

# Capitalist Press Muddies Trotsky In Death, As It Fought Him In Life

By GEORGE STERN

In life Leon Trotsky was always a feared and fearful figure to the capitalist press of the world. In death he is still the hated symbol of the workers' revolution. Upon his still and silenced figure the newspapers continue their vituperative assaults.

They know that while Trotsky is dead, Trotskyism is still the specter that haunts their halls of power. They tried to splutter his name while he lived. They still have the job of muddying his memory now that he is dead.

From their obituary biographies emerges a fantastic caricature of a man with a "checkered career," as the saying goes, an adventurer, a fallen Napoleon, a would-be Genghis Khan, a wandering Jew on the face of a planet he defied. From the limited bounds of their vision they could not, after all, be expected to perceive the figure of Trotsky, the revolutionary titan. The venom of their final curses over his dead body revealed only their instinctive sense of Trotsky as an enemy, a powerful and fearful enemy of the social order they themselves defend.

Where more serious biographical attempts were made, as in the New York Times, a combination of Stalinist and bourgeois distortions were arbitrarily grafted upon a slim framework of the actual physical facts of his life. The Times, intent upon reducing this gigantic historical figure to the puny dimensions of the men it better understands, resurrected the charge that Trotsky was "jealous of Lenin's power and discontented with the fact that he did not have an equal share in controlling Russia's destinies." Also out of its grab bag of handy lies, the Times pulled the assertion that in 1926 Trotsky "capitulated unconditionally (to Stalin) and publicly repudiated his action."

The New York Daily News saw Trotsky as "the greatest, vilest plotter of the Russian revolution, a devious thinker who outwitted everyone save Stalin after the Revolution."

## THE DELIBERATE LINE OF THEIR EDITORIALS

Editorial comment on the murder of Trotsky varied on two themes—first, Trotsky was a victim of a system he himself helped to create; second, Trotsky's life work flowered in Hitler, Stalin, and Mussolini.

The American workers are to be persuaded, you see, that the murderous regime of Stalin is the natural outgrowth—and not the debased and twisted degeneration—of the workers' revolution which Lenin and Trotsky led to victory. The world revolution for which they fought, our master newspapers tell us, is now actually being realized... by Hitler and Mussolini.

On the first of these two themes, both the New York Times and the New York Herald Tribune, played. The Tribune (Aug. 23) said that Trotsky "trampled ruthlessly over millions... and was trampled as ruthlessly himself... meeting an end only too characteristic of the age which he had done so much to produce."

Said the Times (Aug. 23): "The long arm of Stalin's OGPU... finally completed the job with a blow into Trotsky's skull. Brutal? Of course it was; but it was no more brutal than the Stalin tyranny as a whole, no more ruthless than the Russian revolution which this consummate frebrand in exile had himself set alight and kept aflame a generation ago... The victims of his cold cruelty, and of Lenin's, can be numbered in the millions; the wastes of Siberia are bleached with their bones. It was not enough for him that Russia should be drenched in blood and suffering; the whole world had to wage through a sea of violence so that the

## Triumph of the proletariat could be assured.

### THEY DARE TO SPEAK OF VIOLENCE!

How calmly and easily these newspaper hacks indict the Russian revolution and its leaders for the violence that shook the world after 1914! The reprehensible violence was not the violence of the First World War, outcome of capitalist greed and rivalry, which took the lives of 20 million men, women, and children, and twisted the lives of scores of millions more! Oh, no, it was the force wielded by workers who rose in revolt against this senseless slaughter and established their own power as the forerunners of a world socialist order. This was their crime. This was Trotsky's crime.

The armed support given by France, Britain, and the United States to the White Russian armies after 1918, the invasion of Russia by French, British, American, and Japanese troops did not constitute anything resembling "cold cruelty." That term the newspaper hacks reserve for the defense of the Russian workers, led by Lenin and Trotsky.

The capitalist order then, as now, is indeed forcing the peoples of the world to "wade through a sea of violence." It was the effort of Lenin and Trotsky then and it is our effort today to lead them out of that blooded sea onto a far shore of a new kind of peace, a socialist peace. These capitalist choir boys who write these bland editorials in their newspapers are quite content to see these millions drown in their own blood as long as their deaths can keep the worm-eaten hull of the capitalist order afloat. Is it not the Tribune which has openly called upon the United States to declare war on Germany? Is it not the Times today that is in the forefront of that hand of boss warmongers dragging the American people closer every day into the present-day "sea of violence?"

