was started. But they had let slip the propitious moment.

Old Slavin, Commander of the Fifth Army, not a very gifted colonel, but one who knew his business exactly and thoroughly, fixed on a key point of defence, worked out a definite plan and carried it through with truly Latvian stubbornness.

Svyazhisk stood firm, its feet planted in the ground like a bull, its broad forehead lowered towards Kazan, standing immovable on the spot and impatiently shaking its horns, sharp as bayonets.

One sunny autumn morning came narrow, agile and swift torpedo-boats from

boat 'Prochny' which had to fix its steering gear while drifting alongside an enemy barge and under the muzzles of the White Guard artillery.

Vatsetis, commander-in-chief of the eastern front, arrived at a moment when the offensive against Kazan was already in full swing. Most of us, myself among them, had little exact information concerning the outcome of the conference; only one thing quickly became a matter of general knowledge and was greeted with deep satisfaction on all sides. Our old man (that is what we called our commander among ourselves) declared himself opposed to Vatsetis's views, who wanted to undertake an attack against Kazan from the left river bank, while our commander decided to storm Kazan on the right bank which dominates the city and not on the left bank which is flat and exposed.

## The Whites advance

BUT PRECISELY at a time when the entire Fifth Army was tensely poised for the attack, when its main forces at last began pushing forward under constant counter-attacks and many heavy day-long battles, three 'luminaries' of White Guard Russia got together in order to put an end to the protracted epic of Svyazhisk.

Savinkov, Kappel, and Fortunatov at the head of a considerable force undertook a desperate raid against a railroad station adjoining Svyazhisk, in order in this way to capture Svyazhisk itself and the Volga bridge. The raid was brilliantly executed; after making a long detour, the Whites suddenly swooped down on the station Shikhra, shot it to pieces, seized the station buildings, cut the connections with the rest of the railway line and burned a munition train stationed there.

The small defending force at Shikhra was slaughtered to the last man. Nor is this all; they literally hunted down and extirpated every living thing in this little station. I had the opportunity to see Shikhra a few hours after the raid. It bore the stigma of the completely irrational pogrom violence that stamped all the victories of these gentlemen, who never felt themselves the masters and future inhabitants of the soil accidentally and temporarily conquered.

In a courtyard, a cow lay bestially murdered (I say murdered advisedly, not slaughtered); the chicken coop was filled senselessly with chickens riddled in all too human a fashion. The well, the little vegetable garden, the water tower and the houses were treated as if they had been captured human beings and, moreover, Bolsheviks and 'sheenies'. The intestines had been ripped out of everything. Animals and inanimate objects sprawled everywhere, decimated, violated, ugly—dead. Alongside this horrible shambles of everything that once had been a human habitation, the indescribable, unutterable death of a few railway employees and Red Army men caught by surprise appeared quite in the nature of things.

Only in Goya's illustrations of the Spanish campaign and guerrilla war can a similar harmony be found of wind-swept trees bending low beneath the weight of hanged men, of dust on roadways, of blood and stones.

From the station Shikhra, the Savinkov detachment turned towards Svyazhisk, moving along the railroad. We sent our armoured train 'Free Russia' to meet them. So far as I am able to recall, it was armed with long-range naval guns. Its commander, however, did not rise to the level of his task. Being surrounded on two sides (so it appeared to him), he left his train and rushed back to the Revolutionary Military Council in order 'to report'.

In his absence 'Free Russia' was shot to pieces and burned. Its black, burning hull lay derelict for a long time beside the roadbed very close to Svyazhisk.

After the destruction of the armoured train the road to the Volga seemed completely open. The Whites stood directly beneath Svyazhisk, some one-and-a-half to two versts away from the Fifth Army's headquarters. Panic ensued. Part of the Political Department, if not all of it, rushed to the piers and aboard the steamboats.

The regiment, fighting virtually on Volga's banks but higher upstream, wavered and then fled with its commanders and commissars. Toward morning, its maddened detachments were found aboard the staff ships of the Volga war fleet.

In Svyazhisk only the Fifth Army staff with its officers and the train of Trotsky remained.

## How Svyazhisk was saved

LEV DAVIDOVICH mobilized the entire personnel of the train, all the clerks, wireless operators, hospital workers, and the



Devastation on the Volga (Top) a typical civil war battle armoured train. Such trains, organized and manned by the of the Red Army, played a most important part in the



guard commanded by the Chief of Staff of the fleet, Comrade Lepetenko (by the way, one of the most courageous and self-sacrificing soldiers of the revolution whose biography could very well provide this book with its most brilliant chapter)—in a word, everyone able to bear a rifle.

The staff offices stood deserted; there was no 'rear' any longer. Everything was thrown against the Whites who had rolled almost flush to the station. From Shikhra to the first houses of Svyazhisk the entire road was churned up by shells, covered with dead horses, abandoned weapons and empty cartridge shells. The closer to Svyazhisk, all the greater the havoc.

The advance of the Whites was halted only after they had leaped over the gigantic charred skeleton of the armoured train, still smoking and smelling of molten metal. The advance surges to the very threshold, then rolls back boiling like a receding wave only to fling itself once more against the hastily mobilized reserves of Svyazhisk. Here both sides stand facing each other for several hours, here are many dead.

