

THE RED FLAG

ORGAN OF THE MARXIST LEAGUE

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NOTES OF THE MONTH

"The Red Flag" and its Work : Fascism and East London : The Edinburgh Labour Party Conference : Leon Trotsky's Internment

This month we have six pages, an increase made necessary by the amount of material urgently needing publication. Last month we doubled our circulation as well as receiving a great deal more in donations than usual. But we need much more help from our readers if our paper is to continue regular publication. We need new yearly subscriptions; we need more comrades in the provinces to take supplies of our paper for sale and we need regular donations.

Without question, the work we are doing merits greater support than has been hitherto secured. There is no other paper, produced under the difficulties with which the Red Flag has had to contend, which has presented so consistently the viewpoint of revolutionary Marxism. Let us remind our readers that this paper and those associated with it fought for the United Front against Fascism at a time when the Labour and the Communist Parties of the world were opposing it bitterly; let us recall, too, that in this country we advocated a conditional support for Labour Candidates at a time when both the Communist Party and the I.L.P. were running candidates against Labour. Through "The Red Flag" the important writings of Leon Trotsky have been made available to English readers. To-day, "The Red Flag" represents the opinion fighting against the tendencies towards class collaboration and 'national union' displayed by both official Labour and the Communist Party.

Since we began the support for our viewpoint has grown beyond measure. The time is approaching when that increased support will have to be organised independently and openly. In this preparatory period there is a vital need to reach the widest possible number of militant workers with our case. "The Red Flag" exists to do this: its effectiveness depends entirely upon the amount of support and help it receives. We ask you to do all in your power to ensure the regular and enlarged publication of our paper.

Fascism and the East End.

On the eve of the Labour Party Conference's refusal to aid the Spanish workers' fight against Fascism the workers of East London turned out in thousands to prevent the threatened Black-shirt invasion of their streets. The Fascists expected a police-protected march through London Labour's stronghold; instead, the combined forces of police and Blackshirts found themselves powerless in the face of the East End's greatest turn-out since the General Strike.

This was not only a numerically large demonstration, though it was by far the largest for many a year. There was a determination on the part of almost the entire population of East London to prevent the march; a spirit that caused the hasty abandonment by the Police Commissioner of his decision to "allow" the Fascist march. Even the preliminary mustering of the Blackshirts resulted in street battles of a kind that shocked and startled—shall we say scared?—the Conservative and Liberal Press.

This success must be followed up; over many months now the Fascists have carried on an open-air propaganda in certain parts of the East End. Their purpose is clear enough: they concentrate on anti-Jewish and anti-Left-wing propaganda designed to divide the workers. By making their attacks first upon what the *Daily Herald* describes as "Socialists,

Communists and Jews," the Fascists reckon on securing a strong enough foothold in East London to enable them finally to break the strength, there, of the entire Trade Union and Labour movement.

The feeling and enthusiasm aroused by the initial victory of the workers must be utilised by the militant workers to swing the entire organised working class movement into action. The effort of the Labour Party leaders to teach the workers' reliance on the police must be exposed for what it really is—a policy which will secure the Fascists freedom to conduct their anti-Jewish, anti-working-class propaganda, and engage in brutal attacks on workers, in East London.

The combined forces of the Trade Unions, the Workers' political parties, and the Co-operatives must come together for a united drive to arouse and to organise every working man, woman and child to fight against Fascism.

More than that: since Fascism cannot be overcome whilst the Labour Movement makes retreat after retreat, the East End workers, creators of the 'new unionism,' combatants in the great fights for the London unemployed, Labour's loyalest and most determined fighters, must play the central part in the struggle to swing the workers of the entire country to struggle to overthrow the National Government and to open the road to the gaining of political power by the British workers.

The Labour Party Conference.

We go to press before the Labour Party has reached the end of its annual conference. But decisions have already been taken on the main questions before the Conference: an ambiguous and confused resolution has been adopted on the Government's armaments programme, a resolution which leaves the way clear for collaboration with the National Government in war preparations: Communist Affiliation has been rejected and the policy of 'neutrality' towards the Spanish conflict endorsed.

When the Conference assembled, an overwhelming mass of evidence was available to show that the policy of 'neutrality' has prevented the Spanish workers from getting arms, whilst allowing the Rebels to be supplied lavishly by the Fascist Powers. Thousands of Spanish workers were being wounded and killed unnecessarily because they lacked the means of effectively conducting the war whilst their enemies were being supplied with the most modern equipment and weapons.

