

Trotsky: Just Another Right-Winger

TROTSKYISM, THE VANGUARD OF THE COUNTER-REVOLUTIONARY BOURGEOISIE

On the occasion of its 75th anniversary, *Esquire* magazine assembled a group of so-called "greatest writers of the 20th Century." Actually, there is nothing of an artistic or any other nature that distinguishes this group from any group of bourgeois authors except that this is the group that has appealed to the wealthy snobs who "determine" our literary tastes. Fittingly, Leon Trotsky was amongst these. We say fittingly, because Trotsky is undistinguished as a writer and his career was a series of failures in practice and rebuffs from those who knew him best. But Trotsky had one success—the North American bourgeoisie loved him; they lauded his empty thoughts; reprinted his inane but voluminous scribblings and built him an image as "revolutionary" denied him by those who were in a position to better judge his work. Trotsky was the first Madison Avenue-made "revolutionary." Why the U.S. bourgeoisie hailed Trotsky while the Russian workers scorned him will be the subject of this article. We have to apologize to the reader for spending your time on one who is basically a nonentity. Even among revisionist writers and leaders, Trotsky is dwarfed by people like Mao-Tse-Tung, Rosa Luxemburg, Karl Kautsky and Mikael Bakunin. These four, though they were often wrong in theory and usually opportunist in practice evinced in their writings a certain depth of thought and in their revolutionary practice at times a certain honesty and consistency that is entirely absent from Trotsky's life and writings; the latter owes his fame entirely to Madison Avenue.

I. TWO DIFFERENT LINES ON THE QUESTION OF IMPERIALIST WAR

After his expulsion from the world communist movement, Trotsky wrote in all the bourgeois journals that he was virtually the only revolutionary internationalist around. In point of fact, Trotsky bitterly fought the line of revolutionary internationalism pursued by Lenin and revolutionary communists.

During the first world-wide imperialist conflagration (1914-1918), those socialists who had not totally sold out to the imperialist ruling classes met in Zimmerwald, Switzerland to ham-

mer out a program against the war. Immediately two lines developed; on the one hand, Karl Kautsky proposed that socialists mount a fight for "an immediate peace with no annexations or indemnities." In other words ask the imperialist butchers to return to the "peaceful" situation of exploitation and colonialism that caused the war in the first place. They also advanced the ridiculous slogan of "disarmament." Lenin, on the other hand, united around himself a group of revolutionaries that opposed this pacifist rubbish. Lenin said:

The conversion of the present imperialist war into a civil war is the only correct proletarian slogan, one that follows from the experience of the (Paris) Commune . . .

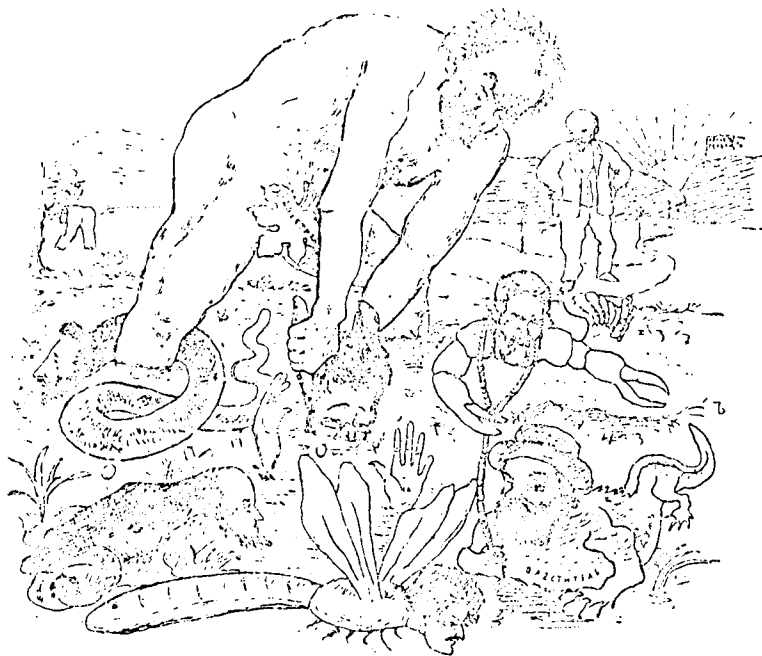
Theoretically, it would be absolutely wrong to forget that every war is but the continuation of policy by other means. The present imperialist war is the continuation of the imperialist policies of two groups of Great Powers and these policies were engendered and fostered by the sum total of the relationships of the imperialist era.

If the present war rouses among the reactionary Christian socialists, among the whispering petty bourgeoisie only horror and fright, only aversion to all use of arms, to bloodshed, death, etc., then we must say: Capitalist society is and always has been horror without end. If this most reactionary of all wars is now preparing for that society an end in horror, we have no reason to fall into despair. But the disarmament 'demand,' or more correctly, the dream of disarmament is objectively, nothing but an expression of despair at a time when as everyone can see, the bourgeoisie is paving the way for the only legitimate and revolutionary war—civil war against the imperialist bourgeoisie.

Convert the imperialist war into a civil war; work for the defeat of your "own" imperialists; overthrow the warmaking government. This is the line of genuine communists in a situation of imperialist war. However, Trotsky in this period attached himself firmly to the Kautsky revisionists and fought for their pacifist program. For example, when he arrived in New York in early 1917 Trotsky disrupted a group of revolutionary Russian exiles led by Alexandra Kollantai and through his delaying tactics prevented them from adopting the revolutionary program. (When Kollantai wrote Lenin about this, Lenin replied to her, "What a swine that Trotsky is." Lenin had had considerable experience with Trotsky's disruptive activities.)

No matter how you dress up pacifism in "internationalist clothes"—pacifism is in essence equivalent to nationalism. Refusing to turn the

SOME EARLY BOLSHEVIK CARTOONS



This shows Plekhanov, the founder of the Russian Social movement, who later sided with the Mensheviks in the controversies of 1903-1905, trying to pull his Menchevik friends out of the

swamp while Lenin stands on the dry path leading to Revolution. Axelrod is the crayfish; Trotsky is the dragonfly.

guns on your own bourgeoisie amounts to a defense of your own bourgeoisie—naked nationalism.

