

STATES of EUROPE -- by Leon Trotsky

3. The Imperialist Dictatorship of America

Since 1923, I had to conduct a struggle to have the leadership of the Communist International consent, finally, to take notice of the existence of the United States and to understand that Anglo-American antagonism constitutes the fundamental line of the groupings and conflicts in the world. This was considered a heresy even at the time of the Fifth Congress of the C. I. (middle of 1924). I was accused of exaggerating, of enlarging the role of America. A legend was conceived according to which I had prophesied the disappearance of European antagonisms in the face of the American peril. Ossinsky, Larin and others smeared up not a little paper in order to "dethrone" powerful America. Radek, following the bourgeois journalist, affirmed that an epoch of Anglo-American collaboration is ahead of us, confusing temporary and episodic relations with the essence of world developments.

Little by little, however, America was "recognized" by the official leadership of the Communist International which began to repeat my formulae of yesterday, not failing, of course, to add each time that the Opposition exaggerates the role of America. The correct estimation of America was at that time, as is known, the exclusive prerogative of Pepper and Lovestone.

From the moment when the orientation to the Left was established, the reservations disappeared. Now it is obligatory upon the official theoreticians to predict that England and America are moving inevitably towards war. On this subject I wrote, some time in February of last year, to the deported comrades: "The Anglo-American antagonism is at last seriously recognized. It seems that Stalin and Bucharin are beginning to understand what it is all about. Nevertheless, our papers are simplifying the problem too much when they picture the situation as if Anglo-American antagonisms were becoming continuously aggravated and must lead to war right away. There is no doubt that there will still be a few crises in the course of its development. War would be a too dangerous business now for the two rivals. They will still make many efforts to come to an understanding and make peace. But at the end of all this there is a bloody denouement towards which they are proceeding with great strides."

The present stage assumes anew the aspect of a military "collaboration" between America and England, and even some French journals fear to see the rise of an Anglo-Saxon dictatorship. It is evident the United States can utilize, and will utilize, their "collaboration" with England to hold Japan and France in check with the same bridle. But all this will be a stage not towards an Anglo-Saxon domination but towards an American dictatorship weighing down on the world, including Great Britain.

In this connection, the leaders of the Communist International may repeat that I see no other perspective than the triumph of American capital. The petty bourgeois theoreticians of Populism likewise accused the Marxists of always conjuring up the victory of capitalism. These accusations are worthy of each other. When we say that America is moving towards world domination, it does not at all mean that this domination will be entirely realized in fact, nor that, even should it be realized in one measure or another, it will last for centuries or even decades. It is only a question of the historical tendency which, in reality, will change aspect, find itself outstripped, in order to make way for other historical tendencies. Were the capitalist world able to exist for decades without revolutionary convulsions, then these decades would be incontestable indications of the American world dictatorship. But the matter lies precisely in this: That this process will develop its own contradictions that will be added to all the other contradictions of the capitalist system. America will force Europe to strive towards an even greater rationalization and at the same time it will leave Europe only an ever more reduced part of the world market. A steady aggravation of the difficulties in Europe will result. The competition of the European powers for this reduced part of the world market will become unavoidably keener. At the same time time, the European powers, under the pressure of America, will endeavor to coordinate their forces. That is the fun-

damental source of Briand's program. Whatever the various stages of development may be, one thing is clear: The growing disruption of the international equilibrium in favor of America will be the essential source of all the crises and revolutionary convulsions in Europe in the coming period. Whoever considers that capitalist stabilization is assured for dozens of years understands nothing of the world situation and will inevitably sink, hide and hair, into the swamp of reformism.

If the question is to be viewed from the way it presents itself on the other side of the Ocean, that is, from the standpoint of the fate of the United States, it is seen that here too the perspectives opened up do not at all resemble a peaceful capitalist idyl.

Up to the war, the power of the United States grew on the basis of the home market, in conformity with a dynamic equilibrium between industry and agriculture. The war brought forward a sharp crisis in this development. The United States exports capital and manufactured goods in ever greater proportions. The growth of the world power of the United States means that the whole system of American industry and banking—that gigantic capitalist skyscraper—bases itself in an increasing degree upon the foundations of world economy. But this foundation is sapped and the United States continues to sap it day by day. By exporting merchandise, capital, by building a fleet, by squeezing England, by buying up the most important enterprises in Europe, in making a way for itself in China and elsewhere, United States finance capital is with its own hands digging cellars under its own foundations where powder and dynamite are accumulating. Where will the light be put to the wick? In Asia, in Europe, or in South America? or what is most probable, in various places at one time. That is already a secondary question.

