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## **Leninism or Trotzkyism? Speech by Comrade L. Kamenev.**

The following is a written version of the speech given by me on the 18. November at the session held by the Moscow Committee, enlarged by the active Party functionaries, and repeated on 19. November at the session of the communist fraction of the Trade Union council, and on 21. November at the conference of military functionaries.

L. K.

Comrades!

The subject of my speech will be comrade Trotzky's latest publication, the article which appeared on the eve of the seventh anniversary of the October revolution, and entitled by its author "The Lessons of October".

Trotzky presents the Party with books fairly frequently. Hitherto we have not thought it necessary to pay much attention to these books, although it is not difficult to find in many of them various deviations from Bolshevism, from the official ideology of our Party. But this book must be accorded special attention, and subjected to a thorough analysis, the more that comrade Trotzky has selected the theme of the Lessons of October for his last publication.

As our whole Party, the whole Communist International, the whole international labour movement, and the whole working youth, are learning the lessons taught by the October revolution and will continue to learn them, it is not possible to consider the interpretation of these lessons as the private affair of this or that writer. As the "Lessons of October" appears with the countenance of the Party, and as it has been written by a member of the CC and the political bureau, of our Party, which—and this is no secret—is the leading Party in the Comintern, then it is perfectly clear that we are threatened by the danger of having such proclamations, such "lessons", accepted as text book by not only our youthful members, but also by the whole Comintern. And the form assumed by comrade Trotzky's work shows it to aim at being a text book for the Comintern.

All who have read the article are bound to see that it appeals not only to our Party, but the international proletariat as well, and to the communist Parties of all countries. And thus it is not a matter of private opinion, but a political conflict concerning the whole Party. Should any comrades maintain that the conflict aroused by comrade Trotzky's book is merely a conflict between Trotzky, Bucharin, Zinoviev, Stalin, and Kamenev, a difference of opinion between literates, these comrades would prove that they are unable to grasp the real interests of the Party. Comrades holding such an opinion can only do so because they would like to utilise the Party conflicts for the purpose of forming some third group based on the slogan: "The

literates are quarrelling among themselves, but it has nothing to do with us."

No one has a right to stand aside in this conflict. It concerns one of the most teaching questions of our inner life, and of the life of the Comintern. The question is: Can the Party recommend the proletariat to accept the lessons as taught by comrade Trotzky's book, or should the Party exercise the whole of its authority in warning the proletariat against the teaching of the "Lessons of October?"

I am not desirous of here entering into a long controversy with this article of comrade Trotzky's. Comrade Trotzky is an excellent writer, and his gifted pen has done the Party much valuable service. But here it serves interests hostile to the Party, here it does not serve Bolshevism, but the cause of those seeking to disintegrate and discredit Bolshevism—both the Bolshevism embodying the ideology of the proletarian revolution and the Bolshevism organising the fighting force of the proletariat. And comrade Trotzky does this by means of an exceedingly artistic, but essentially incorrect, and inaccurate, description of the whole of the events between February and October. I have no doubt but that the Party will call upon a number of its writers, among those who participated in the events of this period and took immediate part in the struggle leading up to the October revolution, and that these will refute the various misrepresentations made by comrade Trotzky with reference to decisive moments in the history of our Party during this epoch.

The April demonstration is misrepresented, the April conference is misrepresented, the events in June and July are misrepresented, the events in connection with the preliminary parliament are misrepresented, and finally the course taken by events in October itself are misrepresented. Here I cannot dwell upon the details required for the restoration of historical truth, or on the confronting of comrade Trotzky's assertions by documentary evidence. What I want to deal with here is the general question of the social and political import of the attitude adopted by comrade Trotzky, and the significance of this attitude when considered in the light of the previous positions taken up by comrade Trotzky, and of the rôle played by comrade Trotzky.

We have hitherto abstained from putting these questions, for easily comprehensible reasons. But now we can avoid it no longer, for comrade Trotzky, in thus raising the question of October, the question of the rôle played by our Party and by Lenin in the creation of the ideology underlying the October revolution, himself forces us to deal with the question from all the standpoints which have been adopted by comrade Trotzky during the history of the Bolshevik Party.



expressing a "super-fractional" justice. But what is its actual import? The "Bolshevist leaders" are to blame for everything—this "philosophy of history" does not differ in any way from that of Axelrod and Alexinsky.

"It is not difficult to see", continues Lenin "how the empty, hollow phrases of Trotzky's resolution serve for the defence of the same standpoint as that adopted by Axelrod & Co. and Alexinsky & Co. Here lies the great and abysmal difference between the conciliatory pose of Trotzky & Co., in reality the most faithful servants of the liquidators and Otsovists, and forming the more dangerous evil for the Party that they are skilled at concealing their true character behind clever and artificial phrases, and behind apparently anti-fractional and pro-Party declarations, and between that really Party standpoint which stands for the purging of the Party from all liquidators and Otsovists."

The irreconcilable struggle for the principles of Bolshevism continued. All the enemies of Bolshevism joined hands and attacked the Bolsheviks, the Party, and its central authorities. Lenin, dealing with the significance of this struggle and Trotzky's part in it, wrote as follows at the end of 1910 (XI/2, pp. 182, 183, 187):

"Martov's article and Trotzky's resolution are backed up by certain practical actions directed against the Party. Martov's article is merely a literary form clothing the campaign undertaken by the Mensheviks for the purpose of causing schism in our C.C. Trotzky's resolution pursues the same Menshevist aims: the destruction of the central authorities (of the Bolsheviks) so hated by the liquidators, and with this the destruction of the Party as organisation. It is not sufficient merely to expose these anti-Party actions on the part of the Mensheviks and Trotzky; they must be combated."

You will see, comrades, that many things have happened in our Party and many of the things which may appear new to our younger comrades are by no means so new to older ones, or to the younger comrades who have studied Lenin's works attentively. "There is nothing new under the sun."

Lenin continues:

"We therefore declare, on behalf of the whole Party, that Trotzky is carrying on an anti-Party policy, that he is undermining the legality of the Party, and entering on a path of adventure and schism... Comrade Trotzky preserves silence on this incontestable truth (about the anti-Party groups), because the real aims of his policy cannot stand the truth. These real aims are: an anti-Party bloc. Such a bloc is being supported and organised by Trotzky... It goes without saying that Trotzky supports this bloc, for the anti-Party elements here get everything they require: liberty for their fractions, glorification and concealment of their activity, skilful advocacy defending them before the working class. It is precisely from the standpoint of "fundamental principles" that we have to regard this bloc as adventurism in the exactest meaning of the word. Trotzky does not venture to assert that he finds in the Mensheviks... in the Otsovists, real Marxists, real defenders of the established principles of social democracy. But it is just this necessity of continual dodging which is characteristic of the adventurer. The bloc formed by Trotzky with Potressov and the group round the "Wperiod" ("Forward") is just an adventure, judged from the viewpoint of "fundamental principles". This assertion is no less important from the standpoint of the tasks of Party politics... The experience of a year has shown that in reality it is precisely the Potressov group, precisely the "Wperiod" set, who incorporate the influence exercised by the bourgeoisie on the proletariat... Thirdly and finally, Trotzky's policy is an adventure in an organisatory sense."

1911.

The struggle for the Party and its ideas continued. Trotzky continued his anti-Party policy. Lenin supplemented his characterisation. In June 1911 Lenin writes as follows (XI/2, p. 322):

"All Bolsheviks must now gather more closely together, strengthen their fraction, determine their Party line with greater accuracy and clarity, collect all scattered forces, and take up the fight for the R.S.D.L.P. (Russian social democratic labour party) purged of the supporters of bourgeois influence upon the proletariat."

And he immediately adds:

"Such people as Trotzky, with his puffed-up phrases on the R.S.D.L.P., with his kowtowing to the liquidators who have

nothing whatever in common with the R.S.D.L.P., are now the "disease of the age". In reality they are the bearers of capitulation to the liquidators, who are anxious to form a labour party on Stolipin's lines."

After the lapse of a few months, Lenin wrote as follows in a special circular addressed "to all Party organisations, groups, and circles":

"Let us merely mention one feature, the most characteristic and general one, in the utterances of Trotzky's little group: In the question of tactics, and of differences of opinion on principles within the Party, Trotzky's arsenal can only supply weapons against the left wing of the Party. It need not be said that such a policy is grist to the mill of the adherents of the "Golos" (the Menshevist newspaper, the "Voice") and to all the other various degrees of opportunists." (XI/2, pp. 335/38.)

Trotzky continued his policy, and Lenin continued his characterisation:

"The real liquidators conceal themselves behind their phraseology, and make every endeavour to frustrate the work being done by the anti-liquidators, that is, the Bolsheviks... Trotzky, and the Trotzkyists and opportunists like him, are more harmful than all the liquidators, for the convinced liquidators state their views openly, and it is easy for the workers to recognise the errors of these views. But Trotzky and those similar to him deceive the workers, conceal the evil, and make it impossible to expose and remedy it. Everyone who supports Trotzky's group supports the policy of lies and deception of the workers, the policy concealing liquidatory aims. Full liberty of action for Messrs Potressov & Co. in Russia, and the clothing of their actions in "revolutionary" phrases for abroad—this is the essential character of Trotzky's policy." (XI/2, pp. 359/60.)

This characterisation: the disguise of Right actions in Left pseudo-revolutionary phrases, was for Lenin the distinguishing feature of Trotzkyism, repeating itself from year to year in different and progressive forms. And Lenin was never weary of pointing out this feature to the Party as the most important and characteristic, and at the same time most dangerous feature of Trotzkyism. A few months after writing the characterisation here quoted, Lenin wrote as follows on Trotzky:

"One trifle has been overlooked by this poor hero of phraseology: A social democrat (in our present terminology a communist) is not a revolutionist unless he recognises the harmfulness of anti-revolutionary pseudo-socialism in a given country at a given time, that is, unless he is able to recognise that liquidatory and Otsovist aims are harmful in Russia, and unless he knows now to combat similar unsocial democratic tendencies."

A few months after this (December 1911) Lenin wrote:

"Trotzky calls himself an adherent of the Party principles, but on the basis of almost total disregard of the Russian Party central, which was called into existence by the overwhelming majority of the Russian social democratic organisation... The revolutionary phrase serves to conceal the tendency of liquidation, to justify it, and thus to confuse the consciousness of the workers... It is Trotzky's special task to veil the aims of the liquidators, and to throw sand into the eyes of the workers... It is not possible to discuss essentials with Trotzky, for he has no views. It is only possible to contend with convinced liquidators and otsovists; but we do not care to enter into discussion with a man who plays at concealing the errors of either group; we merely expose him as a diplomatist of the meanest description." (XI/2, pp. 446, 448.)

It is not difficult to prophesy that these Party historical documents here quoted will presently be explained away in the most convenient and Philistine manner, by references to: Anger, heat of the contest, accidental collisions, &c. I thus consider it to be my duty, though a disagreeable one—since comrade Trotzky has now forced the Party to occupy itself with the history of the relations between Trotzkyism and Bolshevism—, to follow Lenin's utterances, and the characterisation made by Lenin of the relations between the Party and Trotzkyism, not only for a single year, not only with regard to any single question, but systematically during the whole period of fifteen years which have passed since the Party became acquainted with Trotzkyism.

