

LENIN
AND THE
BOLSHEVIKI

BY

MOISSAÏE J. OLGIN

MEMBER CENTRAL COMM.
COMMUNIST PARTY ^{of the}

EDITOR: MORNING FREIHEIT

PRICE 5¢

INTRODUCTION

The Revolutionary Workers League is republishing verbatim, without the omission or alteration of one word or comma, the work of a political opponent. This article is particularly significant today because of its remarkable similarity to the official "communist" position internationally and in Spain.

The position held by Olgin in 1917 represented the official concepts and theories of social-democracy (Menshevism) as it manifested itself in its struggle against Marxism (Bolshevism). The split in the party in 1903 clearly established two distinct schools of scientific thought. Olgin, the Menshevik, was fighting bitterly against Lenin, the Marxist.

The republication of this article establishes that 19 years after the October Revolution, Stalinism has completely abandoned the line of Marxism, the line of Lenin, and is applying all the theoretical rubbish of Menshevism, to the Spanish Revolution.

Reprinted from ASIA, Volume 17; Number 10; Page 779;
December 1917.

Journal of the American Asiatic Association.

Officers of the American Asiatic Association for 1917 --

President

Lloyd C. Griscom, former Minister to Japan.

Vice-Presidents

Eugene P. Thomas, Pres. U.S. Steel Products Co., N.Y.

Theodore B. Wilcox, Pres. Portland Flouring Mills Co.,
Portland

Alba B. Johnson, Pres. Baldwin Locomotive Works, Phila.

John B. Cleveland, Lockhart Mills, S. C.

Charles M. Schwab, Chairman Bethlehem Steel Corp.

Ellison A. Smyth, Pres. Pelzer Mfg. Co., S. C.

Treasurer

Joseph Read Patterson, General Manager in U.S. of
Arnhold Bros. & Co., Ltd., China.

Reprinted by

Revolutionary Workers League

28 East 14th Street, NYC

2139 W. Division St.
Chicago, Ill.

LENIN AND THE BOLSHÉVIKI
The Record and Theories of the Petrograd Leader
of the "Reds".

By Moissaye J. Olgin,
Author of "The Soul of the Russian Revolution"

The news of momentous developments under the direct leadership of Nicolai Lenin reached this country on Nov. 6. The Petrograd Council of Workmen and the Soldiers, under the chairmanship of Leo Trotzki, declared the Provisional Government deposed and a new government to be created by the Soldiers' and Workmen's Delegates. In an address to the Council, Lenin outlined as follows the two principal features of the new "radical" government: First, an armistice as a preliminary step to peace; second, the handing over of the land to the peasants. A proclamation to the army announces, "We have deposed without bloodshed the Government which rose against the revolution."

At this early period of the new phase in the Bolsheviki activities (November eighth) no clear view of the situation is possible. But to those who followed the course of internal politics in Russia it was evident that sooner or later the Bolsheviki, or Maximalists, under Lenin's leadership would make a new attempt to put their theories into practice. It was known that Petrograd was the stronghold of Bolshevism and that the Petrograd garrison was under the influence of Lenin's followers. On the other hand, it was known that the great mass of workingmen all over the country were disinclined to accept Lenin's formulae and that the All-Russian Convention of the Workmen's Councils had rejected the Bolsheviki program. How far the influence of Lenin has grown among the soldiers at the front and among the bulk of the workmen in the country, - this is the question which will decide the fate of the Revolution.

