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TWOPENCE

Leon Trotsky COMMENTS ON THE NEW TRIAL

During February of last year at the time of the second Moscow trial (Piatakov-Radck) which was supposed to correct the bad impression of the first trial (Zinoviev-Kamenev), I stated in the Press: "Stalin resembles a man who tries to satisfy his thirst with salt water. He will be forced to stage further judicial frame-ups one after the other."

The third Moscow trial has been prepared during a more protracted period and, one must think, more elaborately than the previous ones. The international preparation has been going on during the past few weeks before the eyes of the whole world. The notorious article of Stalin (February 14) about international revolution, striking many with its suddenness, has as its objective the creation of a more favourable atmosphere within the ranks of the working class for the future trial. Stalin wished to tell the workers that if he is shooting the whole revolutionary generation, it is exclusively in the interests of the international revolution. His article does not have any other purpose.

The death of my son, Leon Sedoff, which continues to remain wrapped in mystery should, until proved to the contrary, be considered as the second act of preparation for the trial: it was necessary at no matter what cost to force into silence an informed and courageous accuser.

The third act in the preparation was the attempt of Mr. Lombardo Toledano, Laborde, and other Mexican agents of Stalin, to force me into silence on the eve of the third trial just as the Norwegian Government forced me into silence after the first trial (August, 1936). Such are the main ingredients of the preparation!

The accusation against the 21 defendants is once again published only four days before the trial in order to take public opinion unawares and to hinder the timely delivery of refutations from abroad.

The present trial far surpasses the trial of Radek-Piatakov in the importance of the accused and approaches the Zinoviev-Kamenev trial. In the list of the accused are no fewer than seven former members of the Central Committee of the

party, including Krestinsky, Bukharin, Rykov, former member of the *Political Bureau*, i.e., the institution which actually constitutes the highest power of the Soviet Government.

After the death of Lenin, Rykov was the official head of the Government for more than five years. From 1918 Bukharin was the editor of the central organ of the party, *Pravda*, and from 1926 the official head of the Communist International. Later, after his fall into disfavour, he became the editor of *Izvestia*. Rakovsky was the head of the Ukrainian Government and later Ambassador to London and Paris. Krestinsky, the predecessor of Stalin as secretary of the Central Committee of the party, was afterwards Ambassador to Berlin for several years. For almost all of the last ten years Yagoda stood at the head of the G.P.U. as Stalin's most trusted henchman, and cooked up the Zinoviev-Kamenev trial in its entirety. In the list of the accused there are no fewer than six former members of the Central Government.

Of the nine people who were members of the Political Bureau during Lenin's lifetime, i.e., actual rulers of the fate of the U.S.S.R., there only remains one unaccused, Stalin. All the others have been declared agents of foreign States, and in addition the accusations revert back to 1918. The Russian White emigres have more than once accused Lenin, myself, and all the other Bolshevik leaders of having achieved the October Revolution at the orders of the German General Staff. At the present time Stalin is trying fully to confirm this accusation.

According to their political tendencies, those of the accused who are known to me, fall into three groups: (a) Bukharin and Rykov, former leaders of the Right Opposition; the third leader of this group, Tomsky, former president of the Soviet Trade Unions, was last year harassed to suicide. From 1923 to Right Opposition found itself in irreconcilable struggle against the Left Opposition, the so-called Trotskyists. Rykov, Bukharin and Tomsky, shoulder to shoulder with Stalin, carried on the whole campaign of destroying the Left Opposition. (b) The second group is composed of those accused who during a certain time actually belonged to the Left Opposition. Such were Krestinsky, Rosengoltz, who, however, had already gone over to Stalin in 1927, and Rakovsky, who returned to the Government camp four years ago. (c) The third group insofar as I know it consist either of active Stalinists or non-political specialists.

The name of Professor Pletnyev sheds a singular light upon the whole trial. Last year he was arrested on a charge of *sexual delinquency*. The whole Soviet Press wrote about this openly. Now

Pletnyev has been thrown into a trial of . . . the political opposition. One of the following hypotheses may account for this: either the accusations of sexual delinquency were advanced against him only in order to extort the necessary "confessions" from him; or Pletnyev is a truly guilty of sadism but hopes to earn mercy through "confessions" directed against the Opposition. We shall, perhaps, have the opportunity to verify this hypothesis during the trial.

How could Stalin come to this provocation against world public opinion? The answer is composed of four elements: (1) Stalin is contemptuous of public opinion. (2) He does not read the foreign Press. (3) The agents of the Comintern in all countries report to him only his "victories" over public opinion. (3) Informed people do not dare to reveal the truth to Stalin. Thus he has unconsciously become a victim of his own politics. He is forced to drink salt water to quench his thirst.

February 28, 1938.

Yesterday I stated that there were no fewer than seven former members of the Central Soviet Government sitting on the defendants' bench. To-day, after more precise study of the names, I see that among the accused, not counting the author of these lines, there are eight former Soviet ministers, including the former head of the Government, Rykov.

Bukharin, devoid of administrative capacity, never became a staff member of the Government, but as a member of the Political Bureau and as the head of the Communist International from the time of Zinoviev's fall into disfavour (1926), he occupied a position considerably higher than that of a minister. All these people, it seems, strived for nothing except the humiliation and the dismemberment of the U.S.S.R.!