If a definite relation has existed between Trotzkyism and our Party for a number of years, cropping up systematically at every turning point of Party history, and not merely becoming apparent on one single question or on one single occasion, then even the most Philistine and sluggish mentality cannot explain away this circumstance by references to momentary anger, accidental conflicts, and the like. Even the most sluggish mind must recognise that if Lenin continued for fifteen years to en-



lighten the Party on Trotzkyism, and his characterisation proved correct at every turning point of Party history, whether the tide of revolution was rising, falling, or rising again, then it is not a case of animosity, of personal opinion, but it is perfectly obvious that Trotzkyism represents a trend of policy which reappears systematically, and that the foundation of Bolshevism as theory and practice of the proletarian communist revolution can only be laid down by fighting against this trend of policy.

Comrade Trotzky confined himself to defending to the Russian workers the standpoint which I have above characterised in Lenin's words. The position held by the Bolsheviks in the Second International is well known. Even at that time the Bolsheviks, especially Lenin, were hated by the leaders of the Second International. Even at that time these leaders felt that Bolshevism, and again especially Lenin, represented some new force destined to supplant them, and therefore the press organs of the Second International opened their pages to every slander against the Bolsheviks and Bolshevism. But during the whole period of Lenin's exile, during the whole period of the revolution and counter-revolution, Lenin was never given even one single opportunity of appealing to the workers from the tribune of the press organs of the Second International, and of telling the German, French, or Austrian workers the truth about Bolshevism.

In actual fact we were boycotted by the Second International. But on the other hand Lenin's opponents: Martov, Dan, and Trotzky, were given every opportunity of expressing their views, and these were able to spread abroad any amount of lies and slanders, since they were assured in advance that Lenin would not be permitted to reply. Trotzky availed himself of this opportunity to lay the "philosophy" of Bolshevism before the international labour movement in something like the following form: The Leninists were a clique of intellectuals who, under the leadership of Lenin, a man who shrank at nothing, were holding the Russian proletarian movement in their hands in some obscure manner, whilst it was only the ignorance and backwardness of the Russian proletariat which made it trust the Bolsheviks. The most important task was to rescue the proletariat of Russia from the power of this clique and its leader Lenin.

This is the conception of Bolshevism which comrade Trotzky forced upon the International at that time. This is the manner in which he represented the historical victory of the inner Party struggle in Russia, the import of the struggle between the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks, to the socialist workers of Europe. With reference to the articles sent on this subject to the International by Martov and Trotzky, Lenin wrote the following in the year 1911:

"Martov expresses the view of the Mensheviks; Trotzky clings to the Mensheviks and hides behind particularly sounding and hollow phrases. For Martov the 'Russian experience' meant that the 'Blanquist and anarchist unculture had won the victory over Marxist culture' (read: Bolshevism over Menshevism). Russian social democracy had been too zealously Russian (that is, revolutionary, L. K.) as differentiated from the 'general European' (that is, parliamentary) methods of tactics. We find Trotzky representing the same 'historical philosophy'. The 'sectarian spirit, intellectual individualism, ideological fetishism' are placed in the foreground. 'The struggle for influence over the politically immature proletariat'—that is the core of the matter to him.

After describing the views thus presented to the German workers by comrade Trotzky, Lenin continues:

"The theory that the struggle between Bolshevism and Menshevism is a struggle for influence over an immature proletariat is by no means new. We find it in innumerable books, pamphlets, and articles published by the liberal press since the year 1905 (if not since 1903). Martov and Trotzky lay liberal views, trimmed with Marxism, before the German comrades.

"It is an illusion to believe," declares Trotzky, "that Bolshevism and Menshevism have struck deep roots in the proletariat." This is a typical example of the sounding but empty phrases of which our Trotzky is master. It is not in the "depths of the proletariat" that the differences lie between Bolshevism and Menshevism, but in the economic conditions of the Russian revolution. Martov and Trotzky, by ignoring these conditions, have deprived themselves of the possibility of comprehending the historical import of the internal party conflict in Russia. To talk about various trends in the Russian revolution, and to label these "sectarianism", "unculture", &c. (the terms employed by Trotzky against the Bolsheviks, with the idea of alarming the German Philistines, L. K.), without according a single word to the most

important economic interests of the proletariat, the liberal bourgeoisie, and the democratic peasantry, is to sink to the level of the most vulgar journalism."

Comrade Lenin explained the matter to comrade Trotzky: "Martov defends the education of the peasantry (who are carrying on a revolutionary struggle against the aristocracy) by the liberals (who betrayed the peasantry to the aristocracy). This is nothing else than the substitution of liberalism for Marxism, it is nothing more nor less than liberalism disguised in Marxist phrases... The struggle between Menshevism and Bolshevism is indissolubly bound up with this actuality, for it is here the struggle between the support lent to the liberals (on the part of the Mensheviks) and the overthrow of the hegemony of the liberals over the peasantry (by the Bolsheviks). Thus the attempt to explain away our dissensions by the influence of the intelligentsia, the immaturity of the proletariat, etc., is merely a naive and childish repetition of liberal fairy tales."

We see that "Trotzky came to Lenin" by means of telling the international proletariat liberal fairy tales on Leninism.

"A chasm lies between our standpoint and Martov's standpoint, and this chasm between the views of various 'intellectuals' merely reflects, despite Trotzky's opinions to the contrary, the chasm which actually existed in the year 1905 between two classes, that is, between the revolutionary fighting proletariat and the treacherous bourgeoisie."

This is what comrade Trotzky, according to Lenin, did not comprehend about Bolshevism. But if he did not comprehend this, did he comprehend anything about it at all?

"Trotzky distorts Bolshevism, for he has never been able to form any definite views on the role played by the proletariat in the Russian bourgeois revolution."

Comrade Lenin, after characterising Trotzky's whole representation of Bolshevism to the uninformed German workers as a "refined breach of faith", closed his characterisation with the following words:

"In 1903 Trotzky was a Menshevik, he left the Mensheviks in 1904, returned to the Mensheviks in 1903, brandishing ultra-revolutionary phrases the while, and again turned his back upon the Mensheviks in 1906; at the end of 1906 he defended the election alliance with the cadets (thus actually siding with the Mensheviks again), and in the spring of 1907 he declared at the London congress that 'the difference between him and Rosa Luxemburg was rather a difference of individual shading than of political tendency.' Trotzky plagiarizes today from the ideas of one fraction, tomorrow from those of the other, and thus he regards himself as a being superior to both fractions. Theoretically, Trotzky does not agree with the liquidators and Otsovisks on any single question, but in actual practice he is entirely in agreement with the 'Golos' and 'Vpered' group (that is, with the supporters of bourgeois influence over the proletariat, L. K.) I must declare that Trotzky represents his fraction only, and enjoys a certain amount of faith exclusively on the part of the Otsovisks and liquidators." (Compl. works XI/2, 292, 293, 296, 307, 308.)

### 1912.

The year 1912 was a year of changes. In January the Bolsheviks broke off the last remains of organisatory connections with the Mensheviks, and formed their own purely Bolshevik Central Committee at their own Bolshevik conference (at Prague). They excluded the liquidators from the Party, and proclaimed a programme of revolutionary action. After the blood bath on the Lena, a stormy wave of proletarian movement arose, for the first time since 1905. This movement appropriated the programme and tactics of the Bolsheviks in their entirety. The "Bolshevik epidemic" (to use the malicious term coined by the Mensheviks at the time) began to spread, and presently gained the final victory. The awakening labour movement removed the liquidators systematically from every position which they had contrived to gain during the previous sorrowful years of counter-revolution. This was the beginning of the revolutionary attack under the slogans of the Bolsheviks, under the leadership of the Bolsheviks—an attack which led to barricade fighting in Leningrad as early as the middle of 1914.

What was the attitude adopted by comrade Trotzky with regard to these decisive events? Did this wave of revolutionary uplift, this strengthening of the labour movement, perhaps induce comrade Trotzky to abandon the standpoint of an agent of Menshevism, held by him during the preceding years of disintegration and decay? Did his ultra-Left theory of "permanent revolution" after lying unused for years in his drawer, perhaps



aid him to break the bonds fettering him to counter-revolutionary Menshevism?

No: Comrade Trotzky remained true to himself and—to the Menshevist liquidators.

He replied to the organisatory development and establishment of the Bolshevik Party by a closer alliance with the Mensheviki in their struggle against Bolshevism. It was due to his endeavours that the so-called "August bloc" came into being; this bloc was the alliance and organisatory mustering of every non-Bolshevist and anti-Bolshevist group and sub-group.

"This bloc," writes Lenin "is composed of lack of principle, hypocrisy, and empty phrases... The basis of this bloc is evident: The liquidators receive full liberty to proceed as before and comrade Trotzky covers them by the revolutionary phrase, which costs him nothing and binds him to nothing." (Compl. works. XII/1, p. 94, April 1912.)

On the orders of this bloc comrade Trotzky spread abroad even more slanders than before against the Bolsheviki, as leaders of the proletarian advance then beginning. Comrade Lenin characterised Trotzky's writings at that time as "deceiving and misleading the whole working class". With regard to an article written by Trotzky for the German workers, Lenin wrote that it represented

"such a copilation of unconsidered self-praise and sententious lies that there can be no doubt but that the liquidatory commission to write this article was placed in competent hands" (Ibid. p. 93.)

But perhaps comrade Trotzky was only in agreement with the enemies of the Bolsheviki as far as the Bolshevik organisation was concerned, perhaps there was still some difference between him and the Mensheviki, the servants of the liberals, in questions referring to the tasks, the aims, and the tactics of the rising proletarian movement, in questions referring to the tasks, aims, and tactics of the new revolution. Let us ask Lenin again:

"Trotzky abused the Conference in every key, and assured the good people that "the struggle for the right of combination" was the basis of the events on the Lena and their after-effects, that "this demand stands, and will continue to stand, as central point of the revolutionary mobilisation of the proletariat". Scarcely had a week passed away, and these miserable phrases, ground out of the same machine which supplies the liquidators with their phrases, were blown away like dust."

"It is only the liberal chatterboxes and the liberal labour politicians"—continues Lenin—who are capable of placing the right of combination in "the centre of revolutionary mobilisation".

Lenin then compares the policy pursued by the liquidators and by comrade Trotzky with the revolutionary Bolshevik policy of the Petersburg proletariat:

"The proletariat of Petersburg"—writes Lenin—"has grasped that the new revolutionary struggle is not to be carried on for the sake of one single right (the right of combination, L. K.), but for the liberty of the whole people. The proletariat of Petersburg has grasped that the evil must be attacked at its centre, at its source, that the whole system of Tsarist reactionary Russia must be destroyed. The proletariat of Petersburg has grasped that it is a piece of ridiculous stupidity to make this demand for the right of combination... There is no greater lie than the liberal invention, repeated by the liquidators and immediately afterwards by Trotzky, that the "struggle for the right of combination" lay at the root of the tragedy on the Lena, and of the mighty echoes awakened by this event all over the country". (Compl. works. XII/1, pp. 183, 185.)

The difference is very obvious between the Bolshevik conception of fundamental tasks and that of the Mensheviki and comrade Trotzky. But Lenin explains again and again the counter-revolutionary trend of comrade Trotzky's conception of these tasks.

Trotzky followed Axelrod. He found himself superior to the "uncultured", "barbaric", "sectarian", "Asiatic" Bolsheviks in that he, Trotzky, is a "European", and fights "beneath the tactical flag of European social democracy". But what is the meaning of this confrontation of "Europeanism" and "European tactics" with Bolshevism? It means one thing only: renunciation of the fulfilment of the immediate revolutionary tasks in the Russia of the Tsar and the great landowners, and all for the sake of the parliamentary tactics of the European socialists.

