LIFE IN STALIN'S PRISONS

Dr. Ciliga Continues Series on Persecution and Political Life of Polish Bund Flays Stalinists for Pogrom In-Imprisoned Revolutionists in the Soviet Union

(Continued from Page 1)

trials of wreckers were prepared and organized. One of the men who "confessed" spoke to me as follows: "They kept me in solitary confinement for five months, without newspapers, without tobacco, without my being allowed to receive packages (of food and clothing) or to see my family. I was starved and tortured by loneliness. They kept demanding that I confess myself guilty of acts of wrecking that never took place; I refused to assume responsibility for crimes I never committed-I was afraid of self-accusations, but the prosecu- the middle of October. True to its really for the Soviet power, as I where we were being taken. Only need of my confessions, and there- Uralsk. We arrived there on the fore I must give them. I need not evening of November 7. Throughbe afraid of the consequences be- out the day, from our car windows, my unreserved confessions into ac- rades, the celebrations in the cities were being sent to Germany to visit to work (he was an engineer), and other places through which we with downright envy! If some enable me to expiate my sins passed. Everywhere against the workers delegation or a democrathrough work. I would immedi- sky rose the foundations, walls and tic delegation would only arrive ately be permitted to receive visits chimneys of factories, power plants from abroad to pay us a visit, to from my family, obtain newspapers and industrial giants in process of take a look at what is going on, and packages, and go out for walks. construction. A new America, and observe how we are living in But if I persisted in remaining cruel and mighty sprouting over the prisons, concentration camps, stubborn and kept mum, I would one-sixth of the terrestrial globe. . . and exile! But for some reason or be treated ruthlessly and not only The three of us, all Yugoslavs other, the self-same leaders of the find myself subjected to repres- (comrade Draguitch was brought loreign working class organization, sions but my wife and children there three months later) spent 24 and the self-same democratic lawwould be persecuted as well. . . . For months I refused to capitulate, Verkhne-Uralsk political prison-(a protest against the terrors of Hitbut then things became so hard, I was so lonely that it seemed to me minology). This prison is an old unconcerned about measures, quite Several of the imprisoned female that the future could hold nothing military jail, a structure three worse in store. In any case, I be- stories high on the steppes of the came indifferent to everything. Ural Cossacks. The bottom story Then I proceeded to sign everything of the prison is very cold. One has the prosecutor demanded."

mediately permitted to receive ting in the cells of the first tier. newspapers, visits, books, packages, The inside window panes become and was transferred to a common covered during the night with a cell. The G.P.U. kept its promise. His lot was improved by his false self-accusations (and his accusations of others, although he made Student Strike no mention of them directly to me). But why does the G.P.U. inmony? Obviously in order to shift Fascism they supported the prothe responsibility for the difficulties and failures in the fulfillment of the Five Year Pan from the Government onto the shoulders of the engineers-that is the answer. In this jail I later ran across many similar cases.

In the Leningrad prison I was also treated to the spectacle of people compelled to spend the entire day standing in the corridor before the doors of the prosecutor's office-without food or sleep-or, subjected to 16-24 hours' grilling in order to force from them "confessions" wanted by the G.P.U.

There is no sense in deluding oneself that these inquisitorial tortures are, if you please, applied only to the representatives of the former ruling classes, or to the bourgeois intelligentsia, and the middle classes. No. They are applied to workers. I saw a saflor who, on being led out from the cell, was several times told that he was going to face the firing squad. He was led out into the yard, and then brought back to the cell.

"After all, you are a worker. We don't want to shoot you down like otic position of the Young Commu- quality he reveals is a vanity that a White Guard. As a worker you nist League. should make a clean breast of

The sailor persisted in refusing to confess. But as a result of these tortures he went half-mad. Then he was left in peace. They insisted that he confess his fictitious participation in a fictitious plot against Stalin. This happened not after the Kirov affair in 1934, but long before, in the year 1930.

