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The Ideological Principles of Trotzkyism.

By Béla Kun.

Is there a Trotzkyism?

Comrades Brandler and Thalheimer have deemed it necessary to turn the back on Trotzky's recent attack. Not from Trotzkyism, of which they either know nothing or profess not to know anything but from Trotzky. The Czech Right (Hula, Kreibich) also deny the existence of a Trotzkyism. In their opinion Trotzkyism is a deliberate construction on the part of Trotzky's enemies, if not simply a flight of imagination. And they consider the confrontation of Trotzkyism and Leninism to be even more arbitrary, and entirely attributable to certain personal antagonisms. This has also been to a great extent the standpoint of the Polish Right, the standpoint of a large section of the French Right, and approximately the line of retreat taken by the Russian opposition.

We are told that the decisive factor is not that Trotzky opposed Lenin and the Bolsheviks for a decade and a half, but that he was with Lenin at the front at the time of the October revolution. The old antagonism with regard to principles, tactics, and organisation can be relegated to the annals of Party history, their actual political significance has ceased to exist in the course of time.

The antagonism which have cropped up since the victory of the revolution have "no connection with these historical questions". Tactical deviations of an "episodic character" cannot be attributed to any common fundamental principle — and thus such a thing as Trotzkyism does not exist. This manner of stating the case, fairly sums up the colourless air of unconscious naiveness with which the international Right supports Trotzkyism.

But this argumentation on the part of the Right has been knocked on the head by Trotzky himself. Though Trotzky may have had the wish to revise Leninism under the flag of Trotzkyism, still his own Trotzkyism does not permit him to deny a special ideology of its own to Trotzkyism. When writing of the theory of permanent revolution, the essential constituent of Trotzkyism, combatted consistently by Lenin for a decade, he makes the following declaration:

"I (Trotzky) see no reason to withdraw anything which I may have said on this question in the years 1904/5/6 and later." ("The New Course.")

In the course of a letter written in December 1921 he writes to the well known veteran of Bolshevism, Olminsky):

"I do not by any means believe that I have been altogether wrong in my differences of opinion with the Bolsheviks."

Trotzky thus continues to maintain his front against Lenin in fundamental questions of the theoretical problems of revolution. He pursues his struggle against Lenin's "errors". He continues to affirm his old standpoint in the most important methodological question of revolution: the question of the driving forces of the Russian revolution. This circumstance at once places Trotzky in a special position in the Bolshevik Party. It need not be emphasised that the standpoint is one which has nothing in common with Bolshevism. At present it is only necessary, when dealing with the question of whether there a Trotzkyism actually exists or not, to ascertain beyond doubt that it does exist, from Trotzky's own admissions:

1. Trotzky continues to maintain his front against Lenin and Bolshevism in the fundamental question of revolution — in the question of its methodology. This methodology can not change, even after the victory of the revolution.

2. Trotzky opposes Leninism in the sphere of the concrete analysis of the internal forces of revolution. His standpoint involves a disavowal of the role played by the peasantry as a revolutionary force, and the complete denial of the internal vitality of the Russian revolution without a speedy "state support" on the part of the West European proletariat.

3. Thus Trotzky himself evidences that there is an **individual fundamental connection** between the post war Trotzky and the pre-war Trotzky, and that the principle upon which this connection is based represents a fundamental antagonism between his view and Lenin's in the chief questions of revolution. It thus follows that:

4. A Trotzkyism exists, and consists of a standpoint and methods differing in ideology and principles to Leninism, inevitably resulting in previously determinable tactical and organisational views deviating from Leninism and in opposition to this.

It is mere lack of principle to refuse to see principles at all in these principles, and to argue that no principles are involved in the contention, but merely personal antagonisms. It is mere lack of principle to draw away from Trotzky's latest book with the excuse that "all the enemies of the Soviet power are bound to gather round any opposition", and to profess to regard it as purely "accidental", or even not to notice the fact at all, that precisely Trotzky's opposition against the Party forms a power of attraction for counter-revolution. The would — be psychological and virtuous standpoint represented by this lack of principle, in reality an endeavour to avoid the necessity of adopting any definite attitude, assumes approximately the following form:

*) See "Inprecorr" No. 8/1925.

There is no such thing as Trotskyism as a complete and definite system; lack of system is precisely the distinguishing characteristic of the various utterances made by Trotsky in the course of the discussion. The motive for these utterances is mainly to be found in the individuality and psychological structure of Trotsky, and in the fact that he does not choose the right moment for his declaration, etc. All this goes to show that there is actually no such thing as Trotskyism, but merely **simple errors** on Trotsky's part, temporary deviations from the Bolshevik line. At bottom Trotsky is a Bolshevik, a revolutionist, the organiser of victory, etc.

Every worker whose knowledge of the history of the Russian revolution is merely superficial, and gained chiefly in the form of legends, may easily fall a victim to this viewpoint. The lack of principle involved may be opposed as follows:

1. It is perfectly true that Trotskyism does not consist of any complete and definite system of principles, but of precisely the contrary. Trotskyism consists of lack of system. But just as Hamlet speaks of there being "method in madness", Trotsky's lack of system is systematic. In the sphere of principles and theories, and in the sphere of practical politics, this system means: eclecticism, Menshevism, and this without exception, except when the current itself drives the ship of politics with irresistible force, and without the compass of theory, in the direction of revolution (that is of Bolshevism).

2. Trotsky's deviations are thus not deviations from the line of Bolshevik politics, but — in so far as deviations are to be observed at all in Trotsky's political career — the deviations have been from a line alien and opposed to Bolshevism.

Every psychological explanation of this circumstance, aiming at depriving this struggle, in which the Russian CP is defending the most precious treasure owned by the Party and by the Communist International — Leninism — of its objective basis and principles, is an unprincipled attempt at concealment, and is in itself, so to speak, Trotskyism.

What is Trotskyism?

Our thesis is that Trotskyism is a system entirely separate from Bolshevism, and is opposed and hostile to it. We must thus attempt to examine the structure of this system, and to describe its theoretical bases with their resultant tactics and organisation. In order to do this, it does not suffice to throw upon the screen the whole of Trotsky's political career, with all its zigzags. It is necessary to go to the bottom of the point of view involved, and to order its teachings in accordance with the theoretical tactical, and organisational questions of revolution.

We believe that in the course of this examination we shall be able to show that Trotsky, in the midst of a Marxist-Leninist Party, is bound to take the path characterised above: the path from internal Party discussion with the Party to discussion **against** the Party.

Trotsky's Relations to Revolutionary Marxism.

It is usually assumed that Trotsky is an **orthodox Marxist**. And it is true that he arrived by a roundabout way "fighting", as he puts it — at Leninism, the Marxism of the stage of imperialism and proletarian revolution.

As far as "orthodoxy" is concerned, there is no lack of this — in words — even among the Marxist Centralists of Western Europe or the Menshevik wing of Russian social democracy. This section of the Russian Mensheviks (Martov, Martynov*), etc.) have always been anxious to settle the struggle with the Bolsheviks by means of floods of quotations. History shows the Mensheviks and all their quotations sailing across into the waters of counter-revolution. In the Russian labour movement, Trotsky considered himself (as he has repeatedly stated) to be the representative of advanced "European Marxism", but after his conversion to the Bolsheviks he was unable to make his special viewpoint harmonise with Bolshevism, that is, with revolutionary Marxism. He was thus obliged to make some fundamental differentiation between the Marxism of the so called Marxist "Centre" and the pertaining wing of the Russian Mensheviks, to which Trotsky's Marxism also belongs, and the Marxism of the Bolsheviks. This fundamental difference lies in the method. The method of the revolutionary Marxism of Leninism is materialist dialectics. This method of dialectic logic signifies that the subject under ex-

amination is analysed in its totality, and with reference to its associations. It signifies the consideration of evolution in objective "self movement", it asserts that "there is no abstract truth, since truth is always concrete", and thus demands strictest harmony of theory and practice.

This method is the principle of Leninism. It has restored Marxism as revolutionary teaching. This is opposed by Trotsky's method: **eclectics**, precisely the contrary of dialectics, or at best its falsification. In order to show from the very beginning what this method really is, we give a typical quotation from Trotsky:

"**Marxist tactics have chemically combined the reformist and revolutionary tendencies of the revolutionary struggle.** Liquidation and Pravdaism (that is, Bolshevism, already grouped at that time around the Petersburg "Pravda") were disintegrating Marxism in their struggle for influence over the workers, preaching **labour reformism** at one end and vulgar "revolutionism" at the other (the emphasis is mine. B. K.) ("Borba" ["The Fight"] July 1914.)"

In the above example Trotsky's eclectic method in its purest form confronts the dialectics of Marxian Leninism, and not only with reference to the methodological antagonism, but at the same time with the whole of the political results of this antagonism. For Trotsky the antagonism between Bolshevism and Menshevism is not the antagonism between revolution and counter-revolution, between which no harmony can ever exist. Trotsky was totally unable to observe the total irreconcilableness of this antagonism, for he made no attempt at analysing the differences in their historical development under given conditions, and in their connection with the Russian revolution. Instead of doing this he seized upon an abstraction, an utterly false but hypocritically plausible phrase on the "chemical" combination of reformism and revolution. The chemical recipe is prepared somewhat as follows: first take the "revolutionism" (but not the revolutionary methods!) of the Bolsheviks, then the "labour reformism" of the liquidators, and make a mixture of these two. The resultant compound is Marxist tactics on the basis of the semi-feudal, semi-capitalist state of society obtaining in Czarist Russia. And all this in July 1914, when the mass strike of the Petersburg workers had almost developed into an armed insurrection.

This is eclecticism in its most classic form, in its utter bloodless emptiness. And for the sake of this eclecticism Marxism had to be falsified, and revolutionary Marxism transformed into a mixture of reformist and revolutionary spirit. Truly an "orthodox Marxism", and "simplified revolutionism". Or did Trotsky perhaps assume that he was in possession of an alchemy enabling him to combine two irreconcilable ingredients?

It may be here objected that Trotsky has long since recognised this error, and that his above mentioned letter to Olminsky admits his mistake regarding the estimate made of the two fractions of the Russian labour movement: the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks. Externally, this is true. But the standpoint **still maintained** by Trotsky in this same letter, his declaration that he believes his estimate of the driving forces of the revolution to have been unconditionally correct, is based on the same old method.

From this we see that:

1. In Trotsky's eyes Marxism is a mixture of reformism and revolutionary theory. It is not a question of reform and revolution, but of reformism and revolutionary methods. The Bolsheviks were never opposed to reforms as by-products of revolution, or as means towards the strengthening of revolution; but they have always been the deadly enemies of reformism as opponent of revolutionary methods.

2. That which Trotsky calls Marxism is Trotskyism itself: a strange eclectic mixture of various elements, partly reformist, partly revolutionary.

3. The method upon which Trotsky's political, tactical, and organisational views are based is thus not the method of revolutionary Marxism, of Leninism, but an opposite method.

This mixing together of political elements in reality irreconcilable is merely one aspect of Trotskyism. The other aspect runs no less counter to Marxism, to Leninism; it is the mechanical separation of elements in reality belonging to one another, the questioning of the harmony and general validity of the Marxist methods (dialectics).

*) Now a faithful adherent of Bolshevism.

"Marxism is a harmonious view of life." The method of Marxism applies — even for those who are anxious to limit the validity of this method — to every phenomenon of social life. What is the attitude adopted by the "Marxist" military writer Trotzky towards this method? Trotzky denies that Marxism can be applied to military questions. Marxism is applicable to politics, but not to the "theory of war", and has nothing whatever to do with military questions. At most it may be applied to the history of war.

This eclectic method has of course affected Trotzky's military strategy. In this place this is only of interest to us with reference to the attitude taken by Trotzkyism towards Marxism, and enables us to supplement our first three conclusions by the following:

4. Trotzkyism opens out a chasm between theory and practice, entirely contrary to the Marxist thesis of the dialectic harmony of theory and practice.

5. The method of Trotzkyism is a variation, a special form of centrism, hanging between Bolshevism and Menshevism, and stuck fast on the road to Bolshevism.

The Revolution Methodology of Trotzkyism.

It has naturally not been possible for the attitude adopted by Trotzkyism towards Marxism to fail of taking effect upon the special revolutionary theory and special revolutionary method of Trotzkyism. This eclectic method peculiar to Trotzkyism has created the theory of permanent revolution.

