

Trotskyism or Leninism

By Harpal Brar

Preface

One of the myths perpetrated by Trotskyites, with not inconsiderable help from the imperialist bourgeoisie, is that Leninism and Trotskyism are synonymous; that Trotsky was, after Lenin, the most brilliant and greatest Bolshevik (some even implying that Lenin was a great Trotskyist); that Trotsky was the true inheritor of Leninism, and a worthy successor to Lenin, but was, alas, deprived of his rightful place by the cunning manoeuvres of a third-class mediocrity and oriental despot to boot, i.e., Joseph Stalin. This anti-communist myth, repeated ad nauseam decade after decade in truly Goebbels fashion, not only in Trotskyite publications but also in classrooms by petty-bourgeois professors and teachers of history and sociology, not to mention the imperialist press and electronic media, this myth has acquired the force of a public prejudice. This prejudice is the product of deliberate distortion and falsification by Trotskyism and its bourgeois allies, of Marxism-Leninism, of deliberate inventions, deceptions, innuendoes, omissions and their tendentious interpretations of the history of the Great October Revolution and the revolutionary practice and role of the USSR, on the one hand, and the ignorance of those on whom these deceptions, distortions and downright falsifications are practised, on the other hand. Anyone who has made some study, let alone a deep study, of the subject cannot but be aware of the total falsity of this myth. It is the aim of this book to expose this myth and lay bare the truly reactionary, counter-revolutionary, essence of the petty-bourgeois ideology of Trotskyism, which is as irreconcilably hostile to Marxism-Leninism as is the bourgeoisie to the proletariat – notwithstanding its pseudo-Marxist, ultra-'left' and ultra-'revolutionary' terminology.

The task I set myself in this book is to show that Leninism and Trotskyism are mutually exclusive; that Trotskyism is irreconcilably opposed to Leninism; that those claiming to be Marxist-Leninists are duty bound, in the interests of the proletariat, to wage a ruthless and uncompromising struggle against Trotskyism; that they have to bury Trotskyism, as an ideological trend in the working-class movement. Further, I seek to demonstrate that after the death of Lenin in January 1924, as Leninism was upheld by the Bolshevik Party, now under the leadership of Stalin, Trotskyism continued its ceaseless onslaught on Leninism, with some tactical adjustments to the form of its attack. It now attacked Leninism and the Party's Leninist policy under the guise of attacking 'Stalinism' in the name of Leninism. For all that, Trotskyism continued its counter-revolutionary struggle against revolutionary Leninism, albeit without overtly and specifically naming Lenin as its target. Be it said to the honour of

the Bolshevik Party and to its leader, Stalin, Trotskyism was dealt blows equally as shattering as those delivered against it during Lenin's lifetime, causing it to suffer ignominious defeat. In particular I seek to emphasise three specific features of Trotskyism – features which bring it into irreconcilable contradiction with Leninism.

Three specific features of Trotskyism

1. 'Permanent revolution'

Trotskyism stands for the theory of 'permanent' revolution, failing to take into account the vast mass of the poor peasantry as a revolutionary force and reliable ally of the proletariat. As Lenin rightly pointed out, Trotsky's 'Permanent' revolution is tantamount to 'skipping' the peasant movement and "playing at the seizure of power." Any attempt at such a revolution as was advocated by Trotsky would have ended in certain failure, for it would have denied the Russian proletariat the support of its most dependable ally, the poor peasantry. Only this explains Leninism's unrelenting struggle against Trotskyism from 1905 onwards.

For its part Trotskyism regarded Leninism as a theory possessing "anti-revolutionary features" for no better reason that at the proper time Leninism correctly advocated and upheld the idea of the dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry. Going far beyond this indignant opinion, Trotskyism asserts:

"The entire edifice of Leninism at the present time is built on lies and falsification and bears within itself the poisonous elements of its own decay." (Trotsky's letter to Chkeidze, 1913).

Leninism, on the other hand, asserts:

"Trotsky has never yet held a firm opinion on any important question of Marxism. He always contrives to worm his way into the cracks of any given difference of opinion, and desert one side for the other. At the present moment he is in the company of the Bundists and the liquidators. And these gentlemen do not stand on ceremony where the Party is concerned" (Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 20 p. 448, 1914).

2. Distrust of Leninism in matters of organisation

Trotskyism stands for the distrust of Leninism, of Bolshevism, in matters of organisation. Whereas Bolshevism stands for the principle of a revolutionary proletarian party of a new type, a disciplined and monolithic Party, hostile to opportunist elements, Trotskyism stands for the co-existence of revolutionaries and opportunists and for the formation of groups, factions and coteries within a single Party. Anyone who is at all aware of the history of Trotsky's notorious August Bloc, in which the Martovites and Otzovists,⁽¹⁾ the Liquidators⁽²⁾ and Trotskyites happily co-operated in their struggle against Bolshevism, cannot have failed to notice this liquidationist

feature of Trotskyism. Thus, during this crucial historical period, whereas Leninism regarded the destruction of the August Bloc as a precondition for the development of the proletarian party, Trotskyism regarded the liquidationist August Bloc as the basis for building a ‘real’ party.

Throughout this entire period – from 1903 to 1917 – Lenin again and again denounced Trotsky for his “careerism”, “Menshevism”, “conciliationism” and “liquidationism.” Here are a few samples chosen at random from scores of Lenin’s writings in the same vein:

In a letter to Zinoviev dated 24 August 1909, Lenin writes: Trotsky behaves like a despicable careerist and factionalist of the Ryazanov-and-co type. Either equality on the editorial board, **subordination** to the central committee and no one’s transfer to Paris except Trotsky’s (the scoundrel, he wants to ‘fix up’ the **whole** rascally crew of ‘Pravda’ at our expense!) – or a break with this swindler and an exposure of him in the CO. He pays lip-service to the Party and behaves worse than any other of the factionalists.” (*Collected Works*, Vol. 34, p. 400).

When Lenin was waging a life and death struggle to purge the Party of liquidators and otzovists, Trotsky, assuming the role of a conciliator, tried his worst to reconcile the Party with these two bourgeois trends. This caused Lenin to denounce Trotsky in these terms:

“In the very first words of his resolution Trotsky expressed the full spirit of the worst kind of conciliation, ‘conciliation’ in inverted commas, of a sectarian and philistine conciliation, which deals with ‘given persons’ and not the given line of policy, the given spirit the given ideological and political content of Party work.

“It is in this that the enormous difference lies between real partyism; which consists in purging the Party of liquidationism and otzovism, and the ‘conciliation’ of Trotsky and Co., which actually **renders the most faithful service to the liquidators and otzovists, and is therefore an evil that is all the more dangerous to the party the more cunningly, artfully and rhetorically it cloaks itself with professedly pro-party, professedly anti-factional declamations.**” (*Notes of a Publicist, Collected Works*, Vol. 16, June 1910, p. 211 – emphasis added).

In November 1910, accusing Trotsky of following “in the wake of the Mensheviks, taking cover behind particularly; sonorous phrases, “ of “putting before the German comrades **liberal views** with a Marxist coating.” of being a master of “resonant but empty phrases, “ of failing to understand and ignoring the “**economic content** of the Russian revolution, “ and thereby depriving himself “of the possibility of understanding the historical meaning of the inner-Party struggle in Russia,” Lenin goes on to state:

“The struggle between Bolshevism and Menshevism is... a struggle over the question whether to support the liberals or to overthrow the hegemony of the liberals over the peasantry. Therefore to attribute [as did Trotsky] our

splits to the influence of the intelligentsia, to the immaturity of the proletariat, etc, is a childishly naive repetition of liberal fairy-tales.”

Adding: “Trotsky distorts Bolshevism, because he has never been able to form any definite views on the role of the proletariat in the Russian bourgeois revolution.”

Countering Trotsky’s lies and falsifications in the German Social-Democratic press and accusing Trotsky of following a policy of “advertisement” of “shamelessness in belittling the Party and exalting himself before the Germans, “ Lenin concludes:

“Therefore, when Trotsky tells the German comrades that he represents the ‘general Party tendency’ I am obliged to declare that Trotsky represents only his own faction and enjoys a certain amount of confidence **exclusively** among the otzovists and the liquidators.” (*The Historical Meaning of the Inner-Party Struggle in Russia, Collected Works*, Vol. 16 pp. 374-392).

When Trotsky’s Vienna Club, stepping up its activities, passed a resolution in November 1910 to organise a ‘general Party fund for the purpose of preparing and convening a conference of the RSDLP”, Lenin characterised this as a “direct step towards a split... a clear violation of Party legality and the start of an adventure in which Trotsky will come to grief.”

Continues Lenin:

“It is an adventure in the ideological sense. Trotsky groups all the enemies of Marxism, he unites Potresov and Maximov, who detest the ‘Lenin-Plekhanov’ bloc, as they like to call it. **Trotsky unites all those to whom ideological decay is dear; all who are not concerned with the defence of Marxism**, all philistines who do not understand the reasons for the struggle and who do not wish to learn, think and discover the ideological roots of the divergence of views. At this time of confusion, disintegration, and wavering it is easy for Trotsky to become the ‘hero of the hour’ and gather all the shabby elements around himself. The more openly this attempt is made, the more spectacular will be the defeat.” (Emphasis added).

Lenin ends this letter by calling, *inter alia*, for “struggle against the splitting tactics and the unprincipled adventurism of Trotsky.” (*Letter to the Russian Collegium of the Central Committee of the RSDLP, Collected Works*, Vol. 17, pp. 17-22 – December 1910).

In December 1911, being sick and tired of Trotsky’s dirty work as an attorney and diplomat for the liquidators and otzovists, Lenin, exposing Trotsky’s factionalism, wrote:

“It is impossible to argue with Trotsky on the merits of the issue, because Trotsky holds no views whatever. We can and should argue with confirmed liquidators and otzovists, but it is no use arguing with a man whose game is to hide the errors of both these trends; in his case the thing to do is to expose him as a diplomat of the smallest calibre.” (*Trotsky’s Diplomacy and a Certain Party Platform, Collected Works*, Vol. 17 pp. 360362).

In July 1912, in a letter to the editor of Pravda, the daily legal Bolshevik paper printed in Petersburg from 5 May 1912, Lenin advises the editor not to reply to Trotsky's "disruptive and slanderous letters," adding:

"Trotsky's dirty campaign against *Pravda* is one mass of lies and slander... This intriguer and liquidator goes on lying right and left." (Collected Works, Vol. 35, pp. 40-41).

In *The Break-up of the 'August' Bloc* (March 1914), Lenin writes:

"Trotsky, however, has never had any 'physiognomy' at all; the only thing he does have is a habit of changing sides, of skipping from the liberals to the Marxists and back again, of mouthing scraps of catchwords and bombastic parrot phrases."

And: "Actually under the cover of high-sounding, empty and obscure phrases that confuse the non-class-conscious workers, Trotsky is defending the liquidators by passing over in silence the question of the 'underground' by asserting that there is no liberal labour policy in Russia, and the like.

"... Unity means rallying the majority of the workers in Russia about decisions which have long been known, and which condemn liquidationism..."

"But the liquidators and Trotsky,... who tore up their own August bloc, who flouted all the decisions of the Party and dissociated themselves from the 'underground' as well as from the organised workers, are the worst splitters. Fortunately, the workers have already realised this, and all class-conscious workers are creating their own **real** unity **against** the liquidator disrupters of unity." (Collected Works, Vol. 20 pp. 158-161).

In his article *Disruption of unity under cover of outcries for unity*, written in June 1914, Lenin denounces Trotsky for his factionalism and liquidationism and exposes the utter falsity of the charge of splittism hurled by Trotsky and the liquidators at the Bolsheviks. Writing in his allegedly non-factional journal, *Borba*, Trotsky, having accused the Bolsheviks of splittism for the sole reason that they exposed and opposed liquidationism, goes on to admit that the Bolshevik "splittist tactics are winning one suicidal victory after another." This said, Trotsky adds:

"Numerous advanced workers, in a state of utter political bewilderment themselves often become active agents of a split."

Here is Lenin's retort to this accusation and 'explanation':

"Needless to say, this explanation is highly flattering, to Trotsky... and to the liquidators... Trotsky is very fond of using with the learned air of the expert pompous and high-sounding phrases to explain historical phenomena in a way that is flattering to Trotsky. Since 'numerous advanced workers' become 'active agents' of apolitical and Party line [Bolshevik Party line] which does not conform to Trotsky's line, Trotsky settles the question unhesitatingly, out of hand these advanced workers are 'in a state of utter political bewilderment', whereas he, Trotsky, is evidently 'in a state' of political firmness and clarity, and keeps to the right line!... And this very same

Trotsky, beating his breast, fulminates against factionalism parochialism, and the efforts of the intellectuals to impose their will on the workers!

“Reading things like these, one cannot help asking oneself. – is it from a lunatic asylum that such voices come?” (*Collected Works*, Vol. 20 pp. 327-347).

Continues Lenin: “The reason why Trotsky avoids facts and concrete references is because they relentlessly refute all his angry outcries and pompous phrases. It is very easy, of course, to strike an attitude and say: ‘a crude and sectarian travesty.’ Or to add a still more stinging and pompous catchphrase, such as ‘emancipation from conservative factionalism.’

“But is this not very cheap? Is not this weapon borrowed from the arsenal of the period when Trotsky posed in all his splendour before audiences of high-school boys?” (*ibid.*)

Lenin concludes his article with a brilliant description of Trotsky’s wavering and vacillation between the Party and the liquidators, calling him a “Tushino turncoat” appearing before the Party with incredibly pretentious claims, unwilling absolutely to reckon with **either** the Party decisions, which since 1908 have defined and established our attitude towards liquidationism, or with the experience of the present-day movement in Russia, which has actually brought about the **unity** of the majority on the basis of full recognition of the aforesaid decisions.” (*ibid.*)

This brilliant description appears in the main body of this work and is, therefore, excluded from the preface.

About the same time – early 1914 – Trotsky, writing in issue no. 2 of his journal *Borba* falsely attributed to the “Polish Marxists” – not just Rosa Luxemburg – the position according to which the right to national self-determination “is entirely devoid of political content and should be deleted from the programme.” This falsehood drew from Lenin the following observation:

“The obliging Trotsky is more dangerous than an enemy! Trotsky could produce no proof except ‘private conversations’ (i.e., simply gossip, on which Trotsky always subsists), classifying the ‘Polish Marxists’ in general as supporters of every article by Rosa Luxemburg...

“Trotsky has never yet held a firm opinion on any important question of Marxism. He always contrives to worm his way into the cracks of any given difference of opinion, and desert one side for the other. At the present moment he is in the company of the Bundists and the liquidators. And thee gentlemen do not stand on ceremony where the Party is concerned.” (*The Right of Nations to Self-Determination, Collected Works*, Vol. 20 p. 447-8).

In his letter to Henriette Roland-Hoist, dated 8 March 1916, Lenin asks: “What are our differences with Trotsky?”

To this question he gives the following answer:

“In brief – he is a **Kautskyite**, that is, he stands for unity with the Kaut-

skyites in the International and with Chkheidze's parliamentary group in Russia. We are absolutely against such unity ... “ (*Collected Works*, Vol. 43, pp. 515-516).

Writing to Alexandra Kollontai on 17 February, 1917, Lenin says:

“...What a swine this Trotsky is – Left, phrases, and a bloc with the Right against the Zimmerwald Left!! He ought to be exposed (by you) if only in a brief letter to Sotsial-Demokrat!” (*Collected Works*, Vol. 35, p. 285).

Finally, in this letter of 19 Feb, 1917, to Inessa Armand, Lenin writes, *inter alia*:

“There is also a letter from Kollontai who... has returned to Norway from America. N. Iv. and Pavlov... had won Novy Mir, she says,... but ... Trotsky arrived, and this scoundrel at once ganged up with the Right wing of Novy Mir against the Left Zimmerwaldists!! That's it!! That's Trotsky for you!! Always true to himself, twists, swindles, poses as a Left, helps the Right, so long as he can... “(*Collected Works*, Vol. 35, p. 288).

In the light of the foregoing historic evidence, of the most impeccable and irrefutable kind, it can safely be asserted that Trotsky was during this long period – between 1903 and 1917 – a Menshevik and a liquidator who waged a most dirty and factional campaign against the Bolsheviks' attempts to build a revolutionary Party of the proletariat.

Although people with knowledge about the history of the Bolshevik Party know only too well that from 1903 to August 1917 Trotsky was a Menshevik and a liquidator, Trotskyites generally maintain a studied silence over this question or, worse still, they try and excuse him on this account. It is, therefore, very refreshing to discover some ardent Trotskyites who condemn Trotsky's Menshevism, centrism, conciliationism and factionalism. In this category fall the Trotskyites of the International Communist League (ICL) of the so-called Fourth International (the official Fourth International, of course, since each of the milliard Trotskyist organisations claims to be the official Fourth International and describes every other Trotskyist organisation as a fake – a hilarious phenomenon reminiscent of the *Life of Brian*). The ICL publish the theoretical journal *Spartacist*. The occasion for their frank admission and condemnation of Trotsky's Menshevism was the review, in *Spartacist* numbers 45 and 46, Winter 1990-91, English edition, by a certain ICL member, Daniel Dauget, of a biography of Leon Trotsky published in 1988 by Pierre Broué. Pierre Broué was a Professor at the Institute of Political Studies of Grenoble University who had been for 40 years a member of “the ostensibly Trotskyist Lambertist tendency in France” (ICL's description in the said review), i.e., of the Parti Communiste Internationale (PCI).

Broué praises Trotsky for being a “freelancer” – praise which rouses the ICL to indignation and downright outrage. So as not to lose the full force of

ICL's fluent prose, the full burning anger and shame, and the thrust of their argument, and so as not to be accused of quoting them out of context, we reproduce here almost the entire section of the review that was concerned with Trotsky's factionalism and Menshevism between 1903 and 1917

Trotsky as "Freelancer"

"Broué's treatment of Trotsky's political activity between the decisive 1903 Bolshevik-Menshevik split and the October Revolution is at the core of his interpretation; because it is here that he deals with the debates within Russian Social Democracy over the nature, form and structure a revolutionary party must have if it is to take state power, as well as with the role of political and programmatic debate in forging such a party. After the 1903 split between the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks, Trotsky became a sort of freelancer in the party.

"Broué **praises** Trotsky for this, seeing in it the cause for Trotsky's leading role in the 1905 Revolution as chairman of the St Petersburg Soviet and his brilliant propagandist use of his trial following the 1905 defeat:

"In fact, effectively fired from any factional obligations, at a good distance from the up and downs of the conflicts between the two main factions, satisfied in this respect with his unitary' position whose victory seemed to him assured in the future, Trotsky had his hands completely free to devote his attention and activity to the events that were unfolding in Russia...' – Broué, p. 97.

"To read this, one would conclude that Lenin's factional struggle against Menshevism was irrelevant – if not outright counterposed – to intervening in and leading the revolutionary struggle. Indeed, Broué views Trotsky's role as the leading 'conciliator' between the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks as exemplary.

