

20th Anniversary Of The Russian Revolution.

WORKERS OF THE WORLD UNITE

FIGHT

FOR THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL
ORGAN OF THE MARXIST GROUP (TROTSKYISTS)

Subscription 2/6 a year, post free. Vol. I. No. 11. November, 1937.

Price 2d. monthly.

CONTENTS

The Russian Revolution, 1917-1937	1	Congress and the Indian Masses	11
The Third International, 1919-1937	4	The Bournemouth Conference	12
The Struggle for the Fourth International	6	Revolutionary Policy for the British Workers	14
The Murder of the Old Bolsheviks	8	Japan's Struggle for Existence	16

EDITORIAL

THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION 1917-1937

THE Workers State of Soviet Russia after twenty years of herculean struggle still exists. It is demoralised, torn by inner contradictions, dominated by a bureaucracy which is one of the most incompetent, dishonest and corrupt ruling groups that the world has ever seen. Yet the Workers State remains. That it was established and has been maintained is the greatest achievement of the international working class movement.

Soviet Russia is still the basis for international Socialism, it is still the workers' fatherland, still the sole state in the world which the workers must defend, arms in hand, as they must defend no Imperialist state. Let no worker forget his allegiance. Despite all the crime of Stalinism, despite fake trials, mass murder and state terrorism, the Soviet Union is the only workers' fortress in a decaying Capitalist world. As revolutionary socialists, we of the Fourth International, the Bolshevik Leninists (the "Trotskyists"), rejoice with all workers that the Workers State celebrates this month its twentieth anniversary.

That we of the Fourth International celebrate the twentieth anniversary will come as a surprise only to the ignorant, the thoughtless and the Stalinists. Never have the Bolshevik-Leninists committed the error of identifying a corrupt bureaucracy with the Workers' State. In the Soviet Union Capitalism has been overthrown and has not yet been restored. For us, that is decisive. A comparison with Germany will make the point more clear.

Before 1914 Germany was a capitalist state. Its government was a combination of monarchy and a limited parliamentary democracy. In 1918-19 this form of government was overthrown, and the Weimar Constitution inaugurated, one of the most advanced republican regimes of the day. Germany, however, still remained a capitalist country, with private ownership of the means of production as the basis of its economy. In 1933 Fascism achieved a successful counter-revolution. The Fascists swept away the remnants of republicanism, destroyed the working class

movement, and reduced the social and political life of Germany to a condition of barbarism, hooliganism and terror to which history can offer few parallels. But despite superficial changes, capitalism, private ownership, is still the economic basis of Germany. Semi-constitutional monarchy, democratic republic, Fascist gangsterism, these have been changes only in the political superstructure adopted by the ruling class, often unwillingly and at great self-sacrifice, but all with the same aim, the preservation of the system of private property.

In the Soviet Union we have the converse. Despite the partial collapse of Russian economy, the strain of the war, the revolution and the civil war the smallness of the proletariat in comparison with the peasantry and the pressure of world capitalism, yet between 1917 and 1923 we had the proletarian dictatorship, which gave a glimpse of the possibilities of workers' rule. Since 1923 we have had the bureaucratic degeneration which has at last reached the morass of 1937 Stalinism. But, and it is vital to remember this, the economic basis of Leninism, collective ownership, remains. It is still the basis of Stalinism, and therefore, despite the political changes, the Soviet Union remains a Workers' State in the same way that Germany, despite the political changes, remains a capitalist state. As the capitalists of the world despite their divisions, will defend their capitalist Germany against the proletarian revolution, so the workers of the world must defend their Soviet Union. That is why the "Trotskyists," who carry on a ceaseless struggle against Stalinism, are not demoralised or disheartened by its crimes, but lead the workers to-day in celebrating the twentieth anniversary, and proclaiming "Long live the Soviet Union!"

In these twenty years the Workers' State has imperishably demonstrated that collective ownership is incomparably superior to Capitalist economy. Let us look for a moment at what has been done. Electricity in 1936 is 32 million kilo-watt-hours, 17 times as much as in 1913; coal was 29.1 millions in 1913 and 108.9 millions in 1935; oil 9.2 millions in 1913 and 26.8 millions in 1935; iron 4.2 millions in 1913 and 9.4 millions in 1935. Where has capitalism ever achieved anything similar? A great army and air force have been built, and the Soviet Union in the development of air transport ranks amongst the foremost nations in the world. As a result of this economic development, the cultural level of the country is far higher than it was in 1913. It is true that the ruthless repression of all except official opinion, the monstrous lies that are foisted on the population as historical and political truth, the idolatry of the leader, the brutal terror - it is true that all these make Stalinism so similar to Fascism that many people are disillusioned and are inclined to brand them both as intolerable tyranny. So in one sense they are. But the comparison is superficial, for whereas the political and social corruption of Fascist Germany represents a retrogression from pre-war and republican Germany, what seems so similar in the Soviet Union represents a great advance on Tsarist Russia. Millions now are reading and studying, have been awakened to a more vigorous intellectual life. True, they are studying

through Stalinist spectacles and see everything through that foul distorting lens. But inasmuch as in Tsarist Russia the vast majority studied nothing and would have been little better off today (the fate of India and China is infallible proof), we can realise what the Revolution has meant to the Russian poor. The masses have been aroused to the implications of modern life. Backward as they still are, they have done in twenty years of revolutionary activity what India and China will not do in another century of capitalist domination. Russia in 1913 and Russia in 1937, Germany in 1913 and in 1937. That is the comparison. Only the corrupt stupidity of Stalinists would claim that the Soviet Union is more advanced than Germany. They have lied so long and so often that they are incapable of even hearing the truth. Germany is still a more advanced country, but as we see the two countries in their movement during the last 20 years, we see the vitality of collective ownership and the rottenness of capitalism. Long live the Soviet Union.

But today this gigantic achievement is threatened. The magnificent support given by the workers of the world in the difficult days of 1917 and 1918 saved the Workers' State. But the world revolution on which the Bolshevik Party depended was betrayed by the Labour leaders of Europe, chiefly those of Germany and Austria. Isolated in a hostile capitalist world; backward to begin with, and exhausted by its great efforts, the Russian proletariat fell under the grip of a powerful bureaucracy, which, by 1924 had crushed its opponents in the Bolshevik Party. An outline of that struggle can be had elsewhere. It is sufficient to say here that, given the defeat of the world revolution, the emergence of a bureaucracy was inevitable. Socialism demands an abundance of production, a standard of living which was quite beyond the possibilities of a backward agricultural country. It was a combination of the highly developed industry in, for example a Soviet Germany and a Soviet Britain, which could have fertilised the backward countryside of Russia and given the millions of peasants such a standard of life, such facilities for education and culture, such leisure and freedom as would have made it possible for them to approach social and political equality. In the same way as democratic rights, freedom of assembly and the press, the whole bourgeois parliamentary regime was unrealisable under feudalism and impossible except on the basis of the higher production of capitalism, so in the same way, that emancipation from bureaucracy, that freedom from domination by a ruling class or caste, can come only on the basis of a productivity of labour infinitely superior to anything that capitalism has yet shown. Until that time bureaucracy is inevitable. Far from having achieved this high standard the Soviet Union is still infinitely behind the advanced capitalist countries. In these circumstances to talk of Socialism and the abolition of classes is a brazen and stupid lie. You cannot collectivise poverty. The classes will emerge again. The crime of Stalin's bureaucracy is that as soon as it had defeated the left wing it devoted itself chiefly to the increase of its own power and privileges. In the same short-sighted manner as the bureaucracy in Germany before 1933, it has sabotaged the only de-

fence of the Soviet Union—the world revolution. In its efforts to preserve itself, to add constantly to its power and privileges, it has destroyed the Soviets and the Trade Unions, making them merely appendages of the state, and today it leans on the most reactionary elements among the peasantry, and the Stakhanovite workers, whom it bribes with huge salaries. Before the increasing differentiation of salaries, the terrorism and the brutality, the incompetence and corruption inevitable in such a regime, the bureaucracy has only one weapon—terror against the left. But as the contradictions between its words—for it is after all the heir of a revolution—and its actions become more and more obvious, and the internal and external difficulties accumulate, the tension explodes in a war to the death between the bureaucrats themselves. Hence Stalin and his clique turn on Yagoda, Tukhachevzky and the Presidents of the Republics, heads of the Trade Unions, Directors of Trusts, etc. In these conflicts are reflected the internal and external difficulties which still threaten the Russian Revolution. The monotonous tale of daily executions shows the crisis in the Workers' State.

