

THE RED FLAG

ORGAN OF THE MARXIST LEAGUE

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DOCKYARD DISMISSALS!

The circumstances surrounding the dismissal of five workers from Admiralty Dockyards have aroused considerable comment and concern in the labour movement. Rightly so, for the facts as they have been revealed throw considerable light upon the moves being made by the National Government to establish firm control over trade unionism in the war industries. Involved in the war preparations of the National Government are measures which strike at the very roots of trade union independence and power in the workshops, the dockyards and the factories.

No trade unionists, whether Labour, Communist or Revolutionary in politics, practices or advocates sabotage as a method of class struggle. Whatever acts of sabotage may or may not have been committed in the Dockyards they can in no way be connected with the political or industrial associations, activities or views of trade union workers. No one doubts this—not even the Government; for on their own statements the dismissed men were not charged with sabotage nor with being connected with the alleged sabotage acts. All the hints and insinuations, all the talks about 'national safety' being in danger, about 'disruptive' organisations and activities, could not conceal the inability of the Government to prove any connection between the dismissed men and the acts of sabotage reported in the House.

Against the dismissed men there is no charge that they committed acts of sabotage or that they were connected with organisations responsible for acts of sabotage. There were no complaints against their work, they were neither lazy, indolent nor rebellious. Why then were they dismissed? First, here is Sir Samuel Hoare's explanation:

In the subsequent enquiries it emerged beyond a shadow of a doubt that there were men in the Dockyard service whose actions and whose associations forced the Government to distrust their loyalty

Against the men themselves the charge was brought that they indulged in:

Actions and associations that were calculated to incite to acts detrimental to the safety of the State and the Navy, and in particular to acts of sabotage, to mutiny and to disaffection among the men in the State's service.

Here again, be it noted, are no definite charges. One can search in vain through the speeches of the First Lord of the Admiralty and of the Prime Minister for any details of the 'associations' and the 'actions' to which reference is made. But we do know, from the evidence of Frank Gant, of the I.L.P., and others, that the investigation conducted by the Admiralty was into the political activities and associations of workers in the Dockyards.

The Government "distrusted the loyalty of these men" said the First Lord of the Admiralty. "A loyal man" explained Mr. Baldwin, in between praising himself as a champion of Democracy, "is one in whom we have confidence." Indeed it could not be clearer! To get employment at His Majesty's Dockyards—and elsewhere, as we shall show—one has to be worthy of the confidence of Mr. Baldwin's Government!

How many Trade Unionists, Labour Party members and revolutionaries are safe from victimisation and police persecution under this definition which makes the test of employment loyalty the Imperialist State War Machine? The men were dismissed, without trial, without opportunity to make their defence, without definite charges against them, for their political

opinions and associations, or rather for the political opinions and associations the Secret Service suspected them of having.

An article in *John Bull*, published before the debate in the House, but containing, curiously enough, information not made public elsewhere, makes clear the line upon which the Government have been, and are, working.

Describing the activities of 'Intelligence Officers' the article says:

Some of the Intelligence Officers joined the Communist Party, becoming ardent in their extreme left-wing opinions, because the Admiralty suspected that much of the activity they wished to suppress had its origins inside this Party

At Devonport, with the assistance of the Plymouth C.I.D., the authorities took the trouble to collect a list of men in the Dockyard suspected of having extremist tendencies

Consideration is being given to the future Association with the Communist Party, at any time, will be a positive bar against employment.

Yet, according to statements by the men concerned, they are not members of the Communist Party, neither can the Government connect the Communist Party with the acts of sabotage. On the contrary, Communist Party policy during recent times has been such that sabotage would be in direct opposition to their policy. But at no time, even in the "ultra-left" days, would the Communist Party or Communist workers further and carry out the policy of sabotage.

The Government did not mention the Communist Party as the organisation behind the sabotage; neither does it restrict its weeding out of workers to members or alleged members of the Communist Party. It will employ, as it is doing to-day, spies, tale-bearers and agent provocateurs and through them it will seek to remove from the main industries all the active, militant trade union workers. For loyalty to the National Government, to the Imperialist State—which is the announced qualification for employment on war work—is incompatible with loyalty to the working-class and to the struggle of the working-class against imperialist war and against capitalist power. The vast majority of

active trade unionists and socialists are opposed to the imperialist war plans of the capitalists. For this reason the question of the Dockyard dismissals raises issues of profound importance to the future of British Trades Unionism.

