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'Robinson' Frame-Up Under Way In Moscow

(Continued from page 1)

confer with Leon Trotsky prior to their departure for Europe. To this they added the suggestion that the 'Robinsons' or 'Rubens' had been to California prior to their departure for Mexico—without failing to tell their readers that California is the main center of Japanese espionage activities in the United States.

All these deliberately disseminated rumors acquire significance in the light of the charges, completely refuted, to be sure, made in the Radek-Piatokov trial last year, to the effect that Trotsky had conspired with the Japanese Mikado to 'give' Japan the Soviet Maritime Provinces and the island of Sakalin (and its oil) for the purpose of war against the Soviet Union and the United States.

Commission Gives Spur

It is quite apparent, therefore, that a systematic attempt has been made now for months to cook up a new frame-up, made particularly necessary for the Stalin regime because of the fact that the International Commission of Inquiry into the Moscow Trials, headed by Dr. John Dewey, so effectively exploded the previous charges made by the G.P.U. in its 'confession trials' against Leon Trotsky as an agent of Hitler and Japan.

The course under which the thick-skulled and clumsy police agents of Stalin operate is that they are compelled to continue an unending series of trials, in the latest of which they try to stuff up the gaping holes which are revealed in the preceding trials. The impending 'Robinson-Rubens' case is of that type.

The frame-up obviously dates back to July of last year. At that time, the press was filled with reports of the action taken by the Soviet authorities in checking tourist ships from the United States for the purpose of barring from entry into the Soviet Union all persons by the name of 'Robinson.'

How G. P. U. Works

Finally, at the beginning of December, a man registered at the National Hotel in Moscow under the name of 'Robinson' suddenly disappeared. The woman registered as his wife was told by the Soviet authorities that her husband had been taken to a hospital. A few days later, Mrs. 'Robinson' also disappeared—although the Soviet authorities systematically denied knowledge of their whereabouts. That, at least, was the first story.

Now, the official account from Moscow already contains a significant alteration. Now, it is the wife who told the Russian authorities that her husband had gone to a hospital! 'About the middle of November,' reads the revised version of the disappearance, 'the husband disappeared from the hotel. The wife informed authorities that he had become ill and had gone to a hospital, the name of which she did not know. A search of all hospitals in Moscow and the suburbs failed to reveal his presence, the officials said.' (World-Telegram, Jan. 18, 1938.)

This tiny forgery is but one of many, culminating in the monstrous frame-up being prepared for the purpose of blackening Trotsky and the American section of the Fourth International.

Case Bungled

But, unfortunately for the frame-up artists, the whole case has been bungled miserably from the very beginning. Starting with the idea of having the 'Robinsons' enact the role of intermediary between Trotsky and the Mikado, the G.P.U. is ending with an increasingly clear pattern revealing that the 'Robinsons' have been associated throughout with the Stalinist movement.

All the facts thus far brought forth show that the 'Robinsons' were connected at every point with the Communist Party and its members and institutions in this country!

We list here some of the salient disclosures thus far made which have caused the Daily Worker to maintain such an abysmal silence all during the affair:

The Known Facts

1. Mrs. Rubens' relatives regarded her and her husband as Stalinists. Mr. Rubens had no known occupation but plenty of money.

2. In applying for birth-certificates in the names of dead persons named Robinson, the Rubens used an address at which lived a number of Communist Party members, among them Julius Rosenthal (deceased), Lilian Paley, and apparently one other, formerly an official of Intourist, Soviet travel agency.

3. In applying for the Robinson passports, the couple worked through one Arthur or Aaron Sharfin. Sharfin is a member of the Communist Party; he was formerly assigned to the New York District, Section XV (mid-Bronx), Unit 12. He was active in unemployed work at the Stalinist Unemployed Councils at 1400 Boston Road, on East 171 Street, and elsewhere, and for a time lived in one of the Council headquarters.

Links Established

4. Sharfin was linked with one Max or Mac Shaw. This Shaw is apparently the same person as Marshall Shaw, star subscription salesman for Soviet Russia Today, whose picture appears in that magazine, page 18,

December 1933 issue. He is known to members of Local 338 of the Retail Clerks Union as a Stalinist. He apparently also goes under the name of Wershow. His wife, Muriel, is also a Stalinist supporter if not a party member.