The theory of permanent revolution is a scheme of revolutionary development drawn up by Trotzky, showing the lines upon which the revolution of 1905 "should" have developed, the lines upon which the revolution of 1917 — so maintain Trotzky and his adherents — actually did develop. According to this theory, the 1905 revolution should have developed as follows:

1. The actual starting point is: 9. January 1905. A broad revolutionary movement among the workers. Revolutionary unrest and an attempt at organising the peasantry (peasants' league). The Czarist power is getting weaker, but the labour party organisation is still weak as well. The bourgeoisie betrays the revolution immediately. Trotzky, in the camp of the Mensheviks, and fighting relentlessly against the organisational plans and principles directed by the Bolsheviks towards revolution, and against everything in connection with the technical preparation for revolution, deserts his Menshevik comrades and designates the actual task of revolution as follows:

"Every separate and spontaneous action of the masses must be permeated with the idea of the necessity of a simultaneous All Russian action.

Every committee must immediately create a new organ, a "military" one. This organ will grow rapidly, and will completely subordinate all the others when the time for action comes."

2. In the midst of the risings among the peasantry, Trotzky discovers that the proletariat alone is entirely without allies in Russia. It cannot reckon upon the help of the peasantry, or of the petty bourgeoisie of the towns, or of the intelligentsia. These strata cannot play any serious part in the revolution.

3. For this reason the revolution is declared to be permanent; that is, the proletariat emerges victorious from the armed insurrection, and the provisional revolutionary government will be a government of the social democratic party. The armed insurrection thus ends with the proletarian dictatorship. The working class government will be obliged to enter on the task of realising socialism.

Meanwhile Trotzky discovers the peasantry, and promises it "the intervention of the proletariat in agriculture", this of course not consisting of

"fettering individual workers to separate scraps of ground, but beginning with the cultivation of extensive lands under state and municipal administration".

4. And finally, according to the scheme of permanent revolution, after the peasantry has deserted the proletariat, and world reaction has turned upon revolutionary Russia, the dictatorship of the Russian proletariat has no other hope of salvation than to stake everything upon a single card, to join its destiny with the destinies of European socialist revolution (in

1906!), and to appeal to the proletariat of Europe with the cry: Workers of the world, unite!

This is the theory of permanent revolution, of which Trotzky writes repeatedly, even up to quite recently, that he sees no reason to withdraw it, and that it has been the basis of the policy of the Russian CP since 1917.

This theory is entirely "left", and it would seem as if Trotzky had not merely taken a flying leap out of Menshevism, but had sprung clear over the heads of the Bolsheviks over to the extreme left of the revolutionary labour movement. The demands of the Bolsheviks were much more modest. Not socialist labour government and proletarian dictatorship, but provisional government, democratic dictatorship of workers and peasantry. This was the slogan of Lenin and the Bolsheviks, and the immediate object striven for was to make sure that the bourgeois revolution was really carried out. Not immediate social revolution all over Europe, as promised by Trotzky's scheme, but a much more modest prospect, as pointed out by Lenin in 1905:

"Under the conditions given by a revolutionary democratic dictatorship we shall mobilise many millions of the poor of town and country (here we have the idea of the Red Army. B. K.); we shall make the Russian proletarian revolution a prologue to the European proletarian revolution."

It must further be observed that in the question of the driving forces of revolution there existed most important and fundamental differences between the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks as to whether the peasantry or the liberal bourgeoisie are to be the allies of the proletariat in revolution.

Trotzky, who left the Mensheviks without joining the Bolsheviks, created his "permanent theory" in his usual eclectic manner by — as Lenin observed —

"adopting from the Bolsheviks the demand for a decisive revolutionary struggle of the proletariat for the seizure of power, and from the Mensheviks the disavowal of the role played by the peasantry".

To ignore the peasantry, consisting for the greater part of proletarian and of independent economic elements, as factor of the driving forces of revolution, is to rob the Russian revolution of one of the most essential constituents. In Trotzky's hands the proletarian dictatorship becomes an empty agitational phrase, for the proletariat, this narrow (narrower in 1905 than in 1917) stratum of the Russian people, without the peasantry as ally, would neither have been able to seize power nor to maintain it. Deprived of its broad social basis, the socialist labour government would not only have been unable to "place collectivism on the agenda", but it would have had no other choice but to die "in beauty", appealing to the hesitating proletariat of Europe with the revolutionary cry of: Workers of the world, unite!

This scheme of development of the Russian revolution, worked out by Trotzky in collaboration with Parvus, or rather by Parvus in collaboration with Trotzky, such one as many would like to put forward as the strategic basis of the revolution of 1917, was never anything more than an eclectic and bloodless scheme, bare of all connection with social reality, both in 1905 and in 1917.

The realisation of the proletarian dictatorship, and its outlook with regard to international revolution, are also likely to create the outward impression that the revolution of 1917 has really become "permanent" in the sense meant by Trotzky.

But when the inner forces and course of evolution of the revolution are closely examined, it becomes evident at once that in reality the development of the October revolution runs directly counter to all the theses of permanent revolution, for:

1. The October revolution did not take place under such conditions that the peasantry deserted the working class; on the contrary, it was based upon the armed alliance of working class and peasantry;

2. Thus the Russian proletariat, despite the utmost endeavours of international reaction and the postponement of international proletarian revolution, has been able to maintain its position. The armed alliance between working class and peasantry has expanded into an economic alliance.

The strategy of defeat represented by Trotzky does not therefore "fully and completely agree with the standpoint of our Party since 1917". On the contrary! Since the October victory the policy of the Party in all fundamental questions has been a struggle against Trotzkyism, against his standpoint in the peasantry question, and has signified an actual victory over Trotzkyism.

Trotzky has continued to defend the theory of permanent revolution, even in the Bolshevik Party. The chief stages of this theory, as applied to the problems of proletarian dictatorship, are as follows:

1. **Brest Litovsk.** German imperialism still stands unshaken; the German proletariat, for lack of competent revolutionary organisations, cannot strike a decisive blow. The Russian peasant "votes on the peace question with his feet", he runs away from the front. There are two currents in the Party: The majority, under the leadership of Lenin, takes into account the trend of feeling in the peasantry and in the overwhelming majority of the working class as also the existing proportions of forces, and declares itself in favour of peace, in order that the Russian proletariat may gain a pause for breath permitting it to wait for the victory of international revolution. The Left Communists, collaborating with Trotzky, cling to the idea of a revolutionary war, and are frivolously ready to throw the forces of the Russian revolution, of the proletarian dictatorship, "into the scale of the class war of the whole capitalist world". (This Trotzky recommended in 1906, when writing on the results and prospects of the Russian revolution.)

Later on Trotzky drops the plan of a revolutionary war, and takes a retreat with a fresh eclectic formula: "Neither peace nor war!". From Left communism he selects the ignoring of the social classification of the country and the trend of feeling in the peasantry; from Leninist Bolshevism he retains the recognition of the power of international imperialism. The result of Trotzky's opposition is: Worsened peace conditions and the necessity of far reaching capitulation to German imperialism.

2. The method employed by Trotzky for forming the theory of permanent revolution bears further fruit. The trade union discussion was raised by Trotzky just at a time when the peasantry was demanding, with elementary impetus, the abolition of the measures of war communism which were hampering the development of productive forces. The alliance between proletariat and peasantry had not only weakened, but was near dissolution. The feeling among the peasantry was communicated to the cities through the medium of the working masses in close contact with the peasantry. The result was a strike wave and clamorous demands for bread. The so-called "workers' opposition" made a syndicalist demand that the control of production be placed in the hands of the trade unions. Trotzky was not deaf to the demands for bread. He drew the conclusion that production must be developed, in order that this demand might be met. But he did not see that the chief hindrance to the productive powers of agriculture was war communism, and that until these productive forces were released no commencement could be made with the development of industrial production.

Trotzky, too, was anxious to place the control of production in the hands of the trade unions, and was here in agreement with the workers opposition, with its syndicalist tendencies. But in his opinion the trade unions would have to be first "shaken up". A state apparatus of military organisation was to be formed of the mass organisations of the workers. For this purpose the old Bolshevik trade union cadres, possessing the confidence of the masses, were to be substituted by the appointment, from above, of persons possessing "military administrative" experience. This was Trotzky's recipe, immediately before the introduction of the new economic policy.

In this eclectic construction we again find one of the main factors missing — the peasantry as immediate and decisive accessory for the social structure of the Soviet state. And the peasantry is again missing as indirect factor, influencing the masses of workers in social contact with the peasantry. What is lacking is thus the strata-classification of the working class. The recipe is the old one: From Bolshevik policy we select the demand for the development of productive forces and for labour discipline, in the interests of the socialist reconstruction. From Menshevism we take the ignoring of the strata classification of the peasantry and of the working class. To

this we add a pinch of syndicalism, that is, the idea that the control of production should be in the hands of the trade unions. All this is to be so mixed together that the conflicting elements become combined, and the result is Trotzkyism as it existed at that stage of the development of the proletarian dictatorship preceding the introduction of the new economic policy, at the time of the collapse of war communism.

The revolutionary methodology of Trotzky may be further characterised by the empty and dangerous demand for a "dictatorship of industry" (as continuation of the theory of permanent revolution), made in the year 1922. This demand ignored the economic and class structure of the Soviet state as completely as it did the role played by the peasantry.

What is the result of the continual application of this eclectic method to politics?

Lenin replied to this question as follows at the time of the trade union discussion:

"A rupture in the middle of the transmission system of driving belts."

This explains why Trotzky's views lack the transitions.

"Down with the Czar — up with the labour government!"; this was the slogan of Trotzkyism issued by Parvus in the year 1905, at the time when the theory of permanent revolution originated.

"Long live the revolutionary labour government!" repeated Trotzky on 20. March 1917. This he designated as the **sole "concretely positive"** slogan, and he called for the seizure of power at a time when Lenin, in his theses of 4. April, was still speaking of "patient enlightenment as one of the first tasks. Trotzky, in his "Lessons of October", maintains that this slogan was in accordance with Lenin's slogan. But this is not in the least the case!

"It is of first importance that we determine the time of the revolution, and that the technical preparations are made on a plan based on the calendar."

This was Trotzky's slogan in September 1923, when the thunder clouds of the German revolution were gathering. This slogan was easily issued after he had designated as Putschist everyone who was not inclined to swear by the exclusive validity of the prospects of revolution in Europe.

The absence of transitions in such situations means the ignoring in one case of a whole class (the peasantry), and in another case of a party like that of German social democracy (the left wing of the bourgeoisie). This is the natural consequence of the methods of revolutionary strategy involved in Trotzkyism.

The Methods of Trotzkyism in Tactical and Organisatory Questions.

The method of Trotzkyism has accomplished the feat of chemically combining reformism and revolutionary theory in one "revolutionary Marxism", and of causing the peasant class to vanish from among the driving forces of revolution. And in tactical and organisatory questions Trotzky has found equal opportunity for the application of his method. Although Trotzky has beat a much more energetic retreat in these questions than in matters pertaining to the method and strategy of revolution, he has not been able to withdraw everything referring to the estimate of the Menshevist and Bolshevik fractions: In this sphere he has not been able to free himself from Trotzkyism, and has proved as little able to assimilate the organisatory and tactical methods of Leninism as the revolutionary strategy of Leninism.

Nothing is more natural. Marxism and Leninism are so complete in their systems of methodology that they do not tolerate any eclectic intermezzos. Either we accept them without reservation, and become Marxists and Leninists, or those who seize upon the train of the Marxian garment, intending to drag it off altogether, find that this train slips from their fingers — exposing the whole of their fundamental antagonism. This is what happened to Trotzky when he tried to reconstruct the tactical and organisatory principles of Leninism to correspond with his revolutionary theory, but did not observe that Leninism is not merely a totality of tactical and organisatory principles, but is, as the historical and logical completion of Marxism, a **complete method**. The attitude adopted by Trotzky towards the question of the tactics and

organisatory principles of Leninism, in his later proclamations, is not so definite and unequivocal as his attitude towards revolutionary method. Here he candidly and clearly maintains the validity of Trotskyism. There (in tactical and organisatory questions) he performs his circumlocutory movement, aiming at enhancing Trotskyism to the position of always having been Bolshevik tactics, not only in the present (1917), but also in the past. At the time of the discussion preceding the XIII Party Conference, Trotsky made the following statement with respect to the tactical questions of the Party:

"If we now regard our Party in the light of its revolutionary past, and in the light of its past since October, we find that the fundamentally advantageous factor of its tactics is its capacity for rapid accommodation to circumstances, its ability to adapt itself to "abrupt changes of tactics, to the use of new weapons and the application of new methods; **in a word, its capacity for adaptation to the policy of abrupt changes.**" (The emphasis is mine. B. K.)

