

Marx, Founder of Scientific Communism and Organizer of the Communist Party

By F. BROWN

HIS name and his work will endure through the ages." With these words about Karl Marx, his co-worker Friedrich Engels concluded his talk on March 17, 1883, at the grave of the greatest thinker and revolutionist of the 19th century.

Today Karl Marx' name is not only engraved in the hearts of millions of exploited all over the world, but under the banner of Marxism, revived and developed in the epoch of imperialism by the greatest thinker and revolutionist of the 20th century, Lenin, "the proletariat is storming the heavens." In one-sixth of the world, on the road of Marxism-Leninism, the proletariat has overthrown the old order and become the ruler, and today is the builder of the classless society of which Marx "dreamed". In the rest of the world where moribund capitalism is shaking in its foundation, the working class is marching forward and the "days which are the concentrated essence of twenty years", (Marx' letters to Engels) are approaching rapidly.

The greatest merit of Marx and Engels in regard to the working class can be expressed as follows: "they roused the working class to a consciousness of their being, to their self-consciousness; they substituted dreams with science." (Lenin)

WHEN A PERIOD OF SOCIAL REVOLUTION BEGINS

Marx was the great thinker who demonstrated how "history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles" (*Communist Manifesto*) and in line with his materialist conception of history demonstrated further how

"...in the social production which human beings carry on they enter into definite relationships which are determined, that is to say, independent of their will—productive relationships which correspond to a definite revolutionary phase of the material forces of production. The totality of these productive relationships forms the economic structure of society, the real basis upon which a legal and political super-structure develops and to which definite forms of

social consciousness correspond. The mode of production, of material life, determines the general character of the social, political and intellectual processes of life. It is not the consciousness of human beings that determines their existence but conversely, it is their social existence that determines their consciousness. At a certain stage of development, the material productive forces of society come into conflict with the existing productive relationships, or (to express the matter in legal terminology) with the property relationship within which they have hitherto moved. This relationship, which has previously been developmental forms of the productive forces, now become metamorphosed into fetters upon production. A period of social revolution then begins."

And so Marx reached the conclusion that "bourgeois relations of production are the last of the antagonistic forms of the social process of production" (Preface to the *Critique of Political Economy*). Previously in the *Manifesto* he pointed out that—

"...the modern bourgeois society that has sprouted from the ruins of feudal society has not done away with class antagonisms. It has but established new classes, new conditions of oppression, new forms of struggle in place of the old ones. Our epoch, the epoch of the bourgeoisie, possesses however this distinctive feature: it has simplified the class antagonisms. Society as a whole is more and more splitting up into two great hostile camps, into two great and directly contra-posed classes: bourgeoisie and proletariat."

Here the materialist conception, the theory of the class struggle, is put forward in its completeness. Here the proletariat is defined by Marx as the class with the historic mission of building the new society, the driving force for the transformation of capitalist society into Socialist society; the proletariat which is "disciplined, unified and organized by capitalism itself." The class struggle, said Marx, sooner or later must end with the victory of the working class, which in the historical period of the transformation from private property to the Socialist order establishes the dictatorship of the proletariat.

THE THEORY OF DICTATORSHIP OF PROLETARIAT

Marx was the first to develop the theory of the proletarian dictatorship. We find his expression already in his *Class Struggle in France in 1848*, written in 1850. In 1852, writing to his friend Weydemeyer he declared explicitly:

"As far as I am concerned, I cannot claim to have discovered the existence of classes in modern society with all the strife against one another. Middle class historians long ago described the evolution of the class struggle and political economists showed the physiology of classes. I have added a new contribution with the following propositions: first, that the existence of classes is bound up with certain

phases of material production; second, that the class struggle leads inevitably to the dictatorship of the proletariat; third, that this dictatorship is but a transition to the abolition of all classes and to the creation of a society of free and equal beings."

He repeated and further developed his conception after the Commune and later in his *Criticism of the Gotha Program* pointed out again

"...that between the capitalist and Communist systems lies the period of the revolutionary transformation of the one into the other. This corresponds to a political transition period whose State can be nothing else but the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat."

No mystification by the revisionists, by the traitors to the working class, can obscure or destroy this Marxian monument. Marx not only showed that the proletariat should become the builder of the new society, that the class struggle must end with the overthrow of the capitalist society and the establishment of the revolutionary dictatorship as the instrument for this transformation, as a stage for the development of the classless society, but showed also that to reach this aim the proletariat must be conscious of the aim that it has to reach, conscious of its role, *that it must be organized*.