Lenin's program, as set forth in the proclamation of the Bolsheviki Military Committee, is in keeping with his general political conceptions. It follows the line of least resistance. It formulates things that can be easily grasped by an untrained mind. It throws out a bait to attract the mob. At the same time it avoids touching upon the most vital problems. An armistice is promised to the soldiers, who naturally prefer non-fighting to fighting, yet nothing is stated as to what the Bolsheviki government would undertake in case the other allies should refuse to follow Russia's call, - the idea of a separate peace seems to be so unpopular that not even Lenin dared to speak of it. A handing over of the land is promised to the peasants (a reform which was cherished also by the Kerenski government, although it could not be carried out immediately and was rightly left to the jurisdiction of the Constituent Assembly), yet the declaration carefully avoids mentioning that a measure of such vast dimensions as the land reform in Russia can be carried out only after years of efficient preliminary work. As it is, the Bolsheviki declaration means simply an appeal to the soldiers to stop fighting and an appeal to the peasants to take over the landlords' estates, - a piece of statesmanship that could hardly aid Russia on her way to a new life.

It would seem that Lenin's "radicalism" only blocks the road of the Russian revolution by calling forth a reaction and by adding to the disorganization of a country shaken to its foundations. Here, as ever, Lenin's tactics, seemingly extreme, are in reality weakening the strength of democratic Russia.

* * * * *

A smoky backroom in a little cafe in Geneva, Switzerland; a few score of picturesque-looking Russian revolutionary exiles, men and women, seated around uncovered tables over glasses of beer or tea; at the head

of the table a man in his forties, talking in a slow yet impassioned manner; and now and then an exclamation of disapproval, an outburst of indignation among a part of the audience, which would be instantly parried by a flashing remark of the speaker striking home with unusual trenchancy and venom, -this is how I see now in my imagination the leader of the Bolsheviki, the Great Inquisitor of Russian Social Democracy, Nicolai Lenin.

There is nothing remarkable in the appearance of this man; a typical Russian face with rather irregular features; a stern but not unkindly expression, something crude in manner and dress recalling the artisan rather than an intellectual and a thinker. You would ordinarily pass by a man of this kind without noticing him at all. Yet, had you happened to look into his eyes or to hear his public speech, you would not be likely to forget him.

His eyes are small, but glow with compressed fire, they are clever, shrewd, and alert; they seem to be constantly on guard, and they pierce you from behind half closed lids. As to his speech, he is at his best in a debate with an opponent. Occasions for debating were never lacking among the warring divisions of Russian Socialists. Lenin does not reply to an opponent; he vivisects him. He is keen as the edge of a razor. His mind works with an amazing acuteness. He notices every flaw in a line of argument he disagrees with. He draws the most absurd conclusions from premises unacceptable to him. At the same time he is derisive. He ridicules his opponent; he castigates him. He makes you feel that his victim is an ignoramus, a fool, a presumptuous nonentity. and though you may not agree with his own syllogisms, though you may feel that his line of argument is scholastic, you are swept by the power of his logic, you are overwhelmed by his intellectual passion.

This power of conviction, coupled with a great amount of positive knowledge and a high degree of

personal bravery, made Nicolai Lenin a leader of a Social-Democratic faction.

His first appearance in Russian political life was made twenty-two years ago as an economist thoroughly familiar with Russian statistics. This was a time when Russian economic thought was deeply absorbed in the controversy between the Narodniki and the Marxists. The Narodniki (Populists) asserted that the economic future of Russia was destined to be different from that of Western Europe. In the Russian village community and in the teamwork of Russian artisans' bands they saw the nuclei of a new economic order based on equality and justice. By developing those beginnings, they taught, Russia could become an economic democracy without going through the stages of capitalism and the hardships of class struggle. They, therefore, laid great stress on the enlightening work among the rural population and on the improvements in communal ownership of land. Quite the opposite was the opinion of the Marxists. They saw in the village community only remnants of a feudal order destined to be erased by the growth of modern economic forces. As to the artisans' bands, the Marxists asserted that they were powerless to withstand the competition of the factory system rapidly developing in Russia. They, therefore, emphasized the necessity of Socialist propaganda among the industrial workingmen and of class struggle between capital and labor.

