What is National Socialism?

By LEON TROTSKY

EDITOR'S NOTE: The following article was written by Leon Trotsky at the end of 1933. It was published in France in the "Nouvelle Revue Française" and in the United States in the quarterly, "Yale Review" in 1934.

Naive minds think that the office of kingship lodges in the king himself, in his ermine cloak and his crown, in his bones and veins. As a matter of fact, the office of kingship is an interrelation between people. The king is king only because the interests and prejudices of millions of people are refracted through his person. When the flood of development sweeps away these inter-relations, then the king appears to be only a washed-out male with a flabby underlip. He who was once called Alfonso XIII could discourse upon this from fresh impressions.

The leader by will of the people differs from the leader by will of God in that the former is compelled to clear the road for himself or, at any rate, to assist the conjunction of events in discovering him. Nevertheless, the leader is always a relation between people, the individualistic supply to meet the collective demand. The controversy over Hitler's personality becomes the sharper the more the secret of his success is sought in himself.
bring the revolution to its conclusion. It spent fourteen years in finding interminable excuses in its own existence for the Weimar democracy. The Communist Party called the workers to a new revolution but proved incapable of leading it. The German proletariat passed through the rise and collapse of war, revolution, parliamentarism, and hideous Bolshevism. At the time when the old parties of the bourgeoisie had drained themselves to the dregs, the dynamic power of the working class turned out to be impaired.

The post-war chaos hit the artisans, the podilers, and the civil employees no less cruelly than the workers. The economic crisis in agriculture was ruining the peasantry. The decay of the middle strata did not mean that they were made into proletarians inasmuch as the proletariat itself was casting out a gigantic army of chronically unemployed. The pauperisation of the petty bourgeoisie, barely covered by ties and socks of artificial silk, eroded all official creeds and, first of all, the doctrine of democratic parliamentarism.

The multiplicity of parties, the icy fever of elections, the interminable changes of ministries aggravated the social crisis by creating a kaleidoscope of barren political combinations. In the atmosphere brought to white heat by war, defeat, reparations, inflation, occupation of the Ruhr, etc., a new crisis, in which the petty bourgeoisie rose up against all the old parties that had bannistered it. The sharp grievances of small proprietors, never out of bankruptcy, of their university sons without posts and clients, of their daughters without dowries and suitors, demanded order and an iron hand.

The banner of National Socialism was raised by upstarts from the lower and middle commanding ranks of the old army. Decorated with medals for distinguished service, commissioned and non-commissioned officers could not believe that their heroism and sufferings had not been sufficient for the fatherland but also gave them no special claims to gratitude. Hence their hatred of the revolution and the proletariat. At the same time, they did not want to reconcile themselves to being sent by the bankers, industrialists, and ministers back to the modest posts of bookkeepers, engineers, postal clerks, and school teachers. Hence their "socialism." At the fierer and under Verdon they had learned to design themselves and others, and to speak the language of command which powerfully overawed the petty bourgeoisie behind the lines. Thus these people became leaders.

WHERE HITLER GOT HIS PROGRAMME

At the start of his political career, Hitler stood out perhaps only because of his big temperament, a voice much louder than others, and a circumscribed mentality much more self-assured. He did not bring into the movement any ready-made programme, if one disregards the insulted soldier's thirst for vengeance. Hitler began with grievances and complaints about the Versailles terms. The high cost of living, the lack of respect for a meritorious non-commissioned officer, and the plots of bankers and journalists of the Mosaic persuasion. There were in the country plots of ruined and impoverished people with scars and fresh bruises. They all wanted to thump with their fists on the table. "This Hitler could do better than others. True, he knew not how to cure the evil. But his harangues sounded now like commands and again like prayers addressed to inexorable fate. Doomed classes like those facility, necessity of making variations on their plaints or of listening to consolations. Hitler's speeches were all attuned to this pitch. Sentimental formlessness, absence of disciplined thought, ignorance along with gaudy erudition—all these minuses turned into pluses. They supplied him with the possibility of uniting all types of dissatisfaction around the beggar's sack of National Socialism, and of leading the mass in the direction in which it pushed him. In the mind of the agitator was preserved from among his early personal improvisations whatever he had met with approval. His political thoughts were the fruits of oratorical acoustics. That is how the selection of slogans went on. That is how the programme was consolitated. That is how the 'leader' took shape out of the raw material.

Mussolini, from the very beginning, reacted more consciously to social materials than Hitler, to whom the police mysticism of a Metternich is much closer than the political algebra of Machiavelli. Mussolini is mentally bolder and more cynical. It may be said that the Roman, as Mussolini himself utilises religion as he does the police and the courts while his Berlin colleague really believes in the infallibility of the Church of Rome. During the time when the future Italian dictator considered Marx as "our common immortal teacher," he denounced not unskillfully the theory which he believed in contemporary society first of all the reciprocal action of two classes, the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. True, wrote Mussolini in 1914, there lie between them very numerous intermediate layers which seemingly form a joining web of the human collective body. These petty bourgeois propaganda periods, who gravitate, depending upon their interests and ideas, to one or the other of the basic classes. A very important generalisation! Just as scientific medicine equips one with the possibility not only of curing the sick but of sending the healthy to meet their forefathers by the shortest route, the scientific analysis of class relations, predestined by its creator for the mobilisation of the proletariat, enabled Mussolini, after he had jumped into the opposing camp, to mobilise the intermediate classes against the proletariat. Hitler accomplished the same feat, translating the ideology of fascism into the language of German mysticism.

The bonfires which burn the impious literature of Marxism light up brilliantly the class nature of National Socialism. While the Nazis acted as a party and not as a state power, they did not quite find an approach to one class through the intermediate classes, nor did they even those who supported Hitler with money, did not consider his party theirs. The national 'regeneration' leaned wholly upon the intermediate classes, the most backward part of the nation, the heavy ballast of history. Political art consisted in fusing the petty bourgeoisie into oneness through its immediate class ties. What must be done in order to improve things? First of all, throttle those who are undermine. Impotent before large capital, the petty bourgeoisie hopes in the future to regain its social dignity by overwhelming the workers. The Nazis call their overturn by the usurped title of revolution. As a matter of fact, in Germany as well as in Italy, fascism leaves the social system untouched. Taken by itself, Hitler's overturn has no right even to the name counter-revolution. But it cannot be viewed as an isolated event; it is the conclusion of a cycle of shocks which began in Germany in 1918. The November revolution, which gave the power to the workers' and peasants' soviets, was proletarian in its fundamental tendencies. But the party that stood at the head of the proletariat returned the power back to the bourgeoisie. In this sense the social democracy opened the era of counter-revolution, before the revolution could bring its work to completion. However, during the time when the bourgeoisie depended upon the social democracy, and consequently upon the workers, the regime retained elements of compromise. Concurrently, the international and the internal situation of German capitalism left no more room for concessions. The social democracy saved
the bourgeoisie from the proletarian revolution; then came the turn of fascism to liberate the bourgeoisie from the social democracy. Hitler's overturn is only the final link in the chain of events. The Nazi's war of extermination has disclosed the extent to which the petty bourgeoisie has been enmeshed in the web of traditional conservatism. It is not surprising, therefore, that the petty bourgeoisie is hostile to the idea of development, for development goes inevitably against it; progress has brought it nothing except irredeemable debts. National Socialism rejects not only Marxism but Darwinism. The Nazis have committed the same errors as the victors of technology over nature have committed, in that their policies are determined by the needs of the moment, not by the needs of the future. The leaders of the movement are liquidating 'intellectualism' not so much because they themselves possess second and third rate intellects but primarily because their historic role does not permit them to draw a single thought to its conclusion. The petty bourgeoisie takes refuge in the last resort, which stands above matter and above history, and which is safeguarded from contamination, inflation, crisis and the auction block. To evolution, economic thought, and rationalism,—of the twentieth, nineteenth, and eighteenth centuries,—is counterposed in his mind national ideализm, as the source of the heroic beginning. Hitler's nation is the mythological shadow of the petty bourgeois it supplanted, its pathetic delirium of a millennium on earth.

In order to raise its above history, the nation is given the support of the race. History is viewed as the emancipation of the race. The qualities of the race are considered without relation to changing social conditions. Rejecting 'economic thought' as base, National Socialism descends to a stage lower—from economic materialism it appeals to zoological materialism.

The theory of race, specially created, it seems, for a peasant in self-defense who seeks for a universal key to the works of life, appears particularly melancholy in the light of the history of ideas. In order to create the religion of the genuine German blood, Hitler was obliged to borrow at second hand the ideas of racism from a Frenchman, Count Gobineau, a diplomat and a literary dilettante. Hitler found the political methodology ready-made in Italy. Mussolini utilized widely the Marxist theory of the class struggle. Marxism itself is the fruit of union between German philosophy, French history and English economics. To investigate retrospectively the genealogy of ideas, even the most careful and well-documented, is to leave not a trace of racism standing.

The meager thinness of National Socialist philosophy did not, of course, hinder the academic sciences from entering Hitler's fairyland, with all its allurements unobscured, once his victory was sufficiently established. For the majority of the professional rabble the years of the Weimar regime were periods of riot and alarm. Historians, economists, jurists and philosophers were lost in guesswork as to which of the contending theories of truth was real, that is, which of the camps would turn out at the end the master of the situation. The fascist dictatorship eliminates the doubts of the few and the vacillations of the multitudes of the university rostrums. Coming out of the twilight of parliamentary relativity, knowledge once again enters into the kingdom of absolutes. Einstein has been obliged to pitch his tent outside the boundaries of Germany.

On the plane of qualities, fascism is a rapid and bombastic variety of charismatism in alliance with phrenology. As the ruined nobility sought solace in the gentility of its blood, so the pauperised petty bourgeoisie befriends itself with fairy tales concerning the special superiority of its race. Worthy of attention is the fact that the leading National Socialists are not native Germans but interlopers from Austria, like Hitler himself, from the former Baltic provinces of the Czar's empire, like Rosenberg, and from colonial countries, like Hess, who

is Hitler's present alter-ego for the party leadership. A school of barbaric national pattering along the cultural frontiers was required in order to instill into the 'leaders' those ideas which later found expression in the hearts of the most barbarous classes in Germany.

Personality and class—liberalism and Marxism—are evil. The nation is good. But at the threshold of private property this philosophy is turned inside out. Salvation lies only in personal private property. The idea of national property is the spawn of Bolshevism. Defying the nation, the petty bourgeoisie does not want to give it anything. On the contrary, he expects the nation to endow him with property and to safeguard him from the worker and the process-server. Unfortunately, the Third Reich will bestow nothing upon the petty bourgeois except new taxes.

In the sphere of modern economy, international in its ties and anonymous in its methods, the principle of race appears as an interloper from a medieval graveyard. The Nazis set up with concessions beforehand; the purity of race, which must be certified in the kingdom of the spirit by a passport, must be demonstrated in the sphere of economy chiefly by efficiency. Under contemporary conditions this means competitive capacity. Through the back door racialism returns to economic liberalism, freed from political liberties. Nationalism in economy practically comes down to importance, though savage outbursts of anti-Semitism. The Nazis abstract the usurious or banking capital from the modern economic system because it is of the spirit of evil; and, as is well known, it is precisely in this sphere that the Jewish bourgeoisie occupies an important position. Bowing down before capitalism as a whole, the petty bourgeois declares war against the evil spirit of gain in the guise of the Polish Jew in a long-skirted caftan and usually without a cent in his pocket. The pogrom becomes the supreme evidence of racial superiority.