Trotsky's successors have carried on the nationalist-pacifist line consistently. The Trotskyite "Socialist-Workers" Party in the U.S. advanced the slogan "Bring our Boys Home" during the Vietnam war in opposition to the line of "Defeat U.S. Imperialism" of PLP. In the Mid-East wars they rush to a non-class defense of Arab nationalists and the revisionist-imperialists, covering up the imperialist nature of those wars. When General DeGaulle visited Montreal and made his famous "Vive Quebec Libre" speech, the Canadian Trotskyites jumped on that nationalist slogan and appropriated the Gaullist slogan for their own. And in general they uncritically grovel before the figure of any nationalist who happens to capture the fancy of the news media. They are indeed worthy successors of Trotsky.

Pacifism and nationalism dressed up in "revolutionary clothes" is no invention of Trotsky or Trotskyites. Revisionists like Karl Kautsky, Khrushchov and Mao-Tse-Tung were much more original. Just as Trotsky formed a bloc with Kautsky during World War I, the modern Trotskyites formed a bloc with the revisionist U.S. "communist" Party to usurp leadership in the Vietnam anti-war movement. But in each case, it was the revisionists who led the attack on revolutionary communist positions; Trotsky and the modern Trotskyites in each case ran after them snivelling about "revolutionary internationalism" while begging to be included in whatever revisionist bloc was around.

II HATRED OF THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT IS THE HALLMARK OF TROTSKYISM

It is on the question of the dictatorship of the proletariat and violent revolution that Trotsky most clearly takes his stand as just another revisionist. Marx had always proclaimed the inevitability of violent revolution as "the midwife" to socialist society and pointed out that the only road to the replacement of the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie is by the dictatorship of the proletariat. He said that this teaching is what separated scientific socialism from all forms of utopian socialism. The state is itself violence directed at certain classes; the capitalist state depends on the violence of the police and the military to suppress the working class and maintain capitalist rule. Lenin has spoken of "civil war, without which not a single great revolution in history has yet been able to get along, and without which not a single Marxist has conceived of the transition from capitalism to socialism." The victorious workers, however, cannot rest on their laurels. A ruthless dictatorship of the working class must be maintained over the defeated capitalists to prevent counter-revolution. This principle Lenin called the "watershed" between Marxism and revisionism. In this section we will show that Trotsky and his followers completely opposed this, the fundamental tenet of Marxism-Leninism.

Admittedly, it is hard to pin Trotsky down, for as Lenin once remarked:

Trotsky has never yet held a firm opinion on any important question of Marxism. He always contrives to worm his way into the cracks of any given difference of opinion and deserts one side for the other.

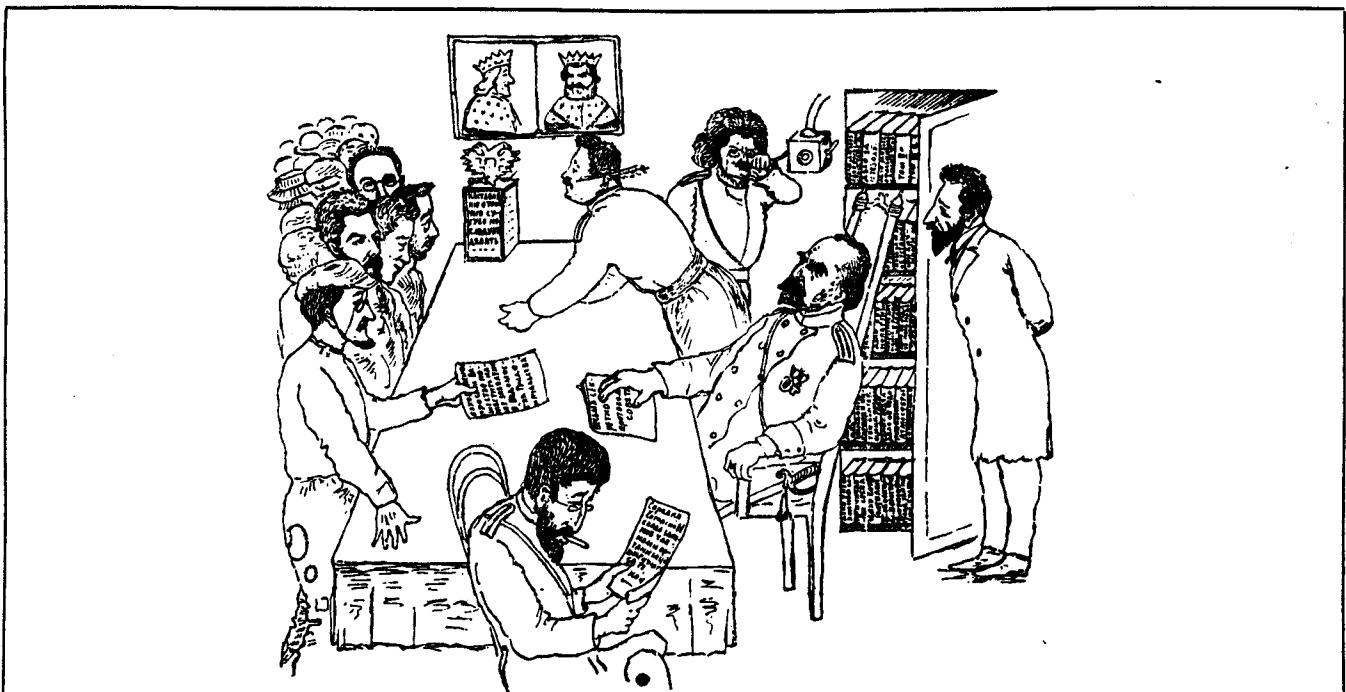
True, in words, when it suited his purpose, Trotsky would support revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat, but in practice, he always found better company with his bourgeois friends in opposing steps to carry out the workers' revolution. We will give two examples, one from his early days as a "revolutionist," one during the civil war in Russia.

In 1905 a revolutionary situation had broken out in Russia; there was a general strike, the army was in disarray; the autocratic government was retreating before the liberals. The time had come to prepare the working class to seize power. A split naturally developed among Russian socialists about what line to take in revolutionary storm. On the one hand, there was Lenin and the revolutionary wing of the Party, known as the Bolsheviks, consisting mainly of workers in the Russian underground. On the other hand, was the group of intellectuals, mainly exiles, called the Mensheviks, that Trotsky adhered to. (The leader of this anti-revolutionary group was P.B. Axelrod to whom Trotsky had dedicated one of his anti-Lenin pamphlets. "To my dear teacher, Pavel Borosvich Axelrod," is how Trotsky referred to the foremost revisionist in Russia, a man who ended up fighting with the imperialists to restore capitalism in Russia.)