For decades during the period of the organization of the workers' parties, Marx and Engels were in contact with them. Already in 1844 Marx stood near to the first workers' organizations which at this time came into existence in Switzerland, London and Paris. In this period of "sturm and drang", Communism not only transformed itself from Utopia, from dreams into a scientific theory, but it worked out its program of action which was the *embryo of the present Marxian Communist Party*. It is known how Marx and Engels while occupied in this period with the elaboration of the theory of historical materialism, were at the same time closely connected with the practical development of the proletarian movement.

"We were not of the opinion at the present time to put the new scientific results only in thick books for the educated world," says Engels. "In the contrary, both of us were active in the political movement, had already among the educated world, especially in Western Germany, a certain following and strong connection with the organized proletarians. We were compelled to expound our scientific point of view but at the same time it was also important for us to win over to our views the European proletariat and primarily the Germans." (My emphasis.—F. B.)

From 1845 Marx was propagating among the members of the Union of the Just his new conceptions, namely that Communism was not a scheme for an order of society, that should be established

by powerful individuals or through the building of Utopian Socialist colonies, but that Communism meant the organization of the working class into an independent political Party which through revolutionary means should take power. Under the influence of Marx the League of the Just was transformed into the Union of Communists. Marx was present at its Congress in London and it was there that he and Engels were entrusted with the writing of the *Communist Manifesto*, the foundation-stone of the Communist Party.

THE UNION OF COMMUNISTS

The first point put forward by the Union of Communists, was the overthrow of the bourgeoisie and the rule of the proletariat, the abolition of the old bourgeois society based on class contradictions and the foundation of a new classless society, of a society without classes and private property.

The second point contained the conditions for membership: activity and corresponding devotion to the aim, revolutionary energy and zealous propaganda, acceptance of Communism, abstinence from participation in any anti-Communist political national societies, submission to the decisions of the Union, secrecy on all matters concerning the Union, unanimous acceptance into the organization.

The organizational points followed. In these fundamental points of the Statutes we find that Marx' theory takes on already a programmatic character. The final aims of the Union are closely connected with organizational measures, with the task of its membership. It determined already the activity, the Communist discipline, the impermissibility of its members to belong to bourgeois societies. While clearly determining the position of the Union of Communists and its differentiation from other working class parties at a time when the proletariat was rising, concentrating its forces in view of the approaching revolution, the Union of Communists while for the support of "every revolutionary movement against the existing social and political order of things", never ceased, however, to instill into the working class the clearist possible understanding of the historical antagonism between the bourgeoisie and proletariat, to make the proletariat conscious of its revolutionary role as the class with the historic mission of overthrowing bourgeois supremacy and the conquest of political power.

In the *Manifesto*, answering the question: in what relation do the Communists stand to the proletarians as a whole? Marx put forward clearly the international character and the role of the Communist Party as the vanguard of the proletariat.

"The Communists do not form a separate party opposed to other working-class parties. They have no interests separate and apart from those of the proletariat as a whole. They do not set up any sectarian principle of their own by which to shape and mold the proletarian movement. *The Communists are distinguished from the other working-class parties by this only:* 1) in the national struggles of the proletarians of the different countries, *they point out and bring to the front the common interests of the entire proletariat, independent of all nationalities;* 2) in the various stages of development which the struggle of the working class against the bourgeoisie has to pass through, they always and everywhere represent the interests of the movement as a whole. The Communists, therefore, *are on the one hand, practically the most advanced and resolute section of the working-class parties of every country, that section which pushes forward all others; on the other hand theoretically they have over the great mass of the proletariat the advantage of clearly understanding the line of march, the conditions and the ultimate general results of the proletarian movement.*"

The conception of the Communist Party as the vanguard of the proletariat is here clearly stated and developed. It is another one of those foundation-stones on which his greatest disciple, Lenin, in the struggle against the Mensheviks, developed the role, the tactic and strategy of the Communist Party—the leading role of the Party as the vanguard, which is not a sect but ultimately connected with the masses.

