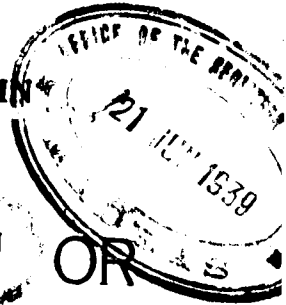


By JOSEPH STALIN



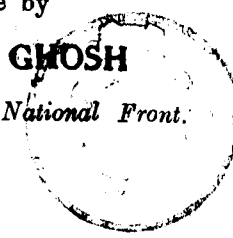
TROTSKYISM OR LENINISM

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With a Preface by

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PREFACE

The recent trials of the Trotskyist wreckers, spies and murderers have created world-wide sensation. Those who at first attributed the trials to "Stalin's blood lust" and were inclined to dismiss the entire evidence as fabrication have been silenced by the overwhelming proofs that are now available. Even the Times correspondent who attended the Bukharin trial was forced to admit that the guilt of the accused had been proved to the hilt.

But even among honest elements who no longer doubt the veracity of the evidence, bewilderment prevails, bewilderment as to how Trotsky who played a "glorious" role in the Revolutionary movement of Russia, could sink so low as to become the agent of international Fascism. M. N. Roy supplies an ingenuous answer. He says that it was absence of internal democracy in the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, persecutions and expulsions of those who differed in any way from the majority, the effort to smother all criticism, that compelled the "one-time revolutionaries" to resort to "clandestine methods." (Independent India No. 5.)

Because of the prevailing ignorance about the history of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, such an "explanation" may be readily accepted. It is believed by many others that Trotsky, the "right-hand man" and "faithful companion in arms" of Lenin was hounded out of the Communist Party merely because he alone remained

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true to Leninism. Stalin wanted to crush him, because he alone remained true to Leninism; Stalin wanted to crush him because he was an obstacle in his path. And so on.

This booklet consists of a speech delivered by Stalin in 1924. From the most authoritative documents of the actual period of seizure of power, viz. the minutes of the Central Committee, Stalin exposes the myth about Trotsky's "special role" in the Revolution, about his being, "together with Lenin," the inspirer and leader of the Revolution; about his being the organiser of the victories over the counter-revolutionary armies of Kolchak and Denikin.

In his Lessons of October and the History of the Russian Revolution, Trotsky everywhere belittles the role of the Bolshevik Party. He almost says in so many words that the Party leadership consisted mostly of vacillators and imbeciles, that it played no part, and only he (Trotsky and Lenin were responsible for the success of the Revolution. Anyone acquainted with the history of the Bolshevik Party and Revolutionary Russia, during the long period of struggle against Czarism, knows how false is the estimation. Why did Trotsky indulge in these brazen-faced lies even in 1924 when he himself was a responsible member of the Party? Why did he attempt to belittle the Party? Was it mere maliciousness?

Stalin replies, "To Trotsky the uncrowning of the Party represents a desperate need to permit him the uncrowning of Leninism. And the uncrowning of Leninism is necessary for smuggling in Trotskyism."

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This was the gist of the matter. In this booklet it is shown how naive and stupid is the conception that "Trotsky alone remained true to Lenin's teachings," how wide is the gulf between Trotskyism and Leninism.

PERMANENT REVOLUTION

In his work 'Leninism' Stalin deals exhaustively with Trotsky's theory of "Permanent Revolution" which he characterises in this booklet as the "first peculiarity of Trotskyism." This theory was first propounded by Trotsky in 1905. Trotsky wrote in 1922 in the preface to a work entitled '1905', "If the proletarian vanguard was to reap the harvest of its victory, it must at the very outset make the most decisive inroads into the domains of both bourgeois and capitalist property. Such action would have led to hostile collisions, not only with all the bourgeois groups.....but likewise with the peasant masses which had helped the revolution in its earlier stages. The contradictions inherent in the possibility of a workers' Government functioning in a backward country where the large majority of the population is composed of peasants, can only be liquidated on an international scale, in the arena of a world-wide proletarian revolution."

Here the entire peasantry, from the Kulak to the poor peasant, is considered to be one solid bloc inherently and incurably hostile to Socialism. Therefore, when the proletariat attempts to build socialism, a violent clash between it and the peasantry is inevitable. The proletariat of Russia being numerically weak cannot by its own strength break down the resistance of the peasantry. Hence without revolution in the industrially advanced countries of the

west, without a European proletariat which (having established Socialism in the West) joins forces with the Russian proletariat to break the resistance of the hostile Russian peasantry, socialism cannot be victorious in Russia.

This was what Trotsky said in 1905 and this, what he repeated in 1924. Dictatorship of the Proletariat, according to Trotsky, is inseparable from "violent collision" between the entire peasant mass and the Russian proletariat, unless it secured support from the Western proletariat.

Lenin wrote, "The Dictatorship of the Proletariat is a special form of class alliance between the proletariat (the vanguard of workers) and the numerous non-proletarian strata of those who labour (petty-bourgeoisie, small employers, peasants, intelligentsia and so on) or the majority of these. It is an alliance whose object is the complete overthrow of capitalism, the crushing for once and for all of the resistance of the bourgeoisie in its attempts for the restoration of the old order and the definite inauguration and consolidation of Socialism."

Trotsky visualises "hostile collision" between the proletariat and the peasantry after the "early stages." Lenin visualises alliance between them not only in the "early stages" but also "for the definite inauguration and consolidation of socialism."

In his article on the "Peasant Problem in France and Germany" Engels wrote:

"When we are in possession of the powers of the State, we shall not even dream of expropriating the pe-

peasants, the small holders (with or without compensation) as we shall have to do in relation to the large land owners. Our task as regards the small holders will first of all consist in transforming their individual production into cooperative ownership, not forcibly but by way of example and by offering social aid for this purpose." (quoted by Lenin in the Teachings of Marx)

These extracts will show, that on the most important question of Marxism, the Dictatorship of the Proletariat its character, there is a fundamental difference between Marxism Leninism and Trotskyism.

Who was right? The October Revolution showed that Lenin was right and Trotsky was wrong. Stalin wrote: "The October Revolution undoubtedly possessed the happy combination of a 'peasants' war' and a 'proletarian revolution' of which Marx wrote. The October Revolution is both possible and feasible. The October Revolution showed that the proletariat can seize power and maintain it, provided it is able to wrest the middle strata, especially the peasantry, from the capitalist classes, provided it knows how to transform these strata from reserves of capitalism into reserves of the proletariat."

But the October Revolution did not teach Trotsky this fundamental lesson of Marxism. On the contrary, he stuck to his theory of Permanent Revolution, of "violent collision" between the workers and peasants.

The theory of impossibility of Socialism in Russia follows logically from the theory of permanent revolution. If the Russian peasantry after the "early stages" of

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revolution inevitably turned against the proletariat, obviously socialism could not be built.

The Communist Party of the Soviet Union decisively rejected this defeatist, counter-revolutionary theory of Trotsky. It went forward to build socialist society in the Soviet Union. In alliance with the peasantry, the proletariat broke the capitalist elements. Land was collectivised, heavy industries were built.

Today the Soviet Union ranks as the second industrial country in the world. In the midst of a crisis-stricken capitalist world, it stands as the one land where no unemployment exists. The masses in the capitalist world who are facing the fierce onslaught of Fascist reaction, look to the Soviet Union as the one country where the most complete democracy has been established. It is a source of inspiration and hope to all who are fighting against fascist barbarity for saving civilisation.

What would have happened if Trotsky's line had triumphed? The Soviet Union would have remained a backward agricultural country, torn by internal war between the proletariat and the peasantry ("Violent collision"), an easy prey to the fascist wolves. Instead of the Russian proletariat giving material and moral support and ideological guidance to the World forces of progress as it does today (Spain, China etc), it would have waited for the proletariat of other lands to come and help it to overcome the resistance of the Russian peasantry.

That would have led to the victory of Fascism and the restoration of capitalism in the Soviet Union and consequent weakening of Socialist forces all over the world.