The Whites then decided that they had before them a fresh and well-organized division of whose existence even their intelligence service had remained unaware. Exhausted from their 48-hour raid, the soldiers tended to over-estimate the strength of the enemy and did not even suspect that opposing them was only a hastily thrown together handful of fighters with no one behind them except Trotsky's and Slavin, sitting beside a map in a smoke-filled sleepless room of the deserted headquarters in the centre of the depopulated Svyazhisk where bullets were whistling through the streets.

Throughout this night, like all the previous ones, Lev Davidovich's train remained standing there as always without its engine. Not a single section of the Fifth Army advancing on Kazan and about to storm it was bothered that night or diverted from the front to cover a virtually defenceless Svyazhisk. The army and the fleet learned about the night attack only after it was all over, after the Whites were already in retreat firmly convinced that almost a whole division was confronting them.

The next day 27 deserters who had fled to the ships in the most critical moment were tried and shot. Among them were several communists. Much was later said about the shooting of these 27, especially in the hinterland, of course, where they did not know by how thin a thread hung the road of Moscow and our entire offensive against Kazan, undertaken with our last means and forces.

To begin with, the whole army was agog with talk about communists having turned cowards; and that laws were not written for them; that they could desert with impunity, while an ordinary rank-and-filer was shot down like a dog.

If not for the exceptional courage of Trotsky, the army commander and other members of the Revolutionary Military Council, the prestige of the communists working in the Army would have been impaired, and lost for a long time to come.

No fine speeches can make it sound plausible to any army suffering every pos-

## Larissa Reissner

Symbol of the international character of the October Revolution is Larissa Reissner, daughter of a Polish mother and a German—East Elbian—landowner; she was born May 1, 1895, in Vienna (Poland), educated in Germany and France; before her 22nd birthday she was an outstanding figure in the Russian Revolution.

Trotsky, in 'My Life', writes of her in his chapter on Svyazhisk. Larissa Reissner, who called Ivan Nikitch (Smirnov) 'the conscience of Svyazhisk' was herself prominent in the Fifth Army, as well as in the Revolution as a whole. This fine young woman flashed across the revolutionary sky like a burning meteor, blinding many. With her appearance of an Olympian goddess, she combined a subtle and ironical mind and the courage of a warrior. After the capture of Kazan by the Whites, she went into the enemy camp to reconnoitre, disguised as a peasant woman. But her appearance was too extraordinary, and she was arrested. While she was being cross-examined by a Japanese intelligence officer, she took advantage of an interval to slip through the carefully guarded door and disappear.

After that, she engaged in intelligence work. Later, she sailed on warboats and took part in battles. Her sketches about the civil war are literature. With equal gusto, she would write about the Ural industries and the rising of the workers in the Ruhr. She was anxious to know and to do it all, and to take part in everything. In her few brief years, she became a writer of the first rank. But after coming unscathed through fire and water this Fall of the Revolution suddenly burned up with typhus. In the peaceful surroundings of Moscow, before she was even 30.



1895

1926

on reconnaissance patrol in the vicinity of the White Kazan and returned three days later, tired, his face wind-tanned, his body crawling with ubiquitous lice. By way of compensation, he was all in one piece.

It was a fascinating spectacle to observe the profound inner process taking place in people who arrive at a revolutionary front: they catch fire like a straw roof lit on all four sides, and then on cooling off become transformed into a fire-proof, perfectly clear and uniform piece of cast iron.

Youngest of all was Mezhlauk—Valerin Ivanovich. He had a particularly hard time. His younger brother and wife had remained behind in Kazan and, according to a rumour, had been shot. Later it turned out that his brother actually had died, while his wife suffered indescribably. It was not customary to complain or talk about one's misfortunes at Svyazhisk. And Mezhlauk kept an honest silence, did his work, and walked through the sticky autumn mud in his long cavalry coat, all

the Baltic fleet to Svyazhisk. Their appearance created a sensation. The army now felt the river side protected. A series of artillery duels began on the Volga, occurring three or four times daily. Covered by the fire of our batteries concealed along the shore, our flotilla now ventured far forward.

These forays were crowned by such extremely audacious ones as that undertaken on the morning of September 9 by Sailor Markin, one of the founders and outstanding heroes of the Red Fleet. On an unwieldy, armour-plated tug-boat he ventured far out to the very piers of Kazan, landed, drove off the crews of enemy batteries by machine-gun fire and removed the locks from several guns.

Another time, late at night on August 30, our ships came flush up to Kazan, shelled the city, set fire to several barges loaded with munitions and food supplies, and withdrew without losing a single ship. Among others Trotsky, together with the Commander, was aboard the torpedo-

Trotsky and members of the Red Army general staff.



Trotsky after escaping from his second Siberian exile.



Trotsky during his sojourn in France.



Soviet delegation to Brest-Litovsk—including Trotsky, then Commissar for Foreign Affairs—all later victims of Stalin's terror.



Trotsky, Natalia and Leon Sedov during third exile, Alma Ata, 1928.



Trotsky's younger son Sergei, who later disappeared in Stalin's concentration camps.



1929, Odessa, Trotsky departing for Turkey after his expulsion from the Soviet Union.



1929, Odessa, Trotsky departing for Turkey after his expulsion from the Soviet Union.

# SVYAZHSK

of him concentrated on one burning point: Kazan.

Meanwhile the Whites began to sense that with its strengthened resistance, Svyazhsk was growing into something great and dangerous.

Intermittent skirmishes and attacks came to an end; a regular siege, with large organized forces on all sides was started. But they had let slip the propitious moment.

