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*Questions
& Answers*

ON THE
PIATAKOV-
RADEK TRIAL

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WILLIAM Z. FOSTER

Questions

AND

Answers

ON THE

PIATAKOV-RADEK

TRIAL

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1: The Trotskyites' Crimes

In the last week of January, 1937, seventeen Trotskyites were tried in Moscow, U.S.S.R., including G. Piatakov, Assistant Commissar of Heavy Industry; K. Radek, leading editorial writer of the Central Communist journal, *Pravda*; G. Sokolnikov, former Ambassador to Great Britain; G. Serebriakov, Assistant Commissar of Communications and several other prominent ex-government officials. The defendants were accused of treason, sabotage, assassination and counter-revolution.

At the trial State Prosecutor A. Y. Vyshinsky presented an indictment outlining the whole conspiracy which, led and directed by Leon Trotsky from his European exile, was aimed to overthrow the Soviet government by violence with the armed assistance of the fascists of Germany and Japan. It was a most dastardly and astounding counter-revolutionary plot. But the defendants, one and all, admitted its authenticity; some penitently, others boastfully and a few defiantly. The combined voluminous testimony of the accused fully sustained the terrible indictment in every particular.

One defendant after another told of his part in the conspiracy and furnished details of Trotsky's plot to smash the Soviet government with the help of the fascists. The accused stated that the fascists, as their reward for overthrowing the Stalin regime and placing Trotsky in power, were to be given rich territorial concessions. Germany was to receive the great Ukraine province and Japan was to be

ceded Sakhalin and the Maritime Provinces in the Far East. These two countries were also to get valuable trade concessions in the Soviet Union. Radek and Piatakov both testified that Trotsky had made a bargain with these capitalist governments accordingly. Piatakov averred that Trotsky's agreement with the leaders of the German National Socialist Party (Hitler fascists) contained the following points:

1. To guarantee a generally favorable attitude towards the German government and necessary collaboration with it on most important questions of an international character;

2. To agree to territorial concessions;

3. To admit German industrialists to concessions (or in some other form) for the exploitation of such enterprises in the U.S.S.R. as constitute necessary economic complements to Germany economy. This concerned iron ore, manganese, oil, gold, timber, etc.;

4. To create favorable conditions for the activity of German private enterprise;

5. In time of war to develop active diversion of plants in the war industry and at the front. This diversionist work [sabotage—W.Z.F.] was to be carried on under Trotsky's instructions in agreement with the German general staff.

Trotsky understood, of course, that such an agreement with the fascists, if carried out successfully, would involve the restoration of capitalism in the U.S.S.R. and he was prepared to accept that also. Radek testified during his examination that Trotsky had sent him a message as follows:

"It must be understood that without a certain leveling of the social structure of the U.S.S.R., to that of the capitalist states, this bloc [Trotsky's group—W.Z.F.] will not be able to maintain itself in power and to preserve peace."

In the furtherance of this monstrous plan to dismember the U.S.S.R. and to surrender the hard-won victories of the October Revolution, the Trotskyites prosecuted a program of terrorism, espionage and sabotage. The testimony of the defendants themselves showed that the assassination of Sergei M. Kirov, a high Party official, December 1, 1934, for whom the sixteen Zinoviev-Kamenev leaders of the Trotskyite group were convicted and executed last August, was carried out in the course of the widespread terrorist conspiracy, and that steps were also under way to assassinate Stalin, Molotov, Voroshilov and other government leaders. The defendant Piatakov stated that Trotsky had declared to him, "We must literally stick at nothing to overthrow Stalin", and Radek testified that Trotsky had demanded the "organization of a small group of trusted people to carry out terrorist attempts on the lives of leaders of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, and primarily against Stalin".

The whole Trotskyite counter-revolutionary conspiracy was based upon the overthrow of the Soviet government by fascist troops and Trotsky assassins. They together worked to lay the basis for a military defeat of the U.S.S.R., and a basic part of the terrible scheme was to paralyze the Russian industries, especially those most important in war. To do this dastardly industrial wrecking work, many of the Trotskyite leaders were situated very strategically, occupying prominent management posts in industry. They confessed at the trial that they had caused a large number of railroad wrecks, coal mine explosions, etc., in which many workers had been killed. How close this sabotage was connected with the fascist war plans was indicated by the defendant Kniazev, a former high railroad official, who testified:

"In this matter instructions of the Japanese intelligence service completely coincided with the instructions which I had received somewhat previously from the Trotskyite organizations."

Another shameful aspect of the Trotskyite plot, one which also flowed logically from the entire counter-revolutionary scheme, was the fact that several of the Trotskyite leaders turned themselves into actual spies for the fascists. Using their key positions in industry and the government, they furnished valuable military secrets to the Japanese and German governments, and for this contemptible work, as some of them testified in court, they received money from the fascist butchers.

In view of the damning evidence presented against the accused Trotskyites, as well as their own open confessions, it was clear that the defendants were carrying on a criminal counter-revolutionary conspiracy which, if successful, would have no other result than to crush socialism in the U.S.S.R. and to enthrone fascism throughout Europe. There could be no other outcome of the trial than a verdict of guilty. All sixteen were convicted. Radek, Sokolnikov, Stroilov and Arnold, because they had not actually committed wrecking activities that cost human life, were let off with sentences of from eight to ten years. The rest were shot.

The condemnation of the Trotskyite criminals was supported by huge demonstrations of workers and farmers all over the Soviet Union, who had followed by radio every word spoken by the judges, witnesses and accused. From long and bitter experience in twenty years of revolutionary struggle, these toiling masses understood quite well what had happened: another great capitalist attack upon the socialist revolution had been defeated by the vigilance and determination of the Communist Party and its leadership.

2: Reaction Rushes to Aid Trotsky

The Piatakov-Radek trial, together with the Zinoviev-Kamenev trial, has fully exposed the counter-revolutionary character of Trotsky and his supporters. It has shown them up definitely to be enemies of the Soviet Union and the world revolution, agents of Hitler, abettors of the fascist war-makers. It has exposed Trotsky as the Benedict Arnold of the Russian revolution, the Judas Iscariot of the working class. It has dealt a mortal blow to Trotsky's following, such as it is, everywhere.

But the capitalist reaction promptly rallies to Trotsky's defense. Ever since the birth of the Soviet Union twenty years ago the capitalists of the world have utilized every possible weapon to defeat the new socialist republic. They sent their troops to overthrow it, blockaded and starved it, isolated it politically, poured out oceans of lying propaganda against it. The more the U.S.S.R. succeeds, the more bitterly they hate and fear it. These inveterate enemies, quick to perceive the advantage to them of Trotsky's ceaseless lies against the Soviet Union, naturally do not want to lose this valuable tool. So they rush to save Trotsky and to use the trial and the whole situation to weaken their mortal foes: the Soviet Union, the Communist International, the People's Front movement in the various countries.

Through all their avenues of publicity, the capitalists are now seeking to discredit the Moscow trial. They attack it openly and insidiously cast about it a network of lies, doubts, suspicions, and innuendoes. They have thrown their press wide open for Trotsky and his nondescript scribbler defenders to spread their poison against the Soviet Union. They are exceedingly anxious to confuse the workers on the entire matter. The world is now treated to the

spectacle of various reactionaries, from Hitler on, openly taking the so-called revolutionary Trotsky's side. In his eagerness for "fair play" and "justice" the fascist, Mr. Hearst, has made his filthy papers practically the official organs of Trotsky to carry his anti-Soviet slanders. And, of course, there is the usual petty bourgeois trailers after reaction in this shameful campaign, such as the wishy-washy liberals and Trotskyized Socialists who are demanding that Trotsky be given a hearing before an "impartial" international commission. And they are joined in this demand by reactionaries of many stripes.

With one great blast the capitalist publicity forces in the press, radio, pulpit, etc., taking their line from Trotsky's frenzied denials of guilt, try to create an air of unreality around the trial. They contest the validity of the witnesses and testimony. They charge that the whole trial was a frame-up or a political show. They exhaust their vocabulary to find adjectives to express their disbelief in the trial's authenticity. They cry that it is "monstrous", "incomprehensible", "unbelievable", "inexplicable", "incredible", and, especially, "fantastic". They seize upon the occasion to repeat every time-worn slander against the U.S.S.R.

The purpose of this pamphlet is to answer the various lies, slanders, insinuations, false charges, trick questions, etc., raised by this reactionary capitalist chorus against the Moscow trial and the Soviet government.

3: Was the Trotsky Plot "Fantastic"?

Enemies of the Soviet Union, seeking to delude the American masses, make the charge that the Trotsky treason exposure is "fantastic". But to anyone who takes the trouble

to familiarize himself with the voluminous testimony presented at the Moscow trial and the political developments leading up to it, the Piatakov-Radek affair, like that of Zinoviev-Kamenev, is anything but "fantastic". On the contrary, it is of the earth earthy, of the very woof and warp of life itself. There was nothing whatever mysterious or "Dostoyevskyan" about it. The trial was the logical and inevitable climax of a whole series of political theories and developments operating over a long period of years; the treason, espionage, terrorism and sabotage of the defendants expressed the final political bankruptcy and degeneracy of the Trotsky tendency.

For 35 years Trotsky has been expounding theories and movements at variance with and in opposition to the policies of the Russian Communist Party. The essence of his political system was the theory of "permanent revolution". In this theory Trotsky holds that socialism cannot be built in one country; that a socialist government in the U.S.S.R. must needs have the armed state support of the workers in other countries or die; that socialism can only be established by a revolution in a whole series of the most industrialized countries, by a world revolution. This theory is, in substance, that held by the Mensheviks, or opportunist Socialists. It leads in practice to the self-suppression of the revolutionary movement in a given country in the name of an abstract world revolution. It is a theory of passivity and defeat, although to the initiated its insistence upon the necessity for a world overthrow of capitalism before socialism can be built anywhere sounds very revolutionary.

Lenin for many years fought against this Trotskyite theory, and after Lenin's death Stalin continued to lead the fight. While militant champions of the world revolution, they both insisted that socialism could be built in a country as rich and broad as the Soviet Union. The long

struggle in the Russian Communist Party, carried on by the Trotskyites since 1923 against the Party majority led by Stalin, turned around this basic question. But life itself, as Lenin pointed out, finally answers all political questions, and it answered this one in Stalin's favor by the unquestioned success of the Soviet government in building socialism.

This final historical answer to the Trotsky theory that socialism could not be built in the U.S.S.R. alone is to be found in the huge development and complete socialization of Soviet industry, the almost entire collectivization of the land and the reorganization of agriculture, the liquidation of the old exploiting classes, the tremendous improvement of the living and cultural levels of the masses, the broad development of Soviet democracy, the enormous strengthening of the country's defenses, etc. History itself has shown conclusively that Trotsky was basically wrong. Trotsky, in considering the mass of peasants as enemies instead of powerful allies of the proletariat, had made a disastrous error; he had also grossly underestimated the strength of the Russian working class. And the masses of workers and farmers in the Soviet Union, seeing clearly the merits of the issue, overwhelmingly rejected the Trotsky policies and gave its hearty support to the line of Stalin, of the Central Committee.

But Trotsky, a petty bourgeois individualist intellectual with an inflated ego and boundless ambition, remained unreconciled to the bankruptcy of his political program and the defeat of his attempts to win the masses to support it. His group clung desperately to their discredited theories, continued their agitation, defied the Party's decisions and discipline and they spread the fight throughout the Soviet Union and the Communist International. This finally led to Trotsky's expulsion in 1927 and to his later exile. Many of his co-leaders recanted, however, including Zinoviev,

Kamenev, Radek, Piatakov and other defendants in the recent trials, and they remained Party members or were reinstated.

FROM PARTY OPPOSITION TO COUNTER-REVOLUTION

Trotsky nevertheless went on with his anti-Party line. But as he was devoid of mass support, he turned more and more towards terrorist tactics. He denounced the Party as counter-revolutionary and advocated the violent overthrow of its leadership. Desperate, with no possibility of getting the Russian masses to back him, Trotsky inevitably turned to coup d'etat methods of gaining power. From open demonstrations against the Party in 1926 to treason and terrorism against its leaders in 1937 was the logical path of his bankrupted political tendency, and Trotsky went all the way along it. His bargain with the fascists to help them defeat the Soviet government in war and to give them territory and economic concessions in return for placing him and his group in power by force of Hitler bayonets was the final capstone of Trotsky's political degeneration, the last station on the political route along which he had been traveling for a full generation.

Those who denounce the Piatakov-Radek trial as "fantastic" speak either from ignorance or with a deliberate intention to deceive. The Trotskyite defendants represented a counter-revolutionary tendency brought to book by history, rejected and bankrupted by life itself; and the great lessons of the trial will not be lost upon the struggling masses of the world.

4: Is the Counter-Revolutionary Degeneration of Trotskyism “Unthinkable”?

Part of the “incredible”, “impossible” theory of the Moscow trials, put forth by the Trotskyite schemers and swallowed by many political novices, goes to the effect that it is quite out of the question to believe that the Trotskyite defendants, many of whom had spent practically their whole lives in the revolutionary movement, would actually descend to terrorism against the Soviet leaders and to make an alliance with the worst enemies of the revolution, the fascists. But such arguments ignore the harsh realities of the proletarian revolution and the complicated manifestations and persistence of capitalist influences within the workers’ lines. Every revolution has its traitors, often highly placed, and the proletarian revolution is no exception. It has constantly to refine and purify itself by throwing off the capitalist dross within its own ranks. The history of the developing class struggle throughout the world is literally strewn with the wrecks of individuals and movements which, with their policies bankrupted in the hard test of the class struggle, finally found themselves on the capitalist side of the barricade.

NO ROOM FOR PESSIMISM

Some sympathizers of the revolution are now crying out in alarm that if the Trotskyite plot is true, then how can they have confidence in any group or party? They moan that they cannot now be sure but what all of them are unreliable and non-revolutionary when put to the final test? Such people are indeed “parlor pinks”! Their naivete has

nothing to do with the stern revolutionary struggle itself, which irresistibly and ruthlessly separates the capitalist slag from the proletarian steel in hammering out the revolutionary party of the proletariat.