As soon as the *Manifesto* was off the press in London, the February Revolution broke out in Paris, which had an immediate repercussion in all German States. On March 13, Vienna was in insurrection. On March 18 Berlin followed. Most of the members of the Union of Communists, following the tasks elaborated in the Statutes of the Union, took their places in the battle and everywhere, during this whole period, came to the front through their courage and leadership, clear guidance in the press, in the mass meetings, in the organization of the working class, and as heroes on the barricades. Marx, Engels, Wolf, Freiligrath, were active in issuing the *Rheinische Zeitung*, the leading revolutionary organ of Germany; Born was in Berlin and Leipzig, editing *Das Volk*, which in its first issue declared: "If we speak of the people (das Volk) it seems all the world is included; this paper, however, represents only a definite class inside the State, the working class . . ." Later on, Born was at the head of the Leipzig insurrection in May, 1849, where he actively led the struggle on the barricades and the famous disciplined retreat to Freibourg, Engels, Willich, Moll, took part in the campaign for the National Constitution in Baden, and other Communists were active in the different cities, in the provinces, as the real organizers of the struggle.

The 1848 revolution ended with the victory of the nobility who, however, were forced to a compromise with the defeated bourgeoisie who were in possession of economic power. The Communists, the heroes of so many battles on the barricades, retreated to London, where the Union was reorganized and became the center of the international revolutionary movement—Blanquists, Chartists, Polish revolutionists, Hungarian revolutionists united, hoping for a new revolutionary explosion and actively preparing for it.

Marx, however, at this moment was of the opinion that the proletariat was not ready for its battle, that it needed a period of education and organization to make it fit for its role. The position of the enthusiasts did not correspond to this line and the Union split.

THE INDEPENDENT AIM OF THE PROLETARIAT

The headquarters of the Union was transferred to Cologne, where Marx revised the Statutes pointing out that the most important aim of the Union was:

“To bring about through all means of propaganda and political struggle the destruction of the old society leading to the spiritual, political and economic liberation of the proletariat, to the Communist revolution. The Union represents in the different stages of development, which the struggle of the working class has to pass through, always the interests of the movement as a whole, as it does always its best for the unification and organization of all revolutionary forces of the proletariat. It is secret and indissoluble; it cannot be dissolved so long as the proletarian revolution has not reached its final aim.”

Here Marx goes a step forward, putting clearly the independent aim of the proletariat and its role in close connection with the idea that a period of education and reorganization is necessary.

From Cologne, the propaganda of the Union was spread all over Germany. The arrest of Nathyng, the emissary of the Union in Leipzig, led to the famous Communist trial of Cologne in 1852, which brought the Union of Communists to an end. During this whole period of “sturm und drang” and revolution, the foundation of Marxism had already been laid. Marx appeared not only as the theoretician of the proletariat, but as the organizer of its Party, of its vanguard, which already in 1848 attempted to exploit the bourgeois revolution for its own end, in the interests of the working class.

With the defeat, the counter-revolutionary period set in. But soon the capitalist and national developments swept away the dams built by feudal powers. The gold discoveries, the first construction

of railroads, steamboats, the development of the mining industry, the development of factory systems, of banks, the triumph of natural science and at the same time the revival of the struggle for national unity in Italy, Germany, Poland; the defeat of Czarist Russia, the European gendarme in the Crimean war, the defeat of Austria, the other European gendarme in Italy (1859 at Salferino), the Civil War in America between the North and South, the emancipation of the serfs in Russia (1861),—all these were signs of the consolidation of the bourgeois revolution, of the development of capitalism.

Contemporaneously, this period prepared the ground for the political class struggle, the conditions for the organization of the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat.

The cruel exploitation of the English workers by the bourgeoisie, which was hiring strikebreakers and cheap foreign labor in order to crush the unions, resulted not in the weakening, but on the contrary, in the strengthening of the union, of the fighting spirit of the working class. The revival of the working class movement in France, Germany and other countries, the sympathy of the English and French proletariat for the Polish insurrection (1863) crushed by Czarism with bestial brutality, called the attention of the workers to the idea of international solidarity, to the necessity of international organization. For the Communists, the period for the reestablishment of the Party of the workers was maturing.

So the International Workingmen's Association, i.e., the First International, was founded on September 28, 1864. Marx was its theoretical leader, its organizer. The First International is a second step forward in the history of the international labor movement, in the building of the proletarian vanguard, of the Communist Party.

The cardinal points of the International, following the Marxian principle, were the organization and the building of the leadership of the working class in the struggle against the bourgeoisie, and the struggle against the half-reactionary, adventurist tendencies within the working class—against sects, for an active, fighting, workers' Party.