Old Slavin, Commander of the Fifth Army, not a very gifted colonel, but one who knew his business exactly and thoroughly, fixed on a key point of defence, worked out a definite plan and carried it through with truly Latvian stubbornness.

Svyazhsk stood firm, its feet planted in the ground like a bull, its broad forehead lowered towards Kazan, standing immovable on the spot and impatiently shaking its horns, sharp as bayonets.

One sunny autumn morning came narrow, agile and swift torpedo-boats from

boat 'Prochny' which had to fix its steering gear while drifting alongside an enemy barge and under the muzzles of the White Guard artillery.

Vatzetis, commander-in-chief of the eastern front, arrived at a moment when the offensive against Kazan was already in full swing. Most of us, myself among them, had little exact information concerning the outcome of the conference; only one thing quickly became a matter of general knowledge and was greeted with deep satisfaction on all sides. Our old man (that is what we called our commander among ourselves) declared himself opposed to Vatzetis's views, who wanted to undertake an attack against Kazan from the left river bank, while our commander decided to storm Kazan from the right bank which dominates the city and not on the left bank which is flat and exposed.

### The Whites advance

BUT PRECISELY at a time when the entire Fifth Army was tensely poised for the attack, when its main forces at last began pushing forward under constant counter-attacks and many heavy day-long battles, three 'luminaries' of White Guard Russia got together in order to put an end to the protracted epic of Svyazhsk.

Savinkov, Kappel, and Fortunatov at the head of a considerable force undertook a desperate raid against a railroad station adjoining Svyazhsk, in order in this way to capture Svyazhsk itself and the Volga bridge. The raid was brilliantly executed; after making a long detour, the Whites suddenly swooped down on the station Shikhra, shot it to pieces, seized the station buildings, cut the connections with the rest of the railway line and burned a munition train stationed there.

The small defending force at Shikhra was slaughtered to the last man. Nor is this all; they literally hunted down and exterminated every living thing in this little station. I had the opportunity to see Shikhra a few hours after the raid. It bore the stigma of the completely irrational pogrom violence that stamped all the victories of these gentlemen, who never felt themselves the masters and future inhabitants of the soil accidentally and temporarily conquered.

In a courtyard, a cow lay bestially murdered (I say murdered advisedly, not slaughtered); the chicken coop was filled senselessly with chickens riddled in all too human a fashion. The well, the little vegetable garden, the water tower and the houses were treated as if they had been captured human beings and, moreover, Bolsheviks and 'sheenies'. The intestines had been ripped out of everything. Animals and inanimate objects sprawled everywhere, decimated, violated, ugly—dead. Alongside this horrible shambles of everything that once had been a human habitation, the indescribable, unutterable death of a few railway employees and Red Army men caught by surprise appeared quite in the nature of things.

Only in Goya's illustrations of the Spanish campaign and guerrilla war can a similar harmony be found of wind-swept trees bending low beneath the weight of hanged men, of dust on roadways, of blood and stones.

From the station Shikhra, the Savinkov detachment turned towards Svyazhsk, moving along the railroad. We sent our armoured train 'Free Russia' to meet them. So far as I am able to recall, it was armed with long-range naval guns. Its commander, however, did not rise to the level of his task. Being surrounded on two sides (so it appeared to him), he left his train and rushed back to the Revolutionary Military Council in order 'to report'.

In his absence 'Free Russia' was shot to pieces and burned. Its black, burning hulk lay derailed for a long time beside the roadbed very close to Svyazhsk.

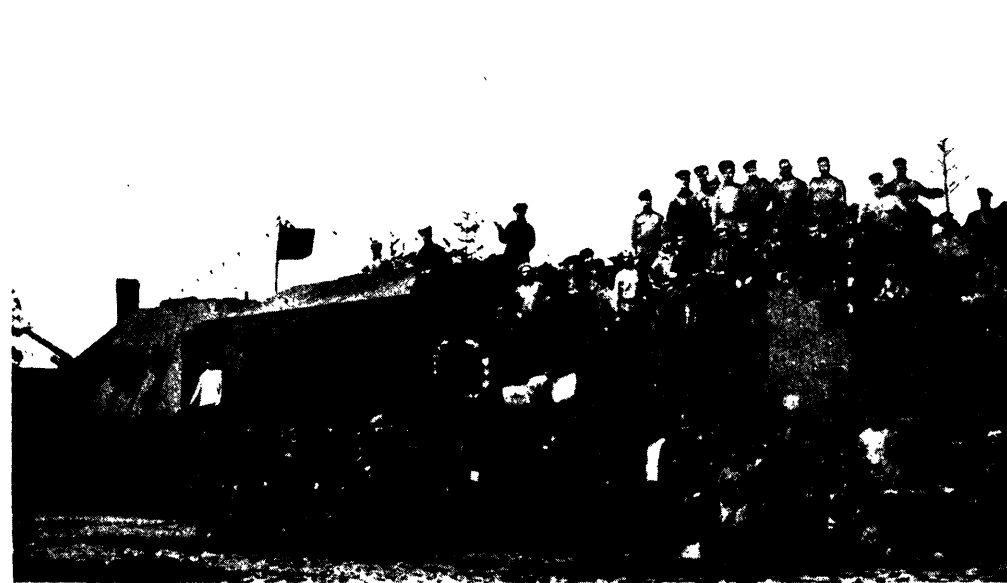
After the destruction of the armoured train the road to the Volga seemed completely open. The Whites stood directly beneath Svyazhsk, some one-and-a-half to two versts away from the Fifth Army's headquarters. Panic ensued. Part of the Political Department, if not all of it, rushed to the piers and aboard the steamboats.