5. Sharfin, having obtained the passport applications either from Rubens direct or through an intermediary, passed them on to Harry Zukerman. At this point the passport applications graduated from the G.P.U. level to the Tammany Hall level, and went through several Tammany stooges to Al Marinelli, County Clerk of New York, who certified them and sent them to Washington. The State Department made out passports.

Ravitch Got Passports

6. The passports were sent, as ordered by the applicants, to an organization called the Drama Travel League Miss Isabel Walsh, worker in that office, has identified pictures of Mrs. Robinson as those of a nervous woman who once came into the office looking for Miss Helen Ravitch, the manager. Miss Ravitch, despite her denials, has been identified as the person who signed the receipt for the passports delivered to her by the Post Office Department.

7. Miss Ravitch is married to Dr. Solon Bernstein, physician to Stalinist William Z. Foster, and also connected with the Stalinist International Workers Order.

8. Before instructing the State Department to deliver the passports to the Drama Travel League, the Robinsons had asked that they be delivered to a mid-town address where lived one Mr. and Mrs. Harry Friedlander. The Appeal has been informed that the Friedlander Post Office Department has shown considerable anxiety case, Mrs. Friedlander's maiden name is Florence Oken. This is the name of a known Stalinist supporter; the organizational tie-up, if any, is unknown at this writing. It may or may not be a coincidence that Oken is a well-known name in Stalinist circles, Helen Oken being the wife of an editor of the New Masses.

Guilty Knowledge

9. A well-known Stalinist in New York stated many weeks ago, when not a single newspaper knew anything about the 'Robinsons' identity, that the couple had been 'in California before going to Mexico.' This Stalinist obviously had inside information on the story which the G.P.U. had gotten up for the 'Robinsons' to tell.

10. Several weeks ago the Freiheit, Stalinist Yiddish organ, declared that certain 'Trotskyite' writers on New York Yiddish papers were aware of the real identity of the 'Robinsons.' Needless to say, the Freiheit has not named names. The Appeal has inquired, not of Trotskyite writers (there are none) but of those Yiddish writers whom the G.P.U. 'accuses' of Trotskyism. All deny knowledge of the 'Robinsons.' The Freiheit was preparing to drag a few Yiddish anti-Stalinists into the frame-up—and incidentally gave away its own guilty awareness of the nature of the G.P.U. plot.

S. W. P. Mail Pilfered

11. Two months ago the national office of the S.W.P. complained to the Post Office that its mail had been rifled. We now learn that the Post Office Department has arraigned one Arthur Semle, a department employee, charged with stealing mail on the route which includes the office. Semle has signed a confession and will shortly be brought before a Federal Grand Jury. The Post Office Department has shown considerable anxiety to convince the press, including the Socialist Appeal, that the only motive in the thefts was to obtain money. The fact remains, however, that none of the mail orders or checks which are missing have been cashed—and that political documents are missing. Inasmuch as the C.P. has for many years made it a practice to steal political documents belonging to its working class opponents, we believe the theft of the mail had the usual political motive: to obtain a basis for forging documents useful to the G.P.U. Coming at the time they did, we naturally would not be surprised if these thefts had as their aim forgeries to be used in bolstering up the C.P.'s plans for the 'Robinson-Rubens' case.

The C. P. may now be expected, under G.P.U. orders, to try to unload the Stalinists in New York who are in any way linked to the case, and perhaps to try to make them out to be Trotskyites. In addition, the G.P.U. may be expected to fish around in American liberal, Bohemian, and pseudo-radical circles in an effort to find somebody who can be bribed, blackmailed, or framed into playing the role of the indispensable link between the Rubens and American Trotskyites. The frame-up, moreover, will probably be stretched to cover not only Trotskyites but any liberal or left critics of Stalin's plan for a People's Totalitarian War Front.