Apart from the other crimes about which we will speak in the future, the new defendants are also accused of the murder of Kirov. I recall that Kirov, a Leningrad agent of Stalin, was killed on December 1, 1934, by Nikolaev, a young Communist unknown to anyone, apparently on personal grounds, and in any case, as was evident from the Soviet accounts, with the direct participation of G.P.U. agents. Immediately after the murder of Kirov, 104 "White Guards," who had supposedly come from abroad in order to commit terrorist acts, were shot without trial.

Although the names of the 104 were not published, it is known that among them were Bulgarian, Hungarian, and Polish Oppositionist members of the Communist International. Later the Leningrad "centre" of the Zinoviev group

was accused of the murder of Kirov, and 13 men were shot. After this, the "Zinoviev-Trotskyist Centre" was accused of the same crime and sixteen people were shot, not counting those shot during the G.P.U. investigation. In January of last year the "Parallel Trotskyist Centre" (Radck, Piatakov and others) was accused of the murder of Kirov, and 13 of the accused were shot. Finally, we now learn that the Right Opposition (Rykov, Bukharin) was likewise occupied with plotting the murder of this same Kirov. Thus all the leaders of the Bolshevik Party, people of great political and revolutionary experience, with names known to the whole world, during a number of years constructed "main," "united" and "parallel" terroristic centres and each of these centres plotted the murder of one and the same secondary Stalinist agent, Kirov, whose name became known only thanks to the trials.

According to the new charges, the terrorist plans of Bukharin and Trotsky began in 1918. In 1921 Trotsky was already secretly plotting with a foreign power (Germany?). The most important of the new defendants were members of the Central Committee of the Party and Government and daily met the "victims" marked by them. Moreover, Trotsky held in his hands the unlimited means provided by a military apparatus. And the result? The victim of this infernal conspiratorial activity beginning with 1918 proves to be no more than the same Kirov who was killed in turn by the White Guards, Leningrad Zinovievists, the United Centre, the Trotskyists, and finally the Bukharinists.

Having cut themselves loose from every responsibility, the totalitarian leaders have cut themselves loose from the elementary laws of common sense. The Moscow trials strike one as grandiose nonsense, as the delirium of a lunatic armed with enormous power. It would be no exaggeration to say that this part of the accusation is saturated with the spirit of *totalitarian idiocy*. We will show in the future that the accusation is no more meritorious in all its other parts.

March 1, 1938.

The new Moscow trial is designed to bolster with more impressive arguments the shaken world confidence in Stalin's "justice." One can not doubt that to a significant degree the trial is Joseph Stalin's dramatised answer to the verdict of the inquiry commission headed by John Dewey.

The investigation was of course conducted in impenetrable secrecy. However, some very important episodes in this investigation have become known, partly from the Soviet Press, partly from

the revelations of Soviet representatives who have broken with the Kremlin (Reiss, Barmine, Krivitsky and others), and partly from other sources.

In his testimony at the January 24, 1937, session of the Moscow court, Karl Radek designated Nikolai Bukharin as a "conspirator." Bukharin has been in prison ever since. The G.P.U. arranged a meeting between Bukharin and Radek, who has played the rôle of agent for Attorney General Andrey Vishinsky. Radek appealed to Bukharin, with whom he had once been on friendly terms: "Confess everything they demand of you, and your life will be spared. I am living tranquilly in a villa, I have my library, I am only forbidden to meet other people." These arguments had no effect upon Bukharin.

At one of the sessions of the February, 1937, plenum of the Central Committee, Bukharin, former head of the Communist International, and Alexis Rykoff, former head of the Soviet Government, were brought from prison—an unprecedented occurrence in the history of the Bolshevik party. They were ordered to make "voluntary confessions" and thus help to crush the enemies of the party (Trotsky and his partisans).

Rykoff wept at the session of the Central Committee. Gentle Bukharin, on the contrary, behaved aggressively, accusing Stalin of judicial frame-ups. Both of them refused to assume the shameful rôle. Stalin shouted: "Take them back to gaol. Let them defend themselves from there!" Bukharin and Rykoff were taken back to the prison by agents of the G.P.U. waiting at the door. Thanks to the great number of members at the plenum, Moscow bureaucratic circles learned of this scene the very same day.

The accused Christian G. Rakovsky, former head of the Ukrainian Government, later Ambassador to London and Paris, was arrested in February, 1937. The first questioning in his apartment lasted eighteen hours without interruption. His inquisitors worked in relays, but the 64-year-old Rakovsky was held for eighteen hours without food or water. Rakovsky's wife wished to give him tea, but they forbade her, stating that she might poison her husband!

Hour after hour of incessant questioning under the hypnotic glare of special spotlights constitutes the G.P.U.'s ordinary system of weakening resistance. Rakovsky was questioned for ninety hours at one stretch, with but short interruptions. This seems incredible, but the methods of the G.P.U. in general are "incredible." Among others, Reiss revealed the above-mentioned fact, based on information received from Slutsky, one of the central figures of the G.P.U. The fact is also known to some American journalists.

Meanwhile, the so-called "purge" continued, its main objective during the past year the preparation of the principals for the third trial. Dozens and hundreds of relatives, friends, collaborators and colleagues of the defendants were arrested. With these arrests the G.P.U. aimed to enclose every one of the accused within a ring of false depositions made by people closest to him.

Those candidates for the defendants' bench, not broken by ceaseless inquisitions and by dozens of false depositions, were executed during the investigation itself, without any trial, simply by decision of the G.P.U., which means, plainly, on the personal order of Stalin.

On the nineteenth of last December, Moscow dispatches revealed that the eminent Soviet diplomat, Leo M. Karakhan, and the former secretary of the Central Executive Committee of the Soviets, Avel S. Yenukidze, had been executed as "spies." In all their political activity, Karakhan and Yenukidze were closely connected with the defendants in this new trial. They were denounced as perpetrators of the same crimes.