"This famous "Europeanisation"—writes Lenin—"is being talked about by Dan and Martov, Trotzky and Levitzky,

and by the other liquidators, in every possible key. It is one of the main rivets securing their opportunism. Their opportunism lies in the fact that the moment which they choose for imparting a "European", parliamentary propagandist character to the Party is precisely the moment when the Party is not faced by European tasks, but by an immediate struggle on the spot. Their idea is thus to avoid the task of revolution, and to substitute revolutionary tactics by parliamentary tactics."

The little word "Europeanism", on the lips of the liquidators and Trotzky during the period between 1910 and 1914, further supplemented by the little word "barbarism" (of the Bolsheviki), served to conceal the renunciation of the revolutionary tasks and revolutionary tactics of the proletariat of Russia. Let us read what Lenin wrote in reply to such a "European" article from comrade Trotzky's pen:

"This is the daydream of an opportunist intellectual who, in the midst of the difficult and non-European conditions facing the labour movement in Russia (Lenin wrote this article for the legal "Svesda" and therefore employed legal terms; here we should read: under the conditions imposed by the revolutionary tasks facing the labour movement in Russia, L. K.) has worked out an excellent European plan, and, because he has done this, boasts of his "Europeanism" to the whole world." (Compl. works. XII/1, pp. 222, 223, July 1924.)

These tactics, actually implying approbation of the transition of the Party from the path of revolution to the path of the then peaceful European socialists, were proclaimed at the time when the new wave of revolution following the blood bath on the Lena demanded an expressly revolutionary leadership. It is possible that someone will submit the question: "How is it possible that the theory of "permanent revolution" did not restrain comrade Trotzky from such unrevolutionary tactics? How could he, the representative of this ultra-Left theory, lend his support to such anti-revolutionary tactics, side by side with the Mensheviki, during the obviously revolutionary situation from 1912 to 1914?"

But anyone putting this question would only prove that he has not yet comprehended Lenin's characterisation of Trotzkyism: "Right politics disguised in Left phraseology."

"Examine the standpoint of the liquidators"—Lenin continued to explain to the naive in the year 1913—the essential character of their liquidatory standpoint is artificially disguised beneath Trotzky's revolutionary phrases. The naive and entirely inexperienced are still often deceived by this disguise... But the slightest closer examination immediately disperses this self-deception."

#### 1914.

Then came the year 1914. The revolutionary movement in the proletariat made rapid strides forward, the waves of the tempest of revolution rose higher and higher. Trotzky's viewpoint remained unchanged in the questions of the principles of revolution and the tactics of the proletarian movement. Let us read what Lenin wrote about him in the year 1914:

"Comrade Trotzky has never yet possessed a definite opinion on any single earnest Marxian question; he has always crept into the breach made by this or that difference, and has oscillated from one side to another." (Compl. works XII/2, pp. 536, 537.)

"The liquidators have their own viewpoint—a liberal and not a Marxian one. Everyone familiar with the writings of Dan, Martov, Potressov and Co knows this viewpoint. But Trotzky has no viewpoint, never has had one; he has merely transitions and flittings from the liberals to the Marxists and back again, fragments of words and sounding phrases, swing here and there... In reality, Trotzky's resounding, confused, and empty phrases, so misleading to the untrained worker, serve solely for the defence of the liquidators; Trotzky accomplishes this by preserving silence on the question of illegality (that is, of the revolutionary organisation and policy of the working class L. K.), by endeavouring to convince us that a liberal labour policy does not exist amongst us at all (that is, no endeavour on the part of the Mensheviki to subordinate the labour movement to the cadets, etc. L. K.) Comrade Trotzky addresses a special and lengthy sermon to the seven deputies, headed by Tschuidse, instructing them as to the cleverest methods of carrying out the policy of rejection of illegality and of the Party." (Lenin. XII/2, pp. 410 to 413.)

Then came the tempestuous months of the year 1914. The labour movement advanced from political and economic strikes



to armed demonstrations, only interrupted by the mobilisation of the army. In July the workers of Petersburg were already at the barricades. It was necessary to strike a balance it was necessary to show to the working class the political currents and tendencies emerging from illegality and from the influence of the refugees from abroad, in order that they might carry on their movement further. Lenin wrote a comprehensive article and had it published in May 1914 in the Bolshevik periodical: "Prosvetschenje" ("Enlightenment"). Here he drew the balance of the ten years of struggle between Bolshevism and Trotskyism, the struggle which we have followed in its various stages:

"The old participators in Russia's Marxist movement know Trotsky's figure very well; there is no need to say anything about him to them. But the younger generation of workers does not know him, for he represents a certain type. At the time of the old "Iskra" (1901 to 1903) people of this type oscillated between the "Economists" and the Iskra group.

When we speak of the liquidators, we so designate a certain ideological tendency rooted in "Menshevism" and "Economism" . . . a tendency closely bound up with the policy and ideology of a certain class, the liberal bourgeoisie.

These people "explain" that they are above the fractions, but the sole basis for this assertion is that they take their ideas from one fraction today, from another tomorrow.

Trotsky was an open adherent of the "Iskra" from 1901 till 1903, and Rjasanov named the rôle played by Trotsky at the Party Congress in 1903 that of a "Lenin's cudgel". By the end of 1903 Trotsky was an open Menshevik, he had deserted from the "Iskra" to the "Economists". He proclaimed that "a deep chasm yawned between the old and the new Iskra". In the years 1904-05 he left the Mensheviks and maintained an irresolute attitude; at one time he cooperated with Martinow (an "economist"), at another time he dished up his left permanent revolution" again. In 1906-07 he approached the Bolsheviks, and in the spring of 1907 he declared himself in full agreement with Rosa Luxemburg.

During the epoch of the decline he turned to the right again after lengthy "anti-fractional" vacillations, and in August 1912 he joined the bloc of the liquidators. Now he leaves them again, but in all essentials he repeats their ideas.

Such types are characteristic of the crumbling away of the historical formations of yesterday, when the mass labour movement in Russia was not fully awakened.

The younger generation of workers must learn to recognise this type of person, who, without concerning himself about Party decisions or . . . about the experience won in the present labour movement in Russia, simply step forward with the most unheard of claims." (XII/2, p. 462.)

Lenin deemed it necessary to say this to the younger generation of workers on the eve of a fresh advance of the revolutionary movement in the working class; he here drew the balance of the ten years' struggle carried on by Bolshevism not only against Menshevism, but also against Trotskyism.

It is comprehensible to everyone that when a characterisation of this kind is repeated from year to year, and not merely with reference to this or that error, but with reference to the whole course pursued by comrade Trotsky, it is not done for any superficial reason. Comrade Lenin saw in Trotsky the embodiment of a current, of a political tendency, harmful to Bolshevism. For this reason, and for this reason only, Lenin considered it necessary to warn the Party against Trotskyism.

### The War Period.

Then came the war, rightly designated by Lenin as an event of world historical importance in the life of humanity, and as the greatest test of international socialism, rendering apparent the impassable chasm between opportunism and revolutionary communism. The moment came when everyone had to show his colours. The moment came when all vacillation had to cease once and for all, and when a definite end had to be put to what Lenin termed inferior diplomacy, the diplomacy of having one foot in each camp.

But did this really come about? Did the war induce comrade Trotsky to break once and for all with opportunism and support of the Right, and to renounce the rôle of defender and disguise for the Mensheviks, in which rôle he had been exposed for ten years by comrade Lenin?

Since the time when comrade Trotsky entered our Party, serving it well, and thereby adding many glorious pages to the

history of his own life and to the history of the Party, we have not considered it possible to enter into this question. But when he takes it upon himself to falsify the history and the ideas of Bolshevism, when he attempts to appropriate to himself the ideology of the Party, when he endeavours to supplant Leninism by Trotskyism in the ideology of the Russian and international proletariat, then he himself forces us to put this question.

Did the war actually separate Trotsky from the opportunists? Did the "inferior diplomacy" cease in the face of these great events? Not at all. Just as comrade Trotsky contrived to combine an archrevolutionary "left" phrase with co-operation with the Mensheviks in 1905, in the same manner he managed to combine his internationalism during the war with the support of opportunism.

#### 1915.

As early as the summer of 1915, Lenin wrote as follows:

"In a reactionary war, the revolutionary class is bound to desire the defeat of its government. This is an axiom, contested only by the conscious adherents or unskilled assistants of social democracy. . . . Trotsky belongs to these last."

"Trotsky, who as usual does not agree in principle with the social democrats on any single question, coincides with them in every question in actual practice. . . ."

"Martov and Trotsky are anxious to combine the Platonic defence of internationalism with the unconditional demand for unity with the "Nascha Sarja" ("Our Dawn"), with the organisation committee (central committee of the Mensheviks), or with the Tseidze fraction."

At the end of 1915 Lenin wrote:

"In reality Trotsky is supporting the liberal politicians of Russia, who, by their disavowal of the rôle played by the peasantry, really mean that they do not wish to raise the peasantry to revolution."

Again:

"Trotsky, and the company of foreign flunkys of opportunism, are doing their utmost to patch up the differences, and to save the opportunism of "Nascha Sarja" group by the defence and praise of the Tseidze fraction."

#### 1916.

At the beginning of 1916:

"The powerless diplomatists, and such preachers of compromise as Kautsky in Germany, Longuet in France, and Martov in Russia, are most harmful to the labour movement, for they defend the fiction of unity and thus prevent the real and matured alliance of the opposition of all countries, the founding of the Third International."

In March 1916:

"And Trotsky? He is entirely in favour of the right of self-determination, but for him this is merely an empty phrase, since he does not demand separation of the nation oppressed by the "Fatherland" of the socialists in any given case. He preserves silence on the hypocrisy of Kautsky and his followers."

In October 1916, just twelve months before our October:

"However good the intentions of Martov and Trotsky may be subjectively, they are none the less aiding Russian social imperialism by their complaisance."

In December 1916:

"As early as the year 1902 Hobson recognised not only the significance of the "United States of Europe" (Kautsky's disciple, Trotsky, may take cognisance of this), but also the significance of a fact which the sanctimonious followers of Kautsky in every country are anxious to conceal: "that the opportunists (social chauvinists) are co-operating with the imperialist bourgeoisie for the creation of an imperialist Europe supported on the shoulders of Asia and Africa. . . . One of the conclusions which we have drawn from this is the necessity of separation from social chauvinism."

#### 1917.

On 17. February 1917 (February 1917!!).

"The name of Trotsky signifies: Left phraseology and bloc with the Right against the aim of the Left!"

Six weeks after the February revolution, on 7. March 1917, Lenin wrote:

"In my opinion, the matter of the greatest importance at the present juncture is not foolish attempts at a "coming to an understanding", on the lines projected by Trotsky & Co., "with the social patriots or with the even more dangerous elements of the organisation committee type (Mensheviks), but to continue the work of our Party in a logical international spirit."



There is one important point which must not be omitted here: During the whole of this period comrade Trotzky was a decided adversary of the "Zimmerwald Left", whose leader was Lenin, and which formed the germ of the Third International. The Third International was not born only of the struggle against Scheidemann, Vandervelde, and their like, it originated and grew in strength at the same time in the struggle against the Zimmerwald "Centre", against Kautsky and Trotzky. The practical policy of the this Centre was as follows: no final rupture with the Second International, no founding of the Third International, the aims striven for by Lenin as head of the Zimmerwald Left.

Lenin never altered his characterisation and opinion of the line taken by comrade Trotzky, either at the time when the tide of revolution was at its highest, or at the time of its lowest ebb.

No Leninist taking the name seriously can admit even the thought that comrade Lenin, in thus systematically revealing comrade Trotzky's standpoint for so many years in succession, was influenced by any individual motives. In his systematic and impassioned fight against Trotzkyism comrade Lenin was solely influenced by the fact that he saw in Trotzkyism a certain current hostile to the ideology and the organisation of the

Bolshevist Party; a current which in actual practice served the ends of Menshevism.

