

"THE FIRST TWO MOSCOW TRIALS"



BY
FRANCIS HEISLER

PREFACE BY
ROY E. BURT

25c

EJW

HAVE YOU READ THESE?

"THE WITCHCRAFT TRIAL IN MOSCOW" by Friedrich Adler.

An authoritative analysis of the first Moscow trial by the secretary of the Labor and Socialist International with a preface by Norman Thomas. 32 pages

10 cents a copy, 15 for \$1.

"YOUTH FIGHTS WAR" by Gus Tyler.

A scorching indictment of war, and "peace" proposals by the editor of the "Socialist Call." 24 pages.

5 cents a copy, 12 for 50 cents.

"IS THE NEW DEAL SOCIALISM?" by Norman Thomas.

100,000 copies of this brilliant speech have been sold—and it's still selling. 12 pages.

5 cents a copy by mail, 10 for 10 cents.

"WHAT SOCIALISM WILL REALLY MEAN TO YOU"—

a pictorial

The most brilliant and attractive pictorial review ever published by the American Socialist movement. Prepared by Lawrence Benjamin of the British Labor party. 16 pages. 120 pictures. Charts. Explanatory text.

10 cents a copy, 25 for \$1.

"TRUE FREEDOM FOR NEGRO AND WHITE LABOR"

by Frank R. Crosswaith and Alfred Baker Lewis.

Can the Negro problem be solved under capitalism? 60 pages

10 cents a copy, 12 for \$1.

"THE CASE FOR SOCIALISM" by Fred Henderson

Official textbook of the British Labor party and the Socialist Party of the U.S.A. 148 pages.

25 cents a copy, 12 for \$2.25.

"THE HERITAGE OF DEBS"

High spots in the life of Eugene V. Debs. Deb's famous "Canton speech" and his speeches to the jury and the court. Quotations from official Socialist statements against war. 32 pages.

10 cents a copy, 15 for \$1.

(Cash must accompany all orders. Add 10 cents to checks.)

Order from

SOCIALIST PARTY U. S. A.

549 Randolph St.

Chicago, Ill.

FRANCIS HEISLER

The First Two
Moscow Trials

Why?

Preface by ROY E. BURT
Executive Secretary
Socialist Party, U.S.A.

Published by
SOCIALIST PARTY U.S.A.

549 Randolph St.

Chicago, Ill.

Copyright 1937
Socialist Party U.S.A.

Printed by
Italian Labor Publishing Co.



I N D E X

	Page
Preface	" VII
Introduction	" 1
I. The Indictment	" 9
A) Witches Sabbath	" 37
B) Dates and Documents in the Indictment	" 17
C) The Role of the Gestapo	" 20
D) Enter Hitler	" 25
E) The Kirov Trial	" 28
F) Terroristic Conversations	" 31
II. The Charge of the Indictment	" 35
III. The Trial	" 37
A) Witches Sabbath	" 37
The Testimony of:	
Mrachkovsky	" 42
Evdokimov	" 46
Dreitzer	" 49
Reingold	" 51
Bakayev	" 55
Pickel	" 57
Kamenev	" 57
Zinoviev	" 60
The Role of the Foreign Trotskyists	" 62
Smirnov	" 63
V. P. Olberg	" 68
Berman-Yurin	" 74
Holtzman	" 77
N. Lurye	" 79
M. Lurye	" 80
Ter-Vaganyan	" 81
Fritz David	" 81
Legal Conclusions of the Trial	" 83
IV. The Concluding Argument of the State's Attorney	" 87
V. The Last Statement of the Defendants	" 98
VI. The Verdict	" 100
VII. The Implications of the Trial	" 102
A. Why Did the Defendants, If Innocent, Confess?....	" 103
B. What is the Left Opposition?	" 116
C. The Present Russian Policy and the Position of the Left Opposition	" 127
D. The Growth of the Opposition	" 130
E. Shooting Zinoviev, Kamenev, etc., But Aiming at Trotsky and the Opposition	" 135
F. The Spanish Revolution of July and the Moscow Trial of August, 1936	" 143
VIII. The Accused	" 150
IX. Some Questions Which Cannot Be Answered By the "Faithful"	" 157
Appendix	
The Opinion of International Labor Concerning the Moscow Trial	" 162
The Trial of Radek, Sokolnikov, and fifteen others	" 172
The testimony of the defendants	" 175
The story of the sabotage	" 181
More trials to come	" 186
Why did Radek and his Co-defendant confess?.....	" 189

P R E F A C E

THE WORLD had scarcely recovered its senses from the first Moscow trial before it was overwhelmed with the story of the second trial; a second trial made more terrible by the fact that it clearly indicates that other trials are to follow.

These trials are the more significant because they are not isolated events which suddenly happen to astonish the world. Indeed, it is hardly correct to call them the First Moscow Trials for there have been other trials. In 1931 the Labor and Socialist International was compelled to issue a pamphlet on the Moscow trials. From 1928 on there have been recurring trials. The trials covered in this book and listed as the First Moscow Trials are of outstanding significance, partly because they present fully that which is but indicated in the earlier trials.

In the attack upon the right of political asylum, in the promise of "more convincing" trials to come, in the bitter resentment of any criticism of their conduct, these trials compel a sober effort to understand what is back of them. The absence of documentary evidence, the reliance upon "confessions" and the bitterness and suspicion they produce in an hour when solidarity of all workers is the growing need in the sharpening struggle raises questions that will not down. And when we consider the seriousness of what these trials portend for the future of the workers who are prepared to struggle for a new society we are driven to make every effort to understand them.

The Socialist Party has from the beginning of the Soviet Union demanded for it recognition and sought to defend it against all of the misrepresentations and vicious attacks made upon it by its enemies. The Soviet Union marked a great achievement in the long struggle of the workers against exploitation. The workers there had taken a long long step in the march toward the complete emancipation of those who toil. This achievement brought hope and new life to millions of toilers throughout the world.

These trials go far beyond the political differences of two groups. They create issues that will for all time affect the struggle

of all workers everywhere. Even liberals who profess a belief in democracy are aroused and shocked by the revelations of what happened. In a much larger measure every worker is most vitally concerned. Charges do not constitute proof. "Confessions" do not explain. Bitter attack is not a convincing answer to a plea for a complete and impartial hearing. From workers everywhere, jealous as to the integrity of workers institutions and the cause of International Socialism comes a demand for a full understanding of what is involved. Whether we like it or not, we must sit in judgment. We want that judgment to be intelligent and adequate. It is essential that, in so far as possible, we understand these trials. Too much is at stake to be moved with bitterness. Against the hysteria and hatred of this hour we must seek to understand and evaluate the forces at work.

This book by Comrade Francis Heisler is an attempt to aid in that effort. It is a critical review of the evidence. It faces the full implications of the trials. It was not written hurriedly. Much work was done on it as a result of the first trial. Conclusions and evaluations were reached similar to those reached by other writers but as a result of independent effort and approach. All the material has been carefully checked and every conclusion carefully examined. With this painstaking care and work he was ready to present the whole matter so as to include the second trial.

While I am happy to write this introduction, the work of Comrade Heisler needs no introduction. It speaks for itself. It is a careful presentation such as would go before any court. Every aspect is considered. There is the careful and thorough preparation marked by accuracy and moderation, characteristic of the work of a trained legal mind. It is couched in language that the lay mind fully understands. It is written from the point of view of one who not only recognizes the struggle of the worker but of one who himself participates. Not only is the whole matter of the trial clearly presented, the testimony evaluated, the history of the defendants outlined, but all the implications of the entire trial is fully faced.

It is no accident that this presentation of the Moscow Trials is so ably done by Comrade Heisler. Years of service in the cause of the workers is back of this. For a number of years he was an outstanding lawyer in the active service of the International Labor Defense. Then he rendered notable service in the Non-Partisan Labor Defense League. At present he is actively engaged in the work of the Workers Defense League.

In the courtroom he has won many notable victories for workers. In the Chicago courts and throughout the Middle West he has most capably served the cause of the workers. In court battles accompanying strikes as that of the truck drivers in Fargo, N. D., of the Union struggles in Minneapolis, or in the more routine task of aiding workers in their defense against perjured testimony and the "frame-up," so common in the experience of workers he has gained much of the experience which enables him to evaluate so effectively these trials of world wide importance.

But it is not merely in the court room where he has served. In organizing the workers, in sharing in the struggle of their organization, in building defense organizations he has been so much a part of the whole struggle of the workers that he is qualified to sense and make clear to others the implications of these trials for the workers of the world.

International Socialism and Socialists are gravely concerned. We want a workers world. We want to champion the Soviet Union not apologize for her. We cherish the approach made toward the achievement of Socialism, and we seek that that record shall not be marred. We want to look forward with anticipation and not with dread.

All men who love liberty and seek justice, all men who desire the continuance of whatever measure of democracy there is in the world as a means for the realization of a more perfect democracy keenly feel the challenge which these trials present.

These trials are a matter of history. But the forces which produced them are still at work. In every part of the world the forces of reaction strengthen themselves. New onslaughts are being made on what little has been gained by the workers in their age old struggle. The issues are being sharpened. The threat of international war grows ever more acute. Against the forces of capitalism and blind reaction the workers must prevail. But the forces expressed in these trials and the threat of new trials, the bitter criticism and hostility manifested against the protest of workers of unquestioned integrity and loyalty to the cause of the workers constitute a most serious threat. That threat cannot be ignored. It must be faced.

Because our lives and our loyalties are pledged to the cause of International Socialism we demand that this cause must be served above all others.

ROY E. BURT.

INTRODUCTION

AT THE TIME when the international working class followed with bated breath the happenings in Spain, the Moscow report of the trial of the Old Bolsheviks came as lightning out of a blue sky.⁽¹⁾ The report caused more than a momentary focusing of the attention of the workers of the world upon "The Fatherland of the Workers." No other news coming from the Soviet Union in the last few years has caused so much discussion, division of opinion, taking of definite sides pro and con among workers and intellectuals, as the one pertaining to the trial of Zinoviev, Kamenev and the other fourteen accused ones. Individuals, groups, as well as papers, although avowed friends of the Soviet Union, were horror-stricken and ruthlessly outspoken in their condemnation of the ruling strata of the Soviet Union, which was recognized as responsible for the trial of the Old Bolsheviks. Sympathizers and members of the communist parties throughout the world, as well as the official and unofficial papers of the Third International, on the other hand, were unanimous in their belief, or at least in the protestation of their belief, in the guilt of the accused Old Bolsheviks, and in their condemnation even before the trial.

The Manchester Guardian Weekly, one of the first of the papers which came out against the intervention of the powers in the Soviet Union, was unequivocal in taking a position against the trial, and condemned the government of the Soviet Union as nothing short of criminal for the uncalled for and untimely staging of the new trial. On Friday, August 21, 1936, before the Moscow trial proceeded very far, the *Manchester Guardian Weekly* wrote editorially:

"The Soviet government has surprised and disgusted even its most ardent friends by its sudden decision to hold a new state trial with all the appearance of a propagandist-terrorist 'staged' production. For a subject it has gone back to Kirov, . . . for victims they have dragged out the wretched Zinoviev and Kamenev. . . . If, as it is generally supposed, the trial is being held for the purposes of propaganda, the moment has been peculiarly badly chosen."

The *Nation*, of New York which is justly or otherwise considered

(1) Refers to the trial of Aug., 1936. After going to press, in Jan. 1937, it is reported officially from Moscow that a new trial will begin on the 23rd day of Jan. Among the 17 accused are Radek, Piatakov, Sokolnikov—and others.

by many to be a supporter of Stalin, after the sixteen Old Bolsheviks were sentenced to death felt that:

"Death for sixteen by the firing squad does not smell any the sweeter for being called, as the Soviet Judge Ulrich called it, 'the highest form of social defense—shooting.' It would be easy to construct a complete defense of the Soviet executions; easy, also, by putting the pieces together rather differently, to construct as complete an indictment of the regime." (2)

The *Nation* in the editorial above quoted seeks and claims to find an explanation for the trial and the executions in the fact that;

"Russia feels it must gird itself for the most crucial struggle in its life. . . . a struggle whose terrible and unyielding quality is presaged by the Spanish events.(3) For such a struggle it must be unified with every opposition stamped out and every national energy whipped up."

The daily reports from Moscow concerning the Bolshevik Trial as given in the bourgeois newspapers, most of them openly hostile to the Soviet Union, can be considered as nothing but observations of news values and their commentaries, expressing no basic concern for the factors involved in the trial, and therefore not representative of an opinion pro or con as are those of the liberal, socialist or communist press. The socialists and the affiliated organizations and organs of the Second International express a concern very seldom seen before; the concern going beyond comments into the sphere of recommendations and protests submitted to the Moscow government. Norman Thomas, member of the National Executive Committee of the Socialist Party of the United States, three times presidential candidate, "reads of the extraordinary trial of Zinoviev, Kamenev and their associates with a heavy heart." He finds that the trial "was an amazing, fantastic, incredible affair." (4) Thomas goes even beyond comments when he demands a fair trial for the accused, and, expressing his opinion of the charges brought against the sixteen accused, says:

"Everything we know of the character and beliefs of these men makes the story highly improbable. The Stalin government must be made to understand that intelligent public opinion will not accept its charges as proof. Neither will it accept the results of the ordinary political trial, as conducted in Russia. A government which, following the assassination of Kirov, summarily put to death more than a hundred persons without trial, has to win its way back to the confidence of men who believe that civil liberty is more than a plaything of one group or faction in a grim struggle. Those of us who rejoiced at Russia's apparent progress towards civil liberty in her new Constitution,

(2) Aug. 29, 1936.

(3) The military-fascist uprising of Gen. Franco, July 18, 1936.

(4) *Socialist Call*, Aug. 29, 1936

will be exceedingly anxious that the whole cause of liberty and humanity, the whole hope of a working class solidarity, shall not be set back by fanatical prosecution of the Trotskyites. Trotsky is right in asking a special commission to take his own testimony." (5)

The leaders of the Second International,—just recently having been invited by the Communist International to form a United Front in defense of the workers of the world—telegraphed their protest in the name of the Labor and Socialist (Second) International to the Central Executive Committee of the Soviet government, declaring that the trial and the execution of the Old Bolsheviks must be considered everything but conducive to the unification of the workers of the world. The telegram, signed by DeBrouckere, Fritz Adler, Citrine and Schevenels apparently expressed the sentiments of the national units of the Second International because it was preceded and followed by condemning articles in the *Daily Herald* (England), *Arbeiter Bladet* (Norway), *Le Populaire* (France), *Pravo Lidu* (Czechoslovakia), and other papers read by workers usually referred to as class-conscious.

If the liberal friends of the Soviet Union are mournful because of the Moscow Trial, if the Second International openly condemns and directly protests to Moscow against the executions, the revolutionary section of the international proletariat goes even farther and accuses the Moscow government of something which would be called scabbing in a strike. The Spanish revolutionary workers, who at the time of the trial did more than writing articles or sending protest telegrams in the interest of the working class victory, took the liberty to accuse Stalin, as the representative of the Communist Party of Russia, of openly supporting the fascists of Europe by conducting the trial and thus splitting the unity of the working class. After Caballero organized the new Spanish cabinet; after the enthusiasms of the workers of Spain to fight for a Workers' Republic was expressed by the volunteering ten-thousands of workers and farmers; after revolutionary committees had been set up all over Spain as the necessary and logical step towards the establishment of a proletarian dictatorship, regiment after regiment of workers' militia was made ready to depart to the front, but

"Before departing, the regiments passed the resolution which was telegraphed to Moscow, protesting against the execution of Zinoviev and indignantly rejecting the calumny that Trotsky, creator of the Red Army, was an agent of the German Gestapo, and also demanding the immediate liberation of millions of anarchists, mensheviks and Tolstoyans from Bolshevik concen-

(5) Ibid, Aug. 22, 1936.

tration camps and prisons. In mass meetings going on in all parts of the city, Stalin was flatly accused of having passed into the fascist camp and of trying to sabotage the Spanish revolution as 'he wrecked past chances of victory of Chinese, German and Austrian proletariats.' (6)

While the effect of the trial as expressed by the opinion of the liberals, socialists and revolutionary communists, extends from shock to open protest and condemnation of Stalin, the adherents and sympathizers of the Third International show no diversity of opinion at all. Their unanimity in having found the accused guilty before the trial is almost suspicious. Their language used against the accused is provoking, their slander and calumny against those who dared to express an opinion different from that of the public prosecutor of the Soviet Union recalls the language of the so-called "third period" of the Communist International, when the Second International and the Socialists in general were called "social-fascists"; they, as Stalin expressed it, being "twin brothers of fascism."

The communist press of the world printed the first news of the trial proper, on August 15, 1936, at which time the news did not as yet take on first page importance. It appears that the preliminary examination was concluded on August 14, 1936, and "the indictment of the State Prosecutor of the U.S.S.R. is confirmed and has been forwarded, together with the documents of the case, to the Military Tribunal of the High Court of the U.S.S.R. to be dealt with on the basis of the resolution of the Central Executive Committee of the U.S.S.R. of August 11." (7)

While the indictment was not as yet published, the communist press of the world was informed on August 14, 1936 by the Peoples' Commissariat of Home Affairs concerning "the discovery of a number of Trotskyist-Zinovievist terrorist groups preparing terrorist acts against the leaders of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the Soviet State, under the direct instructions of Trotsky and under the direct leadership of the so-called United Center Trotskyite-Zinovievite block." (8)

On August 17th the communist press informed its readers, that "Trotskyist Ties With Nazis Revealed As Trials Near" and that "U.S.S.R. Masses Ask No Mercy For Plotters" and that because "Preliminary Statements And *Editorials in the Soviet press Leave No Doubt That The Trial Will Produce Crushing Evidence Of The Guilt Of The Leaders Of This Terrorist Conspiracy.*" The *Daily*

(6) *Toronto Star*, Sept. 5, 1936—Report of Pierre Van Paassen from Madrid.

(7) *Daily Worker*, New York, Aug. 15, 1936.

(8) *Ibid.*

Worker on that day was informed by cable from Moscow that "under the direction of the United Center of the group, *several* terrorist acts were carried out, among them the murder of Sergei Kirov on December 1, 1934, under direct instructions given by Trotsky and Zinoviev. (Emphasis always ours unless otherwise noted.)

August 18th and 19th, apparently taken up by the preludes of the trial, were passed up by the communist press without any mention of the proceedings against the alleged conspirators of Moscow. On the 20th, however, headlines reported that "Fourteen Accused Trotskyites Admit Guilt In Soviet Trial"; and on the 21st "Trotsky Gave Orders To Kill Stalin, Kirov, Say Plotters," and on the same day the communist press of the world spread another headline across six columns that "Soviet Indictments Against Trotskyist Plotters Disclose Conspiracy With Nazi Secret Police-head To Assassinate Stalin, Red Army Chief." On this day the official publications of the Communist International were grinding out not only their reports but also editorial comments, as did the *Daily Worker* (New York) which stated that "*Hitler's chief assassin, Himmler, directed the fiendish Trotskyite assassination plot against the leaders of the Soviet Union.*" The same editorial became prophetic concerning *Trotsky*, saying that "the trial, as it goes on, will demonstrate that he *joined hands with Hitler's bloody agent . . . , to carry through that terrorism which he has openly championed and encouraged.*"

Reading the communist press or at least glancing at the headlines, one almost forgets that there were sixteen alleged conspirators on trial and that Trotsky was not among them. The communist press continued reporting from Moscow; "Trotsky Demanded Killing Of Stalin In Plot For Power," and that "Trotskyism, Spurned By Masses, Uses Nazi Aid Against USSR."

There was a momentary let-up in the accusations directed by the international communist press against Trotsky and against Trotskyites only after the Labor and Socialist (Second) International sent its protest telegram on the 23rd of August, 1936. Then the international press of the Third International went after the Trotskyites only part-time, being at other times busy in assailing the Second International because of its concern for the "Trotsky plotters."

On August 23rd, the *Pravda*, the official organ of the Communist Party U.S.S.R., had the information that;

"the Council of Peoples' Commissars of the U.S.S.R. does not consider it necessary to answer this telegram regarding the

case of the Trotskyite-Zinovievite terrorist center now being tried before the Military Collegium of the Supreme Court of the U.S.S.R. The telegram from DeBroukere, Adler, Citrine and Schevenels is a crude attempt to encroach upon the rights and duties of the Soviet court. It is a political demonstration against the Soviet Union and deserving of branding before the face of the working class of the whole world.

The trial in progress at that time and the so-called confessions of the accused were apparently not sufficient to establish the guilt of Trotsky and the Trotskyites (who, we may recall, were not on trial in Moscow); therefore, luminaries of the Russian Communist Party were brought to the fore. On August 23rd, Karl Radek and G. Piatakov (not yet among the accused on that day) published their articles against Trotsky and the Trotskyites in the *Pravda*, full of vituperations, speaking of Trotsky as "arch bandits" and the "organizer of assassinations of the best people of the World Proletariat," calling him the "fascist bandit chief" who "was thrown out of the country by Soviet power" as deserved by the "bloody bandit" and the "agent of the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie whose agent Trotsky has long been" and "who united his criminal work with that of the fascists Together they directed the terrorist group." These gems of political pamphleteering (some persons would call it political character assassination) appeared on the same day when the communist press, fearful that the readers might forget Trotsky and the Trotskyites while reading about the trial of Zinoviev and his alleged conspirators, reported that the "Soviet Court Weighs Death For Trotsky Conspirators."

When on August 24th, Moscow reported upon the verdict, according to which the sixteen plotters were to be shot, the headlines of the communist press again preferred Trotsky by informing the world that "Court Sentences Trotsky-Zinoviev Conspirators Under Criminal Code." The Russian press urged "Greater Vigilance Against Trotsky's Agents Who Plot Murder Of Leaders." After the publication of the verdict, one reading the press of the Soviet Union found a not unexpected unanimity expressed by resolutions of workers organizations and farm cooperatives. The unanimity with which, according to the official communist press, the workers of the world hailed the execution of the so-called plotters, was surpassed only by the unanimity of slander and vituperation heaped upon the head of all those who failed to join in the jubilation for the sentence and executions. From George Dimitroff, General Secretary of the Communist International, up and down, every bureaucrat, every functionary of the official Communist parties and

of the peripheral communist organizations was busily engaged in name calling and calling down of those socialists, and those liberals who expressed some misgivings or even doubt as to the justification or even advisability of the trial, the sentence and of the execution. The slogan was given by Dimitroff who, writing in *Pravda*, succinctly declares on August 26th that "to defend the despicable terrorists means to help fascism."

As if to crown the trial of Moscow with an open declaration that it was really directed against Trotsky and the Trotskyites, the Soviet government on August 30th officially and formally requested the Norwegian government that Leon Trotsky be expelled⁽⁹⁾ from Norway, which demand was immediately refused by the Norwegian government and was condemned by workers' organizations throughout the world as a most dastardly attempt upon the right of political asylum, the sharper to be condemned because the attack came from the "Fatherland of the Workers."

Even though the sixteen Old Bolsheviks, the alleged conspirators against the safety of the Soviet Union and against the life of the Soviet leaders, were reported as having been shot, the communist press did not feel safe as yet. The sluice gates of the Communist International press bureau were opened, reams of paper and gallons of ink were used in putting out articles—all to convince the world, or that part of it which is interested in working-class unity, that the Moscow trial was necessary and the executions justified in the interest of the workers. The People's Commissariat of Justice of the U.S.S.R. even felt it necessary to publish a "Report of Court Proceedings; The Case of the Trotskyites-Zinovievite Terrorist Centre." The report was made available to those who do not read Russian, in an official translation.

To many it is apparent that the trial was not called to deal with sixteen allegedly confessed conspirators alone, if at all. The trial and the executions, as well as the subsequent international propaganda have obviously important antecedents, as well as expected and unexpected reverberations. To understand the what-for and the where-for of the trial, the reasons for the stage setting, it is necessary to analyze the *dramatis personae*, their acts, their present, past and expected role in the proletarian history. However, to make such an analysis worth while, one must observe an

(9) The request is made for the **expulsion** and not for the **extradition** of Trotsky. The reason for it is that expulsion is accomplished by administrative order while extradition is decreed only after a judicial hearing where a **prima facie** case must be made out on the basis of the charges of the Soviet government. Such procedure, giving Trotsky the opportunity to defend himself before an impartial Norwegian Court, was, for obvious reasons, not desired by the Soviet government.

objectivity, if objectivity is at all possible, in facing the problem. An attempt shall be made to check carefully whatever records are available, more particularly, to use nothing but official sources at all times, always giving reference to the source used. Because of the importance of the problem and for the purpose of bringing at least a semblance of order out of the maze of contradictory reports, opinions, accusations and counter-accusations, a systematic discussion of the national and international relations of the Soviet Union appears necessary. After establishing certain facts, as we believe we shall be able to do in the following chapters, only a summation will be necessary to advance the conclusions, which following proven premises must remain unassailable. To clarify all problems which are raised in connection with the trial, and which urgently confront and closely touch the working class is a need openly expressed; therefore, an early analysis such as this, even though it is based on incomplete records, is considered justified.

November, 1936.

I. THE INDICTMENT

UPON READING the "Report of Court Proceedings" published by the Peoples Commissariat of Justice of the USSR entitled "The Case of the Trotskyite-Zinovievite Terrorist Centre," one is reminded of an oft related story about the "ability" of Czarist Russia to execute death sentences. A revolutionary was to be hanged. The noose was placed around his neck, and the functionary started the necessary machinations to hang the convict. The rope used was not strong enough, and the revolutionary, after having been lifted from the ground, fell when the rope broke. While on the ground, he looked up and, in a tone which carried utter conviction, exclaimed, "My poor Russia, you don't even know how to hang people."

After going over the record of the trial and after reading the indictment signed by A. Y. Vyshinsky, State's Attorney of the USSR, one cannot help remarking that the prosecuting office of Stalin's Russia does not even know how to frame an indictment ("frame" is used in a sense which will become self-evident later).

If one recalls the prosecutions against certain members of the working class, such as the Tom Mooney trial, the trial of the Haymarket Martyrs, the Sacco-Vanzetti, the Haywood-Moyer-Pettibone trials, the trial of the Communists of Cologne, or even the reports of bourgeois trials subsequently found to be frame-ups, such as the Dreyfus trial,—masterpieces of intricate covering up of the facts and a network of credible, probable or at least possible but untrue statements and testimony,—one wonders how such a piece of diletantism, as the indictment and the record of this trial, could be permitted by the Soviet government to come before the eyes of an unprejudiced public. The indictment, as we shall show, would not stand up before the scrutiny of a first year law student, not to speak of the debacle it would meet in conflict with a seasoned criminal lawyer. Had not the evidence caused such tragic consequences, it would have been ridiculous. It is enough,—if during the so-called "third period" of the Communist International, one—as a radical worker—has had experience in New York, Chicago, Cincinnati, Los Angeles, etc., with the Red or Industrial Squads of the police,—to know that much better framed evidence has been

presented thousands of times to bring about the conviction of workers on the simple charge of "Disorderly Conduct." That no better piece of evidence was presented by the Soviet government in the trial of the sixteen Old Bolsheviks may be because it was not considered necessary to present any evidence at all to bring about the desired end, or possibly because A. Y. Vyshinsky was and is a beginner in presenting trials such as the one just concluded. If the latter is the case, then we may expect when Rykov, Bucharin, Radek and Sokolnikov, the second group of accused "counter-revolutionaries," will be brought to trial, that the indictment and the evidence will be much better; and possibly when Kaganovich, Dimitroff, Voroshilov, Molotov (the present ruling group around Stalin) and others will follow to be tried for "fascist-counter-revolutionary activities," the work of the State's Attorney of the USSR will be exemplary, since even a State's Attorney may learn.

* * * *

On the 19th day of August, 1936, the Military Collegium of the Supreme Court of the USSR was presented by the prosecution,—represented by the State's Attorney of the USSR himself, A. Y. Vyshinsky,—with the indictment against the sixteen accused. The indictment was drawn on August 14, 1936 ⁽¹⁾, in accordance with the decision of the Central Executive Committee of the USSR handed down on August 11, 1936, and brought charges under so-called Article 58 of the Criminal Code of the R.S.F.S.R. against:

G. E. Zinoviev;	E. S. Holtzman;
L. B. Kamenev;	I. I. Reingold;
S. V. Mrachkovsky;	R. V. Pickel;
I. N. Smirnov;	V. P. Olberg;
I. P. Bakayev;	K. B. Berman-Yurin;
V. A. Ter-Vaganyan;	Fritz David;
G. E. Evdokimov;	M. Lurye; and
E. A. Dreitzer;	N. Lurye.

The indictment falls into three parts:

I. The Trotskyite-Zinovievite United Terrorist Centre.

II. The United Trotskyite-Zinovievite Centre and the Assassination of Comrade S. M. Kirov.

III. Organization by the United Trotskyite-Zinovievite Centre of terroristic acts against Comrade Voroshilov, Zhdanov, Kaganovich, Kossior, Orjonikidze and Postyshev."

The three sub-headings are followed by:

(1) Report of Court Proceedings—The Case of the Trotskyite-Zinovievite Terrorist Center—Published by the Peoples Commissariat of Justice of the USSR. Moscow, 1936, pp. 9-39.

“Definition of the Charge.”

There is an introduction in which the State's Attorney expresses certain opinion after reviewing the (Leningrad) trial of January 15, 16, 1935, of the “underground-counter-revolutionary group of *Zinovievists* calling itself the ‘Moscow Centre’, the principal leaders of which among the other convicted were G. E. Zinoviev, L. B. Kamenev, G. E. Evdokimov and I. P. Bakayev,” (This trial is identified by the name of the defendant Kirov.)

The prosecutor states that “the preliminary and the Court investigation of that case (the Kirov trial) established that for a number of years this ‘Moscow Centre’ guided the counter-revolutionary activities of diverse underground groups of Zinovievites, including the counter-revolutionary activities of the Leningrad group of Nikolayev-Kotolynov which on December 1, 1934, foully murdered comrade S. M. Kirov,”^(1a) In the opinion of the State's Attorney, that trial “established” that the Moscow Center was “The ideological-political leader of the Leningrad group of *Zinovievists*, knew that this group was inclined to terrorism and did all it could to fan this inclination.”⁽²⁾ There was an apparent slip-up during the first trial, but that slip-up has been corrected because the State's Attorney claims that “it now transpires that eighteen months ago, during the investigation of the case of the assassination of Comrade S. M. Kirov, the investigating and judicial authorities were not in possession of all the facts revealing the true role of the Zinovievite leaders of the so-called ‘Moscow Centre’ on the one hand and *the leaders of the Trotskyite underground organization on the other, in the white-guard, terroristic underground activities.*”⁽³⁾ (Note how the Trotskyites are brought into the case, where formerly only Zinovievites are mentioned.)

Here, and throughout the transcript, one is surprised to note the carelessness with which dates are handled. While on page 10 of the transcript the State's Attorney bases the indictment “on the strength of newly revealed circumstances ascertained by the investigating authorities in 1936,” subsequent testimony shows that many of the accused were arrested already in 1933 and 1934 to respond for the present charges. Of course, it is possible that the prosecutor's office anticipated the “newly revealed circumstances” of 1936 when the arrests were made as early as 1933 or 1934.

Slowly the charge takes form when the indictment speaks of Zinoviev, Kamenev, Evdokimov, Bakayev, as the “initiators and organizers of attempts which were being prepared on the lives of

(1)a. *Ibid.*, p. 10

(2) *Ibid.*, p. 10

(3) *Ibid.*, p. 10

other leaders of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.”⁽⁴⁾ We note that the charge is “*to prepare attempts on the lives of certain individuals.*”⁽⁵⁾ Up to now we heard of accomplished facts—we have heard of attempts to commit a certain act in criminal proceedings, but it remained for the prosecutor of the USSR to charge someone with *preparations for attempts to commit a certain act.* (If the answer is made that this absurd charge may be just the fault of a clumsy translation, then reference is made to the report as published in the *Isvestia.*”)⁽⁶⁾

Beginning with page 11 of the report, one is struck by the repeated use of the word “*bloc*” italicized and thus made conspicuous in the report. The word “*bloc*” appears repeatedly when the indictment states that “investigation has also established that the Zinovievites pursued their criminal terroristic practices in a direct *bloc* (italicized in the official report) with the Trotskyites and with L. Trotsky who is abroad.” “*Bloc*” is used in connection with the adjectives: “Trotskyite-Zinovievite,” the “Trotskyite-Zinovievite counter-revolutionary,” etc. At all times italicized, “*bloc*” appears once or more on almost every other page of the report containing 180 pages.

* * * *

Vyshinsky becomes emphatic when on page 11 of the “Report” he states that the “*newly revealed circumstances established without a doubt* that:

“1) *At the end* of 1932, the Trotskyite and Zinovievite groups joined and formed a United Centre consisting of Zinoviev, Kamenev, Evdokimov, Bakayev (from the Zinovievites) and I. N. Smirnov, Ter-Vaganyan, Mrachkovsky (from the Trotskyites) all charged in the present case.

“2) *The principal condition for the union* of these counter-revolutionary groups was *their common recognition of individual terrorism* against the leadership of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the Soviet Government.

“3) Precisely from that time onward (*end of 1932*), the Trotskyites and Zinovievites, *acting on direct instructions* from L. Trotsky received by the United Centre through special agents, concentrated their hostile activities against the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the Soviet Government mainly on the organization of terrorism against the most prominent leaders of the Party and the Government.

(4) *Ibid.*, p. 11

(5) *Ibid.*, p. 11

(6) *Ibid.*, p. 8

"4) With this end in view, the United Centre organized special terrorist groups which prepared *a number of practical measures* for the assassination of Comrades Stalin, Voroshilov, Kaganovich, Kirov, Orjonikidze, Zhdanov, Kossior, Postyshev and others."

Quite an accusation, is it not? We expect that the accused present and the accused L. Trotsky, who is absent, will be confronted with proof that they "concentrated their hostile activities against the Communist Party of the Soviet Union," that they "*prepared a number of practical measures for the assassination of Stalin and others.*"

The indictment goes further and recalls the assassination of S. M. Kirov when it refers to the accused and states:

"5) One of these terrorist groups consisting of Nicholayev, Rummyantsev, Mandelstamm, Levin Kotolynov and others, who were convicted by the Military Collegium of the Supreme Court of the USSR on December 28-29, 1934, carried out the foul murder of Comrade S. M. Kirov on December 1, 1934 on *direct instructions from Zinoviev and L. Trotsky* and under the direct guidance of the United Centre."

A) The Results of the Preliminary Examination

Beginning on page 12, the indictment presents what appears to be excerpts from the record of the hearing preceding the drawing up of the indictment. There must have been a slip-up in the numbering of the books of transcript since "confessions" made at an early date appear in transcripts carrying high numbers and vice versa; e.g.:

Confession of N. A. Karev	July 5,	Transcript III,	11
" " Reingold	July 3,	"	XXVII, 52
" " Mrachkovsky	July 20,	"	XVIII, 40, 41
" " M. Lurye	July 21,	"	XXXII, 243, 244
" " N. Lurye	July 21,	"	XXXIII, 141, 142
" " Kamenev	July 23,	"	XV, 10, 12, 13
" " R. V. Pickel	July 23,	"	XXV, 65
" " P. Olberg	July 31,	"	XXI, 263, 264
" " I. N. Smirnov	Aug. 5,	"	XXIX, 93, 104
" " Evdokimov	Aug. 10,	"	XXVI, 10

(The reason for such confusion in the chronology of the record is not yet apparent, unless Vyshinsky never expected anyone to read his "*chef-d'oeuvre.*")

While the accused Bakayev's confession in Volume I on page 89⁽⁷⁾ is undated; because Volume III is dated as of July 5, 1936 and XXXIII as of July 21, it would appear that the whole transcript,

(7) Ibid, p. 33

extending from Volume I to XXXVI must have begun not earlier than July 5th, 1936 or thereabouts. Because some of the volume pages are as high as 244, one may assume that approximately 70,000 pages of confession were taken in these proceedings. The inconsistencies in the numbering of the volumes and of the dates of the testimony are of apparent little consequence when one sees inconsistencies so much more confusing, to be shown subsequently.

Everyone of the accused, according to the indictment, confessed that "the *main object* which the Trotskyite-Zinovievite centre pursued was 'assassination'" and that "*the main thing on which all members of the bloc agreed*" and "on which the bloc received *instructions from L. Trotsky*" was "*to adopt the path of terrorism and to prepare attempts on the life of Stalin.*"

In the opinion of the State's Attorney, there is "no doubt left that the Trotskyite-Zinovievite bloc had turned into a group of unprincipled political adventurers and assassins striving at only one thing; namely, to make their way to power even through terrorism." (8)

Accused sometimes deny their complicity, but such did not happen in this case. Reingold—according to the indictment—came out blandly and stated that he and Zinoviev decided in advance, to preclude being compromised in any way, to follow the precept: "When under examination, the main thing is persistently to deny any connection with the organization."⁽⁹⁾ (As it appears from the confessions, they changed their minds and refused to follow such rule of conduct.)

At least sometime in the past, the accused were Bolshevik-Marxists who were in principle and at all times against individual terror. This fact might have been raised as a defense, but the State's Attorney cut off this path of retreat because Reingold, (XXVII, 110, 112) confessed that he and Zinoviev advised in advance that "if accused of terroristic activities, you must methodically deny it and argue that terrorism is incompatible with the views of Bolshevik-Marxists."⁽¹⁰⁾ (Here again, though prepared for defense, the accused changed their minds and followed the opposite of the pre-arranged path.)

Trotsky himself—in the words of the indictment—must have thought of the contingency of being caught; therefore, the "same instructions were given by L. Trotsky, who recommended that when terroristic acts were committed, they should be disavowed." A "position should be taken up analogous to that taken up by the

(8) *Ibid*, p. 18

(9) *Ibid*, p. 19

(10) *Ibid*, p. 19

Central Committee of the Socialist Revolutionaries toward Madam Kaplan, who shot at V. I. Lenin." The indictment apparently assumes that conspirators *do not usually* act in secrecy because it points out "another reason why the United Centre resorted to profound secrecy and carefully masked its terroristic activities was that one of its aims was to betray the vigilance of the working-class and the masses of the toilers."⁽¹¹⁾

Here again the indictment makes a statement which one would expect to be followed by proof. It speaks of the conspirators as "*preparing the assassination of Comrade Stalin.*" We will have to await the trial to see what those preparations were, and whether or not Stalin was actually assassinated, as one would surmise from the foregoing phrase.

Those who are acquainted with the recent history of the Soviet Union know that those of the accused who had played any role in the past (Zinoviev, Kamenev, etc.) and who at one time or another had opposed Stalin, because of their public recantation had been reinstated into the party machinery. Usually such a repentance and denial of one's past does not speak for one's political integrity. This fact is made use of in the indictment which states that "the United Centre simultaneously strove by all means in its power to give assurances of its loyalty and even devotion to the Party and to the Soviet Power, of its repentance of past mistakes and of its readiness to serve the Proletarian Revolution honestly. The leaders of the United Centre figured that having been 'forgiven,' they could, after killing Comrade Stalin, utilize this 'forgiveness' to come into power."⁽¹²⁾

Of course, criminals more often than not have a motive for committing an act. So confessed Kamenev who was "determined to come to power by any means and who banked on the economic crisis and banked on the collapse of the economic policy of the party leadership." But he was fooled by banking on such contingencies because they "obviously failed by the second half of 1932," at which time ⁽¹³⁾ the country was overcoming the difficulties under the leadership of Stalin; and "Kamenev," as he stated, "could not help seeing this."

The State's Attorney informed us that *the accused* confessed, knowing that they had "*lost any and all support of the masses,*" and they realized that "the only means by which" they "*could hope to come to power was to organize terroristic acts against the leaders of the USSR, and primarily against Stalin.*"⁽¹⁴⁾ Now it requires

(11) *Ibid.*, p. 19

(12) *Ibid.*, pp. 19, 20

(13) *Ibid.*, p. 14

(14) *Ibid.*, p. 14

more than the understanding of a prosecuting attorney to follow the logic of conspirators who lost their popular support because of the recognized excellence of the present leadership, and who then expected that they could be restored to leadership as soon as they conspired to and successfully assassinated the "successful and beloved leader," Stalin. Of course, one might expect that these conspirators, after they arrived at their conclusion, that is, that the leadership of Stalin was overcoming all difficulties, would simultaneously arrive at the conclusion that they themselves were political bankrupts and they should have abandoned their fight against Stalin. They did not do so because—as Kamenev said: "as a matter of fact, the *bloc was a counter-revolutionary terrorist gang of assassins who strove to seize power in the country by any means whatever.*"⁽¹⁵⁾ This "terrorist gang of assassins" included Old Bolsheviks such as Kamenev, Zinoviev, Reingold, Mrachkovsky, Ter-Vaganyan, Smirnov, who spent a lifetime in the revolutionary labor movement and a great deal of that lifetime in fighting the counter-revolution in Russia.

There is no doubt, after reading the remainder of the indictment, that the conspirators recognized the fact that "the emergence from the difficulties, the victory of the policy of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union caused" in them "a new wave of animosity and hatred towards the leadership of the party and primarily toward Stalin." (Transcript XI, 10, 12, 13),⁽¹⁶⁾ As a matter of fact, Kamenev was very emphatic because he repeated the exact words again fifteen pages later on page 27 of the same volume of the transcript. Though testimony covering fifteen pages intervened, Kamenev did not fail to repeat everything word by word and comma by comma. (One marvels at the memory of these Old Bolsheviks who can learn their lesson so well!)

Kamenev may be a member of a "counter-revolutionary gang of assassins," but possibly because of his Marxist-Bolshevik past, he does not fail to give credit for "the victory of the policy of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union" under the leadership of Stalin. This acknowledgement is made in spite of the fact that the indictment states that the *accused "sank definitively into the swamp of white-guardism, joined forces and merged with the most inveterate enemies of the Soviet Power, and became the organizing force of the last remnants of the exploiting classes."*⁽¹⁷⁾ But Bolshevik blood will tell, will it not, A. Y. Vyshinsky?

Sometimes the submerged better self of the accused breaks

(15) Ibid, p. 16

(16) Ibid, p. 14

(17) Ibid, p. 12

through as when Reingold, during the examination, states, with reference to Stalin and his co-workers, that "the leadership that had grown up was made of too hard a granite."⁽¹⁸⁾ (It appears that these Russian Bolsheviks, even when they are conspirators, cannot be anything but fair to the leadership represented by Stalin. They do recognize that the leadership is of too hard a granite, though one would expect that when this "counter-revolutionary gang of assassins" came together they would speak of Stalin—whom they expected to assassinate—in terms less respectful than the above quoted. (But, of course, we do not understand Russian, nor the new Bolshevik-Marxists,—surely not when they are tried before and by Stalinite "Bolsheviks" and that may account for the fact that we cannot clearly understand the charges, the trial, the testimony and the execution.)

Though the accused are complimentary to Stalin and to the present leadership of the Soviet Union, during the examination they are anything but complimentary when they speak of Trotsky, even though he is alleged to be their leader to whom they promised allegiance, who with his organization, the accused said, "particularly fostered hatred and animosity against the leaders of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union."⁽¹⁹⁾

To make good for the slip-up during the trial of 1935 when Trotsky and Trotskyites were not brought in otherwise than by innuendo, Mrachkovsky now testifies during the preliminary hearing; "We Trotskyites adopted the policy of terrorism long before the bloc with Zinoviev and Kamenev was formed."⁽²⁰⁾

B) Dates and Documents in the Indictment

As we observed before, dates are rather carelessly thrown about. While Mrachkovsky speaks about the fact that in **1931**, when Smirnov was in Berlin and established contact with Trotsky, the latter gave instructions "to proceed to the organization of action groups of Trotskyites" (XVIII, 40, 41); in XVIII, 44, 56, the same Mrachkovsky testifies that it was in the middle of 1932 when he and "Smirnov put before" their "leading trio the question of the necessity of uniting our organization with Zinoviev and Kamenev," and it was in the middle of 1932 "when it was then decided to consult L. Trotsky"; and it was then, in the middle of 1932, when L. Trotsky replied and spoke of the "necessity of removing by violence the leaders of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and Stalin in the first place." (These conspirators surely had time and leisure to go forward with their conspiracy.)

⁽¹⁸⁾ *Ibid*, p. 16

⁽¹⁹⁾ *Ibid*, p. 17

⁽²⁰⁾ *Ibid*, p. 21

In case anyone should think that the alleged conspiracy was not all that it was cracked up to be by the prosecutor, there were written documents but these documents could not be produced because the person receiving them "eventually destroyed" them "for reasons of secrecy,"⁽²¹⁾ (Such a pity!!) While it was in 1931 or at the latest in the middle of 1932, in accordance with Mrachkovsky, when L. Trotsky gave his instructions as to terrorism,⁽²²⁾ it was not until two or three years later that "in 1934 the accused Dreitzer personally received written instructions from Trotsky through L. Trotsky's son, Sedov, to prepare and carry out a terroristic act against Comrade Stalin."⁽²³⁾ Apparently Trotsky felt that his old instructions as to the assassination of Stalin in 1931 or 1932 were no good and brought no results; therefore, he repeated his instructions two or three years later in writing. "This letter was written personally by Trotsky," according to Dreitzer's testimony, and the contents of this letter were as follows:

"Dear friend,

Convey that today we have the following main tasks before us:

1. To remove Stalin and Voroshilov.
2. To unfold work for organizing nuclei in the army.
3. In the event of war, to take advantage of every setback and confusion to capture the leadership."

Whether or not Dreitzer was a good Bolshevik-Marxist is not known to us, but his association with Bolshevik-Marxists, even though they were "a counter-revolutionary gang of assassins," must have endowed him with a good memory, because he remembers a letter which he received two years back and which began with the salutation "Dear friend." He even remembers the terse, succinct style of Trotsky, recalling the style of an army man. In four lines he gives his orders without wasting too many words, and the task which Trotsky puts before Dreitzer includes nothing less than the removal of Stalin and Voroshilov, the unfolding of organizing work in the army and the capture of the leadership. As Dreitzer recalls, these tasks were for "today." (Trotsky must have felt that a delay of two-three years was enough, therefore, the thing is to be done "today" and no further pussy-footing is brooked.)

There are some persons who believe that Trotsky accomplished a number of things; he escaped twice from Czarist Siberia; he led the Soviets in the revolution of 1905; he was the head of the Military Committee which effectively took over the power after defeating

(21) Ibid, p. 22

(22) Ibid, p. 21

(23) Ibid, p. 22

the Kerensky government in 1917; he organized the Red Army and carried on a warfare against the White generals successfully. He also wrote a few pamphlets, a few books and a monumental history of the Russian Revolution, which is considered by experts an outstanding work of research. But with all his accomplishments one wonders whether Trotsky himself would dare to trust himself to the extent of giving orders and hope that the same might be executed, as Dreitzer's letter—"which was eventually destroyed"—claims. Unfortunately for the prosecution, this letter was destroyed for reasons of secrecy, but Trotsky was careless enough because he "sent to the Trotskyite-Zinovievite Centre a number of other verbal and written instructions concerning terrorism."⁽²⁴⁾ We may expect from the tenor of the State's Attorney's harangue that some of the *number of written instructions* concerning terrorism given by L. Trotsky will appear in evidence. If such should not be the case, than Dreitzer goes on inferring. "I must add that these instructions of Trotsky fully confirmed the instructions I received from Mrachkovsky in May, 1934."⁽²⁵⁾ (Here is one of the hooping-snakes in the "confessions." It appears that the "instructions" were given by Mrachkovsky to Dreitzer, who returned them to Mrachkovsky to receive them back again, and so forth *ad nauseam*.)

The State's Attorney further claims: "The investigation has established that after the smash-up of the Trotskyite-Zinovievite Center in connection with the murder of Comrade Kirov, L. Trotsky himself assumed the leadership of terroristic activities in the USSR."⁽²⁶⁾ If we recall that Kirov was assassinated on December 1, 1934, the "smash-up" of the Center and the subsequent assumption of the leadership by Trotsky could not have occurred before December, 1934. But Mrachkovsky already testified that "in the middle of 1932 . . . it was then decided to consult L. Trotsky on this question and to obtain his directions."⁽²⁷⁾ And further "In 1931 . . . contact was established with L. Trotsky, instructions were received from the latter."⁽²⁸⁾ The foregoing quotation is from the "confession" of Mrachkovsky, which is prefaced by the State's Attorney with the finding that "the united Trotskyite-Zinovievite Center took the path of terrorism under the direct influence of L. D. Trotsky, who personally gave the members of the United Center a number of verbal and written instructions to this effect."⁽²⁹⁾ Mr. State's Attorney, is the question unjustified, as to whether the first of your statements is true, i.e. that Trotsky assumed leadership of the United Center and of its terroristic activities in late 1934,

(24) Ibid, p. 22
(28) Ibid, p. 21

(25) Ibid, p. 22
(29) Ibid, p. 21

(26) Ibid, p. 23

(27) Ibid, p. 21

or is the correct statement that which claims that such assumption had already taken place "in the middle of 1932," or is it true that Trotsky "took over the direction in 1931?" Is it not a physical impossibility that more than one of the statements can be correct, and is it not also a physical, legal and political possibility that you are mistaken not only in the dates but also as to your facts? Even a State's Attorney who prosecutes Old Bolsheviks should be somewhat more careful with his dates.

C) The Role of the Gestapo

The reference of the indictment to V. Olberg, who claims to have begun "active Trotskyite work at the beginning of 1930" and "who arrived in the USSR with the passport of a citizen of the Republic of Honduras," presents him as Trotsky's emissary in Germany.⁽³⁰⁾ V. Olberg confessed that "during one of his meetings with L. Trotsky's son Sedov, the latter showed him a letter from Trotsky, in which Trotsky proposed that Olberg be sent to the Soviet Union with a group of German Trotskyites for the purpose of preparing and organizing the murder of Stalin."⁽³¹⁾ Olberg further "confesses" that he obtained a passport of the Republic of Honduras with the aid of the German Secret Police, that he "succeeded in obtaining a passport with the help of" his "younger brother, Paul Olberg." Thanks to his "connection with the German police and their agent in Prague, V. P. Tukalevsky," he, "by means of a bribe obtained the passport of a citizen of Honduras. The money for the passport, 13,000 Czechoslovakian kronen—I (Olberg) obtained from Sedov, or rather, from the Trotskyite organization on Sedov's instructions."⁽³²⁾ It is worthwhile to stop and look into V. Olberg's alleged confession and at the same time to take a look at him. *He claims* to have been Trotsky's emissary from 1930 on and that *in* 1930, or thereabouts, he was sent by Trotsky to the USSR and *obtained his passport with the "aid of the German Secret Police (Gestapo)"*, *forgetting that the Gestapo was not established until after 1933 when Hitler took power.* Our search of the records pertaining to German and international communist movements fails to disclose a V. Olberg of any prominence. Nevertheless, it is claimed that Trotsky, in his carelessness picked none of the staunch Trotskyists, but V. Olberg as his emissary "to be sent to the Soviet Union . . . for the purpose of preparing and organizing the murder of Stalin." V. Olberg, prior to his being sent to Russia was in contact with the *at that time not yet existing Hitlerite Gestapo.* Watch the plot thicken! Trotsky selects a Hitlerite agent as his emissary. Apparently V.

(30) Ibid, p. 23

(31) Ibid, p. 24

(32) Ibid, p. 24

Olberg had already been in the USSR once because he confesses that "Sedov promised to help me to obtain a passport to return to the USSR *once more*."⁽³³⁾ So it seems that Trotsky's son had connections not only with terrorists but also with the consular officers of the USSR. How otherwise could he have hoped to obtain a return passport for Olberg? It is important to notice that Olberg was to *return to Russia* because this factor coincides with the statement of Vladimir Tukalevski, the man implicated in Olberg's confession as the Gestapo agent. Tukalevski's following declaration was printed in the *Prager Tageblatt*.