WHAT WAS THE SPLIT BETWEEN THE BOLSHEVIKS AND TROTSKY'S MENSHEVIKS ALL ABOUT?

Seeing that a situation had arisen favorable to revolution, Lenin and the Bolsheviks called for a big popular insurrection armed uprising, and the establishment of a revolutionary provisional government. The Tsar of Russia and his autocratic government had to be swept away, and the Bolsheviks didn't shy away from organizing to overthrow the government. Axelrod, and his flunkey, Trotsky, however, were afraid to alienate their liberal friends by such a "radical" call. Instead they appealed for a "representative institution—to set up a popular constituent assembly." Lenin ridiculed that nonsense pointing out that Trotsky's friends "prattle about a 'constituent' assembly, bashfully shutting their eyes to the fact that power and authority remain in the hands of the Tsar and forgetting that to 'constitute' one must possess the power to do so."

Not content with issuing nonsensical manifestos for the Tsar to set up "a representative institution" Trotsky's faction went among the workers and sabotaged Bolshevik agitation for an uprising saying that their own "tactics" "are more to our advantage" than the "tactics" of insurrection. Trotsky used his position in the Petrograd Soviet to push this revisionist garbage. The fact that a full fledged revolution did not take place in 1905 was due partly to the confusion the Mensheviks sowed in the ranks of the workers, and Trotsky



Scene in a 'non-bureaucratic' institution by P. N. Lepeshinsky, 1904

Here a group of Bolshevik underground workers, headed by Lyadov, Rozenberg, Volsky-Valentinov and Gusev, asked the Menshevik editorial board to publish their declaration, Plekhanov, seated facing the Bolsheviks, says: "Ask these fellows

for their passports." Trotsky is on the telephone, apparently to police headquarters. The Menshevik king and queen hanging on the wall are Axelrod and Vera Zasulich respectively.

did his bit.

The Mensheviks and their adherent, Trotsky, used the occasion of the revolution of 1905 to issue wordy pronouncements on the need for more careful day to day work in the trade unions. They also cautioned against becoming "inordinately absorbed in military preparations, armed attacks, the seizure of power, etc." What they failed to see, or feared to see, was that the revolutionary period presented new tasks and careful day to day trade union work was no longer enough or even helpful. As Lenin declared, "the armed uprising brooks no delay; prepare yourself for it immediately and energetically; remember that it is indispensable for decisive victory."

The two lines were clearly drawn in 1905 and no matter how much Trotsky later claimed to be a revolutionary all his life, he cannot coverup the scab role he played then. Faced with a revolutionary situation, he panicked at the prospect of a workers' uprising and ran right into the arms of the liberals with his calls for a "representative" assembly.

Panic at the prospect of a workers' insurrection appears to be a congenital disease of Trotskyites. Trotsky's two leading collaborators in later opposing the Soviet Communist Party, his brother-in-law Kamenev, and the "Bolshevik" exile Zinoviev, had a similar affliction in 1917. These two adherents-to-be of Trotsky's stubbornly fought the proposal to launch the successful Bolshevik Revolution in 1917. Having been outvoted in the Central Committee, Zinoviev and Kamenev took their revisionist politics outside the Party, and wrote an article in Maxim Gorky's liberal newspaper warning the capitalists about the Bolsheviks' plans for an insurrection.

Here we digress for a moment to discuss a weakness of Lenin that seems inexplicable, his forgive-and-forget attitude that later caused so much unnecessary grief to the Communist movement. Take Zinoviev and Kamenev, for example, who should have been shot for what they did. Instead, on Lenin's insistence they were reinstated in the Party and even put back in the leadership. This weakness of Lenin's explains why Trotsky was allowed to join the Party after he had opposed it for so many years. During the revolution of 1917, Trotsky, seeing his Menshevik "teachers" increasingly isolated from the workers, perceived his future as a "revolutionist" lay with the Bolsheviks. So he switched sides in mid-stream and asked to join the Party, making an insincere self-criticism for his past errors. Why Lenin, who had fought this man he considered a "swine" for over 12 years, agreed to this is almost incomprehensible. Lenin who was a theoretical hardliner was often lenient on inner party disputes. For example, he for a long time refused to believe that the top police agent Malinovsky, who had infiltrated the Bolshevik Central Committee, was an agent. When Malinovsky came to trial, Party leaders kept Lenin away from the court for fear he would waver. Generally, Lenin had a weakness for those who had been exiled with him, even if they were police agents or oppor-

tunist "swine." Stalin and other underground leaders of the Bolsheviks had a harder line towards vacillating "Bolshevik" intellectuals like Trotsky, Zinoviev and Kamenev, (Lenin considered Stalin too "rude"), but in the frantic days of the Revolution and the Civil War, it proved impossible to fight these inner party struggles to a conclusion.

The first phase of the Revolution of 1917 lasted from the overthrow of the Tsar in February to the overthrow of the last bourgeois government in October. (The second phase was a revolutionary Civil War that lasted three and one-half years). In the course of the Revolution, the Russian capitalists installed a succession of governments, each a little more "Left," in a vain attempt to prevent proletarian dictatorship. A Menshevik government was installed by the capitalists in the summer of 1917 to stem the tide of revolution.

In the "July Days," the Mensheviks began a round-up of thousands of Bolshevik workers, and a warrant was issued for Lenin, who was the main target of the Menshevik dragnet. Trotsky insisted that Lenin turn himself in to the police "to avoid a split with the Mensheviks." Stalin, as leader of the underground forces in the Party, recognized this capitalist plot to murder Lenin, opposed this and personally took charge of disguising and hiding Lenin. Trotsky turned himself in to his Menshevik friends and was later released unharmed, but the all-out search for Lenin continued until the overthrow of the government in October. This incident clearly indicates two different approaches to revolution and proletarian dictatorship on the one hand, the attitude of Trotsky, so quick to surrender to his trusted Menshevik friends; and on the other hand the attitude of professional revolutionaries, knowing that a cop is a cop and keeping their eye on the goal of revolution.

Trotsky had a reputation as an efficient organizer. (Maybe, that is why some of the Bolsheviks forgave his past and let him in.) On the strength of that reputation, Trotsky was put in charge of the Red Army during the Civil War that occurred after the victorious Revolution of 1917. He took advantage of that position to sabotage the dictatorship of the proletariat by introducing 30,000 former tsarist officers to take command of the workers' army.