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That is why Trotskyism was an anti-Leninist, anti-working class trend from its very inception. Before the October Revolution, Trotskyism meant the under-estimation of the peasantry, under-estimation of the need to win the peasantry. And thus arose the slogans of adventurist isolationism, *that could only weaken and disrupt the forces of Revolution*, e.g., the slogan of Workers' Government. After the revolution, Trotskyism meant "violent collisions" between the proletariat and the peasantry, i.e., undoing the victories of the revolution.

WAS THE PARTY VINDICTIVE?

The myth that Trotsky was "harshly treated," that "repressive measures" were adopted against him and his supporters, while they were honestly propounding their views, is exploded in this booklet. At the end of his speech, Stalin says:—

"It is the task of the Party to bury Trotskyism as an ideological trend.

"There is talk about measures of repression against the opposition and the possibility of a split. That is all nonsense comrades. *I am decidedly opposed to them. What we want is not repression but a broadly conceived ideological struggle against recrudescent Trotskyism.*" (our italics)

This was in 1924. At the same time Stalin said: "Trotskyism according to its own inner content has every chance of becoming the centre and rallying point of non-proletarian elements which are trying to weaken; to disintegrate the Dictatorship of the Proletariat."

These words of Stalin proved prophetic. In every revolutionary movement, along with noble and selfless heroes, there also participate in-scrupulous ambitious elements, thirsting for position, prepared to go to any extent to satisfy their lust for power. One of such elements in the Russian Revolutionary Movement, was Trotsky. In perpetual conflict with Lenin almost throughout the period from 1903 to 1917, advocating organisationally opportunist and politically adventurist lines, Trotsky in August 1917 joined the Bolshevik Party on the eve of the October Revolution. Lenin said in 1912, "In the party policy, he disorganising the legality of the party, and setting out a path of adventure and disunity." Yet when in 1917 Trotsky joined the Bolsheviks, the party not only forgave his anti-party past but elected him to the Central Committee and the Political Bureau.

Does this show vindictiveness?

The Party was not swayed by considerations of Trotsky's anti-Party past, when in 1917 Trotsky applied for membership. During the period between 1917 and Lenin's death in 1924, Trotsky repeatedly opposed Lenin on the Brest-Litovsk Treaty; on the relation between the State and the Trade Unions Trotsky advocated the incorporation of Trade Unions in the State operations. When in 1924 he began his campaign of slander against the Party, the Party refused to expel him or resort to repressive measures.

This was a proposal on a par with the 'Labour Front' of Hitler, and entirely against the democratic spirit of Marxism-Leninism. It was then and then only that he was expelled from the Party.

The party fought Trotskyism, *ideologically*. In 1927 on the 10th Anniversary of the October Revolution the Trotskyists staged an anti-party and anti-Soviet Government demonstration.

Similarly, Zinoviev, Kamenev, Radek, Bukharin and others. In spite of repeated anti-party acts, they were readily forgiven whenever they admitted their past mistakes. In this booklet, Stalin condemns Trotsky's attacks on Zinoviev and Kamenev on the score of their vacillation during the October Revolution. He says "Zinoviev and Kamenev were Bolsheviks—Leninists." As long as there was any ground for believing that the vacillations and mistakes of a Party member had been due to temporary lapses, as long as it had not been overwhelmingly proved that he was a rotten, counter-revolutionary element, the Party readily forgave him, welcomed him back with open arms and defended him against all attacks on his integrity and revolutionary honesty.

NEW PHASE OF TROTSKYISM

With the complete triumph of Socialism in the U. S. S. R. with the final liquidation of all capitalist elements, the *Social basis of Trotskyism in the Soviet Union was smashed*. The growing material prosperity and cultural upliftment of the people on the basis of socialist industry proved the hollowness of Trotsky's thesis. It was no longer possible for Trotsky to secure political support.

Blinded with hatred for the Soviet leaders, thirsting with lust for power, refusing to realise the incorrectness of his line, yet finding no support among the Soviet masses, Trotsky had to seek support from the enemies of the

Soviet Union. This support he found among the disgruntle and cowardly elements in the Soviet Union, who like himself had no faith in the masses and believed in the triumph of counter-revolution as inevitable and *among the Fascists* "The enemy of my enemy is my friend," became Trotsky's motto. Hitler in his quest for allies to disrupt and weaken the working class state found Trotsky a willing tool. *Trotskyism became the handmaid of Fascism.*

The weapon that Trotskyism in its new phase had to wield, could no longer be merely and even predominantly ideological perversion of Leninism. As a result of the triumph of Socialism in the U. S. S. R., the Soviet system had so strongly entrenched itself, that no section of the masses could be persuaded to fight against it. They, who had been relieved for ever from capitalist exploitation and had built up Socialism, could not be persuaded that "Socialism cannot be built in one country," could not be rallied for the restoration of capitalism. *Hence Trotskyism had to sink to murder, sabotage and spying.*

Enough has already appeared in the press to explode the myth of "torture," threats etc. by which the confessions of the Trotskyist wreckers are supposed to have been extracted. The people who propagate or believe in these stories stoutly maintain that Radek, Bukharin, Zinoviev and others were genuine revolutionaries. If that is the case why did they debase themselves in the court! Even the worst enemies of the Soviet Union would admit that Hitler's police have nothing to learn from the OGPU in the methods of torture. Com. Thaelman has been in prison for over 5 years. Why is he not produced and made to confess

that he sold Germany in exchange for Moscow Gold? If *any method* could make "honest revolutionaries" condemn themselves as traitors and spies, would not Hitler and Mussolini have produced hundreds of Communists to make similar confessions? That would have immensely strengthened their position and isolated the Communists. They could not, because *nothing* can make honest revolutionaries confess such things.

This phase of Trotskyism did not manifest itself in the year 1924 when the speech contained in the booklet was delivered. The three peculiarities of Trotskyism which Stalin describes in this booklet *no longer constitute the dominant features of Trotskyism.*—Trotskyism had gone far beyond mere preaching of a false theory and slandering Communist leaders. Today the dominant features of Trotskyism are (1) wrecking, sabotaging and murdering activities in the Soviet Union (2) slandering propaganda against the Soviet Union and attempt to destroy its prestige and popularity among the working masses of the world (3) Disruption of the Peoples' Front movement by demagogic left slogans and tactics.

In all this, Trotskyism faithfully and consistently serves the cause of the spearhead of international counter-revolution,—German, Italian and Japanese fascism. If the Soviet leaders are murdered, if Soviet industries are wrecked, Fascist conquest of the workers' fatherland is facilitated. If the Peoples Front movements are disrupted, Fascist triumph becomes easier.

It is a matter of serious concern to all anti-Imperialists in India, that the counter-revolutionary character of

Trotskyism is not fully appreciated even by many socialists. Those very people who genuinely support the Soviet Union and look to it as the one bright spot in the black world, also lament the fate of those traitors and spies who were stricken down by the sword of proletarian justice. Still less do they seem to understand the real character of the latest Trotskyist slogan of "Workers' Front" as against the "Peoples' Front." It is because of this muddle-headedness that we find the same comrades who support wholeheartedly the Spanish Peoples Front, condemning the repression of the P.O.U.M. rising in Barcelona and which has been trying its best to disrupt the fighting unity of the Spanish Proletariat with the peasantry and democratic masses under the demagogic slogan, of "Soviet Spain." If the attempted coup at Barcelona had not been defeated, it would have resulted not in "Soviet Spain" but in fascist Spain.

The slogan of the Workers' Front *as against the Peoples' Front* can have only one meaning—the isolation of the proletariat from its allies and the strengthening of fascism.

EVERYONE OF TROTSKY'S SLOGANS TODAY SERVES THE OBJECT OF FASCISM

Nothing can be more dangerous than the notion that Trotskyism is "More revolutionary" than Stalinism.

The reader who desires to know more about Trotskyism, its genesis and subsequent development should refer to Leninism—2 Volumes by Stalin and also The New Age (A Marxist Monthly Edited by S. V. Ghate) of November 1937 May and June 1938.

Bombay, }
15th Sept. 1938. }

AJAY KUMAR GHOSH

TROTSKYISM OR LENINISM ?

