

WORKERS' INTERNATIONAL NEWS

VOL.1 NO.1

1 JANUARY 1938

TWO PENCE

G.P.U. STALKS ABROAD

Open Letter to All Working Class Organisations
by Leon Trotsky

The international working-class movement is being consumed by a frightful disease. The carrier of the contagion is the Comintern or, to speak more exactly, the G.P.U., which uses the apparatus of the Comintern as its legal cover. The events of the last few months in Spain have shown what crimes the unbridled and utterly depraved bureaucracy of Moscow is capable of, supported by its servitors which it recruits from among the declassed dregs of humanity. It is a question neither of "occasional" assassinations nor of "occasional" falsifications. It is a question of a plot against the international working-class movement.

It is obvious that the Moscow trials were possible only under a totalitarian regime in which the G.P.U. dictated their conduct not only to the accused but also to the counsel for the prosecution and for the defence. But these judicial falsifications were from the very beginning conceived as the point of departure for a campaign of extermination directed against the opponents of the Moscow clique on the international arena. On the 3rd of March Stalin delivered a speech to the plenum of the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party in which he proclaimed that "the Fourth International is composed, as regards two-thirds of its membership, of spies and saboteurs." This impudent declaration, typical of Stalin, already clearly shows at what the Cain of the Kremlin was aiming. His schemes, however, were by no means limited to the cadres of the Fourth International. In Spain, the P.O.U.M., which was waging an im-

placable struggle with the Fourth International, was counted among the "Trotskyites." After the P.O.U.M. came the turn of the Anarcho-Syndicalists and even of the Left wing Socialists. Anyone who protests against the repression of the Anarchists is now counted as a Trotskyist. Falsifications and crimes are multiplying in a hideous progression. Doubtless one can place certain particularly scandalous details to the account of the excessive zeal of isolated agents. But the work as a whole is strictly centralised and is being carried out according to the plan elaborated in the Kremlin.

On 21st April there met at Paris an extraordinary plenum of the Executive Committee of the Comintern at which were present the most trustworthy representatives of the 17 most important sections. The sessions were of a strictly secret character. Only a brief statement to the effect that the attention of the plenum had been concentrated upon the international struggle against Trotskyism found its way into the world Press. The instructions had been sent from Moscow, coming direct from Stalin. Neither the debates nor the decisions were published. It appears from all the information we have received and from the subsequent events that this secret plenum was in fact a congress of the most responsible international agents of the G.P.U. whose object was to prepare the campaign of false accusations, delations, abductions and assassinations against the adversaries of Stalinism in the working-class movement of the whole world.

At the time of the Zinoviev-Kamenev trial (August, 1936) the ranks of the Comintern were still hesitating. Despite the efforts of the old servitors of the G.P.U., such as Jacques Duclos in France, the cadres of the Comintern, although accustomed to almost anything, hesitated to wallow in the mire besprinkled with fresh blood. But in the course of the following months, the opposition of those who hesitated was broken. The whole Comintern press, which Stalin shackles with a chain of gold, was drawn into an orgy of calumny unexampled in its falseness and filth. The direction of the campaign belonged, as always, to the emissaries of Moscow, such persons as Michael Koltzov, Willi Muenzenberg, and other *canailles*. *Pravda* promised firmly that in Spain the purge would be conducted as pitilessly as in the U.S.S.R. Words were followed by acts: forged documents against the P.O.U.M., assassination of anarchist writers, the murder of Andres Nin, the abduction of Erwin Wolf, the kidnapping of Marc Rhein, dozens of less spectacular killings, stabs in the back in dark corners, detentions in Stalin's extraterritorial prisons in Spain, incarceration within these prisons in specially built cages, massacres, every kind of physical and moral torture—and all under the cover of incessant calumny, brutal and envenomed, utterly in the Stalinist manner.

In Spain, where the so-called Republican Government serves as a legal screen for the criminal bands of Stalinism, the G.P.U. has found the most favourable arena for carrying out the directives of the April plenum. But it is not confined to Spain. It appears from the Press of the Comintern itself that certain secret documents on "Trotsky's interview with Rudolf Hess" have been sent to the French and British General Staff. To the Czechoslovak General Staff has been sent a forged correspondence purporting to demonstrate the liaison of the old German revolutionary Anton Grylewicz with the Gestapo. Jacques Duclos has tried to connect the "Trotskyists" with the mysterious terrorist acts in Paris on the subject of which the G.P.U. might perhaps be able to inform the French police. On the 4th September Ignaz Reiss was killed at Lausanne solely because, horrified by the crimes of Stalin, he had publicly broken with Moscow. A certain number of Reiss' assassins have been arrested. They are members of the Comintern and agents of the G.P.U. who belonged originally to the Russian White Guards. The investigations of the French and Swiss authorities gives one every reason to believe that they belong to the same band which carried out a whole series of still unpunished crimes. The White Guards serve Stalin for assassins just as they serve him for public prosecutors (Vyshinsky), for journalists (Koltzov, Zaslavsky, etc.), or for diplomats (Trojanovsky, Maisky and Co.).

Hardly had military operations begun in the Far East when Stalin began a campaign of extermination against his revolutionary adversaries

in China. The method was the same as in Spain. By selling the products of Soviet industry at a high price to Chiang-Kai-Chek, just as he did to Negrin, Stalin uses the money he receives in this way to pay his falsifiers, his low journalists, and his hired assassins. On 5th October the New York *Daily Worker* published a telegram from Shanghai accusing the Chinese "Trotskyists" in Kuang-Si of an alliance with the Japanese General Staff. The *Daily Worker* is the organ of the G.P.U. which is executing the decisions of the April plenum. My sources of information from China explained that in Kuang-Si there had not been and there was not any Trotskyist organisation (*Socialist Appeal*, 16th October). But this alters nothing: the Shanghai telegram implies that in China also has begun the chapter of forged documents, of abductions of "Trotskyists," of street-corner assassinations. In the prisons of Chiang-Kai-Chek there were already to be found a number of irreproachable revolutionaries: Stalin now threatens their life with an immediate danger.

