

Raidson 'Hooded Ones' Stir France; P.O.I. Calls For Workers Militias

By Terence Phelan

Spectacular charges and counter-charges in the inter-Fascist libel suit, paralleled by even more spectacular police raids upon Fascist arms-caches, have for the last month kept France in ferment. LaRocque has used court proceedings, ostensibly brought for libel against 17 persons and newspapers ranging from the Stalinist *Humanité* to the Royalist *Action Française*, as a base for attacking rival fascist groups, particularly those under Pozzo di Borgo and General Duseigneur, of which the theatrical French Ku-Kluxers, the Cagoulards or "hooded ones," are the fanciest.

Sudden Raids

With a remarkable promptitude, the Popular Front police suddenly discovered a revolt plot, involving LaRocque's rivals: two Paris raids, for example, uncovered 1480 hand-grenades, 45 machine-guns, large stocks of ammunition, subterranean forts and arsenals, and elaborate military organizational plans leading throughout France. Duseigneur, who evidently fancied himself as the French Franco, and DiBorgo himself, were jailed. DiBorgo's allies, the Monarchists, counter-attacked from Switzerland with elaborate proclamations by the royalist pretenders (which fell flat). The government of the Front Populaire, slowly tapering off the raids, issued communiqués which for their exaggeration of the importance of the affair and for their self-congratulatory complacency, are theatrical masterpieces.

This performance has received an excellent official press; but the applause of the truly advanced workers has been more polite than enthusiastic. Regarding with well-founded cynicism the suddenness of the police discovery of the arms-caches of LaRocque's momentary political adversaries, they point out the significant fact that somehow none of LaRocque's far more numerous and well stocked arms-depots were discovered; and though they have been treated to exciting detective-story reports of complete membership lists found, and of great figures involved, they note that the arrests have been extremely few in number, and involve, apart from DiBorgo and Duseigneur, no one of any note; and that, furthermore, most have been released again.

The Fascist Danger

This is far from meaning that French Fascism is not to be taken seriously. Quite the contrary. Staged and limited as the raids were, their revelations are a symptomatic warning of the sort of which Spain had plenty prior to July 1936. They show once more that, just as in Spain, the Fascists are preparing, right under the nose of the Popular Front government, their eventual armed insurrection. The arms seized are only a drop in the bucket. Just as in Spain, the army officers are overwhelmingly Rightist in sympathy: the French counterparts of Sanjurjo, Franco, Mola, and Mola only await the signal. Just as in Spain, the Popular Front government takes only feeble half-measures that, on the one hand, are a positive provocation to the Fascists, and,

on the other, tend to lull the workers to a false sense of security. Summed up, the Front Populaire's whole behavior, in a situation that obviously precedes either revolution or counter-revolution, leads inevitably, not as in 1917 Russia, to the former but as in 1936 Spain, to the latter.

P.O.I. Calls for Struggle

Against the false and fatal policies of the Popular Front, only the French section of the Fourth International, the Parti Ouvrier Internationaliste, raises the slogans that can prevent France's becoming another Spain. Against the provocations and plots of the Fascist gangs, and equally against the feeble and treacherous policy of the Front Populaire toward those gangs, the Bolshevik-Leninists call for workers' militias. Against the increasingly violent attacks by the nationally organized bosses against what few remnants are left of the workers' gains in the great strike of May-June 1936, and equally against the suicidal policies of class peace, legality, and merely "symbolic" 4-hour strikes foisted upon the aroused workers by the reformists, the Bolshevik-Leninists raise the slogan of "generalized mass-occupation of the fac-

ories, as in June '36!"—for nation-wide wage contracts, for a sliding-scale of wages based on the cost-of-living index, for complete workers' control over hiring and firing. Against the P.F.—Stalinist line of compromise and retreat, they raise the cry that the only real defense is "attack and workers' victory — direct mass action"—"for mass occupations, for workers' militias, for the general strike."

Congress Prepares for Action

These are outstanding among the militant slogans adopted by the Second Annual Congress of the POI, held, despite LaRocque's protests to the Front Populaire, October 30-31 and November 1 in Paris. No adventurism, they are backed by a carefully planned practical program of organization leading through the dual power to a workers' state. The Convention, looking also outside France, pledged its continued defense of the conquests of October in the USSR, its solidarity with the Spanish workers and peasants in their fight against Franco, and their aid to the world proletariat, whether under democratic, fascist, or colonial domination, in its struggle against the real enemy, capitalism, and its Stalinist and other reformist lackeys. Cheered by a great organizational growth in the last year, the POI turns its face to the masses, to give them true revolutionary counsel in the most critical year the French workers have had to face since the last imperialist war.

Renewals

The *Socialist Appeal* has been mailed regularly to former subscribers of *Labor Action* and the old *Socialist Appeal*. We did not want subscribers to either of these publications to feel that they were not getting their money's worth. Now, in literally hundreds of cases, subscriptions have expired but we have continued mailing the *Appeal* with the hope that renewals would be forthcoming. Each person whose subscription has expired has been notified by letter and there has been some response.

Much as we would like to, it is financially impossible to continue supplying the *Appeal* to subscribers who do not renew their subscriptions. The number appearing beside your name on the wrapper indicates the issue with which your subscription expires. This issue is No. 18. If your wrapper shows a lower number than this, your name will be removed from our subscription list until you renew.

And while you are renewing, don't forget that subscriptions alone will not finance the *Appeal*. The blank below provides space for contributions. If you can spare any amount to keep alive the only Revolutionary Marxist newspaper published in the United States, spare it now.