The Revolution was made by the workers and peasants of Russia who overthrew the shackles of bourgeois authority. The key to the revolution was the Army Committees which the rank and file recruits organized in nearly every unit of the tsarist army, taking authority away from the tsarist officers, and preventing the tsarist officers from using the army to suppress the revolution. In fact the Army Committees led key units of the army to depose the tsarist officers and join the revolution. Working class members of the Bolshevik Party who had been drafted into the army played a key role in organizing the Army Committees. Party members like Kaganovich, a former worker in a shoe factory, who organized an Army Committee which took leadership away from the tsarist officers at Saratov.

Arrested by the bourgeois government in July 1917, Kaganovich escaped to Mogilev, tsarist headquarters, where during the Revolution in October he persuaded the Mogilev forces not to march in support of the government at the crucial hour.

There were hundreds of Bolsheviks like Kaganovich throughout Russia that were the backbone of the Revolution and that became the leaders of the new Red Army that fought the counter-revolutionary armies in the Civil War. But these working class leaders of the Red Army were not "expert" enough for Trotsky. Trotsky wanted "one-man command," so over 30,000 tsarist officers who had been kicked aside by the rank and file Army Committees were brought back to enforce "military discipline" which Trotsky felt was lacking in the Red Army.

Even in the short run, these officers proved unreliable as the situation in the key city of Tsaritsyn in 1918 proved. Several imperialist and counter-revolutionary (White) armies were advancing on this key junction between Moscow and South Russia. Voroshilov, a working class Bolshevik and leader of a few thousand Red Partisans in the Ukraine marched 200 miles through several German and White armies to try to save the city. When he arrived, he found the tsarist officers, who Trotsky had put in command of the city, trading with the White generals and planning to hand the city over. Due to Stalin's quick intervention, Voroshilov was put into command, the tsarist officers removed, and the city eventually saved. (Trotsky sent a telegram to Voroshilov demanding the reinstatement of the treacherous tsarist officers, but Stalin intercepted the telegram and told Voroshilov to ignore it.)

In the long run, the introduction of tsarist officers proved even more disastrous. Although many of the tsarist officers were exposed as treacherous in the course of the Civil War, many others remained in the Red Army after peace was restored. They became a key anti-socialist force. Slowly and seemingly imperceptibly, they reintroduced the style of a bourgeois military; they trained successors in an anti-working class method of military work. Over the course of the decades, the Red Army was transformed from a worker's army into the imperialist army it is today. Of course, Trotsky's tsarist officers were not the sole cause of that disastrous transformation, but they were a very important element.

Revolutionaries in the Army represented by Frunze and Gusev fought Trotsky's militarist methods. Party conferences on the Army in 1921, 1922 and 1923 were scenes of great struggle between working class forces led by Frunze, Gusev and Voroshilov, who fought for a Marxist working class army, and Trotsky and his gang, who wanted to reintroduce the militarist methods of imperialist armies. At one point in a 1922 conference, an exasperated revolutionary exclaimed to Trotsky that "polished boots and buttons are not everything." Trotsky answered with the incredible statement that, "War is a 'profession' for those who correctly learn military business

...How can the maxims of the military profession be determined with the help of the Marxist method?"

At last, in 1925 the Party Central Committee, removed Trotsky from his post and replaced him with Frunze. But, by now Trotsky's tsarist officers were too deeply entrenched for the new Bolshevik army leaders to easily remove them. Frunze's untimely death nine months later made the situation even more difficult, and the damage Trotsky did to the Red Army remained a hidden sore that slowly festered through the decades, eventually destroying the first worker's army.

We shouldn't overstate the role of Trotsky in this matter. Although Lenin, Stalin, Frunze and other Bolsheviks in the Central Committee disapproved of some of Trotsky's extreme military professionalism, they did not see the significance of his actions. They did not perceive that these actions were striking at the very heart of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Thus, Lenin and, for a long time, Stalin too, were loath to make an issue of it.

Today's modern Trotskyite groups carry on the Trotsky tradition of antipathy to the dictatorship of the proletariat. Thus, whether the SWP runs an endless stream of "socialist" election campaigns or its competitors call for a "Labor" Party, the result is the same—to prettify the bourgeois electoral system and to deny the necessity of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

III FACTIONALISM IS THE ONLY CONSISTENT PRINCIPLE OF TROTSKYISM

Around the turn of the century, all the socialist parties in the world were made up of various factions, fractions, federations and circles loosely connected by a verbal commitment to Marxism and a willingness to fight for pro-working class reforms. For example, a typical social democratic party would have a newspaper and its editorial board, a group of members in Parliament, circles of socialist intellectuals in various cities, trade union leaders in various industries, all members of the Party, but with no national leadership except that exerted by periodic Congresses. While effective to varying degrees in fighting for trade-union issues and democratic reforms, it was clear these parties were incapable of leading a revolution for real workers' power.

When Lenin returned the bulk of the socialist movement in Russia to the revolutionary principles of Marxism, he perceived the need for a Party of a new type—one which organized revolutionary cadre in a tightly disciplined way, where the editorial board of the newspaper, the parliamentary fraction, the trade-union and student cadre co-ordinated their activities toward a common strategy and were under discipline of a Central Committee democratically elected by the membership, but with a clear mandate to set policy for the Party as a whole and for each individual member. Only such a Party could lead the Revolution.

At several Russian Party conferences in 1901-

1904, this issue was fought out to a conclusion. In addition, Lenin wrote two books on the subject, **What is to be Done**, and **One Step Forward, Two Steps back**. We won't detail all the discussions here. Suffice it to say that it was on the question of organization of the Party above all that the Mensheviks split from the Bolsheviks. Trotsky was one of the leading splitters. In reply to Lenin's book, **One Step Forward, Two Steps Back**, which put forward the principles of a revolutionary communist organization, Trotsky wrote a pamphlet for the Mensheviks, **Our Political Tasks**, the essence of which is a demand for freedom for factions and opposition to centralized leadership. In the pamphlet, Trotsky never calls Lenin anything but "Maximilian Lenin," identifying Lenin as Maximilian Robespierre, the hangman of the French Revolution. In that pamphlet Trotsky plainly states that Party discipline need be submitted to only to the degree that Party decisions do not contradict the inclination and views of the individual members. While no revolutionary Party could function that way, Trotsky throughout his career, was loyal to that principle. If Trotsky did not agree with a Party decision, Trotsky simply did not obey it. Naturally, such a principle leads to never ending splits, as the subsequent history of the various Trotskyite groups show.

