
**Message from the
Central Executive Committee of the
Workers Party of America in Chicago
to the Executive Committee of the
Communist International in Moscow
re: Leon Trotsky's Book *1917* and
the *Newyorker Volkszeitung*
[circa Dec. 20, 1924]**

Typescript in RGASPI, f. 515, op. 1, d. 261, l. 5.

On December 13th [1924] the *Daily Worker* carried a statement by the Central Executive Committee instructing the Party press to republish the official review of Comrade Trotsky's book, *1917*, which appeared in the *Pravda*, the official organ of the Russian Communist Party.¹ This statement contained the additional instruction to the party press not to republish the book *1917* or any part of it. In connection with the second instruction, the statement of the CEC cited the *Volkszeitung* as having begun the serial publication of the book.²

¹ Leon Trotsky's book *1917*, published in two parts in an edition of 40,000 copies, was the third volume of his Collected Works to be published by the State Publishing House in Moscow. A collection of previously published material relating to the October Revolution of 1917, the book included a lengthy introductory essay by Trotsky entitled "Lessons of October." This essay represented an attack on the suitability for leadership of Grigorii Zinoviev, at the time *primus inter pares* among the old guard "collective leadership" of the post-Lenin Russian Communist Party. Bibliographer Louis Sinclair list Sept. 15, 1924 as the date of Trotsky's essay; the reference of this document to Dec. 13 of that same year makes clear that a rapid effort was launched to undermine and squelch further circulation of the essay.

² The German-language daily *Newyorker Volkszeitung* was edited by Ludwig Lore, a friend of Trotsky from the time of his New York exile who was himself the subject of ideological scrutiny and factional attack inside the Workers Party.

The CEC has found out since that the *Volkszeitung* was not publishing the book 1917 but another book by Comrade Trotsky on *Lenin*.³ In citing incorrectly the *Volkszeitung* for the serial publication of 1917, the CEC based its action on misinformation supplied by one of its members, Comrade Jay Lovestone.

The CEC is of the opinion that Comrade Trotsky's book on Lenin, which the *Volkszeitung* has been publishing is in many respects as objectionable from the point of view of Leninism as is the book *1917*. Unless simultaneously counteracted by a true expression of the Russian Revolution and of Leninism, the publication of the book on Lenin will be positively harmful to a correct understanding of Bolshevism and Leninism. The publication of these writings of Comrade Trotsky without an accompanying analysis from the Leninist standpoint is not conducive to the Bolshevization of our Party.

At the same time the CEC wants to state that the ideological struggle against the deviation of Comrade Trotsky and his followers is positively weakened by such false steps as citing the *Volkszeitung* for things which it had not committed. The best antidote to Trotskyism and other opportunist deviations from Comintern policy is a systematic ideological campaign of education of our membership in the principles and tactics of Leninism as expressed by Lenin and by the Russian Communist Party and the Communist International. The Educational Department of the Workers Party is taking all necessary measures to make available for our Party the treasure of revolutionary knowledge and experience embodied in the teachings of Leninism.

Edited with footnotes by Tim Davenport

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³ An "authorized translation" of Leon Trotsky's book *Lenin* was first published in the United States in 1925 by Minton, Balch & Co. of New York City. A low-cost popular edition from the same plates was produced soon afterwards by Blue Ribbon Books.