

# **Communism – Story of the Communist Party**

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May 1935

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## THE AUTHOR'S APOLOGY.

It was not my intention to write a history of the Anti-Parliamentary and Communist movements. Certainly, I had no intention of publishing such a work. I had a number of completed manuscripts on my hands and I did not wish to write a new work whilst these writings were unpublished. In addition to which, I was jealous to collect the political essays that I had published in fugitive form during the past thirty years. A conspiracy of circumstances compelled me to sacrifice these ambitions to what seemed to be the usefulness and well-being of the proletarian struggle.

For a short time in 1934 I resumed my old missionary activity. I visited Leeds, where I spoke under the auspices of the Leeds Anarchist Group, since defunct. In Aberdeen I conducted an intensive campaign, speaking on a free platform, enthusiastically sponsored by the local I.L.P. A very short campaign was conducted in London, where an endeavour was made to rally sections of the old movement with which I had been associated down to the early days of the War, and later during 1926–27. In these towns, so many miles apart, the question arose at my meetings, in almost identical terms : “ What is Anti-Parliamentarism? What is its history and background? What movement do you represent? “ In every case the questioner seemed to imagine that Anti-Parliamentarism was some breakaway from the Communist Party and the Third International.

It was strange to see how little knowledge even so-called Socialists had of the history of the proletarian movement. It was impossible to continue to refer to this paper and to that pamphlet. What was needed was a complete statement with the facts brought together within the confines of a small work that could be consulted readily. And so this pamphlet began to take form in my mind and assumed an imperative claim to premier place in the matter of publication.

Even so, the matter might have been put on one side but for the international correspondence into which I, plunged. Contacts with Anarchist and Anti-parliamentarian comrades in Nimes, Amsterdam, Frankfurt, Berlin, New York and Chicago, inspired me to write *For Communism*. This work was published in May 1935. It enjoyed a large circulation. The march of time has compelled its revision. The Second World War has collapsed the old Labour movement in all its phases and has developed a new strategy of struggle.

I have revised the original work with care, deleting as little as possible of the original writing, omitting only that which was unnecessary or undated detail, and adding wherever further statement of fact was essential to a clear vision of the issues involved. Thus revised the 1935 booklet becomes Part I of the present study, Communism. Part II will be a complete history of the crimes against Socialists and Socialism, against liberty of speech, thought, and expression that marked and marred the Soviet regime.

Part I is a complete work in itself, although Part II will make a worthwhile completion, not because of its style of writing,, but on account of its factual value. I believe that the publication of this work serves a useful purpose in these days of gloom, misery, and reaction.

GUY A. ALDRED.

GLASGOW, Nov. 5, 1942

# **COMMUNISM**

# 1. TROTSKYISM.

The Communist International was founded in Moscow in 1919. The February Revolution of 1917 had recalled from exile and imprisonment a number of Anarchists who co-operated loyally with the Bolsheviks to effect the October 1917 Revolution. By the time that the Communist International was organised, the persecution of these Anarchists by the Bolsheviks had begun. That persecution continued all the time that Trotsky was an outstanding member of the revolutionary movement in Russia. Lenin, of course, was as much a party to this persecution as Trotsky. This fact has to be borne in mind when one considers that a distinction is made by the Trotskyists between the first five years of the International and the latter period dating from 1924. It is claimed that from 1919 to 1923 the Communist International was a virile, growing movement and that its authority and prestige rose in every land under the guidance of Lenin and Trotsky. In the course of the next nine years the Moscow International degenerated to a zombie.

The workers in all countries were prepared to half consider its existence a fact down to January 1933. But we must regard the second period from 1924 as a nine year crisis of uninterrupted decline. During this period the Trotskyist wing was amputated from the official movement much against the victim's will.

As late as January 1933 the avowed intention of the Trotskyist faction was to reform the Third International and to work in conjunction with the Communist Party in the various countries. The defeat of the German working-class movement and the triumph of Hitlerism caused the Trotskyists to break with their past policy of acting as a faction of the official party and to announce their intention of building up a new Communist International, and new Communist Parties in every country in the world. This included the Soviet Union.

On August 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup>, 1933, the Paris Conference was held of the Left Socialists and Communist Oppositional organisations. Fourteen groupings were represented. This Conference had an unsettling effect on the bodies that sent delegates. The Communist League of America, or International Left Opposition, at its Plenum, on September 17<sup>th</sup>, 1933, passed a lengthy resolution, divided into seven paragraphs, of no consequence. The Lovestone Group of the U.S.A, found itself isolated. The Gitlow Group, the Workers' Communist League, opposed Lovestone's policy of approach to Stalin. Jitlek and Hais led their Czechoslovakian sections back to Social Democracy, whilst the Neurath Group of Czechoslovakia moved from the International Communist Opposition to the International Left Communist Opposition. The Swiss Brandler section inclined towards the Left Opposition, but the French P.U.P, moved towards Social Democracy.

Irrespective of their turn, whether towards the Left or towards the Right, the Trotskyist sections declared for a 4<sup>th</sup> International in September, 1933, on the grounds of the degeneration of the 3<sup>rd</sup> International. In a full declaration of attitude they took their stand on the following points : —

1. REJECTION OF THE 5<sup>th</sup> AND 6<sup>th</sup> WORLD CONGRESSES OF THE C.I. Actually, in 1921, Paul Levi openly broke with the Comintern on the grounds of objections to Leninism,

which showed that the objection to the World Congress' decision should not begin with the 5<sup>th</sup> Congress. The history of the betrayal of the Munich uprising and the creation of the K.A.P.D. after the corruption and failure of the Spartacist movement and the K.P.D. during the 1920 events in Germany, show that the Trotskyist movement is somewhat belated in its historical concepts.

2. PERMANENT CHARACTER OF THE WORLD REVOLUTION. This sound proposition is the historic teaching of Socialism, and was never questioned until the period of the Russian Revolution and the urgent Russian need to nationalise that revolution.
3. RECOGNITION OF THE SOVIET UNION AS A WORKERS' STATE; AND THE CONDEMNATION OF STALINISM FOR UNDERMINING THAT STATE BY ITS METHOD OF: (a) ECONOMIC OPPORTUNISM, 1923–28; (b) ECONOMIC ADVENTURISM, 1928–32. To be sound, it should also be stated that the Soviet Union is not a Workers' State. Also, the economic opportunism begins with Lenin and goes back to 1921 and the N.E.P.
4. REJECTS THE STALIN THEORY OF THE JOINT DEMOCRATIC DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT AND THE PEASANTRY, ON THE GROUND THAT THIS SACRIFICES THE SOCIALIST REVOLUTION TO THE INTERESTS OF THE PEASANTS. Although this theory has been developed to extreme counter-revolutionary lengths by Stalin, it was implied in Lenin's own policy, and probably only means that a real Socialist revolution in Russia was impossible.
5. DEMANDS PARTY DEMOCRACY.

The workers of the world were not much impressed or disturbed by the Anarchist persecutions. Down to the time of Trotsky's fall and exile, the Communist International commanded a tremendous enthusiasm in all proletarian centres of the world. This does not mean to say that it enjoyed the unanimous support of the thinking Communists of the world. The Anarchists of Russia and even in other countries tended to favour the peasantry as opposed to the proletariat. Many Socialists thought that this fact justified their persecution. To my mind, a Social Revolution that continues Siberia and a system of exile and imprisonment is a political, and not a Social Revolution. In course of time it is bound to degenerate to little more than a Palace Revolution. Stalin replaced the Czar as Hitler replaced the Kaiser.

If it is necessary to perpetuate the imprisonment of even counter-revolutionaries the perpetuation argues the strength of the counter-revolution. That in its turn argues the non-success of the revolution. Peasant Anarchist philosophy may well be beyond justification, but the strange historic fact remains that the government that persecuted the peasant Anarchists founded its revolution in a compromise with the peasants and developed a systematic peasant policy of proletarian retreat.

The terrible massacre of the Kronstadt sailors by Trotsky in March 1921, whom Trotsky had previously termed the flower of the Revolution, and the support of Trotsky by Zinoviev and Dibenko, was a shameless and shameful affair. The fortress and city were bombarded for ten days and it cannot be pretended that the sailors were moved by peasant ideas or that they were other than genuine Socialists or Communists. Trotsky's conduct was defended and even applauded in the Communist press of the world by Radek, who immediately after the October 1917 Revolution

boasted a luxurious apartment and maid-servant. Radek's apology no longer carries weight for time exposed him as a panderer. He defended Trotsky's own exile and expulsion and the persecution of Rakovsky, Zinoviev and Kamenev. Radek's 1921 apology was made worthless by his subsequent record and castigation by Trotsky. If we are to accept Radek's apology for Kronstadt in 1921, then we must accept Radek's apology for Stalinism and the Stalinist persecution of Trotsky from 1927 on to the time of his assassination. Radek's own trial and "confession" put him out of court entirely as a witness.

The Kronstadt massacre was succeeded a month later by the massacre of the Moscow Anarchists when Trotsky shelled their headquarters and finally abolished their propaganda. All this was justified on the ground that Anarchists were counter-revolutionists. Stalin has popularised this cry so thoroughly that no genuine revolutionist takes it seriously. Robespierre assassinated the French Revolution and finally himself by this very same parrot cry of counterrevolution. Men do embrace counter-revolutionary philosophy and they do pursue counter-revolutionary policies; but it does not follow that we must therefore give heed to every clamorous cry of counter-revolution when it is dictated by the hysterical needs of an aspiring bureaucrat, whose aim is to arrest the development of the revolution and to build his sect, or his party, or his clique into the edifice of power.

There were Communist elements, of a definite Anti-Parliamentarian kind, who found no place in the Communist International or else were allowed merely a subsidiary and altogether temporary representation at the opening sessions. It may be claimed therefore that the Communist International like the triumph of Leninism in Russia contained in itself the seeds of Stalinism and of later degeneration. That was not obvious at the beginning because the success in Russia of Lenin and Trotsky was an historical success just as the failure of Stalin is an historical failure. The function of Trotskyism is to direct proletarian attention to that failure and in that way to call our attention to the real object and nature of Communist agitation and struggle. For the purpose of comparison, and for this purpose only, and not because we accept the cry, "Back to Lenin," those of us who were Communists before the Russian Revolution of 1917, and remain Communists, now that revolution has passed into history, agree that the Stalin leadership registered the decline of the International to stagnation and death. We differ from Trotskyism in that the Trotskyists think that there was a time when the Communist International really lived as a healthy expression of the workers' struggle. We claim that the Communist International enjoyed only a feverish existence as the after-birth of the Russian Revolution. It was doomed to disaster and to death from the moment of its foundation for its very organisation made it impossible for it to function except as the ramification of the Russian Revolution.

The pet fallacy of Stalinism, "Socialism in One Country," meaning literally, "Capitalism and Dictatorship in Russia," was foreshadowed in every thesis of the Communist International. This fact was not realised by the sections that belonged to the Communist International and it may, therefore, be perfectly true that Trotsky reacted to ideas of Socialism, which were quite foreign to the understanding of Stalin. It is also correct to realise that large sections of the Communist comrades in Russia believed in the proletarian struggle and considered that the Communist International expressed that struggle. To these elements the difference between the two periods of the Communist International will be absolutely real. It is our duty to consider exactly what happened during the evolution of the Stalin leadership.

The Spanish crisis found the Communist International powerless to act because there was no Communist party and no Spanish proletarian policy. Stalinism confronted the fact of the Span-



ish Revolution with the same blankness of vision as was exhibited by the Second International in August 1914. In every other portion of the globe, even in places where the Comintern had boasted of its mass parties, or its parties on the road to embracing masses, the local section of the International, at the moment of the local crisis, writhed in the agony of impotence.

With insignificant exceptions, not one of the authentic leaders of so-called World Communism during the first years of its organised existence (1919–1924), was to be found in its ranks in January 1933. This comparison includes, and primarily relates to, the leaders of the Russian Party. Everywhere the Communist parties had become sieves into which ever new sections of the working-class were poured by the developing and permanent Capitalist crisis, only to be lost through the holes of bureaucratism and false bourgeois politics. Thirteen years after the founding of the Third International, the overwhelming majority of its greatly reduced membership had not been in the Party ranks for longer than two years; the old members had been lost or expelled.

This condition and development of the Communist International was not a private dispute but one that concerned the whole working-class. It raised several most important questions. There was the question of Anarchism and the class struggle, opposition to a burcaucracy claiming to be exercising the Dictatorship of the Proletariat. There was the fact that to-day there existed a definite Anti-Parliamentary movement that believed in the liquidation of the party in the revolutionary workers' struggle to emancipation and at the point of crisis. There was the question of Leninist-Trotskyism versus Stalinism. Arising out of that there was the further discussion : Is the question one of Stalinism or Leninism or is it one of Bolshevism or Communism? If it can be shown that Stalinism proceeds naturally from Leninism, then of course the issue is not what kind of Bolshevism does the worker support, but rather how quickly should Bolshevism be buried as a Social Democratic negation of Communism. The question of Marxism even arose. We were compelled to consider, whether, in certain phases, Stalinism was not the logical development of Marxism; whether even Marxism itself was not, in certain phases, a negation of Communism.

These questions were not the questions of proletarian despair, but of proletarian struggle and progress. That they arose in this fashion dates the difference in outlook, and even, too, the nature of the struggle that divides the proletariat of today from the proletariat to whom Marx and Engels addressed themselves in their striking and historic Manifesto of 1848.

We no longer discuss bourgeois parties and bourgeois literature, but we consider the history of the proletarian movemenet itself; and even then not the proletarian movement reconciling itself to Capitalism but the proletarian movement in various stages of insurrection. Strangely enough the literature of this movement is very largely in the English language. We follow the story of the rise, progress and decline of Trotskyism. The decline of Trotskyism differs historically from the decline of Stalinism. Trotskyism pours its genius like a stream into the waters of the proletarian revolution but Stalinism is but the fossil remains of a great revolution.

## 2. PARTY DEMOCRACY.

The Left Opposition rose in the Soviet Union, and took shape as a distinct grouping in 1923, headed by Trotsky. At that time, the Soviet Union was passing through what Trotsky termed, “the scissors crisis.” This was the crisis of the relative prices and therefore exchange values of manufactured articles and agricultural products. The problem was to bring prices in both sectors into harmony. Inability to solve this problem developed a crisis of unemployment, need, and resulting proletarian discontent which reflected itself in the Communist Party in the expression of dissatisfaction on the part of the members. The NEP had been put into effect in 1921. This had eliminated the atmosphere of War Communism from Russian economy, but it had not destroyed the spirit of dictatorship and military tyranny politically. The Dictatorship of the Proletariat really meant the Dictatorship of the Communist Party and this meant the Dictatorship of an inner circle within the party. The military regime imposed upon the party by the civil war and the Capitalist intervention was now allied to a policy that made concessions to the NEP men and to the peasants. The more divorced this party dictatorship was from a proletarian revolutionary struggle, the more dangerous it became to proletarian development. In this fact is summarised the entire subsequent history of the progress from Leninism to Stalinism.

During the war period the freely elected party apparatus that had arisen during the revolution gave place automatically to a vast hierarchy of officials. The initiative and independence of the rank and file party member were stifled. The entrenchment of the growing bureaucratic caste produced clandestine factional groupings in the party. These groupings reflected the deep dissatisfaction of the party membership but their cabals did not succeed in expressing party democracy. Before illness compelled Lenin to withdraw from active party life, he openly denounced the danger of bureaucratism and indicated the need of workers’ democracy inside the party. He urged Trotsky to purge the party of this destructive cancer. The Tenth Party Congress under Lenin’s direction adopted a vigorous resolution on the need of party democracy which the Twelfth Party Congress re-affirmed. The resolution remained a dead letter and the bureaucracy entrenched itself. Bucharin supported the bureaucracy at this time. Nevertheless, in one of his speeches, he gave a vivid picture of the bureaucratic conditions prevailing. He declared that every investigation was decided by a question from the chair, “Who is for?” or “Who is against?” “The result was all “elections to the party organisation have become elections in quotation marks,” since the voting took place without discussion and according to this formula of for and against, it being a bad business to speak against the authorities.

With this confession before us, we can understand why Trotsky found it futile and impossible to send suggestions, that were never considered, to the sub-committee of the C.C. that were born out of the strike-wave crisis of the summer of 1923. The bureaucracy drove him into non-attendance and then made the fact of his non-attendance a basic argument against his activity of protest.

On October 8, 1923, Trotsky addressed a letter to the Central Committee of the party on this question of democracy and also on the condition of national economy. Forty six of the Commu-

nist Party leaders followed this up by signing another letter of protest dealing with the same issue. This group attacked the C.C. for having “instituted a regime of factional discipline,” which meant the assassination of party democracy. The group developed also its economic proposals of proletarian “Dictatorship of Industry.” Preobrajensky, who supported Trotsky, worked out the theory of struggle against the peasant counter-revolution and stranglehold on the proletarian revolution, in *The New Economics*.

On December 5, 1923, the party leadership, which included Trotsky, *unanimously* adopted a resolution on the questions at issue. Three days later Trotsky collected the articles he had written on the matters in dispute and published them as a pamphlet, addressed to the consideration of local party conferences, under the title of *The New Course*. Supporting the resolution, Trotsky denounced the party leadership, and declared the task of the party was to “subordinate the apparatus to itself.” He paralleled the degeneration of the Bolshevik “old guard” with the degeneration of the leaders of the Second International. He added that the “bankrupt representatives of the apparatus” were prepared, at that moment, “bureaucratically to make the revolution null and void.” He impeached the “factionalism” of the bureaucracy.

Against this pamphlet, it was complained that to oppose the party to its apparatus was not Bolshevism; to blame the apparatus for factionalism was anti-Bolshevism; and to compare the Bolshevik leadership with that of the Second International was to accuse the Bolshevik leaders of “growing grey in the fight *for* and *not* the fight *against*” Opportunism.” It must not be forgotten that, in the succeeding years, as the Bolshevik leaders were discarded one by one, *in every case, Stalinism accused them of life-long opportamism!*

Trotsky’s warnings were denounced as slanders by the section of the Bolshevik “Old Guard” and “Leninist Central Committee” which broke into dozens of fragments in the years that followed. As the individual members succumbed to the persecution of the bureaucratic machine, they must have mused on Trotsky’s application of Lenin’s phrase, that “history knows degenerations of all sorts.”

The Trotsky programme for restoring workers’ democracy was coupled with a definite policy of planned economy for speeding up the industrialisation of agriculture. The plan idea met with astounding antagonism from the bureaucracy but ten years after was accepted and applied efficiently by the Stalinist apparatus and popularised under the title of the Five Year Plan. The fact that it had been advanced by the Trotskyist Opposition and ridiculed by the Stalin majority is forgotten most conveniently. The Stalinist view, and the essence of the dispute, was stated well by Zinoviev, at that time a violent opponent of Trotsky, and the spokesman of the Stalin majority faction, in his speech of January 6, 1924.

Zinoviev spoke of Trotsky’s “obstinate persistence in clinging to a beautiful plan” and declared it to be “intrinsically nothing else than a considerable concession to the old-fashioned view that a good plan is a universal remedy, the last word in wisdom.”

**” Trotsky’s standpoint has greatly impressed many students. We want to have transport affairs managed by Dzherzhinsky; economics by Rykov; finance by Sokolnikov; TROTSKY, ON THE OTHER HAND, WANTS TO CARRY OUT EVERYTHING WITH THE AID OF A ‘STATE PLAN’.”**

Trotsky’s theory of a State plan later became the policy of the Stalin group and the sole justification for its continuation in power. The Stalin majority borrowed wholesale the very programme against which they had mobilised the whole Communist movement years before, and for urging which Trotsky was exiled. With the apparatus at their command, the party leaders were able to

obtain a majority for their demagogy. The control of the machinery of the Communist International facilitated the “ voting down “ of the opposition in the so-called parties abroad. Trotsky was voted down by a membership of which not one tenth had seen or read what he actually wrote and stood for. The majority was rigged against Trotskyism with comparative ease largely because of the October 1923 retreat of the Communist Party in Germany. This event developed hysteria in the ranks of the Comintern, intensified the reaction in the Soviet union, and decided the passing of the Communist International.

### 3. THE LESSONS OF OCTOBER.

The situation in Germany in the autumn of 1923 was favourable to the rise of a revolutionary proletariat. But the Communist Party conducted a relentless war against the Anti-Parliamentary K.A.P.D., which had been born in 1920, owing to the collapse, as an organisation of struggle, of the K.P.D, favoured by Moscow, and used the romance of the Russian Revolution as a shield for its own arrogant ineptitude. The German bourgeoisie was able to extricate itself from an “inextricable situation,” as Trotsky said, because the Communist Party did not realise that the position was “inextricable,” and so failed to act. The revolutionary crisis was reached in October, and the Communist Party went on recruiting, and remained passive, admiring its accumulation of dead forces. It developed no initiative and watched the bourgeoisie overthrow of the Socialist-Communist coalition of Governments in Saxony and Thuringia. At the critical moment, the Communist leaders retreated and threw both the party and the masses into despair. Responsibility for this debacle rested on the shoulders, primarily, of the Communist International bureaucracy and the leaders of the Russian Communist Party. Stalin, Zinoviev, and Bucharin were more responsible than Brandler and Thalheimer, who became the scapegoats.

Writing to Zinoviev, in August 1923, Stalin declared that if the Communists attempted to seize power, they would crash, and receive “a teaching demonstration” that would become “a general slaughter.” He urged that the Fascists must be allowed “*to attack first; this will rally the whole working-class around the Communists. Germany is not Bulgaria. Besides, the Fascists in Germany, according to the data I have, are weak. In my estimation, the Germans must be restrained, not spurred on.*”

Germany was Bulgaria over again but much worse; and Fascism was *not* weak. Instead of encouraging Brandler and Thalheimer to pursue a policy of struggle, Stalin urged on them a studied programme of inaction.

The official report of the September 1923 Plenum of the Russian Party Central Committee, issued weeks before the German retreat, recorded, in terms of condemnation, Trotsky’s view of the matter, as stated in a speech made “before leaving the session of the Central Committee.” The report declared that this speech “greatly excited all the Central Committee members.” Trotsky stated that “the leadership of the German Communist Party is worthless, its Central Committee permeated with fatalism and sleepyheadedness,” and “that under these conditions the German revolution is condemned to failure.” The official report proceeded to describe this statement as a “phillipic called forth by an incident ... which had nothing to do with the German revolution” and “was a contradiction to the objective state of affairs.” The report also said: “*This speech produced an astounding impression.*”

Not Trotsky’s speech, terrible in its accuracy of forecast and depiction of reality, but the facts on which it was based should have produced the impression.

After the German October defeat had confirmed Trotsky’s clarity of understanding, Stalin and Zinoviev denounced Brandler and Thalheimer as being exclusively responsible for the course

which the Comintern leadership had directed. For what happened, and for what did not happen, a simple bureaucratic declaration made Brandler culpable.

Trotsky examined the German October, in his brilliant work, "Lessons of October," in which he compared the Bolshevik upheaval of 1917 with the 1923 defeat in Germany. It is interesting to note that the month before the German defeat, the Bulgarian Communist Party had succumbed. This fact explains Stalin's incautious observation to Zinoviev.

Summarising his study of October victory and defeat, Trotsky declared that the typical, and not particular, feature of the German defeat, was the danger of "crisis of revolutionary leadership on the eve of transition to armed uprising." He showed how "the depths of the proletarian party" were "far less susceptible to bourgeois public opinion" than "elements of the party leadership" and "its middle layers" who unfailingly succumb "to the material and ideological terror of the bourgeoisie." Whereas "only a minority" of the Russian Party leadership "was seized" by this dangerous irresolution and vacillation in 1917, and "were overcome by the sharp energy of Lenin," in Germany the entire leadership vacillated. And so the revolutionary situation was passed by. The business of the Communists was to learn the *Lessons of October* and so limit such fatal crises.

The Stalin faction wished to avoid facing this analysis. When Trotsky referred to the Russian wing of 1917, it was known that he was censuring Zinoviev, Kamenev, Rykov, Tomsky, Stalin and company who, in the months preceding the Bolshevik uprising, opposed the idea of insurrection towards which Lenin and Trotsky were steering the party. Stalin and his henchmen knew that an examination into the German retreat would prove that the right wing of 1917 had repeated its failure in 1923. Consequently the leadership of the Communist International demanded that the whole International outlaw Trotsky and his writings.

An interesting example of the excommunication at work was offered by the voting in the American party. The "Lessons of October" was not printed by the party in the English language and 99 per cent. of the membership and leadership of the American party knew nothing about its contents. But they cast the solemn vote in condemnation of Trotsky's view. It was taken for granted that the Opposition was wrong.

## 4. SOCIALISM IN ONE COUNTRY.

As late as the 5<sup>th</sup> Congress of the Comintern, in 1924, Stalin, Zinoviev, Bucharin, and other Trotsky-baiters, denied that the German defeat had given the bourgeoisie of Central Europe the breathing space it sought and needed. They defined it as a mere episode and declared that the Opposition had lost faith in the Revolution. It was but a step from this denunciation to the assertion that the revolutionary situation was right ahead. From this flamboyant optimism, Stalinism progressed rapidly to the pessimistic belief that the Revolution in Western Europe was postponed indefinitely. The Stalinist bureaucracy became the liquidators; and so they developed the absurd theory of "Socialism in One Country." By its very formulation, this theory registers the fact that its authors had lost faith in the world revolution. "Socialism in One Country" is the doctrine of capitalist stabilisation. Losovsky, as head of the Red International of Labour Unions, declared, on behalf of Stalinism, that the stabilisation of Europe would last for decades. This was a denial of the Socialist dictum that we are living in a period of wars and proletarian revolution. Lenin certainly embraced this dictum; but it does not follow that he never flirted with the idea of building Socialism in Russia.

Until 1924, the Utopian idea of "Socialism in One Country" was never entertained seriously by the Communist movement. Marx and Engels had attacked the idea as Utopian and even Stalin admitted that these pioneers of scientific Socialism never considered the possibility of a national Socialist Utopia. Stalin declared that the idea was "formulated first by Lenin in 1915."

Stalinists claim that this theory of "Socialism in One Country," meaning Russia, was a matter of vital difference between Lenin and Trotsky since 1915. On April 12, 1916, writing in his paper, *Nashe Slavo*, Trotsky replied to Lenin and challenged his conception as "national limitedness." He declared that the Western Capitalist powers were "ripe for the social revolution," but that Russia, Africa, and Asia were not. Trotsky added :

**"To examine the prospects of social revolution in a national framework would mean becoming a victim of that same NATIONAL LIMITEDNESS which constitutes the essence of social-patriotism... To struggle for the maintenance of the national base of the revolution by methods which break up the international connections of the proletariat means, in fact, undermining the revolution."**

In 1922, Lenin informed the Moscow Soviet that "we have dragged Socialism into everyday life" and prophesied that "Russia of N.E.P. will become Socialist Russia." This statement was false and the fact that Lenin uttered it does not make it true.

The same year Trotsky republished his 1915-16 articles, under the title, "A Peace Programme," with an "Afterword," in which he declared that Russia had "not come to the creation of a Socialist order and "had "not even approached it." He added that "the genuine rise of Socialist economy in Russia will become possible only after the victory of the proletariat in the most important countries in Europe."

Four years later, Trotsky repeated this view, and argued rightly that the theory of building Socialism in one country is “ the theoretical justification of national limitedness.” In 1933, he denounced the theory as “ a petty bourgeois Utopia.”

The Stalinists urge that this is not an attack on Stalin but on Lenin. Even so, such an attack would not be criminal. It may prove that Trotsky is not a “ Leninist,” but it does not establish Lenin’s reputation as a Socialist, and it certainly destroys his claim to be regarded as a clear social thinker.

It is contended that the only concession made to the necessity for world revolution by Lenin was the admission that the only *final* guarantee that it could exist once it had been built was in the overthrow of the Capitalist states, i.e., world revolution in order to protect Russia against military attack.

The reply to this apology for nationalist error is simple. It is to denounce the absurdity of this one country theory, irrespective of responsibility for authorship. Lenin’s attitude did contribute to the development of this reactionary thesis, but there can be no question that history left Stalin to champion and exalt the absurd notion to a vision of “ revolutionary “ achievement.

Lenin played a most important part in the 1917 revolution, but there is not a single reference to this theory in the programme of the Bolshevik party at the time. The programme of the Young Communist League of Russia, adopted in 1921, under the supervision of Bucharin and the Central Committee of the party, declares that Russia “ can arrive at Socialism only through the World Proletarian Revolution, which epoch we have now entered.” The 4<sup>th</sup> Congress of the Comintern in 1922, resolved unanimously that the Russian Revolution “ reminds the proletarians of all countries that the Proletarian Revolution can never be completely victorious within one single country, but that it must win the victory Internationally, as the World Revolution. ”

Three years before this, Bucharin had declared that the establishment of Socialism in Russia could “ begin only with the victory of the proletariat in several large countries.” Stalin, in the second edition of his “ Problems of Leninism,” advanced the cautious formula that “ the victorious proletariat of one country,” after it “ had consolidated its power and won over the peasantry for itself,” “ can and must build up the Socialist Society.” This statement is removed far from the unrestrained nationalistic gospel of “ Socialism in One Country,” of developed Stalinism. Even so, the formula has been substituted for almost definite opposite statement in the first edition of this work. Here Stalin declared that the final victory of Socialism for the organisation of Socialist construction could not be attained in one country, but required the “ joint efforts “ of the proletariat of several advanced countries. Which is, of course, the correct view.

The theory of Socialism in one country was not written into the programme of the Communist International until 1928. It had been advanced by Stalin since 1924, and was associated with an unbroken chain of proletarian defeats. The theory undermined the proletarian struggle towards the world revolution and substituted counter-revolutionary political dictatorship over the proletariat for the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat towards a world of freedom. It made a farce of the revolutionary claims of the Soviet Union and Socialist Republic. One of the events which illustrated the growing menace of the theory was the British General Strike of 1926.



## 5. THE BRITISH GENERAL STRIKE, 1926.

Stalinism continued its rake's progress of German debacle and "Socialism in One Country," by pursuing a policy of studied disaster in connection with the British General Strike of 1926. This British policy was the inevitable consequence of the Comintern's German fiasco and its Russian absurdity.

Supporting Stalin's statement that the German proletariat had suffered no defeat, Zinoviev advised the 5<sup>th</sup> Congress of the Comintern, 1924, that Germany was "approaching a sharpened civil war." This was not a discredited prediction, but a braggart's gesture of bad faith; for the time of prediction had passed and the facts told their own tale of counter-revolutionary triumph. It was not possible for the leaders of the Comintern to save their faces by crying in more trenchant tones their slogan of hysteria: "*Socialism in One Country*." To maintain their hold on the Russian proletariat, and to ramify their position in other countries, the Russian leaders had to invent revolutionary phenomena and to paint in revolutionary colours movements and men who had nothing in common with the revolution. Judas moved in the direction of Judas; and they had to identify themselves with the discredited Labour politicians left over from the Second International and petty bourgeois thinkers who were regarded as the literary messiahs in garden cities and "so-correct" intellectual centres. The World League Against Imperialism was formed by the Comintern as a refuge for the members of this intriguing alliance, and the Anglo-Russian Committee was called into existence to prop up the fantastic edifice of the 5<sup>th</sup> Congress. The liquidation of Communism proceeded.

The Anglo-Russian Committee was formed as a result of the British Trade Union Delegation visit to the Soviet Union at the end of 1924. It was composed of the Councils of the Trade Unions of Britain and Russia. For a year prior to the British General Strike, the Communist Party of Great Britain proclaimed the imbecile slogan: "All Power to the General Council." Sunday after Sunday, the *Sunday Worker* popularised the slogan and it was the watchword of the Communist Party meetings. The reason for this slogan was the reason for the alliance itself. Stalinism had converted the Communist Party into a Soviet Border Patrol and the world revolution, and the struggle of the British proletariat, were subsidiary to the "Socialism in One Country" ideal, to the entrenchment of the Soviet bureaucracy.

