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Title
"Internationalized Bolishevism"—The Bolisheviks and the International, 1914-1917

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Citation
Acta Slavica Iaponica, 7, 17-32

Issue Date
1989

Doc URL
http://hdl.handle.net/2115/7985

Type
bulletin (article)

File Information
KJ00000034152.pdf
“Internationalized Bolshevism”:
The Bolsheviks and the International, 1914–1917

Akito Yamanouchi

1. INTRODUCTION

The First World War brought new demarcations to the Socialist movement, but also new lines of reorganization. The choice between internationalism and social patriotism destroyed some former divergences and gave the first impetus toward rapprochement. I previously investigated how the process came about in the Zimmerwald movement. In this paper I take up the case of the Russian Social Democratic Labor Party (RSDLP). In it, a new image of Bolshevism is stressed.

First of all, I mention that I attach importance to the views of R. V. Daniels. He has analyzed the new development of the Russian Socialist movement during the World War: “The question of defensism versus internationalism cut across the familiar factional differences and created an entirely new alignment.” On the lines of this new division, the attempts at reunion were made. It was the party, rallied and reorganized around the principle of anti-war internationalism, that was to become the victorious party of the October Revolution.

In addition, I pay due attention to the following observation of S. F. Cohen, too: “Unlike the legend, then, Bolshevism came to power and for several years remained a diverse movement led by dissimilar men and women who had followed various roads to the October revolution. The party was less an ideological or even organizational monolith than “a negotiated federation between groups, groupings, factions, and ‘tendencies,’” though this its leaders sternly denied.”

Such a diversity derives mainly from the fact that there was an endemic tendency, i.e., a pedigree of Left Opposition or Left Bolshevism in the history of the RSDLP. Through studying the trials and errors finally leading from diversity to unity during the World War, I am going to confirm the image of Bolshevism presented by Daniels and Cohen.

2. ATTEMPTS WITHIN THE BOLSHEVIKS

The Leninist position stood right in the way of the Russian Social Democrats who repeated the attempts at the unification. In contrast to his attitude of compromise toward internationalists in Western Europe, Lenin showed no such tolerance in dealing with his Russian opponents. He was inclined to connect the ideological difference directly with organizational one. Some attempts overcoming the Leninist bounds, however, began to be made both within and without the Bolsheviks.

We start with those within the Bolsheviks. From the end of February to the beginning of March 1915, a conference of the Bolshevik Sections Abroad of the RSDLP, the so-called Bern Conference, was held. In it, a resolution on the tasks of the Party was presented by Iu. Piatakov and E. B. Bosh. Actually, it was rejected, but marked a difference between their position and the Leninist one: In the sphere of international policy, the resolution says, in order to start immediately restoring the work toward the creation of the Third International, and making and strengthening contacts with the Left elements of Socialist organizations,
agreements with other sections of the Party that share the international point of view, such as
the group that issues the newspaper *Nashe Slovo*, are fully admitted and welcomed.\(^6\)

A proposal to issue a journal by Piatakov and others was also discussed in the conference. It is noteworthy that the question whether Trotsky should be invited to the editorial board provoked much discussion so early.\(^7\) After the conference, an agreement between the editorial board of the central organ, *Sotsial-Demokrat*, and “the Kievskis” (Piatakov and Bosh) was reached on jointly publishing a collection of theoretical articles. The latter required Trotsky and his adherents to participate regularly. Similar requests were made to K. Radek, the Dutch Left Socialists and the like.\(^8\) The concentration of wider forces had been intended.

The plan was realized under the title *Kommunist*. It was first published in Geneva in September 1915; not as an official organ, but as “the publication of P. and N. Kievskii” who furnished funds for it.\(^9\) By the time of the foundation, Bukharin had joined the group, while Lenin and Zinoviev demanded two seats on the editorial board. Negotiations between them on the management after the foundation were hard. In the meantime, Bukharin, Piatakov and Bosh moved from Switzerland to Sweden, and started their own activities aimed at direct contacts with Russia. On those activities, the Central Committee did not invest the group with full power, and in November 1915 the group stood face to face with Lenin on the national question. The opposition was not overcome, and at last no further numbers were issued.\(^10\) (Trotsky’s declaration of rejection, mentioned later, on the participation in the editorial board of *Kommunist*, was to shed light on the narrowness of the Bolsheviks in those days, from the opposite side.)

At that time, in the international arena, cooperation of internationalists was about to be promoted in connection with the foundation of *Vorbote*. From the Bolsheviks, Lenin and Zinoviev participated. The project founding an international periodical of the Left Socialists was originally initiated by A. Pannekoek and Radek, but they were short of funds. It was H. Roland Holst who furnished them. Her intention as a patroness could not be ignored. They tentatively planned to enlarge the scale of cooperation, and to add W. van Ravesteyn, editor of *De Tribune*, and Trotsky to the editorial board of the three. Roland Holst, who had kept pace with Trotsky at the Zimmerwald conference, recommended him. She expected the participation of the *Nashe Slovo* group, by whom she herself had been asked for cooperation.

Trotsky agreed to the cooperation in principle, but was still distrustful of the Leninist group.\(^11\) The reason for his final rejection was found in his letter to Roland Holst at the beginning of 1916: He doubted whether the periodical could concentrate wider forces without obtaining the consent of German and French comrades. Indeed, he required that the right to propagate revolutionary-socialist tendencies in the periodical be guaranteed, but believed that the Leninist group held the *de facto* editorial power. The problem was whether both groups could work together. “Leninism, however, means the exclusion of every collectivity.”\(^12\)

It is true that about March 1916 Lenin wrote to Zinoviev that “we had better hold Trotsky in *Sbornik 'Sotsial-Demokrata';* we must hold him thoroughly.”\(^13\) But their opposition was not yet disarmed.