COMRADES! Little remains for me to say after the full report of Comrade Kamenev. I shall confine myself therefore, to the exposure of certain legends circulated by Comrade Trotsky and his adherents regarding the October uprising, regarding the role of Comrade Trotsky in the uprising, regarding the Party and the preparation for October, etc. I shall also refer to Trotskyism as a peculiar ideology, incompatible with Leninism, and to the task of the Party in connection with the latest literary contributions of Comrade Trotsky.

I. The Facts Concerning the October Uprising

First of all, about the October uprising. A rumour is being persistently circulated among the members of the Party to the effect that the Central Committee as a whole was opposed to the uprising in October 1917. It is usually related that on October 10, when the Central Committee passed the decision to organize the uprising, the majority of the Central Committee at first declared itself against the uprising, but at that moment, a worker, supposedly rushed into the meeting of the Central Committee and said: "You are deciding against the uprising, but let me tell you that the uprising will take place anyhow, in spite of everything." It is further alleged that after these threats the Central Committee winced, re-opened the question of the

uprising and passed a decision to organize an uprising. This is not a mere rumour, comrades. This is stated by the famous John Reed in his book, *Ten Days that Shook the World*. He was remote from our Party and of course could not know the history of our secret meeting of October 16 and therefore fell a victim to the gossip which emanated from Messrs. Sukhanov and Co. This tale went round and was then repeated in a number of pamphlets issued from the pens of Trotskyists, including one of the latest pamphlets on the October Revolution written by Comrade Syrkin. These rumours are strongly supported in the latest literary contributions of Comrade Trotsky. It goes without saying that all these and similar Arabian-Night tales are at variance with the facts and that nothing of the kind took place, or could have taken place, at the meeting of the Central Committee. We might therefore have ignored these absurd rumours; many a rumour is concocted in the private studies of the members of the opposition persons remote from the Party. And indeed, that is the way we have acted hitherto, paying no attention, for instance, to the errors of John Reed, nor troubling to correct these errors. But after the latest utterances of Comrade Trotsky, it is no longer possible to ignore such legend for an attempt is made to bring up the youth on such legends, and unfortunately some measure of success has been achieved in his respect. I must therefore counterpose the actual facts to these absurd rumours.

I take the minutes of the meeting of the Central Committee of our Party on October 10 (23), 1917. Present Lenin, Zinoviev, Kamenev, Stalin, Trotsky, Sverdlov,

Britsky, Dzerzhinsky, Kollontai, Bubnov, Sokolnikov and Lomov. Current events and the question of the uprising are discussed. After a debate, Comrade Lenin's resolution on the uprising is put to vote. The resolution is passed by a majority vote of ten to two. It seems clear: the Central Committee, by a majority of ten to two, resolved to pass on to the immediate practical work of organizing the uprising. At that very meeting the Central Committee elects a political centre to lead the uprising, to be called the Political Bureau and to consist of: Lenin, Zinoviev, Stalin, Kamenev, Trotsky, Sokolnikov and Bubnov.

These are the facts.

These minutes at one stroke destroy several legends. They destroy the legend that the majority of the Central Committee was allegedly opposed to the uprising. They also destroy the legend that the Central Committee was on the point of splitting over the question of the uprising. From the minutes it is clear that the opponents of an immediate uprising—Comrades Kamenev and Zinoviev—entered the organ of the political leadership of the uprising on a par with the advocates of the uprising. There was no question, nor could there have been any question, of a split.

Comrade Trotsky assures us that during October we had a Right wing in our Party, represented by Comrades Kamenev and Zinoviev, who were almost social-democrats. The only thing not comprehensible is how it could happen that the Party in such event avoided a split: how it could happen that the differences of opinion with Comrades

Kamenev and Zinoviev lasted only a few days: how could happen that these comrades, in spite of the differences of opinion, were placed by the Party at very important posts, were elected to the political centre of the uprising, etc. The Party is sufficiently aware of Lenin's relentlessness in regard to social-democrats: the Party knows that Lenin would not for a moment have agreed to keep in the Party, and what is more, at most important posts, comrades with a social-democratic frame of mind. How is it to be explained that the Party avoided a split? This is explained by the fact that in spite of the differences of opinion, these comrades were old Bolsheviks. What was that common ground? It was the identity of views on fundamental questions: on the character of the Russian Revolution, on the driving forces of the revolution, on the role of the peasantry, on the principles of Party leadership, etc. Without such common ground a split would have been inevitable. No split took place and the differences of opinion lasted only a few days because, and only because, Comrades Kamenev and Zinoviev were Leninists, Bolsheviks.

Let us now pass on to the legend about the special role of Comrade Trotsky in the October Revolution. The Trotskyists are intent on spreading a rumour to the effect that Comrade Trotsky was the inspirer and only leader of the October uprising. These rumours are spread with particular assiduity by Comrade Lenzner, the so-called editor of Comrade Trotsky's works. Comrade Trotsky, himself, by systematically avoiding mention of the Party, the Central Committee of the Party and the Leningrad

Committee of the Party, by hushing up the leading role of these organizations in the uprising and emphatically pushing himself to the fore as the central figure of the October uprising, intentionally or unintentionally contributes to the dissemination of the rumours about a special role of Comrade Trotsky in the uprising. I am far from denying the undoubtedly important role of Comrade Trotsky in the uprising. But I must state that Comrade Trotsky did not and could not have played any special role in the October uprising; that, being the president of the Petrograd Soviet, he only carried into effect the will of the respective Party authorities, which guided every step of Comrade Trotsky. This may appear strange to philistines like Sukhanov, but the facts, the actual facts fully and entirely bear out this assertion.

Let us take the minutes of the next meeting of the Central Committee, on October 16, 1917. Present: the members of the Central Committee, plus the representatives of the Leningrad Committee, plus the representatives of the military organization, of the factory Committees, of the trade unions, the railway men. In addition to the members of the Central Committee there are present: Krylenko, Shotman, Kalinin, Volodarsky, Shlyapnikov, Latsis and others. Twenty-five persons in all. The question of the uprising is discussed from its purely practical and organizational aspect. Lenin's resolution on the uprisings passed by a majority of twenty to two, three persons abstaining from voting. A practical centre is elected to take charge of organizing the uprising. Who is elected to this centre? Five were elected to it: Sverdlov, Stalin, Dzerzhin-

sky, Bubnov and Uritsky. The tasks of the practical centre were: to direct all the practical organs of the uprising, in accordance with the directives of the Central Committee. Thus, as you see, something "terrible" took place at this meeting of the Central Committee, i.e., "in some mysterious way" the "inspirer," the "principal figure," the "only leader" of the uprising, Comrade Trotsky, did not get on the practical centre, which was called upon to lead the uprising. How can this be reconciled with the current notion about Comrade Trotsky's special role? Doesn't all this look somewhat "strange," as Sukhanov or the Trotskyists would say? Yet there is really nothing strange about it, for Comrade Trotsky, who was a relative newcomer in our Party in the period of October, did not, and could not have played any special role either in the Party or in the October uprising. Like all the responsible functionaries, he was only executing the will of the Central Committee and its organs. Anyone familiar with the machinery of the leadership of the Bolshevik Party, will quite readily understand that it could not have been otherwise: had Comrade Trotsky only acted contrary to the will of the Central Committee, he would have forfeited all influence on the course of events. All talk about a special role of Comrade Trotsky is a legend spread by obliging "Party" gossip-mongers.

This does not, of course, mean that the October uprising did not have its inspirer. No, it did have its inspirer and leader. But that was Lenin and not somebody else. The same Lenin whose resolutions were passed by the Central Committee when it decided the question of the

uprising, the same Lenin who though under-ground," was not prevented thereby from being the true inspirer of the uprising, in spite of Comrade Trotsky's assertion. It is stupid and ridiculous to try now to chatter about under-ground life to camouflage the undoubted fact that V. I. Lenin, the leader of the Party, was the inspirer of the uprising.

Such are the facts.