Consider, for example, the historical debacle of the Second International. This world organization, the Party of Marx and Engels, with its tens of millions of members in its parties, trade unions, cooperatives, youth movements, etc., boastfully held aloft the banner of revolution for two generations. Truly it was "unthinkable" (to the unthinking) that this great movement would betray the revolution when finally the test came.

Yet see what happened. When the World War broke in 1914 the parties of the Second International, dominated by opportunist leaders, with but few exceptions turned tail on their many militant anti-war resolutions and joined with their respective capitalist classes in dragging the workers into the suicidal slaughter. "Fantastic" and "unbelievable", but an historical fact just the same. And then when in Germany and other countries the workers rose in revolution after the war, it was these same opportunist Socialist leaders who led in shooting them down. The "incredible" spectacle was seen of the Second International, which was supposed to overthrow capitalism, actually becoming its savior. The further "incomprehensible" sight was also observed of the opportunist Socialist leaders for many years carrying on a most vicious struggle against the first socialist country in the world, the U.S.S.R. And to cap their climax of political bankruptcy and "impossibility" they actually, in Germany, voted to sustain the Hitler government for whose accession to power they were mainly responsible.

The bankruptcy of the Second International was not met by real revolutionists with empty cries of "fantastic" and "unthinkable". Under Lenin's leadership they were quick to understand the capitalist influences that had brought it

about. They did not waste their time simply bewailing that the confidence of the workers had been betrayed, that no party could be trusted and that now all was lost. On the contrary, they proceeded to free the revolutionary movement from the capitalist poison that had so seriously sickened it. The result was the development of the world Communist movement, and, in these later years, the growth of revolutionary sentiment in the Socialist Parties and the building of the People's Front movement. Such is the iron course of the socialist revolution.

RUSSIAN PARTIES THAT FAILED

The history of the Russian revolution itself is replete with similar experiences of movements, proclaiming themselves revolutionary, that eventually went on the rocks in the heavy seas of the revolutionary struggle. There was, of course, the classical example of the Mensheviks (Socialist reformists) who, despite long years of revolutionary propaganda, actually became the last defenders of Russian capitalism and, from 1917 forward, carried on an armed struggle against the Soviet government. Long since gone into the ranks of the enemies of the revolution are Martov, Dan, Axelrod, etc., once leading figures with Lenin.

But, also, and more instructive to us in considering the Trotskyite group, was the case of the political bankruptcy and counter-revolutionary degeneration of the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Anarchists. Both these groups actually fought legally and heroically through the October Revolution side by side with the Bolsheviks, and they had in their ranks many brave fighters with long records of struggle against tsarism. But in the ensuing terribly severe and complicated tasks presented by the revolution, although many of their number became Bolsheviks, the groups as such proved incapable of leading the masses to socialism. They became victims to latent capitalist tendencies in

their ranks. Hence both of them fell by the wayside, onto the scrap-heap of history.

The Left Socialist-Revolutionaries made a futile attempt to overthrow the Soviet government by a coup d'etat. They were defeated and soon thereafter degenerated into making counter-revolutionary alliances even with the worst White Guard elements, who always operates on the principle of "anybody to beat the Bolsheviks". It was a Russian Socialist-Revolutionary, Dora Kaplan, who shot Lenin. The Russian Anarchist movement went the same general way. They broke with the Bolsheviks and took up arms against the Soviet government. It was an Anarchist who threw a bomb into a meeting of the Moscow Soviet, killing a score of delegates; the Russian Anarchists supported the Kronstadt revolt of 1921 which was also backed by every reactionary force in Soviet Russia, and the Anarchist Mahkno led his guerilla bands against the Red Army in the Ukraine. And these various movements, though they passed over to the side of counter-revolution, clung to their revolutionary slogans and even shouted them all the louder, just as Trotsky is now doing.

THE BREAK WITH THESE PARTIES INEVITABLE

It is of decisive significance that when the Mensheviks, Socialist-Revolutionaries, and Anarchists broke with the revolution the man at the helm of the Bolshevik Party was not the "stubborn", "autocratic", "reactionary" Stalin, but the generally admitted great revolutionary leader, Lenin. Lenin used the same tactics towards them as Stalin did towards the Trotskyites. He tried to the utmost to use them for the revolution, but when they finally deserted it he fought them ruthlessly. This whole course is common sense, sound Marxian dialectics.

The Trotsky group in the Soviet Union has gone the same way of political degeneration as the foregoing groups,

the Mensheviks, Socialist-Revolutionaries, and Anarchists, and for the same basic reasons. Like them, it could travel no further along the road of the revolution. It collapsed in the face of the difficult demands of the struggle. Its basic theory that socialism cannot be built in the Soviet Union is utterly bankrupt and proven false. Huge successes in industrialization and collectivization of the farms, great improvements in the conditions of the masses, rapid strengthening of the Soviet system in every direction—render ridiculous Trotsky's defeatist conceptions.

But, instead of accepting this decision of history, the Trotskyites, like the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Anarchists before them, developed from a policy of opposition into one of counter-revolutionary attack. And so, as did the others, they find themselves in the camp of the enemy. In every revolutionary situation there are only two sides to the barricade.

TROTSKY, KAUTSKY, HERVE, DORIOT AND CO.

It appears incredible to some people that a man with such a big revolutionary reputation as Trotsky had in the past can actually go over to the enemy as he has done. But Kautsky and Plekhanov, far greater Marxists in their day than Trotsky, also betrayed the revolution and descended to the lowest depths of renegadism. And the Socialist-Revolutionary, Maria Spiridonova, was a woman with a much more heroic past than Trotsky, yet she took up arms against the Soviet government. Have we not also seen the Anarchist, Emma Goldman, who noisily welcomed the foundation of the Soviet government, finally reaping a golden harvest from Hearst for her counter-revolutionary attacks upon that same government. And in other countries there were many such renegade figures: the former ultra-"Lefts" Herve, Briand, Doriot; in Italy, the former Socialist Mussolini, etc. All these people, like Trotsky, covered their

political surrender with a cloud of revolutionary phrases. Not reputation for past activities, but present-day sound policy, is what establishes the revolutionary character or not of every individual and movement.

Trotsky vociferously denies his renegadism; for, of course, otherwise, he would be of no further major service to the counter-revolution. He denies the evidence of the Moscow trials completely. But his frantic denials and his protestations of revolutionary spirit are overwhelmed by the avalanche of incriminating facts produced by the Moscow trials. He and his group stand convicted, as traitors, as Benedict Arnolds, before the bar of history.

5: How Did the Trotsky-Fascist Alliance Develop?

Many people express incredulity that Trotsky should actually make an alliance with the fascists, even though the evidence at the Piatakov trials proves conclusively that he did so. And they ask, "How then could so many of his group remain so long in the Communist Party? Why were they not expelled before?"

The answer to such questions is that Trotskyism has undergone a gradual years-long degeneration. Although the essence of its eventual counter-revolutionary character was to be found in its basic theories of many years ago, it was only under the continued pressure of the class struggle that this anti-revolutionary nature of Trotskyism was fully exposed. Only as the Trotskyite tendency matured through the years did it give conclusive indications of its eventual counter-revolutionary debacle.

Trotsky's original theory of permanent revolution, which held that socialism could not be built in the U.S.S.R. without armed state assistance from the workers of other countries, bore the seed of his present treasonable fascist alliance. During the whole pre-revolutionary period Lenin fought resolutely against Trotsky's line, but on the eve of the revolution Trotsky, believing that the European revolution generally was at hand, was moved to join and give some cooperation to the Communist Party. But this cooperation was only temporary. It ended when it became clear during the next few years, especially after the defeat of the German workers in 1923, that the general European revolution was still considerably off in the distance and that the Russian workers and peasants were confronted unavoidably with the necessity of building socialism in their own country without "state help" from the workers in other lands. It was the great genius of Lenin and Stalin that they realized the possibility and necessity of building socialism in a country so broad and so rich in resources as the Soviet Union, and it was Trotsky's great blindness that he did not understand this fact.

TROTSKY SABOTAGES SOCIALIST CONSTRUCTION

From 1923 on, as the Communist Party led by Stalin plunged energetically into the building of socialism in the U.S.S.R., it naturally came more and more into conflict with Trotsky who said it was trying to accomplish an impossible task. In the conflict as the building of socialism progressed, Trotsky gradually passed over from merely arguing that socialism could not be built in one country into definite obstruction of the socialist building that was actually taking place. He hampered the Party for several years with his proposals of desperate schemes for struggle against the middle peasantry in the Soviet Union which, if adopted, would have thrown the country into civil war, and also with his

adventurist plans of provoking premature revolts in other countries, which would have plunged the U.S.S.R. into foreign wars. And all this sabotage of the actual building of socialism Trotsky carried on in the name of his theory of "permanent revolution", of his idea that only with a world revolution could socialism be built in the U.S.S.R.

But the building of socialism went on in the U.S.S.R. in spite of Trotsky's defeatism. Trotskyism was rejected by the masses of workers and peasants in the great mass debates and elections that occurred during the years of 1923-27 and Stalin's policy was heavily endorsed. Then Trotsky began to pass over to the final stage of his counter-revolutionary development; to attempt to overthrow by force the socialism that had actually been built in the Soviet Union notwithstanding all his defeatist theorizing and obstructionism.

The stronger socialism grew in the Soviet Union the more desperate Trotsky became and the more he reached for weapons of force to use against the Stalin leadership and the Party. Violation of Party discipline, denunciation of the Party as "Thermidorean", charges that the Party had become nationalistic and had abandoned the world revolution, appeals for the establishment of a Fourth International, formation of new parties in various countries, calls for a new revolution in the Soviet Union, building of an underground conspiratorial organization, carrying on of industrial wrecking, organization of terrorist assassination conspiracies against the Russian Party leadership, and the formation of an alliance with the fascists of Germany and Japan to overthrow by violence the Soviet regime—were the various steps of Trotsky in his march into treason and counter-revolution.

WHY TROTSKYISM EXPOSED ITSELF

It is always during great crises in the class struggle that capitalistic tendencies, long hidden, are exposed in the

ranks of labor. Thus it was the World War and the post-war revolutionary struggles, with their great tests, that brought out clearly the non-revolutionary character of the Second International. It was when they were faced by the terrific tasks of consolidating the proletarian dictatorship in the early years of the revolution that the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Anarchists collapsed in Soviet Russia and became rallying points for the counter-revolution. And it was the huge task of actually building socialism in the Soviet Union that bankrupted the Trotsky tendency and showed up its policy of sacrificing the Russian revolution, in the name of a world revolution still off in the future, to be anti-socialist in substance and a real aid to the capitalist system.

It is the menacing war situation which brings the counter-revolutionary Trotsky ulcer to a head and gives it its special characteristics. The German and Japanese governments are preparing to attack the Soviet government, so the Trotskyites, destitute of mass support in the U.S.S.R. and determined to overthrow the Stalin regime at all costs, take the last step in their counter-revolutionary degeneration by making a united front with the fascist aggressors and become war instigators against the Soviet Union.

Trotsky and his followers, of course, deny that they are advocates of assassination, counter-revolution and the overthrow of the Soviet government with fascist aid. Naturally, as they make a show of ultra-revolutionism, these are not policies that they can shout from the house-tops. The testimony at the Piatakov-Radek trial, however, proves beyond intelligent doubt that they are guilty. Moreover, Trotskyites have given many indications of their counter-revolutionary trends in their speeches and writings. Let a few facts and quotations illustrate this point and give point to the testimony of the Moscow trials.

As early as July, 1927, Trotsky, who had already virtually condemned the Soviet government as counter-revolutionary, gave a clear indication of his present treason policy in a letter to the Control Commission of the Communist Party. He compared himself to Clemenceau, who seized leadership of the French government in 1914 just as the Germans were threatening Paris. Said Trotsky, "It is necessary to restore Clemenceau's tactics, who, as is well known, rose against the French government when the Germans were within eighty kilometers of Paris."

Since this letter was written Trotsky has gone a long step farther. Not only does he now aim at seizing power during a war crisis, but he has made a bargain with the fascists to help him do so. Trotsky has, because of lack of mass support in the U.S.S.R., abandoned hope of achieving power by peaceful means. He says, in a pamphlet written in 1933, "No normal 'constitutional' way exists to remove the ruling clique. The bureaucracy [Soviet power] can be compelled to yield power into the hands of the revolutionary vanguard [the Trotskyites], only by force." It is strictly in line with Trotsky's conception, therefore, when his American supporters denounce the Soviet government as on a par with, or even worse than, the tyrannies of Hitler and Mussolini and call openly for its violent overthrow.*

Trotsky denies the charges of political terrorism to which his followers voluntarily confessed in the Moscow trials. But the whole logic of his position—his bankrupt program, lack of mass following, and his ego-mania—pushes him to grasp at the weapon of political assassination. Indeed he, himself, admitted as much in an interview given by him in

* Max Eastman in public meeting, New York, Dec. 18, 1936, and Max Schachtman in his pamphlet, *Behind the Moscow Trials*, p. 131.

Mexico City, January 26, 1937, to the *New York American*. Says he:

"Inside the [Communist] Party Stalin has put himself above all criticism and the state. It is impossible to displace him except by assassination. Every oppositionist becomes, *ipso facto*, a terrorist."

Trotsky realizes quite well that the consummation of his bargain with the fascists for the overthrow of the Soviet government would require the restoration of capitalism in the U.S.S.R., and he long ago gave indications of his willingness to accept that restoration. As far back as 1930 (Opposition Bulletin No. 10) he declared:

"Retreat is, nevertheless, inevitable . . . to discontinue mass collectivization . . . to discontinue jumps in industrialization . . . to revise the question of industrialization in the light of experience . . . to abandon the 'ideals' of a self-contained economy . . . to work out a new, alternative plan calculated on the widest possible inter-action with the world market. . . . It is impossible to emerge from the present contradictions without crisis and struggle."

