

**An Open Letter
TO MEMBERS OF THE
COMMUNIST PARTY**

We address ourselves to those workers and militants within the ranks of the Communist Party who in their own minds and hearts still preserve the aim and ideal of the workers' revolution, who remain within the Communist Party because they believe that by doing so they are serving the cause of socialism.

We know that there are such members of the Communist Party. We know that they have, in reality, nothing whatever in common with the cynical, depraved, corrupt bureaucrats who, at the bidding of the Kremlin, direct the Party, nor with the horde of petty bourgeois riff-raff which has swarmed into the party during the past two years of Popular Frontism.

To these workers and militants, we say:

Comrades, what is your answer to the Trial of the 21?

By this trial, Stalin has now wiped out the last of Lenin's intimate colleagues. Through the trials and the purges, he has executed virtually the entire membership of Lenin's Central Committee, of the Central Committee which led the October Revolution.

You do not have to take our word for this. The membership of the Central Committee, the names of the close associates of Lenin, are a matter of public historical record. You can check up easily for yourselves.

Do You Believe In The October Revolution?

In 1917 and 1918 the imperialists and reactionaries everywhere told us that the Russian Revolution was made by a gang of cut-throats, bandits, spies, murderers.

Do you believe this? Or do you believe with us that the Russian Revolution was the greatest and most magnificent event in the entire history of mankind?

Today Stalin tells you exactly the same story that the imperialists and reactionaries told us in 1917 and 1918. If you believe Stalin now, then you must believe that the imperialists and reactionaries were right to begin with.

Vyshinsky states that Yagoda was a poisoner, a brutal sadist, a liar, a depraved and degenerate tyrant.

This is true.

But for a decade Yagoda was Stalin's right-hand man, acting directly under Stalin's orders. Look back through the official press and you will find that this is clearly and unquestionably true.

Yagoda prepared and managed the Trial of Zinoviev-Kamenev. According to Vyshinsky himself, therefore, the Trial of Zinoviev-Kamenev was prepared and managed by a poisoner, sadist, liar, and tyrant.

Is This Socialism?

Let us suppose that the trials are true. Stalin tells you that socialism has irrevocably triumphed within the Soviet Union. What kind of "socialism" is it, then, that turns all of its founders and builders into mad dogs, that makes them prefer to work for the blackest fascism rather than for the "socialist" regime? What kind of man, then, must Stalin be if everyone who works for him very soon develops such a hatred that he spends all his time plotting to kill him?

But, of course, the trials are not true. *You yourselves know in your hearts that they are not true, that they are a gigantic frame-up.*

Do you really believe that the cause of socialism can be served by frame-ups, by lies, by assassinations?

Why then are you silent?

Why not stand up in your Party units and demand answers to the questions which in your own minds shout for replies? Why not read the books, histories, pamphlets, newspapers which can put the facts about the Russian Revolution into your possession? Why not discuss, argue, compare? You know from Marx that action which is blind is a thousand times useless for the working class.

Truth Alone Serves Our Cause

Are you afraid of the truth? *If you are afraid of the truth, how, then, will you have strength to face the revolution?*

But there is no reason to fear the truth. Illusions, shams, treacheries—these are shattered and smashed by the truth. But our great movement, the movement for the emancipation of humanity, is nourished and grows strong by the truth and by the truth only.

You must act, comrades, and act quickly. You read the general press. You will see that no one believes this new trial. You will see also, however, that they are using this new trial to launch a vast campaign against the socialist ideal itself. The trial proves, they say, "the intellectual and moral bankruptcy of socialism." And their conclusion is: to submit once more and forever to the tyranny of capitalism.

By your silence you aid this reactionary campaign, which threatens to destroy the entire Marxist movement.

Stalinism, Not Socialism, Is Bankrupt

This campaign is a lie from start to finish. The trials in no slightest degree involve the ideal of socialism. *The trials are the direct contradiction of socialism.* What they prove utterly and completely is the final bankruptcy of Stalinism; what they prove for all time is that Stalinism and everything it represents is the destroyer, not the continuator, of the revolution.

This is the only possible answer that can be given to the campaign of reaction. No other answer can stand up under the attack, no other answer can vindicate the ideal of socialism.

And if you do not give that answer, you yourselves will be compelled to abandon your ideal. You will slip down once more into the ranks of the passive, broken slaves of imperialism.

