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New Party Formed; To Fight War Plans

Convention Resolutions Stress Fight on War, Mass Work, Defense of Soviet Union by New Party

The Convention of the revolutionary socialists meeting in Chicago over the New Year's Day week-end devoted most of its sessions to a serious consideration of the problems facing the American and the international working class. The results of its deliberations, embodied in the resolutions adopted, will be published in full in subsequent issues of the *Socialist Appeal*. In the current issue we will confine ourselves only to the most striking passages in the main resolutions that were passed, in order to give a general impression of the spirit and policies of the convention.

Political Resolution Points to War Danger

The Political Resolution analyzes the role of American imperialism and the task of the socialists in the coming war as follows:

"It is entirely inconceivable that American imperialism can succeed in resisting the inexorable tendencies that are pulling it into the vortex of the coming World War. The United States is today the strongest world power. The bases of its economic and political strength extend over every continent, and the shocks and convulsions of capitalism anywhere in the world have their immediate, direct or indirect, effects upon this country. This is expressed in military terms by the fact that, despite the virtually invulnerable geographic position of the United States, its armaments program today is the largest in its peace-time history, adjusted to the objectives of world conquest rather than to the myth of self-contained isolation. Politically, it was expressed in the clearest terms in the aggressive, interventionist speech of Roosevelt in Chicago, announcing the determination (Continued on page 2)

Left Wing Delegates Found Socialist Workers Party at Convention in Chicago

CHICAGO, Ill. — The most impressive convention of the revolutionary movement in America during the past decade was being held here this week by the rank and file of the Socialist party left wing branches who had been expelled by Norman Thomas and his executive committee for the advocacy of their revolutionary Marxist views.

Over 100 regular and fraternal delegates representing in their majority trade union workers were registered and meeting in sessions that began promptly on Friday morning, December 31. After a brief speech of welcome by Albert Goldman, Chicago labor attorney, the convention plunged into the intensive and extensive work before it.

War Crisis Looms

The first major report was delivered by Max Shachtman, editor of the *New Internationalist*, on the political perspectives of the United States and the tasks of the revolutionary movement.

"It is entirely inconceivable that American imperialism can succeed in resisting the inexorable tendencies that are pulling it into the vortex of the coming world war," Shachtman declared. "If the working class is unable to prevent the outbreak of war, and the United States enters directly into it, our party stands pledged to the traditional position of revolutionary marxism."

Defeatism Reaffirmed

"It will utilize the crisis of capitalist rule engendered by the war to prosecute the class struggle with the utmost intransigence, to strengthen the independent labor and revolutionary movements, and to bring the war to a close by the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism and the establishment of proletarian rule in the form of the workers state," Shachtman said.

Speaking of the present economic situation, the reporter pointed out that, "it is possible that the full development of the present recession into a deep crisis may be temporarily arrested by a certain period of economic upturn, but the line of development

towards a raging crisis is already unmistakable."

Stressing the democratic nature of the inner life of the revolutionary party, Shachtman said, "Democratic centralism, which is our principle of organization, is based in the first place upon a common adherence to the fundamental program of the party. It implies the free exchange of opinion, the right of discussion, presentation of and defense of views within the framework of the principles of revolutionary Marxism, the unimpaired right of the membership to decide freely the policy of the organization and to select its leadership."

Stalinist 'Democracy'

"The 'democracy' of the Stalinist parties is confined to the 'right' of the party membership to carry out unquestioningly all the decisions arbitrarily arrived at by a bureaucratically appointed leadership over which the ranks of that party have absolutely no control."

The resolution on political perspectives was adopted following a lengthy discussion.

A full day was devoted to the problems of the labor movement and the role of revolutionary socialists in the unions. It began with a report on the trade union resolution by James P. Cannon, national secretary of the Convention Arrangements Committee.

"Unity of the labor movement is a vital necessity and our party must be in the forefront of the struggle to achieve that unity," Cannon emphasized. He warned that unity which did not include a class struggle program against the bosses, a recognition of the rights of industrial unionism, and democracy for the rank and file would become meaningless.

(Continued on page 2)

Appeal View Confirmed in "Robinson"-GPU Mystery

By Junius

While the powers that be in Washington and Moscow continued all last week trying to make up their minds what to do about the "Robinson"-Rubens case, which now bids fair to be a Frankenstein monster capable of devouring its creators, a few facts leaked into the capitalist press for the first time, penetrating the wall of silence which had previously prevailed.

A significant dispatch from Washington, published in the *New York World Telegram* of January 4th, confirms the analysis of the affair made by James P. Cannon on December 17th and repeated in these columns last week.

The *World-Telegram* dispatch follows in part:

"Informed Washington circles said today it is now believed that the mysterious Donald L. Robinsons, Soviet prisoners in Moscow, were former Soviet secret agents.

"The Washington theory, it was learned, is that the Robinson arrests were to be followed by a new series of confession trials in Russia.

"Major objects of the new trials would have been an attack

upon foreign Trotskyist movements and a spy scare against Japan. It was reported that the American publicity given the Robinson case had been received with great satisfaction by Soviet authorities as 'a fine build-up'....

"A series of coincidences, developed by the investigations here, have drawn Washington's attention to the secret agent theory, originally put forward by Max Shachtman and other American Trotskyist leaders.

Ravitch Linked to Foster

"It was learned that new study has been given to the part played in the case by Helen Ravitch, director of the Drama Travel League Bureau, who received

(Continued on page 8)

Convention Sidelights

Riding the rails, thumbing their way, traveling by train and car. Delegates coming to the convention represented all sections of the country and a wide variety of backgrounds, and experiences. Here are a few, picked at random.

California: The honor of traveling the longest distance to the Convention goes to two young comrades from Fresno, who made the trip the hard way, by hitchhiking and riding the rods. They're concentrating at the present time on setting up party locals in the agricultural villages in the surrounding territory, a grape growing locality.

Minnesota: A leader in the Minnesota Farmers Union, John Enestvedt, of Olivia, Minn., is a living refutation of the Manhattan notion that Scandinavians make phlegmatic revolutionists. He's busy trying to convert what he terms the petty bourgeois slogan "Land to the peasants" into "Land to the Teamsters Joint Council and the Farmhands."

The Twin Cities sent a delegation of about 15 delegates and several alternates and visitors. It

(Continued on page 2)

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Convention Resolutions Stress Fight On War, Mass Work, Defense of Soviet Union by New Party

(Continued from page 1)

nation of American imperialism to take the leadership in the struggle to keep its present most dangerous rival, especially in the Far East, from increasing its ration of the Asiatic market; earlier, in Cordell Hull's efforts to consolidate the dominant position of American imperialism at the Latin American conference in Buenos Aires; and subsequently by the sharp notes to Japan which are only a reflection of America's dogged intention of keeping the 'Open Door' open in China and preventing any other power from shutting off the United States from expansion upon the Asiatic continent."

"It is most unlikely that in the event of an inter-imperialist war, the United States will be one of the original belligerents. At the same time, it is just as unlikely that she will wait, as was the case in the last world war, for 32 months before entering the hostilities in order to emerge as the decisive victor. The comparative poverty of the European imperialist powers, as well as the speedier and more general destruction promised by the coming war, will determine the earlier intervention of American imperialism for the purpose of delivering, as in 1917, the decisive blow in the war and of having the decisive word in the division of the spoils."

"If the working class is unable to prevent the outbreak of war, and the United States enters directly into it, our party stands pledged to the traditional position of revolutionary Marxism. It will utilize the crisis of capitalist rule engendered by the war to prosecute the class struggle with the utmost intransigence, to strengthen the independent labor and revolutionary movement, and to bring the war to a close by the revolutionary overturn of capitalism and the establishment of proletarian rule in the form of the workers' state. Combating the chauvinistic wave, it will not only reject any and every form of class-collaboration, support of the war and of the capitalist government, but will work toward the defeat of the American imperialist class and its war regime by the proletarian revolution. Even if the United States were to be allied with the Soviet Union in a war against another imperialist power, this circumstance would not for a minute alter the imperialist character and aims of the war so far as the United States is concerned; neither, therefore, would there be any alteration in the position of our party with regard to American capitalism and its government and in our irreconcilable hostility towards them. The practical steps which our party would take in the course of its opposition to the war would, however, have to be decided in consideration of the need of facilitating the utmost material aid to the Soviet Union's armed forces in their war against an imperialist power, in conformity with our position of defense of the Soviet Union from imperialist assault."

The Trade Union Resolution

Among the most important passages of the Trade Union Resolution are the following:

"The outstanding characteristics of the working class movement in the United States in the recent period, are the enormous growth of trade union movements which now embraces millions of workers never organized in the past; the development of the C.I.O. as the movement of the workers in the basic key and mass-production industries, organized in industrial unions, as contrasted with the classic A. F. of L. form of craft unions; the violent conflict between the A. F. of L. and the C.I.O., and the recent trend towards the unification of the two bodies; and the expansion of the powers and role of the federal government as 'mediator' in the conflict between the workers and the employers."

"A whole series of circumstances has now brought prominently to the fore the question of the unification of the A. F. of L. and the C.I.O.

The main responsibility for the split two years ago unquestionably lies on the shoulders of the A. F. of L. bureaucracy. By its reactionary control of the labor movement, the Executive Council of the A. F. of L. sought to stifle every attempt to modify the obsolete craft union structure upon which it is based, and actively sabotaged all efforts to organize the unorganized, especially in the mass-production industries, on an industrial, that is, on the only conceivable basis.