Persecution of Chinese

All that I witnessed in the Leningrad prison came as a frightful blow to me. Until then I had the highest regard for the G.P.U. This was another one of the phases which demonstrated to me that the degeneration of the once revolutionary power had gone much fur ther than I had presumed. I immediately protested to the prosecutor against these horrors, tortures, false accusations, and

Upon the conclusion of the investigation of my case, I sent a letter to the collegium of the G.P.U. and the C.E.C. of the U.S.S.R., demanding that I be permitted to depart abroad. My communication was left unanswered. There was no need to treat us with ceremony, for we were only representatives of a small Balkan people. Together with my Yugoslav comrade Deditch, I was shipped off to the political prison in the Urals. The question of my returning home was postponed indefinitely. As I found out Entered as second class mail matter later, the treatment accorded us was quite "respectable." After all, I was a European, a man, as Hitler would say, belonging to the

But so far as Chinese and all the present Soviet rulers deal with them much more uncerem niously: they are generally not

recognized as political prisoners. Thus, for instance, the students, the Communist Oppositionists of the former Chinese University of Sun Yat Sen in Moscow were either shipped to the worst exile areas and into concentration camps where only criminals were sent, or they were simply handed over for extermination to Chiang Kai-shek (they were placed on board of a ship which goes from Vladivostok to Shang-

political isolator, in Russian ter- ler Germany keep quiet and remain Heavy Casualties Among Prisoners to wear overshoes and sheepskin .The consequences? He was im- throughout the entire winter, sitthick sheet of ice.

(Continued from Page 1)

"genuine neutrality." Officially, the Communist Party favors legislation pledging the U. S. government to sanctions against the aggressor. But this position was not presented book to see that the "personal at Cleveland. Similar "inconsisten quarel" myth is completely exploded the American Youth Congress.

In the A.S.U., the Young Comvoice in the national committee. the Y.C.L.ers on the committee. The

result has already been stated. Pacifism has always been rampant among the students-during peacetime! This pacifism was easily converted into the most frenzied patriotism during the last war. "Rehearsals" for action against war when it breaks along pacifist lines can have only this effect. For the militant struggle against war, pacifist and patriotic slogans and concepts must be rejected. In the concrete situation this implies above all a struggle against the widespread Rooseveltian illusions of the students and the social-patri-

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bread and gruel for dinner and ists in Stalinist Russia. supper, day in and day out, from year to year. In addition we got a tiny portion of bad fish or of

we began reading in the papers years (until May, 1933) in the yers who grow indignant at any

The food is the traditional fare similar in nature, taken against comrades among the Bolshevik-Len-

The Hunger Strikes

In 1931 we went through an 18canned, and often half-rotten meat. day hunger strike in our prison. cases of insanity-Vera Berger and they feel for their Polish Father- "in accordance with reports carried Conflicts broke out several times It passed peacefully, and most of Victor Krainy, who were trans- land, and their readiness to defend by the 'Left' papers." over the rotten meat. Once a week the demands were granted. This ferred to an insane asylum—there its frontiers against "foreign agwe were given vinaigrette (a sause was the only case of a peaceful was the serious psychical illness of gressors". The real enemies of the in the Volkszeitung article, it is made of vinegar and oil—Ed.). settlement of a conflict. During Marusia Ivanova, whose name is Polish people, according to the Stal-clear that the Polish Stalinists have "his day was considered a holiday. the 1930 conflict, during one of the famous throughout all of Siberia as inists (who masquerade under the appointed themselves as spies to Two times a year—on May 1 and harshest winters, in the month of the heroine of the civil war and of name of "Lefts"), is a small gang snitch on the "disloyal acts" of Comrade Deditch and myself on November 7—we received a slice February, the prison administrathe underground struggle against of Fascist plotters at the head of the Trotskyists who have entered the consequences of such grave were removed from Leningrad in of white bread. But even this tion—the self-same G.P.U.—used Kolchak. After a long drawn out the Government who are bent on the Bund.) modest and monotonous fare was the water hose, sprayed the pro- struggle, the G.P.U. agreed to free selling Poland to Hitler and his tor kept assuring me that if I was methods, the G.P.U. did not tell us given us in inadequate quantities. testing prisoners with ice water, her from jail but refused to let Nazis. The portions were slightly in- broke the windows, and shut off the her go to her relatives, sending said I was, then I must prove it in Chelyabinsk did we learn that creased only after the 18-day hunthe Stalinist social-patriotic camthe Stalinists that the Bund is "not by deeds: the Soviet power was in our destination was Verkhne- ger strike in 1931. The quality, the G.P.U. went even further— prisoners, Andrey Grayev, became paign, their beating of the drums a barracks", and that differences unfortunately, remained unchanged. after they were doused with water stone-blind in the prison after the for a "People's Front" is accom- of opinion are permissible in its When, in the beginning of 1933, from the hose, the prisoners were brutal acts of the G.P.U. in Februbound hand and foot, and, in this ary, 1930. cause the Soviet power would take we could observe the October pa- about the workers' delegations that condition, soaking wet, hog-tied, without any food, they were left count, and give me an opportunity of Troitsk, Magnitogorsk, and the prisoners there, we were seized lying on the cement floors for three days and three nights-"in solitary confinement." Such is the juridical label for these abominations. In the 1934 hunger strike, which was held in protest against the arbitrary automatic and universal extension of the prison terms, the Communist Oppositionists were once again hog-tied and subjected to forced artificial feeding, and then, they were transferred either to concentration camps or to other prisons.