This was well-known: so well-known and undisputed that when the official resolution was moved the spokesmen of the Executive seemed ashamed to support it in open conference. Practically all the local Labour Party delegates, the only ones mandated by the rank and file, were hostile to the resolution and opposed to the treacherous policy of 'neutrality.' It was carried against their bitter opposition by the block votes of the Trade Unions.

At the time of writing, it appears that the indignation of the rank and file has compelled the Labour Party leaders to make some show of action. Speeches by two delegates from Spain added to the anger of the delegates and two leaders of the Party were dispatched to interview the Government and report back to the Conference. Upon the amount of pressure put upon the Reformist leadership during the

next few days well may depend the lives of hundreds of our Spanish Comrades.

The apparent confusion over the policy of the Labour Party on increased armaments was created by the double rôle its officials have to play. On the one hand Parliamentary Opposition must be maintained and the support of the rank and file kept, and on the other actual class-collaboration must be achieved. The approach of war poses all political questions harshly: double-dealing stands more clearly revealed over this than on anything else. Only the unmistakable opposition of the rank and file to such a course prevented the National Council of Labour from carrying through the conference a policy which would have openly given the Government full support for its programme of huge armaments increases and industrial and military conscription. No doubt there will be seats on Government Commissions and Committees and Coronation honours for many well-known Trade Union leaders in the next year.

The feature of the Conference was the fact that the majority of the representatives of the Labour Parties were opposed to the policies of their Executive. The prestige of the Labour and Trade Union leadership has never been lower than it is to-day. The militant workers in the Labour Party and the Trade Unions set to work at once to organise this feeling around a forward programme of class struggle. It is only the lack of organisation and the confusion created by the Communist Party's retreat from revolutionary Marxism that has prevented the creation of a powerful militant movement within the unions and the local Labour Parties. With a correct policy and leadership such a movement could transform the political situation in this country.

Leon Trotsky's Internment.

Under the police supervision enforced by the Norwegian Government, Leon Trotsky is prevented, not only from writing about current political problems, but also from making any kind of public reply to the charges and slanders let loose against him by the Soviet Government and the Comintern.

Efforts are being made to secure an enquiry into the trial and the charges made against the sixteen revolutionaries who have been shot, and against Leon Trotsky. The supporters of this demand include most of the Left Socialist Parties of Europe, the P.O.U.M. of Spain, and many scores of prominent Socialist leaders, well-known Left-wing authors and public figures. A list of these will be published in the next number of *The Red Flag*.

Our readers are asked to get resolutions supporting the demand for an enquiry passed in their organisations and sent to the Labour, Socialist and Communist Press and to the Labour Organisations. Copies of resolutions should also be sent to *The Red Flag*. Money is also urgently needed for the defence fund and to provide the means by which Comrade Trotsky can open libel actions against Capitalist and Communist Party newspapers for their charges against him in connection with the Trial. In this way, Comrade Trotsky hopes to bring into the open material which will go a long way towards exposing the faked nature of the slanders now being assiduously peddled around by the hacks of Stalin.

THE MOSCOW TRIALS

SUMMARY OF AN INTERVIEW GIVEN TO THE CORRESPONDENT
OF A NORWEGIAN PAPER ON AUGUST 21st, 1936,

By LEON TROTSKY

"It is at the present time a question of the lives of many people in the Soviet Union, and of my name as a politician. I have my own principles which I have always advocated. I hold to-day the very same principles as I held formerly. I am a revolutionary but not a terrorist. When, in 1916, Friedrich Adler shot the Austrian Prime Minister, Sturgh I made it clear that my principles were not those of Adler but those of Liebknecht. Karl Liebknecht went into the streets of Berlin and distributed leaflets against the war. Had I wanted to conceal my principles it would not have been necessary for me to go three times into exile. But I am a revolutionary. If I could now go to Spain I should act as one: I should fight for the revolution against the Fascist rebels—I say this openly and honestly. But I cannot go to Spain, and it is absurd to say that I am taking any part in the drama which is now taking place there."

And so the conversation turned to the burning question of the day, the Moscow trial and the accusations which are being brought against Trotsky and which he has already branded as the greatest frame-up the world has ever seen.