"The formation of the C.I.O., its fight against the Green-Woll-Frey machine, its decisive plunge into the work of organizing the masses of the unskilled in the key industries, were progressive steps and more than warranted the active support given by the revolutionists to the C.I.O. as the progressive section of the labor movement. In its fight against the C.I.O., the leadership of the A. F. of L. played a disloyal and reactionary role. Instead of facilitating the work of organizing the big industries of the country, it stood in the way at every turn, joining in the union-breaking chorus of the employers and their apologists. In many cases, the A. F. of L. leadership even resorted to downright strike-breaking in an effort to stem the sensational advances made by the C.I.O.

"However, notwithstanding the wide rift that developed between the two sections of the labor movement, there are now strong forces at work for their unification. The setbacks suffered by the various sectors of the union movement in most recent times has strengthened the feeling that one united organization, instead of two antagonistic ones, would make it easier to win labor's battles against the employers. The defeat registered by the workers in the 'Little Steel' and similar strikes, has only served to emphasize the need of putting an end to the division in labor's camp. On top of this is the ominous deepening of the new crisis, which weakens labor's hold on industry and foreshadows an employers' offensive to reduce the workers' standards of living, annul all the gains made in the past period, and wipe out whatever union control has been established. The dangers of the crisis are reflected in the mounting sentiment among the organized workers throughout the country for a speedy unification of the A. F. of L. and the C.I.O. so that labor may be able to present a sorely needed common front against the capitalist class."

"Our party, together with every revolutionary and class conscious worker, takes a clear-cut position in favor of the earliest and completest possible unification of the A. F. of L. and the C.I.O., and also the hitherto unaffiliated Railroad Brotherhoods. The only condition, practically speaking, under which such a unity would be a step backward would be one binding the former C.I.O. unions to abandon the industrial form of organization and to divide themselves into scores of impotent craft unions. Unification on such a basis is, however, scarcely conceivable."

"The reactionary role which the A. F. of L. leadership has played is clearly established in the minds of the class conscious workers. From this it should not follow that the revolutionary vanguard makes a fetish of the C.I.O. and worships unquestioningly at its shrine. Prior to the establishment of the unity of the two organizations, which the revolutionists must advocate as their general line, they work in either organization, according to specific local circumstances."

"The sit-down strike is not a universal substitute for the classic form of strike action (quitting the plant, mass picket line, etc.) but it is indubitably a proved contribution to proletarian tactics and an effective weapon in their struggle. Its initiation and extension are a tribute to the resourcefulness of the proletariat in finding new and powerful methods of fighting its class oppressors. It has served, moreover, the important end of breaking down an awesome respect for bourgeois private property which the ruling class instills in the proletariat from its childhood onward. It is our duty to defend this weapon against all attempts to suppress, discredit or outlaw it. This does not signify that we advocate the indiscriminate use of the sit-down at all times and in all cases. We judge its feasibility on the same general consideration which determined our tactics in strikes: general objective conditions, the state of the union, mood of the membership, position of the employers and the state, possibilities of achieving the objective, etc., etc.

"The sit-down strike has, however, an even more significant future before it than the ordinary strike. Precisely because it challenges the fundamental tenet of capitalism, the inviolable right of private property in the means of production, the sit-down strike seems to be one of the main indicated means of mass action—by virtue of the seizure of the plants and their temporary control by workers' committees—for realizing the slogan in the coming period of: 'Workers' Control of Production!' The deepening of the present crisis will push this slogan to the foreground and, pro-

(Continued on page 3)

Left Wing Delegates Found Socialist Workers Party at Convention in Chicago

(Continued from page 1)

"Deeper into the trade unions," was the slogan advocated by Cannon. "We must root ourselves in the mass movement in order to guarantee the proletarian character of our party," he declared.

To Fight Stalinism

The resolution pointed out that, "the idea that the Communist (Stalinist) party represents a progressive factor in the trade union movement is based upon outworn memories of the past. The C. P. today is a reactionary force in the labor movement and must be dealt with as such. It is a pernicious influence which the vanguard elements and militants must fight tooth and nail to eliminate from the working class movement."

The convention unanimously adopted the trade union resolution.

Special supplementary reports on various industrial fields were given to the convention.

Glen Tumble, California Socialist Party secretary, outlined the situation and the work in the Maritime industry on the West Coast where many comrades are active in building a militant labor movement despite the sabotage of the Stalinist clique headed by Harry Bridges. Work in the rubber-workers unions and a critical analysis of the role of the party during the past three years was discussed

by B. J. Widick, former research director of the United Rubber Workers of America.

Dunne Reports

V. R. Dunne, outstanding leader of the Minneapolis labor movement, pointed out the lessons of the trade union work accomplished in that area. He described the treacherous role played by the Stalinists in their efforts to smash the union movement since it rejected their policies of betrayal and fame-up.

The auto and steel union problems were described by workers in those fields; union reports from throughout the country in various fields followed.

Specific recommendations on trade union work were drawn up by a committee elected at the convention. They center around the idea of integrating and coordinating the activities of the party on a national scale.

The unemployed situation and the need for revitalizing unemployed organizations like the Workers Alliance through conduct of militant action for relief demands was stressed in that discussion on the agenda. A committee headed by Art Preis of Toledo offered detailed recommendations for work in the unemployed fields.

Discussions were to follow on the Soviet Union, the Spanish revolution, the war in the Far East, party organization and the party press.

Convention Sidelights

(Continued from page 1)

was Comrade Ted Dostal's first experience at a convention of a revolutionary party. Dostal is a leader in the Warehouse Union in St. Paul. We don't of course have to tell here again the story of Vincent and Grant Dunne, Farrell Dobbs, Carl Skoglund, and their co-workers in that great Band of trade union leaders who head the party in Minneapolis.

Ohio: Toledo sent to the convention leaders in the auto and unemployed fields. Art Preis, active in the first Chevrolet strike, and the General Motors strike in 1935, editor of the official strike bulletin, "Strike Truth" was the delegate. Ted Selander, a leader of the Auto-Lite strike, and now in unemployed work, extricated himself from the WAA tangle long enough to attend the convention.

Akron sent a delegation of members led by Comrade B. J. Widick.

From Cleveland came a leading figure in the United Auto Workers and from Youngstown a member of the Teamsters' Union.

New Jersey: Ruben Plaskett, Negro worker from Newark, and an Appeal member since last year was a delegate. Purged from the TWOC, he is now in WAA work. He characterizes the Newark party members as not "just theoreticians, but practical workers."

Michigan: Active in the UAW, and a worker in the Detroit Ford

plant, Jerry Lamont is keeping his hand on the pulse of the now quiescent union movement in auto. Lamont joined the movement first as an YSLer. Also from Detroit, a former European Socialist who recently joined the party, gave a demonstration not long ago of Bolshevik trade union tactics. He joined the company union which dominated an auto parts factory, and after three weeks work brought the whole plant into the UAW.

Montana: From the desert and mountains of Montana came two revolutionists who have kept alive their convictions and activities since the early wobbly days, Comrades Rodney Salisbury and John Boulds. In the C. P. for years, Salisbury held the elective post of Sheriff in Sheridan County (Billings) for a considerable length of time. This post he abandoned along with his Stalinist connections in 1934 when he joined the Left Opposition. Now he is doing important work as president of the Montana Farm Holiday Association.

North Dakota: With experience in workers' revolutionary organizations since 1896, Comrade William Beallou, of Fargo, who participated in the Debs campaigns, was a delegate. There are good prospects of building the party in Fargo.

Missouri: St. Louis and Joplin sent delegations who brought news that penetration into the mass fields is progressing in Missouri. From Joplin, Comrade H., active in the lead and zinc union was a delegate.

Minneapolis Unionists Bring Suit for Libel Against Daily Worker

Leaders Accept Speed-Up; Akron Workers Aroused

MINNEAPOLIS.—Instituting libel suit against the Stalinist *Daily Worker*, the Executive Board of General Drivers, Local 544, retained Albert Goldman, noted Chicago labor lawyer, to proceed with the case.

Suit will be filed in the names of Vincent, Grant, and Miles Dunne, Farrell Dobbs, Bill Brown, and Local 544. Materials to be used in the suit are the special anti-Corcoran edition of the *Daily Worker* and previous material of the same stripe.

Thus the Stalinists will have a chance to try to stretch their "information" to the legal rules of evidence—and to pay a stiff price when they flop.

Further Exposure of West Coast Frame-Up

The whole mechanism of Stalinist frame-ups in this country was further blasted by testimony obtained from George Cole, local C.I.O. director. As readers of the *Socialist Appeal* will recall, the West Coast stooges of the Communist Party attempted to come to aid of their Minneapolis brethren with the "confession" of a certain Robert Bell that he was sent by Minnesota labor leaders to kill Harry Bridges, the C.I.O. director on the Pacific Coast. This "confession" was blasted at once in San Francisco. (See the *Socialist Appeal* of Dec. 11, 1937.)