Marx' Inaugural Address, delivered before the First International, was based upon the *Communist Manifesto*.

The membership cards contain this fundamental principle:

"That the emancipation of the working class is to be attained by the working class itself;

"That the struggle for the emancipation of the working class does not mean a struggle for class privileges and monopolies but a

struggle for equal rights and equal obligations, for the abolition of every kind of class-domination;

"That the economic subjection of the worker under the monopolists of the means of production, *i.-e.*, of the sources of life is the cause of servitude in all its forms, the cause of all social misery, all mental degradation and political dependence;

"That the economic emancipation of the working class is therefore the great aim to which every political movement must be subordinated;

"That all endeavors for this great aim have failed as yet because of the lack of solidarity between the various branches of industry in all countries, because of the absence of the fraternal tie of unity between the working classes of the different countries;

"That the emancipation is neither a local nor a national problem, but a problem of social character embracing every civilized country, the solution of which depends on the theoretical and practical cooperation of the most progressive countries;

"Therefore, workers of the world, unite."

MARX THE ORGANIZER OF THE FIRST INTERNATIONAL

One of the fundamental points in the Statutes of the International was the creation of a centralized, efficient Party, *the basis of which was the sections and its head the General Council*. It says, "In its fight against the collective power of the possessing classes, the proletariat can act as a class when it organizes its own political Party, opposed to all parties founded by the owning classes. Such an organization of the proletariat in political parties is absolutely necessary for the assurance of the victory of the social revolution and the attainment of its final goal, the abolition of classes." (Statutes of the International). This is one of the most important heritages of the First International—the necessity of the political Party of the proletariat, its centralized form, the Party as the most important weapon of the revolutionary struggle. A struggle without organization is impossible. Organization without a central head and central organ, drawing up a unified plan and supervising its execution, is a chimerical organization. Here the principle of centralization as against the federative form insisted upon by the anarchists is put forward.

The Statutes as well as the Inaugural Address, the whole history of the First International, openly and clearly shows that Marx' aim was to build the International into a fighting Party, into the real vanguard of the working class, into an organization for struggle in place of the Socialist or half-Socialist sects. All along, the history of the International shows a continuous struggle of the Central Council against the sects, against their immature attempts to maintain themselves within the International. This fight was carried on in all the Congresses and even more in the negotiations

of the Central Council with the various sections. In practically all the Congresses—Geneva 1866, Lausanne 1867, Brussels 1868—Marx fought against the Proudhonist influence and later on, in Basle 1869 and Hague 1872, against the anarchism of Bakunin which led to a split of the International.

Not only did Marx and Engels carry on a relentless struggle against the petty bourgeois views of Proudhon and the Anarchist Bakunin, but also against the conciliatory attitude of the leaders of the German Party. Engels in a letter to Wilhelm Libknecht written in May 1872 said: "At any rate it is necessary to put an end to these platonic relations; the German workers should be either within the International or outside of it . . . If you personally will be indifferent to this matter, we will be compelled to turn to others, but be assured that one way or the other we will get clarity in this matter". Thus we see that Marx and Engels carried on the struggle on two fronts—against the conspiratorial sectarianism and fractionalism of the anarchists as well as against the petty bourgeois opportunism of Wilhelm Libknecht and others.

In these years of hard struggle inside the Party, the Marxian principle was hammered out against all deviations—the principle of subordination of all phases of the labor movement to the Party. The International, at least in principle, directed the trade union movement (the school of Socialism), directed strikes, etc. Through the International, Marx called the attention of the workers "not to exaggerate the final results of their daily struggle; they must not forget that they are fighting against the effects and not against the causes . . . that they are employing palliatives that do not cure the disease." It was Marx who put the revolutionary trade union movement on the road on which the Red trade unions are marching forward today, showing that the trade union movement must develop into political struggle, that the economic defensive fight must be turned into the fight of one class against another, that "the struggle of class against class is a political struggle". Under the guidance of Marx, the International (the Party) fought against the opportunism of the time. In the start of the Austro-Prussian and Franco-Prussian wars the International considered the problem of war as a vital problem for the working class to solve—namely to side with the working class against the bourgeoisie or with the bourgeoisie against the working class.

At the Lausanne Congress (1867) the International pointed out that war cannot be prevented through the abolition of the army, but that *a change of the social system is necessary*. And further on, the General Council, led by Marx, adopted the famous resolution concerning the Austro-Prussian war in which this war is

branded as the quarrel of two despots and the proletariat is advised to utilize the given situation for its own emancipation.

