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Moscow's Diplomatic Plans in the Light of the Trials

by Leon Trotsky

If the memory of man were a more reliable instrument than it is, the Moscow trials would be absolutely impossible. The G.P.U. breaks the backbone of the accused, and people are used to that. And incidentally it tries to break the backbone of the historical process too, but that is rather more difficult.

In the Zinoviev-Kamenev trial (August 1936) the accused were charged with having maintained the ordinary relations of police spies with the Gestapo. The chief accused denied this charge, and public opinion was disinclined to believe it. In the following January Radek and Piatakov were chosen to add some polish to Vishinsky's all too primitive plan. In their confessions it is no longer a matter of ordinary vulgar espionage, but of an international bloc formed by Trotsky with German and Japanese fascism, and aiming at the overthrow of the U.S.S.R. and the Western democracies. It was no accident that this indictment was framed at a time when the people's front policy was in full swing. Soviet diplomacy, and therefore the Comintern also, aimed at securing the formation of a military bloc of the democratic countries against the bloc of fascist powers. In this constellation the Trotskyists were

presented as the agents of the fascist bloc. The picture presented was clear and simple.

The Trotskyists did not enter into relations with fascist Italy however, because Soviet diplomacy did not wish to interfere with the attempt being made by France and Great Britain to detach Italy from Germany, and calculated with the possibility of itself having to smile sweetly at Rome in the future. The same consideration was also valid to a great degree with regard to Poland, in the expectation that France would succeed in keeping Poland to heel. Thus in their international intrigues the accused carefully considered the viewpoint and the calculations of Soviet diplomacy. They might make an attempt on Stalin's life, but never on Litvinov's diplomacy.

The preparations for the new trial were made in a period in which the hopes and illusions concerning the people's fronts and the possibility of a bloc of the democratic powers were already dying. Great Britain's policy towards Spain, the visit of Lord Halifax to Berlin, London's veer round to the side of Italy, and finally Eden's replacement by Halifax, were the diplomatic signposts which now guided the "voluntary confessions" of the accused. Radek and Piatakov's version, according to which the Trotsky-

ists were agents of the fascist bloc (but not including Italy), was abandoned as no longer suitable to the occasion, and this time the accused marched into the dock as agents of Germany, Japan, Poland and Great Britain.

The connection of the accused with Germany lost its fascist colouring, because it transpired that it dated back to 1921 at a time when Germany lived under the sign of Weimar democracy. Co-operation with Great Britain was established in 1926, 11 years before the Radek-Piatakov trial. But how did it come about that Radek, appointed Trotskyist Minister for Foreign Affairs by the Public Prosecutor Vishinsky, knew nothing about Trotsky's relations with the British government? At the beginning of 1937 Great Britain was a "democracy", but after Eden's resignation it again became a hotbed of imperialism. Litvinov was therefore anxious to show London his teeth. The accused immediately made a note of that. Only a little while ago the war in the Far East was regarded as a drive of Japanese fascism against the Anglo-Saxon democracies. Now Moscow gives us to understand that it is prepared to abandon any distinction between Japan and Great Britain—aren't both of them conspiring with the Trotskyists against the Soviet regime? Rakovsky's evidence presenting himself and me as agents of the British Intelligence Service was in reality a diplomatic warning to Chamberlain!

The fact that Poland was introduced so late into the company of those countries compromised by their relations with the Trotskyists is due to two causes, one big and one small. Since the recent change in British foreign policy, Poland's inclination towards Germany has become more definite. The days when Stalin invited Pilsudski to come to Moscow and celebrate the anniversary of the October Revolution (1933) are forgotten, and Moscow wishes to indicate to Poland that it harbours no illusions about Polish neutrality, and that Poland must reconcile itself to being an arena of the struggle between Germany and the U.S.S.R. in the coming war. Litvinov threatens Colonel Beck through the lips of the accused.

The second reason why Poland could not be mentioned in the previous trials was that the chief "diplomat" of the second trial, Radek, could not possibly contrive to put his Polish semi-fatherland into the list of "Trotskyist" countries. In 1933 Radek himself made a journey in state to Warsaw, where he was officially received by Pilsudski to whom he spoke with pathos of the future happy co-operation of the two countries born of the revolution. The world press reported at the time that a military alliance was developing between the U.S.S.R. and Poland. As Radek made his sensa-

tional visit to Warsaw as Stalin's ambassador and not as Trotsky's agent it was particularly difficult for him to connect up Poland with Trotskyism. Th's time it was the job of the accused Sharangovitch to do it.

France was not mentioned at all of course, and nor was the United States. As far as these two countries are concerned the idea of a "bloc of the democratic powers" against the fascist bloc is still valid. It is true that Rakovski confessed to criminal relations with a number of French industrialists and journalists, but in this case the persons concerned were enemies of the Popular Front. Litvinov wished to compromise the Chamberlain government with Rakovsky's statements concerning the British Intelligence Service, and in the same way he wished to render the Popular Front government in France a service with Rakovsky's statements concerning the French industrialist Nicolle and the French journalist Buré. The accused remained loyal to the last: even in their "treacherous" arrangements with foreign States they always took the diplomatic plans of the Kremlin into consideration.