Why are they not on the defendants' bench? Only because the G.P.U. did not succeed in breaking them during the preparation of the case. They were executed in order to give a last and definite warning to the others.

We must add that those who have been arrested not only are without benefit of defence attorneys, but also are denied interviews with close friends and relatives. The exceptions to this iron-clad rule are individuals like Radek, who are used exclusively to cajole the prisoners into making the demanded confessions. It is in this manner that the accused were "educated" during the past twelve months, some of them, after undergoing years of preparatory persecutions and repressions.

On the 19th of last January, the world Press announced that the January plenum of the Central Committee in Moscow had ordered a let-up on the mass purge. World public opinion hastened to conclude that a new, more moderate course was beginning. In reality, the mass purge was halted only because its immediate purpose had already been gained; that is to say, the will of the important defendants had been broken and the possibility of a trial assured. Such was the course of the investigation.

Moscow's foreign agents have hastened to call the new mockery a "public" trial. As if the legal machinery becomes "public" just because the inquisition at a chosen moment raises the curtain over a small part of its work! The trial opened to-day, the 2nd of March. However, the Soviet newspaper *Pravda* had already declared on February 28 that the accused would not escape

execution.

Pravda is Stalin's personal newspaper. What significance does the trial bear if Stalin, through his newspaper, dictates the verdict before the opening of the trial? Only such lackeys as have recently declared Stalin's Constitution to be "the most democratic in the world" can call this trial "public."

In this new trial we can expect some improvement over those preceding it. The monotony of the breast-beating of the accused in the first two trials produced a suffocating impression even among the rubber-stamped "friends of the U.S.S.R." That is why it is possible that this time we may see some of the defendants, in obedience to their assigned rôles, deny their culpability, in order to confess their guilt later under cross-examination. We can predict, however, that not one of the accused will raise difficulties for Prosecutor Vishinsky by obdurate recalcitrance.

Another innovation is also possible. In the preceding trials we were astounded by the complete absence of all material proofs—documents, letters, conspirative addresses, guns, bombs. All letters mentioned in those trials invariably had been "burned." It is very likely that this time the G.P.U. has decided to fabricate a few false documents in order to give at least a semblance of support to the friendly foreign lawyers and journalists. The risk is not great—who in Moscow can check up on the work of the G.P.U.?

Is it possible during the coming trial, despite all, to expect from the defendants some surprise disagreeable to Stalin and the G.P.U.? Will an indignant outcry break in upon the rushing torrent of confessions: "All this is a frame-up from beginning to end!"?

Such a surprise is not excluded. But at the same time it is scarcely probable. The court room will be crowded with well-drilled agents of the G.P.U. capable of creating the proper atmosphere, both for the accused, already morally broken, as well as for the journalists, judiciously selected.

Moreover, each of the defendants has been secretly promised his life. The image of Radek and his comfortable villa will continually flash before the eyes of these tortured victims. An even stronger brake unquestionable is the thought of their families and people near to them who will inevitably perish in case of an open protest. But no matter how smoothly the trial proceeds in its outward aspects, it will explode in mid-air as political, moral and psychological nonsense.

March 2, 1938.

The Method in Kremlin Madness

"Judex," writing in *Controversy* for March, shows that in the Soviet Union during the "hangman's year" of 1937, it is possible to count up from Press reports, etc., at least 2,776 victims of the purge. Among them are included practically all the surviving colleagues of Lenin.

In the past years, the Socialist movement refused to believe the reports of the wholesale bloodshed and imprisonment in the Soviet Union, because these reports emanated usually from "our Riga correspondent," whom we gradually came to regard as the Father of Lies himself. But during 1935 genuine and authentic reports were published forcing revolutionaries to face the real facts. A. Tarov, old Bolshevik militant, made his escape from Stalin's gaols and revealed the ruthless brutality with which all political opponents were hounded by the regime. Dr. Ciliga, onetime secretary of the Czechoslovakian Communist Party, similarly imprisoned, made statements which corroborated Tarov's picture of terror and persecution of Communist opponents of Stalin. Victor Serge also made disclosures from his own prison experiences. All three men are revolutionaries of long standing who considered it an essential part of their duty to the Socialist cause to tell the truth concerning the Soviet Union to the world working class. They showed that mass resentment towards the Stalinist bureaucracy was gathering force and finding for itself a leadership which the bureaucracy sought to obliterate by ever more ferocious repression. The prisons and camps were filled with the new generation of revolutionaries who heroically waged their obscure unlauded struggle against the privileged of the new Russia.

In the recent series of trials and purges, the lid has been taken off this struggle, and workers outside Russia are permitted to get a glimpse of the real Russia as it exists behind the enticing facade of propaganda and conducted tours. By its frenzied attempt to discredit all the leading participants in the October Revolution, the bureaucracy discloses its deadly fear of all those associated with revolutionary ideology. Only a government confronted with the threatening hos-

tility of the masses fears the revolutionaries to an extent that it proceeds to such measures as the purge and the trials.

The fantastic motives to which the accused confess can deceive no one. Trotsky a German spy since 1921? The blockade during the War had reduced Germany to a spectre of famine. In 1921 Germany was defeated, exhausted, impoverished, disarmed, humiliated, starving, with a bullying Franco-British imperialism standing vengefully over her and seeking to plunder even her future resources by demanding colossal, unbelievable sums of money as reparations. And we are asked by Messrs. Stalin, Vyshinsky and company to believe that Leon Trotsky chose this bankrupt Germany as his paymaster and became a traitor and a spy in order to earn those German marks which were cheaper and less useful than wallpaper.