The fight was severe. The powers were nearly equal. On the side of the Narodniki were economic tradition and the charm of a romantic idea. On the side of the Marxists were youthful vigor of argument and apparent conformity with the facts of life. Yet the Marxists needed elaborate economic research to prove their assertions. Part of this work, concerning industrial development, was furnished by Tugan-Baranovski, later a famous professor, in his book, THE RUSSIAN FACTORY, ITS PAST AND

PRESENT. Another part, concerning rural Russia, was completed by Lenin in his DEVELOPMENT OF CAPITALISM IN RUSSIA, published in 1899, under the name of Vladimir Ilyin. (*)

Lenin's DEVELOPMENT OF CAPITALISM has since become a standard book in Russian economic literature. Many of its statements, bold and daring in their time, have been corroborated by later investigation and have become an organic part of Russian economic thought. Lenin's main task was to prove that the village community, preserving the appearance of equality in land distribution, had in reality gone through a process of differentiation resulting in accumulation of wealth on one pole of the village and in actual proletarianization on the other. Drawing upon the rich source of statistical data collected by the Zemstvo, in which work he himself had participated in former years, he showed that nearly one half of the peasant population were rural proletarians, "wage earners with a piece of land", while one-fifth of the village households had accumulated land and capital, had developed into a class of agricultural bourgeoisie and had become the "actual master of the village". Lenin's DEVELOPMENT OF CAPITALISM proved his thorough acquaintance with European and Russian economic literature and an unusual dexterity in polemics. Together with another book, ECONOMIC SKETCHES AND ARTICLES, published in the same year and devoted mainly to problems of industrial development in Russia, it put Lenin-Ilyin in the first rank of

* Both Lenin and Ilyin are pseudonyms. Lenin's real name is Nicolai Ilyitch Ulyanov. His first essay was published in 1895 under the name of Tulin.

Russian economists and made him known all over Russia. In the two following years he published a splendid translation from English of Sidney and Beatrice Webb's INDUSTRIAL DEMOCRACY, proving that he was not only a well trained economist, but also an assiduous worker.

Thus, when he joined the revolutionary movement, he was by no means a homo novus in public life. He came as a man with authority, demanding respect and attention.

His first steps in revolutionary work were connected with the Social Democratic organization called Iskra (Spark), formed about the end of the nineteenth century and aiming at uniting all Russian Social Democratic groups and circles into one political party. The organization published a secret paper of the same name, of which Lenin was co-editor and one of the leading spirits. In this capacity he very early manifested a remarkable feature of his character: his intolerance of the opinions of others, his readiness to treat comrades as enemies and traitors to the Socialist cause if they happened to disagree with him as to program or tactics.

There was a group of Social-Democrats concerned with the publication THE WORKMEN'S CAUSE and known under the name of Economists. This group advocated the not-altogether wrong idea that political work among labor interests ought to begin with organizing trade unions; that, to awaken the masses to make political protests, their immediate economic needs ought to be taken into consideration. This group had a sense of political realism; it preferred the movement of masses, however primitive, to discussion of principles in intellectual circles. It may have underestimated the aptitude of the masses to grasp political issues - events have proven that it was so; yet it was doing practical and useful work.

This group Lenin chose as the target of his most

bitter attacks. There was nobody in the Iskra organization so sincerely enraged, so full of hatred against the Economists as Lenin, - in his book WHAT IS THERE TO BE DONE? published abroad in 1902 and smuggled into Russia by the revolutionary organizations, he asserted that the Economists "denounced socialism and politics", that their work was detrimental to the cause of the workingmen as "an injurious bourgeois undertaking". He declared a war of extermination against the Economists, among whom there were old devoted Social-Democrats with a record of long and fruitful activities. He did not shrink from destroying Social-Democratic organizations which had established connections with the masses - a task far from easy under "illegal" conditions. "Better no organization than an organization imbued with wrong ideas", was his slogan.