The silence maintained with regard to France is particularly eloquent in its absurdity. Almost until the end of 1931 France was regarded in Moscow as the chief enemy of the U.S.S.R., whilst Great Britain occupied second place. Germany counted as a friend. At the trial of the members of the Industrial Party (1930) and of the Mensheviks (1931) France was always the centre of all hostile intrigues. However, the Trotskyists, who began to establish relations with the enemies of the U.S.S.R. in 1921 (at a time when they were all in power, or rather, when together with Lenin they were the power), ignored France so utterly that they must have forgotten her very existence. No, they really forgot nothing, but they foresaw the future Franco-Soviet Pact, and even at that time they were anxious to do nothing whatever which might cause Litvinov difficulties in 1938.

What a blessing for Vishinsky that people have such short memories! After my banishment to Turkey the Soviet press never referred to me in any other fashion but as "Mr. Trotsky". And on March 8th, 1929 the *Pravda* devoted almost a whole page to proving that "Mr. Trotsky" (not "Herr Trotsky" mark you) was practically an ally of Winston Churchill and Wall Street. The article ended with the words: "It is quite clear why the bourgeoisie pays him thousands of dollars!" It was a question of dollars then, not marks. On July 2nd, 1931 the *Pravda* published a forged facsimile purporting to prove that I was the ally of Pilsudski, and an upholder of the Versailles Treaty against the U.S.S.R. and against Germany. That was at a

time when Soviet relations to Warsaw were becoming unfriendly, two years before the plan for a Soviet-Polish alliance was mooted.

On March 4th, 1933, at a time when Hitler was already firmly in the saddle, the *Isvestia*, the official organ of the Soviet government, declared that the U.S.S.R. was the only country in the world which harboured no enmity towards Germany, "irrespective of the form and composition of the Reich's government". And *Le Temps*, the semi-official organ of the French government, wrote on April 8th: "At a time when Hitler's accession to power was deeply disturbing European public opinion, the Moscow newspapers remained silent." Stalin still hoped for friendship with fascist Germany. Small wonder that at that time I was still an agent of the Entente!

On July 24th, 1933 I migrated to France with the permission of the Daladier government. Immediately *L'Humanité*, the Paris mouthpiece of Soviet diplomacy, announced, "He (Trotsky) will now attack the U.S.S.R. from France, the hotbed of anti-Soviet reaction—France is a strategic point, and therefore Monsieur Trotsky moves here." And at that time I was already able to celebrate the twelfth anniversary of my career in the service of Germany!

We have now recalled a few of the diplomatic milestones on the way to the present trial. The long list of facts and quotations could be lengthened indefinitely. However, the conclusion to be drawn from it all is already clear enough: the treacherous

actions of the accused represent no more than a negative complement to the international calculations of the government. The situation changes, and the diplomatic considerations of the Kremlin change with it. And parallel with this process the complexion of Trotskyist "treachery" changes too—or rather the confessions of the accused concerning their alleged treachery. And the most interesting thing about it all is that present-day interests and calculations have proved strong enough to overturn completely the events of the past 20 years.

By 1937 my old friendship with Winston Churchill, Pilsudski and Daladier was completely forgotten and I became the ally of Rudolf Hess and the cousin of the Mikado. My old role as agent of France and of the United States was completely unsuitable for the indictment of 1938, by my forgotten friendship with British imperialism suddenly became very topical again. We can already prophesy quite safely that should I be exposed during the last few days of the present trial as having maintained connections with the United States it will be seen that such connections were established not as the agent of Roosevelt, but as the ally of his sworn enemies the "economic royalists". In this way I shall continue to serve a patriotic purpose even in the depths of my "treachery".

L. TROTSKY.

Coyoacan, March 8th, 1938.
12 o'clock.

The Lesson of Aylesbury

"To-day," declares the *Daily Worker* editorial of May 28th, "the proposal for a united Peace Alliance (the British form of the People's Front) is the main issue for discussion in the organised Labour movement." After some four years of penetration in the British co-operative movement, the "Communist" party has succeeded in transforming the Co-operative Party into a ventriloquist's dummy, voicing a demand that originates in the foreign policy of the Kremlin. The sounds come from the editor of *Reynolds* but the voice is that of Stalin. The fact that just over 45% of the votes cast at the Brighton conference of the Co-operative Party were against the Peace Alliance has encouraged a large section of the co-operative officialdom to continue their opposition for the time being, although in a temporising manner. They resent the inroads which the Stalinists have made on their authority but bit by bit they begin to make room.

The Stalinists after this initial victory have continued to throw all their resources into the campaign, seeking to exploit the indignation of the British workers who are constrained to look on helplessly while the fighters against Franco are starved of arms. The Spain Conference of last month passed resolutions cunningly linking the Popular Front with proposals for practical aid to Republican Spain. The same tactic was followed in those trade unions into which the Stalinists have penetrated: resolutions demanding the calling of an emergency conference of the Trade Union Congress are pressed forward through every possible channel. The National Executive Committee of the Labour Party plainly hints at a similar process going on within the Labour Parties when it declares in its Statement on the Popular Front that "They (the Communists) would be capable of stabbing us in the back at any time." but "With the Liberals the position is different, for

they at least do not attempt to manipulate Labour Party policy from within." Stalinist factions have carried the demand for the Popular Front and for emergency conferences that will provide a test of strength, into the co-ops, the trade unions and the Labour Party itself, creating an effervescence that the Labour bureaucrats try in vain to bottle up. The more opportunistic of the Labour bureaucrats begin to edge over to the Popular Front, while fake "left wingers" of the type of Sir Stafford Cripps march over boldly.

