

An Open Letter

TO MOISSAYE OLGIN

Concerning the Fate of Your Two Friends, Juliet Poyntz and Noah London

My Dear Mr. Olgin:

Two of your oldest political and personal friends have disappeared—Juliet Stuart Poyntz and Noah London. The first vanished from her last known residence in New York, and despite a great deal of publicity about her case, there has been no clue to her whereabouts. The second was last heard of in the Soviet Union, and despite repeated requests made in our columns for information, those who are in a position to supply it have been disturbingly silent.

You knew both of these persons very intimately. Although you joined at a somewhat later date the party which they helped found, you established close bonds of friendship with them. After the formation of the Workers Party in 1921, when you were being hounded politically by the Costrell-Bittleman faction in the Jewish Federation of the party, Noah London became one of the most influential friends you had, and one of your closest collaborators in the editorial board of the Freiheit. In the subsequent internal fight over the Labor Party, your relationships were even more firmly cemented.

Leader in Anti-LaFollette Faction

As for Juliet Poyntz, your friendship, political and personal, was, if anything, even stronger. With you, and Ludwig Lore, she was one of the principal leaders of the faction which opposed the famous "LaFollette maneuver" of the Communist Party in 1924. In point of fact, you went to the sessions of the Executive Committee of the Comintern at that time in order to present the view you held in common with her.

These friendships, as you and so many others know, you maintained until not so long ago. Then, for one reason or another, your two friends fell foul of the Moscow machine. Noah London and his wife were tried a few years ago on a charge of "sabotage" which you, as well as I, know to be preposterous for a man of London's record and position. He disappeared after that trial and recently the report reached here that he was shot by the Stalinist authorities. As for Juliet Poyntz, you know that after her disappearance, in the midst of her work on a book dealing with the situation in the Soviet Union, responsible persons charged that she was done away with by the Stalinist secret service in order to silence her.

Now, Mr. Olgin, I would like to know what you have done about these two old friends of yours. Have you at least made the appropriate inquiries about their fate in those qualified quarters which, both of us know, are in a position to give detailed and authoritative information—especially if you asked, in your capacity as a prominent official and leader of the American communists?

What Have You Done, Olgin?

Or have you, as has been your custom in these past years, remained silent; slunk whimperingly from your elementary obligations; cursed yourself bitterly for your impotence in the privacy of those intimates who you hope will not betray you as you are always ready to betray them; and rationalized your cowardice under some mythical higher duty to your political employers who despise and ridicule your notorious servility as much as you do theirs to the next layer of the hierarchy?

This letter is not addressed to you because you have retained any of the small ration of character and probity you could so ill afford to lose. What little you had left after your years of service under Abe Cahan, you surrendered completely during your term of service under Stalin. But you do have left what has sustained you for years: self-interest.

Look around at the shambles of the Stalin machine! See how many of its victims are men who sought to escape it by shrieking its praises and suppressing their inner revulsion! What assurance have you that tomorrow or the next-day, you will not face—not the firing squad in a G.P.U. cell, but the murderous slander campaign against the expelled scapegoat? That the party authorities will say, as they did about Juliet Poyntz, that they can scarcely remember the name of Olgin? Or that they will be silent, as they are in the case of Noah London, about what happened to M. J. Olgin because of the heretical, frightened remarks he made to "good friends" about things sacrosanct in the eyes of the Stalinist inquisition?

Would it then not be better to speak out now about the fate of your two old friends whom you have till now deserted and betrayed, before others have to speak out about you?

Yours, etc., MAX SHACHTMAN.

Self-Avowed Assassins

An Editorial

Writing on the case of Charles Rappoport, French communist who publicly denounced the Moscow trials as frame-ups, the Paris correspondent of the New York Stalinist Yiddish daily, Morning Freiheit (April 25, 1938) wrote, according to a translation given in the Workers Age (May 14, 1938):

"But Rappoport finds himself in bourgeois France, where betrayers of the proletariat are not sent for trial before the courts. . . But who knows, the power of the Cheka is beyond imagination. Perhaps even in Paris it will prove capable of giving its enemies a special 'dose' . . ."

