

# Notes of a Journalist by ALFA

## THE KNIGHTS OF ANTI-TROTSKYISM

The *Pravda* accuses Riutin—Riutin!—of Trotskyism and the party must listen to all this and suffer. This is what we have come to! Let us briefly recall the past. The initiators of the struggle against Trotskyism were Zinoviev and Kamenev. After some time they themselves came over to the banner of Trotskyism; the fact that they later deserted this banner does not change the matter. The chief, or rather, the only theoretician of anti-Trotskyism was Bukharin, who fostered the whole campaign. He turned out to be—Bukharin, the author of the program of the Comintern! —“A bourgeois liberal” and “an agent of the wreckers inside the party.” His repeated repentance does not change this fact. The Moscow organization was entrusted into Uglanov's hands especially to carry on the struggle against Trotskyism. His services in this sphere were more than once given official recognition. But no sooner had he crushed Moscow Trotskyism than he himself was exposed as an echo of the Kulak-Nepman. At the head of the Moscow Central Control Commission which was expelling Trotskyites was the not unknown Moroz. No sooner had he completed his work of expulsion than it was recognized at the joint session of the Moscow Committee and the Control Commission under the direction of Stalin, that Moroz, who was the personification of the “party conscience” on the Moscow scale, in reality lacks all conscience whatsoever (literally!). At the head of the Krassnopresnensk district, the main proletarian district in Moscow stood Riutin, the pillar and hope of Uglanov, the main theoretician of anti-Trotskyism in the Moscow organization. Now he has been stamped a former Menshevik, a renegade, a wrecker, and is expelled from the party. But nevertheless, between his Menshevism of 1917 and his wrecking of 1930 he has succeeded in executing the chief work of the Moscow organization in its struggle against Trotskyism.

We could continue this compendium indefinitely beyond the confines of the U. S. S. R. In all the sections of the Comintern the majority of those who direct the struggle against Trotskyism proved to be Rights, counter-revolutionaries and renegades. We must ask, did not their renegacy consist precisely in the fact that they conducted a struggle for the extermination of the only Marxist, the only Leninist faction of contemporary communism?

## HECKERT TEACHES LIEBKNECHT

Fritz Heckert writes in an anniversary article of the *Pravda* on the defeat of the German revolution of 1918-1919: “It was a great mistake that the Spartacist union considered itself as merely a propagandist group in the ranks of the Social Democratic party.” Further on, he accuses Karl Liebknecht, Rosa Luxemburg and Leo Jogisches of “not having understood the rôle of the revolutionary party.”

In this remark there rests a grain of truth even though it is expressed pedantically, torn out of its concrete historical context. But this is not what we are concerned with now.

If it can be at all considered a mistake that Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht maintained the Spartacus group in the position of a revolutionary faction inside the Social Democratic party too long, and by that impeded the victory of the German revolution, then what can be said about the gentleman who forcibly compelled the young Communist party of China to enter a purely bourgeois party, abide by its discipline, and even to give up its duty of opposing Marxism to Sun-Yat-Senism?

But it was precisely this crime that was committed during 1923-1928 by the leadership of the Comintern. Nevertheless it was Fritz Heckert who unflinchingly defended the criminal policy of the Right-Centrist bloc against the Left Opposition. Isn't it clear that Heckert should have been a bit more careful in relation to Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg?

## THE STALINIST RECRUITMENT

The newspapers print in almost every number:

“We non-party workers, in reply to the double bookkeeping of the Opportunists declare our adherence to the party.”

After this always follows a list of workers with a note attached to each: twenty years of industrial experience, twenty-five, twenty-nine and even thirty-three. Thus it is a matter of workers from forty to fifty years of age. All of them were mature at the time of the October revolution and the Civil War. This did not prevent them from remaining outside the party. Only the double bookkeeping of the two Chairmen of the Council of Peoples' Commissars—Rykov and Syrov—induced them to join the party.

What sort of workers are these who

succeeded in retaining their jobs in a factory, very often in the same factory, for a period of 15 to 20 years prior to the revolution? These are the meekest, the most submissive, very often simply servile elements, the participants in the religious processions, those who bring gifts to the boss on his birthday. In the first years of the revolution they did not even dare to think of entering the party. But once it is ordered by the bosses, by the authorities, they cannot refuse. These are the elements and layers inside the working class to which centrism looks more and more for support, gaggling at the same time, the most advanced workers.

## THE GREATEST CRIME

*Pravda* has now formulated a new kind of crime: “the Trotskyists' methods of discrediting the best pupil of Lenin and the recognized leader of the party, comrade Stalin”. Unfortunately, the most serious beginning of this Trotskyist method was laid down in Lenin's Testament where “the best pupil” is accused of rudeness, disloyalty, and the tendency towards the abuse of power, and where the party is recommended to remove him from his post.