But in rejecting the confessions as far as their face value is concerned it is necessary to recognise that within them there lurks an unspoken confession—the confession by the bureaucracy that there is in Russia a deep peasant discontent, a shortage of necessities in the cities, a growing revolt among the national minorities, a despairing mood of defeatism among layers of the workers—all produced by their own disastrous policies. To prevent the resentful population from turning to Stalin's past opponents for leadership, to explain the disaster, disease and death that result from bureaucratic excesses, to discourage and terrorise the separatists and the defeatists, the trials are staged. Stalin seeks to transmute into patriotism and loyalty to his caste all the bitterness and rebellion that the ruling caste has created. If the peasant has been overtaxed and deprived of manufactured goods, if the worker has been overdriven and underfed and too heavily burdened, all this is due not to Stalinism but to the former revolutionary leaders and the Trotskyists working with foreign interventionists. Who is to blame for your hunger, disease, discontent, comrades? Germany, Japan, Britain, working through Trotsky, Zinoviev, Rykov, Bukharin and the rest.

The confessions reveal that there is deep resentment among the masses engendered either by the accused or their accusers—"dissatisfaction with taxes," "bad savings bank service," "delays in payment of wages," "dislocated planning in such commodities as sugar, butter, eggs, tobacco, etc.," "delayed despatch of goods to the villages," "muddled accounts," "stealing and squandering," "cheating and robbing of consumers." And when the exasperated masses begin to look accusingly towards the bureaucracy, the bureaucracy points towards the scapegoats who are brought forward to say their piece before the microphone.

Thus Stalin seeks to kill two birds with one stone: to escape blame himself and to canalise it towards his political enemies. The frame-ups and confessions are but the technical device by means of which this end is effected. This device has been successful in getting the bureaucracy out of past difficulties.

In 1931 Ramzin, the engineer and self-avowed head of the so-called Industrial Party, made his "unreserved admission of guilt" of sabotage.

"I will enumerate the principal forms taken by this plan of sabotage.

"In the first place, there was the method of minimum standards, that is, the greatest retarding of the economic development of the country, and holding back of the pace of industrialisation.

"In the second place, the creation of disproportion between the individual branches of national economy and also between individual sections of one and the same branch.

"Finally, the third direction, which we began to extend more and more during the course of the last period, was the method of 'freezing' capital, i.e., the investment of capital either in absolutely unnecessary construction or in that which might have been postponed, not being absolutely essential at the moment. This method of 'freezing' capital meant cutting down the rate of industrialisation. Without doubt this lowered the general level of the economic life of the country, thus creating discontent among large masses of the population."

By this "confession," Ramzin drew upon the heads of himself, his associates and two foreign Powers, Britain and France, all the disappointment and anger of the workers who never received the promised benefits that were to result from their tremendous efforts for the Five Year Plan and who could see with their own eyes the colossal wastage that had vitiated their labours.

The trick worked, and not only did the bureaucracy escape the censure it merited, but it actually succeeded in strengthening its position by working on the war-fears of the population.

Emboldened by success, Stalin has employed the trick again and again, each time reaching new heights of fantasy. Contemptuous of world opinion he fabricates more and more complex amalgams. The Dewey Commission of Inquiry, by its painstaking sifting of evidence, not only exposed the lies and absurdities of the Moscow Trials of 1936 and 1937, but it has also a mass of evidence in its hands whereby it has been enabled instantly to point out the lies and discrepancies in

the Trial of last Month.

On March 3, just after the Trial opened, Dr. Dewey sent to Alexander Troyanovsky, Soviet Ambassador in the United States, a letter enclosing depositions which prove that Leon Trotsky did not meet Krestinsky at Meran, Switzerland, in October, 1933.

"We have many depositions stating that Trotsky was at St. Palais, near Royan, France, until October 9, 1933, when he left for Bagnères de Bigorre, in the Pyrenees. His health was bad, and he did not leave St. Palais from the time of his arrival there, on July 25, 1933, until his departure for Bagnères."

Dr. Dewey requested the Ambassador to transmit this evidence to Moscow, and, further, to check the testimony with the records of the French police who kept Trotsky under close surveillance during this period. Not only was Krestinsky's confession thus proved to be at variance with the facts, but Bessonov's confession was similarly shown to be false. Bessonov testified that he met Leon Trotsky in a Paris hotel in July, 1934. Evidence at the disposal of the Dewey Commission shows that from April 12, 1934, when Trotsky's place of residence, known only to the heads of the Surêté Nationale, was discovered by the Press, he was kept under surveillance day and night by a police inspector, and therefore could not have been in Paris in July without the knowledge of the police. This evidence was also placed at the disposal of the Soviet Government through Mr. Troyanovsky. The Dewey Commission demanded once again that the Soviet Government request from the French Government the records of the Surêté Nationale covering Trotsky's movements in France, which refute Bessonov's evidence.

The evidence thus submitted by the Dewey Commission was not considered by the Soviet court. This court was set up to hear confessions,

not evidence.

