

Internal Stalinist Declaration On 'Trotskyism' It Launches Witch-Hunt Against Communist Party's Own Members

The important advances made by the Socialist Workers Party in the last few months—indicated by the returns in the Minnesota elections, the expansion of our press, the very successful tour of Comrade Grace Carlson, new successes in the trade unions, etc.—have driven the leadership of the Communist Party to launch a new campaign against "Trotskyism." The opening gun in their campaign, laying down the line that is to be followed, is not a public document, but an internal one, published in the internal bulletin of the National Committee of the Communist Party. We publish it in the adjoining columns, and we propose to answer it in this article.

The document of the National Committee of the Communist Party is typical of what goes under the name of "self-criticism" in the Stalinist apparatus. It raises the question, why the Trotskyists made such gains in Minnesota, but deliberately avoids really answering the question. The answer it expects from its Minnesota subordinates is indicated in advance: a perfunctory amount of breast-beating about the failure of the Minnesota Stalinists to adequately combat the Trotskyists. This is the answer of a police mind. It is like the Pinkerton explanation of a strike: not enough was done in advance to destroy the influence of the union leaders. Why the Trotskyists win mass influence: that question the Stalinist leaders will not and cannot answer. But we can: elsewhere in this paper Comrade Grace Carlson explains the Minnesota developments.

Apart from the complaints about Minnesota, the rest of the Stalinist document consists of a discussion of ways and means of preventing "Trotskyist penetration" within the Communist Party.

The document's reference to the proposals of Comrades Trotsky and Cannon is thoroughly distorted. The interested reader need only look up the issues of the *Socialist Appeal* where these proposals were openly published in full detail, and he will find that what we were talking about was the task of united fronts of the Socialist Workers Party and the Communist Party on certain specific issues on which we can jointly act against the reactionaries. These discussions on the united front are not honestly identified in the Stalinist document because the last thing the Stalinist leaders want their members to know is that the Trotskyists are prepared to discuss joint action against the reactionaries and war-mongers.

This distorted reference in the Stalinist document is designed to cover up the real purpose of that section of the document: namely, to organize a witch-hunt within the Communist Party, not against Trotskyists at all, but against all members of the Communist Party who, without any contact with the Trotskyists or without any knowledge of the program of the Trotskyists, have nevertheless begun to think seriously about the fundamental problems confronting the revolutionists.

Note who are to be the victims of this witch-hunt: "honest rank and filers" spreading doubt, those attempting "to undermine the confidence of the membership in the leadership," those making "very left" proposals, those "expressing doubts" regarding various phases of Soviet policy. In a word, all those thinking workers in the Communist Party and its periphery, who are beginning to critically examine the preposterous Browder leadership, who want a firm revolutionary policy, who are increasingly disturbed by Stalin's reactionary role—those, and not the Trotskyists, are to be the victims of this witch-hunt.

And here we must correct our introductory remarks. We said that our successes have driven the Communist Party to launch this campaign. It would be more accurate to say that the present world situation has driven them to launch this campaign. The unfolding of all the implications of the second World War, including as an integral aspect Stalin's reactionary policy, are the root causes of this desperate campaign of the Communist Party. Our successes are but the result of our correct policy of struggle against the imperialist war and against Stalin's counter-revolutionary policy. The evident panic of the Communist Party leadership, as indicated in their document, is fear not only of the Socialist Workers Party but fear also of what the membership of the Communist Party is thinking about—and what that membership will do when it has thought things through.

Why They Fear Their Own Members

The war, which strips everything bare, is more and more exposing the real nature of the Stalinist bureaucracy and its perfidious policies. The National Committee of the Communist Party is really disturbed about "expressions of doubt regarding various phases of Soviet policy." The Moscow Trials, the Stalin-Hitler pact, and the subsequent Stalin-Hitler trade agreements, the joint partition of Poland with Hitler, the invasion of Finland, Motolov's kow-towing before Ribbentrop, these and other recent events have provoked the greatest consternation and convulsions in the ranks of the Communist International. They have created doubts in the minds of revolutionary workers everywhere about Stalin's policies and the role of his International.

But these doubts are nothing compared to the doubts in store tomorrow when Communist workers in this and other countries learn about recent developments within the Soviet Union which have hitherto been kept from them by their own party leaders. In his recent dispatches from Moscow, Walter Duranty, inspired by the Kremlin, is already attempting to cushion public opinion against the shocks it will receive when it hears of Stalin's new blows against the Soviet workers.

The Stalinist press here has not yet printed a word of the so-called pre-conference discussion which has been published in the Soviet press in preparation for the 18th Party Conference. Ask the Communist party leaders why the *Daily Worker* remains silent on the preparations for this Conference.