For the first time, so far as we know, we have an instance of an open threat by the Stalinists to murder a political opponent. In actuality, they have already committed such murders in Moscow, in Spain, in Bulgaria and in France. But there has never yet been such a cynical avowal of their use of terrorist methods against critics.

By this slip of the pen in the Freiheit, the Stalinists turn into their own foreheads the brand of ASSASSINS!

TICKETS FOR THE S. W. P. BOAT RIDE (New York)

Up the Hudson to HOOK MOUNTAIN On SATURDAY, JULY 9 Can still be obtained (Price \$1) at the City Office 116 University Place

NOTICE: The boat will leave PROMPTLY at 9:30 A. M. from Pier 4, the Battery

The trip will be postponed ONLY in the event of stormy, rainy weather AT THAT HOUR

Alive or Dead?



JULIET STUART POYNTZ

Y.P.S.L. SUMMER SCHOOL CLASSES GET UNDER WAY

The New York District of the Y.P.S.L. is conducting a Summer School from July 5 to August 9, at 116 University Place. The courses, open to Y.P.S.L. and S.W.P. members and their friends and sympathizers are as follows:

- 1. A.B.C. OF MARXISM BY HAL DRAPER, Nat'l Sec'y Y.P.S.L. (Tuesday nights 7-8:15 p. m., beginning July 5) July 5—Basic Philosophy of Marxism (Dialectical Materialism) July 12—Why History Happens—Marxist Philosophy applied to Society (Historical Materialism) July 19—Economic Mechanism of Capitalism (Marxist Economics) July 26—Political Mechanism of Capitalism (State and Revolution) August 2—Imperialism and War August 9—Radical Tendencies Today.

2. HISTORY AND PROBLEMS OF AMERICAN LABOR BY BILL MORGAN (N. Y. Trade Union Dir. S.W.P.) (Tuesday night 8:30-10 P. M., beginning July 5)

A brief survey of American labor history and a discussion of labor's current and most pressing problems. Early labor history; Knights of Labor; A. F. of L. and Comperism; C.I.O. and current trade union problems.

3. PUBLIC SPEAKING—IRVING FANKEN, N.Y. District Comm., Y.P.S.L. (Monday nights 8-9, beginning July 11)

A brief course in the elements of public speaking. How to prepare and present indoor and outdoor speeches. Classroom and field practice. Open to Y.P.S.L. and Party comrades.

Fees for courses are nominal—20 cents for single course, 35 cents for two. Public Speaking free to Y.P.S.L. members.

UNION BRIEFS

Fifty "no-stop-work" contracts, the first of their kind between a government agency and labor unions, have been signed by the Federated Building Trades unions in fifty cities and the United States Housing Authority. Fifty similar contracts are nearing completion. The contracts provide that the unions will not halt work because of demands for changes in pay or jurisdictional disputes. Thus the bureaucrats of the A.F.L. have hamstrung the workers and prevented their regaining a tiny fraction of what was taken away from them during the long building slump.

Morris Engargola of Brooklyn, New York, recently convicted of having led a group of strikers in an assault on a scab at the plant of the Fein Tin Can Company, was sentenced by Judge George W. Martin to serve ten months in the penitentiary. A sock in the jaw in the interest of the workers costs ten times as much as the socks of a drunken bum.

Drivers unions in two states won a five-day strike against the Gamble-Robinson Company. Negotiations were concluded in Minneapolis, Local 544 officers participating with the representatives of the six local unions. A flat fee cents per hour increase was won for all classifications.

More than 300 railroad workers, representing 21 Harris County, Texas, railroad union lodges, voted unanimously last week to wage a fight to the finish against the American Railway Association's threat of a 15 per cent wage cut. At Kansas City, Mo., 1,000 workers met and pledged themselves to fight the cut.

A Turn-Coat on the Witness-Stand

EARL BROWDER TESTIFIES BEFORE THE McNABOE COMMITTEE

BROWDER: DEFENDER OF THE SOVIET UNION

Reporting the testimony of Earl Browder, secretary of the American Stalinists, before the McNaboe legislative committee, the New York Post of June 30, 1938, gave the following exchange between the witness and the committee chairman:

"If it came to a war between the United States and Russia who would you bear arms for?" McNaboe asked.

