

## Harry Milton, Wounded Saved From GPU Jail

Harry Milton, torn from the clutches of the Spanish GPU, is arriving in New York. Wounded on the Aragon front, his sacrifices in the struggle against fascism did not save him from arrest and imprisonment as a revolutionist. Workers' protests saved him.

We print below extracts from Comrade Milton's recent letter: Jefatura Prison, Barcelona, 5-21-37.

The day before yesterday I was arrested by the authorities at Portbow, brought back here and without being given an opportunity to speak or to make any kind of an explanation, thrown into jail. The conditions here in jail beggar description, a long damp stone room, about 100 persons in it. Absolutely no provision for sleeping or resting. No beds, blankets or any sanitary facilities. We are fed twice a day, one thin piece of bread and a little platter of rice and potato soup.

A Spanish edition of the infamous Moscow trials is now being concocted.

Some of the POUM comrades have already been brought before a special tribunal of three judges all of whom are Stalinists. All of them are asked to confirm the alleged link between the POUM and Franco. The entire procedure is a farce.

The anarchist workers are becoming increasingly more impatient with their official leaders and all kinds of anti-leadership and illegal papers have appeared on the streets. In prison with me is my commandant from the front, Kopp, a ranking General. At the front we had been quite friendly but now we are real chums. He's a Belgian engineer, made gun powder secretly for the Spanish Government, was discovered, beat it from Belgium with a lorry filled with guns and ammunition, and since has been at the front. He will probably be shot on the charge of having led the uprising of May 3. So far no charges have been made against me but I assume similar charges will also be made for participating in an "insurrection" while on leave.

The military situation is again extremely serious, with the fall

of Bilbao. It will now be possible for the fascists to move the Bilbao army to raise the siege of Huesca which is now completely surrounded. If they succeed there will be hell to pay in Aragon and Catalonia.

My general health after fifteen days here is beginning to crack. I'm always very tired, very sleepy and have no energy. We have absolutely no exercise and a cockroach would die of starvation on the food.

Falcon Prison,  
July 11, 1937.

I have already told you that with me in prison was Kopp, the commander of my regiment. We had a thorough discussion three days ago, as a result of which we decided to immediately organize a general hunger strike. After taking all the necessary steps to bring it to the attention of the radical and labor press in England and Europe, a letter was sent to the Chief of Police demanding that charges be immediately placed against us or that we be set free. The idea caught on like wild fire. When the politicals learned of our discussion, and that we were already on strike for almost two days, they also decided to participate. All the anarchist prisoners joined in. The POUM refused to participate. After four days the joint Plenum of the Anarchists and the Youth passed a resolution to the government demanding an immediate release.... or else. The government told the anarchists they would take some action but first the strike must end. The anarchists instructed their membership to quit. They did and of course nothing happened. I didn't eat for 5 and one half days.

Paris, August 30.

I take this occasion to convey my deepest and most comradely Salud to my dear friends and comrades, the Bolshevik-Leninists of the United States. For ours is the banner of today and tomorrow. We shall conquer. The day will come when once again the working class will measure swords with the enemy. And when that day comes we shall wipe the capitalist class off the face of the earth. Speed that day.

## SOCIALIST CALL ALIBI ON Y.P.S.L. ANSWERED

### BY COLD FACTS

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had, and may have still some influence in the upper councils of the Methodist youth movement.

One of the new NEC members is the leader of the Altman youth group, Hyman Bookbinder. Barshop, who created a scandal in the League with his record manipulations, was also put on the Committee. Report has it that when he was put in nomination, many delegates booed. How much of this was plain jest and how much honest pique on the part of the few activists present, will likely never be known. Prominent militants, who are known to be left wing in sympathy, were completely excluded from the NEC.

### And a Convention

Most of the delegates at the League convention had met for two long days in left wing caucus session. Yet they went through the convention with no slackening of spirit. An NEC was elected, representative of

every section of the country and, above all, of militancy in the class struggle. Every one of the 18 members was active in some capacity in building the organization. They included union organizers, student leaders, professional revolutionists. No fly-by-night dilettantes. Every one of them was young, though many have years of self-sacrificing experience behind them. Older comrades, leaders in past activities, left the ranks of the youth in order to augment the cadre of party militants.