Stalin's Recent Anti-Labor Laws

The Communist Party has launched a gigantic publicity campaign to sell a million copies of the Dean of Canterbury's book "The Soviet Power." (Incidentally, what would Lenin have said of the fact that, twenty-four years after the establishment of the first workers state, its official representatives must lean upon a pacifist sky-pilot of the reactionary Church of England as its principal defender in the English-speaking world?) The Dean's book praises the system of free education in the Soviet Union. But since he wrote his book that free educational system has been abolished. On October 2, 1940, a Kremlin ukase provided that all secondary school students henceforth have to pay tuition fees. With the low wages paid to the average Soviet worker this means that his children are deprived of the possibility of education. In the *Daily Worker* and other C. P. papers you will not find either the text or a description of this reactionary order which sets back the Soviet educational system, once the best in the world, behind that of the United States.

The Dean's "Soviet Power" asserts that child labor has been eliminated in the USSR. But the primary purpose of the October 2 ukase was to drive the children of the Soviet workers and peasants out of the schools and into factories, fields and mines. This ukase was supplemented on the same day by still another, officially setting up the child labor system. Again the Communist Party papers are silent about this ukase. You will find only one or two meager and obscurely-worded references to "in-

Text of Communist Party Statement On Trotskyism

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Struggle Against Trotskyism

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(The following is the verbatim text of an article, "Struggle Against Trotskyism," which was published by the National Committee of the Communist Party in the January, 1941 issue of the National Committee's internal party organ, PARTY NEWS.)

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For Vigilance and Education
We do not here wish to go into a detailed examination of the causes for this situation in Minnesota. This will have to be done, and the comrades in Minnesota must do it and do it quickly and thoroughly. Here it is enough to repeat what the Minnesota comrades have already offered as an explanation. They admit that they did not carry on a struggle against the Trotskyites because they believed them to be very weak, and thought that by attack-

ing them, they would only call attention to them and thus help them. What need is there here to go into any details until this dangerous and false position is eliminated? How can we analyze the concrete phases of the struggle against Trotskyism, the strong and weak sides of our methods, when we are confronted with a situation where the comrades consciously and seriously followed a policy of no struggle at all? It is this underestimation of the role of Trotskyism that must be solved first. And in solving it we will of necessity be confronted with and solve the details as to how to fight them successfully.

It is essential that the Party everywhere profit by the Minnesota experience. It is not necessary to wait until we are confronted with similar situations in other localities. Now and all the time we must everywhere carry on the struggle against Trotskyism. It must be admitted that in the recent period the struggle against this counter-revolutionary poison has been neglected. Our job is not only to fight Trotskyism when it has already poisoned sections of the working class. We must carry on a constant struggle against Trotskyism in order to immunize the workers against it.

We must bear in mind that always new strata of workers are entering the struggle who have not yet learned the character and role of the Trotskyites, who do not know its treacherous history. Even in our Party there are many thousands of members who, having joined in the last few years, have not gone through the struggle that our Party has carried on against this counter-revolutionary agency.

It is necessary to teach the Party membership the history of Trotskyism, its role from its very inception, its final degeneration into an espionage agency of imperialism. It is necessary to acquaint the broad strata of the working class and toilers, who may be fooled by its camouflage pose, with what Trotskyism really is. Especially in this necessary today when, on the one hand the masses are moving leftward, and, on the other hand, the forces of reaction are unleashing the sharp attack against the working class and its organizations, using all varieties of methods including frontal attacks, corruption, and espionage.

THE PARTY LEADERS AND THE OLDER MEMBERS WHO HAVE GONE THROUGH ALL PHASES OF THE FIGHT AGAINST TROTSKYISM MUST MAKE IT THEIR DUTY TO TEACH THE NEWER MEMBERS, MUST SEE TO IT THAT THE PARTY ORGANIZATIONS CONSTANTLY CARRY ON THE STRUGGLE AGAINST TROTSKYISM AND LEARN TO DETECT TROTSKYITE PENETRATION INTO THE LABOR MOVEMENT AND EVEN INTO THE PARTY ITSELF.

Guarding Against Trotskyite Penetration

In this connection we must take note of the recent decisions of the Trotskyites to concentrate their efforts to penetrate our Party organizations. This policy is openly stated in a report of James Cannon in which he admits that this policy was proposed by Leon Trotsky himself. This policy of trying to disrupt our Party from within he admits is made necessary because despite all attacks the bourgeoisie could not destroy our Party. He says: "The Stalinist workers, on the other hand, by and large, stayed with the Party, and stood up under a great deal of repression and persecution. These established facts must be taken as the point of departure in determining our tactical approach to this question." And what is this "new approach" to consist of? Here it is. "We must devise a more flexible tactic towards the C. P. and look for suitable occasions . . . to penetrate their ranks . . ."

In the face of this policy of the Trotskyites it is clear that we must train all Party members and all Party organizations to be vigilant against such Trotskyite infiltration into our ranks, as well as into the ranks of the workers' organizations. And we may be sure that these spies will not come in announcing themselves as Trotskyites. Where they succeed in penetrating our ranks, they will camouflage themselves as "honest rank and filers" spreading doubt, passivity, aiming to disrupt the Party's activities, acting as finger men against our most active comrades. Where they can succeed, their method will also aim at provocations in order to prepare the open attack against us.

