

Trotsky Urges Backing For Pioneer Publishers

Pioneer Publishers has just made public a letter received from Leon Trotsky on the occasion of its seventh anniversary. The letter follows:

Economic Crisis and Ideologies

"According to all indications, the present crisis should bring about tremendous changes in the whole world and perhaps first of all in the U.S.A. The crisis of 1929 has already dealt a serious blow to the traditional ideologies of Americanism and created the necessity for a new orientation.

The economic revival of the past year has, it is true, somewhat damped theoretical searches and social criticism. Hopes arose that the process of economic growth interrupted by the crisis would again be re-established. But sooner than one could have expected the hour of a new crisis struck. It started from a lower level than the crisis of 1929 and is developing at a more rapid tempo. This demonstrates that it not an accidental recession nor even a conjunctural depression but an organic crisis of the whole capitalist system. That is why one can with assurance predict that in all fields of human ideology—in economics, politics, philosophy, literature, art—there will open an epoch of bold criticism, liquidation of old prejudices, searches for new systems, courageous creation.

Revolutionary thought in America, with immeasurably more stability and vigor than hitherto, will begin to study different social doctrines in order to resolve the question of the fate of the United States and of the capitalist system as a whole.

What to Expect from Other Publishers

"On the other hand, one can expect that the bourgeois publishing houses which from time to time printed radical works in the firm belief that the U.S. was immune to the actions of "destructive" ideas will in the coming years become more cautious; i. e., reactionary, and will completely ostracize revolutionary theoretic thought.

"It is impossible to place the slightest hope in this respect in the publishing activity of the so-called Communist Party. With time it becomes ever more hostile to theory. No wonder: every page of the revolutionary classics is an accusation against the present politics of the Comintern. Frame-up and falsification have become its basic method in all fields. It is impossible to trust any book, any article, any quotation issued by the Comintern press. Sooner or later all these works will be placed on a special Index under the general title, "The library of pseudo-Marxism and lies."

"As far as the Socialist Party is concerned one cannot in general speak about it in relation to the problems of theoretic thought. This party lives on vulgar commonplaces. Its leaders are ingrained with an organic aversion to scientific analysis. Concern over revolutionary theory appears to their eyes as an unmistakable sign of sectarianism, if not a form of lunacy.

Serious Task Faces Pioneer Publishers

"Under these conditions the necessity for a revolutionary publishing house, independent both from capital and from the

Soviet bureaucracy is completely evident. Pioneer Publishers from the very beginning set itself the task of bringing out a serious library of revolutionary thought for advanced workers and radical intelligentsia.

"During the last few years the first step along this road have been taken. They have been met with manifest and encouraging sympathy. But there yet remains immeasurably more to be done than has been accomplished. There is weight in the idea that the center of social-revolutionary and revolutionary-philosophical thought will shift in the next period to America. Under the blows of the crisis and social shake-ups there will here arise a generation of revolutionary theoreticians capable of saying a new word. All the more necessary is it to create for this awakening social criticism a stable base in the form of a publishing house not bound by any other considerations and obligations outside of the objective to open to humanity a new road of development. Pioneer Publishers can accomplish a great historic task. Our common duty is to help them.

(Signed) Leon Trotsky.
Nov. 29, 1937, Coyoacan.

As a non-commercial publishing house Pioneer Publishers depends on the support of everyone interested in the development of a genuinely revolutionary publishing house in America.

Among the volumes scheduled for publication are: *Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Spain* by Felix Morrow; *Ten Years of World Politics* by Leon Trotsky; *What is Imperialism?* by G. Zinoviev; *The Year One of the Russian Revolution* by Victor Serge; *Marxism and Philosophy* by Franz Mehring; *Selected Works of Rosa Luxemburg*, etc. etc.

In themselves these works more than warrant the support of those who have profited by earlier Pioneer publications.

Contributions should be sent to Pioneer Publishers, 100 Fifth Avenue, New York.

Union Lawyers Plead Memorial Day Massacre Defendants Guilty

CHICAGO.—Without consulting the workers who were arrested for participation in the mass picketing demonstration staged on Memorial Day before the Republic Steel Co., the lawyers, appointed by the union to defend those arrested, entered into an agreement with the State's Attorney of Cook County to plead all the defendants guilty.