"One of the accused in the Moscow trial, Olberg, declared that I, as a Gestapo agent, had procured him a passport of the Honduran Republic so as to make it possible for him to travel in the U. S. S. R. V. Olberg appeared in the Slavic Library for the first time in 1933 and presented himself as being an instructor at the Pedagogical Institute of Stalinabad in Tadchigistane, signed himself as a German citizen on a questionnaire put to him in order to procure his library identification card and declared his desire to acquaint himself with the latest publications in the field of history. On the 29th of September, 1933, his library identification card was handed to him. For some time he visited the reading room; later, according to his statement, he travelled in the USSR. In the spring of 1934 he re-appeared at the Library and on the 4th of May, 1934 his library card was renewed. He frequented the reading room of the library over a longer period of time, declared that he was going to stay here for a considerable time yet, since the German Embassy refused to prolong his passport for foreign countries. For the same reason, he tried to obtain with the aid of the Pedagogical Instituted of Stalinabad a visa for the USSR to continue his pedagogic activities in Stalinabad. On the 21st of January, 1935, his library card was extended. He frequented the reading room at intervals. Then, in the spring of 1935, he came to the Library and declared he was departing for Stalinabad. I have never heard from him since. Now that I read of his participation in the plot and his calumny directed against my person, I immediately presented a protest to the Soviet Legation in Prague with the request to forward this protest to the High Tribunal at Moscow. It was clear that Olberg, driven by a desire to hide his real accomplices, abusively used my name to complicate matters. In fact, I sent a telegram to the High Court of Moscow, in which I demanded that in the interest of the truth they should carefully check Olberg's statement, made part of the indictment, which statement I indignantly refuted as a calumny. I demanded such a checking of Olberg's statement as a satisfaction to me. When I was informed of Olberg's deposition made before the Court, I found in it the names of

(33) Ibid, p. 24

other persons unknown to me. The only other person I heard of is V. Olberg's brother, P. Olberg, who visited the reading room of the library as a student. Since I did not find my name mentioned in the verdict, I hope that the High Court accepted my demand.

(signed) Vladimir Tukalewskij⁽³⁴⁾.

In conjunction with Tukalevski's declaration concerning V. Olberg, L. Trotsky's statement, concerning the same person, as printed in the interview in the Oslo *Dagbladet*, appears to be of some interest. Trotsky states:

"Among my papers, I find the following: In 1930 a certain Olberg attempted to become my secretary. Franz Pfempfert, at that time Editor of the *Aktion*, warned me in his letter of April 1, 1930 in the most determined manner against Olberg; that he was a person of questionable character and in all probability an agent of the GPU. Because Olberg appears to be the foundation of all charges, I shall put at the disposal of the press all material pertaining to him. It is simply absurd to state that I would trust a man with secret terrorist commissions whom I personally never have known and against whom a very good friend warned me in advance."⁽³⁵⁾

We may expect that those who try, however hard it may be, to believe in the monstrous accusation of A. Y. Vyshinsky, will answer that of course Trotsky and Tukalewskij would deny the charges. (It might occur to someone that an International Investigation Committee as demanded by Trotsky, could establish the truth.) Therefore, we are leaving Trotsky's statement aside. Let us look further at the official report.

V. Olberg confesses:

"I emphasize that my connection with the Gestapo was not at all an exception, of which one could speak as of the fall of an individual Trotskyite."

(Of course not, that would not fall in line with the design and purpose of the trial which must show up the Trotskyites and L. Trotsky as a "counter-revolutionary terrorist gang of assassins" and Hitler agents). Olberg continues confessing that the Gestapo connection "was the line of the Trotskyites in conformity with the instructions of L. Trotsky given through Sedov."⁽³⁶⁾ Apparently Olberg did approach not only Trotsky, whom he did not know, but also, he continues, "several times I met a prominent official of the Gestapo whose name was not mentioned to me . . . with this official I discussed my first journey to Moscow and my plans concerning the preparation of a terroristic act."⁽³⁷⁾ So *Olberg* actually

(34) *Prager Tagblatt*, Aug. 27, 1936

(35) *Dagbladet* (Oslo, Norway), Aug. 21, 1936.

(36) Report of Court Proceedings, etc (See note No. 1.) p. 25.

(37) *Ibid*, p. 25

"confesses" *discussing Trotskyite terroristic acts with a prominent official of the Gestapo, and not even his "name was mentioned" or known to him.* Mr. State's Attorney, the plot thickens and is becoming fantastic, too fantastic to be believed by anyone but "prominent English and American attorneys" who were present at the trial and who cabled to the communist press abroad that "the testimony of the accused rings true."

The "confession" of Berman-Yurin, whose person is just as obscure as that of Olberg, adds to the tale of the first "Gestapo" agent. But now the State's Attorney does not even feel it necessary to introduce him as a Trotskyite worker; he is one who simply goes and meets Trotsky in Copenhagen, and Trotsky, the great conspirator that he is, gives the unknown Berman-Yurin the "special mission and instructions to organize the assassination of comrade Stalin."⁽³⁸⁾ The denial of Trotsky that he ever met Berman-Yurin is of no avail. Trotsky says:

"From Constantinople I went to deliver a discussion to a student association in Copenhagen. During my sojourn at Copenhagen some forty persons visited me. I remember all of them and I know that no Berman was among them, unless he changed his name since, nor did any other Soviet citizen visit me at that time. There was, however, a Lithuanian who spoke Russian among my visitors."⁽³⁹⁾

No, the denial of Trotsky is of no avail, because Trotsky was not only careless in selecting V. Olberg and Berman-Yurin, both of whom he sent to Russia with the instructions "to kill Stalin"; on the top of that, he must have mistrusted his "emissaries," Olberg and Berman, because "*simultaneously* with Berman-Yurin, L. Trotsky sent also the accused Fritz David to the USSR."⁽⁴⁰⁾ (Who Fritz David is, is not told.) Now this Fritz David met L. Trotsky in the autumn of 1932 and L. Trotsky proposed to him that he undertake the "historic mission of killing Stalin."⁽⁴¹⁾ Fritz David's "conversation" with Trotsky "took place in *November, 1932* and I accepted his proposal to kill Stalin." The date of November, 1932 may be unimportant to the State's attorney, but it is of colossal importance to those who want to unravel the truth on the basis of the official Russian publications. The official Report of Court Proceedings states:

"On arriving in the USSR Berman-Yurin (who was sent by L. Trotsky simultaneously with Fritz David to the USSR, that is, sometime after November, 1932) found Fritz David at an address given him by Sedov. Fritz David and Berman-Yurin decided to

(38) *Ibid.*, p. 26

(39) *Dagbladet* (Oslo, Norway), Aug. 21, 1936.

(40) Report of Court Proceedings, etc. (See note No. 1), p. 26

(41) *Ibid.*, p. 26

carry out the assassination of Comrade Stalin at the Seventh Congress of the Comintern."⁽⁴²⁾

The State's Attorney may not know the historical fact, but it is a fact, nevertheless, that the Seventh Congress of the Comintern was not called before the late Spring of 1935 and no living person had any information in November, 1932, or 1933, or in the whole year of 1934, whether and when the Seventh Congress would convene. *How* in the name of common sense shall one believe these "confessed terrorists" *Berman-Yurin and Fritz David* that they *were able in 1932 or even 1933, or giving them plenty of time in 1934, to plan to kill Stalin at the Seventh Congress of the Communist International, if the Seventh Congress was still off in the far future, as a matter of fact, not yet even announced?*

But plan they did, Berman-Yurin and Fritz David decided sometime shortly after November, 1932, to kill Stalin at the Seventh Congress, actually convoked in the summer of 1935. (What these determined terrorists did in the USSR for almost three years, that is between the order given to them by Trotsky in 1932 and the Seventh Congress of 1935, again nobody knows and the prosecutor does not care to know.) The Congress was at last convened and the plan as to the assassination of Stalin was ready for three years, but the terrorists "failed to do (what they 'confessed' they had prepared for years) owing to the fact that Berman-Yurin was unable to get into the Congress, while Fritz David, although he got into the Congress, could not carry out his criminal intention because he sat far away from the presidium and had no opportunity of getting near Comrade Stalin."⁽⁴³⁾

Trotsky failed miserably in selecting his emissaries. He allegedly selected two men—previously unknown to him—who "in November, 1932 accepted his proposal to kill Stalin;" they go to the USSR and sit around until the summer of 1935 and then, even though one of them is present at the Congress where Stalin is sitting at the presidium, the terrorists are unable to find an "opportunity of getting near Comrade Stalin." The story is presented as "evidence of the plot," in spite of the fact that the Congress lasted for several days, and in spite of the fact that the "beloved leader Stalin" freely mingled with the thousands of delegates. Nevertheless, one cannot deny—according to the State's Attorney—that both Berman-Yurin and Fritz David had every intention in the summer of 1935 to execute Trotsky's order of 1932, because "Fritz David was to have shot comrade Stalin at the Seventh Congress with a Browning pistol, which he had received from Berman-

(42) Ibid, p. 27

(43) Ibid, p. 27

Yurin.”⁽⁴⁴⁾ So the plot is complete; the shooting is to be done with a Browning pistol and not with a pea-gun. The gun is given by one terrorist, Berman-Yurin, to another, David. (You now again see a hoop-snake with its tail in its mouth.) Berman-Yurin must have acknowledged that David was a better shot, so even though they had only one Browning pistol, and even though Berman-Yurin had it, and though he came to Russia to use it, he generously gave it to the other fellow. Here is one phase of the State’s Attorney complete plot.

D) Enter Hitler

The indictment from which the above quotations were taken purports to be a transcript; however, it is a peculiar one because in addition to some quotations allegedly representing confessions, there are a great number of interpolations in which the opinion of the State’s Attorney is given, as when he states:

“The investigation has also established that the terrorist group headed by Trotsky’s agent, Moissei Lurye, whom Trotsky sent into the USSR from abroad, was actually organized by the active German Fascist Franz Weitz, the representative of Himmler, at that time the leader of the Fascist SS Detachments and now the director of the German Secret Police (Gestapo).”⁽⁴⁵⁾

The State’s Attorney does not bother to give any evidence found by the alleged investigation, allegedly proving the organization of a terrorist group by an alleged Franz Weitz. As a matter of fact Weitz’s identity remains a secret and about whom we get only such information as the State’s Attorney desires to hand to us. Neither by the personal appearance of Weitz nor by anything else do we learn about Weitz’s actions, but only by the confession of M. Lurye, who is permitted to establish what is the apparent main tendency of the indictment—the alleged connection between the Nazis and the Trotskyites. According to the indictment:

“Nathan Lurye replied that he was still, as before, a convinced Trotskyite, and he reported that a terrorist group, small in number, but very reliable had been organized here in Moscow in April, 1932. . . .”⁽⁴⁶⁾

The question is naturally asked, by whom was the terrorist group organized in Moscow in April, 1932. This same question is asked and answered by the State’s Attorney and by M. Lurye who confessed that N. Lurye stated to him, the “action group was created by a certain Franz Weitz” M. Lurye was inquisitive, as may be gathered from his following comments:

“When I asked who was Franz Weitz, N. Lurye, at first unwillingly, answered as follows: Franz Weitz is an active mem-

(44) Ibid, p. 27

(45) Ibid, p. 27

(46) Ibid, p. 27

ber of the National Socialist Party in Germany and a trusted man of Himmler (the present director of the Gestapo in Germany). At that time Himmler was the leader of the "SS"—Blackshirt Guards...."

"...The main task of the group, according to Weitz, was to prepare terroristic acts against Stalin, Kaganovich, Voroshilov and Orjonikidze...."(47)

According to the indictment, M. Lurye's confession was supported by N. Lurye who confessed:

"I must admit that from the autumn of 1932 to the end of 1933 the terrorist action group of which I was the head, was actively preparing a terroristic act against the People's Commissar of Defense, Voroshilov...."

"...I was commissioned to do this by Franz Weitz, a German engineer-architect, member of the National-Socialist Party of Germany, representative of Himmler, now director of the Gestapo."

"...In August, 1932, leaving for Germany for his vacation, Franz Weitz put me in charge of the terrorist action group and set before me the task of preparing and carrying out terroristic acts against Stalin, Kaganovich and Voroshilov."(48)

It is interesting to observe the subtle insinuation which permitted the bourgeois reporters present at the trial to arrive at a conclusion which was then headlined by the Stalinite press concerning the connection between Trotsky, the Trotskyites and the Hitler agent, Weitz. There is not a word of testimony that Franz Weitz had any connection with the Trotskyites. There is no proof that Franz Weitz existed. While on the one hand David confessed that it was in *in November*, 1932 when Trotsky proposed to him the terroristic act (49), according to Lurye, Weitz leaving for Germany, *in August*, 1932, had already put Lurye in charge of the *existing* terroristic group. Weitz must have been many steps ahead of Trotsky!

There is another question which might occur to those who still remember history. It is a historical fact that Hitler came to power at the end of January, 1933. In March, 1933, the Communist International declared that the policy of the Communist Party of Germany in its fight against Hitlerism was correct before, during and after Hitler's taking power. On the other hand, the Trotskyites were urging a United Front of all working class parties (not the People's Front, but a United Action Front of the Socialists, Communists and Trade Unions). The Stalinites in Germany, as well as throughout the world denounced that proposal because they felt

(47) *Ibid*, p. 28

(48) *Ibid*, pp. 28, 29

(49) *Ibid*, p. 27

that a United Front with the Socialists (at that time denominated by them "social-fascists") and with the Trade Unions was nothing less than counter-revolutionary. The Trotskyites, however, predicted prior to 1933 that unless a United Front were actuated, fascism would be successful in Germany. The Stalinites, on the contrary, were convinced that Hitler, because of the strong organization of the Communist Party in Germany and because of its correct policy before during and after Hitler's advance, could not come to power in Germany.

The fact that the indictment now attempts to show that the Trotskyites already in 1932 were connected with the future leaders of Hitler Germany, gives a latent acknowledgment of their foresight as to future happenings, and at the same time permits a doubt to arise in the mind of the people as to how the non-existing secret police (Gestapo) of Hitler Germany could engage in any kind of act whether terroristic or otherwise. But Mr. Vyshinsky—who, by the way, will be recognized as the same Vyshinsky who in 1917 was a member of the Russian Anti-Bolsheviks,⁽⁵⁰⁾ and who at that time bitterly fought the Bolsheviks, including those tried now and those of the present functionaries of the USSR who were Bolsheviks at that time—is not to be bothered by such questions.

There is no mistake about the Nazi connections of the accused; at least the State's Attorney points to "the establishing of direct organizational contact with the German Fascist and German Secret Police;⁽⁵¹⁾ which contact was allegedly established by M. Lurye and N. Lurye in 1932. Lack of evidence is easily bridged by the State's Attorney when he states that "finally the circumstances established by the investigation (when and where is not stated) show that L. Trotsky, Zinoviev, Kamenev and others, the leaders of the Trotskyite-Zinovievite bloc, in their fight against the Soviet government sank so low that their morals proved to be more contemptible than those of gangs of the most hardened criminals."⁽⁵²⁾

This bridging of lacking evidence is for the most part, if not always, presented by a declaration of the State's Attorney, as when he says that:

"It was already established in the case of Nikolayev, Rumyantsev, Kotolynov and others shot by sentence of the Military Collegium of the Supreme Court of the USSR on the charge of murdering Comrade S. M. Kirov on December 1, 1934, that direct connections existed between the group of Zinovievites in Leningrad who committed the murder, and the accused Zinoviev, Kamenev

(50) Service D'Information et de Presse; No. 11, Oct. 2, 1936, Paris.

(51) Report of Court Proceedings, etc. (See note No. 1), p. 29

(52) Ibid, p. 29

and Bakayev, already convicted in the case of the so-called 'Moscow Centre'.⁽⁵³⁾

E) The Kirov Trial

Up to this point of the indictment proper, there has *been no reference to* any record of the previous Kirov Trial. As a matter of fact, there has been no reference to the shooting of others besides Nikolayev for the Kirov murder. It may be recalled that in connection with the assassination of Kirov, Zinoviev, Kamenev, Evdokimov, Bakayev were convicted for "*moral responsibility*." Now they are re-tried not for moral but for material responsibilities. We may here ask the question whether or not the Soviet Criminal Code permits double jeopardy, but the answer to this question is unimportant because others much more momentous are to be asked. One such question is how is it that the investigation of the accused and previously sentenced Zinoviev, Kamenev, Evdokimov and Bakayev lasted—after their first trial—for nineteen months before the so-called confessions were obtained? Why is it that the State's Attorney has to resort, however unwilling, to the further declamation that:

"After *obdurate denials*, the accused Zinoviev, convicted by the testimony of a number of others accused, had to admit...."⁽⁵⁴⁾

Many of the Socialist commentators doubted the truth of the accuseds' "confessions." Others queried how it came about that revolutionaries, or former revolutionaries such as Zinoviev, Kamenev, Evdokimov etc. were willing to confess if they were really innocent. This question is very hard, if not impossible to answer at this time, but before one spends nineteen months in Stalin's jail, one cannot tell what he or she would be willing to confess. The working-class of the world apparently forgot about the convicted Old Bolsheviks, convicted and jailed early in 1935 or prior thereto. There were no Trade Union delegations visiting Zinoviev in Stalin's jail as there were a number visiting Dimitrov when he was in Hitler's jail—charged with the firing of the Reichstag. There were no protest telegrams, no encouraging letters sent by the working-class of the world to Kamenev as were sent by the hundreds of thousands to Dimitrov in Germany. How does one know whether or not these Old Bolsheviks came to the conclusion that they were already considered guilty by the working-class of the world? How does one know whether or not Zinoviev and his co-sufferers in Stalin's jail were not willing to escape from their imprisonment by paying for it with anything and everything, includ-

(53) Ibid, p. 30

(54) Ibid, p. 31

ing a confession? We do not attempt to give the answer to these questions, at least not yet.

Only now, after the Kirov assassination, we learn from the statements of the State's Attorney made within the indictment that Nikolayev, Rumyantsev, Kotolynov and others were shot;⁽⁵⁵⁾ that among "the others" were Levin, Mandelstamm and Myasnikov.⁽⁵⁶⁾ We cannot be sure that these are all who were meant "by others" shot for the Kirov murder. (In the final argument of the State's Attorney ⁽⁵⁷⁾, he again refers to the foregoing names and adds the name of "Sossitsky and a number of others convicted and shot.")

We do not know whether the sixteen accused tried recently had information as to the fate of those accused of the murder of S. M. Kirov, but it is possible that they knew something about it and even Old Bolsheviks may attempt to evade and escape the fate of Nikolayev, Rumyantsev and others by confessing, if such confession promises to bring them not only relief from Stalin's prison but also the possibility of escaping the fate of "the others."

Like a red thread appears throughout the indictment and also throughout the subsequent trial the name of Trotsky. There is not one confession, there is not one statement in which the Trotskyites and Trotsky himself are not made to appear as having played the role of the *regisseur*. Kamenev testified that when the Trotskyite-Zinoviev bloc was organized, Zinoviev informed him:

"that the representatives of the Trotskyites in the center of the bloc, Smirnov, Mrachkovsky and Ter-Vaganyan, emphatically insisted on this decision (to organize terroristic acts), that they had direct instructions on this matter from Trotsky..."⁽⁵⁸⁾

Again the State's Attorney concludes, not on the basis of any evidence presented, but just so, that "the investigation has established, the practical fulfillment of the plan to organize the murder of Comrade Kirov was assigned by the United Center to I. P. Bakayev . . ." ⁽⁵⁹⁾

If the statements, the indictment and the confession in the present trial are loose, the organizers of the United Center must have been still more so. While I. P. Bakayev was assigned by the United Center to organize the murder of Kirov, Kirov, as we know, happened to be murdered by Nikolayev. To bring the United Center in contact with Nikolayev is quite easy. Evdokimov just testifies that he "learned from Bakayev that in the autumn of 1934 he, *Bakayev, together with one Trotskyite terrorist, whose name* **he does "not know,"** went to Leningrad to establish contact with the Lenin-

(55) Ibid, p. 30

(56) Ibid, p. 31

(57) Ibid, p. 141

(58) Ibid, pp. 31, 32

(59) Ibid, p. 32

grad terrorist Center and to organize the assassination of Kirov.”⁽⁶⁰⁾ Now this plan to murder Kirov was hatched sometime in 1931 or 1932, but Bakayev, who was put in charge of the organization of this murder, did not even go to Leningrad until the autumn of 1934. While he did not do very much for two or three years concerning the advancement of the plan, in the autumn of 1934 he meant business. He went to Leningrad and then “while in Leningrad, Bakayev and the above mentioned (unnamed, F. H.) Trotskyite terrorist met Nikolayev and arranged with him that he would assassinate Kirov.”⁽⁶¹⁾ Presto! Now through the unnamed Trotskyist, arises the connection between Nikolayev, who is alleged to be the actual murderer of Kirov, and the United Trotskyite-Zinovievite terrorist Center, and through the United Center with L. Trotsky himself. There is no question but that this testimony should convince everyone, as it apparently did convince all the Stalinite newspapermen and legal talents present at the trial, that the plot existed, and that the connection was actually established between Nikolayev and L. Trosky.

Of course, that was not all the evidence that brought about the conviction. There was a whole lot more. It was the accused Reingold who “confessed” that he;

“learned personally from Zinoviev that the assassination of Kirov in Leningrad was prepared on his direct instructions and on the instructions of the Center of the Trotskyite-Zinovievite bloc.... In giving reasons for the necessity of committing a terroristic act against Kirov, Zinoviev said that Kirov must be physically destroyed as Stalin’s closest assistant....”⁽⁶²⁾

It is interesting to note that while Trotsky allegedly used exactly the same words, that is that “Stalin must be physically destroyed,” Zinoviev, ranking below Trotsky, used the same words with reference to Kirov, ranking below Stalin. But Zinoviev said something more. According to Reingold “He also added: ‘It is not enough to fell the oak; all the young oaks growing around it must be felled too’.”⁽⁶³⁾ Now the statement as to “the oak” and “the young oaks” is quite nice, as far as Zinoviev is concerned, since he was nothing but a member of a “counter-revolutionary gang of assassins.” (These Old Bolsheviks, even when they turn into assassins, apparently give credit where credit is due. When Zinoviev talks about Stalin and about his assistants to be assassinated, then he refers to Stalin as the oak and to the assistants as the young oaks. One who does not have much information about the mentality of an assassin would imagine that such an individual

(60) Ibid, pp. 33, 34 (61) Ibid, p. 34 (62) Ibid, p. 32 (63) Ibid, p. 32

would refer to his victim by calling him all kinds of names and rarely, if ever, compare him with an oak, but that is just one more of those strange things appearing in the trial.)

The State's Attorney in summing up the so-called confessions sometimes makes an admission which taken together with other parts of the transcript must appear as a slip-up. Introducing Bakayev's admission,⁽⁶⁴⁾ he states:

"after persistent denials of his participation in the organization of the assassination of Comrade Kirov, the accused Bakayev under the weight of the evidence brought against him testified: I admit that Zinoviev personally instructed me to organize the assassination of Stalin in Moscow and Karev to organize the assassination of Kirov in Leningrad."

There is a contradiction between previous and subsequent admissions as to Bakayev's role, Bakayev who here appears to be in charge of the assassination of Stalin and who later is presented as the organizer of the Kirov assassination. The State's Attorney himself, in contradiction to Bakayev's confession, declares that:

"Evidence on the role played by Bakayev, as one of the principal organizers of the assassination of Kirov was also given."⁽⁶⁵⁾

Still more important than the contradictions, is the fact that Bakayev submitted to confessing only after **persistent denials** and only after he was already sentenced and in the custody of the State's Attorney from January 16, 1935 on.⁽⁶⁶⁾ The question may be justly asked why did it take the State's Attorney from January, 1935 until July 23, 1936 (when the first alleged confession was made) to get the so-called truth. This same question re-occurs in connection with the "confession" of the other accused persons.

F) Terroristic Conversations

Most of the reporters present during the trial mention the overwhelming effect made upon them by the facts brought out during the trial. A careful examination of the record, however, shows a whole lot of talk, "attempts," "trials of attempts," and "intention to commit certain acts" and no facts at all. Karev's confession shows that "**in conversation with Bakayev I learned that the latter intended** to utilize the Zinovievite groups . . . for the **organization of a terroristic act** against Kirov."⁽⁶⁷⁾ Evdokimov stated that he "**learned from Bakayev** that in the autumn of 1934 he . . . went to Leningrad to establish contact with the Leningrad terrorist center and to **organize the assassination of Kirov.**"⁽⁶⁸⁾ Slowly the only actual fact, that is, the assassination of Kirov, is brought home to the so-called Zinovievite-Trotskyite Center. How

(64) Ibid, p. 33

(65) Ibid, p. 33

(66) Ibid, p. 175, para. 4

(67) Ibid, p. 33

(68) Ibid, pp. 32, 34

is that done? The State's Attorney simply declares that **after obdurate denials** the accused Zinoviev had to admit that "in the autumn of 1932 in my villa at Ilyinskoye . . . I instructed Bakayev to prepare a terroristic act against Stalin, and Karev to prepare a terroristic act against Kirov."⁽⁶⁹⁾ Here is a new beginning of the plot. Thereafter, Bakayev for years engages in "conversations" from which one may learn that he **intended to** utilize the Zinovievite group for his plan against Kirov.⁽⁷⁰⁾ Bakayev further "converses" and from this "conversation" Evdokimov learns that Bakayev, after "conversing" from the autumn of 1932 until the autumn of 1934, went to Leningrad to establish the contacts about which he was "conversing" and to organize the assassination of Kirov, about which he "conversed" some more. And then comes the grand finale: "While in Leningrad, Bakayev . . . met Nikolayev and arranged with him that he would assassinate Kirov."⁽⁷¹⁾ If this plot is not complete, then A. Y. Vyshinsky, the State's Attorney of the USSR, does not know his plot. As a matter of fact,

"the terrorists had expressed confidence in the success of the terroristic act; they considered themselves to be safe. The reason for this was that all of them . . . enjoyed the confidence of a number of leading party workers and officials of Soviet organizations in Leningrad. This ensured them every possibility of pursuing their preparations for a terroristic act against Kirov."⁽⁷²⁾

Thanks to this confidence which the terrorists enjoyed and thanks to the possibility which was ensured to them to pursue their preparations, such preparations took only two years. One may conclude that but for the confidence these terrorists enjoyed the preparations would have lasted probably two hundred years.

If one does not see the connection between Kirov's assassination on December 1, 1934, and the activities of the so-called Trotskyite-Zinovievite Center, the State's Attorney will come to his help by again declaring that "the investigation has established that . . . Kamenev made a special journey to Leningrad in June, 1934 for checking up on the progress of the work of organizing the terroristic act against Comrade Kirov."⁽⁷³⁾ Here it appears that the Center made a slip-up, because Evdokimov learned that Bakayev, who was in charge of the Kirov assassination, went to Leningrad only in the autumn of 1934 to organize the assassination of Kirov. Kamenev, the boss of Bakayev, was ahead of him because he had already in June, 1934, gone to Leningrad to check up on the work. Not only Kamenev was ahead of the game; Zinoviev, who also

(69) Ibid, p. 31
(72) Ibid, p. 34

(70) Ibid, p. 33
(73) Ibid, p. 34

(71) Ibid, p. 34

engaged in "conversations," as Matorin confessed, told him that "the preparations for the terroristic acts must be pressed forward to the utmost and that Kirov must be killed by the winter."⁽⁷⁴⁾ Kirov was actually killed in the winter; therefore, the conclusion must be that, presented by the State's Attorney of the USSR.

One wonders that the reporters who were, as some of them stated, flabbergasted after hearing the overwhelming facts, did not report about the assassination of Stalin, because the State's Attorney of the USSR speaks about it when he declares that "the materials of the **investigation** have **established that the United Trotskyite-Zinovievite Center**, after it had killed Comrade Kirov, **did not confine itself to organizing the assassination of Comrade Stalin alone.**"⁽⁷⁵⁾ If that means anything, it means first that the terrorist Center organized the assassination of Stalin and it means secondly that they not only did that but "the terrorist **Trotskyite-Zinovievite Center simultaneously** carried on work to **organize assassinations of other leaders of the Party**, namely, Comrades Voroshilov, Zhdanov, Kaganovitch, Kossior, Orjonikidze and Postyshev."⁽⁷⁶⁾ So the declaration of the State's Attorney leads one to believe that not only Kirov but at least seven others, among them Stalin, were killed because the Center "organized assassinations" of these other leaders. However, we are soon put at ease when we read the further declaration of the State's Attorney that "various terrorist groups operating under the general leadership of the United Center attempted to carry out the assassinations" of the leaders mentioned above. So they were not engaged in assassinations, only in attempts to carry out assassinations. But then again it appears that there were actually terroristic acts committed, because the State's Attorney further declares that "the organization of the terroristic act against Comrade Voroshilov was the work of Dreitzer's group, which received directly from Trotsky instructions to murder Voroshilov."⁽⁷⁷⁾

About Dreitzer's work we get details because, as was further **testified to by the State's Attorney**, "in regard to the preparations for the assassination of Comrade Voroshilov, the accused Mrachkovsky testified: '**In the middle of 1934, E. Dreitzer reported to me that simultaneously he was organizing the assassination of Voroshilov for which purpose Dimitry Schmidt, who was a commander in the army and under no suspicion in the party was to be prepared.**'"⁽⁷⁸⁾ The accused Dreitzer on July 31, 1936 testified: "For the purpose of committing the terroristic act, **I recruited Esterman**

(74) Ibid, p. 34
(77) Ibid, p. 35

(75) Ibid, p. 35
(78) Ibid, p. 36

(76) Ibid, p. 35

and Gayevsky, and in 1935 Schmidt and Kuzmichev. The latter two undertook to kill Voroshilov." (79) So one sees that Dreitzer in the middle of 1934 reports to Mrachkovsky that he organized the assassination of Voroshilov, for which purpose Schmidt was to be prepared, who therefore at that time was not yet engaged to do the killing because Dreitzer "recruited Schmidt only in 1935." So far so good, but the State's Attorney does not watch his dates because he declares that "the testimony of Mrachkovsky and Dreitzer was also confirmed by the accused Reingold who testified as follows: **'I learned from Mrachkovsky and Dreitzer that in the summer of 1933, a Trotskyite group of military men was organized under the leadership of Dreitzer. The group consisted of Schmidt, commander of a brigade of the Red Army, Kuzmichev, chief of staff of a military unit, and a number of other persons whose names I do not know. I learned from Dreitzer that Schmidt and Kuzmichev were to carry out personally the terroristic act against Voroshilov and that they had agreed to do so.'**" (80) (All these contradictions appear on the one and same page of the official printed report.)

So to sum up, **Mrachkovsky in conversation in the middle of 1934 learns that Dreitzer will engage Schmidt to assassinate Voroshilov** sometime in the future. **Dreitzer states that he engaged Schmidt only in 1935, but Reingold learns about Schmidt being in charge of the Voroshilov assassination already in 1933.** This is what the State's Attorney calls "the investigation has established;" and which must be just as truthful and just as well established as the State's Attorney's further statement that "the investigation has also established that in the same period a number of terrorist groups were organized in attempts on the lives of other Soviet functionaries." (81) If one counter that the patent contradiction is made by the accused and not by the prosecutor, one may answer that the purpose of the trial was to establish the facts by clearing up just such contradiction. The State's Attorney however could not be bothered with such unimportant details, his job was to prove --by hook or crook--the Trotsky-Gestapo connection.

(79) Ibid, p. 36

(80) Ibid, p. 36

(81) Ibid, p. 36

II. THE CHARGE OF THE INDICTMENT

THE STATE'S ATTORNEY, continuing his monologue which he calls an analysis, defines the charges:

" the investigating authorities consider it established:"

"(1) That in the period of 1932-1936 there was a United Trotskyite--Zinovievite Center organized in the City of Moscow with the object of committing a number of terroristic acts against the leaders of the C.P.S.U. and the Soviet Government for the purpose of seizing power.

"(2) That Zinoviev, Kameney, Evdokimov and Bakayev represented the Zinovievites; and Smirnov, Ter-Vaganyan and Mrachkovsky, the Trotskyites in the so-called Center.

"(3) That during this period, the United Trotskyite-Zinovievite Center organized a number of terrorist groups and prepared a number of practical measures to assassinate Comrade Stalin, Voroshilov, Zhdanov, Kaganovich, Kirov, Kossior, Orjonikidze and Postyshev.

"(4) That one group on direct instructions from Zinoviev and L. Trotsky and under the direction of Bakayev murdered Kirov on December 1, 1934." (1)

The State's Attorney further confesses that all of the accused, with the exception of Smirnov, admitted their guilt but that Smirnov acknowledged only his participation in the United Center, his personal connections with Trotsky and meeting Trotsky's son while abroad in 1931, and that he maintained connections with Trotsky up to his, Smirnov's arrest in 1933. But Smirnov "**categorycally** denied" that he took part in the terroristic activities of the Center. (The categorical denial of Smirnov does not help him because the State's Attorney, presenting the charges, claims that Smirnov is proved by the testimony of the other accused as having participated in terroristic activities.)

The State's Attorney shows that there are no inhibitions, at least so far as the prosecution is concerned, in dealing with Old Bolsheviks. He states categorically and succinctly that "on the

(1) Report of Court Proceedings, etc., p. 37

basis of the above," Zinoviev, Kamenev, Evdokimov, Bakayev, Ter-Vaganyan, Mrachkovsky and Smirnov are accused of having organized terrorist groups and accused of making preparations to assassinate Stalin, Voroshilov, Zhdanov, Kaganovich, Kirov, Kossior, Orjonikidze and Postyshev and of having also organized and carried out on December 1, 1934 the murder of Kirov and thus stand charged with having committed crimes covered by Article 58 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Socialist Federation of Soviet Republics.⁽²⁾ **(Note Smirnov's participation in the murder in 1934 though imprisoned since January, 1933.**

Dreitzer, Reingold, Pickel, Holtzman, David, Olberg, Berman-Yurin, M. Lurye and N. Lurye stand charged under Articles 19 and 58 of the Criminal Code, as having been members of the underground terrorist Trotskyite-Zinovievite organization and having taken part in the preparation to assassinate Stalin, Voroshilov, Zhdanov, Kaganovich, Kossior, Orjonikidze, and Postyshev.⁽³⁾

The State's Attorney represents Trotsky and his son, L. L. Sedov, as "having been exposed by the materials in the present case as having directly prepared and personally guided the work of organizing in the USSR terroristic acts against the leaders of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and of the Soviet State," and he promises them that they, "in the event of their being discovered on the territory of the USSR, are subject to immediate arrest and trial by the Military Collegium of the Supreme Court of the USSR."⁽⁴⁾

Besides the great number of persons who paid with their lives in connection with the assassination of Kirov in December, 1934, and in addition to the sixteen defendants now on trial, there are others to whom the State's Attorney refers, such as Gertik, Grinberg, Y. Gaven, Karev, Kuzmichev, Konstant, Matorin, Paul Olberg, Radin, Safanova, Faivilovich, D. Schmidt and Esterman, who will be tried at a later date.⁽⁵⁾ All these, past, present and future, defendants are,—according to the summation in the indictment,—charged with complicity in the Kirov murder.

(2) Ibid, p. 38

(3) Ibid, pp. 38, 39

(4) Ibid, p. 39

(5) Ibid, p. 39

III. THE TRIAL

THE REPORT of Court Proceedings informs us that "after the reading of the indictment, the President of the Court questions in turn all accused whether they plead guilty as charged."⁽¹⁾ All the accused with the exception of Smirnov and Holtzman plead guilty on all charges. Smirnov admits personal communication with Trotsky, and while "admitting his political responsibility for the activities of the United Center,"⁽²⁾ denies personal participation in the preparation and execution of terroristic acts. Holtzman, similarly to Smirnov, admits membership in the Center and denies personal participation in any act, making no statement as to political responsibility for the activities of the Center.

The excerpts from the testimony—as published by the People's Commissariat of Justice—cover seventy-five closely printed pages, followed by the statement of the State's Attorney, Vyshinsky, covering fifty additional pages. The latter appears to be printed in full, thus preserving for posterity every gem, every provocative statement, prejudicial remark that the Soviet prosecutor presented before the court. Nine pages of the transcript present what appear to be highly condensed and disconnected statements of the accused, followed by the verdict signed by the presiding judge, V. V. Ulrich, and two members of the court, I. Matulevich and I. Nikitchenko.

Reading the report of the trial, the vituperative statements of the State's Attorney, disjointed excerpts from the accuseds' final statements and then the verdict, one must feel as though he had had a nightmare, a nightmare wherein appeared three legged men, women with one eye in the middle of their forehead, pink elephants and other creatures of phantasy gone mad. It is hardly possible to believe that such a performance as the trial really happened.

A) Witches Sabbath

To get even a semblance of sanity out of so incredible a spectacle, one must read the reports of those who were present at the trial, and who are trying to give an objective description of the atmosphere surrounding the case. The *New York Times* des-

(1) Report of Court Proceedings, etc. p. 40

(2) Ibid, p. 40

cribes the trial as **"an amazing story** of a series of plots, both within and without this country to 'decapitate' the Soviet regime by assassinating all the principal leaders and place a new government in the saddle" ⁽³⁾

The reporter of the *New York Times*, Harold Denny, describes the **testimony of Reingold** and comments that **"it would seem a perfectly incredible story except that Zinoviev and Kamenev sprang almost eagerly to their feet tonight to confirm it."** ⁽⁴⁾ Yes, it would seem a perfectly incredible story and none the less because;

"the manner in which the story was divulged is characteristic of the trial, in which the defendants are wrangling among themselves, jealous of standing up as plotters and cheerily piling up evidence against each other. Zinoviev and Kamenev in earlier testimony belittled Reingold's importance in the terrorist group. When Reingold's turn came, he told of this plot to kill Stalin, to show how completely 'in the know' he was." ⁽⁵⁾ Those who observed the defendants before the Military Tribunal must have found it extraordinary that **"most of today's defendants who certainly are in the shadow of death appeared casual about their fate."** ⁽⁶⁾

The reports coming out from the Soviet Union and published by the press of the world unanimously agreed that only two of the defendants remained in disagreement with the indictment by failing to "confess up." "The testimony of the others up to the close of the day's sessions composed a bizarre picture." ⁽⁷⁾ The picture must have been at least bizarre when the newspapers describe the defendants **who "vied to be named as killers,"** even though the defendants were "calmly aware that the executioner's rifles answer confessions such as theirs." ⁽⁸⁾ It must have been quite elevating to observe when:

"in an almost bored voice G. Evdokimov, former chairman of the Leningrad Soviet, told the Court how the sixteen vied for the 'honor' of shooting Joseph Stalin." ⁽⁹⁾

There was almost an untimely end for the trial, because "hardly had the session opened, than Zinoviev rose and declared: 'I am fully guilty' (thirteen of the co-defendants doing similarly); whereupon **Zinoviev was asked by the prosecutor if he had organized the plot.**

Answer: **Yes.**

Question: **Did you plot the death of Sergei M. Kirov?**

A. **Yes.**

Q. **Did you organize the plan to kill Stalin?**

⁽³⁾ *New York Times*, Special Cable from Moscow, August 19, 1936

⁽⁴⁾ *Ibid.*

⁽⁵⁾ *Ibid.*

⁽⁶⁾ *Ibid.*

⁽⁷⁾ *Ibid.*

⁽⁸⁾ *Associated Press Telegram*, Moscow, August 19, 1936

⁽⁹⁾ *Ibid.*

A. **Yes, I am guilty of every charge in the indictment."**

After such a statement, one would imagine that everything is over but the shooting. But such an early conclusion of the trial would have been "too bizarre a picture," and to make it less (or more) so, the trial was carried on for five days.

There may be a few persons, or the improbable is possible, that there are many who believe the performance put on in Moscow is not a stage play. The editorial of the *Manchester Guardian* believes, to the contrary;

"Few but the faithfully blind will take at their face value the charges against Trotsky, Zinoviev and Kamenev and the rest, and regard the 'confessions' honest. And even the faithful will be sorely put to it to explain why, at the moment when they are denouncing (and being by Moscow exhorted to denounce) the bloodthirsty methods of fascism in Spain, Germany, Abyssinia, Japan, etc. the workers government should find it politic to follow their example * * * * The mighty government of the Soviet Union drags miserable prisoners from their cells to make a public holiday and tries them for new offenses, which the omniscient state curiously omitted to discover before. With the best will in the world it is hard not to be cynical about this Russian trial. One can only look for the explanation not in any desire for justice, but in the shift of state's policy and the need of an internal diversion. In this case it is the familiar cry of the state in danger, the beloved leader's life hazarded, a foreign power fomenting assassination. And the scape goats are the old scape goats—all the politicians whom Stalin has broken."⁽¹⁰⁾

The *Manchester Guardian* did not forget the Kirov assassination and the subsequent trial arranged in January, 1935. At the time of the trial the State had already repeatedly changed the story as to the cause of the murder. Giving the motive for the murder first as a White-guardist plot from without, the official explanation later turned to the counter-revolutionaries within, and still later brought into the story an obscure Latvian consul who with his five thousand rubles attempted to start a counter-revolution in Russia and allegedly initiated it with the Kirov murder. The *Manchester Guardian* points out that in 1935 there was no direct accusation against Trotsky and the Trotskyites, though it is possible that "the real faithful" sensed already the coming charges staged at the present time. Zinoviev and Kamenev themselves were at the time charged only with "**moral responsibility**" for the Kirov murder. (The "moral responsibility" was placed against André, the communist counselor of Hamburg who was recently sentenced to

(10) *Manchester Guardian Weekly*, August 21, 1936

death in Hitler Germany for the murder in 1931, of the Nazi named Dreckman. Apparently the Hitler Courts and prosecutors know how and wherefrom to learn.)

The *Manchester Guardian* believes that during the Kirov trial of 1935, Zinoviev and Kamenev escaped a direct charge and subsequent death as

“a recognition that they had been virtually impotent since their fall nine years before.... now eighteen months later, the story is retold with new trimmings, fresh characters appear, almost every communist leader who has passed out of favor is held up as a potential murderer. The Latvian consul with his five thousand rubles vanishes into the background and the Gestapo and 13,000 Tcheck kroner come in.... Once again the narratives are complete, the confessions of the accused abject, their guilt handsomely acknowledged. But so also were the narratives and confessions and admissions in January 1935. It is strange that such material parts of the story were then unknown and still stranger that important events did not take place until months after the earlier trial... everything we know of Trotsky and the principal accused, it is highly unlikely that they have intrigued with their country's greatest foe. Still one supposes the trial will go according to plan and the death sentences for which the state controlled Moscow press is clamoring, will be pronounced.”⁽¹¹⁾

Yes, the trial went on according to a plan, which plan was soon revealed as the attempt to use the trial as a stage setting on which to place and shoot at the real defendant, Leon Trotsky. Already on August 20th, the *New York Times* reported from Moscow that;

“Leon Trotsky who is now safe in exile, but who will be shot if he sets foot on Soviet soil, emerged as the real defendant in the trial.... Prosecutor Andre Y. Vyshinsky concentrated today in tracing the plot to Trotsky, and in turn linking him and his son, Sedov, to the German Secret Police. In doing this he had the fullest cooperation of Zinoviev, Kamanev and most of their admitted confederates who spent today as they did yesterday eagerly damning themselves as ‘hypocrits and traitors’.”

There is, however, a recurring incredibility in the testimonies, as when the reporter present at the session of August 20th cables to the *New York Times* that;

“today even more than yesterday was apparent the incomprehensible desire of the defendants to convict themselves.... The spectacle here is one of sixteen men accused of a crime having only one possible penalty and with no possibility of technicality saving them, facing the court with ‘We, who are about to die, salute you.’ (This may be the rudiment or the remnant of the Old Bolshevik spirit of the accused.)

(11) Ibid

Almost all of the defendants, who after their being sentenced, pitifully begged for their lives in their petition for clemency to Stalin, during the trial acted to

“supplement their full confessions with eager testimony against themselves and against each other. They spring to their feet like bright pupils glad to show how much they know. There is witty repartee among the prisoners, prosecutor and court in which the prisoners join in the merriment.... These doomed men are marching toward the firing squad amid gales of laughter.. Only one so far, Smirnov, is fighting for his life and his fellows are hounding him harder than the prosecutor.”⁽¹²⁾

The hounding of the non-confessor Smirnov by his fellow defendants may be of some significance. His non-confessing does spoil an otherwise perfect scene.

The stage is set, the curtain is up and back of the scenes the *regisseurs* are working diligently to stage as complete a plot as their ability and imagination will permit. Their ability is not great. They are staging a tragic and bloody melodrama, but melodrama nevertheless, and poorly staged at that. Their imagination did not carry them beyond the substituting of the Gestapo for the Latvian Consul, increasing the 5000 rubles to 13,000 Tcheck kronen, and making the moral responsibility into a “self-confessed” criminal responsibility, and last, but not least, fraudulently and clumsily, bringing Trotsky’s and the Trotskyites’ names into the plot. The Trotskyists are to take the most important place at this trial, while during the Kirov trial they were present by inuendo only.

The back stage *regisseurs* worked overtime; already on August 16th the sentiment of the workers was brought to a desired crystallization in Russia when, as the *Daily Worker* reported, “35,000 workers of the Stalin Auto Plant resolved that there is not and can be no mercy or leniency for those who in a bandit underworld prepare terrorist acts against our Stalin and his colleagues.” Not only did the workers of Moscow, Leningrad, Kiev, Rostow on Don, Tiflis, Odessa and other cities demanded the death of the “plotters,” but Soviet citizens in far away Peking were highly incensed and even though the indictment was presented only on the 14th day of August in Moscow, the *Daily Worker* in New York already two days later could report about the sentiment of those in Peking who were “indignant of the despicable terrorist activities of Trotskyite-Zinovievite counter-revolutionaries. We demand ruthless punishment of the enemies of the Socialist fatherland and toilers.”⁽¹³⁾ Thanks to the cable system which brought this

(12) *New York Times*, August 20, 1936

(13) *Daily Worker*, New York, August 17, 1936

Peking resolution to Moscow on August 16th, the State's Attorney must have felt himself strengthened by the immediate arrival of the moral support from China. While the trial was to open only on the 19th of August, the *Pravda* of Moscow in its edition of August 16th knew already that "the whole Soviet Union, the whole international proletariat will learn with bitter indignation about new crimes committed by **degenerate** scoundrels (apparently meaning Zinoviev, the former chairman of the Communist International, Kamenev, the former chairman of the People's Commissariat of the USSR, and others.) whose names have long since aroused the disgust of all honest workers. Despicable handful of bankrupt people without support in any country representing no one but themselves, these men are skunks."

The *Pravda* is unnecessarily violent in warning the people of Russia against the opponents of Stalin, designating them "people without support in any country." The Opposition "representing no one but themselves" by some occult means "for years they were the source of all secret attack on the unity of the party and its leaders. They incessantly vilified the leaders, inflamed frantic hatred against them, among the entire Trotskyite-Zinovievite rabble. They inculcated vile hypocritical method for misleading the party."⁽¹⁴⁾ One is not quite able to follow the *Pravda* when it speaks of a "handful of bankrupt people" and then again speaks of them as "rabble;" or is there something like a "handful of rabble"? One is not quite able to undersand the *Pravda*—how people "representing no one but themselves" could mislead the party. Were those handful of men so strong in their arguments, or is the mighty Communist Party of Russia so weak that it can be misled by people representing no one but themselves? This would be hardly possible, even though the *Pravda* refers to them as "White-guard Bandits" and "Fascist Spies." One could go on quoting from the *Pravda* and other official communist papers, but we believe that the above is a fair sample of the atmosphere preceding and surrounding the trial.

* * * *

THE TESTIMONY OF THE DEFENDANT MRACHKOVSKY presents him, according to the official report, as "the man most in the confidence of Trotsky and personally closest to him. In the past he had occupied an important position in the army."⁽¹⁵⁾ He is further presented as an old Trotskyite. In the words of the prosecutor "Mrachkovsky from 1923 onward had carried on, in

(14) *Pravda*, Moscow, August 16, 1936

(15) Report of Court Proceedings, etc., p. 40

conjunction with Trotsky, Trotskyite anti-Soviet work.”⁽¹⁶⁾ He is designated as a leading member of the Center who worked under the personal direction of Trotsky, from whom he received his instructions through Smirnov. He is called by the State’s Attorney “one of the leaders of the counter-revolutionary Trotskyite underground organization⁽¹⁷⁾ who in 1932 joined the United Center.”

Mrachkovsky is further presented by the prosecution as one of those who, **in the disfavor of the Stalinite leadership was sent to exile, but later recanted.** “On returning from exile in 1929, he only on paper admitted the correctness of the general line of the party.”⁽¹⁸⁾ After having recanted, he confessed having organized “a further struggle against the party. . . . Even though the group had no political platform, the platform drawn up in the preceding period, 1925-27, was upset by the fact of the correctness of the general line of the party.”⁽¹⁹⁾ (This is one of the many bouquets handed by the defendants to the Stalinite leadership for the “correctness of the general line of the party.”)

It is strange, to put it mildly, to see the obvious willingness of the defendants to cooperate with the State’s Attorney and say **whatever the State’s Attorney wants them to say.** When the State’s Attorney queries: “What do you mean by the expression ‘until we put Stalin out of the way?’” Mrachkovsky answers: “Until we kill Stalin.”⁽²⁰⁾

Mrachkovsky, though willing to testify to all he expected to do and what he was suspected of doing, does not remember his dates any more than the State’s Attorney. He states: “Already in 1931, this Trotskyite group openly discussed the question of terrorism . . . At that very meeting in the presence of Smirnov, myself, Ter-Vaganyan and Safanova. I was given the task of organizing a terrorist group, that is to say, to select reliable people. The same task was assigned to Dreitzer together with me. That period, 1931 and 1932, was spent in inducing and preparing people to commit terroristic acts. For this purpose I recruited Yatsek and Yudin. **Dreitzer recruited another group of people including Schmidt, Kuzmichev** and some others whom I don’t remember.”⁽²¹⁾

If we recall the transcript in which Mrachkovsky “confessed” having received the information from Dreitzer concerning the latter’s recruiting Dimitry Schmidt in 1934 and Dreitzer’s confession of having done so in 1935, and further Reingold’s testimony, who was allegedly informed by Mrachkovsky and Dreitzer already in 1933 of Dreitzer’s having recruited Schmidt and Kuzmichev, one

(16) *Ibid.*, p. 40

(19) *Ibid.*, p. 41

(17) *Ibid.*, p. 40

(20) *Ibid.*, p. 41

(18) *Ibid.*, pp. 40, 41

(21) *Ibid.*, p. 41

wonders whether the fourth version, as stated during the trial by Mrachkovsky, is correct, *i.e.*, that Schmidt and Kuzmichev were recruited by Dreitzer in 1931 and 1932. Such **contradictory testimonies appear to the State's Attorney of no sufficient importance to inquire into**, nor is he willing to resolve the contradiction here presented concerning the Trotskyists, whose entry into the plot is advanced from 1932 to 1931.

Mrachkovsky, in his testimony, put the initiative upon Smirnov, whom he accused of receiving instructions from Trotsky. The same desire to implicate the "non-confessor" Smirnov is demonstrated by the other "confessor" defendants.

When the defendants are not well prepared to give the proper answer, the State's Attorney is ready and willing to come to their help; so when Mrachkovsky testifies as to his being instructed by Smirnov to go to see Reingold and to come to an agreement with him about the uniting of all forces, the following colloquy ensues:

"VYSHINSKY: On what basis?

MRACHKOVSKY: On the basis of organizing the assassination of Stalin.

