

THE MILITANT

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LENIN LIVES IN THE WORK of THE OPPOSITION

In the present period, with the intensification of the organic ills and weaknesses of capitalism, with the dawn of new and broader horizons of class struggle, war and revolution, the vanguard of the working class, the Communists, must more than ever look to Lenin for inspiration, for guidance. It was Lenin who characterized our epoch as one of social convulsions, as one of international struggle for the proletariat. Lenin was the founder and organizer of the party of the working-class, the Communist International, which as the conscious arm of the class will inevitably lead it to victory.

Today the epigones of Leninism are in power in the International. Today the teachings of Lenin and of Marx are being ground underfoot, while reactionary theories like that of socialism in one country are proclaimed the acme of Communist wisdom. The Communist International has been crippled and paralyzed by the Stalinist bureaucracy, at times playing the rôle of an international pacifist society, at times that of an irresponsible adventurist sect. The Russian revolution which Lenin held up as the torch-light of emancipation for the world proletariat, is being run into national socialist channels.

The years of opportunist policy, in the Soviet Union and in the International following the death of Lenin, have crystallized a Right wing group in the Communist movement, based on the theory of socialism in one country. For them, for the Lovestones and the Brandlers, all the teachings of Lenin are summed up in his meticulous attention to national peculiarities. They only disfigure and misrepresent Lenin the Internationalist. They turn him into a monstrous caricature, that of the nationally limited "exceptionalist". These people have broken with the fundamental tenet of revolutionary Marxism, with proletarian Internationalism.

The International Left Opposition alone bases and supports itself on the rigorous and far-sighted principles of Leninism. It is the true heir of Lenin. Under the leadership of the co-worker of Lenin, L. D. Trotsky and of the cream of Bolshevism—the Russian Opposition—the Communist Left fights for the defense of Leninism and for the regeneration of the Communist International in the spirit of Lenin. For us as for Lenin it is clear that we live in the framework of world economy, in which every country forms an inseparable link. For us as for Lenin the enemy is imperialism, monopoly — world capitalism. The struggle of the proletariat is an international struggle. Our daily struggle against American capitalism is for us a battle on one particular front in the war against world capitalism. With Lenin, we look upon the Russian revolution upon the Soviet state as the first step of the international revolution. The only way to defend it is the Leninist way: "hard work at developing the revolutionary struggle in one's own land and the support of such and only such struggles and policies in every country without exception." We reject the Stalinist brand of mechanical internationalism, which sets an arbitrary date for international action regardless of the degree of readiness of the different sections and irrespective of the objective situation (first of August, 6th of March etc.) For Leninists revolutionary action consists of the application of an international line that assigns specific tasks to every national section on the basis of the situation of its country in the complex of world economy. This is the way Lenin regarded the tasks of the Russian Communists:

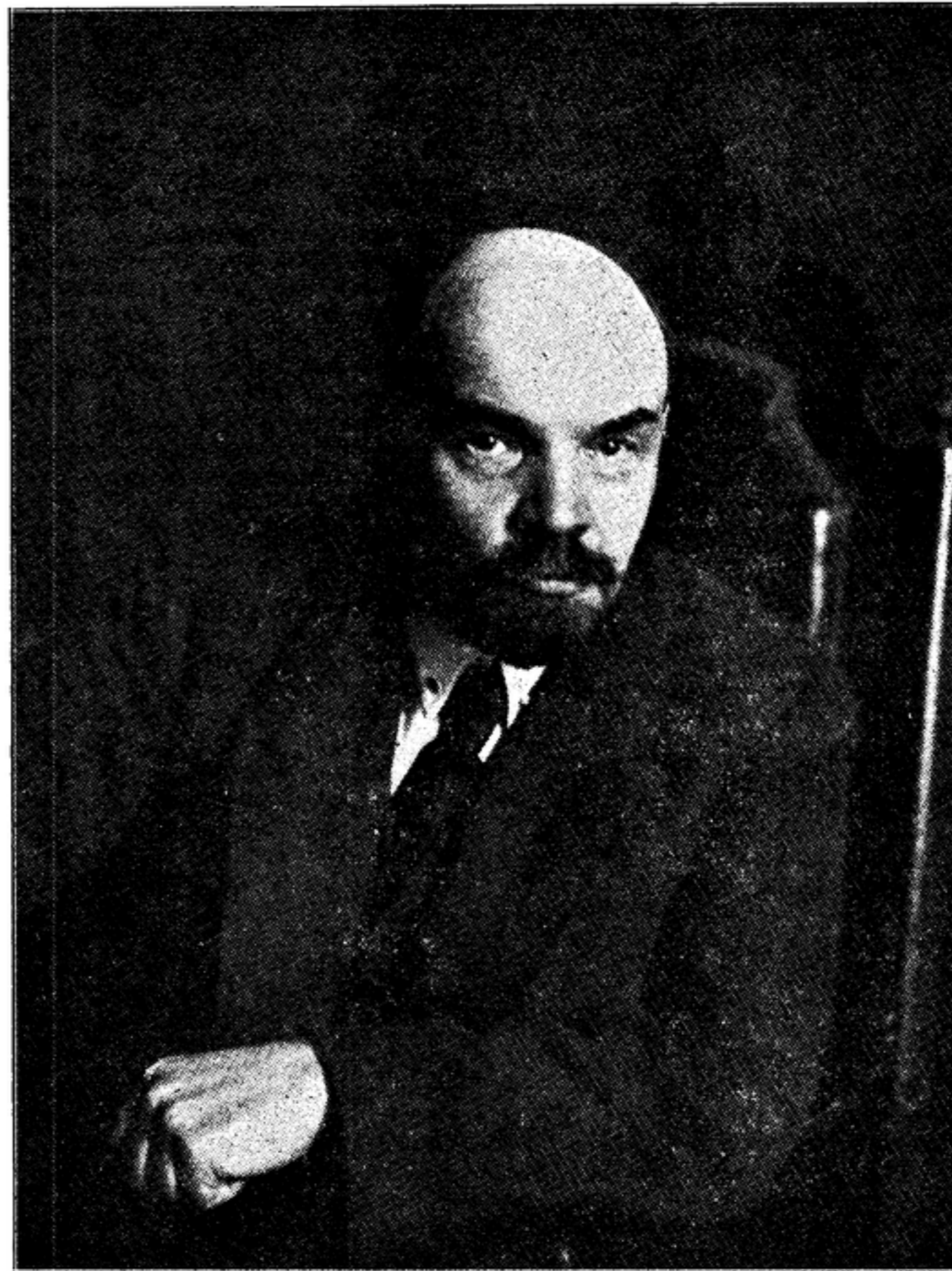
"The Russian proletariat," Lenin said, "cannot single-handed bring the Socialist revolution to a victorious conclusion. But it can give the Russian revolution a mighty impetus such as would create most favorable conditions for a socialist revolution and would in a sense, start it. It can help to create more favorable circumstances for its most important, most trustworthy and most reliable collaborator, the European and American proletariat, to join the decisive battles." (Farewell Letter to the Swiss Workers.)

It is in this light that we reject the theory of socialism in one country as un-

Leninist. It is in this sense that we condemn the Bucharin-Stalin policy of "Enrich yourselves!" the Stalinist policy of "one-hundred percent collectivization" and the bureaucratic "liquidation of the kulak as a class", as different sides of one and the same reactionary theory, that of the national socialist Utopia—as a betrayal of the interests of the revolution.

Only with a Leninist policy can the revolution be successfully concluded, only on

an international scale. It is for such a policy that the Left Opposition has suffered suppression, exile, expulsion and physical violence. But it has become hardened in the struggle. It will not yield. On the solid rock of Leninist principle it will build up its revolutionary cadres, fight for the confidence and support of the Communist workers and, with them, lead the proletariat to victory under the banner of the regenerated Leninist Comintern.



To those who mock at us because of our present smallness of numbers, we hold up the glorious example of Lenin, who with a tiny band of courageous revolutionists, raised the standard of proletarian internationalism at Zimmerwald in the face of world reaction; of Liebknecht, who alone and isolated defended this same internationalism in the Reichstag in the face of slander and vilification against the German social-chauvinists; of Rose Luxemburg, who with a little group of Spartacists, persecuted and hunted down by the treacherous Noske and Scheidemann, by the dogs of reaction, formed the first nucleus of German Communism. We too stand alone today. We are accused of being sectarians, of isolating ourselves from the masses. But we know well—and we have rich and fertile Marxist experience to back us—that the masses are not clay to be played with, that intransigence of principle on our part today gives birth to the inspired actions of the masses tomorrow. Today our task is to clarify, to solidify our ranks on the basis of principle. We are now defending, as a small minority, the living heritage of Marxism, even as Lenin did in the days when the Kamenevs and the other feckless "old Bolsheviks" thundered against him and his sectarianism. Our task today is mass propaganda. It is bearing fruit. The seventh anniversary of Lenin's death finds the Leninist Left Opposition definitely on the upgrade.