Cole's revelations, made public by the Northwest Organizer, organ of the Teamsters Joint Council of Minneapolis, not only expose the frame-up but bring to light the methods by which they are concocted. We reprint the Northwest Organizer's article on the subject, in full:

How the Bell Affidavit Was Cooked Up

That one C.I.O. official warned another against using the phoney Bell affidavit cooked up by the Stalinists, but that the C.I.O. officials then got together to render the frame-up more plausible, was revealed when George Cole, Regional Director of the C.I.O., was recalled for further examination last week by the coroner's jury investigating the murder of Pat Corcoran.

Subpoenaed by the jury the correspondence of the C.I.O. officials was introduced in the record, and reveals the deliberateness with which the frame-up was engineered.

Wanted "Right Kind" Of Information

On November 17, Richard Francis, Regional Director of the C.I.O. in Seattle, Washington, wrote a letter to Cole, asking him for information on Robert J. Bell. On the 18th Cole wired Francis: "Party mentioned unreliable and no good." But Francis answered by wire, repeating his request and on the 19th Francis wired Cole again for material.

On the 20th Francis wrote Cole, explaining that Bell had sworn to an affidavit that Meyer Lewis, A.F. of L. representative, had hired Bell to kill Harry Bridges, and urging Cole that "Any information you can furnish us will greatly assist us in our work to discredit the American Federation of Labor and break the Teamsters racket under Dave Beck on the West

Coast." In other words, despite Cole's warning, Francis insisted on the "right kind" of information!

Cole's Warning

Once more, on November 22, Cole warned Francis: "Party mentioned treacherous character. Take no chances," and followed up with a letter "to emphasize my telegram that the man is no good." The next day Cole wrote to Francis, explaining to him that "The drivers (Local 544) warned all locals not to trust Bell in matters of money and advised against hiring him as an organizer." However, Cole went on to provide details useful to Francis in building up a false picture of Bell as an A.F. of L. organizer. But he ended his letter,

once again, with a warning against Bell.

But Francis—egged on by the Stalinists who had provided the phoney affidavit—insisted on going through with it. His answer to Cole's repeated warnings was to send copies of the affidavit to all parts of the country for release to the press. Obviously fearing negative comment by Cole, Francis wired him instructions on November 29th to release the affidavit to the press "with no comments other than ask for a federal investigation."

But Francis was not the only scoundrel. Cole, after all his warnings, himself read the affidavit to a Stalinist mass meeting here on December 1. But two days later, confronted on the witness stand at the coroner's inquest, Cole denied all knowledge and responsibility for the affidavit. With the opening of his files by the jury, however, it is clear what his foul role was in this filthy business.

AKRON.—Unionism in Akron suffered another setback last week when officials of Goodyear local agreed to a company proposal to speed up production, and ultimately cut wages.

Using the excuse of preventing decentralization by cutting down unit production costs, John House the reactionary president of the local No. 2, United Rubber Workers of America, accepted the management's plan to increase tire production seven per cent per man each day.

The rubber companies, notorious throughout American industry for their speed-up system, did not slow down production until after the Goodyear strike in 1936 and the series of sitdowns which followed it.

Union members placed an unofficial limit on the amount of work to be done each shift. Although House and his henchmen prevented the "limit" from becoming an official union policy, the workers maintained it in the shops.

The limit has become so explosive an issue, that the membership of the union were only informed of the officialdom's capitulation through the daily press. It is probable that it will

not be discussed at the business meeting, but left to the plant foremen to introduce.

"In event the program is worked out, it will be handled department by department, it was learned. There will be no general program to cover the entire factory", the Akron Times-Press said.

Since the limit was the greatest single factor in building unions in the rubber industry, its abolition will throw the U. R. W. A. into further retreat. Men with 10, 15, and 20 years' service, who were about to be discharged in 1936 because they could not compete with younger, faster workers, joined the union, because it saved their livelihood. Now their future, and the future of the local is imperiled by the surrender of the officers.

If successful in bringing back the speed-up, the companies will cut wages. Before the days of the U. R. W. A., the companies often urged the men to produce more.

The company would then cut wages for each unit produced.

Thousands of Akron workers in the grip of the economic crisis may accept this attack upon their living standards. They may believe, at first, that more production and longer hours may increase their wages slightly.

"I have worked one month in the last five," one Goodyear tire builder stated. "My total wages for this period were less than what a WPA laborer gets."

However, not all the unionists will take the attack without resistance. Already several have been arrested on charges of "beating up production hogs". Resistance against the rubber barons must be organized, directed and done on a mass basis.

The organization of a progressive bloc on the basis of retaining wage and hour standards and for union democracy, is the first step to be taken in combatting the combined attack of the companies and their stooges within the union.

CONVENTION RESOLUTIONS

(Continued from page 2)

perly directed by the revolutionary party, it may become the decisive popular slogan with the masses of the workers and above all of the militant trade unionists."

The Russian Resolution

After a thorough-going analysis of conditions in the Soviet Union, the Russian Resolution draws the following conclusions:

The Solution of the Present Crisis Of the Soviet Union

"The present crisis in the Soviet Union will eventuate either in capitalist restoration, which will follow with certainty as the immediate result of successful imperialist attack, or in the long run with equal certainty from the continued rule of the Stalinist bureaucracy; or, on the other hand, in the conquest of power by the workers, the re-establishment of their own democratically controlled dictatorship as the State power, the reform of the economy, and the reassertion of unambiguous progress toward socialism. The character and methods of the present dictatorship, its armed suppression of all opposition or suspicion of opposition, has done away with all possibility of the peaceful reform of the State, and leaves the masses only the road of political revolution.

The Defense of the Revolution

"The outcome of the present crisis in the Soviet Union will be decided by international forces. The Soviet Union is an integral part of the world economy and polity, and cannot be artificially isolated from the rest of the world in spite of all the pretenses of the theory of socialism in one country. The economic and social conflicts within the Soviet Union are reflections and expressions of the conflicts of international economy and of the international class struggle. The dependence of the Soviet Union and its destiny upon international forces is most strikingly of all shown in the preparations for and probable events of the coming imperialist war. Indeed, the international policies of Stalinism are inescapably bound up with its foreign policy, resting upon alliances with the democratic imperialist powers and the social-patriotic betrayal of the masses and of the workers' revolution.

"The military victory of one or more of the imperialist powers over the Soviet Union would guarantee the immediate restoration of capitalism within the Soviet Union. The unconditional defense

of the Soviet Union against imperialism is therefore the imperative duty of the international proletariat.

"Stalinism, however, likewise in the long run guarantees the complete defeat of the revolution and the restoration of capitalism within the Soviet Union. The revolutionary defense of the Soviet Union, that is the defense of the remaining conquests of the Revolution of 1917—above all of the nationalized economy and the mighty foundation it provides for workers' rule and progress toward socialism—therefore requires no less imperatively the struggle against Stalinism. This means, within the Soviet Union, the political struggle to win the decisive sections of the Soviet masses to the revolutionary program and upon that basis the overthrow of the Stalinist bureaucracy and the re-establishment of the democratically controlled Workers' State. The struggle against Stalinism, far from being inconsistent with the unconditional defense of the Soviet Union against imperialism, is a necessary part of such defense. The struggle for the revival of the Russian proletariat and for the overthrow of the Stalinist dictatorship that will ensure the socialist progress of the Soviet Union, is impossible without the fullest political and material aid to the Bolshevik-Leninists in the Soviet Union in their work to reconstitute the revolutionary proletarian party of Marxian internationalism, section of the Fourth International.

"The defense of the Soviet Union, of the Russian Revolution, is inseparable now as always from the international revolution. The success of the revolution internationally, in at least certain of the advanced capitalist nations, is the only assurance for the socialist development of the Soviet Union, the only way in which to root out Stalinism and regenerate the Russian Revolution. Defense of the Soviet Union therefore excludes support of any imperialist government, or capitalist government within any imperialist coalition in the coming war, whether or not allied with the Soviet Union; but requires the vigorous prosecution of the class struggle within every country with the aim of the overthrow of the capitalist government and the establishment of a Workers' State. Only such a State can in actuality defend the revolutionary interests of the Soviet Union.

"Within the Soviet Union and internationally, the indispensable condition of the extension of the revolution is the building of the new party of Marxian internationalism, of the Fourth International. The task of the defense of the Soviet Union, the revolutionary struggle for workers' power and for socialism throughout the world, are summed up in the building of the Fourth International, and its sections throughout the world."

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The Lesson of Spain--the Last Warning :-: By Leon Trotsky

MENSHEVISM AND BOLSHEVISM IN SPAIN

The military operations in Ethiopia, in Spain, in the Far East are being studied closely by all military staffs, preparing themselves for the great future war. The battles of the Spanish proletariat, heat lightning flashes of the future world revolution, should be no less attentively studied by the revolutionary staffs: only under this condition will coming events not take us unawares.

Three conceptions fought—with uneven forces—in the so-called republican camp: Menshevism, Bolshevism and Anarchism. So far as as the bourgeois republican parties are concerned, they had neither independent ideas nor independent political significance and maintained themselves only on the back of the reformists and anarchists. Furthermore, it would not be any kind of exaggeration to say that the leaders of Spanish anarcho-syndicalism did everything to repudiate their doctrine and virtually reduce its significance to zero. Actually in the so-called republican camp two doctrines fought: Menshevism and Bolshevism.

