

Trotsky Sounds the Alarm Signal on the Danger to the Soviet Regime

(Continued from Page 1)

and collective farms, in tractor and machine stations, in plants, factories and state institutions, in party organizations, even within the Central Committee itself. The "damaged" is that image up against which the bureaucracy stumbles at every moment, while staring into mirrors and failing to recognize itself. On the other hand, the dislocation of economic relations and the growth of universal discontent do provide actually a culture medium for the bacilli of bourgeois counter-revolution.

Violently driven inward, the economic disproportion—first of all, the disjunction between the city and the village but least of all the commonplace kulak "reminders" or the "survivals" of bourgeois psychology—augments the absolutely unbearable tension in the political relations of the country, impelling the bureaucracy to take to the road of further suppressions of all Soviet social activities, thus breeding the malignant embryos of the Bonapartist regime.

Repressions become the chief method of economic management. With all the earmarks of civil war, the collection of seed takes place and preparations are made for spring sowing. The struggle against slackness which is bred from starvation by apathy proceeds in the form of savage penalties. Shortage of food is met by mass expulsions from cities. The press celebrates as a socialist victory the introduction of the passport system.

The helmman of the October revolution, the builder of the Soviet state, the Bolshevik party is crushed, bulldozed, trodden underfoot, demoralized, or driven underground. The dictatorship of the apparatus that smashed the party has been supplanted by personal dictatorship. Within the apparatus those are hand-picked who are trustworthy; from among the trustworthy are chosen the most trustworthy. No one, in effect, trusts any longer in the "leader" whose infallibility has brought about a series of frightful miscarriages. Everybody knows and sees that his own policies have driven Stalin into a blind alley and that he does not know today what Stalin will do tomorrow. But the more the apparatus loses its support in the masses, the more do those who are trustworthy and most trustworthy isolate themselves away from the apparatus, the more religious is the homage paid the sagacity of the "beloved leader." The personal oath of allegiance has completely superseded loyalty to the program. Only those articles and speeches are permitted which rehash the oracular maxims of the leader. The voice of the entire Soviet press has become the voice of swinish and loathsome toadyism. One cannot, without blushing from burning shame, look upon the outraged covenants of the party and the trampled down banner of the October revolution!

Defense of the U.S.S.R.

It is self evident how important are the successes of industrialization from the viewpoint of the technical reinforcement of the Red Army and the Red Fleet. The world wide situation imperiously imposes upon the armed forces of the Soviet Union a role of exceptional importance both in the West and the East. But it is precisely within this sphere that a policy of illusions would prove most dangerous and criminal. The Red Army is not reducible to military technique alone. In war, bread and meat play no less a role than projectiles for artillery; the horse occupies no less a place than does the tractor. The living forces of the army have as a reservoir the workers and peasants. The mood of the workers determines the mood of the army. Taken on the scale of a major war, military technique itself is a function of the entire economy, demanding from the latter inner harmoniousness and ability to operate without a hitch.

If Stalin seeks to justify the material privations of the toilers as a sacrifice they place upon the altar of state defense, then this explanation is as false as are all the bureaucratic totals of the first five year plan. In point of fact the disjunction between rural economy and industry hits directly at the army and saps at the will power of the Soviet government in the international arena. Without the acute disorganization of Soviet economy, the extraordinary insolence of Japanese Imperialists as well as the free play for the activities of German Fascism would have been impossible. The Stalinist religion of pacifism, of the Geneva as well as the Amsterdam brand, is the religion of weakness. Today the chief defense of the proletarian State lies in the putrefaction of world capitalism. While that is very important, it is still an insufficient means of defense. In order to conquer the initiative in the world arena, it is necessary to rehabilitate the economic foundation of the Soviet state.