The Congress of 1903 was a turning point in the world communist movements. It was here that the Mensheviks (among them Trotsky) departed irrevocably from the revolutionary ranks and that the Bolsheviks hammered out their revolutionary organization in the fire of battle against the Menshevik intellectuals. Among the issues that Trotsky, Axelrod and other Mensheviks fought Lenin, Gusev and other Bolsheviks were:

- Membership in the Communist Party. The Bolsheviks held that membership must be mainly

workers and at any rate limited to those actively committed to revolution and willing to submit to revolutionary discipline. The Mensheviks demanded membership for every "sympathetic professor" or "striking high school student."

- Principle of Organization. The Bolsheviks developed the organizational principle of democratic centralism where decisions democratically decided upon by the majority must be carried out by all Party members unconditionally. The Mensheviks demanded individuals be allowed essentially to do their own thing and factions have the freedom to organize against the national leadership.

- The Party Newspaper. The Bolsheviks held that the Party press be subordinate to the Central Committee. The Mensheviks insisted on the "right" of the editorial board to publish anything they want.

- Election to the leadership of the Russian underground. The Mensheviks pushed a list of their adherents, principally, Trotsky, Fomin and Egorov, a trio of sellout artists. The Bolshevik candidates were Popov, Travinsky and Glebov, three tested professional revolutionaries.

The Congress of 1903 was followed by the Revolution of 1905 in which Trotsky and his Menshevik friends played the despicable role of scabs we detailed above. With the defeat of the Russian workers' movement in 1905-1906, there arose among most of the Mensheviks and some faint-hearted Bolsheviks, a feeling of despair and pessimism so great that they lost all hope and called for the liquidation of the Party. This group was called the liquidators and Trotsky outdid even some of his Menshevik "teachers" in his vigor on behalf of that cause. Trotsky became one of the main leaders of the liquidation faction and thus found his career. From that time until his long overdue demise in 1940, he pursued only one

LENIN ON TROTSKY

"And it is this Judas who beats his breast and loudly professes his loyalty to the Party, claiming that he did not grovel before the Vperyd group and the liquidators. Such is Judas Trotsky's blush of shame."

Judas Trotsky's Blush of Shame,
 Lenin, **Collected Works**, Vol. 17, p 45
 Written in early 1911, pub. in Pravda,
 Jan. 21, 1932

"... we were right in calling Trotsky a representative of the worst remnants of factionalism."

"Although he claims to be non-factional, Trotsky is known to everybody who is in the least familiar with the working-class movement in Russia as the representative of 'Trotsky's faction.'"

"Trotsky, however, possesses no ideological and political definiteness, for his patent for 'non-factionalism,' as we shall soon see in greater detail, is merely a patent to flit freely to and fro,

from one group to another."

"All that glitters is not gold. There is much glitter and sound in Trotsky's phrases, but they are meaningless."

Lenin, "Disruption of Unity," May 1914, **Collected Works**, Vol. 20, (1966 ed. C.W.)

"But, joking apart (although joking is the only way of retorting mildly to Trotsky's insufferable phrase-mongering.)"

Ibid.

"Roland-Holst... Plakovsky... Trotsky... are all the most harmful 'Kautskians,' in the sense that all of them in various forms are for unity with the opportunists, all in various forms embellish opportunism, all of them (in various ways), preach eclecticism instead of revolutionary Marxism."

Collected Works, Vol. 35



Trotsky: Think, don't fight



If you do fight, fight the revolutionary party.

consistent aim in life—the liquidation of the Party of the workers.

Every revolutionary Party must expect defeats, even serious defeats. The Party must wipe the blood from its face and start again, adjust tactics to the changing situation but never lose sight of the main goal, **revolution**. In every capitalist country today, the ruling regime lives on borrowed time going from one crisis to another, afraid of its workers, unable to trust its soldiers or its intelligentsia. The social form of production is in crying contradiction to private property and capitalist exploitation. The spectre of proletarian revolution haunts every ruling class around the world without exception. But without a tested, experienced mass-based revolutionary leadership—the Communist Party—the revolution can't succeed. To advocate liquidation of the Party under these conditions is to surrender to the class enemy at precisely the historical period when they can be had.

Lenin knew this and he fought to keep the Party together. He knew the defeats of today are but the necessary preparation for the victories of tomorrow. Trotsky, on the other hand, was so panic-stricken by the seeming strength of the bourgeoisie, so distraught over the defeats of 1905, that not only was he ready to surrender himself but he loudly urged others to this cowardly course.

Fortunately, the majority of the Bolsheviks would buy none of Trotsky's rubbish, but instead in the difficult conditions of the Fascist style reaction painstakingly built the Party. Professional revolutionaries like Stalin, Krylenko,

Gusev, Osipov, Voroshilov, and many others spent the years 1906 to 1917 in and out of prison, forming underground workers' groups, secret trade-unions and army committees, spreading the Party literature and building the Bolshevik Party so that by 1917 most class conscious Russian workers looked to the Bolsheviks for leadership.

While these professional revolutionaries were on the front lines inside Tsarist Russia, Trotsky from exile in Switzerland continued as late as 1913 to push his liquidationist rubbish. Unable to get class conscious Party members to share his fear and despair, he tried more devious means to break up the Party. First he tried to discredit Lenin, the leader of the Bolsheviks.

The wretched squabbling systematically provoked by Lenin, that old hand at the game, that professional exploiter of all that is backward in the Russian labour movement, seems like a senseless obsession. (See "Trotsky's Letter to Chkheidze," April 1913.)

When that didn't work he seized upon some minor differences between Russian and Polish revolutionaries to drive a wedge between opponents of Trotsky's liquidationism in the two countries. Trotsky tried to magnify differences based on gossip in order to discredit both Lenin and the Polish revolutionaries. Lenin pointed out:

The obliging Trotsky is more dangerous than an enemy! Trotsky could produce no proof, except "private conversation." "(I.e. simply gossip, on which Trotsky always subsists)..." for his contention that Polish revolutionaries had big differences with the Bolsheviks. After presenting some facts to clearly refute Trotsky, Lenin goes on to ask: "Why did Trotsky withhold these facts from the readers of

his journal? Only because it pays him to speculate on fomenting differences between the Polish and the Russian opponents of liquidationism, and to deceive the Russian workers on the question of the program."

