

DECEMBER 1940

THE BULLETIN

Answers to Questions on War

Cannon Draws an Analogy

ARTHUR BURKE

Shachtman Labels the S. W. P.

J. C. HUNTER

The R. W. L.'s Anti-Stalinist Veneer

GEORGE MARLEN

The Trotsky School of Falsification

Who Informed Stalin?

THE RED STAR PRESS
P. O. BOX 67. STATION D NEW YORK



CONTENTS

	<u>PAGE</u>
Answers to Questions on War G. Crame	1
Cannon Draws an Analogy Arthur Burke	12
Stalinist Mass Work and the <u>Labor Action</u> J.C. Hunter	18
The Workers Party Interprets an Event A.B.	20
The <u>Socialist Appeal</u> -- Page Two VS. Page Three Margaret Lane	23
R.W.L.'s Anti-Stalinist Veneer George Marlen	24
Shachtman Labels the S.W.P. J.C. H.	27
An Aspect of Stamm's Policy J.C.H.	29
THE TROTSKY SCHOOL OF FALSIFICATION Who Informed Stalin? G.M.	32

Address Communications to:-

THE RED STAR PRESS
P.O. Box 67, Station D.
New York

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON WAR

I N PREVIOUS ISSUES of The Bulletin we have presented detailed evidence showing that the imperialists throughout the world are pursuing a policy of collaboration and not a policy, as in 1914, of trying to defeat one another. The purpose of this collaboration, which means a temporary shelving of imperialist rivalries, is to decimate the class-conscious world proletariat and destroy the socialized property in the Stalinist-distorted Soviet Union.

Recently, we received a letter which posed a number of questions regarding our position on the present international situation. The questions are of such a nature that we have decided to publish them just as they were submitted to us, with our answer to each question. The questions and our answers follow:

Question 1: "Why do the stocks go up with every British 'success' but down with 'peace scares' and Nazi 'successes'? Are the Wall Street people being fooled, or fooling whom? After all, the workers do not watch the stock market much."

Answer: The idea that the stocks on the Wall Street market have gone up with British, and down with German "successes" is an illusion. When we say this, we have in mind not what may have happened to this or that stock at any moment, but to the stock market as a whole. The bourgeois press publishes cumulative statistics on the movement of the stock market as a whole, and an investigation of these statistics will show that the questioner labors under a misconception. On December 9, 1940, The N.Y.Herald-Tribune (page 21) published a graph illustrating the movement of the 70 leading in-

dustrial, and 30 leading railroad stocks on the N.Y. Stock Exchange Market over a period of time. Let us begin our examination with the summer of 1939, when there was no "war" and see what this movement has been.

In the summer of 1939, a slump occurred on the Wall Street market. Then there was an irregular rise. Immediately upon the declaration of "war" on September 3, 1939, the stocks rose somewhat markedly. During Hitler's occupation of Poland, the stocks continued to rise and reached their highest point since the end of 1938. The occupation of Poland was a terrific British "defeat," but the Wall Street stocks did exactly the opposite of what the questioner apparently imagines occurred.

We do not intend to convey the impression that there was any causal relationship between Hitler's "successes" and the rise in the Wall Street stocks. The rise in stock prices may have been due to a thousand and one factors other than Hitler's "successes," factors involving certain economic transactions amongst the capitalists.

In the middle of May 1940, when Hitler began to invade Belgium and Holland, the stocks took a sharp drop. So far it was not yet clear whether this would be a British "Success" or "failure". About the time that it became clear that it was a British "failure", the stocks began to rise. Again, we do not mean to draw any causal relation between the rise in the Wall Street stocks and the British "failure". We desire merely to point out certain concrete facts and to show that they do not bear out the questioner's suppositions.

It will be of value to carry the matter even beyond the Wall Street market to which the questioner refers, and see what has been happening lately in the German stock market.

On the basis of the questioner's supposition that the direction of the movement of stocks is a proof that there is a real war going on, how would he account for the following? Nazi stocks reached their highest point since September 1939 precisely during the period when the spectacular victories of Greece, the ally of Britain, were reported to have occurred. It will be recalled that the Greeks were reported to have captured Koritza on November 22, 1940. The period immediately preceding this date was obviously what the questioner would consider a period of "success" for the British side. Nevertheless, precisely during this period the Berlin stock market experienced its greatest rise in prices since September 1939. On November 25, three days after the reported capture of Koritza by the Greeks, the New York Times stated:

"BERLIN, Nov.24- The Boerse here has just experienced the most agitated week since the beginning of the war. An upward trend of prices noticeable for several weeks was accentuated further and the stock price index jumped in the week from 178.14 to 186.20 on Friday, representing the biggest weekly advance since September 1939." (My emphasis - G.C.)

It might perhaps be imagined that this bullish market in Germany might have been due to the fact that Hungary and Rumania had joined the "Axis". But this same dispatch from Berlin continues:

"There seems to be a consensus that last week's advance was not due to general political factors such as the accession of Hungary and Rumania to the three-power pact or expectations of Great Britain's collapse at the present phase of the air battle. The Boerse as usual showed little interest in international developments."

It might seem from this that the German Wall Street is stimulated to prosperity by British "successes." Obviously, this would be an incorrect conclusion. As a matter of fact, the above-quoted dispatch goes on to say that the rise in stocks on the Boerse occurred on the strength of a prospect of a building expansion. This indicates once again that the fluctuation of stocks is not necessarily caused by British "successes" or "failures".

* * *

Question 2: "How come so many ships are being sunk, factories destroyed or crippled? Of course workers killed in the process don't mean a thing, but why should capitalists hurt the means of production, the actual root of their power? You know that during the last war Krupp in Essen got royalties for every shell fired from Allied guns. If now Krupp is bombed doesn't the present 'war' seem more real than the last one?"

Answer: Marxism teaches the workers that, paradoxically enough, capitalism operates along such lines that very often the bourgeoisie are compelled, due to certain critical situations in society, to resort to wholesale destruction of wealth. That is done to prop up their system as a whole. War naturally entails a terrific destruction of wealth, including the means of production. Let us make a survey of the amount of destruction in the present situation.

Naturally since the imperialist plan is to make it appear that they are "fighting" they must engage in destroying some life and property to cover up the actual fact of their collaboration. It may be recalled, as a good example, that the headlines were screaming that the R.A.F. had bombed the Krupp factory, heart of the German munitions industry. Certainly the headlines made it appear that this was serious. But on careful examination we see that, contrary to the impression that our questioner has, that the bombardment of Krupp seriously damaged the plant, the following is reported:-

"A party of foreign newspaper men brought by plane from Berlin to see whether British reports of heavy damage to the great Krupp steel and munitions works were true found Krupp still a going concern and the plant apparently little hurt."

"Careful observation from a plane flying over the plant and during a slow trip by automobile winding here and there through the enormous works failed to disclose any evidence of serious hits on furnace rooms, coal and cooking plants or steel plants." (World-Telegram, Nov. 11, 1940. My emphasis — G. C.)

The above is a characteristically revealing indication of how factories are "destroyed."

"The Germans as a whole have not felt the full force of aerial warfare. They may and do suffer certain discomforts, but their days are still untroubled by bombs, and their public utilities are still functioning 100 per cent." (New York Times, November 10, 1940. My emphasis - G.C.)

Thus after fourteen months of "war" with the reported R. A. F. intense attacks on Germany, especially in recent weeks, the public utilities of Germany according to the papers have not even been scratched.

We have seen in the headlines terrific devastation of London. But if one reads the news tucked away behind the heavy screen of noise, one finds a picture similar to the one we have seen reported from Germany.

W. L. White writes from London that:-

".....for a few hours until dusk you might think that our American picture of war-torn London is the figment of some rewrite man's imagination."

Not only is there no wholesale devastation in London, but in the same ar-

ticle White adds that:

"If I had not been reading the newspapers I would think that London was in the process of a mild building boom, about half as great as New York's construction urge in 1929...." (New York Times, October 12, 1940.)

Some figures have been published to show the extent of the "damage" to British industry especially in and around London:-

"A manufacturers' trade association, more than six hundred factories in Greater London owned by member firms, stated that only six, or less than one percent, had been damaged by bombs." (New York Times, October 23, 1940.)

Furthermore:

"The London Chamber of Commerce has a membership of some 9,000 concerns engaged in every branch of light and heavy industry. Less than twenty of these companies have notified the chamber of the necessity to move to temporary addresses because of raid damage," (Ibid.)

Out of 9,000, less than 20! - perhaps a dozen or so.

One explanation for all this lack of damage is the following: "A surprising number of 'duds' have fallen on London," and this fact "had become common gossip in London but had not been permitted to pass the British censorship." "The time bombs that were at first the most feared of all are the ones that have chiefly convinced experts that there is something wrong." (New York Times, Oct. 6, 1940.)

"Strangely" enough, there were no German "duds" in the destruction of Warsaw and other Polish cities, no reports of "duds" falling upon Belgian, Dutch or French cities. But when it came to the bombardment of London, a surprising number of "duds" have been found.

Careful examination of the reports that the bourgeois press prints, will give one a fair idea of how "attacks" are reported. For example, on September 12, 1940 the World-Telegram headlines blared:- "British Bomb Berlin Airport," and the story continues:- "British pilots reported their bombs inflicted heavy damage on all objectives." The most important objective, according to the report, was Berlin:

"Most spectacular objective of the British counter-attack was Berlin, where R.A.F. bombers flying low through a searchlight and ground battery barrage, blasted at the Tempelhof Airdrome, the Anhalter railroad station, which is often used by Adolf Hitler, and an anti-aircraft battery in the Tiergarten." (Ibid.)

Thus, prominence is given to the great and devastating work alleged to have been done by the airmen. However, often in the same issue of the paper, and sometimes even in the same article, but hidden in some obscure, unnoticeable place, is a report like the following which refers back to the headline news:

"A correspondent, who spent half an hour criss-crossing the airdrome among military and passenger plane runways and buildings, failed to see any damage. The Ann alter station, its huge yellow brick shed full of puffing trains, appeared as usual." (Ibid. My emphasis - G.C.)

Thus is the lie given to the front page report.

In early August 1940 reports from British sources stated that the Port of Hamburg was virtually in ruins as a result of three months' bombing. Correspondents who were able to see a good deal of the city and the harbor of Hamburg, whose pulverization as a result of 3 months' bombing had been heralded by the British, reported that:-

"Hamburg was bombed yesterday and last night, allegedly from a

great altitude, but a party of foreign correspondents taken by special plane to Hamburg from Berlin this afternoon could see no trace of any violent bombardments which the Royal Air Force was supposed to have carried out against the city, 'pulverizing' the town or sections of the town.

"A visit to the harbor and shipping centers also showed these to be intact, it was said. The correspondents then received an excellent birds-eye view from St. Michael's tower from which no sign of destruction could be detected." (New York Times, August 4, 1940. My emphasis - G.C.)

On November 29, 1940 the New York Times headline stated: "Cologne Battered In Fierce R.A.F. Raid." American correspondents reported however:-

"..... Although the raid on that city was 'noisy' they said today, the action was apparently confined to outlying districts.

"In the course of a flight today over principal industrial cities such as Cologne and Duisburg, these correspondents saw no signs of telling damage to any big German industrial plants, they declared. Furthermore, they said they found big Rhine bridges as well as those over the canals in that district still intact.

"Admitting the possibility that localized damage had been done by isolated bombs, these American newspaper men nevertheless reported that Rhineland industries appeared unimpaired by British bombs and the Rhineland cities apparently none the worse for all the raids on them." (New York Times, November 29, 1940.)

With respect to the so-called damage in France, the French Minister of Industrial Production and Labor, Rene Belin, is reported as saying that:-

"The damage to French industry generally, he remarked, was negligible in the short-lived war with

Germany, as compared to that suffered in the World War.