Another feature of his conceptions revealed itself clearly in the same book, his mistrust of the masses. Lenin does not believe that the masses can find their own way in the maze of the modern social life. A staunch Marxist and an ardent devotee of the economic interpretation of history, he nevertheless maintains that the workingmen need a guide, an intellectual star to light their road to a socialist order. "The workingmen can have no Social-Democratic consciousness of their own", he writes. "This consciousness can be brought to them only from without. The history of all the countries prove that by itself, through its own powers, the working class can develop only a trade-unionist consciousness, an understanding of the necessity of organization, of economic struggle against employers of factory laws, etc. As to the doctrine of socialism, it has grown out of the philosophic, historic and economic theories worked out by the educated representatives of the propertied classes, the intellectuals."

This theory was, perhaps, incompatible with orthodox Marxism, yet it admirably suited Lenin's

character. It opened immense vistas before the intellectuals, the "educated representatives of propertied classes", who came to work among the masses (Lenin himself belongs by birth to the Russian landowning nobility). On one side are the masses, mere clay for historical structures; on the other is the intellectual, the leader, the moulder who puts life and meaning into the mute stuff.

No, he does not believe in elementary forces, in the genius of the masses, - this knight of pure Social-Democratic reason. "Every kind of admiration for the elementary power of the labor movement", he writes, "every kind of minimizing the role of conscious elements, means, independently of the subjective intentions of those who do so, a strengthening of the influence of bourgeois ideology over the workmen". The labor-class in itself has a fatal inclination to become imbued with capitalistic conceptions. It is up to the Social-Democratic intellect to rescue it from peril.

This view involves a line of tactics far from democratic. At the second convention of the Russian Social-Democratic Labor Party in the summer of 1903 Lenin's aspirations proved to be in crass contrast to those of his own group, Iskra. The convention had to vote on the statutes of the party forming its constitution. Lenin demanded a thoroughly centralized party, where all activities are directed from a central body practically not responsible to the organization. Lenin's friends emphasized the necessity of local self-government and democratic control within the party organization. Lenin succeeded in rallying around himself a majority of the convention, to which the minority was strenuously opposed. For a short time it seemed that the difference of opinion was not very wide and would permit both Lenin and his opponents to remain in the same party. Soon, however, it became apparent that Lenin's views and methods were of a character totally different from those cherished by

the oldest and most experienced leaders. The party split into two factions; the Bolsheviki, or "members of the majority", deriving their name from the fact that their program won the majority in the convention of 1903; and the Mensheviki, or "members of the minority". They are known, too, as Maximalists and Minaminalists.

He did nothing to develop mass movement in Russia; it was developed by itself through the irresistible impulses of life. But he gained considerable influence over Social-Democratic extremists. His plan aimed at a secret, centralized, perfectly trained and efficient body of revolutionists spreading among the masses and inciting them to action. This body, he thought, must be limited in number. Its members ought to be the sole propagators of the revolutionary idea and the sole makers of the revolution. Guided from one center and acting simultaneously everywhere, they could make a revolution at a certain moment fixed in advance; they could overthrow the government with one blow, seize political power, and establish themselves as a Provisional Government in preparation for a republic.

What appealed to the workingmen was the boldness, the straightforwardness, the seeming revolutionary austerity of Lenin's assertions. The bourgeois were wrong under all circumstances; this was so easy to understand. The revolution was to be completed by labor only; this appealed to the imagination. The workingclass ought to stop at nothing short of an armed insurrection; this sounded well. The Bolsheviki did not bother about intricacies of social development, about possible twists and turns in the course of the revolution, about alliances and compromises; this looked radical. The Bolsheviki drew their adherents from the intellectuals on one hand, and from the least enlightened representatives of revolutionary labor on the other. and they became a factor in Russian political life.

