

L. (TROTSKY) WAR & REVOLUTION, The Fall of the 2nd Int. and the Preparation of the Third

Second Ed., Moscow, 1923, Vol. I.

The introduction to this volume, which was written in 1919 and reproduced also in 1922, states a few words about Austria-Hungary, Paris and Switzerland at the outbreak of the imperialist war, and then first summarizes the relations of Our Word (Nashe Slovo) with Golos, and finally comes to the relations of Nashe Slovo with the Social Democrat (pp. 26-27)

In the struggle with opponents Nashe Slovo definitively broke with the doubtful allies and with the non-formed character (neoformalnostiu) of its own platform, which had arisen out of a compromise. On the 1st of Mar. 1916, the editorial board formulated the program of the publication in the following manner:

Nashe Slovo sets as its task the influence (sodelstvovat) to reestablish the International on the basis of a congruent revolutionary struggle of the proletariat of all countries against the war, imperialism, and the bourgeoisie capitalist society.

An uncompromising struggle with social-patriotism, which poisons the consciousness of the proletariat and paralyzes its revolutionary will, is the central militant (boevuyu) task of Nashe Slovo under the conditions of the moment.

Belonging to the Zimmerwald unification of the internationalists and seeing in it the first landmark on the road to the creation of a revolutionary Third International, Nashe Slovo considers the obligation of the left wing of the internationalists to be the decisive criticism of ~~the~~ half-way politics and socialist eclecticism, the explanation to the proletariat of the conditions and character of the coming (nastupivshoi) historic epoch and the propaganda of revolutionary tactics, which at its basis signifies the transition of the proletariat from a defensive to an offensive struggle by means of a systematic ~~(deepening and)~~ widening of the economic and political conflicts of the working-classes with the imperialist bourgeoisie and its state under the sign of the conquest of political power with the aim of socialist revolution.

In the frame of the Russian S-D Nashe Slovo sets itself the task of cleaning the ranks of the party from social-patriotism, necessarily forming itself (neobkhodimo primayushchevo) in the conditions of Russia the more anti-revolutionary and demoralizing character.

An open break with social-patriotism staffs and merciless struggle with them for influence of the working masses. Nashe Slovo considers a necessary condition for efficient unification of the Russian internationalists by means of overcoming circle exclusiveness and ~~fractional~~ factional insulation.

"During the time of the war nearly 53 numbers of the Social Democrat, edited by com. Lenin came out in Geneva. The differences between the Social Democrat and Our Word, appearing in the beginning very significant, decreased more and more to the degree that the depth of the differences with social-patriots and social-pacifists were defined. The very fact of Martov's participation in the Nashe Slovo, ~~in~~ despite ~~an~~ his then timely move to the left, continued to show that with the Mensheviks the question of internationalism is all in its place, could not but (mix up the cards at first). The criticism of the Social

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Democrat was in this respect indubitably correct and helped the left wing of the Ed. Bd. push out Martov and by this give the newspaper, after the Zimmerwald conference, a more definite and uncompromising character. At the time of the second conference of the Zimmerwaldists (in Kienthal) the delimitation of Nashe Slovo with the internationalists of the type of Martov became an accomplished fact. Martov himself at that time again moved to the right and went hand in hand with Axelrod who united Francophilism with pacifism, putting above everything else, incidentally, detestation of the Bolsheviks.

points
"However, there were three points where Nashe Slovo--even after it definitely went over into the hands of the left wing of the Ed. Bd.--did not agree with Social Democrat. These points concerned defeatism, the struggle for peace and the character of the coming Russian revolution. Nashe Slovo rejected defeatism. The Social Democrat rejected the slogan of the struggle for peace, fearing that pacifist tendencies will hide under it, and counterposed to it civil war. Finally Nashe Slovo held the point of view that the task of our party would be the conquest of power in the name of socialist uprising. The Social Democrat continued to ~~maintain~~ hold the position of "a democratic" dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry. The March revolution liquidated these differences."

On Oct. 31, 1914, IT writes that "The fall of the Second International is a tragic fact, and it would be blindness and cowardice to close the eyes to it." (p.80)

"Not socialism died (gibnet), but only its temporary historical expression. The revolutionary idea fades, throwing off from itself its hardened skin. But the skin consists of live people, from a whole socialist generation which in self-sacrificing agitation and organizational work of several generations of political reaction hardened in its views and habits of national possibilism.

"As the national states became a brake for the development of the productive forces, so the old national socialist parties became the chief impediment for the revolutionary movement of the working class. They had to reveal its whole backwardness, to compromise the full limitation of its methods, to destroy (obrushit) on the proletariat the shame and horror interecine in order that through terrible disappointments it could free itself from prejudices and slavish habits of the preparatory epoch and become finally that which at present the voice of history calls it to: the revolutionary class struggling for power."