"For example, he said, little or no damage had been done to the coal mines and electric plants of Northern France, and they soon would be ready to start operations." (N. Y. Times, August 4, 1940. My emphasis - G.C.)

It seems that some of the more observant reporters are taking the reports about "great bombing attacks" with a grain of salt. A report from London states:-

"Last night it was reported a Southwest coast town had the worst raid in its history. But cautious correspondents were beginning to wonder about this kind of report. Some towns have 'the worst raids in history' as regularly as some prima donnas have their last appearance." (New York Times, Sept. 5, 1940.)

Time and again the story went that industrial sections of England suffered terrific damages. Illusion-spreading headlines to the contrary, we find that:-

"Industrial England, which took the brunt of Nazi bombing attacks many weeks before the beginning of the blitzkrieg on London, is virtually untouched." (New York Post, October 7, 1940.)

Our questioner might say in reply to these quotations that these denials of destruction are made for propagandistic purposes, to boost morale. But this is obviously not the case. The propaganda that is being spread is all in the direction of creating the impression that tremendous destruction is taking place in both England and Germany. The correspondents of the New York Times send in reports denying widespread destruction but the editors of the Times are careful to camouflage these reports, to tuck them away in obscure places, and to becloud them with misleading headlines. The propagandistic policy of the bourgeois papers is in the direction of creating the impression that tremendous de-

struction has taken place in England and Germany. And it is this notion that has taken root in the mind of the masses.

Unquestionably, a certain amount of destruction has taken place:- ships have been sunk, dwellings have been destroyed, some factories have been damaged, some airplanes have been shot down, and soldiers and civilians have been killed, but whatever has taken place must be understood in light of the total policy of the imperialists in the present historical period. The basic bourgeois policy since the October Revolution has been to form a common front of world imperialism against the international proletarian vanguard, against the colonial masses, and for the destruction and dismemberment of the first workers state. All other policies which arose from the inter-imperialist rivalries have been temporarily subordinated to the basic policy. We have described the unfolding of the imperialists' policy since the October Revolution in previous articles in The Bulletin.

Over a period of many years after the end of the World War, the international imperialists have struggled to prop up German capitalism, a highly important, but exceedingly weakened link in the world capitalist system. The British, French and American imperialists materially aided the German bourgeoisie to rehabilitate its war machine. An organic part of this process was the destruction of the German proletarian vanguard and the crushing of the German working masses through the establishment of fascism. The next phase of the imperialists' policy was the utilization of Hitler as the gendarme of Europe. Under the cover of "appeasement," Austria and Czechoslovakia were put under the control of the Nazi forces. Pursuing the same basic policy, but now under the cover of a declaration of "war," Poland, Denmark, Norway, Holland, Belgium and France were also put under fascist control.

Meanwhile Stalin was permitted to take certain territories. This trans-

formed him from a "peace-lover" into an "aggressor" — a fact which will be used as a "moral" issue in the forthcoming imperialist attack on the Soviet Union.

In the context of this basic policy of the imperialists which aims at dividing so enormous and wealthy a territory as the Soviet Union and placing the world proletariat under fascism, whatever "warlike" destruction is entailed in the present preliminary stages, to camouflage the preparation for the impending attack on the Soviet Union, is insignificant in comparison with the final gains the imperialists hope to obtain. Finally, it should be pointed out that even this camouflage-destruction is being more than compensated for right now by the intensified exploitation of the working class on the pretext of "war necessity."

* * *

Question 3: "Why could not Daladier or Reynaud remain at the head of the government in France? After all, they had played their part well in letting the Nazis in, why should the Nazis insist upon their being removed and even put to trial?"

Answer: Different situations necessitate different personalities being at the head of the state in bourgeois society. This is elementary. If it is necessary at a certain time to have as the head of state a man with a "democratic" front, then such a man will be put there by the bourgeoisie and he will fool the masses of workers by means of liberal demagogy. When the situation calls for a different type of individual, say a fascist, then such a man will be placed at the top, and the masses again will be bamboozled, but this time by a different method. Never forget that while the bourgeoisie are in power, it matters very little whom they put at the head of the government. No matter who the individual may be, he is at all times carrying out the policies of his class, the bourgeoisie. Thus, whether it be Blum, Reynaud, or Petain, the interests of the French imperialists are being

cared for and strengthened. As far as removing Reynaud or Daladier is concerned — just as with countless others in history — this was a step necessary to the French imperialists in order to create the impression among the workers that somehow or other these two men were not preserving the interests of "France," i.e., that they represented something basically different from Petain. Although Daladier and Reynaud served French imperialism to the best of their abilities, it was necessary to remove them and even use them as scapegoats thus throwing the resentment of the masses on a few individuals to safeguard the imperialist oligarchy as a whole. This is an age-old maneuver to distract attention from the responsibility of the bourgeoisie as a whole and to make it look as if the misery of the masses is the fault of a few individuals. You may be quite sure that, although Reynaud, Blum, Daladier and the rest are perfectly clear as to the game of the imperialists, for they helped to conduct it, neither one of them will as much as say one word which would betray their class.

* * *

Question 4: "Why have 50 U. S. destroyers been delivered to England? I fail to see how they can be of any use in a war against the Soviet Union."

Answer: With respect to this question a number of possible reasons may be given. One reason, always valid, is that it was a good business deal for the steel trusts. American steel interests now have an opportunity to rush construction of new destroyers and make more and greater profits.

With respect to the second part of the question it should be noted that any part of a fleet can be used for purposes of blockade, attack, etc. Since destroyers are the chief means of fighting submarines, of which Stalin's navy has a certain number, there may be some reason to believe that that will be one of their main tasks in the future.

* * *

Question 5: "Why are the 'Refugee children' from England mainly the sons and daughters of Lords and capitalists? If the purpose was deception of the masses wouldn't it have served that purpose better to bring here workers' children?"

Answer: It isn't true that only the children of Lords and capitalists are being evacuated. Workers' children, also, according to the reports, are being evacuated. If they are not being sent to America, but to the interior of England, it is probably only a matter of expense.

* * *

Question 6: "Why does England, and U. S. as well, prevent the shipment of foodstuffs to Europe? After all, hunger may yet make the masses revolt against their masters, which is just what should be prevented?"

Answer: First of all the facts are not entirely correct in the question. It is not true that England is actually preventing the shipment of foodstuffs to Europe, for we read that:-

"The first French food ship to attempt to pass the British blockade openly entered the Mediterranean off Gibraltar, escorted by two French war ships, without being disturbed today. The freighter brought African colonial foodstuffs, chiefly raw material for edible oil, one of the basic elements now lacking in French diet." (World Telegram, October 1, 1940.)

We can add further proof to show that food is not prevented from reaching Europe:

"Relations between France and Britain have been seriously strained by the decision of the Petain Government to order the French Navy to convoy French merchant ships carrying food and raw materials into Marseille and other French ports.

"It is learned on unimpeachable authority that the French have been breaking the British blockade in

this manner for several weeks. A considerable quantity of food has been conveyed to France from Algiers and several French convoys even have passed unmolested through the Strait of Gibraltar." (New York Times, December 12, 1940. My emphasis - G.C.)

It is to be noted that the ships carrying food to France are not neutral ships but are French ships of the Petain government whose domination by Hitler cannot be doubted. It has actually been revealed that Churchill's policy is to permit food to go to Nazi-controlled territory, in this instance, France.

"So far Prime Minister Winston Churchill has shown unusual restraint in meeting this problem. He has recognized that in view of the hard feeling in France about the British naval action against the French Fleet at Oran any serious interference with the French naval units now protecting the convoys might force France into the war. Mr. Churchill has taken the view that it would be better to permit a limited quantity of food to pass into France than to take on a new enemy." (Ibid. My emphasis - G.C.)

It can be safely assumed that the imperialists, in their gigantic plan to wipe out the proletarian vanguard and partition the Soviet Union, are not going to allow a problem like food to interfere in any serious way with their program.

* * *

Question 7: "If the sham war is but the preparation for the assault on the Soviet Union, how can we be sure that this will not also develop into a sham war, with the Stalin regime giving everything without resistance? Would that mean that the attack was less real?"

Answer: Stalin secured undivided personal power under the guise of being a Bolshevik. He has always used revolutionary phrases, symbols and other

shielding devices to cover up his counter-revolutionary actions. This is the method which has enabled him to this day to fool millions of revolutionary workers into believing that he is the true follower of Lenin. The confusion of the workers is all the greater because of yet another fact. It is difficult for the workers to realize that at the head of the state created under Lenin's leadership in the greatest revolution in history, there now stand counter-revolutionary usurpers whose policy is the anti-thesis of Lenin's. This cancerous leadership — Stalin and his entire bureaucracy — has conspired, killed, distorted truth, and committed the bloodiest deeds in history precisely to keep itself in power. No deed has been too villainous to commit if it succeeded in preserving the bureaucracy's stolen power and privileges.

Although millions of workers who follow or are sympathetic to Stalinism do so because they believe Stalin to be an honest Bolshevik leader of the international proletariat who wishes at every opportunity to spread the revolution, the imperialists know better. They have carefully followed the activities of Stalin since his usurpation of power and know that he promotes not revolution, but counter-revolution. As such, Stalin and his bureaucracy represent no danger to imperialism, for opportunism can be only a support to imperialism. But Stalinism, though a counter-revolutionary tendency, controls a proletarian form of state. The imperialists must of necessity destroy the material base upon which the Stalinist bureaucracy thrives — socialized property. The bureaucracy cannot exist without its means of subsistence, the socialized property which it has usurped, and will naturally, in its own — and not in the workers' — interests put up the best military fight of which it is capable. It will send millions of workers into the slaughter and will itself be in the front lines to urge the workers on. Stalinism is a reactionary force; it conducts a reactionary policy in peace and in war. When world imperialism strikes at Stalin, it will encounter a frenzied

attempt on his part to save for himself and for his bureaucracy the paradise created at the expense of the toilers. Whereas the French and British finance capital, under the guise of "war," have collaborated with Hitler to strangle the French working class in order to preserve the private property basis of French imperialism, Stalin will not be able to win the imperialists to a compromise to preserve the socialized property upon which his power rests. Since Stalin will invariably continue to handcuff the world proletariat to the international bourgeoisie, he is in an insoluble contradiction. He strengthens the imperialists and thus is prevented from being able to defeat them. The contradiction can and will be resolved either by the imperialists through the destruction of Stalin and the socialized property, or by the proletariat, under a re-born Leninist leadership, through the destruction of Stalin and the extension of socialized property on an international scale.

* * *

Question 8: "You call opportunists and ridicule those who maintain there is a war and try to find secondary explanations for its 'peculiarities' instead of acknowledging that their basic conception has been wrong. Aren't you following the very same 'opportunist' line of reasoning when you say in substance, the one-party-system was all right, and only by a set of unfortunate circumstances such as Trotsky's treachery, etc., did Stalin achieve supreme power which he never should have? Doesn't this also resemble the position of the Trotskyites when the parties of the Third International suddenly turned to the left again, which they never should have according to Trotsky's 'Marxist' prophecy, as pointed out in the 'Bulletin'?"

Answer: Unfortunately, this question has so many ideas strung together which are not directly connected, that we do not understand just what point the questioner is asking. If he will reformulate the question, we will be glad to answer him.

* * *

Question 9: "Is this the very first war in world history to be acted instead of fought? Or might there have been similar ones as Napoleon's against England which he also long threatened to invade but never did? A very similar case might be built up how Napoleon had to act to deceive the revolutionary French masses, and how the other powers had to play their parts in order to prevent the spread of the revolution?"

Answer: This is certainly not the first situation in which the trappings of war were used by the participants to mask collaboration against the actual or potential threat of the toilers.