We of the Fourth International see these things. We shall expose them fearlessly, for only by these means can the workers of the world know what it is so necessary for them to know—the truth. Behind the facade of collectivisation there is differentiation: rich collectives and poor collectives. Private peasant ownership is growing, the differentiation in salaries is steadily increasing the privileged castes of the towns. For all these exploiters the transition back to capitalism will be easy. The working poor who will have to defend the revolution are being mercilessly crushed by the bureaucracy. The new Constitution is now exposed for the farce we always knew it would prove. Not only are the Soviets gone. Who would dare to oppose Stalinism in the smallest gesture? Every succeeding year sees the division between the privileged and unprivileged growing greater and greater, as it must in the isolated state. A severe shock from without would give such an impetus to the counter-revolution within, that the whole collectivist structure, which has cost so much blood and suffering, may collapse, burying with it the hopes and aspirations of millions. The ultimate result would be a Fascist state based on private ownership, and the struggle for Socialism will have once more to piece its remnants together and struggle out of the consciousness of this overwhelming disappointment and defeat.

It must not be. We outside the Soviet Union bear that responsibility. The workers in the Soviet Union are so enclosed that by their own efforts they will never be able to liberate themselves. We outside have to defeat the counter-revolution in Europe, and the Russian proletariat, the breed of 1905 and 1917, will deal with the Stalinist bureaucracy. We must redouble our struggles, comrades, against the capitalists, Fascist and democratic. Let us mercilessly expose and tear up by the roots the poisonous Third International, to-day merely the agent of the bureaucracy, seeking to mould the international working class to its reactionary will. It is under our leadership and by our policy that the workers will defend

the Soviet Union, or it will not be defended at all. Long live the Soviet Union. And that the Soviet Union may live we must build a new International, to lead the instinctive struggle which the masses will put up for the Workers' State, the day that they realise its danger. To say "Long live the Soviet Union" therefore, is to say "Long live the Fourth International."

A new generation: new tasks. We shall not flinch. Comrade Wolff, for years secretary to Comrade Trotsky and the secretary of our international organisation, one of our staunchest comrades, has been kidnapped in Spain and murdered, the work of the G.P.U. and its ally, the Spanish Communist Party. The list of kidnappings and murders grows. Never has the revolution been so persecuted as at the hands of the Stalinist agents, who owe their power to the greatest revolution in history, and it is for us, the vanguard, that they reserve their wildest slanders and most murderous ambushes. Worse is to follow. In the coming war, if the Soviet Union is allied to Britain, we shall have to contend, not only with the police, but with the Stalinists who will put their knowledge of the working class movement at the disposal of the ruling class in its time of greatest crisis. About this let us cultivate no illusions. The revolutionary movement in Spain has paid heavily for not seeing what was inevitable. But the very urgency of the Stalinist persecution shows the fundamental soundness of our position. Our strength is the strength of the whole current of history and already, as the tide of revolution washes against their feet, they betray themselves by their frantic terror. They will not crush us. They cannot crush us. Our principles have stood the test of history. Every succeeding day only amplifies their truth. They have shot Wolff: there are half a dozen others to take his place.

Some, driven into demoralisation, lose their balance and declare that the Soviet Union must not be defended. These we condemn. Let not the crimes of Stalinism prevent us from celebrating the twentieth anniversary of the October Revolution, from joining with the workers of the world in a thunderous roar of "Long live the Soviet Union" that will ring in the ears of Capitalism and Stalinism, as the announcement of their approaching doom.

MARXIST STUDY CLASS

Tutor: M. NICHOLS (Trotskyist)

At The Typographical Hall,
102 Maxwell Street,
Glasgow.

EVERY MONDAY at 8 p.m.

First Class: OCTOBER 15th.

DISCUSSION.

ADMISSION FREE.

THE THIRD INTERNATIONAL 1919-1937

THE subjugation of the C.I. and other international bodies with headquarters in Moscow to purely Russian National foreign policy was early marked, and the following incident, not hitherto recorded, is characteristic. In 1926, Japan had over 4,000 Koreans in prison, undergoing the most barbaric of mediaeval tortures. The people of the Far Eastern provinces of the U.S.S.R. had not only a common frontier with the Korean people, but close racial and cultural ties. It was not surprising, therefore, that the International Red Aid in the Far Eastern Provinces, should wish to make a special campaign and collection for their Korean fellow workers and peasants. When the request to sanction such a campaign came to the Executive of the I.R.A., the matter was referred, on Political Bureau instructions, to the Foreign Office. The F.O. replied that the Russian workers and peasants in the Far Eastern Provinces were not to make a campaign in *their own country* for their Korean brothers, because "our relations with Japan are at present excellent."

Compare that with June to August, 1923, when the German Revolution was on the agenda. Twenty leading workers in the Comintern were given daily courses at the headquarters of the Russian General Staff in the use of small arms, machine guns and street fighting tactics, ready to be sent to Germany. Posters were everywhere displayed showing a Red Army man striding over Poland offering bread to the German workers in exchange for machinery, and mobile cinemas repeated the theme!

The history of the change in the Communist International from a revolutionary International to a counter-revolutionary brake upon the revolution, is inseparably bound up with the rise of the bureaucracy in the Communist Party of the U.S.S.R.; with the death of Lenin and the rise of Stalin to the position of a personal dictator.

Stalin's contempt for the leadership of the parties of the C.I. is a genuine one. Never a theoretician, but always a "practical man," always more a national Revolutionary than an internationalist. Stalin was quick to utilise the services of the host of sycophants, place-seekers and sheer "bread-card artists" who had attached themselves to the Russian Revolution when it had secured itself. Journalists like A. L. Strong, G. Fisher, Freeman, Barbusse, Vaillant-Couturier, and a host of others, discovered in the Russian Revolution, a source of inspiration for profitable writing. "Socialist" functionaries such as Pepper, Petrofsky and Borodin, found it more pleasant to tour the world in first class carriages than to grub along on the poor pay roll of the Second International. It was such creatures, in the second rank of the C.I. personnel that Stalin found, ready and paid for, the people he needed in his fight against the Internationalists.

The complete right about turn that has been made under Stalin, is brought vividly before us when we study the past publications of the Soviet Government and the C.I. We have before us as we write, a pamph-

let in English, dated "Petrograd, February, 1918." Its title is "Decrees issued by the Revolutionary Peoples' Government." Published by "*The Bureau of International Revolutionary Propaganda, attached to the Commissariat for Foreign Affairs.*" What a step from that to Litvinoff and Geneva! That pamphlet was issued when the U.S.S.R. was torn with civil war and foreign intervention. Now, when according to Stalin "Socialism has been irrevocably established" we have Popular Fronts and Fights for Democracy! Then, the International Revolutionary Propaganda Bureau attached to the Foreign Office; now a reactionary band of functionary-bureaucrats, keeping back the revolution and murdering revolutionaries (e.g. in Spain)—in the interests of Russian national socialism.

The Second International, now usually referred to as the Labour and Socialist International, was founded in 1889, and collapsed politically in 1914 at the outbreak of the 'Great' War. Its leadership, British, French, German, etc., went completely over to the enemy class, and became the best recruiting sergeants and body-guard of their respective national bourgeoisies. During the war, only small groups in every country remained true to Marxism, to International Socialism. Working illegally, often in prison, struggling against the stream of reaction, these small groups planned and worked for the building of a new International to replace the one that had so shamefully betrayed the working class in the hour of its greatest need.

The Bolshevik Revolution in Russia in November, 1917, led by Lenin and Trotsky, gave the working class of the world a new hope. Out of that new hope out of the renewed confidence drawn from the success of the Russian proletariat, sprang the Communist or Third International, founded in 1919.

As Max Schactman so well says: "From its foundation day, the Communist International declared pitiless war against socialist treachery, against corruption and degeneration in the working class, against bureaucratism and opportunism. The Communist Parties everywhere were born and grew up in combat against socialist reaction. The torn, confused and scattered ranks of the revolutionary movement throughout the world, were re-united under the banner of the Russian Revolution and world Communism . . . The masses were once more led upon the road of class struggle. In every field of proletarian endeavour, in the Trade Unions, in strikes, in Parliament, in demonstrations, the Communists reawakened the depressed spirits of the workers, fortified them with new courage, enlightened them with new ideas, inspired them with new militancy."

After the formation of the Third, or Communist International, we witnessed an unedifying scene. Centrists, those of revolutionary phrases who shrink from revolutionary acts, attempted to form a Two and a Half International. The British I.L.P. and its Continental counterparts were prominent in this move

to retard the progress of the awakened masses towards proletarian revolution. Many of the same elements are repeating history today, hovering between the Third and Fourth Internationals, afraid, that is of either linking themselves to the new openly reactionary Third International under Stalin, or of proclaiming themselves for the revolutionary Fourth International which is the rightful heir of Marx and Lenin.

The history of the rapid degeneration of the Third International after Lenin's death, and the subsequent imprisonment, exile and murder of the revolutionary Internationalists by the Stalinists, is too long to deal with in this article. But the outstanding events of the period, a record of defeat and betrayals, born of incorrect, non-Marxist theory, of the needs of the Russian bureaucracy and the pressure of world economic and political forces, can be briefly summarised.