When the case came up in the Criminal Court of Cook County on December 20, the lawyers entered a plea of guilty to charges of unlawful assembly and rioting placed against 61 workers. The judge thereupon fined six of the defendants \$10 and \$10 costs. The remaining got off with a one dollar fine and one dollar costs. The small fines were in return for the plea of guilty.

The meaning of the whole farce was explained to the defendants after they walked out of the court room and most of them, prepared to go on trial and fight it out to the end, were bitterly disappointed and resentful.

Both the Republic Steel Co. and the Chicago police force will naturally use the plea of guilty to justify the murderous attack upon workers exercising their lawful right to picket.

Not all compromises with the enemy are to be condemned. But a compromise which is based upon a plea of guilty in a case that has received world-wide publicity, where the bosses and cops were placed on the defensive in the role of murderers, is nothing short of a betrayal of the interests of the whole working class.

The Daily Worker of December 21, 1937 simply mentioned that the bad judge found the 61 pickets guilty. It carefully concealed the fact that the lawyers, by agreement with the prosecution, pleaded them guilty. The Stalinists, being in control of the Steel Workers Organizing Committee in the Chicago area, are the ones actually responsible for the malodorous deal.

Akron Court Decision Outlaws Closed Shop

By Blake Lear

AKRON, Ohio, Dec. 26.—A ruling which virtually outlaws the closed shop in Akron was handed down here last week by judge E. D. Fritch.

Since the court's decision will be used as precedent, the ruling constitutes a blow not only to the working class of Akron and of Ohio, but to the working class nationally as well. Labor must unitedly fight this decision tooth and nail.

Essentials of Decision

The essential portion of the decision reads: "...a contract by the employer to employ only union labor is contrary to public policy when it includes an entire industry so as to operate generally in the community, preventing workmen from obtaining employment without joining the union."

"A contract against public policy is void and illegal."

In other words, taxi drivers, light and power employees, cereal workers, fishing tackle workers, building tradesmen, and members of the newspaper guild and the typos are forbidden to have a closed shop, either because their employers have a monopoly in their field in Akron or because where the monopoly is split two ways, as it is in the newspaper field, the typos have a closed shop at both plants. In both cases, you see, a closed shop would mean that it would prevent a workman "from obtaining employment without joining the union."

The breadth of interpretation can be so great this ruling could easily be made to extend not only to the bakery workers, coal drivers, and other trades, but could be applied to the large rubber shops as well, on the basis that there are certain departments in each plant which are unique in the city, and that were a scab denied the right of employment in such a department he would be unable to obtain a job elsewhere in the industry.

Background of Decision

The decision is part of the poisoned fruit of the A. F. of L.-C. I. O. split. Thirteen members of the old A. F. of L. union

for street car operators and bus drivers, who had lost an election with the C. I. O. and who had been denied membership in the C. I. O. local of the Transport Workers of America, were fired, since the transport workers had secured a closed shop. They took their case to court and the decision was the result. The court, ironically enough, did not even recommend that they be taken back on their jobs.

The ruling beautifully exposes the role of the courts as the watchdogs of capitalism. Under the slogans of preserving the right to work, fighting monopoly, and defending the public's interests, which translated means preserving the "right" to work at slave wages, fighting unionism, and defending the interests of the capitalist class, the court has given labor a stiff blow.

Higher Form of Deception

Since by and large the old argument that the workers in a plant do not represent a majority and hence should not be granted recognition seldom holds any longer, the courts have to resort to a higher deception. As the struggle gets sharper they make up new rules. They outlaw the closed shop. They declare the sit-down "illegal, immoral, and revolutionary." They refuse to press laws invoked against the bosses.

That is why a struggle conducted on straight trade union lines alone can only lead up a blind alley. Such a condition has been reached in France, where magnificent struggles have led only to the breaking of contracts by the companies and a discreet averting of the head by the courts. The trade union problem becomes a political problem and can be solved only on the political field. This is the stage at which many unions in the United States, plagued by lay-offs, cursed with the problem of unemployment, beset with a rise in the cost of living, and harassed by the courts, have now reached. For, lacking the revolutionary answer to these problems, many unions, especially those in the mass production industries, are going to be thrown into a severe crisis in the next few months.

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