As I write, I have before me a copy of the *Sunday Worker* for May 24, 1925. It commences a series of articles, entitled falsely, "Leaders of the Left," and "No. 1" is "A. B. Swales," then President of the Trades Union Congress, a member of the General Council, and also E.C. Member of the A.E.U. In 1924, he was British Fraternal delegate to the A.F.L. The Moscow subsidised *Sunday Worker* said:

**"It will be seen that he had held every high office in the trade union movement. And yet — and this is his strongest point as a Labour leader — he is still an ardent rank and filer and views every big problem from the angle of the Worker at the bench.**

**"Many superficial people when they are dressed 'in a little brief authority' become very 'uppish' and begin to ape the mannerisms of 'society.' Not so our friend Swales.**

**He is at one with the Workers, body and soul, in their everyday struggle. And he has nothing but contempt for those leaders who, when they leave the workshop, forget the masses and their struggle...**

**“ At the Trades Union Congress to be held in September at Scarborough he will deliver the Chairman’s speech. Knowing him as we do we prophesy that this will not be a thing made up of rhetoric fireworks – it will be something much more important. It will be something stated in plain blunt language, and it will give the whole movement a bold and clever lead. It will personify the simple and rugged strength of a far-seeing and courageous leader.**

**“ Swales is not one of your ‘ standoffish’ kind. At a social gathering he is the soul of merriment and can sing a good song, in a splendid resonant voice, with the best of them.”**

Stalin and Bucharin endowed the Anglo-Russian Committee with capacities and objectives that were not only beyond it, but alien to its very nature. In 1926, its year of collapse and patriotic failure, Stalin depicted it as the staunch bulwark of the world-proletariat against “ Imperialist war in general,” which it most clearly was not. Stalin added “ *and against an intervention in our country especially on the part of England, the mightiest of Imperial States of Europe.*”

This phrase is the real explanation of Stalin’s belief in the Anglo-Russian Committee, this “ organisation of broad movement of the working-class “ – for what?

Hymns of praise were sung to Purcell, Cook, Hicks, Swales, Tillet, and Citrine, as the revolutionary organisers of the proletariat in all the languages of the Comintern. The Trotskyist Opposition maintained that it was a false idea to set these British Labour Lieutenants of Capitalism on a revolutionary pedestal. The Opposition added, with a scathing accuracy, that the “ more acute the international situation becomes the more the Anglo-Russian Committee will be transformed into a weapon of English and International Imperialism.” Stalinism denounced this attitude as antagonism to the United Front, and paid servitude to Sir Austen Chamberlain !

Purcell needed the alliance of the Soviets as a shield from the attacks of the revolutionists in Britain. The Soviets hailed him as one of the organisers of the struggle against the military intervention which alone could prevent Russia from building the Socialist Society. The Trade Union bloc quickly became a political bloc between the reformists of England and the Russian party bureaucracy. This bloc lasted not for a moment but survived the collapse of the General Strike and was maintained by Stalin until well after the Berlin Conference of the Anglo-Russian Committee, held in April 1927.

Into the details of the General Strike of 1926, which was brought about by the Miners’ Strike, one need not go in the present pamphlet. That has been dealt with by the present writer fully elsewhere. After nine days of resistance on the part of the workers, that darling of the C.P., the General Council of the Trade Unions, betrayed the struggle and its members made one mad collective rush to Whitehall to confer with the Baldwin Government on how to crush the strike. With patriotic frenzy, these “ Left Labour Leaders “ hastily wiped off the red veneer with which the Comintern had coated them. The financial aid from the Soviet Union was rejected with indignation as “ that damned Russian gold.” Purcell and Swales dropped the Red Flag with ungracious haste in favour of the Union Jack. Instead of being “ the organisatory centre that embraces the international proletariat for the struggle “ they proved to be the reliable prop of the British ruling class against the starving and struggling workers. The only illuminating event of the struggle was Zinoviev’s excellent analysis of the position of Cook; and this analysis was in direct opposition

to the views advanced by all members of the Stalinist faction and to the policy of the Communist Party in Great Britain. It was one of Zinoviev's brilliant deviations.

During the General Strike days of struggle and treachery, it may be said that the Anglo-Russian Committee was as certainly worthless to the cause of Socialism in Russia as it was to the cause of Socialism in Britain. It had a distinct value only for the British Trade Union leaders and for the British ruling class. Purcell, Swales and Hicks utilised to a maximum the prestige accruing to them out of their formal and inexpensive collaboration with the Bolshevik representatives on the Anglo-Russian Committee. Even when the General Strike had proved a disaster, Stalin and Bucharin still refused to break with these betrayers of the working class. When at last the Stalinists did oppose the Purcells, they then denounced not only the leaders but also described Social-Fascists the workers who had been betrayed into following these leaders by the policy of the Comintern and the Anglo-Russian Committee.

The Anglo-Russian Committee made no protest against the bombardment of Nanking by British gunboats; against the police raid upon the Arcos, the Soviet trading organisation in London; against the treachery of the betrayal of the General Strike; but it did adopt a resolution in which the Russians and Englishmen declared that the only representatives and spokesmen of the Trade Union movement were the Congress of the British Trades Union and its General Council: and that the fraternal union incorporated in the Anglo-Russian Committee could not and must not violate or restrict the rights and autonomy of the respective Trade Union movements of each country; nor interfere in any manner whatsoever in their internal affairs.

The Anglo-Russian Committee was a proletarian classic failure. It defended Labour Fakirism in England; identified itself with bureaucracy and despotism in Russia, and proved the natural prelude to the tragedy of the Chinese Revolution.

## 6. THE CHINESE TRAGEDY.

The collapse of the great Chinese revolutionary movement of 1925–27 is a standing historical condemnation of the Communist International. Clothed in the formal authority of the Russian Revolution and the Comintern, Stalin and Bucharin prohibited the Chinese proletariat from struggling for power. They used the prestige of the Russian Revolution to destroy the Chinese Revolution and they employed the Soviets of Russia to prevent the formation of the Soviets of China. They made history both repeat and parody itself; for they played exactly the same part during the Chinese struggle as they had played in the Bolshevik discussions from April to May 1917, when they objected to the very insurrection that made possible finally Stalin's rise to power. They translated Menshevism into the language of Chinese politics. Napoleon III, as Marx said, was the nephew burlesquing the uncle and his coup d'état was history repeating itself; once a tragedy, and then a farce. Stalin and Bucharin presented the farce first and the tragedy afterwards. Napoleon III had abdicated before the Commune; but the Russian "Napoleon The Little's" sought prestige from the capitalist butchery, whilst claiming to be the Communards perpetuating the Commune.

Sun Yat Sen flourished 1866 to 1925. He was the father of the Chinese Nationalist movement and founded the Kou Min Tang. In 1911, he became Provisional President of the Chinese Republic and was head of the Canton Nationalist Government until his death.

Kou Min Tang means, literally, the People's Party. It was founded and organised under that name by Sun Yat Sen in 1911–12. It had a petty bourgeois, nationalist, semi-Socialist, and very semi-Socialist foundation. Under Sun Yat Sen its platform consisted of three planks: Nationalism, Democracy, and Socialism. Its successors forgot the second and third planks and defined the first as Imperialism, Militarism, and Power. The Communists entered the Kou Min Tang in 1922, when it was reorganised, and admitted into the Communist International as a sympathetic party.

As early as 1923, Trotsky was opposed resolutely to the rising Communist Party of China joining the Kou Min Tang, and he was against the acceptance of the Kou Min Tang into the Comintern. Radek and Zinoviev opposed him in this attitude and Rakovsky was in Paris and unacquainted with the facts and incapable of exercising any influence. In 1925, Trotsky again proposed formally that the Communist Party leave the Kou Min Tang. This was rejected unanimously by the other members of the Political Bureau. Up to 1926, Trotsky voted independently and against all others in the Political Bureau on this question. During this year and 1927, he had uninterrupted conflicts with Zinoviev and his supporters on the matter; but in April 1927 Zinoviev embraced the Opposition viewpoint, and presented his thesis on the Chinese Revolution to the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U. on the 15<sup>th</sup> of that month. By way of reward, he was removed from his position in the Communist International and the party's Political Bureau and expelled from the party. He capitulated and was given a minor administrative post. Obviously, the Chinese question, i.e., the support of the Kou min Tang, was the acid test of Bolshevism at this time.

The American *Daily Worker*, in its issue for April 23, 1925, published the death-bed message of Sun Yat Sen, under the heading:

“SUN YATSEN IN LAST MESSAGE GREETED SOVIET.”  
“ LENIN SHOWED THE WAY TO FREEDOM.”

The communication was dated Peking, April 22, and stated that, “ feeling the approach of his death, Dr. Sun Yat Sen called the members of the Central Committee of the Kou Min Tang” together and had a “ message drafted to the Central Executive of the U.S.S.R.,” which he signed with his own hand. This message proved that Sun Yat Sen’s outlook was similar to that of Mazzini. Like Mazzini he expounded sincere sentiments, but their very sincerity condemned his understanding and revealed his idealistic inability to visualise the social conflict. Sun Yat Sen simply did not realise the meaning of Socialism and possessed no grasp of the Class Struggle. He is not to be condemned for his failure to understand the real issue and he may be worthy of praise for his allegiance to principles that took him into exile and made him the subject of possible assassination for many years. The loftiness of his idealism did not make him the propagandist of the poor and it was absurd for any advocate of proletarian emancipation to place his faith in Sun Yat Sen’s programme. It is not Sen that should be condemned for entertaining and proclaiming his ideas but the Comintern for deeming him an ally. That gesture of welcome to the Chinese leader established the futility and impotence of the Russian leaders. But Sen was succeeded by leaders who were unworthy of being ranked with him for idealism. With him they proceeded from the standpoint that China was a semi-colonial country, subjected to the yoke of an alien imperialism. They played their part in the struggle not as prophets but as adventurers. To honour these successors of the founder of the Kou Min Tang was to identify the Comintern with a programme of action that was a long way removed even from the ideals of Sun Yat Sen. The compromise was not only fatal, but it represented a mortal degeneracy.

The text of Sun Yat Sen’s message was as follows :

**“ My Dear Comrades:**

**As I lie here, with a malady that is beyond men’s skill my thoughts turn to you and to the future of my party and my country.**

**You are the head of a union of free republics which is the real heritage that the immortal Lenin has left to the world of the oppressed peoples. Through this heritage, the victims of imperialism are destined to secure their freedom and deliverance from an international system whose foundations lie in ancient slaveries and wars and injustices.**

**I am leaving behind me a party which I hoped would be associated with you in the historic work of completely liberating China and other exploited countries from this imperialist system. Fate decrees that I must leave the task unfinished and pass it on to those who, by remaining true to the principles and teachings of the party, will constitute my real followers.**

**I have, therefore, enjoined the Kuomintang to carry on the work of the national revolutionary movement in order that China may be freed from the semi-colonial status which imperialism has imposed upon her. To this end I have charged the party to keep in constant touch with you, and I look with confidence to the continuance of the sup-**

**port that your government has heretofore extended to my country.**

**In bidding farewell to you, dear comrades, I wish to express the fervent hope that the day may soon dawn when the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics will greet, as a friend and ally, a strong and independent China and the two allies may together advance to victory in the great struggle for the liberation of the oppressed peoples of the world.**

**With fraternal greetings,**

**(Signed) Sun Yat Sen."**

If Lenin showed the way to freedom in the sense that Sun Yat Sen understood, it must be clear that Leninism was a departure from Marxism and certainly the antithesis of the proletarian revolution. The Comintern was pleased at Sen's tribute and was quite willing to deserve it by wholesale departure from the principles of proletarian struggle. It accepted the party of Sun Yat Sen and declared that it was the embodiment of the bloc of four classes in the Chinese nation; the workers, the peasants, the petty bourgeoisie, and the bourgeoisie itself. Stalin declared that the alien oppression was felt by all classes in the Chinese nation with equal severity, and that the Chinese bourgeoisie must be supported by the masses of workers and peasants in the revolt and war against foreign Imperialism. This revolt necessitated a revolutionary anti-Imperialist United Front centred around the Kou Min Tang. The Chinese Communists were ordered to accept the decisions of the Nationalist Government which established compulsory arbitration, and they were warned by Moscow not to organise Soviets because that would menace the "revolutionary centre" in China.

This Moscow policy led directly to the massacre of the vanguard of the Chinese proletariat and the destruction of the Chinese Communist Party. The party was permitted to possess no independent class outlook. It was denied the right to criticise and it issued a joint manifesto with the Kou Min Tang in which it was announced that the difference between the two sections was only "in some details." Chiang Kai Shek conquered large sections of territory with the aid of the Communist Party and its gullible proletarian followers. Wherever he triumphed, the Communist Party and the Trade Unions remained illegal. Under his flag the rich peasants continued to own the land and the Chinese Communist Party continued to restrain the workers from protest whilst it urged the poor peasants not to rise in revolt. Moscow had willed that the function of the Chinese Party was to betray the proletarian and peasant masses and to remain impotent in the real revolutionary struggle. In opposition to Stalin's attitude, the Trotskyist Opposition declared that the Nationalist armies were not the armies of proletarian revolution and that the Kou Min Tang was not the party of the proletariat.

Aided and abetted by Stalin and the Chinese Communist Party, Chiang Kai Shek and the Kou Min Tang executed over one hundred thousand Chinese Communists in 1927-28. Only a short time before these massacres commenced, Stalin had sent Chiang Kai Shek his picture with an expression of regards and solidarity. The ink was hardly dry on the report of Stalin's Moscow speech praising Chiang Kai Shek as a revolutionary fighter, when the latter wiped out the very flower of the Chinese Revolution. The catastrophe that overtook the Chinese Revolution in 1927 was due to the policy of the Communist International. As the Kou Min Tang swept northwards and became more and more powerful, the Chiang Kai Sheks found it more and more necessary to turn their guns against the poor workers and peasants who were forming their own organisations and throwing up Soviets. The Kou Min Tang was not able to make its real gesture against the poor until it won Shanghai. Persuaded by the Communists that the Kou Min Tang was the party of the workers, the workers of Shanghai declared a general strike in April 1927, overthrew

the reactionaries and established a Socialist People's Government. The Communists were represented in this government and urged that word be sent to Chiang Kai Shek that it was now safe for him to enter the city. He took possession of the city, abolished the government and then proceeded to slaughter thousands of Communists and workers. The people recoiled in horror from the Kou Min Tang of Chiang Kai Shek, but the Communist International appealed to them not to lose faith in the Kou Min Tang but to support the Kou Min Tang of the left as opposed to the Kou Min Tang of the right. The Chinese workers were told to put their faith in the Christian General, Feng, and in the Kou Min Tang left-wing leader, Wang Chin Wein. A month later these generals had played the same game as Chiang Kai Shek, and further massacres of Communists and workers were reported from Nanking and Hankow. The Communist Party of China was not merely beheaded. It was literally disembowled.

When Chiang Kai Shek entered Shanghai to consecrate in proletarian blood the victory of the counter-revolution, the French Communist Party telegraphed its congratulations on the formation of the "Shanghai Commune." After the massacre, the Stalinists lauded the bourgeois generals, Feng Yu-hsiang and Wang Chin Wein in the Communist Party press of the world as "our own." It was not for nothing that at a later date the same Communist Party press conducted an infamous campaign of slander against the solitary Dutchman hero of the Reichstag trial, Van Der Lubbe. To be condemned by such hirelings is to be immortalised.

Down to August 1927, Trotsky's demand for an independent Communist Party in China was denounced by Stalin and Bucharin. The opposition adopted the same attitude towards the Wuhan government which was established by the so-called Lefts as it had adopted towards Chiang Kai Shek. But the Stalinists denounced the call of the Trotsky faction to the Chinese proletariat and peasants, to continue their instinctive fight for Soviets. At last the Communist International changed its course and tried desperately to save the situation by commanding the Chinese Party to prepare for an armed uprising. This uprising actually occurred in December 1927, in Canton, and Soviets were organised hastily and mysteriously from above. The masses actually played no part in these Soviets, which were formed artificially long after the revolution had been betrayed. The Stalinist organisers understood revolution so little that they did not realise that Soviets, to be Soviets, must rise spontaneously with the surging forward of the revolutionary movement itself. All that resulted from the desperate appeal of the Comintern to the Communists of China was a massacre of the workers in Canton that crushed the last remnants of the revolution.

The activity of the Communist International in China in 1927 was far worse than the conduct of the Mensheviks during the 1905 Russian Revolution. The Mensheviks never opposed the strikes of workmen or the formation of Soviets. They never opposed the formation of revolutionary grouping of the workers, independent of and critical of the capitalist class parties, and they never argued that the revolution was a democratic revolution against Czarism, and that therefore there must be a bloc of four classes. They never advised the workers not to build up their own press, and they never pretended that workers could take power through any other than the Marxist party. It may be that what the Mensheviks term the Marxist Party was not the party of genuine proletarian strength, but at least the idea was that there was a social war, and that the proletariat must throw up its own political organisation. Compare this attitude with that of the Communist International in China twenty-two years later, and then attempt to gauge to what depths the degeneration of Bolshevism has sunk.

The explanation of this degeneration is to be found in the interest as well as the ignorance of the Stalin bureaucracy. The strategy of proletarian struggle in China as in Russia, was to have

the revolution begin as a democratic revolution, and to let it end up as a socialist one. This was the theory of Marx, and although it may not be in accordance with the NEP policy of Lenin, at least he did not deny that it was his purpose. Lenin declared that only the proletariat could lead the struggle for democracy to victory, only the proletariat could lead the colonial struggle for independence, and only through Sovietism could freedom be established. Lenin's conception of the function of the Soviets as organs of post revolutionary industrial administration may have been hazy and unsound. Social administration is the true purpose of the Soviets, but Lenin erred in regarding the Soviets merely as organs of insurrection and civil war, which they are, and not as organs of administration, which is their final and higher function if democracy is to be established. The Soviets are the expression of democracy victorious as well as the instruments of achieving democracy. To recognise this fact is to liquidate the political party in the course of the struggle, and to conceive of the party as being subsidiary to the working class. Lenin lacked the ability to realise this simple truth, and to him the party was more important than the workers. The church was above the congregation and the priest was greater than God. Leninism led to Stalinism, but it did not involve that terrible abandonment of principles that characterised the conduct of the Russian leaders in their attitude towards the Chinese Revolution. That degeneracy came from the fact that the Russian leaders had abandoned the world revolution, and that the Communist International was organised, not to advance, but to arrest, the class struggle.

If the Chinese workers had overthrown the Kou Min Tang and destroyed Chiang Kai Shek and the other adventurers whom Stalin described as Red Generals, a real war against Western capitalism would have commenced. The Russian workers would have been called upon to have united themselves with the Chinese workers; the Russian Red Flag would have become the real Red Flag ; the Communist International would have become a genuine proletarian international; and Moscow would at last have become Red Moscow.

The bureaucrats, eager for diplomatic honours and foreign treaties, did not want anything so real to take place in the East. They only wanted " Socialism in One Country." They wanted recognition, peace, and power. Their motto was : " We have ours; why should we worry." They abandoned the Chinese proletariat as they abandoned the British proletariat in 1926, and the German proletariat in 1923, and as they were to abandon the German proletariat in 1933. They abandoned proletarian Internationalism for a yellow opportunist nationalism, whilst pretending to be the dictators of communist thought, action and struggle.



## 7. PLANNED ECONOMY.

The struggle of the Trotskyist Opposition for planned economy lasted from 1923 to 1928. Plan was introduced into Soviet economy in July 1920. The entire railroad system was a wreck, and Trotsky was given the job of restoring transportation. His famous “ Order No. 1042 “ was the first of a series of systematic decrees instructing measures which evolved order and regularity out of collapse and chaos. Lenin described Trotsky’s measures as examples of what had to be done in other branches of industry. Trotsky reported to the 8<sup>th</sup> Congress of the Soviets and with Emsharov prepared a thesis on the need for a plan in economy. This thesis was defended by Lenin. By 1923 Lenin had withdrawn from the party council and Trotsky stood alone in the Executive Council of the party in defence of planned economy. He insisted that the only material foundation for Socialism in Russia was the development of large machine industry, particularly in the realm of agriculture, and urged that such development was imperative in view of the retardation of the international revolution and the menace of the petty bourgeois strata of the village population. The reply of the bureaucracy was to launch a furious attack upon him. This attack was the beginning of the struggle for what afterwards became known as the Five Year Plan.

The Stalinists urged that the planned economy proposed by Trotsky was too extreme and that it menaced the building of Socialism in Russia. It is obvious that these objections were contradictory. Rykov reported to the 5<sup>th</sup> Congress of the Comintern that Trotsky’s proposals were a petty bourgeois deviation from Leninism and that the Russian party leadership was doing all that could be expected of it in the field of industry and agriculture. Stalin sneered that it was not a plan that the peasant needed but a good rain for his crops. Trotsky’s insistence on the danger of the rising Kulaks was derided.

At this time the Kulak was becoming the dominant figure in the countryside and was permeating the party with his ideology. The Leningrad proletariat became alarmed at the inroads made by him and his urban associates, the Nepmen. The Stalin-Bucharin leadership identified itself with the Kulak against the proletariat and so the Leningrad proletariat finally compelled Zinoviev, who had fathered the campaign against Trotskyism, to make a bloc with the 1923 opposition.

Kalinin denounced the poor peasants as “ lazy-good-for-nothings “ because they did not accumulate. The fact that the President of the Soviet Republic could advance the theory of private accumulation as opposed to planned economy illustrates the capitalistic basis of the Soviet Union. This mediocre official praised the industry of “ the economically powerful peasant,” the Kulak. Bucharin in a famous or infamous speech, according to the Socialist viewpoint, advised the well-to-do-peasants: “ Enrich yourselves.” *Pravda* in April, 1925, praised the Kulaks for being “ well-to-do” peasants and added that the “ economic possibilities of the Kulaks must be unfettered.” Continuing its opposition to planned economy, the Central Executive Committee of the Soviets, in 1926, granted the vote to the Kulaks, thus extending political recognition to the exploiting and actually money-lending peasants.

In 1925, Trotsky published his "Whither Russia," in which he urged that the Soviet Republic should adopt an independent agricultural reproduction based on collective accumulation. He declared that this would show a speed of industrial progress unknown and impossible under the private accumulation of ordinary capitalism. His prediction, which time showed to be a serious underestimation of the reality, was the subject for great merriment among the Stalinists. Stalin met the idea with ironical ridicule and Bucharin declared that along the lines of collective accumulation Russia would build Socialism "with the speed of the tortoise" or at a snail's pace.

The 1927 platform of the opposition was suppressed. The bureaucracy refused to have it printed, which only shows how the idea of the dictatorship of the proletariat can be used to suppress the enlightenment of the proletariat. The platform was circulated in mimeographed form and its circulation was made a crime punishable by imprisonment or exile. There are Bolsheviks in Siberia to-day who were sent there in 1927 for having circulated a proposal for planned economy which Stalin was compelled to adopt, in a corrupted and perverted form in 1929. These Bolsheviks joined the old Bolsheviks who had been persecuted in 1920 or 1923 for developing a definite Anti-Parliamentarian programme; and they must have joined some Anarchists who had been sent into exile for alleged peasant counter-revolution. How any peasant counter-revolution could exceed in reaction the reaction of the policy of Stalinism it is difficult to understand.

A first Five Year Plan was elaborated on behalf of the Stalinists by Rykov and Krzhizhanovsky. It was the answer to the Opposition and it was virtually the negation of all idea of planned economy. The timid worthless proposal suggested an annual growth of 9 per cent. for the first year, with a decreasing percentage to 4 per cent. for the last year of the plan. The Trotskyist Opposition demanded a categorical condemnation of this plan, and proposed a 20 per cent. annual growth. Six years later the bolder proposal proved an entirely moderate figure compared with the reality.

Answering the Stalinists, the Opposition proposed to raise its funds by a forced loan from the Kulaks. Thereupon the Stalinists raised the hue and cry against "the counterrevolutionary Trotskyists." Stalin, Rykov, and Kuybischev issued a signed manifesto to the whole Russian people, announcing that the Opposition proposed "to rob the peasantry." In the cities, Stalin and Bucharin assured the disturbed proletarians that there was no danger to be feared from the Kulaks owing to their "insignificant percentage." The need for collectivisation, or what Lenin pretended was State Capitalism controlled by a proletarian state, was minimised to vanishing point. As late as 1928, the principal agrarian "specialist" of the Stalinist apparatus, Yakovlov, the Commissar for Agriculture, declared that collective farming would for years to come, "*remain little islets in the sea of private peasant farms.*" The Opposition were all expelled at the 15<sup>th</sup> Party Congress and Rykov hectorated the expelled leaders with the question: "*If the Kulak is so strong why hasn't he ... ?*"

Rykov did not have long to wait. A few months later the Rykov-Stalin Five Year Plan was revised completely, thus justifying the attack upon its inadequacy. If, later, the Russian Five Year Plans revealed essential, positive features, this fact was due to the five year unremitting struggle of the expelled Trotskyist Opposition. Converting the Stalinists to even an elementary idea of the need for planned economy was itself a Five Year Plan.

## 8. THE RIGHT WING'S FATE.

The ebb tide of reaction was reached by the end of 1927. The outlook of the international proletariat was turning towards the Left. Early in 1928 the “ bloodless Kulak uprising “ disturbed the Russian workers and pressed the party leadership towards the Left. Stalin felt the time had come to sacrifice the Right Wing.

He made cautious attacks upon obscure representatives and so undermined the authority of his intended victim, but he did not make his frontal attack upon the Right Wing leadership until 1929–30. He then attacked Rykov, Bucharin and Tomsy, and presented these three leaders to the workers as the banner-bearers of the capitalist restoration. Zinoviev’s successor, the head of the Communist International, the head of the Soviet Government, and the leader of the Soviet Trade Unions, the man who had been so prominent in the Anglo-Russian Committee, were denounced by Stalin as the agents of the Thermidorian counter-revolution.

For six years Stalin had been in indissoluble alliance with this trio and their indictment was an indictment of himself, and his centrist faction. He borrowed the arguments of Trotskyism and was accused in reply of being a Trotskyist. Trotsky foretold this development in 1926.

The entire 15<sup>th</sup> Party Congress condemned the Opposition panic-mongers. Molotov, Stalin’s intimate, impatiently defended Rykov in December, 1927, with the declaration that the Kulak was nothing new, adding : “ *It exists, and there is no need to speak about it.*” A month later witnessed the “ bloodless uprising.”

Feeling that they were defended by Bucharin, Stalin, Molotov and Rykov, the leaders of the Soviet Government and the leaders of the Comintern, the Kulaks refused to turn over their hoarded stocks of grain unless the Soviets yielded to their price demands. They proclaimed a general strike and declared their intention of starving the cities, the proletarian centres, into submission. The Soviet Government thereupon determined to requisition grain from the villages by armed force. The frightened bureaucrats took flight from the rank opportunism of their Kulak flirtation to sheer adventurism. Bucharin, Rykov and Tomsy had to go the way of Zinoviev, Kamenev and Trotsky.

## 9. “GORILLA” ADVENTURISM.

The Stalinist period of “gorilla” adventurism commences with the 9<sup>th</sup> Plenum of the Communist International early in 1928. It based its arguments on a complete misunderstanding of the importance of parliamentarism. The vote cast for the Communist Party in Germany had increased. So also had the vote cast for the Social Democracy. This voting was interpreted as a first sign of working class resurgence. Inspired by this illusion, the 9<sup>th</sup> Plenum turned its eyes towards China, and there discovered the rise of a “new and higher” stage of the Chinese Revolution. At this time China was in the throes of counter-revolution.

Undisturbed by the Chinese tragedy and incapable of visioning what was to happen in Germany, the Plenum announced through the medium of Thaelmann and others, that the working masses throughout the world were becoming “more and more radicalised.” It is to be believed, and hoped, that in the course of time this statement will become correct. As an observation of what was occurring in 1928, it left much to be desired in the matter of accuracy.

The sixth Congress was held in the middle of 1928. It carried the absurdities of the 9<sup>th</sup> Plenum a step further. Trotsky presented to this Congress a warning against the light-minded conception of an automatic horizontal progress of the revolutionary movement throughout the world. This warning was not permitted by the official faction to be passed on to the assembled delegates.

The sixth Congress had several points of similarity with the fifth, which was held in 1924, after the defeat in Germany. On the questions of the nearness of revolution, the relation of social democracy to Fascism, Bolshevisation, and the Right danger, the 1928 congress merely parodied that of 1924. For example, the German revolution having experienced defeat, the 1924 Congress declared that no defeat had occurred, that the German revolution was right ahead. The Chinese revolution having met with disaster, the 1928 Congress acknowledged no defeat, but declared that the Chinese revolution was right ahead. In 1924, social democracy was declared to be “the most moderate wing of fascism,” and in 1928 all socialists and non-communist party elements among the workers were termed “Social Fascists.” In 1924 the Congress celebrated the victory of “Bolshevisation” at a time when the various “Bolshevist leaderships” imposed on the national sections were undermined. In 1928 the victory of the “unified communist international” was celebrated, whilst the most violent internal struggles were being fought behind the scenes, and the destruction and exile of the right wing was being planned. In 1924, with much ultra-leftist palaver, the fifth Congress made a pretended move to the left, and then swung completely to the right, and entered on the miserable opportunist period of the Anglo-Russian Committee, and the Chiang Kai Shek alliance, the anti-Imperialist league, etc. In 1928 the sixth Congress endorsed adventurist conclusions only to consecrate the revisionist theory of “Socialism in One Country,” with the terrible international consequences that we have discussed.

The 1928 struggle against the “Right danger” was a triumph of hypocrisy. It was launched at the sixth Congress by Bucharin, the international right wing leader, after he had resisted the campaign at the fifteenth Congress of the Russian party. Rumours of disagreement were dismissed as “Trotskyist slanders” by the very spokesmen who were crushed organisationally immediately

after the Congress, and either expelled outright or saved temporarily from expulsion and execution by humiliating capitulation. The leaders of the sixth Congress, like those of the fifth, met with a speedy end, once the Congress had concluded.

At the sixth Congress, Stalin made a special report to the Council of Elders, and introduced a resolution signed by himself, Bucharin and every other member of the Political Bureau, declaring that they “*must emphatically protest against the circulation of rumours that there are dissensions among the members of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U.*” The assembled marionettes listened solemnly and approved enthusiastically of this ludicrous deception. A few months later, Bucharin, the political leader of the Congress, the reporter on the programme, the president of the Comintern, with Stalin, the concoctor of the absurdity, was denounced as the leader of the capitalist restoration tendency in the Soviet Union. The right wing was expelled in every country in the world. In the United States of America, Lovestone, Gitlow and Wolfe were expelled as agents of the American bourgeoisie. In India, the notorious Roy, who had made a livelihood denouncing Trotsky as an agent of Chamberlain, was expelled on the charge that he was an agent of Chamberlain. The right wing was cut off in Sweden, France and Czechoslovakia; and in Germany, Brandler and also Ewart were banished from the Comintern.

To any sane mind the declarations of the 9<sup>th</sup> Plenum, with the commentary of the events of the months following, would have proved a warning against further absurdities. The limits of Stalinist absurdity were not reached even when the Kremlin counter-revolution made its 1939 pact with Hitler, and its 1942 pacts with Churchill and Roosevelt.

The Stalinists were not only undismayed by the events of 1928, but they drew positive inspiration from all that had happened. At the 10<sup>th</sup> Plenum, in 1929, Molotov celebrated the expulsion and exile of his colleagues of the year before by proclaiming what the Stalinists term “the third period,” or the constantly increasing radicalisation of the masses, simultaneously in every country. There can be no fourth period, declared this communist clown, for the third period ends the revolution. One might suspect the revolution was ended, but not in the sense that Molotov meant us to understand his words. Actually, Molotov was preparing the Communist Party for the rise of Hitlerism in Germany.

Losovsky supported Molotov. He explained that the “*heightened political sensitivity, of the broad masses is a characteristic sign, of the eve of revolution.*” Moireva, a member of the E.C.C.I., declared that the world situation recalled the Russian July days, that were the precursors of the October revolution. France was said by this imbecile speaker, with the applause of the assembled congregation, to be destined to head the revolutionary prospects of this third period. The double menace of this French absurdity, and of this period nonsense, was to be found in the fact that from the theory of the third period flowed the theory of Social Fascism which divided the working class movement in Germany during the critical rise to power of Fascism; whilst the fantastic predictions concerning France caused the communist elements in Spain to be taken wholly unawares by the Spanish uprising. This prediction explains why the Comintern had no Spanish policy. It was looking to France for a lead at a time when the French workers were utterly incapable of leading.