The German working class at the end of the 'Great' War, were again betrayed by their Social Democratic leaders, and a revolutionary situation gave them only the Weimar Constitution. A 'democratic' constitution which embodied a form of emasculated Workers' Councils in the factories. Even the small reforms won from the bourgeoisie as a result of their fear of the proletarian revolution which had shown its head for a short time in Bavaria, were gradually filched from the workers. War and the 'Peace' and the Versailles Treaty had almost destroyed German economy, the masses were starving and throughout 1922 and 1923, they were flocking to the Communist Party. Towards the Autumn of 1923, the economic and political crisis was such that once more the revolution was on the order of the day. Even the small shopkeeping class was asking for admittance to the C.P., and its membership was rising so rapidly that it had to declare its ranks closed. The German proletariat and the petty bourgeoisie were waiting for the C.P. to lead them out of the morass to the overthrow of capitalism.

Lenin was dying and the rising Stalinist bureaucracy were given their first opportunity to sabotage the revolution in a foreign country: they took it with both hands. The revolutionary situation was allowed to pass and the bourgeoisie again obtained a breathing space.

After the debacle in 1923, the Stalinists entered on a short period of adventurism. On December 1st, 1924, an insurrectionary putsch was attempted in Reval, the capital of Esthonia. 227 armed communists gathered at certain points in the city, endeavoured to capture the armories, the aerodrome, the railway station, government buildings, etc. Action commenced at 5.15 a.m. and by 9.0 a.m., it was crushed. The small groups of armed workers were absolutely isolated from the mass of the workers, amongst whom no preparation had been made.

In Bulgaria in 1923, a large Peasants' Party under the leadership of Stambuliski, was crushed by the reactionary Zankov at a moment when the intervention of the Communists on the side of the Peasant Party would have brought it to power. After having missed the historical moment, here also the Communist leadership swung to adventurism. That is, revolutionary action apart from the masses. The assassination of well-known reactionaries and the blowing up of

the Sofia cathedral, were some of the signs of this new zig-zag.

In Britain towards 1925, the working class was moving rapidly to the left movement which culminated in the General Strike of 1926. The Labour leaders needing new authority over the leftward-moving masses, flirted with Moscow, and the result of the flirtation was a marriage of convenience between the General Councils of the British and Russian Trade Unions: the infamous Anglo-Russian Committee. With this weapon of Stalinist approval in their hands, the Purcells, Hicks and Cooks were ready to lead the working class away from the revolution and into the hands of the bourgeoisie. They succeeded in smashing the General Strike and brought a period of disillusionment and apathy to the working class movement such as it had not known for three quarters of a century. Once again the Communists, who had given out the slogan "All power to the General Council," turned to new adventures. It was not long before Pollitt, in a period closely following betrayal and defeat, was issuing a call for "Soviets in Britain."

In China, 1926-27, the proletariat were organised and armed, and leading being them millions of insurrectionary peasants. In many of the most important industrial cities, the proletariat were in command and ready to take power. The Communist International through its agents, Borodin, Roy, Albrecht, Neuman and Co., made a bloc with the Nationalist militarist, Chiang-Kai-Shek, dissolved the Chinese C.P. and finally agreed to the disarming of the workers' guards in Hankow and other strategic proletarian positions. As Trotsky had clearly foreshadowed, once Chiang, with the assistance and approval of Stalin, had disorientated and disarmed the front ranks of the armed workers, he proceeded to declare the Trade Unions illegal, and ended by putting to the sword 10,000 workers in Shanghai alone. Thus the united front between the C.I. and the Chinese nationalist bourgeoisie ended, as was inevitable, in the literal, beheading of the Chinese revolution.

In Germany again, when the bourgeoisie were already preparing to re-establish their economy and regain complete control of their State, sided by British and American loans, when they were preparing their Fascist bludgeon for the workers, the only road for the proletariat was unity and action. The working masses were overwhelmingly in the Social Democratic Party, although a large number were following the Communist Party. This was the moment seized on by the C.I. to proclaim that all Social Democrats were Social Fascists. Stalin declared that the Social Democracy was the twin of Fascism! Instead of unity and strength the Stalinists brought disunity weakness to the German masses. Hitler came to power without a fight and the German masses were handed over to the butcher by the Communist and Social Democratic leaders.

After the German defeat, after the period when every Social Democratic worker had been branded a Social Fascist, the C.I. made another sharp turn. It stood on its head! The fear of Hitler drove the Russian bureaucracy to make alliances with Liberals, "people of good will" and the most reactionary

Socialist leaders. A call went out through the C.I. for Popular Fronts, for fights for democracy—capitalist democracy! That is where fifteen years of Stalin's leadership has landed the Communist International.

The clearest and most damnable example of the destruction of the proletarian revolutionary movement and the bolstering-up of the 'democratic' bourgeoisie, is taking place under our eyes, at this moment, in Spain. Here the working class had, in July, 1936, defeated the Fascist revolt and seized control of the means of production in many parts of the country. It was a period of dual power, in which it needed only the leadership of a revolutionary vanguard, a party of the proletariat, to seize power and establish proletarian dictatorship. The Stalinist deliberately hindered this development and the Centrists (POUM) as always, hesitated, compromised and failed to put their brave words in action. Obedient to the needs of the Russian bureaucracy, the Communists united with the right wing Socialists, liberals, and finally with the bourgeoisie, to crush every attempt

of the working class to regain their lost position and to advance. Confusing the workers on the issue of Franco's defeat, issuing slogans of "Defeat Franco first," when Fascism could only be defeated by the overthrow of capitalism, the Stalinists dragged large sections of the Spanish workers behind the bourgeoisie and, when the proletariat of Barcelona came on the streets to defend the last remnants of their gains, manned the barricades on the wrong side. Finally the Stalinists, true to their counter-revolutionary line, murdered many of the best of the proletarian fighters.

The Communist International, under Lenin, the advance guard of the world revolution, has, under Stalin, become the mainstay of capitalist reaction in a number of countries. Spain and China: what further demonstrations of the role of the Stalinists are needed to convince the advanced workers that a new International must be forged? An International of proletarian revolutionary parties, under the banner of Marx and Lenin: the Fourth International.

THE STRUGGLE FOR THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

IT was in 1923 that the movement began which has culminated in the struggle for the Fourth International. By 1924 Socialism in a single country was the central theoretical issue in Russia. It was essentially the slogan, lyingly presented as Leninism, of the new ruling caste in the Soviet Union, a bureaucracy thoroughly well satisfied with itself, and concerned with its own comfort. As we look back to-day, we can see that Stalin, its chief representative, was but the instrument of the bureaucracy. Since the German defeat of 1933, that bureaucracy has become a frantic upholder of the status quo, and, therefore, in the last analysis, counter-revolutionary. The Third International, its tool, follows, and for four years now the struggle for the Fourth International has been going on.

Many parties have abandoned their grip on the tails of Stalinism. Of them, two are symptomatic; the first is the POUM, the second is the I.L.P. We shall devote ourselves to these as typical of one aspect of the struggle for the Fourth International.

The POUM in July 1936, was a small party with about 3,000 members, concentrated chiefly in Catalonia. Internationally it was affiliated to the International Bureau for Revolutionary Socialist Unity, and thereby gave a clear pointer to its future development. For what exactly was, or is, this Bureau? On the Abyssinian question, the R.S.A.P. of Holland, one of its members, took the line of workers' sanctions. The Italian section supported sanctions. The I.L.P., after one of the most scandalous episodes, or rather series of episodes, in recent political history, declared its neutrality. None of these parties, it may be argued, could have had any serious influence on the Aby-

ssinian situation. But who argues thus proves one thing, his own ignorance of revolutionary politics. A party make take correct positions on major political issues and yet be found wanting in the hour of crisis. But nothing is more certain than this. Any political organisation which is slack, slipshod, careless or opportunist in theory, will infallibly go to pieces when faced with the enormous strain of revolutionary action. The weakness in theory is directly linked with a weakness in practice. The members of the Bureau went their different ways on Abyssinia and then cheerfully joined up again. This meant that the leadership did not care about principles, that the rank and file did not know that principles mattered.

When the counter-revolution broke out in Spain in July 1936, the POUM was soon faced with the issue: shall we enter the Catalan Government or not? A Marxist party, with the cards in its hands, would have known. 1936 is not 1917. Marx and Lenin, the first four Congresses of the International, the teachings on the State, are clear enough. But these "practical" men never pay any serious attention to these things, a sharp clear position on such issues is for them, pedantry or sectarianism; they have no time, it would offend old members, why quarrel over such a trifle anyway, we disagreed on Abyssinia, but there are so many things we have in common. The POUM militant but centrist, was unaccustomed to that unity of theory and practice which is Marxism. It could never have remained in the Bureau after the Abyssinia scandal if it had been Marxist. When after July 1936, 40,000 eager, but untrained workers, rushed to join it, it was swamped. This will happen to every revolutionary party in every revolutionary crisis, and

only a steeled core can discipline this membership. The POUM collapsed politically. It went into the Government. It issued slogans, but the weeks went by and the opportunities with them. Those were the urgent days when the bourgeoisie wanted to quiet the masses, to prepare to rob them later of what they had gained in the days of July. Every day counted. The POUM stayed in the Government for months. It blinded the masses at a time when it should have opened their eyes. When it left the Government, it was because it was thrown out.