At this time Trotsky formed a bloc with the extreme nationalist Jewish Bund. This group, which had always stood on the extreme Right of the workers' movement and was the forerunner to the modern Zionist Party in Israel, was also fighting tooth and nail to liquidate the Party. But as Trotsky's subsequent history showed, he would make a bloc with anyone if it would help his game of splitting or liquidating the Party.

None of this worked and Trotsky finding himself completely isolated during the Revolution of 1917 joined the Party he had fought so hard to liquidate. But his factionalism never stopped. Whether it was over the question of submitting to an unpleasant peace treaty in order to preserve workers' power or over Trotsky's hare-brained scheme to militarize the trade unions, Trotsky found ample excuses to squabble with the Bolshevik Central Committee, and he was forever forming factions, worming "his way into the cracks of any given difference of opinion." We won't bore the reader with details of all the factionalizing Trotsky was involved in. But until Lenin's death Trotsky was, with one exception, relatively restrained. Lenin had routed Trotsky ideologically in the past...and "once Bitten twice shy."

The one exception took place in the winter of 1920-1921 in an otherwise not noteworthy discussion on trade-unions. Apparently Trotsky felt the time was right to issue a factional pamphlet that attacked the Central Committee in bitter terms. After the decision in the Central Committee went against him by 19 to 1, Trotsky went outside the Party, formed his own group with its own "platform" that demanded that the workers "choose between two trends," i.e. the Party or Trotsky. The workers did choose overwhelmingly for the Party and against Trotsky; Lenin wrote a stinging rebuke of Trotsky and to Bukharin who tried to excuse Trotsky's factional behavior, **Once Again on the Trade Unions, The Current Situation and the Mistakes of Trotsky and Bukharin**. Seeing himself completely isolated, Trotsky gave in again to the Party Central Committee and was once again forgiven by the soft-hearted Lenin.

After Lenin's death, Trotsky began his all-out assault against the Party. In order to prepare himself to "assume the mantle of Lenin." Trotsky prepared two articles, one on the history of the Revolution, the other on the need for a strong-man in the government. Trotsky's clear-cut object was to become military dictator. He started by rewriting history in his pamphlet, **Lessons of October**. This pamphlet was typical of the liar Trotsky's version of history. His struggle against the Bolsheviks is omitted. Trotsky is the great genius leader of the Revolution (with the help of Lenin). The rank and file of the Party does not exist; in the background is barely discerned a dull-witted anonymous Central Committee, and the Petrograd Bolshevik organization, the real

collective organizer of the insurrection, is altogether absent.

Later in 1927 Trotsky issued a call to replace the dictatorship of the proletariat with a strong-man caudillo type government headed by himself, no doubt, that would sweep away "like garbage," the "ignorant and dishonest cribbers" which was how Trotsky referred to the Central Committee of the Party which he was still a member of. Looking for an historical example, he explicitly patterned himself after Clemenceau, the reactionary anti-communist premier of France during World War I. Clemenceau first entered politics as a mayor of Paris during the Commune which he betrayed to the Versailles government; later as premier in 1910 he ruthlessly crushed the biggest strike wave in France at that time; as wartime leader of France, he was such an aggressive predatory imperialist that even Woodrow Wilson could not stomach him. He then organized the united imperialist intervention against Soviet Russia. Such was the man after whom Trotsky chose to pattern himself (now that his "teacher" Axelrod was dying.)

After Trotsky issued his factional pamphlet in 1924, the Central Committee replied and a thorough discussion of Trotsky's differences with the Party was held in all Party units. The rank and file was overwhelmingly against Trotsky. All the worker units were opposed to Trotsky's rubbish; his support was confined to some Party intellectuals and a few student clubs. In January 1925, Trotsky made a half-hearted self-criticism and submitted to the Central Committee. At that time Zinoviev and Kamenev were among the leading assailants of Trotsky's factional activities; in fact Zinoviev had demanded Trotsky's immediate expulsion from the Party. Stalin and the majority of the Central Committee, however, instead settled for a reprimand and removal of Trotsky from leadership of the Red Army. There were two reasons for Stalin's mildness toward Trotsky in this instance—one, he distrusted Zinoviev's motives, and second, he did not fully perceive the severe danger of Trotsky's factional activities. After the January meeting, Trotsky retired from the scene temporarily.

In the next year, Zinoviev began his own factional activities, evidently thinking that with Trotsky out of the way he would get "Lenin's mantle." He used the Petrograd organization where he had a base of support among the Party functionaries to attack the Central Committee. Courageous Party workers in Petrograd, particularly in the Vyborg industrial section of the Party, exposed his factional activities to the Central Committee which then brought up the matter at the 14th Party Congress, December 1925. After a six day discussion by a vote of 559 to 65, the Congress condemned the factional activities of Trotsky, Zinoviev and Kamenev. Since they all in the end agreed to stop their factionalizing, they were retained in the Party and in the leadership. Once again Stalin and the Central Committee followed Lenin's forgive and forget attitude.

Generally speaking there is little that a Party member can do that is worse than factionalizing.

The working class is in a constant state of war with the bourgeoisie; the Party is the general staff of the working class and nothing disrupts the leadership that the Party gives its class more than a faction. Even if the faction happens to be right in a tactical sense, disruption of the Party's leadership is still the greater service to the bourgeoisie. This is because the hardest battle the Party fights is the battle to become and to remain the general staff of the working class. This battle is in many ways tougher than the Revolution itself. If the Party degenerates into factions, the working class will turn to other leadership as sure as night follows day. Thus, a revolutionary Party cannot afford to take a lenient attitude toward factions and factionalizers. The subsequent history of the Party in Russia showed how ill-conceived and futile was the Central Committee's lenient attitude in December, 1925.

In 1926-1927, the three leading factionalists, Trotsky, Zinoviev and Kamenev finally got together and formed a new united faction with a handful of adherents. This time it was no half-way faction but the whole hog:

- They organized a full fledged organization complete with their own rump Central Committee and regional committees to oppose the Party's duly elected leadership (of which they were still a part)

- They circulated a series of declarations and platforms villifying the leadership of the Party and particularly Stalin, whom they now blamed for their downfall, and proposing their own revisionist program in place of the Party program.

- They circulated a bunch of Trotsky's old anti-Bolshevik, anti-Lenin pamphlets to justify their factionalizing activities.

- They organized illegal printing presses in conjunction with bourgeois intellectuals outside the Party.

- They made arrogant statements that they were violating Party discipline and would continue to do so.

