

The RED FLAG

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SOVIET FOREIGN POLICY

On Brockway and Pollitt

In our last number we had occasion to remark that the full meaning of the German debacle and its effects upon the world working class movement had yet to be fully appreciated and understood in this country. The victory of Fascism and the powerful blows it has delivered at the German workers has radically changed the world situation: the change is reflected in the relations between the imperialist powers, and between the capitalist world and the U.S.S.R., as well as on the workers movement itself. We now propose to take up certain aspects of Soviet Foreign policy, for it is in the sphere of the relations between the Soviet Union and the Capitalist world that there is considerable confusion.

Soviet foreign policy has already undergone some discussion in the Communist Party and in the I.L.P. This is the result of Fenner Brockway's article of June 16th, "Workers Prepare," in which the Independent Labour Party leader criticised the Soviet Union's resumption of trade relations with Germany and their offer to sell the Chinese Eastern Railway to Japan. Brockway argues that in both cases the U.S.S.R. put the interests of Russia before the interests of the world working class.

POLLITT "REPLIES."

Harry Pollitt attempted a reply to these charges. It is not possible here to deal in full with Pollitt's points. But it is permissible to draw attention to the weakness of his arguments and to the reason for the stream of pointless abuse that has since decorated the pages of the *Daily Worker*. The words "counter-revolutionary" and "Fascists" are flung about in a criminally careless manner whilst the points at issue are ignored. Whatever may be Brockway's position the fact remains that many workers in the I.L.P., and even in the Party, look with misgiving upon recent actions of the Soviet Government. The reasons for such actions need to be stated. But the leaders of the Communist Party of Great Britain cannot state frankly the causes for the Soviet Government's policy in the Far East and in Europe.

It is undeniable that the abandonment of the Chinese Eastern Railway represents a serious economic loss to the Workers' State. And much more than that: it means giving to Japanese Imperialism a vital weapon which will be used, at some future date, against both China and the Soviet Union. It is equally clear, except to those whose business it is to defend whatever Stalin does, that the renewal of the trade agreement with Germany at this stage only serves to strengthen Hitler's hand in Europe. And, coming at a time when the C.I. is proclaim-

ing the nearness of Hitler's downfall and the rapid rise of German Communism, the hurried conclusion of normal relations with Fascist Germany shows Stalin's real estimation of the strength of the Fascist rule. All these facts need to be recognised frankly and openly.

But the changed world position needs to be understood. The balance of forces is now weighted against the Workers' State. The world proletariat is in retreat: needs to gather its forces, to estimate the cause of the defeat, and to prepare for coming battles.

CAN RUSSIA MAKE WAR?

Some two years ago the Left Opposition raised the question of the relation of the Soviet Union to the coming conflict in Germany and the possible role of the Red Army in this conflict. But we raised this, not as an isolated thing, but as part of a radical change of policy both in Germany and in the U.S.S.R. The mistaken policy was persisted in with disastrous results. To put forward the idea of the U.S.S.R. breaking with Germany now, after the crushing of the German workers, and the weakening of the U.S.S.R. is to be guilty of adventurism of the worst kind. If the U.S.S.R. were to break off relations with Germany it would be either the first step to war on Germany or, if war is not to be the next step, then an impotent gesture harming not Hitler but the U.S.S.R. True it would make more unemployment in Germany but what is needed in Germany is not more unemployment but a correct revolutionary policy and leadership. No, it is necessary to face facts: the leaders of the Communist Party cannot admit that Russia is weakened by the internal crisis and by the German defeat because their own masters, the Stalin Group, are responsible for both.

The past policy of Stalin has prepared for the present stage of retreat and panic. It is necessary to attack not the effects of the Stalinists' policy but its causes. Under present conditions the U.S.S.R. could do not other than make these concessions.

The present leadership of the C.I. bears the direct responsibility for the defeat of the Chinese Revolution which weakened the Soviet in the East. It is directly responsible for the collapse of the German Communist Party. It is responsible for the present acute position in Russia. All along the line the fight must be prepared against this leadership. We urge on all our comrades in the Communist Party and the I.L.P. the need to examine, criticise and define positions in order to nail down responsibility and to prepare for a radical change in all spheres of working class policy.