The revolution in 1905 put before the Socialists a series of grave problems. For a time it looked as if the movement was going to destroy all foundations of absolute and establish democracy. The question of a provisional revolutionary government took on a practical aspect. The Mensheviki, at a convention in the summer of 1905, declared Social-Democratic participation in a provisional government to be in the interest of the revolution. A leader of the Mensheviki, Martynov, in his book, **THOSE ADVANCED AND THOSE BEHIND**, explained this decision. "The revolution," he wrote, "will hardly start from the very end. The provisional government which will spring up after the first decisive victory will find the mass of the people on a very low stage of political development. The provisional government will be able to retain its power only when enjoying the confidence of the nation. It is, therefore, essential that the provisional government express not the most extreme tendencies in the revolution, but represent a resultant of the views of the various classes and groups which had been opposed to the old regime and then become the masters of the situation."

This is precisely what happened in the spring of 1917. Against this view Lenin directed his most poisonous arrows. He thought it a betrayal of the revolution to compromise with other parties. He declared that the Mensheviki were enemies of the working class upholding the reactionary forces. His scheme was a dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry, and elimination of the bourgeois parties from the provisional government in order to conduct the revolution to a final conclusion and to establish a republic. He did not say that the provisional government ought to introduce Socialism, but some of his followers, Trotzki among them, inferred this from his ideas. "Either one or the other thing," Lenin wrote in 1905 in a pamphlet entitled **TWO TACTICS OF THE SOCIAL DEMOCRACY IN A DEMOCRATIC REVOLUTION**, "Either we strive, together with the people, towards a successful conclusion of the revolution in spite of the inconsistent,

selfish and cowardly bourgeoisie, or we are careful not to frighten away the bourgeois parties. Then we are betraying the proletariat and the people in the interests of that same inconsistent, selfish and cowardly bourgeoisie".

The fact was that the Russian revolution of 1905-06 as well as that of 1917, was a national movement comprising various degrees of radicalism. It was also a fact that the defeat of the revolution of 1905 was largely due to lack of unity in the revolutionary ranks, the liberal parties therein having withdrawn their support after the Imperial Duma was granted. These facts did not fit into the scheme of a "dictatorship of the workingmen and the peasantry" and therefore they were ignored by Lenin. Ignoring the most striking facts, or interpreting them away, was a peculiarity of Lenin's mind.

At times it lead to political blindness. In 1906, after the dissolution of the first Duma, when it became evident that absolutism had retained its power - when the mass of the peoples were becoming disappointed and the revolutionary organizations were crumbling and the collapse of the revolution was evident - Lenin was preaching nothing less than an immediate armed insurrection. He urged the creation of an army of conspirators, to consist of groups of from five to ten "professional revolutionists", those groups to go among the people and stage an insurrection. He even fixed a date for this insurrection; the end of the summer.

When, in the dark years that followed the collapse of the revolution, the Mensheviki were trying to adapt themselves to new conditions, making every effort to live and work among the masses, to organize "legal" or half-legal trades unions, to help in the establishing of educational societies and cooperative organi-

zations, even at the price of sometimes hiding their true Social-Democratic physiognomy under the mask of "legality", Lenin branded them as cowards, as compromisers, as weaklings surrendering to the triumphant foe. In his opinion they were "befogging the class-consciousness of the proletariat", which he considered worse than refraining from any activity whatever.

Now, as before, he advocated an armed insurrection. He looked upon social democratic activities as a preparation for such an insurrection, as, in effect, the formation of secret bands of professional revolutionists ready to strike when the time was ripe. To the more realistic, sober-minded Mensheviki, who rejected this plan as utopian, he gave the name of Liquidators - people liquidating the revolution.

Life mocked at Lenin. Even his own adherents had to adapt themselves to changed political conditions, to do prosaic every-day work among the masses, to abandon in practice, if not in theory, the romantic idea of an armed revolution conducted from one center and completed by the workingclass and the peasants only. Even the Bolsheviki were trying to make use of remnants of political freedom achieved in 1905, hoping thus to facilitate the organizing process of the people which sometimes assumes an aspect different from that forecasted in the Social-Democratic program. Yet Lenin himself remained firm. It was his creed that all Liberals are cowards and traitors, and that the salvation of Russia can only come from a dictatorship of the workmen and the peasants, achieved by an armed revolution.

