

SOCIALIST APPEAL

Vol. II. - No. 31. Saturday, March 12, 1938. Published every week by the SOCIALIST APPEAL PUBLISHING ASS'N. at 116 University Place, New York, N. Y.

Entered as second-class matter September 1, 1937 at the post office at New York, New York, under the Act of March 3, 1879.

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Advance Information!

"Revelations at the Moscow trial regarding plots by alleged Trotskyists to undermine China's resistance to Japan were predicted here today by the Chinese Communist daily Hsin Hua Jih Pao.

Last week we exposed the frame-up machinations of Stalin's G.P.U. directed toward the discredit and extermination of the revolutionists organized in the Communist League of China.

On March 5, the day after receipt of the Hankow dispatch (which was dated March 4) the contours of Stalin's frame-up of the Chinese Fourth Internationalists began to emerge in the totalitarian courtroom in Moscow.

Christian Rakovsky is testifying in a conversation which he alleges he had with "a highly-placed individual" in Tokyo in 1934. This "individual" (unnamed, of course) said to Rakovsky: "We are aware that you are a very close friend and adherent of Mr. Trotsky.

Yes, dear children, it is all so perfectly clear: The government of imperialist Japan being unable as you all know, to create its own "incidents" in China, was obliged to turn to Trotsky and the Chinese Trotskyites.

But who nowadays believes fairy tales?

Mr. Kerensky Comes To Town

Mr. Alexander F. Kerensky has come to town for a speaking tour. The former Prime Minister of the Provisional Government of Russia before the Bolshevik Revolution, is very indignant and morally outraged.

We are not, as is known, among those who believe that support of the Russian Revolution and the leadership of Lenin makes necessary an endorsement of the dreadful atrocities committed by the counter-revolutionary regime of Stalin and Co.

March New International Appears

The March issue of the New "Class Relations in the Chinese International has just come off the press. Included among its contents is a review entitled "The New Line-up in Europe and the Soviet Union"

James Burnham discusses "Prospects for the Development of a Labor Party" in the United States, while Arne Swaback writes on "The Trade Unions in Politics."

Kerensky, will hardly condemn Stalin only in order to exchange him for the man and the system that were kicked into oblivion by the revolutionary masses of Russia in November 1917.

For it was under Kerensky that the first big frame-up a la Stalin was launched against the Bolsheviks. It was Kerensky who sought to besmirch and exterminate the party of Lenin and Trotsky by bringing the latter to trial on the charge of being German spies.

There is no tragedy, it is said, without its humor. The Kerensky visit has its humor, too. It is supplied, morbidly by his whilom admirer and present-day hireling of the Kremlin despot, Mr. M. J. Olgin.

"After the (Petrograd Bolshevik) demonstration, he (Kerensky) wrote in a radiogram broadcast 'To All': 'It has been established definitely that the disorders in Petrograd were organized with the participation of German government agents...'

Kerensky's radiogram of 1917 sounds word for word like an excerpt from the Vyshinsky announcement of a new trial against the "Trotskyist agents of fascism." Actually, Stalin is simply plagiarizing the terms and methods of the bourgeois reaction, and its frame-up system, as exemplified in his time by Mr. Kerensky.

The choice between Kerensky and Stalin is the choice between the wreckage of a politician trying to drag himself out of history's garbage can and a politician, still at the top, but destined just as surely for the discard.

Nailed Again

In the last issue of the Appeal we devoted considerable space to a critical analysis of the new "Keep America out of War" movement, started by the Lovestoneites and the Altman-Thomas Socialists, and officially launched last Sunday at a mass meeting in the Hippodrome.

We pointed out, too, that no one representing the revolutionary position of the Socialist Workers Party (Trotskyists) was asked to participate in the March 6 meeting and that the suggestion of one committee member to invite an S.W.P. speaker for the meeting was vigorously rejected.

Orson Welles, Broadway actor, was apparently one of those signed up without being consulted. Up bobs the Stalinist Daily Worker on March 4, the day following the appearance of the Socialist Appeal, with the charge that Welles "accuses the Trotskyist Committee of the March 6 Anti-War Meeting, to be held in the Hippodrome, of forging his name to a letter sent to Broadway actors, producers and playwrights, calling upon them to attend this meeting."

Which is just the sort of thing one has to expect from the long-practised forgers of the Daily Worker, who take their orders from the world's greatest forger in Moscow!

This splendid issue of the monthly organ of revolutionary Marxism is on sale at the office of the New International, 116 University Place, New York City, and all branches of the Socialist Workers Party.

VANGUARD GROUP LECTURE FORUM Sunday, March 13, 8:30 P.M. Speaker: SAM WEINER Subject: The Program of Libertarian Communism Vanguard Hall 22 West 17th Street, N. Y. C.

