

# Behind the Scenes in the Russian Party

Dear Comrades:

We are sending you the latest information received about the situation created within and around the Political Bureau. We guarantee absolutely the exactness of this information, verified for the most part in two or three different ways. Many of the remarks reported are cited literally.

The report of the conversation of Kamenev and Bucharin (see *The Militant*, March 15, 1929) was published on January 20th. This document hastened the clash in the upper circles; it stunned the lower ranks. In making it public, we spoiled the game of combinations by Zinoviev and Kamenev. The Political Bureau met . . . for three days on this subject. They quarrelled over it finally. The Stalin fraction decided to eliminate Bucharin, Tomsky and Rykov from the Political Bureau at the next Plenum. The Rights are preparing a passive resistance. The Stalinists are crowing: they have achieved a complete and easy victory. Our (the Opposition's) leaflet was republished by the Central Committee, for everyone said: We learn of what is happening from the leaflets of the Opposition and not from the Central Committee. The political significance of this leaflet and its popularity among the masses is immense. Everyone says: Yes, the Party is being led blind-folded! As a result of all this, the Political Bureau and the presidium of the Central Control Commission instituted a quite formal trial of the "trio". We give some details on this matter.

## Bucharin's Air Journey.

In December-January, Kamenev met Bucharin quite often at Piatakov's. Bucharin said the following about the preparations for the forthcoming Plenum: "The disposition of our forces before the Plenum was such that I was in Kislovodsk writing articles for Pravda, Rykov had to worry about economy, while Uglanov, who felt very belligerent, was told to remain quiet so as not to give Stalin any excuse for interfering in the Moscow organization. Uglanov could not stand it, came forward at the 9th Plenum of the Moscow Committee, was beaten and, losing his head, said stupid things about his alleged errors, etc., etc. I learned that Rykov had finished his thesis on the control figures for the Plenum. I considered that Stalin would twist Rykov around his finger in the Political Bureau and make the already unfortunate thesis still worse. Since I could not attend the next session of the Political Bureau if I took the train, I left by airplane. We landed in Rostov. The local authorities met me with suspicious talk about the harm that might overtake me in a continued air flight, etc., etc. I sent them to the devil. We flew on. In Artemovsk we landed again. I had hardly left the cabin when I was handed a sealed packet, a cipher dispatch from the Political Bureau, ordering me categorically to discontinue my flight—because of my weak heart! I had hardly made myself known than agents of the G. P. U. led the aviator away somewhere and before me stood a delegation of workers who asked me to make a report. I asked when the next train left. It appeared that there wasn't any for 24 hours. I had to make the report."

Kamenev: "Then it is you who wrote the resolution on the struggle against the Right deviation?"

## Bucharin and Tomsky Resign.

Bucharin: "Of course I did. I had to show the Party that I was not a Right winger. I arrived in Moscow Friday; the session of the Political Bureau had taken place Thursday. I went through the theses; they were obviously unsatisfactory, and I asked for the convocation of the Political Bureau. Molotov wouldn't agree, abused me, cried that I prevented harmonious work, that I should take care of my health, and more of the same. The Political Bureau was called together. I succeeded in putting through a number of amendments but in spite of that the resolution still remains elastic. We drew a balance: the Moscow organization was ruined, we decided to force the offensive; we formulated eleven paragraphs of demands for the removal of the Stalin people. When these demands were shown Stalin, he declared: There isn't a single point that cannot be realized. A commission was chosen (Rykov, Bucharin, Stalin, Molotov, Ordjonikidze). One day passed, a second, a third. Stalin did not call together the commission. The Plenum of the Central Committee opened. The first report is discussed, the second is about to be passed by. In the form of an ultimatum we demanded the convocation of the commission. When it met Stalin cried that he would not permit one single person to keep a whole Plenum from working. What kind of ultimatums are these; why should Krumin be removed?, etc., etc. I became angry, told him a few sharp things to his face and ran out of the room. In the corridor I met Tovstucha to whom I handed my previously prepared letter announcing the resignation of Tomsky and myself. Stalin came after me. Tovstucha handed him my declaration. He read it through and went back. Rykov told us later that his hands trembled; he was pale and expressed the desire to make concessions. He demanded that the declaration announcing my resignation be destroyed. They promised then to dismiss Kostrov, Krumin and someone else. But I did not go to the Plenum again!"

## Bucharin's Platform and Kamenev's!

Hereupon Bucharin showed Kamenev a document of 16 pages that he had written wherein he estimated the economic situation. According to Kamenev this document was more to the right than the April 1925 theses of Bucharin.

Kamenev asked: "What do you think of doing with this document?"

Bucharin answered: "I will supplement it with a chapter on the International situation and finish it with the question of the inner-Party situation."

"But that would be a platform?" asked Kamenev. "Perhaps, but haven't you also written platforms?"