The defendant Radek, at the Piatakov trial, declared that Trotsky had summed up his counter-revolutionary program to him as follows:

"There is no socialism in the Soviet Union—it is merely capitalist industrialism—war against the Soviet Union is inevitable—the Soviet government will be defeated—therefore concessions must be made by the Trotskyites who will come into power to Hitler and Japan and then the revolution will begin anew."

TROTSKY AN ANTI-LENINIST

Trotsky sets himself up as a super-Leninist. But his whole counter-revolutionary program is a monstrous repudiation

of Leninism. Trotsky stands Leninism on its head, makes a ghastly caricature of the whole brilliant strategy of the great revolutionary leader, Lenin. Whereas Lenin advocated that the workers and peasants should work for the defeat and overthrow of their tsarist-capitalist government in the war and for the establishment of socialism, Trotsky aims at the overthrow of the socialist government and the re-establishment of capitalism. Whereas Lenin, at Brest-Litovsk, made peace with the weakened and hard-pressed German imperialists in order that the new Soviet government might have a breathing spell and get a chance to intrench itself, Trotsky makes an alliance with the aggressive fascist butcher Hitler to smash the Soviet government and destroy the socialism the toilers have labored so hard to build up. Whereas Lenin was the greatest fighter against imperialist war, Trotsky has become the instigator of the terrible fascist war that now menaces civilization.

From all the foregoing facts—the long opposition led by Trotsky on the theory that socialism cannot be built in one country, his open revolt against the Party and condemnation of the Soviet government as capitalistic, his many articles and statements advocating violent overthrow of the Soviet government, his long and vicious slander campaign against the U.S.S.R., the damning evidence presented against him at the Moscow trials—the conclusion is inescapable that Trotskyism is guilty of making treasonable alliance with the fascists. It has gone the counter-revolutionary way of the various other groups and movements cited above which, although using revolutionary phrases, were not revolutionary at heart and which were unmasked by the ruthless workings of the class struggle. The task now remains definitely to brand the Trotskyites as traitors before the toiling masses of the world.

6: Were the Convicted Plotters the Old Bolshevik Guard?

It is a favorite assertion of the Trotskyites and the capitalist newspaper writers that the main body of revolutionary fighters who carried through the Russian revolution has turned against the Communist Party and become supporters of Trotskyism. But such a contention in no way corresponds to the truth. Associated with Stalin in the top Party leadership are such veteran revolutionists as Molotov, Kalinin, Mikoyan, Voroshilov, Kaganovich, Petrovsky, Postyshev, Litvinov, Chuban, Yaroslavsky, Manuilsky, etc.; not to mention such well-known figures as the recently deceased Orjonikidze, Dzerjinsky, Kuibishev, Gussev, Kirov (murdered by Trotskyites) and many more. Besides these, are the thousands of other lesser known "Old Bolsheviks" who now occupy leading posts all over the U.S.S.R. Principally, it was these reliable fighters—not the Trotskys, Zinovievs, Piatakovs and Radeks—who were the iron Bolshevik core of leaders who, with Lenin at their head, led the revolution through its earlier years, even as they are now leading it.

The enemies of the Soviet government also seek to create the impression that the Trotskyite opposition suddenly sprang into being since the death of Lenin and the accession of Stalin to the main leadership of the Communist Party. This is done to make it appear that Stalin's policies have antagonized the best revolutionists. But such a contention is contrary to all the facts. In reality, practically every outstanding figure in the Trotsky group had already behind him when Stalin became the Party leader, a long period of struggle against the Party's policies, one which extended back through many years of Lenin's brilliant leadership.

Much of the international notoriety that Trotsky and his followers acquired was gained, in fact, out of the very fights that they have conducted against the Party leadership.

CHRONIC OPPOSITIONISTS

Trotsky himself fought the Bolshevik Party viciously for fifteen years in pre-revolutionary days. Affiliated with opportunist Menshevik elements, he, in 1904, denounced Lenin as "a leader of the reactionary wing" and was repudiated by Lenin as a semi-Menshevik. Trotsky did not become a member of the Communist Party until 1917, just on the eve of the revolution. He remained a Party member only a few years, meanwhile conducting several big struggles against Lenin on such vital questions as the Brest-Litovsk Treaty, the New Economic Policy, the role of the trade unions, etc. Long before Lenin's death Trotsky was already treading the path that eventually led out of the Party and that has finally brought him to fascism and counter-revolution. Trotsky was never a real Bolshevik, and he has no claim whatever to the term "Old Bolshevik". His affiliation to the Party, partial as it was at best, lasted only during the period of most acute revolutionary struggle, a time during part of which even such divergent groups as the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, the Anarchists, Syndicalists, etc., found it necessary to work with the Communist Party.

The opposition record of the two Trotskyites, Zinoviev and Kamenev, also stretched far back into Lenin's days. They were not provoked into rebellion by Stalin. In 1910, Zinoviev, to satisfy Trotsky and the Mensheviks, broke with Lenin and urged the suspension of the journal *Proletarii*, edited by Lenin. In 1914, Kamenev scandalized the whole Party by congratulating the Grand Duke Michael upon his succession to the throne. In 1916, Zinoviev went behind Lenin's back and made an unprincipled alliance with an Anarchist group. In 1917, Zinoviev and Kamenev voted

against the revolutionary seizure of power and expressed in the public press the Party's plan of insurrection. For this action Lenin denounced them as strikebreakers and demanded their expulsion from the Party. After the revolution these same two men even agreed with the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries to displace Lenin from the head of the Soviet government and to put the Right Socialist-Revolutionary, Avksentiev, in his place. Zinoviev and Kamenev made various other oppositional moves during Lenin's life, and they eventually found their true political home in the Trotsky terrorist movement.

Piatakov also had a long record of opposition under Lenin, acting nearly always jointly with Trotsky. In 1915, he opposed Lenin on the right of nations to self-determination; in 1916, he defended Trotsky's dogma of the impossibility of building socialism in one country; in 1917, he opposed Lenin's famous April Thesis; in 1918, he fought Lenin on the basic Brest-Litovsk issue, and in the same year (as Prosecutor Vyshinsky pointed out) he actually plotted for the arrest of Lenin and his removal as the head of the Soviet government. Piatakov also joined Trotsky in various other fights against Lenin's policies and leadership. Radek, Sokolnikov and many others of the defendants in the two Moscow Trotskyist trials had similar records of opposition to Lenin.

THE PARTY AND THE OPPOSITION

It is often asked how it was possible, then, that men who had committed so many grave political errors as the Trotskyites did, were, nevertheless, allowed to remain in the Party and to hold responsible posts. The answer is that in the earlier years of the Party life the wrong policies of these people, those who were members of the Party, did not generally take the form of counter-revolutionary proposals. Although many of them were very serious and repre-

hensible in character, as a whole their mistakes shaped up principally as serious deviations from the main revolutionary line of the Party. Repeatedly they recanted their errors and re-accepted the policy and discipline of the Party. The Party under Lenin's leadership, as well as under that of Stalin in later years, accepted in good faith these promises of more loyal conduct and made every effort to utilize these people's talents for the revolution. It was only in the last several years, when facing the supreme test of actually building socialism, in one country, that the long-germinating Trotskyism degenerated definitely into actual counter-revolution. Then the Trotskyites were expelled from the Party. If during these last years some of the Trotskyites managed to stay in the Party it was by the subterfuge of hiding their counter-revolutionary activities behind pledges of Party loyalty.

The Trotskyite opposition is of no recent growth. It is not a movement that has just sprung up against Stalin's leadership, but has a long historical continuity, going back to the first days of the Party. Even in its earliest years, before its real course was fully understood, it always constituted a tendency that dipped in and out of the Party, something that never became part of the flesh and blood of the Party. This Trotskyite opposition tendency has now fully matured. Its policies and leadership repudiated by the course of the revolution, it finally exposes its long-hidden counter-revolutionary kernel and comes forth as the tool of murderous fascism, the ally of the worst enemies of the revolution. The great body of Bolsheviks who are now supporting Stalin's leadership in the building of socialism in the U.S.S.R. are in the main the same group that most consistently supported Lenin and that fought Trotskyism throughout the whole life of the Party. Stalin was Lenin's best disciple, his most loyal aide, and Stalin's present policies and leading group of co-workers are the historical continuation of Lenin's policies and leadership.

7: Is Capitalism Returning in the Soviet Union?

In order to try to justify his counter-revolutionary course, Trotsky raises the cry that capitalism is being re-established in the Soviet Union. He declares that Stalin has abandoned the program of socialism, both in the U.S.S.R. and on a world scale. For ten years Trotsky has been shouting that the Soviet Union has suffered a Thermidor; a term which is taken from the great French revolution and which signifies the beginning of a period of reaction after a revolution. Trotsky hails the Moscow trials as further indications of the capitalist trend of the Soviet Union and the Communist International. And, curiously enough, Hearst and other reactionaries, in their own way, join Trotsky in shedding crocodile tears over Stalin's supposed turning away from his revolutionary principles.

THE POLICY OF THE COMINTERN

Before examining the situation regarding socialism in the Soviet Union, let us consider briefly the Communist International world policy in the light of Trotsky's charges. In doing so we must see that, far from abandoning the world revolution, the Communist International, headed by Dimitroff, is proceeding in the most direct manner along the road to socialism. This is by the route of the People's Front struggle against war and for the preservation of democracy, and the movement's leading theorist and organizer is Stalin.

Hitler and his fascist bloc of nations have two great immediate objectives. These are to wipe out European

democracy (and with it every semblance of workers' parties, trade unionism, etc.), and to carry through a successful war against the Soviet Union and other countries, for the redivision of the world. Good revolutionary strategy on our part demands that the maximum possible mobilization of all the democratic and peace forces of the world be made in order to defeat the murderous plans of Hitler and his allies. This is precisely what the Communist International is doing, through the People's Front, which unites workers, farmers, professionals, small business elements, etc., in one anti-fascist, anti-war movement. The People's Front policy was initiated by the Communist Parties in several countries and it was stressed very much in the recent Seventh Congress of the Comintern in Moscow.

It should be clear even to a political novice that the strategy of the People's Front fight against war and to preserve democracy against the fascist attacks is correct. If Hitler and his allies can be beaten in their plan to crush democracy, their defeat will constitute a mortal blow to the whole program and set-up of the fascists everywhere. It goes without saying that the possibilities of a successful fight for socialism are far greater in a country where the workers have succeeded in defending their civic rights and organizations against the fascist assault, than in a land where the fascists have overthrown democracy and wiped out practically every semblance of workers' mass movements. The fight for democracy and against war is the fight for socialism. The great revolutionary issue of today is democracy versus fascism.

The Popular Front has justified itself, not only in theory but also in practice. Its successes in Spain, France and China are too obvious to require comment. And the toilers in Germany, Italy, Austria and many other countries, realizing that this new Leninist united front movement constitutes the greatest anti-fascist force possible in present-day condi-

tions, are rousing themselves from the pessimism caused by the victories of fascism in Central Europe, are developing a new unity and militancy, and are laying the foundations of People's Fronts in their respective countries. Every revolutionary force of today that is sincere and realistic must fight for the People's Front.

The People's Front movement is raising an insurmountable barrier in the path of fascism. It is the nightmare of Hitler, Mussolini and Company, and it will eventually lead to their undoing. Instead of abandoning world revolution as Trotsky alleges, the Communist International, by stimulating the People's Front internationally, is advancing by the shortest possible route to universal socialism.

SOCIALISM IN THE U.S.S.R.

Trotsky charges that capitalism is being restored in the Soviet Union are also completely shattered by a glance at the facts. Trotsky, paid highly for his writings by the bourgeois press, has become one of hired capitalist slanderers of the Soviet Union. His vitriolic attacks set the table for the whole pack of reactionaries and give them material to feed upon. A devastating reply to Trotsky's and his capitalist supporters' lies about the U.S.S.R. going back to capitalism is to cite a few points from Stalin's report to the recent Soviet Congress upon the occasion of the adoption of the new Soviet Constitution:

"We have in 1936 achieved the complete liquidation of capitalism in all spheres of national economy. . . . Capitalism has been completely expelled from the sphere of our industry, and the socialist form of production is now the system which alone dominates. . . . In volume of production our present socialist industry exceeds pre-war industry more than seven-fold. . . . In . . . agriculture . . . we now have mechanized production conducted on the largest scale anywhere in the world, equipped with modern technique in the form of an all-embracing system of collective . . . farms. . . .

"The kulaks . . . have been liquidated and the small individual peasant farm sector with its backward medieval technique now occupies an insignificant place. . . . The collective farms . . . together with the state farms, possess over 400,000 tractors with 7,580,000 horsepower.

"As for distribution throughout the country, the merchants and speculators are now completely expelled from this sphere. The whole field of distribution is now in the hands of the state, the cooperative societies and the collective farms. . . .

"Thus the complete victory of the socialist system in all spheres of the national economy is now a fact." *

Stalin says further:

". . . The class structure of our society has also changed. . . . The landlord class has already been liquidated as a result of the victorious conclusion of the Civil War. . . .

"The capitalist class has ceased to exist in the sphere of industry. The kulak class has ceased to exist in the sphere of agriculture. The merchants and speculators have ceased to exist in the sphere of distribution. In this way, all exploiting classes have proved to have been liquidated.

"The working class has remained. The peasant class has remained. The intellectuals have remained." **

Then Stalin goes on to show how these producing classes have been profoundly changed and developed by the revolution and how the advance of socialism is breaking down the "dividing line between the working class and the peasantry, as well as between these classes and the intelligentsia". Also the many different peoples that go to form the Soviet Union have established "fraternal cooperation . . . on the basis of economic, political and military mutual aid, uniting them in one union, a multi-national state". "We now have," concludes Stalin, "a fully-formed multi-national socialist state which has passed all tests and which has a

* *Stalin on the New Soviet Constitution*, pp. 4-5. International Publishers. New York.

** *Ibid.*, p. 6.

stability which any national state in any part of the world might well envy."