VYSHINSKY: (The prosecutor and not the defendant testifying!) Smirnov said: Go to Reingold and come to an agreement with him about

MRACHKOVSKY: . . . Uniting our terrorist forces for the purpose of assassinating Stalin, Voroshilov and Kaganovich."⁽²²⁾

This is not the only time when the defendants, (who as Harold Denny stated in the *New York Times*,) gave their "fullest cooperation to the State's Attorney" and presented their testimony in the form of a duet where the State's Attorney carried on the brunt of the testifying, the defendants just continuing the statements or sentences begun by the prosecutor. Some of the details of the testimony read like excerpts from the old "Nick Carter" series, as when Mrachkovsky states that in December, 1934 he "received from Dreitzer a letter of Trotsky's written in invisible ink."⁽²³⁾ Here the story begins to get really mysterious—the invisible ink enters, apparently for the purpose of preventing others from getting the information. When the letter itself is needed for evidence, it appears to have been written on invisible paper because no letter is produced during the trial. However, Mrachkovsky recalls the approximate content of the mysterious letter, and he quotes it from memory as follows:

(22) *Ibid.*, pp. 42, 43 (23) *Ibid.*, p. 43

"Dear friend, the task that confronts us today is to accelerate the assassination of Stalin and Voroshilov. In event of war, it is necessary to adopt a defeatist position and take advantage of the confusion. Nuclei must be organized in the Red army. The letter was signed 'Starik' (old man)."⁽²⁴⁾

Now this letter appears to be the same to which,—according to X, page 102, 103 of the transcript—⁽²⁵⁾ Dreitzer referred. Dreitzer recalled Trotsky's instructions to remove Stalin and Voroshilov. Mrachkovsky read in the instructions "to accelerate the assassination of Stalin, and Voroshilov." Dreitzer is ready to admit only the instruction: "in event of war to capture the leadership." Mrachkovsky claims more details because he is instructed "to adopt a defeatist position." But such discrepancies do not matter when the so-called letter (on invisible paper and ink) is permitted to stand as evidence without being introduced.

The above letter is again referred to in Dreitzer's testimony⁽²⁶⁾ where it is stated that "in October 1934, Dreitzer's sister brought him from Warsaw a German Cinema magazine which an agent of Sedov's had given her for Dreitzer. In the magazine Dreitzer had no difficulty in discovering . . . a message written in invisible ink in Trotsky's own handwriting containing instructions to prepare and carry out immediately terroristic acts against Stalin and Voroshilov."

Dreitzer claims having passed the letter to Mrachkovsky, and now it turns out why the oft mentioned letter of Trotsky cannot be presented in court. The reason is that Mrachkovsky, "after reading it, burned it for reasons of secrecy."

There is more or less agreement as to the time of the alleged organization of the alleged United Center, and it is agreed by the defendants and by the State's Attorney that it was sometime in the fall of 1932. The defendant, Smirnov was arrested on certain charges, not otherwise specified, on January 1, 1933 and remained in the jails of the Soviet Union up to the time of the present trial.⁽²⁷⁾ Nevertheless, the State's Attorney, with the heartfelt cooperation of the other defendants, is trying to make Smirnov admit his participation in the United Center, even though the time between his arrest, January 1933, and the organization of the Center, the fall of 1932, was just a short period, in no case more than six months. Smirnov must be connected with the acts confessed by the others because Smirnov was a supporter of Trotsky's position prior to the latter's expulsion from the country, therefore the attempt to use Smirnov as a bridge from the confessed defendants to

⁽²⁴⁾ Ibid, p. 43

⁽²⁵⁾ Ibid, p. 22

⁽²⁶⁾ Ibid, p. 52

⁽²⁷⁾ Ibid, p. 152

Trotsky. Most baffling is the willingness of Zinoviev to admit everything charged against him by the State's Attorney. Interrupting the examination of Mrachkovsky, Zinoviev is questioned concerning the activities of the so-called United Center.

"VYSHINSKY: Against whom? (were the terrorist acts directed)

ZINOVIEV: Against the leaders.

VYSHINSKY: That is, against Comrade Stalin, Voroshilov, and Kaganovich? Was it your center that organized the assassination of Comrade Kirov? Was the assassination of Sergei Mironovich Kirov organized by your center, or by some other organization?

ZINOVIEV: Yes, by our center.

VYSHINSKY: In that center there were you, Kamenev, Smirnov, Mrachkovsky and Ter-Vaganyan?

ZINOVIEV: Yes.

VISHINSKY: So you all organized the assassination of Kirov?

ZINOVIEV: Yes.

VYSHINSKY: So you all assassinated Comrade Kirov?

ZINOVIEV: Yes.

VISHINSKY: Sit down."⁽²⁸⁾

We almost expect the State's Attorney, upon such excellent answers given by the defendant, to express his appreciation by some sign, as a teacher would towards a "bright pupil," (such was Zinoviev designated by the reporter of the *New York Times*.)

Just as a mere aside, on Page 45 of the transcript there appear three lines without being quoted—as if it were an unimportant opinion of someone: "**I. N. Smirnov denies Mrachkovsky's testimony to the effect that he, Smirnov, had conveyed Trotsky's instructions about terrorism to the Moscow Trotskyite center.**" The State's Attorney thereupon confronts Smirnov with his "confession" allegedly given on August 13 in XXIX, page 115 of the record. Smirnov, even under the prompting of the State's Attorney, "remains silent."⁽²⁹⁾

* * * *

THE TESTIMONY OF EVDOKIMOV elicited that he, the former member of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U., up to a short time prior to the trial belonged to the closest circle built up around Stalin. When questioned by the court whether or not he confirmed his "confession" given at the preliminary examination "replies in the affirmative."⁽³⁰⁾ He admits every charge made against him;

"VYSHINSKY: You were a member of the center?

EVDOKIMOV: Yes, I was.

VYSHINSKY: Did you know that the center was preparing

(28) Ibid, pp. 44, 45 (29) Ibid, pp. 45, 46 (30) Ibid, p. 46

assassinations of the leaders of the C.P.S.U. and the Soviet Government?

EVDOKIMOV: Yes.

VYSHINSKY: Did you personally approve of the preparation of these assassinations?

EVDOKIMOV: I agreed to them.

VYSHINSKY: You took part in and considered it necessary to proceed by the path of assassination?

EVDOKIMOV: Yes.

VYSHINSKY: Do you admit that the assassination of Comrade Kirov was prepared with your assistance?

EVDOKIMOV: Yes I admit that." (31)

Some of the foreign correspondents present at the trial were wondering how it came that during the Kirov trial in January, 1935, the alleged facts as now presented were not known. "It is strange that such material parts of the story were then unknown and still stranger that important events did not take place until months after the earlier trial." The reporters were wondering, and the State's Attorney must have wondered about the same thing and must have tried to find an answer to the self-same question when he declared to and for Evdokimov:

"VYSHINSKY: At the trial in Leningrad, on January 15-16, 1935, when facing the courts as you do now, you emphatically asserted that you had nothing to do with that murder. At that time you told untruths?"

EVDOKIMOV: Yes, I deceived the court.

VYSHINSKY: You thought you deceived the Court. As a matter of fact, the deception did not work. Now it is exposed.

EVDOKIMOV: Yes." (32)

Apparently, Evdokimov agreed at last that "crime does not pay;" he is willing to agree with the State's Attorney though it took eighteen months, or longer in prison before he was brought to that conclusion. After eighteen or more months in prison, the State's Attorney may call upon the accused to join in and make the confession an almost unanimous one. He succeeded with all but **Smirnov** who again, according to the State's Attorney, "**makes the attempt to deny this testimony of Evdokimov:**" (33) This attempt of Smirnov was not successful (not anymore than were the alleged attempts upon the life of Stalin, Voroshilov, Kaganovich), because, "the replies of Mrachkovsky and Evdokimov to questions put to them by Comrade Vyshinsky establish that **the conversation about terrorism did take place** and that Smirnov fully and completely supported the line of terroristic acts." (34)

From the above quotations, it would appear that the **accused**

(31) Ibid, pp. 46, 47 (32) Ibid, p. 47

(33) Ibid, p. 47

(34) Ibid, p. 47

were on trial really because they were conversing about terrorism, and that Smirnov was particularly tried because "he fully and completely supported the line of terroristic acts" in the "conversations." How he did do that is not explained. Apparently Smirnov, who was in the penitentiary of the Soviet Government from January 1, 1933 on, has had some good connections within and may have walked out every once in a while when a terroristic act was to be "conversed about." But let us see the terroristic acts.

Evdokimov testifies as to the conferences of 1932 at Ilyinskoye where "there was **outright talk about the necessity of terrorism** in the first place against Stalin and Kirov. The organization of these terroristic acts was, on Zinoviev's proposal, entrusted to Bakayev."⁽³⁵⁾

So the State's Attorney progresses; **first** there are **only conversations** about terrorism; **now** there is **outright talk**, so one expects that with the help of the State's Attorney, we will arrive at something more tangible because **after this outright talking was done** in 1932, "in the summer of 1934 a conference was held in Kamenev's apartment in Moscow . . ." where "it was decided to expedite the assassination of S. M. Kirov."⁽³⁶⁾

Here the State's Attorney wants to emphasize the outrightness of the talk and so he queries:

"VYSHINSKY: So it was put as straight as that: 'To expedite the assassination of S. M. Kirov!'"

EVDOKIMOV: Yes, it was put like that."⁽³⁷⁾

Of course, one would imagine that if the terrorists already in 1932 were talking outright about terrorism, then in 1934 they would put it as straight as they did, because two years should be long enough to move from "outright talking" to "putting it straight."

Now the acts are related: Bakayev, according to Evdokimov's testimony, went to Leningrad in the autumn of 1934 "to check up on the progress of the preparations for the terroristic act against Kirov."⁽³⁸⁾ Then, "as a result of further questioning, Comrade Vyshinsky established that while on his visit to Leningrad, Bakayev met the future murderer of S. M. Kirov, Nikolayev, with whom he discussed the preparations for the assassination."⁽³⁹⁾ Here is a little retrogression because the man Bakayev, entrusted with the terroristic act in 1932, after doing some "outright talk about the" necessity of terrorism, in 1934 goes to Leningrad, meets the future murderer of Kirov with whom **"he discussed** the preparations for the assassination."

⁽³⁵⁾ Ibid, p. 48
⁽³⁸⁾ Ibid, p. 48

⁽³⁶⁾ Ibid, p. 48
⁽³⁹⁾ Ibid, p. 49

⁽³⁷⁾ Ibid, p. 48

There must have been quite a number who were desirous of assassinating Kirov, because on further questioning by the State's Attorney it is stated:

"BAKAYEV: There was no need for me to come to an understanding with him (Nikolayev) about it because the instructions for the assassination had been given by Zinoviev and Kamenev.

VYSHINSKY: But Nikolayev told you that he had decided to assassinate S. M. Kirov, didn't he?

BAKAYEV: He did, and so did other terrorists—Levin, Mandelstamm, Kotolynov, Rumyantsev.

VISHINSKY: You discussed the assassination of Kirov?

BAKAYEV: Yes.

VYSHINSKY: He expressed his determination. And what was your attitude towards it?

BAKAYEV: I was for it."⁽⁴⁰⁾

The only apparent reason for the foregoing testimony is the attempt to prove the guilt of Levin, Mandelstamm, Kotolynov etc. who were previously executed in connection with the Kirov murder.

* * * *

THE TESTIMONY OF THE ACCUSED DREITZER contradicts that part of the Record, which, on page 40, claims Mrachkovsky to be "the man most in the confidence of Trotsky and personally closest to him." On page 51, it is Dreitzer who was "one of the most prominent Trotskyites. He had been chief of Trotsky's body-guards." Dreitzer even brags about the Trotskyite-Zinovievite Center being a strictly "centralized and disciplined counter-revolutionary organization;"⁽⁴¹⁾ though subsequently it appears that the discipline could not have gone very far. While Dreitzer allegedly took upon himself the committing of terroristic acts, he did not do much, if anything, for three or four years.

The first act which Dreitzer actually did was to **talk** during the trial. This "most prominent Trotskyite" Dreitzer, helps the State's Attorney with surprising readiness to accomplish what the trial set out to do, that is, to find the absent Trotsky guilty on every count of the indictment. As Dreitzer stated: "There could be no acting on one's own, no orchestra without a conductor among us."⁽⁴²⁾

Smirnov appears to be the only one who was actually abroad after Trotsky was expelled from the Soviet Union. That explains the obvious desire on the part of the State's Attorney and the defendants assisting him, to bring Smirnov in contact with the Center. Dreitzer states that the Trotskyite section received in-

(40) Ibid, p. 49

(41) Ibid, p. 51

(42) Ibid, p. 51

structions "from abroad from L. D. Trotsky, and here from I. N. Smirnov, Trotsky's deputy in the USSR."⁽⁴³⁾ Poor Smirnov! He must have had a hard job giving instructions to the so-called Center while he was sitting cooling his heels in the government prisons from 1933 on, while the Center organized in the fall of 1932 did the most important and the most "outright talking" in 1933, that is, after Smirnov's imprisonment. There is no evidence that any of the accused Old Bolsheviks, ever talked to Trotsky after 1928, because while Dreitzer confesses that in 1931 he went to Berlin to make contact with Trotsky, the only thing he did "in Berlin he twice met Sedov (Trotsky's son) in a cafe in Leipziger Strasse."⁽⁴⁴⁾ (Concerning the testimony of Olberg, David and the other unknown defendants meeting Trotsky, more later.)

It was rather careless of Sedov and also careful on the part of Dreitzer to go to Berlin for the purpose of "ascertaining Trotsky's attitude on the question of a block between the Trotskyites and the Zinovievites," that is, the formation of the terroristic Center, and discuss the matters nowhere else than in a cafe in Leipziger Strasse. A cafe without a name located on Leipziger Strasse is a very hard place to disprove, as there are many places mentioned in this trial wholly disproven.

The State's Attorney himself must have noticed that there was too much talk and too little action on the part of the confessed terrorists because he turns to Zinoviev and asks:

VYSHINSKY: Accused Zinoviev, in the summer of 1932 had you already come to an understanding about the necessity of organizing terroristic acts, or was there only talk about these terroristic acts?

ZINOVIEV: As far as I can picture it, the situation was as follows: With the Trotskyites this was already a mature decision, based on the absolutely precise instructions of Trotsky given a fairly long time before that, and they had taken a number of practical steps."⁽⁴⁵⁾

Now, here you have it! Vyshinsky is put at ease. There was more than talk; as a matter of fact, Trotsky gave "absolutely precise instructions" (to whom, when and where does not matter), and they, the Trotskyites, had taken a number of practical steps. (What these practical steps were is of no consequence, the main thing is that there was some more talk, some more conversation before and during the trial."

Here Smirnov is again grabbed, the State's Attorney makes a sudden tackle at him when he asks of Zinoviev;

(43) Ibid, p. 51

(44) Ibid, p. 52

(45) Ibid, p. 53

"VYSHINSKY: Did Smirnov display any activity in relation to this, or not?

ZINOVIEV: Smirnov, in my opinion, displayed more activity than any one else, and we regarded him as the undisputed head of the Trotskyite part of the bloc, as the man best informed about Trotsky's views, and full sharing these views."⁽⁴⁶⁾

We, of course, may be permitted to draw the logical conclusion and ask if Smirnov, who was in the penitentiary from the beginning of January, 1933 "displayed more activity than any one else," how little terroristic activity was displayed on the part of the others?

Smirnov is apparently not one of those to whom the reporters refer as "bright pupils." Nor is he one of those who vied with the others to confess the murders, but to the contrary, he is a poor pupil and because of this attitude, the State's Attorney calls for testimony against him.

"VYSHINSKY: Did Smirnov display persistence during these negotiations, did he press for terroristic acts?

ZINOVIEV: As I have already said, he heatedly and with much persuasion insisted on the commission of terroristic acts, although there was no need to persuade us. We were already convinced."⁽⁴⁷⁾

The State's Attorney still seems to be bothered about the fact that no acts were proven. Therefore, he comes out in an outright manner and asks the "court to note that the testimony of Zinoviev, Reingold and Dreitzer establishes that after 1932 practical preparations were made for terroristic acts."⁽⁴⁸⁾ Where, how and when these practical preparations were made is again not the purpose of the trial to establish. It is further interesting to note the small slip-up. At this time Vyshinsky referred to the testimony of Reingold as already presented, though this statement is followed by the:

* * * *

TESTIMONY OF REINGOLD, which brings out the fact that he was "one of the most active members of the Zinovievite underground counter-revolutionary organization."⁽⁴⁹⁾ Reingold appears to be one of the activists who went further than just conversing, because he was "invited by Zinoviev and Kamenev to take part in drawing up the platform of the counter-revolutionary organization."⁽⁵⁰⁾ (Incidentally Mrachkowsky testified that they had no platform.)⁽⁵¹⁾ Whether Reingold accepted the invitation and did something is not shown by any testimony; however, the State's Attorney claims that Reingold "personally directed one of the groups which was preparing to assassinate Comrade Stalin."⁽⁵²⁾ What the prepa-

(46) Ibid, p. 53

(47) Ibid, p. 54

(48) Ibid, p. 54

(49) Ibid, p. 54

(50) Ibid, p. 54

(51) Ibid, p. 41

(52) Ibid, p. 54

rations were are details left entirely outside the scope of the trial.

Reingold, while accusing his co-defendants, does that as an apparent personal favor to them, because he testifies about his long standing acquaintance with Kamenev since 1923, with **Sokolnikov** since 1919—Sokolnikov whose name appears for the first time connected with that of the so-called Trotskyite-Zinovievite center. Reingold even claims that “Dreitzer was my personal friend; I was in very close touch with Mrachkovsky I also knew I. N. Smirnov very well. I was in close contact with Zinoviev.”⁽⁵³⁾ Because of his long-standing acquaintance and because of the close contact, Reingold is eminently fitted to say that he “can confirm that Zinoviev, Kamenev, Bakayev, Evdokimov, Smirnov, Mrachkovsky, Ter-Vaganyan and Sokolnikov were members of the Trotskyite-Zinovievite center.” Apparently the State’s Attorney became impatient with the individual identification of the defendants, and so obtained from Reingold a wholesale implication.

Reingold goes even further. He did not only identify his co-defendants as participants in the terroristic “conversations,” but he also brought in the names of others because “negotiations were carried on about joint activity with the ‘Leftists’: **Shatskin, Lominadze, and Sten,** and also with the representatives of the ‘Right deviation’: **Rykov, Bukharin and Tomsky.**”⁽⁵⁴⁾ This is the first time that the trial reaches out to embrace in addition to the so-called Trotskyites and Zinovievites, the Bukharinites, holding a right wing position.

Reingold appears to be the brightest of all “bright pupils” because he explained just about everything. There are people who still recall the historical fact that Trotsky and Zinoviev did not cooperate after the capitulation of Zinoviev and Kamenev to Stalin; therefore, it is necessary to explain how it came about that Zinoviev and the Zinovievites did now form the so-called Center with the Trotskyites. Reingold does the explaining when he says “the Zinovievites uniting with the Trotskyites arose as far back as 1931. Meeting Zinoviev in his apartment and in his villa that year, I heard him say that it was a pity that we had fallen out with Trotsky.”⁽⁵⁵⁾ (“It was a pity” said Zinoviev, and that proves the existence of the Center.)

Reingold also explain the irreconcilable deviation between Marxism and terrorism when he refers to the purported statement of Zinoviev allegedly made in 1932 that “although terror is incompatible with Marxism, at the present moment these considerations

(53) Ibid, p. 54

(54) Ibid, p. 55

(55) Ibid, p. 55

must be abandoned (this is a "suspended" Marxian theory). There are no other methods available of fighting the leaders of the Party and the Government at the present time. Stalin combines in himself all the strength and firmness of the present Party leadership."⁽⁵⁶⁾ (See the bouquets being thrown to Stalin!) According to Reingold, "Kamenev enlarged on this theory and said that the former methods of fighting, namely, **attempts to win the masses**, combinations with the leaders of the Rightists, and banking on economic difficulties, **have failed**. That is why the only method of struggle available is terroristic acts against Stalin and his closest comrades-in-arms."⁽⁵⁷⁾

The logic of Zinoviev, the Marxist, is that while Marxism is incompatible with terrorism, the theory must be suspended so that one may remain a Marxist while following a terroristic path. Kamenev's logic seems to be that "**after attempts to win the masses have failed,**" the next step is to remove the leader who "combines in himself all the strength and firmness of the present Party leadership." Kamenev must have hoped to win the masses—which he by **political means failed to win**—by removing the leadership which the masses trusted and followed. Vain hope that is founded on such illogic!

Reingold is rather verbose in his testimony and adopts the jargon of New York, St. Louis, and Chicago gangsters when he talks about "the job." He claims that "it was decided to create an organization of the most carefully chosen and resolute people who could go right through with the job."⁽⁵⁸⁾ What kind of a "job" is not explained, nor does the State's Attorney inquire into that. Apparently the job was to converse some more and probably to proceed to "outright talking."

Reingold goes on to implicate the so-called "Rightist leaders" in the complicity of conversation and negotiations when he states that such "negotiations were carried on with the leaders of the Rightists: Bukharin and Tomsy. After these negotiations Zinoviev definitely said that he had found common political ground with Tomsy in appraising the policy of our country." The fact that no evidence was presented of any terroristic act committed by the Left or Right is of no consequence, because Reingold goes on and testifies that "there was an interruption in our terroristic activities between the autumn of 1932 and the summer of 1933,"⁽⁵⁹⁾ resulting from the fact "that Zinoviev and Kamenev were compromised in connection with the Ryutin case," and both were exiled;

⁽⁵⁶⁾ Ibid, p. 55

⁽⁵⁷⁾ Ibid, p. 55

⁽⁵⁸⁾ Ibid, p. 55

⁽⁵⁹⁾ Ibid, p. 56

but it was decided in advance that the exiles should show repentance (false repentance, of course.) After having been generously forgiven by Stalin, they were, as stated by Zinoviev, to "crawl on the belly into the Party," so that they could again go on with their "terroristic conversation." Here the State's Attorney comes to the help of Reingold when he sums up as follows:

"VYSHINSKY: I understand then from what you say that both Kamenev and Zinoviev proceeded along two lines: on the one hand they did all they possibly could to display their loyalty, their devotion to the Party, while on the other hand it was they who were preparing terrorist acts against the leaders of the Party. Is that right?

REINGOLD: Yes.

VYSHINSKY: Accused Zinoviev, Reingold's testimony implicates you in a grave crime. Do you admit your guilt?

ZINOVIEV: Yes.

VYSHINSKY: Accused Kamenev. I put the same question to you.

KAMENEV: I answer in the affirmative.

VYSHINSKY: So you confirm that you had such a monstrous plan?

KAMENEV: Yes, there was such a monstrous plan.

VYSHINSKY: You worked out this monstrous plan and confirm this now?

KAMENEV: Yes, I do." (60)

One must agree with the reporters present at the trial that the defendants were testifying as "bright pupils" do when the inspector of the school appears. One is rather taken aback if he knows that the "bright pupils" include the life-long collaborators of Lenin, the President of the Third International and the Vice-Chairman of the People's Commissariat of the USSR—Zinoviev and Kamenev; especially because Kamenev turns out, by his own confession, to be also a brigand ready to rob the State Bank. The State's Attorney, **confessing for Reingold**, states that "it is ascertained that Kamenev and Zinoviev commissioned Reingold to carry out a number of responsible tasks, in particular that of creating abroad a special fund for the purpose of financing the terrorist organization in the event of Kamenev and Zinoviev being deported abroad." (61) After the State's Attorney so testifies, he turns to Kamenev.

"VYSHINSKY: Accused Kamenev, was there any such talk?

KAMENEV: This was in 1929 when I and Zinoviev presumed that we might be deported abroad like Trotsky and therefore we thought it necessary to create abroad some fund for

(60) Ibid, p. 57

(61) Ibid, p. 57

the purpose of maintaining and continuing the work which we had been carrying on here.

VYSHINSKY: From what resources did you think you could set up this fund?

KAMENEV: We had certain resources in view.

VYSHINSKY: Did you appeal to Reingold for assistance?

KAMENEV: Not for assistance. We simply instructed Reingold and Arkus to create this fund. Reingold and Arkus were financial officials under Sokolnikov.

VYSHINSKY: Did you propose to organize this fund at the expense of the State?

KAMENEV: At any rate not out of Reingold's personal fund.

VYSHINSKY: To put it more exactly, you intended to rob the State." (62)

Kamenev does not only implicate the Center and does not only confess the intention to rob the State, but he also implicates others not on trial—**Arkus** and Sokolnikov, the former Soviet ambassador to London.

* * * *

DURING THE TESTIMONY OF BAKAYEV, repeated reference is made to him as one of the absolutely reliable persons belonging to the Center, though it is shown subsequently that he failed every time his co-conspirators relied upon him. Bakayev states that "particularly intense terroristic activity was carried on in August 1932 and in the autumn of 1934." (63) What these intense terroristic activities were is not brought out; but as it appears from further testimony they did not go beyond "some more conversation" and "outright talking." According to the State's Attorney, Bakayev stated that "in October 1934 an attempt on the life of Stalin was organized in Moscow under the direction of Kamenev, Evdokimov and himself, in which he, Bakayev, took a direct part. The attempt failed. When the attempt failed, Bakayev went to Kamenev and told him about it." (64) So there was, according to the State's Attorney, an attempt upon the life of Stalin. This attempt failed, but the failure must have been such a colossal one that no one even knew anything about the attempt, no newspaper wrote about the attempt nor about its failure; so Bakayev had to inform Kamenev that the attempt had failed. When informed, the former Vice-Chairman of the People's Commissariat said: "A pity, let's hope that next time we'll be more successful." (65)

This defendant, who was allegedly in direct charge of the Kirov assassination, relates his visit to Leningrad and his meeting with Levin, Mandelstamm, Sossitsky, Rumyanstev, Kotolynov and Myas-

(62) Ibid, pp. 57, 58 (63) Ibid, p. 60

(64) Ibid, p. 60

(65) Ibid, p. 60

nikov ⁽⁶⁶⁾ in Levin's apartment, where he was introduced to Nikolayev. It is interesting to note that this man, in direct charge of the organization of the Kirov assassination for two years, was first introduced to the actual terrorist only in the fall of 1934, *i.e.* just prior to the assassination. Personal acquaintance was apparently substituted by "conversations" and "outright talking," because Bakayev states that: "Levin said that Nikolayev was an old member of the **Young Communist League** whom Evdokimov had known for many years and whom he had given the best recommendation as an absolutely reliable person. Nikolayev gave me the impression of being a determined and convinced terrorist." ⁽⁶⁷⁾

While in Leningrad Bakayev learned that the so-called terrorist group "had established a regular watch over Kirov and that Kirov was so well covered there would be no difficulty in killing him." ⁽⁶⁸⁾ He was also informed, and this time by Nikolayev, that the latter "had succeeded in finding out the exact time when Kirov traveled from his apartment to the Smolny, that he could kill Kirov either near the Smolny or in the Smolny itself." ⁽⁶⁹⁾ But apparently Nikolayev could not, for years, make up his mind whether to kill Kirov near or in the Smolny. Therefore, preparations took from 1932 to 1934.

It was reported repeatedly by reliable newspapers that Nikolayev was a secretary of Kirov. In the testimony, however, nothing must appear concerning such relationship because if Nikolayev, as a secretary, had personal contact with Kirov, it would have been difficult for the State's Attorney to explain the long delay between the so-called laying of the plan and its execution. Neither could it be explained why Nikolayev allegedly stated to Bakayev that he "had tried to get an appointment with Kirov so as to shoot him but had failed to get an appointment." ⁽⁷⁰⁾ One usually does not get an appointment with someone "so as to shoot him."

Bakayev, to whom the State's Attorney repeatedly refers in the indictment, as well as in his closing argument, as the most determined terrorist, seems to be rather meek and to be eating out of the hand of the State's Attorney when he was asked:

VYSHINSKY: In 1932 you received instruction to organize the assassination of Comrade Stalin. Was that so?

BAKAYEV: Yes.

VYSHINSKY: Did you take a number of practical measures to carry out these instructions, namely, to organize several attempts on the life of Comrade Stalin, which failed through no fault of yours?

⁽⁶⁶⁾ Ibid, pp. 60, 61

⁽⁶⁷⁾ Ibid, p. 61

⁽⁶⁹⁾ Ibid, p. 61

⁽⁷⁰⁾ Ibid, p. 61

⁽⁶⁸⁾ Ibid, p. 60

BAKAYEV: That is so.

VYSHINSKY: Besides, did you take part in the assassination of Comrade Kirov?

BAKAYEV: Yes." (71)

No details are volunteered, nor are any asked by the State's Attorney concerning the several attempts on the life of Comrade Stalin. As far as the record goes, these several attempts were all exhausted by discussion, and nothing more. In summing up the testimony of Bakayev, just as in summing up all other testimonies, the State's Attorney and one of the defendants concluded:

"VYSHINSKY: The decisive part was played by you, Trotsky and Kamenev. Accused Kamenev, do you associate yourself with Zinoviev's statement that the principal organizers were you, Trotsky and Zinoviev, and that Bakayev played the part of a practical organizer?

KAMENEV: Yes." (72)

this makes the role of Trotsky clear and the purpose of the trial still clearer.

* * * *

THE TESTIMONY OF PICKEL brings out, according to the statement of the State's Attorney, that "Pickel, supplementing Bakayev's testimony, states that in the autumn of 1933, Bogdan made another attempt on the life of Comrade Stalin." (73) Here is reference made to another attempt on the life of Comrade Stalin, though the most careful scrutiny of the Record does not show any trace of any previous or subsequent attempt. Proof of such attempts are details, of no apparent interest to the prosecution.

* * * *

THE TESTIMONY OF KAMENEV could have been made a very short one, but for the desire of the State's Attorney to prolong it. Kamenev starts with the categorical statement that "the terrorist conspiracy was organized and guided by myself, Zinoviev and Trotsky." This statement appears to be sufficient for his conviction, if confession alone is sufficient, but Kamenev was prompted to do his utmost, to do even the impossible, not to be expected even from the brightest pupils of the State's Attorney. Kamenev was apparently aware of the fact that "it was no use counting on any kind of serious internal difficulties to secure the overthrow of the leadership which has guided the country through extremely difficult stages, through industrialization and collectivization." (74) Kamenev was **"without any hope of obtaining any mass support whatsoever."** (75) Nevertheless, he proceeded to plan

(71) Ibid, p. 61
(74) Ibid, p. 65

(72) Ibid, p. 62
(75) Ibid, p. 65

(73) Ibid, p. 63

terroristic acts hoping against hope that after assassinating the "leadership which had guided the country through extremely difficult stages," mass support would come to him. Why and how is not stated, not even inquired into.

Kamenev is ready to give credit where credit is due. He is ready to make Trotsky alone exclusively responsible for all the alleged and confessed acts of the accused:

"We carried on negotiation about the block with Smirnov, Mrachkovsky and Ter-Vaganyan, not as with men who independently issued political instruction. **They were of value to us as men who precisely repeated the instructions of Trotsky.**" (76)

Dates, places, persons are of no consequence whatsoever in this trial and they are mentioned as casual things, as when Kamenev states that "in the summer of 1932 a meeting" was held at Ilyinskoye. "At this meeting Zinoviev reported that the union with the Trotskyites, who had received Trotsky's personal instructions to commit terroristic acts, was an accomplished fact. At this very meeting Bakayev was instructed to carry out a terroristic act in Moscow, and Karev in Leningrad." (77) But what happened? Kamenev does tell us that "the exile of myself and Zinoviev somewhat held up the execution of our terroristic plans." (78) So a plan concocted in 1932 was "somewhat" delayed until at least December, 1934, but the accused, according to their own confessions, were engaged in historical acts—and two or three years are but a moment in the eyes of the Gods, or when measured by history.

Kamenev helps the State's Attorney in preparing evidence for new trials, if and when such trials shall be deemed necessary by the Government. He gives evidence against a second set of defendants, or at least helps the prosecutor holding the sword of Damocles over persons not yet drawn into the conspiracy. Kamenev states: "Among the leaders of the conspiracy **another person may be named** who in point of fact was one of the leaders, but who, in view of the special plans we made in regard to him, was not drawn into the practical work. I refer to **Sokolnikov.**" (79) Not only Sokolnikov but others are pointed out by Kamenev: "Knowing that we might be discovered, we designated a small group to continue our terroristic activities. For this purpose we designated Sokolnikov. It seemed to us that on the side of the Trotskyites this role could be successfully performed by **Serebryakov** and **Radek.**" (80) Serebryakov and Radek, together with Sokolnikov, are made part of the second set not yet on trial, as well as **Shlyapnikov,**

(76) Ibid, p. 66
(79) Ibid, p. 67

(77) Ibid, p. 66
(80) Ibid, p. 67

(78) Ibid, p. 66

and **Medvedyev** with whom Kamenev "and Zinoviev maintained constant contact,"⁽⁸¹⁾ and who are designated by Kamenev as the "former **Workers' Opposition Group.**" Still others are pointed out. Kamenev "personally maintained relations with **Tomsky** and **Bukharin** and sounded their political sentiment. They sympathized with us. When I asked **Tomsky** about Rykov's frame of mind, he replied, 'Rykov thinks the same as I do.'⁽⁸²⁾ **So Rykov, as well as Tomsky, may stand charged with "thinking."**

The gem of all testimonies was presented by Kamenev in his colloquy with Vyshinsky:

VYSHINSKY: What appraisal should be given of the articles and statements you wrote in 1933, in which you expressed loyalty to the Party? Deception?

KAMENEV: No, worse than deception.

VYSHINSKY: Perfidy?

KAMENEV: Worse.

VYSHINSKY: Worse than deception, worse than perfidy—find the word. Treason?

KAMENEV: You have found it.

VYSHINSKY: Accused Zinoviev, do you confirm that?

ZINOVIEV: Yes.

VYSHINSKY: Treason, perfidy, double-dealing?

ZINOVIEV: Yes."⁽⁸³⁾

Social ideals, Marxist convictions, even good upright character is negated by the alleged confessions of the former Vice-Chairman of the Peoples Commissariat when discussing these problems with Vyshinsky:

VYSHINSKY: Consequently, your struggle against the leaders of the Party and the government was guided by motives of a personal base character—by the thirst for personal power?

KAMENEV: Yes, by the thirst for power of our group.

VYSHINSKY: Don't you think that this has nothing in common with social ideals?

KAMENEV: It has as much in common as revolution has with counter-revolution.

VYSHINSKY: That is, you are on the side of counter-revolution?

KAMENEV: Yes.

VYSHINSKY: Consequently, you clearly perceive that you are fighting against socialism?

KAMENEV: We clearly perceive that we are fighting against the leaders of the Party and of the government who are leading the country to socialism.

VYSHINSKY: Thereby you are fighting socialism as well, aren't you?

(81) Ibid, p. 68

(82) Ibid, p. 68

(83) Ibid, p. 68

KAMENEV: You are drawing the conclusion of an historian and prosecutor." (84)

The last statement of Kamenev, even though he appears to be playing the role of the "bright pupil," may be nothing else but a "pulling of the leg" of the prosecutor. What else can it mean that Vyshinsky is "drawing the conclusion of an historian and prosecutor?"

* * * *

IN HIS TESTIMONY ZINOVIEV, as the State's Attorney recites, proceeds "relating the history of the restoration of the united Trotskyite-Zinovievite center in 1932." (85) The history thus presented by the State's Attorney is not quite in keeping with the facts. The statement that Zinoviev "emphasizes that **there never were any material differences between the Trotskyites and Zinovievites** does not need any disproving, since the opposite is quite clearly known to any and all who ever studied the period of 1923-1936 of the Russian revolution.

Zinoviev knows, and possibly the State's Attorney has some inkling of the fact, that there were unbridgeable differences between Trotsky and Zinoviev. These differences, which permitted no rapprochement between the two, are just swept aside in passing when the bright pupil, Zinoviev, states: "Our differences with Trotsky after the Fifteenth Congress **when Trotsky used the word 'treachery' in relation to me and Kamenev, were really slight zig-zags, petty disagreements.**" (86) To one, like Zinoviev—who discovered the suspension of the Marxian theory pertaining to its antagonism to terrorism—treachery may be a petty disagreement, but to others it must seem more serious.

History does and will testify that Zinoviev's statements, whether they were made voluntarily or because of his eighteen months of imprisonment, are not facts. It is not true that "from 1928 to 1932 there was not for one moment any real difference between Zinoviev and Trotsky."

Zinoviev concurs with Kamenev in bringing in the names of the "Workers' Opposition"—Shlyapnikov and Medvedyev—and of the "leftists"—Lominadze, Shatskin, Sten—and of the "**individuals**"—Smilga and Sokolnikov. There is a fine distinction made between those who are brought in by the confessors' testimony directly, and those implicated "but only to a certain extent"—as Sokolnikov; thus permitting a grading of the subsequent accused. Zinoviev testifies that he "often told untruths" but that now he is telling

(84) Ibid, p. 69

(85) Ibid, p. 71

(86) Ibid, p. 71

the whole truth. Evidently Vyshinsky has certain doubts and so he proceeds to question him:

"VYSHINSKY: Are you telling the whole truth now?

ZINOVIEV: Now I am telling the whole truth to the end.

VYSHINSKY: Remember that on January 15-16, 1935, at the session of the Military Collegium of the Supreme Court, you also asserted that you were telling the whole truth.

ZINOVIEV: Yes. On January 15-16 I did not tell the whole truth.

VYSHINSKY: You did not tell the truth, but you maintained that you were telling the truth." (87)

The answer leaves the State's Attorney in a dilemma as to whether or not one who once told untrue stories while he maintained they were true can be believed now just because he says so—even though his story now is different from that previously told. Vyshinsky, as we shall see, recalls this dilemma in his closing arguments.

Zinoviev is one of the most ardent of the confessors, for the obvious purpose of implicating Smirnov. He presents Smirnov as one in charge of the group (while in jail?), as when he states: "I. N. Smirnov entirely agreed with this instruction (pertaining to the unification of the groups) and carried it out wholeheartedly and with conviction." (88) As if "a counter-revolutionary gang of assassins" could have any conviction.

The State's Attorney, with the cooperation of Zinoviev, presents another gem:

"VYSHINSKY: Thus, summing up your testimony, we may draw the conclusion that in the organization of the Trotskyite-Zinovievite terrorist block and center, the decisive part was played, on the one hand, by you, as the leader of the Zinovievites, and, on the other, by Trotsky through his representatives?

ZINOVIEV: That is correct.

VYSHINSKY: At the time Trotsky's principal representative and even deputy in the U.S.S.R. was I. N. Smirnov?

ZINOVIEV: That is correct.

VYSHINSKY: Was the recognition of the necessity of terrorism the decisive condition for uniting the Trotskyites and Zinovievites?

ZINOVIEV: Yes." (89)

It is more than obvious that the purpose of the testimony is not to relate any facts or acts, if such facts or acts existed, but to bring into the record certain conversations so as to prove Trotsky's leadership in the alleged conspiracy. The State's Attorney does

(87) *Ibid.*, p. 72

(88) *Ibid.*, p. 72

(89) *Ibid.*, p. 73

not bother to go into any details, but just relates that Zinoviev testified "as to what practical steps were taken in preparation for the assassination of the leaders of the party."⁽⁹⁰⁾ There is information neither as to Zinoviev's testimony nor as to the proof of the practical steps which were allegedly testified to.

Every so often one sees the real purpose of the confessions when the former chairman of the Third International, Zinoviev, presents statements studded with self-incrimination, self-abuse, as that: "we continued **our tactics**, which **represented a combination of ever subtler forms of perfidious double-dealing with the preparation of the conspiracy.**"⁽⁹¹⁾ It is hard to believe that the defendants also confessed that they considered Trotsky as their superior in every respect. It is incredible to reconcile such a statement with their present attitude, because now all of the defendants, most particularly Zinoviev, abuse and slander Trotsky and the Trotskyites. When Zinoviev speaks about his co-defendant, M. Lurye, he says: "I knew that M. Lurye was a Trotskyite and not a Trotskyite only, for **when he spoke one could even hear the language of a fascist.**"⁽⁹²⁾ Vyshinsky is interested in learning how one hears the language of a fascist, therefore he inquires:

"VYSHINSKY: In what did his fascism show itself?

ZINOVIEV: His fascism showed itself when he said that in a situation like the present we must resort to the use of every possible means."⁽⁹³⁾

Zinoviev here forgets that in XXXII, 252, he is purported to be saying to the same M. Lurye, (who was apparently disturbed about making connections with the German Secret Police:)

"**What is there in this to disturb you? You, are a historian, Moissei Ilych, you know the case of Lassalle and Bismarck, when Lassalle wanted to use Bismarck in the interests of the revolution.**"

"...By means of this historical parallel," added M. Lurye, "Zinoviev wanted to prove the possibility and the necessity of utilizing an alliance with the National-Socialists in the fight against the C.P.S.U. and the Soviet Government."⁽⁹⁴⁾

Even bright pupils slip-up sometimes. The slip-up is to be corrected by a belated explanatory attempt of Zinoviev and the State's Attorney.⁽⁹⁵⁾

* * * *

THE ROLE OF THE FOREIGN TROTSKYITES.

Zinoviev, performing in cooperation with the State's Attorney, does a good job. Not only does he bring in on every turn the

(90) Ibid, p. 73

(93) Ibid, p. 75

(91) Ibid, p. 74

(94) Ibid, p. 28

(92) Ibid, p. 75

(95) Ibid, p. 76

name of Trotsky and the Trotskyites in general, but even some of the foreign International Communists. It seems from the testimony that because of their standing as International Communists they must be dragged down; their names must be brought into contempt before the workers of the world.

Zinoviev allegedly discussed terroristic acts with M. Lurye, and the State's Attorney sums up the testimony of Zinoviev: "They discussed the terrorist instructions of Trotsky which M. Lurye had received in Berlin through **Ruth Fischer** and **Maslov**."⁽⁹⁶⁾ Here again no time, place, or other evidence is needed; just a statement on the run and Ruth Fischer and Maslov have been, at last in the opinion of the State's Attorney, proved to be the co-workers of the German Fascist Secret Police. There are however people who want more than such proof as to Fischer and Maslov, whose names have been connected with the front rank of the international revolutionary workers for the past twenty years.

Zinoviev, who was considered by all leaders of the Russian revolution as possibly the most talented speaker, shows some signs of his talent, during the trial. He is if nothing else, verbose some of the time during the examination, while most of the time he is satisfied with answering the questions of the State's Attorney by "yes" and "correct." He goes into detail whenever details are needed for the purposes of the trial. So he tells us that "he took part in this affair (preparing the terroristic acts) and that he knew of two attempts on the life of Comrade Stalin."⁽⁹⁷⁾ To show when, where, and how these attempts were committed is apparently not the duty of the prosecution. Knowledge, conversation, talk—they are sufficient in the opinion of the State's Attorney to convict, and he must have known what was to be sufficient.

* * * *

THE EXAMINATION OF SMIRNOV shows that he is a rather hard nut to crack. In spite of all the attempts of the State's Attorney, in spite of all accusations of his co-defendants, Smirnov remains the only non-confessor. The testimony of Safanova,⁽⁹⁸⁾ Smirnov's former wife, was expected by the State's Attorney to break down Smirnov. She is used to illustrate "I. N. Smirnov's attitude to terrorism."⁽⁹⁹⁾ She is here to tell that in December 1932, I. N. Smirnov "categorically confirmed the opinion that Stalin must be assassinated, that Stalin would be assassinated." Apparently the only reason for Smirnov's arrest—on January 1st, 1933—was his categoric conviction as to the need for assassinating Stalin,

⁽⁹⁶⁾ Ibid, p. 75

⁽⁹⁷⁾ Ibid, p. 76

⁽⁹⁸⁾ Ibid, pp. 76-78 ⁽⁹⁹⁾ Ibid, p. 77

expressed one month prior to his arrest. The State's Attorney himself admitted that **"Smirnov denies that he had passed on to Ter-Vaganyan, Mrachkovsky and Safanova, Trotsky's instruction to adopt terrorism. He also denies that, when Mrachkovsky returned after his talk with Stalin, he spoke of the necessity of assassinating Stalin."**⁽¹⁰⁰⁾ However, the denial does not bother the State's Attorney. If anyone has any doubts as to the purpose of Safanova's examination, the State's Attorney will dispel such doubts in saying: "the evidence of the accused (of the accused . . . ?) and of witnesses utterly exposes Smirnov as one of the principal leaders of terrorism against leaders of the party and of the Soviet Government, which Smirnov pursued on the direct instructions of Trotsky."⁽¹⁰¹⁾

One is justified to ask whether or not the other allegations of State are just as "utterly exposed" as that of Smirnov's participation in the alleged terroristic conspiracy. (The prosecution itself admits that Smirnov, from January 1, 1933 on, spent the time in the jails of the State against which he was allegedly conspiring.)

This utter lack of proof, in spite of the utter "exposé" against this defendant, is best seen from the testimony of Smirnov who is introduced by the State's Attorney as "one of the leaders of the Trotskyite organization since its formation, the closest friend of Trotsky and the actual organizer and leader of the underground Trotskyite counter-revolutionary activities in the U.S.S.R., who maintained personal connections with Trotsky and the Trotskyite organizations abroad. Smirnov, Trotsky's deputy in the U.S.S.R.,"⁽¹⁰²⁾ must have been better than ambidextrous, because if he was the leader of the underground group, he was such leader from within the prison. He not only maintained personal connections with the Trotskyites abroad, but he did so from beyond prison-walls.

The State's Attorney admits that Smirnov "denies his own direct part in the terroristic activities and only partly admits his crimes."⁽¹⁰³⁾ and testifies for Smirnov that he in 1931 went abroad; "in Berlin he met Sedov, Trotsky's son and agent. Smirnov claims that this was an 'accidental' meeting. During his 'accidental' meeting, Smirnov hastened to make arrangements with Sedov about their next meeting which took place in Smirnov's lodgings."⁽¹⁰⁴⁾ Apparently Smirnov's lodging was in a cafe in Leipziger Strasse, because the indictment states that: "In Berlin he (Smirnov) twice met Sedov (Trotsky's son) in a cafe in Leipziger Strasse."⁽¹⁰⁵⁾

In discussion with Smirnov, Sedov expressed what Smirnov

(100) Ibid, p. 77
(103) Ibid, p. 79

(101) Ibid, p. 78
(104) Ibid, p. 79

(102) Ibid, p. 79
(105) Ibid, p. 52

"tries to make (it) appear (that this was,) Sedov's own opinion with which he, Smirnov, allegedly did not agree." (106) Nevertheless, Smirnov committed high treason because he "right there promised Sedov to establish communications with him and to establish 'informational' communication with Trotsky." (107)

So at last we know the charges against Smirnov. In addition to that brought forward in the indictment, he is charged with having promised to communicate with Sedov and to establish "informational" communication with Trotsky. Maybe being in "informational" communication with Trotsky is a crime against the state, but a perusal of the Criminal Code of the Soviet Union will not find any such crime defined.

When Smirnov states that he did not expect that Sedov's opinion, to whomever it would be communicated, would be accepted as that of Trotsky's or directives given by Trotsky, the State's Attorney refutes him with the testimony of Mrachkovsky who apparently accepted Sedov's opinion as that of Trotsky. Smirnov does not even admit the existence of the Center, however subtly the State's Attorney conducts his examination.

"VYSHINSKY: So when did you leave the Center?"

SMIRNOV: I did not intend to resign: there was nothing to resign from.

VISHINSKY: Did the Center exist?

SMIRNOV: What sort of a Center...?" (108)

Smirnov does not know anything about the Center, but the favorite confessors, the bright pupils come to the help of the State's Attorney:

"VYSHINSKY: Mrachkovsky, did the Center exist?"

MRACHKOVSKY: Yes.

VYSHINSKY: Zinoviev, did the Center exist?"

ZINOVIEV: Yes.

VYSHINSKY: Evdokimov, did the Center exist?"

EVDOKIMOV: Yes.

VYSHINSKY: Bakayev, did the center exist?"

BAKAYEV: Yes.

VYSHINSKY: How, then, Smirnov, can you take the liberty to maintain that no center existed?" (109)

One wonders how Smirnov, after being in the custody of the State from January 1, 1933 on, can have the moral courage to deny the existence of the non-existing Center when Zinoviev, Kamenev and others in jail for only eighteen months so readily confess. If Smirnov does not want to accept leadership in what he considers a non-existing group, then such leadership is given to

(106) Ibid, p. 79

(107) Ibid, p. 79

(108) Ibid, p. 81

(109) Ibid, p. 81

him willy-nilly, as when Olberg testifies about his alleged meeting with Sedov: "Sedov spoke with great respect of Smirnov as the leader of the Trotskyite organization in the USSR."⁽¹¹⁰⁾

When Smirnov denies the acts credited to him by the State's Attorney, then the State's Attorney concluded the matter by stating: "**The accused persists in his evasions and tries to deny the part he played as the leader of the Trotskyite organization.**"⁽¹¹¹⁾

There is a summing up by the State's Attorney to the effect that in spite of Smirnov's denial, there were certain facts elicited from him, and that he was forced to confess certain things previously denied. However, even the State's Attorney must admit: "But the accused makes this confession only after the prosecution has exposed him by absolutely incontrovertible facts," and if the State's Attorney says these facts are incontrovertible, then they must be such.

Smirnov is presented as the person who maintained personal contact with Trotsky, and the State's Attorney even accepts that as proven.

"VYSHINSKY: Did you have direct communication with Trotsky?

SMIRNOV: I had two addresses.

VYSHINSKY: I ask you, was there any communication?

SMIRNOV: If having addresses is called communication....

VYSHINSKY: What do you call it?

SMIRNOV: I said that I received two addresses.

VYSHINSKY: Did you maintain communication with Trotsky?

SMIRNOV: I had two addresses.

VYSHINSKY: Was there communication by mail with Trotsky?

SMIRNOV: There was communication by mail with Trotsky's son."⁽¹¹²⁾

There was something further when Smirnov stated that he wrote a letter to Trotsky and received a reply from him.⁽¹¹³⁾ What this letter and answer were about, when they were written is of no consequence to the prosecutor. For him it is sufficient that Trotsky's name is mentioned, and another stone is laid to the monumental edifice to be built up by the trial against Trotsky.

When Smirnov is asked: "Did you give instructions to the group?" and Smirnov answers: "No, I did not," then again Mrachvosky and others will belie Smirnov's statement, and that denial is more than sufficient for the State. When, in contradiction to Smirnov, the others agree with the State's Attorney, the latter turns to Smirnov and asks him: "Accused Smirnov, do you think

⁽¹¹⁰⁾ *Ibid.*, p. 82

⁽¹¹¹⁾ *Ibid.*, p. 82

⁽¹¹²⁾ *Ibid.*, p. 83

⁽¹¹³⁾ *Ibid.*, p. 84

that Ter-Vaganyan, Mrachkovsky and Evdokimov are telling untruths;" Smirnov's answer is silence which may be taken by the State's Attorney as an agreement with him, but may also be taken as a sign of strength of character which does not permit Smirnov to call the confessing co-defendants by their real name.

Smirnov had at last made some contradictory statements, which the State's Attorney considers necessary to have contradicted further, and in turn by every one of the co-defendants. The change from the first to the later part of Smirnov's testimony is apparent. While through most of his testimony he clearly denied any and all of the accusations even after all the confessors, his co-defendants, contradicted him, at the end he becomes contradictory to himself and to his own testimony.

Page after page, Smirnov consistently denies any participation in any terroristic act, denies any orders or instructions as to terrorism coming from Trotsky. After he denied even his knowledge of any terroristic Center, which the co-defendants agree was organized,⁽¹¹⁴⁾ there was a sudden change when Vyshinsky turned to Smirnov:

"VYSHINSKY: What then do you admit?