It is unfortunate that the present leadership of the Communist International

is totally incapable of following all the stages of this development. It buries the basic facts under an avalanche of commonplaces. Even the pacifist agitation made over the United States of Europe took it by surprise.

4. The Soviet United States of Europe

The question of the U. S. of Europe regarded from the proletarian standpoint, was raised by us in September 1914, that is, at the very beginning of the war. In the pamphlet, *The War and the International*, the author of these lines sought to demonstrate that the unification of Europe was undeniably put in the foreground by its entire economic development but that the United States of Europe was inconceivable except as the political form of the revolutionary dictatorship of the European proletariat.

In 1923, when the occupation of the Ruhr posed anew, in an acute form, the fundamental problems of European economy (primarily coal and iron ore) in connection with the problem of the revolution, we succeeded in having the leadership of the International adopt the slogan of the United States of Europe. But the attitude towards this slogan remained hostile. Not being in a position to reject it, the leadership of the C. I. took the same attitude towards it as to that abandoned child "Trotskyism". After the defeat of the German revolution in 1923, Europe lived the life of stabilization. The fundamental problems of the revolution disappeared from the order of the day. The slogan of the United States of Europe sank into oblivion. It was not included in the program of the C. I. For this new zig-zag, Stalin gave an explanation remarkable for its profundity: Since it is not known in what order the nations will make their proletarian revolution, it cannot be foreseen if the United States of Europe will be necessary. In other words, this means

that it is easier to formulate a prognosis after the event than before it. In reality, it is not at all a question of the order in which the revolution will be realized. There only suppositions are possible. But that does not relieve the European workers or the International in general from the necessity of giving a precise reply to this question: How can European economy be snatched from its diffusion and how can the popular masses of Europe be saved from decay and servitude?

The misfortune is, however, that the economic ground for the slogan of the United States of Europe invalidates one of the fundamental ideas of the present program of the Comintern: the possibility of building socialism in a single country.

The essential feature of our epoch consists in the fact that the productive forces have definitely passed beyond national frameworks, and have assumed primarily in America and in Europe, partly continental and partly world dimensions. The imperialist war was born out of the contradictions between the productive forces and national frontiers. The final chapter of this war, the Versailles treaty, further accentuated these contradictions. In other words, in face of the development of the productive forces, capitalism cannot exist in a single country. Furthermore, socialism can and must base itself upon ever more developed productive forces: otherwise it would present reaction and not progress in relation to capitalism. In 1914 we wrote: "If the problem of socialism could be solved within the framework of a national state, it would thereby be compatible with national defense." The term: Soviet United States of Europe expresses the idea that socialism is impossible in a single country. It cannot even attain the fullness of its development within the limits of a continent. The Socialist United States of Europe represents by itself a stage of a historical slogan on the road to the socialist world federation.

It has happened more than once in history that when the revolution was not strong enough to settle historical problems, it was the reaction that occupied itself with solving them. Thus, Bismarck with the unification of Germany after the failure of the 1848 revolution. Thus, Stolypin tried to solve the agrarian problem after the 1905 revolution. Thus, the Versailles victors solved the national question in their fashion, which all the previous bourgeois revolutions had shown themselves powerless to solve. The Germany of the Hohenzollerns endeavored to organize Europe in its fashion, that is, to unite it under its helmet. That did not succeed. It was then that the victor Clemenceau decided to utilize the victory in order to cut Europe into the greatest possible number of pieces. And now Briand, armed with needle and thread, is preparing to sew together the pieces in order to make a single piece, even if he does not know what end to start with.

The leadership of the Communist International, and to an extent the leadership of the French Communist Party, are exposing the hypocrisy of official pacifism. That alone is insufficient. To explain the course towards the unification of Europe solely by the preparation of war against the U. S. S. R. is infantilism, not to say worse, and can only compromise the task of defending the Soviet Republic. The slogan of the United States of Europe is not a cunning idea of diplomacy. It springs from the unavoidable economic needs of Europe which arise all the more acutely as the pressure of the United States makes itself more imperiously felt. It is especially now that the Communist Parties must counterpose the slogan of the Soviet United States of Europe to the pacifist comedy of the imperialists.

