

A Reply to a Stalinist Calumniator

By James Casey

Underworld king engage drug addicts, stool pigeons, dim-witted thugs and other unfortunate products of the capitalist system for their foul jobs. When one of these overlords want to snuff out a rival, he gives the sign to two or three of his human derelicts and the morning papers carry a story of so-and-so having been "taken for a ride".

Such crimes fill us with a sense of disgust and class-conscious workers, while condemning the instigators and perpetrators, inveigh basically against the society that breeds this sort of violence.

However, there is rampant today a form of crime more bestial than the underworld murders and a human species more abhorrent to the normal intellect than the gangsters of the racketeer realm.

Stalinists and Apologists

We refer, of course, to the Stalinist executioners and their noisy professional apologists. Here we have a situation wherein men are cruelly maligned, tortured physically and, finally, shot down in cold blood for the "unforgivable sin" of upholding revolutionary working class principles against the perversions of Stalinist People's Frontism.

Bent on "wiping out" the working class opposition, Stalinist leaders here and abroad have marshalled bands of "literary" weaklings to act as shock troops. In America, the business of this pathetic crew is to concoct endless lies and slanders of the most brazen, most contemptible and most cowardly variety. That these lies and slanders may be exposed is to these Stalinist chiefs entirely beside the point. They operate on that golden Hearstian theory that the truth travels at a snail's pace and that many, perchance, will go to the grave without ever knowing it.

Accordingly, the prostitute scribblers rant and boil and snort. Their excretions appear in the *Daily Worker*, the *Pravda* and other Stalinist publications. And one quick reading of their hodge-podge shows that these villifiers, like all liars, become hopelessly enmeshed in their own lies, indicting both themselves and their masters.

Perhaps the most overworked of these forlorn figures is that *Daily Worker* columnist, Michael Gold. Poor Mike! Whenever there is some especially dirty work to be done, Mike is singled out for the job. He has railed against James T. Farrell. He has, on instructions, fumed against Scott Nearing. Under orders from his chiefs, he has scanned Webster's Unabridged Dictionary for the vilest epithets to hurl at Sidney Hook, James P. Cannon and a long list of other writers, economists and political leaders, just because they refuse to concede that to build Socialism, you have to kill off two-thirds or three-quarters of a nation's population.

Gold in Exile

And when poor Mike got kicked out editorship of the *New Masses* because he got the signals mixed up and wrote several weeks before the official command was given that it was "the duty of all workers to support Roosevelt", he was sent to New Mexico on a probationary vacation for his "political health". After nine months in New Mexico, Gold was allowed to return and, as a sort of confession, he was obliged to write a series of Stalinist tracts against Leon Trotsky.

True, the articles didn't make much sense but, then, what they

lacked in coherence, they surely more than made up in name-calling and just plain puerile piffle. The cuss words were lusty and plentiful and what more could Joseph Stalin or Earl Browder desire as a substitute for political argument?

The confession was a howling success. Mike was reinstated. And now he is back at his column, as happy as it's possible for one in his plight to be.

His latest assignment was to "show up" James Casey and try to make a good job of it. These Stalinist chiefs are sly and scheming gentlemen. They are conscious that the election campaign is about to get under way and that the chances are one thousand to one that Casey will get busier than ever blasting full of holes the class betrayal policies of the People's Front bamboozlers. Hence, the Communist Party members must be stirred into a frenzy against Casey. They must be worked up to such a pitch that the very sound of his name will make them want to tear their hair, kill somebody or commit suicide. Hence the Gold effusion in the August 6 issue of the *Daily Worker*.

Mike starts out by saying that a certain professor has quit the Communist Party. He adds that the said professor had gone to Harper's or Scribner's or some other high-brow magazine to write about how he had been misled. This professor, Gold adds, had shunned contact with "real workers". But what can you expect, exclaims Mike, of men who get into the party for six months and leave? Thereupon, Mike launches on his tirade against Casey... implying that the cases of the professor and Casey are identical.

At once poor Mike illustrates to what low depths a man must descend in order to do the bidding of the Stalinist masters. Mike knows as well as do his Stalinist bosses that Casey had never written a line about the Stalinists in any of the capitalist magazines or newspapers. Moreover, Mike and his masters know that Casey is not a newcomer in the revolutionary working class movement. Casey was a member of the Stalinist Party when Gold was still trying to learn the definition of anarchism. And Casey was a member of the Socialist Party in the war days when Gold was memorizing lines from Keats and Shelly and pan-handling nickels around the Rand School.

