

## **Preface to Solidarity Edition**

The fiftieth anniversary of the Russian Revolution will be assessed, analysed, celebrated or bemoaned in a variety of ways.

To the peddlers of religious mysticism and to the advocates of 'freedom of enterprise', Svetlana Stalin's sensational (and well-timed) defection will 'prove' the resilience of their respective doctrines, now shown as capable of sprouting on what at first sight would appear rather barren soil.

To incorrigible liberals, the recent, cautious reintroduction of the profit motive into certain sectors of the Russian economy will 'prove' that laissez-faire economics is synonymous with human nature and that a rationally planned economy was always a pious pipe-dream.

To those 'lefts' (like the late Isaac Deutscher) who saw in Russia's industrialization an automatic guarantee of more liberal attitudes in days to come, the imprisonment of Daniel and Sinyavsky for thought-crime (and the current persecution of those who stood up for them) will have come as a resounding slap in the face.

To the 'Marxist-Leninists' of China (and Albania), Russia's rapprochement with the USA, her passivity in the recent Middle East crisis, her signing of the Test Ban Treaty and her reactionary influence on revolutionary developments in the colonial countries will all bear testimony to her headlong slither into the swamp of revisionism, following the Great

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Stalin's death. (Stalin, it will be remembered, was the architect of such revolutionary, non-revisionist, measures as the elimination of the Old Bolsheviks, the Moscow Trials, the Popular Front, the Nazi-Soviet Pact, the Teheran and Yalta Agreements and the dynamic struggles of the French and Italian Communist Parties in the immediate post-war years, struggles which led to their direct seizure of power in their respective countries.)

To the Yugoslavs, reintegrated at last after their adolescent wandering from the fold, the re-emergence of 'sanity' in Moscow will be seen as corroboration of their worst suspicions. The 1948 'troubles' were clearly all due to the machinations of the wicked Beria. Mihajlo Mihajlov now succeeds Djilas behind the bars of a people's prison... just to remind political heretics that, in Yugoslavia too, 'proletarian democracy' is confined to those who refrain from asking awkward questions.

To the Trotskyists of all ilk – at least to those still capable of thinking for themselves – the mere fact of the fiftieth anniversary celebrations should be food for thought. What do words mean? How 'transitional' can a transitional society be? Aren't four decades of 'Bonapartism' in danger of making the word a trifle meaningless? Like the unflinching Christians carrying their cross, will unflinching Trotskyists go on carrying their question mark (concerning the future evolution of Russian society) for the rest of their earthly existence? For how much longer will they go on gargling with the old slogans of 'capitalist restoration or advance towards socialism' proposed by their mentor in his *Revolution Betrayed* ... thirty years ago! Surely only the blind can now fail to see that Russia is a class society of a new type, and has been for several decades.

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Those who have shed these mystifications – or who have never been blinded by them – will see things differently. They will sense that there can be no vestige of socialism in a society whose rulers can physically annihilate the Hungarian Workers' Councils, denounce equalitarianism and workers' management of production as 'petty-bourgeois' or 'anarcho-syndicalist' deviations, and accept the cold-blooded murder of a whole generation of revolutionaries as mere 'violations of socialist legality', to be rectified – oh so gingerly and tactfully – by the technique of 'selective posthumous rehabilitation'. It will be obvious to them that something went seriously wrong with the Russian Revolution. *What was it? And when did the 'degeneration' start?*

Here again the answers differ. For some the 'excesses' or 'mistakes' are attributable to a spiteful paranoia slowly sneaking up on the senescent Stalin. This interpretation (apart from tacitly accepting the very 'cult of the individual' which its advocates would claim to decry) fails, however, to account for the repressions of revolutionaries and the conciliations with imperialism perpetrated at a much earlier period. For others the 'degeneration' set in with the final defeat of the Left Opposition as an organized force (1927), or with Lenin's death (1924), or with the abolition of factions at the tenth Party Congress (1921). For the Bordigists the proclamation of the New Economic Policy (1921) irrevocably stamped Russia as 'state capitalist'. Others, rightly rejecting this preoccupation with the minutiae of revolutionary chronometry, stress more general factors, albeit in our opinion some of the less important ones.