The Stalinized Comintern

If one were to leave aside for the moment the conscious and unconscious damage done by the bureaucracy, the onerous internal condition of the Soviet Union is rooted in the economic backwardness of the country and in the interna-

tional isolation of the proletarian State. But, in its turn, the present isolation is the result of the policies of the Comintern. The vain glorious overestimation of the internal successes achieved in the USSR is just as criminal as the underestimation of the tasks of the international revolution. It is absolutely essential that Soviet economy be built up, step by step, thus reinforcing the foundation of the dictatorship of the proletariat and preparing the elements of the future Socialist state—but that is not enough. Should the European bourgeoisie batter down the workers with the club of Fascism and retard the revolution for decades, no economic successes whatsoever can save the Soviet Union. The problem of capitalist encirclement poses us face to face with the strategy and tactic of the Communist International, its chain of mistakes and crimes.

Within the USSR, where the Stalinist bureaucracy has at its disposal the mighty resources of the State, its policies could still masquerade its bankruptcy for a number of years; squandering the basic capital of the revolution but not leading directly to catastrophic consequences. On the world arena, where the open struggle is compulsory against the social democracy and all other forces of bourgeois society, the policies of bureaucratic Centrism have already succeeded in exposing themselves in all countries and in all quarters of the globe, as the systematic, even if unconscious sabotage of the proletarian revolution. For the past ten years, the Stalinist leadership has contributed nothing to the struggle of the international proletarian vanguard, save mistakes, confusion, demoralization and defeat. Bulgaria, Germany (1923), Estonia, one again Bulgaria (1924), China (the period of the bloc with Chiang Kai-Shek as well as all the subsequent policies), England (the Anglo-Russian Committee), Spain (the period of revolution)—such is the far from complete geographical inventory of the genuine deeds of damage perpetrated by the Centrist bureaucracy in the sphere of international revolution. The growing isolation of the Soviet Union cannot be compensated for by any "non-aggression pacts" whatsoever.

There has not remained a living spot upon the body of world capitalism. Reformism has drained to the dregs its fund of beggary and slavish sagacity, and it stands before the proletariat exposed in its impotence, branded by its treachery. In the Soviet Union—as the Stalinists insist—the five year plan has been fulfilled, and socialism has been absolutely guaranteed. What other conditions are there required for the Comintern in order to overthrow the organizations of reformism that have rotted to the core, and to collect around itself the proletarian masses and lead them to the conquest of power? Concurrently, however, official Communism everywhere is losing positions and influence, is becoming isolated away from the masses, and is being forced out of the trade unions. At best, sections of the Comintern now serve as thoroughfares for the unemployed.

Its mode of action in Germany has been the tragic zenith of the international defeatism of the Stalinist faction. Were one to set as one's conscious goal: to save from disintegration the crime-spotted social democracy; and to open the shortest road to power for Fascism—none could have devised a tactic more direct than that employed. Stalin placed General Chiang Kai-Shek into the saddle with the friendly hand of an ally; as for Hitler, he made the road to power easy by guaranteeing the division of labor between the social democratic and Communist bureaucracies; screening themselves behind different phrases, they both have led and still lead the tactic of retreat, marasmus, and cowardice. The results are an open book. To serve its class enemy under the guise of waging irreconcilable struggle against it—this is the curse that hangs heavy over Centrism!

Groupings in the C.P.S.U. and the Comintern

The course of events within the CPSU shows that the economic crisis has turned into the crisis of the revolution, and that it is forcing its way more and more decisively from below to the tops, through the state and party apparatus.

The exclusive Stalinist faction that is mustered around the plebeian "leader", whom it has ceased to trust, exerts its efforts desperately in order to maintain itself. The first condition requisite for this is not to permit the party's awakening. Repressions against the opposition have now assumed a mass character such as did not obtain even in 1928 when promises were given and taken that all opposition would be "liquidated" once and for all. Naturally the chief blows are directed against the Bolshevik-Leninists, the only faction whose authority has grown immeasurably and continues to grow.

