

# IN THE WORLD OF LABOR

By Paul G. Stevens

## A Wave of Persecutions Hits the Polish Trotskyists

On February 14, the French news agency "Havas" carried the following dispatch over its wires from Warsaw:

"A wide-spread police action has been undertaken against illegal political groups. More than a hundred persons have been arrested and forty-seven are still being held. The police action appears to be directed against Trotskyist elements in the main. In the course of the raids, leaflets and proclamations of the Fourth International were seized in large quantities."

This reign of persecution unleashed against our Polish comrades is of particular significance in view of preceding events.

As reported in these columns, Moscow dissolved the Polish Communist Party last July. The formal dissolution of this Comintern section followed the physical extermination of scores of Polish leading militants during the Stalinist purges in Russia since 1936.

Immediately after the dissolution of the C.P.P. was announced, the Polish Trotskyists issued an appeal for the reconstitution of the Polish Communist Party on the basis of the platform of the Fourth International. They undertook this step under the most dangerous circumstances. The fascist police of Poland was constantly at their heels, aided by the Stalinist agents who openly denounced our comrades to them in the press.

Nevertheless, the Polish Trotskyists carried on widespread activity with excellent results. Several weeks ago they were able to hold a successful conference at which a whole series of important documents were adopted. It was shortly after this conference that the police, encouraged by reports from Stalinist stool-pigeons, launched the drive reported by "Havas."

How hard the organization has been hit cannot be said as yet. Reports are too scant. But, although a large number of leading comrades have been jailed, the Polish section of the Fourth International has already established a name for itself as the only revolutionary organization in the country. Its growth can be impeded by police persecutions, but it cannot be stopped. Our most heartfelt feelings of solidarity to the brave illegal Bolshevik fighters in Poland! The victorious revolution of the Eastern and Central European working class will avenge the dastardly murders of their leaders and the stool-pigeoning betrayal of their militants by the Stalinist agents!

## Revolutionary Socialists of Ceylon Show Way to Fight Fascism

Particularly gratifying these days is the fact that the oppressed of the colonial countries refuse to be fooled by either Stalinists or social democrats in the so-called Mother countries regarding the line-up of the democracies against the totalitarian states for the coming war.

Among those most clearly outspoken against the fraud of the "democratic front" are the militants of the Ceylon Socialist Party. This party has been carrying on a persistent struggle

against the British ban of trade unions on the island, against the pussyfooting of the Ceylon National Congress in its dealings with the British colonial office and for democratic rights.

Recently the party held its annual conference, at which 500 delegates were present. Among other resolutions adopted was one on the Munich "peace." It is in this resolution especially, that the Ceylon revolutionary socialists speak out in a voice which cannot but attract the attention of the workers misled by Stalinism and social reformism in the imperialist countries. The resolution concludes by "proclaiming to all colonial peoples and to the international working class, that in successful colonial struggle against imperialism lies not only freedom to colonial peoples, but also the main attack against fascism; for finance capital draws its greatest strength from the exploitation of colonial peoples."

## Daladier Hits at French Revolutionists While Chamber Talks of "Amnesty"

While the French Chamber of Deputies is preoccupied with debates regarding the granting of amnesty to all those arrested during the general strike last November, the Daladier government, helped into power by the disastrous Popular Front, becomes particularly vicious in its attack against the revolutionary press.

On February 7, comrade Suzanne Charpy, former editor of "Revolution," the organ of the Fourth Internationalist youth in France, was condemned to ten months imprisonment and a 2,000 franc fine. The charge was that an article in the paper incited the military to disobedience.

On Feb. 13, comrade Loret, editor of La Lutte Ouvriere, the weekly paper of the International Workers Party (P.O.I.), French Section of the Fourth International, was hailed into court for an article giving the revolutionary defeatist position of the P.O.I. in the course of the frenzied, social-patriotic days of the September crisis. His case is yet to be tried.

Daladier, the hero of the Popular Front and the conqueror of the general strike, knows whom French capitalism has to fear. All aid to the French Fourth Internationalists, under attack from the capitalist government, in the front ranks of the working class struggle!

## Winston Churchill as Guest of Soviet Ambassador Maisky

On Tuesday, February 21, that arch-jingo of British imperialism and earliest of enemies of the October revolution, Mr. Winston Churchill, was an official guest at a dinner given at the Soviet Embassy in London by Ivan Maisky, former White Guard and present incumbent in the ambassadorial position.