Although the theory of Social Fascism did not assist the working class struggle, it justified the entire policy of the Communist International. This was a more important matter to Stalin, Manuilsky, and Bela Kun, that master strategist of the Hungarian revolution, than the emancipation of the workers.

Bela Kun declared that the social democracy, from top to bottom, leader and commonest member, all along the line, was a fusion with the capitalist state. The essential value of this theory was that it justified the “ United Front from the top” with Chiang Kai Shek and Purcell, and later it justified also the total negation of the United Front with working class elements organising the social democracy. According to this dogma, it was the essence of Bolshevism to maintain a united front with proved strike breakers in return for their “ *struggle to defend the Soviet Union.*” This was the “ second period.” But in the third period, the Soviet Union, not requiring the same defence, the communist must repudiate all social democrats from Purcell to the unemployed socialist worker because all were fascists.

Stalinism employed the Social Fascism formula to link together the two mutually supplementary periods of its blunders and crimes, and idealised the disorder of its activity in order to encase itself with a protective glamour. The third period, the period of so-called revolution, became in reality the period of the most triumphant counter-revolution, and witnessed the assassination of the German revolutionary movement.

## 10. THE GERMAN ASSASSINATION.

When the Stalinists are accused of assassinating the German working class struggle they explain that on various occasions between 1925 and 1933 they proposed a United Front with the German Social -Democrats. Their assertions in this matter must be correlated to their charge against the Social Democrats in 1924 of being the enemy of the working-class and in 1928 of being the Social-Fascists.

The indictment of Social Democracy as a political principle or organisation is correct. Social Democracy has ever been the enemy of working-class struggle and was so in the days when William Liebknecht organised the famous union of Marxians and Lassalleans, and Engels flirted with the alliance whilst Marx denounced the Anarchists and in most instances wrongly denounced them.

This acknowledgment of a simple political fact does not mean to say that the Social Democratic worker has any more to gain from the perpetuation of capitalist society — or is any less its fundamental class enemy — than the Communist or Anarchist worker.

The approaches that the Stalinists made towards the Social Democrats were always party political approaches concealing the jealous struggle between two parties for political power. The approaches were never class approaches seeking to liquidate the various factions and political sections in the struggle towards emancipation of the working class. They were merely expressions of the Stalinist zig-zag policy forced on the Communist Party by the realities of life itself. They condemned the entire programme of the Comintern and were actually a mockery of the working-class struggle.

Here are the occasions on which the Communist Party sought a United front with the German Social Democrats : —

**1925.- Prussian Parliamentary Group of the C. P. offered to unite with the Social Democratic members in a concentration of all forces to fight the Monarchist danger. They proposed that joint demands should be put forward for the cleansing of the Courts, police and army of Monarchists. On the Berlin City Council the C. P. and the S.D.P. Were in a majority. Here the C. P. urged the united programme. It is obvious that these advances were unreal and fantastic. There was no Monarchist danger. The suggestion was merely so much clamour that concealed the rising Fascist danger which had nothing in common with the old Monarchy. The Municipal alliance would have been purely revisionistic and quite unreal. Further, the Social Democrats had the feeling, quite rightly, that the purpose of these approaches was not to advance the cause of the workers, but to dispossess the Social Democrats of their place and pelf, and to secure positions and careers for the Communist Party leaders. The latter were merely disgruntled Social Democrats who believed that since the old Social Democrat movement was living under the shadow of failure, their careerism would be advanced more rapidly if they sheltered beneath the flag of the Russian Revolution. They hoped to gain from the greater glamour.**

1926.- In January the C. P. asked the Social Democratic leaders to unite in a plebiscite on the question of returning property to the former German royalty. The Social Democrats did not agree until the campaign was over, and then reversed their decision by moving in Parliament that payment be made to the ex-Kaiser. This issue was altogether unreal and purely political. It had no relation to the Social Revolution, since the revolution destroys the property system itself.

It is quite true that Socialism or Communism should be opposed to royalty on principle, but it is a known fact that in Britain, Walter Newbold (when Communist M.P. for Motherwell) defended the oath of allegiance to the British Monarchy with the approval of the Communist Party, and in terms much more subservient than those employed by George Lansbury, who at least did not disguise his final republican ambition. Saklatvala also as Communist M.P. for Battersea defended the allegiance to Monarchy.

The German C. P. proposal was purely demonstrative and designed to serve the interests of the party as distinct from the workers. It was political opportunism, and had no relation to the economic class struggle.

1928.- The C.P. called on the Social Democracy, with some local successes, despite official Social Democratic prohibitions, to organise joint May Day demonstrations. This again was purely a struggle for party political careerism and the control of working-class organisation. It argued no belief in unity on the part of the C.P., and the refusal to participate did not imply that the Social Democrats were opposed to unity. Indeed, the refusal of the Social Democrats, although dictated by similar motives to those which inspired the approach of the Communists and by no ideas of abstract honour, was the more honourable of the two attitudes. Again it was not a question of working-class unity but of the birds of prey hovering over the carcass.

In October, the C.P. invited the Social Democrats to join in the plebiscite against the building of a German cruiser. In view of the revelations contained in another chapter of this work, revealing how Soviet Russia armed the German bourgeoisie and how Bucharin defended that arming at the Comintern, and Clara Zetkin defended the arming in the Reichstag, this gesture was sheer hypocrisy.

Between 1929 to 1932, the Communist Party made repeated proposals to the Social Democrats for a United Front against wage-cuts effected by compulsory arbitration. All these proposals were rejected.

The above record of approaches to unity is the Communist Party reason for declaring that the Social Democrats prepared the way to Fascism and were the enemies of the working-class. The reason for making these approaches was said to be that the Communist Party was not strong enough to organise the working-class without the aid of the Social Democrats.

In reply to this statement, it may be asked how, if the Social Democracy was the enemy in 1924, and was Social Fascism in 1928, the Social Democracy could be expected to organise the working-class against capitalism. If the Communist Party had been a revolutionary party, its line of conduct and strategy is perfectly clear. It should definitely have attacked the Social Democratic leadership and the Social Democratic organisation, but it should not have attempted to undermine that leadership by intrigue. It should have attacked the leadership, but its own rank and file should have welcomed as comrades in the real issues of economic and social life the rank and file members of the Social Democratic movement.

The Russian Revolution knew how to win over the soldiers of the White Army invaders. It knew how to defeat Deniken's army and to win over its regiments. It knew how to defeat the Cossacks when called out by the counter-revolution against the starving people and to win over



the individual Cossack. Despite his reputation as a soldier and explorer, and he was both, the revolution knew how to defeat Kolchak, win over his army, and have him made prisoner by his own troops, who executed him for counter-revolution.

If the revolution knew how to do this why could not the Communist Party in Germany, with its Russian traditions and influence, win over the rank and file of the Social Democracy. Had it been the movement of the working-class, had it been the spontaneous movement of the masses, it would have destroyed the Social Democratic party and captured its every local for Socialism and Communism. But the German Communist Party was not the movement of the workers. Despite its parades of the Iron Front, despite its wild talk about civil war, it was a political party, highly centralised, inspired by careerism and not by proletarian class struggle. Its purpose was not to destroy the Social Democratic party by struggle but to overthrow it by competition. It wanted capitalism to remain. It wanted Parliamentarism. It wanted careerism. But where yesterday the members of the Reichstag were Social Democrats, to-day and to-morrow they were to be Communist Deputies. And so careerism wrecked the revolution ; careerism dictated by 'lie bureaucrats of the Comintern, careerism dictated by the friends of Chiang Kai Shek, careerism dictated by the Moscow allies of the Kulaks, careerism that defended State Capitalism with the absurd cry: " Socialism in One Country."

The case against the Social Democrats of Germany from 1924 onwards was a strong one. No indictment could be too severe. In 1924, there was an anti-Fascist demonstration of 10,000 workers at Halle. They were fired on and many were killed and wounded by the police under the orders of a Social Democratic Chief Constable, with the agreement of a Social Democratic Governor, and the official concurrence of a Social Democratic Home Secretary or Minister for the Interior, Severing. This sort of conduct continued until Social Democracy was supplanted by Fascism.

On May Day, 1929, in Berlin, the Social Democratic Chief of Police, Zoergibel, prohibited demonstrations for the first time in the history of the German Labour Movement since the days when Most, William Liebknecht and Bebel were imprisoned under the anti-Socialist laws of Bismarck. Thirty-three workers were shot in the streets of Berlin.

Between 1929 and 1932, the Social Democrats supported three successive capitalist governments which ruled in defiance of Parliament and so prepared the way for Hitlerism. These were the governments of Brüning, Papen and Schleicher. The Social Democrats also supported President Von Hindenburg, when he was obviously preparing the way for Fascism by saying that it represented the lesser evil. During this period the Social Democrats supported the governmental policy of wage-cuts.

In the winter of 1930, the Social Democrat, Severing, defended the " Law for the Defence of the Republic " before the Nazis. He explained that it was not directed against them but against demonstrations of the masses. His conduct established the sincerity of his explanation.

In July, 1932, the first semi-Fascist government of Von Papen was established. On the eve of the 20<sup>th</sup> of this month the CC. of the German Communist Party adopted a resolution, as it said, " *before the proletarian public.*" This resolution was addressed to the S.P.D., that is, the Social Democrats, to the Alpha-Bund, and to the A.D.G.B., and asked these parties if they were " *prepared to carry out, together with the Communist Party, the General Strike for the proletarian demands.*"

The strange thing about this resolution is that on July 20, 1932, the Communist Party regarded the Social Democrats as a proletarian party. But on July 1st, 1932, they refused to consider the Social Democrats as a proletarian body, but denounced them as Social-Fascists and declared that

only the “United Front from below” was possible. They repeated this declaration on August 1<sup>st</sup>, 1932.

In the *Daily Worker* (America), Bela Kun, the Hungarian strategist, describes how the German Communist Party appealed to the leadership of the Social Democracy for a United Front against the Fascist terror on the date given, namely, July 20<sup>th</sup>, 1932. This is in the issue of *The Worker* for September 21<sup>st</sup>, 1934. Continuing his life story, Bela Kun three days later answers the question why the Communists did not make the offer to the Social Democratic parties before the Fascist danger in Germany was an immediate one. He admits that no genuine proposal for unity was made in the following answer to this self-posed question.

” We answer as follows:

**... To propose a united front at that time to the party leadership of Wels, Severing, Braun, Leipart and the rest would indeed have been purely a manoeuvre designed to unmask them... This would not only have been a manoeuvre; it would have been a stupid manoeuvre.”**

In the face of this declaration of what consequence is the C.P. argument that they renewed this offer of a United General Strike on January 30, 1933, against the first Hitler government and repeated it on March 1<sup>st</sup> of the same year on the eve of the State elections. Of what consequence is the further explanation that in June 1932, the C.P. members of Parliament offered the United Front to the Social Democrats for the Socialist control of Parliament.

If the Social Democrats were not Socialists and had no Socialist policy, how could there be a Socialist control of Parliament? And what is the worth of a Socialist control of parliament if there remains a capitalistic control, of industry? The very declaration self-exposes the politician and presents us with an apology of a counter-revolutionist.

The Stalinists declare that owing to Social Democratic treachery, the conditions for a successful revolution did not exist in Germany in January and March, 1933. But what of the years of Communist Party pretence, the speeches in Moscow, the war on the K.A.P.D., the ineffective political posing; before the marionettes of the Comintern.

Trotsky has devoted four pamphlets to this question of the German Communist Party debacle. The subject is dealt with very thoroughly in his “What Next?” and “The Only Road,” both of which are obtainable in English.

Germany is the key country in Europe. After the Paris Commune it gave us parliamentary Socialism, and down to the outbreak of the world war dominated socialist thought and activity. After the Russian revolution Germany recovered its importance in relation to proletarian struggle. Had Germany turned Soviet in 1918, had Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg triumphed, the whole civilised world would have been plunged into the class struggle, and the battle would have been fought on the streets of the cities and in the villages, of Soviets or Parliament, of Soviets or bureaucracy, of world socialism or world capitalism. Liebknecht and Luxemburg were assassinated by the social democracy they had pioneered, and German capitalism scored its first victory.

In 1923, the German revolutionary forces tamely surrendered to the reaction, and a decisive turning point was reached in the revolutionary struggle in Europe. Huge demonstrations and meetings were held in the Soviet Union to support the German proletarian revolution that the Comintern had forbidden to take place. These meetings were held purely for the purpose of camouflage, and to prevent the Russian worker from becoming restless. Actually, the capitalist world was able to breathe deeper and freer. Within ten years it was clear that the class struggle

in Germany had reached a crisis, and that the issue must now be fought of world communism or world fascism.

Despite the assassinations of Liebknecht and Luxembourg, despite the terrible Social Democratic betrayals, the German working-class still ranked as the most powerful and the most important in all Europe. It was reputed to have a high intellectual level. It was versed in the doctrines of Karl Marx, which does not say too much for the doctrines of that gentleman.

Contrary to the logic of Marxism the German workers had loyally experienced war, and had emerged from the capitalist battlefield to pass through three revolutions. They were thoroughly industrialised. Six millions of them had voted communist, and eight millions had voted socialist in the last election against Fascism. If parliamentarism signified anything, fourteen million workers stood behind the doctrines of Socialism. Against them was a ruling class that had lost the war, lost its Kaiser, and lost its business prestige and tradition of ruling. The ruling class army was limited to 100,000 men. In addition to this small standing army the ruling class had some political troops like those of the Nazis of Hitler. They were mainly students, youth without military experience, declassed petty bourgeoisie and lumpen proletarian elements. This combination of trash could not be considered a match for the well organised war heroes and industrially trained workmen. Yet this inexperienced scum of reaction defeated overwhelmingly and crushed mercilessly the strongest working class in the world. The wonderful German Communist Party, with its much boasted storm troops, 250,000 strong, gave up without a fight.

Whilst this disgraceful capitulation was taking place, the Communist International printed no news of the events, called no emergency Congress, and opened no discussion on the matter. Stalinism no longer considered that the safety of the Soviet Union depended upon the international proletariat. The era of revolution had given place to that of diplomacy, and the Communist International had served its historic purpose of assassinating the world revolution. The death of the German revolutionary movement was the sign, according to the ordinary political revolutionary calendar then in vogue, that the world revolution had been but a dream that was ended. If the world revolution should yet prove to be a reality it will be no thanks to Stalinism or to the old socialist philosophy; it will be because these savants, or professional wise-men of the revolution, worked according to the wrong calendar. In the cant term of the Trotskyist and Stalinist discussions, they did not understand the tempo of events. Perhaps that explains how they prepared the monumental betrayal of the German and international proletariat by the pursuit of a false line of policy from almost the first day of the forming of the communist International. It is noticeable, as contrasted with the demonstrations in the Soviet Union of 1923, no anti-Nazi demonstration took place in the U.S.S.R. before or after Hitler's rise to power.

In 1929, the Communist Party split the German Trade Unions. It did not argue, as Communists are entitled to argue that Trades Unionism does not express the Class War but the commodity struggle. It did not take its stand against the Trades Unions because they were reformist organisations. It entered into competitive reformism and, withdrew their members and sympathisers from the established Trade Unions. The Trade Unions were 8,000,000 workers strong and they were controlled by the avowed reformists and careerists of the Socialist Party. The Communist Party withdrew 300,000 members and organised into their own paper unions. This did not develop the revolutionary movement but isolated nominally Communist workers from Socialist workers. The power of the careerists of the Socialist movement was cemented and the so-called Communists were left to organise little sectarian groups in each factory or industrial centre. This was not making war on Social Democratic careerism. This was not inspiring the workers by pro-

mulgating a new principle. It was only splitting the workers on the field of industry and causing them to lose battle after battle. It was the disaster of intrigue and not the advance of revolution.

Proceeding with their party warfare against the Socialist Democratic party, the Communist Party declared that the chief enemy of the German workers was not Fascism but Social Democracy. The Communist Party may have offered a United Front to the Social Democrats, but to the workers they issued the slogan that the first task of the working-class struggle was to destroy the Socialist movement, the so-called Social-Fascists. If anyone visualises the organisation of the Labour movement, the gathering of actual workers in the small local halls, one must realise, however great the indictment may be of the careerist leaders, that to denounce the working-class locals of the Socialist movement as gatherings of Fascists is the quintessence of absurdity. The result of this absurd slogan was the complete sectarian division of the workers themselves which spread amongst the labouring masses like some unholy religious war. The Fascists had an easy time developing their movement owing to this incapacity of the Communist Party for revolutionary understanding and revolutionary struggle. The Fascists shot Socialist workers in the street and if the Communist Party did not actually applaud it most certainly did not protest. The Fascists shot Communist workers on the street and of course the Socialists made no protest.

The next step in this strange revolutionary struggle, which emphasises Bakunin's point that a social revolution must not be regarded as a political revolution and must not be dominated by the metaphysics of party dogma, was the deliberate alliance of the Communists with the Fascists to destroy parliamentary Socialism and to place the Fascists in power.

In 1930 the referendum was taken to decide the question whether the Landtag, that is the Prussian Parliament, should be abolished. The Communists voted — with the Fascists — against the Socialists and Democrats. Had the Communists and Fascists really won and had the German Parliament been abolished, the result would have been not the establishment of Soviets, but the erection of a Fascist dictatorship.

Everyone knows that the Versailles Treaty was a damnable piece of reaction. Its menace to proletarian development was that it inspired inevitably German militarism and a German war spirit and made that militarism seem a radical expression of Justice. It was the function of Communists to understand this treaty and to explain it in relation to the class struggle. The German Communists took up the slogan "Gegen Versailles" (Against the Versailles Treaty) and so made a United Front with the Nazis. This completely destroyed the class struggle. The Communists made this slogan their chief watchword and so catered to those reactionary national prejudices to which the Nazis were appealing and the result of which made inevitable the rise of Fascism. Instead of preaching a German revolution and challenging the capitalist countries to make war on the proletarian Social Revolutionary struggle in Germany, thereby casting aside all capitalist treaties and the diplomats of Europe, the Communists taught the German masses that they were to unite with their capitalist foes within the country to make war on the capitalist enemy of the country. Of what country? The German Fatherland, the German capitalist country, the country that enslaved the workers of Germany. And so, the Communist Party aided the Fascists and raised the slogan of a People's Revolution, a People's Revolution. And this criminal folly was indulged by the alleged extreme disciples of Marx in the most advanced industrial country of Europe, in which the Capitalist Republic could have been overthrown and some suggestion of a proletarian state established.

The Communists forgot that the mass of the workers were behind the Socialist Party and that the only way to undermine the Socialist Party was incessant propaganda, more powerful

revolutionary struggle, real proletarian appeals to the workers, and not flamboyant ultimatums, senseless parades without force or courage, and the hundred and one theatrical activities in which the Communist Party loved to indulge. When they should have been preparing for revolution, the Communists evinced their hopeless reformism by parading against wage-cuts. It was easier to rally the masses to such parades. It was easier and so thoroughly futile. The Communist Party did the same thing in America during the interlude between two world wars, with its hunger marches and it did the same thing in Britain. It termed these anti-wage-cuts and anti-dole-cuts parades revolution, whereas such protests did not touch the fringe of the question.

In Britain we witnessed the complete transformation of the workers' insurance system and the Poor Law of Public Assistance. We had the complete destruction of local government in the administration of unemployed relief and we had established the Board which is virtually a Court of Administration, the members of which are non-responsible to Parliament, receive judges' salaries, and are appointed by Royal Warrant. The Communist Party protested not against the establishment of such Courts, which is Fascism in local government and is part of the general Fascist undermining of Democracy, but only against the dole cuts that marked the first steps of this administration.

The German Communists forgot that the workers were en masse behind the Socialist Party until the time came to apologise for the triumph of Hitlerism. Then it remembered in order to excuse. But what had the Communist Party been doing since 1919 and what was the worth of all its braggadocio when reporting the triumphs of the Communist Party over the Socialist Party to Moscow? The way to destroy the Socialist Party was to unite all working-class organisations against Fascism and to leave the leadership of the Social Democracy high and dry, its yellow colour betrayed in the time of crisis, as on the occasion when it voted for Hindenburg.

The result of this Communist Party intrigue and inability to distinguish between a party dictatorship and the class struggle, between party political aspirations and proletarian social revolution, was to place Hitler and his gunmen in power in Germany in March, 1933, to destroy all working-class and all radical thought organisation; to see the Trade Unions smashed to bits, their buildings seized, their treasuries confiscated; to have the Socialist and Communist parties dissolved, and to have all proletarian elements of struggle driven underground. Thousands of Communists and Socialists were killed. Tens of thousands were jailed and held in concentration camps. Others were brutally beaten and terrorised throughout the land. Stalin declared during this period of Socialist collapse that everything was going along as predicted, that the Social Revolution was right ahead in Germany, that Leninism and the Communist International were vindicated.

The events in Germany were the turning point of the world proletarian struggle. They ended the epoch of Social Democracy. So far as the proletariat of Britain and the English speaking countries of the world were concerned the European struggle ceased to count. It gave the British workers no political backing, no organisational hope.

In 1790, France was the Revolutionary centre of the world. After the Paris Commune, Germany became, despite its notorious authoritarianism, the political centre of working-class thought. German Socialism was never satisfactory for it was always heavy and dull and lacked the elan that belongs to revolution. It lacked the spirit of fire and vigour. When it did discover spirit in Karl Leibknecht and Rosa Luxembourg, all it could do was to murder the heroes that embodied it. After Germany and the war debacle there came Russia.

The Soviet Union turned a Social Revolution into a political revolution and a diplomatic intrigue. And now the whole of Europe lies in ruins. Fascism has made inroads among the English-speaking races under the guise of democratic defence and military necessity. It is left to the workers of those races to make the stand for revolution and so rally the workers of the world for Socialism.

## 11. THE SOVIET FATHERLAND.

It was impossible for the Communist International to destroy the Chinese revolution, the British General Strike, and two German revolutions, without developing a proletarian retreat in Soviet Russia. The fact that the Kulak problem still remains demonstrates the fallacy of regarding Soviet Russia as the workers' fatherland.

The Trotskyist elements, down to their liquidation in 1935, maintained that Soviet Russia was still the socialist fatherland, notwithstanding the errors of Stalinism. But the Trotskyists clung to the idea of the reform of the Third International and of the official Communist Party in the Soviet Union until 1933. It was left to the anti-parliamentarian elements to proclaim correctly, years before, the death of the Third International, and the necessity either of a fourth or a new international, or else of no formal international at all. The anti-parliamentarians were divided on this question, for although they all wished to link up the revolutionary movement in the different countries, some anti-parliamentarians did not see the usefulness of solemn conclaves and mixed language gatherings. The Trotskyists were reluctantly driven to accept the view that the Third International was dead, when the fact could be disputed no longer. It was only a matter of time for such Trotskyists as retained their integrity of understanding to be driven round to the viewpoint that Soviet Russia is not the socialist fatherland.

On the disputed question of the socialist fatherland, the view of the Anarchists and of the Antiparliamentarians is that although Soviet Russia may retain some elemental after effects of her premature but inevitable working-class revolution — and it would be strange indeed if such a tremendous upheaval served no useful purpose at all — fundamentally she is a capitalist country. Only the world revolution can no longer come from Europe. It has been smashed in Italy, in Germany and in Spain. That world revolution cannot come from Asia, for in Japan Fascism is rising, and in China the Kou Min Tang represents the triumph of the counter-revolution.

In 1934 the final pretended hopes of Communism, the last line of Moscow's red generals, surrendered to Chiang Kai Shek ; in August of that year, in the district of Hunan, Li Chien Wu, commander of the independent red regiments, and the other red general, Le Tse-liang. The month before, Kung Ho Chung, who had been the pet of the Stalinists for several years, after events compelled them to give up praising Chiang Kai Shek, surrendered to the latter and offered his services for the suppression of Communism in China.

Kung was a member of the general executive committee of the so-called Soviet government of Juikin. He surrendered on July the 27<sup>th</sup>, and at once proceeded to Chiang Kai Shek's military headquarters at Nanchung. He received an immediate military command, and his anti-communist declarations were widely circulated with a full account of his career as a communist general. Chiang Kai Shek extolled Kung's five years' military prowess, and declared that his alliance was a tremendous event in the history of China. Kung declared that he joined the communists in 1927 with the idea of working for the masses, but that he now realised that Communism was impossible in China, and that to pursue its realisation was to imperil the best interests of the Chinese people. Hence his surrender and his allegiance to the Kou Min Tang.

Kung's surrender meant the complete triumph of the counter-revolution in Asia, and settled reaction in Russia until the World revolution cries a halt. That revolution can be brought about only in the English-speaking countries and only there if parliamentary social democracy and the futile Communist International are repudiated, the existing communist parties and social democratic factions destroyed, and a direct revolutionary movement started amongst the workers. It is the duty of the workers of Britain and America to look no longer to Germany or Russia, but to, unite in building up a new and closely-federated communist movement of action and of struggle.



## 12. RUSSIA UNDER LENIN AND STALIN.

The destruction of Soviet Russia as the land of Sovietism and the temporary stabilisation of capitalism is said by the Trotskyists to date from the death of Lenin. The process most certainly has been speeded since that time. There can be no doubt that Stalin perpetuated and developed the undermining of the Soviet Republic. Trotsky was quite wrong too make Stalin solely responsible. The present demi-god of Russian bureaucracy but continued the work Lenin began. Stalin hastened the degeneration. That degeneration was the inevitable product of the defeat of the German Revolution in 1923, and the subsequent isolation of the Soviet Union. It is possible that Lenin's reaction to the 1923 movement would have been distinct from that of Stalin and more useful to the general revolutionary cause but it is certain that, as regards the collapse of Socialism in Russia, Stalin had an able master in Lenin.

The world situation from 1918 to 1921 was favourable to the myth — promoted by the Trotskyists, that Leninism was much superior to Stalinism. The Communist International and its hired satellites in all countries talk nonsense when they refer to Comrade Lenin and Comrade Stalin in the same breath. There is no comparison between the two men and it is perfectly clear from their records that there was no sympathy between them. The mantle of Lenin has not fallen upon Stalin any more than the mantle of Jesus has fallen upon the Pope of Rome. On the other hand Lenin was not the uncompromising revolutionary and Stalin is not the perfect Communist anti-Christ. The difference between the parts played by these two men is explainable partly in the terms of their distinct genius, but it is equally explainable also in the different circumstances that confronted them.

In the time of Lenin the peculiar equilibrium which prevailed in the capitalist world opposed the capitalist anxious to fight but incapable of victory, to the communist incapable of fighting but unconvinced of defeat. The foreign capitalist did try to overthrow the Soviets between 1918 and 1921. White adventurers were financed by the British Government and honoured by the British king. But the White adventure did not go very far, for the revolutionary peasants and workers of Russia were too determined in their resistance to such alien invasions, and the international proletariat was convinced that Soviet Russia was the Workers' Fatherland. The capitalist class found it was incapable of achieving the task it had set itself; namely the overthrow of the social revolution in Russia. The international proletariat discovered it could not overthrow the capitalist world outside of Russia. And so it came about that Socialist Russia, developing its own germs of anti-Socialism, lived side by side with an external capitalist world, that contained its own germs of Socialism and revolution. The communists grew tired and with the internal struggle developed into tired bureaucrats. The capitalists grew tired and facing their own problems of the economic debacle turned from militarism to diplomacy. Under these circumstances, unless the working-class could develop a spirit of revolutionary aggression, it was inevitable that capitalist stabilisation would outstrip Socialist revolution and the counter-revolution would develop itself in Russia not with the aid of the bayonet but through the power of economy. It was under

pressure of these events that Lenin developed his New Economic Policy, a policy which, on his own confession, he intended to introduce not in 1921, but in 1918.

Lenin's speech to the International Communist Congress, 1921, was published in the Communist Review, London, for August, 1921. The report was verbatim. The speech was divided into four parts : (1) International Situation; (2) Position in Russia; (3) The New Policy towards Peasants; (4) Russia and the Word Revolution. Our concern is with part 3, in which Lenin described the New Policy towards the peasants. He defined this policy as " a proletarian sacrifice for the Revolution " and declared that it implied a system of State Capitalism. He added :

**" But this is a new form of capitalism — State Capitalism. State Capitalism in a capitalist society, and State Capitalism in a proletarian Society are two entirely different things. In the first case, it means that Capitalism is controlled and recognised in the interests of the bourgeoisie and against the proletariat. In the second case, it is promoting the interests of the proletariat ... we exist in the midst of capitalist States. We are alone just now, and until the revolution in highly developed industrial countries has freed us from this, we are compelled to pay toll to international capitalism. We will thus win time; and this means winning everything."**

Whether Lenin was right or wrong in his development of the N.E.P. it is certain that his conclusions were wrong. The N.E.P. did not give time to Soviet Russia but it did give time to the counter-revolution. Addressing the Moscow Soviet in 1922, Lenin declared that "*we have dragged Socialism into everyday life,*" and he added the prophecy: "*Russia of N.E.P. will become Socialist Russia.*" This was preparing the way for the Stalin gospel of " Socialism in One Country " and finally for the defeat of Soviet Russia and the entrenchment of the counter-revolution in the so-called Socialist Fatherland. It does not follow that Leninism would have become Stalinism. It does not follow that Lenin's policy would have been Stalin's policy. But one is justified in concluding that Leninism was not identical with Socialism and that it did contain within itself those germs of menace which have since staggered every thinking revolutionist as the fully-matured Robespierrean policy, Stalinism.

In Russia to-day one has a police system and also a system of political persecution which probably excels that of the Czardom and is second only to that of Fascism, as expressed in the regimes of Italy and Germany. Whereas Fascism operates nationally, Stalinism operates internationally; and under the guise of proletarian revolution, that Hitler and Mussolini could never assume, excommunicates with a ruthless zeal that has been equalled only by the Papacy in its medieval prime.

Persecution and excommunication began in 1920; and to put aside the persecution of the Anarchists, and their unjustifiable imprisonment and exile without trial, there is on record the persecution of Mjasnikov and his Bolshevik Anti-Parliamentarian comrades which date back to that time. Whatever may he said about the Anarchist possessing a petty peasant psychology and being therefore inclined to counter-revolution, it cannot be denied that Mjasnikov and his comrades were old Bolsheviks and had fought as Bolsheviks in the Bolshevik uprising. It was not until Trotsky himself was in exile that he felt the need to assist Mjasnikov who was experiencing a worse exile. But Mjasnikov's first imprisonment and exile met with no protest from Trotsky who was then at the height of his power as Commissar of War and could never have anticipated the fate that afterwards overtook him; that is, not unless he recalled as warnings the events of the French Revolution.

Passing over the intervening years, it may help us to understand the real issues in the Soviet Union, if we consider the Kirov assassination and the executions that followed it. Following the assassination of Kirov 117 people were executed without public trial and the Chief of Police and several of his officers were sentenced to long years of imprisonment to be served in concentration camps not for being parties to the assassination but for not having been able to prevent it. If such brutal and bloody terrorism had taken place under the Czar the Socialist movement of the world would have risen in protest.

It is not possible to believe that the group who assassinated Kirov was a White Guard Terrorist group. Neither is there any reason to believe that the assassination of Kirov was the work of Zinoviev and Kamenev and the Bolshevik opposition. Victims of a false trial these two old Bolsheviks and close colleagues of Lenin during years of struggle and exile, were made by the upstart hirelings of the Communist Party, by men who had not a tenth of their culture or revolutionary experience, to appear as criminal imbeciles. Who knowing that they were going into imprisonment and exile — and death, as it proved finally — made stage speeches admitting their responsibility and terming the assassination criminal counter-revolution. There was never the least evidence that Zinoviev and Kamenev, with their clear understanding of Socialist principles and past attitude towards assassination had been parties to a plot against the life of any member of the Stalinist bureaucracy.

The persons who were implicated, according to the Stalinist bureaucracy, in the assassination of Kirov must have been between the ages of 13 and 18 at the time of the Russian Revolution and therefore had no real connection with the Bolshevik Opposition. Nor were they connected with the White Guards. They were known to be workers and were native Russians. Many of the persons executed had nothing whatever to do with the small group that must have planned the assassination, some actually having been in prison at the time of the assassination. It is obvious, therefore, that although the assassination of Kirov may have been the result of a protest against some of the crimes of Stalinism, the assassination was seized upon as a pretext to suppress working-class struggle and the building of a working-class movement in Russia. What Stalinism fears is the rise of a genuine Communist Party in Russia and like all despotism it must murder thought at all cost and at whatever pretext it can discover. It is a great pity that Azef the notorious is dead. He would have found a boon companion in Stalin and would have been more completely at home under the present police regime in Russia than he was under that of the Czar.