The Real Moscow Defendant



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Editor, Socialist Appeal: Your tactless treatment of the Partisan Review (see Socialist Appeal, December 5, 1937) was not well calculated to win the Partisan Review over to our political position.

Marxism is a guide to act which prevails over other cultural disciplines because its aid is indispensable to the creative imagination. Reciprocally the great imagination guides political action.

Charges Negligence By failing to review the body of the magazine from this general standpoint, the Appeal was negligent. Furthermore, the review was anonymous, and thus partaking of the character of an editorial, involves our Party in a statement of general policy towards workers in the arts and sciences.

It is a bad statement of a bad policy, indistinguishable from Stalinist policy except where it is even more opportunistic. You said: "A revolutionary organ should be open to the best productions of living literature, regardless of the political views of their authors."

Stalinist Depths? Above all, I protest your confusion or identification of the influence of political science on literature or of political events on writers, with the influence of political machines upon literature.

political science. The attitude of your reviewer towards literature is the authoritarian attitude under which bureaucratic despotism grows. Uncorrected it would reduce us to Stalinian depths. John Wheelwright.

OUR REPLY Our December 4 article on the Partisan Review has evoked rejoinders from its editors and several comrades who believe that the interests of revolutionary culture are best served if its practitioners remain independent of revolutionary politics, either in theory or in practice.

The Partisan Review's protest that "the Appeal, by equating indifference with independence, lands us in pure aestheticism," is entirely amiss. We criticized the Partisan Review, not for indifference towards politics in general, but for an indefensible indifference towards revolutionary labor politics.

Present Program The editors partially acknowledge the cogency of our argument by presenting their political position. "Our program," they write, "is the program of Marxism, which in general terms means being for the revolutionary overthrow of capitalist society, for a workers' government, and for international socialism."

This program represents a step forward from their previous total silence on the subject. But these admirable ideas, which coincide with our own, remain suspended, like Mahomet's coffin, between heaven and earth. Having explicitly rejected the ideas and organizations of the Second and Third Internationals, will the editors of the Partisan Review, who remind us that Marxism is not only a theory but a guide to action, descend still further from their mist-wrapped Olympian heights and tell their readers, clearly and candidly, what they think of the ideas and organization of the Fourth International?

Comrade Wheelwright's main contention that literature must be kept wholly free from the influence of "political machines" is, in our opinion, a dangerous and false half-truth. All departments of contemporary culture have to be cleansed of false ideas and pernicious influences. On the other hand, they must be kept open for the introduction of the fertilizing and fructifying ideas

of Marxism, if they are to progress.

Many intellectuals in their revulsion against Stalinism entertain the notion that the interests of revolutionary culture and revolutionary politics are fundamentally incompatible and antagonistic, and that a revolutionary socialist party must blight all touches. In these ideas they resemble, in their own sphere of activity, those anarcho-syndicalists who resent and reject in principle the "interference," i.e. the activity, of revolutionary socialists in the trade-union.

Such ideas and attitudes have nothing in common with Marxism. Just as we combat the reactionary prejudice that the ideas and activities of revolutionary socialists injure the advancement of the interests of the organized workers, so we deny that they must necessarily harm the most sensitive interests of culture. On the contrary we hold that they are not discordant in principle and can be harmonized in practice.

To Socialists

The following letter, addressed by Norman Gilbert to members of the Socialist Party in Pennsylvania, speaks for itself. Having no real forces of their own in the State, the Altman-Thomas-Zam clique are apparently seeking to buttress their feebleness by claiming that Gilbert, a well-known militant, is in their camp.

Dear Comrades: It has just been brought to my attention that a paper is being circulated by certain members of the Socialist Party, wherein over my signature I am represented as endorsing the Altman-Thomas-Zam clique and retaining membership in their party.

I want at this time to make it perfectly clear to every one concerned that when the above-mentioned clique rode rough-shod over every principle of party democracy, violating the party constitution, expelling those members who upheld it, thereby preparing the way for a shameful and disgraceful betrayal of the party into the camp of Waldman-Browder-Wall Street and support of LaGuardia in the New York elections, I switched my support to those comrades who upheld the time-honored position of "No Compromise, No Political Trading."

I at no time, in any way, gave permission for my name to be used as endorsing those tactics or the present so-called "Socialist Party." To do so would have meant to turn traitor to my comrades who were expelled from the S. E. C., and to the principles

Hippodrome Meeting

An Editorial

In an editorial statement last week, "How Not to Fight War," we pointed out the futility, and worse, of the dangerous course embodied in the Thomas-Lovestone-pacifist movement which they call "Keep America Out of War."

The Hippodrome mass meeting of this movement on March 6, completely confirmed our analysis. The two chief speakers whose addresses went out over the radio, Senator LaFollette and Major-General Wm. C. Rivers, supplemented by Homer Martin, symbolized the meeting and set the tone for it. And the tone of the meeting, as described in the report elsewhere on these pages, was patriotism.