Socialist Appeal
116 University Place
New York City

Date

I enclose \$..... for which please send me the *Socialist Appeal*. One year—(\$2.00); Six Months—(\$1.00).

I enclose \$..... as my contribution toward building the *Socialist Appeal*.

Name

Address

City

Letters from Our Readers

Olivia, Minnesota, Local Backs Left Wing

We are reprinting below, excerpts from a copy of a letter to Roy Burt, sent to us by Comrade John Enestvedt, the Secretary of the Socialist Party Local in Olivia, Minnesota. The National Secretary of the Socialist Party (Right Wing) had demanded a "loyalty oath" from the Olivia comrades, a demand which had previously been rejected by the Minneapolis, St. Paul and Austin locals in Minnesota. The Olivia comrades had protested the expulsion of the latter for refusing to comply with Burt's order. —Ed.

Olivia, Minn., Nov. 22, 1937.

Dear Comrade Burt:

When you refer to the Appeal Group or Trotskyites as a dual organization in the party, I am reminded of some of the things that happened at the Chicago convention: For instance, when either the Right Wing or pure Stalinists got up and attacked the Trotskyites... the rank and file at the convention got up one after another and virtually drove them back into their seats. Which only goes to show that the wish of the convention was not to drive the Trotskyites or the so-called dual organization out of the party, but that they welcomed the political principles by which this group was tied together. Let me also remind you that the so-called Trotskyites or dual organization to which you refer is composed not only of former members of the Workers Party but also the real militant Left Wing of the Socialist Party which was developing even before the so-called dual organization entered the Socialist Party.

You refer to the fact that the convention (to be held) on Dec. 31 is made up of a group of disgruntled people. I think you are generally correct: It is made up of the whole Left Wing tendency within the party. In other words, it is made up of the rank and

file of the party members of the Chicago convention who passed fairly revolutionary resolutions and realize now that they have been betrayed by the Right-Centrist N.E.C. which they elected through the short-sightedness on the part of the Clarityite caucus at the convention.

You take me to task for calling the expelled comrades revolutionists... Then you go on haranguing about their being disrupters and therefore are being expelled.

I would like to call to your attention the record of these revolutionists, particularly in so far as Minneapolis is concerned. A short while ago, a report from the U. S. Government declared Minneapolis the best organized union city in the country. A short five years ago, Minneapolis was an open shop town that the Citizen's Alliance of any city would point to with pride. We hold these people to be revolutionists because they have been able to combat not only the forces of the Citizen's Alliance, but also the union splitting and disruptive tactics of the Stalinists...

If you mean by staying as members in the Socialist Party, that the Olivia comrades must denounce the principles of Revolutionary Socialism which the delegates of the Chicago convention endorsed, that no revolutionist will do. We reaffirm our solidarity with the expelled revolutionists, but we do not consider ourselves expelled from the party for upholding the principles of Revolutionary Marxism. We cast our lot with all those politically exiled who are subjects of bureaucratic acts by a leadership at the top of whatever institution they may be, including our comrade Sam Baron, arrested by the G.P.U. in Spain for Trotskyism.

Fraternally yours,
John Enestvedt, Secretary
Olivia Local

A Letter to the Editor of the "Modern Monthly"

We reprint below a copy of a letter sent by comrade Trotsky to V. F. Calverton. To date, no reply or acknowledgment has been made to it. —Ed.

October 15, 1937.

Mr. V. F. Calverton,
46 Morton St.
New York City, N. Y.

My Dear Editor:

You propose that I write an article on war for the *Modern Monthly*. Before entering directly into discussion of your amiable proposition, I am forced to put one preliminary question. In the list of your associate editors is inscribed the name of Mr. Carleton Beals. After his "participation" in the Inquiry Commission on the Moscow Trials, there cannot be the slightest doubt about the moral physiognomy of this gentleman. Beals' article on the Commission hearings in Coyoacan was nothing but a series of lies and falsifications dictated by the interest of the G.P.U. I enumerated the most important of these lies and falsifications in an article, a copy of which, so far as I know, was forwarded to you. You have not yet, however, reacted in any way to the attitude of Mr. Beals.

I can give an article to a bourgeois publication without any concern about the other contributors, as I may ride in a bus without concern about the identities of the other passengers. Totally different is the case with a magazine which appeals to Marxism and revolution. Every

contributor in this case is bound by a reciprocal bond to all the others. I consider it impossible to carry any responsibility not only for Mr. Beals himself but also for the publication which tolerates him in its ranks.

Stalinism is the syphilis of the workers movement. Anybody who chances to be a direct or indirect carrier of such a contamination should be submitted to a pitiless quarantine. The hour has struck for the unsparing demarcation of honest people from all the agents, friends, lawyers, publicists, and poets of the G.P.U. Collaboration in a journal like yours is necessary for such as Beals in order to preserve their mask of "independence." The less reason has an independent journal to give its cover to such gentlemen.

If the name of Mr. Beals remains on your list only through oversight (and I should be glad to hear from you that this is the case) then you can immediately correct this error. In the opposite case I shall be forced to ask you to publish this letter in your magazine in explanation for my taking away my name from the roll of your contributors.

Sincerely yours,
Leon Trotsky.

SOCIAL and DANCE
Saturday Eve., Dec. 18
at LEAH DILLON'S STUDIO
137 E. 18th Street
Auspices: ADMISSION 20c
Lower Manhattan Branch
and Y. P. S. L.