It is a well-established fact known to every Marxist, that the French and the Prussian ruling classes, in the course of the Franco-Prussian war, under the guise of the siege of Paris, were actually collaborating against the French workers.

On the 4th of September, 1870, the republic of France was proclaimed, the bourgeoisie immediately usurping the state power. The siege of Paris by the Prussians continued. To defend Paris, however, meant to arm the already revolutionary workers. The French bourgeoisie converted the defense of Paris into a means of decimating the Parisian proletariat. While pretending to defend Paris, the bourgeois leaders actually engaged in secret intrigues with the Prussians. These machinations were brought to a close with the surrender of Paris.

"The capitulation of Paris, by surrendering to Prussia not only Paris, but all France, closed the long-continued intrigues of treason with the enemy, which the usurpers of the 4th September had begun, as Trochu himself said, on that very same day." (Karl Marx, Selected Works, Volume II, p. 483. My emphasis - G.C.)

The Franco-Prussian War can be divided into two phases: 1) the phase of real war lasting 47 days (July 19, 1870, when the war began, to Sept. 4, 1870);

2) the phase of fake war lasting from September 4, 1870 to January 28, 1871 when Paris was surrendered, a period of 146 days, or almost five months. During this phase of fake war, tens of thousands of soldiers were killed on both sides and much property was destroyed.

We have here a clear instance of the trappings of war being used as a camouflage of collaboration between the rival bourgeoisie against the proletariat. It must be pointed out that the overwhelming mass of workers of that period throughout the world were thoroughly fooled into believing that the French bourgeois Republic sincerely and honestly was fighting to prevent the loss of Paris. Reading the newspapers of those days, one cannot find even an inkling which would lead to the conclusion that the Franco-Prussian war, with the exception of the first few weeks, was a sham war with the bourgeois leaders of both sides in secret collaboration against the workers. As a matter of fact, the non-Marxist workers today still do not know the facts concerning the fake nature of the Franco-Prussian War in its second and major phase.

A somewhat similar situation occurred during the last phase of the real imperialist war between Germany and Russia in 1914-1917. As the revolutionary tide was rising in Russia, the Russian bourgeoisie realized that the very foundations of capitalism were in danger of being wiped out by the proletariat. It so happened that among the most important revolutionary centers at the time were Petrograd and Riga. The Russian bourgeoisie decided on a plan to wipe out the Bolshevik vanguard. This had to be done with extreme care so as not to arouse the suspicion of the workers. Hence, the Russian imperialists decided to hand over Riga to the Germans as a preliminary to the crushing of the revolutionary vanguard in Petrograd. Their policy was to allow the "enemy" to come in to Riga. The Russian bourgeoisie, faced with a revolutionary proletariat, subordinated its imperialist rivalry with Germany to their need of crushing the revolutionary proletariat — even going so far so to

turn over Russian territory to Germany and to use German troops to help suppress the Russian workers.

The workers throughout the world, victims of bourgeois and opportunist newspaper propaganda, never suspected that the plotting Russian bourgeoisie deliberately opened the Riga front under the guise of a continuation of the war against Germany. It must be pointed out that in this treacherous maneuver, thousands of German and Russian soldiers were killed, wounded and taken prisoner, much property was damaged, and part of the Russian navy was destroyed. It must further be pointed out that in the fake phase of the Russo-German war of 1914-17 it was only the Marxists who exposed the fakery. The opportunists of all shades, on the contrary, were essentially spreading the same deceptions as the bourgeoisie, naturally disguised by "socialist" phrases.

We turn now to the question of the Napoleonic campaigns which our correspondent raised. With respect to his specific question concerning Napoleon's long threatened, but never materialized, invasion of England, we must again go back into history and examine what really took place.

It is a matter of fact that Napoleon's navy was inferior to the British navy. Napoleon's plans for the invasion were pushed after March 3rd, 1801. On the 1st of October 1801, an armistice was signed between Britain and France and the Peace of Amiens followed on March 27th, 1802. When war was again declared between the two countries on May 18th, 1803, Napoleon vigorously pressed forward his invasion scheme. An army of 130,000 men was ready at Boulogne for the crossing. To enable this army to invade England it was necessary for the French fleet to have at least temporary control of the Channel. Napoleon's plan was to order some of his ships to distant places, draw the British after them, and then slip away from the British, come back to the unguarded Channel with all the French fleet and thus enable the French troops to cross. However, the British were not fool-

ad into weakening their hold on the Channel. They sent only small squadrons to chase the French to distant waters. At the same time, Napoleon's operations in South Germany forced Austria and Russia into a coalition with Britain against him. The entire situation was changing, especially after the French fleet received its first setback by the British Admiral Calder in the Bay of Biscay in July 1805, and its second and decisive setback by Nelson in the Battle of Trafalgar in October 1805 when the joint French-Spanish fleets were destroyed. Obviously an invasion over water was automatically ruled out since Napoleon no longer had a navy. After Calder's victory, Napoleon succeeded in quieting the mind of the French masses by his victories at Ulm and Austerlitz when he defeated the armies of the British allies, Austria and Russia.

Napoleon pursued a basic policy of real war. When he did not strike, as, for example, when he abandoned his plan for crossing the Channel, it was because he lacked the means. There is no analogy between this incident in the Napoleonic campaign and the present situation. The basic policy of the international imperialists today is to collaborate, along the lines which we have indicated above.

* * *

Question 10: "If there are fake wars, can there be fake revolutions also?"

Answer: Yes. When we speak of revolutions we naturally are talking about proletarian revolutions — or what are passed off as such. The October Revolution was a genuine one, organized by a revolutionary party having mass support. Since the rise of Stalinism, however, we have witnessed fake revolutions.

Stalinism arose as a plot to usurp power, the chief conspirators being Stalin, Zinoviev, Kamenev, with whom Trotsky collaborated. To maintain themselves in power it was necessary for them to capture the Comintern, install bureaucratic stooges who would strictly follow orders from Stalin, and

behead any revolution which would threaten their power. This beheading could be accomplished only by laying down a line for the Comintern which would look revolutionary, but would actually be counter-revolutionary. The Stalinist zig-zag method was evolved for this purpose. In the first revolutionary situation which Stalinism was forced to destroy — in Germany in 1923 — a Rightist line was laid down for this purpose. When the German revolutionary developments had been stifled, the Stalinists, in order to cover up their treacherous Rightist line of collaboration with Social Democracy and the German bourgeoisie, instigated the well known Hamburg putsch. A handful of revolutionary workers under Stalinist control attempted to "overthrow" the government. This was a fake revolution. Its purpose was to cover up, by means of such ultra-Left, wild putschism, the Rightist line just completed. Such a fake revolution was organized by the Stalinists again in Canton in 1927 under the fraudulent name, "The Canton Commune." Thus, there have also been fake revolutions.

* * *

Question 11: If the capitalists wanted no real war to take place, should the workers just in spite have fought a real war and thus spoiled the scheme?"

Answer: Our questioner does not make a distinction between an imperialist war and a revolutionary war, when he speaks of the workers fighting a "real war." Marxism teaches the workers that it is not in their interest to fight each other. The only war that workers can pursue in their own interests is a revolutionary war against their exploiters and oppressors. And only in such manner do they spoil the imperialist schemes.

* * *

Question 12: "Does Stalin know that there is no war? Or is he being fooled, too?"

Answer: Proceeding on the assumption that Stalin is well informed, a close observer of the international scene, and is completely familiar with Marxism, although he does not practice it, we would say that he must see at least this much: that the imperialists are not fighting a war to defeat each other. He must know that, despite the fact that he is not a danger to the imperialists, he is at the head of a state which still has as its basis an advanced form of property as compared to the rest of the world. He must know that this property form represents a thorn in the side of imperialism as a whole and hence must be destroyed. He has witnessed the various attempts by the imperialists to get together for a final and successful assault on the Soviet Union. He must know that British capitalism is a blood-brother to German capitalism and that the two are mortal enemies of the proletariat and the socialized property in the Soviet Union — despite all the "pacts" which have been and may be signed between Stalin and the imperialists.

Stalin's fight will, of necessity, be one based purely on his military power. Having a policy of destroying revolution in order to maintain himself and his bureaucracy in power, he can not, because of the very nature of Stalinism, organize and conduct a revolutionary war. Stalin's war can lead only to the destruction of the Soviet Union. Only the revolutionary proletariat, headed by a Bolshevik party which has destroyed the influence of Stalinism, can prevent the imperialists from carrying out their plan of completely wiping out every remnant of the October Revolution. The primary task of all honest revolutionary workers is to assist in the formation of a new Bolshevik party — before it is too late.

G. Crane,

December 15, 1940

CANNON DRAWS AN ANALOGY

THE S.W.P. is now engaged in promoting the slogan of "Compulsory Military Training Under Trade Union Control." Cannon calls for compulsory military training under the control of the present trade unions. The trade unions at present, however, are led by reformist agents of Wall Street. In light of this, a question was put to the Trotskyites in reference to the slogan which the S.W.P. has been raising. Cannon reported this question at a recent conference of the S.W.P.:

"An interesting question asked by some workers was reported here. 'How can you tell the workers to put themselves under the control of the unions for military training when the unions are controlled by people like Lewis, Green and Hillman?'" (J. P. Cannon, Socialist Appeal, October 26, 1940, p. 3.)

To reassure his followers on this point, Cannon drew an analogy between his position on Trade Union Control of Military Training and a certain phase of Lenin's tactics in the Russian Revolution. Cannon advanced the argument that under Lenin's leadership, the Bolsheviks, after the February Revolution, raised the slogan of "All Power to the Soviets" although the Soviets, according to Cannon, were under the control of reactionaries "of the stripe of Lewis and Green, Hillman and Dubinsky." Lenin's reason in raising this slogan, Cannon further asserted, was based on the fact that the Soviets embraced the workers. Here is how Cannon framed his analogy:

"In 1917, following February, the Soviets of Petrograd and Moscow were in control of the Social-Democrats and the Social Revolutionaries, that is, men of the stripe of Lewis and Green, Hillman and Dubinsky; no

better and no worse. In spite of that, because the Soviets embraced the workers, Lenin raised the slogan: 'All Power to the Soviets.' In the course of that fight for all power to the Soviets, the Bolsheviks won to their side a majority of the workers." (Ibid. My emphasis—A.B.)

Then drawing the analogy to his position on Trade Union Control of Military Training, Cannon continued: "That's the way things have to be conceived in this question also." (Ibid.)

Let us proceed to examine the validity of this historical analogy in the light of the present position of the S.W.P.

TRADE UNION AND THE SOVIETS

In the first place it must be noted that there is a world of difference between the character of a Trade Union and that of a Soviet. A Trade Union is an organization of workers functioning within capitalism with the avowed purpose of defending the interests of the organized workers against exploitation by the bourgeoisie, primarily in the economic sphere. A Trade Union expresses an elemental form of class consciousness, and, as history shows, its existence is perfectly compatible with the capitalist structure. A Soviet, on the other hand, is an historically advanced organization which expresses class consciousness developed to its political form of struggle, embraces the potential historical interests of all the oppressed and exploited, represents the historical form of the dictatorship of the proletariat, and is incompatible with the existence of the capitalist state.

Lenin specifically differentiated

between a trade union and a Soviet:

"The Soviet of Workers Deputies is not a trade union as the bourgeoisie would like it to be. The people view it differently and more correctly: the people regard it as a government power." (V. I. Lenin, Collected Works, Volume XX, Book I, p. 204.)

Cannon, however, in his analogy, falsely equates trade unions to Soviets. He takes Lenin's line on Soviets and applies it to trade unions. Cannon's whole analogy is based on this sleight of hand.

It must be noted that when Lenin raised the slogan of "All Power to the Soviets" he intended the immediate overthrow of the bourgeois imperialist government.