Stalin's analysis is incontestable. No intelligent person can deny the basic facts he here presents. The above-cited great socialist victories of the Russian toilers, carrying with them a rapid rise in living standards, a tremendous advance in mass culture and the establishment of the most fundamental democracy of any nation, shout so loud that all the world may hear and understand that socialism is already definitely established in the U.S.S.R. Trotsky's attempt to deny this patent fact shows to what ends he is now pushed to try to hold erect his defeated theory that socialism cannot be built in one country. His allegations that the Soviet Union is turning back to capitalism are brazen lies; they are contrary to a whole world of reality and they prove the political bankruptcy of Trotsky's whole program.

STALIN, LEADER OF THE WORLD REVOLUTION

The entire course of the class struggle everywhere proves conclusively that Stalin's policy leads to socialism and that Trotsky's program is anti-revolutionary and leads back to capitalism. Trotsky's international policy, as well as his proposals for the U.S.S.R. are counter-revolutionary. His bitter war against the People's Front benefits nobody but the Hitlers, Mussolinis, and the like. Behind a smokescreen of revolutionary phrases, its practical results would be, if the workers were unwise enough to adopt it, to split the anti-fascist forces and make possible the victory of fascism.

The Trotskyist slogans for Spain, "Turn your guns against the Caballero government", "Down with Franco and down with the People's Front", and "War at the front, revolution in the rear", are stabs in the back of the Spanish toiling masses and are leading to the repudiation of the Trotskyites by the workers. The Popular Front government recently arrested a number of Trotskyite leaders as traitors.

Trotsky's fight against anti-fascist unity in Germany is direct aid to Hitler, and his sabotage of the People's Front in France has resulted in the expulsion of the Trotskyites from the French Socialist Party. It is no accident that Trotsky's attempt to substitute the slogan of socialism versus fascism fits in exactly with the efforts of the Hitlers and the fascists all over the world to do the same thing. Let Trotsky disguise it as much as he pleases with radical phrases, his anti-People's Front fight nevertheless is counter-revolutionary, capitalistic, the work of a movement which plays the part of advance guard for fascism.

The program of Trotsky for the U.S.S.R., despite his shouting of sonorous revolutionary phrases, is no less counter-revolutionary than his world policies. His long-continued efforts to slow down industrialization and to prevent collectivization of the farms, his warlike attitude towards the peasantry, his years-long attempts to embroil the Soviet Union in all sorts of pseudo-revolutionary adventures in other countries, his persistent attempts to disrupt and split the Russian Communist Party—these endeavors, if successful, could only have the result of collapsing the Soviet government and preparing the way for the restoration of capitalism in the U.S.S.R. And now, as exposed by the testimony of the Moscow trial defendants, comes Trotsky's alliance with the fascists, his agreements to cede them territorial and industrial concessions and his program of industrial sabotage and assassination of Soviet leaders—all of which would inevitably lead to the re-establishment of capitalism after a terrible blood-bath of the workers and peasants.

The essence of Trotskyism is capitalistic, not socialistic. Nor can all Trotsky's loud mouthing of ultra-radicalism mask this basic fact which everyday events in the world class struggle make clear as light. Talk is cheap and even Hitler and Mussolini know well how to misuse radical

phrases. It is precisely because Trotsky's program leads away from socialism rather than toward it that the masses in the U.S.S.R., and the most advanced workers in all lands, reject it. And it is also the reason why, although the hard-pressed masses are everywhere clamoring for real leadership, that Trotsky has to complain in *Bulletin No. 2* of his American Committee:

"My views are represented by only a tiny minority in every country."

8: Is the Proletarian Dictatorship a Tyranny?

Ever since the rise of Hitler to power in Germany it has been increasingly the fashion among enemies of the working class everywhere to say that the Russian proletarian dictatorship and the German fascist dictatorship are alike; to paint the Hitler despotism and the socialist Soviet government in the same dark color. Such people, with an air of complete finality, vociferously declare that there is no difference between the two systems of society. Both are dictatorships, they say; both are ruled arbitrarily by one man; both oppress the masses; both suppress democracy; both eliminate their opposition by blood purges, and so on. The occasion of the Moscow trials has caused a fresh outburst in the press, over the radio, etc., of this "all-dictatorships-are-alike" theory and many people have thereby been deceived.

But this whole line of capitalist propaganda—for that is what it is—violently contradicts the facts. In reality, fascism and socialism are extreme opposites. As social systems they are poles apart and have nothing in common. They are the mutually hostile crystallizations of the most antagonistic

political and cultural elements in human society. They are bitter enemies and in irreconcilable conflict with each other. Their theories, methods of organization and purposes are fundamentally different. Fascism defends outworn, dying capitalism; while the Soviets represent the coming new order of society, the next stage in social evolution, socialism.

Decisive in determining the character of a social system is the question of which class owns the industries and the land and, therefore, which class controls the government. In fascist Germany, as in Italy and all other fascist countries, the industries and the bulk of the land are owned by the capitalist class, and it is these parasitic elements who also control the government. The workers and other toilers have suffered a temporary but severe defeat. Fascism is the naked dictatorship of the most reactionary elements of the capitalist exploiters, and its consequences have been a rapid impoverishment of the German people. In the Soviet Union an exactly opposite situation prevails. The former exploiting class have been completely smashed. The industries and the land are entirely owned by the people's government, which means the workers, farmers and other toilers. There are no capitalists, no landlords, no social parasites of any sort. Exploitation of man by man has been completely abolished. Production is carried on for use, not profit; and the great toiling masses get the full benefit of every advance in industrial technique. The dictatorship of the proletariat or the workers' and farmers' government is the rule by these victorious toiling millions, and its results are an unparalleled improvement in the conditions of the Russian masses.

Fascism is opposed in principle to liberty and freedom. It is based on the principles of the leader deciding everything and it considers democracy a menace to capitalist class rule. It has destroyed all the workers' organizations: their political parties, trade unions, cooperatives, cultural groups,

etc. It has also wiped out the basic peasant organizations and crushed the political parties of the middle class. The whole people have been regimented into iron-bound, capitalist-controlled organizations, whose sole aim is to enchain the masses so that they can be the more readily exploited. The sword point of fascism is directed against the toiling millions.

SOVIET DEMOCRACY

The Soviet government, on the contrary, is founded on the liberty of the masses. Despite the lies of international capitalist mouthpieces, in no country in the world is there so much real democracy as in the Soviet Union. Nowhere have the toilers such a great political organization as the Communist Party, and their trade unions, cooperatives, and cultural organizations exist on a scale that utterly dwarfs those in other countries, both regarding their size and the breath of their functions. The new Soviet Constitution raises this fundamental and growing liberty to a higher stage. This document is, as Stalin says, "the only thoroughly democratic constitution in all the world". It is characteristic that world democracy, now so viciously attacked by the fascists in Spain and every country, finds in the Soviet government its most consistent and resolute defender. The sword point of the proletarian dictatorship is directed against the enemies and oppressors of the people and all their agents, at home and abroad. The Russian workers and farmers are building the first real classless democracy in the history of the world.

But, say the critics, if the Soviet Union is a democracy why is only one party allowed to exist? Stalin has given the complete answer to this question as follows:

"The party is part of the class, its advance guard. Several parties and consequently freedom of parties can only exist in a society where antagonistic classes exist whose interests are hos-

tile and irreconcilable, where there are capitalists and workers, landlords and peasants, kulaks and poor peasants.

"But in the U.S.S.R. there no longer are such classes as capitalists, landlords, kulaks, etc. In the U.S.S.R. there are only two classes, workers and peasants, whose interests not only are not antagonistic but, on the contrary, amicable. Consequently there are no grounds for the existence of several parties, and therefore for the existence of the freedom for such parties in the U.S.S.R. There are grounds for only one party, the Communist Party, in the U.S.S.R. Only one party can exist, the Communist Party, which boldly defends the interests of the workers and peasants to the very end." *

Hitler is the puppet of the great German capitalists and maintained in power by demagoguery and terrorism. Stalin is not a dictator, but the freely chosen leader of a great democratic people. His tremendous prestige is not due to such leader manufacturing tactics as those of German fascism, but to his brilliant services in leading the Russian masses victoriously in the tremendous task of building socialism. Hitler is a tyrant and a despot; Stalin is a great captain of the world's oppressed millions, as was Lenin, his gigantic predecessor.

Tales about the Soviet Union being overrun with secret police and about the private life of the peoples being everywhere spied upon and about the masses living in terror are a tissue of lies. They are part of the world capitalist campaign that has been built up in their attempt to discredit the Soviet Union before the eyes of the world's toiling masses. The extent, activities, efficiency and ruthlessness of the former O.G.P.U. have been enormously exaggerated by enemies of the Soviet government. The masses have no fear of this organization which is one of their defenses against the counter-revolution. It is only the White Guards, wreckers, and political assassins who dread it. And an excellent demonstration that it does not pry into the lives of the

* *Ibid*, p. 23.

people is furnished by the fact that the wide ramifications of the Trotsky treason, assassination and sabotage plot could go on for so long without being exposed.

THE U.S.S.R. WORLD FORCE FOR PEACE

Fascism is imperialistic, and in its mad race for more territory and markets it is deliberately planning to plunge the world into a frightful war. Fascism preaches race and national hatred; it oppresses the Jews and it seeks to subordinate all people to its absurd Aryan superiority theories. Fascism, the book-burner, has enchained science and destroyed real culture; it systematically cultivates superstition and is actually trying to reinstate the pagan gods of ancient German mythology.

At the antipodes of all this new fascist barbarism, the Soviet government stands as the world's great advocate of peace. It is the principal barrier to the war plans of the fascist butchers. In line with all this, socialism makes the cultivation of anti-Semitism and race hatred a heavily punishable crime, and the many different races and peoples within its borders live together peaceably, in equality and friendly cooperation. Socialism has stricken all shackles from science; it is the inveterate enemy of ignorance and superstition in every form; it has set under way incomparably the greatest mass culture movement in all history.

It is an outrage to put the enlightened Soviet government in the same category as the barbarous Hitler and Mussolini tyrannies. Fascism is night; socialism, day. Fascism represents social reaction and decay; socialism means the steady progress and betterment of the masses. Fascism brings tyranny and oppression to the people; socialism brings a growing freedom and increased mass well-being. The fascist regime is the twilight of the outworn capitalist system; the socialist order is the dawn of the new society towards which the general complex of modern social forces is drawing hu-

manity. The misery, oppression and terror of Hitler Germany are the death agony of capitalism; the struggles and hardships of the masses in the Soviet Union, of which the recent Moscow trials are an expression, are the birth pangs of socialism. Instead of being the same, the fascist and Soviet system, irreconcilable enemies, and alien to each other in every respect, represent two different worlds.

9: Does the Soviet System Breed Conspiracies?

Conscious enemies of the Soviet Union, as well as confused liberal friends, often undertake to place upon the proletarian dictatorship itself, the Soviet government, the blame for the development of the Trotskyite and other counter-revolutionary plots that have been exposed from time to time. *The Nation* (Feb. 6, 1937), voices this idea as follows:

"When a regime makes opposition illegal it sows the seeds of conspiracy; the inevitable result is the growth of plots which find their sequel in ruthless repression and in trials like the one just concluded."

In this statement *The Nation* is basically in error. The plots and conspiracy that have been directed so continuously against the Soviet government do not develop because of a lack of political democracy under socialism. They arise inevitably out of the counter-revolutionary attacks to which the U.S.S.R. has been subjected ever since its foundation in 1917. The overthrown Russian exploiting classes, together with their fellows in the neighboring capitalist states, are quite irreconcilable to the Soviet regime. Real-

izing fully that they have not the slightest chance to win the masses and gain control of the Soviet government by peaceful means, they constantly seize upon whatever violent methods the changing situation offers—armed revolt, kulak agrarian strikes, industrial wrecking, espionage, assassination, etc.—in order to destroy the Soviet system.

The conspiratorial groups in the U.S.S.R. which, during the past twenty years, have plotted and used violence against the Soviet government, including the present Trotskyite gang, regardless of their political pretenses, have been the spokesmen and banner-bearers of this irreconcilable and ever-watchful counter-revolution. Extending democratic civil rights to such inveterate enemies, instead of softening their antagonism, only facilitates and stimulates their anti-Soviet conspiracies.

This is shown clearly by a glance at Soviet history. For the first three years after the revolution there was beside the Communist Party several other parties in legal existence. I remember a meeting of the Moscow Soviet in 1921 that I attended where there were at least a dozen minority parties represented, although, of course, not the openly tsarist and capitalist parties which were illegal. Did the prevailing freedom of speech, organization and action for the legal Left parties other than the Communist Party, after the revolution, prevent counter-revolutionary conspiracies and revolt into developing among them? Most emphatically it did not.

When in the crucible of the revolution their policies proved not revolutionary, these parties became the rallying points of the overthrown ruling classes and they inevitably passed over from parliamentary opposition to open, violent struggle against the government. It is a matter of historical record that it was in this period of several legal parties that the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries carried through their armed attempt to overthrow the Soviet government, and it

was also at this time that the Anarchists openly supported the counter-revolutionary Kronstadt uprising and furnished arms to their bandit leader, Makhno, in the Ukraine.

SOCIALIST SELF-CRITICISM

Within the scope of Soviet democracy free criticism is permitted, provided it is based upon a constructive attitude towards socialism. The practice is much like that of the workers in a strike. Although a strike is a highly democratic movement, it is also very disciplined. No opportunity is given to disruptive elements to break the strike. The difference is that the Russian revolution is incomparably more vast and profound in its effects than the very greatest of strikes. At stake are the lives of millions of people, the fate of the new socialist order of society, the future existence of civilization itself. Correctly enough, counter-revolutionary agitation and action in the Soviet Union is sternly repressed. Thus it was in the early years under Lenin's leadership, and so it is now with Stalin at the helm. The history of the Trotsky fight against the Communist Party and the Soviet government shows at once a democratic toleration of criticism and an iron repression of counter-revolutionary activities.