It would perhaps sound crude to say that Trotsky, in thus summing up Leninist tactics and organisation under the heading of a "policy of abrupt changes", does so **solely** for the purpose of **justifying** his past, and does this the more that this formulation aims at substituting Leninism by Trotskyism **not only in the past**. It is needless to refer in detail to the care expended by Lenin on **his analyses**, to the exactitude with which he sought the **special** in every concrete situation, or to the care he took to ensure that every transition in the objective situation was mirrored in the forms assumed by the corresponding tactical transitions in the policy of the Party.

All that is necessary is to analyse the eclectic character of the Trotsky thesis adduced above:

1. It is true that the **capacity of rapid accommodation** is one of the advantages of the Bolshevik Party, of Leninism, an advantage due to its methodology, its dialectic logic.

2. After Leninism has adapted itself rapidly to circumstances, it finds **as a rule** the corresponding methods and fresh media required by the new situation, and **as a rule** it observes the necessity of the transition at the proper time. At the same time it establishes the nature of the transition.

3. **Abrupt** changes in policy are thus not the **rule** in Bolshevism, but form an **exception**, occurring only when the Party has not quite kept pace with events, but has been taken by surprise to a certain extent. (The change to the new economic policy may be regarded in a certain degree as an abrupt change. It may be that the Party did not see in time that a change was about to take place in the objective situation. When the Party did observe this, it was hampered in its efforts to carry out the necessary transitional measures by the trade union discussion introduced by Trotsky, who, instead of aiding the liquidation of war communism, recommended its retention with a perseverance worthy of a better cause.)

4. All that Trotsky has written about the excellent tactical capabilities of the Bolshevik Party is entirely correct. It is true that the Party knows how to adapt itself rapidly to circumstances, it is true that the Party is capable of abruptly changing its tactics, of fighting with new weapons, and of applying fresh methods. **But what is not true is precisely the conclusion drawn: that the policy of the Party is a policy of abrupt changes.**

5. The conclusion drawn by Trotsky is false for the simple reason that this is not the Policy of Bolshevism, but of Trotskyism. It is Trotskyism which has made a policy of staggering to and fro between the views of various parties, instead of analysing the objective conditions, both before and since the revolution.

And again we put the question: How is it that Trotsky possesses this wonderful capacity for drawing false conclusions from a number of correct premises? We reject the psychological explanation, and hold to the ideological explanation. We once more point out that the whole explanation lies in his method, his eclecticism, which separates things which pertain to one another, and combines things foreign to one another. The application of this method to the Party, to its tactics, and to its organisation, leads to the same consequences as its application to the sphere of theory, of strategy, and revolution: to the thesis of permanent revolution and its logical consequence, to the policy pursued by Trotskyism at Brest, to its

standpoint with regard to the trade union discussion, to the demand for the dictatorship of industry, etc.

The application of this method to tactics and organisation is revealed in two important errors:

1. In a false and anti-Leninist estimate of the role played by the Party in the struggle for the dictatorship.

2. In a false estimate of the inner structure and all inner problems of the Party, on the lines of the Marxist "Centre".

The Policy of Abrupt Changes in Actual Practice.

These peculiarities of Trotskyism follow, theoretically and historically, the manner in which the role played by spontaneity and consciousness is estimated. We know that Lenin — without denying the role and significance of spontaneity in the labour movement — designated it as the task of the revolutionary labour party to carry revolutionary consciousness into the working class, and to defend this revolutionary consciousness in the capacity of an **organised vanguard**, not "clinging to the tail of events", but preceding and leading events. This view is at the same time the basis of the Bolshevik system of organisation: centralisation, discipline, unity, etc. This principle does not "dissolve among the broad masses of the workers", but is adapted to combining with these masses, and can amalgamate with them in a certain sense.

Ever since the commencement of the conflict between the Bolshevik and Menshevik fractions, Trotsky has tended to "West European Marxism" in tactical and organisatory questions. That is, to those parties which have preserved in their phraseology at most something of revolutionary ideology, but are in reality bereft of the slightest will to revolution. Thus he rejects the theory of the task of the revolutionary vanguard, a theory based on the correct estimate of the function of "consciousness" in the labour movement, as follows:

"If the "economists" thus straggle behind the proletariat, instead of leading it, the "politicians" (the Bolsheviks, B. K.) for their part do not lead the proletariat, since they themselves undertake its duties. If the "economists" seek to evade the gigantic task by means of contenting themselves with the modest role of hanging on to history as its tail, then the "politicians" solve the question by trying to make history into their own tail."

The Party — the organisation of the class conscious vanguard — cannot decide until history has decided, until the spontaneous movement has progressed to the same level as the Party. But without this decision there is no united will, and no organisatory preparation for action is possible. In 1904 (a few months before the outbreak of the revolution!) Trotsky was however of the opinion that this was not at all necessary, for he wrote:

"The whole of our tasks are fully and completely concentrated upon the sphere of political tactics. We, the so-called "minority", set the Party no independent organisatory tasks, and are of the opinion that the most urgent tasks are accomplished during events themselves, in the course of the political struggle. In this respect we do indeed stand for an "opportunism in organisatory questions". It must however be recollected that the organisatory rigidity opposed to our opportunism represents nothing more nor less than the reverse side of political stupidity."

All these factors, the complete ignoring of objective conditions, the denial of the role played by the Party as vanguard, and, what is synonymous with this, the denial of the part played by organisation, combine to make the policy of abrupt changes a necessity for Trotskyism.

There will be some who tell us that what we here prove on Trotsky's authority belongs to past history, and to these we reply by reminding them of the attitude taken by Trotsky towards the question of the German events in 1923. Trotsky himself writes of this in his "Lessons of October". Summed up briefly, his attitude was as follows:

1. At the IV. World Congress of the CI, held at the end of the autumn of 1922, and then again later on, Trotsky prophesied the advent of the democratic-pacifist era, following Fascism and imperialism of the Poincaré type. Generally speaking, the prophesy has proved true. No great contention has arisen with regard to this. Trotsky then designated the im-

mediate tasks of the communists in the light of the impending democratic pacifist era. It is however not possible to maintain that he reckoned with the possibility of the Ruhr occupation when defining these tasks. Thus he was equally unable to take into account the resultant economic and political situation in Germany, so that he failed to observe the necessity for preparations in Germany for an immediate struggle for power, or for preparations in the neighbouring countries in support of this struggle. The communist tasks, as defined by Trotzky, lay partly in the sphere of tactics, but chiefly in the sphere of agitation.

2. In the winter of 1923 the Ruhr valley was occupied. Trotzky did not observe the revolutionary significance and consequences of this fact any more than Brandler and his companions did. Trotzky did not observe this link in the chain between Fascism and the democratic pacifist era, or at least he did not deem it necessary to let the occupation of the Ruhr territory alter anything with regard to the immediate tasks defined by the IV. Congress.

3. Conference of the Enlarged Executive of the CI in the spring of 1923. The representatives of the German Party did not propose any discussion upon the necessity of tactical and organisatory preparations in order to take advantage of the revolutionary development of the situation. Neither did Trotzky take any initiative in this matter. Zinoviev called attention to the change in the situation — though not definitely enough — and at the same time to the necessity of a corresponding change in tactics. The slogan of the workers' and peasants' government was assumed to be best adapted to the character of this change of tactics.

4. The Cuno strike in August. Trotzky preserved silence. And even later on he did not utter one word against the members of his fraction who choked off the anti-Fascist demonstration of the German Party in Prussia. And then in September the "abrupt change". Political preparation is a question of secondary importance, the first place is taken by the preparations pertaining to military technics! The revolution to take place on a fixed date, exactly according to the calendar!

The only thing more abrupt than this "abrupt change" is the fact that Trotzky has combined wholesale with Radek and the German Right, since the "German October" in the defence of the Brandlerist tactics, and endeavoured to cast the whole responsibility for the failure of the German revolution exclusively upon the objective situation. Given this situation, he has considered that the German Right pursued the sole possible tactics. But now an even more abrupt change, for Trotzky, speaking of the experiences won in the October revolution, declares that as result of the error of the CI, the German Party missed an opportunity of world historical importance, and thus wiped the German revolution from our agenda for a long time to come. Taking the above as basis, we may establish the following with regard to the tactical method of Trotzkyism:

1. To Trotzkyism the political situations appear as isolated tactical and organisatory periods.

2. He thus has various conceptions of the role played by the Party, but invariably underestimates it. During the "tactical" period the part played by the Party is solely that of an agitator, acting as intermediary and issuing slogans. During the "organisatory" period the Party is omnipotent.

In 1905 Trotzky was anxious to convert every movement of the masses into the starting point for an All Russian action. In November 1923 he was anxious to have every military technical preparation completed by precisely the 9. November, according to a plan exactly in accordance with the calendar, the work to be done by a Party scarcely possessing a semi-functioning and illegal apparatus. But Trotzky underestimates the importance of the Party even in the "organisatory" period, for he wishes to subordinate the political leadership to the military.

3. The policy of "abrupt changes" represented by Trotzkyism is thus to be attributed to the fact that Trotzky does not recognise the necessity of a conscious guidance and organisation of revolution until he is raised on the crest of a billow of spontaneous movement. In periods in which the revolutionary wave has ebbed, and the spontaneous movements have not possessed sufficient power to force Trotzky to acknowledge the Party as vanguard, leader, and organiser, he invariably bows down (in a genuinely Menshevist manner) before spon-

taneity, and strives to deal with the Party from the standpoint of spontaneity.

4. The tactics of Trotzkyism are thus Menshevist until the tide of revolution rises to a certain height, and only then — and that conditionally — do they become revolutionary.

Trotzky follows along at the tail of spontaneous movements instead of leading them, and we shall further see how this strange mixture of "Chvostism" (tail policy) and revolution drew Trotzky into the camp of the Bolsheviki shortly before the October revolution, and how he became one of the best agitators for the revolution.

Centrism in Organisatory Questions.

The policy of "abrupt changes" would logically lead us to suppose that Trotzky at the same time provides for a corresponding system of organisatory structure in the Party, assuring an easy and painless realisation of such abrupt changes, that is, a social equality ensuring ideological unity in the Party, assurance for the continuity of our leadership, strict centralisation, discipline, and an elastic form of organisation, adapting itself to the masses.

If this were the case, it would be quite in order, both from the viewpoint of Trotzkyism as well as from that — actually — of Leninism. Lenin made precisely these demands with reference to the organisation of the vanguard of the proletariat. He did this in order that the Party, as highest form of organisation of the proletarian class, should be capable of the rapid adaptation necessary for the preparation and leadership of revolution, of forming rapid and united decisions, of putting such decisions into immediate and united practice, and of performing all requisite manoeuvres. An organisation possessing such a structure is really capable of accomplishing an "abrupt change" if required.

On the other hand, it is possible for a tactical leadership to be formed within such an organisation, and for this to render the policy of "abrupt changes" superfluous. It is only such an organisation which can raise itself beyond the spontaneity of the labour movement, up to the level of a conscious vanguard. Such an organisation is capable of placing the Party at the head of the masses when the tide of revolution rises, and it is equally capable of retreating in good order, at the right time and without panic, if needs be.

But Trotzky is never deserted by his eclecticism. Every declaration made by him on organisatory questions, during the whole of his career, shows this.

1. With reference to the social strata within the Party his chief anxiety, at the commencement of the struggle between Mensheviki and Bolsheviki, was the question of how the students of the intermediate schools could enter the Party in case of the acceptance of Lenin's organisation statute, and he expressed himself in favour of a "loose" form of organisation. At the time of the Party discussion preceding the XIII Party Conference his watchword was "student youth as barometer" of the Party in relation to the workers.

2. With reference to the ideological unity of the Party, his standpoint immediately before the war was as follows:

"Real unity can only exist if the Party possesses not only the two wings, but at the same time a backbone, a Marxist centre which has overcome the centrifugal tendencies of the right and left wings, and had become the support of public opinion in the Party and of Party discipline. German social democracy would never have been able to preserve its unity had its opportunist wing (Bernstein, David, etc.) simply stood face to face with the ultra-left (!) wing (R. Luxemburg, etc.). The stay and support of unity and discipline in the Party of the German proletariat is the Marxist centre around Bebel and Kautsky." ("Borba" ["The struggle"], July 1914, Nos. 7/8.)