Grand Jury Probe

For the last week there has been in session in New York a Federal Grand Jury investigating the passport racket whereby the mysterious 'Robinson-Rubens' got their phony passports. The high political significance of the 'Robinson-Rubens' case is indicated by the fact that not a single New York newspaper has reported one bit of news concerning the Grand Jury proceedings. Either the reporters can get no information—or they are afraid to print what they get lest they be prosecuted for contempt of the Federal Jury. Moreover, United States Attorney Lester Dunningham has apparently hedged himself about with unusual protections against publicity, usually one of the chief delights of prosecutors.

The orders for silence and secrecy, in fact, come from the Department of State rather than from the Department of Justice.

For what is at issue here is not an affair of justice but an affair of state.

Early in December Secretary of State Hull asked Moscow for an explanation of the disappearance of the Rubens couple, then known only as the 'Robinsons.' It is rumored in diplomatic circles in Washington that Trotskyanov told Hull not to yell too loud or he would be sorry. In any case, Moscow made no official answer for a week, apparently confident that it could play with the sensibilities of Washington with impunity. At the end of a week the State Department discovered that the 'Robinson' passports were phony, issued a statement implying that the 'Robinsons' were not American citizens, and thus unloaded the missing couple who thenceforth were suspect in American eyes.

Subsequently it was established that the phony Mrs. 'Robinson' was really Mrs. Rubens and that, whatever she may have to do with a 'Robinson' passport, she was an American-born citizen. Inasmuch as the Soviet government had never answered Washington's inquiry—except indirectly by an equivocal Izvestia announcement that measures were being taken to apprehend the missing couple—Hull early in January felt compelled to address a new request to Moscow, this time for information about Mrs. Rubens only.

Hull On The Lid

When a week went by without a reply from Moscow, a number of American newspapers commented on the amazing attitude of the Soviet government toward a government whose friendship it has sought in a thou-

and ways to guarantee. Two weeks went by before the Soviet government answered. While using the passport disclosures, to deal a few blows to the G.P.U. in the United States, Hull made no public disclosures.

The 'Appeal' Pries The Lid Off

The Socialist Appeal is not a State Department gazette. It has established that at both ends of the chain which made it possible for the 'Robinson-Rubens' to get their phony passports are Stalinist connections. We have charged that the 'Robinson-Rubens' affair is important because it casts light on the nefarious, reactionary political activities of Stalin's G.P.U. both in this country and in the U.S.S.R.

No Stalinist organ or official has attempted to refute any of our charges.

Powerful Forces At Work

In the United States there are powerful forces which, having an eye to imperialist war adventures in the Far East, desire not to cause serious embarrassment to Stalin. These forces have the ear of the State Department. Consequently, despite Mrs. Rubens' American citizenship, despite the fact that a plot is afoot to use the 'Robinson-Rubens' case for a frame-up by the use of 'evidence' manufactured in Moscow, the State Department enters a conspiracy of silence. Instead of making available to the public all that its many investigators have learned in the last two months, it contrives to silence most of the press on the subject. While it does not dare to suppress openly the American political opposition, it protects Stalin's 'good name' before the public.

Hull may be expected to continue conniving with the Kremlin to hide the facts, unless forced to open the Robinson-Rubens-Yezhov dossier now in his possession.

The continuance of the Appeal's investigation will bring more facts to light, making the Department's situation more difficult.

If at the same time the United States Senate Committee on Foreign Relations demands the facts now in Hull's possession, the State Department may have to do a great deal more talking than Hull or Troyanovsk would like.

Left Jobs

The Trail of Empire

The bloody trail trod by Great Britain in her march forward to becoming a 'peace loving nation' is marked by the 'honors' of her famous regiments. Take a look at the 'honors' list of the Seaford Highlanders, the 'honors' consisting of the list of places where Scottish boys of that regiment died 'defending democracy.' Here is the list to date: Carnatic—Hindustan—Mysore Cape of Good Hope, 1806—Maida—Java—Central India—Peiwas Kotal—Charasiah—Kabul, 1879—Kandahar, 1880—Afghanistan, 1878-'80—Tel-el-Kebir—Egypt, 1882—Chitral—Atbara—Khartoum—Paardeberg—South Africa, 1899-1902—Marne, 1914-18—Ypres—Loos—Somme—Vimy—Arras—Cambrai—Valenciennes—Palestine, 1918—Bagdad.