COMMUNIST OPPOSITION LEADER SENTENCED

Thirteen Years for Chen Du Siu

Chen Du Siu, leader of the Chinese Left Opposition, has been sentenced to thirteen years imprisonment after a trial in the courts of the Nanking Government. Arrested last October, Chen's trial began on the 6th of April. In his defence Chen made a clear statement of his position as a revolutionary.

The Court put the following question to our comrade: "Is it not the ultimate object of the Trotsky faction of the Communist Party to overthrow the Kuomintang and the National Government and to establish a dictatorship of the Workers and Peasants?"

"Of course it is" was Chen's answer. The other Opposition members on trial made the same reply.

COMRADE READER!

The "Red Flag" is becoming established all over the country. Everywhere militant workers recognise the value of our paper. But its growing sale and influence presents added burdens for our organisation.

Remember—our paper can only come out regularly with your help and support. Send us a donation without delay!

Chen Du Siu is an old revolutionary fighter and one of the founders of the Chinese Communist Party. During the 1925-27 period of growing nationalist struggle Chen was political secretary of the Chinese Communist Party and in that capacity loyally carried out the policy of Stalin and Bucharin. In 1929 he came to the conclusion that the Left Opposition policy on the Chinese Revolution had been the correct one and aided in the unification of the existing left groups in China into the Left Opposition.

The sentence on Chen will undoubtedly be followed by severe sentences on the other Left Opposition workers also on trial. The Government of Chiang-Kia-Shek is carrying on a ruthless campaign to suppress the Chinese Left Opposition. After the Conference held early last year several police raids took place and many of our Chinese comrades were arrested.

For the old fighter Chen Du Siu a sentence of 13 years in the prisons of the Chinese Government is a death sentence. It is typical of the present leaders of the Communist Party of Great Britain and of the International Labour Defence that not one word of protest has been raised on behalf of our comrade. The Communist press is silent when the worker arrested does not accept the present policy of Stalin.

We ask all workers organisations to raise the demand for Chen's release and we ask members of the Labour Defence to see that this question is taken up with a view to a national campaign for the release of Chen.

PROBLEMS OF THE SOVIET REGIME

by LEON TROTSKY

1. THE WITHERING AWAY OF THE STATE.

Socialism fully realised (communism) signifies a society without a state. But the period of transition from capitalism to socialism requires the strengthening to the extreme of the functions of the state (dictatorship of the proletariat). This historical dialectic of the state is made sufficiently clear by Marxist theory.

The economic basis for the complete disappearance of the workers' state is such a high development of economic power that the work of production no longer has need of any compulsion and the distribution of the necessary human needs requires no legal control.

The transition of the revolutionary dictatorship to a society without a state obviously cannot be brought about by decrees. The state does not dissolve by a special act but disappears gradually from the scene, "withering away," in proportion as socialist society, powerful and highly civilised, conquers all the vital functions with the aid of numerous and flexible organs, which no longer need to use coercion.

The process of the liquidation of classes passes along two different roads. Gradually, with the liquidation of classes, that is to say with their dissolution into a homogenous society, coercion withers away in the direct sense of the word, disappearing forever from social circulation. The organisational functions of the State, on the contrary, become more complicated, are improved, attend to details, and penetrate into new fields which previously remained so to speak outside society (house-keeping, education of children, etc.), submitting them for the first time to the control of the collective intelligence.

Whether it is a question of a single country or of the whole planet, the general manner of posing the question does not change. If one admits that a socialist society is possible within national limits, the disappearance of the state must also come about within the limits of a single country. The necessity of defending itself from threatening capitalist enemies from without is, in itself, entirely compatible with the weakening of the internal coercion of the state; the solidarity and conscious discipline of the socialist society should yield the greatest results on the field of battle as well as on the field of production.