Do not abandon your ideal! Join with us to defend it against all of its enemies. Only that ideal, the ideal of the classless socialist society, has hope or promise for men.

You will find that ideal guarded untarnished within the growing regiments of the Fourth International. In the face of the nightmare trial, in the face of the yawning crisis, the march of totalitarian reaction, the black clouds of the approaching war, let us carry forward our ideal, to a sure and lasting triumph!

Workers
of the World
Unite

Socialist Appeal

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**Lenin's Aides Shot
Anti-War Struggle Only Reply To Hitler**

**FASCISM LASHES
AUSTRIAN LABOR**

Drive Toward General War Conflagration Given
Impetus By Latest Triumph of Swastika;
Move Loses Wave of Chauvinism

VICIOUS REACTION IS DEEPENING

On Wednesday, March 9, Kurt Schuschnigg, then Chancellor of Austria, tried a last desperate bluff to preserve his own despotism against the encroachments of his giant rival to the north and announced a plebiscite on Austrian independence to be held the following Sunday.

Hitler and his Austrian Nazi cohorts, realizing that the Schuschnigg-controlled plebiscite would undoubtedly return a majority for independence, immediately sent their gangs into the streets of the Austrian towns and villages.

On Friday, March 11, Schuschnigg was presented with a series of ultimatums from Berlin, demanding the calling-off of the plebiscite, Schuschnigg's resignation, the formation of a Nazi cabinet and full freedom for the Nazi party in Austria.

Nazism Triumphs

Schuschnigg yielded on every point, but the machine set in motion was not in the least prepared to stop with any concessions. That night the German army, in accordance with plans long ago worked out in meticulous detail, rolled across the Austrian border. On Saturday German tanks, airplanes, and mechanized regiments took over the Austrian cities.

The clerical-fascism of Schuschnigg yielded its final fruit: the full-blown tyranny of Nazism. On Sunday, after a thousand years at the center of European history, the sovereignty of Austria was proclaimed at an end, and the nation was incorporated into the German Reich.

On Monday, Hitler rode in triumph through the streets of Vienna, as his police herded thousands from their proscribed lists into prison and concentration camps, as the frenzied gangs of Nazi students and demoralized middle class ruffians beat aged Jews into pulp, ransacked the Jewish shops and restaurants, applied cat-o-nine-tails to workers who failed to show proper

**Loyalist Spain In
Peril Of Collapse**

Following up the capture of Teruel, Franco's troops have embarked upon a determined drive to carve the territory of Loyalist Spain into two isolated segments. Reports as we go to press indicate that little effective resistance is being offered to the new fascist offensive, and that the Franco forces have already reached a point less than forty miles from the Mediterranean coast.

There are ominous rumors of secret negotiations between government heads and representatives of Franco's camp behind the scenes of the new military crisis. The Socialist Appeal will publish next week an extended analysis of the whole situation and its relation to the European crisis.

enthusiasm for their "liberation."

On Saturday there had been issued an insolent announcement of the abrogation of Article 88a

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**Navy Departs
For Pacific
War 'Games'**

Record Maneuvers Will
Cover Vast Triangle
in Western Ocean

Proceeding under a shroud of secrecy which indicates the closeness of war, the greatest peacetime naval operations in the history of the United States got under way this week as more than 150 warships steamed out into the Pacific from their bases on the West Coast. Cooperating in the exercises are some 500 war planes, naval bases and shore stations from San Diego to Puget Sound and from Alaska to Samoa, merchant vessels along the Pacific, and commercial airlines. Navy personnel totalling more than 60,000 officers and men are participating in the exercises which are scheduled to last until the end of April.

Actual time for the commencement of the maneuvers was kept a closely guarded secret and, unlike previous exercises, press representatives have been rigidly debarred from accompanying the fleet. The imperialist government at Washington, consciously preparing for war against Japan, is determined that results of the exercises shall remain an official secret.

Scope of Maneuvers

Another indication that war with Japan is looming on the horizon is the decision to extend the exercises both farther west and farther south than ever before. Approximately 12,000,000 square miles of the Pacific will be covered. Although the maneuvers will, as usual, center around Hawaii, the American Samoan Island group with the best harbor in the South Seas, Pago Pago, will figure in the navy moves.

