

The Crisis of the Russian Revolution Why Basques Lost the North

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the part of the international proletariat, will sweep aside the military-bureaucratic regime which is strangling them, re-conquer power and control of their own destiny, and head Soviet society as a whole once more on the path of socialism; or the continued rule of the bureaucracy, with its sabotage and disruption of the economy and the whole social order, and its cumulative undermining of the remaining socialist foundations of the economy, will result in the restoration of capitalist exploitation and capitalist rule. There is no middle road.

Stalinism has nothing in common with socialism, with Bolshevism, with the ideas or policies or methods of those who made the Revolution. The Stalinist Party, masquerading as the Communist Party, is the direct opposite of the Bolshevik Party of the Revolution. The Bolshevik Party the Party of Lenin and Trotsky, still lives within the Soviet Union, but it lives in hiding, in the prisons, the concentration camps, in exile, and in the hearts and memories of the workers.

The totalitarian nature of the Stalinist military-bureaucratic dictatorship over the masses, and its complete reliance upon the suppression of all opposition and upon the guns of the G.P.U. have excluded the possibility of the legal and peaceful reform of the regime. By his own acts and his own system, Stalin has left the masses only the one resort of political revolution to re-establish their power.

The defense of the Russian Revolution, of the greatest victory of the working class, thus imposes as an inescapable duty the unremitting struggle against, and the overthrow of, Stalinism—the deadly and irrevocable enemy of that Revolution.

The Defense of the Revolution

No greater witness could be brought to the immeasurable strength of the socialist revolution, and the inexhaustible sources of development which it opens up, than the fact that all of the defeats of the international working class, the weariness and disillusionment of the masses, and all the crimes of Stalinism, have not yet succeeded in altogether destroying the conquests of the revolution.

In the still nationalized industry of the Soviet Union, the workers have a weighty and invaluable foundation from which, once they have regained control of the political regime, they could leap forward toward socialism. This great conquest, the immediate and direct result of the October Revolution twenty years ago, belongs to the workers of the entire world. They must and will defend it against all of its enemies.

They will defend it against the hidden or open attacks of world imperialism. In the case of war, they will unite firmly and unwaveringly in the military struggle against the imperialist aggressors, whose victory would guarantee at once the destruction of the nationalized economy, and the restoration of capitalism. And ceaselessly also they will defend the conquests of October against the fatal hand of the bureaucracy, whose enduring victory would no less certainly guarantee the destruction of the economy and the restoration of capitalism.

The defense of the Revolution is the solemn and imperative duty of all workers, and above all of all revolutionists. In the fulfillment of this duty, there go hand in hand the two necessarily related tasks of the struggle against imperialism and the struggle against Stalinism. This, and this alone, is the defense of the Revolution.

The Attack on the Revolution

As in its first days twenty years ago, so now the revolution is under attack from every side. Capitalist imperialism, both bourgeois and fascist, and all of its servants, plots and prepares constantly for the definitive destruction of the revolution, for the dismemberment of the Soviet Union,

for the regaining within it of the rights of capitalist exploitation.

The Stalinist bureaucracy suffocates and strangles the revolution, its course is the sure and certain road to its final defeat.

The social democracy, reformism, reinforced now by the Stalinist reversion to the offal and refuse of reformism, as always is ready to act as the lackey of imperialism, rejoices at the degeneration of the revolution, and is prepared to gloat over its bones.

All the tribe of cowards and weaklings, unable to stand up under the blows of historic events, in despair and retreat before advance of reaction and at the spectacle of the temporary triumph of Stalinism, today grub around in an effort to repudiate and undermine the foundations of the revolution itself. In the nooks and crannies of events, they seek shabby proofs of their pitiful thesis that "Stalinism is the heir of Bolshevism", that the degeneration of the Soviet Union was determined by the strategy and policies of Lenin and Trotsky and the other leaders of October.

Their thesis is the thesis of cowardice and despair. They wish to solve the problem of the revolution by a magic phrase, and imagine that purity of heart alone, and not enduring determination and struggle, will wash away the accumulated debris of the long centuries of exploitation and oppression.

We reject with scorn the weaklings and the cowards. The birth pangs of the new world are not easy. Who but a dreamer or a dolt could expect otherwise? The task of the revolution is to remake mankind, to rebuild society in man's image and under his conscious control, to provide the means whereby every man may find the free and full development of all of his resources and talents. It is not a task for the timid, for babies or idlers. Firmness, determination, courage, sacrifice, struggle, intelligence, heroism—these are needed to achieve it. And the strength of these must endure, not bending and shaking to the changing winds of defeat and advance.

The degeneration of the Russian Revolution, the hollow and transitory victory of Stalin, these have in no slightest way weakened our confidence in the revolution itself. Rather, by teaching us more, by showing the endless resources of the revolution in the face of the vast might of reaction, they confirm and renew our confidence.

In this twentieth year, we gladly and proudly reaffirm our allegiance and our faith. We reassert our loyalty to the Russian Revolution, and to the men and the policies that made it. Their way, the way of October, of the Bolshevik Party, of Lenin and Trotsky, is our way, and the only way.

The Extension of the Revolution

In the next great advance of the international revolution, the advance which events are even now preparing, which is maturing in the very defeats and losses, the whole tribe of weaklings and doubters and traitors will be thrust aside like chaff before the surging wave of the masses. Stalinism and its blighting influence will go down into the shameful grave which history has already dug for it. The victorious masses will not take time to argue at length with the cowards and the traitors.