The recent Aylesbury by-election provided the first test for which the Stalinists were clamouring. When the local Labour Party refused to accede to the withdrawal of the Labour candidate in favour of the Popular Front Liberal candidate, the Stalinist officials resigned "in protest." The *Daily Worker* urged Stalinists to support the Liberal candidate against the Labour candidate, R. Groves and in spite of the fact that Groves' programme was approved by the reactionary "Council of Action," a test which no Trotskyist programme could pass, the Stalinists persisted in labelling Groves as a "Trotskyist."

When Labour almost doubled its vote where the Liberals and Tories lost three thousand votes apiece, the Popular Front received its first douche of cold water. Groves explained the reason for the increased vote in an article in *Forward* (28th May, 1938): "We presented a clear statement of the condition of the workers and of the political and economic reasons for that condition. We showed the class rule of capitalism as the cause of poverty and war, and the need for its overthrow by Labour. Almost every vote we won represented a conversion to Socialism."

The Aylesbury result demonstrates that a programme of class struggle, even as presented by Groves in an emasculated form to suit the taste of the local "Council of Action," has the effect of attracting support, giving the lie to the Popular Front theory that it is necessary to water Labour's programme down to avoid driving the masses away. The closer Labour approaches to a real fighting programme for socialism, the greater the support from the masses, who will always respond to a clear class lead.

This lead is not given by the heads of the Labour movement. To the Popular Front agitation of the Stalinists they oppose loud but vague talk of Socialism and criticism of the Liberals. In contrast with their talk their actions testify to their true role. When Chamberlain beckons, they run to assist in the war plans of British Imperialism. Citrine shamelessly opposes the I.F.T.U. resolution condemning the British Government for its attitude towards the Mexican oil expropriation. Their actions show un-

mistakably what their clamour about Socialism is designed to cover up, that they are the lackeys of British Imperialism. If they oppose the Popular Front for the present, it is because the masses are quiescent and for their part they are quite satisfied to let things proceed as they are, to go on in the enjoyment of their privileged position as long as the masses continue to suffer in silence.

But how long will the masses remain quiescent? Economic crisis approaches. The single fact that the total values of Stock Exchange securities has fallen by approximately £2,000,000,000 in the past twelve months is more than enough to show the trend of industry to-day. The ruling class registers grave apprehension; Chamberlain broaches a five year plan of relief works to deal with the anticipated crash.

To-day in the lull before the storm, the Labour bureaucrats resist the Popular Front, but to-morrow when mass resentment rises under the blows of the crisis they will not hesitate to head off the movement of the masses into the safe paths of Popular Frontism. The Stalinists, whose mainspring is the needs of Kremlin foreign policy, are already busy betraying the workers' movement to those needs by advocating the Popular Front. The "Liberal" and "progressive" capitalists, recognising the strike breaking purpose of the Popular Front, are already eager to enter in the plot. Each for their own purposes, they will co-operate to baffle the mass movement. And the I.L.P., fluttering helplessly as usual between revolution and reformist betrayal, denounces the Popular Front in one breath and in the next declares in favour of participating if it is formed, in order "to expose it from within". The tragic experience of P.O.U.M. has taught them nothing.

The National Government must go, yes, but what shall take its place? The Aylesbury result has answered this question: Labour, with a clear cut policy of struggle against capitalism for workers' demands can increase its support among the masses. In a general election, a militant programme expressing the class needs of the workers can sweep the National Government from office where a watered down Popular Front programme would only baffle and confuse them. A Labour Government with a bold fighting programme could replace the National Government. Developing economic chaos, with its accompaniment of mass misery and hunger, will direct a stream of politically awakening workers into the reformist Labour Party, and they, through the urgency of their daily need will support a programme of workers' struggle if such a programme is counterposed to a grandiose plan and phrase-mongering of Popular Frontism. The place for all revolutionary socialists is within the mass organisations of the workers, seeking to give expression to

the real interests of the workers through their own organisations, seeking to impel the corrupt labour politicians along paths of struggle, a process that will inevitably compromise and expose them before the eyes of the masses and thereby clear the way for a genuine leadership.

It is not enough that revolutionary socialists are aware of the treacherous part which the Labour bureaucracy plays in side-tracking mass struggle. It is also necessary that the broad masses become aware of the treachery, and this they cannot do except by

passing through the actual experience of attempting to win their objectives under their present leadership. If in the midst of the moving masses stands the revolutionary, taking part in the day to day struggle, winning the confidence of the surrounding workers, ruthlessly exposing the efforts of the leadership to damp down workers' militancy, then the first condition for workers' victory is assured. Out of this activity is engendered the workers' vanguard which leads the way in the workers' triumphal march into power.

Hands Off Chen Tu-hsiu!

A vigorous defence of Chen Tu-hsiu, leader of the Fourth Internationalists in China, who has been under a hail of calumny by the Chinese Stalinists ever since his release from a Kuomintang prison last autumn, has been published in Hankow, present seat of the Koumintang government, by nine prominent Chinese scholars.

To the Stalinist slander that Chen Tu-hsiu is a Trotskyist "bandit" and a "traitorous spy for the Japanese imperialists" the scholars reply:

"It is not necessary for us, as non-communists, to interfere in the internal theoretical controversies among the communist factions, which are always attacking each other. But we were greatly surprised to discover false accusations against Chen Tu-hsiu in two Communist periodicals, 'The Masses' and 'Emancipation.' Under the pretext of defending the unity of the opposition to Japanese imperialism, the ridiculous accusation is made that Chen Tu-hsiu is a traitorous bandit who receives money from and conducts spying activities for the Japanese.