As comrade Lenin would say, it is comparatively easy to combat Menshevism, for its open and consistent anti-proletarian character, obviously liberal in essentials, is at once comprehended by only slightly experienced workers, and is thus rejected by the workers. It is more needful to combat the concealed forms of Menshevism, those forms which clothe opportunist policy in Left revolutionary phraseology, the form which adapts Menshevism to the revolutionary feeling of the masses. Those who fight against us with open visor are not our sole enemies, we have another foe in that group which disguises the efforts of open enemies by means of revolutionary phrases, and furthers the cause of the enemies of the Party by exploiting the confidence felt in these phrases.

Lenin merely formulated the relations to Trotzkyism, characteristic for the whole Bolshevist Party, although comrade Trotzky succeeded at times, in especially difficult moments in the life of the Party, in drawing some few Bolsheviki over to him, if only for a brief period, by means of his phrases and inferior diplomacy.

II.

## Comrade Trotzky Enters the Party.

The above described relations between Bolshevism and Trotzkyism were characterised by comrade Trotzky himself in the words, "I came to Lenin fighting." This phrase not only evidences a desire to win approbation, but it is very well expressed. Comrade Trotzky is a master of elegant phraseology. But the matter in question is unfortunately much too serious in character to be settled by a well turned sentence.

In the first place this phrase is not strictly accurate, and in the second place it is calculated to carry away the reader by its beauty and to conceal comrade Trotzky's real thoughts. This elegant phrase is a piece of hypocrisy.

Is it then really true that the whole history, of Trotzky's attitude, as we have followed it here from 1903 till 1907, can be characterised by these words of his: "I came to Lenin fighting?" Trotzky is apparently extremely satisfied with the history of his relations to Bolshevism; at least he wrote in his book "The new course", which appeared a few months ago: "I do not consider that the road by which I reached Lenin is any less suitable or certain than other roads." For Trotzky this is very reassuring. But is it possible for the Party, without deceiving itself, to regard the road upon which Trotzky reached our Party as suitable and certain? If this road really was a "road to Lenin", then every one-time Menshevik and social revolutionist, of whom there are not a few in our Party, can make use of Trotzky's words and declare: "In reality I was not a Menshevik or social revolutionist, I was merely making my way, fighting, to Bolshevism."

One thing at least is evident: the Party cannot recommend any body to take Trotzky's road to Bolshevism.

The comrades who have come over to us from other parties have generally declared that they have been mistaken, that they have had a different conception of the interests of the working class and had thought to serve these interests in a different manner, but that they are now convinced that they have been on the wrong road. The Party did not demand any such avowal from comrade Trotzky, and was quite right in not doing so. Comrade Trotzky stood the test, and stood it excellently. But this does not by any means signify that the Party can permit comrade Trotzky to designate his fifteen years of fighting against Bolshevism and Lenin as a suitable and sure path to Leninism. I maintain that Trotzky sees the road by which he approached Lenin from an entirely opposite standpoint to ours; that he does not believe Bolshevism to have proved right and Trotzkyism wrong.

Trotzky came to the Party with the conviction, not that he was going to learn anything from Bolshevism, but that he was going to teach the Party Trotzkyism, and substitute Leninism by Trotzkyism. In Trotzky's book "War and Revolution", we read:

"There were three points in which the newspaper 'Nasche Slovo' (Trotzky's organ, L. K.) had not yet arrived at an agreement with the 'Social Democrat' (organ of the CC of the Bolsheviki, conducted by Lenin and Zinoviev, L. K.) even after the former had finally passed into the hands of the left wing of the editorial staff. These points referred to

defeatism, to the struggle for peace, and to the character of the approaching Russian revolutions. 'Nasche Slovo' rejected defeatism (which Lenin had held from the beginning of the war to be the fundamental principle of really revolutionary internationalism, L. K.) The 'Social Democrat' rejected the slogan of the struggle for peace . . . and opposed it by the slogan of civil war (rejected by Trotzky, L. K.) 'Nasche Slovo', finally, supported the view that it must be made the task of our Party to conquer power in the name of socialist revolution. The 'Social Democrat' maintained the standpoint of the democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry."

A few lines before Trotzky informs us that the "differences" existing between the "Social Democrat" and the "Nasche Slovo", considerable at first, "had diminished" . . . Not only Trotzky, but Martov, was at one time a member of the editorial staff of the "Nasche Slovo"; Martov however resigned his post later on account of the remorseless criticism exercised by comrade Lenin, and of the increase of revolutionary communist elements among the editors. After the paper had finally passed into the hands of the left wing of the editorial staff, that is, into Trotzky's hands, these three points of dispute remained: the question of defeatism, the question of civil war or peace, and the question of the character of the impending Russian revolution.

Lenin stood for the defeat of the national bourgeoisie, he impressed upon the workers the necessity of the defeat of their "own" bourgeoisie—Trotzky was opposed to this!

Lenin stood for civil war—Trotzky opposed it!

Lenin stood for the democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry—Trotzky opposed it! Here, as Lenin pointed out, he caused great confusion with his Left phrase on "permanent revolution". In this last point Trotzky gave the impression of being more Left than Lenin. He was not content with the mere dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry, but demanded permanent revolution. Here we have merely a further example of what Lenin impressed upon us for so many years with regard to Trotzky: a Right policy with regard to daily questions of actual practice, but skilfully disguised in the phraseology of the Left.

A fourth difference must however be added to these three, one not mentioned by comrade Trotzky: the difference in the question of the Second and Third Internationals. Lenin, at the head of the Zimmerwald Left, stood for immediate rupture with the Second International and with Kautsky, and for the founding of the Third International. Trotzky, and the pro-Kautsky Centre, were against this.

But only a few months after the existence of these differences had been definitely ascertained, Trotzky joined the Bolshevist Party.

"The March revolution", he writes, "has wiped out all these differences."

Truly? All of them? And how? Trotzky does not say. Yet the Party has a right to put this question, since comrade Trotzky has obliged us to occupy ourselves with his history. Are we to understand the declaration that the revolution has erased all



differences in such manner that we may assume comrade Trotsky to have become convinced of his having been mistaken on all these important points? That he has adopted the viewpoint of the Bolsheviks? Comrade Martinov, one of the best of the Menshevik theoreticians, declared candidly: "I have served the working class for thirty years in the way which I held to be the best. Today I see that I have been in the wrong. History confirms the correctness of Lenin's standpoint with regard to the Russian revolution, and I join Lenin." But comrade Trotsky has given the Party no such answer.

#### Trotsky on Himself and Leninism.

Trotsky, in his book "1905" (pp. 4/5) writes as follows:

"In the period between 9. January and the strike in October 1905 I formed those views of the character of the revolutionary development in Russia which have received the designation of "permanent revolution". Despite the interval of twelve years, this estimate has been fully confirmed." (This was written in the year 1922! L.K.)

But during the whole of these twelve years this theory was opposed by another theory, Lenin's theory, expressed in the formula: Revolutionary democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry.

"This idea" — so wrote comrade Trotsky in 1918, and wrote it again in 1922 without the slightest reservation— "this idea has been repeated unwearingly by Lenin since 1904. But that does not make it correct."

In this book ("1905") Trotsky describes Lenin's fundamental idea as an empty abstraction, and writes that the Bolsheviks "arrive at the idea of a bourgeois-democratic self-limitation of the proletariat possessing state power".

He continues: "Whilst the anti-revolutionary features of Menshevism are already visible to their full extent, the **antirevolutionary features of Bolshevism** (I underline these words on account of their importance. L. K.) threaten to appear as mighty danger only in the case of a revolutionary victory."

Comrade Trotsky, who caused this phrase on the dangers of the anti-revolutionary features of Bolshevism to be republished and confirmed in the year 1922, adds the following:

"As is already well known, this did not happen, for Bolshevism, under comrade Lenin's leadership, changed its ideological equipment in this most important question in the spring of 1917, that is, before the conquest of power." (Trotsky, "1905," Russian ed. p. 285.)

Trotsky's idea is now clear. The standpoint held by Lenin and by the Bolshevik Party on the character of the revolution, as developed between 1904 and the spring of 1917, had not only been wrong, but even counter-revolutionary with respect to the socialist revolution. Lenin and the Bolsheviks were thus obliged to "change their equipment" in the spring of 1917, before the conquest of power, for the purpose of accomplishing the conquest of power. That is, they found themselves obliged to substitute the counter-revolutionary equipment of Bolshevism by the really revolutionary equipment which Trotsky had kept ready on hand for twelve years. It is Trotsky's conviction that Lenin came over to Trotsky after first building up the Party for fifteen years on "anti-revolutionary" ideas.

Trotsky has proved to be in the right during the whole course of his intellectual conflicts with Bolshevism and with Lenin up to the year 1917—that is the import of all Trotsky's latest books ("1905" and "1907").

But if this is so, then we must state it openly. If Bolshevism contains anti-revolutionary features, if we have to change our equipment before a decisive battle, then what right have we to teach uncorrected Bolshevism to our proletariat and to the proletariats of all countries? Why do we not say anywhere, not in one single text book read by the proletariat of our country and of the whole world: Comrades, we teach you Bolshevism, but do not forget that Bolshevism contains anti-revolutionary features, and as soon as the fight begins, then you will not be able to manage with the equipment of Bolshevism, but will have to replace it by another, the equipment of Trotskyism.

We must either teach Bolshevism, Leninism, as it is, without correction, as the real theory of proletarian revolution, or, if there is anyone who believes that this theory is not the true theory of proletarian revolution, but that it has to be supplemented by Trotskyism in order to become such, then he must state openly and straightforwardly what alterations he thinks should be made. Is there really something anti-revolutionary in the teachings of Bolshevism on the revolution? Then the works issued by Lenin before the spring of 1917 must not be made the scientific authority on proletarian struggle and proletarian

strategy against the bourgeoisie. Or we must at least say: But the art of realising proletarian revolution is not to be learnt from Lenin's works up to 1917, but from Trotsky's works since 1905.

The October revolution was either accomplished beneath the banner of uncorrected Leninism, or it was accomplished beneath the banner of Trotskyism and its correction of Leninism. Here we are at a parting of the ways.

It was to be expected that comrade Trotsky, in order to grant a certain amount of satisfaction to the Party which he has thus benefitted, should willingly admit that he has committed certain organisatory errors in the past. What does such an acknowledgment cost, when it serves as cloak for the unpunished assertion that Bolshevism, Leninism, contains anti-revolutionary features? Paris is worth a mass! If one can appropriate the rôle of intellectual and theoretical leader of Bolshevism and the October revolution, it is worth while to admit to even considerable errors in the past.

Trotsky, in his "Lessons of October" actually does make such a confession to the Party. "I have acknowledged my real and great organisatory mistakes", he writes. But was the fifteen years' conflict between Lenin and the Bolsheviks on the one side, and Trotskyism on the other, concerned with organisatory questions? This is nonsense, an endeavour to distract from the point. The conflict was directly concerned with the fundamental questions of the revolution, with the mutual relations of the different classes during the revolution with the question of "permanent revolution" or comrade Lenin's theory and this is the question of the rôle played by the peasantry in the revolution, the question of the paths leading to socialism in an agrarian country, the question of the methods and conditions for the realisation of the proletarian dictatorship in a country in which the peasant population preponderates. This is no contention on abstract formulas. The theory of permanent revolution is based upon a complete underestimation of the rôle played by the peasantry; it replies to one question only: it tells us how power cannot be seized or maintained under these conditions.