The regiment, fighting virtually on Volga's banks but higher upstream, wavered and then fled with its commanders and commissars. Toward morning, its maddened detachments were found aboard the staff ships of the Volga war fleet.

In Svyazhsk only the Fifth Army staff with its officers and the train of Trotsky remained.

### How Svyazhsk was saved

LEV DAVIDOVICH mobilized the entire personnel of the train, all the clerks, wireless operators, hospital workers, and the



Devastation on the Volga (Top) a typical civil war battle scene. Above, an armoured train. Such trains, organized and manned by the most conscious elements of the Red Army, played a most important part in the civil war.

guard commanded by the Chief of Staff of the fleet, Comrade Lepetenko (by the way, one of the most courageous and self-sacrificing soldiers of the revolution whose biography could very well provide this book with its most brilliant chapter)—in a word, everyone able to bear a rifle.

The staff offices stood deserted; there was no 'rear' any longer. Everything was thrown against the Whites who had rolled almost flush to the station. From Shikhra to the first houses of Svyazhsk the entire road was churned up by shells, covered with dead horses, abandoned weapons and empty cartridge shells. The closer to Svyazhsk, all the greater the havoc.

The advance of the Whites was halted only after they had leaped over the gigantic charred skeleton of the armoured train, still smoking and smelling of molten metal. The advance surges to the very threshold, then rolls back boiling like a receding wave only to fling itself once more against the hastily mobilized reserves of Svyazhsk. Here both sides stand facing each other for several hours, here are many dead.

The Whites then decided that they had before them a fresh and well-organized division of whose existence even their intelligence service had remained unaware. Exhausted from their 48-hour raid, the soldiers tended to over-estimate the strength of the enemy and did not even suspect that opposing them was only a hastily thrown together handful of fighters with no one behind them except Trotsky's and Slavin, sitting beside a map in a smoke-filled sleepless room of the deserted headquarters in the centre of the depopulated Svyazhsk where bullets were whistling through the streets.

Throughout this night, like all the previous ones, Lev Davidovich's train remained standing there as always without its engine. Not a single section of the Fifth Army advancing on Kazan and about to storm it was bothered that night or diverted from the front to cover a virtually defenceless Svyazhsk. The army and the fleet learned about the night attack only after it was all over, after the Whites were already in retreat firmly convinced that almost a whole division was confronting them.

The next day 27 deserters who had fled to the ships in the most critical moment were tried and shot. Among them were several communists. Much was later said about the shooting of these 27, especially in the hinterland, of course, where they did not know by how thin a thread hung the road of Moscow and our entire offensive against Kazan, undertaken with our last means and forces.

To begin with, the whole army was agog with talk about communists having turned cowards; and that laws were not written for them; that they could desert with impunity, while an ordinary rank-and-file was shot down like a dog.

If not for the exceptional courage of Trotsky, the army commander and other members of the Revolutionary Military Council, the prestige of the communists working in the Army would have been impaired, and lost for a long time to come.

No fine speeches can make it sound plausible to any army suffering every pos-

Republic, would have had to be in Svyazhsk; had to live through the entire practical experience of these weeks of battle; had to call upon all the resources of his will and organizational genius for the defence of Svyazhsk, for the defence of the army organism smashed under the fire of the Whites.

Moreover, in revolutionary war there is still another force, another factor without which victory cannot be gained, and that is: the mighty romanticism of the Revolution which enables people straight from the barricades to cast themselves immediately in the harsh forms of the military machine, without losing the quick, light step gained in political demonstrations or the independent spirit and flexibility gained perhaps in long years of Party work under illegality.

To have conquered in 1918 one had to take all the fire of the Revolution, all of its incandescent heat, and harness them to the vulgar, repellent age-old pattern of the army.

Up till now history has always solved this problem with imposing but moth-laden theatrical tricks. She would summon to the stage some individual in a 'three-cornered hat and a grey field uniform' and he or some other general on a white horse would cut the revolutionary blood and marrow into republics, banners, slogans.

In military construction, as in so many other things, the Russian Revolution went its own way. Insurrection and war fused into one, the Army and the Party grew together, inseparably interwoven, and on the regimental banners were inscribed the unity of their mutual aims, all the sharpest formulae of the class struggle.

In the days of Svyazhsk all this remained as yet unformed, only hanging in the air, seeking for expression.

The Workers' and Peasants' Army had to find expression somehow; it had to take on its outward shape, produce its own formulae, but how? This no one clearly knew yet. At that time, of course, no precepts, no dogmatic programme were available in accordance with which this titanic organism could grow and develop.

In the Party and in the masses there lived only a foreboding, a creative premonition of this military revolutionary organization which was never seen before and to which each day's battle whispered some new real characteristic.

Trotsky's great merit lies in this, that he caught up in flight the least gesture of the masses which already bore upon it the stamp of this sought-for and unique organizational formula.

He sifted out and then set going all the little practices whereby besieged Svyazhsk simplified, hastened or organized its work of battle. And this, not simply in the narrow technical sense. No. Every new successful combination of 'specialist and commissar', of him who commands and the one executing the command and bearing the responsibility for it—every successful combination, after it had met the test of experience and had been lucidly formulated, was immediately transformed into an order, a circular, a regulation. In this way the living revolutionary experience was not lost, nor forgotten, nor deformed.