Who is the Newcomer?

It is Gold, not Casey, who is the newcomer in the working class movement. So much for that.

Mike claims that Casey got peeved because he was not appreciated on the *Daily Worker*. Now, just what kind of mumbo-jumbo is that, Mike? Has Mike Gold so soon forgotten how Mike Gold got up at a Stuyvesant Casino banquet and paid tribute "to our great managing editor of our great revolutionary newspaper." And has Mike Gold so soon forgotten how his own masters—from Earl Browder and Clarence Hathaway down to Ike Amter and Charlie Krumbein—praised Casey from the public platform on numerous occasions because, they admitted, he turned an unreadable organizational bulletin into the semblance of a regular newspaper. Casey did get damned sore while on the *Daily Worker*—but that was when Casey was asked to put into the paper editorials giving left-handed support to Roosevelt in

preparation of the election campaign.

After a bold start, Mike's attack slowly simmers down into a whine. Casey was paid more money than any man on the *Daily Worker*, including Clarence Hathaway, bemoans Mike, and asks: "Why did he kick?"

It is relevant to ask Mike, at this juncture, why doesn't he and his boss Browder get together and decide to stick by the same lies?

Last Summer, Browder rushed to the capitalist press to declare that Casey was "just a minor editorial employee." And now along comes Mike with the statement that Casey wasn't satisfied, even though he was receiving more money than anyone else on the staff. Now isn't Mike just a little bit afraid that some Communist Party rank-and-file members might be curious to know why "upright, disciplined Bolsheviks" should discriminate and pay a minor editorial employee more than anyone else on the staff including the so-called editor-in-chief, even though the latter did spend nine months of the year in Minneapolis bar-rooms.

Gold and Browder at Odds

As Mike goes on, his twaddle grows more and more at variance with that of his boss Browder. Browder told the membership that Casey had gone over to Hearst. So had the *Daily Worker*. Taking Browder at his word, many Communist Party members had been buying the *New York Journal* for months in anticipation of reading one of Casey's articles. Now Mike tearfully whimpers: "If Casey wanted to go back to the *New York Times* and higher wages, why didn't he do so quietly instead of raising a fuss."

Desperately trying to avoid the real issue, Mike seeks to give his readers the impression that Casey has gone back to the *New York Times* and that his "opposition to People's Frontism" was just a pretext.

Needless to say, Mike lies as flagrantly when he implies Casey had returned to the *Times* as did his boss, Browder, when he said Casey had gone to Hearst. And needless to say, also, that if Casey had cared to amass money, he would not have gone to the *Daily Worker* in the first place.

It is toward the end of his fulmination that Mike gives himself away. Why did Casey have to write a pamphlet, asks Gold, "charging the Communist Party with being reactionary and betraying the working class." Therein lies one of the answers to Mike's assignment.

Casey wrote a pamphlet showing how the Stalinists, with the People's Front line, have lost every right to call themselves a revolutionary working class party. The lies about the "new democracy" within the Party, growth in organization and the schuirs to support Democrats in Philadelphia and Republicans in New York, all are brought into the light of day. And Casey also asked why the Stalinist leaders, while calling on their followers to boycott Hearst, were themselves quietly carrying on business transactions with the Fascist publisher.

Eloquent Silence

Not a single word of this does Mike mention. Under the iron rule of Stalinism, Mike dare not try to meet or discuss political issues. That is not the Stalinist way. The Stalinist way is to lie, to distort, to misrepresent and

to invent bedtime stories. That is why Mike recounts supposed conversations that he and Casey had about the latter's wife not being satisfied with *Daily Worker* earnings. For more than a year, Mike claims, he had listened to Casey's complaints. And now, more than twelve months later, Mike suddenly ups and squeals on Casey.

Mike and his masters know full well that Helen Casey was an active worker in the Communist Party and the general fraction secretary of a mass organization in a Bronx section. Helen Casey was one of the largest contributors to the Party fund for many years, and before she was expelled for her opposition to People's Frontism, she challenged the Party leadership to bring her case before the membership. Naturally, this was never done.

By manufacturing the drivel about Helen Casey and alleged conversations, Mike shows himself open to a serious charge. As "the hardened, honest and disciplined Bolshevik" that he boasts he is, why didn't Mike report Casey's deviations to his masters, when Casey was still with the *Daily Worker*? Why did

he wait more than three hundred and sixty-five days before coming out with this confession? Does not Gold realize that by his own statement he placed himself in the position of being branded "a self-confessed Trotskyist plotter" and "an enemy of the people?"