Thus unity and ideological agreement are substituted by the introduction of wings and fractions as institutions, under the ideological, tactical, and organisatory hegemony of the "Marxist centre". This centrist view here held by Trotzky is by no means merely incidental. Later on, during the war, in March 1916, he spoke as follows on the tasks of the Internationalists:

"The undisputed aim of our present intellectual and organisatory struggle is the purification of the International from social chauvinism."

No word about the Marxist centre, from whose real countenance the veil had already fallen. But at the same time he characterised the policy of the Bolshevik organ, the "Sozialdemokrat", conducted by Lenin and Zinoviev, as a "split at any price", and condemned it. (These and similar articles were published by Trotzky in 1923 under the collective title of "Preparation of the Communist International"!)

He returned to the same organisatory tactics during last year's Party discussion, demanding the freedom to form fractions and groups.

3. "Chvostism" in the question of centralisation, and "chvostism" in organisatory questions, forms another characteristic feature of Trotzkyism.

In 1904 Trotzky wrote:

"In internal Party politics these methods lead, as we shall see further on, to the "representation" of the Party by the Party organisation, to the representation of the Party organisation by the CC, and finally to the representation of the CC by a "dictatorship"; it also leads to the committees possessing the power to determine and alter, whilst the people preserve silence."

In 1924 he wrote:

"The approach of the German events aroused the Party to attention. Precisely at this juncture it became more evident than ever that the Party is living on two stories; on the upper floor the decisions are made, on the lower floor the decisions are merely reported."

A classic example of how it is possible to dismember the elements of a unit on eclectic methods.

Trotzky's attitude towards organisatory questions is equally attributable to his views on spontaneity and consciousness, and to the resultant "Chvostism". In consequence of the method peculiar to Trotzkyism, there is a lack of dialectic connection between object, means, and method. A revolutionary aim is fixed, but followed by a revolutionary strategy in which the forces decisive for the realisation of revolution are lacking. Trotzky thinks to realise revolution either entirely without the aid of organisatory preparation and leadership, relying solely on spontaneity, on the instincts of the working class, or he transplants the organisatory principles of foreign soils to Russian ground, without consideration of the objective differences. When Trotzky, in the course of the revolution, regards the stage of maturity calling for conscious guidance work to have been reached, the consciousness then brought by Trotzkyism into the revolution is not the consciousness of the Party, it has not grown in and with the Party, it does not consist of the collective experiences of the Party, and is not a generalisation of these experiences into an ideology. Thus the elements of consciousness contained in Trotzkyism give the impression of an abstract idealism, even though Trotzky otherwise confesses to materialism.

In organisatory questions Trotzkyism is equally a disavowal of the Party and the role it plays, and the "super-administration" spoken of by Lenin when characterising Trotzky's methods of statesmanship is one of the results of this disavowal.

Trotzky has directed violent attacks against the Party apparatus. The methodological source of these attacks is however nothing more nor less than the fact that Trotzky, denying the role played by the Party, degrades the Party as totality to the level of an "apparatus". To an apparatus serving for the realisation of an abstract consciousness, of an idea sometimes finding self expression. This is what he wanted to make out of the broad mass organisations of the workers, the trade unions, and this is what he would make of the Party, if it were possible for the collective and concrete consciousness of the Party to subordinate itself to such an idea.

The Abrupt Change before October.

After all this someone may ask: And if we admit that Trotzkyism is an eclectic method running counter to the dialectic method of Marxism — Leninism, that with reference to revolutionary strategy it is synonymous with the strategy of the revolutionary phrase, and that it represents, with regard to tactics and organisatory principles, a denial of the role played by the Party, with regard to tactical and organisatory questions a Menshevist "Chvostism", and with regard to its whole political attitude a remnant of centrism in the CI, then

how can we explain the fact that in 1905 and 1917 Trotzky was none the less one of the leading personalities of the revolution?

We are of the opinion that here again the explanation need not be sought outside of the ideology of the individual, in his psychology. Nothing would be more crude than to aduce Trotzky's "revolutionary temperament" to decide the question. This would be on a par with the methods pursued by the virtuous centrists of the old II. International, who attempted to attribute the antagonism between the revisionists and the Left radicals to "differences of temperament".

The peculiar eclectic method of Trotzkyism placed him at the head of the revolution, just as it has prevented him from continuing to be a leader during the period of liquidatory counter-revolution, and has reduced him to the position of literary trainbearer of Menshevism. His method and his standpoint have placed him in both positions.

We have seen that in the question of spontaneity and consciousness the methods of Trotzkyism have led to the result that the Party "should not fulfil the tasks of the proletariat". In other words, the Party is not to be a conscious vanguard, deciding, acting, and organising, **before** the spontaneous mass movement has attained even that minimum of consciousness called forth by the revolution and the struggle for power. For Trotzky and Trotzkyism this period signifies the ascendancy of the reformist elements, as follows: With reference to method: subordination to spontaneity; to tactics: abandonment of the revolutionary slogans (petition campaign); to organisation: agreement to the liquidation of the Party.

The role of the conscious vanguard is not to be played, nor is the moment for the conscious leadership of the activity which is organising the revolution to be recognised as having for the Party arrived, until the spontaneous movements in the working class work their way upward, and the wave of revolution rises. This means, subjectively, a tempestuous pace of development of the consciousness of the masses of the proletariat outside of the Party. These masses, far behind the Party, and even working against it at times (Against the current!), masses with which the Party has been unable to gain sufficient contact, despite every endeavour and despite intervention in matters concerning daily life, now affiliate themselves closely to the Party. The difference between the consciousness of the vanguard and the consciousness of the masses has quantitatively diminished.

For Trotzky this period theoretically signifies that the revolutionary elements contained in the "chemical combination" of Marxism are in the ascendancy; from the viewpoint of method it signifies the adjustment of spontaneity and consciousness; from the viewpoint of tactics: that by means of this method the difference between the masses and the vanguard is balanced by the spontaneous revolutionary movement. The revolutionary method drives the organisatory part of the movement forward, and emphasises the revolutionary military role of the Party to an extreme point. **The narrowing of the gap between the conscious state of the spontaneous mass movement and the consciousness of the leading Party enabled Trotzky to take the leap — under the influence of mass pressure — into the embodiment of this leading consciousness, the Bolshevik Party.**

That "Chvostism" which made a Menshevik of Trotzky in his anti-revolutionary period also brought him into the camp of the Bolsheviks during the revolutionary period, and found him at the head of the masses during the revolution. Thus Trotzky became the tribune of the revolution, the eloquent agitator for the Bolshevik Party, transmitting to the masses, agitated by the revolution, everything which the Bolshevik Party, under Lenin's leadership, had created in decades of collective and conscious work.

Without Trotzky and in spite of Trotzkyism.

Trotzky's Trotzkyism was however not dead when Trotzky was carried over to the Bolsheviks (though not to Bolshevism!) by the spontaneous movement of the masses. It was merely suppressed for a time by the revolutionary events. This has been amply proved by the attitude taken by Trotzky in all essential questions of the revolution, and in tactical and organisatory matters.

It is just for this reason that it is methodologically wrong to speak of "deviations" on Trotzky's part in connection with the various discussions in the Party. If we regard Trotzky's political career in the light of the system of Trotzkyism — and only thus is it possible to form a correct judgment — then the actual deviation is not that which is generally assumed: not Brest-Litovsk, nor the trade union discussion, nor the demand for the dictatorship of industry, nor the petty bourgeois standpoint adopted with reference to the inner Party problems during the latest Party discussion. Trotzky's actual

deviation consisted of his entry into the Bolshevik Party, for this was inconsistent with his views on the question of liquidation, with his theory of permanent revolution, and with the rejection of the Party as bearer of the consciousness of the proletariat. This was the deviation from that definite course whose fundamental is an eclectic method running counter to Marxism in all revolutionary questions, or, in one word, a form of **Centrism** corresponding to the external and internal conditions of the Russian labour movement.

The Theory of Comrade Trotzky and the Practice of our Revolution.

By G. Sokolnikov.

I.

The Theory of "Permanent" Revolution and the Pause for Breath after Brest Litovsk.

In order to be able to form a correct estimate of the theory of "permanent revolution" brought forward by comrade Trotzky, it is worth while to observe whether comrade Trotzky's policy has led in a number of cases, in decisive moments of our revolution. Comrade Trotzky assumes that the differences of opinion existing among the Bolsheviks before October were considerably greater than the differences of opinion existing at the time of Brest Litovsk. In reality this is not the case. The differences of opinion were considerably greater at the time of the Brest negotiations. At a first glance it might appear as if the sole question was that of whether the Brest peace was to be signed or not. But what did comrade Trotzky adduce in substantiation of his attitude? Why did comrade Trotzky oppose the signing of the Brest peace? Much light is thrown upon this by a declaration made by comrade Trotzky at the time, at one of the sessions of the CC. At that time comrade Trotzky spoke as follows:

"It is better for us to perish within a few days at the point of the German bayonets than to fall beneath the blows of the hoarders within a few weeks."

Comrade Trotzky assumed that the position was hopeless, and that all which remained to us was the choice between two modes of annihilation: Either to sink into oblivion "in beauty", as revolutionists who had fulfilled their duty, who had begun the revolution, who had carried the flag of revolution to Europe, and who, encountering resistance beyond their powers, perished, but did not retreat; or we had the alternative of perishing at the hands of the hoarders, the deserters from the front, who would overthrow the revolutionary power within a few weeks.

Comrade Lenin put the question differently: We are the weaker, the enemy the stronger, let us rather retreat. We can retreat, not only in the sense that we retreat to Ural and even beyond Ural, but also in the sense that the possibility of political retreat manoeuvres also exists. We could not offer battle to German imperialism. Why not? Because the mujik did not want to fight. What is our task in this case? To retreat; to give the mujik the possibility of recovering from the imperialist war, to give our Party the possibility of drawing the mujik over to its side, to give our Party the possibility of gathering strength for a subsequent offensive.

Whilst the Bolshevik standpoint recognised the perfect possibility of manoeuvre, of a retreat into the peasant background of revolution, enabling the working class to strengthen its position by an alliance with the peasantry, thus at the same time strengthening the position of the Party, from comrade Trotzky's standpoint there was no possibility of political manoeuvre in any direction, for to him the position was as follows: Our Party having seized power in the name of the working class, is inevitably bound to collide with the peasantry. Our Party is thus doomed to defeat within the limits of our own country, and our sole salvation lies in breaking these

limits, in going across to Europe and fighting a battle there, even a perfectly hopeless battle. This is the conclusion drawn by comrade Trotzky from the standpoint of "permanent revolution", and on the estimate formed by him of the relations existing between the classes within the country itself, an estimate corresponding with the views which have always formed the inner purport of Menshevism.

And if our Party had followed comrade Trotzky's advice at the time of the Brest negotiations, and had thrown itself upon the German bayonets, what would have been the result? The Party would have been destroyed within a few days, and with it the fruits of the October victory. The Soviet power would have fallen, the government of the bourgeoisie would have come into power again. This is whether comrade Trotzky's error would have led us, and this error arose out of his theory of revolution, out of the Menshevist elements in comrade Trotzky's politics. And our Party did not follow comrade Trotzky.

The Party was of the opinion that in Russia itself the proportion of forces was such that the Bolsheviks could keep and maintain power within the country, and that the Bolsheviks possessed the full possibility of manoeuvring, and, if required, of retreating, for the purpose of maintaining this power. On this assumption Lenin led the Party to the October insurrection. Should a rupture with the peasantry threaten, should it turn out that the working class has gone too far, then there is the possibility of retreat; the greatest concessions can be made to the peasantry, in order not to lose contact with them, and in order to retain power in the hands of the working class and to preserve the possibility of progress towards socialism. This is what Lenin preached.

II.

The Concessions made to the Peasantry under the New Economic Policy, and Comrade Trotzky's Standpoint.

We find the same differences of opinion in 1920, on the eve of the NEP. It is true that comrade Trotzky thought it necessary, in his book "The New Course" to emphasise that a few months before the Party substituted the requisition of foodstuffs by taxation in kind, he had made a somewhat similar proposal. But the essential point is not this, but that at the end of 1920, immediately before the transition to the New Economic Policy (NEP), and during the discussion on the trade unions, comrade Trotzky came forward with a proposal and a plan entirely incompatible with the NEP and leading in the opposite direction.