"But, as we know, our countrymen are well acquainted with the long career of Chen Tu-hsiu. His words and his deeds throughout this time of war are also known to everybody. If a man like Chen Tu-hsiu can be freely accused as a traitorous bandit, then everyone will have license to similarly accuse his opponents.

"We must put an end to this stream of slander! We live beside Chen Tu-hsiu. We know him very well. Whether on the score of friendship or for the sake of justice we cannot keep silent about this falsehood. We believe all friends of Chen Tu-hsiu, likewise those in whose minds justice is uppermost, will feel the truth of this declaration."

The statement was signed by Huang Hsing-kung, Chow Fu-hai, Hua Nyi-lin, Tien Shih-ping, Liang Han-chow, Ko Yi-han, Chang Hsi-min, Tao Hsi-hsing, Lin King-pei.

Pursuing in China the vicious campaign against revolutionists which is being carried out by Stalin's G.P.U. in Spain, the Stalinists in Hankow, where Chen Tu-hsiu resides, are howling for the blood of the outstanding leaders of the Fourth Internationalists.

"New China," a Stalinist rag, compelled to make some reply to the statement of the nine scholars, asks: "Is it untrue that Chen Tu-hsiu is a traitor? Such a statement will be justified only if Chen Tu-hsiu openly renounces the organization of the Trotskyist bandits and takes part immediately in the campaign against them."

A current number of the American *Socialist Appeal* reports the receipt of a letter from China which describes how agents of the Chinese Communist Party have been visiting bookshops and buying up wholesale the translated works of Leon Trotsky and other revolutionists, also all literature in any way critical of the Stalin murder regime in the Soviet Union, and consigning it to the flames in the best style of Adolph Hitler.

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Trade Union Struggle in USA

The United States business activity continuing in its headlong decline has now sunk to the lowest level since 1933. As the factory gates close one after another the army of workless grows and with it grows the threat to the trade unions. The workers, with the wounds of the bitter strike struggles, the picket lines and the sit-downs of the past years not yet healed, are guarding their pay-packets from the attacks of the employers in spite of the weakening of their position through increasing unemployment.

Among the hardest hit by the slump are the automobile factories; in the course of a year the number of factory sales of motor vehicles has dropped to almost half, and the employers have initiated a campaign to cut wages and smash the industrial union, the Automobile Workers' Union of America established in the course of the C.I.O. drive.

Mr. Knudsen, the president of General Motors Corporation accused the A.W.U. of using gangster methods. In reply, Homer Martin, president of the A.W.U. declared that it was quite natural for Mr. Knudsen to suspect the union of having strong-arm squads, since it "certainly had plenty of opportunity to learn about their use from the example set by your corporation." Mr. Martin added: "But when you say that 'there is not in the entire C.I.O. sufficient talent to build one automobile that will run under its own power' you must have forgotten that every automobile produced by General Motors is built by C.I.O. members.

"But I remembered upon reading this statement that you and other officers of the corporation didn't do such a hot job building a union, although there is ample evidence that you tried hard enough. I can imagine how much chagrin you must have suffered when you got your nice little company union all set up to find that 'the darn thing just wouldn't run.'

"I was most interested in your sudden apparent love for the 'trade or craft union', as against the 'industrial union.' And I just could not help wondering if your real reason for disliking the 'industrial union' might be your certain knowledge of the efficiency and effectiveness with which the 'industrial union' operates."

Martin allocated to R. T. Frankenstein, former assistant president of the union, the task of organising the Ford workers into the A.W.U., a job which means smashing the company union, the Ford Brotherhood of America, maintained side by side with Ford's service men or private police to keep the workers under the bosses thumb. In spite of the vote of the members in favour of affiliation to the A.W.U. in spite of the ruling of the National Labour Relations Board giving the A.W.U. the right to negotiate on behalf of Ford workers, the company union maintains its grip, and when last month A.W.U. organisers attempted to distribute leaflets at the Ford gates, they were "slugged", and pictures taken by reporters were destroyed by the service men. Workers are being laid off, in some cases wage cuts have been imposed and attempts by Ford workers to organise sit-down strikes are quickly frustrated by the service men specially equipped for this job.

The Stalinists initiated a determined drive last month to 'capture or smash' the A.W.U. Frankenstein, a notorious red-baiter, became their candidate for the presidency of the Union, in opposition to Martin, whom the American *Daily Worker* labelled as a 'fascist.' His programme was typically Stalinist: prohibition of factions in the union in the interests of unity, public pledges of allegiance to elected officers, disciplinary action against members who spread rumours or untrue charges against officers. This programme is the euphemistic expression of the real aims of the Stalinists—suppression of democracy in the union, belly-crawling, and the opportunity to frame up members on the lines of the Moscow Trials. And how sincere the Stalinists were in their drive against factionalism was demonstrated when Martin read out the minutes of the Stalinist faction meeting which decided the tactics that they intended to put into operation at the very assembly. The voting for the presidency was a defeat for the Stalinist-Frankenstein clique.

The workers within the A.W.U. however are by no means disposed to accept Martin's phrases about democracy in the unions as a substitute for militant struggle, and the recedescence of so-called wildcat strikes shows the temper of the automobile workers. For example the well planned sit-down strike con-

ducted last month by the workers in the Chevrolet parts plant of General Motors Corporation was carried out in defiance of the attempts of the A.W.U. officials to damp it down. Doors were chained, non unionists and foremen were kept out, the A.W.U. order to evacuate was ignored and the management by these means were forced to negotiate on the grievances that had provoked the strike. This as well as the other instances of unofficial strikes has demonstrated the hampering character of the reformist leadership in the workers' struggles.