The programme with which National Socialism came to power reminds one very much—alas!—of a Jewish department-store in an obscure province. What won't you find here—cheap in price and in quality still lower! Recollections of the "happy" days of free competition, and hazy traditions of the stability of class society, hopes for the regeneration of the embryonic empire, and dreams of a short-cut to prosperity! Phrases from Rome; a trampoline for an American moratorium; an enviable hostility to inequality in the person of a proprietor in an automobile, and animal fear of equality in the person of a worker in a cap and without a collar; the frenzy of nationalism, and the fear of world creditors. All the refuse of international political thought has gone to fill the spiritual treasury of the neo-Germanic Messianism.

Fascism has opened up the depths of society for politics. Today, not only in peasant homes but also in the city skyscrapers there lives alongside of the twentieth century the tenth or the thirteenth. A hundred million people use electricity and still believe in the god-given power and mysticism of the idea. What inexhaustible reserves they possess of darkness, ignorance and savagery! Despair has raised them to their feet, fascism has given them the banner. Everything that should have been eliminated from the national organism in the course of the unbridled development of society comes today gushing from the throat; capitalist society is harkening up the undigested barbarism. Such is the physiology of National Socialism.

**FASCISM, SERVANT OF MONOPOLY CAPITALISM.**

German fascism, like the Italian, raised itself to power on the backs of the petty bourgeoisie which it turned
The Post-War Strategy of Food

By C. CHARLES.

A basic weapon of the capitalists in their struggle for life as a social class will be the control of food. American—and to a degree British—capitalists will brandish this weapon over Europe, Asia and Africa. The famished and starved revolutionary masses, the capitalists hope, are to be brought to their knees by the weapon of food.

They will also attempt to use food to secure from the governing regime of the U.S.S.R. ever greater economic and political concessions aiming at the eventual restoration of capitalism in the Soviet Union. The U.S.S.R. is considered by the imperialists to be in the category of "viable business."

That is the essential meaning of the naming of Lehman to his new post. Following the appointment, the "New York Times" declared on Nov. 28, 1942:

"Food will be a mighty weapon and a powerful persuader in that crucial period between war and peace when the future of the world will be decided."
April 1943.

"...food will decide many questions in the armistice period; it will be a potent adjunct to the diplomacy of peace. We are fighting with arms to make the war brief, but when the arms are laid down, for a time at least, we shall have to fight with food to make it safe.

THE FOOD CRISIS IN EUROPE TODAY

Both the scope and depth of the food problem in Europe is much greater than during the last period of the First World War and the post-war period. Countries which then did not require foreign food and were able to help in the feeding of the war-ravaged regions—the Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Italy, northern Africa, France—are now in extreme need of food. The countries which knew hunger during the last war are this time suffering even greater famine.

The Consul General of the Netherlands stated on December 10 that insufficient nourishment was expressed in the mounting death rate in that country. Much of the increase in fatalities from contagious disease is the result of the rampant hunger, deriving from deficiencies of vitamins A and C.

On the same day, the Norwegian Consul General declared that the situation in Norway was becoming "worse and worse from month to month, and that this winter will certainly be critical."

According to the Belgian Consul General the diet deficiency of the adult population in Belgium is estimated at not less than 60 per cent—in other words the adults are getting only about 40 per cent of the food they require for healthy life. The average American consumes about 20 pounds of meat and combined fats monthly. The average adult in Belgium gets two pounds. The prevalence of tuberculosis has increased among children by 30 per cent, as has rickets, and the cases of swelling of feet and limbs from starvation are clogging up the hospitals. Child mortality in the industrial centres has doubled.

If this is the situation in these relatively favoured countries, the condition of the masses in eastern Europe must be many times more horrible. The state of starvation in Greece is well known. By 1941, industrial France had suffered a cut of between one-third and one-half its consumption of bread, and two-thirds in sugars, meats and fats. Now the conditions have worsened. Italy, Germany's ally, is only in a slightly, if at all, better condition than Hitler's fallen foe. Germany itself is one of the only Continental European lands, hovers close to the hunger level, and will undoubtedly sink into conditions like those in the rest of Europe before the end of the war.

And to the list of countries in Europe which will require food from abroad must be added northern Africa, Asia Minor, Japan, India and China.

As manpower is further drained from agriculture and as the remaining draft animals are harnessed to cannon instead of ploughs, as the farm implements become outworn and cannot be replaced, as all the chemicals are diverted from enriching the soil to the manufacture of explosives, as planting and harvesting become less effective, as the cattle, hogs and sheep dependent on imported grasses and grains are slaughtered, as the fishing craft are driven from the sea and the fishermen forced into the armies and navies, as the railroads collapse and the roads are demolished, as the monetary systems break down— as the war continues—the hunger will become more intense and far reaching.

The last days of the war will be days not only of hunger but of revolution. As Herbert Hoover wrote in the November 28 "Colliers":

"A starving world must be fed after this war ends even if it had not been promised, we would have to do it if we want to make a lasting peace instead of lasting anarchy.

There are more Hunsmen that follow modern war than at the time the Apocalypse was written. In modern total war, Russia and Post-Capitalism are accompanied by four new recruits whose names are Revolution, Unemployment, Suspicion and Hate.

On July 23, 1942, Cordell Hull warned that "in some countries confusion and chaos will follow the cessation of hostilities."

We found worry and doubt in the hearts and minds of the peoples behind those fronts. They were searching for a common purpose.

"Europe in 1917 was probably in much the same mood. It is an inevitable corollary of blood and war-weariness. Then, in 1917, Lenin gave the world one set of answers."

In proceeding to use food as a weapon of counter-revolution, the American capitalists have a rich experience to draw upon. They did it once before on a grand scale when, following the last war, and as a matter of fact bringing the war to an end, a series of revolutions swept through Europe. Hoover then head of the American Relief Administration and the European Children’s Relief Fund, a post similar to that which has just been filled by Lehman.

FOOD AND COUNTER-REVOLUTION, 1919-1922

A few weeks after the signing of the armistice, Woodrow Wilson requested of Congress $100,000,000 for European relief purposes. He said in this message of February 24, 1919:

"Food relief is now the key to the whole European situation and to the solution of peace. Bolshevism is steadily advancing westward, is poisoning Germany. It cannot be stopped by force, but it can be stopped by food, and all the (Allied) leaders with whom I am in conference agree that concerted action in this matter is of immediate and vital importance.

"The money will not be spent for food for Germany itself, because Germany can buy its food, but it will be spent for financing the movement of our real friends in Poland and to the people of the liberated units of Austro-Hungarian Empire and our associates in the Balkans.

"I do not see how we can find definite powers with whom to conclude peace unless this means of stemming the tide of anarchism be employed."

While Wilson was claiming that Bolshevism could not be stopped by force, he was using force against the newly founded Soviet Republic. At the moment of his message, there were on Russian soil, in active struggle against the revolution, American and British troops in Murmansk; American and Japanese soldiers at Vladivostok; Czechoslovaks in eastern Siberia; French naval forces at Odessa, all in active co-operation with White Guard Russian forces. The Allies were also subsidising the Russian White Guards and the countries bordering Soviet Russia in their wars against the Soviet regime. These White Guards were to Wilson “our real friends in Poland” and our associates in the Balkans.

Vernon Kellogg, close collaborator of Hoover in the relief work in Europe, says in his “Herbert Hoover, The Man and His Work” (1920), which he describes in the preface as the book of an admiring “friend”:

"It is from my personal knowledge of his achievement in this extraordinary position during the first eight months in Europe that I am driven to express the opinion that Herbert Hoover is one of the most indubitably great humanitarians of modern times."

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Bolshevik domination in Eastern Europe (west of Russia) was averted.” (Page 267.)

“The people had to be something that counted. So Hoover did it. It was not only lives that had to be saved; it was nations. It was not only starvation that had to be fought... it was Bolshevism.” (Page 276.)

Kulikowski, in his recent article in “Colliers” of Nov. 28, 1942, summarises his work following the last war thus:

“Our major purpose was to save hundreds of millions of lives. But food and restored employment were the foundations upon which order could be preserved and the completion of peace made possible. Moreover, we sought to sustain the co-operative plants of democracy which had sprung up in all these countries.”

“Democracy for Hoover meant the regime of “Butcher” Mannerheim in Finland, Paderewski and Piłsudski in Poland, Wrangel, Denikin and other White Guards in Russia, and Horthy in Hungary.

“A clear example of the role of the relief administration is the counter-revolution in Hungary. Following the collapse of Austria-Hungary and the signing of the armistice, a left-wing government under Count Karolyi came to power in Hungary. However, the economic and political situation in Hungary had reached a state of extreme tension; Hungary was blockaded by the Allies. Food was scarce as were raw materials and fuel. The Jugoslav, Rumanian and Czechoslovak governments, puppet governments of the Allies, were striking pieces off Hungary, encouraged by the Allied Council in Paris. Within the country, a Red army was going over to the Communists. The workers were becoming steadily more radical. On March 24, in the Karolyi government peacefully stepped aside, and a Soviet government was established under the control of the Socialist Party of Hungary, which represented a new, forceful, united organization of pro-Soviet Social Democrats.1

This Soviet Republic lived four and a half months.

T. C. C. Gregory was one of the key figures in the events which led to the crushing of the Hungarian soviets. Let us allow Herbert Hoover’s friend, Vernon Kellogg, to introduce this person.

“One of Hoover’s rules was that food could only go into regions where it could be safeguarded and controlled. That counted against Bolshevism. Shrewd Bela Kun (head of the Soviet regime in Hungary) was able to play a winning game in Hungary against the Peace Conference and Supreme Council (of the Allies) at Versailles, but he was outwitted by the press, square-jawed Captain ‘Tommy’ Gregory, Hoover’s general director for South Eastern Europe.” (Page 277.)

In “World’s Work” of June 1921, Gregory wrote an article entitled “Overthrowing a Red Regime.” He described the events frankly enough:

“It was apparent to all in touch with the situation, whether in Paris and London, or in the capitals of southeastern Europe, that the salvation of central Europe depended, in the early summer of 1919, on the immediate ousting of Bela Kun from his position as Bolshevik dictator in Hungary.1

“The obvious method was to employ force. Marshal Foch was summoned for conference, he said that this could be done, but that it would take an army of 250,000 men, completely equipped and prepared for a vigorous campaign. This programme staggered Paris.”

1 For the sake of avoiding any misunderstanding, it must be stated that in spite of the unity and their assumption of position, the supreme council and the supreme council to which they were forced by the upsurge of the masses—the Social Democrats remained Social Democrats. Within the Communists, in backward countries, led by a group of genuine revolutionists, were Bela Kun and J. Pogany, who proved completely incompetent and who later became part of the Stalinist bureaucracy.

The use of direct force was ruled out. Other methods had to be devised. Gregory, in Vienna, came into contact with a General Boehm, representative in Austria of the Hungarian Soviet Government. Boehm, Gregory thought, was the key to the situation, and it was to work through Boehm’s “egotism, ambition and nerve.”

Boehm proved amenable to Gregory’s proposal that he should take steps to lead a counter-revolutionary movement. In answer to a number of questions he put he was told that:

“Paris would undoubtedly recognize and support any government, representative of all classes, on which the whole people of Hungary could agree; on the second (question he was told) that he undoubtedly knew of men who wielded really powerful influences in Hungary and who would undoubtedly fall in with any plan for the unblocking of Bela Kun, were it sufficiently well conceived and organized to have a reasonable chance of success. He instantly named Agoston and Hauhbitz, two of the most powerful of the labour representatives in the Kun government... They were sent for and came secretly to Vienna.”