The further degeneration was no surprise. Instead of being prepared and organised to go underground, many of its leaders were captured by the Government without the slightest difficulty. Many have shed their blood and fought bravely. But when will these sentimentalists learn that a revolution is not a football match, where you greet the vanquished with "Well played, Sir," and everyone goes home happy? The masses in a revolution have always shed their blood without stint and displayed conspicuous bravery. What in history has surpassed the defence of Madrid and the self-sacrifice and bravery of the Asturian miners? And yet how very, very far are the Spanish workers today from the socialist revolution! We know the cursed treachery of the Stalinists, we know how hard they have made the task, *but we have to accept that.* Brockway and Maxton are hoping to heaven that the C.P. will see the error of its ways. Nothing will ever teach some people anything. The POUM had great odds against it. But it was bound to fail. In the hard school of persecution it will learn; how quickly and how much, it is impossible to say. But from July 1936 to May 1937, there was chance after chance in Barcelona and in Catalonia. Today all is to be done again.

Let us look at the I.L.P. It goes the same slack, slipshod way. Educate its members? It blinds their eyes and stuffs their ears. When the POUM was thrown out of the Government, Brockway commented in the *New Leader*: "at any rate it will now have time to get on with the revolution." Hitherto we had believed that fatuities such as this were the exclusive privilege of James Maxton. The I.L.P. contingent can tell a tale. It is not told. What are the facts about young Smilie? Does Brockway tell them? Not he. He sits cowering in the *New Leader* Offices, frightened at the horrible prospect of isolation which faces him if he comes out and denounces in unmistakable terms the criminal treachery which is being perpetrated in Spain. While supporting the POUM materially, does he make clear before his party and the workers, the weaknesses of which the POUM has been guilty? Not he. In regard to the practice of Marxism and the training of cadres, the struggle for the Fourth International, Brockway is the supreme example of the Artful Dodger. For years the propagandists of the Fourth International have pointed out the way the Stalinist bureaucracy and the Stalinised Comintern were going. Brockway dodged, shifted, evaded, compromised, published a laudatory review of the monumental pile of rubbish which the Webbs produced. Now that the Spanish Stalinists and the Moscow Trials and purge have written the truth in blood, what is to be done? The Bolshevik

way is clear. Call an Extraordinary Conference, admit fully previous errors, and show that, for the I.L.P., the Third International is dead by proclaiming the necessity for a Fourth International.

But all these centrists are of a certain mould. Such clear decisive action, the only thing the masses can understand, is not for them. Up to now where do they stand on the trials? When Stalinism began to drag the name of Socialism in the mud, Brockway, Aplin, Smith and Co., were as bewildered as the most backward worker. These leaders of the working class led bravely from behind. They are still there. For while their rank and file have gradually come to conclusions, these leaders are still hiding behind a judicial impartiality. The C.P. does not wait for any enquiry. It kidnaps and murders in Spain: kills the revolutionaries. For them Brockway uses ink of a pale and watery pink. But for the Trotskyists that is another story! The vigour, the confidence, the revolutionary rage with which he proves that he is not a Trotskyist, never has been, and never will be. Why? All these milk and water revolutionaries have a bugbear. It is called "isolation."

Nin and the POUM joined the Catalan Government. They were afraid of "isolation." Brockway will admit in words that the I.L.P., the Trotskyists and the Anarchists, are in their different ways, on one side of the barricade and the Stalinists on the other. He knows that if, in the coming war, Britain is on the side of the Soviet Union, the Stalinists will be as merciless to him, to Maxton and the I.L.P., as they were to Nin and the other revolutionaries. But will he propose united front, actively in defence of the Spanish Revolution, between the I.L.P., the Trotskyists and the Anarchists? Not he. The I.L.P. forbade its speakers to stand on the Anarchist platform during the Mayday celebrations. The C.P. demanded this ban and Brockway, though he knows what the C.P. is doing and will do, fears "isolation." The Trotskyists and the Anarchists are small. The Stalinists have money, press, incredible brazenness. True they are kicking the I.L.P. in the front and rear, digging them in the eye and spitting on them. All that Brockway can do is to complain querulously and allow them to terrorise him from standing up for the Anarchists and the Trotskyists. The moral cowardice of these men! That is how we know that they will always lead their parties to ruin. If Brockway being frightened by the C.P., has not the courage and determination boldly to assume or defend the Trotskyist position, he and his type can never face any serious revolutionary crisis. They will break to pieces under it. That is what happened to the POUM. We must not disguise these things. Too much is at stake.

Ask him why the I.L.P. does not declare for a Fourth International? Political reason he has none. The I.L.P. has been taught by bullets (the only way in which these people ever learn, and then often too late), that today, inside and outside Russia, Stalinism is a danger to the working class. Yet, a Fourth International? No! Why? The latest reason is that Trotsky is intolerant and has a bad temper! Brockway in an article in the *New Leader* is at pains to dissociate himself from Trotsky. "We are not Trotskyists!" They will go to their deaths leaving as

their last legacy to their workers "We are not Trotskyists." It may help them in heaven. It will not turn away one Stalinist bullet, one Stalinist dagger, or check for one second the enormous factory for lies and slander that is the Third International. Why does Stalin organise these Trials and why do the bureaucrats spend their time and money and energy, on slandering Trotskyism and the Fourth International? Why, in the name of heaven, why? It is because the Stalinists know now that if the new movement is associated with Trotsky it will acquire a potential force which will be the greatest danger to their counter-revolutionary policies. For precisely this reason, small as we are, they try to frighten off everyone from joining us. And Brockway plays right into their hands. "We are not Trotskyists." Maybe, say the Stalinists, but they shoot, kidnap and murder them, to be quite sure that they may not change their minds.

The Trotskyists have committed serious errors. Our isolation, leading us to sectarianism, the polemical character of our propaganda and agitation, lack of contact with the mass movement, leading to bitter internal quarrels and splints, the imitation of Trotsky's faults by followers incapable of imitating his virtues, these and other grave errors no serious Bolshevik-Leninist would deny. But where was there ever a movement which did not carry the defects of its virtues? Today our political line is a thousand times justified. What is to be done? Brockway's reply is: "Tell the world we are not Trotskyists!"

Lenin called for the Third International in September 1914. That harsh realist knew that it could not come at once. But he knew his revolutionary duty was to proclaim its necessity, its inevitability, the principles on which it should be based, to seek those who were moving towards it, to unite on specific issues, but never to try to form unity campaigns with

declared enemies, to skulk behind specious excuses, throw the responsibility on the masses, to pander to the weak and wavering in his party. The POUM prepared its perfect eclipse in the days before July 1936. Will Brockway, Marceau Pivert and the rest learn? Now is the time for building, by clear thinking, unequivocal speech and resolute action. Such inflated windbags as Maxton, McGovern and Campbell Stephen have exposed themselves long ago. The I.L.P. must throw them out of the party. Surely our comrades must know that. You know it, comrades. You cannot be serious revolutionaries and carry that pre-war, pacifist, parliamentary baggage. But these tattered and torn rags are covered and made to look respectable by Brockway and by the publishing of fierce articles in controversy. This sham has lasted too long. Comrades in the I.L.P., you have had a harsh lesson in Spain in recent months. Speak to the returned members of the Contingent. Do not hesitate and fumble. Forward to the Fourth International! Under that banner you can fight and win. We are your comrades. In the hour of danger, and the hour is approaching, you will have nowhere to turn, but us. Why not turn to us now? You, we know, are not afraid of the "isolation" which keeps Brockway tearing his hair lest the C.P. and the world should think that he is a Trotskyist. A few hundred of us can face the future with enormous confidence. Once we get a strong nucleus we shall grow automatically.

This is the time. Thousands everywhere are waiting. Trotskyism is no longer a political back-water, but the banner of the struggle against Imperialist war. Today you know it. The very violence of Stalinism should show you where your road lies. It is the curse of the Brockways that they never lead but stifle the impulses of their best followers. It is for you to take the step. It is only by your own resolution that you will jerk these mischievous malingerers out of their industrious futility, and expose them before they can prepare further catastrophe.

THE MURDER OF THE OLD BOLSHEVIKS

The second Moscow trial in January 1937, arraigned as "traitors" Radek, Pyatakov, Sakolnikov, etc. These men are known to have been fighters for the revolution, men who helped to build up the Soviet State. Yet we are told that they plotted—and in company with Hitler! to wreck their own handiwork and destroy that for which they themselves had striven and sacrificed. For one to believe this, the evidence must be completely convincing and totally undeniable. Yet we are presented with no external evidence and only the "confessions" of these men. Surely it is to be expected that these "confessions" will have been carefully and suspiciously sifted by the State prosecutor until there remains no shadow of doubt as to their consistency and accuracy.