The Communist Party, defeated in its attempt to rule or wreck the A.W.U. nevertheless have succeeded in other fields in maintaining their control—In the furriers, painters, food workers, and maritime unions, where the use of gangsterdom, co-operation with racketeers, the suppression of minorities and the dictatorial methods employed serve to maintain their domination.

Louis Weinstock, elected by Stalinist influence as Secretary Treasurer of the Painters Union has his hatchet men standing by to slug those members who have the temerity to oppose him. His "organiser" last month led an attack upon a militant member of the union who tried to voice his disagreement with Weinstock's policy, and who was knocked down and kicked about the face and body by the gang at the union meeting.

Similar methods are employed by Harry Bridges, President of the International Longshoremen and Warehousemen's Union, the union smasher in chief of the Stalinists along the West Coast Waterfront. The Sailors Union of the Pacific (S.U.P.) was for a period dominated by the Stalinist gang headed by Bridges but last January the membership threw out the fakers and replaced them with a progressive leadership. The S.U.P. tried to force the ship-owners to live up to the agreement they had made with the Union and picketed the ships which did not keep the terms of the contract. Bridges ordered the

Longshoremen in his union to smash through the picket lines, and backed by police armed with sawed off shot guns and machine guns they succeeded in breaking through the lines and landing a skeleton crew on the "Sea Thrush" at Portland. At Seattle he personally supervised the crashing of the picket line around the "Timber Rush." When the "Sea Thrush" docked at San Francisco the pickets were again crashed, on his orders with police aid.

To justify this strike breaking activity Bridges points to the ruling which he obtained behind the backs of the S.U.P. and with the bosses aid, a ruling which gives the rival National Marine Union, Stalinist controlled, the right to conduct negotiations with the shipowners.

The city of Akron is again becoming the scene of bitter struggles. The Rubber industry hard hit by the depression has slumped to 30% of normal production. The bosses' proposals to cut wages was rejected by the United Rubber Workers of America, a C.I.O. union. Troops are being rushed to Akron together with the tear gas bombs and the uniformed thugs that United States bosses employ in their attempt to smash down workers' resistance.

This marks a new intensification of industrial warfare in the United States with the accompaniment of physical violence, legalistic manoeuvres and wire pulling in the unions. The workers disunited by the warfare between the American Federation of Labour and the C.I.O. is further torn asunder by the unscrupulous manoeuvres of the Stalinist adventurers who proceed to even greater lengths of gangsterism than the old time bureaucratic trade union leaders. To unite the workers on a militant programme of struggle, to canalise the splendid fighting powers which the American workers have manifested in recent years against the bosses wage cut offensive—this is the task which confronts the serious vanguard of the American workers to-day.

Slump

The steady drop in United States production, the so-called "recession", has been continuing unabated for the past half year. According to the figures published by the American Federation of Labour, which takes up a conservative and cautious attitude in its computations, the number of unemployed in America is now 11,232,000. The number of busi-

ness failures is almost double that of a year ago.

In Britain also, ominous signs appear of the extension of the slump, warnings of another world depression. Compared to the figures of a year ago the estimated cost of building plans approved last month showed a drop of more than 20%. In the same period, British imports have dropped 11.2%

and exports 13.4%; most striking of all, rayon output has fallen 22.7% below the figures of last year. Gross railway receipts are down this year by half a million sterling. If the industrial decline which is indicated by these statistics has not so far shown itself in a sharp increase in unemployment figures, the cause must be sought on the one hand in the recruiting drive for the regular army, which now absorbs between six and seven hundred recruits every week, and on the other hand, in the increased employment in the armaments industries. As productive industry slumps to lower levels day by day, the workers are drawn into the unproductive trades of soldiering and arms manufacture. The worker is exchanging his overalls for a uniform, instead of producing the means of life he is set to work producing the means of death, but in any case he is kept away from the Labour Exchange, and the figures of unemployment, which show an increase of more than 200,000 over last year, do not reveal the real extent of the decay of industry which is setting in throughout Britain.

The increasing shift from production to war preparations is also shown in the movements of capital. For the first quarter of last year new capital issues totalled £49,505,000. This year they total £33,000,000. Just as manpower is drafted from production to war preparation, so also is capital drawn away into financing the defence loans. The national debt approaches £8,600,000,000 and the burden of interest which must be paid out of taxes piles up with the piling up of rearmaments and emergency stores of food and raw materials.

British Imperialism, menaced from the outside by impoverished rivals, is also menaced from within by a growing economic paralysis which it prepares to counteract by the traditional capitalist remedy of savage wage-cuts. Although during the first three months of this year wage increases were obtained by more than two million workers, increases swallowed up by the rising cost of living, during April wage-cuts were imposed on 330,000 workers.

In spite of the turn towards a wage cutting policy, the workers in the large trade unions are pressing forward with demands for increased pay, shorter hours and better conditions. The three railway unions submitted on May 19th their demands: a minimum weekly wage of £2. 10. 0 is claimed by the National Union of Railwaymen; the Locomotive crews demand a scaled wage minimum based on terms of service; the Railway Clerks claim an increase of £20 per annum on maximum salaries plus £10 London allowance. Simultaneously the engineering and shipbuilding unions have decided to present to employers their demands for higher wages,

shorter hours, closed shops, paid holidays, and abolition of the present grading system of wage rates. While the bourgeoisie, whipped on by declining traffic and trade, commences an onslaught to worsen workers' conditions, the workers confront them with a counter-offensive for better conditions. The inevitable clash draws close.