## EVILS OF CAPITALISM LAID AT TROTSKY'S DOOR!

But they have a way of making Lenin and Trotsky responsible for today's slaughters as well as two decades ago. Isn't it part of the thrashing agonies of a dying capitalist order feasting with a sore call Fascism? Nothing of the kind, according to the N. Y. Herald Tribune. It's all due to.... Trotsky.

"For his monument (said the Tribune editorial), one need only look about one... Trotsky is dead and Trotskyism rules in Berlin and Moscow and Rome; it roars through the propaganda ministries' loudspeakers, loads the bomb racks, fuels the tank columns, infuses the 'fifth columns' with their heartless fanaticism..."

Trotsky was often in his life the victim of amalgams—false couplings with his enemies and opponents, unscrupulously manufactured in attempts to destroy his influence over the workers. He and Lenin together were smeared in 1917 as "agents of the Kaiser." Trotsky was smeared by Stalin as an agent first of the British, then of Hitler, then of the British again and now of the United States! The Tribune simply adopts this mechanism for the benefit of its own purposes, and seeks to bracket Trotsky simultaneously in the minds of the American people with Stalin, with Hitler, and with Mussolini.

## ABYSS BETWEEN STALINISM AND TROTSKYISM

But between Trotsky and Stalin, history itself has dug an abyss. Stalin embodied in his person and his regime the degeneration of the Russian Revolution. This degeneration flowed from the isolation of the Soviet Union and its backwardness in the midst of a hostile capitalist world. Trotsky was the living embodiment of the revolution it

## The Lesser Known Trotsky



A rare photo of Trotsky at a recent picnic. The unsuspecting lad in front of him is his grandson, Seva.

self, who fought to make it and then fought to extend it because he understood that socialism could triumph only as a world order. This brought him into irreconcilable struggle against Stalinism as well as against the whole of the capitalist world. Of the disorders of this capitalist world, Hitler and Mussolini are only two additional and especially virulent manifestations. They represent the hypodermic injection of Fascism with which capitalism is trying to prolong its last hours. In the revolution that will again raise Trotsky's banner aloft, Hitler and Mussolini will be among the first to fall.

Trotsky's life as a man of ac-

tion, as a revolutionist, was indeed a life filled with violence—but it was violence employed against those who make violence the very basis of their whole system of society, employed against the capitalist rulers of the world who govern by gun and club and bomb. Our masters and their journalistic acolytes glorify the violence that bolsters their own way of life. They shudder—and rightly—at the violence which challenges that way of life. Of that challenge Trotsky was a mighty symbol. That is why they hated him so while he lived. That is why they still fear and hate him even now that he is dead.

## Trotsky Honored Pledge Cardenas Affirmed

(Continued from Page 1) rectly quoted, were never denied by the Mexican Stalinists. In compliance with this order to create the necessary atmosphere, Toledano had made this particularly vicious speech. But Cardenas' strong statement in defense of Trotsky against these Stalinist slanders slowed up the Stalinist murder campaign for the moment.

The aftermath of Cardenas' statement was to make the Stalinists more desperate and reckless than ever. Laborde and Campa expelled from the Communist Party the secondary leadership (Guerra, Ramirez, etc.) who had failed to carry out successfully the campaign against

Trotsky. Then, in February, 1933, Laborde and Campa were themselves expelled for being "pro-Trotsky," i. e., for having failed to murder him. A new and more desperate leadership came in and the concentration of GPU agents in Mexico began in earnest.

Cardenas' public declaration defending Trotsky did not, therefore, save Trotsky from the GPU murder machine. But Cardenas' statement of November 19, 1933 did wreck irreparably a keystone in the Stalinist murder alibi—the charge that Trotsky had plotted against Cardenas—a charge incessantly made in the Stalinist-Toledano press and now repeated by the GPU assassin.

## Cardenas Points At Stalinists As Killers

(Continued from Page 1) and people of Mexico to maintain a state of security and tranquility for the inhabitants. These elements have committed the crime of treason to the country, have prostituted their doctrines of proletarian progress, have wounded their country, committed a crime that history will censure as dishonorable for those who inspired it and as abominable for those who consummated it and cooperated in making it effective."

Cardenas concluded: "The Executive Power that I represent condemns unreservedly acts so shameful and declares that it will hunt down the direct responsibility that they have had in the assassination of citizen Leon Trotsky, whom Mexico gave protection on its soil without any other purpose than to comply with its principle of granting asylum to all political refugees." By hunting down the direct responsibility for the murder of Trotsky, Cardenas finished, the government will "make patent

before the entire world, the sovereign right of the Mexican nation." Cardenas' distinction between those who carried out the crime and those who cooperated in making it effective is interpreted as directed at Lombardo Toledano and his associates, who by their incessant attacks on Trotsky sought to prepare the "necessary atmosphere" in which the Stalinists might more boldly carry out the murder of Trotsky.