Instead of recognising that the centre of gravity of our difficulties lay in these new relations formed between the working class and the peasantry on the basis of the completed first stage of the civil war, comrade Trotzky transferred the centre of gravity to the organisation of production on the same bases as those of war communism. Comrade Trotzky held the view that, in order to enable the organisation of production to bear all its fruit, it was necessary to transform the trade unions into organs immediately organising production, and controlling its economics.

The New Economic Policy has on the contrary led to a greater division of the functions of the trade unions and the economic organs. The Party appointed certain coworkers to economic positions, and allotted them the task of firmly establishing and improving the undertakings, in accordance with the possibilities given by the condition of the market. On the other hand, the Party calculating that the economic authorities might follow a wrong policy towards the working class in their efforts to cope with the struggles in the market and to adapt themselves to the market, strengthened the trade unions and imposed upon them the task of rectifying such errors of the economic organs. What was the essential character of the transition to the New Economic Policy? It need not be said that it did not consist in the substitution of the requisitions by the imposition of taxes in kind.

The fundamental factor of the transition lay in the recognition, up to a certain point, of private property in agriculture, in crafts, and in trade. Under war communism we had completely annulled all private property (proceeding for the most part on elementary lines). The New Economic Policy restored the right of small private property, and permitted the growth of larger private property within certain limits.

Any suggestion on comrade Trotzky's part that he "anticipated the NEP" is ridiculous. For the requisitions to be replaced by taxes in kind was not the point. In 1917 and 1918 we manoeuvred, we retreated before German imperialism, but within a few months we came into our own again. In 1921 our retreat was before private property, and we made concessions to the peasantry, who held to private property. Have we lost or have we won? That is, has the new policy enabled us to continue our advance towards socialism with new methods, by means of the alliance between the working class and the peasantry? Yes, we have been enabled to do this. The results of our work after the expiration of the first year of the New Economic Policy demonstrate this with perfect clearness, and the coming years will doubtless prove it to an even greater extent.

By means of this policy we have been enabled to consolidate the position of the Soviet government still further, we have strengthened the bloc of the working class and the peasantry, and have rendered possible a further, if slow, progress towards socialism. What did comrade Lenin write in the autumn of 1921? He wrote that we had entered upon a period of very slow advance towards socialism, and that our progress would cost much pains and trouble. In the autumn of 1921 he wrote of "reforms". Up to this time we had not wished to hear anything about reforms. We, a revolutionary Party, had erected our barricades, had fought with weapons in our hands, had conquered power, and now in the autumn of 1921 Lenin speaks of reforms, of small improvements from day to day, of small steps in the direction of socialism. Truly this but little resembles the Trotzky policy of permanent revolution.

III.

Comrade Trotzky in the Discussion in 1923.

What did the discussion in 1923 show us, viewed from the practical aspect only? A great part was played in this discussion by the conflict with regard to the economic plan and the State Planning economic commission. It is useful to recall the importance of this discussion at this juncture, and to emphasise it. The State Planning Commission is an authority in which very extensive state industry is represented, in which electrification and state commerce are represented, and indeed many important organs of state economics. But is agriculture represented in an equal degree in the State Planning Commission, or to a less extent? Everyone can comprehend that agriculture is represented in a less degree in the State Planning Commission, and that the whole struggle for vesting "powers" in the State Planning Commission was carried on entirely wrong lines, and would in actual practice have resulted in neglecting agriculture, in a failure to recognise the full significance of agriculture in the general scheme of economic reconstruction.

The point is that from the standpoint of the economic plans of state industry, commerce, etc., the State Planning Commission is an excellent arrangement, ensuring that industry develops with all possible rapidity, increases its capital, and provides all manner of technical improvements for us, etc.

But the advance of industry must be accompanied by the simultaneous possibility of development and rapid reconstruction of agriculture, not only for the reason that in our backward agrarian country, under Soviet rule, — the imperialist policy of capitalist expansion being completely abandoned — state industry can only advance to prosperity on the basis of the development of the home markets, that is, on the basis of prosperous agrarian economics, but also for the reason that the maintenance of the Soviet state on the basis of the alliance between the working class and the peasantry demand it.

But will this not signify the rule of elementary forces, and the triumph of "agrarian deviations", these spectres so often raised for our alarm? Lenin, in his second letter on Workers' and Peasants' Inspection, writes: "We must save a penny at a time, we must collect the pence we need from our agrarian economics, and save them for the heavy machine industry, for the construction of the great water works at Volchov, for electrification, etc." Lenin then himself puts the question: But will this not signify the rule of agrarian narrow-mindedness?, and himself replies: No. The essential point is that in this backward agrarian country the working class gains the confidence of and the leadership over the peasantry. Much time will pass before we are actually in a position to spring from this agrarian steed to the steel horse of machine industry. This is the manner in which comrade Lenin approached the question of the tasks of industry in relation to the peasantry and to agriculture.

In the 1923 discussion comrade Trotzky and his adherents opposed their plan to the organisation of a systematic financial reform, suggested by the CC. As a matter of fact it was precisely the financial reform which rendered possible really systematic progress in state economics, and along with it a "systematic progress" in agrarian economics. At times when currency was sinking in value, it was even more difficult for the peasant than for state organs to calculate beforehand, to foresee, to "proceed systematically". This was an almost impossible matter for him. The opponents of the financial reform did not think of this at all when preferring their own plan, for they thought only of the narrow interests of state economics, and understood nothing of their economic and political connection with agrarian economics.

On the other hand, so long as the currency is sinking the peasantry pays an emission tax in favour of big industry and the state. Taken from a very narrow-minded view of big industrial interests, the financial reform was not necessary, since this would have limited the possibility of credit grants, the budget possibilities of big industry; but from a less superficial point of view the financial reform meant an essential aid to big industry. The stabilised currency is obviously already playing the role of lever towards a sound development of state economics. Had we followed comrade Trotzky in this question of the development of state industry, if we had not introduced the financial reform, and had been reckoning to this day in quadrillions and sextillions etc., if we had now to face the collapse of money circulation at the same time as a failure of crops, in this case we should have in all probability become involved in a financial collapse (here we use a term employed by comrade Lenin), and should have risked a serious political crisis.

IV.

The "Scissors" and Comrade Trotzky.

It is frequently pointed out that comrade Trotzky, in his speech on industry held at the XII. Party Conference in 1923, drew attention to the question of the "scissors" (disparity between the prices of industrial and agricultural products). How is it possible then to assert that comrade Trotzky does not accord sufficient attention to the peasantry? We must however examine into the results arising from comrade Trotzky's attempt to participate directly in industrial questions.

It is an incontestable fact that just after the XII. Party Conference the blades of the "scissors" began to diverge rapidly, and that by the autumn of 1923 the distance between the blades was so great that the autumn crisis was brought about, a crisis closely bound up with the whole discussion held in the year 1923.

How did this happen? The policy defended by comrade Trotzky was based in industrial matters upon the principle: Dictatorship of industry. This induced industry to exert and

mobilise every force, and to employ the weapon of high industrial prices with the object of increasing the accumulation of capital, in order to gain the highest possible profits. In the course of the summer months following the XII. Party Conference, and during the first months of autumn, industrial prices rose rapidly. When the question of rapid reduction of industrial prices arose in the autumn of 1923, comrade Trotzky's adherents stood for high prices. They practically undertook to defend high prices (in spite of the promises to abolish the "scissors" as soon as industry had concluded the process of capital accumulation and development). This was a conflict against the policy of price reduction pursued by the CC. The CC obliged industry in opposition to the adherents of the "dictatorship of industry", to agree to a reduction in prices, and to forego the accumulation of high profits, as a continuation of this policy would have led to a breach between the working class and the peasantry.

Thus the real reduction of prices did not begin until after the autumn crisis, after the standpoint held by comrade Trotzky with regard to the industrial question had suffered defeat.

V.

Will the Alliance between the Workers and Peasants Hold?

Why are the differences of opinion between us and comrade Trotzky of so great importance just now? For the reason that they are not connected merely with the questions involved in the history of October, but at the same time with fundamental political questions of today and tomorrow. At the last plenary session of the CC the chief item on the agenda was the question of our policy towards the peasantry, the question of certain changes of policy to be adopted with regard to the peasantry. The CC was obliged to consider the question of the peasantry from a new point of view, for, just as actual armed fighting against the White generals ended in the Soviet areas in the spring of 1921 (bringing about the revision of economics and policy of war communism), another great change was brought about in the year 1924 by the de jure recognition of the Soviet Union in almost every country, involving the international de jure recognition of the peasants' revolution.

This means that the struggle of the peasantry for the land is ended. The right of the peasant to the land is recognised, and the peasantry thus no longer requires the alliance of the working class in the fight for the land. Hitherto the working class has lent considerable aid in this common struggle for the land. Of course the situation may change again, a fresh intervention may be undertaken, forcing the working class to join the peasantry in a common defence of the right to land, but at the present moment this question has been removed from the agenda by history. And for this reason our Party had to find out how the relations between the working class and the peasantry are best to be regulated under these new conditions.

Our Party has issued the slogan: Less and less compulsion towards the peasantry, greater efforts to convince them. It should not be the sole object of the communists in the country to gain the formal majority in all village councils and rural municipal committees, a majority gained at any price, often enough under the influence of a "pressure on non-partisans". It is not now the chief task of the communists to obtain the majority in all administrative bodies, for the critical moment is past in which it was necessary to lay a hand upon the whole apparatus, down to the last screw, to ensure the organisation of the armed struggle, of the collection of the taxes in kind, etc. The first and most important work of our Party at the present moment is to really win over the poorer and medium peasantry for our ideas, not by fear, but by actual conviction. The poor and middle peasantry must become firmly convinced of the advantages of the alliance with the working class. It is our chief task to free the greatest possible number of peasants from the influence of the upper stratum of peasantry, now becoming economically stronger, and endeavouring to carry the rest of the peasantry along with it. This is the fundamental task now facing our Party.

Should we attempt to exercise a "permanent" control over the peasantry, to accord to the working class the role of commander in chief for all eternity? No, the command of the working class is right so long as there is war, but wrong when

the war is ended and international recognition has been attained. The next step is to abandon with all possible speed the methods of "commanding" the peasantry, and to pass on to gaining an adequate support among the peasantry by means of actual conviction. This implies a change of policy in many cases and a careful adaptation to the interests of the peasantry leading to the strengthening of the alliance with the peasantry. But have we still a basis for such an alliance, now that the common struggle for the land is ended? Yes, indeed. Who is the actual medium of enlightenment out in the country? The Party of the working class. Who carries agronomic knowledge to the peasant, and brings him the new agricultural technics and methods? The Party of the working class. Who organises the small producers in cooperatives, emancipating them from slavlike dependence upon dealers, middlemen, and usurers? The Party of the working class. Who organises agricultural credits for the peasantry? The Party of the working class. Who elevates the peasant from the complete enslavement of his position under the great landowners to the position of a conscious and active citizen of the Soviet republic? The Party of the working class.

This is the Leninist plan of allying the workers with the peasantry, most clearly expressed in Lenin's letters on the workers' and peasants' inspection, on cooperatives, and on enlightenment. But it is an attitude entirely inconsistent with the views expressed by comrade Trotzky, according to which the working class is inevitably bound to come into collision with the peasantry on the road to socialism, and the peasantry will crush revolution in its own country unless the working class succeeds in obtaining the aid of the international proletariat against the peasantry. This is the standpoint of "permanent revolution". But it is perfectly obvious that this standpoint very nearly approached that of the Mensheviks, according to which the present Soviet power is merely a temporary combination, which will maintain its position until it becomes necessary to clear the way for the bourgeois development of Russia. But the working class and the peasantry are bound to collide, the bloc will be broken up, the peasantry will win the day, and then a fresh page of capitalist evolution will be turned. Thus, preach the Mensheviks.

But comrade Trotzky's attitude involves precisely the same conclusions. If the working class is inevitably bound to come into conflict with the peasantry, then its defeat is equally inevitable in a country where the working class is in the minority, and the peasantry forms the overwhelming majority. In this case there was no need to seize power at all. Comrade Trotzky seeks to save himself from this Menshevik conclusion, which is the outcome of an essentially Menshevik estimate of the relations between working class and peasantry, by resorting to the world revolution. In comrade Trotzky's "theory" the world revolution does not play the part of a consequence of natural evolution, but the role of a means of escape from the tragic contradictions of the Russian revolution. But even in his estimate of the international situation comrade Trotzky drops into Menshevism, and finally entangles himself in hopeless contradictions.