An examination of the Verbatim Report, by no means intensive or exhaustive, reveals such remarkable contradictions as to almost pass belief. It is highly improbable that any of the trials which follow will be reported at such length for foreign consumption, if indeed, they are reported at all, which renders a careful examination of this trial of prime importance to revolutionary workers.

Some months ago, there was issued from Moscow, this Verbatim Report of the "Court Proceedings in the case of the Anti-Soviet Trotskyite Centre." In the 580 legalistic looking pages of the book, Trotsky is arraigned before the world on a variety of charges

through the medium of confessions made from the dock in Moscow, in January 1937, by Radek, Pyatakov, Sokolnikov and Serebryakov, amongst others.

The report concerns a "Parallel Centre" of which the prisoners were declared to be members and whose object was, according to the indictment, "To direct criminal anti-Soviet, espionage, diversive and terrorist activities." Page 18.

Let us see how this is borne out by the remainder of the proceedings, without concerning ourselves in this examination with the political aspect of the case, and relying exclusively upon the verbatim report for our material. In order to give a comprehensive pic-

ture of the proceedings, we will segregate the vital elements into a few main divisions, and quote only the essential parts of the testimony upon which rests the entire case. The examination of an organisation of any kind whatsoever, must be conducted within what may be termed a framework composed of answers to the four main questions of:--How? Who? Why? What? or in other words How did it start? Who initiated it? Why was it set up? And What did it do?

Such is a self evident basis for enquiry, though it breaks down in the present instance, "How the Parallel Centre started" is a question which is simply not dealt with in the Court Proceedings. No date or venue is indicated which, by any stretch of imagination, can be said to answer this question. We are compelled to alter the framework to fit the material. As the nearest approach, we will substitute the query: *When did the Parallels Centre Start?*

Here are the statements of the four alleged Parallel leaders, and the Indictment:--

The Indictment says, "Organised in 1933."	Page 18
Sokolnikov says, "In 1935 after the parallel had commenced its activities."	" 149
Pyatakov says, "In the autumn of 1932" and also, after prompting from Vyshinsky "end of 1932."	" 37 " 38
Radek says, "End of October or beginning of November 1932" also "After I joined the movement in 1933."	" 87 " 92
Serebryakov joined "Autumn of 1933."	" 168

What are we to make of this jumble of contradictory declarations on such a concrete vital point as the formation of the organisation? If the case depends on Confessions as apart from evidence, which of the confessions are we to believe. Vyshinsky, the State Prosecutor appears oblivious not only to these contradictions, but to all the rest which follow. Let us continue with the second question.

WHO FORMED THE PARALLEL CENTRE?

The Indictment says: "Organised on the instructions of L. D. Trotsky."	" 18
Radek says: "Mrachkovsky on behalf of the Z-T'S (Zinovievite--Trotskyites of First Trial."	" 88
Sokolnikov says: "Kamenev, on behalf of the Z-T'S."	" 147
Kamenev (in testimony) says the same	" 168
Pyatakov says: "he and Radek formed it." Also "I gave Kamenev my consent to join the reserve centre."	" 38 " 37
Serebryakov says: "Piatakov."	" 168

Not one of these bear out the declaration of the indictment as to the "instructions of L. D. Trotsky." Each of the four leaders gives a fundamentally different version, and no attempt is made to reconcile them.

WHY WAS THE PARALLEL SET UP?

The Indictment says: "The object was to direct criminal anti-Soviet, espionage, diversive and terrorist activities." Page 18

Pyatakov says: "With Radek I discussed the very great predominance of Zinovievites in the main centre (Z-T's) Radek and I were disturbed by the

thought that after we had seized power, the Zinovievite section would go too far, and something had to be organised to counter-act it. Page 38

Radek says: "Mrachkovsky told me "They would like to preserve certain cadres in the event of arrest, that is why we have not included you in the first centre." Page 88

Kamenev says: (In testimony which Sokolnikov confirmed) "In conversations with Zinoviev we became convinced that it was necessary to create a leading group of the Z-T organisation in the event of our being exposed." Page 168.

Romm says: "Radek went on to say that the idea had arisen of creating a reserve, or parallel centre, in the event of the functioning centre being discovered." (Romm is a G.P.U. witness). Page 139

The confusion here is worse confounded, if possible, than before. Pyatakov declares it was an *anti-Zinovievite* organisation. Radek declares it was *pro-Zinovievite*. Kamenev-Sokolnikov declare it was neither pro or anti, but a leading Group. Pomm declares that, according to Radek, the idea just arose.

WHAT DID THE PARALLEL DO?

The Indictment states: "Treason, against the country, espionage, committing acts of diversion, wrecking activities, and the preparation of terrorist acts . . . under the direct instructions of L. D. Trotsky, now in emigration." Pages 4-5

Radek: "It was testified that Trotsky's directive concerning a group terrorist act, arrived in January, 1936.

Vyshinsky: "Trotsky's directives concerning terrorist acts, group acts, were received by you?"

Radek: "They were."

Vyshinsky: "Is that a fact?"

Radek: "Yes, it is a fact."

Vyshinsky: "There is no dispute about that?"

Radek: "No."

Vyshinsky: "Before that directive, were preparations for terrorist acts being made in our country?"

Radek: "Before we received Trotsky's directives, we took our own bearings." Page 74

Sokolnikov states: "I knew about the directive before that, but about the wrecking activities, I was informed by Pyatakov in the autumn of 1935."

Vyshinsky: "Did you yourself take part in wrecking activities?"

Sokolnikov: "No."	Page 160
Muralov set up two Siberian centres in 1931.	Page 216
Loginov says he set up a Ukranian centre in 1931.	„ 179
Muralov receives from Shestov Trotsky's directive to proceed to terrorist activities in 1932!	„ 217
Shestov "In November 1931, Muralov set me the task of carrying out a terrorist act in regard to Eiche."	„ 210
Radek: "We decided to put an end to the situation in which nobody bore responsibility for the terrorist work (in July 1935.)"	„ 104
Radek: "Since Sokolnikov was representing the Zinovievite organisation" (July 1934.)	„ 107
Radek: "As a participant in the Trotskyite-Zinovievite bloc from its very beginning."	„ 91
Radek: "I have no practical experience whatsoever in the sphere of terrorist struggle."	„ 100
"These are but a few extracts from a plethora of "evidence," which runs riot over the entire volume. Let us consider for a moment what they imply.	
"Trotsky's alleged "directive" was received five years after parallel terrorism is declared to have been in operation. Parallel terrorism takes place years before the Parallel is in existence.	
Radek is unaware that he is a member of the Parallel and claims membership of the master organisation, the Zinovievites. Forgetting this, he declares	

that Sokolnikov (his alleged partner in the Parallel), is a member of the other organisation. Sokolnikov has to be informed at the end of 1935 (nearly the terminating point of the parallel), of its wrecking activities.

A few further tit-bits from this astonishing volume (omitting the famous Pyatakov journey to Oslo, which has been dealt with at length on various occasions), will serve to fill out the picture of this treasure trove of absurdity, known as the Verbatim Report.

Radek: "In July 1934, Sokolnikov visited me at the "Ivestia" Offices . . . We did not think these were good conditions for the negotiations, and I was to write to Trotsky to this effect."

"Through Romm, who went aboard in May, I sent Trotsky a letter."

Vishinsky: "This was in May, 1934?"

Radek: "This was in May, 1934." Pages 107/8.
Superb! A letter projected in July and discussed at length, is sent the previous May. Nothing is impossible to these parallel conspirators.

Vishinsky: "Specifically on what force within the country did you calculate, on the working class?"

Sokolnikov: "No."

Vishinsky: "On the Kulaks, or the few remnants of the Kulaks?"

Sokolnikov: "That is so." Pages 478 and 9.

Vishinsky (quoting Stalin: "In our country there are no longer any landlords or Kulaks."

A. B. ELSBURY.

An International Socialist Fair

will be held on

FRIDAY & SATURDAY DECEMBER 3rd & 4th

3.0 P.M. BOTH DAYS

at ITROSE HALL, MORNINGTON TERRACE

MORNINGTON CRESCENT (back of Carreras)

There will be stalls to represent
AFRICA, WEST INDIES, INDIA,
CHINA, FRANCE, U.S.S.R., etc., etc.

Other stalls and amusements will
include:— Novelties, Revolutionary
Christmas Cards and Presents, Com-
petitions, Raffles, etc.