3. ATTEMPTS WITHOUT THE BOLSHEVIKS

As for the attempts without the Bolsheviks, the first was made by the *Nashe Slovo* group in Paris at the beginning of 1915. When an Inter-Allied Socialist conference in London was scheduled for February, the group proposed a joint demonstration of internationalists at the conference against social patriotism, to both the Central Committee and the Organizational
Committee of the RSDLP. Both Committees were agreed in principle, but they were opposed to each other concerning the criteria by which internationalists were to be united. As on earlier occasions, no unity was achieved. Such attempts, however, were to be repeated. I will pay special attention to their progress.

A. Lunacharskii said in his memoirs: “We sincerely wished to really stand on the new ground of internationalism and to arrange the complete unification of all our front from Lenin to Martov.” Lunacharskii was to some extent the initiator of the slogan: “Down with defenders of the fatherland. Long live unity of all internationalists!” In fact, at the beginning of 1915 he took the initiative in urging cooperation in the *Nashe Slovo* group.

In the meantime, a change took place in the *Nashe Slovo* group. In March 1916 Martov withdrew from the editorial board after a hot discussion on personal participation in social-patriotic periodicals. After that, Trotsky’s influence was to be expanded. In February 1915, for the first time, Trotsky recounted publicly the inner story of his disagreements with the Mensheviks. And in May, June and July he published a series of editorials entitled “Our Position:” The old divisions of Russian socialism have been liquidated. The grouping in the International is now decided by the attitude toward the war. *Nashe Slovo* refuses to support either the Organizational Committee or the Central Committee; it rejects both the Menshevik charge that it is contributing to a split in the Party and in the International, and the Bolshevik charge that it is guilty of “a half-way policy.” Here, the third “Our Position” was expressed; though the principal consideration was never to insist on autonomy.

That position was expressed more clearly in his “Open Letter to the Editorial Board of the periodical *Kommunist,*” published on June 4, 1915: “In no circumstances I can further agree with your opinion, which is emphasized by a resolution, that Russia’s defeat would be a ‘lesser evil.’ ” From the position of striving for a joint struggle of the internationalists against the social patriots, Trotsky regarded the *Kommunist* group too narrow. He pointed out that the Bolsheviks were seeking an ally in the Left Socialists of Western Europe on one hand and giving harsh treatment to the Russian organizations, except themselves, on the other. In Trotsky’s opinion, this attitude showed the limitation of “the standpoint of the factional perspective.” His firm belief was expressed in the conclusion: “Close contact with the revolutionary elements of the International......will inspire you or even compel you to broaden your criteria and change many of your standards of value, and upon this new basis the collaboration......will be possible and productive.”

Early in 1916 an appeal for unity was intensified especially by pro-Bolshevik Antonov-Ovseenko and others in *Nashe Slovo.* In the middle of 1915 they had already argued that their rapprochement with the *Sotsial-Demokrat* group was inevitable for the concentration of all Russian internationalists. Immediately after Antonov-Ovseenko declared his withdrawal from the Menshevik group in Paris, he contributed an article to *Nashe Slovo,* which appeared in its “Free Tribune” columns on January 18 and 19, 1916: “so-called ‘Leninism’ is overcoming its specific sectarian features......the workers’ groups, connected with *Sotsial-Demokrat,* now represent in Russia the only active force of consistent internationalist spirit.” From that he draws the following conclusion: “For really non-factional internationalists in Russia, there is no other organizational way out than uniting into one organization with the ‘Leninists,’ which, in most cases, means joining in the ‘Leninist’ organization......Of course, there exists the danger that, through such unification in the provinces, we shall forfeit individual valuable features......but the spirit of the class movement, which lives not in literary laboratories......but in the dust and tension of mass political struggle, will brace itself and boldly develop.”

Along with this attempt, there was one more by the *Vpered* group, with Lunacharskii. In
the first issue of *Vpered* reissued in August 1915, the editorial board declared its tasks, one of which was as follows: "As revolutionary internationalists, we will conduct agitation for the unification of all revolutionary-international elements." In August 1916 Lunacharskii, who had taken the Zimmerwald manifest as a basis for the unification of all Russian internationalists just after the Zimmerwald conference, made to the Zimmerwald Committee (ISC) the following request: In addition to the Central Committee and the Organizational Committee, there is at least a third group, fighting for the unification of the Party. At present it is centered around *Nashe Slovo.*

The attempt of the *Vpered* group was to be continued until the negotiations with Zinoviev and Lenin who were scheming to return to Russia after the outbreak of the February Revolution. It is noteworthy that Lunacharskii and others had consistently followed a policy: Even if we fuse politically with the Central Committee, our ideological independence should be safeguarded.

The above attempts from two sides around *Nashe Slovo*, though involving subtle differences, seem to have become factors forcing Trotsky and others to moving in close to the Bolsheviks. One month after Martov had withdrawn from the editorial board of *Nashe Slovo*, it declared as follows: We “occupy a critical position with regard to the special slogan and method of Leninism” but aim at “closer political cooperation with very active and influential group of Leninists.”