In the Commons debate Arthur Greenwood quoted a letter in which conditions in the Dockyards concerned were described. The men all walk in fear of getting the sack and not one of them dare say a word to his work-mate in case he is talking to a 'tec.

These conditions, leading to victimisation, will be the feature of all industries in which war work is being done, if the Government get their way. The first act of the Admiralty, after dismissing the men, was to supply the Engineering and Allied Employers Federation with the men's names. As the last war espionage will be developed over all the main industries and its purpose will be to strike at the active workers upon whom the strength and leadership of trade unionism rests in the factory, the workshop and the yard.

The National Government has struck its first blow in the drive against militant trade unionism in the war industries. Its second blow will be the more decisive, the more effective and the more sweeping if this test case is allowed to pass without a real effort on a national scale to rouse the unions to action.

The leaders of British Trades Unionism are not likely to make serious resistance to the limiting of trade union freedom in the workshops. Most of them have already indicated their desire to support and assist the Government's war preparations plans. Support for war preparations carries with it acceptance of the restriction of trade union rights and freedom in industry.

A nation-wide movement of protest is needed and it is the duty of all militant workers to do all in their power to initiate such a movement. The struggle against war depends for its success upon the maintenance of militant trades unionism in industry and every attack by the Government upon the conditions and the liberties of trade union workers in industry must be resisted with all the power that can be mustered.

HARWORTH

One of the most important trade union struggles of recent years is taking place at Harworth, Nottinghamshire. It is a struggle for the elementary right of workers to belong to the trade union of their own choice, to the trade union of all the Mineworkers; it marks the culmination of a long and bitter struggle in the Midland Coalfields.

In November last a ballot vote of the workers at the Harworth Colliery resulted in 1,175 votes for the Mineworkers' Federation and 145 for the Industrial Union. This union was established by Spencer in alliance with the coalowners, following on the Lock-Out of 1926. It has lived thus long because to its aid have been summoned all the power of the coalowners using the weapons of victimisation, persecution and eviction.

Now the miners are denied employment unless they are prepared to leave the Federation and to join the Spencer Union. With the loss of employment goes the loss of homes; for

many of the houses belong to the Company, and eviction notices have already been served. The miners are out against this attack on trades unionism. The Harworth men will fight: of that there can be no doubt, for they have built their union up against heavy odds from a hand-picked working in secret to a body which represents all but a few in the Colliery. But they need the support of all the miners and of the entire trade union movement.

The support of the Federation and of the T.U.C.—and we mean active, effective support, not words and manifestos—is dependent upon the rousing of real pressure from the rank and file. The bulk of the organised mineworkers are prepared to back the Harworth men: the entire trade union movement will support them too, but only if in every branch and workshop the serious issues at stake in this struggle are made known and the need realised for full support on this important sector of the workers' struggle.

WAR & THE SOVIET UNION

—By LEON TROTSKY—

The danger of war is but one of the expressions of the dependence of the U.S.S.R. upon the rest of the world, and consequently it is one of the arguments against the utopia of an isolated socialist society—a redoubtable argument which is now presenting itself in the most pressing manner.

An attempt to force all the factors of the next carnage of the peoples would be vain: if such a calculation were possible, the conflict of interests would always be resolved by peaceful transactions of the agents. There are too many unknowns in the bloody equation of war. The U.S.S.R. enjoys in any case great advantage both inherited from the past and created by the new regime.

The experience of the intervention during the civil war demonstrated that its huge size is for Russia, as in the past, a very great superiority. Little Soviet Hungary was overthrown in a few days by foreign imperialism, aided, it is true, by the ill-fated dictator, Bela Kun. Soviet Russia, cut off from the beginning from its frontiers, resisted intervention for three years; at certain periods the territory of the revolution was almost reduced to that of the old Grand-Duchy of Muscovy; but it was enough to hang on to and conquer in the end.

The human reserve is another considerable advantage. The population of the U.S.S.R., increasing at the rate of 3 million a year, is now over 170 millions. A single class of military service comprises 1,300,000 young men. The most rigorous physical and political selection eliminates not more than 400,000. The reserves, which can be estimated at 18–20 million men, are practically inexhaustible.