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## Assassin's Story Falters Under Examination

(Continued from Page 1)

whether he was a member of the Fourth International, he said no. Asked whether he knew that the Bureau was the highest body of the International, he said yes. Asked whether he knew that not even members of the organization knew who the members of the Bureau were, he also said yes. Asked who introduced him to the member of the Bureau, he said, some Greek members of the organization. Did they introduce the Bureau member by name? No. They simply introduced him as a member of the Bureau!

**Changes His Story**  
5. In his "statement" Jackson had said that the Bureau member had "supplied me with all the means, expenses of the trip, papers, etc." Under police questioning, however, Jackson said he got \$2000 from the Bureau member—and \$5,000 from his (Jackson's) mother for the trip to America.

**Why 8 Months Wait?**  
6. In answer to a question what was the nationality of the Bureau member, he answered that he was Rumanian or someone from the Balkan states. Asked whether he received a letter of introduction, Jackson said no. How, then, did he expect to see Trotsky without a letter of introduction? He said that was not his problem but that of the people who had sent him. What did he expect to do at Trotsky's? To act as a translator or secretary. If that was his function did he not think that it was very peculiar that he should be sent without a letter of introduction? No. Testimony then brought out that he arrived in Mexico in October, 1939, and did not get to see Trotsky until May 28, 1940—eight months later!

7. What did he do all those months? Nothing except wait for an opportunity to see Trotsky. Why did he wait so long? Well, that was the instruction—to wait; and he further testified that during all this time he pretended to be in business, insisting that too was part of his instructions. He was then asked whether he had

met some of the secretaries of Trotsky. Yes. Did he ever ask them whether it was the custom for secretaries to wait in Mexico for eight months or so before introducing themselves to Trotsky? No, he had never asked them.

**What Is True!**  
8. The last question at last night's session was then put as follows: "You claim that you met someone in Paris, whose name you do not know. You also claim that he told you to go to Mexico to see Trotsky and that he gave you the expenses for the trip. You also claim that he furnished you with all the papers and that he advised you not to be too insistent in your efforts to see Trotsky, but to wait until it would appear that a visit to Trotsky was most natural and casual. You also claim that you were instructed to tell everybody you were in business. Now I ask you, if this alleged member of the Fourth International were an agent of the GPU and if you also were an agent of the GPU, would he not give you exactly the instructions that you claim he gave you?"

When the assassin denied this, he was asked: "In other words, if you were to substitute the GPU for this alleged member of the Bureau of the Fourth International and for your mother, who you claim gave you \$5,000, would not your story be the exact truth?"

Whereupon the assassin went into a long harangue against Goldman. Throughout this session, unlike previous ones where he had sat meekly and answered questions, the assassin abused Goldman. Trotsky's attorney was getting under his skin.

That last question particularly struck home. So far as broad details of his leaving Europe and coming here are concerned, the assassin is undoubtedly telling the story as it actually happened—except to leave out the agency of the GPU and substituting for it his mother and the "Bureau member."

## CLENCHED FISTS BID FAREWELL TO TROTSKY

(Continued from Page 1) by Stalin. Those mentioned included Trotsky's daughters Nina, 1928 and Zinaida, 1933; his sons Sergei, 1937, and Leon Sedov, 1938; and his friends and secretaries: Blumkin, 1929, Moilin, 1937; Ignace Reiss, 1937; Erwin Wolf, 1938; August Klement, 1938, and Sheldon Harte, 1940. As Comrade Cannon ended his speech, the audience rose to its feet spontaneously, the "International" resounded through the building and thus the meeting ended, as Comrade Cannon had proposed in his conclusion:

"Let us say farewell to him in a manner worthy of his disciples, like good soldiers of Trotsky's army. Not crouching in weakness and despair, but standing upright with dry eyes and clenched fists. With the song of struggle and victory on our lips. With the song of confidence in Trotsky's Fourth International, the International Party that shall be the human race!"

(Reports of other memorial meetings appear on page 4 of this issue.)

## Assassin Was In May 24 Attempt Says Mexican Government Paper

MEXICO CITY, August 28.—El Nacional, Mexico City daily and organ of the government, today states categorically that a high official of the Mexico City police identifies the assassin of Trotsky, Jackson, as one of the participants in the May 24 attempt on Trotsky, for which David Serrano, member of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party is awaiting trial, and David Alfaro Siqueiros, another Stalinist, is a fugitive from justice.