The confessed murders of Gorki, Kuizishev and Menzhinsky and the confessed plot against Lenin, Sverdlov and Stalin are belated attempts to answer the criticism that has no doubt been whispered throughout the Soviet Union: so many murderous spies have been at work so long and yet there is only one corpse, that of Kirov, to show for all their efforts? This phase of the trial has been elaborately prepared, even to the extent that R. Page Arnot, British G.P.U. hack, was set to work to rewrite the history of the Russian Revolution. The distortions in his book are now clearly seen as preparation for the frame-up—the emphasis on the errors of the Old

Bolsheviks, the picture of Trotsky as a military wrecker in the Civil War with Stalin intervening again and again to transform imminent defeat into victory, the failure even to mention the accusations of the capitalist government against Trotsky of being a German agent, all the distortions, lies and slanders of the book fit in neatly with the indictment in the latest trial. R. Page Arnot is the literary counterpart of A. Vyshinsky, specialist in frame-ups. The G.P.U. has its agents in the midst of the British working class movement. Though the apprentices of Stalin to-day still exist to aid the Master in his work, to-morrow they will practice each in his own territory. The British workers must be warned.

Gastonia Strike Leader Jailed

Fred Beal and six other leaders of the heroic strike of the Gastonia textile workers were framed-up and sentenced in September, 1929, to long terms of imprisonment. Upon the decision of the Central Committee of the Communist Party (of the United States) of which all were members, they forfeited their bail and fled to the Soviet Union. After they had left, the (American) *Daily Worker* of August 27th, 1930, wrote:

"They are quite justified in escaping from the vicious sentence imposed upon them, by placing themselves beyond the reach of the Southern capitalist class justice . . .

"The working class as a whole should glory in the fact that they got away. The workers should support their escape despite the howls of the bourgeoisie . . . Let the bosses take the bail; it is better that they have 27,000 dollars than the seven Gastonia fighters serve 117 years in their prison."

Fred Beal, after first hand experience of the Bureaucracy in the U.S.S.R., came out against

them and left the Soviet Union to return to America, preferring to take his chance of prison.

He was arrested by the Massachusetts authorities and held for extradition to North Carolina where a 20-year prison sentence awaits him.

The *Daily Worker* labelled him as "a fugitive from justice" (a term also applied to him by the representatives of "Southern capitalist class justice"), and, as part of the Stalinist campaign to disrupt his defence, published a letter attacking him as a fascist.

The *Daily Worker* claimed that the signatures on the letter were those of members of the Socialist Party but the executive secretary of this organisation has declared that only one of the group who signed the letter can claim to be a member. By means of falsification and misrepresentation, methods common to Stalinism the world over, the attempt is made to sabotage the defence of this class-war prisoner and to send him to serve the 20-year sentence that hangs over him.

'Through All Channels'

To those who have criticised Leon Trotsky for allowing his articles on the recent frame-up to appear in yellow papers of the type of the "Sunday Express," he has replied in the following words:

"My task and that of my collaborators during these days was to launch into world circulation

through all accessible channels the greatest possible number of facts and arguments against the executioners and thus attempt to stay their hand. If I should have to post placards, warning the people of a cholera epidemic, I should equally utilise the walls of schools, churches, saloons, gambling houses, and even worse establishments."

More Arms?

Hitler's dramatic seizure of Austria created a war-scare which British Imperialism immediately utilised in order to intensify and speed up its preparations for the war which it sees as inevitable in the next few years. The bitter struggle for markets, for sources of raw materials, for spheres of investment passes rapidly out of the phase where it can be regulated any longer by tariffs, quota agreements and currency manipulation. By placing the German toilers on a diet of black bread and propaganda, German Imperialism has succeeded in fabricating a new arsenal out of their uneaten dinners. Totalitarian chemistry has transmuted butter into guns, and those guns have gained for German Imperialism a prize that butter could not get for them—Austria. Those guns now menace Czechoslovakia, and beyond Czechoslovakia, the Ukraine.

But British Imperialism can still afford to use different methods to gain the same effect. A population which voluntarily fights because it believes itself to be the victim of foreign aggression is far superior in morale and power of endurance to a people who are dragooned, starved and bullied into a warlike mood. Cunningly exploiting Hitler's act of aggression which comes on top of the barbarities perpetrated in Spain and China, the National Government sent out a call for air-raid helpers, and an army of volunteers responded. The cry, "More Arms," goes up and Britain gains a tremendous spurt in the arms-race. As long as British Imperialism is able to pose as the threatened victim of the foreign aggressor, all talk of conscription may be postponed till the very outbreak of hostilities. And in contradiction to the totalitarian states, Britain can still afford the luxury of depending upon the volunteer in her war preparations.

On March 23rd Neville Chamberlain asked the T.U.C. General Council for its "goodwill and help" in speeding-up the arms programme, to be expressed in negotiations between unions and employers over proposals for reorganising industry on a war basis. The National Government thus seeks in the name of patriotism to transfer to the shoulders of the working class the burdens of the increased tempo of rearmament. Modern war rests upon modern industry, and the regimentation and militarisation of the industrial workers, achieved by force in Germany and Italy, must here be accomplished through "democratic" machinery, by consultation with the trade union heads. Let no worker be deceived by the presence of stern criticism on the part of some of the trade union leaders; none the less surely will

they lead the workers into the trap of class collaboration, to undergo once again the experiences of the last world war.

During the last war, the trade union rights and industrial safeguards which had been wrested from the master-class in years of painful struggle were surrendered by the workers' leaders as their contribution to the war-needs of the imperialists. The duration of the working day, the restrictions on night-work, Sunday work, overtime, on the employment of apprentices and women, the regulation of output, all these were given up. The right to strike was surrendered, and even the right to change employers, so that the decisions of the arbitration boards which were set up were compulsory for the men. The system of fines was restored and the factory regulations safeguarding the health and the lives of the workers were abandoned.