But nature and men afford only the raw material of war. The military "potential" depends above all on the economic power of the State. In this connection the advantages of the U.S.S.R. are tremendous as compared with those of old Russia. We have already shown that the planned economy has given the best results up till now, precisely in the military domain. The industrialisation of distant regions, especially of Siberia, gives a new importance to the vast stretches of steppe and forest. The U.S.S.R. remains, nevertheless, a backward country. The low productivity of labour, the mediocre quality of production and the weakness of the means of transport are only partially compensated for by the extent of the country, its natural riches and its population. In times of peace, the measure of the economic forces of opposed social systems may be deferred—for a long time, but not forever—by political innovations and above all by the monopoly of foreign trade. In time of war, the test is direct, on the battlefields. Hence the danger.

Defeats in war, although they usually give rise to great political changes, do not by any means always lead to economic upheavals. A social system which assures a high level of culture and great wealth cannot be overthrown by bayonets. On the contrary, one sees the con-

querors adopt the customs of the conquered when the development of the latter is superior. The forms of property cannot be modified by war unless they are gravely in contradiction to the economic foundations of the country. The defeat of Germany in a war against the U.S.S.R. would inevitably lead to the fall of Hitler and also of the capitalist system. One can hardly doubt, on the other hand, that defeat would be fatal to the leaders of the U.S.S.R. and to the social bases of that country. The instability of the present regime in Germany results from the fact that its productive forces have long surpassed the forms of capitalist property. The instability of the Soviet regime, on the contrary, is due to the fact that its productive forces are still far from being at the height of Socialist property. The social bases of the U.S.S.R. are threatened by war for the very reasons which, in time of peace, make necessary the bureaucracy and the monopoly of foreign trade, that is to say, on account of their weakness.

Is it possible to hope that the U.S.S.R. will issue from the next war without defeat? To a question posed with clarity let us reply clearly: if the war were merely a war the defeat of the U.S.S.R. would be inevitable. As regards technique, economy and the art of war, imperialism is infinitely more powerful than the U.S.S.R. If it is not paralysed by revolutions in the West, it will crush the regime that was born from the revolution of October.

To this it may be replied that Imperialism is an abstraction, since it is torn by its own contradictions. That is true; and without them the U.S.S.R. would have made its exit from the scene long since. The diplomatic and military accords of the U.S.S.R. rest in part upon these contradictions. But one would commit a tragic error by refusing to see that there is a limit at which these antagonisms must cease. Just as the struggle of bourgeois and petty-bourgeois parties, from the most reactionary to the most social-democratic, comes to an end before the immediate danger of the proletarian revolution, the imperialist antagonisms will always be resolved by a compromise in order to prevent the military victory of the U.S.S.R.

Diplomatic agreements are merely "scraps of paper," according to an epigram of a Chancellor of the Reich which is not devoid of reason. It is nowhere written that they will last until the war. No treaty with the U.S.S.R. will stand up to the threat of an imminent revolution in any part of Europe. It would be enough that the political crisis in Spain (not to mention France) should enter a revolutionary phase for the trust in Hitler-the-Saviour, enjoined by Lloyd George, to gain irresistibly all the bourgeois governments. If, further, the unstable situation in Spain, in France and in Belgium should end in the victory of reaction, not a trace of the Soviet pacts would remain. Finally, if we allow that the "scraps of paper" should retain their force in the first

phase of military operations, one cannot doubt but that the grouping of forces in the decisive phase will be determined by factors of far greater weight than the solemn engagements of diplomats who specialise in felony.

The situation would change completely if the bourgeois governments obtained material guarantees from the government at Moscow that it would place itself on their side not only in the war but also in the class struggle. Profiting from the difficulties of the U.S.S.R., which will have fallen between two stools, the capitalist "friends of peace" will obviously use all means to break down the monopoly of foreign trade and the Soviet laws regulating property. The movement for national defence which is growing among the Russia émigrés in France and Czechoslovakia is being nourished on these hopes. And if one must admit that the world struggle can only end in war, the allies have a great, great chance of attaining their end. Without the intervention of revolution, the social bases of the U.S.S.R. must needs collapse in case of victory as in case of defeat.