The norm obligatory for all was not mediocrity but, on the contrary, the best, approaching the masses.

In the last analysis it is precisely this revolutionary instinct which is the court of highest sanction; which exactly purges its new creative justice of all deeply hidden counter-revolutionary back-slidings. It places its hand of violence upon the deceitful formal justice in the name of the highest, proletarian justice which does not permit its elastic laws to ossify, to become divorced from life and burden the shoulders, of Red Army soldiers with petty, aggravating, superfluous loads.

Trotsky possessed this intuitive sense. In him the revolutionist was never elbowed aside by the soldier, the military leader, the commander. And when with his inhuman, terrible voice he confronted a deserter, we stood in fear of him as one of us, a great rebel who could crush and slay anyone for base cowardice, for treason not to the military but the world-proletarian revolutionary cause.

It was impossible for Trotsky to have been a coward, for otherwise the contempt of this extraordinary army would have crushed him; and it could never have forgiven a weakening for the fraternal blood of the 27 which sprayed its first victory.

A few days before the occupation of Kazan by our troops Lev Davidovich had to leave Svyazhsk; the news of the attempt on Lenin's life called him to Moscow. But neither Savinkov's raid on Svyazhsk, organized with great mastery by the Social-Revolutionists, nor the attempt to assassinate Lenin, undertaken by the same party almost simultaneously with Savinkov's raid, could now halt the Red Army. The final wave of the offensive engulfed Kazan.

On September 9 late at night the troops were embarked on ships and by morning, around 5.30, the clumsy many-decked transports, conveyed by torpedo boats, moved toward the piers of Kazan. It was strange to sail in moonlit twilight past the half-demolished mill with a green roof, behind which a White battery had been located; past the half-burned 'Delphin', gutted and beached on the deserted shore; past all the familiar river bends, tongues of land, sandbanks and inlets over which from dawn to evening death had walked for so many weeks, clouds of smoke had rolled, and golden sheaves of artillery fire had flared.

We sailed with lights out in absolute silence over the black, cold, smoothly flowing Volga.

Aft of the stern, light foam on the dull humming wake washed away by waves that remember nothing and flow unconcernedly to the Caspian Sea. And yet the place through which the giant ship was at this moment silently gliding had only yesterday been a maelstrom ripped and ploughed by wildly exploding shells. And here, where a moment ago a nightbird tipped noiselessly with its wing the water from which a slight mist curled upward into the cold air, yesterday so many white spumy fountains were rising; yesterday, words of command were restlessly sounding and slim torpedo boats were threading their way through smoke and flames and a rain of steel splinters, their hulls trembling from the compressed impatience of engines and from the recoil of their two-gun batteries which fired once a minute with a sound resembling iron hiccups.

People were firing, scattering away under the hail of down-clattering shells, mopping up the blood on the decks. . . . And now everything is silent; the Volga flows as it has flowed a thousand years ago, as it will flow centuries from now.

We reached the piers without firing a shot. The first flickers of dawn lit up the sky. In the greyish-pink twilight, humped, black, charred phantoms began to appear. Cranes, beams of burned buildings, shattered telegraph poles—all this seemed to have endured endless sorrow and seemed to have lost all capacity for feeling like a tree with twisted, withered branches. Death's kingdom washed by the icy roses of the northern dawn.

And the deserted guns with their muzzles uplifted resemble in the twilight cast-down figures, frozen in mute despair, with heads propped up by hands cold and wet with dew.

Fog. People began shivering from cold and nervous tension; the air is permeated with the odour of machine oil and tarred rope. The gunner's blue collar turns with the movement of the body viewing in amazement the unpopulated, soundless shore reposing in dead silence.

This is victory.

One can be the most adept at articulating, one can give to a new army a rationally impeccable plastic form, and nonetheless render its spirit frigid, permit it to evaporate and remain incapable of keeping this spirit alive within the chicken-wire of juridical formulae. To prevent this, one must be a great revolutionist; one must possess the intuition of a creator and an internal radio transmitter of vast power without which there is no

the things of genius conceived by the masses themselves in the most fiery, most creative moments of the struggle.

In little things as well as big—whether in such complex matters as the division of labour among the members of the Revolutionary Military Council or the quick, snappy, friendly gesture exchanged in greeting between a Red Commander and a soldier each busy and hurrying somewhere—it all had to be drawn from life, assimilated and returned as a norm to the masses for universal use.

And wherever things weren't moving, or there was creaking, or bungling, one had to sense what was wrong, one had to help, one had to pull, as the midwife pulls out the new-born babe during a difficult birth.

Of extreme importance is the fact that in those days in Svyazhsk there was precisely such a man as Trotsky.

### Trotsky's role

NO MATTER what his calling or his name, it is clear that the creator of the Red Army, the future chairman of the Revolutionary Military Council of the

## Reissner

Elsewhere Trotsky ranks her with Isaac Babel as the greatest writer of the Civil War period—a remarkable tribute to a girl to whom Russian was a foreign language, acquired in maturity.

'The Front', a collection of her Civil War sketches, from which 'Svyazhsk' is taken, was enormously popular with the Soviet masses. The various districts of the Communist Party—Moscow, Leningrad, the Urals, etc.—fled with each other in bringing it out in scores of editions. A larger collection of her work, 'October: Ausgewahlte Schriften', was brought out in Germany by the official Communist publishing house as late as 1930, with an introduction by Radek written in 1926, the year she died.