Some say: Let us admit this, still it is impossible to deny that Comrade Trotsky fought well at the time of October. Yes, that is true, Comrade Trotsky really fought well during October. But Comrade Trotsky was not the only one who fought well during the period of October: even such people as the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, who then stood shoulder to shoulder with the Bolsheviks, did not fight badly. In general, I must state that during a victorious uprising, when the enemy is isolated and the rebellion is spreading, it is not difficult to fight well. In such moments even backward people become heroes. However, the struggle of the proletariat is not a solid advance, a solid series of successes. The struggle of the proletariat has also its trials, its reverses. Not he who displays courage in the period of a victorious uprising is a genuine revolutionary, but he who, while being able to fight well during the victorious advance of the revolution, is also able to display courage during the period when the revolution is in retreat, when the proletariat is defeated; who does not lose his head and flinch when the revolution meets with setbacks, when the enemy gains successes; who does not become panic-stricken and seized with despair

during the period when the revolution is in retreat. The Left Socialist-Revolutionaries did not fight badly in support of the Bolsheviks during October. However, who does not know that these "brave" fighters became panic-stricken during the Brest period, when the advance of German imperialism plunged them into despair and hysterics. It is an extremely sad but undoubted fact that Comrade Trotsky, who fought well during the October period, lacked the courage during the Brest period, the period when the revolution received temporary setbacks, to show sufficient firmness at that difficult moment and not to follow in the footsteps of the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries. Beyond dispute the moment was difficult, it was necessary to display special courage and iron self-control in order not to become confused, to retreat in time, to accept the peace terms in time, to withdraw the proletarian army from the blows of German imperialism, to preserve the peasant reserves, and after thus obtaining a respite to strike at the enemy with renewed vigour. However, Comrade Trotsky unfortunately did not display such courage and such revolutionary firmness at that difficult moment. In the opinion of Comrade Trotsky, the fundamental lesson of the proletarian revolution consists in not having flinched at the time of October. This is wrong, for this assertion of Comrade Trotsky's contains only a fraction of the truth about the lessons of the revolution. The whole truth about the lessons of the proletarian revolution consists in "not flinching" not only in the day when the revolution is advancing, but also in the days of its retreat when the enemy is gaining the upper hand and

the revolution suffers reverses. The revolution has not been exhausted by October. October is only the beginning of the proletarian revolution. It is bad enough if flinching is evinced during an uprising in the ascendent. It is still worse when there is flinching after the seizure of power when the revolution is undergoing heavy ordeals. *To retain power the day after the revolution is no less important than to seize power.* If Comrade Trotsky flinched during the Brest period, at a time when our revolution was passing through a severe trial, when matters went almost as far as the surrender of power, he must understand that the October mistakes of Kamenev and Zinoviev had absolutely nothing to do with it.

Such is the case with the legends about the October uprising.

II. The Party and the Preparation for October

Let us now pass on to the question of the preparation for October.

If one listens to Comrade Trotsky, one might think the Party of the Bolsheviks during the entire preparatory period from March to October did nothing but mark time, was torn by internal contradictions and hampered Lenin in every way, and that but for Comrade Trotsky no one knows what would have been the ending of the October Revolution. It is somewhat amusing to hear these strange speeches about the Party from the mouth of Comrade Trotsky, who declared in the same "Preface" to the third volume that the "Party serves as the principal instrument of the proletarian revolution," that "without the Party,

over the head of the Party, by eluding the Party, by means of a substitute for the Party, the proletarian revolution cannot win," and Allah himself will fail to understand how our revolution could be victorious, if "its basic instrument" proved unserviceable, while there is no possibility—so it turns out—of winning "by eluding the Party." However, it is not the first time that Comrade Trotsky treats us to his antics. It is to be assumed that the amusing speeches about our Party are part and parcel of the usual oddities of Comrade Trotsky.

Let us briefly review the history of the preparation for October according to periods:

(1) *The period of the new orientation of the Party (March April.)* The principal facts of this period: a) overthrow of tsarism, b) of the Provisional Government (dictatorship of the bourgeoisie), c) appearance of the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies (dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry), d) diarchy, e) April demonstration, f) first Government crisis.

The characteristic trait of this period is the fact that the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie and the dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry simultaneously co-exist side by side, the latter dictatorship confiding in the former, believing in its peaceful aspirations, voluntarily yielding its power to the bourgeoisie and thus transforming itself into its appendage. So far, there are no serious conflicts between the two dictatorships. On the contrary, there is a "liaison commission."

This was a very great turning point in the history of Russia and an unprecedented turn in the history of our Party. The old pre-revolutionary platform of the direct overthrow of the government was clear and definite, but it no longer fitted the new conditions of struggle. Now it was no longer possible to advance directly to the overthrow of the Government, because it was bound up with the soviets, which were under the influence of the defencists, and the Party would have had to wage war both against the government and against the soviets, which was beyond its strength. However, it was also impossible to follow the policy of supporting the Provisional Government, for it was a government of imperialism. In the condition of struggle a new orientation of the Party became necessary. The Party (its majority) gropingly proceeded to this new orientation. It adopted the policy of having the soviets exercise pressure on the Provisional Government in the question of peace, and did not venture all at once to take any step beyond the old slogan of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry to the new slogan of the rule of the soviets. This half-way policy was intended to enable the soviets to perceive the truly imperialist nature of the Provisional Government from the concrete questions of peace and thereby rip the soviets loose from the Provisional Government. However, this position was utterly erroneous, for it begot pacifist illusions, poured water on the mill of defencism and hampered the revolutionary education of the masses. In those days I shared this erroneous position with other Party comrades, and completely renounced it only in the middle of April, when I

endorsed Lenin's theses.* A new orientation was necessary. Lenin gave the Party this new orientation in his famous April theses. I do not enlarge on these theses, as they are known to all. Were there any differences of opinion between the Party and Lenin at that time? Yes, there were: How long did these differences of opinion last? Not more than two weeks. The All-City Conference of the Leningrad organization (second half of April), which adopted Lenin's theses, was a turning point in the development of our Party. The All-Russian April Conference (end of April) only completed the work of the Leningrad Conference on an All-Russian scale, welding nine-tenths of its members to the unified position of the Party.

Now, after seven years, Comrade Trotsky takes malignant joy in the former differences of opinion among the Bolsheviks, depicting these differences of opinion as verging on a struggle of two parties within Bolshevism. However, in the first place, Comrade Trotsky unconsciously overdoes matters in this connection, for the Party of the Bolsheviks passed through these dissensions without the slightest tremor. Second, our Party would have been a caste and not a revolutionary party had it not allowed certain shades of opinion in its midst, and it is well known that we had differences of opinion also in the past *e.g.*, at the time of the Third Duma, which, however, did not prevent unity in our Party. Third, it will not be amiss to ask what was *then* the position of Comrade Trotsky

* It is well-known that Comrade Zinoviev, whom Comrade Trotsky is ready to transform into a "Hilfordingian," fully and completely shared Lenin's point of view.

himself, who is *now* rejoicing with such malignant glee in the former differences of opinion among the Bolsheviks? Comrade Lenzner, the so-called editor of the works of Comrade Trotsky, assures us that the American letters of Comrade Trotsky (March), "fully anticipated" Lenin's *Letters from Afar* (March), which lay at the basis of Lenin's April theses. These are the very words used: "fully anticipated." Comrade Trotsky does not object to such an analogy, apparently accepting it with gratitude. However, in the first place, Comrade Trotsky's letters are "altogether unlike" Lenin's letters both in spirit and in their conclusion, for they fully reflect Trotsky's anti-Bolshevik slogan: "No tsar, but a workers' government," a slogan which means a revolution *without* the peasantry. It suffices to glance through these two sets of letters to become convinced of this. Second, in such a case, how are we to explain the fact that *Lenin deemed it necessary to dissociate himself from Comrade Trotsky the very next day after his arrival from abroad?* Who does not know of the repeated statements of Lenin to the effect that Trotsky's slogan "No tsar, but a workers' government" is an attempt to "skip the peasant movement, which has not yet outlived itself," that this slogan means "playing at seizing power by a workers' government?" *

What can there be in common between Lenin's Bolshevik theses and the anti-Bolshevik scheme of Comrade

* See Lenin, *Collected Works*, Volume XX, Part I, p. 124, "Letters on Tactics." See also Reports at the Leningrad All-City Conference and at the All-Russian Conference of the Russian Communist Party (middle and end of April 1917.)