Gregory, together with Sir Thomas Cunningham of the British military commission and the Italian diplomatic Social Democratic leaders and they all agreed at once that the next step must be the framing of a programme of action upon which the Allied governments could stand in giving their moral support to the anti-Kun movement.

“The declaration, almost immediately suggested to Paris, through Mr. Hoover, contained the following points:

1. The assumption of dictatorship in which complete powers of government were to be vested. Names to be discussed: Hauhbitz, Agoston, Garam, and Boehm.

2. Dissolution of the communistic Kun government, with a repudiation of Bolshevism and a complete cessation of Bolshevist propaganda.

3. Dictatorship to bridge over period until formation of a government representative of all classes.

4. Immediate cessation of all terrorist acts, confiscation and seizures.

5. Raising of blockade and immediate steps to be taken by Entente to supply Hungary with food and coal; and to assist in opening up the Danube.

6. Immediate calling of an Entente advisory body.

7. Mutual political conventions.

8. Ultimate determination respecting socialisation of permanent government.

“It must be kept clearly in mind, that aside from Boehm, who was a mere tool, the real conspiracy we had set afoot was one dominated by the labour-democratic interests in Hungary... With this strong and active body of men, and without the leadership of the three named, Boehm, or any other military or monarchist-conspirator would have been helpless as a schoolboy. The plot hinged on the labour element... I wired the eight points to Hoover; the moment they were drawn up and now Cunningham and Borghesi communicated them to their respective governments.”

The French government was also notified. Gregory goes on:

There is no doubt that Mr. Hoover was the principal agency responsible for the scheme, as he was repeatedly received (at the hands of the supreme Allied Council). The supreme council, emphatic in the statement that the programme for Hungary was a general rather than a specific one, signed and issued it. Boehm and his associates, began to crystallize the plans.

Among the programmatic points was one promising the lifting of the blockade and the supplying of food to...
Hungary. However, Gregory, just at this key point found himself in a difficulty:

"The work for which our (Relief) Mission was created was almost finished and by irrevocable stipulation we were to wind up our activities, close our offices, discharge our staff, and leave central Europe on August 1. It was now July 28th. Hoover had wired me that our funds were used up and we must cease. There was food in Trieste belonging to private packers, as well as supplies of wheat and maize in the Banat that were available, but I had no money with which to purchase these commodities and there was no source from which I could obtain any. Save one.

"Two or three times the assistant Bolshevik food administrator of Hungary, a shrewd and clever man, had come to me secretly in Vienna, representing Bela Kun, and begged me to sell him supplies. I had refused him absolutely for there was a blockade on Red Hungary. I had told him from the first that we would have no dealings of any nature with Bolsheviks, and that he was wasting his own money. Then, for six weeks I had not seen him. Then, for six weeks I had not seen him. When I refereed to this source I saw the possibility of effecting a coup that would help terminate our mission in central Europe with complete success.

"The food minister had no more knowledge than had Bela Kun that a mine was being laid under Bolshevism. Within forty-eight hours of the time that the mine was to be exploded I sent for him and told him that it was possible that I might reconsider my former decision as to selling him food for the Hungarian people.

"He almost cried with joy. But I checked him. "There is one difficulty in the way," I said, "I cannot send you a grain of wheat or an ounce of fat until it is paid for in cold cash. Have you any real money?"

"You have your choice," he said. The Bolsheviks have taken charge of the banks in Hungary, and I have millions of kronen, francs, marks, pounds—I have even American dollars."

"About three o'clock the next afternoon two men accompanied by the perspiring Hungarian minister entered carrying a clothes basket, covered with a cloth. For two hours my assistant checked pounds British and Turkish, French francs, Italian lire, to say nothing of marks and crowns, and with the whole took the with $6,000 in crisp one-thousand dollar bills of the vintage of Uncle Sam. That night they rested in our name in the Vienna Bank Verein. A trade had been closed with the packers' agents and three train cars packed with fat ordered to be ready for immediate shipment to Budapest on receipt of a wire from me."

That afternoon the Bela Kun regime was overthrown.

At 10 o'clock next morning "supply trains, loaded to the guards, and coming from every direction began to roll into Hungary."

However, the overthrow of the Bela Kun regime was but the first stage of the downfall of reaction. The government of yellow Socialists lasted a few days and was overthrown by the Rumanian soldiers—armed and supplied by the Allies—who placed a Hapsburg on the throne. He was removed by the Allied Council of Paris which didn't want a Hapsburg in power, preferring another variety of reaction.

At the end of the story Gregory's narrative ends. We know what followed. Hapsburg was followed in a short period by the Hungarian White Guards and reactionaries headed by Horthy who came into power and have remained there through pitiless terror and extermination of every individual who raises a voice against the brutal dictatorship of Horthy and the White Guards were encouraged and aided by the Allies while workers' and peasants' Hungary was starved into submission.

Everything falls into a logical place in this account: the use of a food and medicine blockade against a revolution to help the counter-revolutionary preparations; the use by the capitalists of the only force which could dissolve the workers, the yellow Social Democratic leaders; then the curt dismissal of the latter by the reactionaries after having served their purpose. The timing is varied, but basically the sequence is much the same in the entire post-World War I history of Europe.

HOOVER'S COUNTER-REVOLUTION IN FINLAND

Following the Russian revolution of November 1917, a similar revolution took place in Finland. The Finnish workers and peasants found arrayed against themselves both the Finnish bourgeoisie under General Mannerheim and German regiments under General von der Goltz. The combination was able to defeat the Finnish Soviet regime and a period of white terror began during which Mannerheim, supported by German imperialist bayonets, slaughtered 16,000 workers and peasants while 16,000 more died in prisons where their unconscious were held. As a result of this exploit Mannerheim earned the sobriquet of "Butcher." But he could not have succeeded without the aid of Hoover's "relief organisation.

The division of labour is interesting. The Germans aid Mannerheim against the masses. Then this obviously German agent is helped, following the convention, by the American Relief Administration. In the "Saturday Evening Post" of April 30, 1921, Hoover relates:

"The case of Finland as related to me not long ago by the Finnish minister will illustrate the final importance of all these (relief) measures—not child relief alone. He declared that the American Relief Administration in the winter of 1918-19, and to a lesser extent in the winter of 1919-20, not only enabled the Finnish government to survive but laid the foundations for national stability. Its results so upheld the arms of the forces of order that the country has been able to overcome the menace of Bolshevism at its own door.

The "New York Times" on Dec. 22, 1918, carried the following dispatch:

"Washington, Dec. 22.—Official announcement was made tonight through the War Trade Board that Finland had apparently been able to overcome German rule (1) since it secured the promise of the Allies to support it, and set up a relief programme which included the shipment of food and other supplies. This action, which was recommended by Herbert Hoover, Food Administrator, has been approved by the Allied nations."

"The statement also is made that this government, prepared to extend material help to all parts of Russia which followed the Bolsheviki and the German agents. It is understood that one problem which President Wilson and Herbert Hoover took up with the Allied nations was the importance of such action at the earliest date possible and the tonnage needed for Russian aid will be supplied as rapidly as required, despite other claims here."

"The announcement concerning Finland is taken here as an indication that this government, in concert with the Allies is hopeful soon of extending the Russian relief programme which includes the shipment of 200,000 tons of food, clothing, agricultural supplies and railroad equipment in the next three months to follow the armies of occupation.

"This plan of extending aid gradually to many parts of Russia will be extended as rapidly as possible pending a decision on the question of increasing the armies of occupation."

"
Toward Soviet Russia, thus, the policy of the Allies was one of armed intervention, and stringent blockade of the Bolsheviks—the "cordon sanitaire"—through which the Bolsheviks could not buy, much less receive as relief either food, medicine or machinery, while A.R.A. relief was supplementing Allied arms and funds furnished to the White Guards and the various border states. This policy lasted for four years until it became clear that the Soviets of Russia were firmly established in power.

The first Allied efforts to crush Soviet Russia took the form of the direct employment of armies of intervention: American, British, Canadian, Czechoslovak and Japanese. This method, however, had to be abandoned. American troops mutinied; the Canadian government, acting under popular pressure, demanded that Canadian troops be withdrawn; the Czechoslovaks fought half-heartedly; the French Black Sea fleet sailors mutinied, and revolt swept through the British Army of Occupation and aroused the English civilian population. English regiments destined to Russia refused to embark. Lord George, Prime Minister of Great Britain, informed Clemenceau that if the efforts to send Allied troops against Russia were continued, "soviets would be set up in London and Paris."

Following the first failure, the Allied entered upon a slightly different course: instead of direct intervention they armed, financed and fed White Guard restorationists in their war against Soviet Russia and deliberately encouraged imperialist adventurers by the new states bordering on Soviet Russia, especially Poland.

Prominent among the armies of attempted restoration of capitalism were those led by the mercenaries and Czechs, and by provocateurs, von der Goltz; Kolchak, Denikin, Wrangel, Rodzianko and Pilsudski. The population in the territories of these armies were fed by the A.R.A. and the other relief organizations, thus relieving these White Guards of that expense.

In No. 8, Series 2 of the "American Relief Administration Bulletin" we find:

"The American Relief Administration's work in the liberated regions of Russia has followed closely the fortunes and misfortunes of the forces arrayed against Bolshevism. From the beginning of the Relief in April 1918 the Relief operation has enlarged or contracted as Rodzianko's and Yudenitch's men advanced or retreated.

"The work of feeding Pockov came to an end on the 26th of August with the capture of that city by Soviet troops. Part of the district remained in the possession of the Whites and there the work was carried on as before.

"There was little change during September until the offensive against Petrograd (by Yudenitch) began. September the 28th saw the White troops under way in the direction of Luga and the A.R.A. Children's Fund followed the army and feeding the children of the districts newly liberated."

"On the 15th of October, General Yudenitch announced that Petrograd would fall within three days. On the 16th, Krasnoe Selo was captured and the A.R.A. immediately organised kitchens there, while Petrograd was not taken, and Yudenitch fled in a rout, A.R.A. kitchens and all.

Hoover's continued support of the Whites and the political movement behind it was indicated in the April 30, 1921 "Saturday Evening Post." In the course of the interview, he declared:

"The Russian refugees present a dilemma for which there is no solution as far as I can see until the Bolshevik government falls. In addition to more than two hundred thousand Russian children there are eight hundred thousand adults—the Intelligentsia—satttered all the way from Helsinki to Constantinople. If these men and women are not kept alive there will be no nucleus of which to build the future Russia."

FEEDING CHILDREN IN WHITE TERRITORY

Feeding children has an appealing humanitarian ring to it. It is indeed a calloused person who will resist such a plea. Approximately $90,000,000 was raised in the United States for the starving children of Europe. While 86 per cent of the Hoover Children's Relief Fund was being spent in Poland to feed the children, the Polish "Republic" found ample funds to spend against the war against the Soviets. Yudenitch's, the seat, which was able to reach 200 miles into Russian territory with 700,000 men under Polish arms. Pilsudski received hundreds of millions of dollars from the Allies in this war, besides the relief funds. Soviet Russia, to repeat, far from receiving aid, was denied the right to even buy either food to feed the starving or medicine for the sick.