"Earlier, as Broué notes, 'Trotsky, partisan of centralization and of the authority of the Central Committee ever since he had been deported to Siberia, was seen in the émigré circles as Lenin's 'hatchet man', At the 1903 Congress Trotsky began a **programmatic** struggle against Lenin on the question of the party. For example Trotsky opposed the sovereignty of the party congress: 'The Congress is a register, a controller, but not a creator' (*Report of the Siberian Delegation, 1903*) Although the programmatic implications were far from clear at the time, the 1903 split was a fundamental split on the party question Trotsky's federalist position on this question was also reflected in '*Report of the Siberian Delegation*' with his rejection of the Bolshevik definition of a party member that required 'personal participation in one of the Party bodies.' In practical terms Trotsky was in favour of the Menshevik definition of a party member as one who gave Personal assistance 'to the party – he wished to allow all the broad 'workers organisations' which existed alongside the party committees in many major Russian cities,

to act in the name of the party **regardless** of their adherence to the statutes or decisions of party congresses.

“At the same time that Broué enthuses over Trotsky’s independence, he mentions in passing that Trotsky was wrong on the party question during this entire period. But what he says pales in comparison with Trotsky’s own judgement:

“The deep differences that divided me from Bolshevism for a whole number of years and in many cases placed me in sharp and hostile opposition to Bolshevism, were expressed most graphically in relation to the Menshevik faction. I began with the radically wrong perspective that the course of the revolution and the pressure of the proletarian masses would ultimately force both factions to follow the same road. Therefore I considered a split to be an unnecessary” disruption of the revolutionary forces. But because the active role in the split by with the Bolsheviks – since it was only by ruthless demarcation, not only ideological but organizational as well, that it was possible, in Lenin’s opinion, to assure the revolutionary character of the proletarian party (and the entire subsequent history has fully confirmed the correctness of those policies) – my ‘conciliationism’ led me at many sharp turns in the road into hostile clashes with Bolshevism.’ – Trotsky, *Our Differences*’ (Nov. 1924).

“The traditional ‘center’ and right wing of the Social Democracy were only too happy to use Trotsky’s name and journalistic brilliance as a left cover for their own positions and **as a weapon against Lenin**. Thus Broué reports that ‘Trotsky was on good terms with Kautsky and the ‘center of the German Social Democracy until at least 1912... It was Kautsky during this period who, to Lenin’s great anger, opened the pages of *‘Die Neue Zeit’* and *‘Vorwärts’* to Trotsky, Broué also details Trotsky’s warm relations with the Austro-Marxists of Vienna, noting that he rapidly became ‘the uncontested head of the Social Democratic colony in Vienna’ from 1909 to 1912 .He passes rapidly over the fact that during the same period Rosa Luxemburg viewed Trotsky with ‘systematic suspicion’ and as a ‘dubious individual’, no doubt due to his ties to her right-wing opponents in the German Social Democracy.

“Broué’s attitude toward Trotsky during these years is exemplified by his treatment of the infamous August bloc. The Vienna *‘Pravda’* edited by Trotsky attempted to ‘conciliate’ the Bolshevik and Menshevik factions- – Broué approvingly quotes the professional anti-communist Leonard Schapiro’s praise of the Vienna *‘Pravda’* for not being as polemical as the Bolshevik press. A 1910 agreement between the factions provided for Bolshevik financial support to the Vienna *‘Pravda’*, with Kamenev (who was close to Lenin and was Trotsky’s brother-in-law) responsible for administering the Bolshevik funds The agreement stipulated that the Mensheviks would get rid of their right wing, and the Bolsheviks of their left wing.

While the Bolsheviks respected the agreement, the Mensheviks did not, and in the subsequent polemics, Trotsky sided with the Mensheviks and got rid of Kamenev. Trotsky's articles, aimed at militants inside Russia who were unfamiliar with the details of the dispute, denounced the Bolsheviks as a 'conspiracy of the émigré clique.' Kautsky solicited and published several articles by Trotsky attacking the Bolsheviks, which provoked angry rejoinders not just from Lenin, but also from Plekhanov and Rosa Luxemburg. When the Bolshevik Prague Congress in 1912 proclaimed that it represented the party as a whole, Trotsky organised a unity' counter-conference in Vienna in August.

"In Trotsky's mind [the conference] was to have been the general unification, the reunification of the party. In fact, the Bolsheviks' rejection of it reduced the participants to a bloc against them, which they baptized the 'August bloc'. The Polish Social Democrats and Plekhanov also chose not to appear ... In fact, Trotsky's return to the factional arena proved particularly unfortunate. Independent of his intentions, and even of his precautions, the positions he took after the Prague conference and his role in forming the August bloc made him appear, despite himself, as the soul of a general coalition against the Bolsheviks and an indirect supporter of the 'liquidators'." – Broué, pp. 139-140.

"Every qualifier in Broué's description of Trotsky's role in the August bloc is wrong or misleading. As is clear from Trotsky's denunciation of the Bolsheviks as an 'émigré clique', he was well aware that what Broué so delicately terms 'general unification', was a polemical cudgel with which to attack Lenin. Trotsky did not just 'appear' to be the soul of the anti-Bolshevik coalition, he was in fact that soul in that he was the most left-wing, most respected force outside the Bolsheviks. Trotsky's actions were not misconstrued 'despite himself,' but were an accurate reflection of the role he played vis-à-vis the Bolsheviks in the entire period from 1903 to at least 1915."

"The outbreak of WWI and the betrayal by the parties of the Second International most of whose leaders supported their own' governments in the bloody inter-imperialist war, shifted the grounds of dispute within the world socialist movement, forcing realignments and regroupments. Lenin and Trotsky both fought against the imperialist war, and both attended the gathering of antiwar socialists held in Zimmerwald Switzerland in September 1915." (pp. 33-34).

Be it noted in passing that the last sentence is either born out of dishonesty or simple ignorance – most likely the former – for everyone with the least knowledge about this matter knows that the Bolshevik slogan of working for the defeat of one's own government in the imperialist war then raging was countered by Trotsky with his chauvinist slogan demanding 'Neither victory nor defeat'. Further, we have provided, quotations above from Lenin

to the effect that during this period Trotsky was a Kautskyite and fought against the Zimmerwald left headed by Lenin's Bolsheviki. But that does not concern us here. ICL continues:

“Broué argues that after Zimmerwald despite ‘real disagreements’ between Lenin and Trotsky, there was ‘a reasonable prospect for a gradual rapprochement between the two men who in reality were divided only [*sic*] by the 1903 split, which had long since been outdated.’ What Broué slides over is the fact that Lenin never repudiated the 1903 split – instead he generalized from it to a fully-formed **theoretical** position on the necessity for revolutionary cadres to organize a vanguard party, separate from reformist and centrist tendencies. Trotsky was ultimately won to Lenin's side on this question in 1917.

“There is something anachronistic and evocative of the worst aspects of French political traditions in Broué's repeated presentation of Trotsky as a simple star, freelancer, too busy being ‘a leader of men’ and giving brilliant speeches before and after the Revolution to have been a ‘party man’ or to have had the time to familiarize himself with [the] faction fights in the corridors’. Trotsky **was** a factionalist before 1917 – on the wrong side. But his program of conciliationism could never have built the sort of hard faction that could win leadership in the party, nor the kind of Party that could take state power.” (p. 34).

Well said, Messrs the Trotskyites of the ICL! We think any comment on ibis would be superfluous!

All this does not, however, prevent the Trotskyites of the ICL from asserting, without as much as a blush, that Trotsky, after the death of Lenin, was best placed “to carry forward the authentic Bolshevik programme against Stalin's usurpers.” Very strange logic indeed, according to which Trotsky, the Menshevik liquidator, who, spent two decades in a mortal struggle against every aspect of Leninism, was better suited to, carrying out the ‘authentic’ Bolshevik programme than someone like Stalin who, had spent two and a half decades faithfully supporting and actually carrying out the Bolshevik programme. Here is how ICL put it:

“In his admiration for Trotsky the left-Menshevik, Broué also never considers the potential authority that Trotsky would have gained and retained among stalwart Bolsheviks had he come over to Lenin's side as a hard party man in 1903 – an authority that would have served him well in the subsequent period when he fought to carry forward the authentic Bolshevik programme against Stalin's usurpers.” (*Ibid.* p. 35).

Pigs might fly! The above statement of ICL amounts, if it amounts to anything at all, to a meaningless tautology, namely, had Trotsky been a staunch supporter of Leninism in the period 1903-17, he would have been well placed to carry out the authentic Bolshevik programme after Lenin's death. The problem, however, is that he was not during this long period, nor

was he in the subsequent period, a staunch supporter of Leninism. The one who *was* a staunch Leninist, namely Joseph Stalin, was quite correctly chosen by the Bolshevik Party to lead it in carrying forward the authentic Bolshevik programme against the would-be usurper, to wit, Trotsky.

There is method in ICL's madness. They admit Trotsky's pre-1917 Menshevism in order to present gullible, readers with a sanitised version of Trotsky who, it is claimed, suddenly saw the light and after 1917 became a better Bolshevik than anyone else.

"The fact is," write the ICI, "that Broué... **agrees** with Trotsky's conciliationism before 1917, and much prefers Trotsky the anti-Leninist to Trotsky the Bolshevik."

Unlike Broué, in a vain attempt to gain credibility for Trotskyism, the ICL would rather make a clean admission of Trotsky's pre-1917 Menshevism and anti-Leninism in order to be able all the more zealously to fasten the label of staunch Leninist on Trotsky's lapel. This trick will not work, however, for apart from the short period during October when he hid his anti-Leninist stock-in-trade in the cupboard, Trotsky continued to practise his anti-Leninism, his anti-Bolshevism, with a zeal worthy of a better cause. It is not only the case that Broué, as is justly claimed by the ICI, "subtly puts Lenin under the gun" in order to gain the appreciation of the "anti-Leninist Soviet intelligentsia" (these words were written in the winter of 1990-91), but also the fact that the Trotskyites of the ICI, in common with all other Trotskyites, are attempting to substitute Trotskyism for Leninism, albeit by denouncing pre-1917 Trotskyism. No subterfuges, no tricks, no artful dodging, no deception, can detract from this fact – not even the pretence of praising Leninism.

3. Distrust of Bolshevik leadership

Trotsky stands for the distrust of the leaders of Bolshevism, for discrediting and defaming them. As Stalin correctly observed:

"I do not know of a single trend in the party that could compare with Trotskyism in the matter of discrediting the leaders of Leninism or the central institutions of the Party." (*Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 366).

In Trotsky's letter to Chkeidze, already cited, Trotsky described Lenin as "a professional exploiter of every kind of backwardness in the Russian working-class movement."

If Trotsky could express such ill-mannered views about Leninism, is there anything surprising in the fact that he showered, after Lenin's death, even more vile abuse on Lenin's most faithful pupil, Stalin.

How could Trotsky end up in Bolshevik ranks?

How was it that Trotsky, having such an impeccably anti-Bolshevik and anti-Leninist record, found himself in the Bolshevik ranks in the period of

the October revolution? Stalin, in a speech on 19 November 1924, asked and answered this question:

“How could it happen that Trotsky, who carried such a nasty stock-in-trade on his back; found himself, after all, in the rank of the Bolsheviks during the October movement? It happened because at that time Trotsky abandoned (actually did abandon) that stock-in-trade; he hid it in the cupboard. Had he not performed that ‘operation’, real co-operation with him would have been impossible. The theory of the August bloc, i.e., the theory of unity with the Mensheviks, had already been shattered and thrown overboard by the revolution, for how could there be any talk about unity when an armed struggle was raging between the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks? Trotsky had no alternative but to admit that this theory was useless.

“The same misadventure ‘happened’ to the theory of permanent revolution, for not a single Bolshevik contemplated the immediate seizure of power on the morrow of the February Revolution, and Trotsky could not help knowing that the Bolsheviks would not allow him, in the words of Lenin, ‘to play at the seizure of power.’ Trotsky had no alternative but recognise the Bolsheviks’ policy of fighting for influence in the Soviets, of fighting to win over the peasantry. As regards the third specific feature of Trotskyism (distrust of (the Bolshevik leaders), it had naturally to retire into the background owing to the obvious failure of the first two features.

“Under the circumstances, could Trotsky do anything else but hide his stock-in-trade in the cupboard and follow the Bolshevik; considering that he had no group of his own of any significance, and that he came to the Bolsheviks as a political individual without an army? Of course, he could not!

“What is the lesson to be learnt from this? Only one: that prolonged collaboration between the Leninists and Trotsky is possible only if the latter completely abandons his old stock-in-trade, only if he completely accepts Leninism. Trotsky writes about the lessons of October, but he forgets ... the one I have just mentioned, which prime importance for Trotskyism. Trotskyism ought to learn that lesson of October too.” (*Collected Works*, Vol. 6, pp. 366-367).

Trotskyism, however, failed to learn this lesson, and its old stock-in-trade, hidden in the cupboard in the period of the October movement, was dragged into daylight once more, especially after the death of Lenin, through Trotskyist literary pronouncements aimed at undermining the Bolshevik Party principle, belittling and discrediting Lenin (albeit under the guise of praising and exalting Lenin) and asserting the correctness of the much-discredited theory of permanent revolution, which was shattered by the experience of the three Russian revolutions – ie, that of 1905 and those of February and October 1917.

On arriving in Petrograd in 1917, Trotsky affiliated to the Mezhrayonsi (inter-regional), a group that vacillated between the Bolsheviks and the

Mensheviks. In August 1917, declaring that they had no differences with the Bolsheviks, the Mezhrayontsi joined the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party (Bolsheviks). Trotsky joined the Bolsheviks with them. On joining the Bolshevik Party, quite a number of Mezhrayontsi broke with opportunism; but, as subsequent events were to reveal, for Trotsky and some of his followers, joining the Bolsheviks was only a ruse. They continued to propound their harmful and reactionary views, flout discipline and undermine the Party's organisational and ideological unity.

As Trotskyism, far from abandoning its old nasty stock-in-trade, on the contrary dragged it out into the light of day, it was bound, owing to its entire inner content, to become the centre and rallying point not only of the non-proletarian elements in the USSR who were then (in the 1920s and 1930s) striving to disintegrate the proletarian dictatorship, but also of the imperialist bourgeoisie seeking by a thousand means to overthrow the proletarian regime that had been ushered in by the mighty October revolution. At every crucial stage in the development of the Russian revolution and the existence of the dictatorship of the proletariat in the USSR, Trotskyism continued to maintain its reactionary anti-Bolshevik, anti-Leninist stance in matters of theory as well as organisation, cloaking it under thick layers of 'revolutionary' rhetoric.

Brest-Litovsk

In 1918 the young Soviet Republic, bereft of any army with the will and ability to fight, was fighting for its very survival through signing the Brest-Litovsk Peace Treaty with German imperialism, thus gaining a much-needed respite for the exhausted population. At a crucial moment in these negotiations, Trotsky, as the head of the Soviet delegation to the peace talks, in violation of the instructions of the Party central committee and the Soviet government, declared the unilateral withdrawal of the Soviet Republic from the war, demobilisation of the Russian Army, and he then left Brest-Litovsk on the spurious ground that "we can only be saved in the true meaning of the word by a European Revolution" (*Extraordinary Seventh Congress of the RCP(B)*).

This gave the German Command the pretext it needed for ending the armistice, mounting an offensive and obliging the Soviet government to sign "a much more humiliating peace, and the blame for this rests on those who refused to accept the former peace." (Lenin, *Political Report of the CC to the Extraordinary Seventh Congress of the RCP (B)*, 7 March 1918, *Collected Works*, Vol. 27).

Appropos the failure of the European revolution to come to maturity thus leaving the Bolshevik Revolution to solve its problems on its own, and forcing the Bolsheviks to face reality as it was rather than as they would wish it to be, Lenin admonished Trotsky and his ilk in the Party in the following

terms:

“If you are unable to adapt yourself, if you are not inclined to crawl on your belly in the mud you are not a revolutionary but a chatterbox; and I propose this, not because I like it, but because we have no other road, because history has not been kind enough to bring the revolution to maturity everywhere simultaneously.” (*Ibid.*)

Thus the young Soviet Republic paid a very heavy price for Trotsky’s adventurism and phrase-mongering defeatism, which is the chief characteristic of his rotten theory of permanent revolution, according to which nothing good can ever come of any revolution unless it is accompanied by a world revolution.

Trade union debate

With the victorious conclusion of the Civil War of 1918-1920, as the Soviet Republic under Lenin’s guidance, switched from war communism to the New Economic Policy (NEP) and embarked on a programme of economic revival and rejuvenation – of restoration of industry through an upsurge in agriculture and by drawing the workers and trade unions into active socialist construction through planned organisation and persuasion (and not coercion), Trotsky and his supporters forced on the Party a discussion on the question of trade unions (a luxury and a diversion from the work of economic construction, from the fight against famine and economic dislocation that the Party could ill afford at the time). Trotsky, the patriarch of bureaucrats, as Stalin rightly called him insisted on “tightening up the screws” and “shaking up” the trade unions, and turning the latter into state agencies, and on replacing persuasion by coercion.

The Party discussion on the trade unions resulted in the total rout of Trotsky and his supporters. When the Central Committee of the Party rejected Trotsky’s Prussian sergeant’s proposal, Trotsky went outside and gathered a group of his supporters with the aim of fighting against the Central Committee. So alarmed was Lenin by Trotsky’s factionalism and flouting of Party discipline that he caused the 10th Party Congress (March 1921) to pass a resolution forbidding the formation of factions and disbanding existing factions forthwith. It was further stated that the “non-fulfilment of this decision of the Congress shall be followed by unconditional and immediate expulsion from the Party.”

Trotsky’s return to fully-fledged factionalism

This resolution was to arouse Trotsky’s bitter hatred and opposition, for whenever he could not get his own way on any question, he rushed to form a Trotskyist faction within the Party, even if that meant threatening a split.

During 1921 Lenin’s health began to decline. Cerebral arteriosclerosis was already blocking his blood circulation and taking its toll, with the result

that this man of inexhaustible energy and drive was tiring easily, and spent most of the summer resting in the village of Gorki, not far from Moscow. The 11th Party Congress, meeting at the end of March 1922, created the new office of General Secretary, to which, one day after the conclusion of that Congress (i.e., on 3 April 1922), on Lenin's initiation and sponsorship, Stalin was appointed. On 26 May 1922, while resting in Gorki, Lenin suffered a severe stroke, which caused a partial paralysis of the right side of his body and loss of speech. He recovered from this stroke remarkably quickly and was back at his desk in early October 1922. After two further minor strokes on December 13 and 16, 1922, he suffered on March 10, 1923, a massive stroke, from which he never recovered and after which he took no further part in politics.

Following the latest stroke suffered by Lenin, Trotsky, with an eye on the leadership, stepped up his factional activity and intensified his vile and slanderous attacks on the Party leadership, its central institutions and its policy. On 8 October 1923 he sent a letter to the Central Committee, in which he asserted that the country was being inexorably led by the Party leadership to a catastrophe, to prevent which he demanded greater inner-Party democracy. Stripped of its Trotskyite verbiage, this meant the right to form factional groupings. A group of 46 followers of Trotsky also issued a manifesto – known as the Statement of 46 – to the same effect. Trotsky's letter and the Statement of 46 were discussed and condemned at a joint plenary meeting of the CC and the CCC with representatives of ten of the largest Party organisations in October 1923.