Trotsky's viewpoint, summed up from a study of the "Lessons of October", may be expressed as follows: "On the eve of the events of 1905, Lenin imparted a peculiar character to the Russian revolution by the formula: Democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry. But, as later developments showed, this formula had only significance for one stage on the way." This is followed by a literary dissertation to the effect that this stage was a stage on the way to Trotsky's formula. And this is the actual intellectual kernel of all Trotsky's latest writings. Trotsky shuffles his Trotskyism beneath Leninism with the whole of the literary art and talent peculiar to him. This last book of his is not written for the whole Party, but for the younger generation now growing up, for the Youth who within a year or two will have to determine the destiny of the Party.

The aim of Trotsky's latest book "1917" is to take revenge for the twelve years in which Lenin exposed Trotsky's wretched policy, to prove that the revolution confirms his (Trotsky's) theory, and to poison the minds of the future leaders of the Party, now studying in the communist universities, worker's faculties, colleges, etc., by this shuffling of Trotskyism into Leninism. We cannot permit this aim to be realised.

In this book ("1917") Trotsky inveighs against Zinoviev, Kamenev, Rykov, and others. I shall deal farther with this, and with my own errors, but am of the opinion that the reproaches made in this book are not intended for us only. The names of Kamenev and Zinoviev are given, but Lenin is meant. The question of the fate of Bolshevism may be put in the following form: Lenin had an excellent theory, but the disciples of Lenin did not know how to apply it, they did not recognise the needs of the concrete situation. The formula was right, but it has been badly carried out by this or that Bolshevik. It is possible to put the question in this manner, but it can also be stated as follows: If we draw all the logical conclusions from the Leninist formula, we are bound to land in a bog. The formula itself is wrong, and this wrong formula has been employed logically correctly. In the first case we have a justification of the Bolshevik theory and an indication of the errors of individual Bolsheviks, but in the second case, if we are told that Lenin's nearest disciples accepted his formula and landed in a bog through applying it literally, then we see—enlightened as we already are by Trotsky's assertion as to the anti-revolutionary features of Leninism, and by his statement that Trotsky's theory, and not Lenin's, has been "completely confirmed"—then we see that the blows struck



are not directed against Kamenev and Zinoviev alone, but through them at Lenin's main formula.

#### Lenin in April 1917.

Is it true that Bolshevism, in order to solve the problems of the revolution, was obliged to withdraw from its past? Is it true that the theory of the revolutionary democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry proved inadequate? What were the actual facts, and how were these regarded by Lenin?

What really happened—as seen by Lenin as well as by us—was that the Bolshevik idea of the “revolutionary democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry” was fully and completely realised in the Russian revolution, and, after its realisation, began to develop into the Bolshevik idea of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

I here take the opportunity of referring to one of the works in which Lenin laid down his principles at that time: “Letters on Tactics”, in which he comments on and explains to the Party his famous theses of 4th April. Lenin writes:

“The revolutionary democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry has already been realised in the Russian revolution... The workers' and soldiers' Soviets are the revolutionary democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry as realised in actual life. We are still in the minority; we recognise the necessity of gaining the majority (in these organs of the dictatorship).” (Compl. works. Russian edition, Vol. XIV/I, p. 29.)

If our theory has been realised, we must stride forward. How? In such manner that we gather together the proletarian elements of town and country against the petty-bourgeois elements, on the basis of the realised dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry. This means the mustering and organisation of the proletarian elements on the basis of this dictatorship, in order to proceed from the revolutionary democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry to the dictatorship of the proletariat, to the purely socialist revolution. For this reason Lenin invariably adapted his tactics to the development of the mass movement in the peasantry, and he studied the “peculiarity” of the realisation of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry, which consisted of the fact that the latter, at the given stage of the revolution (April 1917) retained their confidence in the bourgeois government in the form of “defence of native country”. After describing the views of the Bolsheviks contending against him (I was one of these), and after a sharp attack upon us, Lenin writes:

“A Marxist must never quit the firm ground of analysis of class relations. The bourgeoisie is in power. And is the mass of the peasantry not another bourgeoisie belonging to another stratum, of another description and character? Does it follow that this stratum may not seize power by the “consummation” of bourgeois democratic revolution? Why should this not be possible? Old Bolsheviks frequently judge in this manner.”

I replied: “This is perfectly possible... it is quite possible that the peasantry seizes the whole of the land and at the same time the whole power...”

Lenin continues: “If the peasantry ceases to support the government in the social revolutionary and Menshevik Soviets, if the peasantry, having deserted the bourgeoisie, seizes the land and power in spite of the bourgeoisie, then we shall have a new stage in the bourgeois democratic revolution, and one which will occupy us greatly.”

This is much more complicated than Trotzky's theory, straight as the line which the crow flies. For Trotzky, with his slogan of: “Off with the Tsar and on with the labour government”, the matter was much simpler. He simply ignored the whole peasantry and the conditions prerequisite to the realisation of the dictatorship of the proletariat in a capitalistically backward agrarian country.

The greatness of Lenin lies in the fact that he began to carry out the dictatorship of the proletariat under the given conditions of a given agrarian country, and actually did carry this out by means of constantly keeping in sight those real elements upon whose foundation this dictatorship can not only be proclaimed, but built up.

As a matter of fact, even in April it was not possible to judge whether there might not be a moment in the Russian revolution in which the peasantry would leave the social revolutionary and Menshevik Soviets in the lurch and turn against the Provisional Government, before it could attain to the dicta-

ship of the proletariat. Lenin, as real politician and mass leader, knowing that we pursued the policy of the proletariat under the peculiar conditions of an agrarian country, arranged his tactics for both possibilities.

Lenin would not have been Lenin, that is, he would not have been the practical leader of millions in class war, if he had really taken over Trotzky's equipment, for Trotzky's theory would have inevitably led to the breakdown of the proletariat and of the peasantry as well. In its pure form, the line taken by Trotzky is simply the ignoring of the peasantry, the ignoring of that transition stage during which the peasantry still places its confidence in the ruling bourgeoisie at first, is disappointed and turns against the bourgeoisie, but still does not join the proletariat; this transitional stage which ends by the proletariat taking over the leadership of the peasantry in the form of peasant's risings, realising the dictatorship, and endeavouring to bring about an alliance between workers and peasants in various and changing forms.

Lenin, in the same pamphlet in which he wrote against the old Bolsheviks, states:

“In my theses I have secured myself against any leaps over agrarian or petty-bourgeois movements which have not yet been overcome, against any playing with “seizure of power” by a labour government... “Trotzkyism” down with the Tsar, up with the labour government”—is wrong. The petty-bourgeoisie (that is, the peasantry. L. K.) exists, and cannot be ignored.”

Is this not the literal repetition, in the heat of revolution, of all that Lenin had long warned the Party against? In 1910 Lenin had already said that: “Trotzky's fundamental error... is the lack of the smallest thought about the question of the transition from this (the bourgeois) revolution to a socialist revolution.”

Trotzky's “original” theory takes from the Bolsheviks the demand for decisive revolutionary struggle on the part of the proletariat and the demand for the seizure of political power, from the Mensheviks it takes the “denial” of the rôle played by the peasantry... Trotzky did not, however, reflect that when the proletariat induces the non-proletarian masses of the peasantry to confiscate the land of the landowners and to overthrow the monarchy, the “national bourgeois revolution” in Russia is achieved and that this becomes a revolutionary democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry.

Lenin criticised severely those comrades (including me) who had not observed that the revolution had already passed from one phase to another. He feared most that progress would be hindered by the Party's falling into the rut of Trotzky's abstract theory, and again he accuses it of waiting to spring over the peasants' movement before this was in our hands.

There was no need for Lenin to change his equipment. The old Leninist theory, the old Leninist, Bolshevik conception of the character of the Russian revolution, and of the relations between proletariat and peasantry, were seen by Lenin to have proved fully correct. And now we had to advance further on the same lines. But the greatest care must be taken, in this advance, not to fall into Trotzky's mistaken foot-steps. Twelve years before 1917 Lenin had prophesied that, after the revolutionary democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry had been realised, we should have to advance to the dictatorship of the proletariat, but that we must take the peasantry into consideration, and must create conditions under which the peasantry co-operate with the proletariat, without simply ignoring the peasantry as Trotzky proposes. Bolshevism does not need to borrow weapons from the arsenal of Trotzkyism.

At the same time, there were some Bolsheviks who did not advance so rapidly from stage to stage as was required by the tremendous acceleration of the revolution caused by the enormous pressure of the war. But this does not in the least signify that Bolshevism was on the wrong track, that it lead into a bog instead of to victory or that it had to be altered during the revolution. And this is just what Trotzky is trying to prove.

Trotzky has never grasped the essentials of the Leninist theory on the relations between the working class and the peasantry in the Russian revolution. Even after October he did not grasp it, and he did not grasp it when our Party applied it in fresh ways, or when our Party successfully manoeuvred for the realisation of the dictatorship of the proletariat without separation from the peasantry. His own theory, which in his opinion has proved entirely right, has prevented him from grasping the Bolshevik position. If Trotzky's theory had proved correct, this would signify that the Soviet power would long since have ceased to exist. This theory of “permanent revolution”



which does not trouble about the peasantry or provide any solution for the question of the alliance between the proletariat and the peasantry, renders the labour government in Russia absolutely dependent upon the immediate proletarian revolution in the West. According to this theory the proletariat, after having taken over power, is plunged into the most hopeless contradictions. Its power is limited by objective social difficulties.

Their solution is prevented by the economic backwardness of the country. Within the confines of a national revolution there is no means of escape from this contradiction." (Trotzky, "1905", Russian edition, p. 286.)

Under such conditions a delay or postponement of the proletarian world revolution would have inevitably caused the immediate collapse of the workers' dictatorship in Russia. Thus the adherents of the "permanent revolution" are bound to see the necessity of a world revolution, and to demand its realization by force, with the aid of military compulsion.

Real Bolshevik policy, as pursued by Lenin from February to October, has nothing in common with either this policy or this psychology.

How did matters really stand in October and immediately afterwards? Seen from the standpoint of Marxism, from the standpoint of the analysis of the class forces of the revolution, was not the acceptance of the social revolutionary decree on landed property, the supplementation of the Soviet government,

by the left S.R., the designation of the government created by the October revolution as "Workers' and Peasants' government", all proposals of Lenin, was all this not a growing development of the dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry into a system whose actual essence was already the dictatorship of the proletariat?

It is possible to omit some of these facts of the October revolution; but then we do not arrive at any scientific analysis of Lenin's policy. And what about the transition from war communism to the new economic policy, from the committees for the impoverished peasantry to Lenin's speech on the "medium farmers"? How can this be brought into harmony with that theory of permanent revolution which has proved so "perfectly correct"?

In 1910 Lenin wrote that life was already a decade ahead of Trotsky's management theory. Now we can add another eight years. Does this circumstance that life has passed Trotsky's theory by for eighteen years justify Trotsky in claiming to be able to correct Leninism by Trotskyism?

Since life has passed Trotsky's theory by, Trotsky attempts in his books to not only correct Leninism, but life as well, and to prove by every art of which he is master that life follows Trotsky after all.

It is incumbent on the Party to show precisely the contrary, and to prove to not only Trotsky but every new member the necessity of "Bolshevizing Trotsky". How far has the Party succeeded in this?

III.