Apparently there was some confusion as to whether Mr. Churchill had turned left or whether Mr. Maisky was merely renewing acquaintances. A commentator in a rather conservative British labor paper reassures his readers with the following contribution on the subject:

"Churchill's visit to the Russian Embassy must not be taken as confirmation that he has joined the Communist party. He is regarded as being too far to the Left for that yet."

# Stalin Offers Olive Branch To Hitler In Apologizing For 'Fascist War-Mongers'

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way in Stalin's report to an extremely soft and restrained comment on the activities of the Axis powers. But his change in front is far more drastic than that. In actuality, he offers an apology for them and their activities.

For the first time in years, we hear from the lips of a Stalinist a very careful explanation of the reason for the "fascist aggression." It is all due, we now learn (rather, the Stalinists are instructed to learn) to purely imperialist rivalries between the "democracies" and the Axis powers. These rivalries, we are further enlightened, go back to the unequal distribution of the loot taken in the last World War (in the case of Italy and Japan) and to the iniquitous Treaty of Versailles which was imposed upon Germany. "Germany, which suffered severely as a result of the first imperialist war and the Versailles Peace, joined with Japan and Italy and demanded extension of her territory in Europe and the return of the colonies which were taken from her by the victors in the first imperialist war," Stalin says now.

## Democracies Are Now the Aggressors

In other words, the conflicts of the powers have not been based upon the noble idealism of the "democrats" on the one side and the "aggressors" on the other, but upon such classic imperialist considerations as "a new revision of the world." But was not this idea the sheerest "Trotskyist-Fascist" heresy up to yesterday? But Stalin goes still further. The real aggressors, the real war-mongers, he points out very elaborately, are actually not such powers as Germany, but rather... the Democracies! Unbelievable, yet true.

How? Very simply. Nobody in Russia is thinking of a war with Germany, it goes without saying. But what's more important, nobody in Germany except for a few lunatics, is thinking of war against the Soviet Union. All the talk about Hitler seeking to conquer and annex the Ukraine is so much nonsense. Who invented this myth? THE DEMOCRACIES! So says Stalin.

It was the "Democracies" who, according to Stalin, began "urging the Germans to march further East, promising them easy pickings and prompting them on: 'Just you start a war against

the Bolsheviks and then everything will proceed nicely.' It must be admitted that this too looks very much like egging on, like encouraging the aggressor."

## Warns of Bargain With Germany

If Stalin means to say anything by this, it can only be that it is the "democracies" who are trying to drive the fascist powers into a war!

To make this point even clearer and more emphatic, Stalin points out that the "democracies," the supporters of the "non-intervention" policy have as their aim

"not to prevent, say, Germany from becoming entangled into European affairs, from becoming involved in war with the Soviet Union; [but rather] to allow all the belligerents to sink deeper into the mire of war, to encourage them stealthily to follow this line, to allow them to weaken and exhaust one another, and then, when they have become sufficiently weakened, to appear on the scene with fresh forces, to come out, of course, 'in the interests of peace,' and to dictate their terms to the weakened belligerent nations."

Stalin is saying to the "Democracies": Don't think that I intend to pull your chestnuts out of the fire. If you do not string along with me, I can always make a bargain with your rival, Germany.

To Hitler, he says: I am by no means wedded to London, Paris and Washington. There is no reason why we should go to war against each other until we are both worn out and the "Democracies" come in and squeeze us both out of the picture. Instead of allowing yourself to be egged on against the Soviet Union, let us get together, so that you can turn your attention to retrieving the colonies "which were taken from her (Germany) by the victors in the first imperialist war."

To his League of Nations allies of yesterday, Stalin offers the threat of a new turn in foreign policy.

To Hitler, Stalin offers a hand at least half-way outstretched. Which, boiled down to essentials, means that Stalin has turned over the initiative for the next step in world politics to—Hitler!

# HEROIC MILITANTS FACE GREAT ODDS IN MADRID STAND

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olmi than would have been the case two weeks ago, it will be because the National Defense Council has cleaned house and showed the world that Loyalist Spain is not Stalinist Spain."

In other words, the local Social Democrats, running true to form, are servilely solidarizing themselves with the butchers of the workers in Madrid. How vain are their hopes and their illusions. Franco will once more demonstrate when his legions tramp into the doomed capital.