Two most recent facts are particularly significant of the situation in the party; the arrests and deportation of the leaders of the Left Opposition who capitulated about four years ago, and the complete and final capitulation of the leaders of the Right Opposition. A few months after the quite noto-

rious deportations of Zinoviev and Kamenev to Siberia, Stalin arrested L. N. Smirnov, Preobrazhensky, Ufimtsev, Ter-Vagayian and about 100 former Left Oppositionists connected with them. The significance of this fact must be plumbed to the bottom. Those concerned are old Bolsheviks; they had built the party, carried it through on their shoulders during the years it was driven underground, participated in the October Revolution and the Civil War, and created together with the faction of Bolshevik-Leninists. When (in February 1928) under the pressure of food shortages, Stalin made a sharp turn to the side of planned industrialization, and of struggle against the kulait, an influential section of the Left Opposition, became frightened by the perspective of a split, capitulated to the bureaucracy, and extended to it trust on credit. In its own time this fact, played a major political role in that it strengthened the position of the Stalinist bureaucracy and retarded for a long period the influx to the ranks of the Left Opposition. Today we have the balance sheet of the experiment made by the honest, sincere and not careerist capitulation: after departing Zinoviev and Kamenev, Stalin arrested Smirnov, Preobrazhensky, Ufimtsev and the rest! This blow at the top had been preceded in the course of the past year by the arrests of several hundred rank and file capitulators, who anticipated their leaders' in returning to the road of the Left Opposition. Within the last two years, a truly gigantic shift has occurred in the consciousness of the party, for the regroupings at the top are only belated and diluted reflections of the profound processes that occur in the masses. Here we have an extraordinarily clear illustration of the power that is latent in the correct and undeviating line of politics; isolated individuals and groups, outstanding even in regard to their revolutionary qualities, may drift at times into the camp of the enemy, under the influence of temporary conditions, but they are forced ultimately, by the march of events, to return to the old militant banner.

There is an altogether different, but in its kind no less symptomatic significance in the 100 percent capitulation of Rykov, Tomsky and Bucharin. The political cohorts of these leaders spread far into the camps of class enemies. As we had forecasted more than once, the sharpening of the crisis of the revolution could not but inevitably throw the Bolshevik and tiny head of the Right Opposition up against its lefty counter-revolutionary tail. The moment for this has arrived. Alarmed by the mood of their own followers, leaders of the Right crawled unconditionally on their knees to the official leadership. They were able to go through with this surgery all the more easily because no matter how acute the internecine fight became from moment to moment, it nevertheless remained the fight between Left and Right shadings in the camp of bureaucratic Centrism.

In this manner, the capitulation of the Right wing leaders reflects the differentiation of the Right Opposition, which remained amorphous but which indubitably was the most numerous of all groupings of the last period. Workers by tens of thousands, party men among them, dismayed by the economic adventurism of the bureaucracy, gravitated all the more naturally to the side of the Right wing leaders, the more sincerely they were inclined to interpret Stalin's policies as the direct application of "Trotskyism", after they had been hoodwinked by the entire preceding anti-Trotskyist demagoguery. The differentiation of the Right wing means the liberation of these proletarian elements from under the Thermidorian influences; and their drawing inevitably closer to the Left Opposition, the

ill features of which are only now becoming distinct, in the light of their personal experience. The political groupings in the party are becoming clear-cut, the levels of reservoirs come into clear view. Concurrently the "Workers' Opposition" and "Democratic Centralism" have factually disappeared from the political arena. The proletarian elements from among the intermediate groupings in the opposition of the last years are gravitating toward the Bolshevik-Leninists, the only faction that has a clear program, tested in the furnace of events; and that has not lowered its banners for an instant.

Even though not quite so clearly, an analogous process is to be observed also on the international scale. During the time when ruling Centrism, incapable even of posing the question of an international Congress, stopped giving any answers whatsoever to the most burning questions of the world revolution; during the time when the Right wing (Brandierites) because of the centrifugal forces that govern opportunism, ceased completely to exist as an international tendency—the Bolshevik-Leninists, and they alone, proved capable of calling together an international conference, under the present and most difficult conditions, and at this conference they gave a clear answer to the most important and debatable problems of the world proletarian movement for the entire post-Leninist period.