More than two years ago a programmatic document, entitled *War and the Fourth International*, sketched this perspective in the following terms:

"Under the influence of the pressing need of articles of the first necessity by the State, the individualist tendencies of the rural economy would be reinforced and the centrifugal forces would grow from month to month in the midst of the kolkhozes. . . . One must expect, in the overheated atmosphere of war, an appeal to "allied" foreign capital, attacks on the monopoly of foreign trade, the weakening of the State control over the trusts, an aggravation of the competition of the trusts among themselves, conflicts between the trusts and the workers, etc. In other words, a long war, if the international proletariat remained passive, might, indeed must, lead the internal contradictions of the U.S.S.R. to resolve themselves by means of a bonapartist counter-revolution."

The events of the last two years have only doubled this possibility.

What has preceded does not in any way, however, require "pessimistic" conclusions. We wish neither to shut our eyes to the enormous material superiority of the capitalist world or the inevitable felony of the imperialist "allies," nor to deceive ourselves about the internal contradictions of the Soviet regime; but we are not at all inclined to overestimate the solidarity of the capitalist system either in the hostile countries or in the allied countries. Long before the usurious war has been able to put to the test the relation of forces, it will submit the relative stability of these regimes to a rude examination.

All serious theorists of the future massacre of peoples are counting on the probability and even on the certainty of revolutions. The idea, more and more often brought forward in certain circles, of small professional armies, an idea hardly more realistic than that of a duel of heroes inspired by the precedent of David and Goliath, reveals by its fantastic nature the terror experienced by the bourgeoisie of the people in arms.

Hitler misses no opportunity of underlining his desire for peace by alluding to the inevitable spread of bolshevism that a war will provoke in the West. The force which still restrains the war that is ready to break loose is neither in the League of Nations, nor in pacts of mutual security, nor in pacifist referendums, but exclusively in the salutary fear which those in power feel of the revolution.

Social systems, like all phenomena, must be judged by comparison. In spite of its contradictions, the Soviet regime has, as regards stability, immense advantages the regimes of its probable adversaries. The very possibility of the Nazi domination over the German people is due to the prodigious tension of social antagonisms in Germany. These antagonisms have neither been removed nor attenuated; the tomb stone of Fascism merely represses them. War will bring them to the surface. Hitler has far less chance than William II to lead the war to a favourable end. Only a revolution made in time could, by sparing Germany a war, avoid a fresh defeat.

The world press represents the assassination of Japanese ministers by officers as an imprudent expression of passionate patriotism. In reality, these acts may be placed, despite the difference of ideologies, in the same class with the bombs thrown by the Russian nihilists against the bureaucracy of the Tsar. The population of Japan is stifling under the combined yoke of Asiatic agrarian exploitation and ultra-modern capitalism. At the first relaxing of military restraint, Korea, Manchukuo and China will rise against Japanese tyranny. War will plunge the Empire into a social cataclysm.

The situation in Poland is scarcely better. The regime set up by Pilsudsky, the most sterile that exists, has not even succeeded in lightening the serfdom of the peasants. The western Ukraine (Galicia) is undergoing a cruel oppression which injures all its national sentiments. Strikes and riots follow one another in the working-class centres. The Polish bourgeoisie, seeking to assure its future by an alliance with France and friendship with Germany, will succeed only in hastening the war in which to lose itself.

The danger of war and of a defeat of the U.S.S.R. is a reality. If a revolution does not forestall a war, a war may well assist a revolution. A second confinement is generally easier than the first. One will not have to wait two and a half years for the first revolt in the next war. And once begun the revolutions will not stop half way. The destiny of the U.S.S.R. will be definitely decided not on the maps of the G.H.Q.'s but in the class struggle. The European proletariat alone, implacably opposed to its own bourgeoisie, even among the "friends of peace," can prevent the U.S.S.R. from being defeated or stabbed in the back by its "allies." And even the defeat of the U.S.S.R. would only be a brief episode if the proletariat was victorious in other countries. On the other hand, no military victory will save the heritage of the October revolution if imperialism is maintained in the rest of the world.

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REG. GROVES REPLIES

The Unity Agreement and the Moscow Trials

During the past few weeks the *Daily Worker* has published repeated attacks on me. These attacks have been a small part of a world-wide campaign waged by all sections of the Communist International in response to the instruction: "The question of the fight against Trotskyism must be raised in the international working class movement in a new fashion . . . Vigilance must be increased not only in the Communist Parties; the masses must be taught to be vigilant, the working class must be taught to be vigilant, in respect to the Trotskyist agents of Fascism." This was at the Presidium of the Comintern Executive in September last, where Communist Parties were criticised for not being sufficiently vigorous and energetic in their treatment of the August Trial. The new trial in Moscow has been the signal for a campaign of mendacity and slander seldom equalled in the history of the Labour Movement.