Vol. II of this work continues with many more journalistic articles. The most significant of these concern Zimmerwald. ~~and other~~ From this the following extract on the works of the conference is taken, (pp.46-51, Vol. I.):

"In addition to Grimm as the organizer of the conference, the ~~xxxx~~ following were elected to the Buro: La ~~xxxx~~ari, as the representative of the Italian party, whose authority has tremendously risen in the course of this war; dr. Rákovsky, representative of the Roumanian proletariat in the Balkan 3-D federation; the well-known Holland postess and political activist Henrietta Rolland-Holst in the capacity of secretary of the conference and Angelica Balabanova as the translator.

"Among the participants of the conference there were various tendencies, and they already revealed themselves in the speeches of the national delegates and especially during the time of the dispute on the chief question of the day: the relation to the war and the struggle for peace.

"One part of the conference, standing to the extreme left, took its point of departure from the fact that the old socialist parties as the German and the French, tying up its fate with the fate of capitalist states in the most responsible period of European history, by this very act politically liquidated themselves not only for this ~~critical~~ period, but forever. The workers party will be able to rearise only out of new elements. They must everywhere raise the flag of split and tear up all organizational ties with the politicians of (civil peace) Burgfrieden'a and l'union sacree. The ~~most~~ clearest expression of this group at the conference was Lenin: to him and his closest friends more or less closely belonged the Swedish deputy, leader of the left group, Herlund, and leader of the Norwegian union of youth, Norman.

Centre
"To another group, playing at the conference in a certain sense the role of 'centre', belonged a certain number of delegates, with with no less animosity than the first groups to the politics of the official West European parties. (But they they did not consider at the moment the organizational split generally obligatory condition of work in the spirit of internationalism. The representatives of this group, even as the extreme left, took their point of departure, the fact that the fall of the Second Int. is the result of a whole historic epoch of political stagnation and immobility of international relations at least in Western Europe. A whole generation in the workers movement was formed in the atmosphere of systematic adaptation to the parliamentary state and in the critical moment for this state tied its fate with it. The representatives of this group considered, as did the left, that the epoch after the war will be in no sense whatever a return to the past as if nothing had happened. Deep changes will occur also in the cores of the socialist parties. But to the extent that the matter concerns mass organizations, as in the West, the organizational split, in the opinion of the centre, does not yet follow from political necessity. The matter thus far is one of an uncompromising idea (theoretical) and political struggle for the influence over the masses within the organizations. To this second group belonged the left elements of the German delegation ('Spartacists') Rolland-Holst, Balabanova, part of the Italian delegation, part of the Russian, Balkan and Swedish delegates.

"Finally, the third group composed the more moderate elements who saw the main task of the conference in a demonstration for peace, in its majority hoped that after the end of the war the present nationalist infection in the workers movement will disappear and everything will return to the old rut. To this

moderate group belonged part of the German delegates, the French, part of the Italians. (1)

"It is entirely clear that these 3 groups had to express themselves not in the same relations to the tasks of the conference. Whereas the first group pushed mainly to a more close choice of co-thinkers for the struggle within the old parties in the name of a full break with social-nationalism, the third group wished to limit the whole conference to a theoretical (idee) manifestation for peace.

"After the refusal of the majority of the conference from working out a programmatic tactical resolution, the left wing ~~had~~ had the concern that the next task of the to-be-born International, the struggle against the war, would be placed on revolutionary-class rails. We consider that this aim was reached in the highest degree which was possible by the condition of things.

"General disputes on this question ~~related~~ related to the basic reasons and "immediate authors" (vinovnikov) of the war, an evaluation of the conduct of the official socialist parties and passive semi-opposition (abstaining from the voting on credits), finally, those forces and means which are at the disposal of the proletariat for the struggle for peace and for the creation of conditions for it.

"Axelrod in his speech expressed the view that to measure with one gauge the conduct of the French and German social-democracy, ignoring the immediate authors of the war and the difference of the military position of the country means to demonstrate not internationalism, but 'cynism'.... The conference decisively rejected to follow this path... The capture of the socialists by the nationalist bloc, as the delegate of the Nashe Slovo remarked in his polemic, ~~psychologically~~ is more explainable in the countries that were invaded. ~~that in the victorious countries, but politically it, both here and there, alike~~ demoralizes the proletariat. The task of the conference does not consist of searching for conditions which soften the guilt of the national varieties of social-patriotism, but in order to lead against its simultaneous and coordinated struggle in the whole International....

There were presented 3 outlines of resolutions projects of proclamations: the ed. bd. of the Social-Democrat, the right wing of the German opposition, and the delegation of Nashe Slovo.