"Since, as I have already shown," he continued, "chronology here plays an important rôle, I ask you to pay attention to the course of development of the case. The G.P.U. knows many arts, but it is not a master of the art of scientific chronology. In February, 1929, I wrote the following lines in the Russian newspaper, *Bulletin de l'Opposition*, which appeared in Paris in July of the same year:

'For Stalin there remains only one thing: to attempt to draw a line of blood between the official Party and the Opposition. It is an absolute necessity for him to bring the Opposition into relation with terrorist acts, with preparations for an armed insurrection, etc. But there stood in his way . . . the leader of the Opposition. Hence Stalin's plan continued by sending this leader abroad (and he also prepares to banish many other people) in order in this way to have a free hand with the young adherents of the Opposition whose names were unknown to the great masses in foreign countries. One must, therefore, expect that Stalin, after banishing the leaders of the Opposition will try in one way or another to lead some one of the pretended Opposition groups into an adventure; or, in case this does not succeed, to fabricate a 'terrorist act' or a 'military conspiracy' and to place the blame for it upon the Opposition.'

"Everyone, to whatever party he may belong, will understand the general meaning of this quotation. If he can read Russian, he can see from this Bulletin—in which for seven and a half years all my articles have appeared—that I have always been an opponent of in-

dividual terror, but that it was already clear to me what would happen.

"The first terrorist act that occurred was the murder of Kirov in December, 1934. Kirov was an administrator of average capacity who, in my opinion, had no political significance whatever. After the murder the Government offered two explanations of it. At first it declared that the terrorist act had been committed by White terrorists who were said to have come from Poland, Roumania and other countries on the fringe of Soviet Russia. On the 17th December it was suddenly announced that the murderer, Nikolaiev, was a member of the Leningrad Opposition. Very possibly Nikolaiev really did belong to the Leningrad Opposition, but if so in the year 1926, not in 1934. For in 1928 the chapter of the Leningrad Opposition came to an end.

"After another two weeks, Zinoviev was drawn into the trial, and together with his followers, was accused as a murderer. In the year 1926, Zinoviev worked together with me inside the framework of the Party, and was known as an Oppositionist. When, in 1928, the bureaucracy grew strong, Zinoviev capitulated. From 1929 to 1934, Zinoviev and Kamenev were considered as traitors to the Opposition. All this appears with complete clearness from the *Bulletin de l'Opposition*.

"When I heard that both of them were alleged to have been connected with the terrorist plot, I said to myself immediately that something extraordinary and unusual was happening. I had not heard before that they were said to have entered into opposition anew. Meantime, I did not for a moment doubt that they had nothing to do with the terrorist act. Both of them appeared before the tribunal in January, 1935, and up till then my name had not been brought into association with the affair. It first appeared in the indictment."

Trotsky got up and walked across the floor. He remained standing in front of one of the bookshelves. "Look here," he said, "my own books. Some of them are somewhat charred. This is owing to the fire to which we were exposed in Constantinople. These books are the result of a literary activity of forty years, and in all of them you will find that I have always been an opponent of individual terror—as much in the Soviet Union as in the rest of the world."

"In the year 1935, however, I was not actually accused, but merely named. It was said that Nikolaiev had declared that before the crime he had been in touch with a consul of a foreign State. From the consul he had received 5,000 roubles in order to carry out the attack, and in return for this Nikolaiev was to render the consul a service: to procure for him a letter to Trotsky.

"Gentlemen, this was all that was said in the indictment about me.

For the judge omitted to question Nikolaiev further on the subject of this letter!

"When the consul was brought forward, all the other consuls protested, and demanded that the name of this unworthy colleague should be published. Then, after a long delay, it was announced that his name was Skuieneck and that he came from Latvia. The Soviet Government was asked whether a diplomatic note would be sent to Latvia; but they replied, No! The consul, thereafter, went unmolested to Finland.

"He acted safely, then, not as a consul, but as a private person. And I have often asked myself: Why did they not make him appear before the tribunal? Why did they not assure themselves of his person? Pray, was it not, perhaps, because he was an agent of the G.P.U.?

"It is my opinion that they arranged this attack on Kirov in order to annihilate the Opposition—but, it was not the plan that Kirov should be killed; the attack was to have been frustrated at the last minute. When it turned out otherwise than as they had planned, the chief of the G.P.U., in Leningrad, Medved, was held responsible. This was the third trial relative to this terrorist act! Medved and some other functionaries of the G.P.U. were accused because they had known about the attack, but had done nothing to prevent it. Medved confessed everything, and went to prison for three years.

"I know Medved. He was not an independent politician; it was Stalin himself who planned this thing in order to strike a blow at the Opposition. Even, to-day, I do not know whether Nikolaiev himself was also an agent of the G.P.U. The very fact that he succeeded in breaking into Kirov's office—Kirov held a high position and not for a long time had everyone had access to him—needs explanation. Medved, at all events, discovered Nikolaiev through his G.P.U. agents. Nikolaiev was a desperate young bureaucrat. What psychological impulse impelled him to the murder I do not know.