Ours was no apologetic, pussy-footing tone. The Convention meant a great deal to those delegates who had sacrificed so much to attend. They had come to lay the foundations for a mass revolutionary youth organization. With a bold militancy they organized a Young Peoples Socialist League that, shaking off the petty obstructionists like Clarity, will come to grips with the real enemies, the capitalist class and its reformist agents. Along this road lies the future of the revolutionary YPSL!

## London Buro Aids Stalin Frame-Ups By Refusal To Join Probe Commission

Hypocrisy In Guise of "Impartiality" Shown In Reply By Brockway

By Leon Trotsky

"The London Bureau of Revolutionary Socialist Parties" was invited, together with the Second and Third Internationals, to participate in the International Commission of Inquiry on the Moscow trials. On May 21, Fenner Brockway, in the name of the London Bureau, rejected the invitation. The pertinent section of his reply reads verbatim as follows:

"The International Bureau is not able to endorse the American Commission of Inquiry or to be represented on it because it takes the view that a disastrous mistake has been made in initiating the inquiry through a Committee which describes itself as a 'Committee for the Defense of Trotsky'."

The London Bureau, it would seem, is vitally concerned in the success of the inquiry and if it refuses to give any assistance it is solely due to the fact that the investigation was initiated by the "Defense" Committee. However, Mr. Brockway fails to specify just who should have initiated the inquiry. The new head of the G. P. U. Yezhov? Or the secretary of the Comintern, Dimitrov? Or the King's Counselor, Pritt? Or the secretary of the London Bureau, Fenner Brockway? Or, finally, the Archbishop of Canterbury? The most "impartial" of the above-listed candidates, one should imagine, is Brockway himself. But, as is obvious from his letter of last February to the American Socialist, Devere Allen, none other than Brockway himself not only refused to initiate the inquiry but did everything in his power to prevent others from taking the initiative, and, furthermore, adduced arguments involving not the interests of impartiality but those of the Moscow bureaucracy. Here is what Brockway wrote to Allen: The inquiry "...will merely arouse prejudice in Russia and in Communist circles." Isn't it astonishing?

In a letter not intended for publication Brockway incautiously spoke up as a member of the "Committee for the Defense of" — Stalin, Dimitrov, Vyshinsky and Yagoda. I pointed this out in the press at the time. Not a word came in reply from Brockway. Several months elapsed. In his letter of May 28, Brockway again came out against the inquiry, but this time with a completely different set of arguments. But in essence he still remains a member of the undercover "Committee for the Defense" of the falsifiers against their victims.

There is no juridical or moral ground whatever for the suspicion which Brockway, in the name of the London Bureau, seeks to cast over the inquiry. All that the American Committee did was to take the initiative. Furthermore, the sum and substance of its initiative consisted precisely in this: To assure, in collaboration with other organizations, an objective and a conscientious investigation through a special International Commission, entirely independent of the initiators.

The composition of the American Committee is not a homogeneous one. There are individuals in it who understood from the very outset the absurdity and vileness of the Moscow accusations. Other members had no

settled opinions on this score but they were either alarmed by or indignant over the "totalitarian" character of Moscow justice and over the fact that the Norwegian "Socialist" flunkies of the G.P.U. had placed me behind lock and key at the very moment when I needed freedom most to defend not only myself but hundreds of others. It goes without saying that had the American Committee been composed of hypocrites it might have called itself "The Committee for the Defense of Eternal Precepts of Morality." But it choose to act openly. By "Defense of Trotsky" the Committee had and has in mind not to provide the alliance between Trotsky and Hitler with a cover but to provide Trotsky with an opportunity to publicly refute the accusation made against him. Nothing more! It is quite sufficient.