Following the collapse of the Polish forces in August 1920 and the driving of Wrangel out of the Crimea, it was apparent that the Soviets were firmly entrenched. However, the blockade and the armed attacks were having a terrible effect on Soviet Russia, bled white by two and a half years' previous participation in the imperialist war. Another and even worse famine was in prospect for the coming year. With the lifting of the blockade and the recognition of the Soviets by various countries, the more sincere relief organisations started to come to the aid of the famine-stricken regions of Soviet Russia. Among these organisations were the Friends Committee, the Nansen organisation, the Jewish Joint Distribution organisation, the Friends of Soviet Russia. Popular outcry against Hoover's policy was strong. It was only at this point—July 25, 1921, after four years of the Soviet masses into a "famine zone"—that Hoover's organisations grudgingly agreed to aid in the feeding of Soviet children in the famine zones.

The use of "philanthropy" now will not be substantially different than it was in 1918-22. Lehman will duplicate the role of Hoover. The only difference between World War I and World War II is that the latter conflict takes place when the social system is 25 years older and therefore more degenerated. This degeneration expresses itself in all fields: economically, in the stagnation of world capitalism as exemplified in the post-war depression; politically, it was used in the past to be sensibly to insure the "safety of the new-born democracies." Long before the present war ends this pretence is not seriously maintained. Even capitalist democracy would be too risky a political system for Europe for the Allied imperialists. This time they

1 Von der Goltz was a German general stationed by the Kaiser in the small Baltic states between Poland and Soviet Russia. His role in Finland has been noted. So great was the Allied fear of Bolshevism that the armistice terms stipulated that the German forces under his command remain in this region as a safeguard against a socialist revolution. The Soviet regime set up by the Polish refugees was already a partisan of the Imperialists. Later he attempted various expeditions into Soviet Russia.

2 In the light of his feeding of Poland while she was conducting a war against Soviet Russia on a large scale, it is surprising that Hoover found time to feed relief because the Allies stipulated that she must stop fighting her neighbors. It was not until the renewed famine in 1922 that we were able to assist her in a large scale.

3 Evidently no such condition was put on Poland—nor Finland, Rumania, Czechoslovakia or Yugoslavia or the White Guards as organise the Intelligentsia. Quoile the contrary, if they were fighting a Soviet regime!
are banking on out-and-out reactionaries as instruments of political control over the socialist masses. This is the meaning of the relations with Hapsburg, Darlan, Franco. If World War I was fought under the slogan of "Hang the Kaiser," the Second World War has all the appearances of being fought with the purpose of placing Kaisers back on their thrones, as witness the American State and Military Departments' close relations with Otto of Hapsburg, brother of the Austrian crown prince.

An editorial in the New York "Times" of December 1 entitled "An Offer to Italy" says:

"... we must tell the Italians, at least in broad terms, what our conditions of peace must be. ... The Italian must depose Mussolini and his Fascist organisation. ... We must make it clear that as an immediate consequence of peace, trade between them and the United Nations will be restored, so that they may receive the food and other supplies necessary for the prompt rehabilitation of their country. ... Clearly the United Nations cannot make peace with the existing Fascist regime. Here again, however, a problem would arise regarding the extent to which it is wise to attempt to impose from the outside a democratic regime or a particular form of government on Italy." The Allies are perfectly willing to make peace with an anti-Axis non-democratic government, feed it and support it. What the Allies are seeking is an Italian prototype of Hapsburg or Darlan. Maybe the Italian King? or Crown Prince? or General Badoglio? The future will single out the candidate, but his political physognomy is clearly delineated: reaction, the ability to deal firmly with the aroused masses.

There are many more months of agony before the war terminates. But as the end of the beginning becomes the beginning of the end, the capitalists are preparing politically and organisationally to suppress the workers and peasants. Likewise must the workers begin to prepare so that food will not be used to support counter-revolution and stave off the revolutionary masses. To allow the capitalist governments to control the dispensation of relief can have terrible consequences.

Even the pro-war International Transport Workers Federation, in the leading article of its bulletin of June-July 1945, warns that food will be used for reactionary political purposes. It concludes its article by declaring that "only the Labour Movement could offer such a guarantee" against the use of food for reactionary political aims. "In view of what happened from the end of 1918 on there are well-founded reasons for fearing that when the fighting ceases the generally prevalent distress will once again be exploited for political ends." The organ of the International Transport Workers points out:

Considering the power of the transport workers, with affiliated transport unions in 35 countries... the article of their bulletin is a welcome sign.

Such a guarantee on the part of the labour movement can be made good in only two ways. One, through the establishment of workers' and farmers' governments in Great Britain, Canada, the United States and other countries with supplies of food. These socialist governments would extend to revolutionary countries under blockade the hand of class solidarity. However, in those countries in which the workers have not succeeded in establishing governments of their class, the slogan of trade union control of post-war relief can be a rallying cry and a method of defeating reactionary purposes in the distribution of food and relief.

The American capitalists are preparing to use food as a means of making the world safe for capitalism after the war. They plan to use it to "persuade" Europe, Africa and Asia's masses. They make their calculations with the hope that the American masses will prove immune to socialism. Is this idea well founded? Not in the least. The power of the awakened American workers may prove the fatal flaw in all the plans of American and Allied capitalism.

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The National Question—Three Theses

By A GROUP OF EUROPEÁN COMRADES

EDITOR'S NOTE: Continuing the discussion on the national question in Europe, we publish in this issue the theses submitted by a group of European comrades and an answer by Felix Morrow.

I.

It is as clear as in the third year of the new World War that at its beginning that this is a war of long duration, a war that has no prospect of being decided by means of military power and thus reach its "natural" end. In ever increasing tempo it has changed the economic, political and social face of the earth; it has destroyed dynasties and nations, enslaved peoples, uprooted millions of people. It is the end of the Austrian, Norwegian, Danish, Finnish, Swedish, German, French, Belgian, Dutch, Italian, Hungarian, Austrian, Yugoslav, Rumanian, Greek and a large part of Russia have one after another been conquered and occupied by the German armies. Austria, formerly incorporated, Italy, Hungary, Bulgaria and Rumania are under German domination and control, while the rest of Europe (Switzerland, Sweden, Netherlands, Finland and Turkey) is to a great extent under German influence. In all these countries the regimentation of human life is making gigantic progress and changes them to German prisons. The prisons, the new ghettos, the forced labour, the concentration and even war-prisoners' camps are not only transitional political-military establishments, they are just as much forms of new economic exploitation which accompanies the development toward a modern slave state and is intended as the permanent fate of a considerable percentage of mankind. As always, the first victims of a system that has become impossible are the "socially untrustworthy", Jews, foreigners, men, of whom the "published" number in France alone was admitted to be 120,000 on August 20, 1941. This economic ruin is accompanied by a callous destruction of human lives and values and a migration of peoples of colossal extent. "Resettlements", "transfer of workers", etc., which amount to hundreds of thousands, follow the movement of armies of millions. The German radio made known in the middle
of August 1941 that a country, such as Belgium, had already supplied 200,000 workers to Germany.

All this is the result of a process which began a long time ago and is still increasing in intensity in the present war. Far from being "planned organisation," this process follows laws of compulsion and seeks to break through by force, where it cannot break off, the competition on the international scale. Before as after, the accumulation of capital and unheard of riches on the one side, and the ruin, destruction and barbarism on the other. The world-wide economic crisis of 1929 cost already as much as the First World War, but the technical rationalisation which followed it flowed into the greater crisis of the new war ten years later. Confronted with the choice of logics behind and seeing cannons, tanks and airships of the dominant powers turned against them, German capitalism organised its own war machine and beat down the world competition with its cannons, airships and tanks. So mechanisation with progressing capital application leads itself ad absurdum, the means of destruction which are supposed to charge the crisis and lead to a solution, force production of further means of destruction and cause unprecedented economic disproporions which subject the whole world. England and America answer German expansion with a rearming which is not to surpass any previously known and again set back the production of consumer goods.

The English dominions, Latin America and the resources of India are drawn in increasing measure into the conduct of the war and thus, with the deep-going changes in Asia and Africa, strengthen the tendency which leads to the universal reduction in the standard of living of the masses, to destruction, to the preparation of greater disproporions and growth. Not only have the productive powers of mankind ceased growing, not only have technical discoveries and improvements brought about no further increase in material wealth, but economy is retrogressing. In contrast to the use of complicated machinery and in contrast to the concentration and over-development of an industry, it only for war purposes, there is compulsory labour, that is, the mass use of manual labour which is cheaper than machine labour, the founding and extension of small and middle-sized firms because of the shortage of consumer goods, the restoration of handwork, the dissipation and destruction of industry. Uneven development is recapitulated in the whole world and along with it agricultural production decreases constantly. Wherever one looks, there is destruction, gangrene and anarchy in alarming degree which seal the catastrophe of culture.

II

As a result of the brutal suffering and terrific pressure which the war imposes upon the nations, hate, rage and despair are accumulated and unleashed at first in the countries conquered by Germany. The political situation in these countries is characterised above all by the destruction of workers' and non-fascist bourgeois parties. Step by step unions, political and cultural societies of all kinds, religious organisations, etc., are wiped out according to the German pattern, chased out or in some way put under direct fascist control. With certain exceptions, where this process has not yet been fully completed, there is no longer an independent traditional bourgeoisie or proletarian political or workers' movement, and in these countries (especially in Poland and Czechoslovakia) even the "national" bourgeoisie is being driven more and more by such means as "aryanisation," compensation and expulsion. All that is left of the old organised "movements" are today nothing but illegal circles, which have little connection with each other and can in no way act as an entity. Under such circumstances protection against compulsion is not even attempted, because it would make the movement as nothing but a "drive for national freedom." In a few countries (Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, in part Poland, etc.) this drive has crossed the limit and has turned into a real people's movement, which also passes the limit of the "old" movements. It can participate in all classes and strata, from workers, farm labourers, farmers, urban petty bourgeoisie (tradesmen and artisans, that is, together with the farmers, those classes, which in spite of their large numbers are remnants of pre-capitalistic modes of production) to officials, priests, intellectuals and generals. In other countries, where it has not reached the point of sabotage, the movement goes underground and finds respective expression in individual acts of sabotage, arson, train wrecks, accidents, assassinations, etc. But everywhere involved in protest movements, at the side of workers and peasant, etc., there are students, journalists, professors, officers, priests, etc. And this without distinction amongst the victims of the German repressio. The longer the war lasts, the more will German fascism appear as the main enemy to the enslaved and exploited peoples. Everything will be levelled to a desire for the overthrow of this enemy and, in fact, it must be recognised that without it there can be no question of change in existing conditions.

III

If in Europe dominated by Germany there is no longer an organised and active workers' movement, and even the bourgeois organisations are out of the picture, there can also be no talk of the existence of real revolutionary organisations, insofar as they are understood as united structures, which, even if illegal, would be willing and capable of influencing the development by means of a correct agitation and propaganda. What is left of the revolutionary tendency are individuals and weak and unco-ordinated groups, which are more or less correctly oriented on the general evaluation of the situation and the abstract principles, but living at the brink of events and failing to understand how to formulate their concrete demands. The antagonism of the masses, for whom every revolutionary, as every revolutionary party, should have a fine sensitivity, meet these organisations completely unprepared and passed over them to the order of the day which can be called "struggle for national liberation." It is no exaggeration to state that revolutionary socialism may once again miss its chance and compromise itself, if it continues to face this struggle any longer without taking part. The responsibility lies with international socialism, to take up the demands of all oppressed—in no matter what form they appear—to drive its voice loudly and clearly, mobilize its forces, enlighten the world on the meaning of events, to assist the national sections in word and deed, and to lead them to the right path. There is no more burning problem in Europe than the national liberation of nations enslaved by Germany, and its solution with the help and through international socialism is important and indispensable for this cause.

