

CANNON EXPOSES ATTEMPT TO USE THE "ROBINSON" CASE AGAINST U. S. TROTSKYISTS

On December 17, when the first Moscow dispatches implicating "American Trotskyites" in the so-called "Robinson Case", appeared comrade James P. Cannon, National Secretary of the Socialist Party (Left Wing), issued the following statement to the press:

Purpose Clear

The development of the "Robinson" case constitutes an attempt by the Stalin regime to transfer to American soil its methods of government by frame-up, which only a few days ago was dealt such a powerful blow in the report of the International Commission of Inquiry headed by Professor John Dewey. This new frame-up, in which the "Robinsons" are mere instruments, has as its primary aim the besmirching of that section of the American labor and socialist movement which resists Stalin's totalitarian regime. It has been contrived, moreover, as a desperate effort to rehabilitate in American public opinion the Moscow frame-up courts, whose verdicts have inspired widespread scepticism and loathing in the United States. Startling developments may be expected soon, but the details already published show that, despite extended experience and unlimited resource the Stalinist secret police are still incapable of concocting the perfect frame-up.

So far, "Izvestia", official Moscow organ, hints only that "American Trotskyites are somehow implicated." When Stalin's agents become more specific in their "implications," we will be ready to answer them. We have nothing to hide and nothing to fear.

Feared Outcome of Inquiry

The planning of the present frame-up began when the Communist Party in the United States, the Soviet Embassy staff, and the Stalinist secret police, failed in their attempt to block the creation of an impartial commission of inquiry into the Moscow trials. The Kremlin decided on a new frame-up to cover the holes in the old one.

On December 3, nine days before the publicly announced date on which the Dewey Commission was to announce its findings, news of the "Robinson" case first appeared in the press. The coincidences of the dates in these two developments is one clue to the motives of the frame-up: the Kremlin's desire to head off the much-feared outcome of the Dewey Commission's study.

Background of Affair

It is now alleged that the "Robinsons" are deep-dyed conspirators, members of a powerful international spy ring, who entered the Soviet Union in November. It is significant that last summer Soviet authorities took the unusual step of barring from Soviet soil American tourists equipped with visas and papers ordinarily sufficient to effect admission. At that time the world press reported that special pains were taken to bar all Americans named Robinson. Here is an indication of another preliminary step: the preparation of the public mind to attach sensational significance to the name of Robinson.

The arrest was effected in ex-

traordinary fashion. On December 2, Mr. "Robinson" was taken into custody. His "wife" was permitted for a whole week to move freely about Moscow, informing American journalists that her "husband" had disappeared. Only after she spread this news, the first to reach the public, was she arrested. Thus the Soviet police led the United States Department of State to inquire after the fate of alleged American citizens. Only after a delay of two weeks was it announced that the "Robinsons" had forged passports, were alleged spies, and were in jail. These circumstances, too, point to an elaborate frame-up scheme.

The latest development is a series of press reports tending to link the "Robinsons" with various New Yorkers. To my knowledge, not one of these persons has now or ever had any connection with our organization. On the contrary, more than one is connected with the Stalinist movement.

Usual Frame-Up Structure

Nobody need be surprised if the "Robinsons" affair mushrooms fantastically in a few days. Already a Warsaw report, probably of Moscow origin, alleges that the "Robinsons" once visited Trotsky in Mexico. How convincing! How true to form! A Moscow frame-up would never be complete without a single "visit to Trotsky."

Our knowledge of thefts by the G.P.U. agents of documents belonging to our associates, for the purpose of forging "evidence", has prepared us for endeavors to implicate American Trotskyists in the endless frame-up chain. Nothing is too fantastic for the G.P.U. police mentality, not even a hysterical charge that the "Robinsons" are the nucleus of a Trotskyite ring seeking to establish Japanese rule in the United States, Italian rule in Mexico, and German rule in the Soviet Union, attended, of course, by the usual mythical assassination plots that never come off, irrefutable "evidence" which is "unfortunately unavailable" and the like.

Some Questions to Soviet Officials

One wonders only whether, having had at least since April to prepare this frame-up, and two weeks in which to work on the "Robinsons" in the G.P.U. secret chambers, the Soviet prosecutor is ready to produce the customary enthusiastic, if somewhat nonsensical, confessions of complete guilt without which no

Soviet political frame-up trial is really complete. Or does he need more time?

Other questions which I would like to put to Soviet officials through the press, are as follows: Are the two prisoners American citizens? If not, what is their nationality?

Are they the same people whose photos are filed in the United States passport bureau? Will the Soviet government permit American press correspondents to photograph the "Robinsons"?

How did the "Robinsons" get fake birth certificates?

At what mail address were the passports really received? Were they received in the United States by the prisoners, or by other persons and then shipped abroad for delivery to the prisoners?

When did the "Robinsons" enter the Soviet Union? If before he world press reported the Soviet ban on Robinsons, why did the Soviet government not arrest them when the ban was put on? If after, how did they get in?