"So now began the persecution of the Opposition. I was not mistaken when I predicted that this would happen. The present trial is not a new trial, it is only a new edition of the trial of January, 1935. That was the dress rehearsal, to-day we have the first performance.

"For a year and a half they have been preparing this case. And now I am not merely the organiser of the terrorist act, I am also maintaining relations with the Gestapo, if you please! And this despite the fact that my name was mentioned only in passing in the indictment of 1935.

"I am supposed to maintain relations with the Gestapo? And with so powerful a confederate I am supposed to have achieved nothing else than the murder of Kirov!

"Now they are bringing a lot of new witnesses into the case. A great number of their names I hear now for the first time: I do not know them. And of the conspiring consul we hear no more. They have found these witnesses during the course of the past year and a half. If I were still in the Soviet Union I should be lost. But I am abroad, and I can bring forward hundreds of witnesses who will prove that I had nothing to do with the Kirov murder."

It was alleged that you had made an arrangement with Berman-Yurin both in Copenhagen and in Oslo to undertake the murder of Stalin.

"From Turkey I visited Copenhagen in order to deliver a lecture to a student society. During my residence in Copenhagen about forty people visited me. I remember them all, but among them there was no Berman—unless he has, in the meantime, changed his name—or any other Russian citizen. There was, on the other hand, a Russian-speaking Lithuanian with whom I spoke.

"Among my papers I have found the following explanation. In the year 1930 a certain Olberg tried to come to me as secretary. The then editor of *Aktion*, Franz Pfemfert, clearly warned me in a letter of 1st April, 1930, against Olberg as a suspicious character who was said to be, in all probability, an agent of the O.G.P.U. Since Olberg appears to be the ground of the whole accusation against me, I would gladly place at the disposal of the press material that reveals his character. It is singularly stupid to declare that I would have given any sort of instructions of a terrorist nature to a man whom I did not myself know and against whom a close friend had warned me.

"During my residence in Norway I have received no sort of visit from the Soviet Union. Moreover, I have not written from here to the Soviet Union, either directly or indirectly. Until about two years ago my wife was in touch with our son. He was, in his time, a professor in a technical school: now I do not know where he is. But quite by chance we have learned that he was to be banished to Siberia. He had never occupied himself with politics; but it was enough that he was Trotsky's son. The letters which we received from him until about twenty months ago contained only short greetings such as my wife wrote to him. She has tried, also, to find out, through a bank in Oslo, where he is; but the only information that comes from the Soviet authorities is: Address unknown.

"Our other son, on the other hand, has taken part in political life. In the year 1928 he followed us of his own accord into Central Asia and later into Turkey. At the moment he is completing his studies at the Sorbonne.

"In the telegram which Moscow has sent out on the subject of the trial, a letter is reproduced which I am said to have sent through my son to Smirnov. According to this letter I desire three things: namely, (1) to kill Stalin and Voroshilov; (2) to organise cells in the army; and (3) in case of war to turn to advantage all the mistakes that are made in order to seize the power.

"The whole letter contains five lines! Five lines for these three tasks! This is surely somewhat condensed!

"The whole thing is a great frame-up; it is a lie, an infamous lie which is being levelled against me. In the Soviet Union there is no possibility of raising the voice of criticism: there criticism will be strangled, there this senseless accusation will remain undisputed. But here we have the possibility of criticism; and I, gentlemen—I shall criticise!"

TROTSKY'S TRADUCERS

By HENRY SARA

There is nothing in the writings of Marx or Engels, or for that matter, in the writings of any lesser known Socialist author, which condones or supports in any way the practice of political assassination. On the contrary, everything points the other way. And the subject received great emphasis in the early days of the history of the German Social Democracy when the question was brought very much to the fore. The leaders even toured the country, devoting entire lectures and speeches to the dangers entailed in such activity, so opposed to the teachings of Marxism. There are no grounds whatever for the least obscurity on this matter. It is an open book for all to read. *Marxism and the doctrine of political assassination are as the poles apart.*

It is only from this angle that it is possible to make an accurate examination of the events which are alleged to have taken place in Soviet Russia over a number of years, culminating in the assassination of Kirov.