SMIRNOV: I admit that I belonged to the under-ground Trotskyite organization, joined the bloc, joined the center of this bloc, met Sedov in Berlin in 1931, listened to his opinion on terrorism and passed this opinion on Moscow. I admit that I received Trotsky's instructions on terrorism from Gaven and, although not in agreement with them, I communicated them to the Zinovievites through Ter-Vaganyan."⁽¹¹⁵⁾

Though the above statement of Smirnov appears as a quotation from the testimony, one wonders whether there is anyone who ever did or will testify as the report presents Smirnov as testifying—just as a music box after being wound up and the catch released continues to grind until the machinery is unwound. Was it disgust? Was it utter hopelessness on the part of Smirnov? Was it a desire to escape further questions that makes him confess, was it an attempt on his part to make his testimony obviously improbable? It is difficult, if not impossible to say; but the fact that Smirnov's testimony was never considered an admission even by the State's Attorney will be seen from the latter's concluding argument and can be seen from the further fact that after Smirnov allegedly confessed, the State's Attorney felt it necessary to turn again to Ter-Vaganyan, Mrachkovsky, Dreitzer, Evdokimov and Kamenev,

(114) Ibid, p. 85

(115) Ibid, p. 85

who one by one contradicted Smirnov and agreed with the State's Attorney that Smirnov was the man responsible for all and everything, that Smirnov was the leader who have the instructions to organize the terrorist group.⁽¹¹⁶⁾

* * * *

THE EXAMINATION OF V. P. OLBERG makes one wonder who this man is. One wonders whether Kamenev in his closing speech referred to this man when he bemoaned his disgraceful end sitting in the dock with shady characters.⁽¹¹⁷⁾ Olberg is quite accommodating to the President of the Court who queries whether or not he confirms his principal "confession" of terroristic acts. Olberg "confirms it fully and completely."⁽¹¹⁸⁾

He claims connection with the German Trotskyite organization as of 1927-1928 and that he contacted Trotsky and Sedov in 1930 through Grilevich, the publisher of Trotsky's pamphlets in Germany.⁽¹¹⁹⁾

Olberg makes a statement concerning his visits to the Soviet Union; that terrorism was discussed **"after Trotsky's message in connection with Trotsky's being deprived of the citizenship of the USSR.** In this message Trotsky developed the idea that it was necessary to assassinate Stalin. This idea was **expressed** in the following words: **'Stalin must be removed.'**⁽¹²⁰⁾ If anyone doubts that "must be removed" means a directive from Trotsky that Stalin "must be assassinated," Olberg explains that it must mean as much even though it is not expressed more in detail. The proof of it is that Sedov stated to him: "Well, now you see, it cannot be expressed in a clearer way. It is a diplomatic wording."⁽¹²¹⁾

Insinuations, allusions may be of some help to the State's Attorney to mislead those who, heard for the first time during the trial reference made to the political, theoretical, and tactical controversies, which were carried on between Trotsky and Stalin. It might be of some help to mislead those who do not know the history of the Russian Opposition into believing that Trotsky actually wrote a letter recommending the assassination of Stalin. Those who still remember facts, cannot be misled even though most of the defendants testified to the existence of such a letter. Fortunately for those who want to know the truth Olberg's statement clarifies the situation and identifies the letter to which the defendants refer as allegedly containing Trotsky's recommendation as to terrorism.

Olberg identifies **the letter as "Trotsky's message in connection**

(116) Ibid, p. 86
(120) Ibid, p. 87.

(117) Ibid, pp. 169, 170
(121) Ibid, p. 87

(118) Ibid, p. 86

(119) Ibid, p. 86

with Trotsky's being deprived of the Citizenship of the the USSR" in which the idea of assassination of Stalin was expressed in the words: "Stalin must be removed." Yes, **the letter exists**. More than that, **the letter was published** by Trotsky and made available to anyone who cared to read it. It was printed in the March number of the *Bulletin of the Opposition* in the year of 1932. The letter actually written by Trotsky and dated March 1, 1932 was not sent through Gaven; it was not sent to Smirnov; it was not written in a German cinema magazine with invisible ink; to the contrary it was written for publication and addressed as an **"Open Letter to the Central Executive Committee of the Soviet Union."** The letter refers to the resolution of the Central Executive Committee of the U.S.S.R. of February 20, 1932. Trotsky by this resolution was deprived of his Russian citizenship. In his letter of March 1, 1932, Trotsky protests against the act of the Central Executive Committee, and stamps it an unpolitical and incorrect act of Stalin, to whom Trotsky, in the Open Letter, refers as follows:

"Stalin has led you into a blind alley. The only way out is through the ending of Stalinism. Trust must be placed in the working class; the proletarian advance guard must be put into a position to take stock of the whole Soviet organization, from top to bottom, by means of free criticism and mercilessly to clear away the accumulated rubbish. Lenin's last urgent advice must at last be followed: Stalin must be removed." (122)

Yes, **Trotsky** wrote the letter and he **recommended**—not to the conspirators who are now on trial, but—to **the Central Executive Committee of the Soviet Union that Stalin must be removed**. **The same recommendation was made by Lenin** in his last letter, sometimes referred to as **Lenin's Testament—a Confidential Communication**. Lenin's letter was to be read at the party Congress, but was suppressed, after having been discussed in the Central Executive Committee. (The suppression occurred while Stalin was General Secretary of the party.) Lenin, in his letter, expressed great misgivings concerning the "stability of the Central Committee" and he recommended "measures to prevent a split so far as such measures can be taken." He wrote:

"The fundamental factor in the matter of stability—from this point of view—are such members of the Central Committee as Stalin and Trotsky. The relation between them constitutes, in my opinion, a big half of the danger of that split, which might be avoided, Comrade Stalin, having become General Secretary, has concentrated an enormous power in his hands; and I am not sure that he always knows how to use

(122) *Bulletin of the Opposition*, March, 1932.

that power with sufficient caution. On the other hand, comrade Trotsky, as was proved by his struggle against the Central Committee in connection with the question of the People's Commissariat of Ways and Communications, is distinguished not only by his exceptional ability—he is, to be sure, the most able man in the present Central Committee—but also by his too far-reaching self-confidence and a disposition to be far too much attracted by the purely administrative side of affairs. These two qualities of the two most able leaders of the present Central Committee might, quite innocently, lead to a split, and if our party does not take measures to prevent it, a split might arise unexpectedly.” (123)

Lenin, just before his final illness, added a postscript dated January 4, 1923:

“Stalin is too rude, and this fault, entirely supportable in relations among us communists, becomes unsupportable in the office of General Secretary. Therefore, I propose to the comrades to find a way to remove Stalin from that position and appoint another man who in all respects differs from Stalin only in superiority—namely, more patient, more loyal, more polite and more attentive to comrades, less capricious, etc. This circumstances may seem an insignificant trifle, but I think that from the point of view of the relation between Stalin and Trotsky which I discussed above, it is not a trifle, or it is such a trifle as may acquire a decisive significance.” (124)

Olberg, Dreitzer, Mrachkovsky, are referring to Trotsky's letter and claim that Trotsky therein recommended the assassination of Stalin, while the letter—not produced at the trial—contains nothing more nor less than a quotation by Trotsky addressed to the Central Executive Committee of the Soviet Union, which quotation was taken from Lenin's last letter to his party, the party which he built up with the help of others, not the least among them Trotsky. Many people wonder why Trotsky's letter was not introduced in evidence. The answer is simple. One cannot be prosecuted, nor slandered for writing a letter quoting Lenin—at least, not in a court which claims to exist under the traditional teachings of the self-same Lenin.

Olberg is inexhaustable in confessing. He goes on to explain in detail how he was to go to the Soviet Union and how his difficulties in obtaining a passport were overcome. In the description of his difficulties, there were interesting sidelights thrown upon the real purpose of the trial, as, for instance, in the following discourse:

“VYSHINSKY: Connection between the German Trotskyites and the German police—was that systematic?

(123) Lenin's letter of December 25, 1922—Pioneer Publishers—The Suppressed Testament of Lenin, pp. 5, 6

(124) Ibid, pp. 6, 7

OLBERG: Yes, it was systematic and it was done with Trotsky's consent." (125)

Olberg does not confess directly his connection with the Gestapo, but does it otherwise:

"VYSHINSKY: So it can be said that you yourself admit connection with the Gestapo?

OLBERG: I do not deny this." (126)

Olberg claims to have gone to the USSR the first time at the end of March, 1933 and to have remained there until July, 1933. During his short sojourn, he lived in Moscow for six weeks and then "went to Stalinabad, where he obtained a position as teacher of history." (127) There is no reference whatsoever as to how it came about, and with whose help, the stranger Olberg obtained a teaching position in Stalinabad after having been in the USSR but for six weeks. Besides the connections which he claimed he had with Trotsky, Olberg must have had others, sufficiently powerful to provide him with the position of a teacher.

Upon his return to Prague, Olberg made contact with one Tukalevsky, "an agent of the German secret police in Prague." (128) According to Olberg "Tukalevsky is the director of the Slavonic Library of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Prague. I learned from my brother that he was an agent of the fascist secret police." (129) As to this testimony Tukalevsky's statement in the *Prager Tageblatt* (heretofore quoted,) is of some interest.

It is also interesting to read the statement of the State's Attorney that "Olberg obtained a passport from Lucas-Parades, Consul-General of the Republic of Honduras in Berlin who had arrived in Prague at that time," and who, according to Olberg, "sold me the passport for thirteen thousand Czechoslovak kronen. This money I received from Sedov." (130) Olberg, in accordance with a statement in the *Revolution Proletarienne*, obtained a passport with the full knowledge of the Soviet legation in Prague. (131) The correspondent of the *Revolution Proletarienne*, who personally knew Olberg and who is ready to prove his statement before an international labor-jury, writes:

"The declaration of Vyshinsky is well known. The defendants of the great sensational trial of Moscow were the agents of Hitler's Gestapo! The proof of it? There is none. Rather there was produced at the trial a single tangible piece of evidence, a passport.

"Olberg carried this passport; he went to the USSR with this passport, having a valid visa obtained in due form: **the passport**

(125) Report of Court Proceedings, etc., p. 88

(126) Ibid, p. 88

(127) Ibid, p. 88

(128) Ibid, pp. 88, 89 (129) Ibid, p. 89

(130) Ibid, p. 89

(131) *Revolution Proletarienne*, September 9, 1936

was a passport of Honduran Republic, but the prosecutor accused Olberg, this 'rabid dog,' this 'vomit of the counter-revolution', for having such a 'false' passport.

"Around this passport, the prosecution built a whole structure. It was supposed to have been purchased with the help of a Gestapo agent in Prague; the price was supposed to have been thirteen thousand Czeck kronen, which was allegedly supplied by the 'Trotskyites' of Prague. This embroidered story is false from the beginning to the end.

"First: Olberg never entered the USSR without proper permission. He could not have entered clandestinely, since he was employed in the USSR. He entered the country in a perfectly legal manner, with his passport, with a permit issued by the Soviet legation of Prague.

"The court conducted the investigation in a manner to hide this first important fact.

"Second fact: Olberg did announce in advance to the Soviet Legation at Prague, that he was going to procure a foreign passport. The Soviet Legation itself suggested the idea, because Olberg, a refugee emigrating from Germany and deprived of his nationality applied to the Soviet Legation and requested the necessary authorization to enter the USSR. There he was told approximately the following: 'Since you are not a citizen of our country; since you do not enjoy the advantages of a communist we have no right to supply you with the papers. However, you should procure some kind of a regular and valid passport and then we shall see.'

"Third fact: There was nothing irregular in the acquisition of the passport. Olberg, the son of a former Russian citizen, a German emigrant, deprived of his citizenship by Hitler, contacted one of the many runners (couriers) existing in Prague, which runners, for a compensation procure a regular passport—not counterfeit, to the contrary issued by the Legations of certain countries. Olberg, to acquire a nationality, purchased a passport in such manner. The price was fixed at six thousand Czeck kronen.

"The last and most important fact: The persons who gave the money necessary for the purchase of the passport are known.

"In fact, this man Olberg, who studied history at the University of Berlin, obtained from his parents and friends six thousand kronen; and further, to raise the money necessary, he sold his library to the Masaryk Library in Prague. The painful gathering of the sum took two months.

"With the money in his hand, Olberg looked up his runner, but since the passports of the Honduran Republic were in great demand, the runner increased the price to nine thousand kronen. Olberg did not have that sum. He bargained and succeeded in fixing the price at seven thousand kronen.

"As to the other money, Olberg obtained the one thousand by borrowing it. The persons thus 'touched' by Olberg live in

Prague. They can be examined before an International Trial Board.

"The above facts demolish the fragile structure created by the prosecutor of Moscow. There is no Gestapo, there are no "Trotskyites"; nor are there thirteen thousand kronen, nor clandestine entries into the USSR. What remains is an almost banal story of a passport purchased on the market. One can refer to other German emigrants in possession of the same kind of passport.

"The Soviet Legation in Prague knew and knows absolutely everything about the origin of the passport; knows that Olberg entered the USSR in a regular manner with the visa issued by the Soviet Legation. Therefore, the Legation accuses itself of being the agent of the Gestapo."

Olberg seems to have traveled quite extensively between the Soviet Union and Prague because in March, 1935, he arrived in Russia for the second time. In July, 1935, that is three months later, he was already back again for the third time. During his third visit to Russia "he soon obtained employment in the Gorky Pedagogical Institute, where he remained until his arrest," (132) again showing that it was rather easy for Olberg to obtain employment in Russia, just about at his own pleasure, and further pointing to some other than Trotskyist tie-up.

A very enlightening statement is made by the State's Attorney during Olberg's testimony:

"VYSHINSKY: There is a gap here in your testimony. In what capacity did your brother Paul Olberg, arrive here?" (133)

It is enlightening to see that the **State's Attorney knew that there was a gap in Olberg's testimony**, and it is still more enlightening to see that Olberg was more than ready to fill up the gap. One wonders whether Olberg did not follow an exact line of testimony which may have been established during a previous rehearsal. If one, however, thinks it unfair to assume that a rehearsal may have been arranged for, prior to the testimony, one has only to take a look at page 91 of the official report where, without any causal connection whatever, Vyshinsky, out of the blue sky, poses the question: "When did you have that talk with Sedov about not permitting the Trotskyite organization to be compromised;" although Olberg had not up to that point made even an allusion to the fact that he had had a talk with Sedov concerning the compromising or not compromising of the Trotskyite organization. Nevertheless, Olberg is ready to answer the question and states: "That was at the time of my second journey. He said that if I

(132) Report of Court Proceedings, etc., p. 90

(133) Ibid, p. 91

were arrested by the organs of security of the USSR, I was under no circumstances to say that this terroristic act was carried out on Trotsky's instructions, and at all events I was to try to conceal Trotsky's role." (134)

Here again the State's Attorney asks questions to which he must have known the answers in advance. The question is formulated in a manner which shows no connection to the previous answers unless the answers were given at a secret rehearsal.

"VYSHINSKY: Whom did he advise you to throw the blame on for the organization of terroristic acts?

OLBERG: On the white-guards or the Gestapo." (135)

While Olberg did not testify concerning advice to throw the blame on anyone, Vyshinsky, quick-witted as he is, must have sensed that there was such advice. One is justified to ask, why did Olberg fail to follow the advice to blame the white-guards, or the Gestapo? Why though fore-armed did he fail to make use of the plan? The prosecutor shows no curiosity to find the answer.

Vyshinsky instead of clarifying the issues takes the liberty of putting things in his own way; he says: "Consequently we may put it this way; you, Valentin Olberg were connected with Trotsky through his son Sedov; you were sent on Trotsky's direct instructions conveyed through Sedov to the USSR as Trotsky's agent to prepare and carry out a terroristic act against Comrade Stalin?"

"OLBERG: Yes." (136)

The Court, claiming objectivity, permitted such statement to stand, as a resumé of the evidence.

* * * *

THE EXAMINATION OF BERMAN-YURIN shows that the State's Attorney and the President of the Court felt that they might throw aside even the formalities of examining or cross-examining the witnesses. It was not necessary; it was enough to call upon the "bright pupils" to recite their piece:

The accused opens up almost naturally—one would say—with the name of Trotsky.

"PRESIDENT: Berman-Yurin, tell us what instructions you received from abroad before your departure for the Soviet Union." (137)

"BERMAN-YURIN: I received instructions from Trotsky to go to the Soviet Union to commit a terroristic act against Stalin. I visited Trotsky personally in Copenhagen in November, 1932." (138)

(134) Ibid, p. 91
(138) Ibid, p. 93

(135) Ibid, p. 92 (136) Ibid, p. 92 (137) Ibid, pp. 92, 93

This witness brings in the names of so-called German Trotskyites when he mentions Grilevich and Alfred Kundt through whom—he alleges, he came in contact with Sedov. Watch the testimony, which shows the utter disregard of caution on the part of Trotsky who allegedly arranged for terroristic acts in Russia. Berman-Yurin states:

“In November, 1932, I had there, a meeting with Sedov who then for the first time spoke openly about the necessity of assassinating the leaders of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. Evidently Sedov noticed that I was wavering and he said that Trotsky would be in Copenhagen shortly and asked whether I would not like to go there and meet Trotsky. I, of course, expressed my agreement.” (139)

Mind you, it was in November, 1932, and Berman-Yurin is not mistaken about it; no, he remembers well that it was in November, 1932 because it was then the first time that Sedov talked about the necessity of preparing for assassinations. This witness claims that it was evident that Sedov noticed his wavering, but nevertheless, Sedov, the “incautious,” took the “wavering” Berman-Yurin to Copenhagen to meet Trotsky between the 25th and 28th day of November, 1932, and there the witness was introduced to Trotsky. (140) While “evidently Sedov noticed that” the witness “was wavering,” nevertheless, Sedov threw all caution to the wind and introduced the “wavering” Trotskyite to Trotsky, the “older incautious,” who after **meeting for the first time** this “wavering” terrorist, told him “the principal question is the question of Stalin. Stalin must be physically destroyed.” (141)

Any terrorist leader who was as careless as Trotsky appears to have been, deserves to be caught, as the State's Attorney claims he is; but there is also the possibility that the State's Attorney's story, is not even well made up. It is not a good story, not an interesting one and surely not a credible one. But Trotsky must be discredited at all costs; therefore, the State's Attorney makes Trotsky talk some more through the mouth of Berman-Yurin, who claims that **already at his first meeting with Trotsky**, the latter “also expressed his views on the situation in the event of intervention against the Soviet Union. He adopted an absolutely clear defeatist attitude. He also said that the Trotskyites must join the army and that they would not defend the Soviet Union.” (142) You take it or leave it. Berman-Yurin says so; and the fact that Trotsky for years and years wrote about the great need of defending the Soviet Union in spite of the Soviet leadership is for naught

(139) Ibid, p. 94

(140) Ibid, p. 94

(141) Ibid, p. 94

(142) Ibid, p. 95

since Berman-Yurin, who was in the confidence of Trotsky during his first and only meeting with him, belies Trotsky's writings for the past nineteen years. Trotsky was extremely careless, was he not Mr. State's Attorney? Not only did he entrust Berman-Yurin, upon seeing him for the first time, with **the secret terroristic act**, but he also **entrusted** the same act **to a man whom he did not even meet**, and whose name was mentioned the first time by his new acquaintance, Berman-Yurin. Trotsky wanted Berman-Yurin "to carry on the work independently. I replied I did not know anybody in Moscow and it was difficult for me to see how I should act under the circumstances. I said that **I had an acquaintance named Fritz David and asked if I might get in touch with him.**"⁽¹⁴³⁾ During this trial the natural thing is that Trotsky, accepts Berman-Yurin's recommendation as to the unknown Fritz David. (Such and similar details must have caused the foreign newspaper writer to exclaim: "Incredible . . . the concoction of a diseased mind!")⁽¹⁴⁴⁾

Berman-Yurin, this special trusted emissary of Trotsky, left for Moscow in March, 1933. Arriving in Moscow, he met his acquaintance, Fritz David, "and together they discussed the terroristic plan and began to make preparation to carry it out. At first they thought it possible to make an attempt upon Comrade Stalin's life at the Thirteenth Plenum of the Executive Committee of the Communist International and the plan failed. It was decided to postpone the assassination of Comrade Stalin until the Congress of the Comintern."⁽¹⁴⁵⁾

Berman-Yurin's testimony in open court tallies in general with his admission made prior to the trial. Therefore, it is necessary to point out again that Berman-Yurin,—who left for Moscow in March, 1933—then, or shortly thereafter, undertook, together with Fritz David, to carry out the assassination of Stalin during the Congress of the Comintern, which Congress at that time was not even convoked. As a matter of fact, in 1934, the "Opposition" openly chastised the Stalin leadership for its failure to call the Congress. Berman-Yurin is unable to give any information as to the cause of the inability of David to commit the act during the Congress, but the fact communicated to him by David was that "he could not manage to shoot." He was sitting in a box in which there were many people and there was no possibility of shooting."

(143) *Ibid.*, p. 95

(144) Joshua Kunitz, *New Masses*, October 20, 1936, p. 4

(145) Report of Court Proceedings, etc., p. 96

Berman-Yurin forgot to ask David why he did not get up and walk out of the box and around the people.

While no evidence of an act or even of an attempt is given by Berman-Yurin, some conversation is related which shows that at least in the opinion of the State's Attorney, the hellish plot existed, because "in May, 1936, Fritz David informed me that another emissary a German—had arrived from Trotsky and visited him and had spoken to him extremely sharply accusing us of being inactive, irresolute, lacking courage and had literally demanded that we take advantage of any opportunity that might arise to assassinate Stalin."⁽¹⁴⁶⁾

One would say that terrorists who arrived in Moscow in March, 1933, may be justly accused of inactivity in May, 1936, if they, like Berman-Yurin and Fritz David, did nothing during the period of three years.

* * * *

THE ACCUSED HOLTZMAN, is introduced as "one of the most active members of the Trotskyite counter-revolutionary organization."⁽¹⁴⁷⁾ It is claimed that Holtzman joined the Trotskyite organization in 1926, and the State's Attorney informs an unaware world that "later on he formally broke with the Trotskyites and continued to meet with them, particularly with Smirnov."⁽¹⁴⁸⁾ So Holtzman, even though he had capitulated to Stalin, must respond for his former aberration and must stand trial as a "counter-revolutionary assassin."

Holtzman does not seem to have been at all pliable because the report states that "after a protracted denial of his illegal Trotskyite activities, Holtzman in reply to point blank questions put to him by Comrade Vyshinsky testified that in 1931 he 'accidentally' met Smirnov in the street." One can just see the point blank questions of Comrade Vyshinsky and his satisfaction when Holtzamn admits the crime of meeting Smirnov in 1931 "accidentally" in the street. (Quotation supplied in the report.)

When this defendant is at last ready to testify, then he testifies to all that the State's Attorney desires him to. And if the witness is not willing to do so, then the State's Attorney does it for him, as when he refers to a certain place where Holtzman met Smirnov, and Vyshinsky asks: "This was Smirnov's Trotskyite meeting place?"⁽¹⁴⁹⁾ Apparently, Smirnov had other meeting places besides a "Trotskyite meeting place."

Up to the time of reading the official record of the Moscow

⁽¹⁴⁶⁾ Ibid, pp. 96, 97 ⁽¹⁴⁷⁾ Ibid, p. 98 ⁽¹⁴⁸⁾ Ibid, p. 98 ⁽¹⁴⁹⁾ Ibid, p. 99

trial, one labors under the misapprehension that a defendant is innocent until he is proved guilty. But that is not the case here because it was up to Holtzman to disprove the charges. He was not successful, and so the record says: "The accused Holtzman fails to disprove the fact that upon the instructions of the Trotskyite center he remained a covert Trotskyite within the party."

VYSHINSKY: Formally you were in the party?

HOLTZMAN: Yes.

VYSHINSKY: At the same time you were a Trotskyite?

HOLTZMAN: A Trotskyite.

VYSHINSKY: And..... (A little prompting is needed.—F.H.)

HOLTZMAN: A counter-revolutionary.

VYSHINSKY: And a double-dealer?

HOLTZMAN: Yes."⁽¹⁵⁰⁾

If one is not convinced by such testimony as were those great legal talents who were present during the trial and cabled to the New York *Daily Worker* as to the fairness of the trial, he must be made of other stuff than those legal talents are made of.

Upon reading the official report, one has the sneaking suspicion that the State's Attorney is a reader of mystery stories. Holtzman talks about "a secret code for correspondence with Trotsky, for which purpose certain pages from the Arabian Nights were used."⁽¹⁵¹⁾ It is possible that the State's Attorney followed Trotsky's example; but instead of using certain pages, he used the whole Arabian Nights to present it in the form of a trial.

Holtzman relates his going to Europe in 1932,⁽¹⁵²⁾ and his meeting with Sedov, who recommended that he meet Trotsky. Sedov told him "that we could not go together for reasons of secrecy. I **arranged with Sedov** to be **in Copenhagen** for two or three days, to **put up at the Hotel Bristol** and meet him there. **I went to the Hotel** straight from the station and **in the lounge met Sedov.**"⁽¹⁵³⁾ That alleged meeting occurred in 1932 when he was "to be sent abroad on official business."⁽¹⁵⁴⁾ Unfortunately for the prosecution, he again failed to watch his dates and places, because, as the Copenhagen *Socialdemokraten* writes, the Hotel Bristol of Copenhagen was wrecked in 1917 and was not rebuilt until 1936. The statement, according to the *Prager Tagblatt*⁽¹⁵⁵⁾ follows:

"Holtzman, one of the accused at the Moscow trial, declared that Sedov, Trotsky's son, entrusted him, Holtzman, with the assassination of Stalin and others; that this occurred in the Bristol Hotel, City Hall Square, Copenhagen. The *Socialdemokraten* of Copenhagen, having learned about this testimony from the official report of the trial, makes the observation that the

(150) *Ibid.*, p. 99
(154) *Ibid.*, p. 98

(151) *Ibid.*, p. 99
(155) *Prager Tagblatt*,

(152) *Ibid.*, p. 98
October 5, 1936

(153) *Ibid.*, p. 100

Hotel Bristol had already been wrecked in 1917. In fact, the Scandinavian Baedeker does not list the name of Hotel Bristol, Copenhagen."

It must have been pretty hard for Holtzman to meet Trotsky or Sedov in the lounge of the Hotel Bristol in 1932, when the hotel to which the lounge allegedly belonged was not existing for fifteen years. During this alleged conversation in the **non-existing Hotel Bristol, Trotsky's instructions**—so often testified to by other witnesses—were given. To make sure it was not in 1936 that Holtzman met Trotsky by arranging it with Sedov in the Hotel Bristol, one need merely quote the following from Vyshinky: "So Trotsky plainly told you that the official task now, that is, in the autumn of 1932, was to assassinate Comrade Stalin; you remember for sure?"

"HOLTZMAN: Yes." (156)

While Holtzman and Berman-Yurin are ready to give the details of their meetings with Sedov in Copenhagen, which meetings were disproved by the non-existence of the Hotel Bristol, Sedov in a statement denies meeting Holtzman or Berman-Yurin altogether. Sedov's deposition sums up to:

- 1) Sedov was not in the Hotel Bristol in Copenhagen.
- 2) Sedov was not in Copenhagen at the time of his alleged meeting with Holtzman or Berman-Yurin in 1932.
- 3) **Sedov never was in Copenhagen.**

(Sedov is ready to prove his statement before an International Board of Inquiry.)

* * * *

THE TESTIMONY OF N. LURYE shows that he was another emissary of Trotsky who came to the USSR from Berlin "on the special mission of the Trotskyite organization for the purpose of committing terroristic acts." (157) If one, listening to the testimonies, should still have a lingering doubt as to the character of the Trotskyite organizations, Lurye is made to state that "the training of Trotskyite organizations given me during all those years I spent in that organization in Germany, in the long run reduced itself to arousing hatred towards Stalin and the leadership of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union." Thus Lurye's statement should serve as a warning to anyone who, for any reason, may stray from the fold of the *bona fide* Stalinite organization.

This witness was really ready to make "a trial" to attempt a terroristic act, because, upon questioning by the President of the Court, he states that he was armed during the period from Sept-

(156) Report of Court Proceedings, etc., p. 101

(157) Ibid, pp. 101, 102

ember, 1932 to the spring of 1933, and was planning to assassinate Voroshilov.

"PRESIDENT OF THE COURT: So that you would have committed the terroristic act had a favorable moment offered itself. Why did you not succeed in doing so?

LURYE: We saw Voroshilov's car going down Frunze Street. It was traveling too fast. It was hopeless firing at the fast running car. We decided that it was hopeless."⁽¹⁵⁸⁾

Yes, it must have been hopeless, though it is not hopeless to present such "evidence" now in open court. These defendants must have had all kinds of bad intentions, because this witness, after finding it "hopeless to shoot at Voroshilov's car," tried to meet Kaganovich or Orjonokidze at Chaljabinsk "and tried to commit a terroristic act against them." The record shows that again "he failed to carry out his intention."⁽¹⁵⁹⁾ (The fast running car with the contemplated victim in it may have been plagiarized from Malraux's book, "Man's Fate." Plagiarism or not, the testimony of N. Lurye, absurd as it is, was permitted to stand as evidence.)

* * * *

THE ACCUSED M. LURYE claims that on leaving Berlin for Moscow he "received (these instructions) from Ruth Fischer and Maslov, but actually they were the instructions of Trotsky himself."⁽¹⁶⁰⁾ How and why the instructions, even if received from Fischer and Maslov, were the instructions of Trotsky is not stated. Statements, insinuations and conclusions are permitted to be presented as "evidence" before the court which claims to have given a fair trial to the defendants present and to those, who like Trotsky, were **judged in absentia**.

There is much talk about "practical steps the accused have taken to organize terroristic acts."⁽¹⁶¹⁾ But there are no details as to these acts. There is also a statement by the defendant that he "took part in preparing an attempt on the life of Zhdanov;" but no details are given as to the place, time and factual matters. Nothing but the naked, unverified statement. Testimony is permitted to go into evidence in the form of a declaration, as that a certain "terroristic act was to have been committed."⁽¹⁶²⁾ Whether it was committed or whether it was to have been committed, or whether the act existed only in the imagination of the State's Attorney is not brought out. The prosecutor is not concerned with anything, but with the presentation of prejudicial, though unverified, statements. The State's Attorney may not know that *magna est veritas*,

⁽¹⁵⁸⁾ Ibid, p. 103
⁽¹⁶²⁾ Ibid, p. 107

⁽¹⁵⁹⁾ Ibid, p. 104

⁽¹⁶⁰⁾ Ibid, p. 105

⁽¹⁶¹⁾ Ibid, p. 106

et praevallet. He may not believe but nevertheless: **Truth must and will prevail.**

* * * *

THE TESTIMONY OF TER-VAGANYAN is just about a repetition of those preceding it. The record confesses that "Ter-Vaganyan admits that he was one of the organizers of the Trotskyite-Zinovievite center and also that the center was organized on the basis of Trotsky's instructions on terrorism."⁽¹⁶³⁾

This witness brings into the picture some persons, oppositions, or tendencies that had not been mentioned previously. He claims that Smirnov maintained systematic connections with the "**Gruzian deviationists.**"⁽¹⁶⁴⁾ He refers also to the "**Stuckgold terrorist group.**"⁽¹⁶⁵⁾ The reason the group was a terrorist one is because Smirnov, according to this witness, "did not want Stuckgold to see anyone else. Such secrecy could have only one meaning—that Stuckgold had some kind of special connections which had to be safe-guarded."⁽¹⁶⁶⁾ (This is a further sample of the kind of "evidence" admitted.)

Other names and other groups are mentioned by this witness, such as Lomanidze, who had knowledge of the bloc, as well as the so-called "**Leftists.**"⁽¹⁶⁷⁾ To dispel any misunderstandings which some of the members of the groups thus far implicated may have had, this witness volunteers the statement that he met "**Friedland** and told him that it was now necessary to adopt violent forms of struggle against the party. In reply to this question as to the meaning of violent forms of struggle, I said: 'You are not a child—**violent forms of struggle are terroristic forms** of struggle, that is clear.'⁽¹⁶⁸⁾ The communist press, reporting the trial, readily accepted the equating of "violent struggle" with "terrorism."

And the testimony thus takes on a clarity paralleled only by the clarity with which the purpose of the whole trial is demonstrated, *i.e.* to stamp any and all opponents of Stalin with the mark of counter-revolution and terrorism.

* * * *

THE ACCUSED FRITZ DAVID claims he received instructions "personally from Trotsky in Copenhagen." Fritz David and Trotsky were unknown to each other up to 1932—or even later, if we accept Berman-Yurin's testimony. In spite of their chance acquaintance, David testifies to a childish faith which Trotsky put in him in entrusting "David, the unknown," with the alleged terroristic act already testified to by Berman-Yurin.

(163) *Ibid.*, p. 108
(167) *Ibid.*, p. 110

(164) *Ibid.*, p. 109
(168) *Ibid.*, p. 111

(165) *Ibid.*, p. 110 (166) *Ibid.*, p. 110

WITH THE TESTIMONY OF DAVID, the prosecution rests and the State's Attorney makes a statement to the court concerning **Tomsky, Rykov, Buckharin, Uglanov, Radek, Piatakov, Serebryakov** and **Sokolnikov**, as persons who, because of the testimony of Kamenev, Zinoviev and Reingold, "to a greater or lesser degree (are) involved in the criminal counter-revolutionary activities for which the accused in the present case are being tried." (169)

The State's Attorney further informs the court that he found it necessary to institute investigations against the persons named and further, that "in regard to Serebryakov and Sokolnikov, the investigating authorities are already in possession of material convicting these persons of counter-revolutionary crimes." (170) As an afterthought, there are appended a few lines referring to Dreitzer's alleged statement implicating as "an active participant in the terroristic work of the Trotskyites," **Putna**, "an old and active Trotskyite." (171)

(169) *Ibid*, p. 115

(170) *Ibid*, p. 116

(171) *Ibid*, p. 116

LEGAL CONCLUSIONS OF THE TRIAL

THE STATE'S ATTORNEY rested his case, apparently convinced that he had succeeded in proving the guilt of the sixteen defendants. He asserted that he had also proved L. Trotsky and the International Communists, to be accomplices of common murderers and of the German Nazis. The Soviet Government itself did not feel so sure that the trial was an unmitigated success. Neither did the Communist press of the world—seeing the worldwide reaction to the executions—feel that the obvious purpose of the trial was accomplished. To silence the adverse critics the Communist International published additional documents and polemics and thought thus to prove what the trial failed to do. Leaving for the moment the supporting Communist literature aside, from the official record alone it appears:

1) The first so-called "confession" was obtained not much before July 23, 1936, at which time Kamenev "confessed" (XV, 10, 12, 13). On the same day, Pickel's "confession" was put on record (XXV, 65). Mrachkovsky's testimony—though it is dated July 20,—must have been obtained on the 23rd, between the testimony of Kamenev and Pickel, because it appears in XVIII, 40, 41. Reingold "confessed" between July 23 and August 5 (XXVII, 52). On August 5th, Smirnov "confessed" (XXIX, 93, 104). Evdokimov's "confession" although dated August 10, 1936, must have been obtained prior to August 5th and after July 23rd because it appears in XXVI, 10. Zinoviev's testimony is not dated but it appears in XII, 36, 37, 38; therefore, it must have preceded the testimony of Kamenev in XV, 10, 12, 13 by just a short time. When the testimony of M. Lurye and N. Lurye or Olberg was obtained is not quite clear, because, even though Kamenev is reputed to have "confessed" on July 23rd in XV, the Luryes' testimony as of July 31st are placed in XXXII and XXXIII. These volumes should logically follow that of August 5th, numbered XXIX (admissions of Smirnov). The record attempts to show that Olberg testified on July 31st in XXI while an earlier testimony dated May 16th is reputed to have been included in the later volume XXIV. It is nothing but a conjecture, but a justified one, nevertheless, that none of the

so-called Old Bolsheviks testified prior to July 21, 1936. (*i.e.* two days prior to Kamenev's "confession" in XV.) This assumption is especially justified because the Soviet press did not report anything about the conspiracy, and the trial to follow before the end of July, 1936. We shall return later to the date of July 21, 1936.

2) The State's Attorney brings the defendants to trial "on the strength of newly revealed circumstances ascertained by the investigating authorities in 1936."⁽¹⁾ However, all the defendants, at least all the Old Bolsheviks were imprisoned not later than December, 1934. As a matter of fact, Smirnov was arrested in January, 1933, and he was not even mentioned during the first Kirov Trial; therefore, his arrest in 1933 must have anticipated the "newly revealed circumstances ascertained in 1936."

3) Allegations were made as to the organization of numerous Centers and Groups, while no "evidence" of any other Center or of any other Group was shown but of that to which the alleged conspirators belonged. It was not shown that there were any rank and file members of the groups as, naturally there could not be, since Kamenev testified that they had no popular support at all. There was no evidence whatsoever as to any attempt upon the life of any of the Soviet leaders, even though all of the defendants testified as to the preparations to assassinate Stalin, Voroshilov, Kaganovich, etc.

(The charge, concerning the existence of the conspiratorial United Center, is a copying of the charge made during the menshevik trial of 1931. The accused of 1931 were allegedly members of the "Menshevik Union Bureau," the existence of which was successfully denied by the Socialist International.⁽²⁾)

4) No documentary evidence was introduced with the exception of the Honduran passport of Olberg, even though there were repeated references made by the confessing defendants to Trotsky's letter in which he advised that "Stalin must be removed." Nor was there any evidence as to the many other "written instructions of Trotsky sent to the center," mentioned at the trial.

5) There was no evidence connecting the Center with the assassination of Kirov, with the exception of Bakayev's alleged action. Bakayev, however, did nothing more than visit Leningrad in November, 1934, allegedly meeting with Nikolayev who later on committed the murder which, according to the testimony, was to have been committed by Bakayev.

6) Repeated statements were made that the conspirators,

(1) Report of Court Proceedings, etc., p. 10

(2) The Moscow Trial and the Labor and Socialist International—London, 1931

and most particularly the Trotskyites, had no program whatsoever. This attempt to show lack of program and thus to show up Trotsky and the Trotskyites as common murderers falls, in the face of the historical fact that Trotsky's group in 1934 openly embarked upon the organization of the Fourth International, the program of which was published in a statement signed by four national organizations of the Trotskyites.

7) It was not shown that any of the confessing defendants had personal contact with Trotsky, with the exception of the statements of Olberg, Holtzman and Berman-Yurin, which statements were disproved by their own testimony, as when it was stated that Holtzman met Trotsky's son in the Hotel Bristol at a time when the said Hotel did not exist.

8) Evidence was introduced (Olberg's confession) as to the connection of Olberg with the Gestapo at the time when the Gestapo did not yet exist.

9) The evidence claimed that every act allegedly discussed, every directive allegedly given, came from Trotsky and from the International Trotskyite group—thus showing definitely the purpose of the trial to bring Trotsky and his group into disrepute.

10) Great effort was exerted by the prosecution to show that plans for assassination were laid, but all these plans were unsuccessful. As a matter of fact no attempt to carry out the plans was proven, unless one accepts the fantastic statement that Berman-Yurin and David decided in 1933 to make an attempt upon Stalin's life during the Seventh Congress, which was not announced until two years later, as proof.

11) The record shows a unanimous desire on the part of the confessors, with the exception of Smirnov, to testify to anything and everything the prosecutor wants them to and to follow every prompting of the State's Attorney to debase themselves and at the same time to show that they were the innocent victims of the arch-conspirator, Trotsky.

12) All evidence introduced was to prove that the defendants had no political status whatever and that all their acts are to be judged as those of common murderers. This desire of the prosecution to eliminate any and all political coloring of the defendants was clearly shown, in spite of the fact that some of the defendants, as Zinoviev and Kamenev, represented a political tendency in Russia. In this respect the trial is clearly reminiscent of others, preceding the Moscow trial. One is forced to recall the trial of the leaders of the Hungarian Soviet Government arranged by the Horthy

dictatorship. All revolutionary leaders were tried not as political offenders, but as common criminals, e.g., the President of the Supreme Court of Soviet Hungary was tried for murder because of the sentences passed by his court; the Soviet Commissar of Finance, for larceny and embezzlement because of his official orders, etc. As a matter of fact, all Communists of Hitler Germany are charged and tried as common felons and not for their former political activities.

13) None of the alleged co-conspirators of Trotsky were his political followers at the time of the purported conspiracy. The trial brought out the strange fact that Trotsky chose his co-workers not from among the Trotskyists, but from camps inimical to his political theories. The prosecutor was successful in proving that the "Trotskyist conspirators were either anti-Trotsky (as Zinoviev, Kamenev, Evdokimov and Bakayev); former Trotskyists, who capitulated to Stalin (as Smirnov, Ter-Vaganyan, Mrachkovsky, Dreitzer and Holtzman); or total strangers to Trotsky (David, Berman-Yurin, Olberg and the Lurye's). A strange fact indeed!

IV. THE CONCLUDING ARGUMENT OF A. Y. VYSHINSKY, STATE'S ATTORNEY OF THE USSR

THE LONG-WINDED speech for the prosecution is worth analysing, if for no other reason than that it gives interesting side-lights on the trial, and more particularly, because it inadvertently recites certain facts and statements made by the accused and not otherwise referred to in the transcript of the trial. It contains many conclusions, a large share of which are not borne out by the testimonies but are such as the prosecutor, or the powers behind him, desire to draw. The speech is characterized by the juxta-position of the "horrible and monstrous guilt" of the defendants with the exemplary life of the leaders of the Soviet Government, "the fiery tribunes of the proletarian revolution." The State's Attorney contrasts the attitude of the defendants with those who "are building a new Socialist system, a new Soviet State, under the difficult conditions of class-struggle, amidst the fierce resistance of the last remnants of the exploiting classes which we have routed and utterly crushed."⁽¹⁾ Vyshinsky here speaks about "building Socialism" apparently forgetting the "Resolution on the Report of Comrade Manuilsky" adopted by the Seventh Congress of the Communist International on August 20, 1935, wherein it is stated that the building job has been completed, since "**The final and irrevocable victory of Socialism in the USSR, and the all-around consolidation of the State of the proletarian dictatorship have been achieved.**"⁽²⁾ A few pages later, the State's Attorney brings himself in line with Manuilsky by stating: "Under the leadership of the Soviet Government and our party headed by Stalin, Socialism has finally and irrevocably triumphed in our country."⁽³⁾

The State's Attorney, nevertheless, feels that in spite of, or because of, the great victory, there is a danger that certain enemies of Stalinism may come to the fore, to show increased resistance against the Socialist conquest. He refers to the statement of Stalin

(1) Report of Court Proceedings, etc. p. 118

(2) *International Press Correspondence*, XV, No. 44, p. 1145

(3) Report of Court Proceedings, etc. p. 121

wherein "the beloved leader" warned against such contingencies, against the "resistance of the last remnants of the dying classes." Vyshinsky, it seems, considers Zinoviev, Kamenev and the other fourteen on trial as the last remnants of a dying class—what class is not stated. It surely cannot be the class or the group of the Stalinite Bolsheviks to which they, at the time of the trial, obviously did not belong. It may be possible that he classifies them into the group of the Old Bolsheviks who started out in the school of Lenin and who, under the pressure of Stalin's Bolshevism, turned into whatever the indictment claims them to be. The State's Attorney recalls the warning of Stalin that the Victory of Socialism may "give ground for the revival of the activities of the defeated groups of the old counter-revolutionary parties; the Socialist-Revolutionaries, the Mensheviks, the bourgeois nationalists in the center and in the outlying regions; it might also give ground for the revival of the fragments of counter-revolutionary opposition elements from among the Trotskyites and Right deviationists."⁽⁴⁾ The State's Attorney feels "this trial has fully and distinctly proved the great wisdom of this forecast." (Another fully proven forecast, made sometime ago by L. Trotsky, that Stalin and his supporters in Russia will have to resort to executions to weaken the ever increasing opposition, will be returned to later.)

It is not cheerful to hear Vyshinsky referring to the defendants as: "these mad dogs of capitalism;*** liars and clowns, insignificant pigmies, little dogs snarling at an elephant, this is what this gang represents;*** common criminals;*** "incorrigible, hardened murderers." Any disparaging reference to the defendants is off-set by the adjectives applied to the leaders of the Soviet Government whom the State's Attorney calls "our wonderful Bolsheviks;*** tireless and gifted builders of our state;*** with great and unsurpassed love, the toilers of the whole world utter the name of the great teacher and leader of the peoples of the USSR—Joseph Vissarionovich Stalin;*** the victory of Socialism is first and foremost the victory of our own Bolshevik party, of its Leninist, Stalinist leadership, of its Central Committee headed by the great Stalin."⁽⁵⁾ The prosecutor may be stating a fact: it may be that every one of the Russian workers exhales the name of the great Stalin with awe; it may be that the toilers of the whole world utter the name of the great Stalin with great and unsurpassed love; but it is not quite true that the Stakhanovites and the Krivonossites are universally loved in the USSR as claimed by Vyshinsky. As a matter of fact, the

(4) Ibid, p. 119

(5) Ibid, pp. 120, 121

Stakhanovites and the Krivonossites, representing a method of speed-up, are no more cherished by the Russian Workers than the speed-up, the Taylor, and the piece-work systems are loved by the workers of the United States or of Europe. Much of the popular opposition, as of late, expressed itself in the open attack of the workers upon Stakhanovism.

The State's Attorney clearly shows that one purpose of the trial is to eliminate all possibility of considering the act of the accused a political one. To deny any and all political motive to the Old Bolsheviks, the State's Attorney presents a picture not borne out by the official report of the trial. It is not true that the defendants during the trial "sought and expected a political evaluation of their crimes." It is not true that the defendants "talked about political struggle." It is not true that the defendants talked "about some kind of political agreement with some kind of alleged political party." All these statements are untrue because the defendants were more than submissive and pointed out that they had no political program, that they had no political motives, and to the contrary, the defendants, according to their own testimony, had only one motive and that was to show that every act, every alleged conspiracy was the result of their being misled into Trotskyism, which, according to their confessions, had no political content whatsoever.

There are many who believe that the trial was arranged because the powers of the USSR felt that leaders of opposition cannot safely be kept in jails or in exile when opposition sentiment is growing in the country. There are many who feel that the leaders of the USSR were disturbed by the possibility that the growing opposition sentiment might find expression and a leader among those jailed or exiled for oppositional attitude, and that therefore the firing squad was called upon. This theory is substantiated or at least alluded to by the State's Attorney who refers to the Old Bolshevik defendants and claims that "to chain them is not enough. We must adopt more determined and radical measures against them."⁽⁶⁾

In reviewing the so-called confessions and testimonies, the State's Attorney simplifies matters when he presents his conviction that the defendants had only one program—"to murder."⁽⁷⁾

Those who read the report of the court proceedings as published by the People's Commissariat of Justice of the USSR and read it with a semblance of attention must wonder why it is necessary

(6) Ibid, p. 123

(7) Ibid, p. 123

for the State's Attorney to mis-state facts in his closing argument. Is it because a State's Attorney, whether in a bourgeois country or in the USSR, has only one purpose—to obtain conviction? Or because there is some motive behind such falsification? No one who followed the trial and read the newspaper reports about the incredible attitude of the defendants—how “fearlessly they confessed,” how “joyously” they cooperated with the State's Attorney in their confessions, how “they participated in the merriment which often prevailed in the courtroom”—can help wondering why the State's Attorney resorts to mis-statements in saying that after the court has scrutinized the record it “will become convinced of the animal fear with which the accused tried to avoid admitting that terrorism was precisely the basis of their criminal activities.”⁽⁸⁾

The prosecutor does not believe in Smirnov's partial admission because he himself says that this defendant “tries by every means in his power to prove that he, Smirnov personally, did not adopt terror and did not agree with it, and he even went so far as to say that he had left the Trotskyite-Zinovievite terrorist center or bloc.”⁽⁹⁾

The closing argument for the State contradicts the record in speaking of Valentine Olberg who claimed, during the testimony, that he was a Trotskyite. Here the State's Attorney refers to him as “a paid agent of Trotsky (i.e. not a voluntary political adherent, F. H.) and simultaneously of the German Secret police—the Gestapo.”⁽¹⁰⁾ One wonders whether Franz Pfempfert in writing to Trotsky and warning him against Olberg was not really right in stating that he believed Olberg to be a paid agent of the GPU (Russian Secret Police.)

The prosecutor embarks upon theoretical discussions of the differences involved between Trotsky and Stalin “and his glorious comrades in arms.” He states “that under the leadership of Comrade Stalin, the great executor and keeper of Lenin's will and testament,” (Not of Lenin's testament in which he calls Stalin rude and a person who must be removed from the secretaryship), “the counter-revolutionary Trotskyite organization was routed. It was under their leadership, amidst fierce battles against Trotskyite counter-revolution, that Trotskyite counter-revolution was finally crushed.”⁽¹¹⁾ One wonders why “fierce battles against Trotskyite counter-revolution” were necessary when the Trotskyites, as is so often stated, represented no one but themselves, and if they were just a handful of people opposing Stalin “and his glorious comrades in arms.”

(8) Ibid, p. 125

(9) Ibid, p. 126

(10) Ibid, p. 126

(11) Ibid, p. 127

Vyshinsky, the State's Attorney, puts his stamp of approval upon the policy of Stalin, which policy, for the past twelve years, has been battled by the Left Opposition under the leadership of Trotsky as a pernicious theory endangering the very existence of the Soviet Union.

The State's Attorney claims that Stalin "developed and un-deviatingly carried out Lenin's teachings on the building of Socialism in our country."⁽¹²⁾ Stalin did, in fact, develop the un-Marxian idea of the possibility of building Socialism in one country, but the State's Attorney does not know Lenin's teachings if he claims that Stalin's Socialism in one country is founded upon Lenin's teachings.

With the help of Olberg's testimony, we found it possible to tie up the alleged letter of Trotsky, in which he allegedly called for Stalin's assassination, with an existing letter in which Trotsky recommended, in line with Lenin's last words, that Stalin should be removed from leadership. It was possible to do so by circumstantial evidence only. In his closing argument the State's Attorney himself puts his finger on the letter when he says that **"in March, 1932, in a fit of counter-revolutionary fury, Trotsky burst out in an open letter** with an appeal to 'put Stalin out of the way'."⁽¹³⁾ So it was actually in March, 1932; it was actually an open letter and not a letter written in invisible ink in a German cinema magazine; it was not a secret letter but an open one, which was published, as we have shown, on March 1, 1932. Of course, the State's Attorney cannot quote correctly, and while the letter actually contains the recommendation that "Stalin must be removed," he changes it completely; replaces it with "to put Stalin out of the way." In this connection, Vyshinsky does not fail to make a statement contradicted by his own record when he claims that this **open letter** of Trotsky of March, 1932 "was found between the double walls of Holtzman's suit case and figured as an exhibit in this case."⁽¹⁴⁾ There was no such exhibit, and checking back with the testimony of Holtzman, the record further belies Vyshinsky because Holtzman stated that Trotsky's instructions to him were not put in writing:

"VYSHINSKY: So Trotsky plainly told you that the fundamental task now (that is, in the autumn of 1932) was to assassinate Comrade Stalin? You remember for sure?

HOLTZMAN: Yes.

VYSHINSKY: So this was Trotsky's instructions?

HOLTZMAN: Yes. Trotsky could not put it in writing, and

(12) Ibid, p. 127

(13) Ibid, p. 127

(14) Ibid, p. 127

so I accepted it in verbal form and communicated the exact sense of it on my arrival in Moscow.

VYSHINSKY: That was Trotsky's verbal instruction?

HOLTZMAN: Yes."⁽¹⁵⁾

Apparently Holtzman had a suit-case with double walls in which the **verbal instructions of Trotsky were placed**; at least that is the logic of Vyshinsky's statement and record.

Verbose as the State's Attorney is in his final argument, he cannot fail to talk out of turn and make references to statements of the defendants eliminated from the official transcript. Vyshinsky claims that the defendant, Ter-Vaganyan, "confirmed that Smirnov, while abroad, really did receive from Trotsky instructions to adopt terror. Ter-Vaganyan **merely veiled his evidence by substituting for the world 'terror' the phrase: 'sharp struggle against the leaders of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.'**"⁽¹⁶⁾ So for Mr. Vyshinsky the substituting of terror for sharp struggle is simply a veiling of the evidence. Such falsification is needed to built up the issues!