The Stalinist faction declared as far back as two years ago that the classes in the U.S.S.R. are liquidated "in the main"; that the question who will prevail is decided "completely and irrevocably"; more than that: that "we entered into socialism." From this, according to the laws of Marxian logic, it should have followed that the necessity of class coercion is "in the main" liquidated and that the period of the withering away of the state had begun. But such a conclusion, insofar as it has been attempted by some indiscreet doctrinaires, was immediately declared as "counter-revolutionary."

However, let us leave aside the perspective of socialism in one country. Let us proceed not from bureaucratic construction, already brought to an absurdity by the march of development, but from the actual state of affairs: the USSR is of course not a socialist society but only a socialist state, that is, a weapon for the building of a socialist society; the classes are as yet far from abolished; the question who will prevail is not decided; the possibility of capitalist restoration is not excluded; the necessity of a proletarian dictatorship therefore retains its full force. But there still remains the question of the character of the Soviet state, which does not at all remain unchangeable throughout the whole transitional epoch. The more successful

the economic construction, the healthier the relation between town and country, the broader therefore should be the development of Soviet democracy. This does not constitute as yet the withering away of the state since the Soviet democracy is also a form of state coercion. The capacity and flexibility of this form, however, best reflects the relation of the masses to the Soviet regime. The more the proletariat is satisfied with the results of its labour and the more beneficial its influence on the village, the more the Soviet government attempts to be—not on paper, not in a program, but in reality, in daily experience—the weapon of a growing majority against a decreasing minority. The flourishing of Soviet democracy, while not yet signifying the withering away of the state, is however tantamount to the preparation for such a withering away.

The question becomes more concrete when we consider the fundamental changes in the class structure during the revolution. The dictatorship of the proletariat, as an instrument to crush the exploiters, was necessary against the landlords, the capitalists, the generals and the kulaks, in the proportion that these latter remained at the top in easy circumstances. One cannot attract exploiters to socialism. Their resistance had to be surmounted at all posts. The years of civil war signify the highest tension of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

As to the peasantry as a whole, the task posed itself and poses itself quite otherwise. It is necessary to win over the peasantry to the socialist regime. We must show the peasants by experience that state industry is capable of furnishing them with goods under more favourable conditions than the capitalists, and that collective agriculture is more advantageous than individual agriculture. So long as this economic and cultural task is not resolved,—and it is still very distant, particularly since it cannot be completely resolved except on the international scale—friction between classes is inevitable and as a consequence, state coercion. But if in the struggle against the landlords and capitalists, revolutionary violence was the principle method, the question was posed quite otherwise in relation to the kulaks: suppressing without pity the avowed counter-revolutionary resistance of the kulaks, the state was prepared to compromise with them in the economic field. They did not "dekulakise" the kulaks, but contented themselves with the limiting of their exploiting tendencies. For the peasantry as a whole, revolutionary violence should have played only an auxiliary and, moreover, decreasing role. The real success of industrialisation and collectivisation should have expressed itself by an easing of the forms and methods of the State coercion, by the increasing democratisation of the Soviet regime.

2. THE POLITICAL REGIME AND ITS SOCIAL BASIS.

On 30th January, 1932, Pravda wrote: "During the second five-year plan the last vestiges of capitalist elements will be liquidated in our economy." It is absolutely obvious that from the point of view of that official perspective, the state would definitely have to disappear during the second five year plan, for when "the last vestiges" (!) of the inequality of classes are liquidated, the State has no part to play.

In reality we observe processes of an absolutely opposite character. The Stalinists themselves do not dare claim that the dictatorship has during the past ten years assumed more democratic forms, but on the contrary indefatigably exert themselves to prove the inevitability of the further strengthening of the methods of state coercion. Moreover, what actually takes place is much more important than all perspectives and all progresses.

If one studies Soviet reality through the lens of the political regime — such a study while not sufficient is perfectly legitimate and extremely important — the picture not only becomes dark, but even sinister. The Soviets have lost the last remains of an independent sense by ceasing to be Soviets. The Party does not exist. Under cover of the struggle against Right tendencies, the trade unions have been definitely crushed. We have more than once examined the question of the degeneration and the stifling of the Party and of the Soviets. It is necessary to pause here, at least for a few lines, on the fate of the trade union organisations during the period of the Soviet dictatorship.