Have Piatakov intervened in the . . . tion by

declaring: "I would urgently advise you not to come out against Stalin who has the majority behind him. (The majority of functionaries of the type of Piatakov and worse!) Past experience teaches us that such steps end badly." (An argument remarkable for its cynicism.)

To this Bucharin replied: "Of course, this is true, but what shall we do?" (Poor Bucharin!)

## Whom Piatakov Will Obey.

After Bucharin had left, Kamenev asked Piatakov why he gave such advice which would only prevent the struggle from developing. Piatakov answered that he seriously believed that one cannot come out against Stalin. "Stalin is the only man who can still be obeyed". (Pearls, real pearls! The question is not what is the correct road, but rather of finding out who can be "obeyed" so that there shall not be any "bad" consequences.) Bucharin and Rykov are making a mistake if they think they will rule instead of Stalin. It is the Kaganovitchs who will rule, and I do not want to and I will not obey Kaganovitch." (It is not true, he will obey Kaganovitch too.)

"Then what do you propose to do?"

"Well, I have been entrusted with the State Bank, and I will take care to see that there is money in the bank."

"As for me, I will not worry about scholars entering the N. T. U. (the Scientific-Technical Administration of which Kamenev is head) — that is no politics," said Kamenev. At this point they separated.

At the end of December, Zinoviev and Kamenev defined the situation as follows: "We must get at the helm. This can only be achieved if we support Stalin. Therefore no hesitation to pay him back the full price." (Poor fellows! They have already paid much but the rudder is still far off.) One of them (Kamenev, I think, went to Ordjonikidze. They talked a lot about the correctness of the present policy of the Central Committee. Ordjonikidze approved. When Kamenev declared that he could not understand why they were left in the Centro-Soyuz (where Zinoviev is working), Ordjonikidze replied: "It is still too early; the road must be opened. The Right will object." (And according to the resolution the Right is the principal enemy.) Kamenev said that it was not absolutely necessary to give him a high post, that the simplest thing would be to give him the Lenin Institute (But that is the main source of the Stalinist falsifications!), that they must be permitted to write for the press, etc. Ordjonikidze agreed and promised to raise the question in the Political Bureau.

Three days later Kamenev went to Voroshilov. For two hours he groveled before him, praised the policy of the Central Committee, to all of which Voroshilov did not reply with a single word. (For which he is to be commended.) Two days later, Kalinin came to Zinoviev and stayed for twenty minutes. He brought news of the deportation of comrade Trotsky; when Zinoviev began to ask for details, he replied that the question was not yet decided and in the meanwhile it was not worth talking about. When Zinoviev asked about what was happening in Germany, Kalinin answered that he knew nothing: "We are up to our necks in our own affairs." Further, as if in reply to the visit of Kamenev to Voroshilov, he said literally as follows: "He (Stalin) babbles about left measures, but in a very short time he will be forced to apply a triple dose of my policy. That's why I support him." (That is correct! All his life Kalinin has never said and never will say anything more correct and appropriate.)

## The Capitulators and the Deportation.

When the Zinovievists learned of the deportation of Trotsky, they came together. Bakaiev insisted that they come out with a protest. Zinoviev answered that there was no one to protest to, because "there is no master". (Then to whom does Zinoviev intend to pay the full price?) That is where the matter rested. The next day, Zinoviev went to Krupskaja and said that he had heard from Kalinin of the deportation of L. D. Kruskaia said that she had heard about it also.

"What do you intend to do with him?" asked Zinoviev.

"Firstly, you must not say you, but they, and secondly, even if we decide to protest who will listen to us?"

Zinoviev told her of the conversation of Kamenev with Ordjonikidze, of whom Krupskaja said: "Though he cries on everybody's shoulder, no confidence can be had in him."

Kamenev met Ordjonikidze who told him that he is publishing a work on the struggle against bureaucracy and he proposed that Kamenev aid him in it. Kamenev agreed with alacrity, whereupon Ordjonikidze invited him and Zinoviev to his house. During the visit little was said about his work. Ordjonikidze declared that he had raised the question in the Political Bureau and that Voroshilov had said: "No extension of their rights (that is, of Zinoviev and Kamenev.) Look what they want: the Lenin Institute! If they don't like the Centro-Soyuz, perhaps they can change to some other institution. As for printing their articles, that is not forbidden, but that does not mean that everything can be printed." (Oh, Voroshilov!)

"Well, and what did Stalin say?"

"Stalin said: 'To extend their rights means to make a bloc. To make a bloc means to share half. I cannot share half. What will the Right say?' (But are not the Rights the "main enemy"?)

Kamenev: "Did he say just that in the Political Bureau?"

Ordjonikidze: "No, that was before the session."