Trotsky followed his letter with a pamphlet entitled *New Course*, in which in addition to the demand for more Party democracy, he accused the old Bolsheviks – the Party leadership – of degeneration. He counterposed young people, especially students, to veteran Bolsheviks, declaring the former to be the barometer of the Party.

In talking about the degeneration of the 'old guard', Trotsky had used the expression "we, the old Bolsheviks," which provoked Stalin to make this observation, full of biting sarcasm:

"First, I must dispel a possible misunderstanding. As is evident..., Trotsky includes himself among the Bolshevik old guard, thereby showing readiness to take upon himself the charges that may be hurled at the old guard if it does indeed take the path of degeneration. It must be admitted that his readiness for self-sacrifice is undoubtedly a noble trait. But I must protect Trotsky from Trotsky, because, for obvious reasons, he cannot and should not bear responsibility for the possible degeneration of the principal cadres of the Bolshevik old guard..."

With more than a covert reference to Trotsky's long Menshevik past, Stalin, while admitting the possibility of degeneration of the Bolshevik old guard, goes on to add:

“Nevertheless, there are a number of elements within our Party who are capable of giving rise to a real danger of degeneration of certain ranks of our Party. I have in mind that section of the Mensheviks who joined our Party unwillingly and who have not yet got rid of their opportunist habits.” (*Collected Works*, Vol. 5 p. 395).

The Thirteenth Conference of the RCP(B), held on 16-18 January 1924, strongly condemned the factionalism of Trotsky and his followers, stating that “the present opposition is not only an attempt to revise Bolshevism not only a flagrant departure from Leninism but patently a **petty-bourgeois deviation**. There is no doubt whatever that this opposition mirrors the pressure of the petty-bourgeoisie on the position of the proletarian party and its policy.” (*Resolution On the Results of the Discussion and on the Petty-Bourgeois Deviation in the Party* – CPSU in Resolutions, etc. Vol. 2).

Lenin’s death and Trotsky’s attempt to substitute Trotskyism for Leninism

Lenin, after a further stroke on the morning of 21 January, 1924, died in the evening. Trotsky, although a newcomer to the Party, had convinced himself that he had a better claim to succeed Lenin than old, trusted and tried Bolsheviks such as Stalin. So in October 1924 Trotsky published an introduction to his collected works entitled *Lessons of October*, which purported to deal with the reasons for the Bolshevik victory in the October Revolution. Having made general ritual references in it to the necessity of a revolutionary party for the success of a revolution, Trotsky went on to belittle the role of the Bolshevik Party, extol his, own part in the revolution, hinting that Lenin had suddenly changed his previous position for that of Trotsky, to which fact alone was to be attributed the success of the October Revolution. He also dragged out of the cupboard his old and much-discredited theory of ‘permanent revolution!’, arguing that hostile collisions between the proletarian vanguard and the broad masses of the peasantry were inevitable. One gets the impression from reading his *Lessons of October* that it was Trotsky who organised the October victory.

In other words, the man who had fought against Bolshevism and Leninism for 14 long years, who had sided with the Mensheviks and liquidators to oppose the building by Lenin’s Bolsheviks of the proletarian revolutionary party capable of leading the proletariat and the broad masses in seizing political power, who had spent his life opposing Lenin’s theory of proletarian revolution with his absurd theory of ‘permanent revolution’, who had opposed the Bolshevik slogan of defeat of one’s own government in the imperialist war (the first world war) with his chauvinistic slogan demanding *Neither victory nor defeat*, suddenly and providentially descended on the scene in Petersburg to rescue the revolution from the frightened and useless lot that constituted the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party, the majority of

whom, according to this fairy tale worthy of the *Arabian Nights*, were opposed to the October uprising!!

Nothing could be further from the truth. Trotsky's special role in October originated with John Reed, the author of *Ten Days that Shook the World*, who, being remote from the Bolshevik Party, had no knowledge of the secret meeting of its central committee on 23 October, 1917, and was therefore taken in by the gossip spread by people such as Sukhanov. These fairy tales about Trotsky's special role in October were later passed round and repeated in several pamphlets written by Trotskyites, including Syrkin's pamphlet on October. After Lenin's death Trotsky strongly supported these rumours in his literary pronouncements.

Since a systematic attempt was being made by Trotskyites to re-write the history of October and bring up Soviet youth on such legends, Stalin, in a speech delivered at the Plenum of the Communist Group of the AUCCTU,⁽³⁾ refuted – by reference to hard facts – these *Arabian Nights* fairy tales in his characteristically devastating manner. Citing the minutes of the meeting of the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party on 23 October 1917, he proved that the resolution on the uprising was adopted by a majority of 10 against 2; that the same meeting elected a *political* centre, called the Political Bureau, to direct the uprising, the members of the Centre being Lenin, Zinoviev, Stalin, Kamenev, Trotsky, Sokolnikov and Bubnov. Thus the Centre included even Zinoviev and Kamenev who were the only two to vote against the resolution on the uprising. This was possible in spite of the political disagreements between them because there was at that time a unity of views between these two (Zinoviev and Kamenev) and the rest of the Central Committee on such fundamental questions “as the character of the Russian revolution, the driving forces of the revolution, the role of the peasantry, the principles of Party leadership, and so forth.” (Stalin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 341). Thus the decision on the uprising was taken by the Central Committee and the Central Committee alone. Hence the political direction of the uprising was firmly in the hands of the Central Committee.

As to the legend that Trotsky played a ‘special’ role in that he ‘inspired’, and was the ‘sole leader’ of the October uprising – this legend was spread by Lentsner, and Stalin dealt with it as follows:

“The Trotskyites are vigorously spreading rumours that Trotsky inspired and was the sole leader of the October uprising. These rumours are being spread with exceptional zeal by the so-called editor of Trotsky's works, Lentsner. Trotsky himself, by consistently avoiding mention of the Party, the Central Committee and the Petrograd Committee of the Party, by saying nothing about the leading role of these organisations in the uprising and vigorously pushing himself forward as the central figure in the October uprising, voluntarily or involuntarily helps to spread the rumours about the special role he is supposed to have played in the uprising, I am far from denying

Trotsky's undoubtedly important role in the uprising. I must say, however, that Trotsky did not play any special role in the October uprising, nor could he do so; being chairman of the Petrograd Soviet he merely carried out the will of the appropriate Party bodies, which directed every step that Trotsky took. To philistines like Sukhanov, all this may seem strange, but the facts, the true facts, wholly and fully confirm what I say." (*Ibid*, pp. 341- 342).

Stalin then passes on to an examination of the minutes of the next Central Committee meeting held on 29 October, 1917. Apart from the members of the Central Committee, there were present at this meeting representatives of the Petrograd Committee as well as representatives of military organisations, factory committees, trade unions and the railwaymen. At this meeting Lenin's resolution on the uprising was adopted by a majority of 20 against 2, with three abstentions. At this meeting too a practical centre was elected for the organisational leadership of the uprising. To this practical centre were elected the following five: Sverdlov, Stalin, Dzerzhinsky, Bubnov and Uritsky. Let Stalin speak:

"The functions of the practical centre: to direct all the practical organs of the uprising in conformity with the directives of the Central Committee. Thus, as you see, something terrible happened at this meeting of the Central Committee, i.e., 'strange to relate', the Inspirer, the 'chief figure', the 'sole leader' of the uprising, Trotsky, was not elected to the practical centre, which was called upon to direct the uprising. How is this to be reconciled with the current opinion about Trotsky's special role? Is not all this somewhat 'strange', as Sukhanov, or the Trotskyites, would say? And yet strictly speaking there is nothing strange about it for neither in the Party, nor in the October uprising did Trotsky play any **special** role, nor could he do so, for he was a relatively new man in our Party in the period of October. He, like all the responsible workers, merely carried out the will of the Central Committee and of its organs. Who-ever is familiar with the mechanics of Bolshevik Party leadership will have no difficulty in understanding that it could not be otherwise; it would have been enough for Trotsky to go against the will of the Central Committee to have been deprived of all influence on the course of events. This talk about Trotsky's special role is a legend that is being spread by obliging 'Party' gossips.⁽⁴⁾

"This, of course, does not mean that the October uprising did not have its inspirer. it did have its inspirer and leader, but this was Lenin, and none other than Lenin, that same Lenin whose resolution the Central Committee adopted when deciding the question of the uprising, that same Lenin who, in spite of what Trotsky says, was not prevented by being in hiding from being the actual inspirer of the uprising. It is foolish and ridiculous to attempt now, by gossip about Lenin having been in hiding to obscure the indubitable fact that the inspirer of the uprising was the leader of the Party, V.I. Lenin.

"Such are the facts." (*Collected Works*, Vol. 6, pp 342-344.)

Continues Stalin:

“Granted, we are told but it cannot be denied that Trotsky fought well in the period of October. Yes, that is true, Trotsky did, indeed, fight well in October, but Trotsky was not the only one who fought well in the period of October. Even people like the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, who then stood side by side with the Bolsheviks, also fought well, In general I “must say that in the period of a victorious uprising when the enemy is isolated and the uprising is growing; it is not difficult to fight well. At such moments even backward people become heroes.

“The proletarian struggle is not however, an uninterrupted advance, an unbroken chain of victories. The proletarian struggle also has its trials, its defeats. The genuine revolutionary is not one who displays courage in the period of a victorious uprising; but one who, while fighting well during the victorious advance of the revolution, also displays courage when the revolution is in retreat when the proletariat suffers defeat, who does not lose his head and does not funk when the revolution suffers reverses, when the enemy “achieves success; who does not become panic-stricken or give way to despair when the revolution is in a period of retreat The Left Socialist-Revolutionaries did not fight badly in the period of October, and they supported the Bolsheviks. But who does not know that those ‘brave’ fighters became panic-stricken in the period of Brest when the advance of German imperialism drove them to despair and hysteria. It is a very sad but indubitable fact that Trotsky, who fought well in the period of October, did not in the period of Brest in the period when the revolution suffered temporary reverses, possess the courage to display sufficient staunchness at that difficult moment and to refrain from following in the footsteps of the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries. Beyond question; that moment was a difficult one; one had to display exceptional courage and imperturbable coolness not to be dismayed, to retreat in good time, to accept peace in good time, to withdraw the proletarian army out of range of the blows of German imperialism; to preserve the peasant reserves and, after obtaining a respite in this way, to strike at the enemy with renewed force. Unfortunately, Trotsky was found to lack this courage and revolutionary staunchness at that difficult moment.

“In Trotsky’s opinion, the principal lesson of the proletarian revolution is ‘not to funk’ during October. That is wrong; for Trotsky’s assertion contains only a particle of the truth about the lessons of the revolution. The whole truth about the lessons of the proletarian revolution is not to funk, not only when the revolution is advancing but also when it is retreat when the enemy is gaining the upper hand and the revolution is suffering reverses. The revolution did not end with October. October was only the beginning of the proletarian revolution. It is bad to funk when the tide of insurrection is rising but it is worse to funk when the revolution is passing through severe trials after power has been captured. To retain power on the morrow of the

revolution is no less important than to capture power.” (*Ibid.* pp. 344-345).

Stalin asked the question: “For what purpose did Trotsky need all these legends about October and the preparation for October, about Lenin and the Party of Lenin? What is the purpose of Trotsky’s new literary pronouncements against the Party?...” (*Ibid.* p.363)

By way of an answer, Stalin continues:

“Trotsky asserts that all this is needed for the purpose of ‘studying’ October. But is it not possible to study October without giving another kick at the Party and its leader Lenin? What sort of a ‘history’ of October is it that begins and ends with attempts to discredit the chief leader of the October uprising to discredit the Party, which organised and carried through the uprising?... **That** is not the way to study October. **That** is not the way to write the history of October. Obviously, there is a different ‘design’ here, and everything goes to show that this ‘design’ is that Trotsky by his literary pronouncements is making another (yet another!) attempt to create the conditions for substituting Trotskyism for Leninism. Trotsky needs ‘desperately’ to discredit the Party, and its cadres who carried through the uprising in order, after discrediting the Party, to proceed to discredit Leninism. And it is necessary for him to discredit Leninism in order to drag in Trotskyism as the ‘sole’ ‘proletarian’ (don’t laugh!) ideology. All this, of course (oh, of course!) under the flag of Leninism, so that the dragging operation may be performed ‘as painlessly as possible’.

“That is the essence of Trotsky’s latest literary pronouncements.” (*Ibid.* pp. 363-364).

Trotskyism – a rallying point for counter-revolution

Stalin went on to conclude that the danger was “... that Trotskyism, owing to its entire inner content stands every chance of becoming the centre and rallying point of the non-proletarian elements who are striving to weaken to disintegrate the proletarian dictatorship,” in view of which it was “the duty of the Party to **bury Trotskyism** as an ideological trend.” (*Ibid.* p. 373).

In later years Trotsky himself was obliged to admit that “in the wake of this vanguard [i.e., the Trotskyist opposition] there dragged the tail end of all sorts of dissatisfied, ill-equipped and even chagrined careerists,” adding, however, that the opposition had managed to free itself from “its accidental and uninvited fellow wayfarers.” On the contrary, as the contents of the pages that follow reveal, it is precisely the non-proletarian elements, with their irreconcilable hostility to the proletarian dictatorship, their striving for the disintegration of the proletarian dictatorship, who supported the Trotskyist opposition in the USSR and who continued to support him abroad after his expulsion from the Soviet Union. It is precisely the same type of person who has since those times rallied around Trotskyism, driven by an innate

hatred of Marxism-Leninism and of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Even the Trotskyite Deutscher is compelled to say. ‘Outside the party, formless revolutionary frustration mingled with distinctly counter-revolutionary trends Since the ruling group had singled out Trotsky as a target for attack he automatically attracted the spurious sympathy of many who had hitherto hated him. As he made his appearance in the streets of Moscow [in the spring of 1924], he was spontaneously applauded by crowds in which idealist communists rubbed shoulders with Mensheviks Social Revolutionaries; and the new bourgeoisie of the NEP, by all those indeed who, for diverse reasons hoped for a change [i.e., for the disintegration of the proletarian dictatorship through the weakening and disintegration of the Bolshevik Party]’ (Isaac Deutscher, *Stalin*, Pelican, 1966, p. 279).

At its plenary meeting held on 17-20 January, 1925, the Central Committee of the RCP(B) characterised Trotskyism as a variety of Menshevism” and Trotsky’s ceaseless attacks on Bolshevism as an attempt to substitute Trotskyism for Leninism. This meeting resolved to remove Trotsky from the office of Chairman of the Revolutionary Military Council of the USSR, and he was “warned in the most emphatic term that membership of the Bolshevik Party demands real, not verbal subordination to Party discipline and total and unconditional renunciation of any attacks on the ideals of Leninism “

Emergence of the New Opposition

After the above meeting pronounced against Trotsky and warned that his splittist activity and anti Leninist propaganda was incompatible with Party membership, Trotsky retreated for a while, awaiting his chance This chance came when Zinoviev and Kamenev – two old Bolsheviks – frightened by difficulties and overcome by defeatism, went into opposition after the 14th Party Conference (April 1925) affirmed the possibility of building socialism, in the USSR. Being incorrigible defeatists and sceptics, Zinoviev and Kamenev denied the possibility of building socialism in the Soviet Union, and in this way found common ground with pessimism, scepticism and defeatism personified, namely, Trotsky, the author of the theory of ‘permanent revolution’, the epitome of hopelessness.

The New Opposition (as it was called), led by Zinoviev and Kamenev, launched ‘vicious attacks on the Party’s Leninist line (on the possibility of building socialism) at the 14th Congress of the Party, which opened in December 1925. After suffering a crushing defeat at that Congress, the New Opposition, headed by Zinoviev and Kamenev (who had until only recently been -seeking to remove Trotsky from the leadership and whom Trotsky, in turn, had been seeking to eliminate from the leadership of the Party) openly embraced Trotskyism. Thus emerged an anti-Party opposition bloc, to which flocked the remnants of the various opposition groups previously squashed by the Party – all motivated by their hatred of, and opposition to, the Party’s

policy of strengthening the proletarian dictatorship and building socialism in the USSR.

The leaders of this opposition, Trotsky, Zinoviev and Kamenev, “granting each other mutual amnesty,” as Stalin put it, and using as an occasion and a pretext the collapse of the British General Strike (that they blamed on the leadership of the Bolshevik Party for having allegedly failed to give leadership and guidance to the British workers), produced their platform, written by Trotsky, which was presented in part to the Plenum of the Central Committee on 6-9 April 1926, and in full to the meeting of July 14-23 1926. In flagrant breach of Party discipline, the opposition organised demonstrations in factories, demanding full discussion of their platform. The communist workers vehemently denounced the opposition leaders and made them leave these meetings. Faced with this humiliating defeat, the opposition leaders beat a retreat and sent a statement, on 16 October 1926, in which they confessed their errors and promised to desist in future from their factional activity against the Party. In the words of Ian Grey:

“Appalled by their own temerity and recklessness, the six leaders – Trotsky, Zinoviev, Kamenev, Pyatakov, Sokolnikov and Evdakov – confessed their guilt in a public declaration and swore not to pursue factional activity in future. They also denounced their own left-wing supporters in the Comintern and the Workers’ Opposition group.” (Ian Grey, *Stalin – Man of History*, Abacus, 1982, pp. 213-214).

Formation of an illegal party

The opposition’s statement of October, 1926, turned out to be totally insincere and thoroughly hypocritical. As a matter of fact the opposition had formed an illegal party of its own, with a separate system of membership, district committees, and a centre. The illegal party, with a secret illegal printing press, held secret meetings at which the opposition’s factional platform, and the tactics to be adopted against the Bolshevik Party, were discussed – all this in violation of the decisions of the 10th Party Congress banning the formation and continuation of separate factions within the Party.

In October 1926, the Plenum of the Central Committee, sitting jointly with the Central Control Commission, issued a severe warning to the leaders of the opposition, removing Trotsky from the Politburo and Kamenev from his candidate membership of this body. Zinoviev was removed from the Comintern.

The Fifteenth All-Union Party Conference (Oct-Nov 1926) characterised the Trotsky-Zinoviev opposition as a Menshevik deviation in the Party, issuing the warning that further development in the direction of Menshevism would lead to the opposition’s expulsion from the Party.

At the beginning of 1927 the opposition renewed its attack on the policy of the Comintern vis-à-vis the Chinese revolution, blaming the Comintern

and the CPSU for the reverses of the Chinese revolution. Taking advantage of the internal difficulties, as well as of the deterioration in the international position of the USSR, the opposition yet again came out with the so-called 'platform of 83'. Renewing their slander against the Party, the opposition claimed in this platform that the Soviet government was intending to abolish the monopoly of foreign trade and grant political fights to the kulaks. Such slanders could not but encourage the kulaks and imperialism alike in putting pressure on the Soviet government in an attempt to wrest precisely such concessions from the Soviet government. In addition, the opposition demagogically demanded greater freedom in the Party, which it understood to mean the freedom to form factions and to "indulge in unparalleled abuse and impermissible vilification of the Central Committee, CPSU(B) and the ECCI. They complain of the 'regime' within the Comintern and the CPSU(B). Essentially, what they want is freedom to disorganise the Comintern and the CPSU(B)..." (Stalin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 9, p. 317).