Trotsky with its "playing at seizing power"? Where do people get this passion of comparing a hovel to Mont Blanc? Why was it necessary for Comrade Lenzner to pile on this risky addition to the heap of old legends about our revolution, this further legend about Trotsky's "anticipating" Lenin's famous *Letters from Afar* in his American letters? **

** One of these legends is the very widely circulated version about Trotsky's having been the "only" or "chief organizer" of the victories on the civil war fronts. In the interest of truth I must declare, comrades, that this version is altogether at variance with the facts. I am far from denying the important role Comrade Trotsky played in the civil war. But I must declare with the utmost emphasis that the high honour of organizing our victories belongs not to any individual person, but to the great collective of front-rank workers of our country—the Russian Communist Party. Perhaps it would not be amiss to cite a few instances. You know that Kolchak and Denikin were regarded as the principal enemies of the Soviet republic. You know that our country breathed freely only after conquering these enemies. And history records that our army finally routed both these enemies, *i. e.*, both Kolchak and Denikin, *in spite* of the plans of Comrade Trotsky. Judge for yourselves:

1. *About Kolchak.* It is the summer of 1919. Our army advances against Kolchak and operates near Ufa. There is a meeting of the Central Committee. Comrade Trotsky proposes to hold back the advance on the line of the Byelaya River (near Ufa), leaving the Urals in the hands of Kolchak, to remove some of the troops from the Eastern front and throw them across to the Southern front. A heated debate takes place. The Central Committee does not agree with Comrade Trotsky, finding that the Urals with their factories and railway network ought not to be left in the hands of Kolchak, as he could easily recuperate there, rally his forces and appear once more on the Volga—it is necessary first to drive Kolchak beyond the Ural mountain chain into the steppes of Siberia and only thereafter to engage in diverting forces south. The Central Committee rejects Comrade Trotsky's plan. The latter resigns. The Central Committee does not accept his resignation. Vatssetis, the commander-in-

There is good reason for saying that an obliging bear is more dangerous than an enemy.

(2) *The period of the revolutionary mobilization of the masses (May-August).* The principal facts of this period are: (a) the April demonstration in Leningrad and the formation of a coalition government with the participation of "socialists"; (b) the First of May demonstrations in the principal centres of Russia under the slogan of "democratic peace"; (c) the June demonstration in Leningrad under the main slogan of "Down with the Capitalist Ministers!" (d) the June offensive at the front and the reverses of the Russian army; (e) the July armed demonstration in Leningrad, the withdrawal of the Cadet ministers from the government; (f) the bringing of counter-revolutionary troops from the front, the demolition of the editorial offices of

chief, who supports Comrade Trotsky's plan, resigns. His place is taken by a new commander-in-chief, Comrade Kamenev. From this moment, Comrade Trotsky ceases to take a direct part in the operations of the Eastern front.

2. *About Denikin.* It is the autumn of 1919. The advance against Denikin fails. The "steel ring" around (Mamontov's raid) is an obvious failure. Denikin takes Kursk. Denikin approaches Orel. Comrade Trotsky is summoned from the Southern front to attend a meeting of the Central Committee. The Central Committee recognizes the position as alarming and decides to recall Comrade Trotsky and dispatch new military workers to the Southern front. The new military workers demand that Comrade Trotsky stop "interfering" with the operations on the Southern front. Comrade Trotsky withdraws from direct participation in the operations on the Southern front. The operations on the Southern front, up to and including our capture of Rostov-on-Don and Odessa, proceed without Comrade Trotsky.

Let anyone try to disprove these facts.

Pravda, the struggle of the counter-revolution against the soviets and the formation of a new coalition government headed by Kerensky; (g) the Sixth Congress of the Party, which issued the slogan of preparing for the armed uprising; (h) the counter-revolutionary State Conference and the general strike in Moscow; (i) the unsuccessful advance of Kornilov on Leningrad, the revival of the soviets, the resignation of the Cadets and the formation of the "Directorate."

The intensification of the crisis and the disturbance of the unstable equilibrium between the Soviets and the Provisional Government, which for better or for worse existed during the preceding period, must be considered as characteristic features of this period. Diarchy has become intolerable to both sides. The frail body of the "liaison commission" is on its last legs. "Governmental crisis" and "ministerial leap-frog" were on everybody's tongue in those days. The crisis at the front and the chaos in the rear were having their effect, strengthening the extreme wings and pressing the conciliationists and the defenceists from both sides. The revolution is being mobilized, calling forth the mobilization of the counter-revolution and evokes a new surge of the revolutionary tide. The question of the transfer of power to a new class becomes the burning question of the hour.

Were there any differences of opinion within our Party at that time? Yes, there were. But they were exclusively of a practical nature, in spite of the assertions of Comrade Trotsky who tries to discover a "Right" and a "Left" wing in the Party, i.e., those differences of opinion were

such that, generally speaking, without them there is no active Party life, no real Party work.

Comrade Trotsky is wrong when he assures us that the April demonstration in Leningrad evoked dissensions within the Central Committee. The Central Committee was absolutely united on this question, condemning the attempt of a group of comrades to arrest the Provisional Government at a time when the Bolsheviks constituted a minority both in the soviets and in the army. Had Comrade Trotsky written the "history" of the October Revolution not *a la* Sukhanov, but according to actual documents, he would easily have convinced himself of the erroneousness of his assertion.

Comrade Trotsky is absolutely wrong when he asserts that the attempt "on Lenin's initiative" to organize a demonstration on June 9 was decried as "adventurism" by the "Right" members of the Central Committee. If Comrade Trotsky had not written *a la* Sukhanov, he would have known for certain that the demonstration of June 9 was postponed in full agreement with Lenin, and the postponement was even defended by Lenin, in his great speech at the famous meeting of the Leningrad Committee (see minutes of the Leningrad Committee).

Comrade Trotsky is absolutely wrong when he speaks of "tragic" dissensions within the Central Committee in connection with the July armed demonstration. Comrade Trotsky is simply fabricating when he presumes that certain members of the leading group of the Central Committee "must have regarded the July episode as a harmful adventure." Comrade Trotsky, who at that time was not yet a

member of our Central Committee and who was only our soviet parliamentarian, might, of course, not have known that the Central Committee regarded the July demonstration only as a means of probing the enemy, that the Central Committee (and Lenin) did not want to transform, and did not even think of transforming, the demonstration into an uprising, at a time when the soviets of the capital were still backing the defenceists. It is quite possible that some of the Bolsheviks were actually whining in connection with the July defeat. I am aware, for instance, that some of the Bolsheviks arrested at that time were even ready to quit our ranks. But to draw conclusions on that account against some alleged "Rights," supposedly members of the Central Committee, is tantamount to distorting history in defiance of all decency.

Comrade Trotsky is wrong when he declares that during the Kornilov days a section of the leaders of the Party displayed a tendency to form a *bloc* with the defenceists to support the Provisional Government. This has reference, of course, to those same alleged "Rights" who are disturbing Comrade Trotsky's peace of mind. Comrade Trotsky is wrong, since documents are in existence, such as the central organ of the Party of that period, which upset Comrade Trotsky's assertions. Comrade Trotsky cites Lenin's letter to the Central Committee with a warning against supporting Kerensky. But Comrade Trotsky does not understand Lenin's letters, their significance, their object. Lenin in his letters sometimes intentionally runs ahead, bringing into the limelight *possible* errors that might be committed and criticizing them in advance, for the purpose

of warning the Party and ensuring it against mistakes or sometimes he overstates a "trifling incident" and makes a "fly look like an elephant" to the same pedagogic end. A leader of the Party, especially if he lives "underground," cannot act otherwise, for he must see further ahead than his comrade-at-arms and is in duty bound to sound the alarm over every possible mistake and even over "trifling incidents." But to draw the conclusion from such letters of Lenin's (and there are quite a few such letters of his) that there were "tragic" differences of opinion and to trumpet it about means not to understand the letters of Lenin, not to know Lenin. This may explain why Trotsky sometimes hits exceedingly wide of the mark. In brief: in the days of the Kornilov action there were no, virtually no, dissensions in the Central Committee.