The members of the Committee understood from the first just as well as Brockway did that the verdict of the International Commission would carry weight only if the inquiry were conducted with all the requisite guarantees for thoroughness and objectivity, in particular, with the participation in the Commission of representatives of the different trends in political thought. The Committee began by inviting publicly the representatives of the Moscow Government, the Comintern, "Friends of the Soviet Union," the Second International, the London Bureau, etc. It was, naturally, not a question of the political or moral evaluation of Stalinism, Trotskyism, Bolshevism or Marxism. No political tendency would agree to serve as the object of appraisal by an inter-party commission; no rational commission would undertake such an insuperable task. The appraisal of political tendencies in the course of the political struggle. The final verdict is brought in by history.

The task of the inquiry of the International Commission did and does consist only of verifying certain specific charges made against certain individuals. The political conclusions from the verdict of the Commission will be drawn by each tendency in its own way. This made it all the more essential for every organization interested in bringing out the truth to participate in the investigation. But the direct and indirect agents and "friends" of the G.P.U. and the friends of friends flatly refused to participate. Some of them, in the spirit of Fenner Brockway's first letter, argued that it was impermissible to arouse any prejudice against Stalin and his Comintern; others, in the style of Fenner Brockway's second letter, adjudged the commission not "impartial" enough. Both the former and the latter had ample justification for fearing an investigation. The London Bureau protected their rear.

To reveal more vividly the unworthy role played by this Bureau we shall dwell on another, and more recent case. The gangsters of the G.P.U. in Spain murdered Andres Nin, the leader of the P.O.U.M.. Nin was an opponent of mine. Fenner Brockway, on the contrary, considered Nin a co-thinker. If the London Bureau and other "impartial" Pontius Pilates had joined in an investi-

gation of the Moscow frame-ups immediately after the Zinoviev-Kamenev trial, the G.P.U. might not have dared to put in circulation the palpably false charge that the leaders of the P.O.U.M. are collaborating with General Franco. But this was not done. The "impartial" ones shielded the G.P.U. As a result, Nin has been murdered, together with scores and hundreds of others. The P.O.U.M. has been crushed. What has been let slip cannot be retrieved. Do Messrs. Brockway think that the time has now come for an international investigation of the crimes of the G.P.U. in Spain—the frame-ups, pillages and murders? Or are they waiting for the sterilized priests of impartiality to initiate the investigation? Let Brockway supply me with their addresses and telephone numbers. I will immediately get in touch with them. But if, as I suspect, they do not exist in nature, let the London Bureau take upon itself the initiative of calling the inquiry. Let the Bureau, emulating the example of the American Committee, turn to all the existing labor Internationals and to outstanding individuals in science, literature and art who are known for their honesty and integrity. If someone were to say that Fenner Brockway would make a "disastrous mistake" by initiating the inquiry instead of allowing matters to rest with Stalin or Negrin, every rational and honest person would call such an "accuser" a brazen hypocrite.

In conclusion, I consider it necessary to recall here another not unimportant circumstance. In the very same February letter in which he expressed his touching concern for the interests of Stalin, Yagoda and Dimitrov, Fenner Brockway proposed to create an international commission of inquiry... into my political activity and, furthermore, with rather strange "precipitancy" proposed to include in this commission Norman Thomas, Otto Bauer, Branting, and other bitter political enemies of mine. The very idea of an "official" appraisal of the political activity of an individual or a party through the medium of a commission of inquiry is so absurd that it properly belongs only on the pages of a provincial humorous magazine. Of course, Fenner Brockway himself could not have failed to understand this. But he attempted to make use of the gory Moscow amalgams in order to deal a blow at Bolshevism ("Trotskyism") which he hates so much; in addition he tried to cover up his factional struggle with the cloak of an impartial "investigation." Specialists in morals are notoriously fond of fishing in troubled waters.

We, the "amoral" Bolsheviks, proceed differently. We openly criticized Nin's policies when he was alive. We did not alter our evaluation of him after he died. But inasmuch as we never for a moment doubted the integrity of this proletarian fighter, we stand ready to do everything in our power to rehabilitate his name and mercilessly brand his executioners. We declare in advance to Fenner Brockway and all other specialists in morals that not a single one of our friends and co-thinkers will at-

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