Trotskyism's struggle against 'Stalinism' – a continuation of the struggle against Leninism

What the Trotskyite opposition was fighting against was the regime established by the 10th congress under the guidance of Lenin – a regime designed to strengthen the dictatorship of the proletariat through unity and iron discipline within the Bolshevik Party by outlawing factionalism. The underlying principles of the regime established by the 10th Congress were that "while inner-Party democracy is operated and businesslike criticism of the Party's defects and mistakes is permitted no factionalism whatsoever is permitted, and all factionalism must be abandoned on pain of expulsion from the party." (Stalin, *The Political Completion of the Russian Opposition*, *Collected Works*, Vol. 10, p. 166).

"I assert", said Stalin, "that the Trotskyites had already started their fight against the Leninist regime in the Party in Lenin's time, and that the fight the Trotskyites are now [i.e., September 1927] waging is a continuation of the fight against the regime in the Party which they were already waging in Lenin's time." (*Ibid.*)

As the opposition's platform drew no support from the workers, it retreated again and handed another declaration to the Central Committee, on 8 August 1927, in which they promised yet again to cease their factional activity, only to violate it a month later.

As the preparations got under way in September 1927 for the Fifteenth Party Congress, the opposition drew up the third statement of its aims and policies. An end had to be put to the opposition's factionalism, its disorganising activity and the charade of repeated violations of its hypocritical declaration of admission of guilt and promises to cease factional activity. So, at the end of October 1927, the Central Committee in a joint meeting with the

Central Control Commission, expelled Trotsky and Zinoviev from the Central Committee, deciding further to submit all the documents relating to the factional activity of the Trotskyite opposition to the Fifteenth Congress for consideration by the latter.

It is worth recalling that during the Party discussion preceding the Fifteenth Party Congress, 724,000 members voted for the Leninist policy of the Central Committee, while a derisory 4,000 votes were cast for the platform of the Trotskyite-Zinovievite opposition bloc, that is, half of one per cent of the membership that took part in this debate.

Why did the opposition fail?

The opposition failed to get any support in the Party organisations, for its line was that of utter bankruptcy the line of wanting to supplant Leninism by Trotskyism, while the Party wished faithfully to pursue the line of Leninism – that of revolutionary Bolshevism.

“How, then,” asked Stalin, “are we to explain the fact that notwithstanding his oratorical skill, notwithstanding his will to lead, notwithstanding his abilities, Trotsky was thrown out of the leadership of the great Party which is called the CPSU(B)?” He went on to answer: “The reason is that the opposition intended to **replace** Leninism with Trotskyism, to **‘improve’** Leninism by means Of Trotskyism. But the Party want to remain faithful to Leninism in spite of all the various artifices of the down-at-heel aristocrats in the Party. That is the root cause why the Party, which has made three revolutions, found it necessary to turn its back on Trotsky and on the opposition as a whole.” (*Collected Works*, Vol. 10, p. 165).

Speaking at the Fifteenth Congress of the Party, Stalin returned to this question again. “How could it happen that the Party as a whole, and after it the working class as well so thoroughly isolated the opposition? After all the opposition is headed by well-known people with well-known names, people who know how to advertise themselves..., people who are not afflicted with modesty and who are able to blow their own trumpets, to make the most of their wares.

“It happened because the leading group of the opposition proved to be a group of petty-bourgeois intellectuals divorced from life, divorced from the revolution, divorced from the Party, from the working class.” (Stalin, *ibid.* p. 345).

From factionalism within the Party to counter-revolutionary struggle against the Soviet regime

Faced with utter defeat within the Party, bankrupt politically and isolated from the Party membership, the Trotskyite-Zinovievite bloc switched over from factional activity within the Party to anti-Soviet and counter-revolutionary struggle against the Bolshevik regime, attracting in the process

all the anti-Soviet elements to their camp.

On 7 November, 1927, the tenth anniversary of the October Revolution, Trotsky and Zinoviev organised anti-Party demonstrations in Moscow and Leningrad. Poorly attended, these counter-revolutionary demonstrations were easily dispersed by the demonstrators of the working class under the leadership of the CPSU.

By its November 7 actions the opposition had given full proof of its conversion into a counter-revolutionary force openly hostile to the proletarian dictatorship in the USSR. Having infringed all the norms and rules of Party life, the Trotskyites now embarked upon a career of violating state laws which in due course led them to murder, sabotage, wrecking and, finally, to an alliance with fascism.

On 14 November, 1927, the Central Committee expelled Trotsky and Zinoviev from the Party, while other members of their group were removed from the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission.

The Fifteenth Congress of the Party (December 1927), noting that the opposition had ideologically broken with Leninism, had degenerated into Menshevism, had adopted the path of capitulation to international imperialism and the internal bourgeoisie and had become an instrument of struggle against the dictatorship of the proletariat, enthusiastically endorsed these expulsions. Moreover it expelled in addition a further 75 members of the Trotsky-Zinoviev bloc, as well as 15 Democratic Centralists. Further, the Congress instructed Party organisations to purge their ranks of incorrigible Trotskyites and take steps to re-educate the rank-and-file members of the opposition in the spirit of Leninism.

After the Congress many ordinary members of the opposition recognised their errors, broke with Trotskyism and were restored to Party membership. In January 1928 Trotsky was exiled to Alma-Ata in Central Asia (Kazakhstan). Even there he continued clandestinely to indulge in his anti-Party, anti-Soviet activity. Consequently, in January 1929 he was expelled from the Soviet Union.

Since the opposition intended little by little to switch the Bolshevik Party from the Leninist path to that of Trotskyism, and since the Party wanted to remain a Leninist Party, it was only natural that the Party turned its back on the opposition and raised ever higher the banner of Leninism. This alone explains why, as Stalin put it, “yesterday’s leaders of the Party have now become renegades.” (*Collected Works*, Vol. 10, p. 199).

Not personal factors but departure from Leninism is the cause of Trotskyism's failure

Instead of grasping this truth, the Trotskyite opposition in its day, and the Trotskyites ever since then, have explained the opposition's defeat by personal factors. This is how Stalin described the far-reaching historical roots of Trotsky's fight against Bolshevism and the reasons for the failure and bankruptcy of the opposition's line:

"The opposition thinks that its defeat can be 'explained' by the personal factor, by Stalin's rudeness... That is too cheap an explanation. It is an incantation, not an explanation. Trotsky has been fighting Leninism since 1904. From 1904 until the February revolution in 1917 he hung around the Mensheviks desperately fighting Lenin's Party all the time. During that period Trotsky suffered a number of defeats at the hand of Lenin's Party- Why? Perhaps Stalin's rudeness was to blame? But Stalin was not yet the secretary of the Central Committee at that time; he was not abroad, but in Russia, fighting tsarism underground, whereas the struggle between Trotsky and Lenin raged abroad. So what has Stalin's rudeness got to do with it?

"During the period from the October Revolution to 1922, Trotsky, already a member of the Bolshevik Party, managed to make two 'grand' sorties against Lenin and his Party: in 1918 – on the question of the Brest Peace; and in 1921 – on the trade-union question. Both those sorties ended in Trotsky being defeated. Why? Perhaps Stalin's rudeness was to blame here? But at that time Stalin was not yet the secretary of the Central Committee. The secretarial posts were then occupied by notorious Trotskyists. So what has Stalin's rudeness got to do with it?

"Later, Trotsky made a number of fresh sorties against the Party (1923, 1924, 1926, 1927) and each sortie ended in Trotsky suffering a fresh defeat.

"Is it not obvious from all this that Trotsky's fight against the Leninist Party has deep, far-reaching historical roots? Is it not obvious from this that the struggle the Party is now waging against Trotskyism is a continuation of the struggle that the Party, headed by Lenin, waged from 1904 onwards?

"Is it not obvious from all this that the attempts of the Trotskyists to replace Leninism by Trotskyism are the chief cause of the failure and bankruptcy of the entire line of the opposition?

"Our Party was born and grew up in the storm of revolutionary battles. It is not a party that grew up in a period of peaceful development. For that very reason it is rich in revolutionary traditions and does not make a fetish of its leaders. At one time Plekhanov was the most popular man in the Party. More than that he was the founder of the Party, and his popularity was incomparably greater than that of Trotsky or Zinoviev. Nevertheless, in spite of that the Party turned away from Plekhanov as soon as he began to depart from Marxism and go over to opportunism. Is it surprising, then, that people

who are not so 'great, people like Trotsky and Zinoviev, found themselves at the tail of the Party after they began to depart from Leninism?" (*Collected Works*, Vol. 10, pp 199-201).

Just as the struggle waged against Trotskyism by the Bolshevik Party headed by Stalin from 1924 onwards was a continuation of the struggle that the Party headed by Lenin had waged from 1903 onwards, equally Trotsky's fight against the Bolshevik Party headed by Stalin was a continuation of the struggle that Trotskyism waged against the Bolshevik Party when it was headed by Lenin. Lenin had been the chief target of Trotsky's vilifications from 1903 to 1917. After the death of Lenin, Stalin came to occupy this honourable position, became the chief target of the opposition's attack. This was because Stalin, by faithfully defending and carrying forward the Leninist line, became the most representative spokesman of the Bolshevik Party and in that capacity drew the wrath of the opposition in its repeated, if unsuccessful, attempts to substitute Trotskyism for Leninism. It was not a case of the allegedly Leninist Trotsky fighting against an allegedly outside usurper, Stalin, as is put out in Trotskyite fairy tales; on the contrary, it was the staunch and indefatigable Leninist (Stalin) who brilliantly continued the successful Leninist assault on the anti-Bolshevik and petty-bourgeois ideology of Trotskyism. This alone explains Trotskyism's hatred of Joseph St" the very mention of whose name causes Trotskyite gentry to foam at the mouth- This is how Stalin described the opposition's hatred for him:

"First of all about the personal factor. You have heard here how assiduously the oppositionists hurl abuse at Stalin, abuse him with all their might. The reason why the main attacks were directed against Stalin is because Stalin knows all the opposition's tricks better, perhaps, than some of our comrades do, and it is not easy, I dare say, to fool him. So they strike their blows primarily at Stalin. Well, let them hurt abuse to their hearts' content.

"And what is Stalin? Stalin is only a minor figure. Take Lenin. Who does not know that at the time of the August bloc the opposition, headed by Trotsky, waged an even more scurrilous campaign of slander against Lenin? Listen to Trotsky, for example.

"The wretched squabbling systematically provoked by Lenin, that old hand at the game, that professional exploiter of all that is backward in the Russian labour movement, seems like a senseless obsession' (See *Trotsky's 'Letter to Chkeidze', April 1913*).

"Note the language, comrades! Note the language! It is Trotsky writing. And writing about Lenin.

"Is it surprising, then, that Trotsky, who wrote in such an ill-mannered way about the great Lenin, whose shoe-laces he was not worthy of tying, should now hurl abuse at one of Lenin's numerous pupils – Comrade Stalin?

"More than that. I think the opposition does me honour by venting all its hatred against Stalin. That is as it should be. I think it would be strange and

offensive if the opposition, which is trying to wreck the Party, were to praise Stalin, who is defending the fundamentals of the Leninist Party principle.” (*Collected Works*, Vol. 10, pp. 177-178).

Trotsky’s regular predictions of doom

Proceeding from the unscientific and pessimistic, not to say anti-Leninist, theory of ‘permanent revolution’, which was refuted by the experience of the three Russian revolutions and by all further social development in the USSR and elsewhere, Trotsky could, and did, predict nothing but doom. The underlying theme and purpose of all his statements between 1923 and 1940 was to deny all possibility of building socialism in the USSR and thus to undermine the confidence of the Soviet proletariat in building a new society by its own efforts if the world revolution failed to come to its rescue. This was accompanied by vicious attacks on the only guarantee for the successes of the USSR during this epoch-making period of particular difficulty and particular achievement, namely the Leninist leadership of the Party and state of the proletarian dictatorship. Of course these attacks were always hidden under a guise of attacking the ‘bureaucratic state apparatus’, or ‘Stalinist bureaucracy, with the alleged desire to improve matters. And when the oft-predicted disaster did not happen, this only provided Trotsky with an occasion to report on invented widespread disaster, disillusionment and demoralisation as a means of bringing about the fulfilment of his jeremiads.

Trotsky’s ‘New Course’ predicts degeneration of the Party

In 1923, at the time of the New Economic Policy (NEP), Trotsky predicted immediate doom for the proletarian dictatorship through the “degeneration of the state apparatus in a bourgeois direction.” In his *New Course*, written in 1923, he claimed that “Bureaucratism has reached an excessive and truly alarming development.” This is how he predicted the restoration of capitalism through the NEP, claiming that quantity would at a certain stage be transformed into quality:

“...The rapid development of private capital... would show that private capital is interposing itself more and more between the workers’ state and the peasantry, is acquiring an economic and therefore a political influence... [S]uch a rupture between Soviet industry and agriculture, between the proletariat and the peasantry, would constitute a grave danger for the proletarian revolution, a symptom of the possibility of the triumph of the counter-revolution.

“What are the political paths by which the victory of the counter-revolution might come if the economic hypothesis just set forth were to be realised?... [T]he political process would assume in the main the character of the degeneration of the state apparatus in a bourgeois direction... If private capital increased rapidly and succeeded in fusing with the peasantry, the

active counter-revolutionary tendencies directed against the Communist Party would then probably prevail...

“The counter-revolutionary tendencies can find a support among the kulaks, the middlemen, the retailers, the concessionaires, in a word, among elements much more capable of surrounding the state apparatus than the Party itself...

...[T]he negative social phenomena we have just enumerated and which now nurture bureaucratisation could place the revolution in peril should they continue to develop... bureaucratism in the state and party apparatus is the expression of the most vexatious tendencies inherent in our situation, of the defects and deviations in our work which... might sap the basis of the revolution... Quantity will at a certain stage be transformed into quality.” (Chapter 4).

In all this, Trotsky forgets completely the role of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Of course, the introduction of the NEP did unleash capitalist elements, in the countryside in particular; of course it was a partial return to capitalism. All that was known to the author of the NEP, Vladimir Ilyich Lenin. But there was no other way of transition from war communism to socialism except through the NEP even though the latter, by unleashing capitalist elements in the countryside, carried the danger of capitalist restoration. This danger, however, this possibility of capitalist restoration, could never be realised as long as the proletarian dictatorship exercised its iron rule over hostile capitalist classes – kulaks and traders. That is why Lenin called for the maximum strengthening of the dictatorship of the proletariat. This, in turn, could only be done through unity of will and iron discipline in the ruling Bolshevik Party. That is why he caused the Tenth Party Congress to pass the resolution, written by himself, calling for existing factions within the Party to be disbanded forthwith, for the formation of new factions in the future to be banned, and declaring that non-compliance with this resolution by anyone would result in their immediate expulsion from the Party. Trotsky for his part consistently undermined the proletarian dictatorship by his vicious attacks on the leadership of the Party, his denigration of the Party and state apparatus in the USSR, and by flouting all norms and discipline of the Bolshevik Party.

Failure of Trotsky’s predictions

Notwithstanding Trotskyist sabotage, Trotsky’s predictions did not come true, thanks to the Leninist leadership of the Party and the state during this very difficult period. Instead NEP Russia was actually transformed into a mighty socialist USSR that then went on to achieve the crowning glory of defeating the mighty Nazi war machine almost single-handedly. As the “degeneration”, “initiative-killing bureaucratism”, “ossification”, “estrangement” and “morbid uneasiness” predicted by Trotsky failed to materialise

and the USSR began to be transformed through the collectivisation and industrialisation drive of the Five-Year Plans, Trotsky intensified his attacks on the USSR and the leadership of the Bolshevik Party – revealing in the process his true hideous features as a market socialist, i.e., as a bourgeois socialist of the social-democratic variety.

Contemptible and cowardly capitulator

In 1933, Trotsky published his pamphlet *Soviet Economy in Danger*, in which he came out in opposition to this second assault on capitalism, i.e., the assault mounted through socialist industrialisation and collectivisation – both measures of world revolutionary historic significance. He declared that the “correct and economically sound collectivisation, at a given stage, **should not lead to the elimination of the NEP but to the gradual reorganisation of its methods.**” (p. 32).

In other words, no attempt should be made to eliminate capitalism in general, and capitalism in the countryside in particular.

Gorbachev style, pretending to stand for some sort of control of the market, Trotsky’s method of controlling the market is to leave it to the market to control itself!

“The regulation of the market,” he says, “itself must depend upon the tendencies that are brought about through its medium.” (p. 30).

Every revolutionary giant stride forward of the Soviet economy at that time, because outside the market, is portrayed by this high priest of market socialism as disorder and “economic chaos.” He says:

“By eliminating the market and installing instead Asiatic bazaars the bureaucracy has created... the conditions for the most barbaric gyrations of prices and consequently has placed a mine under commercial calculations. As a result economic chaos has been redoubled.” (p. 34).

Trotsky, who in December 1925, at the 14th Party Congress of the CPSU, had tried to force on the Party the policy of immediate collectivisation of the peasantry, when the conditions necessary for such collectivisation were totally lacking, this same Trotsky in 1933, when collectivisation was well on the way to completion, comes out in opposition to the policy of liquidating the kulaks as a class, demanding instead the establishment of “a policy of severely restricting the exploiting tendencies of the kulaks.” (p. 47).

In other words, capitalism must not be eliminated in the countryside.

Praying for miracles Trotsky declares: “Commodities must be adapted to human needs...” Trotsky’s position amounts to this: ‘Economic accounting is unthinkable without market relations.’ In view of this, it is hardly surprising that Trotsky came to the conclusion that: “It is necessary to put off the Second Five-Year Plan. Away with shrieking enthusiasm!” (p. 41).

No wonder then that Stalin, in his Report to the 17th Party Congress (26

January 1934) made the following observation on the Trotskyist programme:

“We have always said that the ‘Lefts’ are in fact Rights who mask their Rightness by Left phrases. Now the ‘Lefts’ themselves confirm the correctness of our statement. Take last year’s issues of the Trotskyist ‘Bulletin. What do Messieurs the Trotskyists demand, what do they write about in what does their ‘Left’ programme find expression? They demand: **the dissolution of the state farms**, on the grounds that they do not pay, **the dissolution of the majority of the collective farms**, on the grounds that they are fictitious, the **abandonment of the policy of eliminating the kulaks**, **reversion to the policy of concessions**, and **the leasing to concessionaires of a number of our industrial enterprises**, on the grounds that they do not pay.

“There you have the programme of these contemptible cowards and capitulators – their counter-revolutionary programme for restoring capitalism in the USSR!

“What difference is there between this programme and that of the extreme Rights? Clearly, there is none. It follows that the Lefts’ have openly associated themselves with the counter-revolutionary programme of the Rights in order to enter into a bloc with them and to wage a joint struggle against the Party.” (Stalin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 13, pp. 370-371.

Trotsky’s anti-Soviet diatribes are grist to the imperialist mill

Although bourgeois economics learnt nothing from Trotsky’s Soviet Economy in Danger, seeing as he had but repeated, in a clumsy way, what had been said a decade earlier by bourgeois economists such as Von Mises and Brutzkus, it was nevertheless extensively quoted in the imperialist press by the bourgeois critics of socialist construction, for it enabled them to stress that their ‘objective’ and ‘impartial’ critiques of socialism, and their dogma that it was impossible for society to free itself of the market, were fully accepted by this ‘old Bolshevik’. (For a fuller treatment of this subject, the reader is referred to chapter 11 of my book *Perestroika – the Complete Collapse of Revisionism*).