After the July defeat, there really arose a difference of opinion between the Central Committee and Lenin on the question of the fate of the soviets. It is well known that Lenin, wishing to focus the attention of the Party on the preparation for an uprising outside the soviets, warned against becoming infatuated with the soviets, figuring that the soviets defiled by the defenceists, had already become a hollow shell. The Central Committee and the Sixth Congress of the Party adopted a more cautious line, holding that there was no ground for believing a revival of the soviets impossible. The Kornilov affair showed that that decision was correct. However, this difference of opinion was of no practical importance to the Party. Subsequently Lenin acknowledged that the line taken up by the Sixth

Congress was correct. It is interesting to note that Comrade Trotsky did not clutch at this difference of opinion and did not magnify it to "monstrous" proportions.

A united, well-knit party occupying the centre of the revolutionary mobilization of the masses—such is the picture of the state of our Party during this period.

(3) *The period of the organization of the assault (September-October).* The basic facts of this period are: (a) the convocation of the Democratic Conference and the failure of the idea of a bloc with the Cadets; (b) the passing over of the Moscow and Leningrad Soviets to the side of the Bolsheviks; (c) the Congress of the Soviets of the Northern Region and the decision of the Leningrad Soviet opposing the withdrawal of the troops; (d) the decision of the Central Committee of the Party on the uprising and the formation of the Military-Revolutionary Committee of the Leningrad Soviet; (e) the decision of the Leningrad garrison to give armed support to the Leningrad Soviet and the organization of a system of commissars of the Military-Revolutionary Committee; (f) the action of the Bolshevik armed forces and the arrest of the members of the Provisional Government; (g) the seizure of power by the Military-Revolutionary Committee of the Leningrad Soviet and the establishment of a Council of People's Commissars by the Second Congress of Soviets.

The rapid growth of the crisis, the utter confusion in the ruling circles, the isolation of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and of the Mensheviks and the mass desertion of the vacillating elements to the side of the Bolsheviks must be

considered the characteristic feature of this period. One unique feature of the tactics of the revolution during this period deserves to be noted. This feature consists in this: *that the revolution tries to make every, or almost every, step of its offensive look like a defensive measure.* The refusal to evacuate the army was undoubtedly a serious offensive step of the revolution, yet this offensive was effected under the slogan of the defence of Leningrad against a possible attack by the foreign enemy. Undoubtedly the formation of the Military-Revolutionary Committee was an even more grave offensive step, directed against the Provisional Government, yet it was carried out under the slogan of organizing Soviet control over the activities of the district military headquarters. Undoubtedly the open passing over of the garrison to the side of the Military-Revolutionary Committee and the organization of a network of Soviet commissars betokened the beginning of an uprising, yet these steps were carried out by the revolution under the slogan of the defence of the Leningrad Soviet against any possible action by the counter-revolution. *The revolution seemed to camouflage its offensive steps with a smoke-screen of defence, in order to draw the hesitant, vacillating elements the more easily within its orbit.* This may explain the outwardly defensive character of the speeches, articles and slogans of this period, which none the less are of a profoundly aggressive nature as regards their inner content.

Were there any differences of opinion during that period within the Central Committee? Yes, there were, and they were of no small importance. I have already mentioned the differences of opinion regarding the uprising.

They were fully reflected in the minutes of the Central Committee of October 10 and 16. Therefore, I shall not repeat what was stated before. It is now necessary to dwell on three questions: on participation in the Pre-Parliament, on the role of the soviets in the uprising and on timing the uprising. This is the more necessary since Comrade Trotsky in his zeal to thrust himself into a conspicuous place has "inadvertently" misrepresented Lenin's position on the last two questions.

There is no doubt that the differences of opinion on the question of the Pre-Parliament were of a serious nature. What was really the object of the Pre-Parliament? It was to help the bourgeoisie push the soviets into the background and to lay the foundations of bourgeois parliamentarism. It is another question whether the Pre-Parliament could fulfil this task in the revolutionary situation which had taken shape. Events showed that this object could not be attained and that the Pre-Parliament itself was but the abortive fruit of the Kornilov affair. But the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries undoubtedly pursued precisely this purpose when they set up the Pre-Parliament. What could the participation of the Bolsheviks in the Pre-Parliament mean under such conditions? Nothing more or less than a misleading of the proletarian masses in regard to the actual complexion of the Pre-Parliament. This largely explains the passion with which Lenin, in his letters, castigates the advocates of participation in the Pre-Parliament. Participation in the Pre-Parliament was undoubtedly a serious mistake. But it would be a mistake to imagine, as Comrade Trotsky does, that the

Advocates of participation entered the Pre-Parliament for the purpose of doing organic work, for the purpose of "directing the labour movement" "into the channel of Social-Democracy." This is altogether wrong. This is not true. Had this been right, the Party would not have succeeded in eliminating this error "in no time," by a demonstrative exit from the Pre-Parliament. The vitality and revolutionary power of our Party expressed itself, incidentally, in that it instantly corrected this mistake. And then, allow me to correct a small inexactitude which found its way into the communication of Comrade Lenzner, the "editor" of Comrade Trotsky's works and which concerns the meeting of the Bolshevik fraction that settled the question of the Pre-Parliament. Comrade Lenzner informs us that there were two reporters at this meeting: Kamenev and Trotsky. This is wrong. As a matter of fact there were four reporters: two spoke in favour of boycotting the Pre-Parliament (Trotsky and Stalin) and two were for participation (Kamenev and Nogin).

Comrade Trotsky fares worse yet when dealing with Lenin's position in regard to the form of the uprising. Trotsky implies that, according to Lenin, the Party was to seize power in October "independent of the soviet and behind its back." (*Cf. On Lenin*, [Russian] p. 71.) Afterwards in criticizing this balderdash ascribed to Lenin, Comrade Trotsky skips and frolics about and in the end delivers himself of the following patronizing phrase: "This would have been a mistake." Comrade Trotsky is here telling an untruth about Lenin; he distorts Lenin's view on the role of the soviets in the uprising. A heap of docu-

ments could be adduced to prove that Lenin proposed to seize power through the soviets, either the Leningrad or the Moscow Soviet, and not *behind the back* of the soviets. Why did Comrade Trotsky need this more than strange legend about Lenin?

Nor does Trotsky improve matters when he "analyses" the position of the Central Committee and of Lenin on timing the uprising. When reporting the famous Central Committee meeting of October 10, Comrade Trotsky asserts that at this meeting "a resolution was carried to the effect that the uprising was to take place not later than October 15." (Cf. *On Lenin*, [Russian] p. 72.) He would have the Central Committee time the uprising for October 15, and then break this decision by putting off the date of the uprising to October 25. Is this right? No, it is not. During this period the Central Committee adopted only two resolutions on the uprising—one on October 10 and one on October 16. Let us read these resolutions.

The Central Committee resolution of October 10 reads:

The Central Committee recognizes that the international position of the Russian revolution (the mutiny in the German navy, as an extreme token of the growth of the world socialist revolution throughout the whole of Europe; the threat of peace among the imperialists,* for the purpose of stifling the revolution in Russia) as well as the military situation (the undoubted intention of the Russian bourgeoisie and of Kerensky and Co. to surrender Petrograd to the Germans); and winning the majority in the soviets by the proletarian party—all this taken in connection with the peasant uprising and the change in the peoples' confidence in favour of our Party (elections in Moscow); finally the obvious preparation for a second Kornilov affair (the evacuation of troops from Petrograd, the moving of

* Obviously this should read "separate peace."

troops to Petrograd, the encirclement of Minsk by Cossacks, etc.), this places the armed uprising on the order of the day.

Recognizing thus that an armed uprising is inevitable and has fully matured, the Central Committee instructs all the organizations of the Party to be guided accordingly and discuss and settle all practical questions from this point of view (the Congress of Soviets of the Northern Region, the withdrawal of the troops from Petrograd, the action taken by the people of Moscow and of Minsk, etc.)

The resolution of the conference of the Central Committee with the responsible Party workers, dated October 16, reads:

The meeting whole-heartedly greets and fully supports the resolution of the Central Committee, calls on all organizations and on all workers and soldiers for an all-sided and most intense preparation of the armed uprising, for the support of the centre set up by the Central Committee for that purpose, and expresses its full conviction that the Central Committee and the soviet will indicate in due time a favourable moment and expedient methods of attack.