Malcolm Cowley

(Continued from Page 2)

which coincided with Lenin's illness and the opening of the campaign against "Trotskyism.' The struggle of the epigones for power, as I shall try to prove, was not merely a struggle of personalities; it represented a new political chapter—the reaction against October, and the preparation of the Thermidor. From this the answer to the question that I have so often been asked—'How did you lose power?"-follows naturally." (Pp. v-vi,) One need but thumb through the

cy" is displayed by the Y.C.L. in by Trotsky; it might be said that the raison d'etre of the book is to fabrication when Cowley says ignoble role as Danilov." Trotsky about. When Cowley counterposes

One further example of Cowley's trickery: "But the least admirable is always striking poses and playing roles," writes Cowley; and as proof he weaves together some incidents in Trotsky's life, each one distorted sufficiently—by the simple device of describing them in semihumorous language! If Trotsky makes a forced march in the Civil War back to his main forces, Cowley describes it as "General Phil Sheridan riding twenty miles to Winchester." If Trotsky is forcibly carried into exile, Cowley has him "carried downstairs kicking and squirming." So that, having painted a picture at his own sweet will, Cowley can sagely conclude: "In all these episodes there is a mixture of profound drama with acactor's parade in circumstances that make it seem trivial and unmen and women, ecording to Trotsky's "personality seems less

expected." Expected! The above examples of Cowley's method must suffice. That method is not peculiar to him, but is employed by other Stalinist intellectuals when writing in liberal pub-Nation and the New Republic.

Who was defeated when Trotsky

was defeated? Only Trotsky, ap-

parently, in Cowley's estimation. he would never have written them) indicate the true answer. checked in 1923, with the failure can use no others. of the last German uprisings. In was also suppressed, most Russians decided that their only hope was to develop socialism in their own country. Trotsky the internationalist was thus defeated by events in Shanghai and Berlin." Not only

also defeated. Brandler's policy of sector. In the event of struggles 1923, Borodin's policy of 1927,-this with the administration, both secwas the policy of Stalin based on tors harmonized their actions, supthe "theory of socialism in one porting each other in this or that country"; Cowley can scarcely be form, but otherwise the relations expected to know-he knows so few between the two sectors, even as things about the revolutionary regards the day to day routine, movement-that Stalin's policy was were rigidly differentiated. The ilalready formulated in those days, legal post office was organized against the small groups of Trotand not after 1927. "Today his jointly. tragic burden is that he has been defeated by historical forces," Cowley says of Trotsky. Yes, the world munist sector was divided into a proletariat has been defeated by number of groups and shadings, is the "historical force" which made that defeat possible.