The Canadian communist, Henry Beattie, who for four months took part as a volunteer in the Spanish war and was then sent back to his own country as an agitator by the militiamen themselves, has recently related in the Press how the Canadian Communist Party forced him to declare at public meetings that the Trotskyists in Spain "used to kill off wounded militiamen." For some time, according to his own words, Beattie carried out this monstrous order "in submission to Party discipline," that is to say, to the decisions of that secret plenum directed by Stalin. Now that Beattie has torn himself away from the poisonous atmosphere of the Comintern and entered again into the fresh air, he is, needless to say, attacked as a spy and saboteur, and it is even possible that they have put a price on his head. Stalin is not miserly about such enterprises: the technical expenses alone incurred for the murder of Ignaz Reiss amounted to 300,000 francs!

To cover or justify these crimes, dozens of foreign bourgeois journalists, of the school of Walter Duranty and Louis Fisher, are in the pay of the G.P.U. For anyone who can read between the lines it is no longer a secret that the equivocal telegrams and articles sent from Moscow which are at once friendly and critical and are signed with the names of "independents" and frequently marked "not censured," are in reality written at the dictation of the G.P.U., and aim at conciliating world public opinion to the sinister figure of the Cain of the Kremlin. What distinguishes this type of "independent" journalist from the Mr. Duranty's is that they are more expensive. But it is not only reporters who are mobilised. Well-known and even famous writers, like Romain Roland, the late Barbusse, Malraux, Heinrich Mann or Feuchtwanger, are in fact the stipendiaries of the G.P.U., which makes liberal payment for the "moral" services of these

friends through the State Editions of their works.

It is otherwise, but by no means better, in the case of the leaders of the second International and the International of Trade Unions. On account of considerations of diplomacy or internal policy, Leon Blum, Leon Jouhaux, Vandervelde, and their *comperes* in other countries have organised a conspiracy of silence in the full sense of the word about the crimes of the Stalinist bureaucracy both in the U.S.S.R. and on the world arena. Negrin and Prieto are the direct accomplices of the G.P.U. All this under the banner of the defence of "democracy"!

We are all aware: the enemy is strong; his arm is long; gold jingles in his pockets. He clothes himself in the authority of a revolution which he strangles and dishonours. But we know also something else; however powerful the enemy may be, he is not all-powerful. Despite the exchequer, the apparatus and the phalanx of "friends" of the Kremlin, the truth has begun to hew itself a way into the consciousness of the working masses of the whole world. Half-drunk with irresponsibility, Stalin has clearly surpassed the limits which prudence imposes on even the most privileged criminal. Only those who wish to be deceived can be deceived thus impudently: to this category belong not a few equivocal celebrities. But the masses do not wish to be deceived. They must have the truth. They wish it, and they will have it.

No longer held back by a single principle, Stalin has crossed the final limit. Precisely there lies his weakness. He can still kill. But he cannot stop the truth. More and more anguish overcomes the communist, socialist and anarchist workers. Even Stalin's allies in the Second International are beginning to look with horror toward the Kremlin. Already many literary "friends" are taking refuge in the shade of "neutrality." And this is only the beginning.

Ignaz Reiss is not the last who has brought us his revelations. Reiss' assassins who were arrested in France and Switzerland will tell many things. Thousands of revolutionary volunteers returning from Spain will bring back the truth about the butchers of the revolution in all parts of the world. The proletarian who reflects will wonder: why all this? to what end this infinite series of perfidies? And in his head will ring the reply: Stalin is preparing his "coronation" on the ruins of the revolution and the corpses of the revolutionaries.

Stalin's bonapartist coronation will coincide with his political death for the working-class movement. We must combine the efforts of all revolutionaries, of all sincere workers, of all true friends of the proletariat in order to purify the ranks of the movement from the hideous contagion of Stalinism. To succeed in this there is but one way: to tell the workers the truth, without exaggeration, but also without under-statement. The programme of action thus follows of itself from the situation.

We must carefully ascertain and publish the names of the national delegates to the last plenum at Paris, for they are the individuals immediately responsible for the organisation of the falsifications, the abductions, and the assassinations in the different countries.

We must carefully ascertain and publish the names of all the foreign Stalinists who have held or hold any sort of military, police or administrative post in Spain: all these individuals, as agents of the G.P.U., have participated in the crimes committed in Spain.

It is necessary to follow attentively the international Stalinist Press and also the "literary" activity of the open and secret friends of the G.P.U., because from the stupefying works which they produce it is often possible to predict what new crimes Stalin is preparing.

We must encourage in all working-class organisations an attitude of serious distrust toward whoever is linked either directly or indirectly with the Stalinist apparatus. From the agents of the Comintern, mere instruments of the G.P.U., we can expect nothing but treachery with regard to revolutionaries.

We must open the eyes of public opinion to the fact that the insinuating and lying propaganda of numberless philosophers, moralists, aesthetes, artists, pacifists and working-class "leaders" for the defence of the Kremlin under the guise of defence of the U.S.S.R. is liberally paid by Moscow gold. We must condemn these gentlemen to the shame they merit.

Never before has the working-class movement had within its own ranks an enemy so pernicious, so dangerous, so powerful and so perfidious as the Stalinist clique and its international agency. Carelessness in the struggle against this enemy is equivalent to treason. Chatterers and dilettantes, but not serious revolutionists, can confine themselves to a pathetic indignation. A plan is necessary, and organisation is necessary. We must create special committees to follow the manœuvres, the intrigues and the crimes of the Stalinists, to warn the working-class organisations of the danger and to work out the best methods of opposition and resistance to the Moscow gangsters.

We must publish the required literature and collect funds. In every country we must publish a book which will completely unmask the national section of the Comintern.

We possess neither State apparatus nor hired friends. Nevertheless, we confidently challenge the Stalinist band in the face of the whole world. We shall not fold our arms. Certain among us may still fall in the struggle. But the final outcome is already decided. Stalinism will be crushed, destroyed, and covered with shame. The way will be clear for the international working class.

LEON TROTSKY.

Coyoacan, 2nd November, 1937.