Some units are expected to

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**GPU Court Decrees
Death For Eighteen
After Farcical Trial**

**Frame-ups? So What?
Says Anna Strong**

NEW YORK—"Suppose the Moscow trials are frame-ups—so what?" said Anna Louise Strong, professional "Friend of the Soviet Union," at a lecture to the forum of the Community Church last week. Her audience, composed largely of Communist Party members and sympathizers, sat in shock and dumbfounded silence. The first to recover began to boo and John Haynes Holmes, the chairman, had to rise to restore order.

The flustered Miss Strong tried to swallow her unintentional slip by launching into a discourse about Soviet economy. She neglected to mention, however, that all the economic gains of which she spoke were carried out under the direction of men who have now been shot as "wreckers," "saboteurs" and "Fascist spies."

**2,000 MEET TO
DENOUNCE TRIAL**

NEW YORK.—Two thousand people jammed the Hotel Center auditorium last Wednesday to protest the new Moscow frame-up at a mass meeting held under the auspices of the American Committee for the Defense of Leon Trotsky.

The speakers, including Suzanne LaFollette, Eugene Lyons, (Continued on page 3)

**Last of Lenin's Staff Victims of Stalin's
Executioners; Rakovsky Spared For
Future Frame-up Charges**

TRIAL WAS FLIMSIEST OF ALL

Eighteen of the twenty-one have been sent to their doom! Climaxing a decade of repression against the opponents of his reactionary regime, marked at its high points by the Zinoviev-Kamenev trial and executions in August, 1936, the Radek-Piatokov trial and executions in January, 1937, and the execution of the Red Army generals a few months later, Stalin has now physically exterminated almost the last of the authentic representatives of Russian Bolshevism.

Sentence on the defendants, who were dragged into court March 2 on demonstrably false charges of sabotage, treason and murder, was passed last Saturday in the totalitarian courtroom in Moscow after a trial universally condemned as a monstrous injustice, a trial in which the charges rested, as in previous trials, and contrary to Soviet law, exclusively upon the "confessions" of the defendant-witnesses—confessions forced from Stalin's broken victims in the foul dungeons of the G.P.U. and then repeated in the courtroom; a trial in which there was no defense; a trial planned in advance, in all its details, by Stalin; a trial in which contradictions and absurdities abounded by the carload; a trial featured by the most fantastic falsehoods and an almost unbelievable rewriting of the history of the Russian Revolution—

A trial which, translated into the language of honest and normally intelligent people, was a FRAME-UP!

The Victims

Nikolai Bukharin, Alexei Rykov, C. F. Grinko, N. N. Krestinsky, A. P. Rosenoltz, V. I. Ivanov, I. A. Zelensky, Old Bolsheviks and colleagues of Lenin, were sentenced to death. Like

wise doomed were Stalin's loathsome creature, Henry Yagoda, (former head of the G.P.U.), M. Chernov (former Commissar of Agriculture), F. Khodzhayev (former chairman of the Council of People's Commissars of Uzbekistan), B. B. Sharanovich (former secretary of the Communist Party of White Russia), Akmal Ikramov (member of the Stalin Constitution commission), P. Zubarev, V. Maximov, V. Kruchkov, Bulanov, Drs. L. I. Levin and I. N. Kazakov.

Christian Rakovsky, one of the most illustrious of the older generation of Russian revolutionists and the last of the Oppositionists to capitulate to Stalin, was sentenced to prison for 20 years. S. A. Bessonov, former secretary to the Soviet Embassy in Berlin, was given 15 years, and Prof. D. D. Pletnev 25 years. These men, especially Christian Rakovsky, who told an unfinished Japanese spy-plot story involving diplomats not yet brought to trial, are doubtless being saved for another frame-up as forecast in more detail elsewhere in this issue of the Socialist Appeal.

The fate of the defendants was sealed before they entered court. Stalin had already written the death sentences for the eighteen and the prison sentences for the (Continued on page 4)

**SOVIET CONSULATE
PICKETED IN FRISCO**

SAN FRANCISCO—Members and sympathizers of the Socialist Workers Party picketed the Soviet Consulate here on March 10 to protest the judicial murders in Moscow.

"Defend the Russian Revolution against Stalinism," "Stop the Moscow Frame-ups," "Hands off Trotsky," were some of the slogans on the placards carried by the pickets.

Officials at the consulate said the consul was "not in" when a delegation demanded entry to make their protests directly to the representative of Stalin's government.

Lenin's General Staff of 1917

STALIN, THE EXECUTIONER, ALONE REMAINS