"I refuse to admit the possibility of such a war," said Browder. But McNaboe pressed for an answer and Browder finally replied: "Under all conceivable conditions indicated at the present time, I would bear arms for the United States."

Why did the "Daily Worker" of July 1, 1938, reporting this exchange, deliberately suppress the last sentence of Browder's reply, which declared that he would fight for American imperialism in a war against the Soviet Union?

There are few things as revolting as the sight of a turncoat slithering on his belly before the enemy he was once devoted to fighting against.

Of that breed, there are few in history to match the admixture of consummate renegacy, cynical effrontery, hypocrisy and servility that marked the testimony of Earl Browder, Stalin's vicerey for the United States, before the red-baiting legislative committee in New York headed by Senator John J. McNaboe.

Disavows Principles

With studied perfection, Browder repudiated not only what he himself stood for only the other day, but disavowed every single principle that was cemented in to the foundation of the international communist movement some twenty years ago.

The brand-new pretensions to "democracy," "Americanism," and patriotism, which were so touchingly emphasized by Browder, were, however, so obviously fraudulent, so patently the product of instructions from the Kremlin's totalitarian bosses as part of their diplomatic masquerade, that the New York Post is surely not right in saying that "even Senator McNaboe—who is scarcely distinguished either for perspicacity or knowledge of the radical movement—"saw through it."

It is this deliberate fraudulence, this all-too-obvious hypocrisy and double-dealing that distinguishes the Stalinist leaders from virtually all other renegades in the history of the labor movement.

Under Moscow Orders

When the social-patriots of the Second International before the last World War pledged themselves to bear arms for the "fatherland," they really meant it; and when the war broke out they redeemed their pledge in full.

When the Stalinists say—as Browder said to McNaboe—that their love for "American democracy" burns with so pure and powerful a flame that they will support U. S. capitalism in the coming war, even if it is fighting against the Soviet Union, the true and "native" upholders of American imperialism know they are talking with tongue in cheek and under orders from the self-same Moscow gang they pledge themselves to fight if war is declared.

The McNaboes are perfectly well aware of the hypocrisy in the pledge made by Browder, even though it is quite true that, fraudulent or not, the very agitation and education carried on by the Stalinist chieftains will result in many (if not most) of their present supporters actually turning anti-Soviet and pro-imperialist at the crucial moment.

An American Precedent

If we leave aside for a moment this last—and by no means unimportant point, the only precedent in modern American labor history for Browder's belly-crawling—a precedent which did not, however, reach anything like the depths of depravity touched by Browder—is the famous case of the five New York socialist assemblymen ousted by reaction from the Albany legislature in January 1920: Waldman, Claessens, Solomon, DeWitt and Orr.

What a storm of sulphur and brimstone was poured on their heads by the contemporary communist press for the manner in which the five social-democrats sought to regain their legislative seats! How scornfully and indignantly did the special declaration of the Communist International in 1920 reject the appeal of the American Socialist Party for affiliation, and excommunicate the official Brief for the Socialist Assemblymen because, among other things, "it apologizes for the presence of foreigners in the party by calling them 'potential voters' and hastens to explain that a new rule requires all party members immediately to become citizens."

What would the Communist International of that time say about its American section of today, whose recent convention also adopted "a new rule (that) requires all party members immediately to become citizens?"

What the C. I. Said

The turn-coats in Albany prevailed on their party to eliminate the constitutional provision calling upon members elected to public office to vote against any

and all military appropriations, about which the Communist International said at that time "we do not know a single socialist party in the world which has equalled the action of the American party." But even in dropping this provision, the Hillquitites of 1920 never went so far as to guarantee explicitly their support of American imperialism in any war it might wage. They weren't for sale so cheap.