"Jackson is the same man who led the assault on the house of Trotsky on the 24th of May, which was carried out by Alfaro Siqueiros and his associates, and he also tortured and assassinated Sheldon Harte, Trotsky's secretary," a high officer of the metropolitan stated yesterday afternoon, reports El Nacional. "Alfaro Siqueiros took his orders from Jackson, as did other individuals with whom he met in one of the apartments of the Ex-mita building, in Tacuba, where Siqueiros and Gomez Lorenzo (another Stalinist) lived and where Jackson asked Sylvia Ageloff to address her mail."

# WORKERS' FORUM

Write to us—tell us what's going on in your part of the labor movement—what are the workers thinking about?—tell us what the bosses are up to—and the G-men and the local cops—and the Stalinists—send us that story the capitalist press didn't print and that story they buried or distorted—our pages are open to you. Letters must carry name and address, but indicate if you do not want your name printed.

## White Guards Drink Toasts To Celebrate Trotsky's Death

The Kremlin gang rejoices over their success in murdering Trotsky, they are joined in the toast by the White Guard officers whom Trotsky drove out of Soviet territory. The Akron Beacon Journal of August 23 reports a group of White Russian officers, here attending the national encampment of the Army and Navy Union, drinking a toast to celebrate Trotsky's death.

One of these White Guards, a Captain V. V. Koodroff, vice commander of Garrison 297 of the Army and Navy Union, an executive at the Voynik-Sitkovsky airplane plant at Stratford, Connecticut, and of course, a pious Christian, said: "From the standpoint of Christianity, of course, we should not approve murder in any form. But from the point of view of giving peace to a civilized world Trotsky's death was inevitable... Talk about Hitler—Hitler is not one-tenth as dangerous as this man."

Another, Captain Alexis A. Stopenoff of the Czarist army, said: "The United States should breathe a great sigh of relief now that Trotsky is gone." Yes, these White Guards are grateful to Stalin for murdering Trotsky. They understand that with Trotsky's death, the possibility of capitalist restoration in the Soviet Union is immeasurably facilitated. These are the class forces whom Stalin has aided with his murder machine.

PHILLIP CLARK

## Author of "Studs Lonigan" On Trotsky's Death

I know of no words strong enough to be employed in condemning the murder of Leon Trotsky. And I am convinced that he was murdered by an agent of the GPU.

For Leon Trotsky, I felt both admiration and affection. I was not a follower of his in the strict and literal meaning of this term. But I was influenced by him. The Old Man educated some of the members of my generation: I was one of those whom he educated. Were it not for his writings, I would be a different person than I am and I would think differently than I do. The loss of Leon Trotsky at this particular moment is tragic. In this black and bitter period of reaction, Trotsky was needed, and needed not merely as a symbol, but even more so as a leader. Now, those points on which one disagreed with him fade in importance. One sees his greatness, the inspiration which was gained from his very life, and from his indomitable fight, and from his brilliant writings.

Leon Trotsky was a great revolutionary, a great writer, a great man, a great spirit. Edmund Wilson, the literary critic, once remarked that since his exile from Soviet Russia, Leon Trotsky has served as "the Marxist conscience of the world." The pickaxe blow of Stalin's hired assassin struck down "the Marxist conscience of the world." With grief, I say farewell to the Old Man. He is dead in the flesh. The spirit that animated his work will not die.

JAMES T. FARRELL

Editor: A foul blow has been struck the Fourth International! But the movement is not reeling under the impact. Comrades and sympathizers have set their teeth to carry on with greater determination the struggle with labor's enemies and misleaders. We will carry on the struggle with the realization that each of us must be a little more strong, a little more sacrificing, a little more understanding now that the revolutionary genius, Leon Trotsky, is no more.

How symbolic is it that a hiring of Cain Stalin should with Judas-like methods destroy the true leader of revolutionary socialism. In his fear of this great Bolshevism, Stalin has committed an act which exposes the entire mechanism of bureaucratic tyranny. But his cowardly blow will not save him, for the Fourth International will live on and will struggle on. The priceless heritage of Leon Trotsky's lucid writing will serve as a beacon for revolutionary thinkers leading them to the Fourth International, and leading the Fourth International to inevitable victory. Socialism will conquer with the stainless banner of Trotskyism! St. Cloud, Minn.

PHILLIP CLARK

## Russian Revolution Still Lives, Despite Stalin's Crimes

Allow me to express my indignation and that of Simon Simons at the foul deed perpetrated against the world revolutionary movement by the murder of Leon Trotsky. It seems that this deed of Stalin foulness was designed to put an end to whatever decency there remained as a vestige of the Herculean spirit of the Russian Revolution, just as the Stalin-Hitler pact marked the coup de grace. Providence, R. I.