It was not until Stalin's 50th birthday (December 21, 1928) and the publication on that date of Voroshilov's 'Stalin and the Red Army' that the falsification of the history of the Civil War began with full force.

Of course, her sketches have been forbidden literature in the Soviet Union because their portraits of the Civil War leaders later murdered by Stalin are a complete refutation of all Stalin's falsifications. More recently a biographical sketch of Larissa Reissner, along with a short excerpt from 'The Front' was published in 'Sputnik' (November 1968), a monthly digest compiled by the Novosti Press Agency and published in Britain by Daily Mirror Newspapers Ltd. The short description of life in the Volga-Caspian fleet avoids mentioning the real fighters against the White counter-revolution.

But Larissa Reissner was not altogether unknown to the first British Communist. The very first issue of 'Communist Review' of May 1921 carries one of her brilliant sketches entitled 'The Heroic Sailors of the Russian Revolution'.

the Baltic fleet to Svyazhsk. Their appearance created a sensation. The army now felt the river side protected. A series of artillery duels began on the Volga, occurring three or four times daily. Covered by the fire of our batteries concealed along the shore, our flotilla now ventured far forward.

These forays were crowned by such extremely audacious ones as that undertaken on the morning of September 9 by Sailor Markin, one of the founders and outstanding heroes of the Red Fleet. On an unwieldy, armour-plated tug-boat he ventured far out to the very piers of Kazan, landed, drove off the crews of enemy batteries by machine-gun fire and removed the locks from several guns.

Another time, late at night on August 30, our ships came flush up to Kazan, shelled the city, set fire to several barges loaded with munitions and food supplies, and withdrew without losing a single ship. Among others Trotsky, together with the Commander, was aboard the torpedo-



Commissar for Foreign Affairs—all later Trotsky, Natalia and Leon Sedov during third exile, Alma Ata, 1928.



Trotsky's younger son Sergel, who later disappeared in detention camps.



1929, Odessa, Trotsky departing for Turkey after his expulsion from the Soviet Union.



Trotsky's daughter Zina, driven to suicide by Stalin's persecution. 1933, Cassis. Trotsky and his wife arrive secretly in France.

# LEON TROTSKY: LENIN'S ALLY AGAINST STALINISM

TROTSKYISM arose as a political tendency in the struggle of the Left Opposition to understand and check the rise of the Soviet bureaucracy as personified and led by Stalin.

Contrary to the claims of the Stalinists, and the slanders of bourgeois publicists and historians, the continuity of revolutionary Marxism, the theoretical life-line of the international working class, was not preserved by the faction grouped around Stalin at the time of Lenin's death in 1924.

Though masking its break from Bolshevism with a loudly-proclaimed adherence to 'Leninism', Stalin's bureaucratic clique proceeded to undermine all the basic tenets of Marxism, as defended and developed by Lenin in his struggle to build the Russian Bolshevik Party and the Communist International.

Stalin first propounded the reformist, nationalist theory that complete socialism could be built in Russia without further revolutions in the West less than a year after Lenin died.

The Communist Parties of the world, within this scheme of things, had to renounce the struggle for state power and convert themselves, in Trotsky's words, into 'frontier guards for the Soviet Union'.

This reactionary line was in fact carried into the various sections of the Communist International, with disastrous results in Britain (the General Strike), China (the victory of Chiang Kai-shek and his massacre of the Shanghai communists) and finally Germany, where the Nazis crushed the entire workers' movement and began their preparations for war on the Soviet Union.

Side by side with these international defeats went the strangling of Soviet democracy within the Party and the state, the ousting of oppositionists from leading positions and their replacement by servile careerists—often officials of the old Tsarist regime—loyal to Stalin.

Trotsky, as the main theoretician of the Left Opposition, made a constant analysis of every twist and turn in the line of the bureaucracy, all the time developing alternative policies to strengthen the economy and state at home and turn the International back towards its original Leninist path in the capitalist world.

But in all this work, Trotsky was building on a political foundation already established by Lenin.

The fight for internationalism, for Party democracy and against bureaucracy, for the development of socialist planning and against pro-capitalist elements in town and country—all these essentials of the Left Opposition's programme had been anticipated by Lenin



Lenin and Trotsky (on stairs) on the orators' dais, Theatre Square, Moscow.

in the last year of his active political life.

These facts can no longer be kept from the membership of the British Communist Party by its Stalinist leadership. The theoretical journal of the CPGB, 'Marxism Today', published in its July issue a short but devastating article, by novelist and historian Jack Lindsay, on the origins of Stalinism.

After sketching in the social

Lenin, and the assumption of power by Stalin. Stalin did not want to change the system of authority exercised wholly from above; he did everything to strengthen and petrify the situation of authoritative centralism and bureaucracy. Every-one interested in just what had happened should read 'Lenin's Last Fight' by Moshe Lewin. 'This book, extremely sympathetic to Lenin, is largely based on recently published

bureaucracy—over the issues of Stalin's nationalist treatment of Georgia, the defence of the state monopoly of foreign trade and the weakening of the Soviet power—Lenin turned for assistance to Leon Trotsky:

'Lenin... was at odds with Stalin on the question of the foreign trade monopoly, considering that Stalin's views would lead to a disintegration of, or at least a serious blow to a socialist economy.