Trotsky’s diatribes against the Soviet regime were grasped with alacrity by the German and Italian fascists: “See, my friends, “ said Goebbels to the German socialists and communists, “what Trotsky is saying about the Soviet state. It is no longer a Socialist State but a state dominated by a parasitic bureaucracy, living on the Russian people.” (see Appendix 2) These and similar arguments, broadcast by the fascists as well as other imperialist states, were designed to weaken both the faith the masses might have in the USSR as well as their faith in themselves, in their capacity to build a new life for themselves. These Trotskyist arguments were, and continue to be, seized upon by the opponents of communism in the Labour movement as well as by the radical petty-bourgeois intelligentsia. Trotskyism thus per-

formed, and continues to perform, the function of confusing and disarming the working-class movement politically and ideologically.

Flying in the face of all reality, ignoring the developments in socialist construction in the USSR, Trotsky continued to predict disaster and to advocate the overthrow of the ‘Stalinist bureaucracy’ – a euphemism for the Leninist leadership of the Bolshevik Party and the Soviet state – in other words, the overthrow of the dictatorship of the proletariat. In an article written in October 1933, Trotsky predicted the restoration of capitalism if ‘Stalinist bureaucracy’ continued to hold sway:

“The further unhindered development of bureaucratism must lead inevitably to the cessation of economic and cultural growth, to a terrible social crisis and to the downward plunge of the entire society. But this would imply not only the collapse of the proletarian dictatorship but also the end of bureaucratic domination. In place of the workers’ state would come not ‘social bureaucratic’ but capitalist relations.” (*The Class Nature of the Soviet State*).

In February 1935 Trotsky predicted the “inevitable collapse of the Stalinist political regime” and its replacement by fascist-capitalist counterrevolution”, unless the removal of the Soviet regime came “as a conscious act of the proletarian vanguard,” to wit, the same Trotskyist counter-revolutionaries who denied the very possibility of building socialism in the first place, who tried to put every obstacle (albeit unsuccessfully) in the way of socialist construction, who hand in hand with the imperialist bourgeoisie slandered the Soviet state and Bolshevik Party leadership, who belittled and denigrated every single achievement of socialist industry, agriculture, science, technology and the arts and who ended up by being allies and tools of German and Japanese fascism!! These very contemptible cowards and counter-revolutionaries, these ardent advocates of the programme of capitalist restoration, in the topsy-turvy world of Trotskyist make-believe and intrigue, convince themselves that they are the ‘proletarian vanguard’! At the same time we are told by Trotsky that the Bolshevik Party which, following the Leninist line, not only believes in the possibility of building socialism in the USSR but is actually accomplishing it successfully in the face of internal and external difficulties and foes, is a regime of ‘Bonapartism’ which is bound to make way for ‘counter-revolution’ unless its removal comes about at the hands of the counter-revolutionary Trotskyists who have awarded themselves the title of “proletarian vanguard”!

“The inevitable collapse of the Stalinist political regime will lead to the establishment of Soviet democracy only in the event that the removal of Bonapartism comes as the conscious act of the proletarian vanguard. In all other cases, in place of Stalinism there could only come the fascist-capitalist counterrevolution”. (Trotsky, *The Workers’ State, Thermidor and Bonapartism*).

Trotsky acknowledges socialist achievements as a means of gaining credibility

By the end of the Second Five-Year plan, however, even the blind could not fail to see the gigantic, truly heroic and world- historic achievements of socialist construction. Even intelligent representatives of imperialism began to make admissions of the achievements of socialism in all walks of life of the USSR – the only country to have achieved full employment while the capitalist world was reeling under the hammer blows of recession. Trotsky was in danger of being discredited because of the crying discrepancy between Soviet reality and Trotsky's description of it. So Trotsky, that most anti-Soviet of all anti-Soviets, in order to gain some credibility, was compelled to write almost effusively of the gains of socialism in the USSR, again, of course, merely as a prelude to a further scurrilous campaign of lies and slander against the Soviet regime. In his *Revolution Betrayed* (1933), he writes:

“Gigantic achievements in industry, enormously promising beginnings in agriculture, an extraordinary growth of the old industrial cities and a building of new ones, a rapid increase of the number of workers, a rise in cultural level and cultural demands – such are the indubitable results of the October revolution...

“Socialism has demonstrated its fight to victory, not in the pages of ‘Das Kapital’ but in an industrial arena comprising a sixth part of the earth's surface – not in the language of dialectics, but in the language of steel cement; and electricity ... a backward country has achieved in less than ten years successes unexampled in history.

“This also ends the quarrel with the reformists in the workers' movement. Can we compare for one moment their mouse-like fussing with the titanic work accomplished by this people aroused to a new life by revolution?...” (p. 16).

Thus quite mysteriously, and without any explanation let alone a correction or an apology from Trotsky, we find that the “smug, negative, disdainful cliquish, bureaucratic apparatus,” characterised on the one hand by “inertia” and on the other by “antagonistic violence towards criticism,” staffed with only “careerists and political hangers-on” who are so divorced from reality as to be in danger of losing support of the masses and forfeiting state dominance to the “counter-revolutionary tendencies” among “retailers, middlemen... and kulaks – this bureaucratic apparatus”, i.e., the leadership of the Bolshevik Party and the Soviet state, has somehow risen to the occasion and organised “ten years of successes unexampled in history.”!

Normally Trotskyism paints a picture of the Soviet people being ordered about and herded around by the ‘Stalinist bureaucracy’, meekly and sullenly accepting their fate. – Yet in some pages of this book, which are characteris-

tically contradicted by some other pages in the same book, Trotsky describes the enthusiasm with which the Soviet youth plunged into economic, cultural and artistic activity, in the following glowing terms:

“To be sure, the youth are very active in the sphere of economics. In the Soviet Union there are now 1.2 million Communist Youth in the collective farms. Hundreds of thousands of members of the Communist Youth have been mobilised during recent years for construction work timber work coal mining. gold production; for work in the Arctic, Sakhalin, or in Amur where the new town of Komsomolsk is in process of construction. The new generation is putting out shock brigades, champion workers, Stakhanovites, foremen; under administrators. The youth are studying and a considerable part of them are studying assiduously. They are as active, if not more so, in the sphere of athletics in its most daring or war-like forms such as parachute jumping and marksmanship. The enterprising and audacious are going on all kinds of dangerous expeditions.

“‘The better part of our youth,’ said recently the well-known polar explorer, Schmidt, ‘are eager to work where difficulties await them.’ This is undoubtedly true...

“... [I]t would be a crude slander against the youth to portray them as controlled exclusively, or even predominantly, by personal interests. No, in the general mass they are magnanimous, responsive, enterprising... In their depths are various unformulated tendencies grounded in heroism and still only awaiting application. It is upon these moods in particular that the newest kind of Soviet patriotism is nurturing itself. It is undoubtedly very deep, sincere and dynamic...” (Chapter 7).

More scurrilous attacks on socialism

All this, however, is only a prelude to a vicious denunciation of the Soviet regime, a negation of Soviet achievements and everything socialist, and a distortion – nay a downright falsification – of Soviet history. Having been forced to pay lip service to socialism having “demonstrated its tight to victory, “ to the Soviet state having achieved “ten years successes unexampled in history,” Trotsky devotes the rest of his book to a vitriolic attack on the USSR and its leadership. We are told, despite all the admissions about “successes unexampled in history”, that “the Soviet State in all its relations is far closer to a backward capitalism than to communism” (p. 22); that, far from achieving the lower stage of communism, what the Soviet Union had achieved was a “**preparatory** regime **transitional** from capitalism to socialism.” (p. 52); that this regime was engendering increasing inequalities: “wage differences in the Soviet Union,” he asserted, “are not less but greater than in the capitalist countries” (p. 228); and that industry was dominated by a “corps of slave drivers” (p. 229). Before this transitional regime could develop in the direction of socialism, it was absolutely necessary for there to

be “a second supplementary revolution against bureaucratic absolutism” (p. 272) because “the bureaucracy can be removed only by a revolutionary force. And, as always there will be fewer victims the more bold and decisive is the attack” (p. 271). Since the Soviet leadership had the overwhelming support of the working class and the collectivised peasantry, Trotsky’s references to revolutionary force” could either mean acts of terrorism against the leadership of the Bolshevik Party, or a military conspiracy, or foreign intervention for the overthrow of the Bolshevik regime – or a combination of all these means.

That this is precisely what Trotsky had in mind is made clear in the course of the pages of this book.

Re-assertion of the discredited theory of ‘permanent revolution’

There is also the inevitable statement that the advance towards socialism depends to some extent on the prior victory of the revolution in the rest of Europe (p. 274) – a rehash and latest version of Trotsky’s permanent hopelessness that masquerades as the theory of ‘permanent revolution. That being the case, one may be forgiven for asking- what will the “supplementary revolution against bureaucratic absolutism” achieve if the revolution is destined to vegetate and degenerate into hopelessness in the absence of “victory of the revolution in the rest of Europe”?

In addition, the book contains virulent denunciations of all attempts at raising the productivity of labour, unattainable under the conditions of capitalism Trotsky attacks all wage differentials, piece-work payments, socialist emulation drives – all of which are simply denounced as “a source of injustice, oppression; and compulsions for the majority, privileges and a ‘happy life’ for the few” (pp. 244-245). Apart from the demagogy of it all, what comes through is the sheer ignorance, not to mention dishonesty: it would appear that its author has failed totally to grasp the essence of *The Critique of the Gotha Programme*, in which Marx deals, inter alia, with the norms of distribution under the lower and higher stages of communism. In the lower stage, distribution can only be according to the formula From each according to his ability, to each according to his work, a formula which does not “remove the defects of distribution and inequality of ‘bourgeois right’” (Lenin, *State and Revolution*).

Equating socialism and fascism and spreading defeatist demoralisation

Driven by his intense and insensate hatred of the Soviet state, mindless subjectivism and limitless vindictiveness against the Bolshevik regime for the reason that the latter had decided to expel him for his incorrigible factionalism, Trotsky goes to the despicable length of saying in Chapter 11 of his book *Revolution Betrayed* that “Stalinism and fascism ... are symmetrical

phenomena In many of their features they show a deadly similarity.”

In the appendix to his book, Trotsky says:

“...with the working class and its sincere champions among the intelligentsia... our work will actually cause doubts and evoke distrust – not of the revolution but of its usurpers. But that is the very goal we have set ourselves.”

Trotsky predicts and calls for the defeat of the USSR in war

Since Trotsky, driven by a combination of egotistical factionalism and bourgeois subjectivism, always referred to the Leninist leadership of the Bolshevik party and the Soviet state as a “Stalinist bureaucracy”, “caste of usurpers”, “totalitarian Regime”, etc., it can hardly be denied that the purpose and intention behind Trotsky’s demented vituperations was to malign the Soviet regime by attempting to convince workers all over the world that this regime, indistinguishable according to Trotsky from fascism, was not deserving of their support. Such an attitude is only the prelude to wishing, and calling, for the defeat of this regime in any war against fascism by spreading demoralisation. That Trotskyism took this step not only secretly but also openly is clear from the following disgusting pronouncements concerning the then impending Second World War. In these pronouncements Trotsky predicts with malicious glee the military defeat of the USSR in the coming war. Indeed he goes even further, asserting that a protracted war without a military defeat “would have to lead to a bourgeois-Bonapartist revolution.” Here are Trotsky’s very words:

“Can we, however, expect that the Soviet Union will come out of the coming great war without defeat? To this frankly posed question we will answer as frankly; if the war should only remain a war, the defeat of the Soviet Union will be inevitable. In a technical economic, and military sense, imperialism is incomparably more strong. If it is not paralysed by revolution in the west; imperialism will sweep away the regime which issued from the October Revolution” (*Revolution Betrayed*, p. 216).

What would be the case if the Soviet Union managed to survive the fate assigned to it by Trotsky? Well, the destruction of the Soviet state would ensue just the same. Turn or twist as we may – military defeat or not – the Soviet Union could not survive the war:

“The protracted nature of the war,” Trotsky wrote, “will reveal the contradictions of the transition economy of the USSR with its bureaucratic planning.... [I]n the case of a protracted war accompanied by the passivity of the world proletariat the internal social contradictions of the USSR not only might lead but would have to lead to a bourgeois-Bonapartist revolution.” (*The Fourth International and the War*).

In 1940, nearing the end of his life – a life full of irreconcilable hostility towards Leninism – Trotsky, with a zeal worthy of a better cause, again pre-

dicted the defeat of the USSR and the triumph of Hitlerite Germany:

“We always started from the fact that the international policy of the Kremlin was determined by the new aristocracy’s... incapacity to conduct a war.

“...the ruling caste is no longer capable of thinking about tomorrow. Its formula is that of all doomed regimes ‘after us the deluge’...”

“The war will topple many things and many individuals. Artifice, trickery, frame-ups and treasons will prove of no avail in escaping its severe judgment” (Statement to the British capitalist press on *Stalin – Hitler’s Quartermaster*).

“Stalin cannot make a war with discontented workers and peasants and with a decapitated Red Army” (*German-Soviet Alliance*).

“The level of the USSR’s productive forces forbids a major war... The involvement of the USSR in a major war before the end of this period would signify in any case a struggle with unequal weapons.

“The subjective factor, not less important than the material has changed in the last years sharply for the worse...”

“Stalin cannot wage an offensive war with any hope of victory.

“Should the USSR enter the war with its innumerable victims and privations, the whole fraud of the official regime, its outrages and violence will inevitably provoke a profound reaction on the part of the people, who have already carried out three revolutions in this century...”

“The present war can crush the Kremlin bureaucracy long before revolution breaks out in some capitalist country...” (*The Twin Stars: Hitler-Stalin*).

Trotsky’s predictions refuted by the epic victory of the USSR in World War II

As usual, and happily for humanity, all Trotsky’s predictions were totally belied. After initial reverses in the first few weeks of the war, attributable in the main to the Nazi surprise attack, the Soviet defences stiffened. Before long they struck back. The rest of the world, like Trotsky, had given the USSR only a few weeks before collapsing in the face of the onslaught of the allegedly invincible Nazi war machine. The Red Army and Soviet people, united as one under the leadership of the CPSU and their Supreme Commander Joseph Stalin, exploded this myth of Nazi invincibility. Soviet Victories in the titanic battles of Moscow, Stalingrad, Kursk and Leningrad will forever be cherished not only by the peoples of the former, great and glorious Soviet Union, but also by all progressive humanity.

“The Battle of Moscow had been an epic event... It had involved more than 2 million men; 2,500 tanks, 1,800 aircraft, and 25,000 guns. Casualties had been horrifying in scale. For the Russians it had ended in victory. They had suffered the full impact of the German ‘Blitzkrieg’ offensive and, notwithstanding their losses... they had been able to mount an effective counter-

attack. They had begun to destroy the myth of German invincibility...” (Ian Grey, *Stalin – Man of History*, Abacus, p. 344).

The surrender on 1 February 1943 at Stalingrad, by the fascist general Von Paulus and 23 other generals, mesmerised the world. The victory of the Red Army at Stalingrad was incredible as it was heroic. The Nazi losses in the Volga-Don-Stalingrad area were 1.5 million men, 3,500 tanks, 12,000 guns and 3,000 aircraft. Never before had the Nazi war machine, which was accustomed to running over countries in days and weeks, suffered such a humiliating defeat, a defeat “in which the flower of the German army perished. It was against the background of this battle... that Stalin now rose to almost titanic stature in the eyes of the world” (Deutscher, *Stalin*, p. 472). From now on nothing but defeat stared the Germans in the face, leading all the way to the entry of the Red Army into Berlin and the storming by it of the Reichstag on 30 April 1945 – the same day that the Fuhrer committed suicide. Six days later, Field- Marshall Wilhelm Keitel, acting on behalf of the German High Command, surrendered to Marshall Zhukov.

Stalin and the Great Patriotic War

Although the credit for the victory must correctly be given to the Soviet armed forces and the heroic efforts of the Soviet people, no narrative of these fateful years is complete without a reference, indeed a fulsome tribute, to the undisputed leader of the CPSU(B), the Soviet people, and the Supreme commander of the Soviet forces Joseph Stalin. Even a renegade like Gorbachev is obliged, apropos the Soviet victory in the Second World War, to admit that: “A factor in the achievement of victory was the tremendous political will purposefulness and persistence, ability to organise and discipline people, displayed in the war years by Joseph Stalin.” (*Report at the Festive Meeting on the 70th Anniversary of the Great October Revolution* held in Moscow on 2 November 1987, p. 25).

Ian Grey, who is a bourgeois but honest writer, has this to say on this score:

“The massive setbacks and the immediate threat to Moscow would have unnerved most men, but the impact on Stalin was to strengthen his grim determination to fight. No single factor was more important in holding the nation from disintegration at this time.” (*Ibid.* p. 335).

Further:

“It was in a real sense his [Stalin’s] victory. It could not have been won without his industrialisation campaign and especially the intensive development of industry beyond the Volga. Collectivisation had contributed to the victory by enabling the government to stockpile food and raw materials to prevent paralysis in industry and famine in the towns. But also collectivisation with its machine-tractor stations, had given the peasants their first training in the use of tractors and other machines.” (*Ibid.* p. 419).

Quoting Isaac Deutscher, who is far from being friendly to Stalin, approvingly, Ian Grey continues:

“‘Collectivised farming had been ‘the peasants’ preparatory school for mechanised warfare’...

“It was his victory, too, because he had directed and controlled every branch of Russian operations throughout the war. The range and burden of his responsibilities were extraordinary, but day by day without a break for the four years of the war he exercised direct command of the Russian forces and control over supplies, war industries, and government policy, including foreign policy.” (*Ibid.* pp. 419-420)-

Finally the same writer says:

“It was his victory, above all because it had been won by his genius and labors, heroic in scale. The Russian people had looked to him for leadership, and he had not faded them. His speeches of July 3 and November 6, 1941, which had steeled them for the trials of war, and his presence in Moscow during the great battle of the city, had demonstrated his will to victory. He... inspired them and gave them positive direction. He had the capacity of Wending to detail and keeping in mind the broad picture and, while remembering the past and immersed in the present; he was constantly looking ahead to the future”(p. 424).

Innately hostile as he is to Stalin, Deutscher is nevertheless obliged to Paint this Picture of Stalin’s role during the war:

“Many allied visitors who called at the Kremlin during the war were astonished to see on how many issues, great and small military, political or diplomatic, Stalin personally took the final decision. He was in effect his own Commander-in-Chief, his own minister of defence, his Own quartermaster, his Own minister of supply, his own foreign minister, and even his own *chef de protocole*. The *stavka*, the Red Army’s GHQ, was in his offices in the Kremlin. From his office desk; in constant and direct touch with the commands of the various fronts, he watched and directed the campaigns in the field. From his office desk, too, he managed another stupendous operation, the evacuation of 1,360 plants and factories from western Russia and the Ukraine to the Volga, the Urals and Siberia, an evacuation that involved not only machines and installations but millions of workmen and their families. Between one function and the other he bargained with, say, Beaverbrook and Harriman over the quantities of aluminium or the calibre of rifles and anti-aircraft guns to be delivered to Russia by the western allies; or he received leaders of the guerrillas -- from German occupied territory and discussed with them raids to be carried out hundreds of miles behind the enemy’s lines. At the height of the battle of Moscow, in December 1941, when the thunder of Hitler’s guns hovered ominously over the streets of Moscow, he found time enough to start a subtle diplomatic game with the Polish General Sikorski who had come to conclude a Russo-Polish treaty... He enter-

tained them [foreign envoys and visitors] usually late at night and in the small hours of the morning. After a day filled with military reports operational decisions, economic instructions and diplomatic haggling he would at dawn pore over the latest dispatches from the commissariat of Home Affairs, the NKVD... Thus he went on, day after day, throughout four years of hostilities – a prodigy of patience tenacity, and vigilance, almost omnipresent almost omniscient.” (Isaac Deutscher, *Stalin*, pp. 456-457).