The relative independence of the trade unions is a necessary and important corrective in the system of the Soviet State which finds itself under the pressure of the peasantry and the bureaucracy. So long as classes are not liquidated, the workers must, even in a Soviet State, defend themselves with the help of their trade union organisations. In other words, trade unions remain trade unions, so long as a State remains a State, that is to say an apparatus of coercion. The blending of the trade unions and the State can only take place side-by-side with the dissolution of the State itself. That signifies: in proportion as the liquidation of classes removes from the State functions of coercion dissolving them into society, the trade unions lose their well-determined class task, and are dissolved into the State now in the process of "withering away."

The Stalinists also recognise in words this dialectics of the dictatorship engraved in the program of the Bolshevik Party. But the actual relations between the trade unions and the State are developing in a quite contrary direction. The State not only does not wither away (in spite of the proclamation of the liquidation of classes), not only does not ameliorate its methods (in spite of economic success), but on the contrary becomes more and more openly an apparatus of bureaucratic coercion. At the same time the trade unions, transformed into bureaucratic chancelleries, have definitely lost the possibility of fulfilling the role of buffers between the State apparatus and the proletarian masses. Worse still, the apparatus of the trade unions themselves has become the instrument of an ever-increasing administrative pressure on the workers.

The primary conclusion from what is said above is this: the evolution of the Soviets, of the Party and the trade unions follows not an ascending curve but a descending one. If one admits as correct the official estimate of industrialisation and collectivisation, one would have to say: the political superstructure of the proletarian regime is developing in a direction quite opposed to the development of the economic base. Then are the Marxist laws false? No, it is the official estimate of the social base of the dictatorship that is false, and it is radically false.

More concretely the question has to be formulated this way: Why was it possible in 1917-1921, at a time when the old ruling classes still fought weapon in hand; when the imperialists of the whole world supported them actively, and the armed kulaks sabotaged the army and the provisioning of the country — why was it possible at that time to discuss openly within the Party the burning question of the Brest-Litovsk peace, the methods of organising the Red Army, the composition of the Central Committee, the trade unions, the transition to the NEP, the national policy and the policy of the CI? And why now, after the end of the intervention, after the defeat of the exploiting classes, after the successes of industrialisation, after the collectivisation of the overwhelming majority of the peasants,—why can no discussion now be allowed on the questions of the pace of industrialisation and collectivisation, on the relation between heavy and light industry, or on the united front policy in Germany? Why would any member of the Party who demanded the calling of the regular Party congress in accordance with the statutes, be immediately expelled or subjected to repressive measures?

Why would any Communist who openly expressed doubt about Stalin's infallibility be arrested at once? Whence this terrible, monstrous, unbearable tension of the political regime?

To refer to the external menace by the Capitalist States, explains nothing in itself. Obviously, we do not want to understate the significance of the capitalist encirclement upon the internal regime of the Soviet Republic; yet the necessity of maintaining a powerful army is an important source of bureaucratism. However, the hostile encirclement is not a new factor; it accompanied the Soviet Republic since the first steps of its existence . . . With healthy conditions within the country, the pressure of imperialism ought only to increase the solidarity of the masses, particularly the cohesion of the revolutionary vanguard. The penetration of foreign agents of the type of the sabotaging engineers, etc. . . . in no way justifies and does not explain the general strengthening of the methods of coercion. A social environment, where solidarity reigns, ought to reject hostile elements from it even more easily, as a healthy organism rejects infections.