The Spanish Communist Party has not uttered a single word on the developments in Madrid. Its leaders, who fled like a bunch of rats as soon as the generals took power, have lapsed into complete silence. They have refused interviews to the boss press and no statements from them have appeared in their own press here, the Daily Worker.

In Spain itself only a few second-rank leaders and a host of unknowns joined in the fight. The most prominent remaining Stalinist, Col. Antonio Ortega, took a demonstratively "neutral" position, keeping his own troops out of the fight and helping to get the rest to surrender, according to press reports.

## Stalin Avoids Spain Comment

In Moscow the Central Committee of the Communist Party met amid much fanfare. Stalin issued a report on the international situation without so much as mentioning the street fighting in Madrid. After him came Manuilsky of the Comintern who was similarly silent on the events in Spain which are driving straight to the heart of every working class revolutionist in the world!

Most pitiful of all is the local Daily Worker. The first day of the revolt it was completely silent. On Tuesday it appeared with a hysterical editorial accusing "Tory-Trotskyist traitors" with being behind the coup and carefully ignoring the fact that every party in the People's Front had already publicly solidarized with the Miaja junta in Madrid. The only fact adduced in the article to bolster up the "Tory-Trotskyist" headline, was a characterization of Carillo, the U.G.T. representative in the Junta and a Socialist Party leader, as "pro-Trotskyist." But Carillo, they fail to say, actually was one of the closest collaborators of the Stalinists in the U.G.T. right up to the coup d'etat of last Sunday night!

## Afraid to Speak

For the rest, in dwindling headlines, the Daily Worker confined itself to United Press dispatches. Finally last Saturday it abdicated completely any attempt to explain its own position and accompanied the United Press dispatches with a "warning" that the capitalist agencies were "inaccurately" using the label "Communist" in dealing with the Madrid events.

In other words, the local Stalinists do not know yet what to say about the debacle their policies have led to in Spain. The militant, heroic stand of the fighters in Madrid smacks too much of resolute struggle to fit in with the present-day Communist Party policy of "peaceful collaboration" and sycophantic sniveling before the capitalists.

# SPAIN, YESTERDAY AND TODAY -- IN THE DAILY WORKER'S COLUMNS

"The Daily Worker, both in its news and in its headlines, seeks constantly to present objective facts."

—Clarence Hathaway, editor Daily Worker, Feb. 28, 1939.

## Feb. 3—"Why Spain Will Never Be Conquered by Invaders; Spain Was Cut in Two Just as Now, But It Triumphed."

Feb. 8—"Negrin Rejects Mediation; Loyalists To Continue War Against Invaders. Azana's Policy Rejected by Government and Cortes. Miaja Calls War Council For Defense." "Miaja, known as the 'savior of Madrid,' has nearly 400,000 well-trained troops under his command for the defense of such important cities as Madrid, Valencia, Cartagena and Alicante." "The tales about Miaja (capitulating) are fabrications out of the whole cloth."

Feb. 9—"Madrid Vows Finish Fight On Franco. Central Army Chief Cites High Morale of Forces. Colonel Segismundo Casado, Chief of the Central Army, declared today that the Loyalist withdrawal from Catalonia had only strengthened the desire of the Central Army to fight." "As Chief of the Army I state that we are giving a unique demonstration of cooperation of the military power with the people without friction."

## MIAJA NAMED CHIEF BY NEGRIN

Feb. 10—"Negrin Names Miaja Supreme Chief; Central Front Unites For Resistance. Madrid Hero Given Rank of Gov't. Minister." "General Jose Miaja was named Supreme Commander of all armed forces of the Spanish government on land, sea and in the air today on the Central and Southern fronts."

Feb. 11—"Negrin Arrives in Valencia; Calls Army Chiefs to Map Fight to Finish." "Catalonian Army Now In France Ready to Join Miaja at Front." "General Jose Miaja, Government commander-in-chief, indignantly denied reports abroad that the Republican General Staff was negotiating with the fascist rebels."

Feb. 13—"Loyalists Continue Fight, from Madrid. Government Fully Set to Battle Until Victory, Says Negrin." "The newspaper Informaciones told the Madrilenos that 'the government is in Madrid, Miaja heads the army and these are two happy omens.' A decree was published reaffirming Negrin's appointment of the 69-year-old Miaja—the 'Savior of Madrid'—as supreme Generalissimo of the Loyalist armies." "This [the central army] is commanded by Colonel Casado, one of the most brilliant officers of the old Spanish army. . . ."