First, these are democratic demands, which must always and everywhere be supported and without the realisation of which socialism cannot win.

Second, socialism cannot find the necessary allies in city and country for the accomplishment of the revolu-
tion, cannot mobilise the masses for the final battle and cannot win their sympathy if it hasn't stepped forward as the determined defender of their demands during an entire period and thus won the leadership in battle.

Third, only revolutionary socialism is in the position to realise the democratic programme and to give a goal and direction to the movement at hand, without which it must sooner or later relapse and bury socialism under itself.

Along with these general reasons which are applicable under all conditions, there are specific ones which arise from the present situation.

In Europe in order to be able to restore the tie between socialism, isolated because of retrograde development, and the workers' and mass movement, it is necessary to build revolutionary parties and restore the labour movement. But to change the existing cadres and cadre elements into revolutionary parties, it is necessary to have a more sympathetic milieu which allows them under illegality to test their forces, to school themselves, to educate new forces, to gather the most progressive elements around it, to overcome the leveling, to introduce the absolutely essential differentiation and to step forward as the vanguard of freedom. The gulf, which up to the moment of revolution exists between on the one hand the programme of socialist revolution and the openness of the objective conditions, and on the other hand the consciousness of the masses and the immaturity of the proletariat and its vanguard, is today especially wide. This gulf, the most important element of which is at present the experience of the younger generation, can be bridged only by a system of "transitional demands", but the world situation and the peculiar conditions in Europe make such a system a matter of life and death in the near future.

However one views it, the transition from fascism to socialism remains a utopia without an intermediate stage, which is bound to mean a democratic revolution. The advantage of the European situation consists in the fact that the masses are being forced on the path of national freedom and that the struggle for this because of the general situation offers a complete transitional programme which encompasses all democratic demands from freedom of assembly, press, organisation and religion and the right to strike to the right of self-determination of nations. It would be absolutely false to conceive it possible to take part in politics and ignore the democratic demands; it would be very dangerous to take the attitude that national freedom could not further the socialist interests. By the danger of standing with "tied hands" does not confront the one that takes part in the restoration of democracy and becomes its daring standard-bearer but the one who stands passively by, does not participate and allows the movement to pass him by and thereby permits the imperialists, "democrats" and reformists to give it a bourgeois instead of a socialist character. The passive bearer of the socialist revolution is comparable to those Italian Maximalists who upon receiving word of an uprising in Turin decided, after the collapse of the uprising on the fifth day, to deny their aid because it was not a question of a "true communist" uprising. The result was the victory of fascism, the discrediting of socialism, the crisis of proletarian leadership, the Second World War. With the continuation of the World War the "European" problem becomes acute even for American socialism and makes a clear, active connection with it essential. It is enough for every revolutionary to render an account of the forces led into battle in this war in order to come to the same conclusion which was our starting point: It is a war of long duration, which must completely destroy all human culture, if the rebellion of the masses does not end it. Not to build free World Socialism from the duty of stirring up this rebellion, preparing for it and acknowledging all means of struggle, which correspond to the forces at hand and which permit the formation of a revolutionary party and that has prospects of ensuring results most favourable in a given situation. As abstract utopianism towards revolution, however, which fails in the secondary as well as the most important tactical questions, can lead to nothing but another defeat.

October 19, 1941.

Our Differences with the Three Theses

BY FELIX MORROW

There is no difference between us and the comradery of the "Three Theses"? as to the reality of the existence of national oppression in the occupied countries. There is no difference between us as to the fact that national oppression now exists in Europe on an unprecedented scale, requiring of us an attentive and sensitive understanding of what is new in the European situation as well as what is similar to the First World War.

Our differences centre around the relation between the slogan of national liberation and the slogan of the Socialist United States of Europe. We insist that these two slogans must go together, for otherwise the slogan of national liberation degenerates into mere bourgeois nationalism in the service of one of the imperialist camps. On the contrary, the "Three Theses" have not made it clear, raise the slogan of national liberation independently of the slogan of the Socialist United States of Europe. In discussions the authors of the "Three Theses" have indicated that they consider national liberation as an immediate agitation slogan and the Socialist United States of Europe as a propaganda slogan, i.e., not present suitable for immediate agitation. (Despite repeated requests they have not as yet written anything on this question except the "Three Theses".) Their separation of the two slogans must be characterised as a nationalist deviation.

The difference between us on slogans expresses a difference in perspectives. We say that, whichever imperialist camp were to win the war, national oppression in Europe would continue; Anglo-American occupation of Europe would likewise constitute national oppression. An Anglo-American victory would not only bring national oppression to Germany; and its allies but we believe would continue national oppression of France and other occupied countries in order to crush the socialist revolution. The bourgeois groups in the occupied countries would undoubtedly be agents of the "democracies" in this task. The authors of the theses, on the other hand,
speak of taking part "in the restoration of democracy"
and of a "democratic revolution" (Thesis III) which,
if words mean anything, can only mean a "revolution"
orther than democratic and the participation of the
bourgeoisie and their labour agents in the "restoration
of democracy." The "Three Theses," then, have a
perspective of a new democratic epoch in Europe.
Of course, they think it will be merely a stage on
the road to international socialism. But they base them-
selves on workers for that stage of (in essence) a revival
of the Third Republic in France, the Weimar Republic
in Germany, etc. For them it is a necessary stage
preceding the direct struggle for socialism.

WHO RESISTS THE NAZIS?

Pursuing this false theory of stages the authors of
the theses are driven by their logic to a completely false
description of the actual composition of the fighters for
national liberation in the occupied countries. Who
resists the Nazis? Comrade Loris and the French con-
mrades have provided irrefutable proofs that the movement
of the resistance is predominantly proletarian. The big
bourgeoisie collaborates with the Nazis; the rest of
the bourgeoisie in part also collaborates or plays no role
even the Gaullist. Andre Philip, apologetically says that
the anti-Nazi bourgeoisie elements do what they can," but
that the proletariat is the core of the resistance.
The "Three Theses" however, more consistent than
"Philip in their search for the elements of a "democratic
revolution," states: In the resistance movement partic-
ate all classes and strata from workers, farmers, labou-
ers, farmers, urban petty bourgeois... to officials,
priests, intellectuals and generals... Everywhere there
are involved, protest movements workers, peasants,
besides students, journalists, professors, officers, priests,
merchants, etc." (Thesis III). Thus they place on an
equal plane the resisting masses of workers and the
handful of resisting bourgeois elements! Their false
theory lends them to a false description of the actually
existing situation.

While they evoke a mythical scene of a great
movement of the bourgeois elements—they do not even
mention the bourgeois collaborators of the Nazis!—the
"Three Theses" insist that the workers' movement is
practically non-existent. There "is no longer an organ-
ised movement of workers' movement" and "there can
also be no talk of the existence of real revolutionary
organisations" (Thesis III). Hence, "Under such cir-
stances protest against growing slavery must find
another outlet" (Thesis III). Thus, while the workers' movement does not and cannot exist at this stage,
"another outlet," namely an all-national movement, can
and does exist. Thus the "Three Theses" countergue
the national movement to the workers' movement. It
can now be seen clearly why they will not link together
the slogans of national liberation and the Socialistic
States of Europe. They consider national liberation
as "another outlet" than the workers' movement.

This theory is false in fact, since the liberation struggle
has actually unfolded under the leadership of workers' organisations and workers' groups. Suppose, however,
there did exist in France a powerful nationalist organisa-
tion led by the bourgeoisie, which had drawn into it
large sections of the workers. What would be our task
then? Obviously, to draw the line between the
bourgeois nationalists and the workers aspiring for
national freedom, to teach the workers that it is not
"another outlet" for the workers, but that whatever
the tasks for the workers—including national liber-
ation—they must fight only under the leadership of their
own workers' organisations.

The workers under the Nazi boot want national free-
Good. The task is to explain to them that national

freedom in this epoch is the task of the working class
under the leadership of the Fourth International. The

task is to expose and condemn bourgeois nationalist
organisations as agents of the opportunists who can only
simply to further the destruction and repression of the
workers. The workers must be shown, as proved for
the spectacle of bourgeois collaboration with the
Nazis, that only the working class can free the country
by proletarian revolution.

These are the ABC's of Marxism. It is embarrassing
to have to repeat them, but the "Three Theses" make it
necessary. There are new problems, opportunities and tasks; but
not in the direction where the "Three Theses" seek
them. It is astonishing to me that its authors can
write that the struggle "levels all and everything and
takes a direction which can be described as nothing
but a 'desire for national freedom.'" As if, while the
Second World War is still going on, the Nazis had
succeeded in obliterating the difference between
the bourgeoisie and the proletariat in the occupied countries!

What is really new in the occupied countries is that the
national sentiment of the workers and peasants is
sharpening in the class bitterness against the collabora-
tion of the bourgeoisie. National oppression has given a new
to the class struggle. National sentiment, hitherto
serving only the bourgeoisie, today can be used against
the bourgeoisie of the occupied countries. That is what is
new.

While national sentiment can no help the revolution-
ary movement, it is also still susceptible of perversion
to the uses of imperialism. That is why we reject most
of the methods of combat advocated by the bourgeois
nationalists and their labour agents. What is the main
condition of the Gaullist-Stalinist tactics, for example?
Espionage for the British, individual terrorism, individu-
life sabotage. We condemn all these as serving one of
the imperialist states and as incompatible with the
proletarian methods. Individual terrorism against Ger-
man officers and soldiers creates a situation in which
it is impossible to fraternise with the German soldiers
the absolutely indispensable prerequisite for unity of the
French and workers and soldiers against all the
imperialists. Terrorism and individual sabotage, aiding
the Soviet Union very little if at all, place incredible
obstacles in the way of the fraternisation and revolution
which alone can really aid the Soviet Union. The Gaul-
lists and their Stalinist allies are by these methods use-
leastly sacrificing heroic fighters who could be invaluable
to the revolutionary struggle. It should be plain, then,
how important it is to combat the false ideology and
methods of the bourgeois nationalists and their labour
agents. Ideological victory over them is the prerequisite
for the efficacious struggle by the working class for
national liberation. But there is not a word about this
in the theses. In their search for a national movement
as distinct from the workers' movement, they falsely
subordinate the workers' methods of struggle to the
unity of national struggle.

We send a reply from the authors of the "Three
Theses." We shall be only too happy to find that any
of our criticisms are but the result of misunderstanding
of their vague, confused and contradictory theses. But
must confess that I also recall the false importance
which the same criticisms gave to the resistance of the
German churches to Nazi co-ordination; these comrades
then thought that the workers could make significant
advances through support of the churches' resistance.

I cannot help feeling that the authors of the "Three
Theses" have throughout exhibited a tendency to dis-
solve the working class into "broader" bourgeois
movements. In all comradeship, we must ask them to
think—and write—their position out to its ultimate
implications.
Radek and Rakovsky Reported Dead

The current issue of “Socialist Courier” — the organ of the Abramovich wing of the Russian Mensheviks — contains the following information concerning the Russian Communists who were purged in the period of the Moscow Frameups, that is, since 1936:

“The information relates to the summer of 1941, the eve of the German-Soviet war. The number of Communists in prisons, concentration camps and exile at the time ran into hundreds of thousands. A special prison has been built, somewhere in the wilds of Yakutsk Oblast: it incarcerates here the most prominent figures. No news has come about this jail since no one has as yet been freed there. No correspondence is permitted with those held in this jail. The only thing known is that several hundred of the ‘Old Guard’, including all the former members of the Central Committee who had not been executed, were sent there. Among those mentioned are Rubenov, Rudzutak, Eikhe and others.