Trotsky repeatedly wrote of and repeatedly published his position concerning the necessity of defending the Soviet Union in spite of the Stalin bureaucracy. Although Trotsky entered into polemics with those who could not see that even such an incorrect leadership as that of Stalin represents the interest of the Soviet Union, which therefore must be defended by the workers of the world against imperialist aggressions, the State's Attorney feels that the statement of Berman-Yurin must be quoted and believed to the contrary—that is, "Trotsky said to me literally the following: We will defend the Soviet Union provided the Stalin leadership is overthrown." The purpose of this allegation is obviously to discredit everything that Trotsky ever stood for.

To those who do not understand the complete capitulation of Zinoviev during the trial, the State's Attorney gives a cue when he says that Zinoviev has repented previously, that he "sent a letter dated May 8, 1933, . . . Zinoviev not only renounced all his past mistakes, but hypocritically vowed his loyalty to socialism and to the Party."⁽¹⁷⁾ Not only that, but Zinoviev, during his previous capitulations, never failed to slander Trotsky and to claim that he understood at last how incorrect Trotsky's and how correct Stalin's policy was. Those who do not understand the reason for capitulation of the Old Bolsheviks, those who do not see the reason why Zinoviev confessed to everything required of him, will find it in-

(15) Ibid, p. 101

(16) Ibid, p. 129

(17) Ibid, p. 133

teresting to read Zinoviev's letter of May 9, 1933, referred to by the prosecutor:

"I ask you to believe that I am speaking the truth and nothing but the truth. I ask you to restore me to the ranks of the Party and to give me an opportunity of working for the common cause. I give my word as a revolutionary that I will be the most devoted member of the Party, and will do all I possibly can at least to some extent to atone for my guilt before the Party and Its Central Committee."⁽¹⁸⁾

The prosecutor makes excursions into the political field as when he warns all those who should by any chance become doubtful as to the correctness of Stalin's leadership that such doubting must inevitably lead to counter-revolution. Vyshinsky says that he must refer to certain evidence so that he may be able "through the court, to warn the whole country, not only against Kamenev and Zinoviev, but against all other double-dealers, all other traitors whom unfortunately we still have in our ranks and who talk about their repentance, who dissociate themselves, and mask themselves."⁽¹⁹⁾ This is a warning to those who are on the verge of losing their faith in the infallibility of Stalin's leadership; and at the same time, it is a warning to all those who at one time or another were in opposition to Stalin that their repentance may not bring the hoped for restoration into the ranks of the party. It may be a direct warning to Radek and Piatokov, implicated during the trial, and who so readily repented on August 23rd in their article in the *Pravda*, to be quoted hereafter.

The State's Attorney places very little confidence in the confessions of the defendants, even though the confessions went to a length which, from the point of view of the prosecutor, left nothing to be desired. No, "not the slightest confidence must be placed in these certified and hardened deceivers! They themselves understand that they do not deserve any confidence. While examining Zinoviev I asked him: 'Are you speaking the whole truth now?' And he answered: 'Now I am speaking the whole truth to the very end.' But what proof is there of this? How can we believe them when they have surpassed all conceptions of perfidy, cunning, deceit and treachery?"⁽²⁰⁾

We ask with the State's Attorney, what confidence can be placed upon the so-called confessions, upon the testimony of the defendants now on trial? And if no confidence is to be placed in the truthfulness of those confessions, then what is left of the evidence against these confessed Old Bolsheviks?

(18) *Ibid*, p. 183

(19) *Ibid*, p. 185

(20) *Ibid*, p. 135

There are a great number of roles which the prosecutor takes upon himself during his closing argument; among them is one of apparent great importance—to show Stalin as the “great executor and keeper of Lenin’s will and testament” and and to show him as one who never departed from the real Bolshevik line. It falls to Vyshinsky to show by means of false allusions that the early opponents of Lenin did not include Stalin. He claims that according to Kamenev “the resistance to the policy headed by Comrade Stalin was based on the premises which made members of the Party in October, 1927 come out as the opponents of the policy of Lenin.”⁽²¹⁾ Anyone having even a slight acquaintance with the history of the Russian Revolution knows that Lenin’s policy, as expressed in the April Thesis of 1917 was violently opposed not only by Zinoviev and Kamenev, but with them by Stalin, at that time the editor in chief of the *Pravda*, who openly attacked Lenin’s thesis in which the latter expounded the theory leading to the October Revolution.

From the closing argument, we first learn that in “January, 1935 we tried the Moscow center in connection with the trial of the Leningrad center which took place a little before that, about two weeks before, and as a result of which L. Nikolayev, Kotolynov, Rumyantsev, Sossitsky and a number of others were convicted and shot;”⁽²²⁾ thus presenting the names of those unknown persons who already had paid with their lives for the Kirov assassination. Vyshinsky also refers to Levin who “was shot in 1935 in connection with the murder of Comrade Kirov”;⁽²³⁾ to Mandelstamm and a number of other members of the Leningrad Zinovievites.⁽²⁴⁾

Contradiction after contradiction is piled up by the State’s Attorney when he claims that though there was a bloc organized, uniting the Trotskyites and Zinovievites, there was competition between them because “Zinoviev admitted that he was pressing to hasten murder. He was in a hurry, he clutched feverishly at people like Nikolayev and Kotolynov in order to hasten this murder. Not the least motive was the desire to forestall the Trotskyite terrorists.”⁽²⁵⁾ The prosecutor makes it appear that though there was a bloc, it was not a bloc. There was a United Center but there was no united activity; or was it that the prosecutor forgot the indictment throughout which “bloc” is italicized and which word, if it means anything, denotes united efforts?

The only act of assassination—that of Kirov,—for the purpose of making any kind of showing,—was to be brought home to the

(21) *Ibid.*, p. 137
 (25) *Ibid.*, p. 147

(22) *Ibid.*, p. 141

(23) *Ibid.*, p. 145

(24) *Ibid.*, p. 146

so-called Zinovievite-Trotskyite Center. The only evidence connecting the defendants to the Kirov murder was Bakayev's going to Lenigrad; and here, the prosecutor, referring to this occasion, quotes from Evdokimov's testimony: "For the purpose of preparing for the murder, Bakayev was sent to Leningrad at the beginning of November, 1934, that is to say, some days before Nikolayev killed Kirov."⁽²⁶⁾ The connection between Bakayev and Nikolayev was to be established by hook or crook. The fact that Bakayev was sent to see Nikolayev "some days before Nikolayev killed Kirov" was the only connecting link between the so-called bloc and the Kirov murder, if one disregards the great number of "conversations" confessed to.

The prosecutor must have prepared the closing argument before the trial because he talks about plans for assassinations in Moscow and "Kiev." There was not a word of evidence introduced, not even mention made, that the bloc had anything to do with Kiev, but such little incongruities are of no consequence, at least not to the prosecutor, because he himself is worried about greater inconsistencies. He worries about the possible question of how it came about that Smirnov in jail, and Kamenev and Zinoviev in exile, were able to direct the assassinations or the plans for assassinations, of even the attempted attempts of assassination. He says that: "In 1932-33 Kamenev and Zinoviev were in exile; but the center functioned. It is known that in 1934 Smirnov too, was not at liberty; he was arrested in January, 1933; but the center functioned. And Zinoviev confirms that the center functioned. **I draw the conclusion** that if the center functioned, it was because of the well-organized technique of communication which enabled even those who were not at liberty, Smirnov, for example, to take part in guiding the work of this center."⁽²⁷⁾ There may be some who believe and will say that Smirnov, in jail, could not have participated in any of the alleged acts, but to them the State's Attorney says that that is "a naive assertion! Smirnov was imprisoned from 1933, but we know that while in prison, Smirnov organized contacts with his Trotskyites, for a code was discovered by means of which Smirnov, while in prison, communicated with his companions outside. This proves that communication existed, and Smirnov cannot deny this."⁽²⁸⁾

We do not feel it proper, in the course of this analysis, to question legal technicalities of the trial, but, nevertheless, it must be pointed out that it is unheard of that a prosecutor, who claims to

(26) *Ibid.*, p. 151

(27) *Ibid.*, p. 152

(28) *Ibid.*, p. 153

be in possession of overwhelming evidence as to the guilt of the defendants, should permit himself to make an assertion without any proof of it. He knows "that while in prison, Smirnov organized contacts with his Trotskyites." It is unheard of in any court of record, in any civilized country, that the State's Attorney should be permitted to state, without proof being submitted, that "a code was discovered by means of which Smirnov, while in prison, communicated with his companions outside." It is unheard of that the State's Attorney should be permitted, without proof, to declare that "this proves that communication existed." If the code was discovered, as the State's Attorney claims, it was his duty to introduce it before the court. But why do that? The State's Attorney is satisfied, and the verdict shows that the court in turn was satisfied that everything had been proved. Even some "members of the American and English bar" are satisfied that the evidence presented during a "fair trial proved the allegations."

The prosecutor, in his vehemence to denounce the Old Bolsheviks, most particularly Smirnov, did not notice that while confessing, the defendants were sometimes engaged in, what is called in the vernacular, "pulling the leg" of the State's Attorney. He says: "The most persistent in his denials is Smirnov. He pleaded guilty only to being the leader of the Trotskyite underground counter-revolutionary center. True, he said this **in a somewhat jocular way**. Turning to Ter-Vaganyan, Mrachkovsky and Dreitzer, he said to them: '**You want a leader? Well, take me!**'"⁽²⁹⁾ So Smirnov, seeing the great desire of the State's Attorney to find a leader for the so-called Trotskyite group, stated in a "jocular way": "you want a leader? Well, take me." Smirnov apparently thought: What is the difference? The trial set out to accomplish something and he might as well cooperate even though only in a "jocular way."

These involuntary admissions on the part of the State's Attorney may endanger the structure which he believes to have been erected. He endangered his great work when he repeated some of the testimony not printed in the record: "Smirnov, in reply to Mrachkovsky, said: 'Invention and slander.'"⁽³⁰⁾ So Smirnov called the testimony of the others "invention," he designated it "slander;" but this part of his testimony is not quoted in the transcript for obvious reasons. The State's Attorney also refers to the fact that Kamenev and Zinoviev refused to acknowledge and confess to the so-called plot eliminating some of their co-workers of the

(29) Ibid, pp. 153, 154 (30) Ibid, p. 154

so-called Center. No, they were not willing to do so. They were willing to confess to the first part of the plot concerning the distribution of posts, among the defendants, after they successfully took over power. But that part of the plot which refers to the alleged plan of murdering some of the conspirators—no, they would not confess to that charge because “that second part is too ghastly, and **Zinoviev said it was taken from Jules Verne.**”⁽³¹⁾ Some part of the alleged plot was further characterized according to the State’s Attorney: “**Zinoviev and Kamenev call this fantastic tales from the Arabian Nights.**”⁽³²⁾ Why does the transcript fail to quote that part of the testimony? The omission is more than suspicious and does not strengthen the case of the prosecution.

It is significant that the State’s Attorney can state to Smirnov: “We know that in your defense speech you will curse Trotsky;”⁽³³⁾ Even though Smirnov denied terroristic motives and though he refused up to this point to join in with the others in slandering Trotsky, but a good Soviet prosecutor can anticipate many a thing!

The course of the whole trial is expressed in a few lines by the State’s Attorney when he refers to that part of the testimony wherein “Ter-Vaganyan said that work was carried on to get together terrorist groups, but that this was preparatory work which did not go beyond the limits of preparations.”⁽³⁴⁾ While Ter-Vaganyan was talking about preparing a “sharp struggle against the leaders of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union,” the State’s Attorney is ready to present the result of the trial as evidencing preparatory work carried to conclusion in the form of terroristic acts.

Vyshinsky concludes as he began with the desire to eliminate every trace of political motive which the defendants may have had. He says: “Before us are criminals, dangerous hardened, cruel and ruthless towards our people, towards our ideals, towards the leaders of our struggle . . . (therefore). . . . **I demand that dogs gone mad should be shot—every one of them.**”⁽³⁵⁾

(31) Ibid, p. 161

(35) Ibid, pp. 163, 164

(32) Ibid, p. 162

(33) Ibid, p. 156

(34) Ibid, p. 157

V. THE LAST STATEMENTS OF THE DEFENDANTS

THE CLOSING sessions in the evening, of August 22nd and the morning of August 23rd were taken up with the final plea of the defendants. There are two points which were repeated by everyone of the Old Bolsheviks:

1) Their desire to show what they call their downfall to be the result of their being misled by Trotsky;

2) Their unwillingness to ask for consideration of mitigating circumstances. As a matter of fact, they begged that they be punished by death.

Concerning the first point, the defendant Mrachkovsky said: "My connection with Trotsky—that is what brought me to this (counter-revolutionary path)." (1)

Evdokimov bemoans the fact that "Trotsky is not with us here in the dock because he is abroad. He has two perspectives before him: either to disappear immediately and without a trace as Azef (Russian Tzaristic spy—F.H.) did, not only from the political arena, but from the arena of life in general and go into oblivion, hide behind some false name as Azef did—or else, at some time, face a proletarian court." (2)

Reingold feels that "our trial, the trial of the Trotskyite-Zinovievite terrorist and fascist organization, will bury the political corpses of Zinoviev, Kamenev and Trotsky." (3)

Bakayev claims: "the organizer of this unprecedented Trotskyite-Zinovievite counter-revolutionary terrorist bloc, its moving spirit, is Trotsky." (4)

Pickel knows now that "Trotsky, Zinoviev and Kamenev were our banner." (5)

Kamenev, the former Vice-chairman of the People's Commissariat, takes at least a coordinated, and not a subordinated role when he declares that "I, together with Zinoviev and Trotsky, was the organizer and leader of a terrorist plot." (6)

Zinoviev is somewhat more modest and confesses only to a role

(1) Report of Court Proceedings, etc., p. 165

(2) Ibid, pp. 166, 167

(3) Ibid, p. 167

(4) Ibid, p. 168

(5) Ibid, p. 168

(6) Ibid, p. 169

of lieutenant; but, nevertheless, says "I am guilty of having been an organizer of the Trotskyite-Zinovievite bloc second only to Trotsky."⁽⁷⁾ "Through Trotskyism I arrived at fascism."⁽⁸⁾

The prophecy made by the State's Attorney during his closing argument that Smirnov "will curse Trotsky later" is borne out because "Smirnov appeals to all his adherents resolutely to break with the past, to fight against Trotskyism and Trotsky."⁽⁹⁾

As to the second common characteristic of the Old Bolsheviks' final plea:

Even though the State's Attorney calls the court's attention to the "animal fear" of the defendants, Mrachkovsky says: "I do not ask for mitigation of my punishment."⁽¹⁰⁾

Evdokimov says that "I do not consider it possible to plead for clemency."⁽¹¹⁾ Reingold: "I fully admit my guilt. It is not for me to plea for mercy." Bakayev is prepared "to bear full responsibility,"⁽¹²⁾ and "awaits the deserved and just verdict of the proletarian court." Pickel says he "must bear" his "deserved punishment."⁽¹³⁾ Kamenev recalls: "Twice my life was spared. But there is a limit to the magnanimity of the proletariat and that limit we have reached."⁽¹⁴⁾

Zinoviev: "I suffered the greatest punishment, greater than anything that awaits me, when I heard the testimony of Nathan Lurye and the testimony of Olberg."⁽¹⁵⁾

The utter abandonment of the Old Bolsheviks, their desire to be punished, makes one wonder why and how it came about that these same Old Bolsheviks, upon hearing the verdict, immediately penned their plea of mercy denied to them by Stalin.⁽¹⁶⁾

(7) *Ibid.*, p. 170
(11) *Ibid.*, p. 167
(15) *Ibid.*, p. 171

(8) *Ibid.*, p. 171
(12) *Ibid.*, p. 167
(16) *Ibid.*, p. 177

(9) *Ibid.*, p. 171
(13) *Ibid.*, p. 168

(10) *Ibid.*, p. 165
(14) *Ibid.*, p. 169

VI. THE VERDICT

THE VERDICT which sentences all of the defendants to the "supreme penalty—to be shot, and all property personally belonging to them to be confiscated" is of some interest only because of the wording of it.

The court finds that it is established that Bakayev, Reingold and Dreitzer "in accordance with the decision of the 'united center,' **twice tried to make an attempt** upon the life of Comrade Stalin."⁽¹⁾ "Tried to make an attempt"—that phrase may be a definition of a certain crime, but it is a crime which does not appear in any of the Criminal Annals of any country. It is incomprehensible how one can try to make an attempt; but nevertheless, **Bakayev, Reingold, and Dreitzer were shot because they tried to make an attempt.**

Not only Bakayev, Reingold and Dreitzer, but also *Nathan Lurye* is found guilty of "**having tried to make an attempt**" on the lives of certain functionaries of the USSR.⁽²⁾ Similarly, *M. Lurye* "**tried to make an attempt on the life of Comrade Zhdanov.**" These five people were sentenced and executed for a crime no one else was ever found guilty of—*i.e.*, for "trying to make an attempt." The cautious wording of the verdict finding the defendants guilty of "trying to make an attempt," bears out the contention that there was no evidence of any terroristic act—not even of an attempt.

While there is not a word of evidence in the record showing any activities of the so-called center in the Ukraine, the court finds that the terrorist center "made preparations for terroristic acts against Comrade Kossior and Postyshev through the medium of the Ukrainian terrorist group operating under the direction of the Trotskyite *Mukhin*, whose case has been set aside for separate trial."⁽³⁾ *Mukhin* appears here for the first time in the record.

* * * *

The State's Attorney convinced himself and the court of the guilt of the defendants. The Court thus convinced brought in the verdict that the defendants should suffer "the supreme penalty—to be shot." Those however, who read the transcript with any

(1) Report of Court Proceedings, etc., p. 176

(2) Ibid, p. 177

(3) Ibid, p. 178

semblance of attention will be less than ever convinced of the guilt of the accused. Many will feel that the real purpose of the trial was to convict all those opposing Stalin, not the least among them Trotsky. Many, reading the transcript, will feel that the State's Attorney though he tried hard to accomplish the purpose of the trial, failed utterly. He failed because he forgot the saying: *age quod agis!* The State's Attorney failed, because of his great ambition to prove the incredible, he disregarded the old advice "**Do your task carefully.**"

VII. THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE TRIAL

THERE are in connection with the trial a number of questions which in the mind of the objective observer require an answer. It does not seem enough to say with the "foreign observer" sitting next to Joshua Kunitz of the *New Masses* that the indictment is "incredible . . . the concoction of a diseased mind."⁽¹⁾ It does not give satisfaction to say with the *Nation* that "the official record of the court proceedings, unfortunately, does not decide the issue;"⁽²⁾ and that "there is no indication, with one minor exception, of the presence in court of any documentary evidence beyond the confessions which had already been made in private examination and set down in the Government records."⁽³⁾ The *Nation's* finding that "the mystery that veils the motives and conduct of the Moscow Trial cannot conceal their essential implications"⁽⁴⁾ is correct; therefore, the motive or motives must be sought to unveil the facts. These hidden facts,—sensed by everyone to be present in the trial,—cannot be dismissed even by the most categorical statements, issued by the most prominent of all foreign barristers, who claim to have been present at the trial.

Three of those prominent lawyers became indignant when the telegram sent by the Executive Committee of the Socialist (Labor) International to Moscow protesting against the trial and executions was published. They expressed their indignation in a cable sent to Roger Baldwin of the International Committee for Political Prisoners. The cable, because of its implications, is worth quoting.

The three "members of English and American bars at present in Moscow have been following trial Zinoviev, Kamenev, others closest attention and we desire protest indignantly against telegram president, secretary, L.S.I. I.F.T.U. seen it fit send Council People Commisar in name International and Socialist movement. Implication telegram that trial likely be both summary unfair is in our opinion completely unjustified. Specific demands made in telegram really fantastic. Accused offered defending counsel—in the USSR all defending counsel independent of government—but refused preferring defend themselves.

(1) Joshua Kunitz, *New Masses*, October 20, 1936, p. 4

(2) *The Nation*, October 10, 1936, p. 409

(3) *Ibid*

(4) *Ibid*

Attempt suggest to court while trial pending that death penalty inappropriate would in our own countries render its authors liable to imprisonment for contempt court. Not many countries where persons charged treasonable terrorist activity would not be liable to death penalty. In most countries for example, England there no right appeal against plea guilty and since in this case defendants confessed guilt question of appeal doesn't appear to rise. We desire place on record that accused had perfectly fair trial, that on evidence and in particular on connections revealed between accused and Nazi secret police death penalty well merited and that telegram since not composed by ignorant men, can only be regarded as attempt create prejudice against USSR and liable to harm to workclass solidarity about which authors telegram profess be so concerned." (5)

Yes, there are certain implications in the cable, none of them helpful, however, in convincing the world of the fairness of the trial. It is not justifiable to ask why it was necessary for the USSR to "inspire" three lawyers—two of them entirely unknown in the labor movement—to lecture the Executive Committee of the Second International? Why was it necessary to have these indignant members of the bar state something as glaringly untrue as their assertion that; "in the USSR all defending counsels (are) independent of government," whereas anyone with the ability to read and with the further ability to understand what he reads knows, that in the USSR,—as in any country where a "proletarian dictatorship" exists,—no counsel can be independent of the government? Why—if at all,—was it necessary to have three foreign lawyers cable from Moscow the great news that the Second International, for its cable to the court, would be held in "contempt" in the home countries of the bar members? Do they try to scare the Second International with a contempt citation, or are the cabling bar members simply unable to get away from legal technicalities? In any case, they are anxious to "place on record that (the) accused had a perfectly fair trial." The cable was signed by three attorneys, at least one of whom **does not speak Russian** and was present only on the closing day of the trial. (6)

No, it is not possible to make categorical statements and thus find the implications of the trial; but rather one must seek for the motives behind the scenes in order to find the answers to the many "Why's'."

A. Why did the Defendants, if Innocent, Confess?

One of the most often repeated questions is why did the de-

(5) *Daily Worker*, N. Y., Aug. 29, 1936

(6) Statement made by one of the three cabling attorneys during his Chicago lecture, November 13, 1936.

fendants, if innocent, nevertheless confess? To answer this question, one must make some historical retrospect.

The question of Trotskyism first appeared in the USSR during the early political struggles between Trotsky on the one side and Zinoviev, Kamenev and Stalin on the other. As Trotsky said, in this struggle of the bureaucracy of Stalin, Zinoviev and Kamenev against international revolutionary policy, the "sharpshooters were always Zinoviev and Kamenev."⁽⁷⁾ Later, however,

"under the pressure of deep social processes, the group of Stalin, Zinoviev and Kamenev itself fell apart. Zinoviev and Kamenev found themselves obliged to acknowledge that the so-called 'Trotskyists' had been right upon fundamental questions.... At the July Plenum of 1926, Zinoviev announced that his struggle against me had been the greatest mistake of his life—'more dangerous than the mistake of 1917' (when he had opposed Lenin)... In October, 1926, 'You must understand,' he said in my presence to his closest friends, some Leningrad workers who honestly believed in the legend of 'Trotskyism,' 'You must understand that it was a struggle for power. The whole art of the thing was to combine the old disagreement with the new questions. For this purpose Trotskyism was invented.'⁽⁸⁾

Those who have studied the history of the Russian Revolution will recall that upon the death of Lenin, on January 21, 1924, the leadership of the Communist Party of Russia, and with it part of Russia, was headed by the triumvirate of Zinoviev, Kamenev and Stalin. Zinoviev himself says that this triumvirate was engaged with Trotsky in "a struggle for power . . . for this purpose Trotskyism was invented." In 1926, Zinoviev and Kamenev joined the Opposition (to which Trotsky belonged as one of its leading members) and;

"during their two years stay in the Opposition, Zinoviev and Kamenev managed to expose completely the back-stage mechanics of the preceding period when they with Stalin had created the legend of 'Trotskyism' by conspiratorial methods. A year later, when it became clear that the Opposition would be compelled to swim long and stubbornly against the current, Zinoviev and Kamenev threw themselves upon the mercy of the victor (i.e. of Stalin—F.H.). As a first condition of their party rehabilitation, it was demanded that they rehabilitate the legend of Trotskyism. They agreed."⁽⁹⁾

But Trotsky decided to preserve Zinoviev's and Kamenev's oral declaration, and for that purpose obtained written statements, including one from Radek, the self-same Radek who, as late as August 23, 1936, published a violent article attacking and defaming

⁽⁷⁾ Leon Trotsky, "On Lenin's Testament," Pioneer Publishers, N. Y. 1935.

⁽⁸⁾ Ibid

⁽⁹⁾ Ibid

Trotsky, the same Radek who but a short time ago was one of Stalin's comrades in arms. Radek's early statement says:

"I was present at a conversation with Kamenev to the effect that Kamenev was going to tell at the Plenum of the Central Committee how they (that is, Kamenev and Zinoviev) together with Stalin, decided to use the old disagreements between Trotsky and Lenin in order—after the death of Lenin—to keep Trotsky out of the party leadership. Moreover, I have often heard from the lips of Zinoviev and Kamenev how they 'invented' Trotskyism as an actual slogan...."(10)

Similar written testimonies were given by Preobrazhensky, Piatakov, Rakovsky and Eltzin.⁽¹¹⁾ Trotsky further sheds some light upon the acts and actors of the fight against "Trotskyism."

"The above cited testimony of Radek was submitted by him on December 25, 1927. A few weeks later he was already in exile, and a few months later on the meridian of Tomsk he became convinced of the correctness of Stalin's position; a thing which had not been revealed to him earlier in Moscow. But from Radek also the powers demanded as condition *sine qua non* an acknowledgement of the reality of this same legend of Trotskyism. After Radek agreed to this, he had nothing left to do but repeat the old formula of Zinoviev which the latter had himself exposed in 1926, only to return to it again in 1928."⁽¹²⁾

Trotsky adds;

"from this short historic record, resting exclusively upon documentary data, many conclusions may be drawn. One is that a revolution is an austere process and does not spare its human vertebrae."⁽¹³⁾

Indeed, the Opposition was compelled "to swim long and stubbornly against the current," and so it came about that Zinoviev and Kamenev,—who together with Stalin formed the original anti-Trotsky group of 1924-1926 and—who under the "pressure of deep social processes" joined the Opposition in 1926, finally (but not for the last time) capitulated to Stalin in 1928. Twice more did Zinoviev and Kamenev join the Opposition, because, as Zinoviev expressed it before the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Russia;

"there can no longer be any doubt now that the kernel of the 1923 Opposition (Trotskyist—F.H.), as the development of the leading faction (of Stalin—F.H.) has shown, correctly warned against the departure from the proletarian line and against the menacing growth of the apparatus regime— In the question of deterioration and in the question of bureaucracy Trotsky was right in the end against you."⁽¹⁴⁾

(10) Ibid

(11) Ibid

(12) Ibid

(13) Ibid

(14) Record of the Minutes of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Russia, IV, 33

While—according to Zinoviev,—Trotsky, in his fight against Stalin's bureaucracy was right, the "austere process of the revolution" did not spare Zinoviev's vertebrae either. In this light we understand the three capitulations of Zinoviev prior to the fourth one in 1936.

By the same process, Kamenev followed Zinoviev in his repeated capitulations before Stalin's bureaucratic power. Likewise, Bukharin, who with Stalin and Zinoviev fought Trotsky after 1923 and broke with Stalin only in 1928, later capitulated to Stalin. Bukharin, because of his participation with Rykov and Tomsky, in the "Right Opposition," was removed from the presidency of the Third International. (He had succeeded Zinoviev in the presidency, after the latter's removal.) Bukharin's capitulation to Stalin took place under the threat of expulsion from the Communist Party of Russia.

The same historical process at work in the Stalin controlled Communist Party of Russia caused Lominadze,—who supported Stalin in his fight against Bukharin in 1927 and 1928, and who later opposed Stalin's dictatorial rule,—to capitulate. His capitulation did not spare him, and he became in 1936 one of those implicated as a "member of the counter-revolutionary gang of assassins." So it came that Piatakov,—an anarchist turned Bolshevik in 1910,—the Chairman of the first Ukranian Soviet Government, who supported the Trotsky Opposition from 1923 to 1928, was expelled from the party of Stalin. Whereupon he promptly capitulated for the first time. About his second capitulation at the 1936 trial, more anon.

The same austere process wrought havoc with Karl Radek, a Zimmerwaldist during the war, a founder of the Third International, who had supported the Left Opposition since 1923. He was expelled from the party with Trotsky and Rakovsky in 1927, to capitulate to Stalin in 1929 and now again in 1936, without however, escaping the charge of being a "counter-revolutionary." We shall yet return to Radek and his capitulation because his path seems to give the answer to the question: why did they confess?

One is almost prompted to state that the "austere process" referred to by Trotsky played havoc with the vertebrae of every accused "Old Bolshevik." in 1934, even Christian Rakovsky joined the long line of capitulators. Rakovsky, a Zimmerwaldist with Lenin during the war, a founder of the Third International, Soviet ambassador to England and to France, had joined the Left Opposition in 1923 together with Trotsky. He was expelled by Stalin

from the party and sent to exile, and was permitted to return only in 1934 after making a statement violently denouncing and slandering Trotsky and Trotskyism.

Rykov, the President of the Council of People's Commissars, after Lenin's death first joined Stalin, Zinoviev, and Kamenev in the early anti-Trotsky campaign. Later, he joined Bukharin and Tomsky in the "Right Opposition;" now in 1936, he is charged with complicity in counter-revolutionary activities. Rykov, even though cleared of the charges, was removed from his cabinet position in September, 1936.⁽¹⁵⁾

The list of the Old Bolsheviks who at one time or other opposed Stalin's bureaucratic regime and who later capitulated, includes Smilga and Preobrazhensky, both of whom were expelled in 1927 and capitulated in 1929; Tomsky, the "Right Oppositionist" and head of the Russian Trade Unions, who for his opposition was removed from his post, and who in 1936, charged with counter-revolutionary activities, committed suicide.

Everyone of the Old Bolsheviks tried in August, 1936, was one time or another, a member of the opposition against Stalin; but every one under the pressure of the "austere process" of the revolution capitulated to Stalin prior to 1936. Why? The answer is not difficult to find. They capitulated not because they were "counter-revolutionary," not because they were opportunists hungry for jobs; no! but exactly because they were "Old Bolsheviks." They capitulated because the Russian Revolution was their revolution; because they voluntarily and willingly had fought and starved for it; because to see the victorious Russian Revolution, the Old Bolsheviks had suffered the anguish of the jails and of the exile of the Tzar; because they bore the sufferings of uprooted emigrants in all the countries of Europe for the Russian Revolution yet to come. They were Old Bolsheviks who were living, working and fighting to the utmost in order to be able to see the victorious October of 1917.

After Lenin's death, the Old Bolsheviks watched jealously that the Revolution be carried onward successfully, and when they felt, when they observed that as against Stalinism "in the question of deterioration and in the question of bureaucracy 'Trotskyism' was right in the end," they said so by joining the Opposition. The pressure exerted by the tremendous party machine controlled by Stalin was resisted by the Old Bolsheviks in an individual manner. While it took Radek less than two years to see the light, it was

(15) After the writing of this, unconfirmed reports announced Rykov's suicide.

seven years before Rakovsky joined the capitulators. After only eighteen months in Stalin's jail, Zinoviev finally capitulated in 1936 and denounced himself and the leader of the Opposition, Trotsky. Smirnov, though in the same jail for forty-five months, was not willing to go the whole road of capitulation even when brought to trial in 1936. But capitulate they did, some of them earlier and some of them later; some of them wholly and some of them partially. On the other hand, there are yet thousands, members of the Opposition, who, remaining in Stalin's jails and in exile, have not yet broken down, have not yet reached the stage of capitulation. And those who entered the gate of capitulation, did they do it for personal and selfish reasons, or for such reasons alone? To the contrary, we believe that these Old Bolsheviks, whose life work had been the building of the Russian Revolution and of the USSR, were willing to pay the price exacted by Stalin for the privilege of continuing in their life-work, even under the false leadership of Stalin. They were all willing in 1927, 1928 and 1929 to denounce their former political position and their former political friend, Trotsky, for the single purpose of being reinstated in the party and permitted to participate in the work of building the workers' State.

The Old Bolsheviks paid the price exacted from them in the form of the earlier capitulations and re-entered the party to work therein, hoping thus to correct the policies of Stalin, which they considered faulty, even treacherous, to the destiny of the Revolution. Now once more these Old Bolsheviks were confronted with exclusion from the party and from the party work. Stalin and "the powers demanded as condition *sine qua non* an acknowledgement of the reality of this same legend of Trotskyism," which these same Old Bolsheviks exposed as the invention of Stalin's group for the purpose of keeping Trotsky from political leadership and his revolutionary tactics from practical application. The Old Bolsheviks, while ready to capitulate and to subscribe to the reality of the Trotskyist legend, were, however, not willing, at least at first, to call themselves and Trotsky murderers. But now in 1936, the terms of capitulation were stricter; the Opposition was to be annihilated once for all: complete surrender was demanded. And surrender they did, after periods of eighteen to forty-five months in Stalin's jail and the denial of active revolutionary work for a longer period. To gain the freedom of activity, to be permitted to return to revolutionary work as they had previously been permitted to do, they at last surrendered. Their surrender, however,

did not gain for them the right of being active again, but was acknowledged instead by the firing squad. Why? Because by this time Stalin understood that the only way to obtain freedom from the threat of the Opposition of the Old Bolshevik leadership, was to eliminate the leadership bodily.

The capitulating Old Bolsheviks may not have acted as men "upright and brave," but they acted under compulsion, if not under that exerted by Stalin, then under their own, which prompted them to pay any price extorted from them for the privilege of resuming their old role as revolutionary workers.

Of course, it may be contended that this analysis is only a theory, a theory most probably incomprehensible to "indignant members of the English and American bar" who without understanding the Russian language and neither knowing about the workings of a revolutionary mind, nor of Stalins jail and of the G.P.U., assert that the Moscow trial of August, 1936, was a fair one. Our theory may not be the correct one, but to us it appears more in keeping with everything we know of the Old Bolsheviks than a theory which suggests Hitler's tactics (in his "purge" of June, 1934) of accusing the executed Old Bolsheviks of "degeneracy."⁽¹⁶⁾

Karl Radek is the person whose example confirms the above analysis of the question: Why, if innocent, did they confess? Karl Radek was ready to pay any price demanded from him in exchange for the privilege of freedom of action, even under Stalin's leadership. Radek, like the other Old Bolsheviks, was made to believe that if he paid the price and capitulated to the extent demanded of him, he would be permitted to return to his work. Radek, too, hoped that the oppositional policy, since it is correct, would in the end triumph; and this end he preferred to await not in exile, not in jail, not before the firing squad, but in the ranks of the revolutionary workers.

Reading the official record of the trial, one must be convinced that now all the former oppositionists were to be brought to task before Stalin; and so among them Radek was implicated by the testimony of Kamenev. Radek's name was mentioned on the 20th of August, 1936, for the first time, an investigation was ordered in the evening of the 21st, and on August 23rd, he was ready to pay the price. He paid in the form of an article entitled "The Trotskyite-Zinovievite Fascist Gang and Its Leader Trotsky." The article itself so clearly demonstrates what we have stated above that it deserves being quoted:

(16) *New Masses*, Novembre 10, 1936.

"The foul stench of the case of Zinoviev, Kamenev, Mrachkovsky, Smirnov and the absent Trotsky, who are being tried by the Military Collegium of the Supreme Court of the USSR poisons the whole world. One after another, heroes of the Fascist underworld rise up, and stripping themselves of all contradictory covering, admit that they plotted with Trotsky and among themselves to murder the best people of the Soviet Union and the international proletariat.

"The leader of this gang of fascist murderers, Trotsky, tries, in face of this evidence, to clear himself by empty denial. The chief inspirer and organizer of the assassination of Kirov, the leader of the whole gang which was preparing assassination of the leaders of the Party and of the USSR, thinks that his subterfuges will hide the facts. But he cannot wash the blood off his hands, for facts are stubborn things, and these facts have come from the mouths of his most faithful agents.

"Arch-bandit Trotsky, organizer of assassination of the best people of the world proletariat, is living in Norway; here his henchmen expose their nakedness. They are doing it because they know that the hand of proletarian justice would nevertheless have torn off their cloaks and shown them to the world in all naked foulness. But their headman, the fascist arch-bandit Trotsky, thanks to the kindness of Soviet power, was able to save his skin abroad. He thinks that since the Soviet court cannot try him, he can perjure as much as he pleases. He lies when he says he was not concerned with any activity within the USSR, although he writes on the USSR.

"He lies when he says that perhaps certain persons sympathizing with him misused his name! It is useless for the fascist bandit chief, Trotsky, to reckon that he can fool anyone. Before he was thrown out of the country by Soviet power, he urged me and Rakovsky and Smilga to form a center abroad which would direct the activities of the Trotskyites in the USSR.

"In January, 1928, he prepared for flight abroad, urging me and others to do the same, for nothing would materialize without a foreign center. Smirnov knew of this and got a foreign passport for this purpose. A passport was not suitable for Trotsky. Our flight was arranged. Although at that time I was under Trotsky's influence and committed a grave crime against the Party, I was horrified at the thought of working under the protection of bourgeois states against the USSR and sabotaged the attempt to escape. Trotsky was glad when he was deported, although he made theatrical gestures of protest against his exile. During his stay abroad, he not only organized a base for propaganda against the policy of the Central Committee of the USSR, but organized crimes.

"In 1929, Trotsky, having persuaded the Trotskyite Blumkin to organize the sending of literature to the USSR, sent his son Sedov to him in a hotel with instructions to organize an attack on commercial representatives abroad for the purpose of getting

money needed for anti-Soviet work. From robberies which Trotsky prepared in 1929, he went over to preparing terror in 1931, giving direct instructions. Smirnov, Mrachkovsky and their people were connected with him in this for eighteen years.

"The bloody bandit who prepared the death of the best people of the proletariat even now has not forgotten his natural theatrical clownishness. He proposed judicial trial in Norway, where he would prove his innocence. Only send Mrachkovsky, Smirnov, Fritz David, Berman-Yurin to Norway for him. Everything would be fine. The bloody clown of the petty-bourgeoisie, once a revolutionary, later a petty-bourgeois, counter-revolutionary, now an open fascist, is playing a bad joke.

"The case is being tried in the presence of hundreds of people, scores of foreign correspondents. Nobody in his senses believes that the defendants are slandering both themselves and Trotsky. No one doubts his guilt before this country, before the ashes of Kirov, before the leaders of our Party whose lives he attempted to take, before mankind whose peace he attacked by organizing his band."⁽¹⁷⁾

One may see how "the powers that be" demanded as a condition *sine qua non* the writing and publishing of such a testimony of self-flagellation and of vilification of Trotsky. Radek paid the price of his anticipated freedom—which he did not get. (He was arrested on October 7, 1936 though in custody before that date.) If he has not as yet been tried and executed, he may thank the general protest raised by the Socialist and Labor parties of the world, and not least among them by those Trotskyist groups of the foreign countries, which Trotskyists he maligned in his article.

Can it be questioned that Radek's article was "inspired" or "ordered" as a price of his being left unmolested? No one but the faithfully blind will deny it. Can it be doubted that the so-called testimonies and confessions of the Old Bolsheviks were inspired, written for them and rehearsed? No one but the utterly and hopelessly blind can fail to see it.

Piatakov was named with Radek as one of the conspirators with the Old Bolsheviks on trial. After he was mentioned on the 21st of August, 1936, there followed an article by Piatakov, which like Radek's showed an urge toward self-reviling and also a similar slandering of Trotsky. Pistakov writes:

"Now after the publication of all the indictments and information, it can positively, objectively be considered as established that Trotsky—Trotsky personally—is the organizer of the dastardly political assassination plots in the USSR.... Our country, under the brilliant leadership of the Central Committee and in the first place under Comrade Stalin, developed at an

(17) Pravda, Moscow, August 23, 1936.

unprecedented rate.... The results of the Five Year Plan have smashed the thesis of the Social-Democrats that it is impossible to build Socialism in one country (Stalin).... It is unsufferably shameful to me to remember that in 1925-1927 I went with this bandit. I committed a mistake—a big mistake.”⁽¹⁸⁾

Is it possible not to see the “inspiration” being forcefully handed to Piatakov? Can one fail to see how Piatakov, the former member of the Left Opposition who combatted Stalin’s un-Marxian theory of “Socialism in one country,” was made to see the light to the extent of championing the same theory and quoting Stalin? No, Piatakov had to pay the price for his former “deviation.” Whether or not his price will be accepted as a payment or will be mocked at, as in the case of Radek and of the other Old Bolsheviks, remains to be seen.⁽¹⁹⁾ In any case, we feel that our analysis as an answer to the query: Why, if innocent, did the Old Bolsheviks confess,— is confirmed by the “spontaneous” articles of Radek and Piatakov.

If further support is needed to prove that the powers in the USSR now demand complete surrender on the part of every Old Bolshevik who ever showed any aberration from the virtuous and devious path of Stalin, such support is given by the declaration of Rakovsky, who with Trotsky carried on the fight of the International Bolsheviks against the Stalinist bureaucracy from 1923 to 1927. In January, 1928, Rakovsky with Trotsky (and with all other members of the Opposition) was expelled from the Communist Party of Russia; but while Trotsky was first exiled to Alma-Ata and later deported to Turkey, Rakovsky was confined to his Asiatic exile. Steeled by his forty years fight for proletarian rights in Bulgaria, Roumania, France and after 1918 in Russia, Rakovsky remained adamant in his opposition to Stalin’s policy until 1934, when, broken in health, he signed his “Articles of Surrender,” in which he denied his past and at the same time joined in the chorus “Laudeamus Stalin.” Then and only then was he permitted to return to Moscow. For two years, Rakovsky lived quietly, taking no part in the political life of the country until the trial of the Old Bolsheviks, when he, as one day later Radek and Piatakov, “succumbed” to the irrepressible compulsion to self-abuse and of the abuse of Trotsky. Rakovsky writes:

“I personally felt burning shame for my past participation in any opposition whose leaders have become counter-revolutionaries....

It is now clear for all, including myself, who maintained personal friendship for many years with him (that) Trotsky is a

(18) Ibid

(19) After going to press, the forthcoming trial of Piatakov and 16 others was announced.

political adventurer, a scoundrel. . . . I appeal to all friends of the Soviet Union abroad—Keep away from Trotsky—. . . . There must be no mercy for the Trotskyist-Zinovievists.”⁽²⁰⁾

So writes Rakovsky, who together with Trotsky in January, 1928, went to exile rather than renounce his opposition. Thus does Rakovsky revile Trotsky, his personal and political friend of many years. Does he do it because after meditating for six years in his Siberian exile he suddenly saw the correctness of Stalin's policy and because now, after two more years in “captive capitulation” he has discovered Trotsky's counter-revolutionary position? No. To Rakovsky it was no news that Stalin had officially accused Trotsky of being a counter-revolutionary before. At that time Rakovsky had looked upon the charge as coming from that Stalin whom Lenin characterized as one who in the interest of the party should be removed from his office as party secretary. Rakovsky knew that on January 20, 1929, Trotsky was forced to leave Alma-Ata in accordance with a decree of the O.G.P.U., which states, among other things, that Trotsky was to be deported because he was “guilty of infractions of Article 58 of the Criminal Code against counter-revolutionary activity” (The charge for which the present defendants stood trial.) Rakovsky knew that Trotsky's activities, designated by the O.G.P.U. as “counter-revolutionary,” were identical with his own, and those activities were known to Rakovsky not to be counter-revolutionary. Why now the sudden change? It is possible not to see that Rakovsky, Radek, Piatakov and the other Old Bolsheviks were “inspired” to humiliate themselves, to deny their past anew, as the price exacted for the privilege of carrying on, outside the jail, away from Siberia, safe from the firing squad?

It is true that the Old Bolsheviks confessed, and their confessions stand up gravely against them. On the other hand, it is also true that there is nothing more suspicious, nothing that requires more and closer scrutiny than a “complete confession” of an alleged criminal. Because of much experience with the unreliability of confessions, the criminal code of every civilized country requires for a guilty finding corroborating evidence in addition to the confession. Why is it that the prosecution, which claims to have in its possession overwhelming proof, failed to show an iota of corroborating evidence? Is the prosecution unaware of the fact that confessions are often proved to be false? Did the prosecutor of the Old Bolsheviks never hear of the so-called “confessions” in ritual

(20) Pravda, Moscow, August 22, 1936.

murder cases and does he believe them to be true? Has Vyshinsky never read any of the accounts of "Famous Criminal Trials?" Did he ever read the confession of the son of the chief-accused in the ritual murder case of Tisza-Eszlár? Did he ever read the gruesome details of the murder confessed to by the accused's own son; the details of how the father held the knife, how the blood of the victim ran? Does he remember that after the "complete confession," when the alleged victim was found and positively identified, she carried not even the slightest trace of violence? (21)

No, the confessions are not enough, not even if we are told that "under similar circumstances Dimitroff refused to confess before the Hitler court." The circumstances were not similar. Dimitroff, while before his class-enemy, was supported by the class-conscious workers of the world, and could have had no such revolutionary motives for capitulation as the Old Bolsheviks had. Dimitroff's confessing meant only one thing—the "Hitler ax." The Old Bolsheviks' confession meant, so they hoped and so they must have been promised, their return to revolutionary work. They were deceived, or possibly deceived themselves; but nevertheless their confession was the pay-off exacted from them in exchange for the expected privilege of active participation in the building or rebuilding of revolutionary Russia.

The great importance of the moral support of the workers given to the defendant at the Leipzig trial is acknowledged by Dimitroff himself, who speaking about the Brown Book (22) states:

"...It indicated to us the international solidarity with which we felt our case to be supported throughout the proceedings, during the preliminary investigation during the trial and within the very Courtroom itself."(23)

It is no one else but Dimitroff who testifies to the overwhelming importance of the support given to him by the international proletariat, which support was entirely lacking in the case of the Old-Bolsheviks. (The Moscow Trial was arranged and completed in such a short time that no sympathy-demonstration did reach the accused.) Dimitroff speaks of the

"many letters, greetings and expression of solidarity, which came to me, often through inexplicable channels, even into my cell.. shown again what a force, a living force is constituted by international solidarity."(24)

Those who disbelieve the "evidence" of the Moscow trial, failed to show their solidarity with the defendants. The Old-Bolsheviks,

(21) "The Trial of Tisza-Eszlár," by defense attorney Eotvos, 1892.

(22) Report of the World Committee for the Victims of German Fascism.

(23) Foreword by Georgei Dimitrov to the "Second Brown Book," j. 2.

(24) Ibid, p. 3

isolated in the Soviet prisons, must have felt themselves utterly abandoned by the international workingclass. This feeling of isolation undoubtedly did contribute to their fantastic behavior at the trial.

There is another point which is raised by the "faithful." The question seems justified. Why did the Old Bolsheviks not repudiate their confessions when at the open trial? The answer is that the price exacted from them included not only confessing but confirming openly, and that of course excluded a repudiation of their confession. The Old Bolsheviks did not know that their pleas for mercy was to be answered with the firing squad in such a short time, that no repudiation of their confession would be possible. No! The prosecution did not slip-up this time as it did after the Menshevik trial of 1931. As one may recall, the accused then confessed just as completely as the Old Bolsheviks. The defendants of 1931 confessed the possible and the impossible. Among the impossibilities was the placing of Abramovitch, the alleged ring-leader, in Russia in the summer of 1928, when he was supposed to have conspired there with the confessing defendants. **The official protograph of the delegates to the International Socialist Congress proved Abramovitch to have been in Brussels at the time of his alleged and "confessed" presence in Russia.**⁽²⁵⁾ And this is a fact proved by a photograph in spite of all "confession" and in spite of the defendant's failure to repudiate the confessions at the open trial. But a graver slip occurred nevertheless. The accused and confessed Menshevik Shukhanov, after the trial, succeeded in smuggling out a letter from his prison, describing how the "confessions" were rehearsed prior to the trial. Shukhanov notified the outside world that the defendants' failure to repudiate their confessions while at the microphone in the courtroom was because of the deal made by and between the accused and the prosecution.

This time there was to be no slip-up; there was no chance to be given to the Old Bolsheviks to repudiate their confessions. The firing-squad sealed their lips. "Dead men tell no tales." Or possibly they do! There is a story about another great confession which was "staged" some three hundred years ago. The confessor was Galileo Galilei, the great astronomer. Galileo believed, and so he declared, that the earth revolves around the sun. This belief was considered by the Roman inquisition to be heresy (the antique word for the "social-fascism," "counter-revolutionary" or "Trot-skyism" of today). Galileo was "inspired" by the Roman inquisition

(25) The Moscow Trial and the Labor and Socialist International, London, 1931, pp. 29, 30.

to confess his heresy (i.e., to accept the "official line"), which he did with "a sincere heart and unfeigned faith;" (like Zinoviev who, during the trial, "tells the whole truth;" or Mrachkovsky who begs only for one thing, to "be believed when I say that during the investigation I spat out all this vomit;" i.e. the heresy, having departed from the official line.).

Galileo was further "inspired" by the inquisition to add to his confession; "I curse and detest the said errors and heresies" (just as the Old Bolsheviks curse and detested theirs; just as they cursed Trotskyism).

There is, however, a moral to Galileo's story. The moral may or may not have application to the trial of the Old Bolsheviks. The legend has it that Galileo, while standing before the Council of Inquisitors; while openly and loudly confessing his errors; while repudiating his scientific discovery that the earth moves around the sun, spoke softly, scarcely audibly:

"Eppur Si Muove." ⁽²⁶⁾

Galileo's whisper, at that time, could not be heard. But, nevertheless, today, the "**earth moves**" in spite of the Inquisition of the Middle Ages, and of the present Century.

B. What is the Left Opposition

The existence of a group of men and women opposing the policies of Stalin cannot be denied, even though the prosecution maintained that they were only a "handful." The official reports coming from Russia show that in the past men and women have been expelled from the party, others exiled and still others jailed and now some executed, and still others to face the firing-squad, for their "counter-revolutionary" activities. We read that the Fifteenth Congress of the Communist Party (January, 1928) expelled thousands of party members, members of the Opposition, and later ordered them exiled to Siberia. The first exiles were followed by others in ever-increasing number, until today there are literally tens of thousands who pay with their exile for their "heretical" opposition to Stalin's policy. We read about groups representing hundreds and thousands of Social-Revolutionaries, Mensheviks, Anarchists and Bolshevik (opposition) tendencies silenced by their exile and confined to Russian jails. ⁽²⁷⁾ We find among the early "oppositionists" Trotsky in exile, Rakovsky formerly exiled, Radek (to be tried), Smirnov (now executed); Preo-

(26) Abbé Irail, *Querelles Littéraires*, III, pp. 49, 1761.

(27) *New Militant*, 1936, articles by Dr. Anton Ciliga.

brazhensky (the well-known Bolshevik economist and financial advisor of the USSR during the negotiations with France); Mrachkovsky (now executed); Uralov (one of the organizers of the Red Army); Beloborodov (former People's Commissar of Interior); Sosnovsky (one of the greatest political propagandists of the Bolsheviks); Kasporova (in charge of propaganda among oriental women); Bogulavski (of the Council of People's Commissariat); Sokolnikov (now under arrest); Zinoviev (now executed); and thousands of others, all participants in the "Ten Days that shook the world."

The present trial is so obviously directed against the "Left-Opposition" led by Trotsky that a discussion of the program of this "International Bolshevik" group appears necessary to complete our analysis.

The clash between the political theories represented by Trotsky on the one hand and by Stalin on the other—the discussion of which cannot be anything but sketchy within the confines of this pamphlet—began, contrary to popular opinion, during the life of Lenin.