Kote Zinzadze Dead!

A brief note, a few perfunctory lines in a recent issue of Pravda, announce the death in Stalinist exile of comrade Kote Zinzadze. We recently mentioned comrade Zinzadze's case in the Militant, pointing out his extremely serious condition and the fact that permission for the change of climate promised him by the party leaders would probably arrive in time for his funeral. Our worst fears have now been realized.

Why was our comrade allowed to die when his life might have been saved? He committed the crime of every Bolshevik Oppositionist; he remained loyal to the heritage of the October revolution. An irreproachable revolutionist, he joined the Bolshevik party in 1903, and was one of the organizers of the October revolution. After the victory of the Russian workers, he work-

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Lenin's Will Must Be Carried Out by the Party!

By the stability of the Central Committee, of which I spoke before. I mean measures to prevent a split, so far as such measures can be taken. For, of course, the White Guard in Russkye Mysl (I think it was S. E. Oldenburg) was right when, in the first place, in his play against Soviet Russia he banked on the hope of a split in our party, and when, in the second place, he banked for that split on serious disagreements in our party.

Our party rests upon two classes, and for that reason its instability is possible, and if there cannot exist an agreement between these classes its fall is inevitable. In such an event it would be useless to take any measures or in general to discuss the stability of our Central Committee. In such an event no measures would prove capable of preventing a split. But I trust that is too remote a future, and too improbable an event, to talk about.

I have in mind stability as a guarantee against a split in the near future, and I intend to examine here a series of considerations of a purely personal character.

I think that the fundamental factor in the matter of stability—from this point of view—is such members of the Central Committee as Stalin and Trotsky. The relation between them constitutes, in my opinion, a big half of the danger of that split, which might be avoided, and the avoidance of which might be promoted in my opinion, by raising the number of members of the Central Committee to fifty or one hundred.

Comrade Stalin, having become Gen-

eral Secretary, has concentrated an enormous power in his hands; and I am not sure that he always knows how to use that power with sufficient caution. On the other hand comrade Trotsky, as was proved by his struggle against the Central Committee in connection with the question of the People's Commissariat of Ways and Communication, is distinguished not only by his exceptional ability—personally he is, to be sure, the most able man in the present Central Committee—but also by his too far-reaching self-confidence and a disposition to be far too much attracted by the purely administrative side of affairs.

These two qualities of the two most able leaders of the present Central Committee might, quite innocently, lead to a split, and if our party does not take measures to prevent it, a split might arise unexpectedly.

I will not further characterize the other members of the Central Committee as to their personal qualities. I will only remind you that the October episode of Zinoviev and Kameneff was not, of course, accidental, but that it ought as little to be used against them as the non-Bolshevism of Trotsky.

Of the younger members of the Central Committee, I want to say a few words about Piatakov and Bucharin. They are, in my opinion, the most able forces (among the youngest), and in regard to them it is necessary to bear in mind the following: Bucharin is not only the most valuable and biggest theoretician of the party, but also

may legitimately be considered the favorite of the whole party; but his theoretical views can only with the very greatest doubt be regarded as fully Marxist, for there is something scholastic in him (he never has learned, and I think never fully understood the dialectic.)

And then Piatakov—a man undoubtedly distinguished in will and ability, but too much given over to the administrative side of things to be relied on in a serious political question.

Of course, both these remarks are made by me merely with a view of the present time, or supposing that these two able and loyal workers may not find an occasion to supplement their knowledge and correct their one-sidedness.

December 25, 1922

Postscript: Stalin is too rude, and this fault entirely supportable in relations among us Communists, becomes unsupportable in the office of General Secretary. Therefore, I propose to the comrades to find a way to remove Stalin from that position and appoint to it another man who in all respects differs from Stalin only in superiority — namely, more patient, more loyal, more polite and more attentive to comrades, less capricious, etc. This circumstance may seem an insignificant trifle, but I think that from the point of view of preventing a split and from the point of view of the relation between Stalin and Trotsky which I discussed above, it is not a trifle, or it is such a trifle as may acquire a decisive significance. January 4, 1923. —LENIN.