The Trotskyists compare the fake trial of Zinoviev and Kamenev, and in particular the secret condemnation of the 117 men who were executed without any pretence of a trial, with the trial of the leaders of the Social Revolutionary party in the summer of 1922. This was in the days of Lenin and Trotsky. These leaders were charged with responsibility for an organised campaign of terrorism and sabotage. The trial took place in the former Hall of the Nobles, at that time the headquarters of the Moscow Trade Unions. Mass publicity was given to all the actions of the defendants. The accused were allowed foreign Counsel, one being Vandervelde. The accused were convicted of the assassination of Voladarsky, of an attempt on the life of Lenin, and of dynamiting bridges. The death sentence was passed but commuted to periods of imprisonment. Trotsky appeared before the Executive Committee of the Communist International and asked that body to approve of this commutation.

The Trotskyists ask why did this take place at the trial of the Social Revolutionists in 1922, and why was there so much speed and secrecy in the case of the 117 in January, 1935. The answer is obvious. A mass trial would have shown that there were no Czarist generals, no British agents, no

high-priced saboteurs on trial, but plain workers and former members of the Communist Party. The mass trial would have brought out the fact that the Soviets were no longer organs of proletarian democracy, that the Trade Unions were merely organs of State oppression and not defensive organisations of the working-class, that the Communist Party existed in name only as a mask for an insufferable bureaucratic despotism. The mass trial would have demonstrated the bankruptcy of Communism in Russia and the desperate insolvency of the Communist International. A mass trial in open Court, under the glare of full publicity would have evoked proletarian sympathy for the persons accused, and hatred for the masqueraders who were prosecuting and judging.

All this is perfectly true, but a further deduction follows : which is, that whilst the Soviet Republic publicly tried the Social Revolutionists in 1922, it secretly condemned the Anti-Parliamentarians and the Anarchists. Might we not therefore draw a parallel between the secret condemnations of 1922 and the secret condemnations of 1935? And if that is so might we not say that Leninism lead to Stalinism ?

When one considers that the existing Communist Party has one sole purpose, the unprincipled defence of the present government of the Soviet Republic, and that its official foreign policy is destined to secure recognition of that government by all the capitalist nations of the earth, one understands that the existing Communist Party of the Soviet Union stands not for Communism either in Russia or outside, but for the stabilisation of capitalism throughout the world. Which only goes to show that Soviet Russia is not, and never was, the Socialist Fatherland.

## 13. COMMUNISM IN U.S.A.

Just after the Franco-Prussian War of 1870, Marx reasoned :

**“ Germany will become a formidable rival of England, but the French bourgeoisie, distrusting England, will seek an alliance with Russia. French loans will develop islands of Capitalism in the sea of Russian feudalism, but if and when European war comes, neither Russian Capitalism nor its corrupt feudalism will be strong enough to survive the shock. Power will pass to the workers and peasants, with the possibility of the revolutionary elements giving the next important impulse to social advance.”**

This was a wonderful prophecy, based, of course, upon knowledge, as all prophecy and vision is. It is a pity that the important impulse to social advance given by the Russian Revolution was not sustained.

Lenin, as a faithful Marxist, in the first days of the Third International, notwithstanding his amazing compromises, did expect the Russian Revolution to be the real inspirer of world revolution and the very centre of proletarian thought and action. He declared with fervour that life itself was with the Communist International, and that although the Communists of the Soviet Union might make mistakes, all revolutionists in the world would have to join it. If this fervent avowal seemed to be true when Lenin made it, it must follow that the Third International developed along lines not intended or suspected at the time. Even in 1920 it was obvious to many Anti-Parliamentarians that there was no place in the Third International for genuine revolutionists. Each succeeding year proved that the historic function of the Third International was to repudiate steadily the world revolutionist and to justify jailings and exiles that no revolutionist can defend or excuse. It is not that the Third International made mistakes. The errors of the Comintern were not mistakes but calculations. The entire organisation was the criminal counter-revolutionary aftermath of glorious and triumphant insurrection.

Criminal counter-revolution spread out its tentacles from Moscow and grasped and crushed the Socialist or Communist movement in every civilised country. The record of its disaster was measured not merely by the corruption of the Communist Party but by the evolution of the Communist Opposition and by the continuous expulsions that served as so many mile-stones. By “ Oppositions “ the reader must not understand the various Anti-Parliamentary sections, some of them conceived before the Communist International, and others definitely emerging from its ranks. The word “ Opposition “ is limited in its application to those elements in the Communist Party, who were compelled to form factions in defence of their principles; who regarded themselves as having to render allegiance to the Communist Party despite their factional principles ; who wanted to reform the Third International from within, and were excluded against their wishes and from the logic of events. In the end, these “ oppositions “ dissociated themselves from the Comintern and the Communist Party of the Soviet Union with tremendous reluctance. The

cant phrase of abuse in connection with these sections was the charge of “ Trotskyism,” which had much the same significance in post-revolution Moscow circles as the word “ infidel “ had to the crusading Christian or the Mohammedan, and the word “ Anarchist “ to the pre-war Social Democrat. Sometimes Trotskyism was used as the counter-charge against the Stalinists by certain sections of the Right Wing, but finally all elements of opposition that were not prepared to return to the Stalinist fold took on some phase of Trotskyism ; and Trotskyism at last liquidated itself in a semi-critical and fantastic militarist loyalism of the second world war. This completed the circle of post Russian revolutionary thought which left the Revolution of the world’s proletariat to pursue its own thought as though the great Bolshevik Revolution was some alien episode foreign too the real struggle of the world’s proletariat or some village incident far removed from the general evolution of proletarian struggle.

Trotskyism and internal party Opposition came into existence when the Enlarged Executive meeting of the Eleventh Session of the Communist International met at Moscow on April 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1925, to formally denounce Trotskyism. No one defended Trotsky’s position, and at the conclusion of the proceedings, Bucharin was greeted with applause, when he formally closed the “ discussion “ ! Bucharin prepared the way for his own expulsion and later execution. There commenced a system of heresy-hunting among the Communist Parties of the world, which reduced Stalinism to an absurdity and elevated Trotskyism into a magnificent heresy. As the expulsions increased, the factions, financially weak, but intellectually strong, formed themselves into the International Left Opposition. Other factions accused of Trotskyism, and counter accusing the Stalinists of the same offence, formed the International Communist Opposition. In 1932, we find these factions brought together for discussion, with the result that the International Communist Opposition became the International Left Opposition. Threatening to become a genuine movement, the Trotskyist movement declared for a Fourth International which had been pioneered by Anti-Parliamentarians. Repenting of its boldness, it retreated at the end of 1934, and linked itself up with the Social Democracy, that Bolshevism had pretended to oppose for so many years, but of which it was actually an integral part. It must not be concluded that the record of Trotskyism during this period of opposition was worthless or futile. Trotskyism gave the working-class movement an invaluable history of proletarian development and supplied an unanswerable commentary on the development of an authoritarian bureaucratic party dictatorship over the working-class and its struggles.

By 1933, the Communist movement, inspired by Moscow, was divided into the usual three factions of Left, Right and Centre. Since the movement had collapsed in Europe, the chief battleground of these groups was the United States of America. Here they proceeded to liquidate themselves.

The least radical of the Communist divisions in America was the Lovestone group. Its leader, Jay Lovestone, was expelled from the C.P. (U.S.A.) by orders of Moscow, in 1929. He was accused of Right Opportunist liquidation and also of taking the same position as the Trotskyists of the U.S.A., Love, Cannon, etc.

Actually, Lovestone had nothing in common with Love, who was condemned at the 1925 Moscow Enlarged Executive already mentioned. At this select gathering, Loveism was described as “ a manifestation of Trotskyism in America.” It was added that “ Love, the editor of our German organ, the *Volks Zeitung*, supports Trotsky ‘in every way he can,’ and criticises and opposes the party’s work and influence among the farmers of the United States.” On which it may be

commented that the Communist Party, as the avowed party of the labourers, had no right to be addressing itself to the farmers of the United States or any other country.

In August, 1929, the E.C.C.I. at Moscow, by cable to the C.P. (U.S.A.) instructed the expulsion of Benjamin Gitlow and others for acting as official leaders of the Lovestone group; and Herbert Zam and others for having solidarised themselves with this group. Members of the party in the United States were warned “ *that any defence of Lovestone Opportunist opinions* “ and “ *any political relations entered into with him*” were “ *incompatible with membership of the Communist Party.*” It was added “ *that such wavering elements should make a definite choice*” and either join Lovestone “ *in the swamp of the renegades of Communism* “ or else take their stand by Moscow.

Heresy is a rapid growth in the Communist Party. Orthodox and applauded one year, the astonished comrade finds himself excommunicated and leprous the next. One day, he is the high priest, and no one is to be compared with him for genius and understanding of all the subtle meanings of Communism and the Social War. The next day, he is a veritable ignoramus, an illiterate, an impossible associate who knows nothing of Communism, never will know anything of Communism, and never did know anything of Communism. He is not merely an imbecile but a predestined imbecile, proceeding from the cradle to the grave along a fatal path of predetermined ignorance.

Only the year before his expulsion, Jay Lovestone had been the Executive Secretary of the Workers (Communist) Party. His writings were advertised in the American Daily Worker as the pure word of Leninism thus :

**“AMERICA PREPARES THE NEXT WAR.**

**“By JAY LOVESTONE.**

**“The United States is preparing for another war. Why?”**

Here followed the statement of the different chapters on the role of American Imperialism; United States versus Great Britain; the Role of Reformism ; and of the Communist Party, etc. The announcement

added : —

**“This pamphlet should be in the hands of every worker interested in a clear analysis of America to-day and the attitude of the Workers’ Communist Party towards the coming war.”**

As regards Gitlow, the same Daily Worker for November 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, and 5<sup>th</sup>, 1928, advised us what a great revolutionary figure’ he was. We are told that “ *enthusiasm and mass solidarity greeted Benjamin Gitlow, Communist Vice-Presidential candidate,*” at New Bedford. He received “ *an enthusiastic ovation*” and was met with “ *the singing of the International.*” The titbit follows : “ *a number of working women brought a bouquet of flowers which they had gathered.*”

Big headings displayed right across the front page of the *Daily Worker* inform us:

**“20,000 IN N.Y. RED ELECTION RALLY AT GARDEN: “FOSTER AND GITLOW HEAD 25,000 IN GIANT PARADE.”**

Sub-headings read :

**“WORKERS HAIL COMMUNIST NOMINEES AT HUGE MEET.**

**“TWENTY-MINUTE OVATION GREETS FOSTER AND “GITLOW: WORKERS ACCLAIM RED PROGRAMME.”**

The letterpress explained that, on Sunday, November 4<sup>th</sup>, 1928, Benjamin Gitlow with Foster was met with a roar of mighty welcome from 20,000 workers at a demonstration in Madison Square Garden, New York. He received a thunderous ovation and found himself the centre of

a sea of surging red splashed with red poster slogans that covered the high area of Madison Square Garden. The audience expressed its communist emotions with horns, whistles and other noise-making apparatus. The entire scene seems to have been a cross between the taking of the Bastille and a visit to Coney Island. When Gitlow appeared on the platform there was a tremendous outburst of communist cheering, and so on. The previous day there had been a huge demonstration from Park Avenue to Union Square. Gitlow and Foster sat in separate motor-cars placarded with C. P. slogans. They smiled and bowed at welcomes of flashlights, shouting and tooting of horns. In the rear of each car two Young Communist Pioneers stood at the salute as the cars followed slowly the Red Flag which headed the line. This was deemed a great event as this was the first time that the Red Flag, forbidden under the Lusk Laws, had appeared on the streets of New York since 1919. Thus the workers were persuaded, beneath big headlines, by the *Daily Worker*[i] that Benjamin Gitlow was one of the greatest communists the world had known.

The idea of Gitlow's greatness was the main thesis of Communist Party publicity in the columns of the [i]Daily Worker for the year 1928. On May 28<sup>th</sup> of that year, this organ, which subsequently slandered Gitlow out of all recognition to himself, and expected its dupes to believe whatever it said, whether its mood was hot or cold, declared : —

“ BENJAMIN GITLOW.

“Born Elizabethport, N.J., Dec. 22, 1891. Father and mother both revolutionary Socialists. Public school education. High school, three years. Has worked in tin foil factory, clothing shops, millinery factories and department stores.

Joined Socialist Party, 1907. President of Retail Clerks' Union of New York, an organisation of department store workers, 1913–14. Blacklisted by Department Store Retail Merchants' Association. Member of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America since 1918. Elected to New York legislature on Socialist ticket. Elected as Socialist assemblyman to the New York legislature on anti-war platform of 1917 — the only one of the ten Socialist assemblymen who remained consistently anti-war. Actively fought against the last imperialist war.

Manager of the New York “ Communist,” “ Revolutionary Age,” and “ Voice of Labor,” 1918–19. Member of the national council of the left wing of the Socialist Party in 1918–19. Helped to organise the Communist Labour Party of America, 1919.

Convicted as a Communist under the New York criminal syndicalist law in 1919 and went to Sing Sing prison to serve a term of five years.”

Gitlow's expulsion for supporting Lovestone was a consistent expression of the zig-zag policy of Stalinism. The Lovestone policy was instructed by Moscow in 1923, and was claimed one year later to be the basis of the American Party's “ tremendous success “ during that year. It was a policy that required several years' consecrated devotion for its successful development. Gitlow was expelled for pursuing it as a serious policy and not regarding it as a passing expedient, a mere political irritation, or imposture.

Every Communist Party leader in the U.S.A. pursued the same course as Gitlow. Only they turned when the Great Bear told its little children to turn. Explaining his enthusiasm for a farmer-labour party, W. Z. Foster, as editor, in the Labour Herald, for March, 1923, declared : “*A Labour Party is one of the most vital needs of the American Labour Movement.*” The report of the Central Executive Committee to the Third National Convention of the Workers' Party, published in The Worker for January 12, 1924, naively stated that the Farmer-Labour policy was “*the greatest step*



forward “ made by the Party since its foundation, and avowed that this was the “correct” policy “ finally formulated.” Correct policy ! For maintaining which, Gitlow was expelled.

Time has established that the Communist Party and the Third International never formulated correct policies : and of all its policies, the, most absurd was the Farmer-Labour policy. It declared that the Communist Party in the United States, immediately after the July 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1923, Conference, “launched a campaign to assist in the organisation of the Federated Farmer-Labour Party “; that the party units had to raise this issue in all local unions, co-operatives, etc. ; that in not “ a single instance “ had “ a mistake “ been made in adopting this policy; that “the organisation of the Federated Farmer-Labour Party “ had “ greatly strengthened the position of the Workers’ Party,” i.e., Communist Party.

The report also said :

**“ During the past year the Communist Party in the United States has become a real political factor.”**

The truth is, the Communist Party has never been a political factor in the United States nor in any other country.

Gitlow obviously could not be blamed by the C.P. for sticking to the Farmer-Labour party thesis. He did so and found himself in a minority of one in consequence. Despite his status in the party his persistency in the matter involved his subsequent expulsion.

Within a year of enunciating the Farmer-Labour slogan, Foster declared that it had lost its power. He received the support of the majority of the G.E.C. of the American Workers’ (Communist) Party, who had declared it to be a correct policy in the annual report already summarised. The Communist International ordered the Ruthenberg (Minority) and Foster (Majority) Groups to work together, and repudiate the ideology of Love, whom the Foster Group had defended in the Council, Foster voting for Love thirty times during the thirty ballots taken between March 7 and December 10, 1924. At that time Love was defending Trotsky’s position.

Writing in the New York *Volks Zeitung*, for January 6, 1924, Love averred that although Trotsky was “ in a minority “ in the Communist Party, “ in the end he will prove to be right.” Yet, when Gitlow was expelled he was accused of acting as leader of a group that adopted Love’s position ! Giving a Roland for an Oliver, Gitlow retorted by denouncing the Stalinists as “ Trotskyists,” and at a later date opposed Lovestone’s approach to Brandler, Amter, etc., on this ground.

Cannon, afterwards of the Trotskyist Communist League, supported the Farmer-Labour policy, and allied himself with Pepper, the Hungarian Communist, who played a counter-revolutionary part during the Hungarian Revolution. As “ Pepper “ he went to the United States and became leader of the American Party. A notorious adventurer, he was violently opposed to Trotsky since the Third Congress of the Communist International, sometimes posing as an “ ultra-Leftist,” at others as a pure “ Right Winger.” He was expelled from the Communist International for supporting Bucharin, but returned to the Soviet Union after his American adventures. In 1925, Cannon supported Lovestone against Trotsky.

Lovestone opposed the application to the C.P., U.S.A., of the decisions of the 9<sup>th</sup> Plenum of the E.C.C.L, February, 1928, and identified himself with Pepper. After Brandler’s expulsion, the Lovestone Group supported his policy, and formed the International Communist Opposition.

The Communist League of America, or Trotskyist Left Opposition, was formed in the United States in November, 1928. The same month it issued its paper, *The Militant*, which, whatever one’s criticism of the political history of the Communist League may be, deserves tremendous credit for its consistent educational propaganda. The Communist League took the stand that the

first four Congresses of the Communist International were vindicated, and that the Communist International marched forward till 1923. The Communist League demanded the re-instatement of the Opposition and urged that the workers of Europe should adopt the slogan :”*Soviet United States of Europe.*”

Down to the city elections of June, 1933, the Communist League supported the Communist Party candidates, on the ground that it was, although the Opposition, an integral part of the Communist Party. In *The Militant*, for May 27, 1933, the Communist League published a letter to the Communist Party, dated May 19, criticising the party in Minneapolis for making a United Front Workers’ Ticket instead of a straight Communist ticket. *The League pledged its full support to the party in its campaign*, criticism notwithstanding.

During the United States, Municipal elections of 1931, *The Militant* carried the slogan, “Vote Communism,” meaning *Vote Communist Party*. Despite the Opposition’s excellent and informing criticisms of Stalinism, the C.P. programme it supported was a mass of absurd reformism, as it is evidenced by the “campaign literature” issued by the party ;

- (1) Communist Election Programme;
- (2) Communist Call to the Toiling Farmers ;
- (3) Unemployment Relief and Social Insurance.

The first carried a list of over 60 “immediate demands,” that is, reform measures, destined to strengthen the Capitalist State. It was simple Social Democratic Parliamentarism.

From the *Toiling Farmers* pamphlet, page 11, sub-title, “How to Get Better Prices”, I select this gem : —

**“ Out of the misery and hunger of millions of toilers of city and farm these monopolies coin enormous fortunes for themselves under the protection of capitalist law which makes private property and private profits from trade sacred. Only when capitalism is overthrown, when the poor and oppressed of city and country rise in united revolutionary action against the robber capitalist class and establish their own Workers’ and Farmers’ Government, can these conditions be ended. Only such a government will outlaw the robbers of the toilers and fix prices so that the city workers pay less, and toiling farmers get more for farm products.”**

In other words in order that the “small and middle farmer” might secure better prices for products raised with antiquated methods, capitalism must be overthrown ! The Socialist Republic will see to it that the petty farmer under “Socialism” receives reduction in taxes, relief from mortgages, higher prices for their products (with higher wages for city workers so that their increased purchasing power may enable them to pay the higher prices asked by the petty farmers !), etc., etc. By parity of reasoning the petty corner grocer and small manufacturer will likewise survive in the new social system and will likewise be “saved” in line with the aforementioned recipe. Was ever such humbug, such reactionary imbecility advanced? Advanced brazenly, and with incredible impudence, in the name of Marxism ! And supported by the Trotskyist Opposition who cried :”Vote Communist” !

Immediately following the excerpt quoted, we read :

**“ The Communist Party demands the repeal of all such tariffs and INDIRECT TAXES on the poor in the interests of the rich.”**

Little time need, be wasted on the third of the pamphlet trinity in the Stalinist “Communist” theology, viz., “Unemployment Relief and Social Insurance; “Demands are made for a seven hour day, when economic dictates, the maximum required be two or three hours at the most!

With respect to the special case of the United States bank depositors, the *Daily Worker* in its Issue of October 27, 1931, reported that I. Amter, the then C.P. candidate for the borough presidency of Manhattan, appeared before a gathering of about 1,000 of these depositors who had met to hear what the politicians running for office had to promise them in the way of securing restitution. A letter from Norman Thomas, the S.P. candidate for the borough presidency, was read, wherein, quite honestly, Thomas told them with incredible candour for his type, that the borough presidency of Manhattan could do nothing about banks, etc. Of interest, by contrast, was Amter's C.P. performance. I quote the *Daily Worker*:

**“ A great ovation was given to Amter when he was introduced. Several times during his speech he was loudly applauded. ‘ Norman Thomas says in his letter that he does not know what he could do if elected borough president. The Communist Party pledges to you that if I be elected, I’ll use all my official power as borough president, to organise all the 400,000 workers and small depositors, for a militant fight to get their money back,’ said Amter.”**

Only a thorough fakir could have made such a promise ! Three days later, the *Daily Worker* carried a front page article, featured with a five column scare-line heading : “*Fight for Your Baby’s Milk*” ! The article criticised various efforts made by other reform bodies to purify the milk supply, and concluded :

**“ The issue is, between the milk companies, of who gets the profits, the loose milk companies, or the bottled milk trust. But that issue is of no concern to New York workers. What is of importance to them is the question of PRICE. In another article we will take this up. But here and now we say: DEMAND THAT MILK, BOTTLED OR LOOSE, BE SOLD FOR NO MORE THAN EIGHT CENTS A QUART!”**

Let me admit that the emphasis is mine, and let me add that, during the campaign made by Hillquit for the mayoralty of New York City in 1917, the “ burning issue “ was cheap milk for the babies ! The “ issue “ was symbolised by distributing broadcast advertising matter in the form of a milk bottle, with the inscription, “ Five cent milk and Hillquit,” with the implication, of course, that if Hillquit was elected mayor of New York City, milk would be five cents a quart ! So that the C.P. backed by the Communist League, was somewhat behind the times in respect to this “ burning issue.” Even as in their demand for a shorter working day, they raised the I.W.W. slogan of a six hour day to a seven hour day, so they increased Hillquit’s price of milk from five cents to eight cents per quart. To support which was not only Stalinism but Trotskyism also !

*The Militant* admitted in 1934 that the Communist League did not attempt to criticise the details of the C.P. election platform, and referred students to its October issues for 1930 and 1932. It explained :

**“ that the Communist Party is the only working-class party in the field, the only revolutionary party ... The Left Opposition, therefore, ranges itself alongside its party, and calls upon every worker to cast his vote for his party, the Communist Party.”**

The Communist League took this stand because it considered itself a faction of the party !

Following on the Paris Conference of August, 1933, Lovestone, in his organ, *The Workers' Age*, for September 15<sup>th</sup>, 1933, attacked Trotskyism and "branded" all attacks on "Socialism in One Country" theory "as dangerous anti-Bolshevism." The International Communist Opposition, and *The Workers' Age*, fought "to liquidate the false tactics of the C.I., and not to oppose the policy of the C.P.S.U. in the Soviet Union." But H. Zam, in *The Workers' Age*, for November 1933, declared for a new Communist Party in the United States and in every other capitalist country, and a new Communist International, outside the Soviet Union, and exclusive of any Russian section. A very sound advance on Lovestone's position.

Unfortunately, Zam did not last the distance. In November, 1934, with Gitlow, he returned to the Socialist Party. The Left Opposition or Communist League of America could hardly have expected such a total collapse of Gitlow's Communism, when it made him the guest of honour at its 5<sup>th</sup> Year Banquet Celebration, at the Stuyvesant Casino, New York, on November 4<sup>th</sup>, 1933. But then, the C.L.A.'s own record was none too good and its great tendency to banquets, and its association at these banquets, were almost as bad as the petty bourgeois affiliations and entertainments of the C.P. itself. At this 5<sup>th</sup> Year Banquet, which was also celebrated as the 16<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Russian Revolution, there were present E. Sutherland Bates, a noted publicist; Edward Lingren, who was prominent in the early days of the Socialist Left Wing movement and a supporter of the Russian Revolution; Diego Rivera, the famous artist; Sydney Hook, the anti-Marxist, chief of the Department of Philosophy at New York University, whom Swabeck of the C.L.A. hailed cheerily as "Comrade"; and others whose names I have omitted.

Gitlow was accompanied by his aged mother, who rejoiced in the honour paid to her son. Shachtman eulogised Gitlow and declared that he knew in 1926 that a new International was needed and that he had found it at last. It is a pity that, in view of this knowledge, his party should have worked so hard to reform the 3<sup>rd</sup> International down to September, 1933. Gitlow spoke of Communist parties as being something that you must impose upon the masses and not a movement that came from them, for he declared that it was no use having a good party unless "you attached it to the masses."

The C.L.A. was formed on November 4<sup>th</sup>, 1928. It had a great tendency to unity with the Intellectuals, supported the C.P. programme, and consorted with Gitlow right up to the eve of his return to the Socialist Party.

After the events of February, 1934, the majority decision of the French Trotskyists, at their 3<sup>rd</sup> National Conference, was that they did not have the strength to stand alone any longer and that, therefore, they must enter the ranks of the Socialist Party. This meant that from being the Left Opposition to the Communist Party the Trotskyist movement was now the Left Opposition to the Socialist Party. From the 4<sup>th</sup> International, it had degenerated to the advocacy of the 2<sup>nd</sup> International. On learning of the decision of the French Trotskyist Group, the Communist League of America decided to effect a similar transformation and to enter the American Workers' Party, previously the Progressive Conference of Labour Action. By a majority of 8 to 1 the C.L.A. National Committee commended the course of the French party and brought about the American merger on December 1<sup>st</sup>, 1934.

True to form, on Wednesday, January 9<sup>th</sup>, 1935, a testimonial dinner was given for A. J. Muste, National Secretary of the Workers' Party, at Irving Plaza, New York City, by the ex-members of the defunct C.L.A. The dinner commemorated Muste's 50<sup>th</sup> birthday and the so-called 15<sup>th</sup> year of his membership of the revolutionary Labour movement. Sponsors of the dinner were of much the same type as the persons who were associated with the Barbusse Amsterdam Anti-

War Conference organised by the C.P. in 1932, namely, intellectuals who had no real contact with the revolutionary struggle. Just as the 1932 association condemned the Communist Party so the 1935 association condemned the remnants of the C.L.A. The sponsors included Roger Baldwin, Ernest Sutherland Bates, Max Eastman, Sydney Hook, Oswald Garrison Villard, Stephen Wise and others, among whom were the ex-Communists Ludwig Lore and James P. Cannon.

The beginnings of the American Workers' Party dates back to the time when Muste entered the A.F. of L. to organise the so-called education of the working-class under the auspices of the Trade Union bureaucracy. He started the Brookwood College in order to challenge the work of the Communist Party Trade Union Educational League. The work of this League was purely partisan and therefore no great improvement on any activity of the ordinary Trade Union. But the purpose of Brookwood College was not to challenge or destroy in the light of wider understanding the sectarian character or effects of the Communist Party organisation but only to safeguard the Trade Union bureaucracy against competition. The purpose of Brookwood College was pure careerism. In the end it proved not sufficiently bureaucratic and the A.F. of L. organised the Workers' Educational Bureau in opposition to the college. By way of protest Muste organised his Conference for Progressive Labour Action and established his organ, the *Labour Age*.

In January, 1931, the *Labour Age* demanded the recognition of Soviet Russia by the U.S.A. "as a sound business policy in this era of depression." The same issue declared that there was no class war in America, but that "if there is any such thing in America as class war then it is the class war between the A.F. of L. and the Communists." The following month the *Labour Age* congratulated in its editorials the British Labour Government for its conduct of foreign affairs and declared that its policy was "brilliant, bold and courageous." It eulogised MacDonald on his London India Conference, which as everyone knows should have been a matter of no moment to a revolutionary labour paper.

In 1933, at the time of the November Pittsburg Conference of the C.P.L.A. proposals were developed for a new International and for an approach to the Trotskyists. On November 11<sup>th</sup> of that year *The Militant* suggested that the Communist League of America should unite with the C.P.L.A., the condition being that the new party should be a Communist Party and that it should organise a Communist International. When at last unity was brought about the idea of Communism was dropped as being sectarian and the term the American Workers' Party accepted because it was above both Communism and Socialism.

The first draft programme was put out by the A.W.P. in the early part of 1934, and was an ordinary parliamentary Socialist document. The second draft was issued in the fall of the same year and endeavoured to smuggle in the idea of parliamentarism under cover of vague revolutionary phrases. The Musteites wrote :

"to defeat the capitalist government and to transfer all power, to the workers' councils, the workers must be prepared to use whatever means are necessary."

This sounds like insurrection and street fighting, or at least the General Strike. Actually, it meant the ballot box. On September 27<sup>th</sup> this revised draft was accepted by the Communist League as a basis for fusion.

After coming together the combined groups put out two documents : (1) A proposed new programme, published in *The Militant* for October 27<sup>th</sup>; and (2) a declaration of principles, which appeared in *The Militant* for December 8<sup>th</sup>. The second statement was the end of the Communist

League and the ideals of Socialist Soviet propaganda. Whereas the proposed programme spoke of the workers using any means “ to defeat the capitalist government,” which could mean smashing the capitalist government, the declaration of principles amends this “ to take control of the State by revolutionary means.” The “ means “ are not defined but of course the term, “ revolutionary,” in the lips of Social Democrats implies nothing at all. Whereas the Communist League had stood for nuclei, the new American Workers’ Party stood for branches. Which meant that it was a political party.

The programme of the A.W.P. nominally rejected the bourgeois social order and its economic foundation and all suggested economic reformisms, such as “ Social Credit” and Stale Socialism. It denounced the replacement of the real political movement of social struggle by the parliamentary electoral movement. It proclaimed its aim as the workers’ state based on the workers’ councils and declared that was not merely the goal but also the democratic instrument for solving the contradictions of the capitalist system and accomplishing the transition to Communism. It opposed the 3<sup>rd</sup> International because it was controlled by Moscow and was serviceable only to the interests of the ruling bureaucracy of the Soviet Union. It declared that the present crisis was the beginning of the end of the present form of society and that even to overcome that crisis would not reverse the decline of the capitalist system.

The A.W.P. admitted that economic contradictions existed in Russia and then spoke of the unlimitedly socialist character of Russian planned economy. Again the programme dropped into pure Social Democracy by distinguishing between its final aims and its immediate aims, thus having a maximum and a minimum programme. The end of a great deal of attack on the idea of employing parliamentary action was that the American Workers’ Party would function politically along the traditional American lines.

The truth is the A.W.P. was but a camping ground for the declassed intellectual reduced to poverty by the capitalist depression, and spurred on to careerism by his sense of snobbery and pedantic importance. The American continent has been singularly barren of real Socialist intellectuals. The New England school of Emerson and Theodore Parker seem to have exhausted the power of American genius, which has attempted no flights since the Civil War. The only real original Socialist thinker of the American continent was Daniel De Leon and he had a lawyer’s horror of all uncivilised action, and was hidebound by his sense of inferiority to Marx. The revolution had to be clean and bloodless to suit De Leon’s taste. This made his entire propaganda Utopian. He denounced the Socialist parliamentarians because he was at heart a parliamentarian; and he slandered the Anarchists because he stole from them the Syndicalist thesis. He combined an idealistic revolutionary parliamentarism with a reformist Syndicalism and urged the formation of industrial unions by the workers with a Socialist objective. This was attempting to do two things at once and was clearly impossible.

It is possible under certain market conditions to organise the workers into industrial unions but then it must be for a struggle on matters connected with the industry in which they are engaged. It is possible to organise the workers for Socialism but obviously this must be on the political or intellectual rather than the industrial field. The planned economy or action belongs to the industrial field, but the Socialist idea and propaganda belongs essentially to the political plane.

De Leon wanted the workers to capture political power peacefully through the ballot box and then the political representatives were to adjourn on the spot, *sine die*, and the industrial unions were then to become society. The only reason given by De Leon as to why the workers’

representatives in parliament should adjourn parliament was that if they did not do so, their action would be a “ usurpation.” Of course, to be threatened with a charge of this character would prevent a political careerist from attempting to cling to power where a threat of industrial or social force would fail to move it !