explain the political content of his when he writes: Trotsky "has not The Plan represented a real techmunist League has the predominant struggle. It is an out and out only been expelled bodily from the nological, and, in part, an econocountry he helped to win, but also mic revolution (or. at any rate, as ists, but, on the contrary, it has 500 miners struck at the state The slogans for the student strike Trotsky brings forward the Odessa painted out of its pictures and decould be sensed even back in 1930, been made still sharper—if that is mines near Cracow, remaining unwere arrived at in agreement with school story "to explain his fall leted from its schoolbooks," We an attempt at such a revolution). from power" and that Trotsky be- know that these Stalinist methods The social and political problems lieves that Stalin "played the same are countenanced by Cowley, who which the Five Year Plan posed is one of the editorial sponsors of before all thinking people could does use terms like "self-satisfied the book, written along the specifi- not fail to arouse in the prison a Philistines" to describe the psycho- cations of painting out the picture profound ferment, new seekings, logical effects of the political reac- of Trotsky from the October Revo- and, in part, a crisis in old ideolotion expressed by Stalin's national lution, signed by Barbusse. Does gles. The intense and more or less Bolshevism; it is crystal-clear in Cowley understand the implications fruitful search for answers to new the book what Trotsky is talking of this method of struggle against questions was accompanied by an paper the flowers of this circular: promised "to maintain the terms of this with a "different explanation when the Stalinists cannot meet In 1963-1935 the situation in the of his fall"-so magnanimously !-- Trotsky's arguments on the level country had become more clarified. he is either deliberately lying or he of logical argument? When they the theoretical questions had asis too ignorant to understand what try to conceal from the Soviet popu- sumed a more distinct and intelation not only Trotsky's ideas, but grated form, and, on this basis, even his historical achievements? there occurred a new crystalliza-When prison or worse is the pun-tion of the prisoners into several ishment for speaking or writing basic political groups, among them that Trotsky is not a counter-revo- the unification of all the Bolsheviklutionary? When such methods are Leninists into a single organizaemployed against proletarian oppo- tion. I, too, took the liveliest part nents in the nineteenth year of the in the struggle of groups and ideas, revolution? Has it ever dawned in the search for the theoretical upon Cowley that there is no war- definition of all that was taking rant for the Stalinist pogrom-tactics place at that time, and everything in Marxist-Leninist theory? Does that had occurred during the enhe know that they are as alien as tire 16 years of the revolution, and is Fascism to the revolutionary in the search for the definitions of tradition? But Cowley knows noth- the lessons of the Russian Revoluing; he only knows that he stands tion and the new revolutionary with Stalin, and anything that is tasks. The large numerical strength good enough for Stalin is good of the Verkhne-Uralsk collective of enough for him. Just let Cowley the political prisoners, the presence

more like the task of a policeman revolutionary thought in Russia for who must enforce the law, than the last 20 years helped greatly to tor's parade, and sometimes with the role of the critic whose intel- facilitate the attainment of definite lectual duty is to analyze and interpret. Yes, it does sound like a ing to age at entry. Sick benefit | pleasant." Truly, Cowley is just policeman; and Cowley by natural the entire country to silence, or, payments from \$225 to \$900-to an honest judge who discovers that inclination, past training and pres- rather, to subservience and coment allegiance, functions in the pelled men to repeat parrot-like an sympathetic than the reader had pages of the New Republic as a obviously false official ideology, the literary cop. He is a minion of the large and internally cohesive jail law of Stalin—a cop patrolling his was transformed into a laboratory beat in the book review section of of ideas. The prison became the the New Republic with ready-made only place for free sociological rememoranda drawn up for him by search. I attempted to make funhis Stalinist masters. Like most of damental use of my compulsory lications. Louis Fischer uses it; the beef-eaters patrolling our presence in this prison, this tiny so do others who write for The streets, in a simpler world he would island of liberty. have been a farmer, suspicious of the ways of city folk, good with "The kind of "intellectual" who has been

> PAUL LUTTINGER, M.D. DANIEL LUTTINGER, M.D. and Holidays.

vich, slashed their veins in protest cial-patriotic line of Stalinist dip- lended by the party!" against this bestial treatment. The lomacy, and of the Seventh World

ists of all parties (Russian and Georgian social democrats, Zionists and left S.R.s), the anarchists and individuals from the Right S.R.s and the Maximalists were placed in different cells and composed another, an anarchist-socialist sector (50-80 people, approximately ten to each of the above mentioned organizations).