Apart from anything else, it is regrettable that, in the land of Socialism, assassinations should take place, or that terroristic activity of any kind should be on foot. Still more tragic is it that, in a land where Marxism has gained a hold, that there, of all places, can be found people ready to prove that lifelong Marxists can so lightly throw overboard their principles and resort to the plotting of murder to achieve political change.

Such base work harms not only Russia, but strikes at International Socialism in a way that its enemies could never wound it. Frame-ups against active revolutionaries in Capitalist countries are bad enough, but when frame-ups can be staged in a country where a people have thrown off their oppressors things must be infinitely worse. If anyone thinks this helps the cause of the working class in Capitalist countries he must be mad.

The enemies of the workers will use these terrible events to their own advantage and the revolutionaries will be powerless to reply.

Make no mistake, the harm done to the cause of the International Socialism through the Moscow Trial of the alleged Trotskyite-Zinovievite Terrorist Centre will be felt for many a long day. Its main value—but at what a price?—is to expose still

more clearly, to all who have the sense to see, what tremendous harm is being done to the working-class movement through the bureaucracy of Stalinism.

It is impossible to treat seriously the attempts which are being made to justify the Moscow Trial. They are as stupid as they are numerous.

In order to overcome the resistance of those who argue that in the ranks of the accused were "Old Bolsheviks," the reply is made that working-class leaders can turn traitor, and, for illustration of the point, the names of Ramsay McDonald, J. H. Thomas, and Philip Snowden are mentioned. What an absurd parallel; as though the question of political assassination were only an unimportant matter in the case and not the basic question of the whole affair.

Then another argument is: Lenin broke at one period with two of the ringleaders of the terroristic activity. Well, what about it? Is one to deduce, therefore, that by virtue of that fact, it makes them capable of turning political assassins?

If stress is laid on the fact that Zinoviev and Kamenev did, by their past, merit the title of "Old Bolsheviks," the objection is at once made that "Old Bolsheviks" are not judged by the length of time they have carried a party card. As though it were merely a question of time, and not a matter of actual service in the party, which, by the way, in Zinoviev's case meant working in conjunction with Lenin to the extent of sharing in the production of "Bolshevik" writings, guiding the activities of the party members as a whole.

Why Terrorism?

But, as in the one case the term of actual party membership, with all that that meant in each personal connection, is swept aside by the apologists of the Moscow trial on the grounds that membership of the party meant nothing; in Trotsky's case, the fact that he wasn't a member of the party over that long period is a proof that he must be guilty of the crime of advocacy of political assassination. What reasoning!

Turn to the Report of the Trial. What was the real reason for these Old Bolsheviks; old red army fighters; and a host of other people, including Red Army Commanders holding prominent positions in the Soviet State, what was the real reason which brought about their discontent. The reply is amazing, but not only amazing, but incredible. *Because Socialism is being achieved in the Soviet Union!*

Just try to visualise what this means. Take Zinoviev and Kamenev as illustrations in connection with this argument. Here were two men. Intellectuals, we are told, over and over again, by the people who are trying to justify the crime against them. They could have said that in the long ago, but it is said to-day to inflame the unthinking. Anyway, both these men had qualifications which would have entitled them under Czarism

to a comfortable existence. Instead of accepting a life of possible ease and comfort they chose the stormy path of revolutionary activity involving hardships and imprisonments and devoted their lives to the service to the proletarian cause.

In their association with the Bolsheviks and the party they strove to overthrow Capitalism in Russia and bring down Czarism in order to make possible a future state of society in which the principles of Socialism could be realized. Now, we are asked to believe, their goal has been achieved, but that they would have none of it; on the contrary, the more they saw their hopes realized, the greater their hate grew against the thing they had struggled to bring into being. At last, in sheer desperation at this success they abandoned their Marxist principles which they had held to all their active revolutionary life and reached out for the gun and the bomb in order that Socialism should *not grow at such an alarming pace.* It is preposterous. However, preposterous or not, their lives have been sacrificed on the basis of this argument. And others too.

But still that is not enough, more are wanted and none more so than the life of Comrade Leon Trotsky. In fact, it is true to say that the whole trial was staged in order to incriminate Trotsky. Most of the report deals with Trotsky. The prosecution raved against Trotsky. All the prisoners blamed Trotsky. Their final speeches were mostly directed against Trotsky. The Soviet loudspeakers; the Soviet press; the Communist press in all countries, inflamed and inflames against Trotsky.