## Trotzky in the Party. Our Errors. October according to Trotzky.

We must differentiate between two aspects of Trotzky's activity. The one aspect is comrade Trotzky as he carried out the instructions of the Party strictly and accurately, learning with the other members of the Party on the totality of common party tasks, and carrying out the tasks of that task or command of the Party. At this time comrade Trotzky's deeds were splendid, and added many brilliant pages to his own history and that of the Party. But since comrade Trotzky has come forward as individualist, believing that he and not the Party is in the right in the fundamental questions of revolution, and that Leninism must be improved by Trotskyism, we are obliged to see that other aspect of comrade Trotzky which shows him to be no Bolshevik.

### Four Attempts made by Comrade Trotzky at Improving the Party.

The Party remembers four occasions upon which comrade Trotzky has tried to instruct the Party, and to force upon it his own Trotskyist deviations. The first occasion was a few months after comrade Trotzky entered the Party. It was at the time of Brest Litovsk. The Party is adequately and accurately informed as to comrade Trotzky's attitude at that time. He underestimated the rôle played by the peasantry, and covered this over by revolutionary phrasology. This was the road to the defeat of the proletariat and the revolution. If we recollect the evidence brought at this time against comrade Trotzky by comrade Lenin, we see that comrade Lenin brought no other evidence than the substantiation with which he had rejected comrade Trotzky's general attitude during the course of the preceding decade.

Comrade Lenin reproached him with two political sins: Lack of comprehension for the relations between proletariat and peasantry, and liability to be carried away by apparently Left, apparently revolutionary phrases. These two errors, typical of comrade Trotzky whilst outside of our Party, were repeated by him within it.

Then came the civil war, the epoch of war communism. Comrade Trotzky executed the task allotted to him. His participation in the direction of the general policy of the Party was less than before. But now the revolution reached a fresh turning point. The relations between the classes shifted. The Party anticipated, in the form of a discussion on trade unions, the question submitted a few weeks later at Cronstadt; the question of the transition from war communism to the new economic policy. What was comrade Lenin seeking for at that time? He was seeking new forms for an alliance between the proletariat and the peasantry, new forms for leading the working masses by means of gaining their convinced adherence rather than by force.

To what did comrade Trotzky look for salvation at that time? He advised us to tighten the screws of war communism. This was again and again an underestimate of the peasantry, the liability to be carried away by externals, by methods of "instruction" from above.

And comrade Trotzky's further attempts—even during comrade Lenin's lifetime—the question of the "plan" according to his peculiar conception, his "formulas" on the "dictatorship of industry", were not these again attempts to force petty bourgeois elementarity upon us from above with bonds of iron. did they not once more show that lack of comprehension of those concrete conditions under which it is alone possible to realise a dictatorship in an agrarian country with undermined industries at a time when the international revolution is retarded?

Beneath comrade Trotzky's effective formulas we can here easily distinguish the feelings inevitably involved by his original theory: On the one hand despair, pessimism, disbelief, and on the other hand exaggerated hopes in the methods of supreme administration (a term of Lenin's), in the competent subjection of economic difficulties from above.

The last discussion is still fresh in our memories. It gave the Party a graphic survey of the totality of comrade Trotzky's errors, as dealt with above. But it also showed with special clearness another error, another feature of Trotskyism, and one far from being new. This is the attempt to undermine and weaken the main frame work of the dictatorship, the Party. The same object was aimed at by the discrediting of the "cadres" of the Party, by the resurrected Menshevist conception of the Party as a collection of "groups and currents", and the essentially liquidatory undermining of the authority of the leading institutions ("they are leading the country to destruction"). And has it not been under comrade Trotzky's banner that the idea of greater freedom from Party influence for extra-Party organisations has flourished? Has not all this, taken together, led to a weakening of the dictatorship of the proletariat, and has it not all been based upon an underestimation of the conditions under which we—in an agrarian country—have to realise the dictatorship? Is it not a petty-bourgeois deviation?

So long as the Party is perfectly sound and everything goes well, comrade Trotzky quietly performs every task which falls to him; but as soon as the Party encounters any obstacle, as soon as it has to adjust its rudder, then comrade Trotzky at once springs forward in the rôle of saviour and teacher of the Party, but invariably points out the wrong way, since he has absorbed the principles of Bolshevism.



which does not trouble about the peasantry or provide any solution for the question of the alliance between the proletariat and the peasantry, renders the labour government in Russia absolutely dependent upon the immediate proletarian revolution in the West. According to this theory the proletariat, after having taken over power, is plunged into the most hopeless contradictions. Its power is limited by objective social difficulties.

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Under such conditions a delay or postponement of the proletarian world revolution would have inevitably caused the immediate collapse of the workers' dictatorship in Russia. Thus the adherents of the "permanent revolution" are bound to pass through stages of despair and profoundest pessimism to attempts at overcoming the economic backwardness of the country by force, with the aid of military commands.

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### Our Errors.

Comrade Trotzky has another trump in his hand against Bolshevism. This trump consists of certain errors committed by some few Bolsheviks (above all by me and Zinoviev, then those of Rykov and Nogin) in October 1917. The errors of the Bolsheviks are naturally invariably exploited by our enemies. Comrade Trotzky did not resort to this trump so long as he hoped to induce the Party to deviate to the path of Trotzkyism by means of the discussion of this or that practical question. But after four attempts—Brest, trade unions, discussion on the economic plan, and the last discussion—had shown him that he cannot persuade the Bolshevik Party to deviate from its path, after he had learnt from the Party at the XIII Party conference that we, the Leninists, do not require our theory to be corrected by Trotzkyism, then he brought forward this last trump.

He is of course not the first to do this. These errors have been exploited often enough already by our enemies, but both errors and exploitation were simply buried beneath the thunders of the proletarian revolution. At the time neither the errors themselves nor their being made use of by hostile quarters resulted in any practical consequences. It is only since then that these errors have been raked up again maliciously by those who had deserted communism: Levi, Frossard, Balabanova. Levi and Frossard are now being followed by Trotzky.

Vacillations were unallowable. Lenin armed himself against them with all the power and passion of a leader who sees that his co-workers are liable to carry confusion into their own ranks by vacillation at decisive moments. He exposed every vacillation relentlessly, and in critical and decisive moments he did not shrink from the severest words or propositions. And he was right, right to the end, without reservation.

But when the moment for calm discussion arrived, the moment for the avoidance of the repetition of similar errors in other Communist Parties, then Lenin characterised these errors very accurately. When Serrati attempted to cloak his withdrawal from communism by these errors of Zinoviev and Kamenev, comrade Lenin wrote: "Before the October revolution in Russia, and immediately after it, a number of excellent communists committed errors which we do not like to remember now. Why do we not like to remember them? Because it is wrong to call to mind errors which have been made perfectly good, unless there is some special reason for doing so."

Special attention must be accorded to the manner in which Lenin formulated our errors: "In the period of which I speak they vacillated, fearing that the Bolsheviks were isolating themselves, were rushing too recklessly into a rising, were too unwilling to meet the advances of a certain section of the 'Mensheviks' and 'social revolutionists'. The conflict went so far that the comrades named resigned demonstratively from all responsible positions both in the Party and in Soviet work, to the great joy of the enemies of the Soviet revolution. The affair culminated in a very severe criticism in the press, on the part of the C.C. of our Party, against the resigning comrades. And after a few weeks, at latest after a few months, all these comrades recognised their error and returned to their responsible Party and Soviet positions."

Is this description of Lenin in any way similar to the malicious attempt made by Trotzky—ridiculous in its malice—to twist this "right" wing into an actually "Menshevik" wing in the Bolshevik Party? But this appears to be comrade Trotzky's fate: In order to attain his objects he is invariably obliged to "overcome" Lenin, Leninism, and the Leninists.

### Trotzky Writes again about himself and Lenin.

Were we the only ones, in Trotzky's opinion, who made mistakes at the time of the October revolution? No, we were not the only ones. This book contains many sensations. But the most sensational sentence in the book is one referring to the October revolution. On page 50 of his "Lessons" Trotzky writes: "The rising on the 25. October was of supplementary character only." There are probably many here present who took part in the October events, and these will be surprised to learn, eight years after the 25. October, 1917, that the rising on the 25. October was merely of a "supplementary character". What did it supplement? We learn that it "supplemented" the events which had taken place on 9. October.

The main data of the revolution are familiar to us. But when I mention events which occurred on 9. October, many will ask what happened on that date to which the October rising was nothing more than a supplement. On 9. October, says comrade

Trotzky's book, a resolution was passed in the Petrograd Soviet, on the motion of comrade Trotzky, ending with the sentence: "The Petrograd Workers' and Soldiers' Soviet cannot be responsible to the army for such strategy on the part of the Provisional Government, and especially for the removal of troops from Petrograd."

It need not be said that this was an important resolution; it united the garrison, which did not want to go to the front, with the Petrograd Soviet. But listen to how Trotzky describes and estimates this event of the 9. October: "From this moment (9. October) onwards we were actually in a state of armed insurrection... The issue of the rising on the 25. October was already three parts pre-determined at this moment... In all essentials an armed insurrection had already been brought about... Here we had a "quiet" and "almost" legal" armed insurrection, one which was two thirds, if not nine tenths, an accomplished fact... From this moment onward we had a victorious rising in the capital city."

Thus it appears that the 25. October was not more than a slight supplement to the great 9. But now the question arises: If the "victorious" insurrection was already an accomplished fact to the extent of nine tenths on the 9. October, what are we to think of the mental capacity of those who sat in the Bolshevik C.C. and decided in a heated debate, on 10. October, whether we should proceed to an insurrection or not, and if so, what then? What are we to think of people who on 15. October gathered together as plenary session of the C.C., together with the functionaries and co-workers from the military organisations, and still deliberated on the prospects of the insurrection, on the forces of the insurrection, and on the date of the insurrection. Had it not been all arranged on the 9th, quietly and legally? So quietly, that neither the Party nor the C.C. heard anything about it.

But this is merely a side issue. What is the Party, what is the Petrograd Committee, or the C. C. when Trotzky writes a history of the October revolution? In this history neither the C.C. nor the Party exist at all as real living powers, as collective organisers of the mass movement. And there is not a word to be learnt from the "Lessons of October" with regard to what took place in Moscow, that not only in Petrograd, but in Moscow and Ivanovo-Vosnessensk there was a proletariat which was also doing something. And with reference to Lenin the book informs us: "Lenin, who was not in Petrograd, did not fully estimate the importance of this fact... Lenin, living illegally, had no possibility of estimating the thorough upheaval", etc. We see that not one of us really knew anything about the October revolution. We had thought that it was precisely Lenin who led the October revolution, and that the C.C., the Party, and the military organisations of the Party organised it. But it appears that they did not appear on the scene at all.

In order to throw even more light on the part played by Lenin, Trotzky reports as follows: "If the insurrection had begun in Moscow (in accordance with Lenin's advice, L. K.), before the revolution in Petrograd, it would inevitably have dragged much more and the issue would have been very doubtful, and a failure in Moscow would have had a very severe effect upon Petrograd."

Whilst Lenin is engaged in imparting such "advice", Trotzky, with his "quiet" but "victorious insurrection" already in his pocket, is executing "an extensive manoeuvre". "We succeeded" he writes triumphantly "in luring our enemies into the trap of Soviet legality". Lenin, calculating much more upon the workers, sailors, and soldiers than upon comrade Trotzky's "manoeuvres", wrote at this time: "It is a crime to hesitate; it is a piece of childishness and formality to wait for the Soviet Congress, a betrayal of the revolution". But Trotzky refutes Lenin's words with an air of victory at the close of his description of the roles played by him and by Lenin in October: "It is one thing to organise an armed insurrection under the bare slogan of seizure of power by the Party" Trotzky instructs Lenin: "but it is something very different to prepare and realise an insurrection under the slogan of the defence of the rights of the Soviet congress".