The realization of Lenin's slogan was predicted on the elimination of the imperialist government. The realization of Cannon's slogan, on the other hand, is not predicated on the elimination of the imperialist government. The trade unions are not organs of power. Obviously, both the formal and the political aspects of Cannon's slogan are completely contradictory to those of Lenin's slogan.

THE BASIS FOR LENIN'S SLOGAN

AND THE BASIS FOR CANNON'S SLOGAN

The extraordinary breadth of the revolutionary upsurge of the Russian masses in February 1917 and the corresponding virtual collapse of the Russian bourgeoisie led Lenin to the supposition that a peaceful development of the revolution was possible. This conception of a possible peaceful development, Lenin symbolized with the slogan "All Power to the Soviets":

"The slogan of all power passing to the Soviets was a slogan of peaceful development of the revolution." (V. I. Lenin, Collected Works, Volume XXI, Book I, p. 37. My emphasis - A. B.)

Again and again Lenin stressed the thought that peaceful development

was possible, since, he said, no class in Russia could offer resistance to the Soviets:

"You have lived through the years of 1905 and 1917, you know that a revolution is not made to order, that revolutions in other countries have proceeded along the gory and bloody road of insurrection, while in Russia there is no such group, there is no such class that could offer resistance to the authority of the Soviets. In Russia this revolution is possible, by way of exception, as a peaceful revolution." (V. I. Lenin, Speech to First Congress of Soviets - June 16 - July 6, 1917. Collected Works, Volume XX, Book II, p. 201. My emphasis - A. B.)

Lenin described this situation as one of Dual Power and it was in this context that Lenin raised the slogan of "All Power to the Soviets." From this angle we see that Lenin raised the slogan in a revolutionary situation.

Cannon, on the other hand, raises his slogan of Trade Union Control of Military Training in a totally reactionary situation with Wall Street in complete control. The American bourgeoisie has so consolidated its power that it already has begun to take away whatever small "concessions" it granted to the workers during the early days of the New Deal period. Inexorably, the Wall Street government moves toward fascism. The workers, on the other hand, are utterly paralyzed in the face of this bourgeois reaction. There is virtually nothing in the present economic, political, and social situation in the United States which even in the remotest way resembles the period of the so-called Dual Power in Russia in which Lenin raised his slogan. The crucial differences existing in Russia following February 1917 and in America today are slurred over in Cannon's analogy.

LENIN DROPS THE SLOGAN

Instead of taking the power, however, as Lenin conceived, the Mensheviks and S.R.'s functioned through the

Soviets to prop up the tottering power of the bourgeoisie. By supporting the imperialist plans of the bourgeoisie, by struggling against the "illegal" seizure of the land by the peasantry, by refusing to take any positive measures against the bourgeoisie, the Mensheviks and S.R.'s supported the bourgeois Provisional Government in a common struggle against the development of the revolution to its proletarian stage. During the July Days (July 16-18) the Mensheviks and S.R.'s actually called in troops to shoot down the revolutionary workers in Petrograd. Aided by these opportunists, the bourgeoisie was thus able to reorganize and consolidate its forces. By July 22, 1917, actual power passed into the hands of a virtual bourgeois military dictatorship under the Bonapartist Kerensky. This actual consolidation of power by the bourgeoisie compelled Lenin to abandon his perspective of a peaceful development of the revolution. In these July Days, the opportunists openly revealed their complete betrayal of the revolution. Thus, the conditions which prompted Lenin to raise the slogan of "All Power to the Soviets" up until July 18-22 ceased to exist and Lenin therefore dropped this slogan.

"The slogan of all power to the Soviets was a slogan of the peaceful development of the revolution, possible in April, May, June, and up to July 18-22, i.e., up to the time when actual power passed into the hands of the military dictatorship. Now this slogan is no longer correct, as it does not take into account this already accomplished passing of power and the real complete betrayal of the revolution by the S.R.'s and Mensheviks." (V. I. Lenin, Collected Works, Volume XXI, Book I, p. 37. My emphasis - A. B.)

Objectively, according to Lenin, this slogan would now be a deception of the masses.

"The slogan of the power passing to the Soviets would at present sound quixotic or mocking. Objectively this slogan would be a decep-

tion of the people." (V. I. Lenin, Ibid., "On Slogans," p. 49. My emphasis - A. B.)

Thus from mid-July to September, Lenin dropped the slogan of "All Power to the Soviets."

Cannon distorts Lenin's position by keeping mum on the fact that in July Lenin dropped the slogan of "All Power to the Soviets." Cannon, to put over his own line, refers to the raising of the slogan in February 1917, but since the analogy would not hold, refrains from mentioning the dropping of the slogan in July.

It must be borne in mind that Cannon, in his analogy to Lenin's policy, states to his followers that Lenin raised the slogan of Soviet Power "because the Soviets embraced the workers" (Socialist Appeal, October 26, 1940). It suffices to ask: Didn't the Soviets embrace the workers in mid-July and August when Lenin decided to drop the slogan? The answer is that in July and August, just as in the preceding months the Soviets embraced the workers yet Lenin dropped his slogan of Power to the Soviets. If the factor of the Soviets embracing the workers was the criterion of Lenin's calling for Power to the Soviets, then Lenin could not have dropped the slogan because at all times from February to October the Soviets embraced the workers. Cannon has completely distorted Lenin's basis for raising this slogan. This is the most striking indication of the essentially fraudulent nature of Cannon's entire analogy.

THE CHARACTER OF THE

OPPORTUNIST LEADERS

To understand fully the context which originally prompted Lenin to raise the slogan of "All Power to the Soviets" we must also take note of his conception of the opportunist leaders at that time. In the first place, the Russian opportunists were to the "left" of the rest of the European opportunists. Even Kerensky, for example, went to the extent of voting against

the war credits in the Tzarist Duma, while in general the Mensheviks and S.R.'s made strong pretenses of being for Socialism in opposition to the Russian bourgeoisie. Lenin viewed the Mensheviks and S.R.'s as "petty-bourgeois democrats" who vacillated between the proletariat and bourgeoisie. In line with this conception, Lenin thought that it was possible for these leaders of the Soviets to consent to an orderly struggle of parties within the Soviets, a struggle which would determine whose program was correct and in the interests of the masses:

"Peaceful development would have been possible even in the sense that the struggle of classes and parties within the Soviets could — provided full state power had passed to the latter in due time — have taken the most peaceful and painless forms." (V. I. L e n i n, Collected Works, Volume XXI, p. 44. Emphasis in the original.)

And again, Lenin speaking of the Soviets said:

"Had they had full power, then the main shortcoming of the petty-bourgeois circles, their main fault, namely, their confidence in the capitalists, would have been overcome in practice, would have been refuted by the experience of their own measures. The classes and parties which had power could have succeeded each other peacefully inside of the Soviets as the only body possessing all power." (Ibid.)

Cannon, on the other hand, in the present situation, is dealing with a hardened core of opportunist trade union bureaucrats who are unswervingly steadfast in their loyalty to the dictates of Wall Street. These trade union misleaders do not "vacillate" in their servility to the bourgeoisie. Unlike the Mensheviks and S.R.'s in 1917, the American trade union bureaucrats do not even pretend to be for socialism, but openly support the parties of Wall Street. Cannon is well acquainted with the real nature of the present trade union bureaucrats. Cannon, in the Socialist Appeal, refers

to the Lewises and Greens as agents of the capitalists in the Labor movement. "Green and Lewis and their similars — the whole upper bureaucracy of the labor movement at present — are agents of the capitalists in the Labor movement" (October 26, 1940). Cannon is certainly far from conceiving the trade union bureaucrats as permitting a peaceful struggle of parties within the trade unions. Indeed Cannon reports a conversation with Trotsky, wherein Trotsky said:

"Do you think Lewis or Green wouldn't shoot at you? It is only a difference of circumstance, that is all." (Socialist Appeal, October 19, 1940.)

When Cannon states in his analogy to Lenin's policy following February 1917 that the Russian Mensheviks and S.R.'s "were no better or worse" than the present trade union bureaucrats, he is flagrantly distorting Lenin's view of the Russian opportunists at that period.

It should be pointed out that even if there could take place a peaceful struggle for programs within the trade unions and the elimination of the Lewises and Greens by even a revolutionary leadership, Cannon's analogy with the Soviets would still be false. The struggle of programs within the Soviets involved directly the transfer of class power to the proletariat. This was so because the Soviets were organs of State Power. The trade unions, on the contrary, are not organs of state power. The struggle of programs within the trade unions does not directly involve the transference of class power; the transference of class power never takes place through the trade unions.

CONCLUSION

1. We have seen that in falsely equating Trade Unions with Soviets, Cannon distorts Lenin's concept of Soviets as embryonic organs of Proletarian State Power.

2. Cannon slurs over the fact that

Lenin originally raised his slogan of Soviet Power in the context of a revolutionary situation while Cannon raises his in a totally reactionary situation.

3. In asserting the identity between the nature of the present trade union leaders and the Russian opportunist leaders of the Soviets, Cannon conceals Lenin's conception of the Mensheviks and S.R.'s at that period.

4. When the situation took a turn toward reaction, Lenin dropped the slogan of "All Power to the Soviets." Cannon conceals this fact and hence has torn Lenin's tactics out of their context.

5. When Cannon states that the reason behind Lenin's slogan was the fact that the Soviets embraced the workers, he clearly falsified Lenin's reasons for this slogan.

Viewed from every angle, Cannon's policy following February 1917 is completely fraudulent and represents a distortion of the history of the October Revolution.

THE CORRECT POLICY

The followers of Cannon are politically advanced revolutionary-minded workers. An important aspect of their ideology is a strong desire to combat the intensive militarization policy which the imperialists are now conducting. A genuine struggle against all aspects of imperialism, military, political, economic, cultural, can be conducted only by the proletarian vanguard led by a Bolshevik Party. Therefore, the first step in organizing such a genuine struggle against the imperialists is the winning over of the proletarian vanguard and its orientation into a Bolshevik Party. The proletarian vanguard is now predominantly under the influence of Stalinism. The first step in a genuine struggle against the imperialists must therefore be the winning away of the proletarian vanguard from the clutches of the Stalinist bureaucrats, where it now lies prostrate.

The only workers who can accomplish the destruction of the Stalinist

system are those who have already advanced to the point of desiring its destruction and the reassertion of Bolshevism as the dominant force in the proletarian vanguard.

The workers who follow Cannon are precisely of this character, but Cannon gives them an orientation and a policy which prevents them from combatting and overcoming the Stalinist reaction. He orients them, in general, not toward the advanced workers who are under Stalinist domination, but toward the politically backward workers who still cling to the bourgeois parties and to the reformists. Along this false orientation he gives them a totally opportunist policy.

For example, he gives his followers the slogan of "Compulsory Military Training under Trade Union Control," i.e., under the domination of the reactionary trade union bureaucrats, the bribed agents of Wall Street, the inveterate enemies of all the toilers. He fetishizes the trade union form by concealing the universally reactionary content given to this form by the treacherous reformist leadership. It is only by doing this, that he can palm off control of the military training by these reactionary trade unions as a progressive step in opposition to the imperialists' military policy. He obscures the fact that the reactionary reformist trade unions which loyally serve Wall Street in the economic and political sphere can only do the same in the military sphere. In fact, by posing some future control of the army by the reformist trade unions as a progressive step against imperialist militarism he hides the fact that right now these trade unions are loyally serving the military policy of Wall Street. Right now these trade unions, even without directly controlling the army, bind the workers to the Wall Street war machine. From this present pro-imperialist function of the trade unions, any future function that they might serve is now revealed as pro-imperialist. This necessary and inevitable connection between the present and future policy of reformism is concealed from the view of the workers by Cannon.