In accordance with the viewpoint of the Socialists and Stalinists, i. e. Mensheviks of the first and second mobilization, the Spanish revolution was to have solved only its "democratic" tasks, for which a single front with the "democratic" bourgeoisie was necessary. From this point of view every attempt of the proletariat to go outside the limits of bourgeois democracy is not only premature but fatal. Moreover, on the order of the day stands not the revolution but the struggle against the insurgent Franco. Fascism is "reaction". Against "reaction" it is necessary to unite all forces of "progress." Menshevism, itself a branch of bourgeois thought, does not have and does not wish to have any understanding of the fact that fascism is not feudal but bourgeois reaction, that one can successfully fight against bourgeois reaction only with the forces and methods of the proletarian revolution.

The Bolshevik point of view, consummately expressed only by the young section of the Fourth International, emanated from the theory of permanent revolution, that is, that even purely democratic problems, like the liquidation of semi-feudal land-ownership, cannot be solved without the conquest of power by the proletariat; but this in turn places the socialist revolution on the order of the day. Moreover, the Spanish workers themselves posed practically, from the first stages of the revolution, not only those problems simply democratic but those purely socialist. The demand not to step out of the bounds of bourgeois democracy signifies in actuality not a defense of the democratic revolution but a repudiation of it. Only through an overturn in agrarian relations could the peasantry, the great mass of the population, have been transformed into a powerful bulwark against fascism. But the land-owners are tied with indissoluble bonds to the banking-commercial-industrial bourgeoisie and bourgeois intelligentsia dependent on them. Thus the party of the proletariat faced the necessity of a choice between being with the peasant masses or with the liberal bourgeoisie. The inclusion of the peasantry and the liberal bourgeoisie in a common coalition could have been done with but a single aim: to help the bourgeoisie deceive the peasantry and thus isolate the workers. The agrarian revolution could have been accomplished only against the bourgeoisie, hence only through measures of the dictatorship of the proletariat. There does not exist any kind of middle, intermediate regime.

From the viewpoint of theory in Spanish politics, Stalin more than anything astounds one by his complete obliviousness to the alphabet of Leninism. After a lapse of several decades—and what decades!—the Comintern has fully re-established as proper the doctrine of Menshevism. More than that: it has contrived to give to this doctrine a more "consistent" and by that token a more absurd expression. In Czarist Russia, on the eve of 1905, the formula of "purely democratic revolution" had behind it in any case immeasurably more arguments than in 1937 in Spain. No wonder that in contemporary Spain "the liberal workers' policy" of Menshevism became a reactionary anti-working class policy of Stalinism. At the same time the doctrine of the Men-

sheviks, this caricature of Marxism, was transformed into a caricature of itself.

THE "THEORY" OF THE PEOPLE'S FRONT

However, it would be naive to think that at the basis of the politics of the Comintern in Spain there lies a theoretical "mistake." Stalinism rules not through the theory of Marxism, or through any kind of theory in general, but by the empirical interests of the Soviet bureaucracy. In their own circle the Soviet cynics laugh at Dimitrov's "philosophy" of the People's Front. But they have at their disposal for deceiving the masses numerous staffs of preachers of this holy formula, sincere ones and cheats, simpletons and charlatans. Louis Fischer with his ignorance and self-satisfaction, with his provincial reasoning and organic deafness to revolution is the most repulsive representative of this unattractive fraternity. "The union of progressive forces!" "The triumph of the idea of the People's Front!" "The assault of the Trotskyists on the unity of the anti-fascist ranks!"... Who will believe that the *Communist Manifesto* was written 90 years ago?

The theoreticians of the People's Front in essence do not go further than the first rule of arithmetic, that is, addition: the total of "Communists", Socialists, Anarchists and liberals is greater than each one separately. Such is all their wisdom. Arithmetic, however, is not sufficient in this problem. Mechanics, at least, is necessary: the law of the parallelogram of forces has validity also in politics. The resultant, as is known, is the shorter the more the competent forces diverge from each other. When political allies pull in opposite directions, the resultant can prove equal to zero. A bloc of different political groups of the working class is completely indispensable for the solution of common practical problems. Under certain historical conditions, such a bloc is capable of attracting to itself the oppressed and petty-bourgeois masses whose interests are close to the interests of the proletariat. The general force of such a bloc can prove to be immeasurably stronger than the force of each of its component parts. On the contrary, the political union of the proletariat with the bourgeoisie, whose interests in the present epoch diverge upon basic questions at an angle of 180 degrees, is capable, as a general rule, of only paralyzing the revolutionary force of the proletariat.

Civil war, where the force of bare coercion has little validity, demands the spirit of the highest self-denial from its participants. The workers and peasants are capable of assuring victory only if they carry on a struggle for their own liberation. Under these conditions, to subordinate the proletariat to the leadership of the bourgeoisie means beforehand to assure its defeat in the civil war.

These simple truths are least of all the fruit of pure theoretical analysis. On the contrary, they represent the unassailable conclusion of the whole historical experience, beginning, at least, with 1848. The newest history of bourgeois society is filled with all forms of the "People's Front", i. e., with the most diverse political combinations for the deception of the toilers. The Spanish experience is but a new tragic link in this chain of crimes and betrayals.

THE UNION WITH A SHADOW OF THE BOURGEOISIE

Politically most striking is the fact that in the Spanish People's Front there was not in essence a parallelogram of forces: the place of the bourgeoisie was occupied by its shadow. Through the agency of the Stalinists, Socialists, and Anarchists, the Spanish bourgeoisie subordinated the proletariat to itself, not even troubling itself to participate in the People's Front: the overwhelming majority of the exploiters of all political shades openly went over into the camp of Franco. Without any recourse to the theory of "permanent revolution", the Spanish bourgeoisie from the very beginning understood that the revolutionary movement of the masses, no matter what is its initial point, is directed against private property, in land and in the means of production, and that it is utterly impossible to cope with this movement by democratic measures. In the republican camp remained, therefore, only insignificant splinters from the posses-

sing classes, Messrs. Azana, Companys, and their like—political lawyers of the bourgeoisie but not the bourgeoisie itself. Having placed its stake fully upon a military dictatorship, the possessing classes were able at the same time to make use of their political representatives of yesterday in order to paralyze, disorganize and afterward stifle the socialist movement of the masses upon "republican" territory.

No longer representing in the slightest degree the Spanish bourgeoisie, the left Republicans still less represented the workers and peasants. They represented no one but themselves. However, thanks to their allies: the Socialists, Stalinists and Anarchists, these political phantoms played the decisive role in the revolution. How? Very simply: in the capacity of incarnating the principle of the "democratic revolution", i. e. the inviolability of private property.

THE STALINISTS IN THE PEOPLE'S FRONT

The reasons for the rise of the Spanish People's Front and its inner mechanics are entirely clear. The problem facing the retired leaders of the left wing of the bourgeoisie consisted in stopping the revolution of the masses and thus gaining the lost confidence of the exploiters: "Why do you need Franco if we, the Republicans, can do the same thing?" The interests of Azana and Companys fully coincided at this central point with the interests of Stalin who needed to gain the confidence of the French and British bourgeoisie by proving to them in action his ability to preserve "order" against "anarchy". Stalin needed Azana and Companys as a covering before the workers: Stalin himself, of course, is for socialism, but one should not push aside the republican bourgeoisie! Azana and Companys needed Stalin as an experienced executioner with the authority of a revolutionist: without this they, an insignificant lot, would never have been capable of attacking the workers. They would not have dared. The traditional reformists of the Second International, long ago thrown off the rails by the course of the class struggle, began to feel a new tide of confidence, thanks to the support of Moscow. However, this support was given not to all reformists but only to the more reactionary ones. Caballero represented that face of the Socialist Party which was turned toward the workers' aristocracy. Negrin and Prieto always looked towards the bourgeoisie. Negrin won over Caballero with the help of Moscow. The left socialists and anarchists, the captives of the People's Front, tried, it is true, to save what could be saved of democracy. But since they did not dare to mobilize the masses against the gendarmes of the People's Front, their efforts at the end were reduced to woeful jeremiads. The Stalinists thus proved to be in alliance with the more rightist, openly bourgeois, wing of the Socialist Party. They directed their repressions against the left: the POUM, the Anarchists, the "left" Socialists, i. e., against the centrist groupings who reflected, though in a remote degree, the pressure of the revolutionary masses.

This political fact, very significant in itself, reveals at the same time the extent of the degeneration of the Comintern during the past years. We once defined Stalinism as *bureaucratic centrism*, and events gave a series of proofs as to the correctness of this definition. But now it has obviously become obsolete. Already the interests of the Bonapartist bureaucracy will not reconcile with the centrist half-way policy. Searching for reconciliation with the bourgeoisie, the Stalinist clique is capable of entering an alliance only with the more conservative groupings of the international workers' aristocracy. Thus the counter-revolutionary character of Stalinism on an international arena expressed itself definitively.

