

capitulating before the Liquidators who are building a Stolypin Labor Party [Stolypin was the Tsar's prime minister]" (V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Russian Edition, Vol. XV, p. 197.)

Then as now a wave of revolutionary movement was rising. The darkest times that followed the Revolution of 1905 were drawing to an end. It was felt that the workers had recuperated and were ready to start a new round of revolution. The Bolsheviks advanced the fundamental demands of a republic, confiscation of the landed estates in favor of the peasants, and the eight-hour day, as the most extreme demands of the impending bourgeois-democratic revolution. Trotsky then as now thought that the workers were not ready to fight for the extreme demands of the impending revolution (which today is the proletarian Socialist revolution). He advanced the slogan of "freedom of association, assemblage and strikes"—and no more. He conceived this as a *step* towards the struggle for a republic. "In order that the struggle for a republic", he wrote in his Vienna paper, *Pravda*, November 29, 1911, "may not be a naked slogan of a few select ones, it is necessary that you, class-conscious workers, should teach the masses how to understand in their own practice the necessity of the freedom of coalition and to struggle for this vital class demand"—a forerunner of his present advice to make the masses draw conclusions "from their democratic logic". Lenin, in commenting upon this slogan, pointed out that "the revolutionary phrase serves here to cover up and justify the falsity of Liquidationism, to fill the minds of the workers with rubbish".

Winding up his characterization of Trotsky, Lenin said:

"It is impossible to argue with Trotsky about principles, for he has no views at all. It is possible and necessary to argue with convinced Liquidators and Otzovists [a group of Bolsheviks demanding the recall from the Duma of the Bolshevik deputies]. With a man who only plays at covering up the mistakes of both of them, one does not argue: one exposes him as a diplomat of the lowest order." (V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Russian Edition, Vol. XV, pp. 303-304.)

Today one exposes Trotsky as a counter-revolutionary renegade who inspires the murder of revolutionary leaders.

### XIII

## Trotsky the Historian

"Trotsky distorts Bolshevism, for Trotsky never has been able to get any definite views on the rôle of the proletariat in the Russian bourgeois revolution. *Much worse, however, is his distortion of the history of that revolution.*" (V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Russian Edition, Vol. XV, p. 15.) (Our emphasis.)

**T**O make falsification of Bolshevism more effective, Trotsky has undertaken to falsify its history. Again we must confine ourselves to a few examples.

How did the idea of an armed insurrection take shape in the October days of 1917? This is how Trotsky tells the story:

"As soon as the order for the removal of the troops [from Petrograd] was communicated by Headquarters to the Executive Committee of the Petrograd Soviet . . . it became clear that this question in its further development would have decisive political significance. The idea of an insurrection began to take form from that moment. It was no longer necessary to invent a Soviet body. The real aim of the future committee was unequivocally brought out when in the same session Trotsky concluded his report on the withdrawal of the Bolsheviks from the Pre-Parliament [a consultative body convoked by Kerensky.—M.J.O.] with the exclamation: 'Long live the direct and open struggle for a revolutionary power throughout the country!' That was a translation into the language of Soviet legality of the slogan: 'Long live the armed insurrection.'" (Leon Trotsky, *History of the Russian Revolution*, Vol. III, p. 92.)

Trotsky made an exclamation—and that started the armed uprising. He says so himself.

He then continues in a modest way to tell about his rôle in the revolution. "Trotsky had formulated some brief general resolution . . . Trotsky continued to speak. The multitude continued to hold their hands in the air. Trotsky chiselled out each word: Let this vote of yours be your oath. . . . The multitude held their hands high. They agreed. They took the oath." (Trotsky quotes here the Menshevik, Sukhanov). "Trotsky

was called in to consider this question. . . . Trotsky was then playing the decisive rôle. The advice he gave us was a product of his revolutionary intuition." (Trotsky quotes Antonov). The draft of the practical plan "was edited by Trotsky". "The President, Trotsky, was also about to approach the automobile. . . ."

Another man seems to have been in the revolution—Lenin. But in comparison with Trotsky the magnificent he appears in Trotsky's writings somewhat puny. Stalin quotes two of his references to Lenin:

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

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

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

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

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

"Some of our people are wavering, but I think that in the end they will agree," replied Nathanson.'

"That is the way some people write history.

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

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

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

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

"Still better, two," said Lenin, "and let them have a firm grip at that. It cannot be that we do not have Communists with a firm grip."

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

"That is how Trotsky writes history.

"What need did Comrade Trotsky have of these Arabian-Night tales, which discredit Lenin?" (Joseph Stalin, *The October Revolution, Trotskyism or Leninism*, November 26, 1924, p. 93.)

The answer is given in the whole career of Trotsky. In order to prove that he is the author of the theory of the bourgeois-democratic revolution passing into the socialist

revolution he gives the following account of the history of Bolshevism:

"From the year 1905 the Bolshevik Party had waged a struggle against the autocracy under the slogan 'Democratic Dictatorship of the Proletariat and the Peasantry'. This slogan, as well as its theoretical background, derives from Lenin. In opposition to the Mensheviks, whose theoretician, Plekhanov, stubbornly opposed the 'mistaken idea of the possibility of accomplishing a bourgeois revolution without the bourgeoisie', Lenin considered that the Russian bourgeoisie was already incapable of leading its own revolution. Only the proletariat and peasantry in close union could carry through a democratic revolution against the monarchy and the landlords. The victory of this union, according to Lenin, should inaugurate a democratic dictatorship, which was not only not identical with the dictatorship of the proletariat, but was in sharp contrast to it, for its problem was not the creation of a socialist society, nor even the creation of forms of transition to such a society, but merely a ruthless cleansing of the Augean stables of medievalism.