No matter what course the development of the world proletarian revolution takes in the next few years—and this depends directly upon the outcome of the struggle against Fascism in Germany and upon the change of the course in USSR—for the Left Opposition, upon the international scale, there has opened the epoch of assured upsurge. The fiftieth anniversary of Marx's death is honored by official celebrations in two camps, reformism and centrism. But from now on the fate of the revolutionary Marxian, i. e. genuine Bolshevik policies is inextricably tied with the fate of the Communist Left Opposition.

The Capital Reconstruction of Economy

In their appraisal of the possibilities and tasks of Soviet economy, Bolshevik-Leninists take as their point of departure not the rapid abstraction of socialism in a country but the real historical process in its world relations and living contradictions. Only the foundations that have been laid by the October revolution can guard the country from the fate of India or China and assure, in the present transitional epoch, serious successes on the road of transforming capitalist society into socialism. The discussions concerning our supposed "denial" of the proletarian character of the October revolution are a hodgepodge of scholasticism, ignorance and lies. The whole gist of the matter lies in the fact that it is possible to pursue various policies upon the social and political bases of the Soviet Union. What still remains to be decided is—precisely which one?

In order to cure the economy which has been disordered by the epigone leadership, i. e., to mitigate the disproportions, strengthen the link between the city and the village, create a stable unit of currency, and improve the condition of all to break away from the bureaucratic muddle and lying. The general character of economic measures, which are dictated by the situation today, may be most correctly denoted by the word, retreat. It is precisely because the collec-

tive farms have spread over too extensive a field on one blow that the workers' government cannot find sufficient means to counteract the break-down of kolkhozi. The measures of repression must inevitably correct their impotence. The only discrete mode of activity lies in sacrificing quantity to gain in quality. Upon the political plane this same task may be formulated otherwise, to wit, sacrifice space in order to gain time.

It is necessary to check the strength of centrifugal tendencies in the kolkhozi and to open up an economically rational outlet for these tendencies by leaning upon the peasant poor, the rural workers, the best kolkhozi, and the best collective farmers. It is necessary to preserve and develop those kolkhozi which have demonstrated their viability, or which may prove viable in the nearest future, in accordance with their available resources and the interest shown by their members.

The Stalinists, of course, will resume their din that our readiness to retreat from 60% collectivization to 40%, and maybe even to 25% (the percentage must be economically determined by actual test, and not set bureaucratically beforehand) signifies "capitulation", "the restoration of capitalism", etc., etc. If so, why then did these bravos desist from completing their collectivization 100% as they set out to do? Why was it decreed sacred to hold to that line at which adventurism stalled at the well-known moment, and already well in the process of retreat? One must not be alarmed by the pseudo-revolutionary bogies lisped by the bureaucracy. Retreat without battle from revolutionary conquests is equivalent to betrayal. The retreat from bureaucratic adventurism is demanded by revolutionary realism. In relation to rural economy it is necessary first of all and regardless of everything else to restore the rule: Leadership and not bulldozing!

The differentiation in the peasantry is still inevitable for a protracted period; there will be well to do kolkhozi as well as poor ones; within isolated kolkhozi there will be not only preserved but also developed considerable social distinctions, with the development of productive forces. And over and above that, there exist 10 million individual enterprises! Such a correlation must be established with the peasant mass as would eliminate the "de-classed" kulak from leading the peasantry against the Soviet state. One must come to an understanding with the moujik. Concessions must be made to the middle peasant. And the village poor must be economically strengthened by the tax, credit, and cooperative systems, by the policies of machine and tractor stations, etc., etc., without at the same time depriving either individual peasants, or the prosperous kolkhozi, or the more well to do collective farmers of the stimulus to further accumulation. The insanity of mechanically liquidating the kulak must be rejected decisively, completely and unconditionally. It is necessary to understand and to admit that the kulak exists not in the guise of "reminders" or of "psychological survivals" but as an economic and social factor. The return must be made to the policy of systematically confining the exploiting tendencies of the kulak, in a serious manner, and for a prolonged period, practically unto the victory of the proletariat in the West.