'On December 13 [1922] he suffered two dangerous strokes. Two days later he wrote to Stalin saying that he had taken the necessary steps to retire and had come to an agreement with Trotsky, who would take up and defend his position. Stalin saw that he was up against too strong an opposition [ie, Lenin and Trotsky] and on the 18th the decision taken on foreign trade was rescinded...'

Lindsay then goes on: 'Lenin wrote to Trotsky congratulating him on their victory. Next day Stalin made a fierce personal attack on Krupskaya for having taken down this letter [the one to Trotsky] at Lenin's dictation.'

As Lindsay notes, in the middle of his struggle against Stalin, Lenin drafted his famous and long-suppressed 'Testament', the second part of which bluntly denounces Stalin for his disloyalty to the Party, and calls for his removal from the post of General Secretary.

Finally Lindsay deals with the outcome of the inquiry into the 'Georgian Affair', in which Stalin was deeply involved with two other future members of his faction, Dzerzhinsky and Orjonikidze:

'The Politburo did its best to keep the dossier from him; its session had endorsed the commission's conclusions and white washed Orjonikidze. Finally in February Lenin got what he wanted; he was also using his own private committee to find out what was happening.

'He wrote again to Trotsky asking him to 'take up the defence of the Georgian CC; next day, March 6, he wrote a

letter to Stalin demanding an apology for his treatment of Krupskaya; he also wrote to the Georgians stating that he was on their side against Stalin and Orjonikidze. Kameney was told by Krupskaya [and she would have known] that Lenin meant to crush Stalin politically.

'But the strain of the situation was more than he could bear; on the 10th a new stroke deprived him of the power to speak. [The vital 12th Party Congress, where Lenin intended to denounce Stalin openly, was due to begin in the middle of April.]

'He lingered on, hopelessly trying to find out what was happening, unable to do anything about it, and died on January 21, 1924. A more tragic position it is hard to imagine.'

Here the roles and political positions of the three main figures in this tragedy are presented in a way totally in conflict with the Stalinist myths of the period.

Lenin is here accurately portrayed, as an enemy of bureaucracy and nationalism, which was defended within the Party by Stalin. But above all, and this is the significance of the article, Lindsay shows that

Lenin lived, Stalin and his supporters were uniting to undermine the conquests of the Revolution, from its economy to the policy of national self-determination.

But history did not stop with Lenin's death. Just where Lindsay ends his analysis of the problems of the Soviet Union and the Bolshevik Party, it is necessary to press ahead.

'What was the relationship between the rise of the Stalinist bureaucracy and its acceptance of 'socialism in one country'?

'And in turn, what effect did the adoption of Stalin's policies in Russia have on the development of the parties of the Communist International, including, of course, the Communist Party of Great Britain, of which Lindsay is a member?

The answer to these questions cannot be gleaned from a study of Lenin's last writings alone, for he had only begun to get to grips with the new problem of bureaucracy within a workers' state, and no Party leader had dared to challenge the Marxist axiom that the Russian Revolution could only bring socialism to the Soviet Union once it had conquered on an international scale.

turn the Party to the programme of Lenin, and when this proved impossible, to found a new International. It was in this fight for revolutionary leadership and programme within the working class that the theory of Marxism was defended and developed against its Stalinist and social-democratic enemies.

It is in that tradition of the fight for Marxist continuity and revolutionary leadership that we honour and commemorate the 30th anniversary of the assassination of Leon Trotsky, Lenin's comrade in his last fight against the future Stalinist bureaucracy and founder of the Fourth International.

NEW PARK PUBLICATIONS

## STALINISM IN BRITAIN

A TROTSKYIST ANALYSIS BY ROBERT BLACK

workers press FIRST DAILY TROTSKYIST NEWSPAPER

Price 6d. Full subscription: £10 a year (posted daily) £2 10s for three months OR

Two editions (for any two days you select) £4 a year—£1 for three months

I would like to subscribe to Workers Press.

Name..... Address.....

Post to: Circulation Organizer, Workers Press, 186a Clapham High Street, London, SW4. (Tel. 01-720-2000)

## JOIN THE YOUNG SOCIALISTS!

REVOLUTIONARY YOUTH MOVEMENT

I wish to join the Young Socialists. Please send me details of my nearest branch.

Name..... Address.....

Fill in the above form and send to

S. Torrance, 195 National Secretary, 186a Clapham High Street, London, SW4.

Published by Workers Press—Keep Left 186a Clapham High Street, London, SW4. Printed by Plough Press Ltd (TU) r.o. 180 Clapham High Street, London, SW4.

## KEEP LEFT

OFFICIAL MONTHLY PAPER OF THE YOUNG SOCIALISTS

PRICE 6d. DON'T leave it to chance! Make sure of your regular monthly copy of Keep Left by sending us a subscription of 9s 2d for 11 issues.

NAME..... ADDRESS.....

No. of copies of KEEP LEFT required regularly.....