THE COUNTER-REVOLUTIONARY ADVANTAGES OF STALINISM

We thus closely approach the solution of the enigma of how and why the leadership of the "Communist" Party of Spain, insignificant in numbers and level, proved capable of gathering into its hands all levers of power, in face of the incomparably more powerful organizations of the Socialists and Anarchists. The usual explanation that the Stalinists merely bartered Soviet weapons for power is extremely superficial. For the supply of

arms Moscow received Spanish gold. According to the laws of the capitalist market, this is sufficient. How then did Stalin contrive to get power also into the bargain? In reply to this we are commonly told: having raised its authority in the eyes of the masses by furnishing military supplies, the Soviet government asked as the condition of its "collaboration" drastic measures against revolutionists and thus removed dangerous opponents from its path. All this is completely indisputable but this is but one, and at that the less important, aspect of the matter. In spite of the "authority" created by the Soviet supplies, the Spanish Communist Party remained a small minority and met with ever-growing hatred on the part of the workers. On the other hand, it is insufficient that Moscow put up conditions; it was necessary that Valencia accept them. In this is the essence of the matter: Not only Zamora, Companys and Negrin, but Caballero, during his incumbency as premier, all of them more or less readily met the demands of Moscow. Why? Because these gentlemen themselves wished to keep the revolution within bourgeois limits. Not only the Socialists but the Anarchists as well did not seriously oppose the Stalinist program. They feared a break with the bourgeoisie. They were deathly afraid of every revolutionary onslaught of the workers.

Stalin with his arms and with his counter-revolutionary ultimatum was a savior for these groups. He guaranteed them, as they hoped, military victory over Franco and at the same time he freed them from responsibility for the course of the revolution. They hastened to put their socialist and anarchist masks into the closet in the hope of making use of them again when Moscow re-established bourgeois democracy for them. As the finishing touch to their comfort, these gentlemen could from now on justify their betrayal to the workers by the necessity for a military agreement with Stalin. Stalin on his part justified his counter-revolutionary politics by the necessity for an agreement with the republican bourgeoisie.

Only from this wider point of view does that angelic toleration which such knights of right and freedom as Azana, Negrin, Companys, Caballero, Garcia Oliver and others showed toward the crimes of the G. P. U. become clear to us. If they had no other choice as they affirm, it was not at all because they could not pay for the airplanes and tanks other than with the heads of the revolutionists and rights of the workers, but because their own "purely democratic" i. e., anti-socialist program, could not be realized by any other measures except through terror. When the workers and peasants enter on the path of their revolution, i. e., to take possession of the factories, property, drive out the old owners, seize power in the provinces, then the bourgeois counter-revolution—democratic, Stalinist, or Fascist, there is no difference—has no other means to stop this movement except by bloody force, complemented by lies and deceit. The advantage enjoyed by the Stalinist clique on this road consisted in its ability to use at once methods which were not within the capacity of Azana, Companys, Negrin and their left allies.

STALIN IN HIS OWN WAY CONFIRMS THE CORRECTNESS OF THE THEORY OF PERMANENT REVOLUTION

Two irreconcilable programs thus fought on the territory of republican Spain. On the one hand, the program of saving private property from the proletariat at any cost and—to the extent possible—saving democracy from Franco; on the other hand, the program of abolishing private property through the conquest of power by the proletariat. The first program expressed the interests of capital through the agency of the workers' aristocracy, the top circles of the petty bourgeoisie and especially through the Soviet bureaucracy. The second program translated into the language of Marxism expressed the not fully conscious but powerful tendencies of the revolutionary movement of the masses. Unfortunately for the revolution, between the handful of Bolsheviks and the revolutionary proletariat, stood the counter-revolutionary wall of the People's Front.

The politics of the People's Front was defined, in turn, not at all by the blackmail of Stalin as a supplier of arms. There was, of course, no lack of blackmail. But

the reason for the success of this blackmail is lodged in the inner conditions of the revolution itself. The growing onslaught of the masses against the regime of semi-feudal and bourgeois property was, during six whole years, its social background. The need to defend this property by the severest means threw the bourgeoisie into the embrace of Franco. The republican government promised the bourgeoisie to defend property by "democratic" measures but revealed, especially in July 1936, its full bankruptcy. When the situation on the property front became still more threatening than on the military front, the democrats of all colors, including the Anarchists, bowed before Stalin; and he found no other methods in his own arsenal than the methods of Franco.

The baiting of the "Trotskyists", POUMists, revolutionary Anarchists and left Socialists; the filthy slander, false documents, tortures in Stalinist holes, murders in dark-alleys—without all this the bourgeois regime, under the republican flag, could not have lasted even two months. The G. P. U. proved to be the master of the situation only because it defended more consistently than the others, i. e., with the greatest baseness and bloodthirstiness, the interests of the bourgeoisie against the proletariat.

In the struggle against the socialist revolution the "democrat" Kerensky at first sought support in the military dictatorship of Kornilov, then tried to enter Petrograd in the baggage-train of the monarchist general Krasnov. On the other hand, the Bolsheviks, in order to bring the democratic revolution to a conclusion, were compelled to overthrow the government of "democratic" charlatans and babblers. Through this they incidentally put an end to every kind of attempt at military (or "fascist") dictatorship.

The Spanish revolution again demonstrates that it is impossible to defend democracy against the revolutionary masses other than by the methods of fascist reaction. And vice versa, it is impossible to lead the actual struggle against fascism other than by methods of the proletarian revolution. Stalin waged war against "Trotskyism" (proletarian revolution), destroying democracy by the Bonapartist measures of the G. P. U. By this again and definitively is overthrown the old Menshevik theory, adopted by the Comintern, which divides the democratic and socialist revolutions into two independent historical chapters, separated in time from each other. The work of the Moscow executioners confirms, in its own way, the correctness of the theory of permanent revolution.

THE ROLE OF THE ANARCHISTS

The anarchists had no independent position of any kind in the Spanish revolution. They did no more than waver between Bolshevism and Menshevism. More precisely: the anarchist workers instinctively tried to go on the Bolshevik road (July 1936, the May days 1937) while their leaders, on the contrary, with all their might drove the masses into the camp of the People's Front, i. e., the bourgeois regime.

The Anarchists revealed a fatal lack of understanding of the laws of the revolution and its problems when they tried to limit themselves to their own trade unions permeated with the routine of peaceful times, ignoring what went on outside of the bounds of the trade unions, in the masses, in the political parties and in the apparatus of the government. Were the Anarchists revolutionists they would first of all have called for the creation of Soviets, uniting the representatives of all the workers of the city and the country, including the more oppressed strata who had never joined a trade union. The revolutionary workers would naturally occupy the dominating position in these Soviets. The Stalinists would prove to be an insignificant minority. The proletariat would convince itself of its own invincible strength. The apparatus of the bourgeois state would be suspended in the air. One strong blow would be needed to pulverize this apparatus. The Socialist revolution would have received a powerful impetus. The French proletariat would not for long have permitted Leon Blum to block the proletarian revolution beyond the Pyrenees. Neither could the Moscow bureaucracy permit itself such a luxury. The most difficult questions would prove soluble of themselves. (To be Concluded Next Week)

In The Teachers Union

INDEPENDENT GROUP COMBATS PEOPLE'S FRONT POLICIES OF STALINIST ADMINISTRATION

NEW YORK.—The honeymoon period in the Teachers Union of New York City is over. Once more the battle for progressive policies in the largest and most important organization of Teachers in being waged with full vigor. In order that the reader may gain an understanding of why the progressive forces are fighting the present leadership we present a resume of the important issues that have arisen.

Period of Growth

In 1935, the combined efforts of the various groups that were opposed to the Lefkowitz-Linville leadership resulted in saving the Teachers Union from disruption. Due to the progressive policies that were adopted and to the inner democratic regime that was instituted by the new administration which consisted of representatives of the various groups, there followed a period of rapid growth of the Union from a membership of about 1400 after the split to a membership of over 6,000 in less than two years. Recruits were obtained from employed and unemployed public school teachers in the elementary and high school divisions, from the school clerical staffs; a college section was developed which has since grown into a separate local, and a private school section was set up to organize teachers employed in private schools.

Due to the effective use of mass pressure tactics a number of noteworthy victories were won: the restoration of salary cuts, the appointment of hundreds of new teachers and the reinstatement of dismissed college teachers.

A monthly organ, *The New York Teacher*, and a weekly news-letter were issued regularly. The educational authorities were compelled to recognize the existence of this new factor by the granting of various other concessions to the teachers including a form of semi-recognition granted to the Teachers Union in official and semi-official conferences, etc.

Role of "Rank and File" Group

In the phenomenal growth of the Union the chief beneficiary was the Rank and File Group—the largest, the most influential and best organized of the former opposition groups—developed originally on the basis of a "third period" trade union, and political program. Despite the fact that its dual union policies and adventurist tactics drove hundreds of old members out of the Union and into the camp of the Teachers Guild splitters (Lefkowitz-Linville), its essentially militant program and the ardor with which it carried it out attracted many of the younger teachers to whom trade unionism was a novel experience.

But the militancy and progressiveness of the "Rank and File" leadership did not last very long. People's frontism and class collaboration policies were imposed from without upon a young leadership that basically desired to follow a progressive policy. This

thought is expressed not to excuse the course of the leadership but to explain the vicious role of people's frontism. The Rank and File "lions" who once roared for mass action and nothing but mass action now become mild parliamentarian lobbyists at Albany and at City Hall and at the Board of Education.

Mr. Isadore Begun, the leader of the Rank and File Group, who was ousted from his teaching job by the Board of Education because of his dramatic espousal of the cause of a dismissed teacher, now began preaching soft-speaking and collaboration with certain members of the Board of Education. He, who hauled Dr. Lefkowitz over the coals for his defense of Mayor LaGuardia, now became lyrical over the virtues of the people's front mayor.