VI.

Comrade Trotzky's Errors in the Estimate of the International Situation.

When forming an estimate of the present situation in Europe, we must admit that at the present moment the countries of Central Europe are taking a pause for breath, and that the possibility of seizure of power by the proletariat is lessened for the moment. Until recently the position in Central Europe was such, owing to the extreme antagonism between Germany and France, that it seemed as if the power was about to pass into the hands of the proletariat. Now that a temporary understanding has been arrived at between France and Germany, we have not only a stabilised currency in Germany, but a stabilisation of the whole economic situation, and a certain progress of industry can be observed; working wages are firmer, and the less class conscious and active workers, exhausted by the cruel struggle, say: "Let us wait and see what will come of the Dawes plan. It may be that it will not give us butter to our bread, but anyway we have only had crusts so far."

Thus there is a certain pause for breath in Central Europe; the antagonism between Germany and France have been sett-

led to a certain extent, and in Germany the prospects of revolution are postponed. But at the same time a revival of the communist movement is to be observed in France. Again, the understanding which is favourable for German industry implies difficulties for English industry. And we thus observe important changes in the English labour movement, and a series of crises in English politics. The active colonial policy being attempted by England, in order to combat Germany's reappearance in the world's markets by drawing England's colonies into closer contact with the mother country, is leading to conflicts which will increase in extent and acuteness. There is no indication of any balancing of relations all over the world. All fundamental antagonisms continue to exist, and our estimate of the international situation as entirely inconstant, and filled with potential conflicts and crises, remains unaltered.

It is however perfectly clear that under these circumstances our home tactics must be directed towards the maintenance of the Soviet power in our own country, without reckoning upon the direct armed support of the German, Italian, French, or other workers. At the same time it need not be said that the more we strengthen our position, the more do we constitute a threat against the international rule of capital, and the nearer do we approach to the moment when the capitalist world will say: "Let us try and crush this germ of socialism!" We may anticipate the coming of this moment with perfect certainty. In the end our revolution cannot remain isolated, but it will not be its internal weakness which causes it to overcome its present isolation, as comrade Trotzky believes, but its capability of awakening internal and external forces sufficiently strong to ensure an international victory.

How does comrade Trotzky estimate the present international situation? He comes to the conclusion that America will put Europe on short rations, that European politics will become completely subordinated to American. What does this mean? It means the smoothing out of antagonisms in Europe, the settlement of the present struggle between Germany and France, between Germany and England — the struggle which divides Europe. American capital extends its rule to Europe, and establishes a firm capitalist order here.

But if this is the case, what of the further prospects of world revolution? In comrade Trotzky's opinion the struggle for "Europe" is already ended, and not with the victory of the revolution proceeding from Russia, but with the victory of the capital bringing its milliards from New York. Revolution cannot convulse Europe unless it carries the citadel of American capitalism. This view is however in all essentials the same as the estimate of the international situation formed by Hilferding, disciple of Kautsky, who sings of the pacification of Europe and the dawn of an "era of peace" beneath the hegemony of America. Whilst Hilferding's estimate simply buries the European revolution, comrade Trotzky's estimate, taken in combination with his theory of permanent revolution, implies the failure of the Russian revolution. Before a victorious revolution has become possible on the other side of the Atlantic, internal conflicts will have destroyed the Russian stronghold of revolution.

There is only one conclusion to be drawn from all these constructions of comrade Trotzky's, and that is the point at

which he arrived before Brest Litovsk: The question of the manner in which we choose to perish. If we are to follow comrade Trotzky, we are either condemned to decay at home; or we must undertake some desperate and super natural effort to break through the ring encircling us. But the whole point is that this whole ring is a faulty construction of comrade Trotzky's, and has only been called into existence by his lack of Bolshevik judgment. In his estimate of the international situation Trotzky thinks along the same lines as Hilferding, exponent of social compromise, just as in his estimate of the role played by the peasantry he is solid with the Mensheviks.

VII.

Our Unity is the Guarantee of Victory.

Why has the CC preserved silence hitherto on these essential differences of opinion? Perhaps an error on the part of the CC may here be admitted. Perhaps it would have been better to have acted differently in this matter. The object of preserving silence was however the desire of the CC to protect to the utmost the Party and political authority of comrade Trotzky. The CC has been very well aware that the publication of these differences of opinion, the reiteration to the Party of the history of the old strife with comrade Trotzky, was likely to not only do harm to comrade Trotzky, but to the whole Party as well. The CC has avoided taking the initiative in discussing all the differences of opinion existing between it and comrade Trotzky. It has not brought up old stories, nor endeavoured to show comrade Trotzky as he really is, but has obliged comrade Trotzky to do this himself by his systematic action against the Party.

Trotzky, after declaring at the XIII. Party Conference his readiness to submit to Party discipline, appeared on the scene again with a "preface" in which he renewed his attacks upon the Party, the CC, and Lenin. After this there was no further possibility of concealing those differences of opinion which for years had been known only to the old cadre of the Party. When our new Party members learn this aspect of the Party history, it will make them members in a higher degree than before. They will be able to take a conscious part in the affairs of the Party. It is true that the conflict forced upon the Party by comrade Trotzky is a minus, but the fact that wide circles of our Party members have been induced by this conflict to a deeper study of the conditions within our Party, and to the formation of a correcter judgment of the peculiarities of Leninism as opposed to the views defended by Trotzky, is a decided plus.

When our Party has explained and estimated these differences of opinion, this will give it the power which it will require for its further action after the difficulties of this contention with comrade Trotzky. Our task will be by no means easy in the immediate future, and we shall have to stand up against more than one blow. We shall need the determined unity of the Party on the basis of Leninism, and this will enable the Party to continue to act as the revolutionary leader of the masses of workers and peasants.

How the Revolution took up Arms.

The C. P. of Russia and the Red Army.

By S. Gussyev.

In the year 1922 the supreme political authority of the Republic issued to the institutions of the Party, the Soviets, the trade unions, and the army the draft of a political statute of the Red Army and Navy for their expert opinion. Clause 41 of this statute (not yet confirmed) runs as follows:

"On the strength of his nomination by the All-Russian Central Executive Committee for the year 1918, the commander of the Red Army, Comrade L. D. Trotzky, is appointed chairman of the revolutionary Military Council of the Republic and People's Commissary for the Army and Navy. Comrade Trotzky was born in 1874 in the village of Janovka, district Jelisawetgrad, Gouvernement of Cherson. While he was still young, he joined the "South Russian Secret Union" in the town of Nikolayev. Here Comrade Trotzky was arrested, imprisoned for about 2½ years and sent to Siberia. During the revolution of 1905 Comrade Trotzky was vice-chairman of the Petrograd workers' Soviet. When the Soviet was arrested, Comrade Trotzky was condemned a second time to banishment to Siberia, he managed however to escape from the country. Abroad, Comrade Trotzky continued to serve the cause of the working class. From the first day the imperialist war, Comrade Trotzky opposed it, for which he was persecuted by the foreign governments. When, in April 1917 he returned to Russia, Comrade Trotzky carried on a relentless fight against the provisional government. A short time before the October revolution, Comrade Trotzky was arrested by the provisional government. After his release, he joined the military revolutionary committee which had conducted the October insurrection. From the moment that the Red Army was organised, Comrade Trotzky became the People's Commissary for the Army and Navy; later he was nominated chairman of the revolutionary Military Council of the Republic. Comrade Trotzky is the leader and organiser of the Red Army. At the head of the Red Army, he leads it to victory over all enemies of the Soviet republic."

The theory of the construction of the army by the leader and organiser alone, as it is described in this paragraph, is a wrong and unmarxist theory. From the Marxist point of view the army is the military skeleton of an existing order of society, or the military reflection of this order of society. This, however, signifies that the army is organised and formed, that it is directed and controlled, that its commanding staff is nominated, that it is trained in the spirit of the definite ideology of the ruling class.

Our State is a workers' State, the ruling class — the proletariat. The proletarian dictatorship is realised by the vanguard of the working class, the best forces of the proletariat, as they are collected in the ranks of the CP. of Russia. The CP. of Russia realises the dictatorship of the proletariat, especially it forms, organises and directs the Red Army through the Soviets and trade unions. This however also means that the Party Conferences determine the fundamental lines of the military policy and commission the Central Committee of the CP. of Russia to carry them out in the meantime between the meetings of the Party Conferences. The Central Committee of the CP. of Russia sets up a political bureau, which on the basis of the decisions come to by the Party Conferences and on the basis of the decisions of the plenary meetings of the Central Committee, passes resolutions and carries them out through the provincial Party Committees, the district Party Committees and the nuclei, as well as the through Communist fractions in the Soviets and trade unions and in other organs and finally, as far as the army is concerned, through members of the CP. of Russia, commissioned by the Party for work in the army who, in the army, with the support of the military hierarchy fill various posts (especially through Comrade Trotzky, member of the CP. of Russia, chairman of the revolutionary Military Council of the Union of the SSR.) as well as through the military political committees (political committees, the commissary apparatus, the Communist army nuclei).

As may be seen from this, the theory of the formation of the armed forces of the proletariat as contained in § 41 of the political statute, has nothing in common with the Marxist theory (the army — is the military skeleton of the existing order of society), as even Engels still represented it, nor with the re-testing of this theory through the practice of the construction of a class army by the proletariat of the Union of the SSR.

The theory developed in § 41, is closely related to that "military bureaucratic romance" which Comrade Trotzky cuttingly ridiculed in the feuilleton "On military and every other kind of bureaucratic conceit ("Pravda", 4th of December 1923). He wrote then as follows:

"When people, because of an external form which has become dear to them, cease to think of its contents, when, in self-complacency, they use relatively qualified phrases without thinking of their meaning . . . and when, vice versa, they shrink from every new word of criticism, of initiative, of independence — it means that the dangerous iron-mould of bureaucratic conceit has entered into the prevailing relations."

This is a perfectly correct idea, but we cannot refrain from saying that it aims a blow, not haphazard, but straight in the face at the writer of § 41 of the political statute. Comrade Trotzky continues:

"At the conference of our political army functionaries I quoted some casual historic notes of our army divisions, as an, at first sight, innocent example of bureaucratic ideology. . . . A considerable part of these historical notes — we need not conceal the sin — is written to the tune of "We weave for thee the laurel wreath". I will speak more openly. Some pamphlets which are dedicated to our divisions of the Red Army, directly recall the historic notes of the foot and mounted guards of sacred memory. . . . The history of every one of our "old regiments" (4—5 years is already a long past in the revolution) is extraordinarily interesting and instructive, provided it is represented truthfully and vividly, i. e. as far as possible, as it actually happened in the field and in barracks. Instead of that we often find heroic legends, which legends moreover smell of bureaucratic conceit. In reading them we find that we have in our ranks — nothing but heroes, that to the last man, they rush into battle, that the enemy always has the numerical preponderance, all our commands are always reasonable and are carried out in the best possible way, etc. etc. The greatest heroism in military as in revolutionary affairs is the heroism of truthfulness and of responsibility."

All this is excellently expressed and applies not only to the history of single regiments but to the Red Army as a whole. All this hits the strange theory developed in § 41 in such a way that Comrade Trotzky would doubtless agree with us in rejecting it as a theory which is unsuitable for the proletariat and its Party, but on the other hand advantageous to the enemies of the proletariat and its dictatorship, and therefore politically harmful.

This is all the more necessary on the part of Comrade Trotzky, as his collected works, consisting of his articles, speeches and commands, published in four books (they will be 5 altogether with a text of about 2000 pages), which deal with our military construction ("How the revolution took up arms"), as they might, contrary to Comrade Trotzky's wishes, become a means of touting for the unmarxist theory as it is developed in § 41. In a space of 1500 pages, hardly 100 lines can be found, in which reference is made to the part played by the Party, the political committees, the commissaries, the Communist nuclei and the trade unions. Moreover these lines are distributed by twos and threes in different places and it is no easy matter to find them. This is a very great disadvantage of these books which bear the responsible title "How the

revolution took up arms". The revolution took up arms through the whole working class — through the CP. of Russia, through the trade unions, through the Soviets. From Comrade Trotzky's book however the reader, especially an uninitiated foreigner, who did not himself live through the period of the construction of the armed forces of the proletariat of the Union of SSR., might gain entirely false impressions — as though nine tenths of the whole affair were to the credit of Comrade Trotzky's articles, speeches, commands, reprisals and organising measures. Even Comrade Trotzky did not intend to produce such an impression through his collected works. He — is decidedly opposed to "the military bureaucratic romance". And just for this reason it is a great pity that he did not use the opportunity to correct this great deficiency in his collected works at least in the preface. A truthful history of the Red Army, and not a military bureaucratic reflexion distorted in the magic mirror of § 41, would only appear if the Central Committee of the CP. of Russia, the central committees of the national Parties, the Provincial Party Committees, the Provincial executive committees, the All-Russian Central Trade Union Council, the central committee of the trade unions, the Provincial departments, the trade unions, the revolutionary front and army councils, the political committees at the front, the army and the divisions, the commissaries of all ranks and special branches would publish their resolutions, commands, speeches, articles etc. This would however be such a sea of raw material, that the 2000 pages of the collected works of Comrade Trotzky would be swallowed up as unnoticeably as the 200 lines which Comrade Trotzky has dedicated to the part played by the CP. of Russia, the Soviets etc. disappear unnoticeably in his 2000 pages of text.