And then it is calmly suggested by the apologists of this infamous trial that if Trotsky is not guilty—then let him go back to the Soviet Union and face his accusers. After years and years of lying attacks upon Trotsky, distorting every principle for which he has stood, making the most foul accusations against him, it is calmly suggested that if he returns to the U.S.S.R. and places himself in the hands of those who hate him for the exposure of their dishonest selves, if he will but return then *he will have a fair trial.*

Trotsky's early statement on the first Kirov Trial is still in circulation. Has it ever been answered by the Communist party press. Have the Stalinist hacks, ever ready to serve their bureaucratic master, attempted to counter all the essential facts raised by Trotsky in his pamphlet? Never.

The man who shot Kirov joined the party in Leningrad in 1924. In that year there raged the storm against Trotsky following upon the publication of his introduction "On the Need to Study October." Zinoviev was the one of the outstanding leaders in that campaign. Anyone who joined the Leningrad organisation would, of necessity, be under the influence of Zinoviev and his associates at that time, and would automatically be steeped in "anti-Trotskyism."

Nikolayev did not begin his party career as a Trotskyist, but as an anti-Trotskyist, and there was not a ghost of a suggestion of anything in the trial which implied that he had ever, at any time, been other than a member of Zinoviev's circle, a thing which would apply to thousands of people who joined the C.P. at that period.

An "Open and Shut Case."

Even if a foreign consul ever did say that he would send a letter to Trotsky (if Nikolayev would write one which it is self evident in the report of the Indictment of 1935, he never did) that would be no argument in any way against Trotsky. Yet there are pamphlets circulated by the C.P. of this country which are base enough to suggest that it does, and which go on to state that it was *proved.* However, it is well-known that, in 1935, the prosecution completely failed to involve Trotsky in the act of Nikolayev against Kirov.

In 1936 all the difficulties have been smoothed out and now there is what is termed in detective fiction as "an open and shut case."

The "Old Bolsheviks," together with some nondescript people were put upon the stand and made to confess. Made to confess? Yes, made to confess. Ah, but say our Communist Party legal experts, why did they confess? If they were not guilty why did they confess? To which there is an obvious reply. If they were guilty; realised the game was up so to speak; prepared to meet their fate; fully expected death, in fact demanded death to expiate their crimes, surely, if they were telling the truth—and they claimed to be telling the truth—all they had to do was to make admissions of what occurred, and obviously their stories would all agree.

But, unfortunately for them, they were tricked into a series of confessions, bit by bit they became involved. They were not making confessions like honest men who might have passed through a period of error and then wanted to relieve their minds. They acted like people who wished to attack an opponent, absolve themselves, and by exaggeration, built up a case against each other, the stronger the case they made the more their opponent would be implicated—but the process was fatal for they merely involved themselves the more.

If harsh words are used against Zinoviev and Kamenev for acting so, they count for little. *Rather should one look back to the period when Stalin developed his campaign against "Trotskyism," with the assistance of Zinoviev and Kamenev, to find the beginnings of this method of undermining a political opponent. Zinoviev and Kamenev have merely carried on the Stalin tradition and have now paid the penalty.*

Let us turn to a few examples of the confessing business and see how it worked out for the confessors.

Zinoviev: "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. We committed no treachery whatever against Trotsky Notice the use of the word "zig-zags," a term having a specific connotation in Left Opposition literature. Here it is

(continued on page 4, col. 1)

HEROIC BADAJOZ DEFENDERS PROTEST SOVIET TRIAL—

The Militia-men of the P.O.U.M. and the U.G.T. at Llerena (Badajoz), survivors of the heroic fight against Fascism, passed a resolution of protest against the Moscow shootings, which declares:

"The Moscow shootings have stirred up the revolutionary feelings of the entire world. We, the peasants of Llerena and the militia-men of the P.O.U.M., who have fought against the criminal hordes of Queipo de Llano, and in which fight the best of our best comrades have fallen, cannot be silent; we join in protest with the revolutionary workers of the entire world."

Trotsky's Traducers

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used to refute a charge of treachery which makes it absurd. When Trotsky said treachery he meant treachery and to suggest a continuity of a bloc under those circumstances is ridiculous. But possibly effective enough for a Moscow Trial!

"Terrorist" Logic!