- They contacted dissident elements in the German, French and other Communist Parties and urged these weak elements to also organize factions against their own leadership.

- Some went so far as to contact the armed counter-revolutionary White bands that still existed in Russia and asked for mutual support.

- In October 1927 they organized an anti-Central Committee demonstration in Moscow, which in conjunction with Trotsky's tsarist officers was to have led to a coup. However, only a handful of Trotskyites showed up and indignant Moscow workers ripped up their signs and broke up the demonstration.

All the time they were members of the Party and even of the highest leadership bodies!

Unfortunately for Trotsky and his faction, they were all generals without an Army. The Party rank and file, especially the workers, rejected their revisionist program and Trotsky's appeals to be the Clemenceau of Russia. The Central Committee organized nearly a year of discussion

in the Party around the faction and its program. After the discussion, a vote was taken: 724,000 voted for the Central Committee 4000 for the Trotsky faction. If the rank and file had any difference with Stalin and the Central Committee, it was that the latter were too lenient with the Trotsky faction. At the October 1927 Central Committee meeting, Stalin made a self criticism:

"At the last plenum of the Central Committee, some members of the plenum rebuked me for being too mild with Trotsky and Zinoviev and for advising the plenum against the immediate expulsion of Trotsky and Zinoviev from the Central Committee. (Voices from the audience: 'That's right and we rebuke you now.') Perhaps I was too kind then and made a mistake in proposing that a milder line be adopted towards Trotsky and Zinoviev. (Petrovsky interrupts from the floor: 'Quite right. We shall always rebuke you for a rotten piece of string.')

The meeting voted to kick Trotsky and Zinoviev off the Central Committee. The 15th Party Congress in December 1927 expelled Trotsky and Zinoviev from the Party. Trotsky shortly afterwards went into exile, the better to continue his liquidationist activities. Zinoviev and Kamenev for a time broke with Trotsky and made yet another self-criticism, and Zinoviev was readmitted to the Party.

In exile Trotsky formed a "Fourth International" of renegades and assorted riff-raff to promote permanent counter-revolution. The spearhead of this gang was directed at overthrowing the dictatorship of the proletariat in the Soviet Union. From 1927 to 1936 almost all the efforts of the "Fourth International" were devoted to subversion of the only workers' government. They recruited a wide variety of agents including some who were assigned by British imperialism and the German Nazis. Inside Russia these agents set up a subversive apparatus that suborned and recruited a handful of weak members or former members of the leadership, including Zinoviev, Kamenev, Bukharin and Radek. A campaign of subversion was begun by the Trotskyites that culminated in the dastardly murder of Kirov, one of the top leaders of the Central Committee in 1934.

With the assassination of Kirov, the Bolsheviks finally and completely broke with the old policy of leniency toward factions and factionalizers. A mass campaign was begun in the Party and the working class to isolate and defeat the Trotskyites and members of other revisionist factions. They were expelled from the Party and those who actually engaged in murder, sabotage and other crimes were brought to trial and some of them were executed in 1937. (These included Zinoviev, Kamenev and Bukharin.)

With the complete defeat of the Trotskyites in the Soviet Union the "Fourth International" turned its attention to sabotaging the work of Communist parties in the capitalist countries. Trotsky who was now living in Mexico gave

"special attention" to building anti-communism in the U.S. and Mexico. To that end in 1939 Trotsky on his own offered to personally appear before the House Un-American Activities Committee to explain to them the "evils" of communism and his "theory" of the "degeneration of the Soviet Union." Trotsky became a frequent contributor to the *New York Times* where he was given ample space to expound those ideas. It was not accidental that this was at a time when the U.S. Communist Party was leading the struggle to organize the CIO and fight unemployment.

In 1940 Trotsky's villainous career came to an end none too soon under mysterious circumstances. The "Fourth International," however, continues its handywork for capitalism to this day, although it has suffered from innumerable splits and factionalizing in typical Trotskyite fashion. The despicable role of the Trotskyites in the U.S. anti-war movement and in the Spanish Civil War is well known; less notorious is the role of the Trotskyites in aiding the counter-revolutionary fascists in the Indonesian massacre of 1965 (See PL V. 5 #6) and in the Ceylon massacre of 1971 (See PL V. 8 #4).

EXPERIENCE OF THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT IN RUSSIA

With the defeat of the Trotskyites, the Soviet Union entered what was called the "Stalin Era." The Party was called "Stalinist"; Stalin was called a personal dictator who controlled every aspect of life in Russia. This view by Trotskyites and other bourgeois observers was sometimes put forward with the contradictory "observations": that "Stalin is Zinoviev's flunkey" (Trotsky); "Stalin is the prisoner of Bukharin" (Zinoviev); "Stalin is the prisoner of the Politburo" (Harry S. Truman). To persons whose only frame of reference is "control" and "prisoners," who are unfamiliar with collective and democratic leadership, it is natural that they would think in these terms. But the actual fact is that a collective democratic leadership of the best revolutionary fighters and old Bolsheviks led the dictatorship of the proletariat in Russia in the period after the liquidation of the Trotskyite and other revisionist factions.

Stalin led the collective, but the men and women who worked with him on the leadership were veteran revolutionaries, and mass leaders in their own right. Some (Vasilyev, Travinsky) had been revolutionary organizers since 1893. We will name them here because collectively they were the real leadership

- Founders of the Bolshevik Party in 1903, most of whom spent the 14 years until the Revolution as leaders of the illegal workers' movement inside Russia: Bubnov, Gorsky, Gusev, Hertz (Lenin's younger brother), Kollontai, Khodorovsky, Krupskaya (Lenin's wife), Lange, Lunacharsky, Lyadov, Oppokov, Orjonikidze, Orlov, Osipov, Palovich, Petrovsky, Teodorovich, Travinsky, Vasilyev.

- Underground revolutionaries and mass leaders who joined the Bolshevik Party in the period

1904 to 1917: Adoratsky, Andreyev, Antonov-Ovseyenko/Buddeny, Beria, Podvoisky, Dybenko, Kaganovich, Kalinin, Kirov, Kurayev, Krylendo, Litvinov, Mikoyan, Molotov, Shvernik, Voroshilov and Zhdanov.

- In the late forties the first two groups of veteran revolutionaries was joined in the leadership by younger men who joined the Party after the Revolution: Bulganin, Khrushchov, Kosygin, Kuzentsov, Malenkov, Suslov, Voznesensky.