The theory of § 41 — is petty bourgeois to the last degree. This gives it its class political significance.

We Leninists have grown up in an epoch in which we had no time to concern ourselves with academic questions, in which we had to dedicate all our powers and all our time to politics. Thus we are not in the habit of occupying ourselves with academic questions. But any academic question may, at a given moment, become a political one, i. e. a political fight of parties or of groups within the parties may grow up round it. Academic points of controversy then acquire political significance. As a shining example of such a shifting of academic into political points of controversy, we may take among others, Lenin's philosophical fight against the empiriomonists and the empirio-criticists (see "Materialism and Empirio-criticism" by him) who, in the years of the decline of the labour movement and of the extraordinary weakening of the CP. in Russia, tried to undermine the last pillar of Bolshevism — Marxism.

At the moment, the theory of § 41 has become a political question. Hundreds, thousands of times, the usual phrase has been repeated: "Comrade Trotzky — is the organiser and leader of the Red Army", and no harm, from the political point of view has resulted. Now however, the petty bourgeois theory of § 41 has a politically harmful effect.

In contrast to the proletariat which is collected in factories and towns, the petty bourgeois, the small property owner, who works by himself in his own small holding, who is prevented by the conditions of his production from having anything to do with his peers and with small holders similar to himself, has not the possibility, and is therefore robbed of the capability of organisation. Because of his ambiguous class nature, his incapability of organising leads him to petty bourgeois doctrines as to the anarchist order of society, which is entirely lacking in elementary power of organisation, not only in the political but also in the economic sphere or he begins, as he realises his own helplessness in organisation, to look for an organiser who will arrange everything for him, put everything right and create good order all round.

The petty bourgeoisie which inhabits the territory of the Union of the SSR. under the proletarian dictatorship, and participates in the benefits of the new economic policy, is developing towards capitalism, i. e. it is training profiteers. But the profiteers want to "grab" the army from us. Even in the year 1920/1921, we were able, while the divisions of the Red Army were being definitely settled (for instance the first cavalry division in the provincial district of Jekaterinoslaw), to observe the efforts of the profiteers to estrange the army from us. Since then, the profiteer element has ideologically considerably increased in strength, and now finds it easier to entice the army away from us. And naturally, it unavoidably

takes refuge in § 41, naturally it cannot resist exploiting the theory of § 41, which reduces the part of the CP. of Russia in the organisation of the Red Army to nothing. The class enemies of the proletariat use every opportunity of tripping up the CP. of Russia. The author of § 41 does not see this danger, and only helps our class enemies by his petty bourgeois theory. Every member of the Red Army must now learn that the organiser and leader of the Red Army is — the Russian Communist Party. This must be hammered into him day after day, it must be knocked into him by force. This is theoretically right, it is practically right and it is historically right. Comrade Trotzky on the contrary is however a member of the Central Committee of this Party, who, commissioned by it and under its direction, carries out the difficult work in the Red Army in his capacity of chairman of the revolutionary Military Council of the Union of the SSR.

We must however make an important correction in the last statement. We really ought to say: "Who did not always carry out this work, who has not always worked according to the instructions of the Party, who did not always agree with the Party." And we are only able to go into this side of the question, because at the moment, it has lost its eminently historical (academic) interest and has gained a political significance. If we are instructing our foreign friends in the art of creating armed forces of the proletariat, it is absolutely unpermissible, it would be a political mistake, to conceal, "for considerations of a personal nature, which could only claim consideration, at the best in the third place" (expression of Comrade Trotzky's in the preface to "1917"), those political difficulties which our Central Committees has had to face, in those cases in which Comrade Trotzky disagreed with it in questions of military policy.

In consideration of this, our representation gains the character of a historical narrative.

We report two of the most significant events:

On April 28th 1919, our army, beaten back to the rivers Volga and Vjatka by Koltschak, and having used the spring time when the roads are impassable, for completing its regrouping, returned to a counter-attack. The result of the whole operation depended on the continuous turning of Koltschak's left (southern) flank, who was consequently compelled to retreat along the whole front from Orenburg to Perm, if he did not want to expose himself to the danger of our breaking far into his halting-place. Koltschak was in no way able to save his left flank, we turned it continuously and his armies retreated in flight and continuously fighting, at an average rate of 10 versts a day. And they not only retreated, they disintegrated rapidly, fell apart and surrendered.

Seven days after the beginning of the operation, the Commander-in-Chief of the front, **S. S. Kamenew** (the future Commander-in-Chief of the Red Army) was dismissed without consulting the revolutionary Military council of the East front, which at that time consisted of Comrade Laschewitsch, Jurenjew and myself.

The following is Comrade Trotzky's command on this occasion:

"The armies of the East front have been under the command of S. S. Kamenew for 8 months. Under his command the armies have given more than one blow to the Czechoslovaks and the bands of Dufov and Koltschak. Under Comrade Kamenew's lead, the troops of the East front have reconquered the towns of Ufa, Orenburg and Urals for the Soviet republic. In consequence of a series of causes, our East front has been temporarily weakened, and Koltschak again took possession of the town of Ufa, after having beaten back our troops some distance. In the last weeks however, energetic measures have been resorted to from the East front, under the leadership of the commander, Comrade Kamenew, in order to restore the situation. These measures have already led to the first genuine success. On the greater part of the line of the East front, our armies have successfully returned to the attack. The strained and uninterrupted work of the commander on the East front has made it necessary for him to have a temporary rest. While releasing Comrade Kamenew for a six weeks' leave I thank him in the name of the Red Army, and sincerely hope that the troops on the East front will, under the leadership of the new com-

mander A. A. Samojlo, complete the success already obtained, and lead the Soviet Republic to a complete victory over Koltshak." ("How the revolution took up arms" vol. 2, book 2, p. 371.)

A. A. Samojlo (nominated commander on the East front in the place of S. S. Kamenew) — a distinguished staff officer, a specialist in the service of the intelligence department, as was also P. P. Lebedjeff (the future Chief of the Staff of the Red Workers' and Peasants' Army) who relieved the former Chief of the Staff on the East front, one of the best, if not the best, one of the most highly educated of the staff officers — showed from the first day an insufficient intimacy with operative questions, an insufficient mastery of the direction of operations of the army at the front. In the old army both of them, as far as I know, worked almost exclusively on the Staff, which probably explains the fact that on the front, they gave the impression of being novices. The result was an extremely difficult, unbearable situation for the members of the revolutionary military council of the East front. We saw that false, erroneous instructions were given, that the command at the front tried to direct the divisions over the heads of the commanders of the army, that the command at the front had attacks of nerves, that it changed its orders, and dashed armies and divisions about etc. We said this openly to Samojlo and Lebedjeff which caused violent dissension between us. The army commanders also began to get nervous and — a thing which had hardly ever happened before, openly opposed the command at the front and openly criticised the orders it had issued. The relations between the command at the front and the army commanders assumed an abnormal character. The front began to crumble. Then we seized the only means left to us, as members of the Party, we stormed our central committee with endlessly long telegrams, demanding that Kamenew be sent back to the front. Up to the present we have not succeeded in finding these telegrams among our documents, but they were obviously convincing enough; a month later, according to a resolution of the central committee, Kamenew once again took over the command of the East front.

As heirs of this difference of opinion between the revolutionary military council of the East front and Comrade Trotzky, Comrade Smigla, who had a short time previously been transferred from the East front to the post of Chief of the Supreme Political Authority, supported in every detail the point of view of the revolutionary military Council of the East front, took over the wrong order of the Commander in Chief Wazetis, that the East front was to consolidate itself on the banks of the Kama and the Bjela, so as to spare a few divisions to the Southern front, where at that time, instead of the expected liquidation of the White Guard scandal, Denikin's offensive began to spread. The dispute as to this order was later on brought before the plenum of the Central Committee together with other military questions. It is therefore desirable to enter with more detail into the way it was handled.

As already mentioned, Koltshak could no longer come to a stop, no longer rest, no longer consolidate himself nor carry out any counter-blow. We drove him steadily before us and left him no time to rest. And this broke up his ranks more than any fighting. To "establish" ourselves on the banks of the Kama and the Bjela and to hand over a few divisions — that meant making a halt on the banks of the Kama and the Bjela and preparing for defence, i. e. giving Koltshak the opportunity of resting and making a counter-attack. In view of the instability of troops in civil war, which is especially noticeable when they are not advancing but on the defensive, it would have been child's play to Koltshak, after he had rested, to break through our front and to force our troops to retreat once more to the Volga. This is one point.

Secondly: our attacking troops, who were inspired by the brilliant success of the first weeks, advanced tempestuously and irresistibly. To stop them in face of that revolutionary buoyancy which had seized them would have meant nothing more nor less than risking the possibility of the horrible suspicion of treachery on the part of the army commander arising in their minds.

Thirdly: further forwards, just between the rivers Kama and Bjela, ten thousand fresh strong reserves of Ural workers who hated Koltshak with a deadly hatred, were waiting for the Red Army.

Fourthly: Not by arresting the advance on the Kama and Bjela, but by pushing the advance to the uttermost, was it possible to remove divisions most quickly and to transfer them to the Southern front. And that for the following reasons. In the first place, by giving Koltshak's troops no peace, we brought about their rapid disintegration and their numerical reduction, thus gaining a relative superiority of forces. Further we got reinforcements from the Ural workers and the Siberian peasants and in this way gained an absolute numerical superiority. Finally, the further we advanced eastwards, the shorter became our front line and the fewer the troops we needed. At the beginning of the attack, our front embraced 1500 versts, arrived on the heights of the Urals, it was rather under 1000 versts, behind Tjumen it shrank to 4—500 versts, still further east it was not more than 30—50 versts.

From this only one conclusion could be drawn: attack and again attack.

Attack without delay, without establishing oneself, without looking round, and always close on the enemy's heels. This was the quickest and surest way to help the Southern front and to liquidate Koltshak. All these considerations, which at that time we communicated to the Central Committee were fully justified by the further course of operations. If I am not mistaken, five divisions were, at the time appointed, transferred from the East to the Southern front, the attack against Denikin took place 70 versts south of Orjol (from the side of Bransk) eight to ten days too late, and was not carried out north of but south of Orjol (15 versts further south). This delay is to be explained by the stoppage of the railway which occurred at that time.

The differences of opinion between the revolutionary military Council of the East front and Comrade Trotzky were intensified by dissensions among the members of the revolutionary military Council as to Comrade Trotzky's methods of working. These methods were good for the phase of the construction of the Red Army (I have described the first phase in the article "The days of Swjaschsk" — "Proletarian revolution" 1924, No. 2), when severe measures were necessary in order to abolish partisanship and lack of discipline. Only the provisioning had to be carried out with the help of partisan methods (a provisioning on the spot and occasional unexpected trains for which Comrade Trotzky was to be thanked). Towards the Spring 1919 however, these methods were out of date, especially at the east front which had quickly rid itself of partisanship and had already established a reliable commissariat. In this case that happened to Comrade Trotzky, as to which the French proverb says: "We have the qualities of our faults." The methods of 1918 were good for 1918, they were no use for 1919.

At the end of the article mentioned, I wrote, on the occasion of the military executions on August 29th on the banks of the Volga (among the persons executed were 3 Communists, one of them an old member of the Party): "At the time when these military executions were carried out and in the situation in which they were carried out, it was an absolutely correct and necessary measure. These executions drew a red, blood-stained line under the previous chaotic partisan period of the life of the Red Army, and were the last stage in the transition to regular discipline."