Then Zinoviev went on to suggest that their attitude in 1926-1927 was one of "double dealing." Was it ever shown in the trial how or why it was double dealing, not in the least. But nevertheless, they were "carried on to terrorism." What carried them on to terrorism? "The logic of things." What was this logic—very formal logic too? They banked on things in the Soviet Union getting worse, but instead they got better. So they resorted to terrorism. "Trotsky's rôle in the terror plot, was greater than mine," says Zinoviev, "and mine was great enough." But one of the accused, Bakayev, made matters very awkward for Zinoviev, by stating that "Zinoviev said that the Trotskyites, on Trotsky's proposal, had set to work to organise the assassination of Stalin and that we should take the initiative in this matter into our own hands." That gave the prosecution something to pound away at for quite a while.

Here is Zinoviev again, depicting one of his fellow prisoners; "M. Lurye was a Trotskyite, and not only a Trotskyite, for when he spoke one could even hear the language of a Fascist." When the prosecutor asked him to enlarge upon his statement his reply was: "His Fascism showed itself when he said that, in a situation like the present, we must resort to the use of every possible means."

Now hear M. Lurye, on Zinoviev: "I again asked him," continues M. Lurye, "whether he was posted on this group. Zinoviev replied in the affirmative. To my perplexed question as to whether it was permissible for Marxists to practise individual terror and maintain contact with Fascist groups, followed the reply, 'You are an historian aren't you Moissei Ilich,' and he drew the parallel of Bismark and Lassalle, adding: 'Why cannot we to-day utilise Himmler?'"

Just try to square those two accounts. He spoke like a Fascist, says Zinoviev, but the man himself is perplexed and raises the question as to how it is possible for Marxists to engage in individual terror. Under questioning, Zinoviev said: "My activities in the Opposition group led first to counter-revolution, then terrorism, and finally, almost to Fascism." Vishinsky: "Why almost?" Zinoviev did not answer.

Vishinsky, the State Attorney of the U.S.S.R. in his speech for the prosecution—and what a dreadful speech it was—said: "Liars and clowns, insignificant pigmies, little dogs snarling at an elephant, this is what this gang represents! But they know how to use guns, and therein lies their danger to society."

They knew how to use guns? There is no evidence of that, but anything served the prosecution to work up hate against the accused. What the report tells us is that I. I. Reingold testified that: "Kamenev proposed that terrorist gunmen be trained." This reads as

though there are terrorist gunmen ready to hand in the U.S.S.R., who only want training in order to know who to shoot at. If it doesn't mean that then it suggests that there are people in the Socialist State who are to be found like gangsters in Chicago.

However, let us uncover the mystery by turning to the report on page 36: "In regard to the preparations for the assassination of Comrade Voroshilov, the accused Mrachkovsky, one of the members of the united centre testified:

"In the middle of 1934, E. Dreitzer reported to me that simultaneously he was organising the assassination of Voroshilov, for which purpose Dimitri Schmidt, who was a commander in the army and under no suspicion in the Party, was to be prepared. It was presumed that he would kill Voroshilov either while reporting to him on service matters, or during the next manoeuvres at which Voroshilov would be present." (Vol. XVIII, p. 49).

"The accused Dreitzer, examined at the office of the State Attorney of the Soviet Union on July 31st, testified on this point:

"For the purpose of committing the terroristic act I recruited Esterman and Gayevsky, and in 1935 Schmidt and Kuzmichev. The latter two undertook to kill Voroshilov." (Vol. X, p. 195).

"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 organised under the leadership of Dreitzer. The group consisted of Schmidt, commander of a brigade of the Red Army I learned from Dreitzer that Schmidt and Kuzmichev were to carry out personally the terroristic act against Voroshilov" (Vol. XXVII, pp. 165, 166).

Here we have three testimonies regarding who was to kill Voroshilov, and each account differs. It was not to be a gunman who carried out the miserable task, but a Red Army commander! He needed no training about guns it is to be hoped. Reingold says he was told by Mrachkovsky and Dreitzer in 1933 that Schmidt was to do the job. Mrachkovsky says Dreitzer told him that Schmidt was ready in the middle of 1934 to put Voroshilov out of the way.

But Dreitzer, the man involved in the task of making the contact, "confessed" that Dimitri Schmidt was recruited by him in 1935. If Dreitzer only recruited Schmidt in 1935, how on earth could he have told Mrachkovsky in the middle of 1934 that Schmidt was prepared to assassinate Voroshilov? Or still more difficult, how could Dreitzer have told Reingold in the summer of 1933 that Schmidt was to carry out a terroristic act against the Red Army leader Voroshilov? Naturally, a question comes to the mind of any thinking person at this point, why was not Dimitri Schmidt called as a witness at the trial? Yes, why wasn't he? Well, you see, the men confessed, and in Soviet law, etc., etc., etc., we shall be told as we have

(continued at foot of column 3)

POPULAR FRONTS
IN SPAIN AND FRANCE

Our reasoned opposition to the policy of the formation of a People's Front in Britain is, by now, well-known. We have insisted that an unprincipled alliance of this kind with non-working class bodies on an ill-defined programme of indefinite duration is fraught with danger for our movement. An examination of the experiences of the Popular Front in Spain and France confirms the soundness of our view.