Thus Cannon takes his revolutionary-minded followers and disorients them to the politically backward workers and gives them a policy of disguised support to imperialism. That he has to draw an analogy to Lenin's tactics, to Lenin's policy, flows from the fact that his followers are Bolshevik-minded and he has to satisfy this tendency of theirs. That his analogy is a complete distortion of the facts flows from Cannon's pseudo-Bolshevik character, his opportunist politics.

As long as revolutionary workers follow Cannon, they will be unable to combat reaction. Cannon will always shunt his followers away from the vanguard workers who are in the clutches of Stalinism. And along with thus disorienting them, he will always give them one or another kind of opportunist line, cleverly disguised, in support of some specimen of bourgeois deception. The workers who already desire to combat Stalinism and to make Bolshevism the dominating force in the proletarian vanguard are the key in the struggle for the overthrow of capitalism. If they do not break with the Cannons and Shachtmans, the key in this struggle will be lost for it will remain in the hands of pseudo-Bolshevik opportunism. Capitalist oppression, in the absence of a genuine Bolshevik Party, will continue. The movement of the politically most advanced workers, like those now following the Cannon, Shachtman misleadership, in the direction of genuine Bolshevism will reopen the possibility of the overthrow of the bourgeoisie, the renewal of the work of the October Revolution.

Arthur Burke,
November 25, 1940

Postscript:

OEHLER "EXPOSES" CANNON'S ANALOGY

In its "International News" of November 1940, the Oehler group pro-

claims that "theoretical clarity" is the uppermost question today. (p.2.) The "theoretical clarity" of the Oehlerite R.W.L. is strikingly indicated in the December 1, 1940 issue of the "Fighting Worker." The Oehlerite paper reproduces Cannon's fraudulent analogy to Lenin's line in 1917 and comments as follows:

"Cannon forgets only one 'small' detail. It is one thing to support a Working Class Instrument, Soviets, Trade Union, etc. even though it has a reactionary leadership; and it is quite another thing to support a CAPITALIST instrument, the bourgeois army, the bourgeois state, etc. EVEN THOUGH it may temporarily be composed of an overwhelming majority of workers or workers' representatives." (page 2. My emphasis - A. B.)

Note that Oehler objects to only one detail of Cannon's analogy.

The quotation marks about the word "small" is evidently meant as ironical. It is even more ironical, however, that the allegedly clear theoreticians of the R.W.L. let pass without so much as a word of comment Cannon's identification of Soviets and trade unions, his outright falsification of Lenin's reasons for raising the slogan of "All Power to the Soviets," his identification of the Soviet leadership in 1917 and the present trade union leadership, his distortion of the entire contextual meaning of Lenin's slogan which was raised in a revolutionary situation. Presumably, this is the "theoretical clarity" which the R.W.L. offers to the workers who follow Cannon.

A. B.

STALINIST MASS WORK AND
THE LABOR ACTION

AS IN THE PAST throughout the world, the Stalinist bureaucrats today in Mexico are vigorously engaged in all kinds of mass activities in order to corral the support of the radical workers. This mass work, in one of its most important aspects, is evaluated in the following terms by the Shachtmanite LABOR ACTION:

"In the mean time the opposition to the Stalinists grows rapidly, and it now seems likely that the reactionaries, rather than the progressive bloc, will gain control of the S.T.E.R.M. [the Teachers' Federation of Mexico - J.C.H.] This will be worse than the present situation, because the Stalinist control of rural education has been progressive in many respects. The Teachers' Federation controls the placement of teachers, and in the rural districts the teachers play a great role in the agrarian reform. The significance of the new rural school in Mexico cannot be over-emphasized, and the teachers, both the Communists and the fellow-travellers, sent out are doing fine work." ("The Mexican Stalinists And Their Role in the U n i o n s," Labor Action, October 7, 1940. p.4. My emphasis - J.C.H.)

It is thus that the Shachtmanite press evaluates this "mass work" of Stalinism in Mexico — fine and progressive in many respects!

Let us, however, look somewhat closer at this "fine and progressive" Stalinist "work" so as to see it for what it really is.

Every demagogue must have some kind of device which is attractive to the masses and will win their allegiance. The mass work directed by the

Stalinist bureaucrats is precisely such a demagogic snare. Naturally, different kinds of demagogues use different kinds of alluring bait. The bourgeois-democrats use one kind of demagogy, the fascists another type, and the Stalinist bureaucrats still a different one. The Stalinist bureaucrats are pseudo-Bolsheviks and hence have to use a form of demagogy which appears revolutionary in the eyes of their victims. It is for this reason that the Stalinist bureaucrats can be found directing all sorts of "mass work," a great deal of which looks for all the world like the sort of work in which Bolsheviks would be engaged. Strikes, demonstrations, protests, picketing,— the whole gamut of mass work which lends a "Bolshevik" halo to the Stalinist leaders,— are the everyday grist which feeds the Stalinist mill.

During the most profound phase of the crisis which was precipitated in 1929-30, the American Stalinist bureaucrats could even be found directing the work of carrying the furniture back into the apartments of workers who had been evicted by the landlord and threatening the direst punishment to anyone who would dare to re-evict the workers. Indeed, the Stalinist bureaucrats, who make up in brazenness what they lack in honesty, on a number of occasions even carried out their threats and actually beat up some of those who tried forcibly to evict the workers. There is no doubt that this "mass work" looked "fine and progressive" to many a worker saved by the Stalinist bureaucrats from being thrown into the gutter. And yet, the worker who came to look favorably on the Stalinist leaders because of this mass work was heading for something infinitely worse than the gutter. He was becoming a supporter of the international system of renegacy which was

the prime factor in placing Hitler in power, which aided Chang Kai-shek to massacre the whole revolutionary proletariat of China, which opened the gates for Franco in Spain, which paralyzed the French proletariat and brought it to its present predicament, which has mutilated the first workers state and brought it to the brink of destruction, and which in general has freed the world bourgeoisie to usher in an epoch of unprecedented reaction. All over the world, and especially where the crisis in the capitalist system was most profound, the Stalinist bureaucrats could be found engaged in this "fine and progressive" mass work.

The Mexican Stalinists naturally pursue this same line of demagoguery. They shout about advanced agricultural methods, about free education for the masses, against the oil trusts, for democracy and for anything which will give them a "fine and progressive" appearance in the eyes of their victims. But what fate does all this "fine and progressive" noise hold for the Mexican toilers? The bloody fate of the Spanish, the Chinese, the German, the Russian, the French masses! Let a revolutionary crisis break out in all its strength, and the Mexican toilers by the millions will flock into the trap set by the Stalinist bureaucrats — if Stalinism is not first destroyed by a genuine Bolshevik tendency. Even now Stalinism is the predominant danger in the Mexican proletarian vanguard, as in that of the German, Spanish, Chinese and French masses. Lest history repeat itself to the detriment

of the Mexican toilers — and of the whole international working class — the first task which must be accomplished is the crushing of Stalinist influence in the Mexican proletarian vanguard.

Mexico is rapidly heading for a repetition of the events in Spain in 1936-39. In all likelihood, Mexico in the fairly near future will witness some kind of an attempt to introduce fascism. Accompanying this there may be the kind of upsurge of proletarian vigor which Spain saw in the recent Civil War. The Mexican toilers, highly class-conscious, are even now burning with eagerness to strike a blow at their oppressors. Again, a section of the international proletariat may face a possibility of destroying a section of world capitalism and of continuing the line set by the victorious October Revolution. Will this spark of proletarian life again be snuffed out by Stalinism? The entire matter hinges on those workers who have already advanced to the point of realizing the need for a new revolutionary party. But if such workers continue to follow those opportunists who spread deception about "fine and progressive" Stalinist mass work, the whole struggle of the workers for liberation is hopelessly doomed.

The first task is to break with the opportunists who perpetuate reactionary illusions which they camouflage with a pretense of building a new revolutionary party.

J. C. H.

November 14, 1940

FOR AN ALL-SIDED EXPOSURE OF THE DISGUISED SUPPORTERS OF STALINISM - SHACHTMAN, CANNON, OEHLER, STAMM - R E A D:

T H E B U L L E T I N

5¢/copy
50¢/year

ADDRESS:
P.O. Box 67
Station D.
New York

THE WORKERS PARTY INTERPRETS
AN EVENT

CAPITALISM CONTINUES its decaying existence, staggering along from crisis to crisis. At every turn it meets either the active or potential resistance of the masses and is forced to preserve its very existence by the most brutal methods of repression and barbarism on an international scale. Simple demands by the working class threaten to shake it to its very foundations. Yet in a series of world-shaking class struggles since the October revolution, the imperialists have managed to preserve their power and their system of exploitation. Its victories notwithstanding, capitalism continues decomposing at every pore. Clearly, the victories of the bourgeoisie over their wage slaves are not due to some basic strength of the capitalist class.

The betraying force that saved capitalism in the crisis of 1914 and again in 1919 was Social Democracy. The later betrayals of the workers, however, are due directly to a new opportunist virus that has arisen in the very vitals of the revolutionary workers. Every advanced anti-Stalinist worker knows the name of this deadly poison - Stalinism - which operates under the guise of Bolshevism.

Having usurped control over the Bolshevik Party, the first Workers State, and the Comintern for the benefit of a privileged bureaucracy, Stalinism has turned the revolutionary trend into channels of counter-revolution. Hiding behind the symbols of Communism, of Lenin, of the October Revolution, Stalinism is able to dominate historically the working class of every country and to influence decisively

the direction of any struggle the workers might undertake. Self-preservation and the interests of the Soviet bureaucracy compel Stalinism to work to prevent the liberation of the toilers

The necessary policy of Stalinism, therefore, is and has always been to effect the defeat and destruction of the revolutionary workers. Let there be but a ferment for revolutionary action amongst the class conscious workers and immediately the Stalinists rush to get control of it so as to be in a position to thwart the possible revolutionary development.

The Comintern flunkeys are extremely watchful of their influence among revolutionary-minded workers and work furiously to maintain their hold upon them. The retention of its stranglehold over these class conscious workers is a matter of life and death to the Comintern bureaucracy.

There are various tendencies which declare that they are struggling against the influence of Stalinism. These tendencies sharply reveal their true character whenever they deal with the issue of Stalinism. We may take as an illustration of this fact the way in which a certain important event of recent days was handled by the Shachtmanite LABOR ACTION.

In Great Britain, the issue of adequate air raid shelters in the working class districts has aroused a good deal of indignation among the English toilers. Almost immediately, the Stalinist bureaucrats began to organize strikes and demonstrations.

Dwight Mac Donald, in LABCR ACTION reported on this situation:

"A tremendous popular demand arose for construction of large scale deep shelters, where thousands of people could spend the night in safety. There were some demonstrations organized and led by Communists." (Labor Action, December 9, 1940, p. 3. My emphasis - A.B.)

Mac Donald then quotes a newspaper report which describes one of these demonstrations led by the Stalinists:

"A newspaper report reads: 'The group from Stepney who crowded into the Savoy Hotel on the Strand last night and demanded shelter were obviously under Communist guidance. They delivered a prepared speech demanding the government provide deep bombproof shelters. They were allowed to stay in the hotel's shelter until the all clear sounded and then they were rushed out by the police.'" (Ibid. My emphasis - A.B.)

Mac Donald comments on this report in the following manner:

"Such invasions of the big luxury hotels clearly have revolutionary implications — the very fact that a mob of people 'from Stepney' should venture to set foot inside the Savoy is remarkable." (Ibid. My emphasis - A.B.)

And this is his sole comment on this Stalinist-led demonstration! Without so much as a syllable of comment on the Stalinist aspect of the event, Mac Donald glibly switches off to other matters, — Churchill, the Labor Party, the Gallup Poll, and so forth.