Defend American Legion

It not only issued invitations to the American Legion, but defended this exponent of American militarism from hostile criticism of its anti-labor policies. To the dual union splitters, the Teachers Guild, it offered the liquidation of groups in the Union, one of the basic democratic issues in the conflict.

United Progressives Organize

In opposition to these policies, there was organized the United Progressive Group, which was a merger of various tendencies in the Union who were opposed to the unprincipled, demagogical and class collaborationist policies of the "Rank and File" leadership. But the United Progressives were unable to make any headway against the influence of the "Rank and File" because within the former was a distinctly right wing tendency, (Davidson-Beigel leadership) which believed in collaboration with the Rank and File leadership in the hope of reforming it.

This right wing criticized the Rank and File, not with the objective of convincing it of the superiority of its policies. When the Union elections of June 1936 took place, it executed a right about face agreement with the Rank and File Group for a common slate. This agreement was an unprincipled one, because of the basic differences that existed between the two groups, but it was brought about because the leadership of the Rank and File and of the right wing of the United Progressives found it more convenient to divide the posts between themselves without a principled struggle in full view of the membership.

That the Davidson-Beigel leadership of the United Progressives had sold the birthright of the Group for a mess of pottage was revealed soon after the election was over. The "Rank and File" leadership proceeded not only to tear up the common program agreed to as a basis of the slate, but in place of the collective leadership in the Union which was to be the concrete expression of the deal, they proceeded to make it impossible for the adherents of the United Progressives to function as committee

chairmen and in other posts that had been allotted to them. Their resignation, one by one, was clear proof of the unsoundness of such a course. The bankruptcy of the Davidson-Beigel of course was apparent.

Strong protest movements within the membership of the United Progressives against such election deals soon developed, but the struggle against the Davidson-Beigel leadership came to a head when in violation of the clearly expressed policy of the United Progressive Group on the question of independent political action, this leadership broke away from the Group to form a bloc with the "Rank and File" in support of the American Labor party's Roosevelt-Lehman Campaign of 1936.

Emergence of the Independent Group

The chief issue in the union elections of May, 1937 was the problem of dealing with unemployment among teachers which has been acute since 1929. New York City teachers obtain regular positions in the service after passing civil service examinations conducted by a Board of Examiners. After that they must wait for appointment by the Board of Education, which appoints only when vacancies exist or when vacancies are created by it due to funds made available for that purpose by the city government in the annual budget. During the past economic crisis, the Board made relatively few appointments with the result that the classes became overcrowded on the one hand and on the other hand thousands of unemployed teachers walked the streets.

In the elementary school division there are thousands of teachers now on regular lists who have been waiting for appointment since 1930, not to speak of many thousands of qualified teachers in this branch of the service who have been failed arbitrarily by the Board of Examiners and who have been driven out of the profession altogether.

In the high school division there are a few thousand unemployed teachers who have been failed by the Board for regular positions but who are employed as substitutes on temporary jobs as these arise, at a fraction of the salary of the regular teacher. This is clearly a wage cutting device. During the session of the State Legislature the Administration of the Union proposed a bill requiring the Board of Examiners to place substitutes with three years experience on regular list even though they had not passed written civil service examinations.

Measure Deceives

On the surface, this appeared very attractive to many substitutes who thought that now their troubles would be over. But a closer examination of this measure will show that it virtually abolishes the civil service system of New York State, a system which furnishes a certain measure of protection for some 200,000 civil service employees from exploitation by corrupt politi-

cians,—a system which is essentially progressive because it is based on merit rather than on political pull or favoritism. Besides, the measure, if passed, would benefit only a few teachers at the top of the list who had secured their temporary positions chiefly through favoritism. The bill did not provide a single dollar for jobs by which appointments could be made and which is the nub of the whole matter. This measure appeals as we have said before, to the substitute because of its apparent concession in the matter of exemption from examinations, but the opposition by exposing the people's front demagoguery as a fraud, and by proposing a program of fair examinations and appropriations of millions of dollars with which to make more appointments was able to poll 44 per cent of the vote cast in a referendum vote of the membership.

The opposition to the Administration measure was so great that they did not dare to introduce it in the legislature. Besides, a modified bill, passed by the State Legislature, was vetoed by Gov. Lehman, the people's front Governor, at the request of Mayor LaGuardia, the people's front mayor. Together with this legislation, he also vetoed other legislation raising the per diem wages of the underpaid substitutes and the annual salary of certain categories of underpaid school teachers.

It was from this debacle that the Independent Group arose and conducted an election campaign based upon a program calling for the end of over-crowded classes by the reduction of classroom registers and the appropriation of

millions of dollars with which to make appointments of substitute teachers to regular positions.

In addition, the program called for independent political action and against the policy of the American Labor Party in endorsing the candidates of capitalist parties. It also called for opposition to imperialist wars and against affiliation with the American League Against War and Fascism with its collective security program.

Independents Show Strength

In opposition to the Administration, and in opposition to the Progressive Group, which agreed with the Administration in its support of the policies and candidates of the American Labor Party, the Independent slate was able to poll over 20 per cent of the vote and to elect several of its candidates to the Executive Board, a remarkable showing considering the grip which the Administration has had on the membership in the past.

In the national convention of the American Federation of Teachers at Madison, Wis., which followed, the delegates of the Independent Group, combined with other delegations to form a national caucus in advocacy of a progressive program calling for a national campaign for the purpose of organizing the more than one million teachers of the country and in opposition to the people's front on the war question. (See *Socialist Appeal* Sept. 11, 1937 for an account of this convention.)

Another article dealing with the Teachers Union will appear in the next issue.

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Popular Front Breaks Army for Fascist Coup, French Sit-Downs; Gov't Calls Troops

French labor was given another bitter and illuminating lesson in the real nature of Popular Frontism last week when their P. F. Government smashed within 24 hours the general strike of Paris municipal workers.

Opposed by the trade-union bonzes, and only tardily supported by the hand-wagon Stalinists, the strike was forced by the militant pressure of a rank and file fed up with the failure of protracted class-collaborationist 'negotiations'. More than 120,000 responded to the strike call: all transport service, by subway, by bus, and tram, was completely stopped; gas, electricity, and sanitary services were cut to the minimum; and only skeleton service was maintained in street lighting, water, etc.

Savage Threats

The answer of that great friend of labor, the People's Front Government, was instantaneous and savage: it called out the Mobile Guards, brought in 1,000 troops ready to break the strike (as they were already doing in the truck-drivers' strike), and to cap all, threatened to call the striking workers (who are army reservists) to the colors for strike duty, so that, as French soldiers, they had either to act as their own strike-breakers or face court-martial for desertion or mutiny—a method of repression which marks a new low in the hypocritical cynicism of class-collaborationist reformism.

But a strike is a strike. The superiority of genuine class-struggle mass action over round-table deals is shown by the fact that fear forced the P. F. to couple to its military threats a half-way concession—it is reported that they offered the Paris workers between 50 and 70 francs (1.85 to 2.31) a month instead of the demanded minimum of between 100 and 150 francs as a special high-cost-of-living grant (the French price-index has increased 50 per cent in the last year). But the reports are conflicting; and, as matters stand in France, even this wretched amelioration may well be stolen from the workers, now they have returned to work, in the final negotiations.

Stalinist 'Explanations'

French labor will not soon forget this lesson, following immediately upon the government's use of the army as strike-breakers in the walkout of grocery workers and truck drivers. Even the Paris council of the C.G.T. (French equivalent of the A.F. of L.) has sharply protested against the Popular Front's fascist threat to mobilize the workers into the army to break their own strike. The Stalinist newspaper *L'Humanité*, however, makes the following statement under the heading "People's Front Victory":

"The workers' victory is a victory of the People's Front. Doriot, de la Rocque, the trusts and the newspapers all urged the government to use force, to throw itself into the arms of reaction.

"But the government, reflecting the extent of the movement, its echoes and realizations, realized this must not be done."

By Terence Phelan

Do these bland liars think the French working class is deaf, dumb, blind, and feeble-minded? The Popular Front government mobilized the Gardes Mobiles and 1,000 troops against the strike, prepared for even heavier army repression; and these cynical Stalinist editors proclaim 'the government... realized this must not be done.' 'A People's Front Victory' alas it was—a victory over the Paris municipal workers by French capital acting through its Popular Front lackeys; that even a compromise settlement has been precariously obtained is because the government of the Front Populaire, though promising its finance-capital masters that it would 'use the utmost vigor...' and despite all resistance ensure the resumption of public service' etc., was afraid both of provoking the militancy of the aroused workers too far and of revealing too plainly to its deceived working-class following the mailed fist within the famous 'outstretched hand'.

The Lesson

The hammer-blows of these facts are reforming the militancy and class-consciousness of the French workers. The government they elected and re-elected to protect parliamentarily the gains won in the revolutionary struggles of May-June 1936 has given them the diametric opposite results: the vicious law of December 30, 1936 which established the fascist principle of compulsory arbitration and outlawing of strikes; the devaluation of the franc and the unchecked skyrocketing of the cost of living; leniency to the fascist gangs coupled with savage repression of workers' mass action. The lesson is simple: class struggle won the gains; class-collaboration lost them.