Our purpose in publishing this text about the Kronstadt events of 1921 is not to draw up an alternative timetable. Nor are we looking for political ancestors. The construction of an orthodox apostolic succession is the least of our preoccupa-

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tions. (In a constantly changing world it would only testify to our theoretical sterility.) Our occupation is simply to document some of the real – but less well-known – struggles that took place against the growing bureaucracy during the early post-revolutionary years, at a time when most of the later critics of the bureaucracy were part and parcel of the apparatus itself.

The fiftieth anniversary of the Russian Revolution presents us with the absurd sight of a Russian ruling class (which every day resembles more its Western counterpart) solemnly celebrating the revolution which overthrew bourgeois power and allowed the masses, for a brief moment, to envisage a totally new kind of social order.

What made this tragic paradox possible? What shattered this vision? How did the Revolution degenerate?

Many explanations are offered. The history of how the Russian working class was dispossessed is not, however, a matter for an esoteric discussion among political cliques, who compensate for their own irrelevance by mental journeys into the enchanted world of the revolutionary past. An understanding of what took place is essential for every serious socialist. It is not mere archivism.

No viable ruling class rules by force alone. To rule it must succeed in getting its own vision of reality accepted by society at large. The concepts by which it attempts to legitimize its rule must be projected into the past. Socialists have correctly recognized that the history taught in bourgeois schools reveals a particular, distorted, vision of the world. It is a measure of the weakness of the revolutionary movement that *socialist* history remains for the most part unwritten.

What passes as socialist history is often only a mirror image of bourgeois historiography, a percolation into the ranks of the working class movement of typically bourgeois methods of

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thinking. In the world of this type of 'historian' leaders of genius replace the kings and queens of the bourgeois world. Famous congresses, splits or controversies, the rise and fall of political parties or unions, the emergence or degeneration of this or that leadership replace the internecine battles of the rulers of the past. The masses never appear independently on the historical stage, making their own history. At best they only 'supply the steam', enabling others to drive the locomotive, as Stalin so delicately put it.

'Most of the time, 'official' historians don't have eyes to see or ears to hear the acts and words which express the workers' spontaneous activity ... They lack the categories of thought – one might even say the brain cells – necessary to understand or even to perceive this activity as it really is. To them an activity that has no leader or programme, no institutions and no statutes, can only be described as 'troubles' or 'disorders'. The spontaneous activity of the masses belongs by definition to what history suppresses.'<sup>1</sup>

This tendency to identify working class history with the history of its organizations, institutions and leaders is not only inadequate – it reflects a typically bourgeois vision of mankind, divided in almost preordained manner between *the few* who will manage and decide, and *the many*, the malleable mass, incapable of acting consciously on its own behalf, and forever destined to remain the object (and never the subject) of history. Most histories of the degeneration of the Russian Revolution rarely amount to more than this.

The Stalinist bureaucracy was unique in that it presented a view of history based on outright lies rather than on the more usual mixture of subtle distortion and self-mystification. But Khrushchev's revelations and subsequent developments in

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<sup>1</sup> Paul Cardan, *From Bolshevism to the Bureaucracy* (Solidarity Pamphlet 24).

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Russia have caused official Russian versions of events (in all their variants) to be questioned even by members of the Communist Party. Even the graduates of what Trotsky called 'the Stalin school of falsification' are now beginning to reject the lies of the Stalinist era. Our task is to take the process of demystification a little further.

Of all the interpretations of the degeneration of the Russian Revolution that of Issac Deutscher is the most widely accepted on the Left. It echoes most of the assumptions of the Trotskyists. Although an improvement on the Stalinist versions, it is hardly sufficient. The degeneration is seen as due to strictly conjunctural factors (the isolation of the revolution in a backward country, the devastation caused by the Civil War, the overwhelming weight of the peasantry, etc.). These factors are undoubtedly very important. But the growth of the bureaucracy is more than just an accident in history. It is a worldwide phenomenon, intimately linked to a certain stage in the development of working class consciousness. It is the terrible price paid by the working class for its delay in recognizing that the true and final emancipation of the working class can only be achieved by the working class itself, and cannot be entrusted to others, allegedly acting on its behalf. If 'socialism is Man's total and positive self-consciousness' (Marx, 1844), the experience (and rejection) of the bureaucracy is a step on that road.

The Trotskyists deny that early oppositions to the developing bureaucracy had any revolutionary content. On the contrary they denounce the Workers' Opposition and the Kronstadt rebels as basically counter-revolutionary. Real opposition, for them, starts with the proclamation – within the Party – of the Left Opposition of 1923. But anyone in the least familiar with the period will know that by 1923 the working class had already sustained a decisive defeat. It had lost power in production to a group of managers appointed from above.