Such a system of combined activities can be applied with success only in the event that the pauperized layers of the peasantry are organized in the Union of the Village Poor, the chief support of the party in the village. The tempos of industrialization must be subordinated to the task of restoring the dynamic equilibrium of economy as a whole. One must reject the development of mis-

takes in the plan merely because they were declared holy in the specifications of the day before. The programs of capital undertakings must be radically gone over, and all those which are obviously no match for the forces of the country must be immediately stopped. The inevitable loss of billions today will safeguard against the future loss of tens of billions. It can be a safeguard against the worst thing possible, against catastrophe.

Even at this moment it may be said with assurance that the industrial growth of 16% for 1933, set for the sole purpose of not breaking too sharply with the adventurist first stages of yesterday, will turn out absolutely unfeasible. In 1932, industry grew only 8.1-2% instead of 36% as was stipulated in the plan. The point of departure must be taken from these actual attainments in 1932, in order that still higher coefficients may be attained by gradually reinforcing the ground resources. These resources which are liberated by way of lowering the tempos must be immediately directed partly into the funds for consumption and partly into light industry. "The condition of the workers must be improved at any price." (Rakovsky). During the construction of socialism people must live like human beings. What is broached here is the perspective of decades and not a military campaign, or "a Saturday" or an isolated case of extraordinary intensification of forces. Socialism is the labor of future generations. But it must be so assembled as to permit the living generations to carry it on its back. The stable of currency system must be restored, as the only reliable regulator of planned economy at the present stage of its development. Without it, the locomotive of planned economy will inevitably fail to make the grade.

For an honest Party Regime! For Soviet Democracy! No new revolution is necessary to save and strengthen the dictatorship. A profound and an all-sided and fully thought out reform will completely suffice. The whole question lies in who will put it through. This question touches not persons or cliques but the party. It is absolutely self-evident that the ruling party in the USSR is in extreme need of a purification from agents of the class enemy, careerists, Thermidorians, and the ordinary candidates for a meal ticket. But this job is not for the hands of the bureaucratic clique. Only the revived party itself, to be more exact, only its proletarian kernel is capable of ridding itself of the foreign and inimical elements. The strangling of the party which took place in the course of the last ten years is the reverse side of the interminable attacks upon the Left Opposition. It is impossible to revive the party without returning the Opposition into its ranks. That is the first demand which we put forward and which we call upon all Communists, young Communists, and all class conscious workers to support. We direct this slogan at the Right Opposition as well. We do not trust the selections of Stalin-Meuchinsky-Yagoda; they have as their criteria not the interests of the proletarian revolution but the interests of the clique. The purification of the party of real opportunists, to say nothing of the Thermidorians, must be carried out freely and openly, by the will of the party masses. What is at stake is the fate of the party and of the Soviet regime. Lenin saw the democratization of the administration as the most important task of the dictatorship. "Every cook must learn how to manage the government." The process that has taken place is quite the reverse. The number of the administrators did not grow to include "every cook", it constricted instead to a solitary chef, and thereto only a specialist in petty party courses. The political regime has become unbearable to the masses, even as the name of its pack-bearer is becoming more and more hateful to them. As far back as 1926 Stalin was told that he was clearly filling himself as a candidate for the post of undertaker to the party and the revolution. For the past six years Stalin has come very close to the fulfillment of this role. Through-out the party and outside of it, there is spreading ever wider the slogan, "Down with Stalin". The causes for the origin and the growing popularity of this "proverb" require no explanations. But nevertheless we consider this slogan incorrect. The question touches not Stalin personally, but his faction. It is true that for the last two years it has become extremely constricted in its scope. But it still includes many thousands of apparatus functionaries. Other thousands and tens of thousands, whose eyes have been opened as regards Stalin, continue to support him nevertheless, from fear of the unknown. The slogan, "Down with Stalin", may be understood, and could inevitably be understood, as the slogan for the overthrow of the faction now in power, and even more—the overthrow of the apparatus. But we do not want to overthrow the system but to reform it by the efforts of the best proletarian elements.