And further.

“...[T]here is no doubt that he was their [the Soviet troops] real Commander-in-Chief. His leadership was by no means confined to the taking of abstract strategic decisions, at which civilian politicians may excel. The interest with which he studied the technical aspects of modern warfare, down to the minute details, shows him to have been anything but a dilettante. He viewed the war primarily from the angle of logistics ... To secure reserves of manpower and supplies of weapons, in the right quantities and proportions, to allocate them and transport them to the right points at the right time, to amass a decisive strategic reserve and to have it ready for intervention at decisive moments – these operations made up nine-tenths of his task” (*Ibid.* p. 459).

Deutscher also dispels any notion of popular hostility to the Soviet regime:

“It should not be imagined that a majority of the nation was hostile to the government. If that had been the case no patriotic appeals, no prodding or coercion, would have prevented Russia’s political collapse, for which Hitler was confidently hoping. The great transformation that the country had gone through before the war had... strengthened the moral fibre of the nation. The majority was imbued with a strong sense of its economic and social advance, which it was grimly determined to defend against danger from without.” (*Ibid.* p. 473)

So much then for the Trotskyist drivel about the “new aristocracy’s incapacity to conduct a war,” the “discontented workers and peasants and a decapitated army” making it impossible to make a war, the alleged inferiority of the weapons of the Red Army, Stalin being unable to “wage an offensive war with any hope of victory,” and the war crushing “the Kremlin bureaucracy.”

Far from being crushed, the Soviet regime emerged from the war much strengthened. Far from crushing the Soviet regime by its war against the USSR, the Nazi regime itself was crushed, as was Germany. What is more, the Soviet victory demonstrated beyond measure the correctness the policies of industrialisation. and collectivisation pursued, in the teeth of Trotskyist and imperialist opposition, by the Soviet regime before the war.

“The new appreciation of Stalin’s role did not spring only from afterthoughts born in the flush of victory. The truth was that the war could not

have been won without the intensive industrialisation of Russia; and of her eastern provinces in particular. Nor could it have been won without the collectivisation of large numbers of farms. The muzhik of 1930, who had never handled a tractor or any other machine, would have been of little use in modern war. Collectivised farming with its machine-tractor stations, had been the peasants' preparatory school for mechanised warfare. The rapid raising of the average standard of education had also enabled the Red Army to draw on a considerable reserve of intelligent officers and men. We are fifty or a hundred years behind the advanced countries. We must make good this lag in ten years. Either we do it, or they crush us – so Stalin had spoken exactly ten years before Hitler set out to conquer Russia. His words, when they were recalled now, could not but impress people as a prophesy brilliantly fulfilled as a most timely call to action. And, indeed a few years' delay in the modernisation of Russia might have made all the difference between victory and defeat. “ (Deutscher, *Ibid.* p. 535).

This is how Deutscher captures the victory parade in Red Square at the end of the war.

“On 24 June 1945 Stalin stood at the top of the Lenin Mausoleum and reviewed a great victory parade of the Red Army which marked the fourth anniversary of Hitler's attack. By Stalin's side stood Marshall Zhukov, his deputy the victor of Moscow, Stalingrad, and Berlin. The troops that marched past him were led by Marshall Rokossovsky. As they marched rode, and galloped across the Red Square regiments of infantry cavalry, and tanks swept the mud of its pavement – it was a day of torrential rain – with innumerable banners and standards of Hitler's army At the Mausoleum they threw the banners at Stalin's feet .The allegorical scene was strangely imaginative...

“The next day Stalin received the tribute of Moscow for the defence of the city in 1941. The day after he was acclaimed as ‘Hero of the Soviet Union’ and given the title of Generalissimo.” (*Ibid.* p. 534)

In “these days of undreamt-of triumph and glory,” continues Deutscher: “Stalin stood at the full blaze of popular recognition and gratitude. These feelings were spontaneous, genuine not engineered by official propagandists slogans about the ‘achievements of the Stalinist era’ now conveyed fresh meaning not only to young people, but to sceptics and malcontents of the older generation...” (*Ibid.* p. 534).

Thus, at the end of the war Trotskyism stood thoroughly discredited - thoroughly bankrupt – and regarded as no more than an information bureau and anti-communist ally of imperialism in particular during the US-led war of aggression against the Korean people, during which most Trotskyists, consumed by their genetical hatred of the Soviet Union, effectively sided with US imperialism and against the forces of national liberation and socialism.

The cold war – Imperialism’s response to the prestige of victorious socialism

The USSR’s successes in the collectivisation of agriculture, massive socialist industrialisation, gigantic achievements in education, science, technology and culture, with a continuously rising standard of living for the working class and the collective peasantry, and her crowning victory in the anti-fascist Great Patriotic War, with the resultant victory of Peoples Democratic governments in Poland, Hungary Czechoslovakia, Romania, Bulgaria and Albania, brought Soviet prestige to soaring point. It was this spectacle of triumphant, confident and advancing socialism that put the fear of God into the hearts of the imperialist bourgeoisie and caused the latter, under the leadership of US imperialism which had emerged from the war as the strongest imperialist power, to initiate the cold war, establish the NATO aggressive warmongering military alliance and re-arm West Germany as a member of this alliance.

The NATO warmongers threatened the USSR with an economic blockade and nuclear blackmail. But the USSR defied the blockade and military threats alike. It re-doubled its efforts to build its economy and destroy the US monopoly of the atom bomb. At the end of September 1949, in the same week as Comrade Mao Tse-tung proclaimed the Peoples Republic of China and the success of the Chinese revolution, the world heard the detonation of the USSR’s first atom bomb. Even such a Trotskyite writer as Isaac Deutscher, whose hatred for Stalin is total and who never misses a chance of describing Stalin as “dug and dreary”, is obliged to admit:

“He [Stalin] achieved some of his vital objectives. He resisted Western pressures firmly enough to deter any American design for spreading the war, and Soviet nuclear industry progressed by leaps and bounds and produced its first hydrogen bomb in 1953, shortly after the Americans had achieved the feat. The basic sectors of the Soviet economy, having reached their pre-war level of output in 1948-49, rose 50 per cent above in Stalin’s last years. The modernisation and urbanization of the Soviet Union was accelerated. In the early fifties alone its urban population grew by about 25 millions Secondary schools and universities were giving instruction to twice as many pupils as before 1940. Out of the wreckage of the world war the foundations had been re-laid for Russia’s renewed industrial and military ascendancy, which was presently to startle the world” (*Stalin*, pp. 585-586).

A few pages further down, Deutscher observes:

“... it is a fact that ‘Stalin found Russia with a wooden plough and left her equipped with atomic piles’... This summary of Stalin’s rule is, of course, a tribute to his achievement.” (*Ibid.* p. 609). The words quoted by Deutscher are quoted from his own obituary of Stalin published in the Manchester Guardian of 6 March 1953.

Of course, only the demented Trotskyites can argue that the above achievements took place automatically on the foundation of socialist property relations inherited from the October Revolution – not because of but despite, the leadership, as it were. No, such achievements do not come without correct leadership. One has only to compare the leadership, the policies pursued by the leadership, and the consequences and achievements of those policies, in the USSR up to the mid-fifties with those of the leadership from the 20th Party Congress (1956) onwards until the August 1991 coup resulting in the disintegration of the USSR to realise what a chasm divides the two periods. Even Roy Medvedev, no friend of Stalin's and the author of the thoroughly anti-Stalin *Let history judge*, has been obliged to say- "Stalin found the Soviet Union in ruin and left it a superpower. Gorbachev inherited a superpower and left it in ruin."

Triumph of Khrushchevite revisionism and the resuscitation of Trotskyism

Thus, in view of her gigantic achievements, which were the fruit of domed persistence in following the Leninist path of socialist construction, working people treated with utter contempt the Trotskyist ravings against the USSR and its leadership. All this, however, changed with the triumph of Khrushchevite revisionism in the CPSU after the death of Stalin. Khrushchevite revisionism could get nowhere in its desire to undermine socialism, reach an accommodation with imperialism, and start the long process, on the road back to capitalism, unless it attacked the person who had, after the death of Lenin and in a bitter struggle for the victory of the Leninist line on the question of socialist industrialisation and collectivisation, become the most representative spokesman of, and whose name was indelibly and inextricably linked with, the building of socialism in the USSR, namely, Joseph Stalin. Hence Khrushchev's attack on Stalin in his so-called secret report to the 20th Party Congress of the CPSU in 1956. With this attack on Stalin's alleged 'personality cult' – all, incidentally, in the name of Leninism and with the alleged purpose of returning to true Leninist norms – began the long political and economic process that brought forth ripe capitalist fruit under the loving and tender care of Khrushchev's last successor, Gorbachev. I cannot here go further into this question, with which I have dealt in greater detail in my *Perestroika – the Complete Collapse of Revisionism*.

Khrushchev's attack on Stalin brought some retrospective credence to Trotskyist counter-revolutionary fulminations against the USSR from the mid-twenties onwards. As under the tutelage of Khrushchev and his successors, the CPSU itself, as well as the revisionist parties in Europe and elsewhere, really did begin to degenerate, the long-repeated Trotskyist jeremiads about the alleged Thermidor and degeneration gripping the CPSU from 1923 onwards came to acquire the semblance of plausibility.

Trotskyism sides with every single counter-revolutionary movement

In the aftermath of the triumph of revisionism at the, 20th Party Congress of the CPSU, and under its direct stimulus, bourgeois-nationalist tendencies within the working-class parties, acting in close coordination with the imperialist agencies and broadcasting media as well as the church, came to the fore in some of the Peoples Democracies. In a number of places – most notably Hungary – these led to counter-revolutionary uprisings. Everywhere in these upheavals directed against socialism and the rule of the working class, the Trotskyites were, as was to be expected, on the side of imperialism reaction, counter-revolution and clerico-fascism. The XIth World Congress of Trotskyites paid homage to the CIA-Vatican inspired and led Hungarian counter-revolution in the following glowing terms:

“The Hungarian revolution of October-November 1956 went the farthest on the path of a fully-fledged anti-bureaucratic political revolution.” (*Imprecor*, Nov. 1979).

James Burnham, the American Trotskyist, and Trotsky’s trusted henchman until 1940, openly advocated, from 1950 onwards, the US policy of ‘liberation’ of captive nations” – a policy of destabilising People’s Democracies in eastern Europe.

Trotskyism and the Czechoslovak counter-revolution

When the extreme revisionists in Czechoslovakia, under the leadership of Dubcek, impatient with the slow speed of ‘reform’ aimed at restoring a capitalist economy and a multi-party bourgeois democracy, started the, so-called Prague Spring they euphemistically declared that their aim was “to free Marxism from Stalinist and bureaucratic distortions” and to “formulate the humanist vocation of the communist movement.” The meaning of these apparently attractive slogans became all too clear during 1989, by which time the liquidation of the Communist Parties in Poland and Hungary, the dismantling of what remained of socialist planning of the economy in those countries, and the plunge into capitalism and bourgeois democracy, under the tender mercies of imperialism and its spiritual arm, the Vatican, had become obvious. Dubcek, in a letter to the Party leadership, pleaded with them not to condemn reforms in Poland and Hungary. So did his colleague, Jiri Pelikan, who called upon the “democratic movement in western Europe [to] develop a dialogue with Solidarnosc... in Poland, with the Democratic Forum ... in Hungary, with Charter 77... in Czechoslovakia”, that is, with the forces of capitalist restoration. Then, in 1968, as well as subsequently in the late 1980s and the beginning of the present decade, the Trotskyites, true to form, were to be found on the side of counter-revolution.

The Trotskyist, Petr Uhl, was one of the most active members of the

anti-communist Charter 77. On 15 October 1988, the luminaries of Charter 77 and other opposition groups signed a Manifesto of the Movement for Civil Liberty which, *inter alia*, demanded “economic and political pluralism,” – freeing of business from “the yoke of centralised bureaucracy,” “complete reestablishment of private enterprise in... commerce craft industry, small and medium business,” and “the integration of the Czech economy... in a natural way with the world economy, based upon the international division of labour” – that is, a manifesto for the restoration of capitalism and bourgeois democracy. While declaring himself to be in sympathy with this manifesto of the velvet counter- revolution, Uhl did not judge it opportune. to append his signature to it, even criticising it as “liberal democratic” and “totalitarian.” The conclusion? Instead of denouncing it and disassociating himself from it, he welcomed the manifesto because of the inclusion in it of “the demand for worker’s control in the big firms,” of the kind that abounds in the imperialist countries with its humbug of a share-owning democracy.

After the success of the counter-revolution and the implementation of the above manifesto, Uhl stated:

“One might discuss the extent to which Trotsky’s theory of the political revolution has been justified. I think that it is in Czechoslovakia that the reality is nearest to this theory.”

He goes on to add by way of an explanation of this ‘political revolution’ and the composition of this anti-communist coalition: “so long as people can say they are against communism, Stalinism and bureaucracy, then everybody is in agreement” (*Imprecor*, no. 304, 1990, p. 26).

And further: “There were those who saw in Charter 77 a step in the direction of political revolution – of whom I was one; others saw in it a means of propagating the word of Christ. It was a veritable laboratory of tolerance.” (*Imprecor*, no. 300, 1990, p. 8).

Comrade Ludo Martens, Chairman of the Belgian Party of Labour (PTB), in his book *The Velvet Counter Revolution* which I recommend to any reader desiring a detailed account of these events, justly remarks in this regard

“To overthrow and destroy socialism (whether it be a strong and vigorous socialism or an eroded and sickly socialism), the clerico-fascists reactionary nationalists, the agents of the CIA and social democrats all stick together and needless to say they show great ‘tolerance’ towards those pseudo-socialists who back up their political agitation with repeated quotations from Trotsky” about the so-called anti-bureaucratic, political revolution, which turns out, as it was always meant, to be no more than another expression, wrapped up in ‘left’ verbiage, for the simple restoration of capitalism Thus has Trotskyism arrived at its “political revolution” against “Stalinist bureaucracy”!!

The Belgian Trotskyist, Ernest Mandel, greeted the events of 12 January 1990 as: “the sudden access of hundreds of millions of men and women from the Eastern countries to political life.” (*Imprecor*, no. 300, 1990, p. 8). The meaning of this meaningless hyperbole was made clear by the selfsame puffed-up and pompous Trotskyist gentry a mere ten months later, on 23 November 1990: “According to Petr Uhl there are probably only a few thousand, even a few hundred militants from Civic Forum at the regional and local level.”

Further: “The student movement which largely inspired the events of November 1989, no longer exists.” (*Imprecor*, no. 319, 1990, p. 4).

In Czechoslovakia, the “access to political life”, over which Mandel waxes so lyrical, happened at a time when the masses were following the counter-revolutionary Civic Forum, under the leadership of Havel, a notorious CIA agent. This is what Pavel Pechacek, head of the Czech section of the CIA-financed Radio Free Europe, has to say in this instance:

“We have always played important role. According to the leader the student revolt in Bratislava, it was Radio Free Europe which lit the fuse. We always had close contacts with Havel, Camogursky and Dienstbeir, who today are members of the new government but who for years worked for us as independent correspondents.”

These were the people – the Havels and Pechaceks – who “awakened the masses to political life” in Czechoslovakia. Knowing full well that the Civic Forum stood for restoration of capitalism, that Vaclav, Klaus, head of the Civic Forum Since October 1990 and one of the principal advisors to Havel, is not Only on record expressing his admiration for Milton Friedman and Hayek the two bourgeois economists most admired by Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher, former President Of the USA and former Prime Minister of Britain respectively, but also his commitment to “a market economy, without qualification” – knowing all this Mandel told a Belgian financial paper on 21 March 1990:

“The transition to a completely western model is possible, but this is not the case in countries like the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia” (*De Financieel Economische Tijd*, 21.3.90).

Knowing all this, why did the Trotskyists go along with the Civic Forum? Their innate hatred of socialism and communism is the answer. This truth is blurted out by the dim-witted Uhl, who explained that his support for the Civic Forum and Havel was motivated by a desire to get rid of the remnants of the socialist system!

After several political somersaults and mental contortions, the Trotskyist Uhl finally, and not unexpectedly, carved for himself a nice little niche in the ‘new bourgeois Czech state, as the head of the Czech Press Agency, a position to which he was appointed in February 1990, from which to propagate the wonders of capitalist restoration and the “access to political life” set in

train by this restoration – ‘anti-bureaucratic revolution’ if you like.

From jabbering away about worker’s control only the previous day, Uhl had little difficulty in getting on with the job of informing the masses that the Czech state represents society:

“It is generally understood that, if we depend on the State, we support the government which is not exactly the case. Of course we must ‘respect’ the government but if there is a conflict it would be up to a parliamentary committee to make a decision, because parliament represents the State more than the government does. Our task is to propagate news abroad about Czech society. This is the concern of the Czech State because it represents Czech society for the moment.” (*Imprecor*, no. 304, 1990, p. 27).

If this drivel amounts to anything at all it amounts to the worst form of parliamentary cretinism, according to which the, Czech parliament and bourgeois Czech state are synonymous, and since, according to this Trotskyist imbecile, the state represents society, it is “our task to propagate news abroad about Czech society.”!! This is the beginning and end, the sole meaning of the much-trumpeted Trotskyist “anti-bureaucratic, political revolution.” Nothing could be clearer than this.

The Belgian Trotskyist Mandel and the French Trotskyist Broué crudely defend counter-revolution

Mandel, notorious for his anti-Marxism and vulgar economism, had for more than two decades held the view that in the absence of a violent counter-revolution capitalism could not be restored in the socialist countries. Proceeding from this erroneous premise, he has all along advocated multi-party democracy (democracy for all). Since, according to his reasoning, there was no danger to socialism and the real enemy lay in ‘bureaucracy’, through multi-party democracy socialism would acquire a democratic character. Towards the end of 1989, in regard to the counter-revolutionary movement in Timisoara, which resulted in the overthrow and foul murder of Ceausescu and his wife, Helena, Mandel surpassed even the lying imperialist media in denouncing the “hideous Stalinist crimes in Timisoara” – crimes which turned out not to have been committed after all. The bourgeois media’s inflammatory figures of 70,000 to 100,000 dead in Timisoara, and the horror stories about mass graves, turned out to be totally fabricated. The correction, of only 700 deaths, most at the hands of the army rather than the Securitate, was made in half-inch columns relegated to inside pages.

In regard to the counter-revolutionary movement in the German Democratic Republic Mandel declared.

“I am delighted over what’s happening in Berlin. The anti-socialist movement is really weak.” Welcoming this “revolution,” – he went on to exclaim. “Everything Trotsky ever hoped for could now become reality.” (*Dans Humo*, 21.12.89).