It must be borne in mind that the Workers Party claims that it is conducting a struggle against Stalinism. Yet, the Shachtmanite writer here "forgets" who led the demonstration and talks about the "very fact" of a mob of workers going into the Hotel Savoy as being "remarkable" and having "revolutionary implications." This is

merely an artificial separation of what the workers did from who led them. The total situation is that the workers were led by Stalinist bureaucrats. Stalinism has politically profited and gained prestige by this demonstration. The leadership of this demonstration by Stalinists and the increase of Stalinist prestige indicate that the total situation is being led in the direction of counter-revolution. To talk in abstract terms about the "revolutionary implications" of this situation is to omit the element of counter-revolution existing in it and governing it. This counter-revolutionary element in the situation is the crux of the whole matter, as has been proven by the history of Stalinism ever since its origin.

There have been situations in which there were not only revolutionary implications but revolutionary uprisings. The entry into the Hotel Savoy is as nothing compared to the seizures of factories and palaces in Spain and the seizures of tracts of land by the peasants in China. Just as in the Hotel Savoy incident, but on an incomparably vast scale, the workers were "led by Communists," to use Mac Donald's phrase, or speaking correctly were misled by the Stalinists. The terrible result is only too well known to the workers.

The very presence of the unexposed Stalinist renegades in the front ranks of the working class is a guarantee of the defeat of the workers, whether in Spain, in China, or in England. It must be borne in mind that the presence of Stalinism is a sign that the working class has not yet learned the true nature of this powerful enemy in its midst. The workers then will turn more than ever to Stalinism in their greatest hour of need under the deadly illusion that it is the same force that led the Russian masses to victory in their revolutionary struggles.

The essence of the situation amongst the class conscious English workers is that the Stalinists are capitalizing on whatever ferment there is among the boldest of the militant

workers. Instead of warning that the concrete situation for the revolutionary English toilers is fraught with Stalinist danger, the Shachtmanite paper babbles about some abstract "revolutionary implications." The comment of Mac Donald on the situation in England is a perfect example of the fraudulent character of the Workers Party "opposition" to Stalinism.

A paper like Shachtman's LABOR ACTION which, in the face of important symptoms of Stalinist danger in the ranks of the British workers, sends

its readers' mind into a nebulous world of "revolutionary implications," is not leading its followers in a struggle against Stalinism.

For the followers of Shachtman, the first step in turning toward a genuine battle against Stalinism is to break with Shachtman. The next step is to join those who stress the need of a decisive battle against the Stalinist enemy and who expose the pseudo-anti-Stalinists, like Shachtman, as a paralyzing obstacle in this struggle.

Arthur Burke
December 9, 1940

SEND FOR A FREE COPY OF

DID TROTSKY COLLABORATE WITH STALIN

A REPLY TO J.R. JOHNSON OF THE WORKERS PARTY

by

G E O R G E M A R L E N

* * * * *

AN EXPOSURE, WITH DOCUMENTARY PROOF, OF THE REAL ROLE OF TROTSKY IN THE STALINIST USURPATION OF POWER IN THE FIRST WORKERS STATE.

A REFUTATION OF THE WORKERS PARTY'S DECEPTIONS ON TROTSKY'S PART IN THE STALINIST CONSPIRACY.

Address:
P.O. Box 67
Station D.
New York

THE SOCIALIST APPEAL —
PAGE TWO VS. PAGE THREE

ON PAGE 3 of the December 7 issue of the Socialist Appeal, there is a report of discrimination against Negroes at Fort Dix, N.J.:

"Motion pictures were being shown at the post theatre and those in charge attempted to segregate Negro soldiers into one part of the building."

Albert Parker, the author of this article in the Socialist Appeal, then proposes his solution of the problem — still on page 3:-

"This emphasizes again the need for the system of military training under control of the trade unions which would end discrimination and segregation, and would establish special officers' training camps to train workers to become officers, so that the worker-soldiers would have officers on whom they could depend to fight for their rights." (Ibid.)

The Socialist Appeal thus describes to its followers a policy for ending discrimination and segregation — trade union control of military training.

In the same issue of the Socialist Appeal, we find another report of a similar Jim Crow incident — this time on Page 2. Where did this occur? Perhaps in some other training camp? Not at all! It seems that this discrimination was perpetrated by the very organization which Page 3 says will end segregation and discrimination if given control of military training.

"A. Philip Randolph and Milton

Webster, the lone Negro delegates at the A F L convention at New Orleans, in the midst of their vain fight to wipe out the 'lily white' policy of the A F L crafts, found themselves Jim Crowed out of an entertainment for the convention delegates arranged by the New Orleans Central Labor Council." (My emphasis - B.L.)

Thus is the mind of the worker, deadened with the pipe-dreams on Page 3, rudely awakened by the harsh reality on Page 2. The editor of the Socialist Appeal, of course, did not draw the connection between the opium on Page 3 and the antidote on Page 2. The drugging of the workers' minds with deception about the trade union control of military training is the dominant policy of the Socialist Appeal. The report of Jim Crowism in the trade unions is only an incidental item used to camouflage the basic deception.

The reformist trade unions are agencies for enabling the bourgeoisie to carry out their reactionary policies in the economic, political and military spheres. The reformist trade unions support bourgeois reaction now. Only those workers who do not understand the reactionary policies of the reformist trade unions in the present will swallow deception about their having some sort of progressive role in the future. The Trotskyist slogan of trade union control of military training is a slogan of placing the training for the imperialist war machine under the control of the reformist agents of imperialism who support and help to carry out every reactionary policy of the Wall Street financiers.

Margaret Lane

R.W.L.'S ANTI-STALINIST VENEER

CONCRETE PROBLEMS of the class struggle change with the shifting of the correlation of classes and the passing of epochs. To be for Bolshevism or for Menshevism in the war of 1914-18 and through the October Revolution and the revolutionary upheavals in Germany, Hungary, Italy and Finland was the problem of the advanced worker. Both seemingly were for the Socialist transformation of society, yet only one was genuinely for the abolition of capitalism, the other was a masked agent of capitalism operating within the workers' ranks.

Today the advanced workers are confronted with the problem of distinguishing between pseudo-Bolshevism and true Bolshevism, or to be exact, they are faced with the problem of re-establishing Bolshevism.

The problem exists due to the rise of the Stalinist reaction which parades under the mask of Bolshevism. A genuine revolutionary opposition to Stalinism can be none other than true Bolshevism. It goes without saying that those "Bolsheviks" who pretend to oppose Stalinism while at the same time attaching the workers to that reactionary force are not Bolsheviks but disguised assistants of Stalinism. It is not easy at times to recognize these subtle aids to Stalinism because they cover their actual policy with a coat of anti-Stalinist paint. And only through a careful study of their double line, only by scraping off the anti-Stalinist paint can their pro-Stalinist essence be discovered.

Let us subject to a brief scrutiny, the politics of one of the groups professing to combat Stalinism

and presenting itself to the workers as the true Bolshevik tendency. We have in view the R.W.L. (Fighting Worker). We read in the Fighting Worker of November 1, 1940:-

"No support, material or political, to Stalinism at any time. Realize that Stalinism can only play a reactionary role."

Is the above thesis correct? We think that this thesis is absolutely correct. For Stalinism is the very essence of reaction within the proletariat. It is counter-revolutionary to the core, stifling the revolution at home and abroad. There is no sphere of activity in which Stalinism can play a progressive role. From its very inception in 1921-22 Stalinism has been playing only a reactionary role. And it is obvious therefore, that any support to Stalinism under any guise, be it "Bolshevik criticism" or under some other cloak, is support to counter-revolution and therefore a betrayal of the working class. The thesis we have cited above is correct, but is this thesis the real position of the R.W.L.?

A closer perusal brings to light the true political face of the R.W.L. Here is this face:-

"The necessity of the Soviet Union TO EXTEND THE REVOLUTION to parts of Finland, Poland, Rumania, and to Baltic nations in an effort to forestall the inevitable invasion of the Workers State, should now be evident even to the blind. But the complete falseness of the methods, of the purely capitalist methods by which these areas were taken in spite of the economic

change is a blight against the world revolution." (Fighting Worker, November 1, 1940. My capitals - G.M.)

Thus, in the thesis we previously quoted, it is stated explicitly and correctly that "Stalinism can only play a reactionary role." But it is the Stalin gang which invaded and occupied Finland, Poland, Rumania and the Baltics. Yet in the R. W. L.'s statement concerning the Stalinist invasions one discovers that counter-revolutionary Stalinism, euphemistically sheltered by the R.W.L. behind the term "Soviet Union," is extending revolution! It is only the method of the occupation that the R.W.L. objects to! Here, in a nut-shell, is political support with "criticism."

Stalinism, of course, does not extend revolution, it extends counter-revolution, either with its own hands or by freeing the hands of the bourgeoisie. Nationalization of property carried out by a force that plays only a reactionary role, whether it be bourgeois-imperialism or Stalinism, is not progressive. In the imperialist era, only that type of nationalization which is directed in the interests of the working class can be defined as progressive. Stalinist nationalization of property in the Baltic, etc., is not carried out in the interests of the working class. It strengthened Stalinism in the S.U. and further undermines, not extends, the October Revolution. In consequence, Stalinism reduces still further the possibility of the political awakening of the Russian and international proletariat. And in this treacherous work, Stalinism is aided and abetted with "criticism," by the R.W.L.

Nor is this all. We have shown that in order to make the Stalinist reactionary extension of "the Revolution" palatable to the workers, the R.W.L. concealed the worst enemy within the proletariat under the sign "Soviet Union." In effect the R.W.L. has identified Stalinism with the Soviet Union.

In the next paragraph the R.W.L.

is not so subtle in attaching the workers to Stalinism. Naming Stalinism outright it chloroforms the mind of the workers with the deadly idea that the international proletariat is an ally of Stalinism! And not merely an ally, but the only ally:-

"Stalinism has gained tactical military advantages, but by its support of the German Imperialist war policy (no matter whether it goes over to the "democratic" camp again very soon or not) it has disoriented further, has extended the demoralization of ITS ONLY ALLY, THE WORLD WORKING CLASS." (Fighting Worker, Nov. 1, 1940. My capitals - G.M.)

Thus the R.W.L. works for Stalinism by telling the workers the fatal lie that they are the only ally of the ghastliest betraying force that has ever stabbed and debilitated the world working class. Its correct thesis is but a thin veneer concealing a political agent of that counter-revolutionary force.

Did the R. W. L.'s position that the working class is an ally of Stalinism originate with that organization? Is this a new ideological means of tying the workers to their worst betrayers? No, it is an old pro-Stalinist contraption used by the Trotskyites of whose basic deceptions the left-Trotskyites like the R.W.L. are the disguised peddlers:•

"This is the stark tragedy of the Stalinist policy: it is the policy of a solidified bureaucracy, which has become alien to the world revolution: which fears for its own status in the event of an extension of the revolution and the consequent quickening of the Soviet workers; which puts its faith not in its real ally, the international proletariat, but in its maneuvers and combinations with capitalist 'allies.'" (Felix Morrow, Socialist Appeal, December 1936. My emphasis - G.M.)

The political connection between the R.W.L. and its parent body is quite obvious.

The world working-class is an ally of neither Stalinism nor Social-Democracy nor any other destructive tendency within its camp. The world working-class today unfortunately blinded and victimized by opportunism, is an ENEMY of Stalinism; it is the force which will destroy Stalinism. The international proletariat is an ally, the only ally, of the exploited peasant masses and the colonial slaves.

Eventually, the world working class will break the hand-cuffs with which the sham "Anti-Stalinists" tie it to Stalinism, will shake off all its betrayers, and, led by a true Bolshevik force, will win its own liberation and the liberation of its oppressed allies.

George Marlen

November 29, 1940.

S E N D F O R A F R E E C O P Y O F

THE
CANNONITES

"ANSWER"

THE
SHACHTMANITES

by

G E O R G E M A R L E N

AN INQUIRY INTO THE CONCEALED BASIS OF THE "POLEMIC" BETWEEN THE TWO TROTSKYITE FACTIONS.

