

Western Clarion

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SCABBING ON PALMER, DAUGHERTY & CO.

LEON Trotsky, if current news items are to be taken seriously, would appear to have outlived the cat of nine lives and to have escaped attention from the cat o' nine tails, this latter being flourished by his own party kith and kin as to an erring brother. We gather from the inevitable confusion that is the reward of diligent news searching on such matters that the rule to go by in the avenues of publicity is to let the wish govern the thought and drown a man in printer's ink, not once but often, failing the final and mortal stroke to be given by those who love him.

It was said by Lenin on the occasion of the fourth congress of the Third International that the nature and content of the various Russian theses concerning communist policy and practice had not been thoroughly understood abroad, even among the members of internationally affiliated communist parties. In some such words as these he said, "They have signed our various theses, but they have not understood them." This was probably a well grounded observation and would be likely to be quite as sound applied the other way around. However, where party argumentation takes place on policy definitely directed toward application in a given country it is not strange to find the means and methods, in discussion and action, to be hard to follow by the outside world.

The outside world knows vaguely at the present time that the Russian Communist party has been active in discussion concerning lessons to be drawn from recent events in Russian revolutionary history, the interpretation of these lessons in the light of present policies, and those to be projected. Out of that discussion there has arisen prominently the figure of Trotsky, now leader of the minority side in party council, a courageous, trusted and able leader of revolutionary experience whose interpretations of events and their consequences meet opposition from the controlling elements of the Russian Communist party. Hence our current newspaper headlines announcing Trotsky's imprisonment, or death, or what not.

We do not propose to set down here any description or analysis of the discussions that have involved the Russian Communists in polemics during the past two years,—to say nothing of the years before. To do that understandingly would be almost as hard for us as for the communist press of this continent. That press, in dealing with "Trotskyism," very clearly demonstrates the difficulties encountered abroad in understanding "our Russian ways," as Lenin has it. "Trotskyism" in the present case finds its expression, without suppression in Russia, in Trotsky's book "1917" which is devoted to the "Lessons of October." In Russia the book has been received and discussed as reopening the theoretical

controversy featuring the history of the Russian Communist party and which dates back to the days of the Russian Social Democratic Labor Party, divided into Bolsheviki and Menshiviki in 1903. Bolshevik policies were identified with the name of Lenin and Menshevik with the name of Trotsky. There followed the events of 1905, 1917 and the years between and after. Concerning the revival of the controversy through Trotsky's book which occasions so much concern among the faithful, we are glad to read this from Kamenev, (The Nation, N. Y., Jan. 7, 1925):—

"Nobody has ever thought of suppressing Trotsky's book, not a member of the Central Committee has ever raised or is raising the question of disciplinary measures against Comrade Trotsky." Further assurances to the same effect are given by Stalin and Zinoviev, and it would appear that the Russian way of dealing with contrary ideas is to accept them if they square with the facts, to demonstrate it if they don't, but in any case never to choke them. But "our Russian ways" are not understood abroad. We find in "The Daily Worker" (Dec. 13, 1924), official organ of the Workers' Party of America, a review of Trotsky's "1917." This review is headed "How One Should Not Write the History of October," and is translated and reprinted from the Moscow "Pravda," and presents a point of view hostile to that apparently held by Trotsky. The review is continued in the issue of "The Daily Worker" of Dec. 23, 1924, and occupies altogether about four pages (magazine section). Good. Critical and informative. It whets our appetite to read the book "1917." It would whet the appetite of anyone interested in the history of the case in hand. But behold, alongside the first installment of the critical "anti-Trotsky" review there is displayed in block the following item, headed:

"Decision of the Party C. E. C."

To all Party Editors:
Dear Comrade:

You will find attached hereto an English translation of a review of Comrade Trotsky's Book "1917" entitled "How One Should Not Write the History of October."

By decision of the Central Executive Committee all Party papers are instructed to reprint this Pravda Review within ten days time.

It is the further instruction of the Central Executive Committee that no Party paper shall reprint the book "1917" or any chapter thereof in the Party Press.

The Central Executive Committee also instructs that in connection with the reprinting of the review attached the following statement by the Central Executive Committee shall appear in the Party papers:

"The Fifth World Congress of the Communist International and the Thirteenth Party Conference of the Russian C. P. branded the opposition in the Russian Communist Party under the leadership of Comrade Trotsky as 'petty bourgeois opportunistic.' Comrade Trotsky has recently published a book '1917' in which he reopens the discussion which was closed by unanimous decision of the Fifth Congress and of the Thirteenth Conference of the C. P. of R.

"The review of Comrade Trotsky's book herewith 'How One Should Not Write the History of October' shows clearly the method employed by Comrade Trotsky to again open the discussion.

"It is the view of the Central Executive Committee of the W. P. of A. that the publication of Trotsky's book in this country would be a detriment to the work of Bolshevizing the Workers Party which is the most important task before our Party.

"The Central Executive Committee regrets to note that the Volksetzung has already begun publication of the book serially. It has instructed the Volksetzung to discontinue the publication and further instructs all other Party papers that neither the book as a whole nor any chapter thereof is to be reprinted in the Party press.

"The Central Executive Committee has further instructed all Party papers to reprint the accompanying review of Comrade Trotsky's book which was originally published in the Pravda, official organ of the Communist Party of Russia."

"CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE W. P. of A.
WM. Z. FOSTER, Chairman.

"C. E. RUTENBERG, Executive Secretary."
Prompt compliance with these instructions is desired of all Party papers.

Fraternally yours,
C. E. Ruthenberg, Executive Secretary.

So newspapers of the Workers' Party shall reprint Trotsky's book nor any chapter of it, but all Workers' Party papers are required to reprint the Pravda review. Come on, Toronto. Tell us if you've read the book. Nowhere do we find that "The Daily Worker" people have read it. We know we'd like to and we're sure all who are interested in such matters will want to.

So Trotsky is not yet assassinated by the Russian Bolsheviki. But the burlesque Bolsheviki of Chicago have assassinated his book. The queer thing known as "Bolshevizing the Workers' Party" must have its day.

Thus the Workers' Party turns censor, copying their betters, ancient and modern. They have little apparent sense of humor, these people, but they are very funny.

IN SUPPORT OF "C."

(Continued from page 3)

contention, in the meantime he would be getting unmercifully mauled, and growing ever weaker and less able to deliver the knock-out when he did recognize its necessity.

Here I would like to state parenthetically that, because those other handlers and coaches and their activities are a part of the struggle they cannot be ignored and, further, in my estimation our socialist education and traditions and revolutionary training does not place us in a position "anti" to them, but has merely added greater distance and increased clarity to our vision.

To my perception "C" takes the position which virtually says, as coach to our principal:—Those other seconds and handlers of yours don't see through your opponent's game and keep advising you to keep pegging away, trying to score points, but I'm trying to show you all the time that your opponent is trying to smash you to the point of submission where you will be willing to take whatever he likes to hand you, and that he will use all kinds of tactics, fair or foul, to attain his object, but neither they nor you see it yet, so in the meantime, buddy, go to it, and hit him as often and as hard as you can, for each time means a loss of strength to him and a gain of confidence to you, and you will finally force him into the position of showing you himself that I had his intentions sized up right; then you will be able to hand him the necessary knockout and take the whole cheese instead of the miserable little bit he intended to hand you.

And that's that.

J. W. D.

ECONOMIC CAUSES OF WAR

By PETER T. LEONIK

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