But Mike can quickly dispel his fears. Casey will save him. The conversations Mike writes about took place only in his own perverted mind. They are part and parcel of the necessary trimmings he had to fabricate to carry out a dirty job for callous, unscrupulous masters, who make lying a cardinal principle of their daily operations.

His masters used Yagoda, the chief of the OGPU, for the same kind of dirty work. Now Yagoda is rotting in some dank prison cell or perhaps he has already been shot in the back in the rear of some toilet. The Stalinist chiefs will not always send Mike to New Mexico for his blunders. Mike should chuck up the whole filthy game before it's too late. If he waits until his masters are through using him he may find, to his grief, that they have chosen for him a most unhappy end.

Stalinists Applaud Split Campaign

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the revolutionary road and transform in into an instrument for People's Front class collaboration, of social patriotic support of "democratic" imperialist wars, and of servile bootlicking of the trade union bureaucracy.

The applause given by the *Daily Worker* to the Altman-Thomas drive marks the latter for what it plainly is: a capitulation to the Stalinist campaign by tearing the revolutionary heart out of the Socialist Party. The right wing combination in the SP is serving as a club in the hands of the Stalinists for the complete devitalization and destruction of the revolutionary socialist movement.

"We offer our hand of comradeship to the Socialist Party", concludes the Stalinist editorial. The "hand of comradeship" of the CP bureaucracy drips with the blood of the revolutionary martyrs of the Soviet Union. It is the hand that has just pumped the body of Adres Nin full of machine-gun bullets. It is the hand that is even now whipping up a lynch campaign against Largo Caballero and other left wing socialists, against the anarcho-syndicalists, and all other revolutionists in Spain. It is the hand that squeezed the right wing for more than a year to start the expulsion drive against the Left wing in the American Socialist Party.

ROLL OF HONOR

Here is the first list of revolutionary socialists "expelled" by the rump meeting of the "La Guardia Socialists" in New York:

Max Shachtman. Martin Abern. James Burnham. Joseph Carter. William Farrell. Sam Gordon. Emanuel Garrett. Ben Herman. Morris Lewit. Alex Retzkin. Maurice Spector. Herbert Capelis. Dan Fellows. Clara Ross. Sidney Moroff. Isadore Greenberg. Esther Lieberman. Rubin Gotesky. Sam Greenberg. Sam Gordon. Felix Morrow. Attilio Salemi. Ernest Ettlinger. Irving Shackley. Frank Visconti. Joe Ellis. Ben Lieberman. Ernest R. McKinney. Max Sterling. Martin Glee. Gertrude Brooks. Lyman Paine. Christian Neilson. Mildred Scharfberg. Bernard Morgenstern. George Novack. F. L. Demby. Cuthbert Daniel. Joseph Gott. Betty Smith. Fay Hollenbeck. Dan Eastman. Sam Roth. Abe Roth. Louis Fein. Victor Fox. Sol Antman. Morris Heller. B. Allen Dash. Lou Gordon. Martha Burns. John G. Wright.

The following comprise the list of the comrades still on charges and scheduled for immediate expulsion on the same "grounds":

Hal Draper. Neil Harrison. Ephraim Friend. Arther Kujawsky. Abraham Bienstock. Harry Low. Irving Smiller. Hilda Agloff. Irving Lefb. Philip Shulman. Meldon Joerger. Sam Gilbert. Sidney Feffer. Julie Dorsey. Max Lane. Bertha Gruner. Abraham Miller. Herman Stern. George Zola. Sam Fisher. Raymond Rosenthal. Mary Greenfield. Fred Nessin. Morris Kline. Harold R. Isaacs. Molly Davis. Milton Davis. Edith Konikow. Oscar Trepp. Arthur Burch. Kathleen Burch. Philip Brinkman. David P. Atkins. Jacob Borut. Fred Jacobs. Ed. Beecher. William Sherman. Ada Mecelle. Stanley Loren. Samuel Chertoff. Morris Spector. Phil Markson. David Miller. Robert Paul. Abe Marcus. Martha Burns. Sara Avrin. Sam Eidensohn. Leon Falk. Ben Eidensohn. Daisy Manrat. David Knebel. Paul Schleifer. Harold Robbins. Sol Lankin. Helene Garden. Sol Broden. Moe Kirschenbaum. Louis Halaine. David Geschwind. Joseph Carwell. Frances Rosen. Morton Gates. William Kitt. Milton Winston. Frieda Weber. Leopold Cyens. Ben Davidson. Edna Margolin. Philip Slaner.