The employers ruthlessly exploited the position for their own private profit; under the conscription system which was introduced, militant workers who raised their voice against the manner in which workers' sacrifices were utilised to pile up fortunes for the capitalists were dealt with summarily. They were sent to the trenches.

Trade Union and Labour Party heads reaped their reward in the Government positions and salaries that were given them; the workers' share was starvation and slavery behind the lines, mutilation and death in the trenches. And when the war was over, the workers were faced with a bitter struggle to regain some of the rights they had been swindled out of, a struggle rendered all the more severe on account of the dilution of the unions during the war and the mass unemployment that followed the war years.

To-day the ruling class seeks to bring about the surrender of workers' rights in advance of the outbreak of hostilities. The mechanisation of modern warfare imposes greater need for industrial war preparation than ever before and the ruling class, profiting from the lessons of the last war, has worked out its plan in readiness. Hitler has provided a golden opportunity to set the plan in motion, and the trade union leaders are being brought into line.

The alarm must be raised among the workers. No support for war preparations. No surrender of hard won workers' rights. Resist the war plans of imperialism. The enemy is in our own country, seeking to safeguard his property and his profits at the expense of our lives and our well-being. Prepare to transform the coming imperialist war into civil war.

Trotskyists in Hitler's Jails

While international revolutionaries were being subjected to a barrage of filthy accusations and hysterical calumnies the news reaches us of a tragedy which was unfolded in the prisons and before the fascist tribunals of Hamburg. After two years of work and of close observation the Gestapo succeeded in dealing a heavy blow to our comrades. We are unable to supply all the details.

The comrades, who openly declared themselves for Trotskyism and who were charged before the tribunal for their work in the reconstruction of a new communist party in Germany, a section of the Fourth International, have been sentenced as follows:

CHARLY MUNTER, clerk, ten years penal servitude;

HEINZ LEIDERSDORF, biologist and lecturer, former leader of the communist students' group in the University of Hamburg, nine years penal servitude;

WILHELM DEFERT, twenty-three year old printer, arrested while undergoing military service, six years penal servitude;

ANITA SUHR, five years penal servitude;

HERBERT BODENSCHATZ, bookseller, five years penal servitude;

ERNST SCHACHT, a founder of the German Communist Party, three years penal servitude.

Others were given sentences ranging from two to five years: Willy Liebelt, Gustav Lepper, student-worker; Hans Jape, clerk; Hans Rehder,

old member of the Viennese Schutzbund; Kurt Schmidt, sailor; Robert Kramer, 65 year old militant who fought in the Hamburg insurrection of 1923; Walter Cahnbley, printer at the State Railway Printing Works, Diekmann, telegraphic worker; Fichte Holbe, mechanic; Schulert, a docker of the Hamburg America Line, arrested at his place of work.

All the comrades were subjected to barbarous tortures in prison in order to extort statements from them. Comrade Charly Munter was kept for 40 days and nights in chains. Comrade Heinz Leidersdorf was kept in solitary confinement without occupation for six months. For three months he was kept chained hand and foot.

The charge had to be withdrawn against Hans Kramer, son of the above mentioned Robert Kramer because this comrade has ended his tortures by suicide. Hans Kramer was a printer in the Hamburg Senate Printing Works; he had smuggled out the warrants and summonses which were printed there in order to warn the comrades.

Comrade Walter Cahnbley was led, by continuous ill-treatment, to attempt suicide three times.

These details have only just leaked out although the trials took place a year ago. These imprisoned comrades are mute witnesses against the foul Stalinist accusations of a Trotsky-Hitler alliance.

S. American Marxists Confer

In view of the approaching International Conference of the Fourth International, the American and Mexican sections have taken the initiative in calling two preparatory conferences: 1. A Latin American conference to examine the problems of the Latin American countries; 2. A Pan-American conference to examine the problems of the continent and the Pacific, in fact all the questions in which American Imperialism is preponderant.

The first conference was held in Mexico City and lasted all the week from 16th to 23rd January. Delegates from the L.C.I. (Mexican section of the Fourth International), a Peruvian comrade, sympathisers from Central South America, Argentine, Cuba, San Domingo and a representative of the International Secretariat of the Fourth International took part in the conference.

The discussion centred chiefly on the following problems: the antagonisms between the U.S.A. and the rest of the continent; the semi-colonial character of Latin America; the characterisation of the different countries and their bourgeoisies as sub-nations and sub-bourgeoisies; the solution of the democratic tasks of national liberation, and above all, the question of the agrarian revolution; the role of the proletariat as alone capable of resolving these tasks in opposition to the powerless bourgeoisies and petty bourgeoisies; the characterisation of Latin American "fascism," etc., etc.

The conference approved resolutions on the problems of organisation, in particular the creation of an international sub-secretariat for the American continent and the production of a Marxist review for Latin America. These resolutions are to be submitted to the International conference for the Fourth International.

A French CP Chief Resigns

M. Charles Rappoport, who resigned recently from the French Communist Party as well as from his position as Paris correspondent for the Moscow *Izvestia*, has addressed a letter to the *Manchester Guardian*, published on March 31st, in which he takes a stand against the last Moscow trial.

"The principal defendants," he writes, "in these trials were old and intimate friends of mine. I knew Rakovsky for something like forty years. I often lived in intimate association with him. For a long time while he was Ambassador or Chargé d'Affaires in London I was actually living at his home. I know his whole life, political and private, and I consider the very idea of the base crime alleged against him to be a monstrosity and an absolute impossibility. Rakovsky created a whole Socialist movement in Rumania. He had several narrow escapes from losing his life or liberty. During the civil war he was a courageous ruler of the Ukraine. All who came into contact with him saw in him a man of noble and chivalrous character. Even after his exile he courageously continued his revolutionary opposition activity.