It is self-evident that an end must be and will be put to the Bonapartist regime of a single leader, or of the pack compelled to reverse him, because that is the most shameful perversion of the idea of the revolutionary party. But the matter touches not the expulsion of individuals, but the changing of a system.

It is precisely the Stalinist clique that indefatigably circulates rumors to the effect that the Left Opposition will return to the party not otherwise than with a sword in its hand, and that it will immediately begin merciless reprisals against its factional opponents. This poisonous lie must be refuted, repudiated, and exposed. There is no feeling for revenge in politics. Bolshevik-Leninists never were motivated by it in the past, and least of all do they intend to be motivated by it in the future. We know only too well those historical reasons which have driven tens of thousands of party members into the blind alley of bureaucratic Centrism. We are motivated by considerations of revolutionary expediency, and not by revenge. We make no exceptions beforehand. We are ready to work hand in hand with every one who seeks to prevent catastrophe through the restoration of the party.

For an honest party regime! This means: for a regime that allows members of the party to say out loud what they think; that eliminates double-dealing, the intra-lineing of the Stalinist monolith; that has no leaders who inherit leadership for life; that freely reelects all the leading organs during congresses of the party; that has an apparatus which serves the party, and the party that serves the proletariat. For Soviet democracy! This means that the party directs the system of proletarian dictatorship, but does not strangle the mass organizations of the toilers, but on the contrary leads them to the burgeoning of their initiative and independence. As one of the most important means for the disciplining of any and every apparatus and for subordinating them to the party, the secret ballot must be introduced within trade unions and the Soviets, during elections of executive organs,—this to be done gradually and regularly, widening the scope on the basis of what experience demonstrates.

For an Honest Party Regime! For Soviet Democracy

The historically created groupings within the Bolshevik party must be bound to carry on their entire activities within the framework of serious discussions, free from personal persecution and calumny, prepare for the extraordinary congress of the party. This can be attained only by struggle. Bolsheviks by hundreds and thousands must raise their voices in protest against the usurping clique, that tramples upon the party and leads the revolution to ruin. "We demand an honest party congress!" Let this slogan unite the Left Opposition with all party members who are worthy of the name.

This same system of activity must be extended to include the Comintern. The Third International can be saved from further degeneration and complete collapse only by the radical change of all its policies, first of all that in Germany. The political turn, here as well, is inseparable from the change in the regime. The readmission of the Left Opposition into all sections must be the first step. The democratically prepared for congresses of national sections compose the second stage. The World Congress of the Communist International is the consummation. The platform of the Left Opposition upon the questions of the world proletarian revolution, has been expounded in numerous documents, and has been consolidated in the program theses of the International Pre-Conference of Bolshevik-Leninists, in the beginning of February, of this year. It is with this platform and not with the sword of vengeance that the Left Opposition will return to the ranks of the Comintern. This platform it shall place upon the table of the next world Congress.

Two and a half years ago, the Left Opposition gave the alarm signal because of the danger from German Fascism. Concealed and illicit as Fascism, the Stalinist bureaucracy accused us of "over-estimating" National Socialism and even of "hysteria". The events have brought their merciless verification. Today—not for the first time but with tenfold force—we sound the alarm signal because of the situation in the USSR. Here the immediate danger threatens not from without but within. Bureaucratic Centrism has become the chief source of danger.

For the struggle against it we call upon all true revolutionists, all class conscious workers, all Leninists, who have remained Leninists. The task is difficult, and the struggle will cost lives. But it must be pursued to the end. The ranks must be closed, the cadres must be strengthened, and the connections must be spread wider. No repressions whatsoever will paralyze our efforts, for the atmosphere of sympathy envelops more and more solidly the work of the Left Opposition in the party.