You see, Comrade Trotsky's memory failed him as regards the date of the uprising and the resolution of the Central Committee concerning the uprising.

Comrade Trotsky is altogether wrong when he asserts that Lenin underestimated soviet legality, that Lenin failed to understand the great importance of the seizure of power by the All-Russian Congress of Soviets on October 25, that allegedly it was precisely for that reason that Lenin insisted on the seizure of power prior to October 25. This is wrong. Lenin proposed the seizure of power prior to October 25 for two reasons. First, because the counter-revolutionaries could surrender Leningrad at any moment, which action would bleed white the incipient uprising and because for that very reason every day was precious. Second, because

the mistake of the Leningrad Soviet, which had *open* fixed and broadcast the date of the uprising (October 25), could not be corrected otherwise than by an actual uprising prior to this legal date of the uprising. The fact of the matter is that Lenin regarded an uprising as a work of art and he could not fail to know that an enemy informed (owing to the lack of caution on the part of the Leningrad Soviet) of the date of the uprising would try without fail to prepare himself for that day, and that, therefore, *it was necessary to forestall the enemy, i.e., to begin the uprising absolutely before the legal date.* This largely explains the passion with which Lenin, in his letters, castigated the fetishists of a date—of October 25. Events proved that Lenin was absolutely right. It is common knowledge that the uprising started before the All-Russian Congress of Soviets. It is common knowledge that power was actually seized before the opening of the All-Russian Congress of Soviets, and that it was seized not by the Congress of Soviets but by the Leningrad Soviet, by the Military-Revolutionary Committee. The Congress of Soviets merely *accepted* power at the hands of the Leningrad Soviet. That is why the long disquisitions of Comrade Trotsky about the importance of soviet legality are altogether superfluous.

A live and powerful party, standing at the head of the revolutionary masses, storming and overthrowing the bourgeois power—such was the state of our Party during this period.

That is how matters stand with the legends about the preparation for October.

III. Trotskyism or Leninism?

We spoke above about the legends against the Party and about Lenin, legends spread by Comrade Trotsky and his confreres in connection with October and its preparation. We exposed and refuted these legends. But the question is: for what purpose did Comrade Trotsky need all these legends about October and about the preparation for October, about Lenin and Lenin's party? What need was there for new literary moves by Comrade Trotsky against the Party? What is the meaning, the aim and object of these moves now, when the Party does not want discussions, when the Party is overwhelmed with a multitude of pressing tasks, when the Party needs good teamwork in restoring the economy of the country, not a new struggle over old questions? Why was it necessary for Comrade Trotsky to drag the Party backwards into new discussions?

Comrade Trotsky assures us that all this is necessary to "study" October. But is it really impossible to study October without once more kicking the Party and Lenin, its leader? What is this "history" of October which begins and ends by uncrowning the principal promoter of the October uprising as well as the Party which organized and carried out this uprising? No, here it is not a question of studying October. That is not the way to write the history of October. Obviously the "intent" here is different. This "intent" according to all indications, consists in this: *the Comrade Trotsky, in his literary moves, makes one more (or more!) attempt to prepare the ground for substituting Trotskyism for Leninism.* To Comrade Trotsky the uncrowning

of the Party, of its cadres, which carried out the uprising represents a "desperate" need to permit him to pass from the uncrowning of the Party to the uncrowning of Leninism. And the uncrowning is necessary for smuggling in Trotskyism as the "only" "proletarian" (no joke!) ideology. All this is done, of course (of course!) under the flag of Leninism, so that the smuggling operation may come off "as painlessly as possible."

That is the gist of the latest literary moves of Comrade Trotsky.

Therefore, these literary moves of Comrade Trotsky squarely raise the question of Trotskyism?

What, then, is Trotskyism?

Trotskyism presents three peculiarities, which place it in irreconcilable contradiction to Leninism. What are these peculiarities?

First, Trotskyism is the theory of permanent (uninterrupted) revolution. And what is permanent revolution in its Trotskyist conception? It is revolution which fails to take the poor peasantry into account as a revolutionary force. In the words of Lenin, Comrade Trotsky's permanent revolution means "skipping" the peasant movement means "playing at seizing power." Wherein lies its danger? In that such a revolution, if an attempt were made to realize it, would inevitably end in failure, for it would sever its ally, i.e., the poor peasantry, from the Russian proletariat. This, too, explains the struggle which Leninism has been waging against Trotskyism ever since 1905. How does Comrade Trotsky evaluate Leninism from the point of

view of this struggle? He regards it as a theory which contains "anti-revolutionary features." (*Cf. The Year 1905.*) Upon what is this sullen opinion about Leninism based? It is based on the fact that Leninism used to defend, and successfully upheld at the time, the idea of the dictatorship of the proletariat and of the peasantry. (*Cf. Ibid.*) However, Comrade Trotsky does not confine himself to this sullen opinion. He goes further and asserts that:

The whole structure of Leninism is at present based on lies and falsification and harbours the poisonous germs of its own decomposition. (*Cf. Comrade Trotsky's letter to Chkheidze, dated April 1, 1913.*)

As you see, we have before us two opposite lines.

Second, Trotskyism means lack of confidence in the Bolshevik Party allegiance, in its monolithic nature, in its hostility towards opportunist elements. Trotskyism in the sphere of organization is the theory of the co-habitation of revolutionaries and opportunists, of their groups and grouplets within the fold of a single party. You must be acquainted with the history of Comrade Trotsky's "August bloc," in which the Martovists and Otsovisists, the liquidators and the Trotskyists, worked in happy collaboration, pretending to be a "real" party. As is well known, this motley "party" pursued the aim of destroying the Bolshevik Party. Wherein did "our differences of opinion" consist at that time? In that Leninism visioned the guarantee of the development of the proletarian party in the destruction of the "August bloc," whereas Trotskyism saw in this bloc the basis for the creation of a "real" party.

Again, as you see, two opposite lines.

Third, Trotskyism means distrust in the leaders of Bolshevism, an attempt at discrediting them, at unrooting them. I know of no tendency in the Party which could compare with Trotskyism in the matter of discrediting the leaders of Leninism and the central institutions of the Party. What shall we make of the "amiable" opinion passed by Comrade Trotsky on Lenin, who is characterized by him as a "professional exploiter of every backward feature in the Russian labour movement." (Cf. the letter to Chekheidze cited above.) Yet this is far from being "most amiable" opinion of all the existing "amiable" opinions of Comrade Trotsky.

How could it happen that Comrade Trotsky, who is carrying such an unpleasant burden on his back, none less turned up in the ranks of the Bolsheviks during the October movement? This happened because Comrade Trotsky threw off (actually threw off) his burden at that time, concealed it in his cupboard. But for this "operation" no serious collaboration with Comrade Trotsky would have been possible. The theory of the "August bloc," i.e., the theory of unity with the Mensheviks, had already been defeated and scrapped by the revolution, for how could there be any talk of unity with armed conflict raging between the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks? The only thing left for Comrade Trotsky was to acknowledge the impracticability of this theory. The theory of permanent revolution had a similarly unpleasant experience, for none of the Bolsheviks entertained any thought of immediately seizing power the day after the February Revolution, while Comrade Trotsky could not be ignorant of the fact that

Bolsheviks would not allow him, to use Lenin's words, any "playing at seizing power." The only thing left for Comrade Trotsky was to endorse the policy of the Bolsheviks as regards the struggle for influence in the soviets and the struggle to win the peasantry. As regards that third peculiarity of Trotskyism (distrust in the Bolshevik leaders) it naturally had to recede to the background, owing to the palpable failure of the first two peculiarities.

Could Comrade Trotsky, in such a state of affairs, do anything else but conceal his burden in his cupboard and follow the Bolsheviks, he who did not have any more or less serious group behind him, who came to the Bolsheviks as a one-man political organization bereft of its army? Of course he could not!