## THE OPPOSITION'S YESTERDAY

*Pravda* (November 21) criticizes in a lengthy article the mistakes of A. P. Smirnov, the former People's Commissar of Agriculture, and his successor U. E. Teodorovitch (1926-1927), and reveals their adherence to the Kondratievs and others. The article is fundamentally a paraphrasing of the written declarations which the Opposition presented to the Central Committee in 1926-1927, and which met with the indignant rejection of Stalin, Molotov and the others. And so poor *Pravda* repeats the Opposition's yesterday.

## “EVERYBODY REMEMBERS”

The paper *For Industrialization*, which is conducted, by the way, in a very frivolous manner, writes: “everybody remembers the idea, advanced at one time by the wreckers of the southern metal industry, that the Dnieprostroy station should be constructed only when there would be consumers for the power on hand. In other words, only after the factories will have demanded power should the construction of the station begin. This was directed against Dnieprostroy” (November 3, 1930.)

“Everybody remembers! But some also remember, besides this, that all these arguments were the basic arguments of the

Political Bureau in 1920-

Voroschilov-Kalinin-Rykov—were all against Dnieprostroy, with the exception of the Ukrainians who were for Dnieprostroy for Ukrainian considerations. Stalin declared that to construct the Dnieprostroy station might be compared to a peasant buying a phonograph instead of a cow. Voroschilov clamored that it would be ridiculous to construct a power station for factories that do not yet exist.

All this is preserved in the stenographic minutes of the Central Committee meetings.

## THE MYSTERY OF REPENTANCE

*Soviet Siberia* informs us that in Kalatchinsk “the chief work and concern of the Communists of late, has been the recognition of mistakes and self-flagellation, which is done with a particular pleasure and frivolity.

Only in Kalatchinsk?

They now repent as easily as they blow their nose. The not unknown Bogushevsky who, for a number of months, was the proverbial extreme Right (in reality, he was not a Right winger, he simply did not catch the signal at the right moment and continued to play the old record), is now not only the responsible editor of the paper *For Industrialization* but he also conducts a furious campaign against the Rights. What was required of him for this high post? Nothing in particular: to cut his hair, take a bath and repent. And the fellow is again as good as new—until a new zig-zag.

After these lines had been written, the Moscow papers brought the latest news: Bogushevsky was called on the carpet for calling the repentance of Bukharin, his teacher of yesterday, double-bookkeeping. Again, he did not catch the signal on time and—he overreached himself. It can't be helped, it's the risks of the trade.

## THE BALD-HEADED COMMUNIST YOUTH

Why do you keep silent, Nicolai Ivanitch?

A few lines to you and Rykov We are ready to devote.

This is a fragment of verses of Bezymensky, the accuser of those who cannot defend themselves. Nussinov, who was expelled from the party, he calls “a most villainous abomination.”\* There's a bold and quick-witted poet for you! Further on he speaks of the “villainous carrion of all oppositions”, even though the eminent Bezymensky himself once belonged to one of the oppositions. And all this is in the style of bald-headed Communist Youth.

\*A play on the Russian name Nussinov. Gnoosni means abomination.

# The Trend of the Economic Crisis

The year 1930 closed with indications of a prolongation of the crisis in American capitalism and the further unloading of the burden of this crisis upon the shoulders of the working class. This condition exists despite the repeated forecasts of the economists and business leaders to the effect that the revival would begin during the latter part of last year.

The months of November and December 1930 witnessed increasing declines in business activity and a growth of unemployment. December closed with an index figure of 75.7 for “business activity,” which marked a drop of two-tenths points from the November figure of 75.9. The significance of this figure, is that it is the lowest point reached since March, 1908. These figures represent a survey of the basic and most important industries, numbering ten in all. Of the ten types, automobile and bituminous coal production alone, show an upward curve. But the rise of automobile and bituminous coal production is purely seasonal.

The month of January 1931, one in which a rise is to be expected because of its spring preparatory character, shows an unshifting position. Indices of steel and pig iron production dropped sharply during the first two weeks of the month. In addition new orders in steel are far below the expectations of the economists in spite of the expected seasonal rise and the advance in automobile production. Other factors pointing to the continuation of the crisis exist in the decline of freight loadings and the decrease in electric power production. It is with the above indications in mind that Benjamin Baker, editor of the *Annalist*, is prompted to remark in the issue of January 16, 1931 that “it may be that the comparative stability of the business index for the last two months of 1930 indicates that the bottom of the current depression has been fully reached, but it is not easy to be confident on this point.”

The irresistible force of the crisis has effectively answered the myth of unending prosperity and the super-power of American capitalism. The object of capitalism at this stage is to strive to emerge from the present crisis in a comparatively short period of time. Reams of paper are written to convey this propaganda to the masses of workers in order to quiet the growing dissatisfaction.