One can, it is true, try to say on this subject that external pressure has increased. For in the whole world the relation of forces has been displaced to the profit of imperialism. However, even if one leaves aside the question of the policy of the C.I. without considering it as one of the causes of the weakening of the world proletariat, it remains indisputable that the strengthening of external pressure can lead to the bureaucratisation of the Soviet regime only in proportion as it combines with the increase of internal contradictions. Under conditions where one must take the workers in the vice of the system of passport and the peasants in the vice of political departments, the external pressure must inevitably weaken still more the internal cohesion, and, inversely, the growth of contradictions between the town and country must inevitably make sharper the danger from the Capitalist States. The union of these two factors pushes the bureaucracy on the road of greater and greater concessions to external pressure and of greater repressions of the working masses in its own country.

Different functions of money, as those of the state, expire by different deaths. As a means of private accumulation usury, exploitation — money expires parallel with the liquidation of classes. As a means of exchange, standard of measurement of labour value, regulator of the social division of labour, money is gradually dissolved in the planned organisation of social economy, it finally becomes an accounting slip, a cheque for a certain portion of social goods for the gratification of productive and personal wants.

The parallelism of both processes of withering away, that of money and that of the state, is not accidental; they have the same social roots. The state remains a state so long as it has to regulate the relations between various classes and strata, each of which draws up its accounts, endeavouring to show a profit. The final replacement of money as a standard of value by the statistical registration of live productive forces, equipment, raw materials and needs will become possible only at the stage when social wealth will free all the members of society from the necessity of competing with each other for the size of the dinner-pail.

This stage is far off yet. The role of money in Soviet economy is not only not completed but, in a certain sense, is only about to be developed to completion. The transition period, in its entirety, means not the curtailment of the turnover of goods, but, on the contrary, an extreme expansion thereof. All branches of economy are transformed, are growing and must determine their relation to each other qualitatively and quantitatively. Many products, which under capitalism are accessible only to the few, must be produced in immeasurably greater quantities. The liquidation of the peasant economy, with its internal consumption, the closed family economy means the transition to the field of social (money) turnover of all that productive energy which is now being used up within the limits of the village and the walls of a private dwelling.

MONEY SOCIALISED UNDER PLANNED ECONOMY.

Taking complete stock of all the productive forces of society, the social state must know how to apportion and use them in a manner most advantageous for society. Money as the means of economic accounting evolved by capitalism is not thrown aside but socialised. Socialist construction is unthinkable without the inclusion, in the planned system, of the personal interest of the producer and consumer. And this interest can actively manifest itself only when it has at its disposal a trustful and flexible weapon: a stable monetary system. Increase in the productivity of labour and improvement in the quality of goods, in particular, are absolutely unattainable without an exact measuring instrument which penetrates freely into all the pores of economy, that is, without a stable monetary unit.

If capitalist economy which reached its unstable proportions with the aid of wasteful fluctuations of the conjuncture, needs a stable monetary system necessary for the preparation, make-up and regulation of planned economy. It is insufficient to build new enterprises; an economic system must familiarise itself with them. This means testing in practice, adapting and selecting. The mass, nation-wide check-up of productivity can mean nothing else but a test by means of the rouble. To erect a plan of economy on a slipping valuta is the same as to make a blue print of a machine with a loose compass and a bent ruler. This is exactly what is taking place. The inflation of the Chernovetz is one of the most pernicious consequences and also instruments of the bureaucratic disorganisation of Soviet economy.

THE OFFICIAL THEORY OF INFLATION.

The official theory of inflation stands at the same level as the official theory of the dictatorship analysed above. "The stability of Soviet valuta," said Stalin at the January Plenum, "is guaranteed first of all by the tremendous quantity of goods in the hands of the state, which are put into circulation at fixed prices." If this phrase has any meaning at all it can be only that Soviet money has ceased being money; it no longer serves to measure values and by that the fixation of prices: "stable prices" are fixed by government power; the Chernovetz is only an accounting tag of planned economy. This idea is entirely parallel and equivalent to the idea of the "liquidation of classes" and "entry into the realm of socialism." Consistent in his half-heartedness, Stalin does not dare, however, to reject the theory of a gold reserve completely. No, a gold reserve "also" does not harm but its importance is only a secondary one. At any rate, it is needed for external trade, where payment must be made in specie. But for the well-being of the internal economy, stable prices fixed by the secretariat of the Central Committee or by its assignees are sufficient.