1) Lenin was greatly concerned about the mushroom growth of the "Organization Bureau of the Central Committee" of the party, headed by Stalin, and to "cut-back" the growth of what Lenin called "bureaucratization" of the party, he proposed in an article written in 1922, the establishment of a Control Commission composed of reliable party members occupying no official position but Commission membership. The Commission was to be authorized to call any functionary of the Communist Party of Russia or official of the USSR to account for any violation of revolutionary morality. Lenin's article was refused publication in the *Pravda* because of the objections of Stalin, Molotov, Rykov, Bucharin and other members of the Political Bureau. The obvious reason for such refusal was the opposition of Stalin, Molotov, etc. to Lenin's proposal. Publication was only acceded to upon the urgent demand of Trotsky and Kamenev. (28)

2) In 1922, Trotsky supported Lenin against Stalin's attempt to change the policy of the USSR concerning foreign trade. Stalin's proposal was to weaken and thus make ineffective the policy of state monopoly. Because of Lenin's and Trotsky's opposition, the law, based on Stalin's program and enacted by the November Plenum of the Central Committee in the absence of Lenin and

(28) Leon Trotsky, "On Lenin's Testament," Pioneer Publishers, N. Y., 1935.

Trotsky, was rescinded at the December Plenum of the same year.⁽²⁹⁾

3)Stalin, as the People's Commissar for Nationalities, in 1922 was in charge of reorganizing the political state of Soviet Russia into a Federated Republic of all national units. While Lenin advised considering all reasonable demands of the representatives of the national groupings, Stalin advanced his proposals on strict centralism. (The first conflict between democratic and bureaucratic centralism in the political field?) Lenin's conflict with Stalin necessitated the carrying of the question of the nationalities to the party. Those supporting Lenin, and thus opposing Stalin, included Trotsky and Rakovsky.

4) Lenin's thesis entitled **Better Less and Better**⁽³⁰⁾ expressed his misgiving against the policy of the "Commissariat of Workers and Peasants Inspection" headed by Stalin. The Commissariat, originally conceived in the nature of a Control Commission against the danger of party bureaucracy, became itself bureaucracy incarnate. Lenin's reorganization proposal was met by the opposition of the party Secretariat, under the leadership of Stalin, which opposition was bitterly attacked by Trotsky who supported Lenin's reform proposals. Because of Stalin's bureaucratic attitude within the party, Lenin, in one of his last letters, broke off comradesly relationships with Stalin in the beginning of 1923⁽³¹⁾

5) With Lenin alive in 1923, Trotsky carried on his fight against the policy of the ruling group in the party and of the Third International (headed by Stalin and Zinoviev) with reference to the Bulgarian and German revolutionary situations. Stalin and Zinoviev considered the German political situation in the Fall of 1923 such that the taking over of power by the proletariat would unavoidably be followed by defeat. (The same objection was raised by the same rightist group to Lenin's and Trotsky's proposal to seize power in Russia in October, 1917.) Trotsky, on the other hand, considered the German bourgeoisie unable to stand up against the proletariat; he considered the bourgeoisie unable to save itself. He expounded the theory that the power of the bourgeoisie cannot be restored, except by the fatal mistake of the proletariat. Trotsky said that the German bourgeois state could be saved only if the "Communist Party did not understand at the right time that the position of the bourgeoisie was inextricable and did not draw the

(29) Minutes of the Plenum of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Russia, 1922.

(30) *Pravda*, Moscow, March 4, 1922

(31) Zinoviev's statement at the July Plenum of the Communist Party of Russia, 1926.

necessary revolutionary conclusions.”⁽³²⁾ As is known from history, the Communist Party of Germany in 1923 followed the lead of Stalin and Zinoviev rather than that of Trotsky; followed consistently the lead of Stalin and of the Communist International from then until now. The result, direct and indirect, is Hitler over Germany; over Europe and in 1936 threatening the world.

6) The new Soviet government was still engaged in a struggle for its life when Lenin in 1920 presented his proposal concerning a large scale “Electrification Plan” to precede a soon-to-be-initiated industrialization program. Trotsky proposed in 1923 a “Plan of Coordination of Industry and Agriculture.”⁽³³⁾ (At the same time, he insisted upon the revamping of the party organization to re-establish workers’ democracy.) Trotsky felt that the backward agriculture could not be brought in step with the advanced political status of the Soviet state until and unless a rapid industrialization took place; the industrialization to permit the transformation of agriculture from primitive-private operation to industrialized-socialist form, the latter form to decrease the economic-political power of the large agricultural owners (Kulaks), whose reactionary political influence Trotsky considered a latent, but existing danger.

Already in 1923, Trotsky and the so-called “Trotskyists” prepared a “Planned National Economy” which proposal was met, on the part of the group of Zinoviev, Kamenev, Stalin, Bukharin, Rykov, etc., with contemptuous jeers and disapproval. (The disapproval of the Opposition’s 1923 Planned-Economy came from the same Stalin who borrowed the plan and who from 1928 on sacrificed everything, including the German revolution, to accomplish the Five Year Plan in four—or was it in three?—years.)

7) The Trotskyist Opposition, to provide for a future leadership of the Workers’ State, prepared to eliminate the chasm separating the existing leadership (bureaucracy) from the young party members. Stalin’s group, in answering the proposal, accused the Opposition of desiring to bring about a conflict between the leadership and the younger generation; that the proposal was nothing else but Trotsky’s desire to get rid of the “Old School of Bolsheviks.” The official machinery was brought into play; calumny, distortion, misrepresentation were used to discredit every move of the Opposition, the proposals of which the bureaucracy felt to be dangerous to its continued existence.

8) The Trotskyist Opposition maintained with Marx and

(32) Leon Trotsky, “Lessons of October,” Pioneer Publishers, N. Y.

(33) Leon Trotsky, “The New Course,” Pioneer Publishers, N. Y.

Lenin that the leading role in the revolution belongs to the proletariat, which must teach the peasantry how to follow in building the Soviet State. Bureaucratic misrepresentations turned this proposal into the charge that Trotsky is the enemy of the peasantry; that he underestimates the revolutionary role of the peasant class.

9) Trotsky developed the Marxian theory of the **"Permanent Revolution,"**⁽³⁴⁾ His programmatic proposals, concerning the national and international policy, **considered the Bolshevik revolution** of Russia **"as the first stage in the world revolution which inevitably extends over decades."**⁽³⁵⁾ To this theory of the permanency of the revolution is contrasted that developed by Stalin in 1924, the theory of **"Socialism in one country."**

The "Left Opposition" maintained and still maintains that the theory of **"Socialism in one country"** is the result of Stalin's utter theoretical bankruptcy; of Stalin's loss of faith in the World Revolution. Trotsky repeatedly pointed out that "Socialism in one country," an un-Marxian confusionism, if attempted to be carried out—as now it is attempted by Stalin—would and logically does bring about the national and international defeat of the working class and finally it endangers the very existence of the Soviet State. The Left Opposition, in its repeated evaluation of the policies of the Third International and of the Communist Party of Russia, pointed out that the repeated zig-zags and turns executed by the official communist parties are the direct result of the fantastic "Socialism in one country." The Left Opposition claims in many of its analyses of the Stalinist policies that certain inevitable results, all leading to the disorientation and destruction of the workers' organizations of the world, follow the attempt to build "finally and irrevocably Socialism in one country." One of the results is, that outside Russia, the revolutionary parties will become nothing but frontier-guards for the Russian Commissariat of Foreign Affairs, in fact, will become changed into peripheral organizations, "Friends of the Soviet Union," under the directorship of the Third International.

The Left Opposition maintained and still maintains that Stalin's failure to discern the revolutionary possibilities in Bulgaria and Germany in 1923-1924 brought about his defeatist position expressed by the pronouncement of 1924, *i.e.*, the establishment of "Socialism in one country." Trotsky clearly showed that the un-Marxian theory of Stalin was refuted before its inception by Lenin who

(34) Leon Trotsky, "The Permanent Revolution," Pioneer Publishers, N. Y.

(35) *Ibid*

maintained throughout his life that the social revolution, begun by the Bolsheviks in Russia, can succeed "finally and irrevocably" only if it is supported by the successful social revolution of other economically more advanced countries (as Germany, France). Lenin asserted that the Russian social revolution can maintain itself, until the supporting revolution of other countries occur, only if the industrial proletariat exercising the Soviet power is able to obtain the working support of the peasantry (at least of a majority of it.)

In its attacks upon Stalin's theory, the Left Opposition successfully points to Stalin's own statement in which he denies the possibility of "Socialism in one country." Stalin is quoted not because he is considered a theoretician of any distinction, but because under the theoretical leadership of Lenin he was able to distinguish between correct and incorrect theories. Stalin himself wrote in evaluating the task of the Communist Party of Russia that: "The organization of socialist production—still lies ahead. Can this task be accomplished, **can the final victory of Socialism in one country be attained**, without the joint efforts of the proletariat of several advanced countries? **No, this is impossible.**"⁽³⁶⁾ The fact that Stalin felt constrained to amend his first and correct analysis in a later edition of his book, shows in the opinion of the Left Opposition that he makes, as Trotsky said, "a virtue out of the necessity." After—late in 1924—Stalin pronounced his new theory, he recalled his first and correct analysis and hastened to amend it to read:

"After the victorious proletariat of one country has consolidated its power and has won the peasantry for itself, it can and must build up the Socialist society."⁽³⁷⁾

The amendment in itself is not, of course, Stalin's theory of "Socialism in one country," pure and simple; but together with the many other statements of Stalin and his lieutenants (as Manuilsky at the Seventh Congress) leads, rather misleads the Communists of the world to believe that Stalin's theory is possible in practice; that in fact it is a reality in the USSR. If the latter were to be the case, then even according to Stalin, the Russian proletariat would have already "consolidated its power" and would have "won over the peasantry for itself." The Left Opposition points out, sorrowfully that neither of those preconditions does exist, as is demonstrated by the recent necessity for applying repressive measures against the peasantry; that in fact a dictatorship is still maintained. If the proletariat had "consolidated its power"

(36) Joseph Stalin, "Problems of Leninism," International Publishers, N. Y., First Edition.

(37) Ibid, Second Edition.

those repressive measures would not be necessary; a Moscow trial of August, 1936 would be unthinkable.

The Left Opposition claims that the "Socialism in one country" thesis brought about the frightful mistake of the Anglo-Russian Committee of 1926, a basic misunderstanding of the theory and application of the "United Front." Following the conclusions drawn from Stalin's theory, the government of the USSR embarked upon the policy of seeking allies to protect the country from imperialist intervention. Such an ally was to be the English Trade Union Committee composed of reactionary Trade Union leaders. Because of the reciprocal relationship, the English Trade Union leadership obtained for its home policy the support of the Third International, which effectively blocked the attack of the left-wing trade-unionists, even during the British general strike of 1926. The general strike, as it is known, was first sabotaged and later brought to defeat by the reactionary policy of the self-same leaders forming the British side of the Anglo-Russian Committee. The Left Opposition forecast just such an action on the part of the British Trade Union leaders and did prior to and during the strike demand the dissolution of the Committee, thus to prevent the reactionary English Trade Union leaders from misusing the prestige derived from a Committee membership and from the joint work with the representatives of the proletariat of the "Land of the Workers." The demand of the Opposition was refused by the Stalin leadership, and the Committee was maintained; in fact, the British reactionary Trade-Union leadership was supported as against the rank and filers until 1927, *i.e.*, almost a full year after the defeat of the British general strike.

10) The Anglo-Russian Committee was dissolved just about the time when the Communist International embarked upon its new, at the time, left swing; known as the "**Third period.**" The Opposition pointed out that this infantile left trend was due, as were the previous and subsequent right swings, to the inability of the Stalin leadership to understand the workings of the historical forces during revolutionary and post-revolutionary periods. The left-turn was the direct result of the defeatist position expressed in the slogan "Socialism in one country." After the painful experiment with the Anglo-Russian Committee; after learning that the reactionary leadership of the English Trade Unions could not and did not serve to prevent imperialist excursions of the British Government in the colonies and did not serve as a fence to prevent such intervention in Russia, the swing to the left took place, demonstrating

itself among others in the new theory of the "United Front From Below." Today, when the official Communist leadership is ready to do just about everything to achieve a United Front with the Socialist and Trade Union leadership, it is hard to believe that once, and not so long ago, the same leadership was considered and publicly designated "social-fascist."⁽³⁸⁾ It is hard to believe that the bureaucracy, just a short time ago, labelled the Trotskyists counter-revolutionary because of their proposal for a United Front with the Social Democracy and the Trade Unions. But, as it is said, "*tempora mutantur et nos mutamur in illis.*"⁽³⁹⁾

Because of the categorical refusal of the Communist International to consider a United Front with the Socialist parties and with the Trade Unions, the Left Opposition charges that no effective bar was erected against the oncoming Nazism, which attitude, among other factors, permitted the ascendancy of Hitler. It is—today, in the era of the "Popular Front"—almost unbelievable, but nevertheless a historical fact that the official German Communist Party voted with the representatives of the National Socialists (Hitlerites) against the Socialist government of Prussia, and thus helped, in accordance with the slogans of "United Front From Below" and "Social-fascism is the main danger," the putsch of Von Papen and the subsequent materialization of the pact culminating in January 30, 1933—Hitler's Chancellorship. The Left Opposition did not only criticize after a *fait accompli*, but again, on the basis of the interpretation and understanding of the forces at work, forecast that the policy of the Communist International would by necessity bring about the defeat of the German working class and the advent of Hitler. This scientific forecast earned for them the opprobrium of being called counter-revolutionaries and defeatists who do not believe in the forces and organizations of the German (Communist Party led?) working class.

11) From about 1923 on, Trotsky and the Left Opposition as a whole predicted the deplorable but logical consequences to flow from the hopeless attempt to establish Socialism in Russia with disregard of other countries. Pointing out the elementary thesis, as explained by Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky many years prior to the October Revolution, Trotsky stated:

"That the productive forces of capitalist society have long ago grown beyond the national frontier..... in the productive-

(38) Earl Browder, "The Meaning of Social Fascism," Workers Library Publishers, N. Y.; see also other similar works published by the Communist Party of America.

(39) Times' are changing and we are changing with them.

technical respect, socialist society must represent a higher stage compared to capitalism. To aim at the construction of a nationally isolated socialist society means, in spite of temporary successes, to pull the productive forces backward even as compared to capitalism. To attempt..... (regardless of the whole world).... to realize a fenced-in proportionality of all the branches of economy within national limits, means to pursue a reactionary utopia." (40)

and therefore:

"The conception of building Socialism in one country is a social-patriotic conception." (41)

Trotsky repeatedly pointed out that the misinterpretation of the Marxian economic theory, such as that by Stalin in claiming the possibility of establishing Socialism in one country (and that in the only one, Russia), lays the foundation of a national-socialist program and leads to the degradation of the Communist International "to an auxiliary corps which is not destined to solve independent tasks." (42)

The Left Opposition, which accepted and adopted Trotsky's criticisms as expressed above, points now to the latest development in the USSR and maintains that the present policies, all conditioned upon the maintenance of the status-quo, bear out the Opposition's critical prognostication.

12) During the Chinese Revolution of 1925-27, the official policy advanced by the Communist International was criticized by the Left Opposition as the result of Stalin's defeatist policy and as one which must bring about the crushing of the Chinese working class. The Communist International subordinated the forces of the revolutionary Chinese working class and that of the Chinese Communist Party to the national bourgeoisie represented by the Kuomintang and its leader, Chiang-Kai-Shek. This subordination was ordered on the false conception that in China,—a semi-colonial country,—a **revolutionary grouping of the four classes** *i.e.*, workers, peasants, petty and big-bourgeoisie, exists, which grouping is directed against the imperialist bourgeoisie of the world. Against the warning of Trotsky, the Communist International entrusted the carrying out of the revolution to the nationalist bourgeois Kuomintang. (The Kuomintang was admitted as a sympathizing member to the Communist International. The vote of the Political Bureau on the admission was unanimous, but for the lone protest vote of Leon Trotsky.).

(40) Leon Trotsky, "The Permanent Revolution," Pioneer Publishers, N. Y.: see also by the same author, "The Bolsheviki and the World Peace."

(41) Leon Trotsky, "Draft Program of the Comintern."

(42) Leon Trotsky, "The Permanent Revolution," Pioneer Publishers, N. Y.

To prevent any interference with the "revolutionary" role expected from Chiang-Kai-Shek, the Communist International forbade the anti-bourgeois activities of the peasant groups, and the industrial workers were "advised" against the establishing of Soviets. In addition, the Chinese representative of the Communist International brought about the disarmament of the revolutionary Nanking industrial proletariat,⁽⁴³⁾ and thus prepared China for the subsequent rule of the counter-revolution under the leadership of Chiang-Kai-Shek and of the Koumintang. The Shanghai massacre perpetrated by Chiang-Kai-Shek justified the advance criticism of the Left Opposition on every point, and proved the utter political bankruptcy of the Stalin led Third International and the total failure of its leadership in the Chinese Revolution.

After the defeat of the Chinese Revolution at the hand of the Koumintang, the Communist International, against the contrary proposal of the Left Opposition, transferred its support to the "Left Koumintang" and the Wuhan government, which in the estimation of the Russian bureaucracy was at work to establish a **"democratic dictatorship of the industrial workers and of the Peasants."** To help along the experimentation of this new bourgeois ally of the Communist International, a coalition government, with the participation of the Communist Party of China, was formed (the first People's Front government?), which government, as is now known from history, brought about a second defeat of the Chinese revolutionary workers. Unfortunately for the Chinese Revolution, the forecast of the Left Opposition was correct and its advance criticism was justified by the subsequent events.

13) The program of the Left Opposition, presented in 1927, embraced every phase of the domestic life of the USSR. It recommended, as a follow up to Trotsky's plan of 1923, a sweeping industrialization; the question of farm collectivization for the purpose of bringing about a socialization of agriculture, and simultaneously the strengthening of the economic-political influence of the farm workers as against the owner farmers. The program further discussed the question of foreign trade monopoly, the control of the bureaucracy, etc., all of which proposals were met by the Centrist and Right wing leadership (Stalin—Lominadze, and Bukharin—Rykov) with slanderous attacks upon the "counter-revolutionary Trotskyism. The proposals of the Left Opposition of 1927, at that time violently condemned, were made part of the industrialization

(43) Dispatches from China in the *Militant*, N. Y., 1929. See also "Problems of the Chinese Revolution," L. Trotsky, N. Y. 1932; and Andre Malreaux, "Man's Fate."

program adopted in 1928. It is a historical fact, which one may learn from reading, that the proposals concerning the agricultural program, as submitted by the Left Opposition in 1927, were made Stalin's own, but not before the Kulak's uprising and the destruction of the farm animals, which endangered the food supply of the city workers for years to come.

14) All of Trotsky's warnings to the Communist Party of Russia and to the national sections of the Third International were answered by slander on the part of the ruling group. Trotsky warned that unless the leadership recognized its mistakes in the field of national and international politics, a degradation of the forces of the revolution must inevitably follow, which in time would endanger the very existence of the Soviets. The warnings of the Left Opposition were thrust aside by the Communist International, and the degeneration, in fact destruction of the Communist Parties followed in most countries, not the least in Germany. The warning of Trotsky, concerning the danger of a nationalistic degeneration in the USSR was not heeded; to the contrary, he was charged with counter-revolutionary propaganda, he was exiled as a counter-revolutionary; and today the USSR is far advanced on the road which threatens to reach the form of autarchy.

The Left Opposition's proposal that the USSR must build its defenses in the form of strong Communist parties in the world and not by relying on reactionary-bourgeois alliances, was rejected, the Opposition itself slandered, its program suppressed, and today the USSR finds itself encircled by an hostile world. This encircling has become almost complete at the present time, when the USSR has almost no supporting forces outside of Russia. Such supporting forces once existed in the form of the revolutionary labor movement of Europe.

The growth of the bureaucracy of the Russian Communist Party was characterized by the Opposition as the beginning of a tendency, which, if not checked in time, will choke the revolutionary life of the party; must logically lead to the repetition of the downfall of the Commune of 1791. The answer of the bureaucracy was further slander, further suppression and persecution of the Opposition, and today, as forecast by the Opposition, the adoration of the "leader," the personal dictatorship of Stalin and his satellites bode ill for the successful carrying on of the Proletarian Dictatorship towards Socialism.

* * * *

These are only a few of the charges placed by the Left Op-

position against the leadership of Russia and of the Communist International. The charges are grave, and they are considered such by the leadership so accused. The charges must appear grave because—one by one—they become justified by subsequent events. Because of the irrefutable correctness of the program and proposals of the Left Opposition, the official leadership attempts to rid itself of its own mistakes, not by correcting the incorrect steps and by abandoning the false policies, but rather by eliminating the critics, by suppressing the Opposition. The Opposition, however, is growing. The inarticulate masses of Russia sense, if they do not know, that they are led astray, away from the path opened up in October, 1917. The Masses search, even if gropingly, for a leadership. They look for leaders in their struggle for regaining the achievements of 1917. To prevent the masses from finding their true and revolutionary leadership, Stalin set out to eliminate the Left Opposition; first by suppression of its program, then by slander and defamation, later by exile and jail and now by the firing squad. The firing squad which, though it snuffed out the life of Zinoviev and of Kamenev, was really directed against Trotsky and the Left Opposition.

C. THE PRESENT RUSSIAN POLICY AND THE OPPOSITION

As if to supply proof of the correctness of the program of the Left Opposition, the leadership of Stalin set out in 1933 to legislate in a manner showing the culmination of a policy of gradual elimination of the revolutionary principles of 1917. The degeneration of the Soviets, forecast by Trotsky, was made legal, as was the tendency towards national-bolshevism. The defeatist attitude of Stalin, giving up his faith in the working class and relying on reactionary alliances, was made apparent by the entry of the Soviet Union into the League of Nations (called by Lenin the "Thieves Kitchen of Geneva") and the conclusion of the Franco-Russian military alliance.

In its home policy, the Soviet Government decreed:

a) Changes in the statutes of the system of collective farms; changes favoring the right of holding and owning property (February 1934. "Socialism is one country" apparently leads to de-socialization after "Socialism is established finally and irrevocably.")

b) Wages to be determined in accordance with the quality and quantity of work done. (March, 1934. The old-fashioned Marxian slogan "In a socialist state, from each in accordance to

his ability, to each in accordance to his needs" does not apply to the "exceptional" country of Russia.)

c) Drastic changes concerning the re-introduction of discipline among the youth and reorganization of the method and system of instruction. (April and September, 1935. A prelude to the depoliticization of the youth and its elimination from a political role.)

d) The reformation of the Young Communist League of Russia, taking away its former political and propagandistic status and remaking in into a Russian "*Friends of the Soviet Union*," concerned only with educational activities and the advancement of the "commonweal". (Congress of the Young Communist International, 1935. Apparently this is the beginning of a mass "*Boy and Girl Scout*" movement, if not of the "*Balilla*".)

e) Last, but not least, following the decrees strengthening the marriage ties, making divorces and abortions more difficult, came the announcement of the New Constitution.

Rumors have it that the draft approved by the Central Executive Committee on June 12, 1936, is the work of Stalin. The publication was coupled with the announcement that public criticism and suggestions for amendments were invited. The public, even though not accustomed to such invitations of their critical cooperation, soon found its voice and papers were flooded with outspoken criticisms. Suggestions for improvement were submitted day after day to such an extent that the invitation to criticize was withdrawn. The final draft was then published without adopting any of the popular amendments, with the exception of minor technical changes.⁽⁴⁴⁾

The new Constitution represents such a basic departure from Bolshevik theory and confirms the forecast and criticisms of the Left Opposition to such an extent that a detailed review of it seems worthwhile. The New Constitution provides for:

a) Introduction of the universal, direct, equal and secret vote. *i.e.*, the preponderance of the rural territories is guaranteed as against the political weight of the industrial proletariat.)

b) The Supreme Council of two chambers supersedes the All-Union Congress of Soviets. (The revolutionary one chamber Soviets are replaced by the reactionary check and balances of the double legislative body, wherein the decisions of the popularly elected chamber can be and are successfully vetoed by that representing the Federal Republics; *i.e.*, the bureaucracy.)

c) The Supreme Council appoints the Commissars and the

(44) Louis Fischer, *The Nation*, 1936.

higher judiciary. (The will of the bureaucracy will demonstrate itself in such appointments, making its perpetuation a *fait accompli*.)

d) Suffrage is extended to every male and female citizen over the age of eighteen, irrespective of "social origin, property status or past activity." This extension means, if anything, the preponderance of elements other than the industrial proletariat, and further the restoration to political participation of those who just a short time ago, because of their "past activities" (e.g. white-guardist), were considered the classical enemies of the Workers' State. It is not to be expected that the members of the "Opposition" will be given the right to vote, since they belong to one of the excluded categories, *i.e.*, they have been "condemned by a law court to the loss of their civil rights." Those members of the Opposition who have never been tried by a court but have been exiled by an administrative order will be excluded from the franchise because of their exiled status.)

e) Elections are to be held not as heretofore on the basis of the economic units, (Factories, cooperatives, communal farms, etc.) but on a territorial basis. (Elimination of the principle of the Soviets.)

While it is not our purpose to analyze or to give a summary of the New Constitution, we feel it is necessary to point out certain implications therein, all of which bear out the prognostication of the Left Opposition concerning the trend of the USSR towards the degradation of the Soviet system and the gradual trend toward a nationalistic economic and political system. That such a trend exists may be seen from the fact that the Communist controlled press of the USSR has lately begun to speak of a "Russian Nation," of a "national unit" within which a new patriotism is to be engendered.⁽⁴⁵⁾

Criticism of the new draft of the Constitution was not confined to the adherents of the Left Opposition, as may be seen from the many thousands of corrective suggestions sent from all parts of the country.⁽⁴⁶⁾ To forestall criticism, the latest "check-up on the party credentials" was initiated. The check-up, followed by the expulsion of approximately 200,000 members from the Communist Party of Russia, was an answer of the leadership to the ever increasing number of opponents of Stalin's internal and external policies, and was to forestall any and all organized opposition to the New Constitution, more particularly to forestall opposition to the emasculation of the Soviets.

(45) Pravda, 1936.

(46) Léouis Fischer, *The Nation*, 1934.

D. THE GROWTH OF THE OPPOSITION

The latest Communist Party purge of 1935 and of the early part of 1936 was carried on in an unusual form. Instead of the party-trial of the members, the expulsion took place subsequent to an administrative order of the bureaucracy which contemplated only a "check-up" of the party cards. Though no complete figures are available, news reports coming from Russia permit the conclusion that between two and three hundred thousand party members were refused new membership cards, thus bringing about the effective expulsion of those "checked" off.

It is worthwhile to speculate upon the categories of those expelled from the Communist Party of Russia. The *Pravda*⁽⁴⁷⁾ considers those eliminated from the party as belonging to one of the following groups:

- 1) Trotskyists
- 2) Zinovievists
- 3) Opportunists, adventurers
- 4) Criminal elements
- 5) Spies

(The Trotskyists, who are thus thrown into a sub-category with "spies" console themselves with the knowledge that in 1917 Lenin and Trotsky were hounded as the spies of the German Kaiser.)

Assuming the most conservative figure; *i.e.*, two hundred thousand, as the number of those expelled, and reversing the order in which the categories are listed, may we not ask whether the Communist Party of Russia, after the "final and irrevocable victory of Socialism"⁽⁴⁸⁾ was achieved, contained more than ten thousand spies? Giving the party the benefit of the doubt, ten thousand expelled members do, we hope, include all the spies belonging to it up to that time; leaving one hundred ninety thousand expelled members to account for.

Extending the same benefit of doubt to the party, another ten thousand must cover all felons (sneak-thieves, etc.) who succeeded in becoming members of the Communist Party; still leaving one hundred eighty thousand in the remaining three categories.

The benefits of a membership in the Communist Party of Russia, in spite of all the exacting duties, must have attracted a great number of the third category, *i.e.*, opportunists and adventurers. Speculating further and still giving the party the benefit of all conceivable doubt, we cannot assume that the well-central-

(47) *Pravda*, January 2, 1936.

(48) *International Press Correspondence*, XV, No. 44, p. 1145.

ized and centrally controlled party made it possible for more than eighty thousand opportunists and adventurers to find a berth with the ruling group of the USSR. Having eliminated eighty thousand opportunists, there remains the stupendous number of one hundred thousand who were expelled for being Trotskyists and Zinovievists. Since the cataloguing of those expelled, as done by the *Pravda*, mentions first the Trotskyists, it is fair to assume that they preponderate, and thus a proportion of 60/40 in favor (or disfavor) of the Trotskyists is not out of place; bringing the number of those expelled for Trotskyism to sixty thousand. The figure of sixty thousand Trotskyists, as against forty thousand Zinovievists is surely a conservative one and gives a larger share to the latter group than the real proportion. It is known that the Zinovievists were confined to Leningrad (almost exclusively), while the Trotskyists were present in every important industrial town, even in the communal farms of Russia. That the latter is the case may be seen from the "purging" reports of the party, wherein the expulsion of Trotskyists is reported from every part of the country. Further it is to be expected that the Zinovievists represented a small minority of the "Opposition," since their ideological leader, Zinoviev, gave up his principled position already in 1928 and thus made it more than hard for his followers to carry on any kind of political propaganda work in the absence of a principled program. The Trotskyists, on the other hand, not only enlarged upon their program in 1927, but they carried on their principled criticism of the bureaucracy, without ever renouncing their political position. As Ciliga, the former member of the Executive Committee of the Yugoslav Communist Party, its delegate to the Communist International and who, for his opposition position, was imprisoned in Russia and released only in 1935, pointed out⁽⁴⁹⁾ the only real opposition in Russia is represented by the Trotskyists; i.e., the group of the Bolshevik-Leninists.

Though the leaders of the bureaucracy, speaking during the trial through the *Pravda*, refer to the Trotskyists as "a handful," the *Pravda* previously presented a radically different picture. During the party purge, the *Pravda* quotes the provisional secretary of the Communist Party of Russia, Khatarjevich, to the effect that; "We succeeded in uncovering not only isolated individuals but entire counter-revolutionary Trotskyist-Zinovievist groups, skulking in the ranks of the party." The report from the Black Sea province states "there existed counter-revolutionary Trotskyist-Zinovievist

(49) *New Militant*, January 25, and February 8, 1935.

groups" in several of the cities and in the industrial and agricultural plants.⁽⁵⁰⁾

Among the local reports, analyzing the result of the latest party purge, there are some which give more than an approximation of the number of the expelled Trotskyists. Secretary Zaitsev of the Charkov district catalogues two thousand three hundred fifty six expelled party members. He assigns from among them 907 to the Kulaks and White-guardists, 594 to the moral degenerates (a horribly large percentage from among the 50,000 party members of the district. From all we have read about Hitler Germany, even the organization of the Nazis did not attract such a large proportion of degenerates as that reported by secretary Zaitsev.) The same report further classifies those expelled as undisciplined workers, sneak-thieves, speculators and bourgeois nationalists (mind you, bourgeois-nationalists and not the kind of the proletarian-nationalist variety, the latter apparently were not "purged" from the party.) Last, but not least, there were one hundred twenty Trotskyists, or just about 5% of those expelled.⁽⁵¹⁾ Taking 5% as the common factor for all Russia, the number of the Trotskyists expelled with the total of about two hundred thousand, would amount to not more than ten thousand. Our first assumed figure of sixty thousand must, for diverse reasons, nevertheless, be nearer to the fuctual number. One of the reasons is that: "In Charkov, the satrapy of S. Kossior, Petrovsky & Co., the physical extermination of the Opposition has been going on since 1923, with a bestial ruthlessness, so thorough that its fame has spread throughout the entire Soviet Union."⁽⁵²⁾ One may imagine that after a continuous purge extending over thirteen years there would be mighty little left for further purging. If, on the other hand, as the party secretary reports, there were still enough Trotskyists to account for 5% of those expelled, then it is fair to assume that in districts less efficient in purging than Charkov, the proportion of the Trotskyists among those expelled in 1936 will be considerably higher than 5%.

There is another reason which leads us to believe that sixty thousand comes near to the true number of the expelled members of the Opposition and that is the fact, that the official figures do not even mention those who belonged, while adhering to the principles of the Opposition, to the Young Communist League of the USSR. It is impossible to believe that the youth of Russia, the least corruptible, the most idealistic section of the population, that

(50) Pravda, December 26, 1936.

(51) Ibid.

(52) Leon Trotsky: "20,000 Oppositionists expelled from the Communist Party of the Soviet Union." New Militant, Feb. 15, 1936.

section which always and everywhere represents the advance guard of the revolution, would have failed to be attracted by the revolutionary program of the Bolshevik-Leninists. To the contrary, the decreed degradation of the Young Communist League from a political to a social-welfare organization,⁽⁵³⁾ indicates nothing less than a political development in a direction not countenanced by the bureaucracy. That the members of the youth group were not unaware of the Opposition was pointed out by the State's Attorney himself during the August trial of the Old Bolsheviks. The prosecutor, wielding his tarbrush, leaves a few spots upon the, yet unsullied vestment of the political youth of Russia, when he (of course, without any proof) declares that: "Nikolayev (the alleged murderer of Kirov) was an old member of the Young Communist League."⁽⁵⁴⁾

The bureaucracy of the USSR, whenever it expresses itself concerning the Opposition, unfailingly shows a desire to minimize the number and importance of the Trotskyists. Repeated references are found to the "miserably few" and to the "handful" of Trotskyists, proving conclusively that the 5% allotted by secretary Zaitsev to the members of the Opposition within the Communist Party of Russia (now expelled) must be an absolute minimum. Because of the obvious desire of the leadership to keep the number of Trotskyists down, (at least on their records) it is not impossible to imagine that many of the expelled rank and file members of the Opposition were lumped with one or the other of the categories expelled. Only prominent members of the Opposition, whose role was known to the party members, were, by necessity, purged for their Trotskyist policy.

Recent figures and facts are available concerning the thousands of imprisoned Bolshevik-Leninists. A. Tarov, a member of the Opposition, succeeded in 1935 in escaping from one of Stalin's prisons. Tarov, a worker who joined the Bolshevik Party in 1917, saw service on the revolutionary fronts, first as a soldier, later, after graduating from a Military Training School, as a Commander of a Red Detachment. From 1921 on, Tarov worked as an organizer under the Central Executive Committee. In 1923 he was ordered to the Communist University in Moscow, where he studied until 1926, in which year he was expelled for an Oppositionist speech and sent to a railroad construction job. In 1927, during the first concentrated attack upon the Opposition, Tarov was expelled from

(53) Decision of the Congress of the Young Communist International, Moscow, 1935.

(54) Report of Court proceedings, etc., p. 61.

the party, and in September 1928 he was arrested as a Bolshevik-Leninist. After lingering in the jails of the G.P.U. for six weeks, he was exiled, together with many other members of the Opposition, to Kazakstan. Many exiled members of the Opposition capitulated after 1930. Those failing to "see the light" were arrested in 1931 (it happened to be in January, the anniversary of Lenin's death), and were sent from their place of exile to the Petropavlosk prison. Tarov gives an account of the treatment afforded to the imprisoned Trotskyists. He describes how the prisoners were assigned to typhoid infected cells, how they contracted spotted fever. He recounts how the imprisoned members of the Opposition, because of the inhuman treatment, resorted to repeated hunger strikes; how the G.P.U., to break the strike, sprayed them with cold water in their unheated cells where they had lain exhausted and weak from hunger.

Tarov also recalls that during one of the G.P.U.'s "pranks" of using the water-hose upon the Opposition, one of the Trotskyists, Pogasyan, was hit in the face by the full force of the water stream, and because of it was blinded. (Some of those who do not understand why the Old Bolsheviks, even though they are innocent, capitulated and confessed, please note Tarov's story). Apparently Petropavlosk was too good a place to keep Tarov and his comrades, because after a few months, they were shipped off to the Verkhni-Uralsk solitary. Here Tarov and four hundred and fifty other Bolshevik-Leninists underwent an eighteen day hunger strike as a protest against the treatment by the G.P.U. administration. (Among other things, a prison guard fired into a cell, wounding the Trotskyist Essayen because the prisoners, in the opinion of the guard, were too loud in commemorating a revolutionary holiday.)

Tarov claims personal knowledge of the existence of a number of colonies of exiled members of the Opposition; among them: Akmolinsk (with many others, Masya Joffe, the widow of Dr. J. J. Joffe, who represented the USSR at the peace conference of Brest-Litovsk and who later committed suicide, is here), Funze and Uralsk. Tarov, not wishing to get acquainted with all the places of exile and with all the prisons of the USSR, decided upon and succeeded in escaping from Russia. He found his way to a country in Central Asia. (Fearing that the Government of the USSR will demand his expulsion, as the expulsion of Trotsky was demanded of Norway, Tarov is not anxious to publicize his present domicile.)

Tarov's conclusion is that today the Bolshevik-Leninists represent the only force which effectively opposes the reactionary policies

of Stalin and of the Third International.⁽⁵⁵⁾ The youth looks towards them for leadership, and this confidence is one of the reasons why the bureaucracy concentrates all of its tremendous power on eradicating them from the political life of the USSR. As it always happens in history, in spite of all persecution, in spite of all the slander, even prison, exile and the firing squad, the number of the Bolshevik Leninists increases from day to day. It is not impossible that the moral of the story told about Galileo has its application to the USSR and to the program of the Bolshevik-Leninists—in spite of the Holy Synod and its holy “line;” EPPUR SI MUOVE.

E. SHOOTING ZINOVIEV, KAMENEV, etc., BUT AIMING AT TROTSKY AND THE OPPOSITION

The clumsiness with which the trial of the Old Bolsheviks was conducted makes it impossible even for the “faithful” not to see that the main, if not the only purpose of the trial, was to defame Trotsky and the Bolshevik-Leninists and thus to discourage, if not prevent the growth of the Opposition. The actions of the Government of the USSR, of the Communist Party of Russia and of the Third International in Russia and abroad, all contributed to the creation of a deep impression upon the world, that the purpose of the trial was to smash the Trotskyists. Such is the conclusion arrived at by the Moscow Correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian*, who, immediately following the execution of Zinoviev and others, wrote:

“The people of the Soviet Union watch anxiously for the next step, for it is certain that the trial itself is only the beginning of a “purge” that will leave the whole country scoured to its political core of every trace of ‘Trotskyism’ of every kind and color.”⁽⁵⁶⁾

The next step was not long in coming. Already on the fourth of September it was reported from Moscow:

“The ruthless campaign to stamp out the survivors of the former alleged anti-Stalin opposition in the Communist party is going on unabated. The Soviet press daily reports countless resolutions of the Communist party committees from all parts of the country expelling men from party posts and demanding further investigation and criminal proceedings against suspects.... The ‘purge’ is carried out by the ordinary party officials. The OGPU only arrests the suspects.... General V. K. Putna, Soviet Military Attachè in London, has been arrested and charged with complicity in the ‘Trotskyist plot’ against Stalin.... Mme. Sokolnikoff (wife of the first Soviet Ambassador in London) has been expelled from the Communist party. She has

(55) A. Tarov: “My Escape From Stalin’s Prison,” *New Militant*, February 15, 1936.

(56) *Manchester Guardian Weekly*, August 28, 1936.

also been expelled from the Communist Writers' Union, of which she has been secretary. Her husband, Gregory Sokolnikoff, is under arrest on a charge of complicity in the Trotsky plot.... Ivan Katayeff, another well-known writer, is to be "purged" from the party ranks for alleged "Trotskyist" sympathies.⁽⁵⁷⁾

Still later it was reported:

"It is now officially confirmed that Karl Radek, the famous Russian publicist is under arrest.... Investigation has established Radek's connection with the alleged conspiracy for which a month ago sixteen distinguished Bolsheviks were sentenced to death. Radek's arrest had been expected.... Although the Soviet authorities had persistently refused to confirm Radek's fate, it was no longer in doubt when a fortnight ago an official communique absolved Rykov and Bucharin of similar charges without mentioning Radek's name. The arrests of.... Piatakov had been previously confirmed."⁽⁵⁸⁾

While Rykov was cleared of the charges implicating him by the testimony of Kamenev, in the Trotskyist plot, he did not get off scot free, because:

"Important changes are announced in the Council of People's Commissars, and they have caused the greatest astonishment in Moscow. Rykov, who early last month was cleared of charges made against him in the Zinoviev trial, has been 'released from his duties' as Peoples Commissar for Communications. In his place has been appointed G. G. Yagoda who was Commissar of Home Affairs and E. N. Yezhoff goes to the Commissariat of Home Affairs.... Yagoda has been devoted to political police work since joining the Cheka in 1920.... Yezhoff who is chairman of the party Control Commission and a candidate for the important Political Bureau.... It is significant that Yezhoff has been among the unimpeachable Bolshevik nucleus whose devotion and loyalty to Stalin have been untouched by the political struggle of the last ten years."⁽⁵⁹⁾

(Yagoda, the former chief of the G.P.U. was in reality demoted, by being made the head of the "unpolitical" Commissariat for Communications. His demotion is undoubtedly due to the many blunders committed by the G.P.U. in preparing the trial of August 1936.)

That the "purge" against the Trotskyists was to go on with unabated violence was to be seen clearly from the reports of the Soviet newspapers. Following immediately upon the trial of the Old Bolsheviks, a great number of party workers belonging to the Opposition were arrested. The *Pravda* reported

"The arrest in Minsk of a large organization of 'counter-revolu-

(57) Ibid, September 4, 1936.

(58) Ibid, October 9, 1936.

(59) Ibid, October 2, 1936.

tionary young communists' who were 'impudent enough to discuss openly the theory of Socialism in one country'."⁽⁶⁰⁾

The same paper one day later reports the arrest of *Lepechev*, secretary of the Palas district committee of the Communist Party of Russia; *Fedotov*, party secretary of Franca; *Tatulov*, secretary of Krasnoukout; *Tchifrenovich*, head of the Propaganda Section of the Soviet republic on the Volga; *Stepanian* of the Caucasian District Committee; *Khandgian*, secretary of the Armenian Communist Party, all charged with counter-revolutionary activities.

From the Russian press of September and October, we learn about the arrest of Red General *Putna* military attachè in London; *Chopechnikov*, the Director of the Supreme War School; *Schmidt*, famous military leader of the Ukranian Civil War; *Kliava Kliavine*, the former chief of the Red Army It is also reported that charges are raised against many writers who are thrown out of the writer's union, as *Tarassov-Rodionov*, the author of the Civil War memories *February, 1927*. The papers write about the discovery of Trotskyist Centers in the party organizations of the Caucasus, in Rybinsk, in Tcheliabinsk, Moscow, Leningrad, etc. Those who were unpolitical in the past, did in most cases escape suspicion and arrest. This is not the case with those who, though neutral in politics—had the misfortune to be related to a member of the Opposition. So Sergei Sedov, the youngest son of L. Trotsky, was arrested in January, 1935, and kept in jail ever since.⁽⁶¹⁾ Sergei, now twenty-nine years old, failed to find interest in politics. His only interest was mathematics and engineering, the two subjects, which he taught up to his arrest in one of the Colleges of the U.S.S.R. Sergei's interest in engineering prompted him to remain in Russia, and separate himself from his family when in 1929, his father was deported to Turkey.

For those of the "faithful" who fail to see the real purpose of the trial of the Old Bolsheviks, the Soviet government gave clear proof of her real intentions to destroy Trotsky when she demanded from Norway the latter's expulsion. On August 29th, the Soviet Union presented to the Norwegian government a request that it expel Leon Trotsky, former War Commissar of the USSR, declaring it proven, that he had plotted from exile there, a series of terroristic acts against the head of the Soviet state. The Soviet request became almost threatening when it stated that:

"It bringing this to the notice of the Norwegian government, the Soviet government believes that the further granting of

(60) *Pravda*, September, 1936.

(61) Letter of Nathalie I. Trotsky (mother of Sergei), *New Militant*, June 29, 1935.

refuge to Trotsky, an organizer of terroristic activities, may harm the existing friendly relations between the USSR and Norway, and that it would contradict the accepted understanding of international principles."⁽⁶²⁾

Apparently the interpretation of the international principles, concerning the right of asylum, is not quite the same in Norway and in other parts of the world, as in the USSR. Such a difference of opinion was expressed by Norwegian premier Nygaardsvold, who, with reference to the Soviet demand, says:

"It is beyond my comprehension how anybody could argue in the way Russia does."

Norway's foreign minister, Halvdan Koht, was even more emphatic in his declaration:

"The principle of asylum will be maintained by the present government in Norway. We will not let ourselves be subdued in such matters by anyone."

(As a matter of fact, Norway, under the pressure exerted by the Soviet government from without, and by the conservative and fascist elements within, became "somewhat subdued" because she later ordered the interment of Trotsky, which amounts to virtual imprisonment.)

The bureaucracy of Russia finds strange bedfellows in demanding, together with the conservatives of Norway, the expulsion of Trotsky. Even though such a meeting of the minds of the Soviet government and of the conservatives, knowing the motives of the trial of Moscow, must be considered logical, nevertheless, the organ of the Norwegian Labor Party finds it bewildering:

"It is strange to find Norwegian conservatism in close cooperation with Moscow Communists in demanding the removal of Leon Trotsky. The whole affair is an abominable attack on asylum rights. If it is asserted that the granting of asylum to a political refugee endangers friendly relations between countries, the principle of asylum is reduced to an absurdity. Even though Trotsky is guilty of the Soviet charges, he still is a political refugee justified in enjoying asylum. Norway, a free country, upholds asylum rights."⁽⁶³⁾

While speaking of "strange things," one is struck by a further portion of the Moscow note to Norway, which recalls the Declaration in the Council of the League of Nations, following the assassination of King Alexander of Yugo-Slavia and Louis Barthou, French foreign minister, in October, 1934. The Declaration provides that members of the League should assist each other against terrorists and lays the foundation of a convention against the harboring of ter-

(62) Soviet note to Norway, August 29, 1936.

(63) *Arbeiderbladet*, Oslo, August 31, 1936.

rorists. One cannot fail to wonder why Litvinov, himself a former refugee from czarist Russia, was the first to support such a convention of the League of Nations. Is it possible that the bureaucracy of Russia already in October, 1934 was preparing the stage on which to "try" Trotsky and thus bring about his expulsion from Norway, or from any country where he may find asylum?

It is strange that a reactionary bourgeois newspaper, the *Chicago Daily News* should remind the Soviet government that the maintenance of the principle of asylum is "a streak of decency" still to be seen in the world. It is strange that the revolutionary government of Russia can be compared, by a bourgeois paper, with the government of the Czar:

"The Russian Bear, now Bolshevik but having the same international habits as under the Czar is growling outside the door of Leon Trotsky's refugee home in Norway. The Soviet demand that this 'man without a country' be driven out of that country. Well, Trotsky is used to that..... when the police agents of Czardom chased him all over the world..... Occasionally politicians and rulers give rein to their passions and, yielding to the dictates of demagoguery, attack the right of beaten men to sanctuary abroad... Mr. Trotsky, it seems safe to say, will remain in Norway until he decides to leave voluntarily. It may be true that the world has gone 'nuts' but not quite so 'nutty' as to scrap the rights of asylum."⁽⁶⁴⁾

The Soviet government having been reminded by an overwhelming number of individuals and newspaper protests that she, in demanding from Norway the abrogation of Trotsky's right to asylum, apparently forgot that there should be left at least "a streak of decency" even in politics, dropped her demand for Trotsky's expulsion. But it is strange, nevertheless, that the revolutionary government of Russia and the mouth-piece of the Third International in Norway, the *Arbeideren* found other strange bed-fellows in the Norwegian Fascists. The slanders and calumnies spread against Trotsky are repeated word for word by the *Arbeideren* (organ of the Communist Party of Norway) and by the *Fritt-Folk* (organ of the Norwegian fascists). The articles appearing in the communist and in the fascist press are so similar that attorney Puntervold, representing Trotsky, in filing his libel suits against the *Arbeideren* and the *Fritt-Folk*, was able to word both complaints as one. It was declared that the purpose of the libel suits was to give Trotsky an opportunity, before the Norwegian court, to force his slanderers to present whatever proof they may, or may not, have had concerning his terroristic activities. (Latest reports from

(64) *Chicago Daily News*, September 3, 1936.

Norway indicate that the government, apparently under the pressure of Russia, forbade Trotsky to prosecute his suits. Thus Trotsky's demand for the sifting of the charges against him before an impartial board was made impossible, at least for the present.)

If the purpose of the trial had been the punishing of the conspirators, then the shooting of Zinoviev and the others should have put an end to the affair. But not so! Following the trial, thousands of "Trotskyists" were removed from their party positions, arrested and were sent to exile in Siberia and to the various jails of Russia. The newspaper campaign, begun against the "handful of Trotskyists" before the August Trial, went on with increased fury.

The organ of the Executive Committee of the Communist International (XIII, 1246-1261), in discussing the trial, speaks of a "bloc from Hitler to Trotsky-Zinoviev" (it does not, by necessity, mention the Norwegian fascist paper, *Fritt-Folk*; this paper being in a bloc with the Norwegian Communists in their abuse of Trotsky). Even though many of the Trotskyists were expelled from the Communist parties of the world for no other reason than because they demanded the formation of a United Front with the Social Democratic Party of Germany before the advent of Hitler, now the Communist International dares to write: "At the time when everything speaks in favor of the policy of the United Front . . . Trotsky opposes the policy of the United Front, distorts facts and casts mud at the leaders and supporters of the policy of the People's Front."⁽⁶⁵⁾ One wonders at the audacity with which the position of the Left Opposition concerning the United Front is being misrepresented. One wonders at the ignorance of the persons for whom the article in the *Communist International* is written; the ignorance of those to whom the "United Front" and the "Peoples Front" appear to be interchangeable, as in the article referred to.

One wonders whether or not those members of the Communist parties, who actually read the article in the *Communist International*, understand and believe the incoherent slur directed against the Trotskyists:

"In Spain, as in the Soviet Union, the foul activity of the Trotskyists and the Gestapo are directly interwoven. The agents of Hitler's secret police prepared the Spanish fascists for the struggle against the Republic long before the military revolt broke out. And here the Gestapo made use of the activity of the Trotskyists."⁽⁶⁶⁾

(65) *Communist International*, New York, XIII, 1259.

(66) *Ibid*

The statement above follows no proof on which to base such a grave accusation. In absence of proof, the article as a whole appears as the raving of a maniac. Even a maniac, however, may have a lucid interval, and so has the editorial writer of the *Communist International* when he discusses **the purpose of the trial**. He states it succinctly: "**Trotskyism must be liquidated.**"⁽⁶⁷⁾

The magazine just quoted from counts on the ignorance of its readers, when it attempts to show that the teachings of Trotsky brought the French Communist Doriot into the camp of fascism. The fact is that Doriot was never a member of the Opposition, but to the contrary, was a rabid anti-Trotskyist. Such an attempted falsification is made though it is well-known that Doriot stepped into the fascist camp directly from the membership in the Central Committee of the French Communist Party (Stalinist). It seems that distortion and falsification are the only means available to bolster up the tottering structure of Stalin's "revolutionary theory." The Communist International (Third) thinks that falsifications will sometimes do in place of facts; more often, however, they do not because **facts and truth** have an obstinate habit—they "**will out.**"

No article written by any supporter of the official policy of the Third International seems to be complete unless it tells the Second International where to get off. So, the editorial of the *Communist International* concludes:

"Shameful is the behavior of W. Citrine, F. Adler, etc. To defend the Trotskyite terrorists means to help fascism. (Emphasis in the original) Only such a conclusion follows from the behavior of these people of the Second International."⁽⁶⁸⁾

The real man, however, to discuss the Second International is Georgi Dimitroff, the secretary of the Third International, and he does so in every organ of the International and in the papers of the national sections. Dimitroff discussed the trial with the vehemence of one possessed by it. In an article entitled "To Protect Terrorists It To Help Fascism," Dimitroff writes:

"It is impossible to read without a feeling of deepest indignation the telegram sent in such a haste to the Soviet government regarding the trial of the terrorist Trotsky-Zinoviev Center, by the official representatives of the Labor and Socialist International and the International Federation of Trade Unions, signed by DeBrouckere, Adler, Citrine and Schevenels."⁽⁶⁹⁾

Dimitroff is deeply indignant, because:

"If the proletarian court in the Soviet Union brought down the sword of punishment on saboteurs who scattered glass-splinters

(67) Ibid

(68) Ibid, p. 1261

(69) Ibid, p. 1243

in the workers' food, poisoned collective farm cattle, spoiled machines, or if the court took action against spies and military saboteurs, agents of fascism who destroyed railway tracks, and caused explosions, every time such incident occurred, such reactionary leaders as Citrine and Adler interceded for and came forward to protect this counter-revolutionary gang of ruffians." (70)

After reading Dimitroff's statement, one must ask whether it is just imagination or based on facts; whether it is nothing but the maniacal raving of one who has no factual arguments to rely upon, or the bitter truth. If it is the truth, how in the name of common sense can the Third International (Secretary Dimitroff) expect to work within the Peoples Front with persons like Citrine and Adler? There is no escape from the dilemma, unless one assumes that Dimitroff does not believe a word of what he writes, that his writing is nothing but window dressing to blind the "faithful."