Editorial

Revolutionary socialism now suffers the blackest reaction it has yet encountered. Capitalism is rapidly fulfilling the final phases of the fate which Marx forecast for it more than half a century ago. The doomed system which has created its own gravedigger in the shape of a working class organised for industry, is now facing that same working class organised for revolt. The conveyor-belt of the modern mass-production factory is more than a mere labour-saving contrivance—it is the physical link binding the proletariat together as the chain binds together the gang of slaves. Mass-production methods linking the workers thus in production, links them also in an awakening to the common insecurity and wretchedness and starvation, the awakening of revolt against a domination which brings, not peace, but war, not bread, but hunger, not work, but stagnation.

Each time the recurrent slump paralyses industry, the conveyor-belt stops, and in its stopping sets free the chain-gangs of wage-slaves. They are free to starve and to scatter. Each successive scattering further disrupts their organisation, and the progressive disorganisation of the workers in industry means the progressive disorganisation of the workers as a class capable of seizing the power. Already there is in Britain an increasing proportion of working-class youth which has never been absorbed in industry, graduating from the school to the dole, and therefore divorced from the working-class sphere of struggle. Already in the so-called "depressed areas," gangrene has set in, and the local mortification of industry has meant the degeneration and declassing of masses of working-class youths and adults.

The temporary and panic-hunted revival that has followed upon the recent unprecedented arms race has only momentarily halted the degeneration, only momentarily revived the workers' struggle in its most primitive form—the trade union struggle for wage increases.

When capitalism passed the peak of its development prior to the Great War, the working class, involved in the decay of capitalism, also passed

the peak of its development as the class destined to inherit power. Despite the example of the October Revolution in Russia, the world proletariat, immobilised by the treachery of the Second International, was prevented by the "Socialist" traitors who led it, from extending October to embrace the world.

In the few years that saw the end of the War and the victory of Bolshevism in Russia, the working-class world glimpsed the true path ahead. For the advance-guard of the workers the theses and resolutions of the first four Congresses of the Comintern, crystallising the lessons of history and the tasks of the immediate future, opened up a new world.

But the hopes awakened in the workers, the peasants, the colonial slaves in those years were doomed to disappointment. They were re-enslaved by treacherous leaders, and the Russian toilers, isolated and exhausted, were crushed to their knees by the weight of Russian backwardness. Struggling against the immense handicap of primitive agricultural methods, by unparalleled heroism and self-sacrifice, they achieved marvels of construction. But these achievements, great as they are in themselves, are swamped in the vast ocean of feudal backwardness and lack of culture. Russia remains predominantly a backward country, increasingly disrupted by the frenzied bureaucracy which seeks to whip on the toiling masses to the accomplishment of an impossible task—to build socialism in isolation from the rest of the world.

In unison the bureaucracy in Russia and their hirelings in the rest of the world announce that "Socialism has been accomplished." And simultaneously with the announcement they have initiated a campaign of murder and calumny not only against the Old Guard of Bolshevik leaders who fought through the revolution, but also against the revolutionaries in other countries. Lenin's co-workers have been exterminated almost to the last man and woman, while the long arm of the G.P.U. extends now all over the world, physically assassinating with the machine-gun, and politically assassinating with its

immense Press and propaganda machinery.

What has happened? What has become of the Russian Revolution, the Soviets, workers' rule, the promise of socialism. All this is being destroyed by Stalinism? Momentarily defeated by Bolshevism, the careerists, the lackeys, the mensheviks, the forces of reaction have crept into the Soviet State machine, they have been organised by Stalin, arch-reactionary, and now they have reached the point where they are able to obliterate the last of Lenin's contemporary followers while mouthing the phrases of October and ruling in Lenin's name.

In the fourteen years that have followed Lenin's death, the achievements of the Russian Revolution have been undermined and almost all destroyed. The Comintern has been reduced to a mere network of foreign agents for the Stalinist bureaucracy, cynical time-servers, zealous only in slavish adulation of Stalin. A whole generation of revolutionary youth has been attracted toward the triumph of October, only to be disillusioned, confused and scattered by Stalinism. Whole nations of revolutionary workers and peasants in China, in Germany, in Spain, have sought to tread the path where Lenin pioneered, only to be betrayed, disorganised and broken by Stalinism.

So it comes about that to-day, when mankind stands on the brink of yet more devastating crises, of yet more frightful wars, the workers of the world are leaderless, or even worse, under the treacherous guidance of an unscrupulous bureaucracy which openly prepares to surrender them to fascism, to social patriotism, to defeat in the class struggle and to imperialist war.

If the capitalist class is prepared to sacrifice the working class to its war aims when its power and privileges are threatened, no less eager is the Stalinist machine prepared to form alliances with capitalism and lead the workers to slaughter also with the same objective in view—the preservation of its own power and privileges. And Stalinism is prepared to go even further than the most reactionary capitalist regime has dared to go, performing even those tasks which the bourgeoisie, brutal though it is, fears to tackle: Stalinism becomes the chief executioner of revolutionaries, serving both the bourgeoisie and itself; Stalinism buttresses a decaying capitalist democracy incapable of depending upon itself.

On the surface, reaction is triumphant everywhere, and in increasing numbers the weaker socialists waver, fall back, desert, masking their cowardice with new theories . . . that Bolshevism is the infancy of Stalinism, that Capitalism has been restored in the Soviet Union. These "theories" are merely rouge on the pallid cheeks of faint-hearted socialists. Stalinism is the frust-

ration of Bolshevism, and yet, despite the degree to which the Soviet State has degenerated, the Soviet rulers have not yet dared to seize the means of production and legalise their own positions as the owners as well as the beneficiaries of Russian capital and power. The Russian functionaries seize for themselves the lion's share of the country's produce, but their position remains insecure; this monstrous Old Man of the Sea may still be dislodged from the shoulders of the Russian Sinbad. True enough, it will take a revolution to dislodge Stalinism, but it will be a political revolution in the sphere of government to restore democratic rights to the workers' and peasants' soviets, and not a social revolution.

And until private property is restored in the Soviet Union, the workers' state still remains and must be defended from the capitalist enemies who threaten on all sides. The main weapon in this defence is the ruthless exposure of Stalinism, its function in the Soviet Union as the grave-digger of Bolshevism, its function in the outside world as the organiser of working-class defeat, as the ally of decaying capitalism.