The Communist League, in *The Militant*, for October 27<sup>th</sup>, 1934, made a bold attack on De Leonism for its utopian reformism ; but actually De Leon’s position is no worse than that of many of the intellectuals who made up the propaganda committee of the A.W.P. and did not possess the vigour and consistency of doctrine that characterised the activity of De Leon.

The intelligentsia of the A.W.P. were the old pre-war intellectuals of *The Liberator* and *The Masses*, living under post-war conditions of being permanently “ broke,” with younger additions to their ranks, equally “ broke “ but entirely devoid of their claims to fame. Max Eastman connected the two eras.

Before the War Eastman had no Socialist record but was a plain bourgeois liberal, who flirted with woman’s suffrage in 1912, and afterwards pretended to poetry. The character of his paper during the War, once America had entered the struggle, caused Eastman to be charged with sedition. It is possible that if the United States had declared war in 1914, even this charge would not have been preferred against him. The three years of grace enabled him to develop his intellectual gymnastics without molestation so long as America was neutral.

In Court Eastman argued, as only a Greenwich villager could, after the style of his Chelsea prototype, that he was not for any war, which meant that he was against the withdrawal of the U.S.A. from the war, and that he was against the defeat of the U.S.A. James Russell Lowell has satirised this type in his immortal *Biglow Papers*, the type that combines nonchalant seeming anti-patriotism with a studied refusal to oppose the patriotism of the herd.

Eastman made no flirtation with politics until the romance of the Russian Revolution began to stir the vague understanding of the intellectuals. His interest was one of “ Copy “ and not of understanding. For a short time in 1924, he flirted with Trotsky and translated his writings into English, until Trotsky, grateful for being translated, felt he had to repudiate Eastman since he did not want to be identified with Anti-Marxism. It must be acknowledged that Eastman made a splendid job of his translation and that for this work the revolutionary movement is under a great debt of gratitude to him. This fact does, not take him out of the category in which a study of his career places him; the category to which Sydney Hook and other leading lights of the A.W.P. belonged. The study of these persons’ careers reveal them as types who have dabbled in neurotics, supposedly naughty theories and sensational ideas, and have no interest in any really vital or radical principle. Their background may be less certain than that of the Bertrand Russell and H. G. Wells clique of Merry England, but they are woven out of the same shoddy cloth.

The United Workers’ Party was organised in January, 1933, and was composed of the previous Proletarian Party Opposition which had arisen in the Communist Party of the United States and then organised itself as a separate group in 1918–19. The first programme of the U.W.P. contained eight points, which may be summarised as follows :-

1. The Permanent Crisis of Capitalism.
2. The Only Revolutionary Class is the Proletariat. Therefore there must be no concessions to the agrarian and petty bourgeois class, and no united Workers’ and Peasants’ policy. The party stood for a Workers’ Republic and a Workers’ Republic only.

3. Declared its opposition to Trade Unionism, and averred that Trade Unions were unable to obtain concessions.
4. Did not believe in urging unemployment reforms. But did urge an active day-to-day struggle for immediate relief.
5. Anti-Parliamentary. Present crisis of capitalism did not permit the revolutionists to waste time and energy participating parliamentary activity .
6. Whilst not necessarily opposed to the Third International, was most critical to it. Reprinted in September, 1933.
7. The dictatorship of the proletariat. On this point the attitude of the U.W.P, regarded the party as only an instrument of the revolution, not the revolution itself. On this point, the subsidiary character of the party to the Soviets or Workers' Committees of Action, the U.P.W. position is anti-Bolshevik and to our mind in line with Anarchism. The U.W.P. claim was that this is a sound Marxist attitude.

In September, 1933, the United Workers' Party defined its attitude towards the declaration of the National Committee of the Communist League of America on the question of a new party and a fourth International. It endorsed the view then put forward by the C.L. that it was necessary to reject the policy of reforming the old corrupt Communist Party and that what were needed were a new C.P. and a new International. The U.W.P. issued its statement as a pamphlet early in 1934 under the title of *Bolshevism or Communism*. From that excellent pamphlet we make two quotations :

“ We have no bureaucracy that is engaged in the competitive struggle with the apparatus of other organisations; we believe that the REVOLUTION IS NOT A PARTY QUESTION BUT THE JOB OF THE WORKERS AS A CLASS; and we are willing to work in the ACTUAL CLASS STRUGGLE, in spite of theoretical differences, together with the L.O. as well as with all other proletarian groups, hoping that our policy will in the course of the struggle be accepted as a successful one.”

“The U.W.P. does not recognise such invented things as Leninism; it only considers Lenin as a Marxist who was not able to free himself totally from the influence of the degenerated so-called orthodox Marxism of Social Democracy. The U.W.P., instead of going back to Lenin, revives real Marxism in its original form before the epigones had destroyed its revolutionary value. WE ARE NOT A LENINIST BUT A MARXIAN ORGANISATION: In our opinion a distinction between Stalinism and Leninism is impossible, as the first was the result, the actual outcome of the latter. So in our opinion, a distinction between Trotskyism and Stalinism is only possible on a PURELY CONCEPTIONAL, THAT IS, UNREAL BASIS. In reality this distinction does not exist, and the failure of the Trotsky group to differentiate not only on tactical questions, but also on questions of principle, is more than proof of this. In our opinion, the policy of Stalin historically is not only defeated, but the WHOLE BOLSHEVIK POLICY, WHICH INCLUDES LENIN AND TROTSKY, HAS FOUND ITS LOGICAL END. The Bolshevism of all forms is bankrupt. THE QUESTION IS NOT STALINISM OR LENINISM, BUT BOLSHEVISM OR COMMUNISM.”



“ We can only line up with an organisation which adopts as a principle and a tactic the recognition of the present crisis as the death crisis of capitalism. The necessity of a proletarian revolution as the only way to escape a situation of wide world Fascism. The recognition of State Capitalism in Russia, and with that the call for the overthrow of the present system in Russia by the revolutionary proletariat of Russia.”

On all these points, as also on U.W.P. endorsement of the position of Rosa Luxemburg in her controversy with Lenin (1904–08), my sympathies are with the U.W.P. The pamphlet, *Bolshevism or Communism*, and also the other pamphlet issued about the same time as a manifesto and programme of the party, on Fascism or Revolution, should be widely read by all English-speaking workers.

The Anti-Parliamentary Communist movement of Britain is the real parent of modern Socialist thought; and possesses the merit of having opposed the pundits of the traditional movement, and despite its poverty of having lasted the distance. It was ridiculed in 1906 for attacking Trade Unionism and Parliamentarism by factions who were compelled, after various squirmings and attachments, to admit that the workers have nothing whatever to gain from either Parliamentarism or Trade Unionism.

It is interesting to note however that Anti-Parliamentarism, whilst not unrelated to Marxist thought, any more than it is unrelated to some of the literature that was inspired by the French Revolution, arose as a distinct propaganda in Britain, and that its pioneer was an English Socialist who had very little time for the study of Marxian economics or of Marx's political writings. William Morris, in the days of the Socialist League, pioneered Anti-Parliamentary Socialism in opposition alike to Anarchism and to Social Democracy. He could not bear the want of fellowship that belongs to standing alone and so returned, reluctantly, a few years before his death, to an unfortunate association with the Social Democrats.

## 14. ANTI-PARLIAMENTARISM, 1927: GERMANY, HOLLAND AND RUSSIA.

The purpose of this chapter is not to discuss the activity of the Anti-Parliamentary movement that was conducting a vigorous propaganda in England and Scotland during the year 1927. That was merely part and parcel of the general movement that had been conducted in Britain since 1906, and of which some details are given in the appendices to my pamphlet *Socialism and Parliament*, Part I. In this chapter my desire is to trace the evolution of the Anti-Parliamentary movement in Germany and Holland and also of the Anti-Parliamentary Communist Opposition groups in the Soviet Union. The period covered is confined to the year 1927, because during that year, the British movement was brought into contact with the movement on the continent of Europe, and first hand information was published in the columns of *The Commune* from March to October, 1927, Volume II.

In *The Communes* mentioned I published a most interesting correspondence from German and Dutch comrades. Appended to that correspondence was a review of the movement as it had developed in Germany and Holland. That correspondence is reproduced, with such abridgement as time and space render necessary. Repetition has been omitted in order to further interest. The heading of the correspondence is reproduced from *The Commune* : —

IT GROWS! IT GROWS!  
ANTI-PARLIAMENTARY INTERNATIONAL LETTER-BOX.

Dear Comrade,  
My friend, our comrade and “ manager “ of the “ INO,” Ernest Liebetrau, asks me to acknowledge receipt of the “ Communes “ and pamphlets, for which we thank you very much. We shall do all we can to meet your wishes as to the translation of the pamphlets sent to us, especially “ Socialism or Parliament “ and “ Labour in Office.” The latter has already been translated in German by the writer of this letter., and we will publish it in our various anti-authoritarian papers: “ Die Proletarische Revolution,” “Der Freie Arbeiter,” “ Der Proletarische Zeitgeist,” etc... With fraternal greetings from all comrades of the “ INO.”  
Frankfurt-a-Main, Feb. 3, 1927. HEINRICH BERGES.

**Dear Comrade,**  
**By hazard we got some days ago a copy of your paper, “ The Commune “ for December, 1926.**  
**We, the extreme group of the Opposition in the Communist Party of Germany — called Entschiedene Linke — are now, after long development, anti-parliamentarian as well as anti-trade unionist...**  
**Our meetings are frequented by thousands of German workers and their numbers are growing steadily. We work in close alliance with the Communist Workers’ Party (K.A.P.)**

and the 'General Workers' Union organisation (A.A.U.)...  
With revolutionary greetings in the great struggle, yours,  
For the Political Office of Entchiedene Linke.  
Berlin, Feb. 12, 1927, CARL PORTH.

Dear Comrade,  
... The way in which Russia has broken up the revolutionary workers, the way of the parliament and of the trade unions may be considered the way of reformism, the way which holds the labourers back from the revolution. Russia is already very far on the way to capitalism. It cannot longer be a revolutionary factor for the working class of Europe. In this situation we have to look for those international forces which are willing to make really revolutionary tactics.  
As for Germany, we have the K.A.P.D., the Kommunistische Arbeiter Partei Deutschlands (the Commun. Lab. Party), which was born during the German Revolution. Its principles are: Dictation of the working class. (The Moscow Commun. Party will dictation OVER the working class by the Comm. Party.) The weapon of the dictation are the soviets, roughly the shop committees in your land. Further, the K.A.P.D. is against the parliament, and will rally all the proletarian forces in the committees...  
Amsterdam, Feb. 28, 1927. H. CANNE MEIJER.

Dear Comrade,  
Your last " Commune " calls: " It grows! It grows! " and really, I was as glad as you, when I saw how different German and Dutch comrades have addressed themselves to your group, because it inspires us to feel that the revolution cannot be besieged, that the head of the revolution always peeps above the swamps of capitalistic-reformistic machinations of the Second and the Third International. Therefore the Dutch comrades which have rallied on a revolutionary basis, express the desire that you convey their greetings to all British Anti-Parliamentarian comrades.  
I send you a translation of a pamphlet broadcasted by us showing how Russia is supplying the German bourgeoisie with arms. I send you some issues of " Imprecorr." To the Third International the capitalistic moral appeals: Money never stinks. You will note the theoretical statement of the nationalistic policy of the Third International during the Ruhr War and why the nationalistic struggle overshadowed the class-struggle. That is also the theoretical statement why it is a revolutionary act to supply the German bourgeoisie with arms...  
By parliamentarism we mean, in Holland, not merely the parliament, but also trades unionism. Parliamentarism is the necessary complement of unionism. The " democratic " supports of capitalism are parliament and union, the two, real obstacles to world revolution and the workers' emancipation. Therefore we fight the union as well as the parliament. It is our conviction that capitalism cannot break down before the unions are broken down. In our propaganda we say: LEAVE the Unions. Break them down. All power to the workers themselves.  
Britain is the classic land of Unionism. Therefore the propaganda against trades unionism will be most difficult. But we believe that the British workers cannot wage the class struggle except by and through committee organisation against trades unionism. We must oppose the unions as capitalistic organisms.  
The " Entchiedene Linke " is the fortnightly review of the Opposition section of the

Communist Party of Germany. But only some of these groups still belong to the K.P.D. Other groups have been expelled.

No. 20 of this journal deals with the question, **THE CONQUEST OF THE TRADE UNIONS** by the Communists! It concludes that it is an illusion to think and to believe that the trade union machinery can be conquered and used for revolutionary purposes, by capturing the majority of the membership. It is no less an illusion to believe that the workers can conquer political power by parliamentary means.

The workers cannot expel the bureaucrats from the unions. They cannot rescue their parliamentary representations from the bureaucrats. "Leave the Unions" is the true revolutionary slogan.

"The *Kommunist Arbeiter Zeitung*" is the organ of the K.A.P.D. It is published twice a week. In its issue for March 17, this journal published an important article to prove how the Third International has arrived, from one alteration to another, to the standpoint held by the Second International on August 4, 1914. At the Fourth Congress of the Comintern, on November 18, 1923, Bucharin declared that there was no difference between a loan from a bourgeois state, and a military block with a bourgeois state: and that it was sound proletarian tactics to conclude a military alliance with one bourgeois state in order to overthrow another bourgeois state: and that where such a military alliance was concluded by the Soviet Government, "IT IS THE DUTY OF THE COMRADES OF SUCH A LAND TO HELP THIS BLOCK" (sic) to the capitalist siege of the Soviet Republic!

It goes without saying that the military block that was meant was Germany. And so the German proletarians are pledged, by the Communist Party and the Third International, to support the German capitalistic class in a coming war. And that is all **STILL** called Communism! ...

With greetings, Amsterdam, March 14, 1927. H. CANNE MEIJER.

Dear Comrade,

The Executive of the Fourth (Communist Workers') International decided, in its session of February 20–26, to put itself into communication with your group. It believes that the relationship between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, inside the British Empire, is undergoing a fundamental change. This change will compel the working class of Britain to evolve an independent class movement, in opposition to the present mis-called "Labour" movement, freed, in its forms and its integrity, from all that chains the

"labour" movement to bourgeois interests and so subjects the workers to the domination of capitalism. The total defeat which the British working class have suffered through the betrayal of the General Strike and of the miners will have brought the British proletarians to the acknowledgment that their existing political and industrial organisations and methods have become means of oppression of the worker in the hands of the bourgeoisie and its labour-leading satellites. An improvement in the existence level of the proletariat was impossible owing to the general crisis of capitalism, but the bourgeois and capitalistic mentality of the working class as a whole, cannot understand this fact.

It was during the German Revolution (1918–1921) that the Communist Workers' Parties and Revolutionary Industrial Councils rose to organise the workers, not for reforms,

**but on the tactic and theory of the death crisis of capitalism, the direct historical struggle towards Communism.**

**The Communist Workers International calls upon all real revolutionary elements in the proletariat to form a substantial international proletarian class-movement against capitalism and the bourgeois state.**

**The C.W.I. considers it as its first task to unite all real revolutionary Communists into a world movement round the banner of Communism, for the proletarian revolution must be a world industrial movement. This movement must stand for the destruction, by untiring agitation – on the ground of its “ cynical reactionary, avowedly counter-revolutionary, and definitely anti-proletarian character – of the existing so-called Labour movement, consisting of the Second and Third Internationals, with its Labour Parliamentarism and Trades Unionism.**

**A penetrating discussion on these issues is needed.**

**With Communist greetings we remain, for the Executive of the Fourth International.**

**Amsterdam, March 20, 1927. L. CARDOZA (Secretary).**

The editorial comment published on this correspondence brought further communications from Cardoza, Canne Meijer, and Kate Rumonova. Consequently I was able to publish a complete account of the phases and divisions of the anti-parliamentary and semi-anti-parliamentary movement in Germany and Holland.

1. **ENTSCHIEDENE LINKE.** — This group arose under the influence of the opposition in the official (Moscow) Communist Party of Germany (K.P.D). Originally consisted of the followers of the Korsch-Schlagewert section and those of Korsch. At the time of *The Commune* correspondence consisted of the followers of Schwarz only. Schwarz was still a member of the Reichstag but turned to the K.A.P.D. and appealed to his followers to enter that party. The old Anti-Parliamentary Party of the workers of Germany (K.A.P.D.) welcomed this appeal.

Before joining the K.A.P.D. completely in September, 1927, this group declared its attitude towards Trades Unionism. It stood for the breaking down of Trades Unionism by *withdrawal and from without*, and the building of shop-committees. Theoretically, until its definite merging into the K.A.P.D., the Schwarze Entschiedene Linke group stood for party dictatorship as opposed to the supreme importance of the industrial struggle. This involved Zinoviev's view that Soviet organisation was useless unless the Communist Party dominated it; an oppressive political dictatorship stagnating real proletarian emancipation, and finally making for the exile, imprisonment and execution of Zinoviev himself. The Entschiedene Linke was Moscow with a left-terminology that finally developed a left understanding. Hence its complete break with Moscow and Parliamentary Communism.

The Entschiedene Linke emphasised this break when it published an account of the resignation from the Weissenfels Town Council of August Meerheim. The mayor or Provost of Weissenfels, that is, the chief magistrate, demanded an explanation from Meerheim, as to his reasons for his resigning from the Town Council, to which he had been elected. Meerheim replied as follows :

—

**“ Weissenfels, March 12, 1927.**

**“ I hereby acknowledge the receipt of your letter of February 12, and beg to state that I decline to keep the place of Councillor which I used to occupy.**

**“ As an explanation of my viewpoint, I submit the following considerations: —**

**“ In view of the resolutions of the second congress of the Communist (Moscow) Inter-**

national, I thought I would be justified, as a revolutionary Communist, in using parliament as a tribune to show the proletariat that bourgeois society only uses parliament as a pseudo-democracy to keep the proletariat down. But my activity, for years, as a Councillor, and the increasing tendency of the German Communist Party towards Reformism, have forced me to realise that parliament and its subsidiary local bodies, are created by Capitalism to deceive THE MOST ADVANCED SECTION of the proletariat.

“ This development shows itself, very distinctly, in the latest resolutions of the K.P.D. (Comm. Party of Germ.), wherein it is acknowledged that the Communists must stabilise the class institutions of Capitalist Society. The bourgeois character of these institutions reveals itself, for example, in the diminishing of publicity to a minimum, and in the obligation to keep all resolutions and discussions of the non-public sessions secret, which MUST lead to corruption.

“Therefore, I hereby REJECT parliamentarism and declare my belief in the revolutionary class-struggle, and in the demand, ALL POWER TO THE SOVIETS, pioneered by Rosa Luxembourg and Karl Liebknecht.

“ I think this explanation should suffice to convince a magistrate of the senselessness of retaining my mandate as Councillor. The favour of an early acknowledgment of my resignation will oblige. (Signed) AUGUST MEERHEIM. ”

2. SCHLAGEWERT-KORSCH GROUP.- This group originated from C.P. members. Thrown out on account of their radically Communist tendencies and opposition to Moscow reformism. Believed in returning members to the Reichstag to carry on Anti-Parliamentary activity, and to develop definite political opposition to parliamentarism. It carried on a powerful anti-parliamentary activity outside of Parliament. The parliamentary representatives of this group were good comrades, always living and agitating among the workers, and devoting their official salary to the furtherance of Anti-Parliamentary propaganda. They were loyal to the proletarian struggle and definitely revolutionary in their sympathy. Like the *Proletarische Zietgeist* group, they stood for federation as opposed to centralism.

The Korsch group *identified* Communism and Anti-Parliamentarism. It did *not* consider Anti-Parliamentarism to be *merely* a tactic. On the contrary, it deemed Anti-Parliamentarism to be an accurate description of the theory or conception of Communism in relation to the State or the political machinery of class society. It defined Anti-Parliamentarism as the fundamental principle of the new social order. The workers' emancipation could not be brought about by a Labour or Social Democratic, or even Communistic Administration sitting in the Reichstag, pledged to uphold and administer capitalist society and maintain capitalist Imperialism. It could be achieved only by the definite, practical, anti-parliamentary organisation of the workers on the political field in opposition to, in definite challenge to, parliamentarism. For the Schlagewert-Korsch group, therefore, Anti-Parliamentarism defined Communism politically under capitalism, its antagonism towards the bourgeois political constitution. And it defined Communism politically after the proletarian revolution, in that it pointed the meaning of Anti-Parliamentarism was the end of political society, and the dawn of practical society. The Korsch group stood for an industrial federation of labour, linked industry, workers' council administration; a commonweal administered by the producers. Soviets were to replace municipalities (which were representative only of the consumers' interests and so conserved the autonomy of the capitalist state) and the Soviet system would replace parliamentarism.

The Schlagewert-Korsch group worked inside the Reichstag and on the streets to give expression to this idea of the class-war and to develop the machinery of action that would effect the revolution that it involves.

When the Mjasnikow group in Berlin issued, illegally, an appeal on behalf of Mjasnikow and the jailed left Russian Communists, the leaflet was ignored by the *Kommunistische Arbeiter Zeitung* and the *Entschiedene Linke*. But Schlagewert published it, accepting responsibility for its circulation. It was then published by the Anti-Parliamentary *Proletarischer Zeitgeist* (No. 22), and widely circulated in Austria. As a result it was translated and published in Czecho-Slovakia, France, and Russia, and led to much anxiety in Comintern circles. Two long articles in the *International Press Correspondence* attempted to answer the appeal.

The leaflet was signed, on behalf of the International Anti-Parliamentary Communist Federation, by representatives of the groups in Czecho-Slovakia, Germany, France, and Russia, as well as Britain, and took the form of an *Open Letter*, addressed “*To the Workers’ Delegations going to Russia from Europe and America.*”

It began as follows

**“Dear Comrades; As you would possibly travel to Siberia; we desire that you look for the Left Communists (Anti-Parliamentarians, as they say in Britain and Germany; Communist Workers’ Group, as they say in Russia), viz., Comrades Gabriel Mjasnikov (Tomsk), Nicolai Kusnetzov (Semipalatinsk), Prostatow (Nicolaevsk), rotting in Siberian prisons, and that you speak with them personally at length, and report to us your opinions and impressions of their condition and that of their families.”**

Concerning Kusnetzow, the leaflet mentioned that he had been imprisoned since January, 1924, was known to have been three times on hunger strikes of long duration, but his present fate was unknown.

The delegations were asked to investigate the fate of the Anti-Parliamentary Communists banished to Chardinsk, without warning, on December 27, 1924; of the 11 Anti-Parliamentary Communists arrested at Perm, on December 8, 1924; and of the following Anti-Parliamentary Communists : — Alexander Medvedyev (Moscow Electro-trust), Kochnov, Tinnov, Moissejev, Miphailov, Sorwin, Rersina, Demidov, Polosov, Matrosov.

The signatories to this manifesto were : Germany, Lauterbach, E. Grillisch; France, F. D’apon; Russia, Ivan Karpelanky, Chruschenko ; Czecho-slovakia, Swetlik, Anton, Johann; Orient, Ali Alibar (India); Yamada (Japan); Poland, W. Muszynski. I signed for Britain.

My signature was the cause of most interesting expressions of sectarian feeling that were vented in letters published in *The Commune*, and commented on at the time: —

**Berlin, May 16, 1927.**

**“Dear Comrade Aldred,**

**“...We were astonished to see your signature to a manifesto issued, in behalf of the political prisoners in Russia, by the Korsch-Schlagewerth Group in Germany, which decided, IN OPPOSITION TO US, to take part in further elections.**

**“We approve, of course, of every protest issued or arranged on behalf of Mjasnikov and his comrades. But we were not informed by our parliamentarian Oppositionists of their intention to make this protest. Surely the protest should be complete and inclusive if it is to be of representative value ...**

**“With heartiest best wishes in the great fight, For the Political Office of *Entschiedene***

**Linke,**

**KARL PORTH.” Amsterdam, June 5, 1927.**

“ Dear comrades!

“... We see that you are publishing excerpts from the ‘Entschiedene Linke.’ Do you know that the leader of this Group (Schwarz) is still a Member of the German Parliament (Reichstag)? Their Anti-Parliamentarism is of a very stumbling kind indeed. Moreover, they follow in the wake of reformism. We hope to inform you about the facts later.

“ With best wishes to the Commune Group of Glasgow and our British Anti-Parliamentary: comrades.

“ Yours- fraternally in the Struggle, for the Ex, of the 4<sup>th</sup> (Anti-Parley) Int., L. LOPES CARDOZA.”

3. 4TH INTERNATIONAL. — Has never existed as a practical organisation. In 1927 it was a pioneer anti-parliamentary idea of organisation. Originated from the idea of federating Anti-Parliamentary Communist groups into a Fourth International, for propaganda purposes, to combat the misrepresentations and reformist activity of the 3<sup>rd</sup> International; but developed the idea of controlling, through congresses and an executive, the world propaganda of Communism and Anti-Parliamentarism and developing an actual organisation of action.

The secretary, Comrade L. Lopes Cardoza, writing on behalf of the Executive Committee, objected that, in summarising his letter dated March 20, 1927, q.v., I omitted the entire programmatic portion, and did not make clear the attitude of the 4<sup>th</sup> International on the subject of AntiParliamentarism. Cardoza declared :

“ COMMUNISM OR ANTI-PARLIAMENTARISM: We do not identify these two ideas. Anti-Parliamentarism is only a tactic which urges itself upon the proletariat. Communism is the final goal of the class-struggle. We must not mix up MEANS AND AIM, TACTIC AND GOAL.”

It is to the credit of the Anti-Parliamentarians, whatever faction, that they anticipated the reluctant demand, years afterwards, and with much greater pretences to understanding, of the Trotsky and Leninist Opposition groupings for a 4<sup>th</sup> International.

4. K.A.P.D. (COMMUNIST WORKERS’ PARTY OF GERMANY). — Arose in 1920, after the collapse of the Spartacist movement. The policy, programme, and early history of this movement is dealt with fully in another chapter. Although it fathered the 4<sup>th</sup> International (Communist Workers’ International), it was not identical with the 4<sup>th</sup> International, which was a distinct expression and development. The K.A.P.D. was a powerful propaganda body of AntiParliamentarism.

The literature (1927) of the K.A.P.D. made most interesting reading. Max Hampel, writing in *Proletarier* for August, the monthly organ of the K.A.P.D., on *Marx-Engels and Lenin*, declared that State Communism was a mere form of capitalism. Hampel insisted that Marxism did not mean organisation from “ above, “ for which all parliamentarians stood, but its opposite, the free association of the producers into Free Communes. Accordingly, it was necessary fo organise the workers into industrial organisations, and not in trade unions. Trades Unionism was not the industrial organisation of the workers, but the studied organised negation of the workers’ industrial organisation.

The *Kommunistische Arbeiter Zeitung*, defining the policy of the K.A.P.D., declared that the “ Socialistic “ real politics of the Bolshevik Government and International led to victories for the N.E.P. bourgeoisie and world capitalism and to defeats for the Russian workers and the working-class movement of the world. The Bolsheviks placed a fatal chain of compromise and disaster on the Russian Revolution by the adoption of the New Economic Policy in 1921. The revolution



was surrendered to the Anti-Communist farmers at the very moment when the Bolshevik Government was boasting most loudly of its imprisonment of real (perhaps) and (alleged) counter-revolutionary elements. The Russian proletarians were forced to abandon their control of production, the private initiative of the bourgeois specialist was introduced *and the Russian workers had to take up once again the heavy lot of an exploited class*, which possessed only the *commodity* of its working energy, and was subjected, in the matter of its social condition of life, to the operations of the “ free “ capitalistic market. This economic negation of Communism was followed directly by a change in the class relations, a fundamental change of the government of the State.

Leaning upon their potency in the field of organised production, the N.E.P. men and the Kulaki (rich farmers) had conquered political power in the Soviet Union without resort to force. The Russian Soviet system had become only a miserable caricature of the Sovietism of 1917, and since 1921, had been but the red-harnessed bull of capitalism, at home and abroad. Nowhere had Soviet diplomacy defended or advanced Communism. Everywhere the “ red “ diplomats warred on real Communism, the spontaneous movement of the workers. After several years of “ United Front “ policy, the “ conquering of the Trades Unions “ tactic, the Communist Party and the Third International were bankrupt. The Communist Party in Germany and in Holland had been conquered by reformist Trades Unionism.

This excellent essay was summarised in *The Commune*, for October, 1927, p. 149.

The Kommunistische Arbeiter Zeitung (July, 1927, Nos.52, 54 and 57) translated and published in full my pamphlet *Labour in Office*, forerunner of *Government By Labour[i]*. *It was translated for this organ by a sailor, known as Icarus. He was released from prison in 1926, after serving five years' imprisonment, for his loyalty to the workers' cause. In 1927, he was organising the fishermen in Cuxhafen (Germany), in the Soviet form. "Every ship is an organisation ! " That was his slogan.*

5. PROLETARISCHE ZIETGEIST. — This group published an organ of this name. It consisted of the majority of the members of the original A.A.U.E. (General Workers' Union or Unity Organisation), who had not linked up with the Spartacus movement. Partly Marxist and partly Anarchist, workers belonged to this group. The members were strict antiauthoritarians and anti-parliamentarians, standing for a federation as opposed to a centralised organisation.

The [i]Proletarische Zeitgeist (Nos. 22–25, and 27) translated and published my pamphlet, *Labour in Office*. It was an entirely different translation from that published by the K.A.Z., and seemed less diffuse.

6. THE INTERNATIONAL BURO OF INTERNATIONAL COMMUNISTS. — Held that it was impossible for the various AntiParliamentary groups, owing to weakness, to take the initiative in developing the direction of the Labour movement. But maintained that Anti-Parliamentarians had to spread a good analysis of the policy of the Communist Party, the Labour Party, and the Trade Unions. Declared Anti-Parliamentarians had to trace the beginnings of the rank and file movement, exhibit its activity, and study the forms in which it appears. Affirming that all revolutions criticise themselves, the Buro stated that the upheavals of 1917, '18, '21, '23 and '27 (Vienna) had taught the failure of the leader or parliamentary organisations, and revealed a new proletarian tactic. Now was the time for the Anti-Parliamentarians to investigate these lessons and deliver the word to the workers.

The Buro stressed the slogan : “ All power to the workers themselves. “ And it insisted that the positive form in which to organise this power was that of shop-committees.

Commenting on the article of Hampel, already quoted, the Buro said :

“ [b]When we see matters in this light, the anti-parliamentary-factory-organisation-movement

is not only a matter of tactics but also of total difference in aim. Here is a touch-point between Syndicalism and Marxism. ”

Writing from Amsterdam, on behalf of the International Buro, H. Canne Meyer says :

**“ By your heavy attack on Russia, you are menaced with isolation. We have experienced this on the Continent. Since 1921 we have exposed the counter-revolutionary character of the Third International, of Russian diplomacy, and the trade unions. Everybody left us. We were ‘doctrinaires’, who isolated themselves from the masses! Which was right, only to the extent that the masses responded for the time to reformism, and so forsook Socialism, while we hold aloft the banner of revolution.”**

7. SPARTACUS (PFEMFERT) GROUP. — Originally, the Spartacus League and K.P.D. Described in the *Spur*, 1920. A small group that broke away from the K.P.D., owing to left tendencies. Included a remnant of the A.A.U.E. (General Workers’ Union, or Unity Organisation). Had a progressive centralistic tendency, like the Entschiedene Linke and 4<sup>th</sup> International groups.

8. OPSTAND GROUP. — Group publishing the Dutch Anarchist paper, *Opstand*. This group stood on the special platform of factory organisation as opposed to trade unionism. With this group, the Anti-Parliamentarians in Holland were on very friendly terms.

9. MJASNİKOW GROUP (Berlin).-This was a small group of active Russian Anti-Parliamentary comrades. Owing to the friendliness existing in 1927 between the German and Russian Governments, these comrades were subjected to the menace of deportation and police restrictions, and their activity was treated as illegal. They were branded as undesirable aliens. They urged a 4<sup>th</sup> International, for propaganda purposes, as against the 3<sup>rd</sup>, but not as a practical organisation of action, issuing decrees, and passing binding resolutions. They endorsed the British Anti-Parliamentarian attitude as to the relative non-importance and non-usefulness of International Congresses.

The Mjasnikov group held that it was essential to heal and not to emphasise divisions that were not fundamental, repudiated the several mutual denunciations and recriminations within the Anti-Parliamentary movement, and declared that the true proletarian policy was to federate the left revolutionary forces, and not scatter them. It saw not revolutionary life and energy, but dullness of thought and expression in wordy theses of inordinate length and tiresome detailed exactness.