In Trotskyist, as indeed in imperialist circles, whereas Gorbachev, Yeltsin and Trotsky are revolutionaries, Stalin and the Bolshevik party that he led are counter-revolutionaries!!

It is worth while reproducing the views of Mandel, considered to be the theoretician of the Trotskyist IVth International, on the counter-revolutionary Programme of capitalist restoration embodied in Gorbachev's Perestroika. During an interview he gave to a journalist of *New Times* he was asked:

"Is it not true that Mikhail Gorbachev stated that Perestroika is a true new revolution?"

To which Mandel replied: "Yes, he does indeed and again this is very positive. Our movement has defended this thesis for 55 years and was therefore labelled as counterrevolutionary. Today people, both in the Soviet Union and in a large part of the international communist movement, understand better where the real counterrevolutionaries were." (no. 38, 1990, French edition).

Again, in the same Belgian financial paper already referred to, Mandel expresses himself on this question in the following terms:

"The reformer Yeltsin represents the tendency which wants to reduce the gigantic state apparatus. Consequently he follows in Trotsky's footsteps." (21 March 1990).

These wonderful admissions from the Trotskyist Mandel, for which we thank him heartily, only make our job of exposing Trotsky's anti-communism and anti-Bolshevism, easier. For once, Mandel is absolutely correct. Gorbachev, Yeltsin and Trotsky do have the same ideological and political physiognomy – they all stand for capitalist restoration.

This same despicable Mandel had earlier described the arch reactionary monarchist, Sakharov, as one of the "radical and progressive left" and the bourgeois-nationalist Sajudis of Lithuania as belonging to "the radical democratic and nationalist popular movement"!! (*Imprecor*, no. 285, 3 April 1989).

Without exception, all the Trotskyists everywhere supported the counter-revolutionary brainchild of the CIA and the Vatican, Solidarnosc in Poland, cheering its rise and accession to power – again in the name of Trotsky's "anti-bureaucratic political revolution,"

The French Trotskyist Broué, already referred to, for his part applauds the counter-revolutionary movements of eastern Europe which two years after the publication of his Trotsky came to head the capitalist-restorationist regimes, and correctly attributes to Trotsky the following version of "political revolution."

"The demands appearing in these movements of workers and youth re-constitute those that defined the program of political revolution' as Trotsky sketched it: democracy, freedom for parties, destruction of the bureaucratic

apparatus, ‘free ‘trade unions, electoral freedom and the right of criticism ending infringements on human rights, punishing those responsible for crimes, winning the democratic rights of speech, assembly, demonstration, as well as the appearance of a free – and hence stimulating -press.’ (*op. cit.* p. 943).

The American Trotskyist ICL’s sophisticated defence of counter-revolution

Of course the correct and candid representation by Messrs Mandel and Broué of Trotsky’s ‘political revolution’ against “Stalinist bureaucracy” is highly embarrassing to the Spartacists of the ICL, who are forever presenting a sanitised version of Trotskyism in an effort to gain for the latter some credibility in the eyes of progressive workers in order to be able to carry out all the more successfully the propagation of counter-revolutionary Trotskyism and the theory of permanent hopelessness. That is why they fly into a rage against Mandel and Broué’s straightforward admissions of the simple truth.

What is the ICL’s own position? While it may appear to an unwary or superficial observer that they defend the gains of socialism and socialist construction, and workers’ states, this is not the case. They are second to none in maligning the former socialist regimes, especially the Soviet regime from 1923 to 1953, which they have always denounced as “bureaucratic”, needing to be overthrown by a “political revolution.” In unguarded moments, however, dropping their usual mask, they reveal the reactionary essence of their Trotskyist political line. In an article written in November 1992 for the sole purpose of presenting a sanitised version of Trotskyism, the truth literally oozes out, despite themselves, in the following lines:

“The idea that ‘socialism’ could be built in a single country (and a backward one at that), surrounded by imperialist enemies, is a nationalist perversion of Marxism.

“Stalin’s dogma of ‘socialism in one country’ was the ideological afterbirth of a political counterrevolution which **defeated** Leninist internationalism and brought to power a nationalist bureaucratic caste.”

Was the idea of socialism in a single country really a “nationalist perversion of Marxism “ was it really “Stalin’s dogma” and “the ideological afterbirth of a political counterrevolution which **defeated** Leninist internationalism and brought to power a nationalist bureaucratic caste”? If what Spartacist says is true, would it be worthwhile for them, or for anyone else, to defend the gains of this “nationalist perversion”? The Spartacists of the ICL only had to ask this question to realise that they were giving away their whole game, of appearing to defend socialism in words while undermining it in deeds. Are the Spartacists really so ignorant of Lenin’s writings as not to realise that this “nationalist Perversion” of socialism in one country was not

“Stalin’s dogma,” but Lenin’s? He and he alone must get the credit (or discredit) for the authorship of this ‘dogma’. The Spartacists ought not to be so ignorant, for they claim that they are Leninists and make the same claim for their guru, Trotsky. Let them then read Lenin’s 1916 article *Military Programme of Proletarian Revolution*, and his article on cooperation at the beginning of 1923, just as Trotsky was writing his anti-Leninist, counter-revolutionary pamphlet *New Course*. And let them read the following lines taken from Lenin’s 20th November 1922 speech to the Moscow Soviet:

“We have approached the very core of the everyday problems, and that is a tremendous achievement. Socialism is no longer a matter of the distant future, or an abstract picture, or an icon. Our opinion of icons is the same – a very bad one. **We have brought socialism into everyday life** and must here see how matters stand. That is the task of our day, the task of our epoch. Permit me to conclude by expressing confidence that difficult as this task may be, new as it may be compared with our previous task and numerous as the difficulties may be that it entails, we shall all – not in a day, **BUT IN A FEW YEARS** – all of us together fulfil it whatever the cost **so that NEP Russia will become socialist Russia.**” (V.I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 33, p. 443 – Emphasis added).

After this, if the Spartacists have the courage of their convictions, they ought to accuse Lenin of the “dogma” they attempt to pin on Stalin’s shirt sleeve; they ought to lay the blame for this “nationalist perversion” at the doorstep of Lenin rather than depositing it at Stalin’s.

SWP Trots welcome the demise of communism

The largest British Trotskyist Organisation, the Socialist Workers Party (SWP), having cheered every counter-revolutionary movement in eastern Europe from the CIA-Vatican inspired Hungarian uprising to the capitalist restorationist Solidarnosc and the Civic Forum in Czechoslovakia, greeted with frenzied glee the demise of socialism in the USSR. Its organ, *Socialist Worker*, declared joyfully- “Communism has collapsed. Now fight for real socialism.” (31 August 1991). It went on to cheer the toppling of the statues of Sverdlov, Dzerzhinsky, and other “former Communist Party icons”; it even considered it opportune to carry a picture of the statue of the great Lenin down and to declare “Communism has collapsed... It is a fact that should have every socialist rejoicing.”

The SWP went as far as to argue that Yeltsin’s victory had brought “the workers of the USSR closer to the spirit of the socialist revolution of 1917, not further from it.”

Well, since the Berlin wall came down on 9 November 1989, what has this ‘death of communism’ and the fight for ‘real socialism’ brought in its

trail? Exactly what imperialism had been desiring and working for over decades. Exactly what every intelligent observer, not consumed by anti-communist hate, expected it to be. The market forces have been let loose over the unhappy peoples of eastern Europe and the former USSR. Everywhere there is rising unemployment, contraction of production, catastrophic rates of inflation, national strife, rising racism, anti-semitism and fascism, increased crime, drug trafficking, prostitution, black market and hunger. There has been an astronomical rise in the prices of basic necessities such as food, accommodation, electricity and clothing. In other words, all the freedoms have been unleashed that are associated with a free market economy and the Trotskyite “political revolution” against “Stalinist bureaucracy.”

In the former German Democratic Republic, for instance, between the beginning of 1990 and the end of 1991, the economy contracted by 20% as entire industries were shut down. In the first half of 1990, industrial output fell by a huge 40%; in the second half of the same year by another 40%! By the spring of 1991, a third of East Germans had either lost their jobs or were put on short time. From 270,000 in July 1990, unemployment jumped to 1 million by the end of 1991 and 1.5 million in 1992.

In Poland, 2 million workers, representing 15% of the workforce, are un-employed, and, while real wages have fallen by 30% the cost of living has risen by 40%.

The picture is the same in Hungary and Czechoslovakia, where industrial Production has fallen by a fifth.

In the USSR, which had a giant economy before 1985, industrial production is down by 40% since then; the rate of inflation stands at a staggering 2,500%; the currency is in ruin, with the rouble, which used to have a value higher than the US dollar, now having a rate of exchange of 800 roubles to the dollar (March 1993).

The same goons of the SWP who with such lurid delight greeted the “death” of “communism” as the beginning of the fight for “real socialism” two years later on bemoan, in the manner of innocent virgins, the fact that the changes are hurting the workers. Writing in the *Socialist Worker* of 9 November 1991, they say:

“Wealth, freedom democracy – This, the media claimed, was the future for east Germany as the Berlin Wall came down on 9 November 1989.

“In the weeks which followed Czechoslovaks, Bulgarians and Romanians threw off their Stalinist rulers too. Poles and Hungarians increased the pressure for reform

“Two years on and those same politicians, commentators and pundits are silent. Not one of their predictions has come true, none shows any prospect of coming true.

“...the market economy has not led to prosperity, simply deepened the misery.”

On the contrary. Every prediction of bourgeois politicians and media has come true. Capitalism is being restored, and this process, as was known to everyone (including the dim-witted Trotskyists whose “anti-bureaucratic political revolution” against “Stalinism” and “the command economy”, shorn of all its ‘left’ verbiage, amounted to this capitalist restoration), can only take place amid misery and ruin for the masses of workers and an extraordinary enrichment of the few. The movement involving the demolition of all central planning and the introduction of private property cannot but express itself in shocks, jolts and dislocation which are hurting the working class of the former socialist states.

It is indeed the SWP gurus who, if they had any sense of shame and a gram of socialism in them, ought to be quiet at the very least, since it is their darlings, Lech Walesa and his Solidarnosc in Poland, Havel and his Civic Forum in the Czech Republic, Boris Yeltsin in Russia, etc., all leaders of the Trotskyist “anti-bureaucratic revolution”, who are introducing the wonders of ‘democracy’ and the free market’. Instead of wisely keeping quiet, Socialist Worker, having summarised the results of introduction of the market economy in eastern European countries, goes on mildly to complain:

“Yet this, and the misery being suffered in east Germany and Poland, has not stopped Russia’s President Boris Yeltsin proposing a programme of rapid and widespread privatisation and the quick removal of food and rent subsidies.”

But it would appear that they are not happy with the results as yet, for they believe that the newly established bourgeois regimes have not been thorough enough in destroying all the traces, instruments and institutions connected with the previous regimes in the former socialist states:

“And not a week goes by without revelations proving the hated Stasi, the Securitate, the Hungarian AVO and all the other riff raff which once enforced the Stalinist regimes, are still around”!

The above sentence, apart from revealing that their hatred is most reserved for the socialist regimes, is also a clever attempt to fool the simple Simons, who swell the rank and file of Trotskyist organisations everywhere and who have a weakness for catchphrases, into believing that the former regimes in eastern Europe were Stalinist, i.e., Leninist. In the preface of my book *Perestroika, The Complete Collapse of Revisionism*, referring in this context to the Trotskyites, revisionists and social democrats, I said:

“This revolting gentry – in particular the counter-revolutionary Trotskyites – have been gloating with delirium over the alleged collapse, in Eastern Europe and the USSR, of Stalinism. Just the contrary. What has collapsed is revisionism, and its inevitable degeneration into ordinary capitalism. What is called ‘Stalinism’ by these despicable creatures is only Leninism in practice. When Leninism was practised in the USSR, as it undoubtedly was during the three decades of Stalin’s leadership of the CPSU, it achieved world-historic

feats on all fronts – economic, social cultural, diplomatic and military – which is precisely the reason why the very name of Stalin has become the target of so much abuse on the part of the bourgeoisie and its ‘hired prize-fighters’. So what has collapsed is revisionism even though in order to confuse the proletariat the sly and yet unthinking and uncouth Trotskyites using the word ‘Stalinism’ as a swear word rather than as a political characterisation, have been applying it to the very revisionists who entertain mortal hatred of Stalin.” (pp. viii-ix).

In the end when all is said and done, *Socialist Worker* is well satisfied with the achievements of the counter-revolution in eastern Europe, and ends with the following smug, not to say smutty, conclusion:

“What *Socialist Worker* said in November 1989 remains true today: ‘what really wonderful about the new movements in eastern Europe is they raise the possibility of a society which is better, freer and more democratic than that which east or west at the moment’.”

In other words, what a wonderful thing it was to have replaced the former socialist regimes with bourgeois regimes and free market economies, the consequences of which Mr Alan Gibson, the writer of this article in *Socialist Worker*, so dementedly and in such self-annihilatory a manner, bemoans!!

The same SWP, which in August 1991 had with great counter-revolutionary zeal declared that Yeltsin’s victory had brought “the workers of the USSR closer to the spirit of the socialist revolution of 1917”, now declares, through the column of the despicable John Molyneux, that “it is precisely the viciously anti-working class nature of Yeltsin’s free market reform, that makes him aspire to dictatorial powers in order to impose his Programme. Consequently no socialist should now support Yeltsin.” (*Socialist Worker*, 10 April 1993, “*Russia: should we take sides?*”)

Such is the logic of the counter-revolutionary gentry of the SWP: support for Yeltsin’s counter-revolution in August 1991 on the pretext that his victory brought the USSR proletariat “closer to the spirit of the socialist revolution of 1917” and opposition to Yeltsin in April 1993 for his attempt to put into effect the declared programme of the very counter-revolution over which the SWP waxed so eloquent!!

Nothing could reveal better the hideous social-democratic face of the SWP than the fact that the same Socialist Worker, which felt elated at the death of communism, suffered a deep “depression” and “post-election demoralisation” in the wake of the fourth consecutive electoral rout of the Labour Party. Bleated the *Socialist Worker*: “The election result was a disaster for everyone who wants a better society.”

The crudity of SWP’s defence of capitalism and its representatives compelled even the Spartacists of the ICL, another counter-revolutionary Trotskyite organisation, to make the following correct observation:

“An organisation [i.e. the SWP – HB] which found a cause ‘that should have every socialist rejoicing’ in the victory of Yeltsin’s counter-revolutionary forces that have brought poverty, mass unemployment and misery to the masses of the former Soviet Union, while finding a cause to make socialists’ sob in the defeat of Neil Kinnock’s scab-herding Labour traitors, obviously has a pretty twisted weathervane...” (*Workers Hammer* July/August 1993).

And further down in the same article, continued the ICL: “Capitalist counter-revolution in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union has meant untold misery for the working masses of those countries – poverty, homelessness and starvation – and made an onslaught of bloody nationalist fratricide. Europe – East and West – faces massive unemployment, the ominous rise of anti-Semitism, racist and fascist terror, attacks on women’s fights... Now that the unifying thread of anti-Sovietism no longer mutes their rivalries the imperialist ruling classes are trying to tighten the screws of exploitation on the proletariat at ‘home’. At the same time, they try to sell the lie to the working class and oppressed that ‘communism is dead’ that any attempt to overthrow this system of exploitation and oppression is condemned in advance, useless, even criminal.

“The SWP presents itself as a fighting alternative. If there were any justice in this world, these Third Camp renegades should feel ashamed to even try to show their face in public! From Poland to East Germany to Moscow, they were among the foremost cheerleaders for the forces of counter-revolution that are now devastating Eastern Europe and the ex-Soviet Union. While most of the rest of the left followed suit howling along with the imperialist wolves in championing any and every anti-Soviet ‘movement’ the SWP not only supported some of the darkest forces of reaction but offered them as a model for the struggle against Stalinist ‘totalitarianism.’

“So, for example, following the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan the Cliffites heralded the CIA-funded Islamic reactionaries who are now drowning any shred of social progress in that country in blood. *Socialist Worker* (4 February 1989) enthused that a ‘Mojahedin victory will encourage the opponents of Russian rule everywhere in the USSR and Eastern Europe’! By rights the SWP should now be pleased that just such ‘opponents of Russian rule’, i.e., vicious nationalist reactionaries, fascist terrorists, women-hating clericalists, have been unleashed by capitalist counterrevolution.” (*ibid.*)

The SWP may be organised independently, but in terms of its programme and political and ideological physiognomy it is indistinguishable from the social-democratic Labour Party – as indeed are all Trotskyite organisations, which everywhere act as an anti-communist militant wing of social democracy.

The hypocrisy of SWP’s fake anti-Labour stance is exposed by another Trotskyite, Sean Matgamna. Writing in the *Socialist Organiser* of 19 No-

vember 1992, from a perspective which would have the SWP within the Labour Party to help build the 'left' within it, this is how he tears the mask of false anti-Labourism, from the hideous face of the SWP:

"In the 1979 General Election the SWP while proclaiming itself 'the socialist alternative' to the Labour Party declined to put up candidates, backed the Labour Party!... It fell to Foot in a much-quoted interview in the London Evening Standard, to express the SWP's dualism, the approach which left the political labour movement to the right wing in all its crassness. He said: 'For the next three weeks I am a strong Labour supporter. I am very anxious that a Tory government shouldn't be returned, and I shall be going around to meetings we are having telling everyone to vote Labour' (9 April 1979)."

Concludes Mr Matgamna: "In his role of SWP ambassador to the bourgeoisie and the media Foot often blurts out the truth about the SWP's politics without the usual 'socialist' obfuscation and phrase-mongering, Michael Foot's nephew Paul is thus a useful man to have around."

The Healyite Trotskyites detect Trotsky's line and welcome Gorbachev's *Perestroika*

The late and unlamented child molester and recipient of funds from a wide variety of sources ranging from the Arab regimes to the CIA for his lifelong devotion to the cause of anti-communism and anti-Sovietism, namely the Trotskyite Gerry Healy of the old and notorious Socialist Labour League (SLL), welcomed Gorbachev's perestroika and glasnost as "the political revolution for restoring Bolshevik world revolutionary perspectives." Since the collapse of the Soviet Union and its disintegration, Healy's followers, the Redgrave Trots of the so-called Marxist Party, have gone on to blacken all Soviet development and history by asserting that Lenin had been wrong throughout and that Rosa Luxemburg's denunciation of Lenin as a "sterile overseer" aiming at "blind subordination" to "an intellectual elite hungry for power" through "pitiless centralism" was correct.

With the disappearance of the former socialist states and the coming to power of bourgeois regimes, the Trotskyites are at sixes and sevens as to how to explain away their wretched theory of "anti-bureaucratic political revolution." As a result they are at each other's throats. The other offshoots of Healy's lunatic fringe, the Northites and Torrancites, are in convulsions over this. The Northites simply pass the buck on to Trotsky who, they say, got it wrong for there was nothing left with which to have a revolution:

What was destroyed between 1936 and 1940 was not only the flower of Marxism but its roots.

"It doesn't detract anything from Trotsky's work to say that he simply could not have known, even when he was writing his denunciations of the Moscow Trials, the scale of the bloodbath that was taking place in the USSR."