Subsequently, in August 1916 Trotsky drew up “Grouping in Russian Social Democracy (Theses),” in which the *Sotsial-Demokrat* group was highly esteemed. Indeed, the position which had been expressed in the “Open Letter to the Editorial Board of the periodical *Kommunist*” in the previous year was often repeated there. But some slight changes were shown: Although the criticism on the Bolshevik slogans of “civil war” and “Russia’s defeat as a lesser evil” was repeated, Trotsky came to mention that such negative features of the Bolsheviks never hindered them from recognizing the urgent necessity of co-ordinated action with *Sotsial-Demokrat* and, practically, such co-ordination could be only realized on condition that preliminary political and organizational agreement between various groups within and without Russia was reached. Here “the creation of ideological and organizational connections” came to be presupposed in theory.

It is brought to realization in the unification between the *Mezhraionty* and the Bolshevik party after the Russian February Revolution. What I want to emphasize is the former’s context leading to the unification, and especially the role played in it of the cooperation between Trotsky and the Bolsheviks, including Bukharin, in America at the beginning of 1917. The very cooperation in America prefigured the fusion of all Russian internationalists. It will be treated in the last chapter, and what is still to be mentioned is that the unification was never based on a one-sided concession from the *Mezhraionty.*

On May 23, 1917 the *Mezhraionty* rejected Lenin’s resolution and adopted Trotsky’s on unification with the Bolshevik party, succeeding to their attempts since the beginning of the War. The *Mezhraionty* thought that the unification was only to be realized by an all Russian congress of organizations and groups “standing on the point of view of Zimmerwald and Kienthal.”

Taking the case of Trotsky, let us show here again that the Zimmerwald movement became a guiding principle in their attempts. When he published his reviews during the War in book form, i.e., “War and Revolution,” he highly estimated the movement in a preface: “The Zimmerwald conference gave great stimulus to the development of the anti-war movement and, beyond doubt, promoted the legalization of socialist grouping.” Early in his review of
October 22, 1915, he had said that in essence the forming of the true Socialist International would not be accomplished around the Bureau of the Second International (ISB), but around the ISC. And he foretold that efforts of Russian internationalists would be turned in that direction. In 1916 he emphasized the struggle for the Third International centering around the ISC. In the “Program of Peace” drawn up on May 25, 1917, just after returning home, he stated expressly that in Zimmerwald and Kienthal revolutionary socialists had definitely formulated common principles of the international revolutionary struggle.

On that standpoint was based the above resolution of unification by the Mezhrayonty. It was because “Russian Bolshevism was internationalized (интернационализировался),” that Trotsky agreed entirely to the resolution. He added, “the Bolsheviks were becoming less Bolshevik (разболевшились) and I cannot call myself a Bolshevik.”

Let me make an additional remark on that unification. Until the realization of it, trial and error prevailed. At that time there were two positions within the Mezhrayonty: One was the majority’s, that of Iurenev and others, who strove for the unification, from the Leninists to the Menshevik-Internationalists inclusive, to the end, in order to “hold as many internationalists as possible in our ranks.” The other was the minority’s, that of Trotsky; there was only one possible unification with the Bolsheviks under the existing conditions that the Menshevik-Internationalists had not yet declared their final decision. It is true that, in the result, the unification was realized in the latter’s direction. But in the former’s attempt, which, it is to be regretted, did not bear fruit, the principle of concentration of all anti-war internationalists, for which they had striven all during the War, was more clearly exhibited, I think. Iurenev wrote down, too: “It is time to refuse the old boundary mark between ‘Bolshevism and Menshevism.’”

There is no reason we should view the opposition between the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks as fixed fast in the current of those days. No matter what we call it, the unification was practically on the point of achievement beyond the limits of Leninist Bolshevism which, according to Trotsky’s term, was capable of “subordinating the problems of political action to those of organizational demarcation.” “Internationalized Bolshevism” was to undergo a transformation again in the swirl of the intraparty conflict in Soviet Russia in the 1920s and 1930s.

4. NOT “VACILLATING” THOUGHT OF BUKHARIN

In 1930 in the swirl of the intraparty conflict, an analysis similar to what I am trying here was presented by D. Baevskii from an extremely critical position. In his article, “Lenin’s Struggle against the ‘Vacillating Thought’ of Bukharin,” he examined theoretically the ideological opposition of Lenin and Bukharin, defending the former’s position: He considered Bukharin’s “vacillating thought” in connection with Trotsky’s and, moreover, the Dutch and Polish Left’s. He defined their attempts during the War as the “‘Internationalization’ of the Bolsheviks,” also regarding their position as “Revolutionary Centrism,” and denied both possibilities.

Is it true that Bukharin’s thought was “vacillating”? In the history of Bolshevik ideology, the years 1914–16 were a formative period. As Cohen has emphasized, Bukharin played an important role in the formation of the new ideology, especially on imperialism and state. The pioneering consideration was bestowed by Bukharin, though it was to be succeeded and finally authorized by Lenin.

By the autumn of 1915 Bukharin finished “Imperialism and World Economy.” It was the
first systematic theory of imperialism by a Bolshevik and antedated Lenin's "Imperialism" by several months. While noting that mobilization for war had been largely responsible for the state's extensive intervention in the economy, he insisted that it was a permanent development: 'the future belongs to economic forms that are close to state capitalism.' What next Bukharin was obliged to examine was "the new interventionist role of the state." By July 1916 his manuscript, "Toward a Theory of the Imperialist State" was written.

Lenin's reaction to that theory of the modern imperialist raping state is mentioned later, but I add here that there was another reason Lenin was against Bukharin: Lenin believed that Bukharin's actions were liable to deviate from those within the Bolshevik party organization, and that Bukharin established contact with various non-Bolshevik groups. In fact, Bukharin acted together with numerous socialists in Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Sweden, Norway, Denmark and the U. S. A. for five and a half years before and during the War.