Fill in this form and send to

A. Jennings, 186a Clapham High Street, London, SW4.

## Socialist Labour League

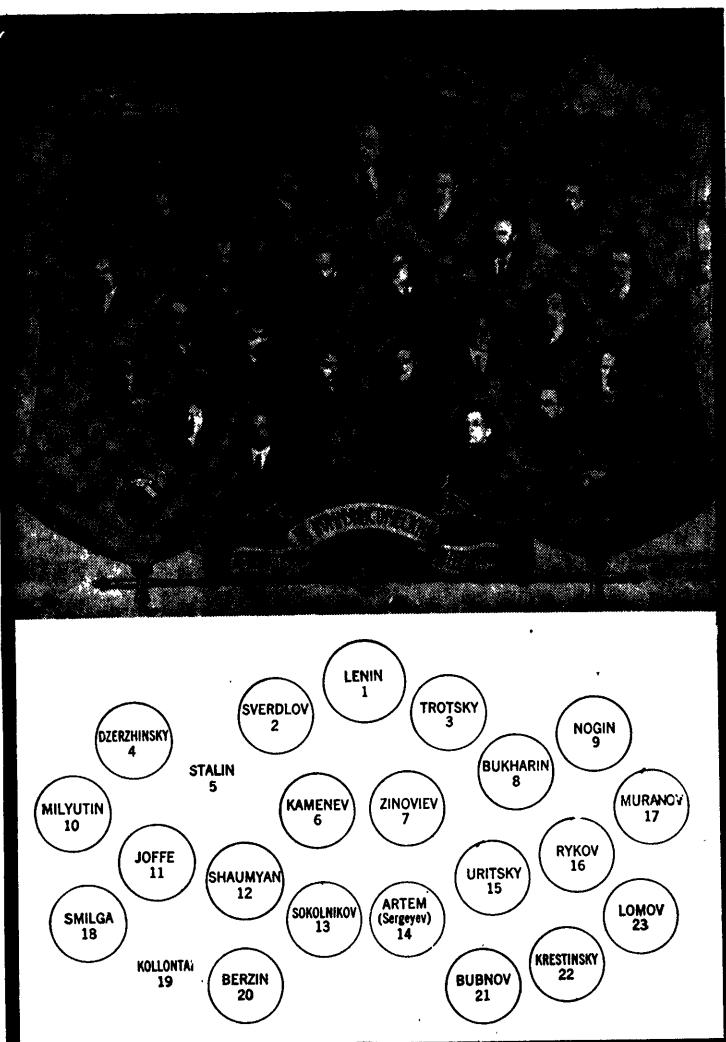
BRITISH SECTION OF THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

Fill in the form below and send to:

National Secretary, Socialist Labour League 186a Clapham High Street, London, SW4.

Name.....

Address.....



The leading 23 members of the 'October' [Revolution] Central Committee.

\* Names not encircled died a natural death and economic background to 'Lenin's last fight' against Stalin, Lindsay says the following:

'The disaster was the crippling and then the death of

Soviet material: the 'Journal' in Volume XLV of Lenin's 'Works'... the 'Memoirs of Foteieva', one of Lenin's personal secretaries; and the articles that Lenin managed to get into print in his last months, despite the opposition of the Politbureau.'

So Lindsay's sources are impeccable. They simply tell the same story that Trotsky revealed in his work 'The Stalin School of Falsification', first published in English in 1937.

All the documents quoted from or referred to by either Lindsay or Lewin, together with many more, are reproduced by Trotsky in his exposure of Stalinist historical falsification.

But until the Khrushchev 'Secret Speech' of 1956, Stalinists throughout the world had denied their existence, claiming them to be Trotskyist forgeries!

Using this material, Lindsay proves that in his fight against



The Petrograd Military Revolutionary Committee.



Poster issued on the first anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution, entitled 'The Leaders of the Proletarian Revolution', featuring Lenin, Trotsky, Kameney, Lunacharsky, Zinoviev and Sverdlov.

Trotsky was the only leading Party member to whom Lenin could turn for political solidarity in his 'last fight'.

Lindsay concluded his bombshell with the telling comment, aimed, we can be reasonably sure, at his own Party leadership:

'This story of Lenin's last days should be known to all communists. To talk of Leninism and fidelity to Lenin without realizing what his struggle was in those tragic days is to insult his memory.'

Lindsay effectively demolishes the lie that Stalin defended and continued Leninism after its founder's death.

He shows that even while

The task of answering this revisionism fell to Trotsky, and it is in his writings, dating from 'The New Course' (late 1923) and 'Lessons of October' (1924) through to 'The Permanent Revolution' (1928), 'The Class Nature of the Soviet State' (1934) and finally his classic analysis of the Soviet Union 'The Revolution Betrayed' (1937) that the key to understanding the present crisis in British, Czechoslovakian and world Stalinism will be found.

For ironically, Lindsay's article is the most recent in a series which have attempted to answer the question addressed to 'Marxism Today' readers by the widow of Otto Sling, executed in the Slangy 'trial' of 1952.

That question was: 'Why did it happen?'

Lindsay, by returning to the decisive struggles of 1922-1923 within the Bolshevik Party, puts his finger on the historical source of the Stalinist infection Trotsky once described as 'the syphilis of the labour movement'.

The continuity of the Marxist movement, which today is defended by the International Committee of the Fourth International, does not reside simply in books.

It was the fight of Trotsky and his comrades, a fight Trotsky knew would probably end in their physical destruction at the hands of the Stalinist bureaucracy, to first of all re-



Leon Sedov, Trotsky's ablest political collaborator. Murdered by the GPU, February 1938.



Trotsky exposed the Moscow frame-up trials at the Dewey Commission.



1939. Trotsky, his wife, Natalia and grand-son Seva in Mexico.



Trotsky at work on his biography of Stalin.



Trotsky, dead, Mexico, August 20, 1940.