

# The MILITANT

Semi-Monthly Organ of the Opposition Group in the Communist Party of America

"It is necessary that every member of the Party should study calmly and with the greatest objectivity, first the substance of the differences of opinion, and then the development of the struggles with in the Party. Neither the one nor the other can be done unless the documents of both sides are published. He who takes somebody's word for it is a hopeless idiot, who can be disposed of with a simple gesture of the hand."—Lenin

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## FOUR DAYS WITH TROTSKY

An Interview with the Bolshevik Leader who Was Exiled to Constantinople

"Then you do not recognize me?"

I had indeed remained without voice, as if speechless, when after a three days journey I found myself facing him in this hotel room.

How could I fail to recognize him despite the seven years gone by since our last meeting?

To be sure, the radiant hair has turned grey; the crease in the cheeks denoting the contraction of a powerful jaw is accentuated, and the smooth face—shaved on the boat that brought him to Constantinople—makes a contrast to the face popularized by so many photographs. But who could mistake it? Behind the large rims of the spectacles are the same magnetic blue eyes with their eagle's glance, the same monumental brow, the large wilful mouth and—I am not writing literature—there is still that same impression of a superhuman force. Yes, it is certainly Trotsky, it is the companion of Lenin, the chief of the October Revolution, and the encounter, after all the ordeals, leaves me without words.

My emotion, his own also—At last, a friend!—cannot express itself otherwise than in a fraternal embrace.

We speak indiscriminately. In hurried sentences, crammed with incidents. Tomorrow we will be more methodical, but how can it be arranged when there are so many things to talk about?

First of all, how is he, after that harsh year of deportation at Alma Ata, in the region chosen for him by Stalin as a place of exile, doubtlessly because "malaria shares its dominion there with leprosy and the plague."

Actually, malaria has taken hold of him, and if he speaks a bit cheerfully of his health, his wife and son, who share his exile and were themselves prey to the same fevers, told me that Leo Davidovitch made them very uneasy during a certain period when the illness assumed a very sharp form. To this day, malaria has not yet left Trotsky, but it seems to be weakening. Periodically, attacks of fever, accompanied by violent headaches, still come on to denote the virulence of the disease.

The malaria attacks an organism weakened by twelve incredible years of activity and hardships, twelve years of Revolution. It is added to a most persistent gout and a chronic inflammation of the colon which obliges our comrade follow a strict regime and to think, in short, of looking after himself.

At the moment these lines appear, the question of the visa will, I hope, be decided and Trotsky will be able to proceed to Germany to receive the care necessitated by his condition. Up to now, he has asked officially for asylum only from Germany where he can have recourse to the doctors who treated him previously. But in other countries, friends have already made obliging application and if the intrigues of Stalin should succeed in preventing Trotsky's entry into Germany, we can surely reckon that he will find a more hospitable welcome elsewhere—in Holland, perhaps.

On the whole, our comrade has lost none of his power to work, but he will have to bring himself to rest for a while. This will be cruel, and one understands it when he knows the activity of a Trotsky. But will it not be better to decide to give this security to the future?

Brought by force from Odessa to Constantinople on the Soviet vessel, Ilyitch, under the escort of the G. P. U., Trotsky lived for the first three weeks at the Soviet Consulate.

He was formally promised, before he sailed, that in order to assure a minimum of security

By Maurice Paz -- Paris

two of his closest collaborators, Ser mouks and Posnansky—now imprisoned in Siberia—would be permitted to rejoin him by the very next boat.

"And if you deceive me in this matter also?" asked Trotsky.

"Then in that case, you will have the right

to treat me like a scoundrel," replied the G. P. U. man.

"That would be," responded our comrade, "a pretty poor consolation for me."

Could one expect anything else but false promises from Stalin? One day, he was informed that Ser mouks and Posnansky would not come; at the same time he was compelled to quit the Consulate at once. Aside from the

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## Another Stalinist Pogrom in New York

The bloodiest and most criminal attack in the record of the terrorist campaign against the Opposition Communists took place Tuesday night, April 9, when an organized mob of Stalinist gangsters raided the regular weekly meeting of the Hungarian Opposition group at Hungarian Hall, 323 E. 79th Street, New York City. Fifteen comrades, six of whom were women, were present in the little hall when the trouble began. They had finished the business matters on the agenda of the meeting and were just starting a discussion of the Platform of the Opposition to be adopted by the National Conference, with comrade Louis Basky as the opening speaker. A gang of fifty or more Stalinists invaded the hall in a body. They were armed with blackjacks, brass-knuckles, knives, lead pipes and clubs and were composed chiefly of Party functionaries and employees of various nationalities. Their leaders were Emmerich Lurzig, editor of the Hungarian Party paper, Uj Elore, and Gustav Mayer, manager of the Party's Hungarian Workers' Home.