This red line however was not noticed by Comrade Trotzky. On this basis, friction arose between Comrade Trotzky and the revolutionary military Council of the third army (Bersin, Smilga and Laschevitsch). The cause of the friction was as follows:

Comrade Trotzky sent in October 1918 the two following telegrams to the revolutionary military Council of the third army:

"Beg you to communicate immediately what, in your opinion are the chief causes of the failure of the operations of the third army. The experiences of other armies have shown that, when bad commanders and commissaries are present, no success is obtained. I beg for a weekly telegraphic general survey of the internal condition of the army, a report on the commanders and commissaries. It is evident that, as regards the third army, radical reforms are necessary. Oct. 8th No. 399, Chairman of the revolutionary military Council, Trotzky."

"About a fortnight ago, some officers of the Perm division went over to the enemy. I demanded that service

lists should be made, giving the addresses of their families, with the object of arresting them immediately. I received no answer. Further I demanded to know whether the commissaries of the divisions and regiments who did not prevent treachery on the part of the commanding persons, were shot. No answer was received. I demand immediate explanation of the following points. 18. No. 398, Chairman of the revolutionary military Council, Trotzky."

Comrades Smilga and Laschewitsch sent Comrade Trotzky the following report:

"In reply to your telegrams No. 399 and 398 we have the honour to explain as follows: You question us as to the causes of the "complete failure" of the third army. To what failure do you refer? During the operations before Kasan and Simbirsk we were given the concrete task of holding the enemy, which we carried out successfully. The commander Bersin received from the Supreme command a telegram from which we gather that the glorious names of Bersin etc. will stand side by side with the "glorious name of Tuchatschewsky", in the same spirit.

The third army is now preparing to carry out its third task, the advance against Jekaterinburg and Tscheljabinsk. This task was allotted to us and the second army, and will be carried out as soon as the division promised by the Supreme command arrives. If however the rate of our offensive operations appears altogether too slow to the revolutionary military Council of the Republic, allow us to call your attention to the following circumstances:

1. There was a time at the beginning of operations, when the front of the third army reached from Ischim to Krasnoufinsk, a length of 920 wersts. Our forces on the other hand, did not exceed 6—7000. It is evident that the army could not at that time resist the enemy's blow, as it was entirely unexpected.

Now our front reaches from Nadeschdinsk to Bik-Bardinsk. It has been considerably shortened but is even now longer than the front of the second, fourth and fifth armies together.

2. Besides this it must not be forgotten that we have to fight in a district which is populated by a profiteer element, which at the best, is neither for nor against us. The only reserves are the workers of the northern Ural. The army, 20,000 strong, has been built up, exclusively by its own members. We have no reinforcements from the Centre to report. In the course of the last two months we have received 4000—5000 men from St. Petersburg, but we have handed over the same number to the second army, by order of the Supreme Command, for the operations against Ischjewsks.

We feel obliged to add, that there has not been a single day on which our army report could speak of rest at the front. Our losses amount on the average to 300—500 dead, wounded and sick daily. There have been fights in which we lost 2000 combatants. There are always fights against regular Czechish troops.

Now to the question of commanders and commissaries. It is best to mention them by name; they must be known to the revolutionary military Council of the Republic:

Fourth division — Blücher, previously commander of the South Ural army, has received the first Order of the Red Flag.

Fifth division — Damberg — fought with Blücher.

Third division — Eidemann — an esteemed functionary in Siberia, previously Commander of the Siberian army.

The mixed division — Oftschnikoff — knight of all the Orders of St. George, has your expression of thanks for his fights against the Germans.

Of these Blücher is — a soldier; the others are — officers of the old army. The commissaries of the divisions and brigades:

Bakajef, Saluzky, Soff, Belakun, Ratschkowsky and Latzis.

We are not in the habit of writing much about the heroic deeds of our troops. Were it however desirable, we are convinced, that we should have no reason to blush at the leaders of the third army.

Conclusions: in order to achieve successful active operations, we need reinforcements. One division of reliable

troops would enable us to carry both the points we have been ordered to force. The mobilised Perm troops must immediately be replaced by other divisions. The territorial troops have shown that they are useless when compulsorily mobilised.

According to the second telegram we are to shoot Bakajew and Saluzky. We cannot do this, as we do not consider them guilty. We beg you to hold us responsible for not carrying out an army order. Oct. 14th, 1918, the members of the revolutionary military Council of the third army, Smilgar and Laschewitsch."

At the same time, Comrades Smilga and Laschewitsch approached the Central Committee with the following explanation:

"Dear Comrades! We beg the Central Committee of our Party to take note of the telegrams received by us from Comrade Trotzky, as well as of our report.

We leave all personal matters entirely out of the question, although we cannot conceal the fact that the telegram of the chairman of the revolutionary military Council of the Republic was an extraordinarily unpleasant surprise to us. In the interest of the subject we consider it necessary to make the following explanation to the Central Committee:

It is perfectly obvious to us that the Centre has no proper conception of the fight in the Urals. It is evident from our report, that the talk about the Urals as a bottomless pit which, to no purpose, swallows masses of troops, is nothing but the gossip of illinformed persons. All the reserves which were intended for us, have been sent on to the Volga front.

Until new troops arrive, active successful operations cannot be expected of us. Up to the present not a single one of our regiments has stayed in the resting-place. We have bodies of troops which have been at the front for 5 months without interruption. It is clear that they are tired to death and incapable of advancing.

Now as to the commissaries: We protest categorically against the irresponsible attitude of Comrade Trotzky towards such things as military executions. Having learned that in some regiment or other a few officers have gone over to the enemy, he demands the execution of the commissaries of the regiment and of the division. According to the exact sense of the telegram, we should, amongst others, shoot Bakajew and Saluzky. Of course we have not done this. Why should only these commissaries be shot? We have no single division in which cases of treachery have not occurred. We should have to shoot half the revolutionary military Council, for Bogoslawsky, whom it appointed commander of the 3rd army, has gone over to the enemy, without assuming command. The result of such telegrams, is simply to undermine the authority of Comrade Trotzky and of the commissaries.

We have repeatedly pointed out that with compulsory mobilisation we must abandon the creation of territorial troops. The mobilised peasants will not fight in their province, in their district. That is clear. And this mistake of military policy cannot be corrected through any terror.

In conclusion we cannot refrain from telling the Central Committee that, in our opinion, only the Central Committee and not single members are entitled to judge our work, even though the latter are formally our "immediate chiefs". The members of the Central Committee Smilga, Laschewitsch, Oct. 14th, 1918."

The political side of this conflict lies in the fact that the military relations of discipline and subordination have come into conflict with the Party relations and have conquered them. This is strongly emphasised in the final words of the declaration of Comrades Laschewitsch and Smilga, who place military discipline, formal subordination to the "immediate superior authority" in opposition to Party discipline. They rightly place Party discipline above military discipline. But even though the military authorities formally construct the army, the Party is actually the organiser of the army and the leader of the whole military policy. Comrade Trotzky has always taken this side of the question too little into consideration. The skeleton of the army consisted of workers. The Communists on the other hand played the part of the spinal column in the skeleton. It was absolutely unpermissible to

break this spinal column. This is however just what Comrade Trotzky tried to do as regards the 3rd army, in the ecstasy of the impulse of military discipline. This is a clear case of "overstraining administrative authority".

The army is the military framework of society and, consequently the Party organisation within the army is the military framework of the Party. In practice this means that the democratic rights of the Party organisation of the army are extremely limited. Especially the right of franchise. In the first place the political committees of the army and of its subdivisions, which direct the whole political work of the army, including the Party work, are not elected but nominated organs. In consequence of the official subordination being much more strict than it is in other public services, there is, with such limitation of the democracy of the Party organisation of the army, always the danger that Party relations of political comradeship will be given an altogether lower position than the military relations of subordination and discipline. This has happened more than once.

No small amount of tact and delicacy, such as is only developed through long years of holding office and of work in the Party, is required in order to find the right combination of military and Party relations.

The difficult situation which had arisen in the Central Committee was also closely connected with Comrade Trotzky's methods of working, on which a strong light was thrown by the conflict with the revolutionary military Council of the third army. There was no revolutionary military Council of the Republic although it could boast of nearly 15 members. It never met. The war commissariat — was without a council. The management of the affairs of the revolutionary military Council of the Republic and the All-Russian General Staff were separated from the army and the fronts. The operating staff was in Serpuchoff and concerned itself neither with matters of organisation nor with questions of provisioning, i. e. 95% of the work of the General Command was outside the province of the General Command which was obliged to operate without sufficient possibility of influencing operations in the way most accessible to it viz. by organising new bodies of troops and through the commissariat.

Briefly, there was no military centre which worked out plans, centralised and directed them.

Comrade Trotzky strove to turn his single person into a centre of this kind which travelled round the fronts and continued to work on exactly the same partisan lines as in 1918: occasional special trains instead of systematic provisioning, an extraordinary superfluity of all possible chicanery and reprisals, little organisation, little agitation. A comrade (if I am not mistaken Comrade Smilga) pertinently characterised this system of working of Comrade Trotzky's as the "system of organised panic" (that is only another form of "overstraining administrative authority" and of the "point of view which only judges by the apparatus", i. e. of an arm-chair critic).

In the middle of July 1919 the situation was such that the plenary meeting of the Central Committee was obliged to place three questions on the agenda: as to the continuation of the offensive on the East front, as to the organisation of a new revolutionary military Council of the Republic and as to the replacing of Wazetis by Kamenew. In all these questions the Central Committee agreed with the proposals of the East Front. Comrade Trotzky was very dissatisfied with these decisions, got excited and wished to resign, but finally, after a time, submitted to the decisions of the Central Committee.

The political side of this whole story is — the tendency of the Party to emancipate itself from military affairs.

Later on the Party had to witness a similar tendency on the part of the Party in the person of Comrade Saponoff to emancipate itself from Soviet affairs.

This tendency was even more prominent in Comrade Trotzky in 1923.

This happened as follows:

At the plenary meeting of the Central Committee in October (1923) it was decided to reinforce the revolutionary military Council of the USSR, by a few prominent Communists of the army, through their transference to the revolutionary military Council. The motives for this decision were: 1. the considerable extension of the revolutionary military Council in connection with the formation of the Union of SSR., at the expense of the representatives of the national republics. It was necessary, in this extended revolutionary military Council, to guarantee the line of direction of the Party by the formation of a firm nucleus within the council; 2. the necessity to increase the number of army functionaries in view of the fact that Comrade Trotzky, occupied with other matters did not pay sufficient attention to military work; 3. the necessity of stimulating the activity of the revolutionary military Council of the USSR, which met seldom and worked irregularly; 4. the difficult situation of the Red Army (the enormous fluctuation in the strength of the army, owing to the calling up of the 1902 recruits being postponed for a whole year, which brought confusion into the training and the political instruction of the members of the Red Army and caused a grave crisis in its provisioning).

Comrade Trotzky protested with unusual acrimony against the decision of the plenum of the Central Committee to introduce new members into the revolutionary military Council of the USSR. The discussion which followed on this plenary meeting shifted the dispute with Comrade Trotzky into another field. The Central Committee however could not but pay attention to the army, and the plenary meeting of January 1924 considered it necessary to appoint a commission to enquire into the fluctuation and the provisioning of the Red Army.

On the basis of the information obtained by this examination, the commission appointed by the plenary meeting of the Central Committee worked out a series of propositions which were then actually used as the foundation of the extensive reorganisation of the Red Army which began in the Spring of 1924.

These are the facts. Their political "moral", the political teaching which we may gather from these facts is — the danger of separating administrative authority from politics, the Soviet apparatus from Party apparatus, especially the army from the Party. In the last few years, the Party has more than once discussed tendencies to a similar separation and has more than once condemned them. Now our Party (and not only ours, but all the others which belong to the Comintern) have the opportunity to study the tendency in its most salient and sharpest manifestation and at the point where it is most dangerous. It is just in military affairs that this tendency grows more rapidly and strongly than in any other branch of administration, owing to the objective conditions of the powerful apparatus of the military authorities, which develops unusually strong forces of the law of continuity and therefore bureaucratizes, further owing to a centralisation driven to its extremity, to sternest discipline and finally to an unusual limitation of the rights of Party organisation in the army, dictated by necessity.

We therefore advise foreign comrades — if they ever have a Red Army — to watch military matters closely with both eyes, and to admit no separation of the army from the Party.

Neither must we forget these rules . . .