Dimitroff himself senses the discord between his present article against the leaders of the Second International and the official policy towards Peoples Fronts. He opines that Citrine, Adler, etc.:

"Try to create the impression that the trial of the counter-revolutionaries in the Soviet Union endangers the realization of the proletarian solidarity with the Spanish People." (71)

This impression apparently obtains with thousands of workers throughout the world; the same impression is given expression in many hundreds of resolutions adapted by workers' organizations in Spain, France, England, the United States. Dimitroff, however, knows better; he simply says: "But that is an obvious lie." (72)

The national organs of the Third International do nothing but repeat the slanderous statements made in the Russian press against the Trotskyists. There are, however, some which offer something new and thus worth quoting. P. Lang's masterly thesis on "The Trotsky-Zinoviev Assassins Before the Bar of the Working Class" contains some real stuff, some real charges not only against the Trotskyists but also against the Second International. (Is there any proof? No! Proof is not necessary if the accusations are presented before the "faithful.") Lang asks and answers the question why there were no outside attorneys present to defend Zinoviev, et al. He recalls the trial of the Social Revolutionaries charged with the murder of Uritsky and Volodarsky and with the attempt upon the life of Lenin. The Soviet government (that was while Lenin still was alive and Trotsky, a member of the Council of Commissars) invited representatives of the Socialist Interna-

(70) Ibid

(71) Ibid, p. 1245

(72) Ibid

tional to defend the accused. The invitation was accepted and attorneys Vandervelde, Rosenfeld and Liebknecht (Theodore, the brother of Karl) represented the defendants. Not a word has been heard since the trial either against the Soviet government, or against the Socialist International, or the representative lawyers, until now when Lang lets us in on his secret:

"When Vandervelde, Rosenfeld and Theodore Liebknecht took their places as official defense counsel, they did not set themselves the task of helping to find out the truth about the activity of their clients but did everything possible to obscure the truth." (73)

Lang's article is reprinted in the *International Press Correspondence*⁽⁷⁴⁾ under the title "Against the Trotskyist Counter-Revolutionary Plotters. There Is No Place for Fascist Murderers on Soviet Soil." The reprint contains the charges against Vandervelde, Rosenfeld and Liebknecht. Since the *International Press Correspondence* is printed in many languages and issued in many countries, it is possible that Dr. Kurt Rosenfeld (one of the attorneys referred to by Lang) may get to see the article. While going from one meeting to another to speak for one or the other Communist controlled Leagues, Rosenfeld may speculate about the United Front as it is meant by the Communist Party and by the Third International. The meaning must be clear if the statements of Lang and Dimitroff have any meaning at all, *i.e.*, Trotsky and Trotskyism must be discredited by hook or crook, and anyone who refuses to join in the campaign of slander and misrepresentation against Trotskyism will himself be slandered and defamed. So, take your choice! That choose one must, seems to be the decision of those who are in control of the powerful propaganda machinery of the Third International.

F. The Spanish Rebellion of July and the Moscow Trial of August, 1936.

At first it would appear that Spain and Russia, as the common subjects of the analysis of the trial, are too far apart. It would also seem that the Franco rebellion of Spain hardly could have anything in common with the trial of the Old Bolsheviks in Russia. There are, nevertheless, certain factors which point to the fact that the Franco rebellion, while it did not bring about the trial, did determine its date.

Let us recall a number of the late happenings in Europe, then

(73) *The Communist*, New York, XV, 953.

(74) *New York*, XVI, 1156-1160.

consider them in the light of the facts generally known and accepted as facts concerning Russia.

Generals Franco and Mola embarked upon their adventure to make Spain safe for further exploitation by the quadrumvirate, army, church, landlord and industrialist, on the 18th of July, 1936. Within three days, the Communist press of the world, proudly—and justifiably so—reported about the spontaneous demonstrations all over Russia; about the proletariat of that country offering its whole-hearted support to the embattled workers of Spain. Collections of money in the Russian factories, communal-farms, etc, benefitted the Spanish fighters to the extent of twelve million rubles. Money collections and sympathy messages did not exhaust the Russian workers; they also demanded the sending of arms and ammunition to Spain. Since in Russia no unauthorized demonstrations or unapproved money collections can take place, it is obvious that the first and “spontaneous” expressions coming from the workers must have been met with the tacit, if not with the open approval of and sponsoring by the Soviet government. Suddenly, and towards the end of July, the “spontaneous” demonstrations of the Russian workers ceased. The Communist press of the world, generally uninformed, but for the official material dished out to them from Moscow, was unable to explain the “spontaneous” absence of the Russian demonstrations. For lack of news, the Communist press felt itself constrained to repeat the old stories over and over again. During the last week of July, and early August, the readers of the Communist press were informed about a dozen times that the toilers of the Workers’ Fatherland had collected twelve million rubles in support of the workers.⁽⁷⁵⁾ (Incidentally, this sum was transmitted by the Soviet government not to the fighting organizations of the Spanish workers, not to the syndicalist or socialist trade unions, not even to the Communist Party, but to the government of the self-same Azaña who, as late as June, 1936 and against the opposition of the labor organizations, reappointed Generals Mola and Franco to their respective high commands.)

What really happened was never a secret to anyone but to the Communist press. The British government decided to follow a strict neutrality towards the Spanish situation, but, as is traditional with that government, it further decided to have some other power present a proposal incorporating the British position. The French Popular Front government of Leon Blum was inspired by London, and surprised the world by offering the Neutrality

(75) *L'Humanité*, Paris; *Daily Worker*, New York; *Arbeideren*, Oslo; *Der Kampf*, Zurich; etc.

Pact of July, 1936, into which Great Britain and Russia joined without delay. The pact incorporated a novel idea, somewhat as follows: The Spanish government is a constitutionally elected body; elected by the overwhelming majority of the voters as late as February of this year. The generals attacking this government represent but a small fraction of the people, but they have the sympathy of the fascist countries, Italy, Germany and Portugal. We know that the tenets of **the International Law provide** that in case a legally established government (as of Madrid) is attacked by a rebellious group, **it is to be considered an "unfriendly act" on the part of any other government should it refuse to sell arms and ammunition to the lawfully elected government.** According to the same laws, it is not less an **"unfriendly act" if any government should sell war supplies to the rebellious forces making war on the legally established government of their country.**

People who are less sophisticated than the governments of England, France and Russia would think that the latter governing bodies would, in accordance with the laws among the nations, supply all the needed war materials to the attacked government of Spain, and simultaneously would make an honest attempt to prevent gun-running to the rebellious generals. However, nothing as logical as that occurred: to the contrary, Great Britain, France and Russia, calling themselves the "peace-loving nations," assumed that Italy, Germany and Portugal (designated the "war-loving nations") might resent their acting in accordance with the International Law. **To avoid the displeasure of Hitler and Mussolini, the peaceful nations, i.e. Great Britain, France and Russia, themselves became violators of the law and proposed the Neutrality Pact.** This pact in effect stated to Hitler and Mussolini: Boys! If you promise not to do that which you are forbidden to do anyway (supplying arms to the rebels), then we shall refuse to do our duty (supplying the legal government of Spain with war materials). Hitler and Mussolini were taken by surprise when they heard about this new interpretation of the International Law, hesitated for a while, wondering where the catch to it was, but then concurred. They concurred, because the pact represented to them just one more "scrap of paper," to be repudiated at will.

The offering of the Neutrality Pact to Hitler and Mussolini must have convinced them, if that was necessary after the shameful attitude of Great Britain, France and Russia towards the Ethiopian rape perpetrated by Italy, that they had nothing to fear as far as the "peaceful nations" of Europe were concerned. One

can even trace the bold and defiant attitude of Hitler and Mussolini to the presentation of the Neutrality Pact. While Great Britain, France and Russia⁽⁷⁶⁾ scrupulously adhered to the Pact, Hitler and Mussolini openly and effectively supplied General Franco with the most modern implements of war.

The Russian workers were awaiting the time when their revolutionary government would declare itself in support of the sorely beset Spanish workers. The Russian proletariat, correctly considering itself the carrier of the revolutionary tradition of 1917, could not but demand its government's intervention against the Spanish counter-revolution. **The Soviet government, on the other hand, was tied to the policy of the status quo. It was engaged in the maintenance of the Neutrality Pact; therefore no popular demonstrations in favor of Spanish were to be permitted.** That is the reason for the sudden lack of news from Russia (which lack of news was naturally incomprehensible to and unexplainable by the official communist press).

The Russian workers, be it said to their credit, failed to see the high-falutin ramifications of Stalin's latest theory concerning "good" and "bad imperialist nations." This new theory maintains that there are good or peaceful, and bad or warlike nations. The first includes Britain, France and Czecho-Slovakia, the latter, Germany, Italy and Japan. The theory then concludes that the duty of the proletarian state is to ally itself with the peaceful nations against the second group. (The old-fashioned Marxian theory that war is engendered not by war-like nations but by capitalism itself is, by all the signs of the theory of Stalin, not applicable anymore, at least not in Russia.) The honest revolutionary demand of the Russian workers for a support of the Spanish victims of fascist aggression could not be suppressed without increasing the already existing opposition to the internal and external policies of the Soviet government. The newly engendered opposition, however, could not be eliminated by the old methods of slander and calumny, because the opposition was created by the attempt to eliminate an obviously revolutionary demand of the masses itself, while previous oppositions were the result of disagreement concerning more or less abstract theoretical questions. To get rid of the opposition of the workers, which opposition the Soviet Government feared might find leadership in the exiled or imprisoned members of the earlier opposition to Stalin's policies, new methods and slogans

(76) Russia's first arms supply was reported on September 24, 1938. See announcement of the London Neutrality Committee.

were to be found. The new slogans were to discredit any possible opposition, and were at the same time to distract the attention of the masses from their demands concerning Spain. The slogans were to be not only demagogic but were to incite mass-hysteria. When this conclusion was arrived at, the finding of the proper slogan was child's play. It is known from times immemorial that the cry about "the country in danger," "the enemy from within and from without is threatening the national existence" will bring about just that kind of mob psychosis which displaces all other sentiment and supersedes any and all thought. Just such a cry was raised in the form of the trial. The accused were charged with having conspired with the country's enemy, (the traditional fascists) to bring about the destruction of the Fatherland. The defendants were presented as the pernicious enemies of the people, having planned to destroy the "Peoples own Tribune," i.e., the "beloved leader" Stalin. The old-fashioned slogan worked, and worked well as it has innumerable times before in history. The clamor for the open support for Spain died down since it was opposed to the policy of the government and every opposition was considered to be in support of the enemies of the Fatherland. The opposition became inarticulate, since opposition to the government in any form was considered conspiracy with those who were to murder the people's own "leader."

While the communist press fell for the blood-curdling stories preceding the trial as emanating from Russia, some of the bourgeois correspondents caught, if not the whole, at least some of the significance of the trial and of the slogan raised by the Soviet government. In discussing the motives for the trial, the *Manchester Guardian* writes:

"On can look for their explanation not in any desire for justice but in the shift of state's policy and the need of internal diversion. In this case it is the familiar cry, the state in danger, the beloved leader's life hazarded, a foreign power fomenting assassination." (77)

Yes, there was a need, a great need at that, for internal diversion. The need for internal diversion in July and August, 1936 explains many things heretofore incomprehensible. It explains how it came about that no one heard about the now executed Old Bolsheviks' great crime against the nation before the end of July, 1936. The need for internal diversion explains why it was that Smirnov, though in jail since January 1, 1933, never was tried, not even accused of any crime before August, 1936. The same need

(77) *Manchester Guardian Weekly*, August 21, 1936.

for internal diversion and the urgent need for a bloody, hysterical slogan explains the incredible charge that the Old Bolsheviks plotted with the Nazis (the eternal and traditional enemy of the Fatherland); that they were plotting assassinations. (The traditional foreign enemy is here again at work of destroying the Fatherland; making preparations for it by destroying the "People's Tribune" who alone stands between the enemy and the Fatherland.)

Zinoviev, in his jail, likely did not learn about the Spanish rebellion and may have died without knowing the name of General Franco, who, however circuitously, in a positive manner brought about the trial and execution of the Old Bolsheviks.

Knowing something about the workings of the minds of the "faithful," one may expect a two-fold objection to the analysis of Stalin's status quo policy. The first is: "Russia was forced by Leon Blum of France to adhere to the Neutrality Pact." This answer may be instantly negated because the present analysis is not concerned with anything but with the tracing of the policies of the Third International and of the Communist Party of Russia, both dominated by Stalin's theories and tactics, which policies culminated in the trial of the Bolsheviks. Furthermore, a "faithful" must not expect anything but an incorrect policy from Leon Blum, who just a short time ago was classified as a "social-fascist." If Stalin, characterizing the leadership of the Social Democracy, and with it Leon Blum, as the "twin brothers of fascism," believes his oft repeated characterization, then he must have been prepared to see the "social-fascists" embarking upon a path which would lead to the strengthening of fascism itself, which path Stalin never was to follow.

The second objection is that Russia at the present supports the Loyalist forces of Spain by a considerable supply of arms and ammunitions. This fact could not disprove; to the contrary, it proves the allegation that the neutrality policy in the beginning was incorrect, harmful and treacherous against the workers of Spain. In any case, it was not before October 7th and thereafter that Russia woke up to the fact that the Neutrality Pact is "an empty torn scrap of paper." It was not before October 23rd when Russia proclaimed its right to extend aid to the Madrid government to the same extent to which the fascist states of Germany and Italy were aiding the rebels.⁽⁷⁸⁾ As a matter of fact, Ambassador Maisky confessed in his statement that Russia knew about the fascist states' arm-running to the rebels during the life of the

(78) Ambassador Maisky's statement to the London Neutrality Committee, October 23, 1936.

Neutrality Pact; **“the time which has elapsed has shown that the agreement is being systematically violated by a number of participants and that the supply of arms to the rebels goes on unpunished.”** (79)

The change in Russia's policy concerning the help to Loyalist Spain shows that every step taken by Russia is determined by the status quo. Adherence to the Neutrality Pact was in the interest of the status quo. The threat to bolt the pact was again in the interest of the status quo, because the threat was made after it became obvious, even to the Russian diplomatists, that the pact itself endangered the status quo, since Hitler and Mussolini were using the opportunity to obtain territorial gains; Hitler in Ceuta and Mussolini in the Balearics. When it became clear that the status quo was endangered in spite of or because of the Neutrality Pact, when it became public that Franco was ready to barter parts of Spain for the fascist states' support, then and only then occurred the change in the policy of Russia. It is common knowledge that Russia's changed attitude was preceded by changed opinion in England, the latter country slowly realizing the danger inherent in a fascist alliance in the Mediterranean as far as the “life line” of the Empire to India was concerned.

The change in policy occurred only after the workers of France went on strike not for better working conditions, not for higher wages, but for “planes for Spain.” It is not unlikely that the revolutionary workers of Russia were chafing under the prohibition to raise their cry “arms and planes for Spain.” Their cry may have been suppressed, but their feelings could not be suppressed; and this fact was one of the factors which changed Russia's policy toward Spain.

VIII. THE ACCUSED

TO SEE THE CHARGES presented by the indictment in their proper light, it is necessary to know the historical past of the accused, or at least of those of the sixteen whose lives were intimately connected with the labor movement in general and with the Soviet government in particular. It also appears necessary to identify some of the persons implicated by the "confessions" of the accused.

Among the accused are:

1. **Zinoviev**, often referred to as the first understudy of Lenin. This designation was given to him because of the close collaboration—literary and political—between Lenin and Zinoviev during the period of their exile. In addition to writing a great number of articles with the open approval of Lenin and presented to party congresses, Zinoviev cooperated with Lenin in editing the *Vorbote*, published in Zurich at the address of Fritz Platten in 1916. The collected articles of N. Lenin and G. Zinoviev for the years 1914-1916 were published by the Communist International in 1921 under the title *Gegen den Strom*. The book *Socialism and War* by G. Zinoviev and V. I. Lenin appeared in many editions sponsored by the Communist International and by the national affiliates and was used as a text-book for "Workers' Schools" abroad and in this country. One edition, as Volume III of the *Little Lenin Library*, was brought on the market by the International Publishers in New York in 1931 and was reprinted in 1933.

What Lenin, whose greatest disciple Stalin claims to be, thought of Zinoviev not as a man, but as a revolutionary may be seen from the "Minutes of the **First Congress of the Communist International**" held in Moscow from the 2nd to the 19th of March, 1919. The meeting having been opened by Lenin and a presidium elected, reports were presented by **Albert and Bucharin, Lenin and Rahja, Platten and Zinoviev, Obolensky, Trotsky and Sirola**. (A careful check-up fails to disclose the names of Stalin's present co-workers either as reporters on any subject or a delegates.) During the preliminary discussion, a statement on behalf of the **Zimmerwalder Left** was delivered and signed by **Zinoviev, L. Trotsky, C.**

Rakovsky, F. Platten and N. Lenin. (After reading those names, one wonders where these men are.) On the 4th of March, 1919, a "Manifesto of the Communist International to the Workers of the World" was presented by L. Trotsky, and then the Program of the Communist International was brought before the delegates. During these discussions, Lenin introduced Zinoviev as the representative of Russia to report concerning the Communist Party of Russia, to which was added a further report by L. Trotsky concerning the situation in and about the Red Army. (It almost stuns one to find that among the delegates of the Communist Party of Russia there was only one, Stalin, who was not called to report on any point of the agenda. The work was taken over in its entirety by the other delegates, Lenin, Trotsky, Zinoviev, Bucharin, Tchitcherin and Obolenski.) After Lenin presented his basic thesis to the congress, a motion was made to found the Third International. The Zimmerwalder Left, represented by Balabanoff, Rakovsky, Platten, Lenin, Trotsky and Zinoviev, was declared as dissolved and the Communist International, with an Executive Committee representing Russia, Germany, Austria, Hungary, Balkan Confederation, Switzerland and the Scandinavian countries, was founded. **The Executive Committee elected as its president G. Zinoviev, and as its secretary, K. Radek.**

The **Second Congress** of the Communist International was opened on the 19th day of July, 1920, by no one else but G. Zinoviev and proceeded to the election of the presidium. **The Executive Committee**, represented by N. Bucharin, **proposed the two Russian representatives, N. Lenin and G. Zinoviev.** The report of the Second Congress extending over seven hundred ninety pages shows among the **Russian delegates** the names of **Bucharin, Lenin, Radek, Rudzutak, Rakovsky, Rykov, Safarov, Serebrjakow, Zinoviev, Sokolnikov, Tomski and Trotsky.** (Stalin's name appears neither as a delegate of Georgia, nor as that of Russia.) The only name now connected with the USSR was that of delegate Manuilski, who, however, did not appear among those participating in any discussion.

The **Third Congress** of the Communist International was opened on the 22nd of June, 1921 and again **presided** over by the self-same **Zinoviev**, who together with **Bucharin, Kolontai, Lenin, Radek, Rakovsky, Trotsky**, represented the **Russian section** of the Communist International.

Zinoviev was formerly a member of the Central Committee and the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of Russia and Chairman of the Leningrad Soviet, who when executed by the Soviet

government at the age of fifty-two had spent **thirty-five years** of his life **with the Bolshevik party.**

2. **Kamenev** was executed at the age of fifty-two by the Soviet government in 1936 as a counter-revolutionary fascist, after having been **a member of the Bolshevik party for over thirty years**, one of Lenin's co-workers, cooperating with him as the vice-chairman of the Council of the People's Commissars of Russia, member of the Central Committee and of the Political Bureau, chairman of the Council of Labor and Defense in the early days of the revolution, also chairman of the Moscow Soviet. As late as 1934, he was the head of the Academia Publishing House in Russia and as such was referred to as the "Literary Heir of Lenin's Work."

(Both Zinoviev and Kamenev, during the final illness and after the death of Lenin and after the relegation of Trotsky to an administrative position, became members of the triumvirate composed of Stalin, Zinoviev and Kamenev, responsible for the policies of the Communist International and the Communist Party of Russia during the period of 1923-1925.)

4. **Evdokimov**, executed at the age of fifty-two, was one of the leaders of the revolution of 1917 and for decades a leader of the Bolshevik party into which he grew from the ranks of common labor. He was a member of the Central Committee and of the Organization Bureau of the Communist Party of Russia, a leading member of the Leningrad Soviet, who spoke on behalf of the Leningrad organization at Lenin's funeral.

5. **Bakayev**, was shot at the age of forty-nine as a counter-revolutionary after he had become famous as the most daring of workers's military men in the fight against the white generals. For decades he had been a member of the Bolshevik party, a member of the Central Control Commission of the party, a member of the Leningrad Soviet.

6. **Mrachkovsky** was shot at the age of fifty-three after, as an Old Bolshevik, he had led the troupes defending Siberia and the Far East against the counter-revolutionary White troupes. Mrachkovsky was "an old revolutionary and one of the finest commanders in the civil war."⁽¹⁾

7. **Ter-Vaganyan** was executed at the age of forty-three as a fascist terrorist after having been the leader of the Armenian (Russian) Communist Party since the October Revolution. The executed was considered one of the outstanding Marxists; he edited the Armenian Marxist Review "*Under the Banner of Marxism.*"

(1) L. Trotsky, "My Life," p. 54 — C. Scribner, June, 1931

These seven are among the sixteen accused in the indictment as being members of a bloc of counter-revolutionary terrorist gang of assassins who strove to seize power in the country by any means whatever. These seven are among the men who were accused and characterized by the State's Attorney as "representatives" of the vanguard of an international counter-revolution."⁽²⁾ They are accused of having issued the slogan "kill" and thereupon and upon their responsibility "the underground machinery begins to work, knives are sharpened, revolvers are loaded, bombs are charged, false documents are written and fabricated, secret connections are established with the German Political Police, people are sent to their posts, they engage in revolver practice and finally they shoot and kill."⁽³⁾ The Italian proverb says "*Se non è vero, ben trovato,*" but Mr. State's Attorney, your story is not even well made up.

* * * *

The characterization of those accused would not be complete if Leon Tortskey, the chief accused were left unmentioned. It is not necessary to deal with his person and with his activities at length, since those are things that are well known. However, it appears necessary to point out briefly Trotsky's position as to terrorism, the defense of the Soviet Union and the present Soviet leadership. That Trotsky was considered a leader of the revolutionary movement even by his political antagonists is testified to by M. J. Olgin, the present editor of one of the official communist dailies in the United States, who published Trotsky's collected essays.. In the preface to the collection Olgin writes:

"We have selected L. Trotsky's contribution to revolutionary thought, not because he is now in the lime-light of history, but because his conceptions represent a very definite, clear-cut and intrinsically consistent trend of revolutionary thought, quite apart from that of other leaders."⁽⁴⁾

As to terrorism, Trotsky once wrote some thirty-five years ago:

"Whether or not the terrorist act, even if 'successful,' throws the ruling circles into turmoil, depends upon the concrete political circumstances. In any case such turmoil can only be of short duration; the capitalist state is not founded upon ministers and cannot be destroyed with them. The classes it serves will always find new men, the mechanism remains whole and continues its work.

"But the turmoil which the terrorist act introduces into the ranks of the toiling masses themselves is far more profound. If it is enough to arm oneself with a revolver to reach the goal, what need is there for the strivings of the class struggle?

(2) Report of Court Proceedings, etc., p. 163

(3) Ibid, pp. 129, 130.

(4) M. J. Olgin, Preface to "Our Revolution," by L. Trotsky, February 16, 1919.

If people in high positions can be intimidated by the noise of an explosion, what need is there then for a party?"(5)

During his early polemics with the Social-Revolutionaries, Trotsky expressed the same thought:

"Arguments about the use of terrorist methods began. After individual vacillations, the Marxist section of the exiled went on record against terrorism. The chemistry of the high explosive cannot take the place of mass action, we said. Individuals may be destroyed in a heroic struggle, but that will not rouse the working class to action. Our task is not the assassination of the Czar's ministers, but the revolutionary overthrow of Czarism. This is where the line was drawn between the Social Democrats and the Socialist-Revolutionists." (6)

Concerning the defense of the Soviet Union and the present leadership, Trotsky consistently maintained that in spite of the present incorrect policy of the leadership in Russia, revolutionaries all over the world have no more important task than the defense of the Workers' State. Trotsky broke with the opposition group of Urbans, which considered the Soviet Union, at the present, a form of state capitalism. Trotsky disagreed with this analysis and answered it as follows:

"The privileges of the bureaucracy by themselves do not change the bases of the Soviet society, because the bureaucracy derives its privileges not from any special property relations, peculiar to it as a 'class,' but from those property relations which have been created by the October revolution, and which are fundamentally adequate for the dictatorship of the proletariat...."(7)

"The theories of reformism, in so far as reformism generally has attained to theory, are always based upon the inability to understand that class antagonisms are profound and irreconcilable; hence the perspective of a peaceful transformation of capitalism into socialism. The Marxian thesis relating to the catastrophic character of the transfer of power from the hands of one class into the hands of another supplies not only to revolutionary periods, when history madly sweeps ahead, but also to the periods of counter-revolution when society rolls backwards. He who asserts that the Soviet government has been gradually changed from proletarian to bourgeois is only, so to speak, running backwards the film or reformism...."(8)

"The anatomy of society is determined by its economic relations. So long as the forms of property that have been created by the October revolution are not overthrown, the proletariat remains the ruling class...."(9)

- (5) L. Trotsky, "A Reply to Friends in America," The Kirov Assassination, Pioneer Publishers, February, 1935.
 (6) L. Trotsky, "My Life," Charles Scribner & Sons, N. Y., 1930.
 (7) L. Trotsky, "The Soviet Union and the Fourth International, The Class Nature of the Soviet State," Pioneer Publishers, February, 1934, p. 20.
 (8) Ibid, p. 5 (9) Ibid, p. 7

The bureaucracy may be burdensome to the Russian workers and perhaps would have been eliminated:

"...had the Western horizon flamed not with the brown color of Fascism but with the red of revolution. So long as this does not happen, the proletariat with clenched teeth bears ('tolerates') the bureaucracy, and in this sense recognizes it as the bearer of the proletarian dictatorship. In a heart to heart conversation, no Soviet worker would be sparing of strong words addressed to the Stalinist bureaucracy. But not a single one of them would allow that the counter-revolution has already taken place. The proletariat is the spine of the Soviet state. But in so far as the function of governing is concentrated in the hands of irresponsible bureaucracy, we have before us an obviously sick state. Can it be cured? Will not further attempts at cures mean a fruitless expenditure of precious time? The question is badly put. By cures we understand not all sorts of artificial measures separate and apart from the world revolutionary movement but a further struggle under the banner of Marxism. Merciless criticism of the Stalinist bureaucracy, training the cadres of the New International, resurrecting the fighting capacity of the world proletarian-vanguard—this is the essence of the 'cure.' It coincides with the fundamental direction of historical progress."⁽¹⁰⁾

During his visit to Copenhagen in December, 1932, Trotsky delivered a lecture "In Defense of the Russian Revolution." In this speech, L. Trotsky made it clear that the great economic accomplishment of the USSR came about in spite of the incorrect leadership, because of the inherent constructive forces of the revolution of the past fifteen years:

"Socialism is allowed by its enemies, that is, by the adherents of capitalism, only a decade and a half to install Paradise on earth with all modern improvements. No, such obligations were never assumed by us. Such periods of time were never set forth. The processes of great changes must be measured by scales which are commensurate with them. I do not know if the Socialist society will resemble the biblical Paradise. I doubt, it. But in the Soviet Union there is no Socialism as yet. The situation that prevails there is one of transition, full of contradictions, burdened with the heavy inheritance of the past, and in addition under the hostile pressure of the capitalistic states. The October Revolution has proclaimed the principle of the new society. The Soviet Republic has shown only the first stage of its realization. Edison's first lamp was very bad. We must know how to distinguish the future from among the mistakes and faults of the first Socialist construction..."⁽¹¹⁾
"...progress can be measured by the growth of the produc-

(10) Ibid., p. 8

(11) L. Trotsky, "In Defense of the Russian Revolution," Speech delivered at Copenhagen, December, 1932, Pioneer Publishers, February, 1933, p. 32.

tivity of social labor. The evaluation of the October Revolution from this point of view is already given by experience. **The principle of socialistic organization has for the first time in history shown its ability to record unheard-of results in production in a short space of time.**

"The curve of the industrial development of Russia, expressed in crude index numbers, is... to say, three times as much as on the eve of the war.

"The picture becomes even more striking in the light of the international index. From 1925 to 1932 the industrial production of Germany has declined one and a half times, in America twice; in the Soviet Union it has increased fourfold. These figures speak for themselves."(12)

As to the defense of the Soviet Union, the Draft Theses Adopted by the Committee for the Fourth International, which Committee is headed by Trotsky, speaks for itself:

"Defense of the Soviet Union from the blows of the capitalist enemies, irrespective of the circumstances and immediate causes of the conflict, is the elementary and imperative duty of every honest labor organization."(13)

We quoted Trotsky, not, by any means, exhaustively, but, we believe, sufficiently to counterpose his sayings and writings to the incredible tales of a Berman-Yurin, Lurye, David, and Vyshinsky.

(12) *Ibid.*, p. 3

(13) "War and the Fourth International," Pioneer Publishers, July, 1934.

IX. SOME QUESTIONS WHICH CANNOT BE ANSWERED BY THE "FAITHFUL"

THIS ANALYSIS of the causes for and the motives of the trial attempted, it is believed successfully, to answer many, if not all, pertinent questions. There are, however, a great number of questions which are to be put to those who maintain that the trial of Zinoviev and Kamenev was a fair one, to those who declare that the trial was not motivated by the desire to suppress a growing opposition in Russia.

The first of the questions to be answered is: Why is it that Rykov, Bucharin and others who were implicated by the confessions of the executed Old Bolsheviks were not tried but exonerated upon a preliminary investigation? If the executed Old Bolsheviks were convicted on their own testimony, then the conclusion is that the testimonies were accepted as true. If this conclusion is correct, then all their testimony must be so accepted. Nevertheless, that part of the testimony which implicated Rykov and Bucharin was disregarded, and therefore one may query: By what occult means did the prosecution arrive at the line which separates the false from the true testimony? There is a possible answer and that is, that the Old Bolsheviks were convicted on their own confessions and on the incriminating evidence supplied by the other accused. This statement, however, is only partly true, since Smirnov and Holtzman did not confess, but were, nevertheless, convicted because of the evidence offered by the others. Furthermore, Radek and Piatakov were implicated similarly to Rykov and Bucharin and none of them confessed, but while the latter two were cleared of all charges, the first two were imprisoned and according to the latest reports are to be tried. There is no answer to our questions, but one, and that is, that only those of the Old Bolsheviks were to pay the "supreme penalty" who were considered potentially dangerous to Stalin's leadership.

The second question requiring an answer is: What supreme force compelled the USSR to stage the trial during the most critical period of the Spanish civil war? The accused were in safe-keeping

for many months. They were made harmless by their incarceration. Nineteen months had already elapsed between the Kirov assassination and the trial; therefore a further delay of a few months (the expected duration of the Spanish civil war) could not, by any chance, have endangered the existence of the USSR. Even though Dimitroff denies that the staging of the trial damaged the cause of the "United Front;" the possibility of such damage is not excluded. Why then the staging of the trial in August, 1936? The only possible answer is that the growing opposition to Stalin's domestic and external policy might have, under certain circumstances, found leadership in some of the incarcerated members of the Opposition. To prevent such a possibility, the jailed leaders were to be doomed and eliminated by the firing squad. This use of the firing-squad, after the spectacular trial, must have checked any opposition from crystalizing, in spite of the opposition sentiment engendered by Stalin's neutrality policy toward Spain.

The third question refers to the incredible charge that the Old Bolsheviks on trial were fascists engaged in activities to restore capitalism in Russia. Assuming, but not for a moment admitting, that this accusation is correct, then one is justified in asking how it is possible that Old Bolsheviks, living for seventeen years under the aegis of Bolshevism, abandoned it in favor of fascism. Is it possible that they came to the conclusion that Bolshevism is not beneficial to the masses and that fascism is to be preferred? No one would admit this as a correct answer, but there is a possibility of asking further: Did Zinoviev, Kamenev, etc. turn not from Bolshevism, but from that brand which is known as "Stalinism" and which is on the way to blossom out into national Bolshevism?

No, it is impossible for the "faithful" to answer these questions satisfactorily. There was no satisfactory answer at the time of Kirov's assassination, and there is none now. On December 27, 1934, the Telegraphic Agency of the Soviet Union, reporting the Kirov assassination, informed the world that there were fifteen members of the old Zinoviev group under arrest. It was then officially admitted that against seven of those arrested, among them Zinoviev, Kamenev, Evdokimov, there was no proof that they had had any connection with the murder. But, as Trotsky points out,

"this admission is made in such a way that one can call it nothing but brazen. The dispatch speaks of 'lack of proof'—as if there could generally be any proof of an accusation intentionally so false and improbable as this accusation by its very essence. By making an artificial division into two groups

of the Old Bolsheviks arrested in Moscow and by declaring that for one of them there are insufficient proofs, the Stalinist clique seeks by this very thing to color its so-called investigation with a tinge of objectivity.' (1)

Nevertheless, the charges were made; therefore, Trotsky asks:

"How could it come to pass that at a time like this, after all the economic successes, after the 'abolition'—according to official assurances—of classes in the USSR, and the 'construction' of the socialist society—how could it come to pass that Old Bolsheviks, the most intimate collaborators of Lenin, those who shared power with Stalin, members of the 'Old Guard' could have posed for their task the restoration of capitalism? Do Zinoviev, Kamenev and the others consider that the socialist regime is no boon to the masses? Or on the contrary, do they expect from capitalism personal advantages both for themselves and their descendants? And what sort of advantages?

"Only utter imbeciles would be capable of thinking that capitalist relations, that is to say, the private ownership of the means of production, including the land, can be reestablished in the USSR by peaceful methods and lead to the regime of bourgeois democracy. As a matter of fact, even if it were possible in general, capitalism could not be regenerated in Russia except as the result of a savage counter-revolutionary coup d'etat which would cost ten times as many victims as the October revolution and the civil war. In the event of the overthrow of the Soviets their place could only be taken by a distinctly Russian Fascism, so ferocious that in comparison to it the ferocity of the Mussolini regime and that of Hitler would appear like philanthropic institutions. Zinoviev and Kamenev are no fools. They cannot but understand that the restoration of capitalism would first of all signify the total extermination of the revolutionary generation, themselves of course included. Consequently, there cannot be the slightest doubt here that the accusation concocted by Stalin against the Zinoviev group is fraudulent from top to bottom: both as regards the goal specified—restoration of capitalism; and as regards the means—terrorist acts." (2)

Hard, if not impossible, is it to believe that there is anyone who could deny the logic of Trotsky's statement. Why then the charge? What is to be accomplished? Trotsky gave his answer:

"...the leading bureaucratic group is not at all inclined to estimate Nikolayev's crime as an isolated, and accidental phenomenon, as a tragic episode; on the contrary, it is investing this act with a political importance so exceptional that it does not stop at constructing an amalgam which compromises itself, nor even at placing all types of opposition, discontent and criticism on the same plane with terrorist acts. The goal of the maneuver is quite evident: to terrorize completely all critics and opposi-

(1) L. Trotsky, "A Reply to Friends in America," Pioneer Publishers, February, 1935, p. 7.

(2) Ibid., pp. 7, 8

tionists, and this time not by expulsion from the party nor by depriving them of their daily bread, nor even by imprisonment or exile, but by the firing squad. To the terrorist act of Nikolayev, Stalin replies by redoubling the terror against the party.⁽³⁾ "Using the Zinovievist group as a footstool, Stalin is aiming to strike a blow at Trotskyism. And cost what it may, he must strike that blow."⁽⁴⁾

Why is it that, in Trotsky's opinion, Stalin must follow up and strike at the Trotskyists? Because:

"...the Kremlin has reconciled itself to the Communist International as a nonentity, by means of the theory of socialism in one country. The hopes based on the world proletarian revolution it has swapped for hopes in the League of Nations. Command has been issued to the communist parties abroad to conduct 'realistic' policies which would succeed in destroying in a very short period of time whatever still remains of the Communist International. Stalin is already reconciled to all this. But it is impossible for him to become reconciled to the regeneration of the world revolutionary movement under an independent banner. Criticism of reformism may be renounced; blocks may be concluded with Radicals; the workers may be poisoned with the venom of nationalism and pacifism; but under no condition is it permissible for the international proletarian vanguard to obtain the opportunity for verifying freely and critically the ideas of Leninism through its own experience and to juxtapose Stalinism and the so-called Trotskyism in the broad light of day...⁽⁵⁾

a "...danger exists which is beginning to weigh like a nightmare on the Stalinist faction. The growing influence of the unfalsified ideas of Leninism in the working class movement of Europe and America cannot long remain a mystery to the workers in the USSR. It is possible to keep quiet, even if this is not easy, about the participation of the former Communist League of America in the Minneapolis strike; it is possible although difficult to maintain silence about the merger of the League with the American Workers Party; but when the confluence of events will take on a broader sweep and the revolutionary Marxists, the Leninists, will take a leading part therein, it will no longer be possible to keep quiet about these facts. The enormous danger which flows from this for the Stalinist faction is obvious. The entire structure of lies, calumnies, persecutions, falsifications and amalgams—the structure which has been uninterruptedly rising since Lenin's illness and death, will crumble upon the very heads of the engineers, that is to say, the calumniators and forgers. The Stalinists are blind and deaf to the perspectives of the world proletarian movement, but they have a very keen nose for the dangers which menace their prestige, their interests, and their bureaucratic privileges."⁽⁶⁾

(3) Ibid, pp. 8, 9 (4) Ibid, p. 18

(5) Ibid, pp. 19, 20 (6) Ibid, p. 21

What, if anything is to be done for those who still believe in what Trotsky calls the Bolshevism of Lenin?

"Expose the scheme in advance. The Stalinists are trying to mold the public opinion of the world police towards expulsions, extraditions, arrests, and other more decisive measures. The Leninists must prepare the public opinion of the world proletariat for these possible events. In this case, as in others, **it is necessary to speak out openly what is."**(7)

(7) Ibid, p. 23

A P P E N D I X

The opinion of International Labor Concerning the Moscow Trial

Dimitroff, the Secretary of the Third International, states with great emphasis that Citrine, Adler, and other leaders of the Second International are lying when they "try to create the impression that **the trial of the counter-revolutionary terrorists in the Soviet Union endangers the realization of the proletarian solidarity with the Spanish people.**"⁽¹⁾ To see whether or not the Secretary of the Third International is correct in his evaluation of the world proletarian opinion, a short review of such opinion is necessary.

It is difficult, if not impossible, to know what, if anything, would be accepted by Dimitroff as a sign of actually existing danger to the proletarian solidarity. One may assume that the resentment towards the trial openly expressed by sections of the fighting Spanish workers can and must be considered such a sign. The Executive Committee of the Workers Party of Marxist Unification (POUM) adopted a resolution, which is a direct answer to Dimitroff's emphatic statement:

"There are differences between ourselves and Trotsky, yet we consider that a crime is being committed against him and we demand the cessation of this international scandal. Certain of interpreting their feelings, we demand that Trotsky be offered a refuge in Catalonia under the revolutionary protection of the working class.

"We know where opposition to the realization of this fine proposition lies. We will fight against it with all our energy, thereby fulfilling a high duty of revolutionary solidarity."⁽²⁾

If the answer of Dimitroff is that the resolution expresses nothing but the opinion of the bureaucracy of the POUM, then the front-fighting forces themselves must be heard:

"The comrades serving in the POUM ambulance at Lesinena, and the wounded of the same ambulance, together with sympathizers of other workers' organizations—C.N.T., U.G.T.—gathered together on September 3rd, approved the protestation of the Ex-

(1) Communist International, XIII, 1245.

(2) Information Bulletin of the POUM, September 1, 1936, p. 4.

ecutive Committee of the POUM in connection with the Moscow trials and signed a declaration that they consider the assassination of Zinoviev, Kamenev and other bolsheviks as a direct attack on the Russian revolution, and that only the proletarian world revolution—of which the POUM militants are the pioneers—can save the conquests of the USSR proletariat.”⁽³⁾

* * * *

Otto Bauer, one of the leaders of the Second International, after analyzing the so-called confessions obtained prior to and during the trial, concludes:

“Five years ago, while the first five years’ plan was being carried through, demanding the most terrible sacrifices from the masses of the people, Stalin strangled all opposition in the ranks of his own party with a chain of trumped up political trials. Now he has resolved to intimidate and suppress the opposition in his own ranks in the same way as he did then, by staging political trials. This is obviously the aim and the end of the terrible Moscow trial.”⁽⁴⁾

It seems obvious that in the opinion of Otto Bauer, it is not impossible that Stalin may “strangle” his “Popular Front” allies as he did “all opposition in the ranks of his own party.” After expressing such an opinion, one wonders whether Otto Bauer will be very anxious to enter into a United Front, not to speak of “organic unity,” as proposed by the Third International. Bauer’s opinion carries considerable weight with the Second International; therefore, it is correct to assume that Dimitroff erred when he found that the trial did not endanger proletarian unity.

* * * *

Maurice Paz, a leader of the French Socialist Party, **is unable to accept the charges as correct or the sentences as justified.**⁽⁵⁾

* * * *

The organ of the British Labor Party reports in detail about the trial. It uses column upon column analyzing the testimony and seeking motives for and behind the trial. The conclusion arrived at by the paper is expressed by the great horror felt towards the methods used by the USSR. The paper sees in the trial **“the end of Bolshevism and of the Bolsheviks.”**⁽⁶⁾

* * * *

The Norwegian Labor Party and its official organ, after carefully reviewing the trial and all the evidence, **cannot believe that Trotsky and Trotskyism were in any way proved guilty** of the charge of terrorism. To the contrary, the daily organ of the party

(3) Ibid, September 15, 1936, p. 7.

(4) Otto Bauer on the Moscow Trial. See the Socialist and Trade Union press, Sept., 1936.

(5) Populaire, August 31, 1936.

(6) Daily Herald, September, 1936.

finds that the Trotskyists and L. Trotsky had nothing to do with the terroristic acts (if such terroristic acts or attempts actually existed.) **The party organ of the Norwegian Labor Party demands**—as against the “request of the government of the USSR to expel Trotsky—that the right of asylum must be maintained primarily for the purpose of preventing the persecution of L. Trotsky.” (7)

* * * *

Jeanette Olson, a leading member of the Norwegian Communist Party, whose statement was refused publication in the communist paper *Arbeideren*, writes in the organ of the Labor Party:

“That the working class did not rise with a tempestous indignation against the methods employed against Zinoviev, Kamenev and the other old comrades of Lenin, can only be explained by the faith upon which the confidence of the workers in Stalin’s government is based. The workers can’t believe that the leaders of the Workers’ State are capable of using such methods in political fights. Leaving aside just for a moment this great faith and the great confidence; reading the reports of the trial as if they were from some country other than Russia, the workers would see that the charges, the testimonies, the confessions and the prosecutor’s final plea were all part of the combination serving one purpose only, and that is, to justify the death sentences which in reality were not justified at all. The workers would then understand further the desperation of Stalin’s government which forced it to annihilate the accused; they would understand that the real reasons for the trial were wholly different from those advocated at the trial. The acceleration of the trial—it took but five or six days to rush through the matters which are of vital importance to the working class of the world—and the rapidity with which executions were accomplished are additional and sinister things pointing to the existing inconsistencies of the trial.

“...The answer, given by the officials of the USSR to the two Internationals concerning the proposal that the accused be given the opportunity to secure their defense counsel from outside of Russia was nothing but a repetition of the unproven charges against the defendants. Can it be expected that such an answer convinced anyone that the trial would be conducted in substantial fairness to the accused?

“In this connection, it is recalled that during the trial of the Social-Revolutionaries, who actually carried out their attempt upon the life of Lenin but failed to kill him, the foreign defense attorneys were given full freedom of action.”

“The bourgeois, the fascist and reactionary papers gleefully report the details of the charges. These papers cannot conceal their joy when commenting about the trial. They rub their hands, they smile, they are extremely happy to see Lenin’s

(7) *Arbeiderbladet*, September, 1936.

closest friends being annihilated. The reactionaries observe with great satisfaction that the remaining Old Bolsheviks, in or outside of Russia, are hounded and persecuted by the USSR.

"An end must be put to the whole affair. This end, however, cannot be reached without exposing the matter to the searching day-light, without submitting the case to a most thorough discussion. The working class of the world has a right to know the truth, and nothing less than the whole truth."⁽⁸⁾

The resolution of the *Central Committee of the Polish Bund*, after pointing out its traditional sympathetic attitude towards the USSR, and after recalling the great revolutionary accomplishments of Zinoviev, Kamenev and Trotsky during the past forty years, states:

"The most deplorable fact is that the staging of the trial occurred at the moment when the fascist criminals put the liberty of the Spanish workers in a mortal danger, at a moment when the danger of war is extremely grave. The trial gave a weapon to the international reaction and fascism, a weapon which will help the carrying on of the fight of the reaction against the international and against the USSR. The staging of the trial filled the heart of every worker with the most painful feelings; the feeling became infinitely more painful because of the sentencing of the accused. However, even after the verdict we hoped that the proletarian sense of justice would not permit the execution of the sentence. Our most modest hopes were betrayed and the most terrible of all verdicts was executed with the greatest possible cruelty. In the name of the proletarian and socialist justice we raise our voice in protesting against this crime. At the same time we express our conviction that the Russian proletariat, which was steeled in the battles of the revolution, understands all the horror of this act, and will not permit the repetition of similar trials."⁽⁹⁾

* * * *

Resolution of the *Central Committee of the Polish Trade Unions*:

"We indignantly condemn the assassination of the Old Bolsheviks; of the leaders of the October Revolution who failed to agree with the personal dictatorship of Stalin. The Central Committee finds the causes for the trial and executions to be in the absence of the real democracy of the workers in the USSR and in the degenerated dictatorship of the Russian Communist Party. The Central Committee protests energetically because of the attack against the Socialist International and the International Federation of the Trade Unions, which bodies, in their telegrams, demanded the guarantees of elementary justice to the sixteen defendants."⁽¹⁰⁾

* * * *

The central organ of the French Socialist Party, *Le Populaire*,

(8) Ibid, August 31, 1936.

(9) *Mysl Socialistyczna*, September, 1936.

(10) Ibid

gives columns upon columns to the question of "the Moscow trial and the United Front." The paper republishes the article which appeared in the *Pravda* late in August, in which the scurrilous attack is made upon deBrouckere, Adler, Citrine and Shevenels. (The attack is made upon the leaders of the Second International because of the telegram they sent to Moscow asking for judicious and fair treatment of the accused Old Bolsheviks.) *Le Populaire* then reprints a subsequent article printed in the Communist paper *L'Humanité*, in which the Socialist paper is presented as "one of the few papers publishing no news about the USSR, with the present exception when it comes to the defense of 'the counter-revolutionary Trotskyists-Zinovievists, who *in concert with Hitler's Gestapo organized the murder of Kirov* and prepared the assassination of the greatest leaders of the Soviet Union; the assassinations to begin with that of Stalin'."⁽¹¹⁾

Le Populaire points, for the benefit of the communist paper, to the great number of articles pertaining to the USSR which appeared in its columns and then states in greatly measured terms that its "defense of the counter-revolutionaries" consisted of nothing more than the support given to the telegram sent on behalf of the Second International by de Brouckere, etc.

To the article is added a postscript which is of great significance to some, possibly even to Dimitroff. The postscript quotes an article by Dimitroff⁽¹²⁾ in which the leaders of the Second International are told, and not in any measured terms, what the secretary of the Third International thinks of them; to which the central organ of the French Socialist Party makes the rejoinder:

"The general secretary of the Communist International continues in treating our friends de Brouckere, Adler, Citrine and Schevenels as 'reactionary leaders.' He designates their act (their telegram to Moscow) as a 'disgraceful intervention.' The man who writes in this manner pretends to serve the 'proletarian unity.' No commentary is necessary."⁽¹³⁾

One must agree with the organ of the French Socialist Party that all comments are superfluous, even useless, since Dimitroff is convinced that the Moscow trial did in no sense endanger the unity of the workers.

The *Pravda* felt it necessary to follow up, the dignified answer of the socialist paper, with another long dissertation⁽¹⁴⁾ to which the Socialist paper replies:

(11) *L'Humanité*, August 27, 1936.

(12) *Ibid*, August 28, 1936.

(13) *Le Populaire*, August 29, 1936.

(14) Reprint in the *L'Humanité* on September 1, 1936, under the heading "The *Pravda's* Answer to the *Le Populaire*."

"We have no pact binding us to the Communist Party of Russia, nor to the Communist International, nor to the USSR; consequently, we may not invoke such a pact to protect us against the charges heaped upon us by the Pravda. We are, however, tied by a 'pact of united action' to the French Communist Party and to its daily paper. We have the right to express our astonishment that the grave accusations of the Pravda found their place in the columns of the L'Humanité. If the Pravda decides to continue its splitting work that is its own affair. Dimitroff's article already showed the dangerous attitude taken by the leaders of the Communist International. By what means, however, can the publication of the Pravda article in the L'Humanité be reconciled with the publication of the Garches resolution printed in the same number of the L'Humanité, in which resolution it is emphasized that 'Union is our common slogan.' 'Splitting of the working class is our common defeat. We are united, and united we remain.'" (15)

The Central Organ of the French Socialist Party (S.F.I.O.) does not feel the necessity of any further comment. There is no comment needed, nor is it possible concerning the central organ of the French Communist Party which writes for unity on its first page and attacks the members of the unity pact on its inside pages.

* * * *

Not only organizations, but also individuals, well known for their outspoken support of the USSR, express their indignation and horror because of the Moscow trial of the Old Bolsheviks.

Ignazio Silone, the author of "*Fontamara*," "*Bread and Wine*," "*Fascism*," the well known Italian anti-fascist sent an open letter to the Moscow paper *Das Wort*, in which he calls upon other anti-fascist writers to join with him in a protest against the trial. Silone declares that it shall not be possible for a Ludwig, Feuchtwanger, etc. to protest against the cruelty of Hitler Germany, if now they remain silent in face of the most cruel and most unjustified treatment meted out to the Old Bolsheviks, Kamenev and Zinoviev. Silone expresses his own indignation (with certain misunderstanding of the factors involved): "To remain quiet now means that we ourselves become fascists,—red fascists. I, however, refuse to become a fascist,—even a red fascist." (16)

[Joining Silone in protest against the Moscow executions, one finds the illustrious name of *Franz Pfempfert*, the old German revolutionary publisher of the "Aktion"; *Victor Serge*, the well

(15) *Le Populaire*, September 2, 1936.

(16) *Service d'Information et de Presse*, October 21, 1936.

known Belgian writer, an active worker in the Bolshevik Revolution since 1917; and hundreds of others.