This can mean one of two things: either that socialism had ceased to exist and capitalism had been restored by the end of the 1930s, in which case, the Northites appear to be arguing Trotsky ought to have then denounced the Soviet regime far more vehemently than he actually did; alternatively it could mean that the workers' state, albeit a 'distorted! one, continued to exist in the USSR but that after the Moscow treason trials there was no 'revolutionary vanguard' left capable of effecting the Trotskyist 'political revolution', and that therefore the 'overthrow of the bureaucracy' could only lead to the establishment of capitalism, to which end the Trotskyists, with their theory of 'political revolution' have worked all these years. In this case, Trotsky was also wrong in advocating his 'political revolution' thereby leading his followers up the blind alley which leads to capitalist restoration. Whichever way one looks at the above Northite quotation, one comes to the conclusion that these gentry are as much at sea in explaining the momentous developments in the USSR as they are at home with Trotskyist gobbledygook.

From the anti-Soviet defeatism, hidden by veritable phrase-mongering and a pretended belief in the chimerical "anti-bureaucratic political revolution", the Northite Trots pass over without any difficulty to the following unreserved and absolute defeatism, characterising the whole period from October 1917 onwards as one of unmitigated disaster:

"We should avoid using phrases that become hackneyed from over-use; but in this case it can truly be said that we have come to the end of an entire historical period that was opened in 1917".

Their rivals, from the Torrance faction of Trots, the *Newsline* Workers' Revolutionary Party (WRP) rump, do not like the Northite 'explanation' whose utter defeatism greatly embarrasses them. In an attempt to gain some credibility for Trotskyism and overcome doubts even among the Trotskyist rank and file as to whether their guru Trotsky's theory of "political revolution" and his lifetime spent in anti-Soviet activity ever contained an iota of progressive, let alone revolutionary, content, the Torrancites come down, Mandel fashion, in favour of characterising the counter-revolutionary developments in the former USSR and eastern Europe as "revolutionary" in nature. Deriding the Northites, the Torrancites write:

"The comic side of all this is that since the bureaucracy is the 'determining force', if the so-called 'military industrial complex' were to overthrow Yeltsin, reinstating the USSR, then no doubt North would have to declare that the USSR was once again a workers state. He would have to say 'Thank god for the Stalinist bureaucracy.'"

Thus we find one section of Trots (the Northites) blaming Trotsky for not being firm enough in his fulminations against the Soviet Union, thereby misleading his followers into the blind alley of supporting an allegedly workers' state in need of political revolution, when, say the Northites, so-

cialism had already been destroyed and therefore there was nothing left against which to have a revolution. The other section (Torrancites) exonerate themselves from all responsibility for lifelong anti-Soviet and anti-communist activity by pretending that the counter revolution has not taken place at all, that Yeltsin represents the “political revolution”, which, in the course of time, will “restore Bolshevism.”

Some other Trots

For its part, the Trotskyist rag Socialist Organiser, referred to immediately above, exulted over the victory of the Yeltsin forces thus: “His brave defiance of the Stalinist establishment will help workers to see what the issues are – an opening society, with the beginnings of the rule of law and some degree of democratic self-control, on one side, and stifling ice-age Stalinist dictatorship on the other.” (*SO Supplement*, 20 August 1992).

The ‘Militant’ Trotskyites were no less despicably shameless in welcoming the Yeltsin counter-revolution: “All over the world workers will see this as people’s power reducing the threat of dictatorship to a poorly scripted farce. Every dictator will tremble at the prospect of his own subjects taking such action.”

‘Workers Power’, yet another Trotskyist outfit, being fully cognisant of the “socially counter-revolutionary nature of Yeltsin’s programme” and the “spivs and racketeers” who supported him, nevertheless felt obliged to back Yeltsin: “No matter what the socially counter-revolutionary nature of Yeltsin’s programme, no matter how many spivs and racketeers joined the barricades to defend the Russian parliament, it would be revolutionary suicide to back the coup-mongers and support the crushing of democratic rights...”

“It is far better that the fledgling workers’ organisations of the USSR learn to swim against the stream of bureaucratic restorationism than be huddled in the ‘breathing space’ of the prison cell.”

Looking forward with great enthusiasm “to the next stage – the task of rapidly dismantling the instruments of central planning” (*Workers Power*, September 1991), ‘Workers’ Power’, reducing its counter-revolutionary logic to an absurdity, calls for “workers control of the counter-revolution! – for a “workers Yeltsin” who will not stop half way:

“Revolutionaries share the workers’ hatred for all the real and symbolic representatives of their oppression. We support the closing down of the palatial CPSU offices, private shops and sanatoria, the rooting out of the KGB officers. But we put no trust in Yeltsin or the leadership of the main soviets in the chief towns and cities to carry out the destruction of the Stalinist dictatorship.

“We seek at every point to involve the masses independently in the process of the destruction of the CPSU dictatorship...”

“The workers must control the process of destruction of the Stalinists

through to the end and not let Yeltsin preserve what is useful to him.”

Like the *Socialist Organiser*, it – Workers Power – too was fully aware of the forces supporting Yeltsin. Its on the spot report stated that those manning the Yeltsin barricades “were not for the most part, the most audacious workers and students of Moscow,” adding:

“Rather they were in the majority small businessmen, speculators and owners of [‘free enterprise’] co-operatives, the traditional base of the [Russian nationalist] ‘Democratic Russia’ demonstrations, plus a few hundred young enthusiasts. While there have been reports of strike action and mass mobilisations in other parts of the USSR, in Moscow at least the working class played little part in the resistance to the coup”.

There are, of course innumerable other Trotskyist groups of which nothing, at all has here been said. It is not, however, either possible or necessary or even desirable to make reference to all of them, for they represent no more than variations on themes already encountered in the brief sketch given above of the major Trotskyist tendencies. What unites them all, however, is that they are all Trotskyists. They are, therefore, all counterrevolutionary to their finger tips – not out of a desire to be so, but because they cannot help being counter-revolutionaries for as long as they follow Trotsky’s petty bourgeois, pessimistic and counter revolutionary theory of ‘permanent revolution.’

The bankruptcy of Trotskyism and the triumph of socialism

The events of the last few years, which have overwhelmed eastern Europe and the USSR, have not only proved the utter bankruptcy of Khrushchevite revisionism but also exposed, if such exposure was ever required, the thoroughly counter-revolutionary nature of Trotskyism. These events have proved beyond doubt the inner affinity, notwithstanding the differences in form, of revisionism and Trotskyism. Khrushchevite revisionism, right in form and in essence, was aiming, through the Communist Party, for the same aim of restoring capitalism in the USSR and other east European countries that Trotskyism, ‘left’ in form and right in essence, had been attempting ever since the twenties through the so-called “anti-bureaucratic revolution.” This affinity, and the proof in practice in a most vivid form of the counter-revolutionary essence of revisionism and Trotskyism, ought to facilitate the task of exposing and fighting both these counter-revolutionary trends.

We are, however, passing through a time of ideological decay, confusion, disintegration and wavering – a time when renegacy and apostasy are the order of the day. With the complete collapse of Khrushchevite revisionism, the disintegration of the USSR and the east European socialist regimes, as well as the liquidation of the revisionist parties elsewhere, the Trotskyists can yet again be expected to come forward and say: ‘We told you so. Trot-

sky was correct in asserting that socialism could not be built in a single country, etc.’ Our task is to refute this nonsensical and counter-revolutionary chatter. The collapse of the USSR, far from proving the correctness of Trotskyism, actually smashes it to smithereens. What it proves is that had Trotskyism (or Bukharinism for that matter) been put into effect in the USSR in the mid-twenties, the latter would have collapsed much earlier, more than six decades ago. The CPSU, however, rejecting Trotskyism and Bukharinism, went on to construct socialism and a mighty Soviet state – a bastion and a beacon of socialism whose epic achievements in war and peace, whose heroic feats in all spheres of social development, economic, educational, artistic, military and scientific; whose superhuman endeavours to build a new society based not on the exploitation of one human being by another but on the basis of the law of balanced development of the national economy for the satisfaction of the constantly-rising needs of the population, a society based on fraternal cooperation and not on national strife and racism, a society based on sex equality not on sex discrimination; whose titanic struggle against, and crowning victories over, Hitlerite Germany – victories which freed humanity from the scourge of fascism – brought socialism to eastern Europe and imparted a tremendous impulse to the national liberation movements thereby weakening imperialism; and whose unstinting support to the revolutionary proletarian and national-liberation wars else -where, whose proletarian internationalism, will continue to inspire humanity in its endeavour to get rid of all exploitation and achieve a classless communist society through the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Trotskyism or Leninism?

In this period of ideological confusion, the Trotskyites are bound to come forward with scraps of pompous, high-sounding, empty, obscure and bombastic catchphrases which confuse the intelligentsia and non-class-conscious workers, in an attempt to fill the ideological vacuum and to pass off Trotskyism as Leninism. They are bound to make yet another attempt to substitute Trotskyism for Leninism. They must not be allowed to do this. Every Marxist-Leninist, every class-conscious worker, must play his or her part in frustrating this attempt and in ensuring that it fails as miserably as did all similar attempts in the past.

It is by way of a contribution to frustrating this attempt to substitute Trotskyism for Leninism that this book is presented. The author seeks no other reward than the fulfilment of this aim. The choice is straightforward: either counter-revolutionary Trotskyism or revolutionary Leninism. One or the other. Trotskyism or Leninism?

A few words about this book

Finally, a few words as to the material which constitutes this book. Parts

I to IV are based on a series of lectures which I delivered in London at the invitation of the Association of Communist Workers (ACW), an anti-revisionist group which, although small in numbers, played a very important role in defending the fundamentals of Marxism-Leninism against attacks from Trotskyists and revisionists alike. Originally these pages were distributed as a series of four separate pamphlets under the title *Some Questions Concerning the Struggle of Counter- Revolutionary Trotskyism Against Revolutionary Leninism*. The pages dealing with the Spanish Civil War (Part V) were never produced at the time. Since then, on the basis of some of the notes that I had at my disposal and further research on her part, my comrade and friend Ella Rule wrote this section and presented it as a paper to the deliberations of the Stalin Society on 24th March, 1991. The sections dealing with the question of collectivisation and class struggle under the conditions of the dictatorship of the proletariat were both written by way of a preface to collections of Stalin's writings on these two important questions. These too appeared as separate pamphlets, the one on collectivisation in 1975 and that on class struggle in 1973. In this last pamphlet, the section dealing with the German-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact has been much expanded to include substantiating evidence which was not in the original pamphlet. Now that this Pact has come in for renewed criticism, I have decided to include this material. Also, I have updated the text to take account of works which have been published since the original material was produced, or have come to my notice since that time. From the context, and the dates of the publications referred to, the reader will have little difficulty in spotting the new material.

These last two publications were necessitated by a stream of attacks on the Marxist-Leninist policies of the CPSU(B) during the leadership of Stalin (1924-53) from individuals and organisations who called themselves anti-revisionist and, therefore, by definition ought to have been opposed to revisionism as well as Trotskyism. What these people were putting forth in practice, however, was something incredibly confused and incredibly reactionary – in many cases merely a rehash of Trotsky's propositions. Their writings were characterised by a mixture of erroneous platitudinousness and ignorant arrogance. The British anti-revisionist movement of those days really did go in for a considerable amount of "sublime nonsense", to borrow Engels' expression, producing several personages who gave themselves airs about the science of Marxism-Leninism of which they really never learnt a word.

In the 1870s, in the preface to his *Anti-Dühring*, Engels complained bitterly about the "infantile disease" which was then afflicting a large section of the German intelligentsia, including a section of the socialist intelligentsia, where "Freedom of science is taken to mean that people write on every subject which they have not studied and put this forward as the only strictly scientific method."

This "infantile disease" was rampant among a large section of the 1970s

anti-revisionist movement and its fellow travellers, causing great confusion. Again, at the invitation of the ACW, I edited the two collections of Stalin's writings on the subjects referred to above, provided each collection with a lengthy preface with the purpose of refuting the sublime nonsense and platitudes of our opponents who, possessing but little knowledge of the science of Marxism-Leninism but a goodly amount of conceit and ignorance, were dishing out, in the name of Marxism, a great deal of muddled and reactionary nonsense. Since this reactionary nonsense came from quarters at least nominally anti-revisionist, it had to be dealt with.

A long time has passed since the contents of this book were first published in the form of six separate pamphlets. Some of the persons polemicised against have either died or retired, or have simply, and wisely, retreated into the little bourgeois niches they have carved for themselves. Equally, some of the organisations have either gone into voluntary liquidation or faded into political oblivion. Yet others are no longer recognisable as they have changed their names once or more often (this being especially true of the Trotskyite organisations). None of this matters in the least. What is really important are the issues and questions which were then, and show every sign of becoming now or in the future, the subject of heated arguments and polemics. In that case all we need to do is to remove the name of the person or organisation while using the substance of the argument against those who might insist on putting out nonsense of the type which was put forward by the people I polemicised against two decades ago. Moreover those against whom I polemicised are insignificant today, or were perhaps insignificant even at that time. But similar nonsense has come from quarters far more significant, whose word carries weight, influence and authority. It is my hope that my polemics against my opponents will have the desired effect of countering equally pernicious nonsense from these high quarters.

Originally, when the contents of this book were distributed as separate pamphlets, each pamphlet was provided with an introduction, so that each could be read on its own if so desired. That form is maintained in the book now presented. This ought to make it easier for the reader to read different sections of the book in any preferred order. I have deliberately provided a rather lengthy preface in order, first, to bring the text up to date by including a brief reference to the demise of socialism in the USSR and eastern Europe, as a culmination of a long process of revisionist theory and practice in the fields of politics, political economy, class struggle and philosophy, all set in train by the triumph of Khrushchevite modern revisionism at the 20th Party Congress of the CPSU in 1956; second, to provide more evidence of the thoroughly counter-revolutionary nature of Trotskyism by reference to the response of present-day leading Trotskyite organisations and individuals to the restoration of capitalism in eastern Europe; and finally to provide to all the matters dealt with in this book a degree of coherence which, being origi-

nally issued as separate pamphlets, they perhaps did not possess.

It has been decided, also, to provide three appendices – one on what has come to be called Lenin’s Testament, another on the relations between Trotsky and the imperialist press and another on the murder of Trotsky by one of his own followers. As they are self-explanatory, there is no need to say anything about them here.

With these words I conclude this preface by expressing the hope that it will make for a useful contribution, no matter how small, in the struggle against Trotskyism and revisionism, and in defence of the eternally true propositions of Marxism-Leninism. I make no pretensions to any originality whatsoever in writing this book. What I have to say in it will be common knowledge to the older generation of Marxist-Leninists. But, to our shame, knowledge of what ought to be generally-known truths is becoming less and less with the younger generation. We meet young comrades who want to join the movement and help with our work. What are we going to do with these comrades? I answer this question in the following words of Stalin’s: “I think that systematic reiteration and patient explanation of the so-called ‘generally known’ truths is one of the best methods of educating these comrades in Marxism.” (Stalin, *Economic Problems of Socialism in the USSR*, FLPH Peking, p. 9).

If I have succeeded in correctly and systematically reiterating at least some of the so-called ‘generally-known’ truths in this book, I shall consider myself entirely satisfied with the enterprise involved.

Notes

1: **Otzovists**: an opportunist group formed in the RSDLP in 1908. It was led by A. Bogdanov. From behind a screen of revolutionary verbiage, the Otzovists demanded the recall of the Social-Democratic deputies from the Third Duma (Czarist parliament) and the cessation of Party activity in legal and semi-legal organisations, maintaining that because reaction was on the rampage the Party had to confine itself to illegal work.

This would have isolated the Party from the masses and turned it into a sectarian organisation incapable of mustering the forces for another revolutionary upsurge.

Lenin showed that the views of the Otzovists were inconsistent, unprincipled and hostile to Marxism. At a conference of an extended editorial board of the Bolshevik newspaper, *Proletary*, in June 1909, a resolution was passed to the effect that “as a clear-cut trend in the RSDLP Bolshevism has nothing in common with Otzovism or ultimatumism” (a variety of Otzovism). A. Bogdanov, the Otzovist leader, was expelled from the Bolshevik Party.

2: **Liquidators**: representatives of an opportunist trend in the RSDLP during the period of reaction from 1907-1912. The Mensheviks were utterly demoralised by the defeat of the revolution of 1905-7. They wanted the disbandment of illegal Party organisations and the cessation of underground revolutionary activity. Their aim was to liquidate the revolutionary Party of the working class and set up an openly reformist party. The liquidators urged the working class to

come to terms with the bourgeoisie, to reconcile itself to the reactionary regime in Russia.

The liquidators were headed by Martov, Axelrod, Dan, Martynov and other Menshevik leaders. Trotsky in fact sided with the liquidators.

At the Sixth (Prague) All-Russia Conference of the RSDLP (January 1912), the liquidators were expelled from the Party.

3: **AUCCTU**: The All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions.

4: "Among these legends most be included also the very widespread story that Trotsky was the 'sole' or 'chief organiser' of the victories on the fronts of the civil war. I must declare, comrades, in the interest of truth, that this version is quite out of accord with the facts. I am far from denying that Trotsky played an important role in the civil war. But I must emphatically declare that the high honour of being the organiser of our victories belongs not to individuals, but to the great collective body of advanced workers in our country, the Russian Communist Party. Perhaps it will not be out of place to quote a few examples. 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 these enemies were defeated. Well, history shows that both these enemies, i.e., Kolchak and Denikin, were routed by our troops IN SPITE of Trotsky's plans.

"Judge for yourselves:

"**Kolchak**: This is in the summer of 1919. Our troops are advancing against Kolchak and are operating near Ufa. A meeting of the Central Committee is held. Trotsky proposes that the advance be halted along the line of the River Belaya (near Ufa), leaving the Urals in the hands of Kolchak, and that part of the troops be withdrawn from the Eastern Front and transferred to the Southern Front. A heated debate takes place. The Central Committee disagrees with Trotsky, being of the opinion that the Urals, with its factories and railway network, must not be left in the hands of Kolchak, for the latter could easily recuperate there, organise a strong force and reach the Volga again, Kolchak must first be driven beyond the Ural range into the Siberian steppes, and only after that has been done should forces be transferred to the South. The Central Committee rejects Trotsky's plan. Trotsky hands in his resignation. The Central Committee refuses to accept it. Commander-in-Chief Vatsetis, who supported Trotsky's plan, resigns. His place is taken by a new Commander-in-Chief, Kamenev. From that moment Trotsky ceases to take a direct part in the affairs of the Eastern Front.

"**Denikin**: This is in the autumn of 1919. The offensive against Denikin is not proceeding successfully. The 'steel ring' around Mamontov (Mamontov's raid) is obviously collapsing. Denikin captures Kursk. Denikin is approaching Orel. Trotsky is summoned from the Southern Front to attend a meeting of the Central Committee. The Central Committee regards the situation as alarming and decides to send new military leaders to the Southern Front and to withdraw Trotsky. The new military leaders demand 'no Intervention' by Trotsky in the affairs of the Southern Front. Operations on the Southern Front, right up to the capture of Rostov-on-Don and Odessa by our troops, proceed without Trotsky.

"Let anybody try to refute these facts."

(Stalin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, pp. 350-352)