The attacks upon myself are not important but they throw considerable light upon the reliability which can be placed upon charges made by the Communist Party press. For this reason I propose to state the facts.

In the course of the pre-conference discussion within the Socialist League on the proposed Unity Agreement with the C.P.G.B. and the I.L.P. I sent a circular letter to all League branches. The letter was confidential and sent only to branch secretaries. Somehow or other the *Daily Herald* secured a copy of the letter, presumably from a disloyal branch secretary. On January 18th the *Daily Worker* accused me of handing the letter and other material information to the *Daily Herald*.

This was a lie and I wrote to the *Daily Worker* to this effect. My denial was published in a mutilated form. Subsequently the *Daily Worker* continued to publish accusations by leading members of the Communist Party to the effect that I had 'made available' information to Transport House and to the *Daily Herald*. This in spite of protests from responsible committees and branches to which I belong. The direct charge has now been replaced by general statements to the effect that 'Trotskyists' disrupt the fight for working-class unity in alliance with the Gestapo and the most reactionary forces in the Labour Party. No doubt the direct charge continues to serve the propaganda of 'anti-Trotskyism' in other countries.

It is quite true that I opposed the Unity Agreement. Strange as it may seem to Dutt, Pollitt, Strachey and others, members of the Socialist League still have the right in conference discussion to oppose the proposals of their leaders if they disagree with them. This right no longer exists in the C.P.G.B. and will soon cease to exist in the Socialist League if the C.P.G.B. gets its way.

My reasons for opposing the Unity Agreement were set forth in my letter to the *Daily Worker* which, since only a few lines were printed,

by this champion of democracy I reproduce here:—

January 18th, 1937.

The Editor,
The *Daily Worker*.

Dear Comrade,

The *Daily Worker* of to-day's date contains the specific charge that I placed "materials at the disposal of the *Daily Herald*." The reference is to a confidential addressed by me to the branches of the Socialist League.

This statement of yours is without an atom of truth. No copy of that letter was sent or handed to any but Secretaries of Socialist League Branches, and I am in no way responsible for its appearance in the *Daily Herald*.

Neither is it true that I organised within the Socialist League "opposition to any attempt at building the unity of the working class movement in Britain." During the whole period of my membership of the Socialist League I have supported the United Front and united actions between working class parties, including the Communist Party. My opposition to the Agreement presented to the Conference can in no way be regarded as opposition to united action, but was to certain clauses in the

Last month we allowed Stewart Purkis, Executive Committee Member of the Railway Clerks Association, to state his views on the Unity Agreement between the Communist Party, the I.L.P. and the Socialist League.

This month we have asked Reg. Groves, National Council Member of the Socialist League, to make a reply to the attacks upon him which have appeared in the "Daily Worker."

Agreement and to the sacrificing of the Socialist League position in the organised Labour Movement without sufficient advantage to the revolutionary left in return.

I hope that in fairness to the point of view of a large section of the Socialist League you will publish this letter.

It is now only too clear why an actual agreement was more important than the position of the Socialist League inside the Labour Party. The agreement denies the right of free criticism; either of the parties concerned, of their personnel or of the actions and policies of the Soviet Government. This clause does not stop the *Daily Worker* from attacking individuals in the Socialist League: neither does it prevent the C.P.G.B. from attempting to destroy their critics and opponents in the working-class movement by slander and by malicious falsehood, but it does hamper those so attacked from replying freely, for to do so is to be accused of seeking to disrupt the unity agreement.

A Party with nothing to hide will not object to the criticisms of working-class opponents. No revolutionary fears an open discussion of policies. The Communist Party enforced this kind of agreement precisely because it was preparing to put over a campaign designed not only to destroy the tiny handful of Trotskyists in this country but to destroy revolutionary socialism generally; to make possible the free campaigning for a policy which will lead, as it has done in France, to support for Imperialist armaments and actions.

It is impossible to remain silent in the face of the onslaught now being made on revolutionaries whose long

record of loyalty to revolutionary opinions—not always necessarily those of the Communist Party—makes all the more unpleasant and disgraceful the attacks of such as Strachey whose past political record, to say the least, does not inspire confidence.