Each sector had its own "household" economic organization, head- ject of . . . the "Trotskyists." ed by an Elder and a "Minister of while the "Minister of Finance" Trotsky; the world proletariat was had charge of the treasury of the though small numerically)". The against this Fascist drive was held

Political Life

In the political domain the Com-'historicad forces," but Stalinism almost each of them with its own separate organization, its own committees, its own publications. The One wonders whether Cowley Five Year Plan shook up the entire against this group. Just the oppo- among the chocolate workers, the realizes how much he is revealing 170 million population of Russia. site has been the case. Not only taxi drivers, the miners, etc. have

"Trotskylsm"? What does it mean, inevitable sharp internal struggle. there of qualified representatives This, the reader will say, sounds of all tendencies and shadings of

Under conditions that doomed

Ciliga's Prison Conclusions

I was of the opinion that aims cattle, simple and content so long and results justify sufferings and as the seasons kept their appointed victims. As a consequence, I ar- unification took place only after Yet his own few sentences on this rounds, but sullen and savage when rived to the views of the so-called my departure from Verkhne-Uralsk, red the workers of Poland as few point (if Cowley understood them perplexed by a problem. In our ultra-Lefts. I became convinced "The Federation of left Commu- events have in recent months. But world he is a prize exhibit of the that the fundamental and decisive nists' (consisting of extreme left there has been no mitigation in the breaking point in the Russian Rev- Bolshevik-Leninists, a section of offensive of the bosses against the revolution in Western Europe was won by the Communist Party. They olution occurred in 1920-1921, when the D.C.ers. Workers' Opposition, living standards of the workers. the initial steps of the workers to- followers of Myasnikov) was organwards gaining control of production | ized there. This Federation num- | the reports, all the struggles of recame to an unsuccessful conclusion, bered 25 people. The re-united cent months have been under the and when, as a result, the bureau-organization of the Bolshevik-Len-leadership or with the active parcratic state-capitalist organization inists consisted of 140. A section ticipation of the Bund and the Poof industrial production triumphed, of the D.C.ers and "independents" lish Socialist Party. Hundreds of 1-2 and 6-8 Except Sundays | being subsequently correlated un- remained outside both these united socialists were arrested during the der the N.E.P. with concessions to groups. private capitalist elements in agri- (To be continued in next issue) various strikes.

WORLD OF LABOR

citement Against 4th Internationalists By JOHN G. WRIGHT

POLAND

der against the most consistent op- member has the right to defend The imprisoned Communists ponents of the Stalinist treachery ived in their cells and took their in Poland as elsewhere-the "Trotwalks in the prison yard in groups skyists". Upon the entry of the (3-5 cells together, 25-30 people); Trotskyists in Poland into the Bund they composed the "communist sec- and into the Polish Socialist tor" (all told, 140-180). The Social- Party, the Polish Stalinists have "redoubled their efforts".

Under the heading: "The Campaign against the 'Trotskyists' ". The Volkszeitung, the Warsaw organ of the Bund (March 11, 1936) takes cognizance of the most recent piece of Stalinist abomination, a circular issued by the Warsaw C.E.C. of the Communist Youth and addressed to the students, and the working class youth, on the sub-

Finance." Each collective was rep- with the statement that the Bund that Polish Fascists are intensifyresented by the elder in dealings has always looked upon the Trot- ing their anti-semitic propaganda, with the prison administration, skyists" as a part of the interna- and staging actual pogroms against writer then goes on to comment as on March 17, in Warsaw. "We have always viewed with as-

> to use a harsher term) the bitter, the living standard of the workers. arbitrary and envenomed struggle A wave of strikes has been spreadthat the Stalinists have waged ing through Poland for the last skyists. One might have imagined | Early in March, the struggle of that after the Comintern had the textile workers in the city of changed its approach towards the Lodz, and the surrounding region, non-Communist movements, the developed into a general strike in Stalinists would also modify their that area. The Warsaw textile struggle against the Trotskyists; workers were prepared to come out that an end would be put to the also, but the strike was shortly setprevious venomous methods of tled. has there been no modification in been flaring. All these struggles are the struggle against the Trotsky- purely defensive in character. Thus,