From his contacts with them, he added important ideas to his ideology. With the Dutch Left Socialists, Bukharin shared the theory of national question. In addition, "A Draft Program of the Revolutionary Socialist League and the Social Democratic Party of Holland," which had been submitted to the ISC at the beginning of February 1916, aroused his concern.

His eyes to the Dutch Left's thought were further opened by Pannekoek. Bukharin's aim in a theory of state was to rehabilitate the anti-statism of original Marxism, and it was Pannekoek who had earlier returned to the anti-statist theme. Bukharin wrote in his letter to Lenin in October 1916: "A great service was rendered by Pannekoek in that he, almost sole, understood the actuality of the problem [on the state]." Bukharin learned this from Pannekoek's article, "Imperialism and the Tasks of the Proletariat" published in No. 1-2 of Kommunist (also reprinted in the first issue of Vorbote): "The state power is not a simple neutral object of the class struggle, but a weapon and a fortress of the bourgeoisie, [i.e.] its strongest support, without which the bourgeoisie could never retain its place. Therefore, the struggle of the proletariat is first of all a struggle against the state power." As the means, mass action was advocated.

Such an assertion had already been made by Pannekoek on the eve of the World War: "The struggle of the proletariat is not simply a struggle against the bourgeoisie over the state power as an object, but a struggle against the state power......The content of this revolution is the destruction and dissolution of the state's means of force by the proletariat's means of force." This was written in the midst of his controversy with K. Kautsky on the "new" tactics under new circumstances, i.e., at the stage of imperialism, and was also a basic concept from which the theory of mass action of the proletariat was drawn. The theory of state, not including that of mass action with which Lenin never agreed, was to be taken up in his "State and Revolution."

Nevertheless, Lenin's tackling of the theory of state was late, after he had received the above-mentioned manuscript from Bukharin. As is apparent in the letters (except, if any, undiscovered or unpublished ones) of the persons concerned, the "vacillating" of Bukharin's thought was not found even on the eve of his visit to America in October 1916. A change, rather, occurred in Lenin. Through the end of 1916 into the beginning of 1917, Bukharin's theory of state turned Lenin's eyes to the importance of, and was a decisive factor in starting the study which was to achieve distinguished results in his "State and Revolution."

In the meantime, Bukharin's theory of state, though an abridged edition, was printed in various Left Socialist organs: Novyi Mir (New York) of November 11, 1916; De Tribune (Amsterdam) of November 24 and 25; Jugend-Internationale (Zurich) of December 1 and Arbeiterpolitik (Bremen) of December 9. Also: Klassekampen (Christiania, or Oslo) and
Stormklockan (Stockholm). 55

When it was printed in Arbeiterpolitik, the following editorial note was included: “Comrade Bukharin, who also in the problem of the right of self-determination is in opposition to the older leaders of the Bolsheviks on the same ground as we stand,...... 56 In the line-up of those organs I feel an international link of the Left Wing camps in those days. It was the very prerequisite to realization of the “new Bolshevism,” i. e., Bukharin’s “Bolshevism on Western European scale” (whose contents are only known by brief comment of Lenin on it 57), wasn’t it?

Let us recognize Bukharin’s concern for avoiding a rupture with Lenin at that time. At the beginning of October 1916 Bukharin, who was on the point of departure for America, wrote to Lenin: “At any rate I ask you one thing: If you will carry on polemics, etc., preserve such a tone as not to lead to a rupture. It would be very painful to me, painful beyond my strength, if joint work, even in the future, should become impossible. For you I hold the greatest respect and look upon you as my teacher of revolution and love you.” 58

Such an attitude was in Lenin, too. Baevskii emphasized that Lenin had taken up and criticized Bukharin’s “Bolshevism on Western European scale” in his article, “On the Arising Trend of Imperialist Economism,” written in August-September 1916. 59 But we should pay attention to the fact that the article was, in the end, not published by Lenin and the name of Bukharin was not mentioned in it. There is a technique which Lenin often made use of when he still saw the possibility of cooperation even if there existed an opposition. Lenin made the same urgent request to Bukharin just before starting for America as he had done to A. Kollontai a year before, i. e., the publication in English of the manifest of the Zimmerwald Left, etc., and the cooperation with the Bolsheviks and the Latvian Socialists in the U. S. 60

The cooperation between Bukharin and Trotsky, who had already presupposed in theory the cooperation with the Bolsheviks in the days of Nashe Slovo, was to be realized in America at the beginning of 1917. In the following last chapter the actual conditions of the cooperation on a more international scale, including them, are made clear.