That the campaign is directed against revolutionary socialists generally can be seen from an article by R. P. Dutt, published in the *Daily Worker* for January 30th, 1937. Dutt expresses alarm because:—

"there has still been considerable hesitation and confusion among some sections . . . Even where there has not been direct surrender to capitalist influence, there have dangerous tendencies to helpless passivity and detachment, idle speculation, pondering, and wondering 'how it can be possible,' 'why have they confessed,' etc.—in place of responding like fighters to the real crisis revealed . . . it is idle to speak of fighting the world offensive of Fascism and to fail to fight on the vital front laid bare by this trial, to fail to fight the influence of Trotskyism in the Labour Movement, not only of direct Trotskyism, but of the half-hearted apologists for Trotskyism, the doubters and sceptics, who, by their attitude, assist the Fascist aggression (our italics).

This is clear enough. Accept absolutely the charges brought for-

now appear as Fascist Agents, Dutt refers to the corruption of the leadership of European Social Democracy. "In every case" he writes, "the causes of this corruption can be traced in underlying social causes and in the previous careers of the leaders concerned. So with the Trotskyist group. The legend of the 'Old Guard' is a lying legend that has long been exposed."

Long been exposed! Let us turn to the *Labour Monthly*, edited by R. P. Dutt himself. In June, 1935, there appeared in this journal a review of Radek's book, *Portraits and Pamphlets*. Here is a typical passage:

The spirit of the book is the determined conviction of the correctness of Stalinism and the enthusiasm of Soviet Russia carrying it into practice. . . . But it must be emphasised that the reason why Radek's book has this (invigorating) effect is that the warmth of his love for Socialism is accompanied by a merciless probing, to use the expression Radek applies to the State prosecutor at the trial of Ramzin, of the secret resistances to the building of Socialism, the secret hopes and wishes for the failure of the revolution. His ruthless exposure of these wreckers carries him down to the roots of the personalities and tendencies described, and it is this that makes his portraits so living and at the same time enables him to clarify, in passing, questions of pure theory, including such intellectual questions as the meaning of "accident". . . The book is so rich and full because the treatment is always and only in terms of uncompromising Stalinism.

Or, let us quote from a review in *Inprecor*, May 11th, 1935, signed by none other than Reg Bishop.

. . . one finds that the press which so often boosted Radek the wit, maintains a stony silence about Radek the exponent of Bolshevik policy, Radek the deadly satirist of capitalism, Radek the enthusiastic builder of Socialism . . .

While paying glowing tribute to Stalin as the leader not only of the Soviet but of the international working class, Radek demolishes the jeers of the Trotskyists who would paint this as servile hero-worship and sycophancy, and shows that Communism does not mean the destruction of individuality, but demands ceaseless individual vigilancy. . . . Radek makes admission in this article of his own earlier errors when, in the camp of Trotsky, he had disbelieved in the possibility of building Socialism in one country. He makes these admissions not in a grovelling spirit of self-flagellation but in the spirit of a scientist who has been proved wrong by later discoveries.

"Trotskyism has always been the capitalist agency inside the Labour Movement" declared Vishinsky in his closing speech at the Trial. (Vishinsky, by the way, was a Menshevik until 1920). "The seeds of their weakness, which was to become final complete corruption, were from the outset in every issue exposed and fought by the Party, by Lenin" affirms Dutt.

Are we not entitled to ask—Who spread this 'lying legend'? Not Leon Trotsky, for it was his attempt to analyse the inner Party differences of 1917 which led, in 1923, to the opening of the first attack upon "Trotskyism". (An attack led, he it noted, by Stalin, Zinoviev, Kameneff and Bukharin). It was Dutt's own Party which up to a few years ago, was creating the legend now called a 'lying legend.' Let the curious reader turn to the *Illustrated History of the Russian Revolution*,

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In explaining why so many of the leaders of the Russian Revolution

International Efforts to Secure Justice for Leon Trotsky

Once before the New World received Leon Trotsky, a refugee from Czarist Russia, expelled from "democratic" France and from Spain. Today the man without a country finds a temporary home in Mexico, and some measure of security from the persecution to which he has been subjected for so many years. But Trotsky's position is not so sure in Mexico that his friends and indeed all those who labour for the political liberty of the working-class can afford to relax from their endeavours to ensure the safety of the great revolutionary. Diego de Rivera, the world-famous Mexican artist who is in considerable measure responsible for the Mexican Government's decision to grant asylum to Trotsky has already suffered violence at the hands of the local Stalinists, who will spare no effort to rid themselves by assassination if necessary of their chief antagonist.