That the rate of decline of the purchasing power of bills of exchange depends not only on the number of revolutions of the printing press but also on "the quantity of goods" is known to any student of economics. This law is applicable to capitalist as well as to planned economy. The difference is that in planned economy it is possible to hide inflation, or at any rate its results, for a much longer period. The more terrible therefore will be the day of reckoning! In any case, money regulated by administrative prices fixed for goods loses the ability to regulate such prices and consequently the ability to regulate plans. In this field as in others, "socialism" for the bureaucracy consists of freeing its will from any control: party, Soviet, trade union, or money . . .

3. OFFICIAL EXPLANATION OF BUREAUCRATIC TERROR.

"Some comrades," Stalin said at the January Plenum of the C.C. "understood the thesis on liquidation of classes, creation of a classless society and withering away of the state as justification for laxity (?) and placidity (?), justification for the counter-revolutionary theory of the slow extinguishing of the class struggle and weakening of state power." Vagueness of expression serves Stalin in this case, as in so many others, to cover up the logical gaps. A programmatic "thesis" on the liquidation of

classes in the future need not mean as yet, it is understood, the extinguishing of the class struggle in the present. But it is not a question of a theoretical thesis but of an officially proclaimed fact of the liquidation of classes. Stalin's sophism consists in the fact that he times the idea of the inevitable strengthening of state power in the transitional epoch between capitalism and socialism, an idea which, following Marx, Lenin advanced for the explanation of the necessity of the proletarian dictatorship in general, to a definite period of the dictatorship, after an allegedly already accomplished liquidation of all capitalist classes.

To explain the necessity for the further strengthening of the bureaucratic machine, Stalin said at the same plenum: "The Kulaks are routed as a class but not finished off." If we should accept this formula, it would seem that to finish the routed Kulaks off, a more concentrated dictatorship is necessary in the literal expression of Stalin—"to finish off the remnants of the dying classes." The finished expression is, in its way, given to this paradox of bureaucratism by Molotov, who has, in general, a fatal inclination to develop the idea of Stalin to completion. "In spite of the fact," said he at the January Plenum, "that the forces of the remnants of the bourgeois classes of our country melt, their resistance, anger and fury grow, knowing no bounds." The forces melt, but the fury grows! Molotov does not suspect, it seems, that the dictatorship is needed against force and not against fury: fury which is not armed by force ceases to be dangerous.

CLASS ENEMY POWERLESS—WHY THE REPRESSION ?

"It cannot be said," Stalin admits on his part, "that these former people could change anything in the present situation of the U.S.S.R. by their damaging and thieving machinations. They are too weak and impotent to resist the measures of the soviet power." It seems clear that if all that is left from these former classes are "former people"; if they are too weak to do anything (!) to change the situation in the U.S.S.R.—that from this should have followed both the extinguishing of the class struggle and the easing of the regime. No, Stalin argues: "the former people can play us some tricks." But revolutionary dictatorship is needed not against impotent tricks but against the danger of capitalist restoration. If, for the struggle with powerful class enemies, it was necessary to put into use the steel-clad fists, against "tricks" of former people the little finger will do.

But here Stalin introduces still another element. The dying remnants of the routed classes "appeal to the backward strata of the population and mobilise them against the Soviet power" . . . But have the backward strata grown in the period of the first five year plan? It would seem, not. Does it mean that their attitude toward the state changed for the worse? That would mean that the "maximum strengthening of state power" (more correctly repressions) is necessary for the struggle against the growing discontent of the masses. Stalin adds: "through the mobilisation of the backward strata of the population, 'fragments' of counter-revolutionary opposition elements from the Trotskyites and Right wingers may again stir and come to life." Such is the final argument: since the fragments (only fragments!) may stir (so far they only may) . . . the greatest concentration of the dictatorship is necessary.