The project of the Social Democrat tried to give, in the spirit of the rejected resolution, definite methods of struggle. It was possible to disagree as to ~~the~~ which limits is it appropriate to

999 (1) The groupings, as they were briefly described here, developed and became simplified. The groups, occupying to a certain degree a central (but not at all 'centrist') position at the conference fused with the extreme left. The Zimmerwald right merged with the Kautskyist 'centre'--between evolutionary communism and social-patriotism. (Evidently this note was put in as an editorial to the 1922 (or 1919) edition, but there is no notation delimiting it from the text itself written in 1915, fr)

include purely-tactical remarks from the resolution into the call: but ~~xxxx~~ entirely independent of this, it was clear that after the resolution was rejected, there were no hopes of transferring the basic tactical thoughts of the resolution into the other document. ~~The basic~~ the basic fault of the project of the Social Democrat was the indefinite, evasive, dual relation to the slogan of the struggle for peace. Com. Lenin adequately revealed especially at the preliminary conference, as earlier in his essays and articles, that he personally has an entirely negative attitude to the slogan of the struggle for peace. His political position in this question is exhausted with the aphorism, that our task is to compel gun 42 not to be silent, but serve our aims. Undoubtedly, the distinction of revolutionaries from pacifists consists in the fact, that, incidentally, we wish to transform also military means into weapons of proletarian revolution. But it is entirely incorrect to counterpose this task to the struggle for peace. In order that the German proletariat should wish to direct gun 42 against its class enemies, he must cease to ~~xxxx~~ wish to direct it against his class brothers--in other words, he must ~~escape~~ escape himself in a hostile relation to this war, which shoots and blood-drains himself and his social ally on the other side of the trenches. The slogan for stopping the war for socialist proletariat is a slogan of class preservation, international coming-together, (sblizheniya) and then the prerequisite of revolutionary action. Meanwhile in the project of the Social Democrat, as in all its platform, the slogan of peace figures not as the central call of the proletariat for the present, mobilizing itself against militarism and chauvinism, but as a half-way concession to the pure revolutionary spirit of the pacifistic human race (ploti).

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"The project of the manifesto worked out by the more moderate elements of the German opposition, placed in the centre of the whole question about the conditions of future peace: no annexations whatsoever and forced economic incorporations, the right of nations to self-determination. There was not a single voice against the necessity of the formulation of these conditions. The European war in the ~~most~~ sharpest form posed the question about the fate of small and weak nations (Belgium, Serbia, Poland, Ukraine, Armenia...) and the form of cohabitation of the big nations....

"The program of peace, for which the proletariat should fight was ~~xxxx~~ literally ~~xxxx~~ and without principled discussion--~~xxxx~~ transferred from the project of the German opposition/... The project itself worked out by the right wing of the German opposition, was, however, fully unsuitable since it gave no evaluation of the socialist parties and bring out with necessary decisiveness the link between the "conditions of peace" and the revolutionary struggle and thus the project fell into a pacifist tone.

"The third project (of the delegate of Nashe Slovo) was formulated in the spirit of the basic ideas developed in the present remarks.

"All 3 projects was in the form of material given over to a commission of 7 members. The commission ~~xxxx~~ drafted basic theses and gave over the working out of a final text to Grimm and the representative of Nashe Slovo. Their project with some secondary corrections was approved by the commission and then unanimously adopted by the conference.

"Three corrections to the final text of the commission, coming from three Russian groups, were rejected.

The first correction was brought in by the ed. bd. of the Social Democrat: it gave a sharp characterization of the position of Kautsky, expressed approval of Liebknecht by name and with such a personification of tactical evaluations, conformable to ~~max~~ single German conditions alone, was inappropriate in the given document. Upon the insistence of the whole commission, it was ~~max~~ withdrawn.

The correction of the S-R demanded that together with imperialism ~~as~~ as the causes of war should be pointed "the forces of the past" (dynasty etc.)...The correction was rejected.

The third correction came from the delegation of the O.K. and two Polish organization. It gave a detailed characterization of the inevitable social consequences of war: the death of the intermediate classes, the growth of the forces and influence of the syndicates, trusts and finance capital, the sharpening of the ~~social~~ contradictions and class struggle. From it flowed the perspective of social-revolutionary convulsions. In this very diffuse correction together with disputable postulates were entirely ~~max~~ indisputable thoughts regarding which differences could only occur regarding the degree of their propriety in the given document. But the correction was handed in very late to be able to have a detailed discussion on it.

From all the above about the composition and political moods those limits beyond which this document could not pass are clear. It is entirely ~~max~~ in its relation to the war and its national liberation ideology, to all forms of military collaboration of the party and to the official social patriotism. But in the sphere of evaluation of the historic epoch and in the sphere of the methods of struggle it preserves an unadmitted vagueness, reflecting purely-critical character of the internationalist opposition in the oldest parties where the political leadership remains in the hands of the social patriots. The document is far from saying all that could and should be said to the masses. But it is the maximum of that which could be said under the given conditions. And there is reflected in this document an undoubtedly tremendous step forward accomplished by internationalist opposition from the time of the catastrophic capitulation of the socialist parties."

--Paris, Oct. 14, 1915.

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PARIS, OCT. 14, 1915

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Efficiency!!
circle exclusiveness
factual insulation
L. Trotsky

circle
opposed

July!!

HERE
L. Trotsky