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It had also lost power in the Soviets, which were now only ghosts of their former selves, only a rubber stamp for the emerging bureaucracy. The Left Opposition fought within the confines of the Party, which was itself already highly bureaucratized. No substantial number of workers rallied to its cause. Their will to struggle had been sapped by the long struggle of the preceding years.

Opposition to the anti-working-class measures being taken by the Bolshevik leadership in the years immediately following the revolution took many forms and expressed itself through many different channels and at many different levels. It expressed itself *within* the Party itself, through a number of oppositional tendencies of which the Workers' Opposition (Kollontai, Lutovinov, Shlyapnikov) is the best known.<sup>2</sup> Outside the Party the revolutionary opposition found heterogeneous expression, in the life of a number, often illegal groups (some anarchist, some anarcho-syndicalist, some still professing their basic faith in Marxism).<sup>3</sup> It also found expression in spontaneous, often 'unorganized' class activity, such as the big Leningrad strikes of 1921 and the Kronstadt uprising. It found expression in the increasing resistance of the workers to Bolshevik industrial policy (and in particular to Trotsky's attempts to militarize the trade unions). It also found expression in proletarian opposition to Bolshevik attempts to evict all other tendencies from the Soviets, thus effectively gagging all those seeking to re-orient socialist construction along entirely different lines.

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2 For information concerning their programme see *The Workers' Opposition* by Alexandra Kollontai. This was first published in English in Sylvia Pankhurst's *Workers' Deadnought* in 1921 and republished in 1961 as *Solidarity Pamphlet 8*.

3 The history of such groups as the *Workers' Truth* group or the *Workers' Struggle* group still remains to be written.

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At an early stage several tendencies had struggled against the bureaucratic degeneration of the Revolution. By posthumously excluding them from the ranks of the revolutionary, Trotskyists, Leninists and others commit a double injustice. Firstly they excommunicate all those who foresaw and struggled against the nascent bureaucracy *prior to 1923*, thereby turning a deaf ear to some of the most pertinent and valid criticisms ever voiced against the bureaucracy. Secondly they weaken their own case, for if the demands for freely elected Soviets, for freedom of expression (proletarian democracy) and for workers' management of production were wrong in 1921, why did they become partially correct in 1923? Why are they correct now? If in 1921 Lenin and Trotsky represented the 'real interests' of the workers (against the actual workers), why couldn't Stalin? Why couldn't Kadar in Hungary in 1956? The Trotskyist school of hagiography has helped to obscure the real lessons of the struggle against the bureaucracy.

When one seriously studies the crucial years after 1917, when the fate of the Russian Revolution was still in the melting pot, one is driven again and again to the tragic events of the Kronstadt uprising of March 1921. These events epitomize, in a bloody and dramatic manner, the struggle between two concepts of the Revolution, two revolutionary methods, two types of revolutionary ethos. Who decides what is or is not in the long term interests of the working class? What methods are permissible in settling differences between revolutionaries? And what methods are double-edged and only capable in the long run of harming the Revolution itself?

There is remarkably little of a detailed nature available in English about the Kronstadt events. The Stalinist histories, revised and re-edited according to the fluctuating fortunes of Party functionaries, are not worth the paper they are written



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on. They are an insult to the intelligence of their readers, deemed incapable of comparing the same facts described in earlier and later editions of the same book.

Trotsky's writings about Kronstadt are few and more concerned at retrospective justification and at scoring debating points against the Anarchists<sup>4</sup> than at seriously analysing this particular episode of the Russian Revolution. Trotsky and the Trotskyists are particularly keen to perpetuate the myth that they were the first and only coherent anti-bureaucratic tendency. All their writings seek to hide how far the bureaucratization of both Party and Soviets had already gone by 1921 – i.e. how far it had gone during the period when Lenin and Trotsky were in full and undisputed control. The task for serious revolutionaries today is to see the link between Trotsky's attitudes and pronouncements during and before the 'great trade union debate' of 1920-21 and the healthy hostility to Trotskyism of the most advanced and revolutionary layers of the industrial working class. This hostility was to manifest itself – arms in hand – during the Kronstadt uprising. It was to manifest itself again two or three years later – this time by folded arms – when these advanced layers failed to rally to Trotsky's support, when he at last chose to challenge Stalin, within the limited confines of a Party machine, towards whose bureaucratization he had signally contributed.<sup>5</sup>

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4 An easy enough task after 1936, when some well-known anarchist 'leaders' (sic!) entered the Popular Front government in Catalonia at the beginning of the Spanish Civil War – and were allowed to remain there by the anarchist rank and file. This action – in an area where the anarchists had a mass basis in the labour movement – irrevocably damned them, just as the development of the Russian Revolution had irrevocably damned the Mensheviks, as incapable of standing up to the test of events.