A 'Peace Loving Nation', 1938

The following quotation from the 'World Review' brings another 'honor' to the record of Bloody Britain. 'That aerial bombing is freely used by the Aden Administration (British) is not denied by the government. It is actually defended by those responsible for it, as a rapid and humane method of keeping peace in the outposts of the Empire. We are told that villages selected for aerial destruction are always warned in plenty of time to allow the inhabitants to get away.'

'The End of Civilization'

'If the Anti-Lynching Bill is allowed to pass it will mark the end of civilization in the United States.'—A distinguished Southern gentleman, speaking in the Senate.

A Wage Differential for Southern Senators

Senators from the South, who opposed the Wages and Hours Bill on the ground that 'due to the beneficence of Mother Nature' workers in the South should have lower minimum wages than in the north, were asked to apply the same rule to themselves and take a twenty per cent cut in salaries by the Atlantic District Council of the I. L. G. W. U. So far no 'saviour of civilization' has stood up on his hind legs in the Senate to propose a bill along those lines. If such a bill were passed, wouldn't the pillars of civilization totter?

'Quite Unintentionally'

Says Director Fechner of the CCC camps: '2,300,000 CCC youths have been taught discipline, how to live in large groups harmoniously, how to care for themselves, and how to maintain rigid sanitation.' He adds: 'Quite unintentionally their training is also such that they could be turned into first-class fighting men at almost instant notice.'

Bei Mir Bist Du Schoen

The latest song hit, goes 'round and 'round and it comes out in the strangest of places. Last week it popped out in a cartoon in the 'Morning Journal.' Here we found no less a 'notable' than Moissaye Olgin, editor of the 'Freiheit' (Stalinist Jewish Daily) down on one knee (he has had a lot of practice in knee, bending), looking with adoration at the Pope, and singing Bei Mir Bist Du Schoen.

'The Sun, the Moon and the Stars'

O great Stalin, O leader of the peoples, Thou who broughtest man to birth, Thou who fructified the earth, Thou who restorest the centuries, Thou who makest bloom the spring, Thou who makest vibrate the musical chords, Thou splendor of my spring, O thou, Sun reflected by millions of hearts. —Quoted from 'Pravda' in Victor Serge's 'Russia Twenty Years After.'

'Lot's Wife and Daughters'

David Dubinsky, president of the I.L.G.W.U., who wants peace and unity between the A.F. of L. and the C.I.O. and wants it now, is compared by John L. Lewis to 'Lot's Wife,' who disobeying instructions looked back at the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah and was turned into a pillar of salt. Lewis in his scorn of Dubinsky, apparently sees himself in the role of Lot who did not look back. John 'Lot' Lewis should, however, remember what happened in the cave (Genesis; 19th Chapter: 32-35 verses. 'Come let us make our father drink wine and we will lie with him' etc. etc.) and watch out for the 20th Century American 'daughters' who are getting a bit too ardent in their affections.

Correspondents Write In From The Trade Unions

EAST CHICAGO, Ind.—The long awaited purge of the Stalinists has begun in the Steel Workers' Union of the C. I. O. Predicted for many months by every one who studied the scene, the purge comes as a blow to the Stalinists. Beginning first in the Chicago-Calumet area where the Stalinists are particularly strong, the drive has started by the dismissal of the district sub-director and former strike director during the Little Steel strike. Other Stalinist organizers are slated to be removed immediately as the John L. Lewis-Phil Murray bureaucracy moves to strengthen its position. The pretext given is 'economy' but any intelligent observer knows that this is not the real reason.

When the drive to organize the steel industry was begun, the C. I. O. was forced to rely on the many Stalinists who volunteered as organizers.

During the strike in Little Steel, the Stalinists demonstrated to the bureaucracy that they were trustworthy stooges and showed them that they were the equals if not the superiors of the Lewis group in their class-collaboration tactics and in their stifling of the workers' militancy.