The working masses of the world, hemmed in by reaction, are compelled to struggle, for they must eat and work and live. They must perforce cut a path for themselves through the ranks of the enemy which seeks to perpetuate conditions wherein humanity decays. The working class, the mainstring of social achievement, the driving force of human progress, is still the heir of history, a robust heir who will not be cheated of his inheritance. If to-day the usurpers, the proprietors, the functionaries feed upon the social wealth which is rightfully his, and deny him even the crumbs from his own table, he will yet strike smashing blows.

Reaffirming our faith in the international working class as the leaders of the world revolution, and in the teachings of Marx and Engels, Lenin and Trotsky, as the guiding light of workers' revolution, we are nevertheless conscious that since workers' disorganisation keeps pace with the decay of capitalism, time is precious. The Workers' International News sets itself the task of assisting in the re-forming of the ranks of revolutionary socialism. As a vital part of this task we publish the truth concerning the present state of the working-class movement. The workers must be told the whole truth. Only by fulfilling our duty in this respect is it possible to benefit from the lessons of the past and press on to the ever more urgent tasks of the near future. The Third International follows the Second International in degeneracy and betrayal. It becomes our task to build the new, Fourth International.

Stalin the Assassin

by Charles Sumner

During the examination by the Dewey Commission of Inquiry at Mexico, Trotsky drew attention to the fact that whenever Stalin is plotting some particularly revolting action he hastens to accuse his enemies of being guilty of the same type of action, thus hoping to cover in advance his own guilt. The crude grossness of Stalin's accusations is only equalled by the brutality and cynicism of his crimes. Trotsky, and with him Zinoviev, Kamenev, Smirnov, Mrachkovsky and all the others, were accused of organising a campaign of terror for the purpose of assassinating the leaders of the Soviet Union at precisely the time when Stalin was in fact fomenting the most extraordinary series of assassinations and abductions which the world has ever witnessed. For months past Stalin has been reorganising the G.P.U. to fit it for its new function as an international murder gang. The old cadres of the G.P.U. are being recalled to Russia, where they are quietly shot or put in concentration camps: if they refuse to return they are kidnapped and shot abroad. Their place is being taken by new recruits from among the White Guards, Stalin's favourite recruiting ground. On 21st April, 1937, there took place at Paris a secret conference of the Comintern with representatives from the 17 leading Communist Parties of the world. The purpose of the conference was to organise the campaign for the physical liquidation of the "Trotskyists," the P.O.U.M. in Spain, and other revolutionary organisations which are opposed to the Stalin regime. That the conference was a success is testified by the sharp rise in the number of murders and abductions of revolutionaries and critics of the Stalin dictatorship that has taken place since it was held. I propose here to deal with a few of the more outstanding cases.

THE MURDER OF IGNAZ REISS.

On 5th September, 1937, the Swiss police found the body of a man riddled with bullets on a lonely road near Lausanne. The man was later identified by his wife as Ignaz Reiss. Reiss, a Pole born in 1899, had from his early youth been a militant in the revolutionary movement. He had worked in the Communist Parties of Poland, Austria and Germany, and his political activities had more than once been rewarded with prison. Since 1927 he had been working as a secret agent of the G.P.U. abroad. The Zinoviev and

Kamenev trials at length opened his eyes to the decay and rottenness of the Stalin regime. In July of this year he definitely broke with Moscow and published the following Open Letter, in which he explains the reasons for his action:

LETTER OF COMRADE LUDWIG (Ignace Reiss).

To the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Bolsheviks in Moscow.

Paris, 17th July, 1937.

The letter which I write to you to-day has long been necessary; it was necessary on the day on which the "father of the people" permitted the "sixteen" to be murdered in the cellars of the Lubyanka.

I maintained silence then, nor did I raise my voice at the subsequent assassinations, thereby loading my conscience with a grievous wrong. My guilt is great but I will make quick recompenses and relieve my conscience.

Thus far and no farther. Here our ways part. Who still remains silent shares the guilt, becomes an accomplice of Stalin, a traitor to the aims of the working class and socialism.

I began my struggle for socialism at the age of 20. I will not accept the dole of Yeshov on the threshold of my 40th birthday.

I have 16 years' illegal work behind me; that is not a small thing, but I still possess sufficient strength to begin anew. For it means a "new beginning," it involves the salvation of socialism! The struggle commenced long ago and I will join it.

The applause for the North Pole fliers is intended to drown the cries of the tortured in the dungeons of Svobodnaja, Minsk, Kiev, Leningrad and Tiflis. It will not succeed. The word, the true word, is still more powerful than the greatest horse-powered engine.

It is true that the record-breaking flyers find it easier to obtain the applause of the American ladies and the degenerate "sporting" youth of both continents, than it is for us to get worldwide publicity and to arouse the conscience of the world. Do not be deceived. Truth will win the race, the day of reckoning is nearer, much nearer than the gentlemen in the Kremlin believe.

International Socialism will then sit in judgement on all the crimes of the past ten years. Nothing will be forgotten or forgiven. History is a stern mistress, and the "genial leader, father

of the people and sun of socialism" will have to speak and answer for all his deeds. The lost Chinese Revolution, the Red Referendum and the defeat of the German Proletariat, Social Fascism and the Peoples Front, the interview with Howard and the embraces of Laval. Each act more "genial" than the other!

This trial will be public with witnesses, many witnesses dead and living, and they will all speak, speak once again, but this time the truth, nothing but the truth. The slandered and murdered innocent victims will all appear and the International Working-Class movement will restore to them their reputations; all the Kamenevs and Mrachkovskys, Smirnovs and Muralovs, the Drobnis' and Serbriakovs, Mdivanis and Okudshavas, Rakovskys and Nins, all the "spies and diversionists, Gestapo agents and saboteurs."

If the Soviet Union, and with it the International Working-Class movement, is not to become finally a victim of open counter-revolution and fascism, the working-class movement must conquer Stalin and Stalinism. This vile hotchpotch of unprincipled opportunism, blood and lies, threatens to poison the world and to destroy the remainder of the working-class movement.

Against Stalinism the sternest struggle is necessary!

Not Peoples Front but Class Struggle; not committees but the intervention of the workers for the salvation of the Spanish Revolution; that is the need of the day!

Away with the lies of Socialism in a single country and back to Lenin's internationalism!