Along this line, in 1868, the General Council wrote to the trade unions:

"The foundation of society must be the brotherhood of the toilers, free from petty nationalism. Labor has no fatherland."

And in its Address on the Franco-Prussian war we find the following:

"While official France and official Germany plunge into a fratricidal struggle, the workers send each other messages of friendship and peace. This one great fact, without precedent in the history of the past, upholds the prospect of a better future. It proves that, contrary to the old society with its economic distress and its political insanity, a new order arises whose international principle will be peace, because the same principle—labor—will rule every nation."

Here we find the true international spirit of the First International that took concrete form in the refusal of W. Liebknecht and Bebel to vote for the war credits. Here the International showed the toilers all over the world their position on war.

"There are wars and wars. There are unjust and bad wars, and there is the war for one's own rights—the revolution. The revolution is violent... the workers must, one fine day, seize the political upper hand and must build up the new organization of labor. They must overthrow the old politics... If, however, that is the case, we must recognize that in most of the continental countries, force must be the lever of our revolution. For the final establishment of the rule of labor, we must at a given moment, appeal to force." (Marx.)

The moment at which the workers should have seized political power, should have used force, should have changed the war into a war for their own rights, came with the glorious struggle of the Communards. Marx, who soresaw their defeat, did not condemn, but studied the lesson of the Commune; and while the Internationalists were actively participating on the battlefields, Marx was in constant touch with the Communards and advised them in their struggles. The experiences of the Commune enriched the teachings of the International, included in the famous Address of the General Council, and in *The Civil War in France*, written by Marx. The Commune buried the old illusions and methods of struggle of the working class. It was the first experiment of the form of the proletarian State on the basis of which the greatest Marxist of the 20th century, Lenin, further elaborated the theory of the dictatorship of the proletariat and gave it concrete life in the establishment of the Soviet Union.

Certainly one of the big weaknesses of the Commune was

the lack of a centralized mass workers' Party, subordinated to the International—"the influence of the Proudhonists and Blanquists was overwhelming" (Engels).

The defeat of the Paris Commune broke the labor movement. Bakunin was developing his struggle through his forces organized secretly inside the International in his Alliance Internationale, against the centralized leadership of the International which he characterized as a personal dictatorship of Marx. He raised the cry for individual liberty against the Marxian theory of the State, putting forward as the best method to eliminate the State, not the methods of mass struggle but the conspiracy and the putsch.

This struggle came to a climax at the Hague Congress with the split and the transfer of the headquarters of the International to New York, where it was dissolved in 1876.

Why was the First International dissolved? Engels answers this question:

"The old International is completely finished. That is good. It belonged to the period... when the oppression ruling Europe and the beginning of the reawakening of the labor movement prescribed unity and abstinence from all internal polemics. It was the moment when the common, cosmopolitan interests of the proletarian could come to the front."

He later said:

"But it has outlived itself in its old form... I believe that the next International—after the writings of Marx have operated for a few years—will be directly Communist and will unhesitatingly raise the banner of our principles."

THE UNITY OF THEORY AND PRACTICE

It was only after years that the writings of Marx and Engels, revived by the genuine Marxists, the Russian Bolsheviks in the struggle against the revisionism of the Mensheviks and the revisionism and opportunism of the leaders of the Second International, after the Marxian principles were developed by Lenin in the epoch of imperialism and the Marxian principles brought the proletariat to victory in one-sixth part of the world, that the real followers of Marx in all countries, under guidance of Lenin, built the Communist International, realizing the world Party of Communism which the First International was intended to be, according to the conception of Marx and Engels. At this point already it should be emphasized with the words of Comrade Stalin:

"Leninism originated and grew strong in conflict with the opportunism of the Second International, a conflict essential to success in the struggle against capitalism... We must never forget that between the epoch of Marx and Engels and the epoch of Lenin came the epoch when the opportunism of the Second International held un-

restricted sway; and that a ruthless fight with the opportunism was one of Lenin's chief tasks."

While the First International had a revolutionary theory and was combining—following the Marxian principle—practice with theory, the practice of the Second International was a reformist one and wanted to reform the Marxian theory to suit the reformist practice. Its "revolutionary" Marxism of which Kautsky was one of the outstanding representatives, was only a "formal" one, insofar as the "orthodox" Marxists, in order not to endanger the "unity of the Party" were trimming their theories to placate the opportunists.