We must especially be on the alert against such provocations, and forewarn the Party organizations to detect them. It is through such provocative proposals, as well as through their attempts to undermine the confidence of the membership in the leadership, it is in their very "left" proposals, and in their expression of "doubts" regarding various phases of Soviet policy, that we

conducted in connection with this mobilization. Picket lines and demonstrations are good, working class weapons. But what slogans are the pickets and demonstrators instructed to shout? "No, sir, the Yanks are not coming," "Defeat the Lend-Lease Bill," "We Want Peace," etc.

will be able to detect them directly, or those whom they are beginning to influence and use as tools in their disruptive work. But such detection will be possible only to the extent that the Party membership understands the policies of the National Committee, that the membership and organizations are activated, and made sensitive to all deviations from the correct Party policies.

The Necessity of Study
The attitude we often come up against is one which considers it a waste of time to spend effort in combating Trotskyism, since Trotskyites are a small sect and we have so many important tasks to fulfill. It is precisely such an attitude which makes it possible for these traitors, saboteurs, and spies to carry on their disruptive work. We must acquaint all members not only with the whole history of Trotskyism in every country, but also with the disruptive work that they are still carrying on in many lands including the United States.

In this connection it will be worth while to study once more the recent writings of Stalin as well as Comrades Browder and Foster in which they explain the role and the methods of the Trotskyites; to study the writings of Lenin and his struggle against Trotskyism in the building of the Bolshevik Party; to study the History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. And finally, to bear in mind these words of Lenin: "The labor movement of every country periodically spends more or less of its reserves of energy, attention and time, in the 'training' of recruits." Time, energy and attention paid to equip our Party and the active forces in the labor movement for an effective struggle against Trotskyism will pay big dividends in the building of our Party and the labor movement.

Stalinist "Anti-War" Pacifism
This is a purely pacifist campaign against war. There is only one difference between this pacifist agitation and that of the Norman Thomas sect and other pacifist groups. This is the addition of one other slogan, "Friendship with the Soviet Union." This slogan is not designed to promote an alliance between the Soviet and American workers, but to promote an alliance between Washington and Moscow, similar in its reactionary consequences to the Franco-Soviet pact and the Stalin-Hitler pact.

The National Committee of the Communist Party talks about the necessity of studying. We suggest that every Communist Party member read Lenin's writings during the last war. The document also advises study of the history of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. We suggest that every class-conscious worker read the theses of the first four congresses of the Communist International as well as its program, written in 1928, on the revolutionary proletarian methods of struggle against imperialism war. Compare these documents with the present pacifist claptrap which Browder is passing off as a truly Leninist program. The Stalinist leaders occasionally polemicize against pacifism, but in essentials nothing distinguishes the Communist Party's "anti-war line" from that of the most treacherous petty-bourgeois pacifist.

We Continue Lenin's Program
Our policy is the real policy of Lenin in the struggle against war. This struggle must be conducted as part of the daily struggle of the working class and the trade unions. We Trotskyists do not believe that peace can be regained or maintained by any reliance upon any imperialist government, whether or not it is temporarily "friendly" to the Soviet Union. We fight against the war and defend the Soviet Union through the methods of the international class struggle.

We realize that all important questions are decided arms in hand in this terrible epoch of wars and revolutions. The workers require military training. In opposition to the conscription imposed upon the workers by the capitalist government, we call for the military training of the workers under the control and supervision of the trade unions, their own class organizations. Our military policy has nothing in common with the pacifist poison spread by Stalinism. Nor do we rely upon theatrical conventions or parades to stop the war. Only the action of the workers directed toward the overthrow of capitalism can put an end to war and the system which breeds wars. This was the teaching of Lenin. This was the teaching of Trotsky.

The Communist Party leaders are victims of their own propaganda against the Trotskyists. For years they asserted that the Trotskyists were simply personal followers or hirelings of the counter-revolutionary Trotsky. Therefore, the Communist Party leaders themselves came to believe that when Trotsky had been assassinated, Trotskyism would cease to exist.

But this, as they themselves are now compelled to admit, was a "dangerous underestimation." They are now obliged to revise their official estimate by the force of facts. The Trotskyist movement in the United States has become stronger since Trotsky's death, for it was not Trotsky by himself that gave birth to our movement, but the ideas of Trotskyism. These ideas form the basis of our party. They are beginning to penetrate wider and wider circles of the advanced workers in the United States. They are beginning to penetrate the walled precincts of the Communist Party.

Once the Communist Party members really know precisely what Trotskyism is, what the Socialist Workers Party stands for, we are confident that they will find their way to joint action with us, and that side by side we shall fight together for a Socialist America and a Workers' World!