In these circumstances it is encouraging to find that in the United States a strong representative committee has been set up in Defence of Leon Trotsky in spite of a wild campaign of vilification unleashed by Trotsky's professional calumniators. No fewer than seventy of the leading Radical and Socialist personalities in the United States have associated themselves with the committee. Among the prominent men and women who have joined the committee are Norman Thomas, the Socialist Presidential candidate, J. B. Dewey, Professor of Philosophy at

Columbia University, Joseph Wood Krutch, editor of the *Nation*, V. F. Calverton, of the *Modern Monthly*, Max Eastman, James T. Farrell, author of *Studs Lonigan*, John Dos Passos, Sydney Hook, Suzanne Lafollette, Horace Kallen, John Chamberlain, and Lewis Browne. In addition to the National Committee local committees are being set up in most American cities with the support of influential sections of the Labour Movement. Set up in October of last year the committee was powerful enough to draw over 3,000 New York workers to a mass meeting in December.

Surely there are in Great Britain sufficient forces to strengthen the work of our own Defence Committee. There is more at stake than the life of Lenin's right hand. All that Lenin himself stood for is in jeopardy. In defending Leon Trotsky we defend at the same time the right of political asylum, the right to freedom and democracy within the working class movement in spite of all the slander of the big and little bureaucrats.

There must be many in Britain who feel with Ignazio Silone, the author of *Fontamara*, the fighter against Mussolini's Fascism: "If I remain silent now, I should not have the courage to write another single line against the Fascist dictatorships." It is our job to enrol them in our fight. The great American committee should be an inspiration to us in this imperative task.

WAR AND THE SOVIET UNION

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cracy will cry out that we "underestimate" the interior forces of the U.S.S.R., the Red Army, and so forth, just as formerly they said that we "denied" the possibility of building Socialism in a single country. These arguments are of so low a quality that they do not even permit of an exchange of views however profitless. Without the Red Army the U.S.S.R. would have been conquered and dismembered like China. Its long, heroic and stubborn resistance will alone be able to create the conditions favourable to the development of the class struggle in the Imperialist countries. The Red Army is thus a factor of incalculable historic importance. It is enough for us that it can give a mighty impulsion to the revolution. But the revolution alone will be able to accomplish the main task, which is beyond the strength of the Red Army.

No one requires the Soviet government to risk itself in international adventures, to cease being ruled by reason, to attempt to force the course of world events. The attempts of this kind made in the past (Bulgaria, Estonia, Canton . . .) only favoured the reaction and were in their time condemned by the Left opposition. It is a question of the general orientation of Soviet policy. The contradiction between the foreign policy of the U.S.S.R. and the interests of the international proletariat and the colonial peoples finds its

most tragic expression in the subordination of the Communist International to the conservative bureaucracy and its new religion of immobility.

It is not under the banner of the *status quo* that the European workers and the peoples of the colonies can rise against Imperialism and the war that must break out and overturn the *status quo* with an inevitability analogous to that which leads the fully developed infant to disturb the *status quo* of pregnancy. The workers have not the least interest in defending the present frontiers, above all in Europe, whether at the orders of their bourgeoisie or in the revolutionary insurrection against this bourgeoisie. The decadence of Europe results precisely from the fact that it is economically parcelled out into nearly forty quasi-national States which, with their customs barriers, their passports, their monetary systems and their monstrous armies at the service of nationalistic particularism, have become the greatest obstacles to the economic development of humanity and to civilisation.

The task of the European proletariat is not to eternalise the frontiers, but to suppress them by revolution. *Status quo?* No! United States of Europe!

(Written in Spring, 1937.)