36,000 PRISONERS

“The wives of prominent Communists who were left at liberty during the initial period of the Moscow Trials were rearrested in 1939-1940 and placed in a special concentration camp, especially built for the purpose, 40 verstes outside of Moscow. In 1940 this camp contained about 36,000 prisoners including the children of those who were permitted to stay with the mothers.” (Socialist Courier, Jan. 5, 1943.)

The same source goes on to report that K. G. Rakovsky, who died in jail “from natural causes,” was one of the outstanding figures of the Russian revolution. He served as the first chairman of the Ukrainian Soviet Republic. Later he served the Soviet Union in the field of diplomacy. He was a member of the Trotskyist Opposition from its inception in 1923. He capitulated to Stalin in 1934. He was sentenced to imprisonment in the Moscow Frameup of March 2-13, 1937.

RAKOVSKY AND RADEK REPORTED DEAD

Another death reported is that of Karl Radek, one of the outstanding Soviet journalists, formerly a member of the Central Committee of the Russian-Communist Party and member of the Executive Committee of the Communist International from 1919-1924. Radek was given a jail sentence in the Moscow Frameup of Jan. 22-30, 1937. “Radek died under mysterious circumstances shortly after he was sentenced.” (According to our informant, all rumours of Radek’s receiving special assignments from Stalin are completely false). He was killed during a walk by one of the G.P.U. guards, who shot him with a revolver. The theory that the assassin was wreaking vengeance on Radek because the later’s ‘revelations’ had involved one of the relatives or friends of the assassin. According to another rumour, the assassin was involved in a conspiracy whose aim was to prevent any further ‘revelations’ by Radek.

“It is also reported that after Hitler’s attack on Russia many of the arrested Communists were executed. We have no details concerning these executions.”

According to the “Socialist Courier” which has in the past published several authentic reports concerning the Soviet Union, the above information comes from a ‘credible source.’

Three Conceptions of the Revolution

By LEON TROTSKY

EDITOR’S NOTE: This document was written by Leon Trotsky approximately a year before he was assassinated by Stalin’s agent in August 1940. Trotsky’s original intention was to include it as a chapter in his biography of Lenin on which he worked during his exile in Norway but which he never completed. Of particular importance is that in this summary Trotsky definitely explains the essential points of his agreements and disagreements with Lenin on the theory of the permanent revolution in its direct application to the development of the Russian Revolution.

“The revolution of 1905 became not only “the dress rehearsal for 1917” but also the laboratory from which emerged all the basic groupings of Russian political thought and where all tendencies and shadings within Russian Marxism took shape or were outlined. The centre of the disputes and differences were naturally occupied by the question of the historical character of the Russian revolution and its future paths of development. In and of itself this war of conceptions and propositions does not relate directly to the biography of Stalin who took no independent part in it. Those few propaganda articles which he wrote on the subject are without the slightest theoretical interest. Scores of Bolsheviks, with pens in hand, popularised the very same ideas and did it much more ably. A critical exposition of the revolutionary conception of Bolshevism should, in the very nature of things, have entered into a biography of Lenin. However, theories have a fate of their own. If in the period of the first revolution and thereafter up to 1921, when revolutionary doctrines were elaborated and realised, Stalin held no independent
position then, from 1924 on, the situation changed abruptly. There opens up a process of bureaucratic reaction and of drastic revision of the past. The film of the revolution is run off in reverse. Old doctrines are submitted to new appraisals or new interpretations. Quite unexpectedly, at first sight, the centre of attention is held by the conception of "the permanent revolution" as the fountainhead of all the blinkings of "Trotskyism." For a number of years thereafter the criticism of this conception constitutes the main content of the theoretical—"sit venio verbo!"—work of Stalin and his collaborators. It may be said that the whole of Stalinism, taken on the theoretical plane, grew out of the criticism of the theory of the permanent revolution as it was formulated in 1920. To this extent the exposition of this theory, as distinct from the theories of the Mensheviks and Bolsheviks, cannot fail to enter into this book, even if in the form of an appendix.

* * *

The development of Russia is characterised first of all by backwardness. Historical backwardness does not, however, signify a simple reproduction of the development of advanced countries, with merely a delay of one or two centuries. It engenders an entirely new "combined" social formation in which the latest conquests of capitalist technique and structure root themselves into relations of feudal and pre-feudal barbarism, transforming and remolding them and creating a peculiar interrelationship of classes. The same thing applies in the sphere of ideas. Precisely because of her historical backwardness, Russia turned out to be the only European country where Marxism as a doctrine and Social Democracy as a powerful movement were slow to develop before the bourgeois revolution. It is only natural that the problem of the correlation between the struggle for democracy and the struggle for socialism was submitted to the most profound theoretical analysis precisely in Russia.

Idealist democrats, chiefly the Narodniki, refused to recognise the impending revolution as bourgeois. They labelled it "democratic" seeking by means of a neutral political formula to mask its social content—not only from others but also from themselves. But in the struggle against Narodnism, Plekhanov, the founder of Russian Marxism, established as long ago as the eighties of the last century that Russia had no reason whatever to expect a privileged path of development that, like other "profane" nations, she would have to pass through the purifying of capitalism and that precisely along this path she would find the seeds of political freedom and prepare for the further struggle of the proletariat for socialism. Plekhanov not only separated the bourgeois revolution as a task from the socialist revolution—which he postponed to the indefinite future—but he depicted in the most accurate and different combinations of forces. Political freedom was to be achieved by the proletariat in alliance with the liberal bourgeoisie; after many decades and on a higher level of capitalist development, the proletariat would then carry out the socialist revolution in direct struggle against the bourgeoisie.

"Lenin, on his part, wrote at the end of 1912: "To the Russian intellectual it always seems that to recognise our revolution as bourgeois is to discolour it, degrade it, debase it... For the proletariat the struggle for political freedom and for the democratic republic in bourgeois society is simply a necessary stage in the struggle for the socialist revolution." Lenin, on his part, wrote at the end of 1912: "To the Russian intellectual it always seems that to recognise our revolution as bourgeois is to discolour it, degrade it, debase it... For the proletariat the struggle for political freedom and for the democratic republic in bourgeois society is simply a necessary stage in the struggle for the socialist revolution."

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For Russia do not; in and of themselves, signify the undermining of capitalism, the undermining of the bourgeois rule, but on the contrary, they clear the soil for the first time and in a real way for a new and swift, for a European and Asiatic development of capitalism. They will make possible for the first time the rule of the bourgeoisie as a class...

"We cannot leap over the bourgeois democratic framework of the Russian revolution," he insisted, "that we can extend this framework to a colossal degree. That is to say, we can create within the bourgeois society much more favorable conditions for the future struggle of the proletariat. Within these limits Lenin followed Plekhanov. The bourgeois character of the revolution served both factions of the Russian Social Democracy as their starting point.

It is quite natural that under these conditions, Koba (Stalin) did not go in his propaganda beyond those popular formulas which constitute the common property of Bolsheviks as well as Mensheviks.

"The Constituent Assembly, he wrote in January 1905, "elected on the basis of equal, direct and secret universal suffrage—this is what we must now fight for! Only this Assembly will give us the democratic republic, so urgently needed by us for our struggle for socialism."

The bourgeois republic as an arena for a protracted class struggle for the socialist goal—such is the perspective.

In 1907, i.e., after innumerable discussions in the press, both in Petersburg and abroad and after a serious testing of theoretical prognosis in the experiences of the first revolution, Stalin wrote: "That our revolution is bourgeois—that is certain. It is not a case of destroying the feudal order, but the capitalist order, and it can be crowned only by the democratic republic—on this, it seems, all are agreed in our party.

Lenin spoke not of what the revolution begins with, but of what it ends with, and he limited it in advance and quite categorically to "only the democratic republic."

We would seek in vain in his writings for even a hint of any perspective of a socialist revolution in connection with a democratic overturn. This remained his position even at the beginning of the February revolution in 1917 up to Lenin's arrival in Petersburg.

* * *

For Plekhanov, Axelrod and the leaders of Menshevism in general, the sociological characterization of the revolution as bourgeois overtaxed all but one thing: it prohibited provoking the bourgeois by the spectre of socialism and "repelling" it into the camp of reaction. "The social relations of Russia have ripened only for the bourgeois revolution," said the chief theoretician of Menshevism, Axelrod, at the congress of the Bourgeois party. The objective historical conditions make it the destiny of our proletariat to incessantly collaborate with the bourgeoisie in the struggle against the common enemy. The content of the Russian revolution was therewith limited in advance to those transformations which are compatible with the interests and views of the liberal bourgeoisie.

It is precisely at this point that the basic disagreement between the two factions begins. Bolshevik absolutely refused to recognise that the Russian bourgeoisie was capable of leading its own revolution to the end. With infinitely greater power and consistency than Plekhanov and Lenin, the agrarian question as the central problem of the democratic overturn in Russia. "The crux of the Russian revolution," he repeated, "is the..."
agrarian (land) question. Conclusions concerning the defeat or victory of the revolution must be based on the calculation of the condition of the masses in the struggle for land. Together with Plekhanov, Lenin viewed the peasantry as a petty-bourgeoisie which, if we left the programme of bourgeois progress, “nationalisation is a bourgeois measure,” he insisted at the Unity Congress. “It will give an impulse to development of capitalism; it will sharpen the class struggle, strengthen the mobilisation of the land, cause an influx of capital into agriculture, lower the price of grain.” Notwithstanding the indubitable bourgeois character of the agrarian revolution the Russian bourgeoisie remains, however, hostile to the expropriation of landed estates and precisely for this reason strives toward a compromise with the monarchy on the basis of a constitution on the Prussian pattern. To Plekhanov, the idea of an alliance between the proletariat and the liberal bourgeoisie Lenin countered the idea of an alliance between the proletariat and the peasantry.

The victory of the revolution, he wrote, can be crowned only by a dictatorship because the accomplishment of transformation immediately and urgently needed by the proletariat and the peasantry will evoke the desperate resistance of the landlords, the big bourgeoisie and Tsarism. Without the dictatorship it will be impossible to break this resistance and repel the counter-revolutionary attempts.

But while the concept be not a socialistic but a democratic dictatorship. It will not be able to touch (without a whole series of transitional stages of revolutionary development) the foundations of capitalism. It will be able, in the best case, to realise a radical expropriation of landed property in favour of the peasantry, institute a universal and full democracy up to instituting the republic, root out all Asiatic and feudal features not only from the life of the village but also of the factory, put in a beginning to a serious improvement of workers’ conditions and raise their living standards and, last but not least, carry out the revolutionary confiscation to Europe.

THE CRITIQUE OF LENIN’S CONCEPTION

Lenin’s conception represented an enormous step forward insofar as it proceeded not from constitutional reforms but from the agrarian turn as the central task of the revolution and singled out the only realistic combination of social forces for its accomplishment. The weakness of Lenin’s conception, however, was the internally contradictory idea of “the democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry.” Lenin himself underscored the fundamental limitation of this “dictatorship” when he openly called it “bourgeois.” By this he meant to say that for the sake of preserving its alliance with the peasantry the proletariat would in the coming revolution have to forego the direct pushing of the power who came out against capitalism and full democracy by the proletariat of its own dictatorship. Consequently, the gist of the matter involved the dictatorship of the peasantry even if with the participation of the workers. On certain occasions Lenin said just this. For example, at the Stockholm Conference in pointing Plekhanov against the “uprooting” of the seizure of power, Lenin said: “What programme is under discussion? The agrarian. Who is supposed to seize power under this programme? The revolutionary peasantry. If Lenin mixing up the power of the proletariat with this peasantry?” No, he says referring to himself: Lenin sharply differentiates the socialist power of the proletariat from the bourgeois democratic power of the peasantry. “But how can the revolution without the seizure of power by the revolutionary peasantry?”