5. THE COOPERATION BETWEEN BUKHARIN AND TROTSKY IN AMERICA

Both Bukharin and Trotsky left their footprints in the U. S. in spite of their brief visit. During their stay in America, the number of times articles by Bukharin and Trotsky were printed in Novyi Mir in New York was 35 and 47, respectively. The former’s started with “Expensiveness and Capitalism” of November 7, 1916, and ended with “Struggle against the War in Wartime” of April 10, 1917. The latter’s went from “Long Live the Struggle” of January 16, 1917 to one on March 27, including serials and those under a pen name or unsigned. 61 Nor did they remain only contributors. Bukharin was elected editorial secretary at the general meeting of the comrades association of Novyi Mir. 62 Trotsky was also recommended for comradeship of Novyi Mir. 63 It was in the Russian Federation of the Socialist Party of the U. S. that the concentration on the more extensive scale of Russian Socialists in America was seen. According to Novyi Mir, January 27, 1917, in the nomination of candidates for the Russian Federation Committee, Bukharin was nominated as secretary in the second rank, and also as a member in the third rank. Trotsky was also nominated as member, though it was the lowest rank. 64 Various branches of the Russian Federation held numerous lecture meetings featuring Bukharin and Trotsky, and the invitations and reports appeared often enough in the pages of Novyi Mir. As far as I know the number of lecture meetings of Bukharin and Trotsky from
Novyi Mir (I cannot be sure because of some missing issues), it was more than 30 and more than 20, respectively. The former started with a lecture meeting held by the Central Committee of the Russian Federation, with the theme of “Europe and the War,” in New York, November 21, 1916, and ended with an address in the farewell meeting held by the Russian Branch in New York, April 3, 1917, on the eve of the leaving for Russia of the second group, including Bukharin and V. Volodarskii. The latter started with a welcome reception for Trotsky in New York, January 25, 1917, and ended with three meetings in New York, i.e., welcome meetings of the Russian Revolution and a farewell meeting on March 26, three days before the departure of the first group, including Trotsky (to be mentioned later).

First, let us see closely the case of Bukharin. “In the ‘American’ period Bukharin became a mature orator and agitator.” The locations of his lecture meetings and the like were roughly divided into two areas: New York and its outskirts, and the inland areas such as Chicago and Detroit. The latter seems to have resulted from a decision in the general meeting held by the three Russian Branches in Detroit at the beginning of February 1917. That is, the meeting decided to request Trotsky to give lectures, or, if he was not available, ask Bukharin. The lecture tour started at the beginning of March and continued about a month, and, on the way, the outbreak of the Russian Revolution was reported. In a lecture, “Russia and the War” in Chicago, March 18, Bukharin spoke of the tasks of the Russian proletariat in that history-making period. In a mass meeting in Chicago dedicated to the Russian Revolution five days later, where 5,000 gathered, he emphasized that the Revolution had only just started. Due to the lecture tour, he was to be a little late in leaving for Russia, but he cut short his tour, which was scheduled until the middle of April, and came back to New York, attending the above-mentioned farewell meeting on April 3.

As for the sponsors, most were the Russian Branches of the Socialist Party in various districts. Others were the Latvian Socialists, the Socialist Propaganda League which the Latvians had organized with a Dutch Socialist, S. J. Rutgers and the American Left Wing, and the Bolshevik Section in New York. The last held a lecture meeting on January 6, 1917, on the theme of “Social-Patriotism and the Third International.” As for the theme of the lectures, most were concerned with the present war, and especially the problem of defending the fatherland. There were some enlightening topics, such as “Anarchism and Socialism.”

Next, let us examine the contents of the lectures more closely. On December 10, 1916 Bukharin was invited to an international mass meeting in Boston. It was held under the joint auspices of the Russian and the Latvian Branch there. From this, the contact of Bukharin with the Latvians, which Lenin had requested, is ascertained. Following J. Berzin’s speech in Latvian, Bukharin spoke in Russian of the failure of Socialist parties on the issue of “War and the Working Class.” According to the news of December 25, the latest assembly of the Russian Branch in New York emphasized the necessity of a wide organizational campaign for peace, and decided to hold serial lectures on the problem of war and imperialism and to invite Bukharin as lecturer. On the basis of another decision at that time, an urgent discussion meeting was held by the Russian Branch on December 29 and a report on “Defense of the Fatherland and Social Democracy” was made by Bukharin. Thus the connection between Bukharin and the Russian Branch was always close. The above-mentioned lecture tour was also under the auspices of the Russian Branches at each place, and the entrance fee and others were allocated for his traveling expenses.

It is noteworthy that Bukharin criticized directly the American Socialist Party in his article, “American Socialist Party, Peace and the International” printed in Novyi Mir, January 10,
This was a response to the resolution, requesting the ISB to convene an International Socialist conference for restoration of the International, which the National Executive Committee of the Party in Chicago had adopted three days before. In it, Bukharin pointed out that two Socialisms and two Internationals, i.e., the old Second International and the Zimmerwald-International, had existed. He insisted that the Socialist Party which, at least according to official documents, had as a matter of course participated in the Zimmerwald Committee, should maintain the relations with the Zimmerwald organization. Actually, however, the Executive Committee was thinking about another thing. It was severely criticized by Bukharin because the resolution had been sent to the ISB, and yet had not mentioned the ISC at all.

As the U.S. showed a strong tendency to participate in the War, the anti-war campaign from all strata of socialists was intensified. Various parts of the country, not to speak of New York, had a rush of anti-war mass meetings. In the turmoil, it is ascertained, Bukharin and Trotsky attended meetings together. One was an international anti-war meeting convened by the Russian Socialists in New York on February 8, 1917. In it, an anti-war resolution of the Executive Committee of the State of New York of the Socialist Party, adopted in an anti-war protest meeting which had drawn about 4,000 in Carnegie Hall three days before, was criticized on account of its moderation. In the editorial of Novyi Mir, the same February 8, the resolution was also criticized by Trotsky: The problem of defending the fatherland, etc., was not taken up, but however that may be, “a great obligation,” i.e., carrying out the resolution adopted in cooperation with bourgeois pacifism, was imposed on the Party. Subsequently, in the international anti-war meeting the same day, Trotsky and Bukharin spoke in Russian and L. Lore in German. Other speakers were Berzin, Lithuanian and Ukrainian comrades, and, moreover, a Japanese Socialist, Sen Katayama. In a resolution adopted before the closing, an anti-war movement and solidarity with the American working class were proclaimed by five hundred Russian, German, Latvian, Lithuanian and Ukrainian socialists and workers.