After Lenin's death in 1924, when the Soviet government began to enter very actively into the enormously complicated and difficult task of building socialist industry and collectivizing agriculture, a whole series of big oppositional movements took shape inside the Communist Party. Each of these, confused by the difficulties of the country's tasks, developed its own distinct political program in opposition to that of the Central Committee of the Party. Without going into all the complications of these events, suffice it to say that there was first an opposition movement by Trotsky; then followed one led by Kamenev and Zinoviev; later these developed another, headed by Bukharin, Rykov

and Tomsy, and finally all three groups—Trotsky, Zinoviev, and Bukharin—combined themselves loosely into one bloc under Trotsky's leadership and carried on a vigorous struggle against the Central Committee of the Party led by Stalin.

These opposition groups, each in its turn and also when they were combined, because they had not yet displayed counter-revolutionary features, were extended the maximum democratic freedom within the Party to present their policies to the membership. This was quite in accord with the Leninist tradition. Trotsky shouts all over the world that he never had a chance to discuss his program with the Party members. But this is a brazen lie. How, for instance, could it have been possible, even if Stalin had desired it, to prevent from being heard such politically powerful figures as Trotsky, Zinoviev, Kamenev, Rykov, Tomsy and various others, all of whom then occupied high posts?

TROTSKYISM HEARD AND REPUDIATED

The fact is, these leaders fully expounded their policies to the Party membership and to the masses. From 1924 to 1929 the entire Party and its press rang with the historic discussion, and so, also, did the whole Communist International. It was a prolonged, widespread, penetrating and intense mass political debate. Vote after vote among the Party members, in executive committees and in conventions were taken. Many books and hundreds of pamphlets were written. And the final result of it all was that the realistic policies put forth by Stalin and the Central Committee were repeatedly ratified by majorities running from 90 per cent to 98 per cent. The Russian toiling masses, as a result of the profound debate and their own vast experience, were able to see the disastrous implications of Trotsky's theory that socialism could not be built in the U.S.S.R. and, despite its many well-known defenders, they rejected it decisively.

Up to this point in the internal Party struggle no restrictions whatever had been used against the Trotsky opposition. These restrictions began when Trotsky refused to accept the decisions of the Party, violated Party discipline, built an underground conspiratorial organization, and started a campaign to overthrow the Party leadership and its policies by force. And as the Trotsky group and its program gradually degenerated more and more politically and eventually the Trotskyites took to assassination, sabotage, espionage and treason, the Soviet government had no other recourse, in self-defense, than correspondingly to carry through its repression of the Trotsky movement and finally to outlaw it altogether as counter-revolutionary and the advance guard of fascism.

Contrary to *The Nation's* statement, the degeneration of the Trotsky opposition into a gang of counter-revolutionaries and the development of its treasonable conspiracy was not due to any lack of democracy in the Soviet Union but to the fundamentally anti-socialist character of Trotskyism, to its counter-revolutionary heart which was exposed to view by the severe pressure of the revolutionary struggle in the Soviet Union and internationally.

In Soviet democracy there is ample room for honest differences of socialist opinion, but there is no place for openly capitalist parties or conspiratorial gangs seeking to overthrow the workers and peasants' government and to re-establish capitalism.

10: Was the Trial a Frame-up?

In their efforts to discredit the Piatakov-Radek trial Trotsky and his supporters, besides trying to surround the whole affair with an air of mystery and improbability, make actual

charges of frame-up. They allege that the trial was just a great show in which the lives of the defendants were ruthlessly sacrificed. Norman Thomas, who is one of the loudest shouters for an "impartial" commission to hear Trotsky, shows his eminent "fairness" towards the Soviet Union by the following insolent and shameful attack, in which he puts the U.S.S.R. on a level with Hitlerized Germany. He says in the *Socialist Call*, February 13:

"No defeat a recognized enemy can impose upon us, by force, is so dangerous as the defeat we accept when in the name of socialism we adopt at any important point the standards and methods of fascism. And this has been done by the Communist Party in Russia in respect to certain political trials."

Such calumniators of the U.S.S.R. find all sorts of motives and methods, often highly contradictory, as to why and how the supposed frame-up was organized. Let us look at a few of the more widely publicized of these "explanations". In doing so with open eyes we cannot but arrive at the inevitable conclusion that the trials were genuine; that the only motive for them was to rid the Soviet Union of the menace of a gang of assassins, spies and traitors; that the defendants had a fair trial; and that they were definitely proved guilty.

THE FALSITY OF THE REVENGE THEORY

Trotsky charges Stalin with being a sadist monster who, out of a spirit of revenge and a desire to see others suffer, is systematically destroying his political enemies. This lying allegation has, of course, been given wide publicity in the capitalist press. The truth is that Stalin was long too lenient and generous with the Trotsky opposition, as the sequel has amply demonstrated.

Just an example or two to show this lenient attitude on Stalin's part: Zinoviev had a very active share in the first big struggle against Trotsky after Lenin's death, as

he was at that time opposed to Trotsky. Zinoviev wanted to expel Trotsky from the Party and it is a matter of record that only Stalin's intervention saved the latter from expulsion. Or take the case of Trotsky's son, Sergei: For several years, Trotsky has been screaming in the world capitalist press that his son was in jail and being persecuted by Stalin. The fact was, however, as various capitalist newspaper correspondents have stated, that young Trotsky was working in a Russian factory as an engineer, educated by the government, drawing a good salary and living his life unmolested.

A very lenient attitude was shown by the Party and the government towards the Trotskyites in the earlier stages of the fight, although they had grievously broken Party discipline and departed from the Party's political line. This lenience was evidenced by the fact that when the Trotskyite leaders agreed to give up their political opposition and to abide by the Party discipline and policy, they were promptly entrusted with most responsible work and were treated as friends by the Party leadership. The high positions occupied by Piatakov, Radek and the other defendants prove this. The fact is that these people took advantage of the Party's lenience and eagerness to save them for the revolution and they repeatedly violated their pledges by carrying on underground Trotskyite activities. It was only when the Trotskyites degenerated into actual assassins and traitors that the government, in self defense, began to make real war against them. The theory that Stalin is animated by revenge in his fight against Trotsky is a lie cut from the whole cloth.

THE FAKE THEORY OF AN INTERNAL CRISIS

Another allegation by Trotsky against the trials, repeated, of course, by Hearst and other sympathetic capitalist journalists, goes to the effect that the prosecutions were de-

liberately staged by Stalin in order to divert the attention of the Russian masses away from their own supposedly very bad conditions. Radek and Company were allegedly scapegoats for Stalin. Trotsky declares: "This last trial shows that a terrible political crisis is approaching in Russia", and he predicts the present government's early downfall.

Such stupid arguments, which smack of the regular crisis-sensation stories that have been coming from White Guard correspondents in Riga and Warsaw for many years, hardly need refutation. In reality, never was the Soviet regime more firmly established and prosperous than now. Industry is progressing by leaps and bounds; today production amounts to 350 per cent of what it was in 1928; and last year its rate of increase was 26 per cent. That is to say; in 1936 industrial output was increased in one year the equivalent to about the whole pre-war yearly industrial production of tsarist Russia. Agriculture has been almost entirely collectivized, and is being swiftly mechanized and otherwise modernized.

Everybody has work; the country has abolished unemployment and it passed through the world industrial crisis without any economic dislocation whatever. Real wages of the workers are steadily advancing, and the peasants are prospering. The government is financially the strongest in Europe. The defenses of the country are in good order and the great Red Army is loyal to socialism. The masses of the people are enthusiastic and optimistic. Party unity is high and the Trotskyites in the U.S.S.R. are only a handful. A conclusive proof of the solidity of the present Soviet regime is the extension of democracy under the new Constitution despite the menacing threat of war.

There is not the faintest sign of an economic or political crisis in the U.S.S.R. Every serious observer knows this to be true. Trotsky's allegations that the Piatakov-Radek trial

was framed-up by Stalin to prevent his fall from leadership is sheer nonsense, fit material for the Hearst-Coughlin anti-Soviet propaganda machine for which it was intended.

THE MYTH THAT THE TRIAL WAS CAUSED BY A CRISIS
OF THE U.S.S.R. INTERNATIONALLY

Another bizarre theory put forth to serve as a basis for charges of frame-up by the Trotskyite plotters has it that the Piatakov-Radek trial was concocted in order to bolster up the Soviet government's "weakening" position internationally; especially to create hate against Germany in the U.S.S.R. and abroad. But for silliness this "explanation" equals the rest of the Trotsky frame-up theories.

It does not require much observation to understand that during the past few years the position of the Soviet Union internationally has been enormously strengthened. Not so long ago the U.S.S.R. was politically almost isolated, an outcast among the nations. But now it is recognized as a powerful factor that none may ignore, and its prestige is steadily in the ascendant. Its alliance with France, its strong position in the League of Nations, its firm attitude against warlike Japan and Germany, its friendly relations with China, its growing defensive agreements with neighboring states, its expanding leadership among the democratic forces of the world in the fight against fascism and war—are all indications of the Soviet government's growing power and influence in the arena of world politics.

But even if it should be necessary to improve the Soviet Union's position internationally, it is ridiculous to suppose that the recent Moscow trials would have been organized to accomplish this end. Their immediate effect has been, to a small extent at least, the opposite, because enemies of the Soviets have seized upon them to make anti-Soviet propaganda. It is characteristic that in the capitalistic world, to which the whole progress of the pro-

letarian revolution is new and strange, every important step forward taken by the Soviet government has been at first more or less misunderstood by the masses in foreign countries and hence exploited by alert anti-Soviet enemies for propaganda purposes. Thus it was with the Bolshevik seizure of power in 1917, the signing of the Brest-Litovsk Peace Treaty, the initiation of the New Economic Policy, the great drive to achieve the First Five-Year Plan, the affiliation of the U.S.S.R. to the League of Nations, the formation of the Franco-Soviet alliances, etc., etc. At first all these developments, so vital to the success of the revolution, were widely misunderstood; it was only after a time that the friends of the Soviet Union in other countries could perceive the constructive elements in these great strategic steps and that the enemy attacks against them lost their force.

So it is and will be in the case of the Moscow trials and the exposure of the Trotsky movement as traitorous and counter-revolutionary. The trials furnished a great revolutionary lesson that must be learned by the masses internationally. A first effect is a temporary hesitation among a few friends of the Soviet Union in some countries and a big blast of hostile criticism from the enemy. Not only the reactionaries and fascists, but also a number of well-wishers of the Soviet government are of the opinion that the Soviet's position has been weakened internationally as a result of the trials. So the theory that the whole business was organized to build up Soviet world prestige would seem to fall flat.

But the fears of honest people that the Moscow trials have done the U.S.S.R.'s reputation real harm abroad are quite unfounded. As has been the case with every other big development in the U.S.S.R., the full revolutionary meaning of the Zinoviev and Piatakov trials will soon become quite clear internationally, even as it is now to the

masses in the U.S.S.R. The trials will before long be thoroughly understood as bona fide, as a necessary strengthening of the revolution's defenses against the capitalist enemies, and their detractors will be confounded. The initial uncertainties of some friends about the trials will be liquidated and the ultimate effect will be a tightening up of the democratic and revolutionary forces everywhere. Historically, the Moscow Trotskyite treason trials are fated to mark a most important advance by the world revolutionary struggle.

A FRAME-UP ORGANIZATIONALLY IMPOSSIBLE

In the foregoing we have seen that a frame-up of the Moscow trials was politically impossible. Not only would such a crime be totally foreign to the whole fiber and being of the Soviet system, but there was also no conceivable political basis for it. Trotsky's allegations of factional revenge, internal crisis and international expediency as political motives for a frame-up, we have seen exploded into nothingness when they were examined above. And now we shall see that a frame-up was not only politically out of the question but organizationally impossible as well.

To any fair-minded person who has read the material of the Moscow trial it is evident at a glance that, even if the desire had been present, it would have been far beyond the scope of human ingenuity to organize a frame-up of these elaborate proceedings. This was no case of one or two defendants on trial, confronted by government witnesses whose testimony they contradicted and then hastily found guilty against their protestations of innocence, as we have seen happen so many times in the United States. Here was a vast and complicated political hearing which could not possibly have been staged even if, unthinkable, the state and the defendants had worked diligently together to do so. Apart from other reasons, the very vastness and intricacy

cies of the trial would make such a frame-up impossible.

Now let us take a glance at the trial from this standpoint of its complexity: First the Soviet prosecutor brought in an elaborate indictment outlining in great detail the crimes of the defendants, their assassination plots, wrecking activities, espionage, collaboration with fascist Germany, etc., and these facts were fully substantiated by a number of state's witnesses. Then the seventeen defendants, for a full week, gave elaborate testimony, amounting to complete confessions of guilt which dovetailed completely with the state's indictment and evidence. The defendants also accused each other, and here again there was no substantial conflict or contradiction as the various accused Trotskyites quite generally agreed with each other's statements, although these were highly incriminating. Moreover, the huge mass of testimony taken in the Piatakov-Radek trial, while elaborating upon that of the preceding Zinoviev-Kamenev trial, in no sense refuted or contradicted it. Besides all this, the evidence adduced at both these trials has stood the test of world examination by bitter enemies eager to break it down.* And, finally, both the trials were carried on in

* Trotsky cannot possibly refute the damning evidence presented against him in the Moscow trials; so, in his desperation, he is reduced to the flimsy expedient of trying to find some wrong date, or incorrect address, or other trivial slip of memory by one or another of the defendants and then, on the basis of this, tries to discredit the whole trial proceedings. Thus, for instance, Trotskyite supporters tried to wipe out the whole Zinoviev-Kamenev trial because Holtzman, one of the defendants, declared that he had met Trotsky in a Hotel Bristol in Copenhagen. "There is no such hotel," said the Trotskyites. But it turns out that the Bristol, long a Trotskyist rendezvous, is in reality a cafe, which formerly had a common entrance with the adjoining hotel. It was quite a natural thing for Holtzman, a stranger in Copenhagen, to mistake the big sign on the Bristol as indicating the hotel as well as the cafe. Thus, the circumstance with which Trotsky hoped to destroy Holtzman's testimony gives it instead an especially convincing stamp of authenticity. Other Trotsky attacks upon the Oslo airplane incident, the Romm visit to Trotsky, etc., are based on similar quibbles.

public under the sharp eyes of scores of capitalist newspaper men and diplomats who keenly scrutinized every move made in the hope of detecting even the slightest signs of a frame-up; but they found nothing.