To set down this man as a spy or a traitor who would sell himself for money is utter nonsense and stupidity."

In referring in similar terms to other dependants in the previous trials whom he also knew personally, he says, rather belatedly, "I'm perfectly convinced of their absolute innocence of the crimes they have been made to confess—how nobody yet knows."

He concludes the letter with an attack on Stalin: "Stalin's policy is removing every trace of the Revolution. He is setting up a military and police State. The informer is king. Denunciation abounds, and even the holders of power are beginning to tremble before it. The high officials are living under a Terror, with the menace of a charge of 'sabotage' hanging always over their heads. Sometimes they punish themselves and assign themselves subordinate posts in order to escape from their responsibilities.

"Stalin may take pride in having demonstrated to the world that Socialism without liberty leads to the most despicable tyranny, ruining and degrading a great country. But it is not Socialism that is responsible. As Krassin, Ambassador in London and in Paris, used to say, 'Mr. Stalin is an Asiatic.' He is a very cunning Georgian, completely ignorant of Europe, knowing no foreign language, exceedingly vindictive, and utterly unscrupulous. His first political acts—and they are well known—were of such a character that his comrades themselves condemned them at the time. The peoples of the Soviet Union are suffering horribly, and the conscience of humanity is brought face to face with its responsibilities."

Rappoport has never been a Marxist or Bolshevik. He was at first violently opposed to Bolshevism and did not join the movement until after it emerged from the indecisive period when the fate of the Russian Bolshevik Party was in the balance. He sided with Stalin in the struggle against the revolutionary left opposition, and wrote a series of articles on "Socialism in One Country." The sending of his "old and intimate friend," Rakovsky, into exile where he remained for half-a-dozen years did not shake Rappoport's confidence in his master, nor did the trials of preceding years have this effect.

If, he now speaks out in condemnation of Stalin's regime, he is uttering what he, in common with the rest of the Stalinist hirelings, has known for years. The fact that he has at this stage spoken out must be taken as symptomatic, indicating the disquiet that begins to trouble the ranks of the foreign lackeys of Stalinism.

In the indictment of the 21 recently tried is the notification of a forthcoming trial of another eleven. From indications in the evidence of Rakovsky and the fact that Rakovsky is permitted to go on living, it is possible to foresee that he will be a witness in a Japanese spy-trial planned to take the stage before long. More trials and still more trials! The rats grow apprehensive. They begin to wonder how long it will be before Stalin's ship begins to sink.

Trotsky Answers Toledano

In "Inprecorr" of March 26th is reproduced part of a resolution of the C.T.M. Congress held on February 26th at Mexico City, to which, with truly Stalinist unanimity, "there was not a single voice raised in opposition." The core of the resolution is the repetition of Toledano's false accusation against Trotsky of interfering in Mexican internal affairs, and the resolution is part of the campaign conducted by Stalin's Mexican hirelings, Laborde and Toledano, to withdraw from Leon Trotsky the right of asylum in Mexico.

The C.T.M. (Mexican Confederation of Workers) is a federation of trade unions dominated by a treacherous reformist leadership increasingly penetrated by Stalinism. The corrupt Stalinist-reformist elements now seek to exploit the crisis produced by the taking over of the oil industry by the Mexican Government in order to intensify the campaign against Trotsky, to place him within reach of the Kremlin murderers.

We print below Trotsky's reply to Toledano.
—Ed.

COYACAN, D.F., Feb. 24th.—Mr. Lombardo Toledano and his clique, after lengthy and assiduous preparation, have made a malicious attempt to deceive public opinion in this country. The "material" on which they based themselves at the February Convention of the Confederation of Trade Unions of Mexico (C.T.M.) does not represent anything new: it is the material of Yagoda, Yezhov, Vyshinsky. It is the material of Stalin. On the basis of this material thousands of people have been shot. Their only guilt was that they detested the dictatorship of the Kremlin clique and felt contempt for its lawyer and lackeys. The "material" which Lombardo Toledano uses in order to deceive Mexican public opinion received the necessary evaluation in the findings of the International Inquiry Commission at New York. In moral height, past, irreproachability of reputation, personal disinterestedness, each member of this Commission, beginning with its president, Dr. John Dewey, surpasses Lombardo Toledano and his kind by several heads. The Commission, point by point, refuted all the accusations of Yagoda, Yezhov, Vyshinsky, Stalin and their international lackeys. The twenty-first paragraph of the verdict states: "We find the Prosecutor fantastically falsified Trotsky's role before, during, and after the October revolution." It is exactly this "fantastic falsifi-

cation" which lies at the root of the slanders of Mr. Toledano and his helpers.

My real politics are accessible to all. They are set forth in my books and articles. As in October, 1917, I defend the interests and rights of the workers and peasants in the U.S.S.R.—against the new, insatiable and tyrannical aristocracy. In Spain I defend those methods of struggle against Fascism which guaranteed the victory of the Soviets in the Civil War (1917-1920), and I oppose the ruinous methods of the Comintern which guaranteed the victory of Fascism in Germany, Austria and other countries, and which are laying the basis for the victory of General Franco. Throughout the world I defend those irreconcilable methods of struggle against imperialism which Lenin, Rosa Luxemburg, and Karl Liebknecht, my old friends and companions-in-arms, applied; opposing the methods of the now thoroughly putrid Comintern which crawls on all fours before "democratic" imperialism, betraying the interests of the colonial and semi-colonial peoples for the sake of caste privileges for the Soviet bureaucracy. Such are my views. I do not intend to change them. I carry full responsibility for them.