But Browder is, in reply to McNaboe's question, "Would you sell Liberty Bonds tomorrow if war broke out?"—that is, war against Mexico or Japan or the Philippines or the Soviet Union; in short, any war of American imperialism—Browder promptly swore allegiance: "I would. But I would not sell them during the last war." And the Daily Worker (July 1, 1938) has the utter shamelessness to print the answer in bold-face type! Browder may now take his place ahead of Samuel DeWitt who, to emphasize the depths of his patriotism, retorted to Tammany's Marty McCue in 1920: "I sold Liberty Bonds and I sold more Liberty Bonds than there were glasses of beer sold over the bar of your saloon." Ahead of DeWitt, we say, because the outraged socialist-patriot was only describing what he did in a past war, while Browder is already pledging himself for the next one!

Qualified Support

When Hillquit said in 1920 that "the socialists of the United States would have no hesitancy whatever in joining forces with the rest of their countrymen to repel the Bolsheviki who would try to invade our country and force a form a government upon our people which our-people are not ready for and do not desire"—then, however outraged revolutionists were at this vicious declaration, he was at least qualifying his support of a hypothetical war with political considerations of an abstractly democratic nature. When Browder, in his obscene zeal to curry favor with the American bourgeoisie, says flatly that he will sell Liberty Bonds to help finance the next war, he does not even include in his statement the qualifications or reservations which the most ordinary bourgeois democrat would make, as, for example, "if it is not a predatory war," or "if it is not a war to protect Standard Oil in Mexico," or "provided it is a war for democracy, or justice, or to end all war," etc., etc. No, come what may, regardless of the war that will finally break out, Browder has already stated, in his reply to McNaboe, that he will "fight for the United States." Or more likely, as did the social-patriots in the last war, he will "fight" on the "home-front" by urging others to occupy the trenches and the graves.

Hillquit Never Knew

When Hillquit said in 1920, amid a chorus of protest in his own party, to say nothing of the clamor of the communists outside of it, that "we adopt the existing form of government based upon the Constitution of the United States as the form upon which to build the future society," he surely had no idea that eighteen years later, the boss of the "communist" party would make assertions on the same subject that would make the late Nestor of the Socialist party sound like an uncontrollable barricade-fighter.

Hillquit at least did not deny his socialist objective; even more, he declared that socialism was on the order of the day. Browder, however, is anxious to impress the legislative committee men with the fact that they need not have the slightest fear of communism being fought for in their lifetime. Knowing the bankruptcy of their own social order, the McNaboes everywhere rightly dread the prospect of a speedily rising movement for the triumph of workers' rule in this country. It is, therefore, no mere idle curiosity that impels them to feel the ground by asking Browder when he expects America to adopt communism. And it is not philosophic resignation, but well-thought-out purposefulness and determination to do all in his power to make his prediction come true, that animates Browder in replying: "America will probably be one of the last to adopt it."

And meanwhile? Fascism—there is the enemy; democracy—there is the cure! And how preserve democracy? As is well known, the Stalinists propose to preserve it by getting behind Roosevelt. In this connection, Browder makes a most revealing, even if not entirely accurate, statement to McNaboe.

Browder and Roosevelt

"Eighty-five per cent of the press is opposed to Roosevelt. They are very short-sighted capitalists who do not understand that he is the greatest protector of capitalism."

From this follow, or should logically follow, two conclusions: One, that the Stalinist support of Roosevelt is exactly equivalent to affording decadent American capitalism its greatest protection—and as is known, there is only one social force it needs protection from. Two, that the Stalinists should devote their agitatorial efforts not to the working class, but to the capitalist class, represented by "eighty-five per cent of the press," with the aim of persuading the Liberty Leaguers and their associates to drop their misguided fight against the much-misunderstood Roosevelt on the grounds that they fail to understand that the president is their "greatest protector."

Defender of Capitalism

Not alone Roosevelt, however, but also Browder. For if the former is the Lord High Protector of American capitalism, the latter is his not unworthy coadjutor. It is true that in his report to the eighth convention of the Communist Party in Cleveland in April 1934, Browder, in answer to the question: "What are the ideas, the misconceptions, with which the social-fascists confuse and disarm the workers?"—declared: "In Germany, this idea was, concretely, alliance with Hindenburg against Hitler; in Austria, with Dollfus against the Nazis; in the United States, with Roosevelt against Wall Street." It is also true that he added in the same speech "that Roosevelt, leading the present ruling class, finance capital, stands for degradation, hunger, misery, oppression, fascism, war."