Entangled hopelessly in the "fragments" of his own ideas, Stalin unexpectedly adds: "Of course, we have no fear of that." Then why be frightened and frighten others, if "we have no fear of that." And why introduce a regime of terror against the party and the proletariat if it is only a matter of impotent fragments incapable of "changing anything in the USSR?"

All this piling up of confusion, leading to pure nonsense is a consequence of the inability to tell the truth. In reality, Stalin-Molotov should have said: due to the growing discontent of the masses and an ever stronger gravitation of the workers to the Left Opposition, the intensification of repressions is necessary for the defence of the privileged positions of the bureaucracy. Then everything would easily fall into place.

(Continued on page 4)

A LETTER ON THE WORK OF THE BRITISH SECTION

Dear Comrades,

You have begun the publication of a little monthly, the 'Red Flag.' This is a modest step forward. We must hope that other steps will follow.

The advance of Communism in Great Britain in no way corresponds to the rate of decay of British Capitalism. The conservative traditions of British politics, including the politics of the working-class, are in themselves obviously insufficient to explain this fact. We only declare what is true and cannot be confuted when we say that above all, and, alas, with greater success, than by any other factor, the progress of Communism during the last years has been hindered by the leadership of the British Communist. They, of course, have not acted independently, but have only followed blindly the orders given by the leaders of the Comintern. But this fact does not free the British Communist bureaucracy from its responsibility, nor lessen the damage it has done.

The study and critical examination of the policy of the British Communist Party during the last eight or ten years constitutes a most important task in the education of the Left Opposition itself. You should carefully study the official publications of the Party throughout this period, digest them, and bring out clearly the Party line on the main strategical problems: its attitude towards the Labour Party, the trade unions, the Minority Movement; the colonial revolutions; the united front policy; the I.L.P., etc. Even the mere selection of the most striking quotations, and the presentation of them in chronological order, would lay bare not only the glaring contradictions of the 'general line,' but also the inner logic of these contradictions, i.e., the violent vacillations of the Centrist bureaucracy between opportunism and adventurism. Every one of these tactical zigzags pushed Communists, sympathisers, and potential friends back, to the right, to the left, and finally into the swamp of indifference. We can say, without the least exaggeration, that the British Communist Party has become a political thoroughfare and that it retains its influence only with that section of the proletariat which has been forcibly pushed to its side by the decomposition of both Capitalism and Reformism.

Along with the new printed organ you have at your disposal a hectographed (excellently hectographed!) bulletin, 'The Communist.' It would be extremely desirable to devote the greatest possible space in this publication to the examination of the policy of the British Communist Party along the lines indicated above, and also to the discussion of controversial questions within the Left Opposition itself. While persistently striving to widen our influence among the workers, we must at the same time make it a point to work for the theoretical and political education of our own ranks. We have a long and laborious road in front of us. For this we need first-class cadres.

With all my heart I wish you success.

Prinkipo, 19th May, 1933.

LEON TROTSKY.

W. GRAHAM EXPELLED FROM COMMUNIST PARTY.

W. Graham, a member of the Hackney Local of the Communist Party has been expelled on the charge of "anti-party work and of "associating with an anti-party group."

This comrade has been a member of the Party for 14 months, was on the Local Party Committee and a delegate to the recent Party Congress. His expulsion is the latest of a series of blows delivered at those inside the Communist Party who dare to criticise the Party policy.

Graham has issued a duplicated reply to the charges made against him. A copy of this reply can be obtained from us on receipt of a request enclosing one penny for postage.

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The knot of contradictions in which the theory and practice of bureaucratic centrism got itself hopelessly entangled will become clear to us from a new side when we draw an analogy between the role of money and the role of the state in the transitional epoch. Money, just as the state, represents a direct heritage of capitalism: it must disappear but it cannot be abolished by decree, it withers away.

A PURELY BUREAUCRATIC ECONOMY.