On February 16th of this year the Spanish P.F. gained a resounding electoral victory over the reaction. Yet within five months the reaction was strong enough to inaugurate the counter-revolutionary war which it is waging with undiminished ferocity to-day. The Left Republican Government of Azana followed by that of Martinez Barrios, placed and maintained in power by the Socialist and Communist Parties, gave five vital months to the counter-revolutionary forces to drill and exercise their detachments of armed gangsters, who raided workers' clubs and assassinated workers' leaders. Fascism was allowed to consolidate its hold in the army and the civil service. The evil conspiracy of Bankers, Bishops, and Generals prepared the regime of civil war openly, while the Government stood by powerless and afraid to arm the workers.

To-day the P.F. is the chief barrier to the successful completion of the war by the working class. The war cannot be waged to a finish within the confines of private property. The radical bourgeoisie is ready to do a deal with the Fascists to save its own skin. Already we have seen signs that the compromisers are at work. The Basque National Party has refused to collaborate in the Caballero government and is preparing a sell-out in the Biscay

(continued from previous column).

been told of other points excusing this trial. Nevertheless, the main fact remains, raised earlier in this article. If the men really were guilty, were determined to make a clean breast of an actual plot or plots, why didn't their stories agree in detail and fact?

Instead of complete unity in their confessions, there is a mass of contradictions from which it is possible to draw but one conclusion, that the whole thing is a frame-up, a frame-up which began with the trial in 1935.

Men who had reached the stage which Zinoviev and Kamenev confessed they had reached certainly didn't need instructions from Leon Trotsky. Instructions which, by the way, were a reiterated injunction to 'kill,' 'kill,' 'kill.' Terrorists don't have to send letters, on magazines, written in invisible ink to tell this, that, and the other person to get this, that and the other leader out of the way. That is more like Hollywood revolutionary history. The tragedy has gone far enough. Let us close our ranks and save Leon Trotsky. For in saving Trotsky we, at the same time, save the Soviet Union from its destroyers.

Provinces. The radical bourgeoisie strangles the working class with its affection, yet if the Fascist successes continue it will be ready to capitulate as it did in October, 1934.

In France, only the persistent pressure of the masses has impelled the P.F. government, led by Blum, to action. As Jacques Duclos, Vice-President of the Chamber of Deputies and leader of the C.P.F. cynically says: "The Government has passed a large number of laws, and some of them are being actually operated."

The strike movement of last June forced the Blum Government to pass a great amount of "social" legislation (40-hour week, holidays with pay, etc). To-day, the employers are systematically flouting the new legislation and are resorting to the lock-out in order to demoralize the workers. Wages have been raised, but prices have followed suit to such an extent that a new strike wave has begun for higher wages to meet the increase in the cost of the elementary necessities of life.

The French workers are in revolt against the betrayal of the Spanish workers by the Blum Government. But Blum is powerless, the prisoner of the Radical-Socialist members of his cabinet thanks to whom the policy of non-intervention was adopted.

Meanwhile, the "dissolved" Fascist leagues continue their organisation with impunity, and are already using their weapons on the streets and at public meetings against the workers. In the colonies, particularly in North Africa, the Croix de Feu is arming the tribesmen to repeat in France what Franco has done in Spain. The army, the civil service, the judiciary remain unpurged. Soldiers in barracks may not even now read the left-wing press, while the reactionary officers are at liberty to carry on propaganda against the Republic. As in Spain, the P.F. Government disarms the workers at the very moment of danger, declares the illegality of the stay-in strike, and employs the police against the workers. Is it any wonder that the atmosphere in France to-day is one of impending civil war?

In France and in Spain to-day, the bankruptcy of the People's Front is clear for all to see. It prepares new disasters for the working class. Those who advocate the practice of a similar policy in Britain are consciously or unconsciously doing the gravest disservice to our movement. In Britain our task must be to galvanise an already powerful working-class movement to class action. That will not be done through flirtations with Sir Walter Layton and Lloyd George, but by the building and uniting of the Revolutionary Left within our own movement in opposition to all policies of class-collaboration.

JACK GLASGOW.

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