Admission is by programme which bears a number, probably a lucky one, so keep your's and buy the next issue of "Fight" should you not be present at the draw -- Programmes are on sale at the door and are also available from the Secretary of the Marxist Group, 97 Kings Cross Road, London, W.C.1. Help in the form of gifts is needed towards this effort to strengthen "Fight" —

ADMISSION THREEPENCE In Aid Of " FIGHT FUND "

THE COLONIAL QUESTION

CONGRESS AND THE INDIAN MASSES

TO the great satisfaction of the British rulers of India, the Nationalist Congress has accepted office in the seven provinces out of eleven where it secured a majority of seats in the new elections. Though the constitution framed by the conservative India Office has limited the powers of these ministries to the discretion of the British Governors appointed by Whitehall, the bourgeois section of the Indian National Congress has thought it wiser to stop agitation and make some money while the present boom lasts. Gandhi, who till now was a hater of all the circumscribed parliaments designed by the Imperial masters for the "gradual education in the arts of democracy of the backward and inferior Indian people" has discovered charms enough in the Provincial governments to cast his great influence on the side of those right-wing politicians of the Congress, who were eager ever since the days of the election to kiss the hands of His Imperial Majesty's representatives in India. The sweeping victory of the Congress Party which not only surprised the British officials but the congress leaders, has been accompanied by several other things which are not to the liking of the new honourables dressed in the homespun uniform of the nationalist cult. A peasant movement of a force and character unparalleled in the history of British India has raised its head in all the provinces. The ministers are talking about prohibition while the leaders of the hungry peasants are demanding immediate cancellation of all debts and substantial reduction in the rent paid by them to landlords and the Government.

The Premier of Behar, Shri Krishna Narayan Singha, who happens to be a big landlord himself, has pontifically declared against all class war, and added that he would not be dominated by the interests of any class in particular. As the speech was occasioned by widespread peasant demands, one can easily deduce what interests are those which are not going to dominate the policy of the Behar Cabinet. Obviously those of the poor peasants and landless labourers who had looked with hope to the day when the Congress would come into power.

The so-called socialists inside the Congress are ready to co-operate with such purely conservative minds as seem to be not the exception but the rule in the different cabinets all over India. Their great leader, Nehru, is such a stickler for constitutional practice, that he does what the right-wing majority in the working committee of the Congress asks him to do. And the bourgeois leaders of the Congress are glad that they are fortunate in having a president with a socialist halo. Nehru has tried his level best to win workers who have joined the Congress to the nationalist outlook. When a local congress committee allowed the workers to join the Congress procession with their own red flags and anti-imperialist and labour slogans, Nehru came down on the secretary of the local congress committee in the name of party discipline. One can quite well understand that even

Mr. Birla, the Indian president of the Employer's Federation has nothing but praise for Nehru. In the recent strike of the Cawnpore cotton mill operatives, in his own province, Nehru has done nothing to prevent the minister concerned from taking an ambiguous attitude, very suitable to the owners who subscribed so profusely to the congress campaign. In spite of all the theoretical criticism of the Gandhi programme of social reform, Nehru manages to walk the tight rope with the Mahatma. He gives an impression of disagreement, but, he unlike even the Liberals like Herbert Samuel, never contemplates giving a go-by to the reactionary crew that hides behind the orange, white and green of the National flag. Minor though very significant is the fact that it was the socialist Nehru who was responsible for exchanging the orange for the red which used to be part of the Indian flag. The slogan of a Constituent Assembly which Nehru has raised in India is formulated in the mechanical form of adult suffrage. No doubt adult suffrage might be a great advance on the present state of affairs, but have not the social democratic parties in Europe been defeated one after another in spite of a democratic franchise. And with a vast peasantry like the one in India, it is quite conceivable that a reactionary agrarian party mouthing radical slogans

(Continued on page 15)

Read regularly the journals of our international sections:

LA LUTTE OUVRIERE (French Section)
LA LUTTE OUVRIERE (Belgian Section)
UNSER WORT (German Section)

Read also

THE SOCIALIST APPEAL, (America)

The following booksellers and newsagents also stock **FIGHT** and other Trotskyist literature:

Bibliophile, Little Russell Street, W.C.1.

Burns and Berry, Shaftesbury Avenue, W.C.

Clapham Socialist Bookshop, 79 Bedford Road, Clapham North.

Johns, Torrington Place, W.C.

Librairie Internationale, 73 Russell Square, W.C.

Librairie Internationale, Percy Street, W.C.

Lahr, Red Lion Street, W.C.

London Weekly Mail, New Bridge Street.

Parton Street Bookshop, Parton Street, W.C.

Preis, Little Russell Street, W.C.

Solosky, Charing Cross Road, W.C.

Strauberg, Coptic Street, W.C.

Socialist Bookshop, 35 St. Bride Street, E.C.4.

L.S.E. Bookshop, Aldwych, W.C.

Socialist Bookshop, 1 St. Hilda St., Liverpool.

THE BOURNEMOUTH CONFERENCE

The Concessions to the Constituency Parties

READERS of "Fight" are not likely to suppose that changes in the Labour Party Constitution will transform it into a revolutionary party. On the other hand to dismiss as negligible the fight of the Constituency Parties would be a sectarian mistake.

The Constituency Labour Parties, that is the political section of the Labour Party, have hitherto been represented on the NEC by representatives chosen for them by the heavy-weight notes of the TU's! Under the new reforms, the constituency parties are able to choose some representatives for themselves which will make for a more active political life. The reforms, small as they are, were not a free gift from the dictators to the rank and file. They were won by a year of hard work and organisation, and they could not be denied without provoking a serious revolt. The Constituency Labour Parties Association which was formed last year to press for reforms, also set up Regional Associations of Labour Parties, independent of the NEC. In many cases they have already started to carry out propaganda and organisational work neglected by Transport House.

This may be more important than the actual reforms they have won. For with a partial victory gained in the first round they will continue to exist, linked up by a coordinating committee. In some areas at least they will become useful organs of class struggle. Political orientations will take place more easily through the Regional Associations as the crisis deepens. The Left Wing will find itself through these Associations.

Our fight, therefore, will be, to preserve their independence and their democratic structure, and to develop them as political as well as organisational channels, through which political ideas can circulate freely. We should aim also at the election of a central body in the future, which will be the democratic representative of socialist thought in the rank and file Labour Party. This may play an important part in future crises.

Once again members of the Labour Party have learned that they can't get anything out of the leadership of the Labour Party unless they organise and fight for it.

The Rearmament Debate.

The *Daily Worker* reports that the Bournemouth Conference voted by an astounding majority of support of the National Government's rearmament plans. This is false, both in a literal sense and in its implications.

The truth is that the delegates were confused and bewildered to find that the Stalinist opposition did not differ from the NEC report on any essential point. They consequently voted for acceptance of the Report. The Report does not dare to support openly the National Government. Such a clause would certainly have led to its rejection. The one and only difference between the opposition and the NEC on the subject of War, is that the former want to instruct the

Parliamentary Party to oppose rearmament *just so long as they are in a minority*, but to about turn, and rearm vigorously as soon as they get into power. The more experienced blackguards on the NEC do not wish to commit themselves to opposing rearmament now...the change round might look too like the Baldwin trick.

Not a single speaker gave a socialist, or even a militant lead to the Conference. To agitate for organised working class action was far from anyone's mind; and all except the pacifists, who could only ask us to curl up and die, were enthusiastically in favour of rearmament under a Labour Government, for a war in defence of "democracy." The Conference had to choose between the Stalinists and the NEC, as like as two peas, and it is not surprising that they refused to reject the NEC Report. The only good reason for doing so was the socialist reason, which was not put forward.

To infer from the vote, in which not only big TU's but many Divisional Parties voted for the NEC, that the delegates were really supporting the National Government's War plans, is a lie and a slander on the representatives of the working class.

The debate had opened in a noticeably serious mood. But it was not long before this tense atmosphere gave way to one of confusion and apathy.

At first some opposition speakers tried to make out that the Report supported the National Government. A reference to the Report disposed of that argument. After that all the social patriotic arguments for rearmament under a Labour Government and for a resurrected League of Nations, merely strengthened the position of the NEC. Delegates were constantly asking their neighbours "*Is the speaker for or against the Report?*"

Aneurin Bevan, who has a subtle mind and exceptional skill as a speaker, explained that all labour wanted was a guarantee that it should support rearmament only in defence of democracy and the League. The NEC had not given positive guarantees on this subject. Considering that he could not mention that the last war was fought for democracy too, and that only a hair-line was dividing him after all from his opponents on the NEC, Aneurin Bevan made the nearest thing possible to a fighting speech. For this reason he got prolonged applause, but he had carried no conviction.

The NEC's Report was accepted by an enormous majority. Then Composite Resolution No. 1, closely resembling the NEC's Report except for the point mentioned by Bevan as to what the party should do in opposition, was turned down by a similar majority. Composite Resolution No. 2 supported the League of Nations like the others, but contained as well left demands...active opposition to conscription, industrial and military...democratisation of the army on a citizen basis. On being blandly assured by the NEC that they had arranged for democratisation of the army, the proposer withdrew.