### STALINISTS BEGIN THE ATTACK

Upon a signal from Lurzig, and without the slightest provocation, the mob of hoodlums threw themselves upon the assembled comrades whom they outnumbered by four or five to one. Comrade Basky, whose life has been threatened repeatedly, was struck across the face with a rubber hose wielded by Lurzig and was attacked from all sides by others. The speaker's 75 year-old father, Lucas Basky, who has been in the revolutionary movement for decades, jumped to the defense of his son, only to be struck over the head with a sharp instrument which opened his scalp in two places and knocked him to the floor in a pool of blood. Six stitches were later taken in his wound by a police doctor. Numerous other of our comrades, including the women, were most brutally beaten, among them being comrade Edmund Fenyes whose scalp was also cut open by the hoodlums.

Our comrades defended themselves as best they could against the overwhelming odds, despite the fact that they had no weapons but their bare fists.

In the course of the fight, one named Michael Holzbauer was cut by a knife wielded by one of the Stalinists. When

the police arrived in response to a riot call, fifteen were arrested, including a number of our comrades and Holzbauer, who was later taken to the Hospital. Comrade Fenyes was held on a charge of assaulting Holzbauer, and was released Thursday afternoon on \$2,000 bail. The Daily Worker reports that Fenyes had been "identified". This is false. The frame-up against our comrade is all the more evident when it is known that his right arm has been treated by a doctor for some time, and was practically useless in any kind of a scuffle.

### THE ORGANIZATION OF THE POGROM

The reports of the affair in the Party press, especially the Daily Worker, Freiheit and Uj Elore, exceeded the already low Brass Check level to which the Stalinists have descended in their lies about the Opposition. By the most brazen perversion of facts they are attempting to work up a lynching spirit against the victims of the raid and to prepare the ground for other pogroms. They even try to conceal the fact that the leaders of the mob were all Party employees. They try to pass them off as obscure "militant workers" and make no reference to the fact that the raid was organized under party instructions, as all the similar affairs have been organized. The Stalinists had PREVIOUSLY ORGANIZED their hoodlums, armed them with the weapons of the underworld, and sent them to the meeting in a body with the express purpose of the physical attack. The presence in the raiding squad of party members of various Nationalities at a Hungarian meeting is proof on its face that constructive discussion had no part in their purposes.

Our comrades were unaware of the approaching pogrom and were entirely unprepared for it. The Workers' Self Defense Guard which protected the last meeting of the Opposition so successfully had not been called, since this was simply the regular weekly meeting which has been held by the Hungarian Group in the same Hall regularly.

The fact that some Stalinists were also hurt causes them to raise howls of complaint, as though they expected our comrades to stand with folded arms while the gangsters cut them down in cold blood. People who raid a peaceful meeting of workers, who are capable of murderously assaulting women and an old man of 75 years with gas pipes and brass knuckles, definitely place themselves in the category of criminals toward whom "labor ethics" have no application. Every honest worker will uphold the right of self defense against them.

The defense of comrade Fenyes against the attempt to frame him will be a duty of the class conscious workers involving elementary working class rights. Another Central Case must not be permitted. At the same time the Oppositionists will refrain from any counter prosecutions. The capitalist courts are not our tribunal. Leave that business to the people like Lovestones, the witness for the prosecution who has already helped to send one Communist, Harry Winitzky, to prison.

### LET THE WORKERS JUDGE THEM

LET THE WORKERS JUDGE THE FASCIST LEGIONAIRES OF LOVESTONE AND FOSTER! Expose the methods of gangsterism and their corrupting consequences before the working masses and fix the responsibility on their sponsors. Form a united front of all progressive forces in the labor movement against these methods. Organize a stronger Workers' Self Defense Guard to protect the meetings from them. This is the Communist way to fight and defeat gangsterism. This is the way of the Communist Opposition.

The Hungarian comrades are proceeding along this line by the organization of a Protest Meeting for next Friday night at the same Hall. A similar movement will be started generally. The truth must be told to the workers openly and fearlessly. The methods of the Stalinists against the Opposition are the methods of FASCISM! If they are not defeated and stopped they will inevitably lead to a horrible tragedy, to the discredit and disintegration of the movement. Only provocateurs or mad men can deliberately bring the movement to this pass. Let every class conscious worker, inside and outside the party, raise his voice against gangster methods in the labor and revolutionary movement and join in the struggle against them.

## May Day MASS MEETING

TUESDAY, APRIL 30, 1929, 8 P.M.

at the HUNGARIAN HALL

323 East 79th Street

(Between 1st and 2nd Aves.)

SPEAKERS:

James P. Cannon - Martin Abern and Speakers in Hungarian and Italian

RICH MUSICAL PROGRAM

ADMISSION: 25c.

Workers Self Defense Guard will Protect the Auspices: New York Communist Opposition Meeting.