THE BANKRUPTCY OF THE SECOND INTERNATIONAL

The whole life of the Second International; its failure to subordinate the whole labor movement to the revolutionary goal; the independence of the different branches of the labor movement in regard to the Party; the independence of the parties from the International; the lack of international centralization; its regard of the Marxian teachings on the role of the Party as the leader, as the vanguard of the revolutionary movement; its looseness, its lack of Party discipline; the substitution of the leadership by parliamentary fractions; the independence of the trade unions from the Party; its perversion of the theory of class struggle converted into the conception of gradual mitigation of class antagonisms; the revision of the Marxian revolutionary theory of the State into the petty bourgeois conception of the State as a neutral organization which stands above classes; the revision of the Marxian theory of the seizure of power by the proletariat to the theory of "evolution towards Socialism"; the substitution of Marxian revolutionary theories of the dictatorship of the proletariat, of the destruction of the old capitalist state machine with the theory of the capture of the parliamentary majority; its opportunism in the colonial and war problems, the two testing stones of Marxian orthodoxy, characterized especially by the position of the German social democrats in their slogan of national defense, in defense of the fatherland, disregarding the Stuttgart and Basle resolutions; the attitude of the parties all along the history of the Second International of accepting resolutions only in principle and in carrying on at the same time their opportunist practices—these are all characteristics of the reformism and opportunism that could not fail to bring the Second International to bankruptcy in the first big trial. The big trial came in 1914. "Overwhelmed by opportunism, the Second International has died." (Lenin)

In the storm of 1914 the leaders of the Second International

either sank into an orgy of social patriotism and some of them, draped in ministerial robes (Guesde, Vandervelde) followed the steps of the "orthodox" Kautsky who "degraded Marxism to unheard of prostitution" (Lenin), sank into the swamp of cowardice and bankruptcy. There are the heroes of the thesis: "the International is not an effective instrument in time of war; it is in substance an instrument of peace". What an irony of "fate" for His Excellency Kautsky, for the ex-"orthodox" who in struggle against the representatives of German reformism had said

"...since David has discovered a bit of Socialism in the Tariff League, one must say that many of our comrades find Socialism everywhere in present society—in every shower, in every public urinal. Should this indeed very harmless and convenient method of transforming capitalist society into a Socialist society become popular, *then it will be time for the social democrats to call themselves Communists again* (our emphasis) in order to differentiate themselves from this kind of Socialism, as did the author of the *Communist Manifesto*." (*Neue Zeit*, 1898.)

Yes, after the bankruptcy of the Second International, after the shameless Kautsky bankruptcy, it was necessary for the proletariat to change the name of its vanguard, to build the Communist Party and break away from the prostitutes of Marxism who later wrote:

"In time of peace the natural position of the social democracy is to be the representative of the lower strata of the people, of the opposition against any government—until it grows so strong that we can take over the government ourselves. In time of war it is put in the unpleasant situation of supporting one government. At any rate, whenever it takes sides with one of the belligerent states, is this government their own, then it means to grant to the same government, to which in time of peace we deny every man, every penny, the means for the conduct of the war." (Kautsky.)

There was the Bolshevik Party with Lenin at its head which already at the beginning of the world slaughter, following the Marxian principles of the First International, appealed to the masses for struggle against imperialist war, to transform the imperialist war into civil war. It was Lenin and the Bolsheviks who, in view of the bankruptcy of the Second International, saw the necessity of organizing the forces of the proletariat in a powerful party, able to lead the masses into struggle against the capitalist governments, against war, for political power. In his article, "Position and Tasks of the Socialist Parties, November 1914", Lenin says:

"Overwhelmed by opportunism, the Second International has died. Down with opportunism and long live the Third International, purged not only of 'deserters' (as the *Golos* would wish it) but also

of opportunism! The Second International did its full share of useful preparatory work in the preliminary organization of the proletarian masses during the long 'peaceful' epoch of most cruel capitalist slavery and most rapid capitalist progress in the last third of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century. *The Third International is confronted with the task of organizing the forces of the proletariat for a revolutionary onslaught on the capitalist governments, for civil war against the bourgeoisie of all countries, for political power, for the victory of Socialism.*" (Our emphasis.)

Here Lenin put down already the cornerstone of the World Communist Party.