This group was associated closely with the Anti-Parliamentary activity of the much imprisoned Russian Bolshevik, Mjasnikov. It rejected all ideas of political dictatorship and also peasant Anarchism. Defining parliamentarism, whether Social Democratic or Communistic, as counter-revolution, it bade the workers of the world respond to the great call of Anti-Parliamentarism to Communism and Social Revolution.

10. SAPRONOV OPPOSITION (Russia).-Attacked (1927) by the Chairman of the Communist Party of Russia in the German issue of *Imprecorr*. This opposition was *not permitted* to write in the Soviet papers. It broadcasted its platform illegally. Declared that (1) the struggle within the Soviet Union and the Russian Communist Party had developed a class character; (2) the fight against Stalin could not be limited to the party, but had to be conducted outside the party, among the workers generally; (3) the fight was the fight of the workers against the petty bourgeoisie who supported Stalin; (4) to unmask Stalin and his policy, it was necessary to unmask the tottering and sham of the Trotsky-Zinoviev “ opposition.”

Sapronov claimed to be the true Communist Opposition in the Soviet Union against Trotsky and Zinoviev, as well as against Stalin, against the 3<sup>rd</sup> International, and its compromising, subsidised Communist Parties abroad.

The Trotsky-Zinoviev Opposition played a disgraceful part in the class struggle. It urged a new policy for Russia and the 3<sup>rd</sup> International, opposed the *Nep*-bourgeoisie and maintained that Russia was not building Communism, but Capitalism. After which, the Trotsky party announced that it did not intend to fight the Stalin party of Thermidor and declared that it stood “ *absolutely and unreservedly for the defence of the Soviet Union under the present central committee of the Party and the present leadership of the Executive Committee of the Communist International.* ”

It added that the Soviet Union, *under this guidance*, “ *is the Fatherland of all Toilers.* ” (*Imprecorr*,” English issue, No. 48, p. 1079).

Which, as time proved, was a platform of disaster and liquidation.

## 15. ANTI-PARLIAMENTARISM IN GERMANY, 1920

At the time of the Russian Revolution, I was incarcerated still in Wandsworth Prison for resistance to military service. I was not released until Tuesday, January 7<sup>th</sup>, 1919, under the Cat and Mouse Act, after 14 days' hunger strike, following upon a long period of work and discipline strike. I was rearrested on Sunday, March 19<sup>th</sup>, after an extensive Anti-parliamentary campaign in Scotland, at the conclusion of a meeting on Clapham Common. I was returned to Wandsworth Prison and again went on hunger strike, being released four days later. No further attempt was made to rearrest me under the Cat and Mouse Act and I subsequently received my complete military discharge.

I was arrested again on Wednesday, March 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1921, illegally in Shepherd's Bush, London, under a Scotch warrant. At this time Bakunin House, Glasgow, the Anti-Parliamentarian headquarters was surrounded and raided by armed police, and at the identical moment my Shepherd's Bush flat was raided by a large contingent of Scotland Yard officers. The charge was alleged sedition against the members of the Glasgow Central Group of the Anti-Parliamentary Communist Federation for printing the group paper called *The Red Commune*. Into the imprisonments that followed it is not necessary to go in the present work. The important point is that between the dates, March 19<sup>th</sup>, 1919, and March 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1921, the Anti-Parliamentarian movement in Britain was developing contact with the Anti-Parliamentary movement in Germany and also defining the attitude of Anti-Parliamentarians in Britain towards the Communist International. This seemed to be a most important period of revolutionary development and must be considered by the new movement that is evolving invisibly out of the present reactionary war situation.

During my imprisonment for resisting military service, which began in May, 1916, the editorship of *The Spur* was taken over by Rose Witcop. She remained editor of the paper from that time on until the Bakunin Press was closed down by the police raids in 1921. In August 1920, Rose Witcop visited Berlin and so brought English comrades into touch with the various sections of the German revolutionary movement. Her impressions are to be found in *The Spur* from September to December of 1920.

Writing from Neukolln, Berlin, on August 24<sup>th</sup>, 1920, she described the relations between the Syndicalist movement and the rising K.A.P.D., and depicted the strength of the Labour movement in Germany at that time. The following excerpt bears on this point : —  
**“This is my second day in Berlin... To-day there is only one daily Labour paper in England. Here, the Majority Socialists have 80 daily papers, while the Independent Socialists have 18, and the Syndicalists count their membership by hundreds of thousands. Shall we still refer to Germany as being backward?”**

This small excerpt illustrates well the extent of the terrible German defeats of 1923 and 1933, and the disaster that has overtaken the organised Labour movement in Europe.

From Munich, Rose Witcop wrote her impressions of the official and the unofficial Communist elements. The latter she found to be genuine enthusiastic comrades, but the former were neither helpful nor interesting.

In an essay on *Lessons from Munich*, she threw light on the betrayal of the Munich insurrection by the disciples of Moscow “ Official “ Communism. She visited Erich Musham in jail where he was being treated as a political prisoner. Her interview with him was a long one and enabled her to get in contact subsequently with various Anti-Parliamentary Communists in Germany who contributed articles in *The Spur* on the history of the German movement: Musham’s motto at this time was “*I believe in the dictatorship of the proletariat, not the dictatorship of parties.*”

One of the Anti-Parliamentary comrades to whom Musham introduced Rose Witcop was “ Wald Quint.” This was the revolutionary pen-name of an airman, who came over to the Communists during the Munich revolution. He was imprisoned subsequently by the “ Whites,” but released after eighteen months’ imprisonment.

“ Quint “ published an essay on *Communism in Germany* in *The Spur*, for December, 1920. This essay was divided into two chapters :(1) *The Liquidation of Syndicalism*; which argued that the Rhur district, once the hot-bed of Syndicalism had become the cemetery of Syndicalism, owing to the Syndicalists discarding Utopian pacifism and mere strike inaction, to fight in the united ranks of the proletariat, arms in hand, against the military force of the organised reaction; (2) *Spartacism*: This chapter described the rise of the K.A.P.D., the Anti-Parliamentary Communist Workers’ Party of Germany, and the failure of the K.P.D., the “ official “ Communist Party of Germany.

“ Wald Quint “ was challenged by a German Syndicalist in the January, 1921, *Spur*, and replied in the April issue, defending the attitude of the K.A.P.D. towards syndicalism. The following passage merits quotation for its clarity of definition :

**“ The Syndicalists are, according to the explicit declaration of the Third International and the repeated assertions of Lenin, useful and unquestionably revolutionary. They stand for Soviet organisation and for Communism. Not the goal divides us from them, for the co-operation which Communism strives to attain, will recognise neither State nor Rulers nor Ruled. They only commit the error of declaring birth without pregnancy, not only as being possible, but as being a basic principle. They hope to secure the domination of the working class over the means and instruments of production and distribution, without first establishing the dictatorship of the proletariat over the counter revolutionary forces of capitalist domination. ”**

Returning to the December essay, and the important second chapter on *Spartacism*, we find the story of the rise of the Anti-Parliamentary movement in Germany told in the appended excerpts :

**“ When on March 13<sup>th</sup>, 1920, the German counter-revolution closed ranks and went into action, with the avowed object of establishing a Junker militaristic dictatorship, there existed no de facto Workers’ Party that embodied the revolutionary will of the German masses. Karl Liebknecht, the creator and founder of the Spartacus League, whose watchword was followed by hundreds of thousands of workers during the bloody months that succeeded the outbreak of the Revolution, whose name was last on the lips of hundreds of revolutionary workers who yielded their blood in its cause — this man of word and deed was murdered. In 1919 the Spartacus League represented revolutionary mass-**

action, the advance guard of the class-conscious proletariat, and to the bourgeoisie it seemed close akin to the Final tribunal, A year later this revolutionary party upon which the proletarians of Germany — indeed, of Europe — gazed with the hope it would be the leader in the coming battle for liberty, sank to the position of a mere marionet, and became a shieldbearer to the Scheidmanns and Kautzkys.”

“ Wald Quint “ proceeds to describe the fate of the fighters for the revolution, the menaces, imprisonments, and slaughtering for which the Ebert “ Socialistic “ Government was responsible. He relates how 24 Anti-Parliamentarism delegates, representing 10,000 workers, were expelled, after the Heidelberg Conference in the autumn of 1919, when the leaders pledged the party by resolution to parliamentarism and Trades Unionism. The Spartacus League refused to accept the challenge and declined to constitute itself a Workers’ Party. The Kapp coup d’etat of March, 1920, witnessed the complete failure of the K.P.D. Says “ Quint “ —

**“ The Executive of the K.P.D. (Communist Party of Germany) not only failed completely during the Kapp counter-revolution, but also published its declaration of ‘loyal opposition’ towards a bourgeois government, and advised the heroic proletariat at the Ruhr district to lay down their arms on the plea that further struggle was futile. This was a direct blow in the back of the class-conscious workers, and the latter therefore decided that it was their duty to found the Communist Party of Germany anew, in order to continue the class struggle with undiminished vitality...**

**“ The new ‘ Communist Workers’ Party ‘ unhesitatingly declared its affiliation with the Third International...**

**“ In July, 1920, the Communist Labour Party sent delegates to Moscow to effect the affiliation of the party to the Third International. In so far as the delegates were requested to commit themselves to undertakings which would have involved the suicide of the Party, and its complete subjugation to the Spartacus League, they broke off negotiations, and left Moscow before the opening of the Second Congress. IN POINT OF PRINCIPLE, THE RELATION OF THE PARTY TO THE THIRD INTERNATIONAL WAS, AND STILL IS THIS, THAT THE PARTY HAS NOTHING TO SAY AGAINST THE CENTRALISM WHICH IS CONCERNED WITH CREATING UNITY AND AN INCREASED PREPAREDNESS OF THE MOVEMENT. BUT IN SO FAR AS METHODS AND TACTICS ENTER THE QUESTION, THE PARTY REPULSES EVERY ATTEMPT AT INTERFERENCE AS AN UNWARRANTED INVASION.**

**“ The National Conference of the K.A.P.D. which was called after the return of the delegates from Moscow, after having failed to secure the admission of the Party into the Third International, declared that the K.A.P.D. was not concerned sufficiently to renew the discussion on their party programme with the bodies of the Third International, in order to undertake a Revision as desired by Moscow. The programme, which had been unanimously adopted by the previous Conference, should have formed the irreproachable basis which should have been respected by the Third International, had the affiliation of the K.A.P.D. to the T.I. been deemed necessary and advantageous.**

**The Third International will now have to formulate its attitude towards the K.A.P.D. — i.e., give an explanation as to how it proposes to arrange its future relationship to this Party on the basis of the K.A.P.D. programme and on the basis of the guiding principles formulated by Moscow. Moreover, the T.I. will have always to bear in mind that the**

**K.A.P.D. has not the least intention to sacrifice even only one iota of its principles.**

**“ The ascendancy of a leader-despotism after Russian style, is in fact, a source of great danger for the international proletariat. In Germany things are taking place at the moment which strongly tend towards the same type of leader-dictatorship, and which call for strenuous care and watchfulness. A dictatorship of a clique of leaders would be the very worst that could happen to the German proletariat, after its long chain of suffering and torture. The proletariat of all lands will be free only when it fights its own battles, for its own freedom, and, after freedom has been secured, rules by itself. ”**

Consider how timidly the Trotskyists approached this conclusion and remember that this was written in 1920.

Germany having failed to defeat Fascism, the proletarian stand must be made in Britain and America and the English-speaking nations. The heart of the proletarian struggle in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century was Britain. Later it moved to France, and then to Germany, and then to Russia. It threatened again to be in Germany. But now it must be Britain and the United States and the proletariat of the English-speaking nations. The issue is World Revolution or World Fascism. Although, finally, the proletariat will win, the failure of the working-class struggle from 1918 to 1933 brought the calamity of the second world war and the fascist depression.

## 16. COMMUNISM IN BRITAIN, 1917–21.

On Friday night, January 28<sup>th</sup>, 1921, three separate Communist Parties gathered together in Leeds. The following morning these three Communist Parties ceased to exist, and a new Communist Party, claiming to be the only revolutionary party in Great Britain, an active disciplined section of the 3<sup>rd</sup> (Communist) International was born. The conference that brought it into being was called by the International Executive Committee at Moscow. This was not the birth of the Communist movement in Britain that had been inspired by the Russian Revolution. On the contrary, as time has shown, if it was not the end at least it was the beginning of the arrestment of the revolutionary movement. It represented the passing from Communist propaganda to Communist illusion. This unfortunate official fusion and domination of the Communist movement in Britain did not come about all at once.

Coming events cast their shadows before; and it is not uninteresting to note that in August, 1920, a special mission that I was to have conducted under the auspices of the Greenock Workers' Committee was cancelled owing to my criticism of Lenin and Gallacher. The action of the Greenock Committee was the beginning of party dictatorship in the British workers' movement. Down to this date magnificent feeling existed in the proletarian movement. The unity that resistance to the war had inspired amongst certain sections of those Socialists who had retained their sanity was perpetuated by the events connected with the Russian Revolution. In place of the deadness and silence of imprisonment that had characterised the war resistance, there was now an outbreak of activity. Everywhere the Socialist groups were aggressive and everywhere they moved in solidarity. No attention whatever was paid to party barriers. The columns of *The Spur*, the Anti-Parliamentary Communist paper, which I founded in 1914, during this period of 1919–20 is alive with evidence of this living unity of the working-class movement. It was left to Moscow and the official Communist Party to make an end of this splendid struggle and agitation.

The Anti-Parliamentary movement definitely inaugurated Communist propaganda, as *Communist propaganda*, in London in 1906. This movement reached Glasgow in 1912. The condition of the war years compelled the affiliation of the Glasgow Communist and Anarchist Groups. Known as the Glasgow Anarchist Group down to May, 1920, in that month, this group officially revived its old name. Alike under its title of the Glasgow Anarchist Group, and also its title of Glasgow Communist Group, this organisation, first from its headquarters in Windsor Street, Glasgow, and then from its headquarters at Bakunin House, conducted a tremendous Communist campaign following upon the Russian Revolution, just as it had maintained a strong Anti-Militarist campaign during the war years. It can be seen, therefore, that the Anti-Parliamentarians did not merely pioneer Communist propaganda in Britain, but that they passed from offering definite resistance to war, to pioneering the new form of Communist propaganda rendered necessary for the support of the Russian Revolution.



I was active on the platform, and in the press, defining the Anti-Parliamentary attitude towards the Revolution between January 7<sup>th</sup>, 1919, and March 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1921. This was a period of strenuous agitation rounded by imprisonment.

No sectarianism was displayed by the Anti-Parliamentarians and down to the action of the Greenock Workers' Committee no sectarianism was displayed by the parliamentary groups. It was the time of intense activity, great solidarity, and keen discussion with full exchange of ideas between the different groups. Behind all this activity was the idea of proletarian emancipation and the development of the world revolution in order to further the revolutionary triumph in Russia.

On my release from prison, I delivered my first lecture at the Watson Street Hall, Glasgow. This was on Sunday, February 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1919, and the subject, which traced the history of proletarian struggle, was "Crises: Past, Present, and to be." The following evening I received a public welcome at St. Mungo Hall, my subject being: "The Present Struggle for Liberty." Both these addresses defended the Bolshevik upheaval.

After this I spoke for the Bridgeton I.L.P., the Anderston I.L.P., the Blantyre I.L.P., the Dumbarton I.L.P., Clydebank I.L.P., Partick I.L.P., and the Clapham I.L.P.; for the Walthamstow B.S.P., the Anderston B.S.P.; for the Herald League in North and South London; for the Ealing Labour Party, and also the Clapham Labour Party; for the Hands Off Russia Committee in various parts of the country; for the Fife Socialist League in Kirkcaldy and neighbouring districts; for various Communist Groups established by the activity of the Glasgow Communist Group, such as the Aberdeen Communist Group, The Edinburgh and Rosyth Communist Group; and for the S.L.P. in South Shields, Shettleston, Dumbarton and Croydon. The subjects dealt with were the following: "Our duty to Russia," "British Labour and Soviet Russia," "As to Politics: a Challenge to Parliamentary Bolsheviks," "The War on Russia," "Bolshevism, Anarchy and Parliament," "Why I am a Bolshevik," etc. Details of this campaign for Communism is to be found as indicated in the columns of *The Spur* and also in the columns of a paper called *The Communist*, the first paper of that name to be established in Britain after the Russian Revolution, but not subsidised by that revolution.

In addition to this campaign in London and Glasgow, in Fifeshire and Aberdeenshire, I visited Wales and conducted a campaign from town to town under the auspices of the various Socialist Groups, at street corners, in town halls and in theatres. This campaign was bitterly attacked at the time in the Anti-Socialist press. In the east end of London, under the auspices of the Workers' Socialist Federation — which Sylvia Pankhurst had renamed her Women's Suffrage Federation, en route to establishing it as the Communist Party, British Section, Third International — I conducted a "Hands Off Russia" Communist campaign.

On its part, the Glasgow Communist Group established the principle of the open platform. It introduced George Hardie of Seattle, and at that time a member of the I. W. W. to Scotland. It also brought Charles B. Roberts, who was nosing around as a kind of most unsatisfactory Soviet missionary, from the U.S.A., acting in conjunction with the Workers' Social Federation. It had Willie Gallacher and James Maxton on its platform. Above all it pioneered the Communist League. This organisation was brought into existence in March, 1919, by the London S.L.P. The League established a paper of which only three issues were published, largely owing to the fact that it was an entirely rank and file movement. These three issues covered the period from May to August, 1919. The manifesto of the Communist League was published in *The Spur* for March, 1919. It was an excellent statement of the Anti-Parliamentary position.

The theoretical statement of the manifesto, was divided into four sections : —

- (1) STATE AND GUILD SOCIALISM.
- (2) INDUSTRIAL SOCIALISM OR COMMUNISM.
- (3) WORKERS' COMMITTEES AND COUNCILS.
- (4) THE COMMUNISTS.

The fourth section declared : —

**The Communists are not merely Anti-Parliamentarians in that they ignore the legislation of the Parliamentary machine, for, as previously stated, the working-class attacks the class legislation of Parliament by direct industrial action through its committees and councils.**

The constitution of the Communist League consisted of five planks. These were appended to the theoretical statement mentioned. The first plank declared that the struggle of the working-class for its emancipation was “ *a political struggle taking place on the industrial field.* ” The second plank called upon the working-class in the name of the Communist League to organise into local councils in order to establish a “ proletarian dictatorship.” The third plank denounced parliamentary action and all use of the ballotbox. The fourth plank announced that a member of the Communist League could not become a candidate for Parliament or Municipal Council or in any way use the Capitalist franchise. The fifth plank declared :

**“ At all times the Communist League shall expose the futility of the Parliamentary and Municipal franchise.”**

Commenting editorially on this manifesto of the London S.L.P., the *Spur* detailed my relation with the S.L.P. since 1906, and the various attacks that has been made upon my consistent Anti-Parliamentarism in the name of De Leonism. The editorial concluded: —

**“ To-day, a section of the S.L.P. is proposing to establish a sound revolutionary organisation. This section’s proposals embody all that the Bakunin Press has consistently stood for, all, that Guy Aldred has urged for over twelve years in the face of S.L.P. opposition and bitter criticism. Those proposals our comrade cheerfully supports. He looks forward, with us, to a complete unity of thought, action and purpose with these Communist comrades. He pledges his support, as do we, to the proposed Communist League, and will do all he can to assist in the realisation of its purpose — the overthrow of Capitalism, and its parliamentary democracy and the substitution of the Soviet Republic. His message, like ours, and that of our comrades, is the brave old Marxian slogan: ‘ Workers of all lands, unite! You have nothing to lose but your chains! You have a world to gain!’ Comrades, advance the republic, by developing the Communist League. To your tents, O Israel! ”**

The Communist League established branches in London, at Peckham, Brixton, Stepney, Croydon, and Greenwich as well as in Central and West London. Most of these branches had their own rooms, a tremendous amount of activity being organised from the Peckham rooms at Queen’s Road.

In Scotland, the League established branches in Edinburgh, Musselburgh and Portobello; at Rosyth, Kirkcaldy, and Cowdenbeath, Dundee, Broxburn, and in Glasgow at Bridgeton, in addition to the Glasgow Central Group, by which name the Glasgow Anarchist Group now became known in relation to Communist propaganda in Scotland.

In Wales, the Treherbert Group spread the news of the Communist League throughout the Rhondda Valley, the group maintaining that the use of the word “ political “ in relation to the class

struggle was open to misconception ; and that the parliamentary vote was not obsolete because it had never been, of any use. I visited all these centres and extended the campaign throughout Wales. My activities were reported in *The Communist* under the heading :” *Spreading the Red Light* “; “ *Towards Communist Unity.* ”

Opposition to the Communist League was forthcoming from the Workers’ Socialist Federation and Sylvia Pankhurst. At the Whitsun Conference, 1919, of this faction, it was decided to change the name to “ Communist Party,” Sylvia Pankhurst making a definite bid for Lenin’s recognition, instead of continuing the struggle for a united Communist movement. In the end, Lenin refused to recognise her, and the official Communist, Party, destroyed her activities. It was the activity of the Lenin-adoring elements of the now popularised Communist movement that finally destroyed the Communist League. All that survived were a few scattered Anti-Parliamentarians in London and the definite Central Group in Glasgow, with one or two federated groups in Lanarkshire.

The Cowdenbeath group went over bolus-bolus to the Communist Party. Originally this group had been more Anarchist than Socialist and had been brought about by a fusion of Communist and Anarchist elements. The February, 1920, *Spur* was edited by me. Answering the spokesman of this group, I said in this issue, defining the Anti Parliamentary attitude : —

**“ We are distinctly Marxist in our thought as was Michael Bakunin, but we also object to ignorant hero-worship. There is a great deal of truth in our Comrade Selkirk’s contention that a large number of Marxians claim that Marxism is infallible whilst taking care never to read him. We are willing to agree that it is not necessary to study Marx in order to propagate Socialism. But we would ask our Comrade Selkirk to reflect that our ability to do so may be due to the fact that Marx, accomplished his life task so well, and influenced so many propagandists, that we feel his influence in works which he never wrote and could never have written. Anti-Marxism, as a protest against stupid hero-worship, may be an excellent tonic, but it is a poor philosophy... Marx gave to the modern revolutionary movement its vital character and essential form. No amount of criticism can destroy the debt we owe to Marx.”**

The following paragraph in the editor’s chair of that issue makes interesting reading at the present time : —

**“ Some of our readers may regret that we have not devoted more space to Russian manifestoes. Our reason has been, not that we wanted enthusiasm in the Bolshevik revolution, but simply that we have deemed it our duty not to repeat matter which was appearing in the columns of our contemporaries, but to publish independent articles upon the subject. We are pleased to think, however, that; in the May and June, 1917 issues of this journal, when the labour movement was applauding Kerensky and threatening to stand by him, we expressed our distrust of the provisional government and our great hopes of the Russian situation. We did this, notwithstanding the difficulties under which we wrote, and our total inability, under military arrest, of securing anything like the information, the labour movement was so busy mis-using. The first movements of the Bolsheviks awoke our sympathy, and we listened to every rumour of their struggling triumph which penetrated into our prison cell, with anxious affection.”**

The June, 1917, essay was entitled “ The World as we Leave It,” and was written on the eve of May 1917, and also the eve of the writer’s third continuous imprisonment for resisting military service. After discussing events in Russia up to the point of the Czar’s abdication and. his arrest,

the essay continued : —

**“ We have no faith in Russia’s democratic republic, but we are sure that Russian thought will prove the hope of the world. The lateness of the Russian Capitalist Revolution will menace seriously the prospect of the Russian capitalistic political institution oppressing too much the emancipation of the Russian proletariat. This fact is the great hope and promise of the Russian situation, not its provisional government, nor the fake labour delegations of the present British government anxious to save monarchy and capitalism.”**

This was my personal view, maintained, consistently, during my imprisonments. On the other side of the prison walls similar very definite views were being expressed by the Glasgow Anarchist Group. In May 1918, this group and the Cowdenbeath Group met to draw up an Anarchist manifesto that was published in the *Spur* for that month. The manifesto consists of five theoretical divisions with an additional platform of five principles and tactics. Unlike all previous Anarchist declarations, it definitely attacks Capitalism, asserts the class war and conceives of the revolution being brought about by class-conscious workers. It is direct actionist and Anti-Parliamentary. It is probably the best manifesto that was ever issued by any Anarchist group. The fact makes it lamentable that at a later date the Cowdenbeath Group should have gone over so completely to Lenin’s parliamentarism and have pioneered Gallacher’s return to the House of Commons.

When Lenin addressed his letter to the Communist Party of Germany, condemning as a blunder the attitude of the Anti-Parliamentarians, his communication was attacked in the *Spur*, for May, 1920, as “ Lenin’s Fatal Compromise.” In this issue the Glasgow Anarchist Group announced its change of name to the Glasgow Communist Group and gave its history up to that date.

The record of Glasgow Group’s reaction to Moscow developments is worthy of note. In July, 1920, the group issued its conditions of membership. These were as follows : —

**“ The group stands for the dictatorship of the proletariat, the Soviet Republic, Anti-Parliamentary agitation, and the Third International.”**

Three months later the group revised its political platform, as follows (See *Spur*, October, 1920), It retained the first three items but discarded the last. Against this, it announced : “*Suspends its support of the Third International until such time as that body repudiates its ‘ wobbling.’ ...*”

“ Wobbling “ has been a feature of the Communist Party and the Third International : criminal wobbling on all issues : on parliamentarism ; on the labour struggle ; on unity against Fascism ; on alliance with Fascism ; on Capitalist Peace and Capitalist War.

In 1921, the Glasgow Communist Group became the Anti-parliamentary Communist Federation. It dropped the dictatorship clause entirely because it realised that this clause was never interpreted to mean industrial struggle but always to imply political power and authority, and finally bureaucracy. The Anti-parliamentarians sympathised with the idea of struggle but had no love for terrorism in the struggle. They realised that terrorism always turned to power, stagnation and counter-revolution.

The Leeds Unity Conference of January 29, 1921, which produced the Communist Party of Great Britain, was criticised by me in an essay I contributed to the *Spur* for February, 1921. This essay was reproduced in full in chapter 17 of the first edition of this pamphlet. Summary will serve the purpose of reference.

The essential passage of criticism complained : —

**“ According to a contemporary the meeting was ‘ historic ‘ and represented the ‘ breath of Moscow in Britain.’ The same labour daily insinuates that all the Communist ele-**

ments in this country were represented at this Conference. As a matter of fact, the REAL Communist elements were not represented at this conference at all. Pioneer revolutionary Socialist bodies, who have done more to spread Communism in this country than any element represented at Leeds, declined to have anything to do with the conference. Amongst others, the pioneer Communist organisation in this country was not represented.”

This was a reference to the Anti-parliamentary Movement whose history dated back to 1907 and was, unbroken.

The article criticised Francis Meynell, the editor of the Communist Party organ, *The Communist*, and complained of the boycott of *The Communist* that was established in May 1919, as a monthly organ of the Communist League, and was a genuine pioneer organ established by working men who had been active Socialists for years. I protested against Anti-parliamentarians stampeding into joining the so-called United Party, and added :

**“ The Anti-Parliamentarians alone are on the revolutionary side of the barricade and when the day of action comes the United Party must either accept the Anti-Parliamentary tactics or retire. In the meantime, the persons who are standing really and truly for Communism, and speeding the Workers’ Republic, are the Anti-Parliamentarians.”**

Time has vindicated this claim. Even to-day, when the Anti-parliamentarians have liquidated their movement into the United Socialist Movement, and maintain a firm stand for Anti-militarism, they are vindicating the logic of their original integrity.

The essay proceeded to discuss the relation of the K.A.P.D. (Communist Labour Party of Germany) and the K.P.D. (Communist Party of Germany) to Moscow. This discussion matters no longer.

The question, “ Shall we support the Third International? “ was discussed in the *Spur*, for November, 1920. Edgar T. Whitehead, then associated with Sylvia Pankhurst, and later a leading light for some time of the Communist Party of Great Britain, answered “ Yes,” in the first essay. I replied to him and answered “No.” Here are some excerpts from my reply :

**“ We face the logic of facts, stand by the logic of our contention, and deny that Lenin and his associates are internationally behaving as becomes genuine revolutionaries.**

**“ We accuse them of turning into parliamentary trimmers. We charge them with social democratic parliamentarism. We decline to support their policy, knowing it to be worthless...**

**“ If Lenin can compromise with men of really non-revolutionary record and exclude the aggressive revolutionists, there is no reason why we should stand in the presence chamber waiting for the glimpse of an occasional genuine revolutionist..**

**“ Taking these facts into account, I ask: ‘ Shall we support the Third? ‘ And I say: ‘ Yes, WHEN it gives up wobbling and stands for revolution.’ Until then, I say, clearly and distinctly: No!’ ”**

## 17. WILLIAM MORRIS AND ANTI-PARLIAMENTARISM.

Anti-Parliamentarism, as distinct from Anarchism, was pioneered in Britain by William Morris. He was seconded by Belfort Bax. Both contributed excellent work to the proletarian struggle, but neither had the courage to last the distance as revolutionary pioneers. They compromised with the parliamentarians and returned to the ranks of the Social Democracy for the sake of fellowship, and because they could not bear being in exile. Trotsky would have termed them the “Capitulators.”

The story of William Morris, and his Anti-Parliamentarian activity, is told in detail in my *Pioneers of Anti-Parliamentarism*. It need not be repeated here. Finally Morris broke from the Anti-parliamentarian Socialist League and formed the Hammersmith Socialist Society, which, according to its prospectus, “will disclaim both parliamentarism and Anarchism.”

It was in Hammersmith that the pioneer work of the Anti-parliamentarian Communist Propaganda Groups were developed from 1907 onwards.

These groups were organised first by me in Clerkenwell, after I had announced my conversion to Anti-Parliamentarism in the columns of *Justice*, the Social Democratic journal for May, 1906. That letter is reproduced in full in *Dogmas Discarded*, Pt. II, Chapter XI.

In various debates in Social Democratic Halls in London ; in open-air meetings in various parts of London ; in the columns of my monthly journal, *The Herald of the Revolt*, described as “*An Organ of the Coming Social Revolution*,” from December, 1910, to May, 1914; in my campaign in Glasgow in 1912, and the following year, under the auspices of the Glasgow Clarion Scouts, I developed the Anti-Parliamentary Communist programme and agitation. Much of this work expressed the lengthened shadow of William Morris.

# **APPENDICES.**

It was my intention to append to this pamphlet the manifestoes issued by Mjasnikov, on behalf of the Russian Anti-Parliamentarians, with details of Mjasnikov's struggles and imprisonments, in Czarist and in Bolshevik Russia alike. Space does not permit such an indulgence. The reader is referred, therefore, to the columns of *The Commune* for 1927, meantime, for the account of Mjasnikov's career, ideas and activity.

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# 1. ANTI-PARLIAMENTARISM IN HOLLAND (1927)

In May, 1927, *The Commune* translated and published the leaflet that was broadcast in Holland by the Anti-Parliamentarian comrades there, exposing Russian Imperialism and denouncing the Soviet Government for providing the German bourgeoisie with arms. The leaflet read as follows : —

FROM THE PAPERS.

RUSSIA PROVIDES THE GERMAN BOURGEOISIE WITH ARMS.

In November, 1926, the “Manchester Guardian” published a report that the German military board had built chemical factories in Russia for making poison gas. German officers had travelled to and from Russia on false passports vided by the Russian authorities. Several ships arrived from Russia at Stettin. Their freight consisted chiefly of arms and munitions, evidently for the German army...

Now, three months after this report, we know that the armament of Germany by Russia is a fact.

Already, on December 6, the “Berliner Tageblatt,” the semi-official organ of the German Government, declared: —

German engineers have erected in Russia three factories; one for AEROPLANES, one for SHELLS, and one for POISON GAS!

It adds that only the shell factory is at work.

At first the Communist Party denied these reports and then said that a concession had been made to a private firm.

**At last, in the Prussian Parliament, Pieck (K.P.D.) acknowledged, in the name of the Communist Party, that the erection of the aeroplane factory was by**

AN AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE GERMAN AND RUSSIAN GOVERNMENTS! ! !