5 Three statements from Trotsky's *Terrorism and Communism* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1961), first published in June 1920, will illustrate the point:

‘The creation of a socialist society means the organization of the work-

Deutscher in *The Prophet Armed* vividly depicts the background of Russia during the years of Civil War, the suffering, the economic dislocation, the sheer physical exhaustion of the population. But the picture is one-sided, its purpose to stress that the 'iron will of the Bolsheviks' was the only element of order, stability and continuity in a society that was hovering on the brink of total collapse. He pays scant attention to the attempts made by groups of workers and revolutionaries – both within the Party and outside its ranks – to attempt social reconstruction on an entirely different basis, from below.<sup>6</sup> He does not discuss the sustained opposition and hostility of the Bolsheviks to workers' management of production<sup>7</sup> or in fact

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ers on new foundations, their adaptation to those foundations and their labour re-education, with the one unchanging end of the increase in the productivity of labour ...' (p. 146).

'I consider that if the Civil War had not plundered our economic organs of all that was strongest, most independent, most endowed with initiative, we should undoubtedly have entered the path of one-man management in the sphere of economic administration much sooner and much less painfully' (pp. 162-163).

'We have been more than once accused of having substituted for the dictatorship of the Soviets the dictatorship of our own Party ... In the substitution of the power of the Party for the power of the working class there is nothing accidental, and in reality there is no substitution at all. The Communists express the fundamental interests of the working class ...' (p. 109).

So much for the 'anti-bureaucratic' antecedents of Trotskyism. It is interesting that the book was highly praised by Lenin. Lenin only took issue with Trotsky on the trade union question at the Central Committee meeting of November 8 and 9, 1920. Throughout most of 1920 Lenin had endorsed all Trotsky's bureaucratic decrees in relation to the unions.

- 6 For an interesting account of the growth of the Factory Committees Movement – and of the opposition to them of the Bolsheviks at the First All-Russian Trade Union Convention (January 1918), see Maximov's *The Guillotine at Work* (Chicago, 1940).
- 7 At the Ninth Party Congress (March 1920) Lenin introduced a resolution to the effect that the task of the unions was to explain the need for a 'maximum curtailment of administrative collegia and the gradual introduction

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to any large-scale endeavour which escaped their domination or control. Of the Kronstadt events themselves, of the Bolshevik calumnies against Kronstadt and of the frenzied repression that followed the events of March 1921, Deutscher says next to nothing, except that the Bolshevik accusations against the Kronstadt rebels were 'groundless'. Deutscher totally fails to see the direct relation between the methods used by Lenin and Trotsky in 1921 and those other methods, perfected by Stalin and later used against the Old Bolsheviks themselves during the notorious Moscow trials of 1936, 1937 and 1938.

In Victor Serge's *Memoirs of a Revolutionary* there is a chapter devoted to Kronstadt.<sup>8</sup> Serge's writings are particularly interesting in that he was in Leningrad in 1921 and supported what the Bolsheviks were doing, albeit reluctantly. He did not however resort to the slanders and misrepresentations of other leading Party members. His comments throw light on the almost schizophrenic frame of mind of the rank and file of the Party at that time. For different reasons neither the Trotskyists nor the anarchists have forgiven Serge his attempts to reconcile what was best in their respective doctrines: the concern with reality and the concern with principle.

Easily available and worthwhile *anarchist* writings on the subject (in English) are virtually non-existent, despite the fact that many anarchists consider this area relevant to their ideas. Emma Goldman's *Living My Life* and Berkman's *The Bolshevik Myth* contain some vivid but highly subjective pages about the

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of individual management in units directly engaged in production' (Robert V. Daniels, *The Conscience of the Revolution* (Cambridge, Mass., 1960), p. 124).

8 Serge's writings on this matter were first brought to the attention of readers in the UK in 1961 (*Solidarity*, I, 7). This text was later reprinted as a pamphlet.