But neither the Second nor the Third Internationals is capable of this historical task; disorientated and corrupted they are only capable of holding the workers back from the struggle; to-day their role is the Special Police of the Bourgeoisie. What a tragic development; formerly the bourgeoisie found their Cavaignacs and Gallifets, Trepovs and Wrangels in their own ranks, but now, under the glorious leadership of both internationals, workers become the executioners of their comrades. The bourgeoisie can go about their business with confidence, "peace and order" reigns again, there are still Noskes and Yeshovs, Negrins and Diaz'. Stalin is their leader and Feuchtwanger their Homer

No, I am finished with that. I take back my freedom. I return to Lenin, to his teachings and his actions.

I dedicate my modest strength to the service of his teachings; I will struggle, and only our victory—the Proletarian Revolution—will liberate mankind from capitalism and the Soviet Union from Stalinism.

Forward to new struggles for socialism and the proletarian revolution! Build the Fourth International!

LUDWIG.

P.S.—In 1928 I was decorated with the Order

of the "Red Banner" for services to the proletarian revolution. I hereby return the Order. It is beneath my self-respect to wear the same decoration as the hangmen of the flower of the Russian working class. (In "Isvestia" during the last fortnight bearers of the Order were named, but shameful silence preserved over their functions, which consist of nothing less than the carrying out of sentences.)

This letter unleashed the fury of the Stalinists: desire for revenge and terror lest he should reveal the filthy secrets of the G.P.U. urged them on to undertake his murder. The leading role in the plot against him was assigned to one Gertrud Schilbach, a G.P.U. agent stationed at Rome who had been Reiss' collaborator for many years. Pretending to be sympathetic with his action, she arranged to meet him in Switzerland. Arriving on 3rd September, she had(x) a long conversation with Reiss and his wife during which she promised to follow Reiss' example in breaking with Moscow. She ended by asking Reiss to dinner at Lausanne the next evening. They had dinner together and then went out into the street. It was late and the streets were deserted. An automobile drove up. A man jumped out and struck Reiss on the head with a blackjack. They then shoved him into the car and drove off. There were seven bullets in his body, five in his head. Reiss had tried to defend himself, and the police found strands of Schilbach's hair clutched in his hand. The police believe that seven people, two women and five men, participated in the murder. Three have been arrested, but the ringleaders, abandoning their bloodstained car near Geneva, have up to now evaded the search of the police.

Reiss' wife is in the greatest danger of assassination. She collaborated with her husband, and knew as much as he did about the crimes of the G.P.U. She has already made some important revelations on which I have drawn in writing this article. She was in Moscow during the Pyatakov trials, and can furnish interesting details about how it was staged. The documents in her possession, of which copies have now been made and disseminated, are compromising to the G.P.U. Mme. Reiss has declared: "I will live."

TROTSKY'S SON. ATTEMPTED ASSASSINATION OF SEDOV,

Stalin, like most common criminals, is grossly incompetent in his crimes: he has been unable to induce anyone, save wretches like D. N. Pritt, Dudley Collard, Feuchtwanger *e tutti quanti*, to believe in the Moscow trials; the decapitation of the Red Army has reduced Soviet prestige to a low level; finally the murder of Reiss has exposed Stalin's gang of hired assassins in Paris. Two

(x) The details of this plot given by me in my letter in "Forward" of 27th November were inaccurate. I had not yet read the report of the Swiss police.

of the persons arrested in connection with the Reiss case were Renata Steiner, a Swiss woman, and Smirensky, a Russian White Guard, both secret agents of the G.P.U. Steiner has made a precise deposition on her activities which is confirmed by all the evidence. She and Smirensky were given the task of shadowing Sedov. They took a flat next to that of Sedov, with a balcony only three feet distance from his. Thence they could observe his every move.

"In January of this year," writes Trotsky, "the G.P.U. terrorists tried to arrange a trap for Leon Sedov at Mulhouse analogous to the one they arranged for Ignaz Reiss in Lausanne. Under cover of the name of my Swiss lawyer, who is occupied with a suit over slanders made by the Comintern, the conspirators repeatedly urged Sedov by telegraph and telephone to come to Mulhouse for a conference. Only accidental circumstances prevented Sedev from going to Mulhouse, where he was awaited at the railway station by Renata Steiner and Smirensky. The confession of Steiner shows from what danger Sedev was saved in January. It was just at the moment that Moscow prepared the second great trial.

"The shadowing of Sedov went on uninterrupted until last August, when Steiner, Smirensky and others received an unexpected order from above to find and kill Ignaz Reiss. The Kremlin considered this assassination the most urgent, in view of the threatening disclosures from the former trusted agent."

The arrest of the assassins has temporarily deprived Sedev of their attentions: doubtless others will be found.

THE MURDER GANG AT PARIS.

Renata Steiner's declaration reveals the identity of the whole hive of G.P.U. agents in Paris. Headed by Slutzky, the official representative in France, the organisation includes Pierre Ducommet, a French photographer now arrested, Kondratiev, a former White Russian officer, Pierre Schwarzenburg, another White Russian, and a man called "Rossi," in addition to Steiner herself and Dmitri Smirensky. These persons almost certainly have two murders and one robbery to their credit, not counting the murder of Reiss.

In January, 1937, Navashin, the former Communist economist, was murdered in the Bois de Boulogne. His assassins were never discovered. But the Paris police were convinced that the G.P.U. had a hand in the affair: Navashin was in possession of knowledge and of documents which would have thrown a lurid light on the Radek-Pyatakov trial which had just taken place.

The notorious kidnapping and complete disappearance of General Miller is now also attributed to the G.P.U. Characteristically enough, Stalin has even penetrated into the counter-revolutionary Union of the White Army, of which Miller was the head, and from which Stalin recruited many of his agents. But Miller was not

Stalin's man. He was "removed" in order to make room for General Skoblin, an old agent of the G.P.U. Stalin is now master of the White Army as well as of the Red: he is using the former to behead the latter.