The approach of the storm is by no means unanticipated by the ruling class. It is not for nothing that the subject of civil war in Britain has formed a topic of sober discussion among them. A few weeks ago, insurance companies announced that civil war risks were among those specifically excluded in new policies for Britain and we recollect that in the army manoeuvres of last year, conducted on the supposition that a civil war was in progress in Britain, forces were supposed to be converging on London from bases in Scotland and Wales, which are, perhaps by coincidence, strongholds of militant labour. Even if these circumstances are considered as mere echoes of the Spanish civil war, there remains the fact that the newly organised food supply units, supposedly set up "in case of national emergency" are powerful weapons for the ruling class in breaking a general strike, and so far, no call has been issued to the general population to take part in them, as has been done in the case of the parallel air raid precautions units. The officers to administer "emergency" food supplies are selected in each area from the local government service.

The machinery to impose upon the working class by force lowered standards of life remains in the background to be used only in the last resort. At the head of the trade unions there still stands the bureaucrats, faithful servants to their capitalist masters, ready to explain to the workers, as they have done before, that it is necessary for them to accept wage-cuts in view of the downward trend of trade, or in view of the precarious international situation. It is only when the efforts of these strikebreakers within the workers' movement are ineffective that the employers turn to more violent strikebreaking methods.

More dangerous than the reformist trade union leaders are the Stalinists who are increasingly penetrating the trade union movement and utilising the prestige of militant trade unionists who support them, for the purpose of carrying out their treacherous political aims. The Stalinists aim to obtain the leadership of the growing wave of militancy in the trade unions in order to bargain with the Government. The *Daily Worker* urges engineering workers not to support the arms programme of the Government as long as it adheres to its present foreign policy, and openly demands, as the price for sup-

porting war preparations, that the British Government enters into a pact with the Soviet Union. The British ruling class would only make such a pact if its own capitalist interests were served thereby. For a workers' party to support imperialist war-preparations *under any circumstances* is treachery to the international working class, and the policy of the Communist Party of Great Britain serves only to force German workers to rally behind Hitler in sheer self-defence.

The mouthing of militant phrases now indulged in by the Stalinists is only another means of bringing pressure to bear on the National Government through the trade unions. They are equally well prepared to damp down the workers' struggle, to advise moderation of workers' demands as the French Stalinists did, just as soon as the National Government shows signs of yielding to their pressure.

Workers in the trade unions, in pressing forward with demands for improved conditions, must not permit their struggle to be sidetracked and exploited for the treacherous political ends of Stalinism. While the capitalist enemy confronts the worker, Stalinism stands in the ranks of the proletariat, now shouting encouraging slogans, but ready at a moment's notice to strike the worker down from behind.

Capitalism with its reformist and Stalinist protectors, guides the workers only to death—a swift death in war or a slower yet no less deadly destruction in economic depression. For the working class the path to life is barred and remains barred until the obstacle is smashed out of the way. To-day's struggles for better conditions of work are but the first stages in the revolutionary task of clearing the road ahead for the workers' triumphant march into the new world of peace and plenty—the world of socialism.

Palestine Communists Denounce Stalinism

The series of Moscow Trials which Stalin stages to meet internal difficulties have had outside of Russia a profoundly disturbing effect, intensified by the hints of trials yet to come. After the recent trial of the 21 the misgivings of the rank and file membership of the British Communist Party has become pronounced. Every discussion within the Party, no matter how it commences tends to gravitate towards the subject of the trials.

This tendency is observable all over the world, where in increasing numbers Communist Party members, confused and disoriented, drop into inactivity or even fall out of the Party altogether.

The statement of Palestine communists here reprinted is of importance as an indication of the general reaction which the Moscow Trials cumulatively are producing within the national sections of the Third International.

To all communists, to all workers and all those who have remained faithful to the cause of the Soviet Union and the Revolution!

The land of October and Socialist construction, the conduct of the struggle against fascism and im-

perialism, the very banner of communism, all this is at present in irresponsible and destructive hands! This is the conclusion we must draw from the trials staged by Stalin-Yezhov. Is it possible that the person who believes in socialism should at the same time believe in the whole exhibition of degeneration and fantastic treachery, as expressed in the trials? Is it conceivable that the moral power of fascism is so strong and the influence of socialism so negligible in the land of deep-going revolution that precisely the most accepted and prominent leaders and teachers together with broad masses, hundreds of thousands of communists, should betray communism and sell themselves to fascism? Only those who themselves do not feel the abyss that lies between fascism and socialism, or who are defective spiritually, can believe or even be uncertain about this.

In the last nine months alone, preceding the trial of Zinoviev-Kamenev, three hundred thousand comrades were expelled from the C.P. as traitors, according to official reports in the press, and it was only after the trial that the wave of mass extermination of the Party commenced. Recently examples were made public of sections in which a majority

was driven out as enemies of the people and fascists. In this manner fascism is supposed to have won over, besides the 300,000, many, many more. Were all this true, were we to believe it, this would be the most shameful death-blow to socialism as an ideal and as a movement.