**Moreover, Bucharin, in “Imprecorr” (Vol. 7, No. 10), for January 28, 1927 (speech corrected in No. 12, February 4)**

DEFENDS THE ARMAMENT OF THE GERMAN BOURGEOISIE BY RUSSIA...

**These facts not only throw a light on Russia as a capitalistic country, but also on the third International. It was already very surprising that the Communist Party representatives in the German Parliament had voted for a SECRET MILITARY FUND OF SIXTY MILLION MARKS AND THE APPOINTMENT OF**

**SEVERAL HIGH MILITARY OFFICERS.**

**Now this is clear too!**

**THAT SECRET FUND WAS FOR THE SHELL DELIVERY, and the officers were needed in the “ production.”**

**AND ALL THIS IS CALLED REVOLUTIONARY PARLIAMENTARISM!**

The functioning of the Third Internationalism is revealed and the part played by the Moscow “ Communists “ in other countries is clear. The Third International is only a weapon in the hands of the new Russian capitalist class. Russia not only concludes a secret league for providing the German bourgeoisie with arms, but, through the agency of the Third International.

**RUSSIA IS ABLE TO SURRENDER THE WHOLE WORKING CLASS OF THE WORLD TO THE CAPITALISTS!**

In 1922, the secret league was concluded. And in 1923, Bucharin at the fourth world congress of the Third International, made the prelude for a new August 4, 1914. When a new war comes, the labourers submit to THEIR bourgeois rulers when THEIR land has concluded a league with the Russian Government. Following the protocols of the fourteenth session of this congress, Bucharin declared that the “proletarian” States must seek not only loans from but conclude MILITARY ALLIANCES with the bourgeois States, and that “ IT IS THE DUTY OF COMRADES OF SUCH A LAND, i.e., BOURGEOIS STATE, TO HELP TO THE BLOCK TO THE SIEGE “ of Russia. He also speaks of this military alliance as “THIS FORM OF THE FATHERLAND’S DEFENCE.”

We thought that the proletarian answer to a new slaughter of the proletariat was to be the general strike, leading to revolution: upheaval rather than war! We are mistaken with all the Socialists who pioneered the idea of insurrection against war. According to Moscow,

**WE WORKERS MUST RALLY TO THE BOURGEOISIE THAT IS ALLIED TO RUSSIA.**

**We must help Russia by allegiance to the bourgeoisie State! AND YOU WORKER!**

**What do you think of such agreements?**

**Is it not clear that the Third International is only an instrument in the hands of political mumpers? Is it not clear that, under the mask of Communism, the interests of RUSSIAN CAPITALISM are being advanced and protected?**

Commenting on this manifesto, *The Commune* endorsed every word, and added: —  
**“ The Third Internation represents the counter-revolution, and the Moscow “ Commu-  
nists” stand for anti-Socialism, PURE AND SIMPLE.”**

The leaflet was discussed at a meeting in Amsterdam of the Communist Party of Holland. An official speaker of the C.P. agreed with the denunciation, but explained that the arming of the German bourgeoisie was a *Failure*, a *Mistake*, and finally, a *Deviation* (sic) from the *really revolution* policy of the Third International ! Accordingly the local Anti-Parliamentarian comrades returned to the matter and broadcast another leaflet showing that the German armament scandal was neither a mistake nor a deviation, but the logical consequence of the theory of Leninism.

The leaflet cited Lenin’s theory that the proletariat does not stand opposed, always, irreconcilably, to its “bourgeoisie” but may have to support such bourgeoisie under certain circumstances. The leaflet adds :-

**The happenings of the last few years have shown how THIS THEORY OF LENINISM**

## IMMEDIATELY LEADS TO THE PROLETARIAT SUPPORTING THE COUNTER-REVOLUTION.

The Third International is attacked for pursuing a German nationalist policy in 1923 and, “during the Rhur war, made a united *front with the German nationalists*.” Reventlow, leader of the nationalists, wrote articles in the Communist Party *Rote Fahne*. The *armament of the poor suppressed German bourgeoisie was a direct consequence of this policy*.

Speaking at Moscow, on January 8, 1927, Bucharin defended this policy and referred to Germany as *passing through an ordeal of national oppression, of humiliation, of actual pillage at the hands of the Imperialist State*.” In other words, Germany was not an imperialist State, and Bucharin thought of Germany in exactly the same way as he thought of Soviet Russia. Immediately succeeding the passage quoted, Bucharin added : —

**I may here observe that not only our Party but all other Comm. Parties rightly held it to be impossible that the peculiar position in which Germany was placed, could have formed sufficient reason for defending even a bourgeois Germany against the tyranny of the imperialist states.**

See *Imprecorr*, No. 10, January 28, 1927.

Bucharin proceeded to show that his attitude was pure Leninism and declared that “Comrade Lenin held a national emancipation war against the rule of imperialism to be possible.” Bucharin added : —

**In my opinion Germany was actually in this position at the close of the Imperialist War. so that THE SOVIET STATE WAS PERFECTLY RIGHT IN EXPRESSING ITS SYMPATHY WITH OPPRESSED GERMANY AND ALL COMM. PARTIES WERE FULLY JUSTIFIED IN AIDING GERMANY DESPITE ITS BOURGEOIS REGIME, in its struggle against the imperialist states.**

The leaflet quoted Clara Zetkin’s declaration in the Reichstag, that “*under certain circumstances, a collaboration would follow between the Reichswehr (the bourgeois army) and the Red Front Fighters’ League*.” (Protocoll, February 27, 1925, page 4637).

Which, with other data, caused the Dutch Anti-Parliamentarians to conclude that Russia had to arm Germany as a matter of course and that the tactic was not a *mistake* nor a *deviation*, but the true application of a false theory. The manifesto concluded : —

**“Fellow Workers! Is it not clear that the armament of the German bourgeoisie is not a ‘mistake’ of the Third International, but the consequence of a real well-known policy? Is it not clear that the masters of LENINISM surrender us, through this policy, to bourgeois interests? Is it not clear that the Third International has become an organisation of the counter-revolution, and a weapon in the hands of the Russian capitalist class? ”**

During the same period, another Anti-Parliamentarian, group, the Groep van International Kommunisten was circulating an interesting leaflet on the revolution in China. The following excerpts explain the events of the Chinese Revolution : —

### UNITED FRONT.

The most important feature in the history of the world is the “awakening of China.” In the national struggle for freedom, all revolutionaries join in a UNITED FRONT to rob the “foreign tyrants” of their privileges and to give the NATIONAL forces free scope. Every revolutionary, manufacturer, bank director, landed proprietor, or proletarian unites in the DEMOCRATIC PARTY (Koumintang), to prepare a new period or development for old China.

#### THE PROLETARIAT PUT OFF.

What is bound to strike us in this struggle is the fact of the proletariat not acting as an independent force with its OWN CLASS PURPOSES, but serving as a puppet of the Chinese bourgeoisie. Therefore we never see the devices: "ALL. POWER TO THE SOVIETS" or "THE LAND TO THE LABOURERS" ! Neither the proletarians nor the farm labourers state their own class purposes. So all the revolution amounts to is, that the proletarians of the towns and the farm workers of the country fight for the aims of

"THEIR " bourgeoisie, for the freedom of " THEIR " nation. But it is of no consequence to the proletariat whether it is exploited by foreign or by Chinese capitalists. As a class it can only aim at Communism, and therefore make for complete industrial revolution. After all, the Chinese bourgeoisie will NOT respect the " NATION." As soon as China enjoys the same rights as the other capitalistic powers, China, which will mean the Chinese bourgeoisie, will join the INTERNATIONAL SYNDICATE OF THE WORLD'S EXTORTIONISTS. The cannons now aimed at the foreign forces will be turned round and pointed at the proletariat! ...

#### RUSSIA.

In this " fight for freedom " in China, Russia plays an important role, but not a proletarian one. Russia of 1927 is not the same as Russia of 1917. The Russia of to-day is a Russia seeking capitalistic allies at any cost. IT IS THE RUSSIA OF THE TREATIES WITH CAPITALISTIC GOVERNMENTS. Just as it supplied ammunition to the German and Turkish bourgeoisie, with which the German and Turkish proletariat were murdered, so it will supply bombs to the Chinese bourgeoisie for the murder of Chinese workmen... Everywhere Moscow prevents the development of proletarian power by its " united front " with the bourgeoisie. Moscow works very systematically: one tactic for the whole world; but not a proletarian tactic.

The leaflet quoted at length from *Imprecorr*, No. 155, 21<sup>st</sup> December, 1926, Stalin's thesis on the Chinese Revolution, which it denounced rightly as counter-revolutionary.

The leaflet arrives at several conclusions from which we quote one : —

**Russian politics in China has been as treasonable to the working-class as in Russia itself, and as in Europe. Under cover of revolutionary phrases, she makes Communism identical with mere reformism, radical, or rather, non-radical reforming politics.**

In the later statement, emphasising the accuracy of this earlier leaflet, the Dutch comrades said : —

**Will the proletarians of the world take it as a lesson, that Russia's only role is that of traitor to the working-class, that Russia will never really menace Capitalism, but only seek alliances with the bourgeoisie?**

## 2. McGOVERN AND GALLACHER.

In the Glasgow paper, *The Worker*, for September 30, 1922, W. Gallacher, who was later to become M.P. for Fife, published an article entitled *The Revolutionary United Front*, in which he praised Ritchie, who was afterwards to become a Glasgow Labour Bailie and then a discredited municipal corruptionist, at the expense of various persons including myself. That article is only referred to in this Appendix because of a reference that Gallacher made to John McGovern, then an Anti-parliamentarian and now M.P. for Shettleston. Gallacher's reference is as follows : —

**J. McGovern, who a week ago was talking to me about joining the Communist Party, has once again found grace, and drawing his revolutionary cloak around him, has publicly shed tears over my awful fall. Here, at any rate, is sufficient revolutionary material for a start. Here is a task for Aldred who wants " A Revolutionary United Front." Let him invite these, and whatever other " Purists" may be found, to a conference, and there let them agree on a positive revolutionary policy. I know they would all agree on abusing the C. P., but then Aldred can get a United Front with the boss class on that.**

John McGovern replied to Gallacher in the *Worker* for October 14, 1922.. McGovern's reply makes most interesting reading in the light of subsequent events. Gallacher commented upon it as follows :

**McGovern is simply playing upon his imagination when he serves up the foregoing as having been a conversation with me. However, it is not worth worrying about. McGovern's job is to set about building up a Revolutionary Party with a Revolutionary Policy. Let him gather his "purist " colleagues together and get on with the job. He'll have his work cut out.**

It is impossible to decide between McGovern and Gallacher as to which statement is correct. The probability is that McGovern's statement contains the most truth. Whatever one's opinions may be as to McGovern's manner in getting into Parliament, it is at least certain that to the best of his ability he has used the House of Commons as a sounding board for much Socialist protest and agitation. Whatever his faults he is the only M.P. who has challenged the House on the Oath of Allegiance from the standpoint of Socialism and public perjury. Where the McGovern of 1922 denounces the follies of Parliamentarism and comes into conflict with the McGovern of 1942, I have no doubt that it is the 1922 John McGovern who is correct.

Here is McGovern's letter as published in *The Worker*,. October 14, 1922 : —

MCGOVERN REPLIES TO GALLACHER.

13 Burnbank Gardens, Glasgow.

Dear Comrade:

It is with reluctance I take up my pen in reply to Wm. Gallacher's statement in last issue of the " *Worker*." because I recognise that I have one thing in common with him

— I would never be a successful journalist, and that we would be well advised to leave it alone. However, he has made a statement concerning myself, that I feel compelled to answer, viz. — that I discussed with him the prospect of my joining the Communist Party of Great Britain.

We had a conversation not, as he states, about a week ago, but some six weeks ago, when we discussed the prospect of Unity.

Gallacher asked me to tell Aldred that he wanted a discussion with him, and would come along the following week to 13 Burnbank Gardens, and we would all have a talk about the position of the movement. In answer to the statement that is often made — that Aldred does not desire Unity — I suggested to Gallacher that he should use his efforts towards forming a united C.P. in which we could all work together. I suggested that the Executive of the C.P.B.G. should be asked to convene a meeting of all the delegates of the Anti-Parliamentarian branches, including Guy Aldred, and see if we could form a common programme on the Anti-Parliamentary question. Gallacher Confessed to me that the C.P. of G.B. Executive were not anxious to have Aldred in the Party, for the following reasons:

(1) That they all admitted that Aldred was the ablest Communist propagandist in Great Britain, and as such they were afraid of his power.

(2) That he would become the leader of the C.P.B.G. and unseat some of the others, such as McManus, Bell or Paul, who had not such knowledge or ability, and could not wipe Aldred's boots.

(3) That they did not desire debates with Aldred, as they would be detrimental to the C.P.B.G.

(4) That he (Gallacher) had got hell for arranging a debate with Aldred on the Sunday of the Schwartz debate. The C.P.B.G. Executive had said that this was what Aldred was out for — and what they wanted to avoid — and that he had deliberately played into Aldred's "barrow."

There is no doubt that the above would be the complete explanation of Gallacher's statement. But those who could attempt to kid the "Russian" International that they had 50,000 members in the Workers' Committee movement in this country, do not mind stretching other statements also.

I agree that, in answer to questions, I have paid a tribute to Gallacher's sacrifices for his principles, but at the same time I have always urged that that could be no excuse for his betrayal of his boasted Anti-Parliamentary views of the past. It is just about time that some one was weeping for those Communists who are changing their position as often, and as fast, as the British Army in their retreat from Mons.

It seems rather strange that, if Gallacher's attitude is dictated by the rank and file, the revolt against the "United Front" should come, not from the Leaders or the "Intellectuals," but from the ordinary branch members who have objected to this weekly change of tactics.

Go on with your Parliamentarism and oaths of allegiance to "King George, his heirs and successors" : Continue your association with P.C. Black-Friday Thomas, Anti-war recruiting Ramsay Macdonald, Communal prison-warder Dollan, Cabinet door-mat Henderson, and all the other traitors to the working-class movement! Remember that Colonel Malone's Communism has not kept him from supporting in the Westminster

**(gas) House a strong Air Force in defence of imperialism.**

**Turn out Sylvia Pankhurst for being too extreme and having some independence, but keep the khaki-clad colonels in your ranks; condemn P.C. J. H. Thomas for taking the oath of a Privy Councillor, but praise Gallacher and Foulis for being prepared to take the similar oath required of a Member of Parliament.**

**What a joke; but never mind, the Workers are beginning to tumble to the game, and the time is coming when neither Russian nor British gold will buy agents and dupes. We have had an exhibition this last two years of how we can assist the starving Russians, by relieving them of their Gold. Pursue the retreat, and pioneer backwards, retreating without the mass who will be moving in the opposite direction away from Reformism and Labour Leaders, towards Revolution and Communism.**

**JOHN McGOVERN.**

### 3. THE SOVIET UNION AND THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

Russia, or the Soviet Union, became a member of the League of Nations in 1934. Her membership was championed by France and Britain. The commander of her air force was welcomed during summer of 1934 at Hendon to witness the imaginary bombing of London. For the first time since the revolution, military attaches were exchanged between London and Moscow. Prior to her entry into the League, the Soviet Union concluded an alliance with the French government that limited her to the French military and political system. During the same year the Soviet Union concluded an agreement with the United States of America in which it gave a distinct pledge not only against the conduct of Communist Party propaganda on American soil but even a pledge against protecting such propaganda when conducted on Soviet soil. All this was a normal consequence of the development of Capitalism in Russia. I would make no mention of the development of that Capitalism if it were not for the fact that the Communist Party of Great Britain and its propagandists refuse to recognise the existence of Capitalism in Russia ; or, when reluctantly compelled to face some aspect of this truth, pretend that Russian Capitalism is not real Capitalism, but a kind of Socialism. My point, as a Socialist, is that sooner or later that development, already expressing itself in the terms of Capitalist diplomacy, must finally express itself domestically in the Soviet Union in the terms of Capitalist diplomacy, must finally express itself domestically in the Soviet Union in the terms of the inevitable class struggle. The Red Army will be used against striking workers as surely as the troops of the American Republic were used against striking American workers in 1934. What will the Communist Party say then? It will denounce the striking workers as counter-revolutionaries.

I recall the XIV Party Conference of the C.P. of Russia, which was opened in the Kremlin, Moscow, on December 18<sup>th</sup>, 1925. This conference was reported on page 89 of *International Press Correspondence*, English edition, vol. 5, No. 89, dated December 24<sup>th</sup>, 1925. This issue was sent to me at the time with the printed request : “ Unpublished manuscripts — please reprint.” In this article we shall reprint.

There were present at the XIV Party Conference, six hundred and fifty-one delegates with decisive, and six hundred and two delegates with advisory votes, representing 591,000 members and 433,000 candidates, as compared with a total of 736,000 members and candidates at the XIII Party Conference. Comrade Rykov opened the Party Conference in the name of the Central Committee. Between the XIII and XIV Party Conferences, the Party had passed through the discussion against Trotskyism which was treated as a heresy. This conference elected the 47 members of the Presidium, the elected members including : Comrades Stalin, Rykov, Bucharin, Tomsy, Zinoviev, Kamenev, Trotsky, Kalinin, Dzershinsky, Molotov, Voroshilov, Krupskaya.

That portion of Rykov’s speech referring to the League of Nations was printed in full by the editor of the *International Press Correspondence* in the issue quoted, as a front page article, under the heading : “ The Soviet Union and the League of Nations. “ The editor introduced Rykov’s



speech with the following explanation : —

**“ We publish below a verbatim report of that part of Comrade Rykov’s great speech on the activities of the Central Committee of the C.P. of Russia at the Party Conference in the Moscow governmental district, which deals with the relations between the Soviet Union and the League of Nations.”**

There can be no doubt therefore that Rykov was speaking in the name of the Soviet government and also of the Communist Party of Russia. It is not necessary to reproduce the report in full. But I venture to reprint the following most important passages

#### THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS — AN INSTRUMENT OF WAR AND NOT OF PEACE.

Judging by the expressions of opinion of a number of responsible statesmen of the bourgeois world, plans have been made for a whole series of conferences of an economic and political character in the immediate future. The bourgeoisie is endeavouring to bridge over in some way the antagonisms which exist and those which are maturing, in order, as they love to express it, “ to establish peace in Europe.”

The enormous number of conferences, treaties and agreements between the separate States do not and CANNOT in any way solve the questions of vital interest to capitalism, neither CAN they, in the slightest degree, prevent the danger of war.

It is very symptomatic that in recent times, the bourgeois and Menshevist Press as well as statesmen of great repute have begun to invite the Soviet Union also to join the “ League of Nations.” It was especially pleasing to read invitations of this kind in English newspapers, which have hitherto regarded the government of our Union as a gang of robbers. Only a year ago, the Conservative party won the election by means of the forged Zinoviev letter and under the slogan of the fight against the Soviet Republics. If one of us were asked whether he believes in the sincerity of such an abrupt right about turn, I do not doubt for a moment that he would answer “ No “ without any hesitation.

When our enemies begin to speak so kindly of us, we must ask: “ Does this not mean some change in their tactics; do they not wish to attack us from another side and beat us by other means? “ IN THE PRESENT POLITICAL CIRCUMSTANCES THE NEWSPAPER CAMPAIGN FOR INCLUDING THE SOVIET UNION IN THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS AIMS AT DISCREDITING US IN THE EYES OF THAT PART OF THE WORKING CLASS WHICH STILL CHERISHES PACIFIST ILLUSIONS.

The “ MacDonalds “ of the whole globe are persistently spreading amongst the working class the version that the League of Nations is an institution which is to ensure peaceful development to mankind. As long as there are sections of the working class who, in their hatred for war, place any kind of hopes in the League of Nations, it is more advantageous, from the political point of view, for our enemies to carry on the discussion with us just in this direction, in order to represent the Soviet Union as an enemy of peace...

On principle we take up and carry through a fight for the point of view that THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS IS AN INSTRUMENT NOT OF PEACE BUT OF WAR, NOT OF LIBERATION BUT OF OPPRESSION; further, that the propaganda for the opinion that capitalist countries might find a remedy for war within the capitalist society, IS A CRIME AND NOT AN ERROR ON THE PART OF THE SECOND INTERNATIONAL. In our opinion, war was, is, and will be inevitable under the rule of capitalism; was and is insolubly bound up with capitalism, is part of its very nature... An American newspaper correspondent describes the policy of England in the League of Nations,

as follows: —

“ In any conflicts which may occur, Great Britain trusts more to her navy, her air force and her army than to obligatory arbitration procedures. The arbitration agreement is binding for all except London, which intends to be the arbitrator in conflicts between other countries.” — (“ New York Times.”)

#### WHY DO WE NOT JOIN THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS?

What significance does the bourgeoisie itself attribute to the question of our joining the League of Nations? I have read in a bourgeois paper a very exact political characterisation of what the bourgeoisie expects from our joining the League of Nations. In this characterisation it is stated that it is expected that the entrance of the Soviet Union into the League of Nations will bring about a “ POLITICAL CAPITULATION IN THE EAST AND AN ECONOMIC CAPITULATION IN THE WEST.” This is expressed very clearly and exactly.

The League of Nations is a shop which deals in peoples and sells them as it sees fit, in the form of “ mandates “ to the so-called States of high culture. The latter, however, defend their rights of mandate by force of arms and MERCILESSLY ENSLAVE the peoples under their tutelage. For this reason, the East would naturally regard us as traitors if we were to stand behind the counter of this shop. We shall not agree to this. We shall continue to rejoice in the development of the movement for national freedom among the oppressed colonial peoples.

Joining the League of Nations would mean for us an economic capitulation in the West, because we should then be BOUND by the RESOLUTIONS OF THE BOURGEOIS MAJORITY in economic questions also.

I do not believe that those governments or those papers which propose our joining the League of Nations, or at least write about it, are honest. I believe that they know from the beginning that we shall NOT JOIN THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS, and I am convinced that the only object of these invitations is to enable MacDonald and his comrades to say to the workers, whom they continue to deceive by maintaining that the capitalist world is capable of avoiding war and by REPRESENTING A CONFERENCE WHICH PREPARES FOR WAR, AS A PEACE CONFERENCE, that: “The Soviet Union, by refusing to join the League of Nations, is responsible for its own isolation.”

They hope to bring about a political and economic renunciation on the part of the Soviet Republics of everything they have done hitherto, a renunciation of their programme, of the October revolution and of the most essential principles of their existence. THEY HAVE NOT ACHIEVED THIS IN OPEN FIGHT, BUT THEY NOW HOPE TO DO IT THROUGH AN ENVELOPING MANOEUVRE.

In 1934 the Soviet Press defended the entry of Russia into the League on the ground that the League had improved and was a different institution from the League that Rykov denounced in 1925 with the consent of Stalin and his supporters. Socialists or “Communists” (sic) were not expected to expose the Capitalist nature of the League of Nations, which remained what it was when it was first organised, not a League of peoples but a League of Governments.

The workers menaced the class struggle and their own emancipation when they permitted the interests of Soviet Russia and its government to attach them to one group of Capitalist powers as opposed to another. The workers had nothing whatever in common with the foreign policy of the Soviet Union, and ought to have pursued throughout the world a definite war on Capitalism, a definite opposition against all militarism, a definite conflict against all Capitalist diplomacy. The

workers ought to have maintained a definite revolutionary class integrity. Soviet Russia joined the League of Nations because the Soviet Union was compelled as a Capitalist nation to do so at a time of crisis in her development.

## 4. THE AMERICAN RECOGNITION.

It was contended by Mjasnikov and other Anti-Parliamentary Socialists or Russian Old-Guard Bolsheviks that the diplomacy of Lenin was a negation of Communist first principles and that it implied the subsequent developments of Stalinism. Over 50 years ago, Peter Kropotkin wrote a short series of essays entitled “Revolutionary Government”, in which he not only anticipated the Russian Revolution but foresaw its Capitalist and diplomatic development. Whether we accept the contention therein advanced and since developed by the modern Anti-Parliamentarians, or whether we accept the view of the Trotskyists that Stalinism is a corruption of Leninism, it is certain that the Russian Revolution entered upon an era of respectability, conservatism and definite Anti-Socialism long before 1934. This was made clear not only by its loans, profits, and concessions, but also by the treaty it concluded with the United States of America in November, 1933. In this essay I but draw attention to the main items of that treaty in order to prove the price that the Soviet Government paid for American recognition.

Litvinov was the Soviet Emissary to Roosevelt. The surrender is to be found in the last three articles of the communication he addressed to the American President on November 16<sup>th</sup>, 1933, as the price of recognition. The vital paragraphs from Litvinov’s note to the American President pledged the U.S.S.R. as follows : —

“ ... 3. **Not to permit the formation or residence on its territory of any organisation or group, or of representatives or officials of any organisation or group, which makes claim to be the government of, or makes attempt upon the territorial integrity of the United States, its territories or possessions; not to form, subsidise, support or permit on its territory military organisations or groups having the aim of armed struggle against the United States, its territory or possessions; and to prevent any recruiting on behalf of such organisations or groups.**

“... 4. **Not to permit the formation or residence on its territory of any organisation or group, and to prevent the activity on its territory of any organisation or group, or of representatives or officials of any organisation or group, which has as its aim the overthrow of, or bringing about by force of a change in, the political or social order of the whole or any part of the United States, its territories or possessions.**”

There can be no doubt whatever about the definite nature of this signed undertaking of Maxim Litvinov on behalf of the Soviet Government. *The New York Times* declared that “ the undertakings given by the Soviet Foreign Minister as a condition of recognition by the United States “ was “ miles as well as years away “ from the attitude of the 1918 Soviet Congress. Commenting on the articles of agreement, *The New York Times* said : “ The United States receives the most complete pledge against Bolshevik propaganda that has been given by the Soviet Government.” *The Brooklyn Daily Eagle* in its issue for November 23, 1933, stated : “ The bargain Mr. Roosevelt drove with Litvinov is the talk of diplomats everywhere... It really marks the first time Russia has ever given in to the world powers. Our officials believe it will lead to the abandonment of the American section of the Comintern.”

These comments were fully justified by the terms of articles 3 and 4 of the Litvinov note to Roosevelt. In these articles, the Stalin regime pledged the Soviet Union to do something which it had never previously agreed to do at the dictates of a bourgeois government, namely, the formal suppression or expulsion from the Soviet Union of the Third International, or any organisation with a revolutionary objective not limited in its aims and purposes to Russia. This is precisely how Roosevelt understood the two articles; this is how Litvinov understood the articles and meant them to be understood ; this is how the bourgeois press of America and the world construed them ; and the reason for such unanimous understanding is this, that no other interpretation was conceivable.

It is perfectly clear that the pact did not apply to the Intourist, or any travel agency for showing the sights of Russia to the foreign traveller. It certainly could not apply to the Methodist Church in Leningrad or to any institution in Russia, except the Communist International. There was no “ organisation or group “ resident in the Soviet Union “ having the aim of armed struggle against the U.S.A., its territories or possessions,” outside of the Communist International.

I do not say that that was the 1933 aim of the C.I., but I do assert that there was a time when the C.I. boasted that its purpose was to promote armed insurrection throughout the world. There is no organisation beyond the C.I. that ever engaged in activity in the Soviet Union “ which has as its aim the overthrow of, or bringing about by force a change in, the political or social order of the whole or any part of the U.S.A., its territories or possessions.”

Notwithstanding the definite nature of this agreement, *The Daily Worker* (U.S.A.) made no attempt to analyse the text of these articles, but declared, in its issue for November 21<sup>st</sup>, 1933, that the Capitalist Press “ know that every attempt to claim that article 4 of the Litvinov pact applies to the C.I. will meet with defeat.”

It is impossible to believe that the “ Communist “ editor believed this statement when he wrote it.

The pact not only pledged Russia to the expulsion of the Comintern but to its suppression. This seat of the C.I. could not be transferred to Berlin, or Tokio, or Washington, or Paris, or even London. Either it met in Moscow or Leningrad or not at all. This was a previous argument for the Communist International being organised from Russia. The American pact refuted the fact that both the argument and the organisation were surrendered to the pressure of Capitalist diplomacy.

The pact was more than the suppression of the Communist International. It was a complete surrender of the principle of the right of asylum which used to be maintained even by bourgeois governments and defended eloquently by even Conservative British statesmen. Lord Palmerston would have seen the government of any other country sink into hell before he would have agreed to such an agreement negating the fundamental principles of national sovereignty and integrity.

If Russia was no longer an international fatherland it should have taken its stand still on its right of sovereign dominion within the confines of its own territory. The pact meant that from the date of signing the American Communist Party and its representatives on the E.C. of the Comintern were non-grata with the Soviet Government and could not take up residence on Soviet territory. The pact meant further that even a group of revolutionary nationalists, driven from their land by American Imperialism, as the Russian revolutionists were driven from Russia by Czardom, could not find asylum in the fatherland of the workers of the world, since they would have designs “ upon the territorial integrity of the United States, its territories or possessions.” The pact meant that if Bill Haywood could have come to life and again had sought the hospitality of the Soviet Union, it would be granted to him only with reluctance if at all, and then only on

condition that he refrained from conducting any political agitation or activity whilst resident in the Soviet Union.

The pact meant that the American Communist Party was left in the lurch by the Stalinist regime at the demands of the American bourgeoisie. Had such a pact been signed by a reactionary British Government during Karl Marx's years of exile in London, there would have been no First International, and Marx's real or alleged revolutionary genius would have found it impossible to discover an avenue of expression.

This pact, which was but a prelude to the Soviet Union entering into the League, and to the world-wide recognition of the Soviet as a respectable neighbour, was a complete negation of all previous Soviet diplomacy. *The American Daily Worker* pretended that the demands made by the American Government and yielded to by Stalinist diplomacy, had been made many times in the past by various bourgeois governments. That is true. *The Worker* added : —

**“ Every single one of these articles, in some form or another has been part of the numerous recognition pacts that the Soviet Government has signed during the last ten years with the leading powers of Europe.”**

This statement is not true. Prior to the American pact the Soviet Government pledged itself not to carry on any “ subversive propaganda “ in the country with which it established diplomatic relations, if a reciprocal engagement was also undertaken. This was understandable and correct. But it was always the argument of the Soviet Government that the Communist International was founded as a voluntary, independent world party of Communism, with sections in every country to which the Russian Government granted hospitality and freedom of action. In point of fact this statement was not correct, for the Soviet Union has always dominated the Communist International. In point of law the contention was correct for although the Comintern was dominated by the Soviet Government, it did not follow that it was an organisation of the Soviet Government or that it was bound always to be dominated by it. The Comintern had a distinct legal existence apart from the Soviet Government. The fact that the Comintern was unduly subservient to the needs of that government had no bearing on the question of its legal independence. Down to the time of the American agreement, the Soviet Union was not willing to sign articles, trading away the life of the Comintern for diplomatic recognition and credit. Previously the Soviet Government had rejected categorically the demands of the world's bourgeoisie for the expulsion and suppression of the Third International.

In 1922 there was a famous conference at Genoa. A Russian delegation was present for the first time. It was headed by that world-famous revolutionist, Rakovsky, one of the greatest and noblest Socialists of our time. As a condition of Russia's admission to the Comity of Nations, the bourgeoisie of Europe put forward the very demands that Roosevelt so successfully insisted on eleven years later. The reply of the Russian delegation was given by Rakovsky on May 11<sup>th</sup>, 1922. This is what Rakovsky said in his signed answer to the gentlemen of the bourgeoisie : —

**“ Giving new scope to this Cannes condition, the memorandum demands that Russia should ‘suppress upon her territory all attempts to aid revolutionary movements in other countries.’ If, however, by this formula the memorandum means to forbid the activities of political parties, or organisations of workers, the Russian delegation cannot accept such a prohibition unless the activities in question transgress the laws of the country.”**

In other words, Rakovsky said : “ Gentlemen, the Soviet Union is ready to make certain concessions, but please keep your hands off the Communist International.” And the Soviet Union

sent Rakovsky into exile, a prisoner for his convictions, and Litvinov on a tour of the Capitalist capitals of the world !