History has brushed aside Lenin's interpretation of opinions and events in this crisis. The revolution of 1917 was a revolution of all the classes, groups, parties, creeds, nationalities in Russia, united, to overthrow the intolerable regime whose representatives had proven traitors to their own country. The revolu-

tion was not an armed insurrection of well-organized plotters directed from one center. In fact the revolution was not organized at all. Yet those who knew Lenin were in no doubt as to his attitude toward the provisional government and the continuation of the war.

Lenin is a man who sees life only from the angle of his own ideas. Even in 1917, as in 1905, and after the overthrow of the Romanovs at a time when such a possibility was a mere dream, he cannot acquiesce in the cooperation of revolutionary Socialists with representatives of other parties. The task he would have assigned in 1905 to a dictatorship of workingmen and peasants, had been completed in 1917 by a totally different combination of forces. This, however, did not change Lenin's conception. His slogan now is "If a republic in Russia is secured, let us go forward, let us establish Socialism". That Russia is unorganized, that the productivity of labor is low, that labor itself in Russia has had no experience in self-government and no experience in managing public affairs, that the bulk of the peasants are by no means Socialists - these are facts that do not hamper the fantastic flight of Lenin's imagination. Of course one could remind him of what he had written twelve years ago about the possibility of social revolution in Russia. In his TWO TACTICS he said, "The stage of Russia's economic development (forming an objective condition) and the stage of consciousness and progress of organizing among the masses of the proletariat (forming a subjective condition intrinsically connected with the objective) make an immediate complete emancipation of the working class (introduction of Socialism) impossible". Even Lenin would have to admit that both objective and subjective conditions have not changed substantially since 1905. Yet here he is, preaching the establishment of Socialism in war-ridden, impoverished Russia.

Lenin lives in an imaginary world in which he mistakes the creations of his mind for realities. Only this can account for the fact that he welcomed the "fraternization" of Russian and German soldiers at the front. Did not the Socialists indeed preach for generations, "Proletarians of all the countries, unite"? Wasn't the "fraternization" an example of such unity? Lenin scoffs at his critics who call it treason. "They cannot understand", he writes in his PRAVDA, "that we look at the fraternization from a different angle; for us they are only slaves of the existing order and its masters". The German soldiers are proletarians, and therefore welcome Russian Socialists, whatever the circumstances may be.

From this statement there is only one step to a propaganda among the soldiers in favor of an actual armistice with the Germans - in spite of the contentions of the bourgeois provisional government - and to a propaganda among the city workingmen to overthrow the existing order.

Here as in previous cases Lenin finds adherents among the least educated and least organized masses. His slogans are easily understood: "The war ought to be stopped at any price; the factories ought to be taken over by those who toil; the bourgeois parties ought to be driven out of the provisional government." It is far easier to catch up these slogans than to grasp the actual situation and to gain an insight into the vastly complicated political and economic conditions of present-day Russia.

It must be noted, however, that Lenin is by no means a personification of Russian Socialism. The Russian Social-Democrats are only one party among many Socialists groups and parties in Russia, and the Bolsheviki are only one faction among the Social-Democrats. What lends Lenin's propaganda the great-

est notoriety is the fact that he is especially influential with the labor masses in the capital. Those masses, however, are one small fraction of Russian labor.

It is Russia's misfortune that factional squabbles similar to those practised in the little Social-Democratic "colonies" in Berne and Geneva, are now applied on a vast scale to world politics. Yet those who love Russia and know her never lose confidence in her creative powers and the ability of her people to find a way out of the most difficult situations.