Another was an anti-war meeting held at the Bronx, February 12, under the auspices of the New York Branch of the Socialist Propaganda League. Bukharin spoke in Russian and Trotsky in German. (Trotsky’s preparing the ground for an anti-war movement in the American Socialist Party was to continue. Trotsky and L. C. Fraina proposed a resolution, which was to be voted down, to a membership meeting of Local New York on March 4, resisting conscription, supporting mass movement organized to refuse military service in the event of war, and, furthermore, declaring “war upon war.”)

Next, as for Trotsky’s lectures and the like, first of all, there were many for the Germans as well as contributions to Die New Yorker Volkszeitung through the good offices of Lore. Trotsky’s lecture activity was striking indeed. A witness described later: “It is understandable that the Russian colony hurried first to organize some meetings after the news of the Russian Revolution. And Trotsky of all, of course, was the highlight of gathering. Meetings were sometimes delayed for some hours, because Trotsky was taking part in some meetings convened simultaneously and physically could not be in time everywhere. But the public patiently waited for him, thirsting to hear the words that would throw light on the momentous event that had occurred in Russia.”

According to Novyi Mir, the locale of his lectures was almost entirely in and around New York; only twice did he go to Philadelphia. The line-up of sponsors, however, was multicolored: the Russian Branch of the Socialist Party, Novyi Mir, the German Branch and the Jewish Branch; also, the Socialist Propaganda League and, it is noteworthy, the Bolshevik Section (to be mentioned later).

As for the theme of the lectures and the like, though less than a half are known, many
were concerned with the War and the European Socialist movement. For example, Trotsky reported on “Zimmerwald and Kienthal” in a regular gathering of the Russian Branch in New York, March 2, 1917.84

Trotsky's visit to America was a sensational event. Printing his letters to the editorial board twice before his arrival, Novyi Mir called readers' attention to Trotsky who was sailing for America after his deportation from Spain.85 He arrived at New York on January 14,86 and, after a preparatory period, a grandiose welcome meeting was held on January 25 under the joint auspices of the comrade association of Novyi Mir and the Russian Socialist groups in New York. It became a great protest meeting against the reactionary European governments, one after another of which had deported Trotsky. He spoke of the split of European socialism after the outbreak of the War and of new Left Wing forces that were on the rise from it. He asked the American comrades as well to grasp the situation. He ended the speech with confidence: “The coming epoch will be that of social revolution.”87

To use Th. Draper's expression, “the Left Wing Americans and émigrés made up a closely knit little international community in those days.”88 A symbolic scene occurred in an international mass meeting of revolutionary internationalists in New York on March 20. The meeting was held jointly by Socialist internationalists in order to throw light upon the Russian Revolution, which had just been reported, from the view point of the European Socialist Revolution. First, Lore spoke in German: The solidarity between the Russian revolutionary proletariat and the German one was mentioned, and the spread of the Russian Revolution to Germany and, thereafter, the World Revolution were surveyed. Next, from the Finnish Federation, S. Nuorteva spoke in Finnish: Finland has been emancipated at the sacrifice of the blood of Russian revolutionaries and we, the Finnish, will always be with you, Russian revolutionaries. L. B. Boudin spoke in English: The Russian Revolution is the beginning of all European and World Revolution and, first of all, we wait for the coming day of the German Revolution. Trotsky's speech in Russian followed: The present Russian government is that of Liberals and it must be replaced by the revolutionary one; then the peace will be declared and supported by the German proletariat, too. There were also speeches in Yiddish, Lithuanian and Latvian. Thus the meeting became that of solidarity with the Russian proletariat fighting under the slogan, “the People's Republic and Peace.”89

Four days after that, in New York, there was a grand concert and ball to celebrate the Russian Revolution. The proceeds were to be sent to the revolutionary proletariat fighting in Russia. At the same time, the speeches on the Revolution were given: Trotsky in Russian; Lore in German; and Fraina in English. Trotsky's speech became a farewell address before his departure.90 All this was sponsored by the New York Section of the Bolsheviks and the Latvian Branch of the American Socialist Party. Judging from the above-mentioned facts that Trotsky and Bukharin attended some meetings together, and that they participated in Novyi Mir and, moreover, the Russian Branch of the Socialist Party, “his[Trotsky's] first association with any Bolshevik circle,” though it was not always backed by their ideological agreement, is ascertained here.91 (In addition, the possibility of the Bolshevization of Novyi Mir by Bukharin and Kollontai, which has been described in a recent biography of Kollontai as well,92 is all the more questionable. During the second stay in America from September 1, 1916 to January 27, 1917, Kollontai contributed only one article63 on a women's problem to, and, at that time, even a mention on her activity did not occur in, Novyi Mir.)

On the side of the Bolshevik Section, too, a unification was already being striven for. In a statement of the New York Section, which had been established one year before, printed in Novyi Mir, June 1916, it was stressed that the European Left Wing, including the Central
Committee of the RSDLP, was on the point of unification around Zimmerwald, and the propagation of the idea of Zimmerwald in America and the convocation of an international gathering in favor of material support to the ISC were appealed for. The New York Section also consolidated relations with the Socialist Propaganda League. On January 17, 1917 the Section discussed its relations with the League on the basis of a report of Berzin and reached the following decision: The Section now affirms that the League takes the standpoint of international revolutionary socialism and that the League and its organ, The Internationalist, can serve well the unification of international and revolutionary elements in the American Socialist Party. Seeing that the League has still some vacillations and deviations, the Section refrains from participating in it as an organization, until it overcomes them. The Section, however, supports personal participation.

