

THE RUSSIAN QUESTION CRITICALLY CONSIDERED

(Continued from the last issue)

The position of our group in opposition to the general line of the Stalin regime was maintained up till the time the resolution of the German Communist Opposition was published in the "Revolutionary Age" of January 10, 1931. This resolution gave full support to the Stalin regime and its general line. It is only necessary to give a historical review of many of the articles and statements published in the "Age" to prove this.

The following is a quotation from the "Revolutionary Age" of November 1, 1929:

FURTHER NARROWING OF THE BASIS OF STALINIST LEADERSHIP IN THE C.P.S.U.

The inevitable disintegration of the Stalin leadership in the C. P. S. U. as the result of the false inner line has reached a new stage of the development. Shatzkin, Sten, and others, who have hitherto formed the famous "young guard" of the Stalinist leadership have been "cut off". In a recent issue of the "Pravda" Comrade Schatzkin stated: "We have defeated Bukharin not with arguments but with Party cards!" while Comrade Sten went so far as to declare: "The Party has grown very unevenly. We have had a tremendous development of its grabbing organs but we have also had a shrivelling up of its thinking organs."

For expressing such obvious truths which even they could hide no longer Schatzkin, Sten and the rest were immediately removed from their posts (Schatzkin was a member of the editorial committee of five of the "Pravda") and made the victims of a campaign against "intellectual Trotskyism." Schatzkin and Sten are both capable comrades; the latter was considered one of the most promising younger Marxian students in the C. P. S. U. Meanwhile the basis of leadership in the C. P. S. U. grows narrower and narrower and the crisis grows ever sharper. At the XIV Congress of the C. P. S. U. (December 1925) Comrade Stalin declared: "The method of lopping off, the method of blood-letting is dangerous and infectious. Today you lop off one limb; tomorrow another, the day after tomorrow a third—and what is left of the Party?"

The catastrophic course followed by the present leadership of the C. P. S. U. (for which Comrade Stalin is directly and personally responsible) is a living proof of the profound truth of the words of the Stalin of 1925!

It will be argued that this quo-

by Ben Gitlow

tation concerns only the inner-party line, the wrong regime and has nothing to do with the questions of economic policy. Only a school-boy can make such an assertion. The Schatzkin and Sten opposition were strong adherents of the Stalin regime and lineup till the time they realized the line was wrong. How, then, can one explain the statement: "We have defeated Bukharin not with arguments but with party cards." It is obvious that this quotation from the "Age" which concludes: "The catastrophic course followed by the present leadership of the C.P.S.U. (for which Comrade Stalin is directly and personally responsible) is a living proof of the profound truth of the words of the Stalin of 1925" does not merely refer to the regime as divorced and separated from the general line of the Stalin leadership. It is indeed a very faint indistinguishable line which separates the Stalin regime from its general line of policy for the Soviet Union. Only at this late date is the leadership of our group trying to justify its position in support of Stalin's general line by arbitrarily drawing a definite line of demarcation between the regime and its line as two different and

unrelated entities. That this was not always the case as far as our group and its leadership was concerned will readily realize from the further quotations which I will give from the "Revolutionary Age."

The following quotation is from the "Revolutionary Age" of November 15, 1929:

BUKHARIN FACES EXPULSION

Reliable reports from the U. S. S. R. indicate that in the C. P. S. U. itself the struggle against the revisionist line and the dangerous inner-party course of the Stalin leadership is developing on an organized scale. As a result preparations are already under way—"semi-officially"—for the expulsion of Bukharin and his supporters at either the next Plenum or the next Congress of the C. P. S. U., to be held towards the end of the year. (Articles in "Izvestiya", etc.) This offensive against Bukharin is closely connected with the political coalition with the Trotskyites, on whose platform the struggle against the so-called "right wing" is being conducted."

This is a very clear statement of opposition to the general line of Stalin regime. It does not fear to state emphatically the position of our group against the revisionist line and the dangerous inner party course of the Stalinist leadership. It states also the fact that the Stalin regime has adopted the platform of the Trotskyites in their struggle against the so-called "right wing". It is obvious to anyone who knows anything about the Trotsky platform that it has a great deal to do with the question of the construction of socialism in the Soviet Union, of industrialization and also the policy to be pursued towards the peasantry. The Trotsky line, in my opinion, represented a wrong line. It was rejected by the fifteenth party congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. It was precisely the false general line of the Trotskyist platform which our group opposed and which the Stalin leadership incorporated as the line of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in place of the correct line of the fifteenth party congress.