In this polemical formula Lenin reveals with special clarity the vulnerability of his position.

The peasantry is dispersed over the surface of an enormous country whose key junctions are the cities. The peasantry itself is incapable of even formulating its own interests inasmuch as in each district these appear differently. The economic link between the provinces is created by the market - and railways but both the market and the railways are in the hands of the cities. In seeking to tear itself away from the restrictions of the village and to generalise its own interests, the peasantry inescapably falls into political dependence upon the city. Finally, the peasantry is heterogeneous in its social relations as well: the kulak stratum naturally seeks to swing it to an alliance with the urban bourgeoisie while the latter strata of the village pull to the side of the urban workers. Under these conditions the peasantry as such is completely incapable of conquering power.

True enough, in ancient China, revolutions placed the peasantry in power or, more precisely, the military leaders of the peasantry led time to a redistribution of the land and the establishment of a new “peasant” dynasty, whereupon history would begin from the beginning; with a new concentration of land, a new aristocracy, a new system of usury, and a new uprising. So long as the revolution preserves its petty-bourgeois character society is incapable of emerging from these hopeless and vicious circles. This was the basis of ancient Asian history, including ancient Russian history. In Europe beginning with the close of the Middle Ages each victorious peasant uprising placed in power not a peasant government but a left urban party. To put it more precisely, a peasant uprising turned out victorious exactly to the degree to which it succeeded in strengthening the position of the revolutionary section of the urban population. In bourgeois Russia, in the twenties century there could not even be talk of the seizure of power by the revolutionary peasantry.

LENIN’S APPRAISAL OF LIBERALISM

The attitude toward the liberal bourgeoisie was, as has been said, the touchstone of the differentiation between revolutionaries and opportunists in the ranks of the social democrats. How far could the Russian revolution go? What would be the character of the future revolutionary Provisional Government? What tasks would it confront? What would be the character of the future revolutionary Provisional Government? What tasks would it confront? And in what order? These questions with all their importance could be correctly posed only on the basis of the fundamental character of the policy of the proletariat, and the character of this policy was in turn determined first of all by the attitude toward the liberal bourgeoisie. Plekhanov obviously and stubbornly shut his eyes to the fundamental conclusion of the political history of the 19th century. Whenever the proletariat comes to power as an autonomous force, its position shifts over to the camp of the counter-revolution. The more audacious the mass struggle all the swifter is the reactionary degeneration of liberalism. No one has yet invented a means for paralysing the effects of the law of the class struggle.

“We must cherish the support of non-proletarian parties,” repeated Plekhanov during the years of the first revolution, “and not repel them from us by tactless actions.” By monotonous preaching of this sort the philosopher of Marxism indicated that the living dynam-
ics of society was unattainable to him. "Tactlessness" can repel an individual sensitive intellectual. Classes and parties are attacked with the unity of their interests. They are not as a result of the liberal and landlords will forgive you millions of "tactless acts" but will not forgive you a summons to take away the land. And not only the landlords. The laws of the bourgeoisie are bound up with the landowners by the unity of property interests, and not by the system of banks. The laws of the petty bourgeoisie and the intelligentsia are material and morally dependent upon the big and middle proprietors—they are all afraid of the independent mass movement. Meanwhile, in order to overthrow Czarism, it was necessary to rouse the people up to oppression of the people to a heroic, self-renouncing, unfettered revolutionary assault that would last at nothing. The masses can rise to an insurrection only under the banner of their own interests and consequently in the spirit of irresistible hostility towards the exploiting classes beginning with the landlords. The "reply" of the opposition bourgeoisie away from the revolutionary workers and peasants was therefore the inimical law of the revolution itself; and it could not be avoided by means of diplomacy or "tact." Each additional month confirmed the Leninist appraisal of liberalism with its hope of the Mensheviks. The Cadets not only did not prepare to make their place at the head of the "bourgeoisie" revolution but on the contrary they found their historical mission more and more in the struggle against it. After the crushing of the December uprising the liberals, who coveted the political limelight thanks to the Czar of Duma, sought with all their might to justify themselves before the monarchy and explain away their insufficiently active counter-revolutionary conduct in the autumn of 1905 when danger threatened the most sacred props of the new regime. The leaders of the liberals, Miliutin, conducted the behind-the-scenes negotiations with the Winter Palace, quite correctly proved in the press that at the end of 1905 the Cadets could not even show themselves before the masses. "Those who now chide the (Cadet) party," he wrote, "because it did not protest at the time by arranging meetings against the revolutionary illusions of Trotskyism, simply do not understand or do not remember the moods prevailing at the time among the democratic public gatherings at meetings." By the "illusions of Trotskyism" the liberal leader understood the independent policy of the proletariat which attracted to it the sympathies of the most numerous layers in the cities, of the soldiers, peasants, and all the oppressed, and which owing to this repelled the "educated society." The evolution of the Mensheviks unfolded along parallel lines. They had to justify themselves more and more frequently before the liberals, because they had turned out in a bloc with Trotsky after October 1905. The explanations of Martov, the talented publicist of the Mensheviks, came down to this, that it was necessary to make concessions to the "revolutionary illusions" of the masses.

In Tiflis the political groupings took shape on the same principled basis as in Petersburg. "To smash reaction," wrote the leader of the Caucasian Mensheviks, Zhizhara, "to conquer and carry through the Constitution—this will depend upon the conscious unification and the striving for a single goal on the part of the forces of the proletariat and the bourgeoisie... It is true that the peasant will be drawn into the movement, investing his vote with decisive power, he will nevertheless be played by these two classes while the peasant movement will add grist to their mill..."

Lenin mocked at the facts of Zhizhara's and that an irreconcilable policy toward the bourgeoisie would doom the workers to impotence. Zhizhara "discusses the question of the possible isolation of the proletariat in a democratic overturn and forgets... about the peasantry! Of all the possible allies of the proletariat he knows and is enamoured of the landlord liberals, and he does not know the peasant. And this in the Caucasus? The refutation of Lenin while correct in essence simplify the problem on one point. Zhizhara did not "forget" about the peasantry and, as may be gathered from the hint of Lenin himself, could not have possibly forgotten about it in the Caucasus where it was a great and stormy rising at the time, ever the banner of the Mensheviks. Zhizhara saw in the peasantry, however, not so much a political ally as a historical battering ram which could and should be utilised by the bourgeoisie in alliance with the proletariat. He did not believe that the peasantry was capable of becoming a leading or even an independent force in the revolution and in this he was not wrong; but he also did not believe that the proletariat was capable of leading the peasant uprising to victory—and in this was his fatal mistake. The Menshevik idea of the alliance of the proletariat with the bourgeoisie was in alliance with the liberals to the radicals of both the workers and the peasants. The reactionary utopianism of this programme was determined by the fact that the far advanced dismemberment of the classes paralysed the bourgeoisie in advance as a revolutionary factor. In this fundamental question the Mensheviks were closer than the Cadets to the Social Democracy. The Mensheviks the lack of courage to draw all the necessary conclusions from their theory of the "bourgeois revolution" led to an alliance with the liberal bourgeoisie which could not counterpose the Social Democracy to the revolutionary movement of workers and peasants. In 1905 the Mensheviks still lacked courage to draw all the necessary conclusions from their theory of the "bourgeois..."
THE PEASANTRY AND SOCIALISM

The Narodniki saw the workers and peasants simply "toilers" and "the exploited" who are all equally interested in socialism. Marxists regarded the peasant as a petty bourgeois who is capable of becoming a socialist only to the extent to which he ceases materially or spiritually to be a peasant. With the sentimentism peculiar to them, the Narodniki perceived in this sociological characterization a moral slur against the peasantry. A discussion occurred for two generations the main struggle between the revolutionary tendencies of Russia. To understand the future disputes between Stalinism and Trotskyism it is necessary once again to emphasise that, in accordance with the entire tradition of Marxism, Lenin never for a moment regarded the peasantry as a socialist ally of the proletariat. On the contrary, the impossibility of the socialist revolution in Russia was deduced by him precisely from the colossal preponderance of the peasantry. This idea runs through all his articles which touch directly or indirectly upon the agrarian question.

"We support the peasant movement," wrote Lenin in September 1905, "to the extent that it is a revolutionary democratic movement. We are preparing (right now, and immediately) for a struggle with it to the extent that it will come forward as a reactionary, anti-proletarian movement. The entire gist of Marxism lies in this two socialist aline in the Western proletariat and partly in the semi-proletarian elements in the Russian village but never in the peasantry as such. From the beginning we support to the very end, by means of all measures, up to confrontation, the insurrectional spirit in him, the peasant in general against the landlord, and later (and not even later but at the very same time) we support the proletariat against the peasant in general."

"The peasantry will conquer in the bourgeois-democratic revolution," he wrote in March 1906, "and with this it will completely exhaust its revolutionary spirit as the peasantry. The proletariat will conquer in the bourgeois-democratic revolution and with this it will only unfold in a real way its genuine socialist revolution." "The movement of the peasantry," he repeated in May 1906, "is the bourgeoisie's affair of the different class. This is a struggle against the foundations of capitalism but for purging all the remnants of feudalism." This viewpoint can be followed in Lenin from one article to the next. year by year, volume by volume. The language and examples vary, the basic thought remains the same. It could not have been otherwise. Had Lenin seen a socialist ally in the peasantry he would not have had the slightest ground for insisting upon the bourgeois character of the revolution and for limiting "the dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry to purely democratic tasks. In those cases where Lenin accused the author of this book of "underestimating" the peasantry he had in mind not at all my non-recognition of the socialist tendencies of the peasantry but, on the contrary, my inadequacy—from Lenin's viewpoint—recognition of the bourgeois-democratic independence of the peasantry, its ability to continue to exist."

The re-evaluation of values on this question was opened up only in the years of Thermodorean reaction the beginning of which coincided approximately with the illness and death of Lenin. Thenceforth the alliance of Russian workers and peasants was proclaimed to be, in and of itself, a sufficient guarantee against the dangers of restoration and an immutable pledge of the realisation of socialism within the limits of the revolution. In the theory of socialism in one country Stalin began to designate the Marxist evaluation of the peasantry not otherwise than as "Trotskyism" and, moreover, not only in relation to the present but to the entire past.

It is, of course, possible to raise the question whether or whether a classic Marxist, view of the peasantry has been proven erroneous. This subject would lead us far beyond the limits of the present review. Suffice it to state here that Marxism has never invested its estimation of the peasantry as a non-socialist class with an absolute and static character. Marx himself said that the peasant possesses not only superstitions but the ability to reason. The regime of the dictatorship of the proletariat opened up very broad possibilities for influencing the peasantry and re-educating it. The limits of these possibilities have not yet been exhausted by history. Nevertheless, it is true already that the growing role of the state coercion in the U.S.S.R. has not refuted but has confirmed fundamentally the attitude toward the peasantry which distinguished Russian Marxists from the Narodniki. However, whatever may be the situation in this respect today after twenty years of the October revolution, it is clear that up to the October revolution or more correctly up to 1924 no one in the Marxist camp—Lenin, least of all—in the peasantry a socialist factor of development. Without the aid of the proletarian revolution in the West, Lenin repeated, restoration in Russia was inevitable. He was not mistaken: the Stalinist bureaucratic restoration is nothing else than the first phase of bourgeois restoration.