Stalinists as Stooges

Always afraid that Murray would dispense with them if they became aggressive, the Stalinists did their best to prove to him that they were the best Charlie McCarthies of them all. Even during the S.W.O.C. convention held in Pittsburgh during the week of December 15, when it was apparent to everyone that the purge was about to begin and that their stooging tactics were of no avail, the Stalinists worked hand in hand with the Lewis-Murray machine in crushing rank-and-file democracy and militancy.

Lewis, Murray, and the coal-miner bureaucracy secured greater power than they ever had before in this convention, where they were given by the delegates (most of whom were either controlled by the Murray machine or by the Stalinists) a blank check to do what they pleased. Now they are moving to consolidate their position and, no longer needing the Stalinists who did a great deal of the dirty work for them, they are pushing them out.

AKRON, Ohio.—Authentic reports that the rubber barons here plan to attempt a return to the eight-hour day with reduced

Marxist School Starts Winter Term Feb. 16

The winter term of the Marxist School will open the week of February 14th at 116 University Place. Regular courses will include: Elementary Socialism, Marxian Economics, Principles of Revolutionary Socialism, History of the Third International, History and Problems of Trade Unionism, Party Organization Problems, and Problems of the Youth Movement. (The last two will be open only to members of the Socialist Workers Party and Young Peoples Socialist League.) Other courses are also being planned.

The last semester of the Marxist School—its first—revealed great interest in socialist education. Several hundred students regularly attended the lecture courses.

ANOTHER GALA EAST SIDE LABOR CENTER AFFAIR!

SATURDAY NITE JAN. 22 159 Rivington St., 1st floor Subscription 20c.

WAA Member 10c AUSPICES: EAST SIDE BRANCH S.W.P. AND Y. P. S. L.

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Lenin, Liebknecht, Luxemburg, Memorial Meeting SPEAKER:

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and full length showing of 'Ten Days that Shook the World'

FRIDAY, JAN. 21, at 8 P. M. ADMISSION 25 CENTS At 916 9th Avenue, (between 58 and 59 Streets)

wages for thousands of rubber workers has galvanized the C.I.O. unions into preparing a defense against such moves.

The C.I.O. industrial union council branded the company plans as a 'selfish, callous and arrogant' move and pledged, 'its complete support to Local Unions involved in fighting such a program.'

The six-hour day is one of the few remaining gains won by the United Rubber Workers of America which has been left intact in the recent onslaught by the rubber companies against the unions.

MARION, Ind.—An object lesson in hog-tieing workers to their employers under the lofty slogan of 'profit sharing' was given here by the Marion Shoe Company.

Several years ago the company was on the rocks, and threatened the workers and the towns people with closing. By devious methods a public spirited campaign to keep the factory in Marion was begun.

Workers raised money for a \$23,000 stock subscription to purchase the factory from the owner. The money was borrowed, and paid back by deducting two per cent of the employee's wages each week.

Magnanimously, the boss decided to stay, and, equally magnanimously, the workers rented

the factory to him at the rate of one dollar a year.

Marion, Ind., now has a shoe factory, the boss has his profits with no deductions for machinery depreciation, and the workers foot the bill.

The American Federation of Labor, which reports this highly instructive incident, is silent on the question of wage, hours, seniority and working conditions.

CANTON, Ohio.—Little Steel barons in the Canton region moved to consolidate their positions last week by introducing into city council a drastic alien registration measure.

The ordinance, proposed by Republican Mayor James Secombe, would compel all foreign born residents of the city to register at the police station every six months, be finger-printed, photographed and pay a one dollar registration fee. They would be furnished with cards which would have to be carried at all times, and shown upon demand of a policeman.

The quiet, almost secret manner of presenting the ordinance failed to catch local labor napping, however. It has been unanimously condemned by the C. I. O. Industrial Council and the American Federation of Labor, with the exception of the building trades council.

The building trades together with the American Legion and other 'civic' groups are waving the flag and beating the drum for its passage.

So determined has opposition become that council postponed a final reading of the ordinance at its meeting last week. Organized Labor representatives were on hand to vigorously oppose the measure.

Letter From Shanghai Tells of China Struggle

(Continued from page 3)

drivers, actually managing by these methods to capture six tanks.