Here the figures are shifted from their actual positions, Lenin is illegal, unable to make a correct estimate of the situation omits to observe that nine tenths of the insurrection has already been accomplished, advises that the rising be commenced in Moscow, although this obviously condemns the revolution to failure. Trotzky, on the other hand, brings about a "victorious insurrection" by the 9. October, carries out a definite but cautious manoeuvre by which he "lured the enemy into a trap", and "prepares and realises the victory" under a slogan com-



prehensible to the broad masses, the slogan of "defence of the rights of the Soviet congress".

What do these "Lessons of October" endeavour to teach us? That in the spring Lenin was obliged to alter his attitude, to abandon his old theory, and to borrow weapons from Trotsky's equipment. And that in October Lenin endeavoured unsuccessfully to lead the insurrection which comrade Trotsky was destined to lead to victory.

We have to choose what we are to learn and to teach. Either this history of October, this history of Trotsky's, or the history as given in the works of Lenin.

In the question of the Constituent Assembly comrade Trotsky quotes my and Zinoviev's letter of 11. October, in which we wrote: "The constituent Assembly will be able to lean upon the Soviets only for aid in its revolutionary work. The Constituent Assembly and the Soviet form the combined type of state institutions towards which we are advancing."

Trotsky's comments as follows: "It is extremely interesting for the characterisation of the whole line adopted by the Right to note that the theory of "combined" state institutions uniting the Constituent Assembly with the Soviets, is one which was repeated one or two years later in Germany by Rudolf Hilferding, an opponent of seizure of power by the proletariat."

Zinoviev's and my letter was written on 11. October; and I take Lenin's article written on 6. October. Lenin writes as follows: "During the transition from old to new combined types are possible at times (as the "Workers' Path" rightly pointed out a few days ago), for instance Soviet Republic and Constituent Assembly."

What does this imply? It implies that in the case before us Lenin resembled Hilferding. Historical truth is of little importance to Trotsky. The alteration of tactics at moments when the situation alters from day to day is of no interest to him; what interests him is to discredit Bolshevism by every possible means.

A final example, again in two words. In this same letter of October 1917 we wrote: "These masses of the soldiery are not supporting us for the sake of the slogan of war, but for the slogan of peace... Should we find ourselves in a position, after seizing power, in which the international situation obliges us to resort to a revolutionary war, the soldiery will turn away from us. The best of the youth among the soldiers will remain true to us, but the great mass will leave us. The historian may judge in how far this estimate was justified. But what does comrade Trotsky do? He writes: "Here we see fundamental arguments in favour of the signing of the Brest Litovsk peace."

Thus it appears that the Brest Litovsk peace, signed by the Party on the urging and iron pressure of Lenin, against Trotsky, was substantiated by "fundamental arguments" supplied by us, the "Right", the followers of Hilferding. It is not to be wondered at when our enemies, who have a very fine feeling for anything wrong, comment on such books about Lenin by remarking that it is difficult to distinguish whether they have been written by a co-worker or a rival of Lenin.

#### Leninism against Trotskyism.

The results may now be summed up. We are the monopoly Party in our country. We gather together in our ranks every

organised worker in the country; but we must not forget for a moment that we are surrounded by elements foreign to our class, and that these elementary forces do not diminish, but will multiply and become politically more enlightened. They do not possess the form of legal organisation. Petty-bourgeois intelligence will also grow on the soil provided by the development of industry, of the works and factories, and of trade. All these petty-bourgeois elements, finding no open means of expression in any social organisation, are naturally endeavouring to further their aims through the medium of our Party itself. The petty-bourgeois elements, in exercising this pressure upon our Party, naturally seek the weakest link in the chain, and as naturally they find this weakest link where people have entered the Party without being assimilated to it, and are possessed by a secret conviction, leaving them no peace, that they are more in the right than the Party, and that it is mere narrow-mindedness on the part of the Party, mere conservatism, tradition, and adherence to this or that clique in leading positions, which prevents the Party from learning from its real saviours, such as comrade Trotsky.

It is with great regret that I state this, and the whole Party will echo this regret, but it has to be said: Comrade Trotsky has become the channel through which the elementary forces of the petty-bourgeoisie find their way into our Party. The whole character of his advances, and his whole historical past, show this to be the case. In his contentions against the Party he has already become a symbol, all over the country, for everything directed against our Party. This is a fact which it is most important for comrade Trotsky to grasp. If he will grasp this and draw the necessary conclusions, then everything can be made good again. Whether he wants it or not (and assuredly he does **not** want it) he has become, for all who regard communism as their greatest enemy, a symbol for emancipation from the thrall of the Communist Party. This is the regrettable but perfectly inevitable conclusion of all who are accustomed to judge political events from the standpoint of actual analysis of class relations, and not from the standpoint of mere words.

I am aware that in Moscow, a city particularly receptive for all manner of rumours, "perfectly reliable" information is already being spread abroad to the effect that, firstly, comrade Trotsky's book has been prohibited, and secondly, that Trotsky's exclusion from the Party is contemplated and Trotsky himself is no longer in Moscow. All this is naturally mere gossip. It has not occurred to anybody to prohibit comrade Trotsky's book; no single member of the C.C. has raised the question of any reprisals against comrade Trotsky. Reprisals, expulsion, and the like would not enlighten anybody, but would on the contrary render enlightenment more difficult and at the same time give opportunities to those brewers of confusion who would like to sow the seeds of schism in the Party, and prevent the real fundamentals of Bolshevism being explained in their differentiation from Trotskyism; and it is this explanation which is of fundamental importance at present.

It must be perfectly clear to every conscious member of the Party that for us, the Bolsheviks, and for the international proletariat marching forward to victory, Leninism is sufficient, and that it is not necessary to substitute or improve Leninism by Trotskyism. (Enthusiastic applause.)

## Why We Were Victorious in October.

By J. Jakovlev.

An analysis of the whole course of the revolution shows, that it was only the fact that we carried on and completed the bourgeois-democratic revolution, that enabled us to begin the socialist revolution.

We gathered the majority of the peasantry round us and won their adherence to the slogans and tasks of the bourgeois-democratic revolution, and it was just this fact which in October 1917 created the conditions favouring the development of the democratic into the socialist revolution. In a country which is, from the socialistic point of view, comparatively so backward, from the world crisis of capitalism which, from the beginning of the imperialist-war, had the realisation of the socialist revolution in Europe on its programme, could not have led the working class to power, had not the work of the bourgeois-democratic revolution been inseparably bound up with that of the socialist revolution.

The plan of the October revolution as presented by comrade Trotsky, lacks understanding of these facts, and that is what is wrong from the beginning in comrade Trotsky's views regarding the October revolution.

Let us recall systematically Lenin's fundamental views regarding the tasks of the working class.

In determining these tasks, Lenin always started out from the fundamental contrast between the productive forces of the country and the construction of the Russian State, a country which had preserved a series of far-reaching remnants of feudalism.

The question of the destruction of the feudal elements in the economic and political structure of Russia, especially the land question, and the question of putting a stop to the wild barbaric suppression of the peoples other than the Great Russian, was set up by the whole history of the development of Russia. Lenin pointed out the fundamental correlations. Lenin calculated:



some 10,000 large landowners possess as much land as 10 million small farmers; 43% Great Russians rule, suppress, subjugate and annihilate 57% of the non-Great Russian population; the State which is still built up on the estates, has the Tsarist clique of large landowners at its head.

Lenin saw the possibility of two methods of solving this fundamental contradiction: it is solved either—as it has been in all bourgeois revolutions—by the bourgeoisie, who use the working class as their cannon-fodder, or by the working class of Russia taking the task of solving the contradiction upon itself.

The Russian bourgeoisie showed itself objectively incapable of completing its own revolution. This was strikingly demonstrated by the experience of 1905, the period between the two revolutions, and the experience of the revolution of 1917. The fundamental causes are: the bourgeois elements being interwoven with elements of the large land owning class; immediate dependence of Russian capital on the subsidies of Tsarism, subordination of Russian to foreign capital, the financial and political interests of which prompted it to support Tsarism; and finally fear of the working class.

In the period between the two revolutions, the **Stolypin** was the only serious attempt at a solution of the fundamental contradictions in a bourgeois way. **Stolypin** tried to solve the task of the national bourgeois revolution on the subject of the land question. But just his attempt, which helped **hundreds of thousands**, whereas **millions** were in question, best proves that revolution was the only possible and the inevitable way to solve all contradictions.

The bourgeoisie supported the military adventure of the Tsardom to a considerable degree, because the imperialistic war postponed the revolution which had already threatened in 1914, and it did not realise that the war would become the strongest incentive to revolution.

Lenin's genius is evidenced just in the fact that **in the revolution of 1905 and later, he demanded of the working class that it should regard as its duty the completion of the bourgeois democratic revolution.** In correspondence with this task, the tactics of the Party and its attitude towards the peasantry, for which the carrying out and completion of the bourgeois democratic revolution was an essential for its salvation, was worked out and determined.

This task is very well formulated in the tactical platform of our Party of February 1906:

"The proletariat will only be able to complete the democratic revolution, if it, **as the only class of society which is revolutionary to the end, carries with it the mass of the peasantry**, and lends it political consciousness in its elementary fight against landed property and serfdom..."

The fundamental mistake of the Mensheviks is that they expect the bourgeoisie to carry out the bourgeois democratic revolution and that they intend to play the part of the opposition.

Comrade Trotzky's mistake in his permanent revolution is that he does not take into consideration that the working class can only be victorious if it carries the peasantry with it into the democratic (i. e. peasant) revolution.

The war has intensified all contradictions to an unprecedented degree, and at the same time brought into the foreground the question of the realisation of the socialist world revolution.

The February revolution completely confirmed the correctness of the Bolshevik line. In the February revolution the workers appear immediately in the rôle of leaders of the soldiers, i. e. of the peasants. The slogan "land" becomes prominent as the most important slogan of the soldiers as well as of the workers, and drives the peasants into the arms of the soldiers. This is one of the most important results of the whole previous activity and attitude of the Bolshevik Party in the question of the peasantry.

In February 1917 classes met, which had only become conscious of their own existence in the pre-February period: on the one side the cowardly, selfish bourgeoisie which had filled its belly with war profits, which vacillated between the consciousness of the hopelessness of maintaining the Tsarist regime and fear of the revolutionary workers; on the other side the workers, who, in the course of one and a half decades, had been trained by the Bolsheviks to revolt against Tsardom and the bourgeoisie, on the basis of the leadership of the chief mass of the peasantry. Even the mechanism of the development of the

events of February reveals in an imposing way the impelling forces of the revolution. The fate of Tsarism was decided when tens of thousands of peasants, who at that time called themselves soldiers of the Guard, slaughtered some of their officers and, without their officers, joined the peasants. Neither those forces which had been mobilised by Tsardom against the insurgents in Petrograd itself, nor the regiments which had been recalled from the Northern and Western fronts, nor even general Ivanov's selected division which had distinguished itself at the suppression of the revolutionaries in Cronstadt, were able to stand against this mass of workers, backed by the peasants.

In the meantime the bourgeoisie and their Menshevik helpers did all they could to hinder the revolution. On the eve of February **Miljukov** and the leaders of the workers' group of the war industry committee warned the workers against responding to provocation; **Rodsianko** implored the Tsar for the sake of saving the monarchy, to call up the officers that they might make order in Petrograd, and not to leave the capital before the situation was cleared up; whilst even on Monday the leaders of the bourgeoisie showed themselves capable of nothing better than creating a committee of the Duma in order to calm the capital.