Fortunately, all this is an absolute frame-up and lie. But this frame-up is a diabolical provocation, which threatens extermination, destruction, degeneration and which only serves the interest of fascism. Were bourgeois reaction to procure an *agent provocateur* and place him at the head of the labour movement with the object of besmirching it, paralyzing it and destroying it from the inside, it could not succeed any better than Stalin with his trials and his extermination of the party. They are not enemies of the people, spies and traitors, these hundreds of thousands and all the leaders—they are communists. They cannot be exterminated without these fantastic frame-ups, in which the narrow Stalin bureaucracy is especially interested in order to bring shame to the cause of the revolution in the manner of an *agent provocateur*. The trials represent a concentrated expression of all the methods of those in power. The lie of the trials has its imprint also on the "democracy" which the new Constitution is supposed to have ushered in and with which we were duped. The cynicism of this deception is all too clear now. This régime of truly absolute autocracy, which makes a fiction of every mass organization—they compel us to designate as most democratic. The lie exceeds all limits! Shall we continue to do violence to our revolutionary conscience and justify everything?

We have passed through our most conscious years with Stalin, not because we really consider him "our father", but because we were under the misconception that this was identical with devotion to the Soviet Union and to the cause of the class struggle and world revolution. We had all hoped that the methods were temporary and that things would change for the better. But Stalin continues ever more brazenly. He utilizes our devotion in order to continue his revolting, sinister and injurious deeds. He simultaneously deceives us and ignores us. Only if he should indeed have grounds to feel that we communists the world over will refuse to sanctify all his deeds, will he too realize that there are limits. Now however, he can no longer stop. The backward Stalin bureaucracy has bound up its faith with lies, deceit, corruption and a terror which steadily mounts not against enemy classes but against the working class and its vanguard and the left wing organisations abroad.

We too are to a degree responsible for the results. And precisely because of our deep feeling of responsibility, we cannot and must not keep silent. We must no longer be misled by the fear that the

bourgeoisie will utilize such exposes. On the contrary, it is our silence that it utilizes in order to identify all communists, and communism itself, with the falsehoods of the trials which are already so clear and so pronounced. Stalin's slander of the Soviet Union as a land which is permeated with ever-mounting fantastic crimes, serves only the bourgeoisie. With all our power we hurl back this Stalin-Vishinsky slander. We are deeply convinced that the Soviet Union is much higher and basically different from the way it is reflected in the trials and through the régime of such a backward and vulgar absolutism. The present identification not only of socialism but also of the Soviet Union with this government-by-trials is a great discreditment of the socialist cause; it is counter-revolutionary. And we are precisely the ones who must break with the methods of the trials, decisively and irrevocably. And the more demonstrations of this kind there will be, the less will the bourgeoisie be able to utilize the trials and besmirch socialism in order to curb the working class.

But already acute are the dangers of the present defeats of the Soviet Union and of the world working class—the direct result of Stalin's policy of trials and of the demoralization of the world communist movement, which is actually ruled by those who staged the trials. It must be thoroughly clear that Stalin's permanent struggle against the cadres of the party, of the army and of economy, are liquidating the foundations of the October Revolution and paralyzing the general state of the country. It must be clear that the continuation of the fascist methods and provocations within the labour movement of the world, discourages and disarms the working class in its struggle against fascism. The continuation of such methods will assure the victory of fascism, and then the Soviet Union itself will collapse.

Communists, workers! We call upon you to save the Soviet Union!

Raise your voice against the danger which threatens the land of October—against Stalin's policy of defeats!

Struggle against the trials which are driving the Soviet Union to the abyss!

Back to Leninism!

For revolutionary struggle of the international working class!

Down with the provocative trials!

Down with the hangmen of the October Revolution!

Long live the Soviet Union!

Long live the world revolution!

Signed: Members who resigned from the Communist Party of Palestine and its organizations.

Spanish Revolutionaries Framed

On February 13th, 1938, a number of Spanish anti-fascist fighters were arrested and subsequently charged with belonging to a secret organisation formed in Barcelona with the object of carrying out the assassination of prominent Republicans and government officials in key posts. The indictment of the 10th March, 1938 accuses them of issuing propaganda detrimental to the Republic and maintaining direct relations with foreign elements. All except one, Victor Ondik, are accused of being implicated in the murder of a certain Captain Leon Narvitch at about 10 p.m. on the 10th February, 1938 in the Rue de la Legalite. Fernandez Grandiso, alleged to be the leader of this "terrorist band" is accused of attacking the murdered man, while another of the arrested men, Jaime Fernandez, is said to have been helped by one Max O'Joan to hold the victim down.

WHO ARE THE ACCUSED?

Manuel Fernandez Grandiso, alleged leader in the murder and terrorist plot, is in actual fact a veteran revolutionary militant. He is a Bolshevik-Leninist and together with Nin and Andrade founded the Spanish Left Opposition. Before the Revolution he had lived in Mexico with his family and had been Secretary of the Communist League of Mexico. After his return to Spain he fought in the Socialist Youth Militia on the Madrid Front.

Another of the accused, Munis, is well-known as a revolutionary Marxist and a life long opponent of individual terrorism.

Adolfo Carlini, also accused, was born in Italy,

where he was a member of the Italian Socialist Party. One of the most courageous among the Italian anti-fascist fighters, he fought on the Aragon Front from the very beginning and is well-known in Barcelona for his heroic conduct during the fighting at Estricho-Quinto and Monte-Aragon.