In the same days, in his thesis on the tasks of the revolutionary social democracy, he writes:

"Let the opportunists 'save' the legal organizations at the price of betraying their convictions; the revolutionary social democrats will utilize the organizational habits and connections of the working class to organize its legal forms of organization befitting an epoch of crisis in order to fight for Socialism and to unite the workers not with the chauvinist bourgeoisie of their respective countries but with the workers of all countries. The proletarian International has not perished and will not perish. The working masses will overcome all obstacles and create a new International.... Only along this road will the proletariat be able to break away from under the influence of the chauvinist bourgeoisie and sooner or later in one form or another, will take decisive steps on the road to real freedom of peoples and on the road to Socialism. Long live the international brotherhood of workers united against the chauvinism and patriotism of the bourgeoisie of all countries. *Long live a proletarian International, free from opportunism.*" (Our emphasis.)

The letter of Stalin* in answer to the attempts of the contraband Trotskyites to deny the historic role played by Lenin in his fight against the opportunism of the Second International *before and during the war* remains the guide for the proper historical appreciation of the role of Lenin and the Bolsheviks in the founding of the Third International. The struggle for the Third International carried on by Lenin could not bear fruit without carrying on a sharp struggle against the left elements, headed by Rosa Luxemburg, who were not ready to make a final break both organizationally and ideologically with the open opportunists and centrists. In the words of Comrade Stalin—

"Do these errors of the German left, which are part of the history of the pre-war period, not bear witness that the left social democrats, in spite of their radicalism, had not yet freed themselves from their Menshevik trappings?"

* Printed in the January, 1932, issue of *The Communist*.

THE STRUGGLE OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

During the whole war period and prior to it, Lenin was fighting to bring together the proletarian forces and the left revolutionary elements of the Second International. He was patiently and comradely exposing before them their mistakes and deviations. He was carrying on a relentless struggle not only against open chauvinism but particularly against the centrism represented by Kautsky in Germany. But the struggle against the centrist Kautsky would not be complete without a struggle against the opportunism and the bombastic left phrases of Trotsky in Russia. In 1915 Lenin wrote:

"Roland Holst as well as Rakovsky and also Trotsky are, in my opinion, all of them, the most harmful Kautskians in the sense that all of them are, in varying forms, in favor of unity with the opportunists; all of them, in varying forms, trim opportunism; all of them practice (in a different way) eclecticism instead of revolutionary Marxism."

And further on:

"In different countries this main fraud of Kautskianism expresses itself in different forms. Trotsky in Russia, while also repudiating this idea, equally defends unity with the opportunists and the chauvinist groups of *Nasha Zaria*. Rakovsky in Rumania, while declaring war on opportunism as the one responsible for the collapse of the International, is at the same time prepared to recognize the justification of the idea of the defense of one's country. All this is the expression of that evil which the Dutch Marxists (Gorter, Pannekoek) called 'passive radicalism' and which amounts to substitution of revolutionary Marxism by eclecticism in theory and to cringing or impotence in the face of opportunism in practice."

"Here is an example," said Lenin, "of the bombastic phrases with which Trotsky always justified opportunism: 'The revolutionary fight against the war is an empty and meaningless exclamation which the heroes of the Second International are such masters in uttering, if by revolutionary action we understand something different than action against one's own government also in time of war. One needs only to think of it a little and he will understand it.' In this too Trotsky repeats the 'methodology of social patriotism.' "

The struggle to bring together all the sincere revolutionary forces demanded, that they should be freed from the errors of their semi-Menshevist trappings as shown in the case of Rosa Luxemburg. Lenin, while appreciating their record, which contained "great and truly revolutionary deeds," continued in a sharp and decisive manner to fight and expose their semi-Menshevist wavering which, in the case of Rosa Luxemburg, flowed out of her fundamental mistake, based on the mechanical interpretation of Marxism; her belief in the spontaneity of the historic process; her error in the

Marxian theory of the accumulation of capital, her mistakes on the national problem, on the role of the poor peasants, and finally the mistake of not understanding the necessity of breaking completely with the opportunism of the Second International.

These errors of Luxemburg certainly harmed the development of the German proletarian revolution. After her break with the centrists, and when she became a Communist, after the heroic death of Liebknecht and Luxemburg, Lenin could say that the true proletarian Communist International has lost two of its best members and leaders.

LENIN THE ORGANIZER OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

Lenin appears here in his full light as the organizer of the International, as the coordinator of the revolutionary forces, the great Marxian who knew how to combine masterly theory with practice.