APPENDIX

In 1917, the Russian masses, confronting annihilation, were fighting intervention, pestilence, starvation and Civil War. Not the least of their enemies were the Mensheviks, - who defended the continuation of the war, were for the defense of the fatherland, opposed the fraternization of troops at the front, and rejected Lenin's concept of a sharp break with the bourgeois state. To "save" the revolution, Menshevism demanded the support of bourgeois democracy and the unity of the working class with the agents of imperialism.

Flowing from the general theories of Social-Democracy, viewing the social revolution in the narrow vision of the petty bourgeois radical, as merely the reform of the capitalist system, Olgin viciously fought the basic principles of Marxism. Olgin, petty-bourgeois politician and Menshevik, could not

conceive, let alone understand, Lenin's intransi-
gence on the questions of the Proletarian Dic-
tatorship, Armed Insurrection and Soviets.

Lenin, proceeding from the premise of the class nature of the state, saw the social revolution as the culmination of the class struggle in the violent overthrow of the bourgeoisie, and in the complete shattering of the state as the political instrument of the ruling class. The fraternization of the troops at the front - so derided by Olgin - was the necessary medium for bringing about the closest cooperation of the international proletariat, and by example, to follow the actions of the Russian workers. Lenin recognized that the continued existence of the Soviet Union as a workers state depended upon the extension of the October Revolution.

In 1917, with the Provisional Kerensky Govern-
ment in power, Kornilov led an army of white Guards
against Petrograd. Lenin proposed a temporary
united front with the Kerensky Government to smash
this immediate danger. But he never proposed to
abandon the struggle against Kerensky. Indeed, he pro-
posed an even sharper struggle, with the necessary
tactic, however, of directing the brunt of the physical
attack against Kornilov. Lenin's position on the
question of supporting Kerensky is contained in the
following quotation, -

"Even now, we must not support the revolution
of Kerensky. It would be a failure of principle.
How then, it will be said, must Kornilov not be
fought. Certainly, yes. But between fighting Korn-
ilov and supporting Kerensky there is a differ-
ence; there is a limit to all things, and that
limit is passed by a few Bolsheviks when they
fall for reconciliation, and let themselves be

carried away by the torrent of events.

We wage and shall continue to wage war on Kornilov, but we do not support Kerensky; we unveil his feebleness....." Lenin-August 1917.

Lenin defended his position within the Central Committee of the Russian Bolshevik Party, against Stalin, Kamenev and Zinoviev.

"Yes, the leaders of the Central Executive Committee are pursuing tactics whose sole logic is the defense of the bourgeoisie and the landowners. And there is not the slightest doubt that the Bolsheviks, were they to allow themselves to be caught in the trap of constitutional illusions .. that such Bolsheviks would prove miserable traitors to the proletarian cause...would prove traitors to democracy and freedom". (Lenin - Oct. 12, 1917, ON THE EVE OF OCTOBER (page 16)

Lenin said we do not support Kerensky, we refuse to reconcile ourselves with bourgeois democracy; and Olgin turned his guns on Marxism. Contrast Lenin's policy with that of Stalinism today in Spain! We must fight Franco, say these Stalinists, bringing Menshevism up to date, but we must support the Peoples Front Government of Azana-Caballero! What striking identity with the Menshevik position advanced by Olgin for Russia in 1917!! Precisely when objective conditions demand a struggle against Franco, the unleashing of all the social forces led by the proletariat, the launching of a determined struggle to lead up to armed insurrection and no support to the bourgeois democrats, the Azana-Caballero Government, Stalinism mobilizes the masses in support of one section of the bourgeoisie against another.

Today, In Spain, under the cloak of Lenin, mutilating and distorting his principles, Stalinism

introduces the very concepts against which Lenin fought so bitterly. Here, the class struggle finally found its highest expression in Civil War and by that fact proved the complete inability of the capitalist class to solve any of the problems of Spanish society. And Stalinism, not unlike Olgin of 1917, declares its bitter hostility and hatred for the Proletarian Dictatorship.