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Kronstadt rebellion. *The Kronstadt Revolt* by Anton Ciliga (produced as a pamphlet in 1942) is an excellent short account which squarely faces up to some of the fundamental issues. It has been unavailable for years. Voline's account, on the other hand, is too simplistic. Complex phenomena like the Kronstadt revolt cannot be meaningfully interpreted by loaded generalizations like 'as Marxists, authoritarians and statist, the Bolsheviks could not permit any freedom or independent action of the masses'. (Many have argued that there are strong Blanquist and even Bakuninist strands in Bolshevism, and that it is precisely these departures from Marxism that are at the root of Bolshevism's 'elitist' ideology and practice.) Voline even reproaches the Kronstadt rebels with 'speaking of power (the power of the Soviets) instead of getting rid of the word and of the idea altogether ...' The practical struggle however was not against 'words' or even 'ideas'. It was a physical struggle against their concrete incarnation in history (in the form of bourgeois institutions). It is a symptom of anarchist muddle-headedness on this score that they can both reproach the Bolsheviks with dissolving the Constituent Assembly<sup>9</sup> ... and the Kronstadt rebels for proclaiming that they stood for soviet power! The 'Soviet anarchists' clearly perceived what was at stake – even if many of their successors fail to. They fought to defend the deepest conquest of October – soviet power – against *all* its usurpers, including the Bolsheviks.

Our own contribution to the fiftieth anniversary celebrations will not consist in the usual panegyrics to the achievements of Russian rocketry. Nor will we chant paeans to Russian pig-iron statistics. Industrial expansion may be the prerequisite for a fuller, better life for all but is in no way synonymous with such a life, unless *all* social relations have

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<sup>9</sup> See Nicolas Walter's article in *Freedom* (October 28, 1967) entitled 'October 1917: No Revolution at All'.

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been revolutionized. We are more concerned at the social costs of Russian achievements.

Some perceived what these costs would be at a very early stage. We are interested in bringing their prophetic warnings to a far wider audience. The final massacre at Kronstadt took place on March 18, 1921, exactly fifty years after the slaughter of the Communards by Thiers and Callifet. The facts about the Commune are well known. But fifty years after the Russian Revolution we still have to seek basic information about Kronstadt. The facts are not easy to obtain. They lie buried under the mountains of calumny and distortion heaped on them by Stalinists and Trotskyists alike.

The publication of this pamphlet in English, at this particular time, is part of this endeavour. Ida Mett's book *La Commune de Cronstadt* was first published in 1938. It was republished in France ten years later but has been unobtainable for several years. In 1962 and 1963 certain parts of it were translated into English and appeared in *Solidarity* (II, 6 to 11). We now have pleasure in bringing to English-speaking readers a slightly abridged version of the book as a whole, which contains material hitherto unavailable in Britain.<sup>10</sup>

Apart from various texts published in Kronstadt itself in March 1921, Ida Mett's book contains Petrichenko's open letter of 1926, addressed to the British Communist Party. Petrichenko was the President of the Kronstadt Provisional Revolutionary Committee. His letter refers to discussions in the Political Bureau of the CPGB on the subject of Kronstadt, discussions which seem to have accepted that there was no extraneous intervention during the uprising. (Members of the

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<sup>10</sup> Pages 9 – 21, dealing with the role of the Navy in the Russian revolutionary movement have been omitted. Although they contain interesting and important material, which we hope will be translated in due course, they are not essential to the main argument.

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CP and others might seek further enlightenment on the matter from King Street, whose archives on the matter should make interesting reading.)

Ida Mett writes from an anarchist viewpoint. Her writings however represent what is best in the revolutionary tradition of 'class struggle' anarchism. She thinks in terms of a collective, proletarian solution to the problems of capitalism. The rejection of the class struggle, the anti-intellectualism, the preoccupation with transcendental morality and with personal salvation that characterize so many of the anarchists of today should not for a minute detract 'Marxists' from paying serious attention to what she writes. We do not necessarily endorse all her judgments and have – in footnotes – corrected one or two minor factual inaccuracies in her text. Some of her generalizations seem to us too sweeping and some of her analyses of the bureaucratic phenomenon too simple to be of real use. But as a chronicle of what took place before, during and after Kronstadt, her account remains unsurpassed.