How did it happen that the first news of the arrest came from Mrs. Robinson?

Why did the Soviet government delay in answering the American inquiry as to the fate of the "Robinsons"?

Such frame-ups may stick for a time in the Soviet Union where all criticism by oppositionists, especially revolutionary oppositionists who fight Stalin's destruction of the workers' victory of 1917, is answered with immediate arrest. That they will not stick elsewhere has just been demonstrated in Minneapolis, where last week I witnessed the ignominious rout by an indignant trade union movement of a local Stalinist frame-up machine.

Dr. Dewey's Prediction

Speaking over the radio Monday, Prof. John Dewey explained to the American labor and liberal public that it must expect the Stalinist frame-up machine to force the Moscow trials issue on them right here. His prophetic words find fulfillment perhaps sooner than he expected. The time has come when every American worker, liberal, and friend of labor must answer the question: how prevent the naturalization on American soil of the brutal and bloody methods of the Stalinist G.P.U.? The frame-up authors aim primarily at us Trotskyites, but they will not hesitate to use the same methods against every worker, every Socialist, every honest liberal and friend of labor, who dares oppose Stalin's force inside or outside the Soviet Union.

Firemen Take The Lead As Progressives Win Support In West Coast Maritime Unions

By Jack Cope

SAN FRANCISCO.—Once again the West Coast maritime workers are moving into the front lines in the battle against the bosses, not only on the picket lines alone but also against the most pernicious agents of the employers within their own ranks, the Stalinists. Recent events within the Marine Firemen, Oilers, Wipers and Watertenders Association have proven this to their hilt. Nine weeks ago a small group of rank and filers in the union launched the "West Coast Fireman", a little four-page sheet founded on a program of amalgamating the three unlicensed crafts on the West Coast into one industrial union affiliated to the Maritime Federation of the Pacific, and with the perspective of joining with the progressive elements on the Gulf and East Coasts to extend this union nationally. Today an aroused rank and file is rallying behind this program and has an excellent chance of realizing its aims.

960 Endorse "Fireman"

Number 9 of the "Fireman" carried 960 names of endorsers, a full one-fourth of the entire membership of the union. Up and down the coast, locals have gone on record supporting the amalgamation move and calling for a referendum on the question. Only the Stalinist-controlled headquarters local, at San Francisco, has held out. This program has also received the full support of all locals of the Sailors' Union of the Pacific and the Seattle local of the Cooks and Stewards Association. The San Pedro local of the cooks which condemned the "Fireman" when it first appeared has rescinded

this condemnation and it is expected that this local too will endorse the amalgamation move soon. The SUP is at present conducting a referendum on the question.

From the very first, the "Fireman" has been a thorn in the hide of the Stalinist clique which now controls headquarters local. In every meeting of the firemen since its appearance they have divided their time between castigating the paper and calling Harry Lundeberg of the SUP, a fink, phoney and misleader in general, but all to no avail. Week by week the number of sponsors mounted. Even these notoriously thick-skinned lads are beginning to get the idea. They have begun to let up on their wild attacks and whereas it was at the risk of life and limb the first copies of the paper were distributed near headquarters, the last issue was distributed right in the hall along with copies of the Northwest Organizer carrying the story of Pat Corcoran's murder and the expose of the Stalinists' attempt to lay the blame on labor itself.

Gain in Election

Further indications of the growth and influence of rank and file sentiment against the union wrecking of the Stalinists—such as their sabotage of the fight against the shipowners in the recent steam-schooner "beef"—was registered during the election of the balloting committee which will count the ballots of the election of officers, now in progress. One of the two committee members elected in San Francisco was the choice of the progressive group publishing the "Fireman" and all six of those elected by out to town locals had the support of this group.

WELCOME THE DELEGATES

at the

New Year's Eve

CONVENTION BALL

Douglas Park Auditorium

Ogden & Kedzie

Chicago, Ill.

Free Favors — Door Prize — ADMISSION 75c

December 31 — 10 P. M.

Auspices: Y. P. S. L. and S. P. (Left Wing)

Chicago Mass Meeting

NEW REVOLUTIONARY PARTY LAUNCHED!

COME AND HEAR

James P. Cannon

Editor, Socialist Appeal

Vincent Ray Dunne

Prominent Minneapolis Labor Leader

Max Shachtman

Editor, New International

Crary Trimble

Sec'y California Socialist Party

WEDNESDAY - DEC. 29 - 8:30 P. M.

Randolph Room, Steuben Club

188 West Randolph St.,

(Enter thru main lobby)

Admission 25c.

Auspices: Socialist Party (Left Wing)

Room 308, 160 North Wells St.

Chicago, Ill.

Christmas Eve Dance

Friday, December 24th, at 9 P. M.

IRVING PLAZA

15th STREET AND IRVING PLACE

Tickets: In Advance 55 cents — At the door 75 cents

For Sale at: Labor Book Shop, 28 East 12th St.

AUSPICES: Convention Arrangements Committee
Socialist Party (Left Wing)