Day after day, first in the Zinoviev-Kamenev trial of last August, and then in the recent Piatakov-Radek trial, the maze of witnesses and defendants poured out their vast stream of testimony, totaling many hundreds of thousands of words. And this great volume of evidence, fitting together in all its parts, gradually built itself up into an impregnable mountain of proof against Trotsky and his lieutenants. It proved beyond all shadow of a doubt that the Trotskyites were guilty of the monstrous crimes of treason, sabotage and assassination charged against them.

Leaving aside all other considerations, it would have been an utter impossibility from simply a physical, technical standpoint to have artificially staged these trials. The greatest writer that ever lived could not have written their highly complex theme, with their ten thousand coordinated details and interlocking facts; also, the most brilliant troupe of actors in the world, even if they had rehearsed for a lifetime, could not have played the parts of the several judges, the 33 defendants and the various witnesses, or acted the many dramatic scenes, the innumerable spontaneous cross questionings of one defendant by another or by the prosecutors the repeated displays of deep emotion by the accused, etc., with which the trials were so crowded. To even suggest that such a high drama of real life was staged is supremely absurd and preposterous.

It is no wonder that the capitalist correspondents on the scene from non-fascist countries, although many of them had an anti-Soviet bias and were eager to find something to discredit the trials, were unable to locate any evidence whatever of a frame-up. It remained for counter-revolutionary Trotskyites, fascist Hearsts and "friends" of the

U.S.S.R. like Norman Thomas, who continuously assail the Soviet Union on principle, to come forward with impossible charges or insinuations of frame-up. The false allegations of these people shatter like glass against the Gibraltar of genuineness of the Moscow trials.

11: Why Did the Trotskyites Confess?

In their attempt to brand the Piatakov-Radek trial as a frame-up Trotsky and his sympathizers especially seek to discredit the confession of the convicted plotters. They use many arguments, often of a most fantastic character, to prove that the confessions of the seventeen defendants in this trial, as well as those of the sixteen in the Zinoviev-Kamenev trial which preceded it, were all manufactured and part of a gigantic frame-up.

In previous pages we have seen that it would have been both politically and physically impossible to organize these trials as a frame-up and now, by looking into the matter of these defendants' confessions, we shall see that a frame-up was also psychologically impossible.

Defenders of Trotsky charge that the confessions were wheedled or forced out of the men on trial and they allege various ways by which this was done, all contradictory to each other. Most of these contentions are too absurd to require any refutation, such as the "theories" that the men were doped with an oriental "truth drug", that they had been subjected to a sinister light treatment, that they had been hypnotized, that black magic had been practiced upon them, that they were victims of a mass confession and suicide hysteria, that their admissions of guilt were an expression of the mysterious Slav soul, that the whole thing was a form of anti-Semitism, etc., etc.

One widely expounded "explanation" has it that the defendants voluntarily sacrificed themselves upon the altar of socialism; that is, they confessed upon Stalin's bidding in order to discredit Trotsky and to strengthen generally the position of the Soviet government at home and abroad. What a megalomaniac Trotsky is to consider himself so important that all these men would take their place before a firing squad just to ruin him politically. And how absurd it is to assert that these hard-boiled Trotskyite leaders, who had been fighting Stalin for years, would suddenly agree to die in disgrace for the sake of him and his policies. Such drivel is fodder for morons.

Another favorite Trotskyite "analysis" of the confessions is that they were cajoled out of the men on trial by promises of leniency. But this, too, does not hold water any better than a sieve. Consider the sixteen defendants in the Zinoviev-Kamenev trial: They were experienced leaders, they knew quite well that the death penalty was sure for the crimes of political assassination and industrial wrecking and, consequently, they could not have failed to clearly realize that they, by confessing to these major offenses, were walking straight to their execution. Trotsky claims, however, that the Zinovievites were double-crossed, that is, that they were first promised leniency and then shot. But what about the seventeen defendants in the Piatakov-Radek trial, of several months later? They also were intelligent men, sophisticated leaders and determined opponents of the Stalin regime. It is utterly incredible that these men, with the fate of Zinoviev and the others fresh in their minds, could possibly have been induced by any kind of promises to plead guilty to the monstrous crimes which they did.

NOT PROMISES AND NOT TERRORISM

The whole "promise" theory is thus wholly untenable. But this does not trouble Trotsky any; perhaps some un-

thinking people will believe it nevertheless? And for those who do not swallow it, Trotsky has plenty more equally flimsy "explanations". One of the most publicized of these is that the men were terrorized into confessing.

But this "terror" theory also will not bear examination. Firstly, there was not the slightest bodily sign upon the defendants to even suggest that they had been subjected to external physical or mental torture of any kind. Secondly, not one of them in the course of the extended testimony gave the least indication in his statements that he might have been terrorized. This latter fact is very important; for it must be remembered that the defendants, notwithstanding the crimes they had lately committed against socialism, were men who had formerly passed through many revolutionary struggles and were inured to hardship and danger. Surely one of the 33 of them would have shown courage enough to protest at the trial, and thereby to the whole world, if his confession had been extorted from him by force. Such an individual, in any event, could not have had anything to fear in the way of physical harm from his jailers, certainly not when supported by the world capitalist press. The reason that no such statement was made was because there had been no terror whatever used against the defendants, and if any one of those on trial had made such an accusation he would have been overwhelmingly proved a liar by the very men on trial with him.

In the celebrated Reichstag fire trial Dimitroff showed by his bold defiance of the fascists that the revolutionists do not quail before terror, and the brave Rakosi, in his recent trial, likewise demonstrated that his revolutionary spirit had not been broken after many years in Hungarian fascist dungeons. Thaelmann in Germany and Prestes in Brazil will, we may be positive, show the same indomitable spirit when they are brought to trial. If the Trotskyite leaders were revolutionists, as their friends maintain, how

was it possible that they could have all remained silent if they had been terrorized into confessing and let themselves go without a protest to traitors' graves? The answer is that it was not possible.

THE REAL BASIS OF THE CONFESSIONS

A sound analysis of the trials shows that it would have been psychologically impossible to secure the confessions from the Trotskyite plotters by means of promises, terror or any of the bizarre methods alleged. The inescapable conclusion from an examination of the whole situation is that the confessions were voluntary and genuine.

Why, then, did the Trotskyites confess? The true explanation is simple enough. They confessed because they were guilty; because the proof of the guilt that confronted them before the great tribunal of the revolution was so overwhelming that it left them no other alternative than confession.

A number of elements combined to make the Trotskyites admit their crimes, but promises, terror, "truth drugs", etc., were not among them. The principal immediate cause of their sense of guilt and their ultimate confessions lay in the fact that the group were politically bankrupt and they knew it. In the face of the tremendous advances of the Soviet Union on every front the old Trotsky theory that socialism could not be built in the U.S.S.R. had become grotesque by its absurdity. Only needed to complete the bankruptcy of the Trotskyite leaders, even in their own eyes, was the exposure of their plottings and their counter-revolutionary activities. When this was done in the preliminary examinations the road was thrown wide open for the public confessions that eventually took place.

It is clear from the testimony at the trials that a number of the defendants were genuinely repentant for the crimes they had committed against the revolution and wanted to

make reparation for what they had done. They were disillusioned with their political course and realized they had been led into a terrible trap by Trotsky. Such elements, who had had long experience in the Leninist practice of self-criticism and admission of errors, would naturally take the lead in confessing the whole monstrous crime. Others of the defendants, who wanted to brazen the thing out, were thus confronted in these confessions with the certainty of being convicted in open court and of losing every possible chance for mercy. Thus they themselves, in turn, found it necessary to acknowledge their treason.

It is incorrect to say, as many do, that the Trotskyites were convicted singly on the strength of their own confessions. Besides his own confession each defendant faced the incriminating testimony of his co-defendants, the state's witnesses, etc.

RADEK EXPLAINS

Radek, who in court was one of the most defiant of the defendants and who by his manner gave the lie completely to the Trotskyite promise-terrorism-hypnotism theories of the trial, told how he was thus brought to make his admission of guilt. He said that for a long time in jail he had refused to confess as he did not want to compromise his friends among the accused; but he finally agreed to do it. He said:

"They told me, 'We have already got fifteen depositions involving you, but if you want to gain time to think it over go ahead and think it over'. I thought it over for two and a half months. Then an investigator said, 'You are the last; so why waste time?' The next day I confessed."

We may be quite sure that the clever Radek made himself perfectly certain that the fifteen depositions against him by his co-plotters were absolutely genuine and that he had no other way out, before he made the confession that

condemned him as a traitor to the cause of socialism and covered his name with eternal shame.

From whichever way the Moscow trials are fairly examined the thesis of frame-up is seen to be totally inapplicable. Let me repeat that a frame-up of the defendants was politically, organizationally and psychologically impossible. The *Brooklyn Eagle*, which is no friend of the Soviet Union, says:

"Harold Denny, correspondent of *The New York Times*, by no means sympathetic to Communism, reported that he had tried in vain to detect a false note in the trials that would indicate 'staging' or rehearsal." (Feb. 1.)

And so it was with every open-minded first-hand observer of the trials. Not one of them but who has expressed his confidence that the trials were genuine.

The Trotsky criminals were guilty. The evidence against them was overwhelming and they could not escape it. They had a fair trial according to Soviet law. They were convicted fairly and openly before the bar of the great revolution which they had betrayed, before the masses of the Russian people who had made every sacrifice for the sake of socialism. Hence, unfounded charges of frame-up will not save these traitors from the obloquy which they deserve, nor prevent the masses of toilers in every country from learning the counter-revolutionary character of Trotskyism which these trials have so clearly exposed.

12: Was There a Contradiction Between the Piatakov and Zinoviev Trials?

Confronted by the damning facts in the confessions of sixteen men in the Zinoviev trial of August, 1936, and of

seventeen in the Piatakov trial of January, 1937, all of whom showed him up to be the chief conspirator and engineer of the fascist assassination and war plot against the U.S.S.R., Trotsky, in panic to free himself from this complete exposure of his counter-revolutionary activities, is having recourse to many explanations, each less convincing than the other. He says, secure in his super-egotistic faith that all must believe him. "I reject all the statements made against me by the defendants. Not a word is true." He shouts that everything is a frame-up by Stalin. And in his desperate efforts to make his contradictory charges of frame-up stand erect, Trotsky uses the most absurd arguments. Thus, in the printed report of what was to have been a telephoned speech from Mexico City to New York, Trotsky tries to bolster up his tottering "frame-up" allegations by citing a supposed contradiction between the testimony in the Zinoviev-Kamenev trial and that of the recent Piatakov-Radek trial. Says Trotsky (*New York Herald Tribune*, Feb. 10, 1937):

"The trial of Zinoviev-Kamenev was concentrated upon 'terrorism'. The trial of Piatakov-Radek placed in the center of the stage no longer terror, but the alliance of the Trotskyites with Germany and Japan for the preparation of war, the dismemberment of the U.S.S.R., the sabotage of industry and the extermination of the workers. How to explain this discrepancy?"

Then Trotsky goes on to argue that the Zinoviev trial was not convincing to the world, and therefore it was necessary for Stalin to cook up a new and more dastardly frame-up; so the Piatakov trial was prepared. He goes on:

"However, for this second, more grandiose production, Stalin lacked the principal actors; he had shot them. In the principal roles of the principal presentation he could place only secondary actors! It is not superfluous to note that Stalin attached much value to Piatakov and Radek as collaborators. But he had no other people with well-known names, who if only for their

distant past could pass as Trotskyites. That is why fate descended sternly upon Radek and Piatakov."

What an absurdity is all this "explanation". Its ridiculousness, which must affront the mind of every intelligent person, smacks of the insolence with which the fascists, to cover up their crimes, customarily put out most fantastic statements for the world to swallow. Consider for a moment this nonsense that Trotsky asks us to believe. Stalin, he alleges, had not succeeded in the Zinoviev trial in ruining Trotsky and thus had to bring forth more incriminating charges against him. So Stalin goes to the men Piatakov and Radek, with whom Trotsky admits Stalin was on friendly relations and valued highly as collaborators, and arranges with them (and fifteen others) to confess to the monstrous crimes of assassination, sabotage, espionage, treason and alliance with the fascists. This Piatakov, Radek, *et al* are supposed to have agreed to do, although they must have known that in so doing they would disgrace themselves forever as Benedict Arnolds and sign their own death warrants. Piatakov and Radek, we are asked to believe, agreed to make this awful sacrifice just to discredit Trotsky. If this were so Stalin must be a wizard, or indeed a super-hypnotist. What an inflated ego Trotsky has to assert that men would go to such terrible lengths of suicide in body and reputation merely to injure him and his two-by-four movement. And what fools he must think people are to believe such trash.

THE TRUTH OF THE MATTER

Now, turning away from Trotsky's fairy tales, let us look at realities. Contrary to Trotsky's allegations, in the Zinoviev trial it was already pointed out by several defendants that Trotsky was working hand-in-glove with Hitler's Gestapo agents. If all the implications of this treason were not brought out at that trial it was clearly because the

government was not yet fully aware of them, and naturally the Trotskyites on trial were eager to conceal such a terrible crime and shame. Besides only a few of the central figures among the defendants were in Trotsky's close confidence and knew the full extent of the group's plotting.