Along this line, one month before the Zimmerwald Conference, he made a step forward for the coordination and unification of the Marxian elements in pointing out that revolutionary social democratic elements exist in many countries in spite of the bankruptcy of the International, of the chauvinists, of the centrists "a la Kautsky", that the spirit of Socialism was alive among the German workers who were gathering under the banners of Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg. It says:

"To unite these Marxian elements, however small their numbers may be at the beginning, to revive in their name the words of real Socialism now forgotten, to call the workers of all countries to relinquish chauvinism and raise the old banner of Marxism, this is the task of the day... Without a series of revolutions, the so-called democratic peace is a petty bourgeois utopia. The only real program of action then would be the Marxian program, which brings the masses a complete and clear understanding of what has happened; which explains what imperialism is and how to fight against it; which declares openly that opportunism has brought about the collapse of the Second International; *which appeals to the workers to build up a Marxian International, openly, without and against the opportunists.*" (Our emphasis.)

The Zimmerwald Conference in September, 1915, and Kienthal, in April, 1916, are the first concrete organizational steps for the building of the Communist International. In both conferences the Bolsheviks under leadership of Lenin laid down in struggle against social pacifism of the Kautskians the fundamental principle, the organization and tactic of the world Communist Party. The Bolshevik minority was firm in this direction and remained adamant for the slogan "For the Third International."

So the left wing led by Lenin in the two historic conferences laid the foundation of the world Communist Party, of the Leninist vanguard of the world proletariat. The moment for the concretization of this "dream" of Marx was approaching; the victorious October Revolution in Russia not only broke the front of the imperialist war, established the dictatorship of the proletariat in one-sixth of the world, but created the historic situation in which the Communist International came into existence which was prepared by Lenin in the struggle against the opportunism of the Second International before and after the outbreak of the world war, and opened a new epoch of world history in which the proletariat is accomplishing and will continue in its mission of breaking the old and building a new classless society.

What Lenin foresaw in 1902 in his pamphlet *What Is To Be Done?* became a reality:

"History now sets us an urgent task, more revolutionary than any of the urgent tasks of the proletariat of any other country. The accomplishment of this task, the destruction of the most powerful support of not only European reaction but (as we can already state) of Asiatic reaction, would make the Russian proletariat the vanguard of the international revolutionary proletariat."

Not only did the Russian proletariat become the vanguard of the international revolutionary proletariat, but the leadership of the Third International rightfully and naturally came into the hands of the Party of Lenin, into the hands of the Bolsheviks, the only Marxian left wing in the Second International.

The Communist International was actually formed at its First Congress in March, 1919, in Moscow. From these days the Communist International extended its branches all over the world. There are practically no countries or sections where the Party of Lenin does not exist and carry into effect the dictates of the two great masters, Marx and Lenin.

"The First International has laid the foundation for the international proletarian fight for Socialism. The Second International was a period in which the ground was being prepared for a wide movement spread over a number of countries. The Third International has taken the fruit of labor of the Second International, has cut off its opportunism, social chauvinism, bourgeois and petty bourgeois filth and commenced to effect the dictatorship of the proletariat." (Lenin.)

At its Second Congress, under the guidance of Lenin, it established the most important principle of organization and activities of the International and has carried the principle of the Bolshevik strategy and tactics on to the international arena.

We must follow the teachings of Lenin that "the strictest centralization and discipline is required in the political Party of the proletariat in order to correctly and successfully place the organizational role of the proletariat," the teachings that "without an iron Party, hardened in the struggle; without a Party enjoyed the confidence of all the honest elements of the class, without a Party capable of keeping in touch with the sentiments of the masses and influencing them, it is impossible to successfully conduct such a struggle."

From the days of its foundation the Communist International was enriched by a treasure of revolutionary experiences. Its sections have been steeled in hundreds of battles. While leading in one-sixth of the world the phalanxes of millions in building the new society, guiding the heroic struggle of the Chinese masses in strengthening and widening their commune, "at this moment of transition to a new round of big clashes between classes and between states, a new round of wars and revolutions," under its leadership the proletariat is preparing itself for new gigantic battles, toward the accomplishment of the aims laid down by its founders.

There is no example in history of such an imposing monument as the growing of the new society in one-sixth of the world, of the existence of a world party of millions, honoring the memory of the two geniuses of the proletarian revolutionary movement who will go down through the centuries of the history of the future—Karl Marx and Lenin.