The soldiers at Shanghai also fought bravely and inflicted heavy losses on the Japanese. But their commanders failed them at every turn. A badly disunited command (at Chajoo, for example, the Japanese landing was almost a scandal), the heterogeneity of the soldiers, the fear of commanders to sacrifice their own forces, mutual distrust, panicky retreat before the approach of the Japanese armies, all contributed toward the ease with which the Japanese occupied the Northern provinces. At Shanghai, the officers showed an inclination to retreat and several division commanders were executed. The general previously quoted stated that the Shanghai phase of the war had convinced him that the factor which decides victory is not the army but the masses. This conclusion will be fully utilized in the future guerrilla warfare.

Masses Held Down

As to conditions at the rear, we see how the bourgeoisie, the landlords, the village elders and the new gentry fear the masses. The masses and the youth are not allowed freedom of organization. If they attempt to organize they are denounced as 'traitors' and arrested. The upper classes organize themselves into patriotic societies to collect funds or do relief work. This is to forestall similar organizations among the masses, to forestall any mass movement. The propaganda of the youth is branded by them as 'undesirable activity.' The students are closed up in schools as in the olden days to study the Chinese classics and to mull over tedious, worn-out lessons. Their work in 'national salvation' is limited to such unimportant fields as collecting funds, mass singing, play reading, wall newspapers, etc.

Administrative officials utilize their positions to amass big fortunes by regulating grain prices, by taking bribes for granting exemptions from conscription, by inventing new taxes and requisitions, etc.

Under such conditions, it is sheer deception of the masses to advocate national solidarity in the fight against Japan. The only classes which are capable of winning a decisive victory in this war are still trampled under foot. The resistance of the upper classes will inevitably collapse. It is designed to prove that resistance against Japanese imperialism is hopeless. Then the upper classes will be ready to live under Japanese military rule.

Stalinists Betray

The most shameful political attitude is that of the Stalinists. When the student and petty bourgeois national salvation movements were widespread and persecuted by the Kuomintang, the Stalinists came out for a 'National Anti-Japanese United

Front,' that is, they sought to drag these movements backward into the fold of the Kuomintang instead of trying to deepen the class consciousness of the masses against the present regime. Their line of action is to push and urge the Kuomintang, to hope and demand that the Kuomintang accept them into the Government and realize their program. Having abandoned the agrarian revolution, they hope to solve the agrarian problem by legislative means. They have abandoned the class struggle because it jeopardizes national solidarity, etc., etc. This means that they have turned their backs on the masses and that they recognize the Kuomintang as their master. When they joined in the work of Chiang Kai-shek's headquarters, Chiang counter-balanced their influence by appointing additional right wingers.

Reform Is Hopeless

The recent reorganization of four provincial governments left government posts still occupied by landlords and reactionary bureaucrats and cliques. It is absolutely hopeless to reform the political structure from within or to initiate military reforms corresponding to the needs of the moment. The experience of the war shows us that the most essential material of the struggle is man-power, the living soldiers. But the Kuomintang has been just as reckless as it could be in handling this living material. The military collapse, I believe, will continue, but the armies, in falling apart, will become guerrilla forces which, in cooperation with the people, will harass the Japanese army and wear it down.

The operations in Shansi by the former Red Army show that a small army, with a politically conscious rank-and-file, animated by the spirit of equality, having close connection with the people, can win big successes. Here the masses do not flee from the fighting zone, but help the army in various ways. There are no more traitors. Japanese planes fly over the army's headquarters, but they do not drop bombs because no traitors have disclosed to them its location and it cannot be identified from the air.

The Revolutionary program

Because of the still prevalent suppression of the mass movement through China, especially in the cities, and the arrest of revolutionists (who are called 'traitors'), also because the Kuomintang controls all popular organizations, there has been practically no genuine mass movement as a reaction to the Loukiaochiao incident and the events which have followed it. The Stalinists have completely turned their backs on the masses. Hence it is up to us to approach the masses with a revolutionary program, calling for the organization of the masses, for the creation of councils of workers', soldiers' and peasants' deputies, for the arming of the workers, etc.

Fraternally, L. J. C.