Tragically, however, the uninformed worker turned naturally to the powerful C.P., which to him represented the extreme left; and here the Stalinist bureaucracy, prostituting the prestige of the October Revolution it is now liquidating, again tried to canalize the worker's revolt into class-collaboration with its tactic of what the French worker calls 'headstuffing', *bouillage de crane*. But that even this will not any longer hold back the indignant French worker is demonstrated these days, as predicted in these columns, by a rising strike-wave.

As soon as the department store sit-ins win their gains, the truck-drivers and warehousemen strike in Paris; then the transport workers in Valenciennes. No sooner have these been 'settled' by the army than the coal-miners are out at Anzin. As we write, the ship-strike at Rouen goes on; the food-handlers walk out at Grand-Combe; the powerfully organized metal-trades vibrate with rank-and-file pressure for real strike-action following singularly provocative lock-outs. The opportunist Stalinist tops and their trained seals in the trade-unions alternately soothe, sabotage, or jump on the bandwagon; government arbitrators hastily throw clean collars and assorted sell-out plans into their suitcase and entrain for trouble

points; the Popular Front talks of its love for labor and democracy, and calls out the troops.

Leadership Needed

The wave is yet a ground-swell only, but it surges and mounts. Whether it will be flattened again by the disillusion of repeated betrayals, or sweep up into a triumphant wave like that of May-June 1936, depends above all upon the workers' finding true revolutionary leadership. In factories and mines where the Bolshevik-Leninists of the IV International have not even been heard of save through the filthy slanders of the Stalinist press, the workers, kicking over the traces of their reformist leadership, are instinctively carrying out the precise slogans of the rapidly growing but still small Bolshevik-Leninist party, the P.O.I. (Workers Internationalist Party). Only the monstrous incubus of Stalinism stands between, slandering, betraying, defeating.

Time is short. French finance capital, though it still hopes to retain its choking grasp on French economy through its left hand, the Radical-Socialist Party and the Popular Front, before venturing on the more expensive and risky expedient of rule through its right hand, Fascism of both Hitler and Franco varieties, will yet inevitably, by the very nature of capitalism, be forced to go Fascist. The French workers must be ready: ready with workers' militias, with naturally linked factory and soldiers' committees, ready above all this time to carry through to the end, the socialist revolution.

Time is shortening, but there is yet time to save France from the fate of Spain. P.O.I. led, or gropingly, self-led or leaderless, the French workers are beginning to find the way.

By Pierre Naville

PARIS.—The recent trials stemming from the revelation of ex-Premier Andre Tardieu that he had paid out secret funds to de la Rocque have strikingly confirmed the repeated warnings of the P.O.I. (Workers' Internationalist Party) concerning the preparation of a fascist coup under the cover of the administration, the police and the army.

While de la Rocque was pleading not guilty in the affair of the secret funds, Pozzo di Borgo and his followers were arrested on charges of plotting "the re-establishment of the monarchy." A number of arms depots were uncovered. A third trial was meanwhile going on against the French Social Party on the charge that it was guilty of "reconstituting a dissolved league" (the Croix de Feu).

The witnesses who came to these trials to justify and glorify their plans for massacring the workers, fully confirmed our accusations. The official communiqué issued by Marx Dormoy, socialist Minister of the Interior, spoke of a "monarchical plot." But it also revealed something far more substantial than a threatened resurrection of the Orleans family. The plotters 'modelled their organization on that of the army.' This little phrase really means that the plot was organized by the army chiefs themselves.

Army Chiefs Involved

General Duseigneur, Capt. Le Maresquier and a number of business men who are reserve officers, were arrested. These officers are not on active service, any more than Gen. Weygand who, along with Tardieu, was probably at the head of the movement. But their activity would be inexplicable without the support and cooperation of officers on active service, of the higher-ranking officers. Who prepared the training of cadres, the armaments, the connection with aviation centers the arsenals and artillery bases? It was the same

group of men whom M. Thorez describes daily as the "elite of the Republican army."

Daladier, the minister of "national defence," in reality covered up the preparations of which he could not have been ignorant. Under the debonair gaze of the People's Front Government the plans for the barbarous assault ripened. Thorez and Guyot preached discipline and "pride in being a soldier"; and the minister of the soldiers encouraged his General Staff to prepare bloody repression against the workers.

At the de la Rocque trial, Pozzo, addressing the Croix de Feu chief, said: "When we spoke to you about arms, you adopted a modest air and said: 'Don't worry about that—in any case I have many acquaintances in the army. All that will be arranged.'" Pozzo thus quite cynically revealed the liaison between the army and the mercenaries of capitalism. The plot of the "Cagouards" (Hooded Ones) is the plot of the General Staff!

By the same blow, the role of the bourgeois army in civil war became plain to the blindest, despite the camouflage of Humanite and Populaire, who on this point are no different from the rightist press. When the minister of the Interior admitted that the plotters "modelled their organization on that of the army," he was obliged thereby to admit that the army functions and is organized for combat against the workers. The myth of external defence of the "fatherland" vanished to give way to reality.

The trial of the French Social Party also revealed what we knew quite well: that Roger Salengro, the late socialist minister of the Interior, and Leon Blum themselves legalized and covered the organization of the French Social Party when the Croix de Feu was dissolved. The testimony of Ybarnegaray and Ottavi, both leaders of the F.S.P. established this beyond question.

Helped Found Party

Ybarnegaray told how Salengro and Blum together approved the creation of the F.S.P. as successor to the Croix de Feu and assured him that "we have neither the intention nor the desire to make your party subject to the decree of dissolution," even though admittedly, it was "born of the Croix de Feu."

Ottavi related that he had two interviews at the ministry of the Interior with Magny, director of the Surete Generale (police), Langeron, prefect of police, and Verlomme, chief of Salengro's staff. They were discussing the methods of dissolving the Croix de Feu and Ottavi raised the question of the so-called "benevolent" organizations of the Croix de Feu: "Why don't you attach them to the party you are going to establish?" they said to me," related Ottavi.

These are two statements that ought to go down in history. The French Social Party was an incontestable advance for Fascism. While preserving intact its secret military organizations and its connections with the General Staff, it developed more broadly under the cover of "legality" its propaganda among the masses. The disagreements inside its putschist wing do not change anything: in the regroupment of fascism under the People's Front Government, Blum and Salengro held the baptismal font for the new infant.

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Appeal View Confirmed in "Robinson"-GPU Mystery

(Continued from page 1)

the Robinson passports sent in her care.

Washington advices recalled that Dr. Solon S. Bernstein, husband of Miss Ravitch, had been physician to William Z. Foster, American Communist leader, during his Presidential campaign in 1932.

Another "Visit to Trotsky"

They also revealed that the Robinsons had spoken in Moscow of extensive travel in the United States and of a visit to Leon Trotsky in Mexico. In the United States, they were said to have spent some time in California, believed to be a subcenter of espionage activity.

In checking the strange career of Adolph Arnold Rubens in New York, believed in some investigating quarters to be linked to the Robinsons, it was learned he had told friends here he was a foreign correspondent, an identity which would be useful in espionage.

It is not difficult to imagine who the "informed Washington circles" are. The Department of State, the Department of Justice, and the Post Office Department have all had agents working on this case in New York and elsewhere for about a month. In all likelihood, the heads of these Departments, or at any rate, Mr. Hull, know exactly what is at the bottom of the "Robinson"-Rubens "mystery". They are probably doing their best to bottle up the truth, but a faint glimmer of it seems to have come through.

Approached Dr. Kallen

The G.P.U. government is arranging a new frameup. The press, and particularly the Hearst press, has been giving them a "build-up." A number of examples of Hearst's distortion of the news on this case along lines suitable to the G.P.U. were cited in last week's Appeal. On December 30th, the New York Mirror (Hearst) added another touch to the "build-up." Their "reporter" approached Professor Horace M. Kallen of the New School for Social Research. Dr. Kallen is well-known in the co-operative movement. He is a liberal who does not endorse socialist doctrine, and who has repeatedly and publicly expressed strong political opposition to the left-wing, which in turn is uncompromisingly opposed to Dr. Kallen's politics. Dr. Kallen, however, is a member of the American Committee for the Defense of Leon Trotsky, having associated himself with it for the same reasons which moved many other well-known liberals.

The Hearst reporter asked Dr. Kallen whether he was acquainted with Mr. "Robinson"-Rubens. According to the Mirror, Dr. Kallen stated that he was not. Apparently Dr. Kallen was surprised by the question and asked the "reporter" what gave him the idea. In any event, the "reporter" pointed out in his article that he thought Dr. Kallen's connection with the American Committee might give him information about the mysterious Rubenses. One may wonder whether even the Hearst imagination could have produced such a result without a little hint from some good "friend of the Soviet Union."

What Is State Department Aiming At?

The State Department has obviously not made up its mind whether to go along with Stalin in the international united front for peace via war. Nor has it made up its mind whether to cooperate with the G.P.U. in staging the projected "Robinson"-Rubens frame-up. The State Department may well feel that the typical G.P.U. frame-up botch works in Russian, but that it doesn't "stick" very well in the United States.

While it tries to make up its mind, however, the State Department is playing its own game. Beginning with the "Robinson"-Rubens angle, and working down through former Tammany County Clerk Marinelli's office, the Federal men, according to the press, have come upon a chain of small-time East Side Democrats, who seem to be less than 1,000 miles removed from some kind of passport racket, and for whom there would be plenty of room, according to Dimitroff's latest effusion, in the People's Front. What the press does not record is that a state of jitters prevails in certain Stalinist circles.