Present Soviet economy is neither a monetary nor a planned one. It is an almost purely bureaucratic economy. Exaggerated and disproportionate industrialisation undermined the foundations of agricultural economy. The peasantry tried to find salvation in collectivisation. Very early experience showed that a collectivisation of despair is not yet a socialist collectivisation. The further decline of agricultural economy struck a hard blow at industry. To support unreliable and disproportionate tempos, a further intensification of pressure on the proletariat became imperative. Industry, freed from the material control of the producer, took on a super-social, that is, bureaucratic character. In consequence of which it lost the ability of satisfying human wants even to the degree to which it had been accomplished by the less developed capitalist industry. Agricultural economy retailed on the impotent cities with a war of exhaustion. Under the constant burden of disproportions between their productive efforts and the worsening conditions of existence, workers, kholhoz members, and individual peasants lose interest in their work and are filled with irritation against the state. From this, and from this alone, and not from the malicious will of the "fragments" flows the necessity for the introduction of coercion into all cells of economic life (strengthening of the power of shop managers, laws against absentees, death penalty for spoliation of kholhoz property by its members, war measures in sowing campaigns and harvest collections, forcing of individual peasants to lend their horses to kholhozes, the passport system, political departments in the kholhoz village, etc., etc.).

Parallelism between the fate of money and the fate of the state looms up before us in a new and brilliant light. Disproportions of economy lead the bureaucracy to the road of ever growing paper-money inflation. Discontentment of the masses with the material results of economic disproportions, pushes the bureaucracy on the road of open coercion. Economic planning frees itself from value control as bureaucratic fancy frees itself from political control. The rejection of "objective causes," that is, of material limits for the acceleration of the tempos as well as the rejection of the gold basis of Soviet money, represent "theoretical" ravings of bureaucratic subjectivism.

If the Soviet monetary system withers away, it withers away not in a socialist sense but in a capitalist one: in the form of inflation. Money ceases to be a working tool of planned economy and becomes a tool of its disorganisation. It can be said that the dictatorship of the proletariat withers away in the form of bureaucratic inflation, that is in the extreme swelling of coercion, persecutions and violence. The dictatorship of the proletariat is not dissolved in a classless society, but degenerates into the omnipotence of bureaucracy over society.

In the sphere of money inflation as in that of bureaucratic arbitrariness is summed up all the falseness of the policy of centrism in the field of Soviet economy as well as in the field of the international proletarian movement. The Stalinist system is exhausted to the end and is doomed. Its break-up is approaching with the same inevitability with which the victory of Fascism approached in Germany. But Stalinism is not something isolated; as a parasitic growth it has wound itself around the trunk of the October Revolution. The struggle for the salvation of the dictatorship of the proletariat is inseparable from the struggle against Stalinism. This struggle has reached the decisive stage. The denouement is approaching. But the last word has not yet been spoken. The October revolution will yet know how to fend for itself.

April 1933.

L. TROTSKY.

PUBLICATION AND BOOK NOTES

We have received from Allen and Unwin a copy of Stalin's "Leninism," Volume II (12s. 6d.) for review. Various points in this book will be dealt with in future issues of the "Red Flag."

Leon Trotsky's Copenhagen speech on "The Russian Revolution" has been published in full by the Labour Literature Department, price 6d. Copies can be obtained by writing direct to the Labour Literature Department, Lanark House, Seven Sisters Road, London, N.4.

Practically all our stock of books by Leon Trotsky has been exhausted. Copies of "What Next in Germany," (2/-), "The Permanent Revolution," (2/6), "The Only Road," (1/6), "The Strategy of the World Revolution" (1/6), and "Communism and Syndicalism," (10d), can be obtained by writing direct to "The Pioneer Publishers," 84 East 10th Street, New York City, N.Y., U.S.A.

The following pamphlets by Leon Trotsky are available:

"Letter to a German Worker." Written in December 1931 and laying down clearly the danger of Fascism. Post Free 2d.

"The Alarm Cry." The present situation in the U.S.S.R.. (Post free 3d).

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We also have a few copies of number one of the "Red Flag" containing L. Trotsky's "Tragedy of the German Proletariat" and of number two in which is L. Trotsky's "Austria Next in Order." Post Free 3d. per copy.

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