> signed by the Warsaw C.E.C. of month. the Y.C.L., addressed to the students and the working class youth struck to compell the manufacturand devoted entirely to the Trot- ers to abide by the contracts signed skyists. We have no intentions of in 1933. The General Strike was replanting in the columns of our called off after the manufacturers we refuse to do the authors of this the agreement", and also to precircular such a favor. Everyone serve the 46 hour week, as well as who has had the occasion to read to "mitigate the methods of introit, and who is not afflicted with ducing rationalization" into the in-Stalinist myopia, has had to agree dustry. that its contents canont be appraised | The Warsaw organ of the P.P.S., otherwise than as an incitation to Robotnik, stated, in commenting

> lar has been read by a few, there cess". are, however, many who have had the opportunity to hear Stalinist ment of the strike, the papers respeeches or to read the so-called ported that in the Lodz area, 800 have been compelled to recognize strike, together with 3,500 knitthat what the "Lefts" permit them- goods workers. selves in relation to the Trotskyists is absolutely unheard-of! Twis- Poland have been unprecedented in ted quotations, the most senseless their brutality. The friction becanards, abusive epithets-all these tween the workers and the police do not quite exhaust the entire ar- came to a head in Cracow, where senal of 'weapons' they employ more than 10,000 workers demonagainst the Trotskyists".

> points out of the Stalinists that the March 20, in the city of Cracow, Trotskyists, who are members of against striking workers. the Bund, have not only obligations towards the party, but that the despite the strict police orders proparty has also a duty towards hibiting it. When the police chargthem: "We, therefore, hold it nec- ed, the demonstrators erected woodessary to stress that in addition to en barricades. The struggle lasted the right to defend their views ful- the entire afternoon. The police

> culture and trade. These conces- from the first opened fire. Eight sions were liquidated, by and large, demonstrators were killed on the during the period of the Five Year spot. More than fifty were wound-Plan, after which there was estab- ed, including several women. Two lished in Russia the system of far- of the wounded died in the hospital. flung bureaucratic state-capitalism The bestiality and ruthlessness in the domain of economy, support- of the police aroused the Cracow ed by a regime of Bonapartism in workers to a fighting pitch. And the sphere of politics.

so-called ultra-Left groupings. This their absence.

ly in the ranks of our party, our The Polish C.P. has not been be- comrades are entitled to one other of the poor Russian mouzhik: workers, peasants and revolution- inists, among them Lena Danilo- hind-hand in following out the so- right, namely, the right to be de-

> Should any member of the Bund consequences of this regime proved Congress of the C. I. The Polish fail in his obligations to the organcatastrophic for a number of com- Stalinists run second to none when ization, he must be called to acrades. In addition to two grave it comes to proclaiming the love count. He will be judged but not

The writer disclaims any knowledge of disloyalty on the part of whatever views he deems to be cor-

In any case, the manner in which the Trotskyists deport themselves is purely the internal business of the Bund, for the latter to decide, and not for the Stalinists.

The article concludes with the following warning:

"We will not tolerate any atempt on any body's part to conduct an incitation to a pogrom against them (i.e., the "Trotskyists")".

. . .

Appropriately enough, the Stalinists are unfolding their pogrom campaign against the Trotskyists The Volkszeitung article begins practically at the same time that tional proletarian movement (even the Jews. A monster protest strike

The rising tide of reaction in Poland is, naturally enough, accomtonishment and deep concern (not panied by a violent drive against two months (since February).

struggle which they have directed Sporadic outbursts elsewhere, derground, because the Government "We have before us a circular introduced a two day lay-off per

At Lodz the textile workers

program against the Trotskyists, upon the settlement of the Lodz "While this mimeographed circu- strike, that it was "quite a suc-

A week after the supposed settle-'Left' publications. And they, too, small textile mills were still out on

The police methods throughout strated on March 23 against the The writer of the article then harsh police methods used on

The demonstration was staged charged with drawn sabers, and

when a few days later, the funeral Because of these views I left the procession took place, thousands 'collective of the le't Bolshevik- marched in the procession, a hun-Leninists," and became one of the dred thousand lined the streets, and initiators of the unification of the the police were conspicuous by

The brutality in Cracow has stir-

So far as can be gathered from Cracow events, as well as in the