On February 27th however, the committee of the workers' members of parliament met, and decided to convert themselves into a Soviet of workers' and soldiers' delegates, organised the workers' militia, took control of the means of finance, in short, became the ruling power. The fact that the Soviets thus organised the power, although the heads of this Soviet were Mensheviks and half-Mensheviks, emphasises more than ever the fundamental relationship of forces which had been created and prepared by the previous history of Russia: on the one side the block of armed workers and soldiers, i. e. of the workers and peasants under the leadership of the workers, and on the other side the bourgeoisie who, only after Tsarism had vanished, turned from the attempt to save Tsardom to the attempt to confirm and direct the revolution, in other words to the attempt, during the February days in Petrograd, to wrench the power from the hands of the actual masters of the situation—the Soviet of the workers' and soldiers' delegates.

The insufficient organisation of the workers, the disorganisation of our Party by Tsardom during the years of the war, the want of immediate knowledge of the bourgeois regime on the part of the masses made it possible for the upper strata of the bourgeoisie once more to form a government. On the situation of this government, on the relation of the powers of this government to the powers of the armed soldiers and workers, after the Mensheviks had for 9 days made efforts to weaken the Soviets, the War Minister of the Provisional Government, one of the most gifted men of the Russian bourgeoisie, **Gutschkov** wrote to **Alexejew**, who at that time was Chief of the Staff to the Commander in Chief:

"I beg you to believe that the actual situation of things is as follows. The Provisional Government has absolutely no power, and its decrees are only carried out in so far as the Soviet of the workers' and soldiers' delegates allows; the latter has control over the most important elements of actual power, such as the troops, the railways, post and telegraph, which are in its hands. It can, as matter of fact, be said, that the Provisional Government only exists to the degree that it is tolerated by the Soviet of the workers' and soldiers' delegates. In the War Office in particular it is now impossible to issue commands, even if they are not in direct contradiction to the orders of the above mentioned Soviet."

Almost simultaneously, **Lenin**, in his first "Letters" from Abroad, wrote from the opposite pole, that by the side of the Provisional Government which "from the point of view of the existing war is, in its essentials, only a clerk in the firms of millionaires of England and France, there has arisen a new, unofficial workers' government, still undeveloped and comparatively weak, which gives expression to the interests of the proletariat and of all the poorest elements of the urban and rural population. This is the Soviet of the workers' and soldiers' delegates in Petrograd."

This relation of forces in February is the outcome of the whole previous history of Russia. But without the Bolshevik attitude towards the peasantry, without the schooling of the Bolshevik Party, the relation of forces in February would have been unthinkable. **Instead of the bourgeoisie**, the workers, who had carried the soldiers with them, **completed in February the bour-**



**geois revolution.** Just this was the starting point of the advance movement of the socialist revolution.

According to comrade Trotzky's formula, the period before February could "be regarded as the period either of the consolidation, the development or of the completion of the democratic revolution." ("1917", p. XVIII.)

This contrasting is in itself absolutely wrong, as there was nothing of the sort in the social conditions of the Russia of those days. Had the position been: **either** the socialist revolution **or** the bourgeois-democratic one, we should never have been victorious in October. In reality there was no contrasting of "either-or", but a "both-and"; both the completion of the democratic revolution and the preparation of October.

The fact is that the October revolution completed the democratic revolution, and thus laid the way for the beginning of the socialist revolution.

Lenin's attitude in his replies to comrade Kamenev in April 1917 and especially in his article on the fourth anniversary of October, which takes into consideration the experiences of four years of our power, implies not only the issue of the slogan of the purely socialist revolution, but the recognition of the possibility and necessity of the development of the democratic into the socialist revolution under certain conditions.

With comrade Trotzky there is no question of the complete carrying through of the democratic revolution by our socialist October revolution; this mistake is the natural result of his formula of the "permanent" revolution.

The whole course of the development of the revolution from February to October is evidence of the correctness of Lenin's views as to the carrying on from the democratic into the socialist revolution.

The fact that the working class, which had carried the peasantry with it, accomplished the bourgeois-democratic revolution as early as in February, determined those enormous difficulties by which the Russian bourgeoisie was met in carrying out its attempt to realise its power. The Provisional Government in all the combinations of its cabinets used all its forces in order to maintain untouched all the foundations of the feudal order, even the Constituent Assembly, and by means of it.

As regards the land question; the policy of the Provisional Government consisted only in a merciless suppression of the attempts of the peasants to seize the land of the large estate owners (this policy is the same with the cadets **Schingarev**, as with the "socialists" **Tschernov** and **Maslov**).

In the national question, the bourgeoisie continued the Tsarist policy. Even the most modest demands of the Finnish, Ukrainian and Moslem bourgeoisie were met by furious resistance on the part of the Great Russian bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie. Thus the contradictions which had prepared February were intensified to an incredible degree towards October: the result of the seven months of lasting, hopeless and ridiculous attempts of the Great Russian bourgeoisie was that they had to relinquish the solution of the problem of the bourgeois-democratic revolution, even after the insurrection of the workers and soldiers in February had made it possible for them to come into power.

While renouncing the solution of the problem of the bourgeois-democratic revolution, the bourgeoisie, in the period from February to April, also made efforts to detach themselves from the Soviets by a counter-attack on the whole front, which culminated in Kornilov's advance, and by a simultaneous disruption of the Soviets from within, by their agents—the Mensheviks and the social revolutionaries.

Our Party is the only Party which is prepared to solve the problem of the bourgeois-democratic revolution to the end, in other words, which is prepared to help the peasants, to take possession of the land, which is prepared to assist the self-determination of the peoples. In the period of February to October, we not only did not oppose the "robbery" of the land of the large estate owners by the peasants, but actually helped in this robbery.

In the army, we took up the position of the organiser of the peasant masses which had risen against the officers and against the staffs of command. The same class war which was raging throughout the whole country, developed with extraordinary force in the army, in the organisation of which, in the same way as in the social construction of Russia, there were, towards February, a series of remnants of the pre-capitalistic past (during the war the punishment of castigating the soldiers with a rod was introduced; before the war, any political discussion,

even though patriotic, was forbidden to the soldiers). The soldier, who killed his officer did exactly the same as did his father or his brother when they killed the large estate owners and burnt out their nests. In this fight our Party was wholly on the side of the peasants and carried them with it.

Whilst the State organisation of the Great Russian bourgeoisie was cracking at every joint, and the whole land was taking up the bourgeois idea of national self-determination, we were the only Party which actually recognised self-determination. Thus in the period from February to October, it is not the bourgeoisie but the working class, which appears as the leader of the bourgeois democratic—under our circumstances the peasant—revolution. This greatly facilitates the realisation of the actual alliance with the peasants and the winning over of the peasants to our policy.

October 1917 liquidated first of all the national subjugation, estate ownership and caste and thus fully confirmed what Lenin and our Party had written dozens of times: "The proletariat is only capable of carrying through the democratic revolution to its end under the condition that, as the only class of society, which is revolutionary to the end, it should carry the mass of the peasantry with it."

Just as in February, the mechanism of the October revolution brilliantly confirms this: The workers were the vanguard who carried the soldiers along with them; no part of the army which was composed of peasants, could resist the alliance which had actually been concluded between the workers and peasants, and any encounter with it caused their disintegration. Even Krasnov's Cossacks did not resist the forces of this alliance, they were not so much defeated by our guns, as by those workers and peasants who hewed, disintegrated and divided up every part of the Cossack army into its components (on the one side Cossacks, on the other side commanders). Neither did they succeed in setting any part of the army from the front in motion against us, however much **Kerensky, Duchonin and Tschernov** worked to attain this end.

And only the circumstance that we carried the peasantry with us in the bourgeois-democratic revolution, has created such an organic combination between the whole of the peasantry and soldiers and the working class, such confidence on the part of the great mass of peasants in the working class, as to have rendered the further development of the democratic into the socialist revolution possible. The conditions of the epoch of the imperialistic war which intensified class antagonism to an enormous degree, and had changed the army into a peasant militia interspersed with workers, formed the foundation for such development. The fundamental points are the following:

1) The October revolution occurred at the end of the imperialistic war, when the working class of all countries was faced by the epoch-making task of taking the power into their own hands in order to achieve socialism. We completed, or rather we carried out to its completion the bourgeois-democratic revolution at a time when the beginning of the end of capitalism became prominent with unwonted clearness in a world-wide measure.

2) At the very moment of the February revolution, the frame work of a new State, essentially different from the bourgeois State, arose and, in the course of seven months, developed into the form of Soviets. The old State organisation of the bourgeoisie was broken by the Soviets, the best form of government for overpowering the resistance of the bourgeoisie and an excellent form through which workers could lead the peasants, as it is a form of democracy for active workers which has never yet been seen in history in this breadth and depth.

3) At the same time withdrawal from imperialistic war was only possible through the breaking off of all connections between Russian and Anglo-French capital.

4) The chief point however was that at the head of the working class was a Party which had learned by two decades of experience how to achieve the difficult work of such a victory of the revolution, in which the victorious working class carried with it the great mass of the poor peasantry.

All this together also determined the inevitability and possibility of the further development of the democratic revolution, under the leadership of the working class, into the socialist revolution or, to put it more plainly, it determined the possibility of the working class, carrying to an end the bourgeois democratic revolution, while solving its socialist tasks, so to speak, "in passing" in the first months of the Soviet power, as no single class has ever yet done in history.



It is just in the development of the democratic into the proletarian socialist revolution, that we find the key to the question of the study of the October revolution. Only when we have understood, examined and realised the relations of the millions of people, the relations of the peasants and the workers and the part played by our Party in the crystallisation of these relationships, can we give a correct answer to the question **why** and how we succeeded in gaining the victory in October.

The first four or five months of the existence of the Soviet power give the most striking example of this further development. In every possible decree of this period we find two aspects: the one is that of the democratic revolution, which completely annihilated the remnants of feudalism and serfdom, and the other is that of the socialist revolution. The decree regarding the land, the declaration of the rights of the Russian peoples, the decree regarding the peace, the regulation as to the workers' control, even the decree regarding the transference of power to the Soviets, are on the one hand still on the plane of the democratic revolution, and on the other hand they open the door to the fight for socialism.

Thus in the question of the land. The elimination of landed property is the yesterday and today of the democratic revolution and at the same time such a blow to private property that it is the today and tomorrow of the social revolution. In the same way the revolutionary issue led from the war into the socialist revolution, in that Soviet Russia, in withdrawing from the war, cut off all connections with the Entente capital.

The decree as to the workers control, which establishes the right of the officials of the workers' control to superintend production, is at the same time a powerful blow at the private property of the capitalists, in that it declares the decisions of the representatives of the workers' control to be binding on the owners and thus introduces an epoch of the fight for socialist economics.

Many more examples could be given, but this is a subject by itself. We quote these here in order to illustrate that there is in reality no dividing line between the democratic and the socialist revolution, that actually it was rather a transition from one to the other and that therefore comrade Trotzky is fundamentally wrong when he formally places the democratic in opposition to the socialist revolution.

Comrade Trotzky gives an incorrect formula for October in that he fails to take into consideration this "growth of the one into the other" and further fails to consider that there was no Chinese wall between the two revolutions, the bourgeois-democratic and the socialist, and that the first grew into the latter, whilst the latter consolidated and solved the problems of the former.

This mistake of comrade Trotzky's is no less important than his incorrect valuation and under-estimation of the part played by the Party in October, which has already been dealt with in detail.