Throughout the world, the preparation of the advance goes on. In every country, the Fourth Internationalists, the inheritors of the traditions and ideas of the October Revolution, defend and preserve that tradition and those ideas against their traducers, and train men who under the guidance of that tradition will march forward with the masses to new and lasting conquests. The banner of the Fourth International is the banner of the October Revolution. Out of the ruins of the Second International, the international of betrayal to the imperialist war, and of the Stalinist International, the international organizer of defeat and degeneration, arises the Fourth International: the international of victory, of the world socialist revolution.

REVOLT IN MOROCCO

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which has the support of the Communist party. The National Defense Ministers held a hurried meeting and decided to ask for special funds to send more troops into the French colonies. In the French Cabinet the ministers of War, Navy, Air, and Colonies recommend the taking of stern steps to further suppress the colonies.

The role of the Communist Party in this is rank treachery to

colonial peoples. They support the suppression of the colonial peoples, by supporting the People's Front Government. Stalinists, who now wholeheartedly belong to and support the French imperialist Army, shoot down the Arab workers who are seeking freedom from French exploitation. Funds to carry on the colonial campaign are voted by the Stalinist members of the French Chamber of Deputies.

Their whole outlook is toward the goal of maintaining the

status quo. After the Franco-Soviet Pact they must show the French imperialists that they are nice respectable people. They don't want any revolutions in any country.

Upper West Side Branch
PRE-CONVENTION DANCE
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916—9th Ave., Corner 58th St.
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REAL SWING BAND
Admission 39c.

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colleagues? It is a fact that their having existed cannot be discovered from the Stalinist press!

Stalinist Alibi

The Stalinists attempted to unload all blame onto the Basque bourgeoisie, in a statement of the CP Political Bureau in mid-September. But La Pasionaria's speech in the Cortes, October 1,—the Basque deputies were there, most of them coming from Paris and immediately afterward returning there—said not a word about the treachery of the Basque bourgeoisie. Instead, she said:

"We know that the salaries which the workers earn are not sufficient to take care of their homes.... In this sense, we have the example of what can occur, when the workers are not satisfied; we have the example of (Basque) Euzkadi, where the workers continued with the same salaries because the same capitalist establishments continued."

Blames Workers

No other conclusion could be drawn from these words, except that the dissatisfied workers had lost the military struggle. The only blame of the bourgeoisie was that they hadn't given the workers better salaries! If the pseudo-radical reference to "the same capitalist establishments" were anything but demagogy, why did not Pasionaria go on to demand that the other capitalist establishments in remaining Spain be given to the workers? On the contrary, the cabinet is systematically taking factories and land away from the workers and giving them back to the old proprietors.

Asturians Fight On

The Asturian and Santander militiamen—largely CNT and left socialist—bitterly contested every foot of ground. The terrain here was even more favorable to the defense than the hilly Santander region. The Asturian dynamiters were still unshakably holding their grip on Oviedo's suburbs, immobilizing the garrison there since July, 1936. All told, nearly 140,000 armed troops were in the loyalist north.

The striking contrast between the fighting methods of the Asturians and of the Basque nationalists was indicated by the fact that not a village was given up before it was destroyed. "The retreating Asturians seem determined to leave only smoking ruins and desolation behind them when they are finally forced to abandon a town or a village," wrote the New York Times (October 19).

But Are Betrayed

Then something happened. Not in the Oviedo region, where the

militia held firm. Not among the forces which, after retreating from Cangas de Onis, had established new lines. But in the coastal region east of Gijon, where the Basque troops were, and which was under the direct command of the general staff stationed in Gijon. The fascist Navarrese advanced twenty-eight miles here through towns and villages in three days. Even so, the chief insurgent forces were fifteen miles east of Gijon when the city surrendered, on October 21!

In the preceding days, the government officials and army officers had fled. But the masses of course could not flee: they were left to the mercy of Franco. No measures had been taken in the months intervening to purge the officialdom, or to create worker-patrols to cleanse the city of the hidden fascists, nor were the Civil and Assault Guards sifted. As a result, once more, the Civil and Assault Guards joined with civilian fascists to take control and the fascist troops merely marched in. Again, a city had fallen intact, with all its factories ready to work for Franco.

The Government of Defeat

The "government of victory", Pasionaria had christened the Negrin cabinet on its birth. Six months have demonstrated the grotesque ludicrousness of that christening. The one conceivable justification for its repressions against the workers and peasants might have been its military victories. But precisely from its reactionary politics flowed its disastrous military policies. Whether Spain remains under this terrible yoke and goes down to the depths, or yet frees herself from these organizers of defeat and goes forward to victory, whatever happens, history has already stamped the government of Negrin-Stalin with its true title: the government of defeat.

UNSER WORT

The attention of comrades familiar with the German language is called to "Unser Wort", the official paper of the German Section of the 4th International.

Comrades wishing to subscribe to the paper, or to receive bundle orders should use the following address for communications:

Jean Meichler, B. P. 14
248 Rue des Pyrenees
Paris (20e), France

MARXIST SCHOOL

Tuesday Evening, Nov 9, 7 P. M.—THE REVOLUTIONARY PARTY AND FARMER LABORISM.—Maurice Spector.

Tuesday Evening, Nov. 9, 8:45 P. M.—THE EPOCH OF STALIN OR THE SOCIAL-PATRIOTISM OF THE THIRD INTERNATIONAL.—Max Shachtman.

Friday Eve., Nov. 12, 7 P. M.—THE TASKS OF MARXISTS IN THE TRADE UNIONS.—James P. Cannon.

(Monday lectures have been postponed one week in view of the Russian Revolution celebration).