If we should state that we favored the Stalinist general line as far back as November 15, 1929, then according to the above mentioned quotation from the "Age"

JUST OUT— "I Accuse!"

by

M. N. ROY

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of N. N. Roy on Trial for
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which all those present were instructed to support the administration.

At the union meeting, we were all let in for a good treat. Bart Cortmen, a business agent, made a motion: "We go on record against two scales of wages." Surprise Number Two was given to us by Jerry Sullivan, another administration man; he made an amendment that we go on record for one scale of wages of \$13.20 a day. So far so good.

From these two motions many of the members got the impression that the administration was against reducing the \$13.20 scale of wages or adopting a \$9 scale for alteration work. But here is where the joker comes in. A third administration man, Gerald Duffy, made an amendment to the amendment that we give the officers a chance for a graceful retreat in the event they cannot come to terms with the employers by allowing them to "arbitrate." The parliamentary net of the administration was now completely drawn, there being three motions before the house, the limit allowed by the Broach constitution. During all the

also warned that the workers group would not accept the agreement unless it provided against the cutting of wages.

Present prospects are that the preparatory conference will end in nothing.

a motion had been passed at a previous meeting not to arbitrate. According to the union constitution, a motion to reconsider must be carried by a two-thirds vote before we can consider a matter which has already been passed upon. But what's a little thing like a constitution when it hinders the administration? After Solomon, of organizing committee fame, who tore up vouchers for several million dollars, spoke, cries thruout the hall were made by machine men to close discussion. This the chairman proceeded to do altho he promised that he would allow full discussion on all motions.

When the vote was taken there was a slight majority against arbitration despite the confusing tactics of the administration, tactics which tried to create the impression that the administration was against two scales of wages. President Wilson, however, declared the arbitration amendment carried. He immediately proceeded to close the meeting before anyone could ask for a recount. Now that the administration has clear sailing to arbitrate wage matters, it will try to disclaim all responsibility for the results. The members must remember how Pries stated he would break a leg in order to save the \$13.20 scale of wages. The members will have to take steps to defeat arbitration if they want to save their union standards.

Electrical Worker

of Comrade Lovestone and those who support his present view to explain how the incorrect, non-Leninist line of the Stalin regime became a correct line, especially now when the results of the Stalinist policies in life prove the contrary.

Further statements to the effect that the Stalin regime adopted the policies of Trotskyism appeared in the "Revolutionary Age" of January 15, 1930. In a statement entitled: "Who Has Adopted Trotskyism" the "Age" states:

"If any proof were needed of the ideological affinity between many basic tenets of Trotskyism and the present line of the Eeci and the various Party leadership, the speech of Stalin at the last Congress of Agricultural experts has furnished it. In this speech he declared openly and frankly that the present policies are those proposed by Trotsky two years ago and for which Trotsky was expelled. Only Trotsky was "premature". This is an open shameless revision of the traditional estimation by the Comintern and the Russian Party of the Trotskyism as "Menshevism hiding beneath left phrases." This is the road for the open incorporation of the anti-Leninist views of Trotsky into the program of the Comintern. Is it any wonder that all the most outstanding Trotskyites are rushing back to the party and finding an open-armed welcome there?"

The speech of Comrade Stalin here referred to was to the Congress of Agricultural Experts of the Soviet Union on the industrial and agricultural policies of the Stalin regime. Stalin did not refer to Comintern policies but to Russian policies, to his general line. Says the "Age" it contained the basic tenets of Trotskyism for which Trotsky was expelled from the Russian party. It is very clear that at that time our group saw very clearly Trotskyism in the general line. Then we branded it correctly as a shameless revision of the correct general line. But it is no more shameless and unprincipled than the revision of our group's position to full support of the Trotskyist un-Leninist line of the Stalin regime.

(Continued in the next issue)

On the "Russian Question"

(Continued from page 4)

da" editorial which declared: "Unless the opposition disavows its policies and activities in time . . . the Communist Party itself will carry the fight against the opposition to the bitter end, making all the necessary conclusions."

From the above statement it is evident that the "Age" was quite emphatic in presenting the position of our group that the Stalin line for the Soviet Union was wrong. It even goes so far to state that the fight against the line of the Stalin

regime by Bukharin, Rykoff, Tomsky was for a Leninist line. We knew very well then that the fight of these three and their associates was against the Stalinist policies in industry and agriculture, against the whole Stalinist general line of socialist construction. We were not afraid to state that the fight of Rykoff, Tomsky and Bukharin was for a correct Leninist line as against the wrong general line of the Stalin regime. It will take a lot of explaining on the part

principles, to cease to fight for a

of our problems, but Leninism can