If past experiences are to be considered in evaluating the length of time that it will take to reach a stage of “normalcy”, then it is within reason to expect that an economic revival will not take place for at least another year and a half. In the table below, which appeared in the *Annalist* of January 16th (1930 review issue) figures appear showing the lowest point reached in the business index during past crises and the number of months required in reaching “normalcy.”

	Bottom of Depression	Length of Recovery Nor'l (Mos.)
February 1885	77	17
June 1894	72	13
November 1896	78	15
March 1908	76	15
November 1914	81	10
March 1921	82	19

It will be noticed that the average length of recovery totalled almost 15 months. However, with the exception of March 1921, the figures speak of a period of the ascent of world capitalism. In the first crisis following the world war, and taking place in the period of the world decline of capitalism the greatest number of months required for a revival was reached. With the month of December closing at the lowest point reached in twenty-two years and 6.3 points below the first post-war crisis of 1921, in addition to the factor of a decaying system, it is evident that a revival is a long way off.

In the field of foreign trade a decline of \$2,737,780,000 from 1929 was recorded. The total exports declined 25 per cent. in value, and 20 per cent. in quantity. European exports dropped 20 per cent. below 1929, while the decline in areas exclusive of Europe declined 30 per cent.

The coming year will witness the attempt of American capitalism to issue from the crisis by a two-fold policy of increased aggression in the field of foreign trade and a continuation of the offensive against the American working-class. This is inevitable with the contraction of the world and home market and the growing competition of the imperialist powers in efforts to issue out of their difficulties. The tendencies in this direction are long existent; they are an integral part of imperialist capitalism, but in the present period of a

within the strongest imperialist country in the world, they will be accentuated many times. Already the United States is making aggressive efforts to defeat the British Empire in the struggle for winning the Latin American market. The same type of penetration is to be observed with regards to the Orient. The Young Plan, the War Debts, and similar instances of attempts at economic domination point to the efforts made in putting Europe completely on rations.

The efforts to emerge from the crisis by dominating the world market more completely can have nothing but catastrophic results for capitalism. In the struggle for supremacy the United States will meet terrific resistance from the other capitalist powers and vice-versa. We are living today in a period of the decline of world capitalism, a period which Lenin described as one of “wars and revolution”. Therefore the struggles for domination of the world market can have no other effect but that of weakening capitalism still further and preparing its eventual destruction.

At home the burden of the crisis rests entirely upon the shoulders of the working class. Capitalism has proved again that it cannot and will not provide for the working class.

Every crisis in capitalism finds the working class suffering the burdens of such crises. The Standard Statistics Corporation estimates that during the first nine months of 1930 dividends increased more than a billion dollars over the year 1929, while wages during this same period declined over \$8,800,000,000. The *Annalist* figures point to a drop in factory employment \$1.2 for December as against \$2.1 for November. It is also recorded that factory payrolls are at the lowest point since April 1922, declining to 72.2 for December from the November index of 73.5. The estimated decrease in wages for the entire year of 1930 is placed at a billion dollars a month! The whole tendency is toward further rationalization.

U. S. capitalism is making efforts to overcome the crisis by increasing the exploitation of the workers. This will be accompanied by continued unemployment, increase of the working hours, and nationwide wage-cuts. The table below taken from *Labor's News* is illuminating in regards to the tendencies toward widespread wage-cutting.

	April	May	June	
Wage Increases	32	42	56	
Wage Decreases	25	33	57	
July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.
44	33	—	36	46
68	63	136	—	93

The above figures represent the number of business organizations that instituted either wage increases or wage cuts. The growing wage-cuts are easily obtained. The ratio of this table shows that for every 15 workers that receive wage increases, 85 workers experience wage cuts. Of additional importance is the fact that the granting of wage-increases was confined in the main to the organized workers, while the great mass of unskilled and unorganized workers suffered heavy losses.

In consideration of past experience, and the added difficulties of a moribund capitalism the end of the crisis is far to seek. The effects of the policy of American capitalism can have but a two-fold effect. It will, on the one hand, accelerate the antagonisms of world imperialism and the struggles of the working class at home. The American working class has a long way to go to reach the stage of class consciousness, and a will to struggle. But that it is on that road and will continue to travel it, is indisputable. The coming year will witness no appreciable improvement in the present crisis. But the burden of that crisis will be placed more heavily upon the backs of not only the American working class but the world proletariat as well.

—ALBERT GLOTZER.

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## BULLETIN of the RUSSIAN OPPOSITION

The latest issue of the official organ of the Russian Bolshevik-Leninist Opposition, published as a double number, has just been received. Some of the material contained in this highly interesting issue is as follows:

Success of Socialism and the Dangers of Adventurism — Declaration of comrade Rakovsky and Others—Statement of Rakovsky, Muralov and Others to the Central Committee of the Russian Party — Comrade Selinichenko in Stalinist Exile — A New Victim of Stalin (Comrade Kote Zinzadze) etc., etc.

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