Aage Kielso, who has escaped, is listed among the accused. He was a volunteer in the militia and a militant Bolshevik.

Besides the four other accused Spaniards, J. F. Rodriguez, T. S. Hernandez, Jaime Fernandez, all known as militant anti-fascists, the list contains Luis Zanon, a youthful comrade who only joined the workers movement after Franco's uprising. Exploiting his youth and ill-health, the police have induced him to "confess" that he was on the editorial staff of "La Batalla" and "L'Editorial Marxista," but in a subsequent declaration he has retracted his "confession."

The Max O'Joan, political commissar, who is mentioned in the indictment as having assisted in the murder of Narvitch will no doubt be produced as a "witness" of the Moscow Trials type, but up to the present he seems to have vanished. He is described as a German.

The murdered Captain Narvitch had declared himself sympathetic to the Fourth International, and is therefore more likely to have been killed by the Stalinists than by anyone else, in order to impose silence upon him.

The impending trials of these Spanish and foreign militants who have served the Revolution throughout is a Spanish version of the Moscow Trials.

HELP VICTIMS OF COLONIAL TERROR

Comrade Ta-Thu-Thau, the courageous leader of the struggle of the Indo-Chinese workers against French Imperialist oppression, is still in prison, ill and paralysed.

The day after the Elysee demonstration in 1930 he was forcibly deported from France on the order of the Minister Pietri, and was compelled to leave behind in France his young son, who was entrusted to the care of a French working class family. As long as he was at liberty he sent regularly monthly remittances to the foster parents of his child.

Arrested for his part in the struggles of the workers and peasants of Indo-China he has now spent

several months in prison. His brutal captors prevent him from receiving medical treatment although his body and face are paralysed and he is in danger of losing his sight. Ta-Thu-Thau's boy is now about 10 years old. He has been taken under the protection of the International Workers' Aid, which issues a call to all workers to demonstrate their solidarity with the colonial workers by adopting the child of Ta-Thu-Thau.

All contributions should be sent to:

SUCOURS INTERNATIONAL,
SOLIDARITE ET LIBERTE,
11 Rue Jean de Bouvais II, Paris.

Who Hounds POUM?

During the recent military operations on the Aragon Front the Stalinists have taken advantage of their privileged positions in the High Command to shoot several members of the P.O.U.M.

The Communist Party papers *Mundo Obrero* and *Frente Rojo* carry flaming banner headlines across their front pages: "WHEREVER YOU FIND A TROTSKYIST—SUPPRESS HIM!" At Lerida the Military Governor of the Fortress has issued an order: "Soldiers, fire at those who defend P.O.U.M."

Orders like this can be carried out with impunity at the front. Daily despatches arrive: "Missing": followed by a list of names of members of P.O.U.M.

Recently the General Commissariat of Communications of the Eastern Army received the following communication: "The soldiers, Juan Hervas, Jaime Trepas, and Maca are missing." The two first-named, Hervas and Trepas, were privates in the Communications Service, and members of P.O.U.M. As members of the Communications Service they worked in the second line and therefore could not have become "missing." THEY WERE SHOT. The third "missing," Meca, was political commissar of the section and a member of the C.N.T. He would not have countenanced the assassination of the P.O.U.M. members and so the Stalinist officers have shot him too and certified him as "missing."

The General Commissar for Communications, Montserrat, a member of the C.N.T., on receiving the report of the "disappearance" of the three comrades, sent an official communique to his superiors praising the three for their anti-fascist activities. Unfortunately his mission stopped there. Had he investigated he would have become acquainted with what was common knowledge in the ranks, namely, that Hervas, Trepas and Meca were not "missing" but had been murdered.

The P.O.U.M. and the C.N.T. militants continue their anti-fascist fight, fully aware that in addition

to the danger of being shot by the fascists there is also the greater danger of a shot in the back.

Lerida has always been a P.O.U.M. stronghold, thanks to many years of self-sacrifice and hard work by devoted militants. After Franco's uprising, Lerida was known throughout Spain as the "independent commune", always in the forefront of the struggle against fascism and for socialism. And here in Lerida the suppression of P.O.U.M. has taken on an exceptionally brutal form. Mena, the first victim was executed without trial.

Lerida has fallen to the fascists. While the revolutionary workers fought on to the very end, the slanderers who unhesitatingly signed their death warrants incontinently fled. These leading lights of the Stalinist P.S.U.C., these bitter enemies of P.O.U.M., who are they?

There is Joaquim Villa, Commissar for the Catalan Government and Commissar of the new 29th division. He decamped to Paris with 12,000,000 pesetas stolen from the funds of the Public Order Commissariat.

Another of these gentlemen, the Stalinist Culebra, as editor of the Lerida P.S.U.C. paper "U.H.P." devoted all his columns to attacking P.O.U.M. He was arrested while attempting to cross the frontier with 60,000 pesetas and a considerable quantity of valuables. Then the P.S.U.C. paper announced his expulsion from the Stalinist Party.

In the attempt to counteract the publication of these embezzlements the Stalinist Press in Barcelona announced that Sebastian Garsalall, member of P.O.U.M. and President of the "unio de los Rabasanes" had been arrested while fleeing with 4,000,000 pesetas. This statement was denounced as a lie by the entire Barcelona press, except that of the P.S.U.C., and when the lie was definitely tracked down to P.S.U.C. members, even the P.S.U.C. press was compelled to announce the explosion of the manufacturers of this slander.