In November, 1936, while the Radek trial was being prepared, 143 lbs. of Trotsky's archives, which were stored in the Paris office of the Dutch Institute of Social History, were stolen. The method used to break through the iron door had never before been employed in France and was unknown, according to the police, to French criminals. Although the library contained many valuable documents and some money, nothing was stolen except Trotsky's papers. All the clues pointed toward the G.P.U., but none of them could at the time be followed up. It is believed that light will be shed on all these cases by the recent arrests.

In addition to murder and robbery, the G.P.U. employs the method of denunciation to the foreign police of people whom it wants put out of the way. Two cases of this disgusting practice must here suffice. Some ten days before the assassination of Reiss, the French police received from Switzerland an anonymous denunciation against him, accusing him of being an international financial swindler. All the names under which he lived in Europe were indicated. These names were known only to the G.P.U., which prepared false passports for him. Again, Grylewicz, the old German revolutionary, was denounced by the G.P.U. in Czechoslovakia as a Gestapo agent. Forged documents were hidden in his room, and he was arrested by the Prague police. After several months of imprisonment, he was released because the denunciation was shown to be false.

SIDELIGHTS ON THE MOSCOW TRIALS.

Trotsky, writing in the *Socialist Appeal*, 30th October, 1937, draws attention to the following facts:

"Slutzky (the leader of the Paris gang), in the presence of witnesses, described the questioning of Mrachkovsky, a famous general of the Civil War and one of the defendants shot in August, 1937 (the Zinoviev trial), as having lasted 90 minutes without interruption. This was one of the methods of extracting confessions.

"The search of the police in the home of Rakovsky (former head of the Ukrainian Government, member of the Central Committee, Ambassador to London and to Paris) lasted 18 hours without food or rest for the 67-year-old man. Rakovsky's wife tried to serve him tea. The G.P.U. opposed this on the pretext that she might poison him. This was Rakovsky's preparation for the first examination. This story is well known to Mr. Louis Fischer, the semi-official Soviet spokesman. I am wondering if he will try to deny it. . . .

"The G.P.U. has made and is making every effort to stage a Rykov-Bukharin trial in order to counteract hostile public opinion with new confessions. In May, Rykov, the former head of

the Soviet Government, and Bukharin, the former head of the Comintern, were brought from prison to a meeting of the Central Committee of the Party. They refused to confess to alleged treason, terrorism, and so on. Stalin shouted out: "Back to prison with them! Let them defend themselves there!" A series of provisional confessions of the alleged members of the Right Opposition (Rykov-Bukharin) are intended to break down the two most important defendants and to oblige them to play their role according to the script of the G.P.U. in a new trial."

THE G.P.U. IN SPAIN.

Stalin has strangled the Spanish revolution, and the G.P.U. now dominates that part of Spain which is not under the control of the Gestapo. We shall have occasion at a later date to discuss the whole question of Stalinism in Spain; here we wish merely to draw attention to a few outstanding cases of G.P.U. terrorism directed against revolutionaries.

Erwin Wolf, better known in this country as Braun, was a young Czech revolutionary who has for some years been closely associated with the Bolshevik-Leninist movement. During Trotsky's stay in Norway, Wolf was his secretary; he was one of the moving spirits in the International Secretariat for the Fourth International. While in Norway he met and married Hjordis Knudsen, daughter of Konrad Knudsen, Labour member of the Norwegian Parliament, and Trotsky's host at Honefoss. After leaving Norway, Wolf went to Spain, where he arrived toward the end of May, several weeks after the Barcelona uprising. For two months he lived quietly at Barcelona, doing journalistic work for foreign newspapers. At the end of July he was arrested by the Government police. He was kept in gaol until the middle of September without any accusation being brought against him, and then released for lack of incriminating evidence. Hardly was he out of prison than he was rearrested by the G.P.U. police. He has not been heard of since. It is possible that he has already been shot, or that he is shut up in one of the many private and extra-territorial prisons of the G.P.U. in Spain. But there are rumours that a more appalling fate has overtaken him: that he has been sent to Russia so that "confessions" may be obtained from him. As Trotsky's former secretary, he would make an ideal "witness" at another Moscow trial. We do not believe that our comrade will flinch before the tender mercies of the G.P.U.; but there are limits to the endurance of even the bravest, and the G.P.U. has more than once succeeded in surpassing these limits. What evidence is there that Wolf has been taken to Russia? Konrad Knudsen reports that a Norwegian worker, travelling in the U.S.S.R. as a tourist this summer, was closely questioned by the G.P.U. about the activities and whereabouts

of Wolf and his wife. A friend of Knudsen's states that a report is current in Moscow which would confirm that Wolf had been brought to Russia. Finally, there is the analogous case of Mark Rein: Rein is the son of Raphael Abramovitch, the famous Menshevik leader and member of the Executive of the Second International. For some time Rein has been editing an anti-Stalinist paper at Stockholm which published damaging but absolutely authentic reports from the Soviet Union. Rein went to Spain as a correspondent and disappeared. It has been established that, toward the middle of April, he was shipped to Russia "as a trunk." The Second International sent a commission to Spain headed by Steinberg, Commissar for Justice in the Bolshevik-Social-Revolutionary coalition government of 1919, to investigate the disappearance of Rein. After establishing that he had been sent to Russia, the commission was in such terror of reprisals from the G.P.U. that it had to have a special FAI guard to accompany it to the Spanish frontier. Two Spaniards appointed by the Valencia Government, under pressure from the Second International to investigate the case, have disappeared in their turn. Stalin stops at nothing.

The case of Kurt Landau, mentioned in the above letter, is important and typical. The Spanish Stalinists have long been attacking Landau because of his former connection with the "Trotskyist" movement, with which, however, he definitely broke several years ago. They have not hesitated to accuse him, according to the familiar formula, of being the "liaison agent between the Gestapo and the P.O.U.M." In fact, however, Landau was hounded out of Germany by the Gestapo as the leader of the Left Communist Opposition. All the members of Landau's group in Germany have been thrown into prison or concentration camps by the Gestapo. Landau went to Spain in November, 1936, and immediately associated himself with the P.O.U.M. From that moment the Stalinist attacks against him began. When, on 17th June, the leaders of P.O.U.M. were arrested in Barcelona, Landau, together with Gorkin and others, could not be found by the police. Never unwilling to imitate the methods of Hitler, the Stalinists succeeded in getting their wives arrested as hostages. Months later Landau was discovered, and on 22nd September he was taken from a little house where he was hiding in the outskirts of Barcelona by two men, one of whom was in uniform, the other in civil dress. Since that day there has been no news of him. In reply to inquiries, Police Headquarters stated that they had no information as to his arrest and that he was not confined in any official prison. Julia Landau, his wife, is still being detained, however, in the Women's Prison at Barcelona. About three weeks ago she addressed the following letter, which has just come to light, to the Republican authorities:

Carcel de Mujeres,
Las Corts,
Barcelona.