## Zinoviev and Stalin.

They left without anything coming of it. Zinoviev wrote a thesis two pages long (since Ordjonikidze did not help him, then a thesis must be written): "The

Kulak is growing throughout the country, the Kulak does not give the worker's state any bread, the Kulak shoots at the village correspondents, at the officials and kills them. The Bucharin group, with its line, cultivates the Kulak; therefore, no support to Bucharin. Today we support the policy of the majority of the Central Committee (Stalin group), so long as Stalin fights against the Nepman, the Kulak and the Bureaucrat." (So Zinoviev has changed his mind: he no longer wants to pay the full price.) Kamenev says: "It is impossible to come to agreement with Stalin; to the devil with them all. Eight months from now I will publish a book on Lenin and then we shall see." Zinoviev is of a different mind. He says: "We must not be forgotten, we must appear at every meeting, in the press, and so forth, knock on every door, push the Party to the left." (In reality, no one has done as much harm to the left policy as Zinoviev and Kamenev.) And his articles are really published. After all, the editors of Pravda have completely adopted the advice of Voroshilov. They have again refused to publish one of his articles because it is said to express panic before the Kulak. In recent days Zinoviev has appeared at a Party meeting, in the Centro-Soyuz, in the Plechanov Institute and elsewhere to speak on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the Communist International.

## The Rights Dare to Criticize the Master!

After we had published the famous document (the conversation between Kamenev and Bucharin), Kamenev was called to Ordjonikidze's, where, after making certain reservations, (Hm! Hm!) he confirmed in writing the exactness of the report. Bucharin was also called to Ordjonikidze's and he confirmed it as well. On January 30 and on February 9th were held joint sessions of the Political Bureau and the presidium of the Central Control Commission. The Right declared that the leaflet was a "Trotskyite intrigue". They did not deny the fact of the conversation. They expressed their opinion that "the conditions for work are abnormal. Commissars — Krumin, Saveliev, Kaganovitch and others — have been put over members of the Political Bureau (Bucharin and Tomsky). The brother Parties are led by screaming at them. (Bucharin, Rykov and Tomsky have only now noticed that Stalin runs the "brother Parties" like an old Turkish Wali administered his province. It is no longer even necessary to scream at Thalman and Semard; a crook of the finger is enough.) Twelve years after the Revolution there is not a single elected secretary of a Provincial Committee. The Party has no part in the solution of questions. Everything is done from above". These words of Bucharin were met with the cries: "Where did you copy that? From whom? From Trotsky!" A resolution to condemn Bucharin was proposed to the commission. But the Right refused to accept it, motivating their disagreement with the fact that they are already being "raked over the coals" enough in the districts.

At the joint session of the Political Bureau and the presidium of the Central Control Commission, Rykov read a long declaration of thirty pages, criticizing the economic situation and the inner-Party regime. At the Moscow provincial Party Conference, Rykov, Tomsky and Bucharin were openly designated as the Right. But very little was said of this in the press. The Plenum of the Central Committee has been postponed to April 16th, the conference to the 23rd. It has not been possible to achieve a conciliation between Stalin and the Bucharin group (although rumors to this effect are being insistently spread, doubtlessly in order that the nuclei shall defeat the Left wing.)

Moscow, March 20, 1929.

— G. G.

IN THE NEXT ISSUE: The secret resolution adopted at the recent Plenum of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, preceding the 16th Party Conference. This resolution, passed by the Stalin faction, formally condemns Bucharin, Tomsky and Rykov and their platform. Neither this platform nor the secret resolution has been published or mentioned in the Stalinist press. Watch for its appearance in the next issue!

## The Daily Worker Eats Crow

The Daily Worker of June 17, 1927 writes: "Trotsky's 'Letter to the Russian Workers' was printed in the United States in the New York 'Nation', an organ of the liberal petty-bourgeoisie, which has always stood in the way, hindering every real forward movement of the American working class. The 'Nation' printed Trotsky's scurrilous document under the pretense of being 'fair'. Under this cloak of 'fairness' they joined with the rest of the defamers of the First Workers' Republic in their task of undermining the Soviet Union. Needless to say the spirit of their so-called 'fairness' was not extended to the defenders of the U. S. S. R."

Oh, yes it was! And not so very long ago, either. Only a few months ago the Daily Worker reprinted with the greatest enthusiasm an article published in this same liberal petty-bourgeois Nation which consisted of a despicable, lying attack upon the Platform of the Bolshevik-Leninists and comrade Trotsky's exposure of the falsification of history by Stalin, printed in the book entitled "The Real Situation in Russia." The article was a book review which the philistine darling of the Stalinists, Albert Rhys Williams was hired and paid for by the Nation to write. When the Daily Worker reprinted his revolting trash from the columns of this same liberal, petty-bourgeois journal, the Nation was hailed by Minor like a companion-in-arms.