Red Army Move in Spain

On February 2nd an important meeting, militiamen of the P.O.U.M., C.N.T., U.G.T., took place in Lerida. Purpose of gathering to lay base Red Army Spanish workers and peasants. Heads of the reformist P.S.U.C. and U.G.T. threatened members with expulsion if they attended. In spite of threat, many attended from the U.G.T., and in all 500 militiamen present at the Campos Eliseos. Following resolutions passed:

1. That the militias of the rear-guard should be solely responsible for revolutionary discipline.
2. That the police organisations of the Government should be dissolved and the members sent to the Front.
3. That a workers' and peasants' Revolutionary Army should be formed.
4. Democratic election of officers by Soldiers' Committee.
5. Only those with record of active struggle against Fascism to be admitted to Military Schools.
6. Compulsory conscription all males from 18 to 45, but no arms for bourgeois elements who must do work under supervision of armed workers.
7. Resolutions to be sent to all organisations.
8. That in view of attitude of P.S.U.C. to this meeting organisation shall be in hands of the P.O.U.M. and the C.N.T.

(From *La Batalla*, 3/2/37)

FUNDS FOR THE P.O.U.M.

An urgent appeal reaches us from the P.O.U.M. Red Aid for funds. Our readers are asked to give as speedily as possible. Give yourself; take collections among your workmates; raise funds at meetings and forward money to

H. BOYD,
238 Edgware Road, London, W.2.

REG. GROVES REPLIES

continued from page 3

published as late as 1928. Here the reader will find biographies of the 'Old Guard' hardly in keeping with the arguments of Vishinsky—also one of the Old Guard, only the wrong Old Guard—of Dutt, Strachey and of course the persevering Pat Sloan.

Supposing we were to accept the case argued by the C.P.G.B.—that these men are guilty of organising sabotage, of wrecking trains, of allying themselves with Fascist Germany and Japan, of offering to these countries slices of Soviet Territory? There would be only one conclusion to be drawn; that Bolshevism, and all that it represents in the revolutionary heritage, finds its oldest leaders in alliance with the bitterest enemies of the working-class. That Lenin's associates, the men who shared the years of struggle, internal and external, the work and sacrifices that went to the building of the Party and to the victory of the Revolution have evolved to assassination, to terrorism, to double-dealing and deceit, to selling the Socialist cause to Fascism.

If this be true then there is precious little justification for supporting to-day those who claim to be the heirs of Bolshevism. If the writings of Zinoviev, Kameneff and Radek in support of Stalin and Stalin's policy, and in denunciation of Trotsky, were make-believe, how do we know that the ragings in the *Daily Worker* do not also conceal double-dealing and alliances with the class enemy? If the case made out by the Communist Party press be a true one, then they have 'exposed' nobody but themselves.

Yet it is upon the word of men whom the *Daily Worker* describes as 'liars' and 'double-dealers' that Trotsky is condemned. There is not a single shred of evidence apart from the testimony of these men to justify the attacks upon Leon Trotsky. No letters, no documents, no proofs—only 'testimony' declared false by the prosecution itself. Every attempt to prove personal contact between Trotsky and the men in the dock has been shattered by facts. The two examples of this—in the first trial the meeting at the

Hotel Bristol at Copenhagen, which it now appears did not exist at the time of the alleged meeting; and the trip to Oslo made by Piataffoff which it now appears he never made. Yet Trotsky and his supporters are the real targets of the attacks. Why?

This question is not difficult to answer. Just as the Comintern are now re-writing the history of the Russian Revolution and the biographies of its leaders, so are they re-writing the policies of Communism. The very things which Dutt, for example, quotes as evidence of the "Fascist aims" of the Trotskyists are the things which he and other Communist leaders have written, spoken and worked for over the greater part of their political lives. The case against the kind of policy and action represented by the "Popular Front" of to-day is nowhere so ably criticised as in R. P. Dutt's *Fascism and Social Revolution*, published in 1934 and representing a summarisation of Dutt's polemics over many years. Dutt and others turn their backs on this to-day. Trotsky maintains the revolutionary traditions for which the Comintern was founded. That is why he and his followers are the subject for such bitter, slanderous attacks.

We have no choice but to speak out in these circumstances. Having turned their backs on political honesty, upon all vestiges of revolutionary principle and policy, the leaders of the C.P.G.B. seek to destroy and to break up the organisations which still stand foursquare on the platform of class struggle, for Workers' Power, for revolutionary struggle against Imperialist war. Our duty is to maintain to the full our political viewpoint, to bring the full facts before the organised workers, to strengthen the forces of revolutionary Socialism by continued work and propaganda.

The course of the workers' struggle will vindicate our stand just as surely as it will punish those who lend themselves to the monstrous falsehoods and false policies featured in the Communist Party press of to-day.

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