Three years later, Zinoviev, at that time leader of the Third International, addressed the Party faction of the Third Congress of the Soviet. His speech was published under the title, "Russia's Path to Communism." The date of the speech was May 20<sup>th</sup>, 1925. From page 22 of the report in question we quote the following declaration of Zinoviev : —

**" We have heard a statement to the effect that the British government is endeavouring to create a united front against the U.S.S.R. in connection with the demand for the expulsion of the Comintern from Moscow. The E.C. of the Communist International, as we know, is not averse to a change of headquarters under certain conditions. Indeed, what is the good of sitting all the time in Moscow? To judge by the frame of mind of the E.C. of the C.I., it apparently would not be averse to setting up its tent in London. But I think that in any case such a decision should be taken by the Comintern independently of the bare-faced demands of the capitalist governments. WHEN THEY PUT FORWARD THAT DEMAND DURING THE FAMINE PERIOD THEY RECEIVED FROM THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT THE REPLY THEY DESERVED. NOW THAT AFFAIRS WITH THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT ARE MORE FAVOURABLE, THERE CAN BE NO DOUBT AS TO THE REPLY TO THEIR INSOLENT DEMAND THEY WOULD RECEIVE FROM THE U.S.S.R. IF THEY DECIDED TO ADVANCE SUCH."**

It is said by the Stalinists that the American recognition of the Soviet Union was forced by the strengthened position of the Workers' Republic. It was not unfair, therefore, to argue that the Soviet Union was in a better position to dictate terms of recognition in 1933 than it was when Zinoviev spoke in 1925, and Rakovsky in 1922. How came it, then, that Litvinov, as Stalin's mouthpiece, made the enormous and altogether unwarranted concession that neither Zinoviev nor Rakovsky were prepared to make, a concession that not a single Communist imagined to be possible in those days of famine when Russia's revolutionary back was to the wall.

There is another highly reprehensible circumstance connected with Litvinov's reception by the American Government, which takes us back to the magnificent days of 1918. When Litvinov stepped on to American soil, he expressed a " keen sense of the privilege that is mine in being the first official representative to bring greetings to the American people from the peoples of the Soviet Union." I am not sure to whom Litvinov was referring when he said " the American people." Was it to the striking American workers, or was it to the people, when the District Attorney goes into Court and says : " The People of the United States versus William Haywood," or " the People of the United States versus Eugene Debs," or " the People of the United States versus Albert Parsons," or " the People of the United States versus Ludwig Martens " ? I would like to know exactly what people Litvinov had in mind. In any case, Litvinov's statement was false. The American Press and the American ruling class knew that it was false. Litvinov was not the first official Soviet representative appointed to the United States. He had a predecessor. His predecessor was Ludwig Martens. And this is how the " People of the United States " treated him.

The year 1918 was a great year for Socialism and the Soviet. In Scotland the Scottish Labour College was active, and John MacLean was organising revolutionary meetings all over the city of Glasgow. In January of that year he was appointed Russian Consul for Scotland, and Scotland Yard immediately got busy interfering with his letters and raiding his Consulate. This was his reward for his activities in 1917 when he took up the case of George Chicherin, subsequently Litvinov's predecessor as Foreign Minister of the Soviet Republic, but then a Russian exile in

London, who had been interned without trial in Brixton Prison. Moved by MacLean's agitation, the late Lord Sheffield took up Chicherin's and other similar cases in the House of Lords, and made speeches that must have echoed through its walls like Byron's of a century before. What happened to Soviet representatives in those days is told in the following extract from Lansbury's weekly *Herald* for April 13<sup>th</sup>, 1918 : —

**BOLSHEVIK IN PRISON.**

Comrade Louis Shammes, secretary to the Bolshevik Consulate in Glasgow, is housed in Barlinnie Prison, pending his removal to Russia at the order of the Home Secretary, who has also decreed the permanent exclusion of Shammes from this country. Shammes writes us that he is in good cheer and preparing for the return home.

*The Labour Leader* for the same date carried the following advertisement : —

**LIVERPOOL I.L.P. FEDERATION.**

All members please note.-Sunday, April 28, at 7.30, in St. Martin's Hall.

JOHN McLEAN, M.A. (Russian Consul for Glasgow). See next week's advertisement.

Alas! MacLean never fulfilled that engagement for he was arrested on Monday, April 15<sup>th</sup>.

It was the same in the United States. In April, 1918, whilst MacLean was in jail awaiting trial, Ludwig Martens was appointed by the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs the Soviet representative to the United States. Martens was not received by the President. He enjoyed none of the official pomp that attended Litvinov's arrival. He was greeted by a mass meeting of the revolutionary workers in New York. He was hunted and persecuted ; his office was raided ; he was hauled before investigation committees ; finally he was deported from America as an undesirable alien. He did one thing that Litvinov did, but he did it differently. He answered the question — What is the Soviet Government going to do about the C.I. and propaganda in the U.S.A.? Martens wrote his reply in the New York Socialist *Call* of May Day, 1919. He wrote : —

**“ The attitude of the workers of the world towards the Russian Workers' revolution has proved that the spirit of international solidarity of workers is not dead... IT IS ALSO PROVED THAT THE INTERNATIONAL IS NOT DEAD. IN THE THIRD INTERNATIONAL IT RISES IN NEW GLORY  
LONG LIVE THE THIRD INTERNATIONAL! ”**

He was called before the sub-committee of the United States Senate on Soviet propaganda, and his bold answer is on record in the columns of *Soviet Russia*, for February 14<sup>th</sup>, 1920. Part of his reply was as follows : —

**“ The government of U.S.A, has also been a party to attacks against the Russian Soviet Government, including invasion of Russian soil without a declaration of war... Being confident that the peoples of other nations were not responsible for these policies, and that they permitted these activities only because they were not acquainted with the real situation, the workers of Russia appealed to the peoples in various countries, urging them to put an end to these attacks. Appeals of this nature have been defensive measures in the war imposed on Soviet Russia by outside forces... Propaganda has been carried on by the Soviet government among the armies of the foreign governments which invaded Russia. “ — (“ Soviet Russia,” 14/2/20.)**



In consequence of this answer, the United States Secretary of Labour issued on December 15, 1920, an order which concluded as follows : —

**“ It is therefore decided that Ludwig Martens is an alien, a citizen of Russia, and that he entertains a belief in and is a member of or affiliated with an organisation (i.e., the Third International-M.S.) that entertains a belief in, teaches or advocates the overthrow by force or violence of the Government of the United States, and the Commissioner General of Immigration is directed to take the said Ludwig Martens into custody and deport him to Russia at the expense of the Government of the United States. ”**

Which reminds us of the reply of the Soviet Union Congress, held at Moscow in 1918 to President

Wilson : —

**“ The Soviet Republic takes advantage of the message of President Wilson to express to all the peoples who have suffered from the horrors of an imperialist war, its warm sympathies and its honest belief that the happy moment is not far away when the workers of all countries will throw off the yoke of capitalism and establish a socialist regime, which alone is able to bring about a just and lasting peace and contribute to civilisation and prosperity of the workers. ”**

That reply establishes the position of Lenin. That reply endorses the attitude of Martens. From Martens to Litvinov. From the hounded and deported Bolshevik to the loudly praised diplomat. From the epoch of revolutionary internationalism to the epoch of national Socialism, of capitulation and of surrender of the world revolution. Such had been the progress of Soviet diplomacy. The passage from one epoch to another represented the price paid for Capitalist American recognition and for a seat in the League of Governments at Geneva. It was inevitable that, in due course, the Soviet Republic would be dragged into the war disasters of Capitalist society.

## 5. CAPITALISM IN RUSSIA..

The purpose of the present article is to put before British working-class readers the facts concerning the development, of Capitalism in Russia. Once these facts are realised, it will be seen that to pretend that Russian Capitalism is some kind of Socialism is ridiculous. Russian industry has been entirely capitalistic for a long period. There exists in Russia to-day a propertyless class of wage earners, a class of capitalist investors, and concessions worked by foreign capitalists.

The *Manchester Guardian* for July 27<sup>th</sup>, 1928, reported that the internal loan issued by the Russian Government for the purpose of financing industry and agriculture that year was £52,000,000. It represented half of the total amount devoted that year by the Russian Government to economic development. Half the 1928 loan carried 6 per cent. interest plus lottery prizes. Half carried no interest, but there was a premium on repayment.

The *Sunday Worker* on August 12<sup>th</sup>, 1928, referring to the amount of money that the Soviet Government intended to spend on creating huge State farms in opposition to peasant proprietorship, declared that it was anticipated that “ good and secure wages “ would attract the poorer peasant to the State concerns.

Note the reference to wages and to the poorer peasants.

*The Soviet Union Year Book* is issued “ to provide business and public men with reliable information on the economic and political life of the U.S.S.R.” There is no need to visit Russia to learn about conditions there, and this work can be consulted in almost any public library. It supplies facts and figures that establishes the reality of Capitalism in Russia. From its columns we learn that the Concession Companies make staggering profits out of the Russian worker. In 1926–27 the average profit was 81 per cent on the capital invested. In 1927–28 it was 96 per cent. One has only to consider when reading this book of facts that the Bolshevik slogan of 1917 was “ Down with the Foreign Bondholder.”

*The Soviet Year Book* shows how foreign bondholders have been replaced by home bondholders, without any noticeable benefit to the workers. There is a new increase in national debt. There are five categories of income tax. The fifth grade applies to those whose incomes are derived from “ ownership of industrial and trading enterprises, from money investments, dividends on shares “ and “ rent.” There is also an “ excess profit tax “ above “ normal profits.”

Imagine a year book of a Socialist Republic referring to “ normal profits.”

*The Soviet Union Year Book* also says : “ *Soviet law recognises the right of inheritance, irrespective of the amount involved.*” There is a graduated inheritance tax. A person who inherits £200 has to pay £10 to the State or 5 per cent. A person who inherits from £20,000 to £50,000 has to pay 90 per cent. on all over £20,000.

The *Sunday Worker*, which could not be accused of being an anti-Soviet paper, since it was a subsidised organ of the Communist movement, in its issue for February 11<sup>th</sup>, 1928, published the following paragraph : —

BIG CHANCE FOR INVESTORS.

Soviet 9 per cent. Rail Loan on English Market.

The Russian State Bank has placed on the English market a 9 per cent. railway loan, issued by the People's Commissariat of Ways and Communications, and guaranteed by the Government (writes a correspondent).

This loan is issued to the amount of £6,000,000. Its redemption will commence on March 1, 1929, and be completed on September 1, 1934. A summary of the revenue offered by this loan shows the following — 9.47 per cent. on invested capital; 0.4 per cent. from further invested receipts on coupons; 1.18 difference between purchase price and nominal value. The total yearly revenue on bonds of loan will amount to 11.05 per cent.

High yielding loans are usually not available for public subscription especially with the security this offers. The profits on the railways last year would cover the loan four times.

That there may be no doubt about the authenticity of this Capitalist development the reader is referred to the *Moscow Daily News* for September 25<sup>th</sup>, 1922, a daily paper printed in English in Moscow. Under large headlines, in this issue there appeared an article inviting the foreign investor to subscribe for Soviet bonds. We quote the opening paragraph of that article : —

“ SOVIET BONDS FOR THE FOREIGN INVESTOR. ”

“HOW MANY PEOPLE KNOW THAT SIMPLY BY AN ORDER TO THEIR OWN BANKERS THEY CAN INVEST IN A SOVIET GOVERNMENT LOAN THAT PAYS TEN PER CENT. INTEREST, AND IN WHICH THEY CAN REALISE THEIR CAPITAL AT ANY TIME THEY LIKE?

“ The method was explained to Moscow Daily Press by a member of the collegium of the People's Commissariat of Finance.

“ ‘ Of course,’ he said, ‘ you must understand that this is an internal loan subscribed chiefly by the workers and peasants of the Soviet Union. We do not issue a prospectus for people living abroad nor any other literature; but since it is a gold loan there is no reason why foreigners should not invest if they want to. CONSIDERING THE STATE OF AFFAIRS IN OTHER COUNTRIES, IT IS HARDLY NECESSARY TO POINT OUT THAT THIS IS PROBABLY THE SAFEST AND BEST YIELDING INVESTMENT IN THE WORLD TO-DAY.’

“THREE ISSUES.”

“ The loan is called the Five Year Plan Loan, and there are three issues. The first is the ‘ Five-Year Plan in Four Years,’ and the second the ‘ Third Decisive Year.’ These loans are both of a premium and interest-bearing character, and are not sold abroad.

“ The third issue is called the ‘ Fourth and Concluding Year ‘ and the bonds are of two kinds — one premium, and the other interest-bearing. The second kind can be held abroad.

“ The procedure of buying is simple. One can send the money direct to the State Bank of the U.S.S.R., Neglennaya 12, Moscow, or give an order to any bank abroad which is in correspondence with the U.S.S.R. State Bank — and all the most important foreign banks are.

“CERTIFICATE WITH COUPONS.”

“ Against the investment the State Bank gives a certificate to which are attached coupons, one coupon for each year up to 1942. Interest is paid once a year on December 1, and it is necessary to send the corresponding coupon to the State Bank with directions as to payment ; or the certificate can be deposited at the State Bank and the interest will be paid automatically each year, either through one's own bank or by whatever method one chooses — and in any currency desired.”

The article then explains that this is a "gold loan" and details the particular advantages to the investor that result from this fact.

## 6. THE SOVIET'S NATIONAL HEROES.

By a Special Decree dated 29<sup>th</sup> July, 1942, three new high orders of merit were introduced for the Soviet army in the names of three national heroes of the old Imperial Russia. In spite of lavish decoration of red gold enamelled stars and other Soviet symbols, the names of Count Souvoroff, Prince Koutouzoff, and Prince Alexander Nievsky are those of representatives of the old Czarist Imperial Nationalism.

The order of Prince Koutouzoff is coined of pure gold in the shape of a five-pointed star. The centre disc of white enamel is surrounded by a wreath of laurels and oak leaves and as if trying to blot out the tower of the Kremlin with its red enamel five-pointed star is the gold image of Prince, Koutouzoff. At the sides are the simple words, Michael Koutouzoff. This order is in two grades, and is awarded to army commanders and divisional officers for stubborn resistance and strategical retreats.

The order of Count Souvoroff is made of platinum also in the shape of a five-pointed star, with the head of Count Souvoroff in the centre over a spray of laurel and oak leaves. This order is in three grades also for the officers of high command for successful frontal operations.

The third order of Prince Alexander Nievsky is made of silver in the shape of a red enamelled five-pointed star. In the centre is a shield bearing the head of Prince Alexander Nievsky. Surrounding it is a laurel and oak wreath resting on a crossed sword, bow and arrow covered by a hammer and sickle. This order is in one grade only and is for exceptional bravery and merit displayed in battle.

The Soviet Government has discovered that it has to-day something in common with the old Imperial regime which was supposed to have been destroyed.

## 7. STALINISM : PEACE AND WAR FROM WAR-ZIG TO PEACE-ZAG.

In February 1941 a People's Convention, so called, was arranged in London, to organise a movement for a People's Government, also so-called. The aim of this People's Government was said to be peace. The convention was boosted in the *Daily Worker*. Shortly after the convention, the *Daily Worker* was suppressed.

The Convention Call, addressed to workers, socialists, trade unionists, the lower middle class, "democrats and anti-fascists," was signed by a long list of names which read like a roll call of the Communist Party. No non-Stalinist organisation endorsed the Convention.

The Call presented the immediate line of the British Communist Party. The Tory Government was denounced for helping to place Hitler in power, and for getting the country into war ; for profiteering, high prices, and taxes ; for inadequate air raid protection. The Churchill Government was attacked for its failure to grant national freedom, and for its "scarcely-concealed hostility" to the Soviet Union. The Labour Party leaders were criticised for their participation in the coalition government.

The Convention Call demanded friendship with the Soviet Union, a People's Government, and a people's peace.

Every intelligent Socialist and Pacifist, every thinking working man and woman knew that the real purpose of this Communist Party Convention was to advance Stalinism. They knew that the policies of the Communist Party before and since the present war were and are dictated by the reactionary interests of the Russian Stalinist bureaucracy.

Before the present war when Stalin was flirting with the democratic imperialists of Britain and France, the English Stalinists were anxious to force the imperialist democracies into war against Hitler. When the present war broke out, the Communist Party of Great Britain was resolutely pro-war. So were the "Communists" in the Paris Chamber of Deputies who voted for war credits. The Central Committee of the party issued a statement in September, 1939, calling for "support of all necessary measures to secure the victory of democracy over Fascism."

The Stalin-Hitler pact took Gallacher and Pollitt by surprise. But they still expected, childishly, that the Soviet Union would remain allied with British and French capitalism. In the first days of the war, the Communist Party executive summarised the situation for the enlightenment of *Daily Worker* readers thus : —

**" Indeed, the essence of the present situation is that the people have now to wage a struggle on two fronts. FIRST, TO SECURE THE MILITARY VICTORY OVER FASCISM; SECOND, TO ACHIEVE THIS, THE POLITICAL VICTORY OVER CHAMBERLAIN AND THE ENEMIES OF DEMOCRACY IN THIS COUNTRY. These two aims are inseparable, and the harder the efforts to win one, the more sustained the activity to win the other. "**

Moscow advised the British Party that their line was wrong. The Stalin-Hitler pact meant that the British “ Communists “ must oppose the British Government and the war. The “ Communist “ yes-men did as they were ordered ; they opposed the war with the same intelligence and the same sincerity as they had exercised in supporting it ; they opposed the war as hirelings, compelled to obey their masters’ orders. In this spirit of serfdom and hire-purchase they organised the People’s Convention, a convention which ought to have commanded no respect from any decent, thinking man or woman.

Of course such a *volte-face* did not command complete adherence. The much-boomed Left Book Club went west. The People’s Fronters, Harold Laski, John Strachey, Aneurin Bevan, Victor Gollanz, remained faithful to the pre-war tune.

In line with the pro-Hitler policy, the Communist Party urged the national independence of the colonial peoples. This was not a principle but a tactic in line with the dictated changed allegiance. Previously, when Stalin was allied with the democratic imperialists, the Stalinists were told that the national independence of the oppressed peoples had to be subordinated to “ collective security “ against Hitler “ in the interests of defeating fascism, the mortal enemy of the working class, “ to quote the words of a leader of the Communist International, Manuilsky (March, 1939).

The British Communist Party issued a statement on “ The Colonies and Fascism, “ elaborating on the idea that the “ main enemy “ of the British colonials was not British imperialism but rather German Fascism. It denounced the very propaganda it advanced after August, 1939, by averring that such propaganda, in the name of repudiating existing imperial domination, in practice acts as the apologist of fascist aggressive aims in relation to the colonial peoples. “ (*Labour Monthly*, August, 1939).

As soon as Stalin’s henchmen adjusted themselves to their Fuehrer’s alliance with German Fascism, they wrote a new statement (“ The Colonies and War “) condemning Britain’s attempt to drag the colonies into the war (that is, the policy they themselves had advocated), forgetting about their old bogey of Fascism as the “ main danger “ in the colonies, and hypocritically announcing that “ *Communists have always fought for the right of all peoples to complete self-determination...*” (*Labour Monthly*, December, 1939).

The Communist Party old line called for a “ People’s Government, “ a coalition of the Labour Party, Liberal Party and “ anti-fascist conservatives “ such as Eden and Churchill — which in alliance with the Soviet Union would wage war “ in defence of democracy against fascism.”

In February, 1941, they called for “A People’s Government, truly representative of the whole people and able to inspire the confidence of the working people of the world “ and for “ a people’s peace that gets rid of the causes of war.”

What did this Communist Party “ People’s Government “ mean? It meant any British government which formed a military alliance with the Soviet Union. All the rest was mere verbiage. So long as the Churchill Government did not serve the interests that governed Stalin and dictated his policy, the Communist Party was against the war and for a Hitler peace. When the Churchill Government served the interests of the Soviet bureaucracy, then the Stalinists once again became ardent upholders of the Union Jack. The genuine question of peace and commonweal, the real economic interests of the working class, has no place in the Communist Party programme of thought and action. It is the subsidised party of the Soviet reaction and ought to command no respect and no support from the workers in Great Britain.

When one recalls the Reichstag fire trial, the denunciation of poor, simple, executed Van der Lubbe, the applauding of Dimitrov, the denunciation of Trotskyists, and others as Social Fascists,

and then thinks over the Stalin-Hitler Pact, one is amazed at the perfidies of “ Communism “ and “ Socialism.” On the occasion of the Twenty-third anniversary of the October-November Revolution in November, 1940, Stalin prohibited the raising of a single anti-fascist slogan in the Soviet Union. Likewise taboo were any and all anti-war or anti -Imperialist slogans. Any mention of fascism, war, imperialism, victims of fascism, colonial peoples, class-war prisoners, refugees, was proscribed. In the 42 official slogans issued by the Kremlin for the November 7<sup>th</sup> celebrations there was not even a direct reference to capitalism.

The only reference to the world situation was contained in the following slogan : “ *Long live the foreign policy of Peace between Peoples and Assuring the Security of our Fatherland !* ”

This meant, in other words, “ *Long live the Hitler-Stalin Pact !* ”

Even such a ritualistic slogan repeated for years as “ Long Live the Soviet Power in the Whole World ! “ was omitted in 1940.

The People’s Front Policy started in 1938. At this time, even, the Kremlin was selling oil to Mussolini for the massacre of Abyssinia. Yet Stalin issued these slogans for the celebration of the Eighteenth Anniversary of the November Revolution : –

**“ Our Flaming Greetings to the Proletarians and Toilers of France, the Vanguard Fighters Against Fascism, Against Imperialist War! ”**

**“ Bolshevik Greetings to the Revolutionary Proletariat of Germany! Long Live the Heroic Communist Party of Germany! Long Live Comrade THAELMANN! Let Us Tear Him From the Clutches of the Fascist Hangmen! ”**

**“ Bolshevik Greetings to the Popular Masses of Abyssinia, Courageously Defending Their Independence.”**

**“ Fraternal Greetings to the Heroic Working Class and all the Toiling Masses of China. Long Live the Communist Party of China! ”**

**“ The Imperialists are Dividing and Enslaving China! Greetings to the Chinese People Fighting for Their Emancipation and Independence! ”**

The Kremlin dictators later shook hands with “ the Fascist hangmen.” Allied to Japan, the same dictators had no time for the Chinese struggle.

In 1935, Stalin launched so many slogans against Fascism, that to do them justice we would have to devote several pamphlets to their reproduction. Here are a few selected at random : –

**“ Fascism is the Most Savage Offensive of Capitalism Against the Toiling Masses!**

**“ Fascism – this Means War of Aggression!**

**“ Fascism-This Means Hunger, Poverty, Misery!**

**“ Down With Fascism! Down with Capitalism!**

**“ Fuse Into a Single United Front For the Struggle Against**

**“ Fascism – The Bitterest Enemy of All Peoples! ”**

In 1940, there is a complete silence as to Capitalism and Fascism. The 42 slogans are mostly “ greetings “ and injunctions to the workers, engineers, and technicians, calling for increased production from crops to metals, calico to buildings, culture to chemicals.

Another set of slogans simply raised “ demands.”

**“ Create Mighty State Labour Reserves for Industry and Transport!**

**“ Long Live the October 2<sup>nd</sup> Laws Instituting Child Labour in the Soviet Union!**

**“ The Struggle Against Laggards and Disorganisers of Production is the Struggle for**



**Strengthening the Might of Our Fatherland and Its Red Army. Long Live Labour Discipline and Exemplary Order in the Enterprises of Our Fatherland! ”**

This was asking the workers to give revolutionary cheers for Fascist Labour Laws that enslaved them : for child labour, above all things !

The “ Long Live “ slogans related to Trade Unions, Konsomols, Soviet Intellectuals, all of which had been purged during the previous mid-summer. Two slogans in this 1940 celebration merit special mention.

There was a sudden and rather unexpected reference to “ *Our Socialist Espionage Service – the CHEKA.*” This was in connection with a slogan calling for the strengthening of the Red Army. The Cheka arose during the civil war. It gave way to the *O.G.P.U.* This name became so abhorrent that the secret police department was renamed the *N.K.V.O.* In 1940, with a Fascist alliance, we had the return to the name more significant of terror than the *G.P.U.* – the *CHEKA* ! This was and is a direct threat of intensified police terror and martial courts.

The second slogan was : –

**“ Let Us Unfold the Criticism of our Inadequacies! Let Us Strengthen Still More the Might and Organised Power of our State! ”**

This slogan was not a slogan of Socialism but of Fascism; a slogan of centralised power, of a totalitarian state. It is a slogan of falsehood, persecution and tyranny.

And so we were brought from the “ Communist “ War-Zig to the “ Communist “ Peace-Zag. In neither instance was the well-being of the working classes, or the final peace and commonweal of the world, the inspiring consideration of the slogan-mongers or hireling apologists, for the Soviet Union. The “ Communist “ zig-zag policy is one of corruption, persecution, betrayal, and dishonesty. It is not Communism but Capitalism ; not peace but militarism ; not proletarian but power-mongering and power-pandering; a policy of exploitation and outrage. The Stalinists have no place in the proletarian struggle.

## 8. C.P. EXPOSURES.

The following exposures of the C.P. were made in *The Commune*. References do not include articles since embodied in my pamphlets :

Sept. 1925.- (1) "Yes, Honour This." Tillet's War Record Exposed; (2) Oh ! That United Front ! Record of the contempt the C.P. was bringing on Communism; (3) Red Hubbub; (4) Saklatvala's Honour; (5) Fighting Free Speech. The Anti-Parley Way.

Oct.- The Passing of Leninism; What They Have Said (Further word against Tillet) ; Liverpool Limelights (acc. Tillet and C.P. Liverpool Conference).

Nov.- Communism Suppressed in Soviet Russia; Communism, Militarism and Sedition (Account of Conditions in Soviet Russia in relation to Opposition and Anti-Militarism) ; Persecution of Mjasnikow ; Leninism Supreme (Account of Berlin Soviet Feast and Toasts, etc., Sunday, Nov. 8, 1925).

Dec. Soviet Trial (Summary and Review) ; Sedition and Charlatanism (C.P. eulogies of Tillet exposed) ; Lenin Statecraft and Humbug; Communism, Empire, and the Political Prisoner.

Jan. 1926.- Debate in Commons (C.P. Trial) ; More Moscow Double-Dealing; Telegrams on Queen Alexandra's death; Chicherin's dining with Stresemann and Seeker.

Feb. — "*Halt this Counter Revolution*" (Statement Russian Anti-Parliamentarians' Programme).

Mar.- *A. C.P. Stalwart*.

May — *What is this Communism?* (Complete Analysis of Soviet Criminal Code in relation to political rights, etc.) ; *Communism, Toryism and Spies*.

March, 1927 — Attitude towards China and the Cantonese Government (Reprinted article "China Calls" from *Commune*, July 1925).

Sept.-Oct. — (1) *Communism, Careerism, and Parliamentarism* (C.P. attitude towards Labour Party and regret at refused application exposed — C.P. support of W. F. Watson, knowing him to be a police agent, supporters included Mrs. Pollitt — Gallacher's support of Tillet- Tillet exposed ; (2) Saklatvala's Domestic Dieties (His Parsee family rites exposed).

Nov.- Shall Labour Liquidate Socialism or Capitalism? (The Issue Defined by Russian Anti-Parliamentarians). Mjasnikow's statement.

Dec.- Remembrance Notes (Paragraphs dealing with treatment of anti-militarists in Russia. Statement of Russian Anti-Parliamentarians).

March, 1928.- Complete exposure of Ben Tillet and C.P. (Malone's speech on unemployment in Parliament, October, 1920).

May.- (1) *What Have They Done?* (Reply to Gallacher's defence of Ritchie against Aldred, Sept. 30, 1922) ; (2) *Socialism or the United Front* (Answers, 1922, to Ritchie summarised. Ritchie sneered at Aldred as "obscure Anarchist lecturer," etc.).

March 1929.- Trotsky's Exile (*Commune Anti-Parley Gazette*, No. 6).

In addition to *The Commune* exposures, *The Council* (1932-33) exposed the C.P. *agents provocateur*. This exposure was developed further in *The New Spur*. These exposures ought to be published

as a separate booklet. Ritchie's activity as a Labour Councillor was exposed in *The United Socialist*, October, 1934. More recently he has been imprisoned and removed from office for corruption.

## 9. THE COUNCIL.

*The Council* was my fifth paper. The first number was issued in October, 1931, and the last in May, 1933. Explaining its purpose in the first issue, I declared : —

**It ("The Council") applies the Anti-Parliamentarian principles and vision we promoted in the "Herald of Revolt" (1910–14) and "Spur" (1914–21). It concludes the exposures of Parliamentarism and reformism of the "Commune" (1923–29) with a definite programme of working-class unity and action...**

**Our aim and method of propaganda will include the following points of advocacy:**

**(1) MEETINGS.- We shall announce FREE all meetings of every organisation affiliated to the Glasgow Council of Action. In the event of disputes arising about meeting places between various organisations, we shall be guided by prior claims. We shall also refer the matter to the Council for decision. We hold decisions of the Council as to the allocation of sites should be binding on all organisations affiliated to the Council. We hold that NO organisation affiliated to the Council should hold meetings against another affiliated organisation.**

**(2) AGENDA.- We shall press for regular meetings of the Council of Action, with an agenda to be sent round to all affiliated organisations, and made public. The public should be admitted to the meetings of the Council.**

**(3) ALL-IN COUNCIL.- We shall aim at building up the Anti-Parliamentary movement. But we shall urge also organisation in any of the organisations affiliated to the Council of Action, according to individual bias. We want every adult worker, irrespective of creed or sex, to be associated in the Council of Action through the medium of some working-class organisation.**

**We are prepared to speak, in the interests of the Council of Action, on the platform of any affiliated organisation. We shall be loyal to the decisions of the Council. We shall work for this expression of industrial social democracy.**

In other words, we aimed to establish a living social organisation throughout the country of proletarian democracy.

## **10. STALIN-HITLER PACT.**

On August 23, 1939, Ribbentrop, the German Foreign Minister, signed, in Moscow, a Pact of Friendship, freeing Germany from all fear of attack by Russia. The pact was broken, without warning, at dawn, on Saturday, June 22, 1941, when Hitler Invaded the Soviet Union, without troubling to make a formal declaration of war. Stalin faithfully kept the pact to that date. The Communist Party of Great Britain and also the Communist Party of the United States and the other English speaking nations insisted on Peace Conventions. After the Hitler invasion of the Soviet Union, these parties, under Moscow direction, denounced Fascism and Pacifism, and demanded Second Fronts, etc. In my view, their patriotism was like their former pacifism, insincere and dictated.

## 11. COMINTERN CONCLUDES.

The Moscow announcement, abolishing the Communist International, was made on Saturday, May 22, 1943. Naturally the Communist Parties in Britain and the United States were not consulted, but they went through the farce later of agreeing to their own dissolution. This pamphlet was printed at the time and its tone could not be altered. The Moscow announcement justifies the entire polemic of this pamphlet and my consistent opposition to the Third International, in the name of Communism. It gives point to the criticisms and comments that I have published consistently since 1919. These can be collected later in separate pamphlet form.

When reprinted, this pamphlet will need to be altered, to the extent that its text will become historical. Also, the Communist International having been relegated to the Museum of Curiosities and criminal anti-working-class relics, much of the argument advanced is no longer necessary. What was reasoning calling for consideration and acceptance is now fact admitting of no question.

Answering William Gallacher in 1921, I told him that I had called myself a Communist since 1906, when there was no axe to grind in using that description, and when careerists never thought of posing as “Communists.” I told him that I would remain a Communist when he had ceased from being one, or even assuming to be one. That prophecy has come true. The corruptionist has completed his evolution and to-day we have the Communist International destroyed after a record of working-class crime that would have disgraced the most terrorist Fascist organisation in the world. The organised hypocrisy passes, the while Gallacher, M.P., eulogises Winston Churchill as the hope of the common people of the world. Gallacher reached this stage by the simple process of posing as the critic and even slanderer of Churchill during the years 1920, 1921 onwards, and opposing him at the famous Dundee election.

The Comintern sacrificed the Social Revolution to the Political Revolution. It substituted Marx for Bakunin, pseudo-Communism for Anarchism, and Dictatorship[? — word missing in original] and Militarism for Democracy and Equity. After much blood and tears it has given us Marshal Stalin in place of the Czar. Was the revolution worth while? The mountain of revolution brought forth a mouse of change. And the struggle starts again.

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Guy A. Aldred  
Communism – Story of the Communist Party  
May 1935

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Originally published as '*For Communism*' in Glasgow, May 1935. Revised and republished in  
Glasgow; The Strickland Press, November 1943. Republished as '*For Communism*' by Unpopular  
Books, London, 1989.

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