It is said openly. Even Olgin could not contest its clarity and purpose. Here is a staunch defender of capitalism!

"It is absolutely false" declares Jesus Hernandez, Communist Party Minister of Education, "That the present workers movement has for its objective the establishment of a proletarian dictatorship, even AFTER the revolution has terminated. We Communists are motivated exclusively by the desire to defend the democratic republic. It cannot be said we have a social motive for our participation in the war." (MUNDO OBRERO, official stalinist organ in Madrid, Aug. 9, and NEW YORK TIMES, and DAILY WORKER, Aug. 10. Our emphasis.)

Stalinism supports bourgeois democracy today, rejects the strategy of developing the world revolution, rejects the extension of the October revolution, and is directed against the historical necessity of seizing power, and smashing the capitalist state.

In the light of historical proof, Lenin's line has been brilliantly confirmed. His policy was: Smash the counter-revolution, overthrow the capitalist coalition government and establish the dictatorship of the proletariat. He based his policy on the independent organs of the working-class and on the

independent revolutionary party. There is no other road for the working-class in Spain.

The Revolutionary Workers League calls for the application of Lenin's line in Spain and the building of the Communist Fourth International which will summon the oppressed of all the earth to fight for the world October.

NO SUPPORT TO AZANA

CREATE SOVIETS

NATIONALIZE INDUSTRY AND
BANKS

WORKERS CONTROL OF
PRODUCTION

LAND TO THE PEASANTS

EXPROPRIATE THE CHURCH

RIGHT OF SELF-DETERMINATION
FOR MOROCCO, CATALONIA,
GALICIA, the BASQUES

ESTABLISH THE SOVIET OF
THE IBERIAN PENINSULA

ORGANIZE A REVOLUTIONARY
MARXIST PARTY

ESTABLISH THE DICTATORSHIP
OF THE PROLETARIAT

FOR A COMMUNIST FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

NOTE ON THE FORCES IN SPAIN TODAY

The Socialist Party, with its Prieto right wing, and its Caballero left wing, carries out the same policy in the People's Front government as the Stalinists. The Anarcho-Syndicalists and the POUM are in words against the People's Front, but in action have consistently supported the "liberal" bourgeoisie against the reactionary bourgeoisie.

The POUM's position on the road to power, the state, the Dictatorship of the Proletariat, and the role of the Party, is centrist.

The Trotskyites have played a most miserable role on an international scale. Isolated from the Spanish Civil War, they trailed behind the events, making criticisms after the event. When, for example, the French and Belgian sections labelled the POUM as revolutionary, the American section branded it as centrist. Today, the Belgian Trotskyites declare the POUM has betrayed the revolution, while the American section proclaim it as a revolutionary party.


The centrists in Spain are divided into three main groupings: the London Bureau to the right, the Trotskyites to the left of the London Bureau, the POUM to the left of the Trotskyites. Fundamentally, there is no difference between these three on the basic questions of the day.

In opposition to the Stalinists, the Socialists, the Syndicalists and the POUM, the working class needs a revolutionary Marxist party. The independent class action of the proletariat depends upon the political and organizational independence of this Marxist party.

It must be built. It can be built. It will be built.

" " " " " " " "

NEW PAMPHLET
Now in Preparation
"IMPERIALIST WAR
or CIVIL WAR?"
by
Hugo Oehler

Read 
The Fighting Worker
Fourth International
Young Worker

Organs of the
Revolutionary Workers
2159 - League - W. Division
U. S. Chicago

COMMEMORATE
the ANNIVERSARY
of LENIN
LIEBKNECHT
LUXEMBURG

FRIDAY, JAN. 22nd
8:00 P.M.

GERMANIA HALL
16th ST. and 3RD AVE.

Speakers

Louis BOSCH • Larry COHEN •
Sol STEVENS • Rose KOSTER •

Auspices: New York District

Revolutionary Workers League

28 East 14th Street, New York City