

### Chapter Eleven: The Right Opposition

While the political conflict was developing at the front of the stage, the party continued its slow transformation. The census of January 1927 revealed that 30% of its members were workers, 10% were peasants, 8% were members of the armed forces and 38.5% were functionaries. A report to the Central Committee on January 28, 1927, revealed that, of the 638,000 party members returned as "workers" in 1927, 184,000 were in reality functionaries. In this way, the phenomenon developed which the report called "the exodus of the working class into the state apparatus". The real apparatus had doubled since 1924. We may estimate the number of apparatchiki, the permanent officials of the party, at around 30,000, born from the reflux of the masses more than from any initiative by Stalin, as has too often been suggested, but who, by their methods and attitude of mind created only cadres in their own image, very different from the Bolsheviks of the heroic period.

In this sense, the defeat of the Opposition was effectively the defeat of the spirit of Bolshevism in the persons of the last people to retain revolutionary enthusiasm. None the less, the hasty efforts to eliminate them show by themselves how complex the new social and political relations were. The apparatus derived its omnipotence from its role as arbiter. This role the conflict of contradictory social forces within the party forced upon it. But the coalition which supported the apparatus against the revolutionary proletarian wing was far from being homogeneous. In reality it brought together elements with divergent aims in a provisional coalition against a common danger, but determined to settle accounts with each other after their shared victory. Trotsky analysed three groupings in the leadership in 1926: that of the trade union bureaucrats represented by Tomsky; that of the pure right, which expressed the pressure of the peasant mass, and, finally, that of the apparatus, the centre, expressed by Stalin and Kirov (1). The defeat of the Unified Opposition made the outbreak of the conflict inevitable, because the centre could not tolerate a situation which made it the hostage of the right. The pressure of events and, especially, the economic difficulties, led the apparatus immediately after the Fifteenth Congress to open the struggle against the right. It must be admitted, about this right, that between the pressure of the peasantry and the fear of adventures which every fraction of the bureaucracy shared, it also expressed, in a deformed way, and in a way more remote than the Unified Opposition, the echoes of the time when the Bolshevik party drew its strength from its discussions and the discipline which it voluntarily accepted.

### The Crisis of the Food Supply: the Turn to the Left

The leadership had maintained at the Fifteenth Congress the line which Bukharin had recommended ever since 1924, as against the Opposition which forecast the worst of catastrophes and warned of the danger of capitalist restoration emerging from the progress of the rich peasant and the slow pace of industrial development. Stalin had made