(undated, but probably written
about 1st November, 1937.)

To the Minister of Public Safety,
To the Chief Commissioner of Police,
To the Governor of Valenciá, etc., etc.

(1) My husband was arrested by two men who alleged that they were agents of the police. I demand that the police make the necessary inquiries in order to find out where he now is.

(2) I demand that the police state whether, on 17th June, I was arrested as a hostage for my husband. If this is the case, I demand my immediate release in view of the fact that any further imprisonment is no longer justified.

(3) If, however, I was not imprisoned as a hostage, I demand that after four months of detention in various prisons a formal accusation be brought against me and that I be immediately examined.

If I do not receive a reply to this letter within a week, I shall be obliged to declare a hunger strike. I count on the moral support of my comrades who, like me, have been detained for four months without accusation or examination. I have succeeded in persuading them not to declare a hunger strike in solidarity with me.

(Signed) JULIA LANDAU.

In my latest information from Spain it was reported that Julia Landau, not having received a reply to her letter, had carried out her threat of a hunger strike. She is now in the prison hospital suffering from the effects of her self-imposed fast.

RETRIBUTION.

The Stalinist regime is rotten to the core. Having by its policy ensured the victory of Hitler in Germany, it is now giving him lessons in how to throttle the international working-class movement. The G.P.U., once the organ of the revolutionary terror, has now become the tool of the counter-revolution. But, in the cadres of the diplomatic service and the foreign secret police, there still remain some devoted revolutionaries. They are beginning to understand the horror of the regime for which they are working, and unwilling further to betray the cause to which they have devoted their lives—the cause of socialism and the working class—they are severing their connections with Moscow in increasing numbers. The last few days have witnessed two more sensational desertions: that of Alexander Barmin, late Soviet Charge d'Affaires at Athens, and Walter Krivitzky, late secret foreign agent of the G.P.U. No more crushing indictments of the regime of Stalin exist than the declarations of these two men, until yesterday trusted servants of the bureaucracy whose corruption they have only with difficulty brought themselves to recognise. We cannot do better than to end by giving in full the text of these historic documents.

LETTER FROM ALEXANDER BARMIN, SOVIET CHARGE D'AFFAIRES AT ATHENS.

To the Committee for an Inquiry into the Moscow Trials (Paris),
To the Central Committee of the League for the Rights of Man (Paris).

Having just left the service of the Government of the U.S.S.R., I consider it my duty to bring to your attention the following facts, and to make an indignant protest, in the name of Humanity and the Rights of Man, against those crimes whose number is daily increasing.

I was First Secretary to the Legation of the U.S.S.R. at Athens since December, 1935, and was Soviet Charge d'Affaires at Athens from March, 1937. I have spent 19 years in the service of the Soviet Government; for 19 years I have been a member of the Russian Communist Party; I have fought for the Soviet regime and devoted all my energy to the first workers' State.

I joined the Red Army as a volunteer in 1919; six months later I was appointed political commissar of a battalion and afterwards of a regiment for distinguished service in the front line. I then went to the School for Red Officers, and later held various commands on the Western Front. After the offensive against Warsaw, the Military Council of the 16th Army sent me for a course of study at the Academy of the High Command. In 1923 I was retired with the rank of brigade commander. I was Consul General of the U.S.S.R. in Persia from 1923 to 1925. For ten years I was a member of the staff of the Commissariat for Foreign Trade, and became, from 1929 to 1931, general director of imports in France and Italy. In 1932 I was the official agent of the U.S.S.R. in Belgium; in 1933 I was a member of the Government Delegation in Poland; during 1934-5 I was president of the Central Trust for the Exportation of the Products of the Motor Car and Aviation Industries. Such, in outline, is the record of my services before my appointment in Greece. Whatever my duties have been, I have invariably thought only of serving conscientiously the interests of my country and of Socialism.

The recent Moscow trials have filled me with stupefaction and horror. It was impossible for me willingly to consent to the execution of the old leaders of the Revolution, despite the confessions which they so plentifully furnished: these confessions only aggravated my qualms of conscience while they prolonged my last illusions.

My profound devotion to the working class and to the Soviet people, the difficulty I experienced in crediting the possibility of such crimes on the part of the leaders of the Soviet State, led me at first to do violence to my conscience and to resign myself to the facts. In making this effort I hoped that I was continuing to serve the cause of socialism. But the events

of the last few months (months which I have spent in France on sick leave) have taken away my last illusion. The resounding trials prepared the way for the extermination *en masse* of the *cadres* of the Communist Party and the Soviet Union, that is to say, of those militants who had carried on the revolutionary struggle in illegality, who had made the Revolution and the Civil War and assured the victory of the first workers' State: to-day they have been bespattered with mud and delivered over to the executioner. It appears to me that a reactionary dictatorship is becoming entrenched in my country.

I have seen my leaders and colleagues, all of them old Bolsheviks, disappear in the prisons, where they have perhaps been executed or done to death: Krestinsky, former ambassador and People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs; Arossev, President of the Society for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries; Karakhan, former vice-commissar and ambassador at Ankara, who is said to have been shot; Yureniev, former ambassador and Commissar General of the Red Army in 1918-19; Eliava, People's Vice-Commissar for Foreign Trade, whose collaborator it was my honour to be; my friends and comrades (with whom I have fought and worked at various periods during the last 20 years), Zuckerman and Fechner, who directed foreign affairs at Moscow; Asmus, Podolsky, and Ostrovsky, the friend and protégé of Voroshilov, who were Soviet ministers at Helsingfors, Kaunas, and Bukarest respectively; Generals Guekker, Schmidt, and Savitzky, heroes of the Civil War and my comrades at the Military Academy; finally, the ambassadors Davitian, Karsky, Bogomolov, Rosenberg, Brodovsky, whom I have known personally only a short time, but of whose honesty and devotion I am absolutely convinced.