Her text throws interesting light on the attitude to the Kronstadt uprising shown at the time by various Russian political tendencies (anarchists, Mensheviks, Left and Right SRs, Bolsheviks, etc.). Some whose approach to politics is superficial in the extreme (and for whom a smear or a slogan is a substitute for real understanding) will point accusingly to some of this testimony, to some of these resolutions and manifestos as evidence irrevocably damning the Kronstadt rebels. 'Look', they will say, 'what the Mensheviks and Right SR's were saying. Look at how they were calling for a return to the Constituent Assembly, and at the same time proclaiming their solidarity with Kronstadt. Isn't this proof positive that Kronstadt was a counter-revolutionary upheaval? You yourselves admit that rogues like Victor Chernov, President elect of the

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Constituent Assembly, offered to help the Kronstadters? What further evidence is needed?’

We are not afraid of presenting *all* the facts to our readers. Let them judge for themselves. It is our firm conviction that most Trotskyists and Leninists are – and are kept – as ignorant of this period of Russian history as Stalinists are of the period of the Moscow Trials. At best they vaguely sense the presence of skeletons in the cupboard. At worst they vaguely parrot what their leaders tell them, intellectually too lazy or politically too well-conditioned to probe for themselves. Real revolutions are never ‘pure’. They unleash the deepest passions of men. People actively participate or are dragged into the vortex of such movements for a variety of often contradictory reasons. Consciousness and false consciousness are inextricably mixed. A river in full flood inevitably carries a certain amount of rubbish. A revolution in full flood carries a number of political corpses – and may even momentarily give them a semblance of life.

During the Hungarian Revolution of 1956 many were the messages of verbal or moral support for the rebels, emanating from the West, piously preaching the virtues of bourgeois democracy or of free enterprise. The objectives of those who spoke in these terms were anything but the institution of a classless society. But their support for the rebels remained purely verbal, particularly when it became clear to them what the real objectives of the revolution were: a fundamental democratization of Hungarian institutions *without* a reversion to private ownership of the means of production.

The backbone of the Hungarian revolution was the network of workers’ councils. Their main demands were for workers’ management of production and for a government based on the councils. These facts justified the support of revolutionaries throughout the world. Despite the Mindszentys. Despite the

Smallholders and Social-Democrats – or their shadows – now trying to jump on to the revolutionary bandwagon. The class criterion is the decisive one.

Similar considerations apply to the Kronstadt rebellion. Its core was the revolutionary sailors. Its main objectives were ones with which no real revolutionary could disagree. That others sought to take advantage of the situation is inevitable – and irrelevant. It is a question of who is calling the tune.

Attitudes to the Kronstadt events, expressed nearly fifty years after the event often provide deep insight into the political thinking of contemporary revolutionaries. They may in fact provide a deeper insight into their conscious or unconscious aims than many a learned discussion about economics, or philosophy, or about other episodes of revolutionary history.

It is a question of one's basic attitude as to what socialism is all about. What are epitomized in the Kronstadt events are some of the most difficult problems of revolutionary strategy and revolutionary ethics: the problems of ends and means, of the relations between Party and masses, in fact of whether a Party is necessary at all.

Can the working class by itself only develop a 'trade union consciousness'.<sup>11</sup> Should it even be allowed, at all times, to go that far?<sup>12</sup>

Or can the working class develop a deeper consciousness and understanding of its interests than can any organization allegedly acting on its behalf? When the Stalinists or Trotsky-

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11 Lenin proclaimed so explicitly in his *What Is To Be Done?* (1902).

12 In a statement to the tenth Party Congress (1921) Lenin refers to a mere discussion on the trade unions as an 'absolutely impermissible luxury' which 'we' should not have permitted. These remarks speak unwitting volumes on the subject (and incidentally deal decisively with those who seek desperately for an 'evolution' in their Lenin).



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ists speak of Kronstadt as ‘an essential action against the class enemy’, when more ‘sophisticated’ revolutionaries refer to it as a ‘tragic necessity’, one is entitled to pause for a moment. One is entitled to ask how seriously they accept Marx’s dictum that ‘the emancipation of the working class is the task of the working class itself’. Do they take this seriously or do they pay mere lip-service to the words? Do they identify socialism with the autonomy (organizational and ideological) of the working class? Or do they see themselves, with their wisdom as to the ‘historical interests’ of others, and with their judgments as to what should be ‘permitted’, as the leadership around which the future elite will crystallize and develop? One is entitled not only to ask... but also to suggest the answer!

*November, 1967*