But the Communist Parties have their hands bound. The living formula, with its great historical meaning, has been expunged from the program of the Communist International solely in the interests of the struggle against the Opposition. That is one more reason for the Opposition to take it up again and proclaim it with perseverance. With it, the proletarian vanguard of Europe will say to its present masters: "To unify Europe, we must first of all wrest power from you. We will do it. We will unify Europe. We will unify it against the enemy, and that enemy is the capitalist world. We will make it the imposing stronghold of militant socialism. We will make it the cornerstone of the socialist federation of the world."

October 4, 1929.

A Most Remarkable Corpse

The future historian of the movement, in thumbing over the numbers of the International Press Correspondence for example, will be impressed by this astounding fact: "Trotskyism" has been killed, has been revived, has decayed, was born again, became a corpse and disintegrated, came to life again, and went through similar reincarnations literally dozens of times.

It has been alternately characterized and condemned as 1. A Right wing deviation; 2. A Left wing deviation; 3. A Centrist deviation; 4. The product of pessimism; 5. The product of impatience; 6. The expression of the middle peasantry; 7. The expression of the labor aristocracy; 8. The result of Kulak pressure; 9. The reflection of the declassed workers; 10. The agency of foreign imperialism; 11. A tendency towards syndicalism; 12. An inverted social-reformism; 13. An under-estimation (or over-estimation) of the middle (or poor or rich) peasantry; and so on ad infinitum. In fact there is no tendency or class or section of a class that has not found itself expressed at one time or another, in one way or another, by so-called Trotskyism!

So that this corpse of Trotskyism, in which the spirits of every class and stratum in society was embodied, has become the most remarkable political "carcass" that history has ever known—that is, for those mutton-heads whose gospel is contained in the editorial and news columns of the Daily Worker and its replicas in every country. Announcements on the "final decay of Trotskyism" have now become as regular and meaningless in the official Stalinist press as its proclamations of the mass movements organized by the Party. And this is so because the real disintegration of so-called Trotskyism would mean the disintegration of the foundations of the international Communist movement with which it is synonymous.

Now comes the Revolutionary Age (No. 3) with an article by W. Herberg consisting of a fact or two, a few half facts, and a number of lies patched together to prove that

"The Trotskyist movement all over the world is in a state of severe crisis. Political confusion reigns everywhere and organizational disintegration is already in an advanced stage... The forces of disintegration of the official Trotskyist movement come from two directions... The crisis

proceeds in full blast" and so on and so forth.

Where is the crisis? What does it consist of? How has Trotskyism disintegrated? In the answer to these questions is the only original—even if not very clever—contribution to the subject by Herberg. The disintegration of Trotskyism consists in nothing more nor less than the fact that "...the revision which the principles of Leninism and the line of the Comintern are now undergoing is taking place in the direction of the main ideas of Trotskyism." The decay of Trotskyism lies in "the surreptitious but wholesale appropriation of the leading political ideas of Trotskyism by the new leaders of the E. C. C. I." Make sense out of this if you can!

Trotskyism is decaying because it is supposed to have become the basis of the Comintern's line! It is disintegrating because its ideas, its main ideas, are being appropriated by the leaders of the International! In the next issue of the Revolutionary Age there must be an article to prove that the Democratic Party has decayed because it recently won an election!

It is difficult to take such "analyses" seriously. A year ago, when it suited Lovestone's factional purpose in the battle against Foster, he yelled himself hoarse about the "growing danger of Trotskyism", in order to embarrass Foster's claims to the precedence of the Right danger in the Party. Today, Trotskyism (in less than a year) has been sunk without a trace by Lovestone and Herberg with a simple wave of the wand. Tomorrow, as necessity requires they will revive it or kill it again.

Outside of the single "unique" contribution made to the subject by Lovestone-Herberg, there is nothing at all original in this thousand and first proclamation of the decay of "Trotskyism". It is plagiarized almost word for word from proclamations written before. It is not only familiar, but it is getting monotonous. And we even know where Herberg's article was taken from: By actual comparison it is copied from the bound volumes of the International Press Correspondence for the years 1923, 1924, 1925, 1926 and 1927 which Lovestone stole from us in his burglary expedition against the menace of the—at that time—"non-disintegrated" Trotskyism. We would appreciate the return of those volumes!