Nevertheless, the Zinoviev trial did uncover enough of the Trotsky-fascist alliance so that the whole of this counter-revolutionary plot was eventually brought to light. It is a matter of record that Radek, Piatakov and the other defendants in the recent Moscow trial, most of whom occupied high government posts and were quite trusted by the Party leadership, were exposed and arrested as a result of the revelations made by the Trotskyites themselves during the Zinoviev trial. It was the testimony of the Zinoviev case defendants also that led to the arrest of Bukharin, Rykov and others, who are yet to be tried.

That is how the shameful and criminal alliance of Trotsky with the fascists of Germany and Japan was exposed. Trotsky's story of a suicide agreement of Piatakov, Radek and the rest with Stalin is a bed-time story for political infants. The two Moscow treason trials were not and could not have been frame-ups. To use such a contemptible device as the frame-up against people whom Trotsky calls revolutionists, would be utterly alien to the very nature of the socialist regime in the U.S.S.R. Moreover, there was no possible political or personal motive for such a frame-up. Trotsky's latest attempt to prove his frame-up charge by pointing out an alleged contradiction between the Zinoviev and Piatakov trials is futile. There was no such contradiction, and Trotsky's synthetic story that Stalin "organized a frame-up" is of a piece with the most fanciful flights in imagination of Baron Munchausen.

13: Why Not More Documentary Evidence in the Trial?

At the two recent Moscow Trotskyite trials there were placed in evidence not only the confessions of the 33 defendants, whose testimony completely exposed the Trotsky treason plot and showed Trotsky to be its leader, but also the testimony of various witnesses and the presentation of a number of documents showing clearly the political degeneration of the Trotsky group into terrorism and its collaboration with fascism. This would seem to be more than ample proof to convict in any court, but Trotsky and his followers would have us ignore all this fatal evidence. They insist that the charge of treason was unproved because there was insufficient documents by the traitors themselves presented to the court. Trotsky yells throughout the capitalist world: "Where are your documents? Why did you not produce written evidence?" And some unthinking people are influenced by his clamor.

Of all the many attempts to discredit the Piatakov-Radek trial this demand for documents in which the Trotskyites should convict themselves in detail and in writing, is surely the most stupid. What nonsense it is to suppose that these men, carrying on such a desperate enterprise, would pile up a lot of correspondence and other written material about it. With plain horse sense, *The New Republic* (Feb. 3) remarks: ". . . when you conspire to overthrow the government of the largest country in the world, you do not put your plans on paper and keep a carbon copy."

There are many reasons why the Trotskyite traitors did not write much to each other about their treasonable plans and activities. Firstly, they would naturally make every possible effort to avoid putting on paper such counter-revolutionary stuff, for should a stray document fall into

the hands of the government, it would lead to their exposure and certain execution. Better to have a dozen rattlesnakes loose in their apartments than one such document lying about.

TRAINED CONSPIRATORS

Secondly, it must be remembered that most of the Trotskyite leaders were men long trained in conspiratorial methods during tsarist days. It is inconceivable, therefore, that they, playing with political dynamite as they were, should have kept any considerable correspondence on the matter. It is also certain that whatever letters and other documents they wrote they guarded most carefully and quickly destroyed after transmission. Trials in the past of Russian engineers and other saboteurs also produced very few documents; for even these comparative novices had sense enough not to write about their criminal actions. So why expect the much more experienced Trotskyite leaders to put their plots on paper and then carelessly allow them to fall into the hands of the authorities.

Thirdly, the Trotskyite conspirators who were tried had very little, if any, need for written correspondence. They were all people occupying high posts in the Party, the government and industry. In consequence they were able to travel freely throughout the U.S.S.R. and likewise to make trips to foreign countries. They also had access to the funds in their industrial and government work. They were trusted and not under any surveillance. Thus they could easily keep in constant personal touch with each other. Why, then, should men so strategically situated and highly mobile write each other a lot of letters discussing and planning to assassinate the Soviet leaders and to overthrow the government?

But even if there had been a lot of documents put in evidence at the trial it would not have helped any so far as Trotsky's criticisms are concerned. He would have been the first to challenge their authenticity and to denounce them as forgeries. He would have shown in great detail just how incredible it was for such experienced men to put their plots in written form, and how easy it would be for the accused, who he claims were in a gigantic "frame-up" against him, to have got their heads together and concocted a lot of false papers. The very existence of a body of documents Trotsky would have hailed as proof positive of a frame-up.

Trotsky plays safe either way. If there are few documents he says there is no plot, and if there were much written correspondence, he would denounce it all as spurious. It was by such a method that he "explained" the Zinoviev-Kamenev trial. As the defendants took the stand one after the other and told of their plans to kill Stalin and other leaders (which resulted in the death of Kirov) and showed Trotsky to be the leader of it all, Trotsky wildly denounced the whole mass of deadly testimony as a pack of lies that had been made up by the defendants under pressure and in return for promises of immunity. Then, when all the accused were convicted and shot, Trotsky quickly hopped over onto the other foot and declared that Stalin had double-crossed them and killed them all "to get rid of the evidence". It is a "heads I win, tails you lose" form of argument.

Trotsky may demand as long as he pleases that the Soviet government produce more voluminous written evidence of his guilt. Maybe he thinks he can convince the world that the Soviet authorities, in order to convict him, have to put in evidence a few theses written by himself upon the art of political assassination of Soviet leaders, or a number of re-

ports on the progress of the campaign of industrial sabotage, or a few letters from various Trotskyite plotters to each other detailing military secrets that are to be furnished to Germany and Japan, or a stenographic copy of Trotsky's negotiations with Hitler's Gestapo agents? But intelligent opinion will neither expect nor ask voluminous documentary evidence in this case. The testimony of 33 men, all of whom knew when they were on the witness stand that they were facing death, besides the other evidence at the trial, has definitely convicted Trotsky of treason to the revolution and all his frenzied shouts about documents will not save him from just condemnation by the toiling masses of the world.

14: Why Was the Death Penalty Applied?

There are some people, generally friendly to the Soviet Union, who argue that unnecessary severity was shown towards the convicted plotters in the Zinoviev and Piatakov trials. While agreeing that the defendants were guilty, they assert that these criminals should not have been shot, but sent to prison. This position they try to sustain with arguments such as: "The executions were against the spirit of the new Soviet Constitution", "It is bad policy in any case to execute 'old Bolsheviks'", and "Inasmuch as the Trotskyites are only a small group anyway, it was unnecessary for the powerful Soviet government to fight them so ruthlessly". Hence, conclude these individuals, the Soviet government, secure in its own strength, would have acted more wisely and created a more favorable world opinion if it had made a "liberal gesture" and let off all the convicted Trotskyite traitors with jail sentences.

But this whole line of reasoning, mostly sentimental in

character, overlooks many decisive realities. First, let us consider the question of whether the trials violated the spirit of the new Soviet Constitution. This splendid document, incomparably the most democratic in the world, guarantees the Russian toiling masses many vital civic rights. But it does not disarm the people in the face of the militant counter-revolution. On the contrary, it provides a strengthening of the defenses of socialism. The only reason the Russian toilers were able at all to build socialism, to achieve such a great document as the new Constitution and to win the concrete freedom which it institutionalizes, was because they have for twenty years bravely and successfully fought back the forces of counter-revolution which menaced them from every side. And their only guarantee of retaining their new Constitution and all that it signifies is by continuing this revolutionary vigilance and struggle against the capitalist enemy. The Trotskyite trials were carried on in the spirit as well as the letter of the new Constitution. Their general result will be to strengthen, not weaken, democracy in the Soviet Union.

Now as to the question of the so-called "Old Bolsheviks" among the convicted Trotskyites. In the U.S.S.R. there is a tremendous mass reverence for the veteran revolutionaries who went through the bitter struggle against tsarism and the hardships of the proletarian revolution. The title "Old Bolshevik" is the most honored of any in the whole country. In a previous section I have shown that many of the defendants never had a real claim to be called "Old Bolsheviks". But in any event this revered name cannot be used as a mask for counter-revolution. When a Zinoviev, a Kamenev, or a Piatakov turns his back upon all he learned from Lenin and works with the capitalist enemy to overthrow the Soviet government he disgraces and deserts the honored ranks and traditions of the old Bolsheviks and degrades himself into a dangerous criminal. Services to the

revolution in former years cannot possibly condone present-day acts of assassination, wrecking and espionage against the Soviet government by degenerated political leaders. The revolutionary proletariat turns its iron fist against all such counter-revolutionary activities, no matter from what quarter they may come.

WHY THE TROTSKYITES ARE A REAL DANGER

Now let us consider the question of whether or not the Trotskyites in the U.S.S.R. constitute an actual danger that has to be ruthlessly crushed. It is true that this group, which as Trotsky himself admits, comprise "only a tiny minority", with their bankrupted theory that socialism cannot be built in the U.S.S.R., cannot possibly win a sufficient mass following to secure control of the government. It is also a fact that Trotsky's terrorist program of assassination, industrial wrecking, etc., although capable of doing much harm and therefore meriting the severest punishment, could never of itself disorganize the economic and political life of the Soviet Union sufficiently to enable the Trotskyite group to seize power through a coup d'etat.

The worst menace of the Trotskyites and the most basic reason for their ruthless extermination lie in their cooperation with Hitler against the Soviet government in the present threatening war situation. As traitors they are dangerous like all other Judas Iscariots and Benedict Arnolds. The whole world knows that Germany and Japan are just waiting for a favorable opportunity to attack the U.S.S.R., and the greatest crime and danger of the Trotskyites is precisely because their alliance with Hitler vastly sharpened the threat of this war attack and increased its possibilities for success.

When Germany and Japan attack the Soviet Union their assault will doubtless be made with lightning speed, probably by huge air raids, without forewarning or formal

declaration of war. It is obvious that the chances for success of the fascist offensive would be enormously greater if the Trotskyite traitors, besides having furnished Hitler vital military secrets, managed to kill off several key Soviet leaders and to sabotage strategic war industries just on the eve of the attack. Considering the vast importance of the time element at the outbreak of a modern war, even a few hours' disorganization of the Soviet government through Trotsky's planned assassinations of Soviet leaders might cost the U.S.S.R. a terrible disaster by keeping its air fleet on the ground and its army immobile. It could lead to a catastrophe and a butchery of the Russian masses. Certainly the German General Staff were quite conscious of these possibilities and had carefully coordinated the proposed Hitler-Trotsky attack.

The Trotskyite traitors, by their desperate plan to seize power in the Soviet Union through an alliance with Hitler, were giving direct stimulus to the war plans of Hitler; they were gambling with the lives of millions of people; they had grossly betrayed the revolution; they were helping the fascists in their efforts to smash the Socialist U.S.S.R., to wipe out European democracy, and to make fascist barbarism triumphant. They had become part of the fascist counter-revolutionary forces.

What, then, could the Soviet government do with men proven guilty of such monstrous crimes against the revolution? What reply could it make to their actual killing of Kirov and their planned assassination of other leaders; their slaughtering of many workers in railroad wrecks and mine explosions deliberately brought about by their campaign of industrial wrecking; their espionage and plans with Hitler to violently overthrow the Soviet regime? The Soviet government is opposed on principle to the death penalty and to long prison sentences and its criminal code is the most humane in the world. But in such a situation, when it

is a case of such terrible crimes against the masses and socialism, talk of liberal gestures and ostrich policies of ignoring the danger presented by the Trotskyites are entirely out of place. The revolutionary Soviet government, surrounded on all sides by hostile fascist countries eager to destroy it, gave, by its severe condemnation of the Trotskyite criminals, the only possible answer to their treason.

15: Did the Conviction of the Trotskyist Traitors Weaken the Soviet Government?

Many liberals and confused Socialists are now complaining that the Moscow trials have lessened the vitality of the Soviet Union and injured its prestige among the world's toiling masses. They say also that it increases the danger of a Hitler attack upon the U.S.S.R., by exposing to the fascists inner weaknesses in the Soviet regime. Among others, Norman Thomas, who has never turned a finger in real support of the Soviet government, sheds many crocodile tears on this theme. The *New Republic*, February 3, also expresses this general point of view when it declares that "the whole episode can only be considered a disaster . . . the harm done Soviet Russia throughout the world would be beyond calculation. . . . It would give aid and encouragement to the fascist forces in Italy, Germany, and Japan", and more along the same line. The general conclusion of such people is that, in the name of unity, the whole matter should somehow have been mediated and hushed up.

But this entire line of reasoning is utterly false. No one but the politically naive or the real enemies of the Soviet Union seeking a convenient cover from which to strike it

could put forth such unsound ideas. The plain fact is that the Soviet Union, instead of being weakened by the trials, will be greatly strengthened. Its body politic will be all the healthier when relieved of this poisonous Trotskyist ulcer.

Of course, it was a loss to the revolution that the clever men among the defendants turned away from its service. This they did, however, in spite of every effort of the Party to prevent it. But once they had developed into counter-revolutionaries there was no other course left for the Soviet government than to free itself of their corroding influence, and this it did resolutely. The whole Soviet regime cannot but be the better and stronger after being relieved of the alien, disintegrating Trotsky elements. Such was the case after the elimination, years ago, of the Menshevik, Socialist-Revolutionary Syndicalist and Anarchist reactionary influences, and so it will be after the eradication of the Trotskyite virus which was sapping Soviet vitality. Just as it would have been a disastrous error to "hush up" the basic differences with the Socialist-Revolutionaries, etc., in their time, so it would be impossible to try to "patch up" or "smooth over" the chasm between the Party and the Trotskyites. The revolution has already found fresh forces to replace the renegade Trotskys, Zinovievs, and Piatakovs, even as it did the not less able renegade Plekhanovs, Dans, Martovs and Axelrods of twenty years or so ago.

NOT OUR'S BUT HITLER'S LOSS

The argument that the exposure and punishment of the Trotskyite traitors encourage Hitler to attack the Soviet Union is simply balderdash. The fascists are more realistic than are our naive liberals; Hitler and his cronies realize fully that what has happened in the Moscow trials is that, by the breaking up of the Trotsky gang of spies and assassins, they have lost a powerful weapon against the U.S.S.R.

They understand quite well that a nation can only be stronger by cleansing itself of the traitors within its ranks. The defeat of Trotskyism will strengthen the Soviet Union and hence will tend to retard, not hasten, the war.