The protest against the Moscow executions crystalized in a demand for an *International Commission of Inquiry*, which is to investigate the Moscow trial and the charges published in the communist press against Trotsky. An appeal to organize such a Commission was issued and signed by many organizations and individuals; among the organizations, the following are found:

Left Revolutionary French Socialist Party,
 Organization of Young Socialists of the Seine District of the
 S.F.I.O. (France)
 Communist group, "Que Faire"
 Group "Combat Marxiste"
 Seine Federation of the Proletarian Unity Party
 International Workers Party (Bolshevik-Leninists) and the
 Revolutionary Socialist Youth⁽¹⁷⁾
 Bureau for Revolutionary Socialist Unification (London Bureau)
 International Bureau of the Socialist Medical Doctors
 Revolutionary Socialist Action (Belgium)
 Workers Party Marxist Unification (Spain)
 and the parties belonging to the Committee for a Fourth
 International:
 Workers Party of Canada
 Marxistische Action (Switzerland)
 Bolshevik-Leninist Workers Party of Cuba
 International Communist League of Belgium
 Communist League of Italy,
 and others.

* * * *

Organizations were created by individuals in different countries for the purpose of obtaining the calling of an International Inquiry Committee to investigate the charge of the USSR against Trotsky. Such committees were formed in France,⁽¹⁸⁾ Denmark, Czechoslovakia (initiated "International Committee for Right and Truth");⁽¹⁹⁾ United States of America (American Committee for Defense of Leon Trotsky.)⁽²⁰⁾

* * * *

Among the signers of the various appeals, one finds the names of men and women long known as friends of the Soviet Union. Some of the names of the signers are:

France: a number of writers, editors, teachers, etc. as:

(17) Address of French Committee for Commission of Inquiry: c-o Gaston Goldschild, 28, Rue Pigalle, Paris (9e).
 (18) Suzanne Barbier, 18 Cite-Jardin, Les Lilas (Seine), France.
 (19) Sonka: Prague I. Postfach 158.
 (20) Rm. 921, 22 E. 17th St., New York, N. Y.

Victor Marguerite—Writer
 Magdeleine Paz "
 Paul Des-Jardins "
 Marcel Martinet "
 George Dumoulin "
 Georges Pioch "
 Maurice Lacroix "
 Henry Pastoreau "

and a committee of attorneys, among them:

Marcel Fouries
 Phillippe Lamour
 Jean Victor Munier
 Gaston Bergery ⁽²¹⁾

Denmark:

Brend Johnson—Trade Union Secretary
 A. Dupont " " "
 Einar Nielsen " " "
 Niels Madsen " " "
 Kai Hoffman Writer
 Oscar Hansen Editor
 Ernst Christiansen "
 Ernst Berg Worker
 Arild Hvidfeldt Student

Czechoslovakia:

Dr. Wolfgang Bruegel, Writer
 Dr. Th. Hartwig, Professor and writer
 Dr. Stefan Szende, Writer
 Dr. Oscar Fischer, University professor
 Fuller-Breiersdorf, Engineer, Academic sculptor
 Dr. Egon Schwelb, Attorney
 Dr. Friedrich Bill, Attorney
 Joseph Srb — Trade Union Secretary
 K. Sindelar " " "
 B. Urbanova " " "
 Joseph Wintern " " "
 Vaclav Valcher " " "
 B. Pantnerova " " "
 Vilen Wuensch " " "
 B. Marova " " "

Joseph Guttman, Former member of Political Bureau and Editor in Chief of Central Organ of the Communist Party

Zavis Kalandra, Former editor in chief of the theoretical organ of the Communist Party.

United States: the long list of names includes:⁽²²⁾

Devere Allen, Writer, National Executive Committee Socialist Party
 Harry W. Laidler, State Chairman, Socialist Party, New York

⁽²¹⁾ Former member of the Commission of Inquiry—Reichstag Fire.

⁽²²⁾ After this was written, it became known that the National Executive Committee of the Socialist Party of America endorsed the American Committee for the Defense of Leon Trotsky and set up a sub-committee for the purpose of closer cooperation with the committee.

Norman Thomas, National Executive Committee Socialist Party		
Anita Brenner	Writer	
Anna Bercowitz	"	
Martha Gruening,	"	
Charles Yale Harrison	"	
Manuel Komroff,	"	
Joseph Wood Krutch	"	
Suzanne Lafollette,	"	
Ludwig Lore,	"	
Charles Malamuth,	"	
James T. Farrell,	"	
Max Nomad,	"	
Max Eastman,	"	
John Dos Passos,	"	
Lewis Gannett	"	
James Rorty,	"	
Edmund Wilson,	"	
Benjamin Stolberg,	"	
C. Erskine Scott Wood,	"	
Vincent R. Dunne, Trade Union leader		
John Dewey,	University Professor	
James Burnham,	"	"
Louis M. Hacker,	"	"
Sidney Hook	"	"
Oscar Jaszi	"	"
V. F. Calverton,	Editor	
Mauritz A. Hallgren,	"	
Freda Kirchwey,	"	
Carlo Tresca,	"	

* * * *

There is a possibility that Dimitroff did not receive the letter of August 23, 1936, addressed to him by Marie Nielsen, member of the Danish Communist Party; therefore, the reproduction of the letter may be of great value. Miss Nielsen writes:

"I was a member of the Zimmerwalder movement, I broke with the Danish Social Democrats in the spring of 1918. I was a co-founder of the Socialist Workers Party (later the Communist Party). In 1920 I participated in the Second Congress of the Third International, and there I promised Comrade Lenin always to fight for Communism. I always fought for Communism. I am a member of the Danish Communist Party.

"Now to the subject of my letter. I am greatly disturbed because of the trial against the Old Bolsheviks. Did you, Comrade Dimitroff, by any chance read the Scandinavian Socialist papers on this subject? One cannot, one will not believe that the old Marxists, the old students and the loyal co-workers of Lenin up to his death were transformed into terrorists who committed such outrages as becoming the allies of the Nazis, of our deadly enemies; one cannot, one does not believe that these old Bol-

sheviks have conspired and plotted with the Nazis to assassinate the Soviet leaders. The labor movement of Norway addressed to the Second (Socialist) International and to the Trade Union International of Amsterdam an invitation requesting that the two organizations ask Moscow whether or not it is possible for representatives or even attorneys of the two Internationals to assist at the trial for the purpose of obtaining exact information.

"If it concerned "Whites" in this trial, my opinion would be that it is an impudent interference with the domestic affairs of the USSR. But since it concerns many of the well known Old Bolsheviks, well known throughout the labor movement for their great accomplishment in the Russian Revolution, who, in addition, were such good comrades, such close political friends of Lenin; therefore, I join the Norwegian appeal and beg of you, Comrade Dimitroff, that you help the Social-Democrats in obtaining the files for examination. We do not desire in any case—is not true?—that they speak with whatever justification about 'the Leipzig trial in Moscow.'

"Our Danish party did not inform its members in any manner concerning the terrible happenings of the trial, but the *Arbejderbladet* simply published the telegrams and thereunder, before the verdict was given, designated the defendants as assassins. I know that I cannot send this, my appeal, through our party, that is the reason why I send it to you personally and directly. Later I shall communicate the contents of my letter to the party.

"The Seventh Congress took place, but there is still no freedom of discussion in the party, no freedom of discussion for those who have an opinion different from that of the leaders."

Marie Nielsen adds a postscript to her letter to Dimitroff:

"I must remark that Comrade Lenin in 1920 told me that I shall always be permitted to speak directly to the Communist International." (23)

One wonders whether Dimitroff still believes that the Moscow trial did not endanger the proletarian unity. Is it possible that he would consider the POUM, the Second International, the London Bureau, the Amsterdam Trade Unions and innumerable individuals friendly to the Soviet Union such whose opinions are of no value? Is it not possible that even Dimitroff and the other leaders of the Third International can and will wake up to the danger of a split in the proletarian ranks brought about by the trial? In any case, it is necessary to know what transpired. The workers of the world are entitled to know what went on in back of the trial. **To prevent the recurrence of other Old Bolshevik trials, there is only one thing to do—expose the scheme in advance.**

IT IS NECESSARY TO SPEAK OUT OPENLY.

(23) Service d'Information et de Presse—Paris, October, 1936.

THE TRIAL OF RADEK, SOKOLNIKOV, AND FIFTEEN OTHERS.

After the foregoing review of the Zinoviev-Kamenev Trial of August 1936 had gone to press, the news of a second trial to begin on January 23, 1937, was announced from Moscow. The defendants, all charged with high treason, were sentenced on January 30th, 1937. To make the analysis complete, it was felt necessary to delay the publication in order to include whatever data is available with reference to the second trial.

January 30th, 1937. F.H.

LEON TROTSKY, the outstanding defendant of the Moscow trial of August 1936, was forcibly deported from Norway on the 18th day of December 1936, because of the pressure brought to bear by the government of the U.S.S.R. He was given asylum in Mexico where he arrived on January 9, 1937. Just a few days later, Moscow reports announced the opening of a new trial of "counter-revolutionaries," who were charged with engaging in activities under the leadership of the exiled Trotsky. The seventeen defendants recently tried are:

Karl Radek	N. I. Muralov
Gregory Sokolnikov	V. V. Arnold
Gregory L. Piatakov	J. D. Turok
M. S. Bogulavsky	G. E. Pushin
J. A. Kiniyazev	J. N. Drobnis
L. Serebryakov	B. O. Norkin
J. A. Livschitz	I. I. Grashe
A. A. Shestov	S. A. Rataychek
M. S. Stroilov	

Among the defendants we recognize a number implicated by the defendants of the August trial. During that trial Kamenev testified:

"Among the leaders of the conspiracy another person may be named who in point of fact was one of the leaders, but who, in view of the special plans we made in regard to him, was not drawn into the practical work. I refer to Sokolnikov.... It seemed to us that on the side of the Trotskyites this role could be successfully performed by Serebryakov and Radek."⁽¹⁾

(1) Report of Court Proceedings, etc., p. 67.

Assuming, but not admitting, that Kamenev's statement was correct, one expects that the present defendants are to answer for the same charges which were lodged against Zinoviev, Kamenev and their co-defendants. But no, the Moscow nightmare goes on as nightmares do, showing no logic, no rhyme, no reason. The old charges are well-nigh forgotten, and new ones, more incredible, more fantastic, are presented by the Soviet prosecutor. The indictment, briefly stated, charges that Radek and his co-defendants:

1. Attempted to overthrow the Soviet Government and restore capitalism.
2. Made a pact with the enemies of the U.S.S.R. (Germany and Japan) for the purpose of provoking war.
3. Made plans for the invasion and seizure of Soviet territory by Germany and Japan, and to facilitate such invasion engaged in espionage in favor of those arch enemies of the U.S.S.R.
4. Commit acts of sabotage to weaken the Soviet State.
5. Attempted to commit acts of terrorism, including the assassination of Soviet leaders.⁽²⁾

If one recalls the indictment against the August defendants, one sees that only the fifth point of the present indictment was leveled against Zinoviev and the sixteen others. If one further recalls that from among the present defendants at least three, Radek, Sokolnikov, and Serebryakov, were designated as leaders of the Zinoviev conspiracy, one is confronted with a riddle, hard if not impossible to solve, *i.e.*: How is it possible that neither Zinoviev nor any of his sixteen co-defendants mentioned any of the first four charges of the present indictment? It is possible that Radek, Sokolnikov and Serebryakov kept their co-conspirators, Zinoviev and Kamenev, in the dark concerning the military plans of Japan and Germany? Did the present defendants do all their sabotaging without the help of Bakayev, Mrachkovsky, and others sentenced for conspiracy in August? Did Radek, Sokolnikov and Serebryakov do their espionage for Japan and Germany without the knowledge of Zinoviev and Kamenev, their co-leaders in the conspiracy? These and other questions must be answered before it is possible to give any kind of evaluation of the present trial.

When analyzing the August trial, we pointed out the many obvious mistakes made by A. Y. Vyshinsky, and concluded that his inability to frame a logical indictment was due to his being a novice in conducting trials of such a delicate nature. We also

(2) News reports in Chicago and New York papers, January 22, 1937.

stated that it was to be expected that in the trial of the second set of defendants, Radek, Sokolnikov, and others, Vyshinsky's indictment would be more logical and would stand scrutiny. Such expectation was based on the possibility that even a state's attorney may learn from experience; but we must confess error. The present indictment, in the light of the testimonies, is shot full of holes.

Walter Duranty, the Moscow correspondent of the *N. Y. Times*, who in his own words is a great admirer of Stalin and definitely anti-Trotsky, gives a detailed report of the trial. But first he states where his sympathies lie:

"As far back as 1923 I became convinced that Stalin would win, and that Stalin was the man Russia needed and Lenin's destined successor. From that conviction I have never wavered through the whole opposition period."⁽³⁾

Duranty's report from the court-room in Moscow must be accepted as, if anything, favorable to the prosecution; therefore his statement gives away the show and answers the question of what the purpose of the present trial is. He concludes that:

"The people abroad said the former trial of Gregory Zinoviev and Leon Kamenev was somehow phony, that it did not "stand up," or seem reasonable. But this trial does stand up and the evidence rings true."⁽⁴⁾

Because of his faith or intuition, Duranty feels that:

"On the whole the trial bids fair to be much more convincing to foreign opinion than the Kamenev-Zinoviev affair."⁽⁵⁾

Let us see whether the present trial actually does stand up better than that of August. Do the present indictments and testimonies sound more reasonable than those of 1936? Is Mr. Duranty correct that the evidence does ring true? Duranty himself gives the answer while describing the scene, when during the trial the courtroom roared with laughter:

"That is an amazing feature of these Moscow trials; that all have an element of the theater, and yet it is not just a play, for the losers pay with their lives. This trial is pure Hamlet, but there will be no come-back for the actors when the curtain falls. Radek's testimony today and Gregory Sokolnikov's and L. Serebryakov's showed clearly that they had 'Let I dare not wait upon I would.' They planned this and talked that, but in reality did little. They said they followed Trotsky in believing that Stalin's regime could be overthrown only by their country's defeat, but they could not quite do things because there was an inner contradiction in their heart. **Anyone of them might have killed Stalin, but they did not**—not from fear but on account of this inner contradiction that ruined their whole plot.

(3) *New York Times*, January 24, 1937.

(4) *Ibid.*, January 26, 1937.

(5) *Ibid.*, January 24, 1937.

This is a strange Russian story, which only readers of Feodor Dostoyevsky will understand." (6)

Come, come, Mr. Duranty. Do you really believe that one has only to read Dostoyevsky to be able to understand this "strange Russian story"? Do you really believe that the "inner contradiction" which you discovered in the heart of Radek will explain the fact that none of the alleged plans were ever executed? Do you really want us to believe that the conspirators "ruined their whole plot" because of Dostoyevsky, and the "inner contradiction?" Duranty assumes many things, but in one of his statements he comes clear up to the truth. He says that the conspirators: "Planned this, and talked that, but in reality did little."

We expect to show that the conspirators actually did nothing to execute the plans charged against them, and that the plans themselves were concocted by the prosecution and the G.P.U. Yes, of course they confessed, but those confessions were to be expected from Radek after his statement in the *Pravda* of August 23rd, 1936; from Piatakov, after his exculpation published in the *Pravda* the same day. Confession, from the others, after many months in the G. P. U. jails were to be expected as natural. How much these confessions really mean when confronted with known facts, when scrutinized with open eyes, is demonstrated by the confessions themselves.

The Testimony of the Defendants.

Both Radek and Piatakov agreed that the members of the so-called parallel center, now on trial,

"adopted Leon Trotsky's view," in order "to achieve that world revolution, which was their ultimate aim."(7)

While speaking of their view to accomplish the world revolution, Radek, almost in the same breath,

"admitted elaborate plans were drawn to . . . bring back a modified form of capitalism to the Soviet Union."(8)

Yes, the observers at the trial are right, it is indeed a strange Russian story, wherein conspirators work to bring about a world revolution, for the purpose of restoring capitalism.

All the defendants presented themselves as lieutenants of Leon Trotsky, who allegedly gave them instructions. Some of them even claimed to have met Trotsky in his exile in France and in Norway. The dates and places of these visits are not as exactly given as Holtzman's in the Britol-Hotel in Copenhagen. (The G.P.U. and state's attorney did learn from past mistakes.)

(6) Ibid
(8) Ibid

(7) News reports in Chicago and New York papers, January 25, 1937.

One of the witnesses, Vladimir Romm, testified:

"That he carried five letters from Leon Trotsky, discussed the situation in a dark alley, near a Paris Park with Leon Trotsky, and agreed to become the latter's undercover informant while serving as *Izvestia* correspondent in Washington, but was unable to do so.... because of 'circumstances'."⁽⁹⁾

Here is the connecting link between the conspirators and Trotsky. The *liaison* man, Romm, meets Trotsky in a dark alley (which dark alley, and when the alleged meeting took place is not established. The dark alley is placed near a Paris park. It is hard to disprove that there is a dark alley near one of the Paris Parks.) Romm agrees to become Trotsky's undercover informant in Washington. Why undercover, and why Trotsky does need an informant in Washington is not told. Could not and did not Trotsky receive all the information available to Romm through the international press? Apparently yes, because Trotsky was forced to get along without his "undercover informant Room," the latter being unable to serve him due to "circumstances." Prosecutor Vyshinsky seems to be a singularly placid man, who has no curiosity whatever. How otherwise can it be explained why he failed to inquire from Romm as to his alleged duties as Trotsky's "undercover informant" in Washington, or as to the "circumstances" which kept him from undertaking those duties?

Romm is a man of mystery who acted as no other human being would. He confessed that he had been one of the conspirators and go-betweens from Radek to Trotsky for the past four or five years. He was reasonably safe from arrest and subsequent execution in the U. S. A., as the correspondent for *Izvestia*. He confessed knowledge of the conspiracy to murder Kirov. He read about the Kirov trial and the discovery of the conspiracy in 1935. He learned about the discovery of further details of this conspiracy and the trial of Zinoviev and Kamenev. He even read about Radek's (his chief's) implication through the testimony of Kamenev. He was informed as to how alleged conspirators such as Zinoviev and Kamenev, are dealt with in the U.S.S.R. Is it logical to assume that he knew what his own fate would be, if his role as conspirator were discovered while on the territory of the U.S.S.R. Nevertheless, Romm in the fall of 1936 leaves the safe haven of Washington, D.C. and goes to Moscow. Is there one other man besides Romm, who, knowing of his guilt, would return and testify against himself? Hardly; but it is a "strange Russian story," which not even the readers of Dostoyevsky can understand. Is it not possible that

(9) *Ibid*

Romm returned to the U.S.S.R. in the fall of 1936 without even suspecting that he would be assigned a role, and a fantastic one at that, in this alleged plot? Is it impossible to assume that Romm was unaware of the fact that he was being asked to return for the purpose of testifying as a "star witness?"

Radek admitted that

"elaborate plans were drawn to paralyze the railway system in a scheme by which it was hoped to overthrow Stalin, and to bring back a modified system of capitalism in the Soviet Union. Germany was to receive the rich Ukrainian Valley and Japan was to get the Maritime Provinces in return for aid in overthrowing the government."⁽¹⁰⁾

Radek apparently forgot that he had previously testified that his and the conspirators' aim was to bring about the world revolution. While the purpose of a world revolution to bring about capitalism is not clear, Radek's testimony concerning an alleged Trotsky letter is more than clear. This letter, supposedly written by Trotsky in 1935, but not introduced in evidence, contained the plan:

1. "Should Japan go to war with the U.S.A., 'invaluable concessions' would be made to aid the Nipponese Nation. These were to include the rich oil resources at the Russian portion of Sakhalin Island."⁽¹¹⁾

It is not hard to divine the purpose of such a "confession," if one knows that the whole trial is directed against the Trotskyites. The Soviet government is disturbed by the sympathetic attitude shown by the American public in general towards the exile, Trotsky. The American public and the newspapers, while in complete disagreement with Trotsky's political ideas, reacted against the Soviet government's violation of the rules of fair play. The alleged letter from Trotsky was to show up Trotsky to the American public as one who conspired with Uncle Sam's potential enemy—Japan. It is possible that this alleged letter, which never saw the light of day, was to accomplish another purpose in the United States. It is no secret that the Soviet Government is after a U.S. alliance; a defensive alliance naturally and logically directed against Japan. It is not farfetched to assume that Trotsky's alleged plot to support Japan in a war against the United States is a good talking point for the Soviet Government when discussing the desire for alliance with the State Department in Washington.

2. What is the purpose, if any, of making Radek present an alleged plot of Trotsky which includes the ceding of Russian territory to

(10) Ibid, January 24, 1937

(11) Ibid, January 23, 1937.

Hitler Germany? It is well known that the Soviet Foreign Office dreads the possibility of Hitler's succeeding in isolating the U.S.S.R. Great efforts are made by the Soviet diplomats to prevent Great Britain and France from being drawn into the German-Japanese anti-Russian alliance. Hitler's chief argument in Downing Street and on Quai D'Orsay is that Russia endangers the European nations because of the revolutionary propensity of the Soviet government and of the Third International. To show Hitler and Trotsky as the authors of a common plot is intended by the U.S.S.R. to keep Great Britain and France away from Hitler, who, as it is to be shown, is not beyond allying himself with the "world revolutionary Trotsky." This is the only explanation for the hair-brained "confession," showing Trotsky, in his alleged letter to Radek, as **a world revolutionary working for a modified form of capitalism.** This is the only explanation of why Radek confessed that he was a Trotskyite and disbelieved in Stalin's theory of "Socialism in one country," while at the same time admitting his connection with "all counter-revolutionary forces." As a matter of fact, Radek went much farther when he stated that: **"I am guilty of all the charges, of all the terrorist plots—even those I did not know about."** (12)

One wonders what Radek meant by this. Did he mean to confess to all charges of the indictment, according to which:

"The investigation has established that this parallel group, (Piatakov, Radek, Sokolnikov et al), upon direct instructions from Trotsky, organized diversionist and terrorist groups, which carried out wrecking and undermining acts at a number of workshops, especially those used for the defense of the Soviet Union, and which prepared terrorist acts against leaders of the Communist Party, the Soviet Union and the Soviet Government. This same group, upon direct instructions from Trotsky, also carried out espionage work, for certain foreign states. The investigation has established that the criminal activities of the group and other members of the Trotskyist organization, who are accused in the present case, were aimed at the destruction of the military might of the Soviet Union, acceleration of a military attack against the Soviet Union, assistance to foreign aggressors in seizing territory from and dismembering the Soviet Union, overthrowing the Soviet power, and restoring capitalism and the domination of a bourgeoisie in the Soviet Union." (13)

Radek, the former secretary of the Communist International, the authoritative commentator of the Soviet Government for the past seven years, confesses to a plan to restore capitalism. To

(12) *New York Times*, January 25, 1937.

(13) News reports in Chicago and New York papers, January 22, 1937.

bring back the domination of the bourgeoisie in the Soviet Union is the plan to which G. L. Piatakov, the Vice-Commissar for Heavy Industries and a Bolshevik since 1910, confessed. Sokolnikov, the Vice-Commissar of the Foreign Office, the former Soviet ambassador to England, confessed an intention to dismember the Soviet Union. M. S. Bogulavsky, the former member of the Moscow Sovjet, L. Serebryakov, the former Commissar of Communications, J. N. Drob-nis, former secretary of the Moscow Soviet, all of them members of the Bolshevik party before the revolution of 1917, confessed that they were aiming "at the destruction of the military might of the Soviet Union, at the acceleration of a military attack against" the self-same Soviet power which they helped to establish. Facts in proof of such accusations are not submitted by the prosecution—nothing but the "confessions." But, as Mr. Duranty remarked "plans, always plans; not action. Hamlet again and the inner contradiction."⁽¹⁴⁾ The confessions are the thing the prosecution is after. It may be that **Radek** said more than the State's Attorney expected of him, when he said:

"I gave evidence on the basis of its significance and on the basis of usefulness."⁽¹⁵⁾

What did Radek mean by referring to the significance of his evidence? What did he consider to be the basis of the usefulness of his confession? To attempt an answer to these questions, we must proceed to some other confessions.

Piatakov, while confessing to every charge of the indictment, gave details, almost too many details as to the execution of the plans. He was too meticulous to suit even the prosecutor in bringing the plot home to Trotsky.

Piatakov "in a clear, colorless voice, as precise and unemotional as that of a professor addressing his class, . . . today threw away his life and the lives of the sixteen fellow-accused as their trial as conspirators against the Soviet began."⁽¹⁶⁾

Piatakov described a secret visit to Trotsky at Oslo, Norway, in December, 1935, stating that he went to Berlin and

"the following morning went early to Tempelhof Airfield, where the emissary (of Trotsky, F.H.) met me and gave me a German passport in a strange name with a Norwegian visa, and by 3 o'clock that afternoon I left by a swift passenger plane, in which I was the only traveller, to the Oslo Airfield, and was rushed in an auto to Trotsky's residence."⁽¹⁷⁾

The story did not sound quite convincing even to the prosecutor,

(14) *New York Times*, January 25, 1937.

(15) Telegram of the U.P. from Moscow, January 29, 1937.

(16) Walter Duranty, *New York Times*, January 24, 1937.

(17) News reports in Chicago and New York papers, January 24, 1937.

because, Piatakov was pressed to explain, "how was this arranged?" "Piatakov shrugged his shoulders, but Bukhartsef, who is also under arrest who has admitted that he was a member of the conspiracy, replied blandly to the same question: 'Stimmer knew people able to arrange things like that.'" (18)

Stimmer must have been good, to say the least, and the people who Stimmer knew must have been still better, to be "able to arrange things like that." What are the "things like that?" First of all, Piatakov, holding down the job of the Vice-Commissar for Heavy Industries must have left the USSR without the knowledge of the government and of the all-knowing G.P.U. Secondly, as a Soviet official, he must have been in Hitler's Berlin in December, 1935, without the knowledge of the Hitler Government and of the all-knowing Gestapo. Piatakov, a Soviet official of primary importance, left by airplane the Nazi-controlled Tempelhof Airfield without anyone knowing about it, and arrived in Oslo without coming to the attention of the Norwegian Government. He must have gone from Oslo to Hønefoss, (the nearest railroad station to the village of Veksel, where Trotsky stayed with the family of Knutsen), without being spotted or recognized by anyone. Piatakov, the stranger, must have gone to the village of Veksel and there must have found the home of Knutsen without being met or seen by anyone. And there he was able to "interview Trotsky for two hours." But that is only one half of the "things like that" which were "arranged." Piatakov was forced to retrace his steps from Veksel to Honefoss and from there to Oslo, from Oslo to Berlin and finally from Berlin to Moscow and he did "things like that" without ever being noticed by the police of Norway or by Hitler's Gestapo, or by Stalin's G.P.U. No, we were in error when we thought that Vyshinsky would learn from experience and improve his practice in the second trial. The Soviet prosecutor cannot make up a plausible story. That the story is made up is proved by the report of two Oslo papers, the *Aftenposten* and the *Dagbladet*, both of which report that their checkup at the Oslo Airport shows no such landing as that confessed to by Piatakov. Of course it is possible, assuming that the Soviet engineers are as good inventors as the prosecutor is, that Piatakov was supplied (by the G.P.U.?) with a folding pocket-size airplane, with which he could take off and land unobserved by anyone.

The State's Attorney must be given credit for trying to learn, as when he makes the defendant Shestov visit Trotsky in Norway

(18) *Ibid*

for the purpose of obtaining Trotsky's written instructions which **instructions** Shestov confessed having "**hidden**" in the heels of his shoes. The prosecutor recalls Holtzman's double-bottomed trunk, in which he allegedly brought to Russia Trotsky's verbal instructions. To avoid a pitfall, Vyshinsky made Shestov use his double-bottomed shoe-heel, though the defendant fails to confess whether or not he is an expert shoemaker (he is the manager of the Kusbas Coal Mines), able to place the documents in the shoes, nor does he state whether or not he had with him an expert Russian shoemaker specializing in double bottomed shoe-heels. It is, of course, possible that Trotsky had such experts on hand in the village of Veksel, on the job 24 hours a day, to accommodate such bright emissaries as Shestov. This is part of the story to which Walter Duranty refers as part of the trial which "bids fair to be much more convincing to foreign opinion than the Kamenev-Zinoviev affairs." Duranty surely does not think highly of foreign opinion.

The Story of the Sabotage.

With the defendants "confessing" to fanciful plans, aimed "at the destruction of the military-might of the Soviet Union, acceleration of a military attack against the Soviet-Union, assistance to foreign aggressors in ceding territory from, and dismembering, the Soviet-Union, overthrowing the Soviet Power and restoring capitalism," one is ready to hear just about everything in subsequent confessions. However the stories unfolded by Shestov, in charge of the Kusbas Coal Mines, by Vladimir Lozinov, an engineer, in charge of the mining works, by J. D. Turok, a former head of a railway division, by J. A. Livschitz, Vice-Commissar of the railways, by J. A. Kiniazev, chief of the Southern Railways, by B. C. Norkin and S. A. Rataychek, both leading officers of the chemical industries, will test the credulity of the most credulous.

Kiniazev "confessed" having **accomplished thirty-five hundred train wrecks in the period of 1935-1936**. Quite a job, is it not? That many wrecks in the period of two years means in the **average five train wrecks each day**, a good average even for the best "Stakhanovite." This average of five train wrecks a day must be understood as having been caused by Kiniazev in his own territory, *i.e.* the territory of the Southern Railway, which is a small part of the U.S.S.R. Such an incredible number of wrecks was caused by no one else than the manager of the Railway himself. How did he do it? How many thousands of helpers did he have? Where are those handy helpers? Did Kiniazev do nothing else but wreck

trains for two years? Did he ever go to his managerial office or was he always on the road, doing his train wrecking? Was his time not pretty well taken up by an average of five wrecks daily? There are some of the questions which may occur to some of the readers of the trial-report. One wonders whether many will agree with Duranty that the trial "bids fair to be more convincing to foreign opinion that the Kamenev-Zinoviev affair."

J. D. Turok is another high ranking railway official, who "confesses" to a number of wrecks, saying that:

"to deceive higher authorities, the wrecks were made to appear as accidents, or the responsibility was shifted to innocent persons."⁽¹⁹⁾

This testimony is put quite blandly. How do train wrecks usually appear, if not as accidents? What is to be done to a wreck to make it appear to be an accident? Is it necessary to point out that high officials of a railway system customarily shift the responsibility for any accident to innocent persons, usually to lower functionaries? Why then Turok's statement? To make the story more fanciful and thus more convincing? Possibly so, though one may have justifiable suspicions about "things like that."

Shestov, manager of the Kuzbas coal mining works "confessed:"

"I planted a cache of dynamite with the aid of a German engineer, for the purpose of blowing up the mine. A group of children discovered the dynamite and played with it... the cache exploded and killed all the youngsters, thus the plot failed."⁽²⁰⁾

Hearing Shestov's testimony, a great number of legitimate questions come to the fore, all clamoring for answer. How much dynamite is needed to blow up the Kuzbas mining works? Did Shestov and his unnamed German engineer carry all the dynamite on their persons? Did they need a truck, or a number of trucks, or possible a freight train to convey the explosives? Where did Shestov obtain the dynamite, without involving many, many other persons? Where did he cache the dynamite, inside or outside of the mines? If an outside cache, how did Shestov expect to get the dynamite into the workings? In one day or during many? If in one load, by what arrangement, with the help of how many people? If the loading of the mines was to be done step by step, then how secret the dynamite from being discovered by the great number of miners engaged in the workings? How did the children come near or into the mines, to discover the cache? How did the youngsters cause the explosion of the dynamite? Were they supplied with percussion

(19) Ibid

(20) Ibid

caps, without which dynamite does not explode? Apparently the prosecutor, does not know the simple fact that dynamite will not explode even if thrown into fire and that a detonator is required to bring about explosion. Lack of such knowledge led Vyshinsky to present such an absurd confession. These are questions which in the interest of truth and clarification should have been put by the prosecutor. He failed to do so. Why? Did he consider the fantastic tale of Shestov in itself sufficient proof of the sabotage? Was he afraid to repeat the question, put to Piatakov: "How was this arranged?" Was the prosecutor afraid that no one would answer obligingly: "Someone knew people able to arrange things like that?" Was the prosecutor himself wondering whether there are people in the whole wide world able to accomplish the thing allegedly planned by Shestov? This same Shestov "confessed" to many other no less fantastic plans. But plans they remained, none of them ever ripening into acts. The reason was, as Shestov put it, that "all the conspirators lacked nerve."

"Lack of nerve did," according to Arnold's testimony save the life of Prime Minister Molotov. Arnold, as agreed by the conspirators, was to sacrifice himself to murder Molotov. He volunteered as Molotov's chauffeur, and was to drive the car over a precipice. Some of the co-conspirators did not trust Arnold, and therefore they followed Molotov in a truck. In case of an expected "nerve-failure" on the part of Arnold, the truck was to push the car over the precipice. But let's have Arnold's story.

"I drove the car towards the precipice, and the truck following me, passed by, the others in the truck thinking that I shall drive over the cliff. Afterwards I lost my nerve, and turned back to the road."⁽²¹⁾

Such a story, such a senseless story! Imagine those conspirators who passed by with their truck, not even looking to see whether or not, Arnold actually drove over the cliff. No, they had no curiosity whatever. They are "funny people" these confessed conspirators. But so is Molotov, the intended victim in the car. What did Molotov do? He apparently just forgot about the exciting experience of seeing himself being carted toward the cliff. Or possibly, he was so glad about Arnold losing his nerve, and not going through with his ghastly plan, that he "refused to prosecute?" Or—an iconoclastic idea—was Molotov one of the conspirators out to murder himself? This latter can be the only real reason for Molotov's failure to report the incident. But—another blasphemous

(21) Ibid, January 25, 1937

thought—, if Molotov failed to report the attempt upon his life, then he is guilty, at least to the extent of being “morally responsible.” The consequence of such a conclusion . . . will probably be discussed in subsequent trials. We can not believe that Old Bolsheviks, as Molotov, would ever become terrorist conspirators; therefore, the incident never occurred, except in the corrupted mind of a G.P.U. agent.

To dozens of plans, dozens of terroristic plots, and much sabotage did the accused confess, but nothing beyond plans, nothing beyond confessions was demonstrated. Oh yes! There was corroborating evidence, at least in the opinion of Mr. Duranty, who writes;

“For the first time there was introduced today some circumstantial evidence, in the form of a diary by M. S. Stroilov of his contact with German agents. Prosecutor Vyshinsky also placed in the record the telephone directory of Dortmund, a Ruhr town, to prove that a German, with whom Stroilov declared he was connected there, did live at the address mentioned. Further evidence came from the Savoy Hotel in Moscow to prove that certain Germans, with whom Stroilov said he conspired, were there at the time he said he talked to them. Then Stroilov and A. A. Shestov were called on to pick out from twenty photographs the five Germans they had worked with in common sabotage. They did it easily.”⁽²²⁾

So they did it easily. But who would not? What prevented the “confessing” Stroilov and Shestov from seeing the photographs before the trial? Does the picking of five pictures out of twenty prove the alleged sabotage, or Trotsky’s and the Trotskyites’ connection with it? The evidence of the Savoy Hotel in Moscow (controlled by the self-same government which prosecutes the defendants), is simply overwhelming. The fact that the government-controlled Hotel shows from its records that certain Germans roomed there at a certain time, is expected to be taken as evidence that the confessing defendant Stroilov was actually engaged in sabotage with those Germans. The same “evidence” supplied by the Hotel must be accepted as proof, that Trotsky and the Trotskyites directed the sabotage.

The crowning piece of Vishinsky’s evidence was undoubtedly the telephone directory of Dortmund. One can visualize the breathtaking scene when this holy telephone directory from Hitler Germany was produced. One must understand that after such evidence, all denials were in vain. How could it be otherwise?

(22) *New York Times*, January 28, 1937.

This public directory contained a name and an address mentioned by Stroilov as his German accomplice. No denial is going to help, because the prosecutor could easily prove that Stroilov never saw the telephone directory before his trial. Vyshinsky could further prove that Stroilov did not get the name and address from the telephone directory, but, on the contrary, the directory was located by means of the data supplied by Stroilov. From reading such conclusive evidence, another blasphemous idea could occur. How did the Soviet prosecutor obtain the telephone directory from the city of Dortmund? Did he by any chance maintain connections with Hitler? Such a conclusion is as much justified as that of the prosecutor, that the telephone directory proves sabotage and Trotsky's connection with it.

Stroilov's diary introduced in evidence and showing data pertaining to his contact with German agents, could be considered as corroborating evidence but for one thing, and that is that the diary could have been prepared as easily as confessions are prepared.

While during the Zinoviev trial in August, Trotsky's alleged instructions to the conspirators were written with invisible ink, using certain pages of the *Arabian Nights* as code, the conspirators of the present trial varied their method. The engineer, Vladimir Lozinov, "confessed" that he "carried out terroristic instructions conveyed to him by means of algebraic formulae." Vyshinsky, up to this time a reader of Nick Carter stories, here goes modern; his "algebraic formulae" are a stock in trade of modern mystery stories.

All acts of sabotage were to be committed by high officials of the U.S.S.R. How impossible such a plot is, one can see easily by transferring the scene to another country. How cold *e.g.* the Secretary of Commerce or of the Interior in the U.S.A. bring about 3,500 trainwrecks in two years, or even in two hundred years? How could such things be accomplished here without the help of thousands of co-conspirators? Can such sabotage be accomplished by the top alone?

We could go on endlessly, but the stories are always the same. Plans with many trimmings. Blood-curdling episodes, all described in detail, never carried out. Livschitz, a former Vice-Commissar of Railways, confessed to every one of the charges; so did Sokolnikov, the former Vice-Commissar of Foreign Affairs; and so did Piatakov, Pushin, former chemistry Official, Karl Radek, J. N. Drobnis, former leading functionary of the Moscow Soviet, M. S. Bogulav-

sky, high functionary of the Commissariat for Industry and former member of the Moscow Soviet. Plan they did for years, but the plots were bungled because, as Arnold put it, they "lost their nerve." "Plans always plans; not action." The result, however, is the pronouncement of the Court handed down on January 30, 1937. All defendants were found guilty and sentenced to die with the exception of Radek, Sokolnikov, Arnold and Stroilov. The date of January 30th thus became a double holiday for Hitler Germany. It was the anniversary of Hütler's taking power; and now there is additional reason for celebration; the liquidation of the "Old Bolsheviks" continues apace.

More Trials to Come

As during the first trial, there were a great number of people implicated now by the testimony of Radek and his co-defendants. Many arrests were announced and many more are anticipated, among them A. G. Beloborodov, the former head of the Ekaterinburg Soviet; Leonid Sosnovsky, one of the best known journalists, and propagandist of the U.S.S.R.; Bucharin, up to now the Editor in Chief of the newspaper *Izvestia*, Christian Rakovsky, former ambassador to Britain and France. The arrest of these men and of many others casts a sinister shadow upon the days to come. One anticipated arrest appears to be more sinister than all others, and that is the arrest of **Sergei Sedov**, the youngest son of Leon Trotsky, the only member of his family remaining in Russia. There has been as yet no official confirmation of the arrest of Trotsky's son, but the "Pravda" published a great number of letters from workers demanding such an arrest. The cynical correspondents of foreign newspapers in Moscow consider such "spontaneous" workers' letters as a proof that Sergei Sedov has been arrested. The fact is that such an **arrest** did take place, but not recently. **It occurred some two years ago** and was announced by newspaper headlines, such as one reprinted here from **June 29, 1935**.

The announcement of the arrest, came through an open letter of Mrs. Nathalie I. Trotsky, the mother of Sergei. The letter, dated June 1st, 1935, requested some of the outstanding intellectuals of Europe to investigate her charges that Sergei's arrest was caused by Stalin's malicious desire to wreak vengeance upon Leon Trotsky. Mrs. Trotsky wrote:

"Sergei was born in 1908. At the outbreak of the October Revolution he was a nine year old boy. He grew up in the Kremlin. In families whose older members are absorbed by politics, the younger ones are often repelled thereby. Such was also our case.

Sergei never occupied himself with political questions; he was not even a member of the Communist Youth.... In the University he concentrated on mathematics and mechanics. As an engineer, he received a professorship in one of the higher technical schools and in the last couple of years, he carried on very extensive pedagogical activities. With two other colleagues he published recently a special work entitled; 'Light Gas Generators of Automobile Tractor Type.'.... When we were forced into exile abroad, Sergei was still a student. The authorities allowed members of our family either to accompany us or to remain in the USSR. Sergei decided to remain in Moscow so as not to be turned away from that work which from then on absorbed his whole being.... My correspondence with my son was limited to exclusively 'neutral' every day subjects not touching on political questions and the special living conditions of our family circle.... L. D. (Leon Trotsky) did not correspond at all with our son in the years of exile so as not to give the authorities the slightest pretext for persecution or simple annoyance, and as a matter of fact, in the six years of our present emigration, Sergei continued his intense scientific pedagogical work without any interference on the part of the authorities. Things took a different course following the assassination of Kirov and the famous trial of Zinoviev and Kamenev. Correspondence ceased entirely and half a year has elapsed since Sergei has been in prison. It is precisely this that compels me to think that the jailers have some special designs in mind... From various sources we knew that Sergei was just a much removed from politics in recent years as before.... The GPU and the university authorities kept a redoubled watch over him first as a student and secondly as a young professor. He was arrested not for any sort of opposition activity (which did not exist and under all circumstances could not exist), but exclusively as the son of L. D. with the aim of wreaking vengeance upon the family.... Remember the attempt of the GPU to link up the name of L.D. with the Kirov assassination.... the Latvian consul.... etc..... this whole scheme, however, fell through and served only to compromise the organizers of the trial. But precisely because of it, we repeated frequently in our family circle after the trial: They will not stop at this, they will have to prepare some new case to cover up the amalgam with the consul.... The only thing that we did not know was the method the GPU will choose this time. But now there cannot be even a shadow of a doubt. By arresting the absolutely innocent Sergei, by keeping him in jail for months, Stalin, clearly and indubitably, presses the aim of creating a new "amalgam." For this purpose, he must force from Sergei some sort of suitable confession—even if only a renunciation of his father."⁽²³⁾

(23) New Militant, June 29, 1935.

MILITANT

an of the Workers Party of the U.S.

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, JUNE 29, 1935

PRICE 3 CENTS

ets
isis

tant
rper

Some into the
New Militant
ing campaign.
Class struggle
used in similar
presenting the
contrasting li
ing the Ameri
in the new
g to the front
revolutionary
farist theory.
Recently died in
their stage of

500 in New York
Pledge Support
To C.S. Victims

Bitter Attacks of I.L.D.
Fail to Shake
Mini

Almost 500 workers and enemies of reaction attended the Mini Appeal Dinner held in New York City Wednesday night. A message to the Sacramento appellants pledging an unending fight for reversal of their sentences was unanimously adopted. The speakers of the evening included Murray Baron of the Socialist Party; A. J. Muste, Secretary of the Workers Party; Arnold Johnson of the National Unemployed League; John Chamberlain, literary critic of the New York Times; and Carlo Tresca, editor of Il Martello. Professor Sidney Hook of New York University presided. Announcement was made by Herbert Solow of the N.P.L.D. of

Sergei Trotsky Jailed By Stalin Bureaucrats

Students at Edinburgh
Offer Trotsky Rectorship

June 7, 1935.
To the Students of Edinburgh
University

Dear Sirs,
I am indebted to you for your so unexpected and flattering proposal: to put me up as candidate for the rectorate of your university. The freedom from any nationalist considerations which you show is a great tribute to the spirit of the students of Edinburgh.

I appreciate your confidence all the more since you, as you yourselves say, are uninfluenced by the refusal of the British Government to grant me a visa. Nevertheless I do not feel that I have the right to accept your proposal.

AN ACT OF VENGEANCE

Mother Asks for Investigation of Latest Series of Persecutions

By NATHALIE I. TROTSKY

Recently rumors have circulated widely among comrades to the effect that this time Stalin has chosen our youngest son Sergei as the object of his vengeance.

Friends keep asking us: Is this really true? Yes, it is true: Sergei was arrested at the very beginning of this year.

If at first one could hope that the arrest was accidental, that in a day or two he would be freed, it is clear now that the jailers have

—far more serious designs. Signs

There is something horrible, something too sinister about the fact that while Sergei was arrested in 1935, his arrest is now hinted at. Does the prosecutor intend, as Mrs. Trotsky claims, to **“force from Sergei some sort of suitable confession—even if only a renunciation of his father?”** Do the “jailers have some special design in mind” concerning Sergei? Will they try to make him confess and present his confession to an already suspicious world as a confession spontaneously and freely given, while in fact he has been at the mercy of the G.P.U. for the past two years? Will the world, and more particularly those intellectuals to whom Mrs. Trotsky addressed her letter in June, 1935, remain silent while plots are laid by the G.P.U.? Will Roland Rolland, Charles Gide, Bernard Shaw and other friends of the Soviet Union remain silent while the trials of other Old Bolsheviks are in preparation, or will they, as Mrs. Trotsky requested, “assume the initiative and establish a committee for investigation in agreement with the Soviet Union?” Do not Rolland, Gide, Shaw and the others believe that the method suggested by Mrs. Trotsky would be the best and only one for checking the truth of the charges leveled by the Soviet Government against the Old Bolsheviks? Would such a committee not be the only institution which could effectively check the spread of the accusations leveled against the Soviet Government; that the trials are framed?

Why did Radek and his co-defendants confess?

The answer to this question was supplied by Radek in his closing statement. The answer is clear from the blunt statement of Radek.

"I gave evidence on the basis of its significance and on the basis of usefulness." (Of course he added, "on the basis of truth").

This declaration tallies with the analysis given by Trotsky in a statement issued by him on January 27, in Coyoacan, Mexico. Trotsky comments upon the confessions, in which the defendants take upon themselves guilt for the most unspeakable crimes. He further comments upon the "cheap phychologist's attempt to explain this phenomenon by the qualities of the 'Russian soul.'" But to that Trotsky points out that "Russian revolutionists, among them terrorists, had in the past the courage to defend their convictions." Why then the unheard of scene presented by Radek and his co-defendants? Trotsky's answer is that now **among the accused:**

"there sit not terrorists by conviction but terrorists produced under instructions."

What are these instructions? And how are they made to bring about the desired results? Trotsky believes that the defendants are brought to confess by pointing to the threatening shadow of Hitler cast across the U.S.S.R. The prisoners are told "Hitler wants to mobilize the entire world against us under the slogan of defense of order against anarchy." How can we fend off this danger? There is only one weapon available and that is, we must demonstrate to the bourgeoisie of England, France and the U. S. A. that Hitler himself does not recoil from an alliance with Trotsky." That is the reason for the "confessions" concerning a Hitler-Trotskyite alliance. The defendants, by fair means or foul, are then made to see the light: that they as old Trotskyites, and they alone, can help in the patriotic work of discrediting Trotsky and besmirching everything Trotsky stands for.

Many of the defendants, as the past trial shows, did see the light. They "confessed" abjectly, wretched from the long isolation in their prison. There are many who confessed because they were guaranteed a reprieve from the verdict. (That such reprieve was held out to Zinoviev, Kamenev, Radek, Sokolnikov, etc., is obvious from two special decrees handed down by the Central Executive Committee, one after the Kirov murder and the other just preceding the Zinoviev trial. The first special degree provided for the

immediate execution of the sentences brought in against terrorists and took away the right of reprieve previously held by the Executive Committee. The second decree permitted the defendants in the Zinoviev trial to present their petition to the Committee for a reprieve. The connection is clear. The defendants were told that a reprieve would be granted to them, but they were fooled: and the defendants were fooled again in January, 1937. They could be fooled, because all of them were in the custody of the G.P.U. prior to the execution of Zinoviev and Kamenev.)


While there are many who confessed to the most unspeakable crimes, there are still more who failed to see the patriotic motive for their confessing to crimes never committed. Those who fail to make an agreement with the G.P.U. are not brought to trial. Whether they are isolated in the G.P.U. cells, or are summarily executed, history will tell. But one thing is assured now—that other trials are in preparation, other victims are selected, and the executioner's gun will crack again, unless the intellectuals and the workers of the world, the friends of the Soviet Union, will rise and will demand;

AN END MUST BE PUT TO THE FARCICAL TRIALS AND TO THE TRAGIC EXECUTIONS!

The publication of this pamphlet involved a great amount of detail work: critical reviewing of the manuscript, checking of the data, typing, proof-reading and helping financially the publication. For their assistance in this work, acknowledgement is due to Martin Abern, Roy E. Burt, Nathan Gould, Frank and Helen Trager, John and Dorothy Stirling, Yetta Barsh, Marjorie Kipp, A.S.L., E.S.T., Walter Walden, the artist—E. G. Myer, Leon D. Stevenson, "two friends" of the author, the Italian Labor Publishing Co.; and last, but not least, acknowledgement is due to Dr. Friedy B. Heisler and Ivan for their "critical support."

MONROE
4619

MONROE
4649



**ITALIAN LABOR
PUBLISHING Co.**
PRINTERS
& PUBLISHERS

Socialist and Progressive Trade Unions and Organizations are invited to ask us for quotations on any kind of Printing.

1011 BLUE ISLAND AVENUE CHICAGO, ILL.

LABOR BOOK SHOP

28 EAST 12th STREET

NEW YORK CITY

BOOKS OF ALL PUBLISHERS

Largest selection of Labor and Socialist Books and Periodicals
in all languages

Send for book list—Liberal discounts to organizations

Additional copies of this pamphlet
can be obtained from

Socialist Party of the U. S.
549 W. Randolph St.
Chicago, Ill.

PRICE

Paper: 25c each

\$2.25 for 12 copies

\$18.50 for 100 copies

Cloth: \$1.25 each

\$8.00 for 10 copies

Youth of America Read the **CHALLENGE OF YOUTH**

Published monthly by the
Young People Socialist League
of America

549 W. Randolph St., Chicago, Ill.

Editor: Ernest Erber

5c a copy: Subscription 25c a yr.

CONCISE! COMPREHENSIVE! CHALLENGING!

A network of 100 alert correspondents in key cities of the U. S. and Europe
Gets first hand news from every front for the

SOCIALIST CALL

21 EAST 17 ST., NEW YORK CITY

REGULAR CONTRIBUTORS

Norman Thomas
McAlister Coleman
Herbert Zam
Bruno Fischer

B. J. Widick
Frank N. Trager
John Newton Thurber
Roy E. Burt

Aaron Levenstein
Frank McAllister
Jack Altman
Gus Tyler

AND AN IMPOSING ARRAY OF FEATURE WRITERS

SUBSCRIBE NOW!

\$1.00 for 6 mos.

\$1.50 for 1 yr.

SOCIALIST CALL, 21 E. 17 ST., NEW YORK CITY

**a m e r i c a n
s o c i a l i s t
m o n t h l y**
21 E. 17 St., N.Y.C.

OFFICIAL THEORETICAL ORGAN OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY

Vigorously represents the interests of Revolutionary Socialism

STIMULATING ANALYTICAL PROVOCATIVE

\$1.50 a year

Special Rates for Bundle Orders

15c a copy

A journal devoted to : Marxian analysis of the most important problems facing the
American and international Socialist movement today, by outstanding writers.

For West Coast News

Read

LABOR ACTION

236 Van Ness Ave.

San Francisco, Calif.

Official organ of the Socialist
Party of California

James P. Cannon, editor

I N D I S P E N S A B L E !

That's what hundreds of Socialists, trade
unionists, students, teachers and progres-
sives have to say about the timely analy-
tical bulletin of the Labor Research Front.

You Can't Afford to be Without
this Service!

Monthly Labor Bulletin 1 yr. 50c

Labor Bulletin and All

Speakers' Notes 1 yr. \$1.00

LABOR RESEARCH FRONT

21 East 17 St., New York City