HARRY DERMER SIMON SIMONS

(We appreciate the depth of feeling of our correspondents, but cannot accept the thesis that Stalin has administered a COUP DE GRACE to the Russian Revolution. He has not succeeded—and will not; the economic foundations established by the October Revolution still stand and, on that foundation, the Russian people will yet destroy Stalinism before it destroys the Russian Revolution.—EDITORS.)

## Our Australian Comrades Fight Despite Government Ban

We have just received word that the Sydney headquarters of the Communist League of Australia, section of the Fourth International, were raided by the police on Saturday, June 24. The Federal government had declared the League illegal the day before. Raids have also been carried out at the homes of the secretary of the League, G. Baracchi, and other leaders. Up to the present, no leading militant of the Australian organization has been apprehended.

The government's action took place after agents had been sent down to take notes at a public meeting of the league in Sydney on the previous Sunday. The meeting was held as usual in the Sydney Domain in defiance of an order prohibiting radical meetings.

More than 2,500 workers gathered in spite of the ban to listen to Comrades Baracchi, Kavanagh, Royston and Joek Little, according to the Australian papers. The speakers are quoted as saying:

"We favor Trotsky who is persecuted by Stalin but nevertheless we are for the defense of the Soviet as a workers' country."

"The French capitalists have preferred to throw in their lot with Hitler rather than have the workers establish communism in France."

In spite of the ban, our Australian comrades continue recruitment, in particular from the ranks of the Stalinists, and are carrying on activity in the name of the Fourth International, naturally adapting methods appropriate to the situation.

Our warmest greetings of solidarity to the Australian Fourth Internationalists under attack. Together with the advanced workers of every country, we say to them, "More power to you!"

# TO THE MEMORY OF THE OLD MAN

(Continued from page 2)

contradictions, its conventionalities, its false values, its lies. The class society poisons and corrupts everything. We are all dwarfed and twisted and blinded by it. We can hardly visualize what human relations will be, we can hardly comprehend what the personality of man will be, in a free society.

Comrade Trotsky gave us an anticipatory picture. In him, in his personality as a man, as a human being, we caught a glimpse of the Communist man that is to be. This memory of him as a man, as a comrade, is our greatest assurance that the spirit of man, striving for human solidarity, is unconquerable. In our terrible epoch many things will pass away. Capitalism and all its heroes will pass away. Stalin and Hitler and Roosevelt and Churchill, and all the lies and injustices and hypocrisy they signify, will pass away in blood and fire. But the spirit of the Communist man which Comrade Trotsky represented will not pass away.

Destiny has made us, men of common clay, the most immediate disciples of Comrade Trotsky. We now become his heirs, and we are charged with the mission to carry out his

testament. He had confidence in us. He assured us with his last words that we are right and that we will prevail. We need only have confidence in ourselves and in the ideas, the tradition and the memory which he left us as our heritage.

## HE NEVER DOUBTED OUR SUCCESS

We owe everything to him. We owe to him our political existence, our understanding, our faith in the future. We are not alone. There are others like us in all parts of the world. Always remember that. We are not alone. Trotsky has educated cadres of disciples in more than thirty countries. They are convinced to the marrow of their bones of their right to victory. They will not falter. Neither shall we falter. "I am sure of the victory of the Fourth International!"—so said Comrade Trotsky in the last moment of his life. So are we sure.

Trotsky never doubted, and we shall never doubt, that armed with his weapons, with his ideas, we shall lead the oppressed masses of the world out of the bloody welter of the war into a new socialist society. That is our testimony here tonight at the grave of Comrade Trotsky.

And here at his grave we testify also that we shall never forget his parting injunction—That we shield and cherish his warrior-wife, the faithful companion of all his struggles and wanderings. "Take care of her", he said, "she has been with me many years." Yes, we shall take care of her. Before everything else, we shall take care of Natalia.

We come now to the last word of farewell to our greatest comrade and teacher, who has now become our most glorious martyr. We do not deny the grief that constricts all our hearts. But ours is not the grief of prostration, the grief that saps the will. It is tempered by rage and hatred and determination. We shall transmute it into fighting energy to carry on the Old Man's fight. Let us say farewell to him in a manner worthy of his disciples, like good soldiers of Trotsky's army. Not crouching in weakness and despair, but standing upright with dry eyes and clenched fists. With the song of struggle and victory on our lips. With the song of confidence in Trotsky's Fourth International, the International Party that shall be the human race!