Bolsheviks of the Soviet Union, Bolsheviks of the World! Soviet economy is in danger! The dictatorship of the proletariat is in danger! The International Revolution is in danger! Upon all of you, upon all of us, there is placed the incomparable responsibility before history. —L. TROTSKY.

The New I. L. D. Scottsboro Lawyer

(Continued from page 1) sacred" such "ancient shrines of our civilization" as "our Caucasian sense of even-handed justice," he praises Alabama's "great heritage of honor", and he rings the chimes of white chauvinist condescension as follows: "Persons of substance in the Southern states have recognized for many generations a moral obligation toward the simple and generous folk whom slavery brought them first as chattels."

The fact that the I.L.D. has during the past two weeks issued numerous statements concerning Liebowitz's activities without once mentioning his attack on the I.L.D. line, seems to indicate that his insolent letter of Jan. 9 was swallowed by the I.L.D. and that the I.L.D. proposed to make no reply. The I.L.D. has always put itself forward as a class struggle organization. Its principles call for the defense of all victims of class justices by means of an able legal fight based on mass pressure. It has contended that this strategy not only provides the best defense for the case at issue, but that it alone defends the general principle involved in every case. It proclaims that it approaches all cases from the angle of the class struggle, reveals the political underpinnings of class justice, and fights a principled fight. To do less is to risk the defendants immediately concerned, or at best, as reformist organizations have repeatedly done, to jeopardize all future victims of class justice by trading the principles involved for an immediate partial concession.

This position the I.L.D. was always explained to outside attorneys who accept legal assignments from it. It has not required them to espouse the philosophy of the I.L.D., but it has required them to remain silent on all points where they disagreed with it. It has insisted that they serve purely as court-room technicians entitled to interfere neither in word nor deed with the I.L.D.'s conduct of the political struggle. Such, for example, were the terms on which the I.L.D. retaining Walter Pollack, a liberal whose philosophy is distinctly not one of class struggle, for the trial before the Supreme Court of the United States. Pollack was, as Lenin insisted lawyers always must be, the instrument, the tool of the class which employed him. Only if the relationship is on such a basis can the I.L.D. relate a good legal fight to the fundamental and essential political fight.

This does not seem to be the basis of Liebowitz's relation to the Scottsboro Defense. He is getting a free hand to attack that defense from a platform given him by the I.L.D. He attacks the mass struggle which has saved the Scottsboro boys four times, he maneuvers just as would an NAACP lawyer seeking to make a deal. When one considers these facts in relation to the equally regrettable fact that the mass defense movement has died down in recent weeks almost to the vanishing point, it begins to look as though the I.L.D. were teetering on the brink of a rotten and dangerous piece of opportunism. To force Liebowitz to hold his

mouth on political questions while he conducts a court-room technical job will, however, not be enough. It is no surprise that New York's most notorious gangster lawyer behaves this way. Least of all is it a surprise to the leading functionaries of the I.L.D. who had due warning from his letter of Jan. 9. Who was responsible in the first place for hiring a man of this stripe who so clearly announced his vicious intentions? The cynical opportunists who took that responsibility were betraying the basic political aspects of the case as well as the interests of the nine Scottsboro boys. They and along with them those functionaries of the Communist party who gave them permission to take the step, deserve a rap over the knuckles. It is up to the I.L.D. and Party rank-and-file to administer that rap.

The Left Opposition favors, as it always has, the broadest united front movement on behalf of the Scottsboro boys on all immediate working class issues. It demands that the Communist party maintain freedom of criticism in such united fronts. Similarly, the I.L.D. must maintain its freedom and must not permit its allies or its employees to attack it while its mouth remains shut. Down with sectarianism and opportunism! Substitute for these the Leninist tactic of the united front! There is no other sound basis for mobilizing the American masses in defense of the Scottsboro boys, in attack on general persecution of Negroes, for the common interests of all workers, white and black.