THE TROTSKYIST CONCEPTION

We have analysed above the points of departure of the two basic factions of the Russian Social Democracy. But alongside of them, already at the dawn of the first revolution, was formulated a third position which met with almost no recognition during those years but which we are obliged to set down here with the necessary completeness not only because it found its confirmation in the events of 1917 but especially because seven years after the October revolution, this conception, after being turned topsy-turvy, began to play a completely unforeseen role in the political evolution of Stalin and the whole political régime.

At the beginning of 1905 a pamphlet by Trotsky was issued in Geneva. This pamphlet analysed the political situation as it unfolded in the winter of 1904. The author arrived at the conclusion that the independent campaign of petitions and petitions and demands by the liberals had exhausted all its possibilities; that the radical intelligentsia had pinned their hopes upon the liberals, that the peasant movement was creating favourable conditions for victory but was incapable of assuring it; that the revolution could be brought about through the armed uprising of the proletariat; that the next phase on this path would be the general strike. The pamphlet was entitled "Before the Ninth of January," because it was written before the Bloody Sunday in Petersburg. The mighty strike wave which came after this date together with the initial armed clashes which supplemented this strike wave were an unequivocal confirmation of the strategic prognosis of this pamphlet. The introduction to my work was written by Parvus, a Russian emigre, who had succeeded by that time in becoming a prominent German writer. Parvus was an exceptional creative personality capable of becoming
infected with the ideas of others as well as of enriching other by his ideas. He lacked internal equilibrium and sufficient love for work to give the labour movement the contribution worthy of his talents as thinker and writer. On my personal development he exercised undoubted influence especially in regard to the socialrevolutionary understanding of our epoch. A few days prior to our first meeting Parvus passionately defended the idea of a general strike in Germany; but the country was then passing through a prolonged industrial boom. The Social Democracy had adapted itself to the regime of the Hohenzollerns; the revolutionary propaganda of a foreigner met with nothing but opposition. Our meeting took place the second day after the bloody events in Petersbourg with my pamphlet, then in manuscript. Parvus was captured by the idea of the exceptional role which the proletariat of backward Russia was destined to play.

Those few days which we spent together in Munich were filled with conversation which clarified a good deal for both of us and which brought us personally closer together. The discussion which Parvus wrote at the time for the pamphlet has entered firmly into the history of the Russian revolution. In a few pages he illuminated the idea which the Bolsheviks in Russia which were, it is true, known previously but from which no one had drawn all the necessary conclusions.

"The political radicalism of Western Europe," wrote Parvus, "as is well known, based primarily on the petty bourgeoisie. These were the handicraft workers and, in general, that section of the bourgeoisie which had been caught up by the industrial development but was at the same time pushed aside by the capitalist class... In Russia, during the pre-capitalist period, the cities developed more along Chinese than European lines. These were administrative centres, pure economic 'hubs'... about the slightest political significance, while in terms of economic relations they served as trading centres, bazars, for the surrounding landlord and peasant, milieu. Their development was still very insignificant when it was halted by the capitalist process which began to create big cities after its own pattern, i.e., factory cities and centres of world trade... The very same thing that hindered the development of petty-bourgeois democracy served to benefit the class-consciousness of the proletariat in Russia, namely, the weak development of the handicraft form of production. The proletariat was immediately concentrated in the towns..."

"The peasants will be drawn into the movement in ever larger masses. But they are capable only of increasing the political anarchy in the country and, in this way, of weakening the government; they cannot compose a tightly welded revolutionary army. With the development of the revolution, therefore, an ever greater amount of political work will fall to the share of the proletariat. Along with this, its political self-consciousness will broaden, its political energy will grow..."

"The Social Democracy will be confronted with the dilemma: either to assume the responsibility for the Provisional Government or to stand aside from the workers' movement. The workers will consider this government as their own regardless of how the Social Democracy conducts itself. The revolutionary overthrow in Russia can be accomplished only by the workers. The revolutionary Provisional Government in Russia will be accompanied by a social revolution. Should the Social Democracy lead the revolutionary movement of the Russian proletariat, then this government will be Social Democratic..."

The Social Democratic Provisional Government will not be able to accomplish a socialist overturn in Russia but the very process of liquidating the autocracy and of establishing the democratic republic will provide it with a rich soil for political work..."

In the heat of the revolutionary events in the summer of 1905, I once again met Parvus, this time in Petersbourg. While preserving an organisational independence from both factions, we jointly edited a mass workers' paper, "Rasskazy Serya", with the support of the Mensheviks, a big political newspaper, "Nachalo". The theory of the permanent revolution has usually been linked with the names of "Parvus and Trotsky". This was only partially correct. The theory of Parvus' revolutionary apogee belongs to the end of the last century, when he marched at the head of the struggle against the so-called "national" government, i.e., the opportunist interpretation of Marx's theory. The failure of the attempts to push the German Social Democracy on the path of more resolute policies undermined his optimism. Toward the perspective of the socialist revolution in the West, Parvus began to react with more and more reservations. He considered at that time that the "Social Democratic Provisional Government will not be able to accomplish a socialist overthrow in Russia." His prophecies indicated, therefore, not the transformation of the democratic revolution into the socialist revolution but only the end of the bourgeois democracy of the Russian type, where on the basis of the farmers' system there arose for the first time a labour government which did not go beyond the framework of a bourgeois regime.

This conclusion was not shared by me. The Australian democracy grew organically from the virgin soil of a new continent and at once assumed a conservative character and subjected to itself a young but quite privileged proletariat. Russian democracy, on the contrary, could arise only as a result of a grandiose revolutionary overthrow; the dynamics of which would in no case permit the formation of a bourgeois democracy. Our differences which began shortly after the revolution of 1905, resulted in a complete break between us at the beginning of the war when Parvus, in whom the sceptic had completely killed the revolutionary, turned out on the side of German imperialism, and later became the councillor and insipre of the first president of the German republic, Ebert.

**THE THEORY OF PERMANENT REVOLUTION**

Beginning with the pamphlet, "Before the Ninth of January," I returned more than once to the development of the theory of a permanent revolution.

In view of the importance which this theory later acquired in the ideological evolution of the hero of this biography, it is necessary to present it here in the form of exact quotations from my works in 1905-6.

The core of the population of a modern city, at least in cities of economic-political significance, is constituted by the sharply differentiated class of wage labour. It is precisely this class, essentially unknown during the Great French Revolution, that is destined to play the decisive role in our revolution... In a country economically more backward, the proletariat may, come to power sooner than in an advanced capitalist country. The assumption of some sort of automatic dependence of proletarian dictatorship upon the technical forces and resources of a country is a prejudice derived from an extremely oversimplified 'economic' materialism. Such a theory has nothing in common with Marxism... Notwithstanding the fact that the United States are ten times higher than our political role of the Russian proletariat, its influence upon the politics of the country, and the possibility of its coming influence upon world politics is incomparably higher than the role and significance of the American proletariat..."
In regard to the degree to which the international Social Democracy will prove able to fulfill its revolutionary task, I wrote in 1918: "The European socialist parties—above all, the mightiest among them, the German party—have each worked out their own conservatism. As greater and greater masses rally to socialism and as the organization and discipline of these masses grow, this conservatism likewise increases. Because of this the Social Democracy as an organization embodying the political experience of the proletariat, may become at a certain moment a direct obstacle in the path of the open conflict between the workers and bourgeois reaction..." I concluded my analysis, however, by expressing assurance that the 'East-influenced revolution will imbue the Western proletariat with revolutionary idealism and engender in it the desire to speak to its enemy 'in Russia'..."

Let us sum up. Narodnikism, in the wake of the Slavophiles, proceeded from illusions concerning the absolutely original paths of Russia's development, and waved aside capitalism and the bourgeois republic. Plekhanov's Marxism was concentrated on proving the principled identity of the historical paths of Russia and of the West. The programme derived from this ignored the real and specific historical peculiarities of Russia's social structure and of her revolutionary development. The Menshevik attitude toward the revolution, stripped of episodic encrustations and individual deviations, is reducible to the following: the victory of the Russian bourgeois revolution is conceivable only under the leadership of the bourgeoisie, and the hand over power to the latter. The democratic regime will then permit the Russian proletariat to catch up with its older Western brothers on the road of the struggle for socialism with incomparably greater success than before.

Lenin's perspective may be briefly expressed as follows: The belated Russian bourgeoisie is incapable of leading its own revolution to the end. The complete victory of the revolution through the medium of the "democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry" will purge the country of medievalism, invest the development of Russian capitalism with American tempos, strengthen the proletariat in the city and country, and open up broad possibilities for the struggle for socialism. On the other hand, the victory of the Russian revolution will provide a mighty impulse for the socialist revolution in the West, and the latter will not only shield Russia from the dangers of restoration but also permit the Russian proletariat to reach the conquest of power in a comparatively short historical interval.

The perspective of the permanent revolution may be summed up in these words: The complete victory of the democratic revolution in Russia is inconceivable otherwise than in the form of the dictatorship of the proletariat basing itself on the peasantry. The dictatorship of the proletariat, which will inescapably place on the order of the day not only democratic but also socialist tasks, will at the same time provide a mighty impulse to the international socialist revolution. Only the victory of the proletariat in the West will shield Russia from bourgeois restoration and secure for her the possibility of bringing the socialist construction to its conclusion.

These formulations reveal with equal clarity both the homogeneity of the last two conceptions in their irrepressible contrast as well as their extremely essential difference from one another on the question of the social character and the tasks of the "dictatorship" which was to grow out of the revolution. The frequently repeated objection of the present Moscow theoreticians to the effect that...
the programme of the dictatorship of the proletariat was "premature" in 1905 is entirely lacking in content. In the empirical sense the programme of the democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry proved to be equally "premature". The unfavourable relation of forces in the epoch of the first revolution rendered impossible not the dictatorship of the proletariat as such but, in general, the victory of the revolution itself. Meanwhile all the revolutionary tendencies proceeded from the hopes for a complete victory; without such a hope an unfettered revolutionary struggle would be impossible. The differences involved the general perspectives of the revolution and the strategy flowing therefrom. The perspective of Menshevism was false to the core: it pointed out an entirely different road for the proletariat. The perspective of Bolshevism was not complete: it indicated correctly the general direction of the struggle but characterised its stages incorrectly. The inadequacy of the perspective of Bolshevism was not revealed in 1905 only because the revolution itself did not receive further development. But at the beginning of 1917 Lenin was compelled, in a direct struggle against the oldest cadres of the party, to change the perspective. A political prognosis cannot pretend to the same exactness as an astronomical one. It suffices if it gives a correct indication of the general line of development and helps to orient oneself in the actual course of events in which the basic line is inevitably shifted either to the right or to the left. In this sense it is impossible not to recognise that the conception of the permanent revolution has fully passed the test of history. In the first years of the Soviet regime this was denied by none; on the contrary, this fact met with recognition in a number of official publications. But when on the quiescent and ossified summits of Soviet society the bureaucratic reaction against October opened up, it was from the very beginning directed against this theory which more completely than any other reflected the first proletarian revolution in history and at the same time clearly revealed its incomplete, limited and partial character. Thus, by way of repulsion, originated the theory of socialism in one country, the basic dogma of Stalinism.