Obviously, at least the first two groups of tested professional revolutionaries were not about to be dictated to by anybody. Yet Stalin was clearly the leader of the collective in the period 1927 to 1953 for several reasons:

- From 1912 to 1917, Stalin was chosen by the Party, at Lenin's nomination, to lead all the underground work in Russia. Thus most of the above named revolutionaries had functioned successfully under Stalin's leadership in the difficult and dangerous period leading to the Revolution.

- When the first Politburo was formed in May 1917, to be a four man steering committee for the Revolution, Stalin (not Trotsky) was chosen by the Party to be on it. He was elected to every subsequent Politburo until his death in 1953.

- In 1922 again on Lenin's nomination, Stalin was elected General Secretary of the Party. As the main Party organizer, he led the organization of the Party during the consolidation of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

- As Commissar of Nationalities, he played the principal role in welding together the independent national states of the old Russian Empire into a united multi-national Soviet Union. Stalin contributed much of the theoretical guidance to the Party in the difficult struggle against the Trotsky-Zinoviev factions and their revisionist programs.

- He gave courageous, personal leadership to the Soviet communists during the fierce struggle to-the-death with the Nazis.

In Stalin's last decade as head of the Party, there arose a myth of infallibility and omnipotence about him. He was neither, nor claimed to be. Few of the professional revolutionaries of the pre-Revolutionary era indulged in this cult. It was in the main the invention of the third group of Soviet leaders, Khrushchev, Malenkov, Kosygin and company. These johnny-came-latelies tried to make up in fawning praise and obsequious worship of Stalin what they lacked in revolutionary experience.

No one man can be "dictator" of a modern state, the size of the Soviet Union, irrespective of the type of government. It is a physical and psychological impossibility. Thus, when people attribute to a man all sorts of deeds and leadership which he couldn't possibly have performed, or even inspired, it is not really a sign of how powerful he is. On the contrary, it is a sign that others are putting up a big smokescreen to mask their own grab for the levers of power. Thus, Khrushchov and his gang organized the cult of Stalin not because Stalin was all-powerful and they had to praise Stalin to get ahead, but on the contrary it was because they were usurping the middle and upper levels of Soviet leadership with

a gang of revisionist careerists. Khrushchov at one time had these things to say about Stalin: "the greatest genius, teacher and leader of mankind," (speech in 1939), "the great ever-victorious marshal," (circular in 1945), and my "own father," (article in 1949). Far from opposing the cult of Stalin, Khrushchov and his gang organized it to further their own subversive program and to associate themselves with Stalin's popularity.

In the same way today the Chou-En-Lai faction in China built up the cult of infallible Mao to mask their transformation of the dictatorship of the proletariat into the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. Mao Tse-Tung is far from the omnipotent one as portrayed by Chou and company. On the contrary, Mao is today a pathetic figurehead, a shadow of his former revolutionary self, trotted out like a harmless icon on various occasions when it suits the Chou leadership. Stalin, on the other hand, fought the revisionists who were slowly gaining a stronghold over the Party, although Stalin did not fully understand what was happening, was unable to identify the behind-the-scenes Revisionist bosses or recognize the pernicious role the Cult of Stalin played in the revisionist process. Stalin's last writing, **Economic Problems of Socialism** (1952), was a bitter polemic against the revisionist ideologues who were preparing the climate for the concurrent revisionist usurpation of power in the Soviet Union.

The dictatorship of the proletariat in the Soviet Union lasted some 35 years, the longest practice the workers of the world have had being the ruling class. There were positive and negative experiences in this period. Naturally, the fact that the capitalists were able in the end to regain the helm is the most negative of all. What follows is not an attempt to fully analyze this experience nor give a definitive answer to the question, why the bourgeoisie regained power. Here we are able only to point to some of the strengths and weaknesses of that era.

In our articles "United Front" and "Win Peasants to Socialism," PL V. 8 #3, we pointed to the mistaken diplomatic policy of the USSR and the related revisionist "united front" strategy of the world communist movement in this period. The object of these policies which began around 1921 and continued at least through World War II was to split the united imperialist camp and to break local nationalists away from the imperialists. In a limited sense these policies were successful in that the Soviet Union after the Civil War never had to face the united armed might of world capitalism. In a larger sense, this strategy caused grave losses to the world revolutionary movement which was disorganized by the support or tolerance shown local fascists and capitalists, by the lack of firm revolutionary direction, and by the twists and turns of Soviet diplomatic policy. In the end, the Soviet Union became increasingly isolated from the workers of the world; the major communist parties abroad became conservative and revisionist.

On the other hand, for three decades, the

Soviet Union was in a very real sense the center of the world revolutionary movement. Almost all the communist parties were formed with direct assistance from the Soviet Central Committee. The idea of dictatorship of the proletariat known only to a few in 1917 became popularized among millions of workers, in every continent. Our Party and other revolutionaries around the world owe a great debt to the Stalin and Lenin leadership in promoting and popularizing this concept which when properly understood and applied will lead to our certain victory.

Within the Soviet Union, the capitalists and imperialists were expropriated, the small peasant economy transformed into a collective economy; a big industrial base was built, the living standards of workers and peasants was vastly improved. As this process unfolded there were big mass struggles as the Party led poor peasants to fight the Kulaks (rich peasants), workers to fight bourgeois managers, rank and file soldiers to fight putchist-minded generals and officers and all working people to fight the Trotskyites and other revisionists and the historic defeat of the 1000 division Nazi armada. Yet, at the same time, unevenly and not without opposition, but nevertheless inexorably, there arose rank and privilege for a new stratum in the bureaucracy and among some Party functionaries. This provided the material base for revisionism. Most of the middle and upper-middle functionaries to one degree or other became infected with a bourgeois style of life and work, a conservative bureaucratic mentality, and a revisionist world outlook. The process was already far gone when Stalin died in 1963 and required only a palace coup by the Khrushchov clique, against those revolutionaries still in the Central Committee to complete the transformation into the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie.

Yet, the experience of the dictatorship of the proletariat in the Soviet Union remains an unsullied glorious page in the history of the international working class. Neither the slanders of the Trotskyite renegades, nor the slurs of the Khrushchov revisionists will detract from the pride that workers all over the world felt for the 35 years that WE WERE ON TOP. We will study the experience, learn the proper lessons, adjust our strategy as need be, then RECONQUER POWER.

ALL POWER TO THE WORKING CLASS!!