But that was before the Stalinist turn at the Seventh World Congress of the Comintern from which—may God forbid!—Browder takes no orders, or would "throw them in a waste basket" if they were sent. Now Browder is for Democracy, for Roosevelt, for the "greatest protector of capitalism." And in the statement entered into the McNaboe committee's records, he made it clear that he is ready to implement his newly-found faith.

The Communist party is opposed to the revolutionary overthrow of American capitalism and its government. The Communist party is opposed to inciting strikes, to stirring up "industrial disorders." The Communist party upholds the democratic institutions of America. The Communist party is opposed to gaining control of the unions.

Wants to Be a Cop

But— There ARE people in the very bosom of the Republic who are guilty of all these dastardly crimes. There ARE seditious and subversive elements in our midst. And if the McNaboe committee is to emulate Our Great President as the "greatest protector of capitalism," if it really wants to put down sedition, mutiny and all other forms of mayhem against law and order—it will find in Browder a man eager and ready to draw up the indictment for the grand jury and put the finger on the criminals.

"I have no desire to hide the fact that there are some people who call themselves communist, who yet proclaim the opposite of all these policies of the Communist party which I have described. These are the groups known as Trotskyites and Lovestonites." (Daily Worker, June 30, 1938.)

We have no doubt that the ambitious informer is ready to provide the necessary names and addresses, to accompany the cops with search and seizure warrants, and to take the stand as a witness for the prosecution. If heed be, he is ready to act as jailer and executioner, for Browder can easily furnish letters of mark, references and testimonials from his teachers in Moscow, Madrid and Barcelona. As to Browder's moving decla-

France Under Daladier Moves Toward National 'Sacred Union' Gov't

Political Course of Bourgeoisie Is Influenced by Growing Isolation of the Soviet Union; Socialist Party 'Left' Expelled

By TERENCE PHELAN

PARIS, June 21.—The shift to the Daladier government, a long-time stop-gap while the heads of all the parties from the Stalinists on the left to the Fascists on the right horse-trade and jockey toward the ultimate goal of a "Government of Sacred Union" including all parliamentary parties, has made no essential change in France's foreign policy, which still follows the plans of British imperialism.

Started last fall by Halifax's Berlin visit, followed by Chamberlain's London visit, confirmed by English and French behavior when Hitler seized Austria, and increasingly unceasing with each new move in the continuing Czechoslovakian crisis and the conversations with Mussolini, Chamberlain's plan is nothing less than buying off Hitler in the West by giving him a free hand in the East against the U.S.S.R., while Britain, and to a lesser extent France, feverishly rush armament programs which they hope will permit them at the proper moment to snatch their imperialist spoils at the expense of both exhausted adversaries.

Fascist Orbit Extends

Rumania has swung largely into the fascist orbit; Austria is actually incorporated into the Third Reich; Czechoslovakia, though unlikely to be territorially occupied by Hitler, is being rapidly bullied into a governmental realignment which will make it either decentralized and impotent or actually pro-Hitler; and Poland, long on the fence, is plainly revealed by the recent terrorization of Lithuania to be playing the anti-Soviet game. A look at the map will show more plainly than any words what these shifts mean to the Soviet Union. Herein is grimly foreshadowed the tragic end of the un-Marxian Stalinist policy of "socialism in one country" (with its vicious concomitant of "no socialism anywhere else"), its reliance upon the "democracies," and that wholesale deception of the international working-class, then which only the distrust that motivated it is more contemptible.

Yet in France the Stalinists continue to check the militancy of the working class, to pin all their hopes on class peace and the Franco-Soviet pact, unembarrassed by their new allies, the de la Rocque Fascists, whose spokesman Ybarnegaray has recently come out strongly in favor of it—this at the behest of those elements in the French General Staff whose technical military distrust of the Red Army, following the purge of the generals, has been somewhat offset by the similar shake-up in the Reichswehr, and by a close study of the military side of the occupation of Austria, which, practically successful because of the lack of resistance by Austrian clerico-fascism, was technically far from perfect.