What is the lesson derived from this? Only one lesson: prolonged collaboration between the Leninists and Comrade Trotsky is possible only if the latter completely casts off his old burden, if he completely espouses Leninism. Comrade Trotsky writes about the lessons of October, but he forgets that apart from all the other lessons, there is one more lesson of October, which has just been related by me and which is of first-rate importance for Trotskyism. It would not hurt Trotskyism to take stock of this lesson of October also.

However, Trotskyism has apparently not profited by this lesson. The fact is that the old burden of Trotskyism, concealed in the cupboard in the days of the October movement, is now once more hauled into the light of day in the hope of finding a market for it—as good fortune would

have it, our market is expanding. There is no doubt that in Comrade Trotsky's new literary contributions, we have an attempt to revert to Trotskyisms, to "overcome" Leninism, to smuggle in and to implant all the peculiarities of Trotskyism. The new Trotskyism is not a mere repetition of the old Trotskyism; it has undergone quite some plucking and pruning, it is incomparably milder in spirit and more moderate in form than the old Trotskyism, but it undoubtedly preserves essentially every peculiarity of the old Trotskyism. The new Trotskyism does not venture to come out as a belligerent force against Leninism; it prefers to operate under the common banner of Leninism, to manipulate under the slogan of interpreting, of improving Leninism. That is so because it is weak. The fact that the attitudes of the new Trotskyism coincided with Lenin's departure cannot be regarded as fortuitous. He would not have ventured to take this risky step if Lenin had still been alive.

What are the characteristic features of the new Trotskyism?

(1) *On the question of permanent revolution.* The new Trotskyism does not deem it necessary openly to champion the theory of permanent revolution. It "merely" records that the October Revolution has fully confirmed the idea of permanent revolution. From this it draws the following conclusion: whatever occurred after the war, during the period of the October Revolution, is important and acceptable in Leninism, and, on the contrary, whatever occurred before the war, before the October Revolution, is both wrong and unacceptable in Leninism. Hence,

the Trotskyists' theory of dissecting Leninism into two parts: pre-war Leninism, the "old," "unserviceable" Leninism, with its idea of the dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry, and the new, post-war, October Leninism which they expect to adapt to the requirements of Trotskyism. Trotskyism needs this theory of dissecting Leninism as a first more or less "acceptable" step necessary to facilitate its subsequent steps in the struggle against Leninism. However, Leninism is not an eclectic theory, pieced together from heterogeneous elements and admitting of possible dissection. Leninism is an integral theory which arose in 1903, which went through the ordeals of three revolutions and which is now marching onward as the militant banner of the world proletariat. Lenin said:

Bolshevism, as a trend of political thought and as a political party, exists since 1903. Only the history of Bolshevism during the whole period of its existence can satisfactorily explain why it was able to build up and maintain, under most difficult conditions, the iron discipline necessary for the victory of the proletariat. (Cf. "Left-Wing" Communism, Chap 2.)

Bolshevism and Leninism are one. They are two names for one and the same thing. Therefore, the theory of dissecting Leninism into two parts is a theory of destroying Leninism, a theory substituting Trotskyism for Leninism.

There is no need to state that the Party cannot reconcile itself to this strange theory.

(2) *On the question of the Party allegiance.* The old Trotskyism undermined the Bolshevik Party spirit by

means of its theory (and practice) of unity with the Mensheviks. However, this theory has been so thoroughly discredited that people nowadays do not even want to call it to mind. In order to undermine the Party allegiance, present-day Trotskyism thought up a new, less scandalous and almost "democratic" theory of counterposing the old cadres to the young generation in the Party. For Trotskyism, no single and integral history of our Party exists. Trotskyism divides the history of our Party into two parts of unequal value—the pre- and the post-October parts. The pre-October part of the history of our Party, is, properly speaking, not a history, but a "pre-history," an unimportant, or at any rate not a very important, preparatory period of our Party. However, the post-October part of the history of our Party is the real, genuine history. There you have the "old," "pre-historic," unimportant cadres of our Party. Here you have the new, real, "historical" party. There is hardly any necessity to prove that this odd scheme of the history of the Party is a scheme that undermines the unity between the old and the new cadres of our Party, a scheme that destroys the Bolshevik Party allegiance.

There is no need to state that the Party cannot reconcile itself to this odd scheme.

(2) *On the question of the leaders of Bolshevism.* The old Trotskyism attempted to uncrown Lenin more or less openly, without fear of consequences. The new Trotskyism proceeded more cautiously. It tries to do the work of the old Trotskyism under the guise of extolling Lenin, under

the guise of glorifying him. I believe it worth while to cite a few instances.

The Party knows Lenin as a relentless revolutionary. But it also knows that Lenin was cautious, did not like people who overdo things, and often with a firm hand put down those too fond of terror, including Comrade Trotsky himself. Comrade Trotsky deals with this theme in his book, *On Lenin*. However, from his characterization, it would follow that Lenin did nothing but "hammer away on every suitable occasion at the idea of the inevitability of terror." (Cf. p. 104.) The impression is created that Lenin was the most bloodthirsty of all the bloodthirsty Bolsheviks. Why need Comrade Trotsky have laid on the colours so heavily when this was unnecessary and altogether unjustified?

The Party knows Lenin as a model Party member, who did not like to settle questions by himself, without a leading collegium, cursorily, without careful probing and verification. In his book Comrade Trotsky refers to this aspect of the case also. However, the person issuing forth from his pen is not Lenin but some Chinese mandarin, who settles the most important questions in the quiet of his study, by inspiration.

Do you want to know how our Party decided the question of the dispersal of the Constituent Assembly? Listen to Comrade Trotsky:

—*Lenin* said: "Of course, it is necessary to disperse the Constituent Assembly, but what about the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries?"

However, we were greatly consoled by old man Nathanson. He came to "consult" us and right at the start said:

"You see, it will probably be necessary to disperse the Constituent Assembly by force."

"Bravo!" exclaimed Lenin, "you cannot get away from the truth! But will your people consent to it?"

"Some of our people are wavering, but I think that in the end they will agree," replied Nathanson. (Cf. p. 92.)

That is the way some people write history.

Do you want to know how the Party decided the question of the Supreme War Council? Just listen to Comrade Trotsky:

Every time after I visited headquarters, I used to say to Vladimir Ilyich: "Without qualified and experienced military men, we shall not be able to get out of this chaos."

"This apparently is true. If they only do not betray us."

"Let us assign a commissar to each of them."

"Yes," he said, "and let them have a firm grip on that. It must be that we do not have Communists with a firm grip."

That is the way the Supreme Military Council came to be constructed.

That is how Trotsky writes history.

What need did Comrade Trotsky have of these Arabian-Night tales, which discredit Lenin? Can it be for the purpose of exalting Lenin, the leader of the Party? Somehow, it does not look like it.

The Party knows Lenin as the greatest Marxist of our time, a profound theoretician and most experienced revolutionary, devoid of even a scintilla of Blanquism. Comrade Trotsky in his book deals with this aspect of the case also. But from his characterization we get not Lenin the giant, but some Blanquist dwarf, who advises the Party in the October days "to seize power with their own

hands, independent of the soviet and behind its back." We have already stated that this characterization is not one iota in keeping with the facts.

What need had Comrade Trotsky for this crying . . . inexactitude? Is this not an attempt to uncrown Lenin "just a trifle"?

Such are the typical characteristic traits of the new Trotskyism.

Wherein lies the danger of the new Trotskyism? In that Trotskyism, according to its entire inner content, has every chance of becoming the centre and the rallying point of non-proletarian elements which are trying to weaken, to disintegrate the dictatorship of the proletariat.

You will ask: what next? What are the immediate tasks of the Party in connection with the literary contributions of Comrade Trotsky?

Trotskyism now comes forward in order to uncrown Bolshevism, to undermine its foundations. It is the task of the Party to bury Trotskyism as an ideological trend.

There is talk about measures of repression against the opposition and of the possibility of a split. This is all nonsense, comrades. Our Party is strong and powerful. It will not allow any splits. As for repressions, I am decidedly opposed to them. What we want now is not repressions, but a broadly conceived ideological struggle against recrudescent Trotskyism.

We did not want and did not pick this literary discussion. Trotskyism forces it on us by its anti-Leninist notions. Well and good, comrades, we are ready.

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