Address:
P.O. Box 67
Station D.
New York

SHACHTMAN LABELS THE S.W.P.

THE RECENTLY CONCLUDED bourgeois election campaign provided a revealing context of an important aspect of the political character of the Shachtmanite tendency. In the elections, Shachtman's LABOR ACTION called for support to Cannon's candidates:

"On the other hand, the Socialist Workers Party.....though a sect with whom we have serious disagreements, is a revolutionary socialist organization. Its candidates deserve the support of the workers because such support would signify active opposition to Roosevelt's war schemes; for independent labor political action and for socialism." (Editorial, Nov. 11, 1940. My emph. JCH)

Cannon, however, slashed out at Shachtman unreservedly, threw him in with the petty-bourgeois pacifists and attacked the idea of supporting a Shachtmanite candidate:-

"It is equally clear that no progressive purpose would be served by supporting the candidates of the various petty-bourgeois pacifist sects - the Norman Thomas Socialist Party, the 'Workers' Party, the Socialist-Labor Party, etc. Their platforms can only delude the workers in this time of war and militarism." (Socialist Appeal, October 26, 1940, p. 4.)

The ludicrous position in which this places Shachtman is, of course, immediately apparent. This, however, is not the important aspect of the matter. A closer examination will reveal some basic opportunist traits of Shachtman's tendency.

It suffices to ask: If the S.W.P. is a "revolutionary socialist organization," as Shachtman states, how can it also be "a sect." Shachtman uses the term, "a sect," disparagingly, but

this can only mean that he is disparaging a "revolutionary socialist organization." Furthermore, there is an obvious discrepancy between Shachtman's characterizing the S.W.P. as a "revolutionary socialist organization" and his being out of it "in opposition." Perhaps Shachtman will answer that he was bureaucratically driven out by Cannon's clique. If the S.W.P. is dominated by a bureaucratic clique, then it is a bureaucratic organization and not a "revolutionary socialist" one. Bureaucratism is an organic outgrowth of reactionary politics. It is a product of an interest in power and privilege, not in revolution and socialism. If the S.W.P. is a revolutionary socialist organization, as Shachtman claims, its program must constitute a genuine struggle against the bourgeoisie. But part of that program must consist of the S.W.P.'s struggle - on Shachtman's premise - against false programs, among which, according to Cannon, is that of the Shachtmanite Workers Party. The inescapable implication of Shachtman's support to the S. W. P. is a condemnation of his own program.

If Shachtman should try to squirm out of his self-contradictions by pretending that, when he called the S.W.P. a revolutionary socialist organization, he meant that the rank-and-file in it are revolutionary and socialist in their tendency, he will be resorting to a piece of cheap sophistry. It is not the character of the rank-and-file which determines the political character of a party. In Browder's "Party" there are thousands of workers who are class-conscious and revolutionary-socialist in their intentions. Would Shachtman on this basis call the Stalinist "Party" a revolutionary socialist organization? It is the political nature of the leadership and its policies which determines the political nature of an organization. When

Shachtman termed the S.W.P. a revolutionary socialist organization, he endowed Cannon and his policies with a revolutionary socialist political character. But if Shachtman's characterization of the S.W.P. as a revolutionary socialist organization is true, then it is a revolutionary socialist organization which brands the Shachtmanite Workers Party as a reactionary, petty-bourgeois pacifist outfit. Shachtman's support to such an organization is necessarily an implied condemnation of his own politics.

Shachtman may also try to use the argument that when he says a vote for the S.W.P. "would signify active opposition to Roosevelt's war schemes" he means merely that this vote would symbolize such opposition and that he does not mean Cannon's politics constitute such opposition. Again, the argument applies: Why does not Shachtman call for a vote for "Communist" Browder's Party on the grounds that this vote would constitute symbolical opposition to Roosevelt's war schemes. Browder's Party is also shouting against Roosevelt's war program. Shachtman may argue that he does not agree with Browder's position on how to combat Roosevelt's war program. But Shachtman claims that he does not agree with Cannon's position on this point either; Shachtman speaks of Cannon's slogan of military training under trade union control as "A slogan with class-collaboration overtones" (LABOR ACTION, November 4, 1940, p. 2). Again it is clear that Shachtman can only differentiate between Browder and Cannon on the (implied) basis of Cannon's politics as opposed to Browder's, and it is to Cannon's politics that Shachtman gives support in calling on the workers to vote for Cannon's candidates. But Cannon's politics - which Shachtman is supporting - include a wholesale condemnation of Shachtman, hence Shachtman's support to Cannon's Party in the elections is inescapably implied condemnation of Shachtman's politics.

Shachtman may even try to wriggle out on the basis of drawing an analogy between his calling for support to Cannon's S.W.P. candidates and Lenin's

calling for support to the British Labor Party candidates in the elections. In reply to this, it should be pointed out that Lenin did not palm off the British Labor Party as "a revolutionary socialist organization." Lenin clearly termed the British Labor Party counter-revolutionary. Lenin conceived - rightly or wrongly - of his tactic in calling for support to the British Labor Party candidates as a method of destroying their counter-revolutionary influence amongst the workers. There is not even an atom of any indication that Shachtman in calling for support to Cannon's "revolutionary socialist" candidates conceived of this move as a means of wiping out Cannon's tendency, for then Shachtman would be in the position of wanting to destroy the influence of a "revolutionary socialist organization." There is no analogy whatsoever between Lenin's tactics and Shachtman's. The self-contradictory features of Shachtman's position in the elections can be whitewashed only with the rankest sophistry.

From every angle, the Shachtmanite position is revealed to be a mess of contradictions which point to its inherently fraudulent character.

In the light of these self-contradictions, it is obvious that Shachtman's characterization of the S.W.P. as "a sect with whom we have serious disagreements" is merely a cover-up of the fact that he is calling for support to Cannon's outfit. This phrase was inserted by Shachtman to act as a shock-absorber of whatever dissatisfaction might arise amongst his followers upon being urged to support Cannon's candidates.

From the standpoint of consistency, there is nothing out of place in Shachtman's supporting Cannon on the basis that the S. W. P. is "a revolutionary organization," for they both are simply aspects of the same opportunist tendency.

AN ASPECT OF STAMM'S POLICY

I N THE CASE of the present draft law, the desire for a revolutionary struggle against the reactionary trend it represents a strong with many radical-minded workers. This desire takes its highest form in those workers who have already advanced to the point of recognizing the need for a new revolutionary party. It is these workers who are politically closest to the possibility of conducting a revolutionary struggle against the bourgeoisie. Nevertheless, most of these workers, though they are at the head of the proletarian vanguard in a general historical sense, are remote from concretely having even a correct orientation toward a revolutionary struggle against the bourgeoisie. This is true in the matter of the draft law or any other manifestation of bourgeois oppression.

We may take the proposals of an article which appeared on October 5, 1940 in Revolt, the organ of the Revolutionary Workers League (Stamm), as a specific example of the disorientation which exists amongst such advanced workers. The article is entitled: "How Can Labor Fight the Draft?" The first half of the article consists of a summary of the hardships to which the draft will expose the workers. This is followed by the observation that despite the resentment against the draft which already exists amongst wide strata of the toilers, there has been "no struggle against it on any important scale." Revolt then asks the question: "What is the explanation for this failure?" And it gives as the reason: "Reduced to one sentence, it is the lack of a program and a leadership." Revolt after this proceeds to accuse the A.F.L., the C.I.O., the Stalinists and the Socialist Party for failing to lead a serious struggle against the draft.

So far, very likely, a revolutionary-minded worker of the character we have indicated above will see no symptom of disorientation in this presentation of the problem by Revolt. Indeed, it is only when Revolt presents its solution of the draft problem that the real essence of its politics comes into view. Let us, therefore, examine in detail the line which Revolt offers the workers as a struggle against the draft.

This line is summed up by Revolt in two words: "MASS ACTION." There is a fundamental fact, however, which Revolt fails to connect with this slogan. This is the fact that there can be genuine mass action directed by a revolutionary organization which carries the proletarian struggle forward; and there can be "mass action" directed by reactionary organizations which paralyze the proletariat in its struggle against capitalism. The slogan "mass action" in the hands of reactionary organization can be nothing but a cover for reaction.

Let us examine concretely to see how Revolt utilizes the slogan of "mass action" as a cover for a reactionary essence. In urging its slogan, Revolt provides the following example as an "inspiration" to the workers: "Huge demonstrations against unemployment in 1930 and 31 compelled the unwilling state and municipal governments in the United States to give relief to millions of unemployed workers." On the surface, it would seem that Revolt has proved its case, but a closer examination will reveal quite a different story.

It is profoundly important to recall that the unemployed demonstrations of 1930-31 were engineered and led by the Stalinist bureaucrats through their Unemployed Councils. The leader

of the Revolt group, Stamm, knows this quite well. These were Stalinist demonstrations, a fact to which Stamm's paper "diplomatically" does not refer. This "mass action" was conducted by the criminal agents of the counter-revolutionary Stalinist bureaucracy as a part of their deception of the toilers. It is precisely through such "mass action" that Stalinism reinforces the illusion amongst the workers that it is a revolutionary tendency continuing the work of the Bolsheviks of 1917. This "mass work" is a method of tightening the Stalinist noose about the neck of the toilers. The fact that the American bourgeoisie, as a maneuver to quiet the mass of the workers, temporarily made some concessions, does not in the least alter the Stalinist nature of these unemployed demonstrations.

It is not only in America that the Stalinist bureaucrats conducted such "mass work" as that which Revolt offers as an "inspiration" to the toilers in the case of the present draft law. In Germany, for example, in the years 1930-32 there was a revolutionary crisis. The Stalinist renegades also carried on their "mass work" there,— millions of German toilers were deluded; Stalinism used its control and influence over the German proletarian vanguard to sell out the German masses to the Nazis. This was the upsnot of Stalinist "mass work" in Germany! The Stalinists in other countries by means of "mass work" covered up this betrayal in Germany.

It is clear that the fostering of Stalinist illusions is an organic part of Revolt's slogan of "mass action" issued in the present situation.

* * *

Stamm is merely a reflection of much more important "mass liners," In a further examination of the "mass line" form of opportunism, we turn to one of Stamm's political ancestors, Cannon of the Trotskyite S.W.P., from whom Stamm inherited his orientation.

The Trotskyites also issue slo-

gans of "mass action." They orient themselves toward work with the rank and file of the reformist trade unions. In a recent speech, Cannon indulged in some "self-criticism" which throws profound light upon the utterly deceptive nature of the Trotskyite claim that in their "mass line" they are building a new revolutionary party. Cannon characterized the Trotskyite "mass work" in the trade union as follows:

"But our work in the trade unions up till now has been largely a day to day affair based upon the daily problems and has lacked a general political orientation and perspective. This has tended to blur the distinction between us and pure and simple trade unionists. In many cases, at times, they appeared to be one with us. It was fair weather and good fellows were together." (Socialist Appeal, October 19, 1940. My emphasis - J.C.H.)

We observe that in their "mass work" the Trotskyites stand self-exposed as nothing more than "pure and simple trade unionists." Now, it is crystal clear that pure and simple trade unionists are not and cannot be building a revolutionary party. A revolutionist is in the first place infinitely more than a mere trade unionist. Pure and simple trade unionists in reformist unions are reformist supporters of imperialism. Such is the manner in which the Trotskyites self-confessedly pursue their "mass line" which they pretend is their work of building a new revolutionary party!