A number of American liberals, including some who usually have a friendly attitude towards the Soviet Union, are wavering and wobbling on this trial situation. But this hesitation will pass when they understand the whole matter better. Already we can note this corrective tendency at work. It is sharply expressed by the brilliant letter of Mauritz A. Hallgren, in resigning his membership in the Trotsky-controlled "American Committee for the Defense of Leon Trotsky".

By contrast with the confusion and uncertainties of American Socialists and liberals on the Trotsky issue, it is refreshing to observe the spontaneous mass response of the Russian workers and farmers in condemnation of the Trotskyite traitors and in support of the Communist Party and its leader, Stalin. This is because these masses are politically literate, trained in three revolutions. For them the revolution is not a matter of parlor speculation and abstract academic principles, but one of life and death. They are not to be deceived by mere revolutionary phrases and famous names. In the fire and struggle of revolution, they learned to judge groups and personalities by the practical results of their policies and activities. They have witnessed at first hand the political decay of the Mensheviks, the Socialist-Revolutionaries, the Russian Anarchists and Syndicalists, and many other lesser movements. They have seen whole groups of well-known figures swept aside by the irresistible force of the revolution when these leaders no longer served to forward its development. They know the Trotskyites of old; every Trotskyite leader is as familiar to them as our outstanding American public figures are to us. They have seen Trotsky's program belied by the

whole development of the Russian Revolution. And when they observed the final bankruptcy of the Trotsky group exposed in these trials, they can see its historical roots and causes in the long struggle of Trotsky against the Communist Party. To them the condemnation of Trotskyism as counter-revolutionary and the advance guard of fascism is not "fantastic", "incredible", or "bewildering", as it is to some American liberals. It is a logical and unavoidable result of the forward revolutionary march of the U.S.S.R.

16: Should Trotsky Have an "Impartial" International Hearing?

Trotsky, alleging a frame-up and refusing to accept the condemnation justly visited upon him by the Soviet courts in the Zinoviev and Piatakov trials, is demanding that he be given an international hearing before what he calls an "impartial" committee, in order to refute the charges against him. Around this demand his handful of followers have tinkered together a few committees in various countries, with the support of many reactionary newspapers and a scattering of confused liberals. The organization in this country is called the American Committee for the Defense of Leon Trotsky.

Now on the surface of things this proposition seems to be fair enough. What more just than that a man be accorded the right of his day in court? But it requires very little examination to see that the whole proposal is a sham, an insidious attack against the Soviet Union, an attempt of Trotskyite schemers to build their disruptive movement by appeals to sentiments of fair play.

The answer to Trotsky's demand for an international

hearing is simple: If Trotsky has a case, if he can defend himself, why does he not return to Moscow and face the courts of the Russian Revolution? There could be no question of his receiving a fair trial, not only inasmuch as Soviet courts always give all prisoners an honest hearing, but also because the whole world would focus its eyes upon a Trotsky trial in Moscow and follow it in minutest detail. Under such a sharp and penetrating scrutiny, there could not be the faintest possibility of a frame-up. So what would Trotsky possibly have to fear in a Soviet court if he were able to prove his innocence before the world? Moreover Trotsky, in such a trial, would have an unequalled tribune from which to preach his doctrines to the international labor movement.

But Trotsky refuses to go to Moscow. And the reason is clear enough; he has no case. He knows quite well that he could not break down a single piece of the evidence already proved against him, and he realizes that in the event of a Moscow trial the whole world would have to recognize his guilt. Nevertheless, Trotsky has to make some kind of a pretense of innocence. So he comes forward with his lying allegations that he could not get a fair trial in the U.S.S.R., and presents his demands for an international hearing.

THE FAKE INTERNATIONAL TRIAL

Trotsky's so-called "impartial" hearing is a sham and he is fully conscious of this fact. He knows quite well that it could not assume the aspect of a real trial and bring out the true situation. Only one side would be present. For the Soviet government to make an appearance at such a hearing would, in practice, mean to admit that it had committed the monstrous crime of framing up an innocent man. The very proposal of such a hearing is an attack upon the integrity of the Soviet government. To urge, as Trotskyites

do, that impartial hearings were held in other countries at the time of the Reichstag fire trial is to insult the first workers' republic by placing it in the same category as the barbarous Hitler regime.

The movement for Trotsky's "impartial" hearing is a conscious Trotskyite attack upon the Soviet Union, despite the fact that some honest people are being fooled by its parade of liberal phrases. Should the hearing ever take place it would necessarily be based upon a condemnation of the Soviet Union in advance as a framer-up of revolutionary leaders. The "trial" would be conducted by the bitterest enemies of the Soviet government, the Trotskyites; even if a few liberals were duped into lending their names to its deliberations. Its proceedings would be but a barrage of anti-Soviet propaganda. Its decision of "not guilty" for Trotsky, and hence "guilty" for the Soviet government, would be a foregone conclusion from the committee's make-up and control.

The "impartial" character of this anti-Soviet movement may be gathered from the fact that of the American Committee for the Defense of Leon Trotsky's 60-odd members, some 20 are definitely Trotskyites and about that many more are sympathizers of Trotsky's general line. Only a few are liberals of any influence, and these are gradually withdrawing as they begin to realize that they are being used by Trotsky for anti-Soviet purposes. Every enemy and false friend of the Soviet Union—the Norman Thomases, Walter Citrines, Pierre Monattes, Andre Nins, etc., are supporting this Trotsky "impartial" hearing movement. A fine bunch of "impartial" figures indeed into whose hands to trust the interests and reputation of the U.S.S.R. Trotsky may feel quite safe that he will never be called upon by such people to make good his advertised bluff to return to Moscow and place himself in the jurisdiction of the Soviet government, if the "hearing" should find him guilty.

For months now Trotsky has been shouting that he is innocent. Yet he has offered nothing substantial to refute the mountains of incriminating testimony presented against him in the two Moscow trials. Trotsky hints that he has some mysterious revelations of Stalin's alleged frame-up that he will present to his proposed "impartial" hearing. But he would need no such international trial to bring his proof to light if he had any. The world capitalist press is wide open to him. Since the trial of Zinoviev and Kamenev in August he has issued dozens of long-winded statements to the daily papers and they have been printed down to the last detail. But there has been nothing in them; only hysterical attacks and quibbling over insignificant items of the trial evidence. The bourgeois newspapers (always willing to strike a blow against the U.S.S.R.) would be more than delighted to publish every scrap of slander Trotsky might care to produce to discredit the Soviet trials, let it be however fantastic. Moreover, they would pay him huge fees for it. Mauritz Hallgren, on resigning from the Trotsky Committee, says relative to Trotsky's holding back of alleged proof of a frame-up:

"But consider the absurdity, the astounding cynicism of such an attitude. Here are men [the Piatakov-Radek defendants—W. Z. F.] awaiting death on charges that Trotsky says are utterly false, and here is Trotsky who contends that he can prove they are false—and yet he withholds this indispensable proof for the sake of a book or for the sake of an international inquiry not yet arranged."*

The plain fact is that Trotsky is guilty of the treason proved against him and the other Trotskyite leaders in the Moscow trials. He has no evidence wherewith to free him-

* *Why I Resigned From the Trotsky Defense Committee*, p. 9. International Publishers, New York.

self from the net of condemnation in which these trials have so hopelessly entangled him. He wants his so-called "impartial" international hearing, not because he can verify his frame-up charges, but so that he may continue and amplify the slanderous attacks he has been making for years against the Soviet Union. Every friend of the U.S.S.R. should reject Trotsky's anti-Soviet "impartial" hearing. If Trotsky wants his day in court let him go to Moscow.

17: Shall Trotsky Be Permitted to Come to the United States?

The answer to this question should be a categoric *no!* from the workers, farmers and middle class elements of this country. Trotsky's coming here would bode no good to either the American or the international struggle of the toiling masses.

Trotsky's supporters organized in the American Committee for the Defense of Leon Trotsky demand his entry into the United States on the ground of the right of asylum for political refugees. But there is no weight to their contention. Trotsky has already been accorded asylum by the Mexican government, and is now living in Mexico City. But even if this were not the case the United States should not admit him. The workers, farmers and liberals of this country have no interest whatever to protect a man who is carrying on a counter-revolutionary struggle against the only socialist country, the U.S.S.R., and whose whole policy in other countries is one of demoralization and sabotage of the workers' fight. The toilers should demand the right

of asylum only for those fighters exiled by reaction, not for those who have betrayed the revolution.

Another reason urged by Trotsky's friends why he should be allowed to come into the United States is in order that he may hold his international "impartial" hearing here. But why does Trotsky have to come to this country for his mock trial? He has no American witnesses to assemble, and as for his own testimony, which could be only a repetition of his usual slanders against the Soviet government, it would be carried in full by the world press even if he should release it in the depths of the great African Congo forest. Trotsky's proposed hearing could only be a vicious attack upon the Soviet Union and the workers have no interest in promoting it.

TROTSKY WANTS THE UNITED STATES FOR HIS BASE

The truth of the whole matter is that Trotsky wants to come to the United States because he believes it would provide a more favorable base for his operations. Mexico cramps his style, because the working class is almost solidly opposed to him. He believes that if he could get here, what with the workers not so politically conscious and alert to the meaning of his activities and with plenty of reactionary support, he would be able to fish in the troubled American waters and also to carry on more effectively his nefarious anti-Soviet attacks and general international counter-revolutionary agitation.

Trotskyism signifies far more than a struggle between Trotsky and the Communists. It is an issue in which all sections of the labor movement are directly interested. Trotskyism means not only counter-revolutionary struggle against the Soviet Union and against the People's Front movement in Europe, but also disruptive activities in every phase of the American class struggle. Trotsky's arrival in

this country would only bring harm to the working class.

Trotsky makes a great show of ultra-revolutionism. But the time is past when political leaders are judged simply by their slogans. Their deeds are what count. But Mussolini and Hitler rode into power behind a smokescreen of revolutionary sounding programs. Trotsky, despite his ultra-radical phrasemongering, is plainly doing the work of reaction. In the name of the revolution he works to split and destroy every movement that is really advancing the cause of the revolution.

In his concluding speech in the recent Moscow trial, the defendant Radek, tearing aside the pseudo-revolutionary mask of Trotskyism and exposing the true reactionary character of the movement, gave warnings to which the workers of the world will do well to pay heed. After baring the counter-revolutionary nature of Trotskyism in the U.S.S.R., Radek declared:

" . . . We must say to the Trotskyite elements in France, Spain and other countries—the experience of the Russian revolution proved that Trotskyism is the wrecker of the working class movement. . . . To all those who struggle for peace, we must say Trotskyism is the weapon of the instigators of war. We say it in a decisive voice, because we have recognized it, we have suffered it, and it was inconceivably difficult for us to confess. . . . We have recognized which historical forces used us as their weapon. Too bad that in view of our intelligence we have recognized it so late. But let this recognition be of service to some."

TROTSKYITES FEW, BUT DISRUPTIVE

The American Trotskyites are only a handful, but they have shown a capacity to do much harm. Just as Trotsky, in the name of socialism, makes ruthless war against the U.S.S.R. and everything else that is truly socialist, so the American Trotskyites, in the everyday struggle, prate loudly of their revolutionary intentions but in reality apply a policy

of disruption and demoralization. No sooner do the workers anywhere develop a promising organization or struggle than the Trotskyites pop up, pronounce it not revolutionary enough, and then outline a course of action which, if adopted, would wreck the whole movement. Such a policy becomes progressively more dangerous as the class struggle sharpens. In the U.S.S.R. and Spain we see how in a revolutionary situation it develops into active aid for the fascists.

A revolutionary policy is the one followed by the Communist Party, which consists, on the one hand, of energetic support of every practical step of the workers and farmers to improve their present-day conditions, and, on the other hand, the education of these masses in the principles of Marxism-Leninism, the revolutionary goal of socialism. On the contrary, the line of the Trotskyites is one of sabotage of the toilers' struggle and this sabotage is carried on to the tune of radical phrases. Although the Trotskyites are so few in number they manage to extend their disruptive activities to many fields of the class struggle.

In the trade unions the Trotskyites are definitely a disintegrating influence. A characteristic example of their tactics was seen when, right at the height of the recent West Coast marine strike, they made a vicious attack upon the able and honest leader, Harry Bridges, exactly when he was under bitter fire from the employers and the combined reactionaries. The Trotskyites are also now busy sabotaging the steel organizing campaign, and they openly denounced the recent Akron rubber strike settlement. When the Workers' Alliance held its recent national demonstration of W.P.A. workers in Washington, the Trotskyites found themselves lined up with the reactionaries in attacking it openly.

The Trotskyites are also enemies in principle of the Farmer-Labor Party and they leave no stone unturned to

prevent its formation. It is indeed naive for liberals who support the Farmer-Labor Party and People's Front movement generally, to invite its arch-enemy, Trotsky, to come to this country.

The Trotskyites, during the past couple of years, have penetrated into and secured a grip upon the Socialist Party, and they have since reduced that organization to a maze of warring sects and brought it to the verge of bankruptcy. These same people are sabotaging the fight in support of Spain and the struggle for peace generally. In the youth movement they are a disruptive influence and they aim to wreck the very important Youth Congress. Wherever one encounters Trotskyites in the American labor struggle they are always the same: doing the work of division and disruption under a cover of revolutionary phrases. Their whole policy serves only the purpose of reaction.

In the ranks of labor there is no place for these strike-breakers and counter-revolutionaries. Trotskyism is a diseased growth that must be cut away from the body of the working class. The Trotskyites must be exposed and driven out. Let not any sincere friend of labor be fooled by sentimental appeals for Trotsky and thereby help cultivate this unhealthy sect. We must not let the traitor Trotsky come to this country. If Trotsky wants asylum and a fair trial, let him return to the Soviet Union and face the revolutionary workers whom he has betrayed. As Dimitroff has said, "To defend Trotskyist assassins is to help fascism."

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