After the decision of the International Inquiry Commission I have no reason to enter into political or juridical altercations with Mr. Lombardo Toledano. But I will be able to explain the truth to the people who have been deceived by him. It is this that Mr. Lombardo Toledano and his clique fear. Their whole machination at the Convention, as the authors themselves have quite clearly revealed, follows but one single aim: to seal my mouth.

They act, of course, not upon their own initiative. Their inspirer lives in Moscow. The verdict of the International Commission, the published stenographic report of the Inquiry at Coyacan, the disclosures of the former responsible agents of the Kremlin, Reiss, Barmine, and Walter Krivitsky, as well as many other facts during the past year, delivered an irreparable blow to the Kremlin clique. My latest book, "The Crimes of Stalin," has already appeared in several languages. I hope that it will also appear in Spanish. Progressive public opinion throughout the world, with ever greater disgust, is turning away from Stalin. This explains the furious attempt of the G.P.U. to force me into silence.

Mr. Lombardo Toledano and his clique are mistaken, however, if they think that they will succeed in executing the mission entrusted to them. Many much stronger than they have tried to accomplish this task before without success. The Czar taught me silence for four years in prison and twice exiled me to Siberia. Kaiser Wilhelm sentenced me to prison in contumacy because I did not wish to keep quiet in Switzerland during the war. The French allies of the Czar expelled me in 1916 from France for the same crime. King Alfonso XIII threw me into a Madrid prison in order to force me into silence. With the same objective, the British imperialists threw me into a Canadian concentration camp. The lawyer, Kerensky, who was successful during a certain period of time in deceiving a considerable part of public opinion, tried to seal my mouth in the Petrograd Kresty Prison. But it is written on the pages of history that I have not learned to be silent on command. On the other hand, during forty years of revolutionary struggle I have seen in the ranks of the workers' movement not a few careerists who cannot only be silent but also slanderous on command.

If I had wished to remain silent about the crimes of the Stalin bureaucracy against the workers and peasants, they would have raised me high on their shield and the Messrs. Lombardo Toledanos of the whole world would have crawled before me as they now crawl before the Kremlin clique. The Norwegian Social Democrats, older brothers in spirit to Toledano, discovered only one means with which to force me into silence about the G.P.U.: to throw me into prison. But through a book, my son, whom only death has now brought to silence, answered for me. Stalin, who understands this better than his agents, does not doubt that Toledano will be unsuccessful in forcing me into silence by some ancient warmed-up slanders. It is exactly because of this that Stalin is preparing *other measures*, considerably more realistic. But for these plans, about which we will speak in due time, Stalin as a preliminary needs to poison public opinion. For this work he requires Lombardo Toledano.

Several months ago this man asserted at a public meeting that I was plotting a general strike against the Mexican government in the interest of Fascism. In his turn, Mr. Laborde—partly a helper of Toledano in slander, partly his master—asserted after this at a public manifestation that I was conspiring with "fascist generals." The answer to this "accusation" was a general contemptuous laugh. But it is impossible to embarrass these gentlemen. They cast these accusations aside only in order to present others immediately. If you throw enough mud, as the saying goes, some of it is bound to stick!

Messrs. Slanderers continue to build their game on the accusation that I am breaking my obligation about "non-interference in the internal politics of Mexico." The importation of odious slanders from Moscow and their translation into Spanish these gentlemen identify . . . with the internal politics of Mexico. I announce: no one has ever demanded of me and I at no time promised anyone that I would renounce the right to defend my political honour from slanderers, and my ideas—from their opponents. I pledged the government of General Cardenas that I would not interfere in the internal politics of this country according to the *general understanding of the word "politics."* This pledge I am fulfilling with absolute conscientiousness. But if on the streets of this capital someone should shove his hand into my pocket in order to steal my documents and letters, I would consider myself completely in the right to seize the criminal's hand. And let the owner of the hand not scream after this that I am interfering in the internal politics of Mexico! Lombardo Toledano tries to despoil something bigger, my political honour, and demands at that—O democrat, O revolutionist!—that I be hindered by force from designating his actions and himself by those names which they deserve.

I have never concerned myself with the political programme and public actions of Mr. Toledano, nor with his references to Lenin, which belong in the sphere of unintentional humour. Likewise I now leave aside the question concerning the kind of machinations that made it possible for Toledano to palm off on the Trade Union Convention a decision upon a question about which the overwhelming majority had not the least conception. But it is completely clear that when Mr. Toledano with the help of forged material mobilizes the whole convention against me, a private individual, a political exile who has no relations whatever with the trade unions of Mexico, and does this with but a single aim—to force me into silence or to deprive me of the right of asylum—then Mr. Toledano acts not as a representative of the internal politics of Mexico but as an agent of the foreign politics of the G.P.U. Let him then carry the responsibility of this unworthy function!

The readers of these lines will understand without difficulty that neither the present circumstances of my personal life nor the general character of my work afford me time to occupy myself over Mr. Toledano. But this question is something altogether different. It is a question concerning public opinion in the country which has shown me and my wife hospitality and which during the past year I have learned to value and to love. It is because of this, and only this, that I consider myself compelled to answer with this declaration the carefully prepared slander of the Mexican agents of Stalin.