Cannon's admission may seem indiscreet or even stupid, coming as it does from the new head of the "4th International." Therefore, it must be made clear that Cannon covered up his admission very carefully by giving the impression that from now on things would be different in the S.W.P. He made it seem as if the fact that the S.W.P.'s "mass work" resembled the activity of a pure and simple trade unionist was merely a matter of inefficiency, i.e., poor application of an essentially Marxist line. Cannon, naturally, was at pains to conceal the

fact that the "mass orientation" in the present situation is organically opportunistic and is inescapably a negation of the struggle for a new revolutionary party. The Trotskyite worker is ^{so} profoundly imbued with "mass line" illusions, however, that by and large he cannot even guess the implications of Cannon's "self-criticism." Should the Trotskyite worker realize that in an orientation to the politically backward workers it is not even possible to pose the problem of building a revolutionary party, then, of course, he would begin to see Cannon's admission in a new light. The Trotskyite worker would then begin to understand that the struggle for a new revolutionary party can be oriented only toward the politically advanced workers who have already broken with the bourgeoisie subjectively and who are Bolshevik-minded. It is toward the workers within the pseudo-Bolshevik political organizations that the fight for a new party must be oriented and not toward the backward, still subject-

ively pro-bourgeois workers.

The first requirement of a worker who desires a new revolutionary party is to break from Cannon, Shachtman, Oehler, Stamm and the various other self-styled "revolutionary" tendencies which send him off on a wild goose chase toward the backward mass of the workers. If even those workers who already desire a new revolutionary party do not understand the correct orientation, if they allow themselves to be converted into "pure and simple trade unionists," then obviously the path to a new party remains barred. Then the slogan of "mass action" will remain a snare, a cover for a negation of the struggle for a new party. Such negation is, historically, simply a form of support to Stalin and to the bourgeoisie, and it is in this historical light that the opportunists' slogan of "mass action" must be understood.

J. C. Hunter
October 24, 1940

HEAD

STALIN

TROTSKY

OF LENIN

by G E O R G E M A R L E N

AN EXPOSURE OF THE STALINIST METHOD
OF PREVENTING PROLETARIAN REVOLUTION.

493 pages
One Dollar
Postpaid

Address:
P.O. Box 67
Station D.
New York

THE TROTSKY SCHOOL OF FALSIFICATION

W H O I N F O R M E D S T A L I N ?

From the meager documentary evidence at the disposal of the revolutionary workers, it is only with the greatest difficulty that the picture of the Stalinist conspiracy for power can be reconstructed in its major and most important features. One of the essential component parts that enter into this picture is the so-called Testament of Lenin. Much confusion, deception and controversy has been woven around this momentous document in which Lenin laid down a clear-cut line of removing Stalin.

As we have learned from the few bits of information available, Lenin destined this document for the Twelfth Congress of the Russian Communist Party, held in April 1923. However, the world learned of Lenin's "will" long after the Twelfth Congress, and not from the leadership of the Russian Communist Party, which included Trotsky. In 1925, Max Eastman, an American journalist, a non-Marxist politically, brought this document to the attention of the workers. As is well known, the entire Stalinist leadership vigorously denied the existence of Lenin's "will." Trotsky attacked Eastman, stating categorically: "ALL TALK WITH REGARD TO A CONCEALED OR MUTILATED 'WILL' IS NOTHING BUT A DESPICABLE LIE. . ." (L. Trotsky, International Press Correspondence, September 3, 1925, #68, p. 1005. My capitals - G.M.)

The talk about the existence of the Testament persisted, nevertheless. Years later Trotsky himself published a pamphlet "The Suppressed Testament of Lenin." On page 12 of this pamphlet Trotsky tells the reader that only two persons in the beginning knew about the Testament, Krupskaya and Lenin's secretary, Volodicheva. The document, Trotsky said, had been kept by Krupskaya under lock and key, and only after Lenin's death did she hand the Testament over to the secretariat of

the Central Committee, which as we know was headed by the General Secretary, Stalin.

"The so-called testament was written at two periods, separated by an interval of ten days: December 25, 1922 and January 4, 1923. At first only two persons knew of the document: the stenographer, M. Volodicheva, who wrote it from dictation, and Lenin's wife, N. Krupskaya. As long as there remained a glimmer of hope for Lenin's recovery, Krupskaya left the document under lock and key. After Lenin's death, not long before the thirteenth congress, she handed the testament to the secretariat of the Central Committee, in order that through the party congress it should be brought to the attention of the party for whom it was destined." (L. Trotsky, The Suppressed Testament of Lenin, p. 12. My emphasis - G.M.)

The impression was created by Trotsky that none of the leaders had read the text of the document prior to Lenin's death, but that it was brought to the attention of the secretariat headed by Stalin, after Lenin died.

Many years following Lenin's death, Trotsky in an amazing article entitled "Did Stalin Poison Lenin?" -- an article which by the way has been, "strangely" enough, received in silence by Cannon, Shachtman, Stamm and Oehler and completely ignored in their official publications -- of a sudden gave an entirely different version. It seems from this new version that Stalin had read the Testament while Lenin was still alive and was preparing to return to activity. It was the period of extensive bureaucratic machinations which Stalin and his allies, Zinoviev, Kamenev and others were carrying out throughout the Soviet Union. Lenin's return to political work would have

meant the death of Stalin's conspiracy for power and his position as a party leader. Stalin realized that his annihilation could be prevented only by Lenin's death:

"When Stalin first read the text he broke out into billingsgate against Lenin. The testament not only failed to terminate the internal struggle, which was what Lenin wanted, but enhanced it to a feverish pitch. Stalin could no longer doubt, that Lenin's return to activity would mean his own political death. Only Lenin's death could clear the way for him." (L. Trotsky, Liberty, August 10, 1940, p. 24)

From the above statement it is clear that Stalin had read the Testament while Lenin was still alive, for he feared "Lenin's return to activity."

In his postscript to the Testament, Lenin very definitely and explicitly laid down a line for the removal of Stalin from his post. In the same article in Liberty, Trotsky relates that he, Zinoviev and Kamenev were informed by Stalin on a certain day "that Lenin had suddenly called him in and had asked for poison." (p. 24) Trotsky himself intimates that this story of Stalin's was a pure invention. Trotsky asks concerning Stalin's tale that Lenin had asked him for poison: - "But did Lenin actually ask Stalin for poison? Was the whole version not invented by Stalin to prepare his alibi?" (Ibid.) Trotsky goes on to say that "Only a few days before, Lenin had written his pitiless postscript to the testament." (Ibid.) In other words, only a few days ~~after~~ Lenin had written his proposal to remove Stalin, the latter came around with a suspicious yarn about Lenin's "request" for poison.

With the publication of the article "Did Stalin Poison Lenin?" Trotsky had to his "credit" three contradictory versions of the story of Lenin's Testament: - 1) The 1925 version: all talk of the existence of the Testament "is a despicable lie;" 2) the 1932 version: the Testament existed and was authentic, but that it was at first

known to ~~the~~ only two persons and that as long as there was a glimmer of hope for Lenin's recovery -- which hope, Trotsky indicated in his obituary article on Lenin, existed until Lenin's very last day -- it was kept under lock and key by Krupskaya. The document was turned over to the Secretariat, according to this version, in 1924, only after Lenin's death. Trotsky in this version definitely conveys the impression that the highest leaders, Stalin among them, and even Trotsky himself, became familiar with the text of the Testament not before, but after Lenin's death; 3) the 1940 and final version: Stalin read the Testament during Lenin's life. Significantly enough, according to this version, only a few days after the Testament was completed, Stalin proposed to "send" poison to Lenin.

There are certain vital questions which must be raised about this whole matter. On the one hand, Trotsky clearly indicates that Stalin read the Testament before Lenin's death which occurred in January 1924. On the other hand, Trotsky states that he himself first learned about the Testament only on May 22, 1924, i.e., after Lenin's death, at a meeting of the council of seniors of the Thirteenth Party Congress. Trotsky says: "It was here that the oppositional members of the Central Committee first learned about the testament, I among them." (The Suppressed Testament of Lenin, p. 12. My emphasis - G.M.) The question arises - How did Stalin manage to read the Testament before Trotsky? Is it possible that Krupskaya, who had the Testament under lock and key, gave it to Lenin's enemy, Stalin, rather than to Trotsky to whom Lenin entrusted the fight against Stalin? Trotsky in My Life, p. 485, relates that the immediate cause of Lenin's breaking off all relations with Stalin was that, in trying to cut Lenin off from all sources of information, Stalin had been very rude to Krupskaya. Did Krupskaya, who had a fairly good knowledge of Stalin's machinations and of the sharp antagonism between Lenin and Stalin, prefer to confide the text of the Testament to Stalin rather than to Trotsky?

There are a few more legitimate

questions. When Trotsky, as he alleges, heard Stalin's suspicious proposal to "send" poison to Lenin, why did not Trotsky inform the people in Lenin's household of the possibility that a plot against Lenin's life was being hatched? Why did he not disclose to the Communist workers the character of the "poison consultation" Stalin had held with him, Zinoviev and Kamenev? The whole "poison consultation," Trotsky indicates, was so extraordinary and bore such mysterious aspects, that the picture of it burned itself indelibly into Trotsky's mind and remained there vividly even in 1940: "I recall how extraordinary, enigmatic, and out of tune with the circumstances Stalin's face SEEMED TO ME THEN. A sickly smile was fixed on it, as a mask." (Liberty, August 10, 1940, p. 24. My capitals - G.M.) Yet, for sixteen years, Trotsky kept silent about the whole affair! And Cannon keeps silent about it even now.

Trotsky revealed at the so-called Dewey Commission that when Zinoviev and Kamenev joined him three years after these events in 1923, all the secrets of the Troika of Zinoviev-Kamenev-Stalin became known to him:- I must introduce, that after the split of Kamenev and Zinoviev from Stalin, all the secrets of the 'Troika' became known by me as an ally of Zinoviev and Kamenev." (The Case of Leon Trotsky, p. 80. My emphasis - G.M.) What secrets of the Stalinist conspiracy did Trotsky take with him into the grave?

Let us make a brief survey of the relations of Lenin, Stalin and Trotsky in 1922-1923, in the light of the statements of Trotsky himself. In December 1922 Lenin prepared his "bomb" against Stalin on the National Question. In January 1923 Lenin wrote his postscript to the Testament proposing the removal of Stalin. A few days later Stalin consulted Trotsky, Zinoviev and Kamenev on the question of "sending" poison to Lenin. Early in March 1923 Lenin declared his solidarity

with the Georgian anti-Stalinists, the Mdivani group, and made ready to demolish Stalin politically and organizationally. At the same time Lenin notified Trotsky not to make compromises with Stalin even on a correct line. To leave no shred of doubt as to how he felt toward Stalin, Lenin in a letter on March 6, 1923 broke off all relations with Stalin. Of what significance, therefore, was Trotsky's "strange" and "inexplicable" statement to Kamenev on the very day when Lenin broke relations with Stalin, of which Trotsky was immediately informed, that "I am against removing Stalin. . . ." (My Life, p. 486)?

There stands before the revolutionary workers a whole series of vital questions. In all his voluminous writings, in the eighteen years of the existence of Stalinism, Trotsky withheld the precise answers to these questions. The revolutionary workers will find a full answer to these and many other questions concerning the origin and rise of Stalinism and the precise character of each person's part in it, including Trotsky's, only when Stalinism is overthrown by the revolutionary proletariat. Meanwhile every revolutionary worker must strive to learn as much as possible about the true story of the Stalinist degeneration of the first workers state. They must not accept things on anyone's say-so, but must demand documentary proof. They must break through the conspiracy of silence by means of which Cannon, Shachtman, Oehler and the like strive to obscure and conceal the real essence and course of the Stalinist conspiracy, and especially Trotsky's part in it. The revolutionary workers must understand why Cannon, Shachtman and Co. remain silent about Trotsky's article, "Did Stalin Poison Lenin?" and dodge the issues and questions it raises. Every sincere fighter for the cause of the proletariat must press forward to learn the entire truth despite the Cannons, Shachtmans, and Oehlers.

George Marlen
December 18, 1940