Workers Mark Time

Deeply discouraged by the

severe set-backs suffered in the spring strike wave through the misleadership of the Stalinists and the C. G. T. bureaucracy, French workers en masse have recoiled to nurse their wounds and take stock. It is, on the whole, a time when general militancy has for a moment ebbed; to pretend otherwise would be wishful thinking. The Stalinist treachery has thus a double edge: not only did it canalize militant strike action back into compromise settlements that were essentially defeats; but by that very betrayal convinced many workers under its ideological influence of the hopelessness of militant action—a vicious circle.

Yet other workers, quite on the contrary, draw the opposite and correct conclusion: they move away from the cesspool of betrayal and gropingly seek a true revolutionary leadership. Here and there—among the technicians, department store employees, postal and telegraph workers, and numerous crafts—sporadically violent revolts against further class collaboration, against Daladier's anti-labor decree laws, against the sacred union for war, burst significantly forth, are with more or less difficulty quashed by the bureaucracy.

Seine Federation Revolts

Symptomatic of this latent fire of militancy under the ashes of temporary calm was the recent revolt of the whole Socialist Federation of the Seine (Paris and its workers' suburbs) against the Blum-Faure leadership of the S.F.I.O. (Second International Socialists). This Federation, ideologically dominated by the "Revolutionary Left" led by Marceau Pivert, a manoeuvring centrist of the Tyler-Zam stamp, had had the courage, remembering the police-murder of the Cligny workers under the "Socialist" minister Marx Dormoy, to protest energetically against the Sacred Union and its war plans, and both to issue internal bulletins and lead public manifestations against continuance of the party's class-collaborationist policies.

It goes without saying that the whole federation was simply expelled en masse from the party—an expulsion confirmed last week by the S.F.I.O.'s annual convention, which, in a disgusting display, underwrote the Bonapartist Daladier decree government, approved in advance the coming nationalist government, and prepared to follow its Macdonald, Leon Blum, anywhere he may lead.

New Party Formed

Pivert's Revolutionary Left is now reconstituted as an independent party under the name of the P.S.O.P. (Socialist Workers' and Peasants' Party), predictably about 5000 strong.

The new P.S.O.P. has in its rank-and-file valuable militant elements whom the Bolshevik-Leninists gladly welcome as comrades in the heavy tasks ahead.

Another Fine Issue Of New International Due

The August issue of the New International, now being prepared, will again present a wide variety of articles of high quality. Among the outstanding features to appear are:

- 1. Behind the Stalinist line of the People's Front—by Max Shachtman.
2. The Stalinists and Roosevelt—by Albert Gates.
3. "They, the People"—by Dwight MacDonald.
4. Reply to Burnham article on "Max Eastman's Science"—by Max Eastman, together with

editorial response. 5. Zionism and the British Lion—by Ben Herman. 6. The New Roosevelt Program—by David Cowles. Those who wish to be sure of obtaining the August issue should place their order at once. The subscription rate is \$2.00 per year; single copies 20 cents. Address all communications to the New International, 116 University Place, New York, N. Y.

Krivitsky Tells of G.P.U. Tortures

(Continued from page 1)

"At the end of the third day he asked to see Smirnov. I gave the order to bring Smirnov into my office. Their meeting overpowered me. They embraced. The two of them wept. Mratchkovsky was the first to speak, and addressing Smirnov he said: 'Ivan Nikitich, let us do what they demand. It is necessary.'"

"Smirnov refused, saying: 'I have nothing to confess to them; I have never fought against the power of the soviets; I have never been a terrorist; I have never wished to kill anyone.' Mratchkovsky urged him, but Smirnov remained adamant. At this moment, weeping, they embraced each other. Smirnov was led away. Mratchkovsky again became irritable and once more spoke of Stalin as a traitor. "On the fourth day, he signed what he was to confirm before the tribunal. I returned to my home, and for a week I was not only incapable of working, but likewise incapable of living. "That, Krivitsky, was the interrogation of Mratchkovsky."

MAX SHACHTMAN.