"The popular and even officially recognized idea of the hegemony of the proletariat in the democratic revolution could not, consequently, mean anything more than that the workers' party would help the peasantry with a political weapon from its arsenal, suggest to them the best means and methods for liquidating the feudal society, and show them how to apply these means and methods. In any case, *to speak of the leading rôle of the proletariat in the bourgeois revolution did not at all signify that the proletariat would use the peasant uprising in order with its support to place upon the order of the day its own historic task—that is, the direct transition to a socialist society.* The hegemony of the proletariat in the democratic revolution was sharply distinguished from the dictatorship of the proletariat, and polemically contrasted against it. *The Bolshevik Party had been educated in these ideas ever since the spring of 1905.*" [Our emphasis.—M.J.O.] (Leon Trotsky, *History of the Russian Revolution*, Vol. I, pp. 314-315.)

Trotsky would have us believe that before 1917 the Bolsheviks never taught the proletariat that its hegemony in a bourgeois-democratic revolution must be used to place on the order of the day the direct transition to a socialist revolution. Compare with this what we quoted from Lenin about the immediate transition from a bourgeois-democratic to a Socialist revolution. Compare especially with the following:

"From the democratic revolution we will immediately begin, just in accordance with the measure of our strength, the strength

of the conscious and organized proletariat, to pass over to the socialist revolution. . . . We will, with all our power, help the entire peasantry to carry through the democratic revolution, in order that we, the party of the proletariat, may be the *easier* enabled to pass, as quickly as possible, to a new, higher task—the socialist revolution.”

Lenin was indefatigable in expressing his scorn for Trotsky's methods. He spoke of the “adventurist policy” of Trotsky's faction. He speaks about Trotsky's “subtle perfidy”. He says that Trotsky is “committing plagiarism”. Lenin knew his Trotsky.

Trotsky falsifies the history of Leninism, the history of the greatest achievement of the world proletariat,—to serve the bourgeoisie and to aggrandize Trotsky.

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“This scoundrel Trotsky”, as Manuilsky called him at the Thirteenth Plenum of the Comintern, and his associates of every stripe, have made it their special task to slander and malign the greatest living leader of the revolution, Stalin. But in vain. He is the embodiment of what is most abhorrent to the bourgeoisie—the proletarian revolution under Communist leadership, completion of the building of Socialism in the U.S.S.R., Bolshevization of the Communist Parties in the capitalist countries, relentless struggle for the correct Leninist line, resumption of the offensive against capitalism by the proletarian forces on a world-wide front, inclusion in this front of the oppressed peoples in the colonial and semi-colonial countries.

If anything is widely known about Stalin it is his iron will, his persistence in carrying out a program, his colossal driving power which has kindled with creative enthusiasm scores of millions of people. Listen how the falsifier of history describes Stalin:

“When faced by great problems Stalin always retreats—not through lack of character as in the case of Kamenev, but through narrowness of horizon and lack of creative imagination. His suspicious caution almost organically compels him at moments of great decision and deep difference of opinion to retire into the shadow, to wait, and if possible to insure himself against both outcomes.” (Leon Trotsky, *History of the Russian Revolution*, Vol. III, p. 164.)

The fighter who, together with Lenin, steered the October revolution, is one who “always retreats”. The great strategist of the civil war, whose plan of military action, quickly and decisively executed, brought about the decisive victory on a front of several hundred miles in South Russia over the White forces of General Denikin, is one who “at moments of great decision” retires “into the shadow”. The author of the Five-Year Plan, a momentous undertaking on an unheard-of scale, setting one hundred and sixty million people to work on the task of remaking one-sixth of the earth's surface according to a certain social design, is one suffering from “lack of creative imagination”. The revolutionist who carried through the last great class war in the Revolution—the liquidation of the kulaks as a class—is pictured as a man who loves “to wait”, to insure himself “against both outcomes”. The fearless leader who always fights ideological battles against opportunism, who detects hidden opportunism no matter how cleverly disguised, who in the very early stages of the Trotsky opposition predicted with astounding clarity that it is to become “the rallying point of non-proletarian elements which are trying to disintegrate the dictatorship of the proletariat”, is characterized as one who cannot make decisions. The builder of the life of minority nationalities in the U.S.S.R., the man who worked out the practical methods of the Leninist solution of the national problem and has directed the building of Socialism in a manner to create a rich, colorful, many-sided cultural life among one hundred nationalities differing in economic development, language, history, customs, tradition, but united in common work for a beautiful future, is one who is afflicted with “narrowness of horizon”. The world leader whose every advice to every Party of the Comintern on every problem is correct, clear, balanced, and points the way to new, more decisive class battles, is declared to be a man of “suspicious caution”.

This is how Trotsky writes history.

What is the aim of all these vilifications? Nikolaiev slew Kirov. Do the Trotskyites knowingly create a psychological atmosphere that would fire some madman to attempt the murder of Stalin?