If one of the 4th Internationalist delegates present had managed to gain the rostrum, his task would not have been easy. The case that our only strength

is the strength of the international socialist movement; that the League is a hoax; that a League War will be an Imperialist War whether we have a Labour Government or not; that the only country in the world where the workers have something to fight for is Russia; that our immediate war policy must be to oppose *without reservations* the National Government, while gaining the ear of the soldiers by our drive for army reforms; that our final war policy can only be the complete overthrow of the capitalist system in England and the seizure of power, this would not have been a popular case: for too long the 2nd and 3rd Internationals have set themselves to undermine the self-confidence of the working class and, too, many workers sincerely believe that to vote a Labour majority into Parliament, is the same thing as to establish Workers' Power in Britain. In spite of this, a statement of the revolutionary position would have brought clarity into a muddled discussion, and shown the only possible line of opposition to the NEC. Such a statement would have made easier the laborious, systematic and dangerous work which will face all revolutionaries in an actual war situation. The Stalinist line has already made it more difficult.

The United Front Debate.

The result of the United Front debate was as usual decided beforehand by the fraction meetings of the big Trade Unions. No one has any illusions about that.

The reactionaries in the Labour Party do not, however, consider votes alone. They showed their fear of the left wing first, by the most strenuous repression before the Conference, and secondly, by allowing quite a free debate as a safety valve. Certain about the result of the voting, all their efforts were directed to preventing a revolt in the party.

The Stalinists do not make this clear. It is not by the voting powers of the constituencies, but by their discontent and threatening revolt that they exercise influence on the Conference. Even the TU block votes are not immune from pressure from below. In this debate it was touch and go which way the big vote of the Mineworkers Federation was thrown. The lesson to learn is that a United Front movement can succeed with sufficient mass support it can smash through the block vote system—provided that it is on the right lines; the lines which will unite the whole working class.

The Unity Campaign cannot win a United Front from above with proposals which are not simple, self evident, and militant. It is only through a general rise in militancy that the need for a united front of action becomes clear. There is no need for a United Front on a reformist programme, such as that which the Unity Campaign proposes. The logical way to unite on a reformist programme is within the Labour Party. A United Front has to be in the first place a United Front against reactionary leadership in the Labour Party, and that can only spring from a growing need for militant action on the Berrymondsey model. Opposition not in words but in action to the spirit of reformism. This the Stalinists refuse to see.

In demanding affiliation, they must conform to reformism in the Labour Party...and conform more and more as time goes on. This cancels out their drive

for a United Front...the two demands are mutually contradictory.

It is a tragedy of the Unity Campaign that it appears, to all, and not only to the professional twisters whose opposition to anything "left" is automatic, to be just another manoeuvre of the C.P., which is true. So that, in general, support for the United Front is limited to those who can give support to the C.P., whose past and present history is not easily passed over.

It is useless for Stafford Cripps to contrast the demand for a working class united class, or a common platform with other working class bodies, with the common platform which certain members of the NEC have had with well known enemies of our class. It is so easily flung in his face that Pollitt will share a platform with a class enemy like the Duchess of Atholl, but not with Trotsky "who after all is a Socialist." In these words that smooth scoundrel Morrison disposed of what should have been a very real and potent argument for a workers' United Front of action. It is easy to expose the C.P. Who is to show that this is no argument at all against the United Front? Only those who propose a United Front of Action.

What lesson are we to learn from this debate which so frivolously disposed of a basic working class issue? Once again the bankruptcy of Stalinism, and the need for wider Trotskyist activity. Our United Front demand, distributed before the Conference, is so much to the point, that it might well have been written after a study of the debate.

All those who are sincere in desiring a united working class must now realise that it is the basis of unity that matters. Stafford Cripps must now see that he has to accept final defeat or change his tactics.

It is our duty as the independent Trotskyist group to press forward our demands for a United Front on the only issue which at this moment can unite the working class...a militant Front against the National Government and War. It is here above all that reformist leadership has broken down.

This would be a Red Front bitterly opposed by the social patriots, because one day it may recoil on their heads. Our friends in the Labour Party and the I.L.P. must help us to make this a practical issue; and to the Stalinists we must put the question... "A Red Front, or a Red White and Blue Front?"

RUSSIAN REVOLUTION 20th ANNIVERSARY

- Fri. Nov. 5th. Outdoor meetings held in local areas.
- Sat. Nov. 6th. Social Evening. 45 Boundary Road. All Welcome.
- Sun. Nov. 7th. GRAND MEETING. HYDE PARK. 7 p.m.

Come and join in the
MARXIST GROUP Celebrations.

A REVOLUTIONARY POLICY FOR THE BRITISH WORKERS.

THE workers of Bermondsey have demonstrated the revolutionary will of the British workers. Despite the lack of leadership and organisation, the spontaneous uprising of tens of thousands of workers declared for militant class struggle. Barricades, red flags, bricks and clenched fists are not the weapons of apathy, of People's Frontism. They represent the hatred of the workers towards capitalism and all that it stands for. The workers are determined to fight as a class against the menace of Fascism. Their mood is such that if capitalist democracy attempts to restrain in them in that fight—and it undoubtedly will—then capitalist democracy will also be fought. The Stalinist leaders are telling the workers to keep the peace, that everything can be achieved by constitutional means. The Labour leaders instruct them to stay at home: to boycott Mosley and thus defeat Fascism. But the workers can often teach political parties a thing or two. Instinctively they know that the Fascist thugs must be swept from the streets by physical force. And they are correct. The advice of the Labour leaders was completely ignored. At Bermondsey the worker members of the Stalinist Party rejected the advice of their leaders and struggled alongside their comrades in the Trade Unions, the Labour Party and the *Trotskyists*. Those comrades who struggled with us will soon be with us politically and organisationally. The Stalinist leaders will not tolerate militancy. The militants are learning this every day.

With such fine material and such determination to struggle, the success of the social revolution resolves itself into a question of political leadership. It is the task of the Marxist Group to build a party capable of providing that leadership. Our first duty is to harness that inspiring militancy into the broad united front of struggle. Capitalist Britain is preparing for war. All workers know this. Soon they will be asked to defend with their half starved bodies the plunder and profits of their exploiters. The first step towards defeating the war plans of the Imperialists is to defeat their political representatives. The National Government must not be allowed to complete its term of class rule. It must be defeated now. On this issue we must build our united front. It is an issue which dwarfs all others. It affects every worker whether employed or unemployed, whether skilled or unskilled. As the struggle developed we would draw behind us all that is best of the professional and middle classes. These people can play no independent part in the class struggle. They will follow that class which by bold and decisive action proves that it means business. We will make no concessions to them. They must either adopt the policy of the united working class front or reject it. In the People's Front these same people are awarded the leading role, and since they do not know where they are going, they can only lead the great mass of the workers to defeat. Spain and France are demonstrating this to anyone who has eyes to see.

To defeat the National Government we would suggest that the Labour M.P.'s stage a demonstrative walk out from the House of Commons. That a one day general strike be called. That the workers, organised in their Councils of Action, carry on a nationwide campaign of agitation and action. The alternative to a National Government is a Labour Government. We, of the Marxist Group, although opposed in every fundamental principle to the Labour Party would struggle with our fellow-workers for the return of that Party as the Government of the country. In the critical impending war situation which exists at present, (no matter how the Labour Party tried to operate the State machine) this would be a tremendous step forward. We know that millions of workers think that the social revolution, workers power and sweeping social reforms, are synonymous with the return of a Labour Government. We tell them that this is not so, but since it is a big step forward on the road to revolution, we are with them in achieving it. If the Labour Party fails, as we say it will, then our comrades will go forward with us. We say that Capitalism cannot be reformed, that it must be overthrown. When the millions of workers have actually experienced the impossibility of reforming capitalism, then they will agree with us that it must be overthrown. Nevertheless a Labour Government would be a terrific blow to the war preparations of the British Imperialists. We would demand that all war credits be abolished. That the hundreds of millions now being spent on armaments be diverted to improving social services, etc. By such action the mighty united front of the workers would throw such a spanner in the mechanism of capitalism that it would damage the works beyond repair.