I wish to address to the public opinion of the world the most pressing and the most desperate appeal in favour of those among them, at least, who may still be living, and against the false and ignoble accusations which have been hurled against them. I think of my friends who are at their post in other countries of Europe, America, and Asia: each day they are threatened with a similar fate and placed in a tragic dilemma—either to return to Russia to a certain death or, by renouncing the hope of again seeing their country, to risk the bullets of the foreign agents of the Secret Police, agents who have just recently been following my every move.

To remain in the service of Stalin's Government would have been to condemn myself to the worst kind of demoralisation and to assume my share of responsibility for the crimes daily committed against the people of my country. It would have been to betray the cause of socialism, to which I have consecrated my whole life.

I obey the dictates of my conscience in breaking with this Government. I have considered the

dangers to which I expose myself by acting thus. I sign my own death warrant and expose myself to the attacks of hired assassins. These considerations cannot in any way modify my line of conduct.

I have sent my resignation to the Commissariat of Foreign Affairs at Moscow, and, renouncing my diplomatic immunity, I find myself to-day a mere political refugee who throws himself upon the protection of the laws and the public opinion of that country to whose hospitality he is indebted. I have obeyed my conscience, sure thus of being more than ever faithful to the ideas which I have served during all my life.

May my voice contribute to enlighten public opinion about a regime which has, in fact, renounced every vestige of socialism, every vestige of humanity.

I am, Sirs,

Yours very faithfully,

(Signed) ALEXANDER BARMIN.

1st December, 1937.

DECLARATION OF WALTER KRIVITZKY, SECRET AGENT OF THE G.P.U.

For 18 years I have faithfully served the Russian Communist Party and the Soviet State, being firmly convinced that I was serving the cause of the October Revolution, the cause of the working class. I have been a member of the Russian Communist Party since 1919, and for many years I belonged to the higher ranks of the Red Army; later I became director of the Institute for War Industries. For the last two years I have fulfilled special missions in foreign countries. The leading circles of the Communist Party and the Soviet State have frequently shown their confidence in me. I was decorated with the Order of the Red Flag, and I received the so-called Sword of Honour.

During the last few years I have followed with growing anxiety the policy of the Soviet Government. Nevertheless, I subordinated my feelings of uncertainty to the defence of what I still considered to be the legitimate interests of the Soviet Union, believing that my work furthered these interests and was therefore necessary to the cause of socialism. But subsequent events have convinced me that the policy of Stalin's Government is becoming increasingly opposed not merely to the interests of the Soviet Union, but also to those of the working-class movement in general.

At the Moscow trials, and, above all, at the secret trials, the most distinguished representatives of the Bolshevik Old Guard appeared in the guise of "spies" and "agents of the Gestapo"; Zinoviev, Kamenev, I. N. Smirnov, Bukharine, Rykov, Rakovsky and others; the most eminent economists and scholars: Pyatakov, Smilga, Pachukanis, and thousands of others whom I cannot mention here.

the generation of October and of the succeeding generation, all those who, amid the fire of the Civil War, amid the famine and the cold, built up the Soviet power, are now condemned to extermination. Stalin did not even hesitate at the decapitation of the Red Army. He has sent to execution the best and most talented of the military leaders: Tukhachevsky, Yakir, Uborevitch, Gamarnik. He has accused them—falsely, as in the case of all the other victims—of high treason. This policy, I am convinced, is in reality undermining the military power of the Soviet Union, its capacity for self-defence, its economy, its science, and every branch of Soviet construction.

By the aid of methods which will eventually become widely known (for example, the third-degree methods applied to Smirnov and Mrachkovsky), and which appear unbelievable in the West, Stalin and Yezov, head of the G.P.U., extort "confessions" from their victims and stage these repulsive trials.

Each new trial, each new exploit of the firing squad, more profoundly shook my confidence. I had sufficient inside knowledge to know exactly how these trials were staged, and to understand that it was innocent people who were perishing.

For a long time I tried to restrain my feelings of horror, of revulsion and agony, and to convince myself that at whatever cost it was necessary to go on with the important work which had been entrusted to me. I confess that it required an extraordinary effort to make up my mind to break with Moscow and to remain abroad.

By remaining abroad, I hope to be able to do my share towards the rehabilitation of the tens of thousands of so-called "spies" and "agents of the Gestapo" who are, in reality, devoted fighters in the cause of the working class. They have been arrested, deported, shot, and assassinated by the present masters of the regime which they themselves created under the direction of Lenin, and which, after his death, they continued to strengthen.

I know—and I have proof—that a price is on my head. I know that the G.P.U. will spare nothing in order to reduce me to silence by assassination. I know that dozens of men, at the orders of Yezov, who are ready for anything, are on my tracks. I believe it my duty as a militant revolutionary to bring these facts to the attention of the public opinion of the international working class.

(Signed) W. KRIVITZKY.

5th December, 1937.

END THE G.P.U TERROR

Comrade Reiss was shot down by the G.P.U., and if the murderers were able to carry out this crime with impunity, it was because the facts in his case, his denunciation of the G.P.U. on resigning, were not publicised in time. If Comrades Barmin and Krivitsky escape the bullets of the G.P.U. assassins, it will only be because the full light of publicity has been thrown on their positions and their renunciation of Stalinist service. Trotsky's son, Sedoff, is similarly threatened, while every day brings fresh reports in the Press of the sudden and mysterious disappearance of Soviet diplomats, and the refusal of others to obey the command to return to Moscow, which amounts to being put "on the spot."

The bourgeois Press is entirely unconcerned with the fate of revolutionaries, and cannot be looked to for carrying out the necessary publication of the facts concerning the threats to their lives. This task falls to the workers' Press, and W.I.N. seeks to do its part in this urgent matter. The murderers will hesitate to strike their victims down in daylight. They prefer the darkness created by the withholding of information from the masses.

Support W.I.N. with subscriptions and donations. Every penny given to this purpose will help to protect the lives of revolutionaries. Sums received will be acknowledged in these columns

Subscribe to W I N