Not only the Section and the League, but the Russian Left Wing in America was concentrating its force. On February 17, an international conference was held in New York on the initiative of the Russian Branch of the Socialist Party. Participants were the editorial board of Novyi Mir, the Russian Branch, the Latvian Branch, the Ukrainian Branch, the Lithuanian Branch, the Bolshevik Section of the RSDLP, the Socialist Propaganda League and the Socialist-Revolutionary group. In it, the following resolution was adopted: The conference is to be organized permanently and to be called the “International Conference of Socialist Organizations and Groups.” The conference strives for the unification of international and revolutionary elements of socialists and professional organizations in various places in order to fight against social-patriots. Furthermore, the conference supports European comrades fighting against militarism and reaction, and declares its official adherence to the Zimmerwald movement, regarding the ISC as “the embryo of the Third International.” And S. M. Semkov of the Bolshevik Section and Novyi Mir became the secretary of the Provisional Executive Committee and the address for contacts with the secretary, respectively.

In such circumstances, the outbreak of the Russian February Revolution was reported, and the first group returning home, including Trotsky, was to leave for Russia on March 27, which would cause a serious loss to such a concentration of forces. They had “the day before been given a boisterous farewell by a multilingual gathering of Socialists.” Three of those gatherings were reported in Novyi Mir. Two were mass meetings to celebrate the Russian Revolution, held by Russian groups. In one, in Brooklyn, money was raised for the revolutionaries returning home. The last was a farewell mass meeting for Trotsky, held officially by the German Federation of the Socialist Party.

Here, I take up a meeting which was to serve as an important springboard for the unification of the American Left Wing. It was held at Lore’s home in Brooklyn on the evening, perhaps, of January 15, 1917. The attendants definitely identified were Trotsky, Bukharin, Kollontai, Volodarskii, G. I. Chudnovskii, Boudin, Lore, Fraima, J. D. Williams (representing the Socialist Propaganda League of Boston), Rutgers and Katayama. The aim of the meeting was to discuss a program of action for the Left Socialists, for the purpose of organizing the radical forces in the American Socialist movement. A heated discussion between Trotsky and Bukharin dominated the meeting. Trotsky supported staying in the Socialist Party, but proposed, first of all, to found an independent organ in order to express the Left Wing’s attitude. Another group with Bukharin and others wanted the Left Wing to split away from the Socialist Party, and insisted on founding a separate organization with its own periodical. As a result of voting, the latter was voted down. Instead, a subcommittee was elected with instructions to present definite suggestions to the next meeting. A week later, the subcommittee, of which Trotsky was a member, proposed a bimonthly organ, and The Class Struggle was founded in
According to Lore's description at the first anniversary of the Russian October Revolution, they, except the Russians, "felt that for the time being it was hopeless to think of organizing the Left within the Party for anything like effective action." Therefore, it was owing to the considerable influence of the Russians that the Left Wing could make such a start. And yet a split from the Party was not placed on the agenda. It was the very context of the American Left Wing movement of those days.

As we have seen, the Left Wing was concentrating its force in the U.S. as well on the eve of entry into a war. The American Left Wing, including émigré Socialists, also showed flexibility, such as free interchanges, in its organizations, though it did not lead to organizational split from the existing Socialist parties. It intensified the radicalism in its programs and policies, such as emphasis on mass action, and escalation in its activities from criticizing the Second International to striving for the foundation of a new International. The Left Wing's concentration was, as Daniels has pointed out, based on the premise of anti-war internationalism. Moreover, the Russian Revolution was bringing forth a new condition.

Finally, I think the perspective of "Internationalized Bolshevism" is also effective when studying the influence of Bolshevism on the American Left Wing. In studying the influence or acceptance of Bolshevism in the Left Wing movement prior to the foundation of American Communist parties in the middle of 1919, how well the Bolshevik literature was introduced in America should be examined first because of great difficulties of personnel interchanges in the periods of the Russian Revolution and the Allied Intervention. Bolshevism which was first propagated there was not what would be called Leninism later, but it was in a wider sense, and, moreover, had something in common with the European Left Wing. Kollontai, Bukharin and Trotsky's visits to America got the American Left Wing ready for rapprochement with Bolshevism to some extent, and the publication of the Bolshevik literature in the Left Wing newspapers and periodicals followed. As for the numbers of publications, there were as many as by the European Left Wings, especially, Dutch and German ones. The number by Lenin and Trotsky was almost the same and the most, but there were also a wide variety of publications by other Bolsheviks.

Tracing back toward the beginning of the War and roughly speaking, American readers' understanding of the inevitability of the imperialist war and the de facto downfall of the Second International was owing to Pannekoek's articles in *The International Socialist Review* and *The New Review* before and after 1914. In addition, Rutgers, a Dutch civil engineer and Left Socialist, had introduced energetically to American readers the news of the European Left Wing movements after his entrance from the Dutch East Indies into America in the middle of 1915. Among the more important items was the prompt and detailed introduction of the Zimmerwald movement. And he, as a witness of "Imperialism or Colonial Expansion in the far East," examined the Far Eastern Imperialism and, furthermore, state capitalism (Staatskapitalisme), and defined "mass-action" as a means of fight for the American Left Wing, both of which were derived from the Dutch and German Left Wings' thought. This thought had some community with that of Bukharin as mentioned above.
Notes