The working class is patriotic—to its own class and its own class interests. Patriotism to the "fatherland," when it is owned and controlled by the capitalist class, is a crime against the working class, the betrayal of its interests. The working class can be patriotic to its country only when it has a country, which means, simply, when it has taken over power and rules the nation.

The most extreme, and consequently the most consistent expression of capitalist patriotism was Major-General Rivers' speech. At bottom, it was the most logical expression of that pacifism which characterizes the whole Thomas-Lovestone movement. Rivers made it perfectly clear that he differs from the outspoken war-jingoes and big-navy people only on technical grounds. They believe more armaments are needed for "defense"—and what bandit state ever went to war for any other reason except "defense"? General Rivers believes that the present armaments level of the United States is high enough for "defense." Defense of what? Of the 48 United States and of... America's imperialist position throughout the world. If this gentleman is a qualified spokesman for the "Keep America Out of War" Committee, the latter should by all means invite the Republican Party minority of the House Naval Affairs Committee, who also oppose the Roosevelt naval program.

Homer Martin, who has been exploiting the genuinely anti-war sentiments of the auto workers, shouted his readiness to shed the last drop of his blood in "defense" of the United States against "invasion." Again we ask: What imperialist state ever went to war without claiming "defense from invasion"?

Martin and Rivers, each in his own way, are imbuing the masses with the reactionary spirit of capitalist patriotism. That is the essence of the matter. Basically, that is the essence of middle class pacifism, which always played such a lamentable and treacherous role the minute imperialist war actually broke out.

The fact that the Lovestoneite representative at the meeting was in this pacifist mudhole with both feet, only emphasizes the perfidious role of the Lovestone group. It supplies the "radical" coloration for a fundamentally patriotic gathering and movement. As for Norman Thomas, his part in this sorry affair is best summed up in the fact that he led the applause for the new Messiah of the "anti-war" movement, LaFollette.

The Hippodrome meeting only serves to emphasize again that an anti-war movement divorced from the working class struggle against capitalism—the system at the root of imperialist war—is a snare and a delusion.

A united movement of the working class against the war danger is proper and necessary, but it is a movement doomed in advance if it stands on the foundation of capitalist patriotism and its middle class pacifist defenders.

Shachtman Heard At ILGWU Group

NEW YORK. — A capacity meeting of members of Local 63 (Dress Pressers) of the International Ladies Garment Workers' Union listened intently on March 1 to a lecture by Max Shachtman, editor of the Socialist Appeal, on "Dictatorship and Democracy," after the chairman of the local had exposed efforts made by the "democratic" Stalinists to dissuade members from attending.

Shachtman made his presentation so lucidly and forcefully that no one left until after the speaker had replied to the numerous questions from the floor. Many were the expressions: "Best lecture we've had."

This response was evoked by the apt presentation of the records of the capitalist powers, democratic and dictatorial, and their systems of alliances; the experiences of the unionists themselves during the last world war; and pertinent analogies demonstrating the shallowness and falsity of the arguments of the Stalinists and social-democrats.

The many questions put by social-democratic workers gave Shachtman further opportunity to show, on the basis of the workers' own experiences in the union and in strikes, and their experiences with their leadership, that the Socialist Workers Party is the only true defender of the Russian Revolution and of revolutionary working-class internationalism in this country.

I am now the proud bearer of a membership card in the newly formed Socialist Workers Party, the only party that is carrying out the program of Marx and Engels. In my locality (Allentown-Bethlehem-Easton), the S. P. does not even have functioning branches.

MARXIST SCHOOL

The Third International, founded nineteen years ago this month, is the subject of critical analysis at the Marxist School every Wednesday evening, at 8:45 P. M. On March 23, Joseph Carter, will consider the background and proceedings of the Third Congress of the International, 1921. This will be followed at succeeding sessions by a study of the later congresses, the development of the struggle of "Stalinism versus Trotskyism"; the politics of the Brandler-Lovestone group; the forces and prospects for the Fourth International.

On Wednesday evenings, at 7:00 P. M., Bill Morgan, labor secretary, Local New York, Socialist Workers Party, conducts the course in "Problems of the Trade Union Movement." Other courses include: Elementary Socialism, Hal Draper, Monday 7:00 P. M.; Marxian Economics, John G. Wright, Tuesday 7:00 P. M.; Principles of Revolutionary Socialism, Maurice Spector, 8:45 P. M.

Admission for individual sessions for any course is twenty-five cents. Classes are held at 116 University Place, New York City.

WANTED

Back Numbers of the Appeal Vol. 1 - No. 5 Vol. 1 - No. 9 Comrades having copies of these issues which they do not need or which they are prepared to donate, please send them in immediately. They are needed to complete the office files.

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March 18, 1938 8 P.M.

NEW YORK ANTI-WAR MEETING On the Anniversary of the Paris Commune

Manhattan Plaza 66 E. 4 St.