According to rumor, the nervous way in which some people take a glass of tea these days would seem to indicate that the Federal men are getting on to a few things. Of course, this may just be Union Square chatter, but one can hardly believe that the G.P.U. is entirely pleased with the fact that a lot of investigators are busily digging-in.

Dr. Bernstein's Connections Well-Known

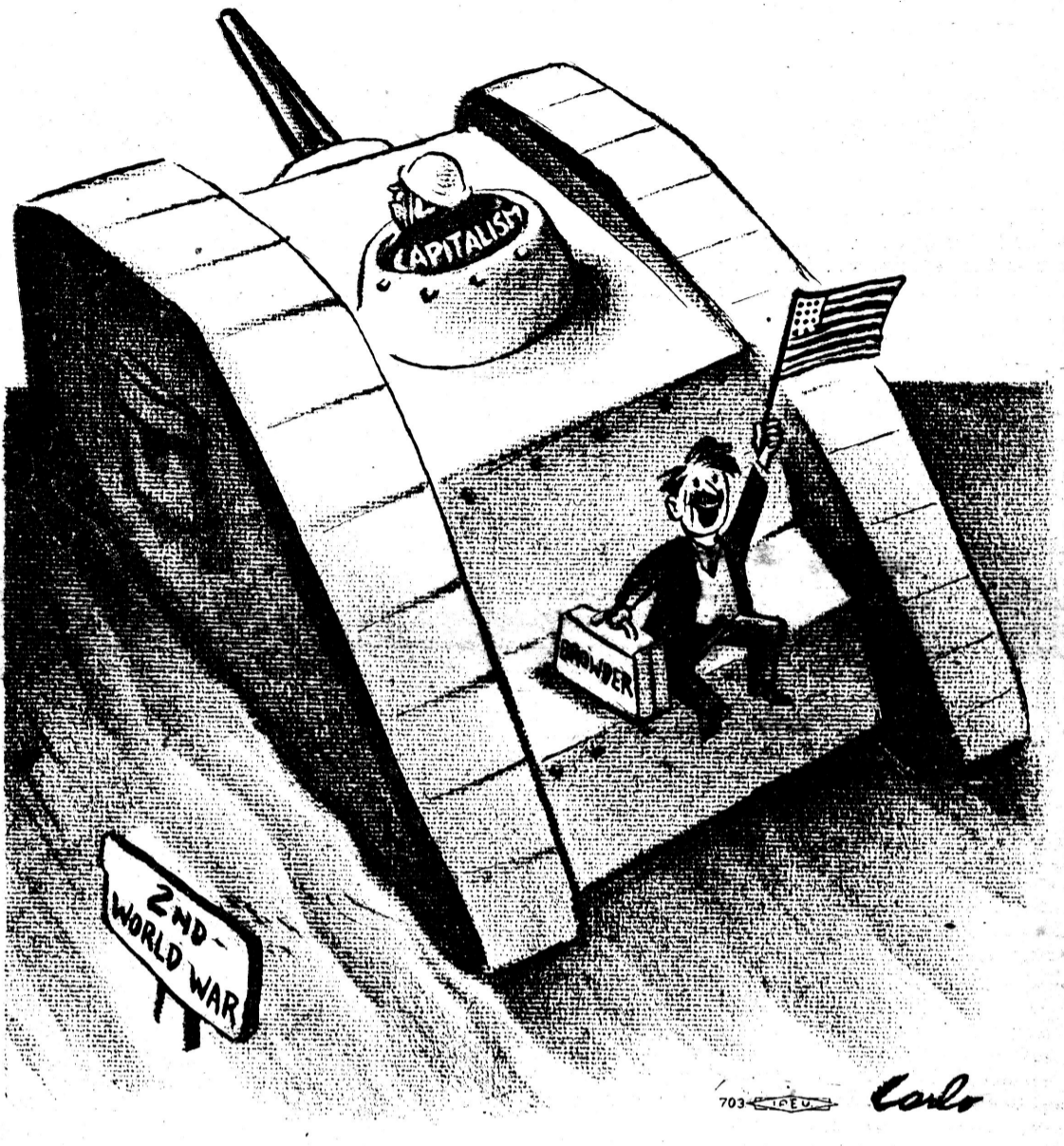
The World-Telegram is entirely correct in pointing out that Miss Ravitch, the lady who now remembers that she signed the receipt for the "Robinsons" passports, is married to none other than Bill Foster's physician. The physician, incidentally, also has had some connection with the International Workers Order. The Daily Worker of September 1932 made Dr. Bernstein rather famous.

Foster was then running for president, but he wasn't putting on much of a campaign. The Daily Worker said he was sick. A columnist named Heywood Brown, who has since grown up to be an ardent admirer of the Daily Worker, printed a charge that Foster was in excellent health but in the political doghouse. The Daily Worker printed a cartoon showing Brown as a drunk and called him liar. In order to support its position, the Daily printed a number of bulletins from a doctor who declared that Foster was in a real physical decline, in addition to his other troubles. The doctor was none other than Dr. Solon Bernstein.

Completing the Frame-Up Formula...

The World-Telegram makes a most interesting remark when it says that the "Robinsons" told people in Moscow that they had visited Trotsky in Mexico. This is all that was needed to complete the picture! There always has to be a visit to Trotsky. Sometimes it is in a non-existent airplane and sometimes in a non-existent hotel. But usually one doesn't hear about it until the "defendant", having thought profoundly on the subject of Stalin's

Fellow Travelers!



virtues in the secret chambers of the G.P.U., grabs a microphone in a Soviet court and "confesses."

This time, however, since what is wanted is an American "build-up", we are told that the "Robinsons", after having registered in November at a Moscow hotel, under a name which the whole world knew since last July was proscribed by the G.P.U., ran around the city telling Americans that they were pals of Trotsky. The indictment seems to be not that Trotsky has secret agents, but that he has secret agents who are first-class idiots.

What About the California Rumors?

It is not quite clear what the Telegram is saying about California. It is reporting that in Moscow people say they were in California? Which people? Who told them? Or does the Telegram mean that in the United States it is being said that they were in California? Either is possible. In any case, in New York a number of Stalinists have been whispering the glorious name of California in connection with the "Robinson" case. This at a time when not a single newspaper prints any indication as to who the "Robinsons" or Rubens really are.

How do American Stalinists know that California enters the picture? Why hasn't the Daily Worker printed the great revelations? Why is the Daily Worker printing on the whole less news about this affair than any other paper in New York? Are they afraid of spoiling the first night by a pre-view?

The new frame-up, as the Hearst approach to Dr. Kallen and other developments indicate, is not to be directed primarily at opposition elements in the Soviet Union nor solely at Leon Trotsky and his political associates. It is to be a grand affair,

run on the principle that if you throw enough mud some of it sticks. While it is still too early to say whether the G.P.U. has "discovered" that the defense of the Oxford Pledge made by the Quakers, the liberals, the Thomases, the Lovestonites and other anti-Trotskyite groups at the recent American Student Union convention at Poughkeepsie was really a Japanese plot arranged by the Trotskyites, it is at any rate clear that if the Soviet Government finally decides to dig up the mysterious "Robinsons"-Rubens, the latter may be expected to tell a juicy story involving definitely non-Trotskyite circles which the Kremlin regards as an obstacle to its plans for a totalitarian People's War Front in the United States.

It is reported that the World-Telegram article and other developments

of like nature have caused a number of well-known liberals, particularly some associated with the "small" navy movement, to begin to watch the development of the "Robinson" mystery with interest. What they are particularly wondering about is whether the "confessions" now being rehearsed in Moscow will be released for public consumption at the time of the scheduled Congressional debate on the Naval Appropriations Bill. Both Stalin and the reactionary big-navy crowd in this country would welcome a Japanese spy scare at that moment more than at any other. But the whole fabric of the case seems to be so full of holes that one wonders whether Moscow can get ready to stage a "Robinson"-Rubens trial for some time to come.

Party Activities

ST. LOUIS.—Fifteen Socialist children, uniformed in blue work-shirts and red ties, sang workers' songs at a Christmas party for 300 children of striking Ford workers in St. Louis. Comrades Von Romer, Kern, Mrs. Von Romer, Mrs. Saunders and other members of the Appeal group, got the idea of a Christmas party for the Auto Workers' children to bolster the morale of the strikers and they made it a tremendous success. Over 300 children attended, and there was no room for their parents to get in the hall. The uniforms, discipline, and working class enthusiasm of the young Socialist entertainers made a big hit with the other children and their parents.

The children's group consists of children of both right and left wing Socialists and of a few Stalinists. It has been functioning here for several years.

"C.I.O.-A.F.L. Unity — its

Real Meaning" will be the subject of a talk in St. Louis January 11, 8 p. m., at Olive Hall, 3830 Olive Street, under the auspices of the Socialist Party (Left wing). The speaker will be Arne Swabeck, well known as a Marxist authority on trade union questions.

This talk will start a series of meetings on Marxism. The meetings, have been arranged in the form of a course sponsored by the Marxist School of St. Louis. The first six classes run weekly from January 18 to February 22 and take up such subjects as the materialist interpretation of history, labor theory of value and surplus-value, capitalist accumulation and crisis, the class struggle, and the theory of the permanent revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat. The teacher of this series will be R. S. Saunders, well known St. Louis trade union leader.