The threat of Imperialist war brings also the threat of Fascism. The National Government may ban a Mosley march, may deprecate the disturbances they cause, but they are always on the side of the Fascists against the workers. They finance them, protect them with thousands of police batons against the workers, and ruthlessly imprison any worker who dares to show his opposition. If the parliamentary dictatorship of the British capitalists fails to drive the workers into the coming war, then the Fascists will be called in to do the job. The Fascists are the reserve forces of the National Government and the capitalists whom they represent. The fight to defeat that Government is also a fight to defeat Mosley. As we build our united front and force a General Election, so also we must organise the workers and force Mosley from the streets. This task must be undertaken now. There is no use in saying "Wait until we have a Labour Government, then we will declare Fascism illegal." In France, the Blum Government deceived the workers in that way. After being declared illegal and having their arms confiscated, the French Fascists are to-day over a million strong, have fleets of armoured cars, are well supplied with machine guns, rifles, etc. The only way to declare

(Continued on page 15)

(Continued from page 11)

might easily upset all the radical conclusions of Nehru, Jayprakash and Masani. The main part of the Congress Socialist group is composed of those intellectuals like the three above mentioned who are dissatisfied with the Chestertonian programme of Gandhi. They have very little experience of the class struggle and great love for big all-India organisations. The peasant movement which has taken the country like a whirlwind seems to have produced a better type of leader, men from among themselves, who speak the people's language and express their aims and objects with a concreteness which is absent from the writings and speeches of the little Nehrus who address the district or provincial conferences with an air and assurance which their work does not entitle them to. The trade unionists are still amazed by the ease with which these European educated fellows mouth Marxist phrases and then drive away in their cars to the house of the rich employer with whom they studied at Oxford or Cambridge. Daltons, Pritts, Attlees are not a pure British phenomena; they have their counterparts in India as well. Unfortunately for them and to the good luck of India, they cannot play a social democratic role very long. They can only become the little Chiang Kai-sheks of India, and it is quite likely that most of these socialists, as time passes on, will become the deadliest enemies of the working-class in India. We have seen one International revolutionary, to wit, M. N. Roy, come out of prison a pure nationalist, propagating political freedom and postponing economic issues to the day of deliverance. He does not even think that any other organisations, except the national congress, are necessary. Independent workers' and peasants' organisations appear superfluous to him. But the people of India, those ninety per cent. hungry workers and peasants, are demanding something here and now, and no congressman, socialist or otherwise, has yet paid any great attention to them. What is needed is a worker's revolutionary party which will give direction to the peasant movement and free all the exploited from the illusions of Congress. The nationalist bubble is about to burst, and the path lies clear for a Marxist-Leninist party. The question is, will India rise to the occasion?

B. C. AGARWAL.

(Continued from page 14)

the Fascists illegal is to smash them out of existence. The sooner we tackle this job the easier it will be, but we must be organised to do so. The workers must organise their strength in a disciplined manner to defeat Mosley. Stalinists have decided against action. The highly respectable Pollitts and Gallaghers are too busy with Duchesses and Archbishops, too busy trying to crawl like the worms they are into the Labour Party, to deal adequately with the workers' struggles. We must build now. The Marxist Group will engage in this work to the limit of its capacity.

Hand in hand with our struggles to build the united front of action, with our struggles to organise against Fascism, we must also struggle to liberate the workers from the reactionary influence of the

Trade Union bureaucrats. Although this struggle is extremely difficult, although we can never hope to capture the apparatus of the Trade Unions, nevertheless we must carry on the struggle. The bureaucrats will retain their positions long after the masses have turned against them, but we are not beaten because of that. If we have built our Shop Stewards' Committees, continuously opposed the reactionary officials, built up large circulations of factory bulletins, instilled into the workers' minds the necessity for direct action, then, at the decisive moment of struggle, the workers will break from the apparatus and go forward under the leadership of their own democratically elected Strike Committees. We therefore urge all workers to join their Trade Unions, to work along the lines we have indicated and transform this strike-breaking, wage-cutting, instrument of the Bevin and Citrines, into an organisation for the prosecution of the class struggle.

A revolutionary policy for Britain cannot be effective unless it is linked up with the struggle of our colonial comrades. An uprising in any part of the British Empire would shake Imperialist Britain to its foundations and hasten the overthrow of Capitalism at home. That is why we are concerned with the colonial question. In India, South Africa, Palestine, Egypt and Trinidad, the struggle continues to flare up. British Imperialism knows only one method of crushing these struggles. Guns, bayonets and bombs; flogging and imprisonment. We must ruthlessly denounce the brutality of our Imperialist John Bull. We must give all possible material aid to the oppressed nationalities by independent workers' action, by legal and illegal methods. Our aim is the complete independence of the colonial peoples. To do this we must have a movement with its roots in every part of the Empire. Spain should teach everyone the folly of ignoring the struggle in the colonies. Because the capitalist Peoples' Front Government refused to declare independence for Spanish Morocco, the native troops fell an easy prey to the propaganda of Franco. Let us not make the same mistake in Britain. It will be fatal if we do.

This outline of a revolutionary policy for Britain does not cover every point, nor does it fully elaborate the points mentioned. Several have been dealt with in past issues of "Fight," others will be dealt with in future issues. We have outlined the main features of the revolutionary struggle which demand immediate action. We call upon every class-conscious worker to help us strengthen our organisation and thereby strengthen the forces of revolutionary socialism.

"Down with Imperialist war!"

"Down with the National Government!"

"For the United front of action!"

"For an immediate General Election!"

"For the return of a Labour Government!"

"Smash Mosley!"

"Fight the reactionary Citrines and Bevin!"

"Fight for the liberation of all Colonial Peoples!"

"Fight for the British Revolutionary Party!"

"Fight for the 4th International!"

JAPAN'S "STRUGGLE FOR EXISTENCE"

FOR nearly three months now, Japanese Imperialism has continued to pour arms, munitions and men into China, in an attempt to annexe part of Chinese territory to the Empire of the Rising Sun. With the aid of bombs, machine-guns, and all other modern weapons of war, Japan is attempting to save itself from the impending internal explosion which has been threatening the existence of its social order.

Japanese Imperialism, coming late on the scene, has found the world already divided out. After the World War, although it emerged "victorious" it did not get the share of the spoils that it expected. The stronger Imperialist powers have compelled Japan to evacuate the former German possessions in Chinese territory, while further north, the Russian Bolshevik power has driven her out of every inch of territory which the forces of the allied intervention occupied. Australia, upon whom Japan depends for her supply of wool is in the hands of British Imperialism, as is the Indian cotton industry. Practically all the sources of raw materials which Japan needs are in the hands of some other Power.

Thus, in the post war period, Japan was faced with the problem of either acquiring new markets for its finished products (which were all in the hands of its competitors) and sources of raw materials, or bursting. The internal situation of ever-growing discontent of the working class and of the peasantry, who still suffer under a feudal social system, has made the turn towards war the only resort which may save Japan from a social revolution.

Japan has however, embarked on an adventure which is not likely to succeed, for the conditions which drove Japan along the path of war with China are creating with accelerating speed inside the country, those very conditions which will make the social revolution only more certain. Such are the contradictions of our present epoch.

For what is the internal situation of Japan today? The economic situation of Japanese Imperialism is a desperate one. It has not only an adverse trade balance, but the adverse trade balance for the last six months is the highest in its history, and exceeds the total for the whole year after the earthquake. The original Budget estimates for this year were 2,372 million yen. Of this 1½ million were devoted to defence and nearly ½ million for the debt service. But on several occasions the Japanese Cabinet has increased the estimates for the prosecution of the war in China, so that by the beginning of September they amounted to 2,548 million yen. Thus the National Debt which is mounting higher and higher, and has already driven the bourgeoisie along the path of inflation, totals now 11 milliard yen, while the total

national increase of Japan for 1936 was only 13 milliard yen!

Wholesale prices have risen in April this year by 96.5%, as compared with December 1931, and retail prices by 30%. Thus Japan had started the war in China at a time of acute internal crisis, which is sharpening and undermining more and more the whole economic structure of Japan. When the Great War broke out in 1914, the ratio of Germany's debt to her national income was 13.5%, but Japan has started a war, which we can all see is not going to be a short one, with her national debt only 2 milliard less than her national income. Dr. Schacht has said somewhere that no one can finish a war with inflation, but that to start one with inflation means certain ruin.

The acute economic situation has already sharpened the class struggle to a high pitch. Already the number of strikes in Japan this year is *the highest on record*, and so is the number of disputes between the peasantry and the land-owning classes. The Japanese working class which has already demonstrated that it is capable of great struggles, is replying to the war which Japanese Imperialism has started, by redoubling its peace-time resistance. And as the war proceeds and more and more of the Japanese people begin to realise that the struggle in China is not a war in their interests, that it is a war of plunder, the object of which is to strengthen the position of their exploiters, the slogan of "Turn Imperialist war into civil war," will assume to the masses as realistic an appearance as the demands for higher wages and better conditions do to the British worker today. Then the Japanese proletariat will assume the leadership of the struggle, will unite with the peasantry and jointly throw off the yoke which they have been carrying for so many years.

The whole post-war period has been full of the possibilities of social revolution. The tension in every country is increasing. It is always difficult to foretell where the workers will start. It may be Germany, it may be Italy or it may be Britain, but as things are now, the most likely country is Japan. As Trotsky said of Tsarist Russia in 1914, it is the weakest link in the Capitalist chain. It can stand less than any other country the strain of war. The revolutionary workers of Japan will be seeking to lead the masses in an effort to turn Imperialist war into civil war. With them the Fourth International is in full solidarity, and calls upon the British revolutionaries to keep before the British workers the vital distinction between the Japanese Imperialists, and these Japanese workers and peasants, who are our allies in the revolutionary struggle.

RETURN SLIP
No. 11.

Published by THE MARXIST GROUP, 97 Kings Cross Road, London, W.C.1.
Printed by THE NAROD PRESS (T.U.), 129-131 Bedford Street, London, E.1.
Printed in England.