7 Ibid. : 177, 191.
8 В. В. Заплаткин, Борьба В. И. Ленина против (имperialistического экономизма) (1914–февраль 1917 г.) (Moscow, 1967) : 145.
9 Cf. Д. Беевский, "Партия в годы империалистической войны," Очерки по истории Октябрьской революции : Под редакцией М. Н. Покровского. 1 (Moscow/Leningrad, 1927) : 447.
12 Ibid. : 256–66.
13 В. И. Ленин, Полное собрание сочинений, 49 : 207.
14 Cf. Ленинский сборник. 17 (Moscow / Leningrad, 1931) : 191–206 ; Gankin / Fisher : 162–64.
15 А. Лупянченский, Революционные скульптуры (Moscow, 1923) : 23.
16 Cf. Senn : 44.
19 "Наша позиция," ibid., No. 89 (15. V. 1915) : 1 ; No. 100 (29. V. 1915) : 1–2 ; No. 106 (5. VI. 1915) : 1 ; No. 107 (6. VI. 1915) : 1 ; No. 146 (23. VII. 1915) : 1 ; No. 147 (24. VII. 1915) : 1. Reprinted under the changed title of "Tasks and Methods of Our Struggle in Л. Троцкий, Война и революция; Крушение Второго Интернационала и подготовка Третьего (Petrograd, 1922) : 78–93 (But the part from the last paragraph of No. 107 to the end, in which Sotsial-Demokrat was repeatedly criticized, was eliminated, for Trotsky regarded it as "episodic polemic which had lost the significance."); cf. Senn : 76–78.
21 "К организационному вопросу," ibid., No. 107 (6. VI. 1915) : 1–2 ; cf. С. В. Тютюнник, Война, мир, революция ; Идейная борьба в рабочем движении России 1914-1917 гг. (Moscow, 1972) : 299.
24 К. Остроухова, "Группа (Вперед) (1909-1917 гг.)," Пролетарская революция. No. 36 (1925) :
217–18.


30 Троцкий. 2: 200–04.


33 Троцкий. 2: 10.


36 Троцкий. 2: 488.

37 Ленинский сборник, 4: 303. At present the most detailed study on the Nashe Slovo group is Shaw’s doctoral dissertation (see note 22), whose estimation is almost in the opposite direction of mine: According to him, the editor’s introduction of “Les bolcheviks par eux-mêmes,” whose estimation I share, “tends to overemphasize the quality or the significance of Lenin’s “moderation,” or the “de-Bolshevization” of the Bolsheviks” (Shaw: 287). But I regard the very “de-Bolshevization” as a determining factor in the unification. Without it, I think, we could not advance further than his following grasp: “it is not clear that Trotsky and others connected with Nashe Slovo...were suddenly won to Lenin’s position in 1917” (ibid.: 280).


46 Cf. ibid.: 441. Both works of Bukharin have been translated into English: N. Bukharin, Imperialism and World Economy (New York, 1929); N. I. Bukharin, Selected Writings on the State and the Transition to Socialism, Translated, edited, and introduced by R. B. Day (Armonk, New York, 1982): 6–37.

59. Бровкин, "Борьба Ленина..." : 41-42.
60. Ленин, Пол. собр. соч., 49 : 306-10.
61. Cf. Heitman ; L. Sinclair, Leon Trotsky ; A Bibliography (Stanford, 1972). In the latter the following serial is not recorded: Н. Троцкий, "В французском вагоне (Разговоры и размышления)," Новый Мир, No. 900 (1. II. 1917) : 4 ; No. 901 (2. II. 1917) : 4.
63. Ibid., No. 894 (25. I. 1917) : 4.
64. Ibid., No. 896 (27. I. 1917) : 5.
67. Новый Мир, No. 906 (8. II. 1917) : 3.
69. Ibid., No. 937 : 5 ; No. 949 (28. III. 1917) : 3.
70. Ibid., No. 941 (20. III. 1917) : 5 ; No. 948 (27. III. 1917) : 5.
71. Ibid., No. 877 (5. I. 1917) : 6.
74. Ibid., No. 870 : 4.
77. Cf. Новый Мир, No. 905 (7. II. 1917) : 1.
78. "Большое обязательство (По поводу резолюции митинга в Кэрнеги-Голл)," ibid., No. 906 : 3.
79. Ibid., No. 904 (6. II. 1917) : 2 ; No. 905 : 1 ; No. 908 (10. II. 1917) : 4 ; cf. Th. Draper, The Roots of American Communism (New York, 1957) : 79.
80. Новый Мир, No. 909 (12. II. 1917) : 1, 4 ; cf. Draper : 77.
81. The New York Call, 10, No. 64 (5. III. 1917) : 1-2 ; No. 77, Section 2 (18. III. 1917) :


Draper: 79.


А. Коллонтай, "На борьбу за охрану материнства!" Новей Мир, No. 883: 4.


Deutscher: 246.


Lore: 7.

I have ascertained that, though I omit the details here, especially from the following: Novyi Mir, The New International (Nos. 3, 6 and 11 have not been checked), The Class Struggle, The Revolutionary Age and The International Socialist Review.

The influence of the Dutch Left Socialists’ thought on the American Left Wing has been known since Draper’s study. I have also investigated it, focusing on Rutgers and making good use of the documents in Dutch archives as well, and have already published the following in Japanese (On completion of this study, the abridged version in English will be written): A. Yamanouchi, “S. J. Rutgers and the International,” Memoirs of the Faculty of Education, Miyazaki University, No. 49 (III. 1981): 1–22; No. 53 (III. 1983): 27–56; No. 59 (III. 1986): 1–26.