## MADRID HAS FORCES TO CARRY ON

Feb. 14—"Negrin Says City Can Withstand Long Siege. Miaja Will Soon Have 500,000 Trained Men to Hold Area."

Feb. 20—"Franco officials were not even satisfied with British and French promises of pressure on President Manuel Azana, because the Madrid government had consolidated its forces to an extent where it can carry on in the Central Zone despite maneuvers outside of Spain."

Feb. 27—"Loyalists Remain Firm for Defense." ". . . all political leaders of parties in Madrid adhering to the Popular Front have agreed on the necessity of increasing the activities of the Popular Front to meet the more difficult situation created by the closer alliances between London and Paris and Burgos." "Direct news from Madrid again blasts the renewed stream of now-familiar lies about imminent capitulation. Spain's Popular Front is tightening its ranks." (Gannes.)

Mar. 1—"Negrin Girds Forces to Defend Madrid. Army Press Determined to Resist." "Gen. Segismundo Casado, commander of Madrid, said that the military situation 'is magnificent. Complete tranquility continues along the fronts, but the situation depends upon the action of the Cabinet.' At Valencia, the Communist morning newspaper, La Verdad, devoted its entire front page to a resolution passed by the Political Bureau of the C.P. of Spain declaring that the 'people's army can and will continue to fight.'"

Mar. 6—"A government radio broadcast, meanwhile, stated that the spirit of the troops and population in Loyalist territory is one of 'unbreakable resistance,' marked by a powerful 'feeling of unity and determination' against the fascist invaders."

## MIAJA "TURNS" TRAITOR

Mar. 7—"Army Conspirators Seize Madrid; Miaja Joins Plot; Plan Surrender." "Besteiro, a permanent leader of the capitulation elements, was accused in 1936 of being an agent of the British Intelligence Service. He shares leadership with Colonel Segismundo Casado, professional soldier of the same political kidney." "The present tragedy of Madrid is but the delayed act begun by Franco and Trotskyite rearguard agents, working under the protection of Caballero from the very outset of the resistance to fascism in 1936." (Gannes.)

Mar. 8—"Miaja Turns Bombers on Madrid Troops. People's Front Forces Combat Traitor Council." "Azana has direct links with Miguel San Andres, who is a member of the new dictatorial council." "General Jose Miaja, President of the new council, poured troop reinforcements into the city as the 'peace' regime battled to crush opposition to its efforts to achieve an armistice with the fascists."

Mar. 9—"Interview with Negrin representative, page 1" "I wish to tell you also that the report of the resignation of the Republican government is entirely false. They would certainly not resign to a rebel head. If the government had decided to give its resignation it could have given it to the new president of the Republic, Martinez Barrio. With him Negrin knew himself to be in perfect accord after the conversations he had had with him several days previously." (Moscow dispatch of charges made by foreign correspondents of Izvestia and Pravda, page 2) "Col. Segismundo Casado and Julian Besteiro, the leaders of the conspiracy against the Negrin government, acted in collaboration with former President Manuel Azana and Cortes President Diego Martinez Barrio."

Mar. 10—"Because these capitulators [Miaja and Co.], in a most difficult hour, were in strategic military posts, they were able to seize decisive political positions." (Editorial.)

# HOW L.A.'S COPS HELPED FASCISTS ATTACK PICKETS

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provoke a disturbance by jostling and pushing the demonstrators and by attempting to rip down banners carried by the pickets. The workers tried to avoid clashes with these provocateurs until the fascist youth made an effort to push the pickets off the sidewalk.

The demonstrators began to resist this attack and were succeeding in quelling the disorder when police, who had been standing close by until this time without intervening, entered the fray.

Black-jack Y.P.S.L. Youths They black-jacked two young members of the Y.P.S.L. One of them, 14 years of age, was beaten unconscious and the other, aged 18, received a scalp wound, necessitating his removal for medical attention.

The demonstrators nevertheless held their ground. The police drew back. In a few minutes, as the pickets continued their peaceful picketing, police threw tear gas bombs into their ranks, forcing them back from the entrance of the theater.

## Fascists Throw Bombs

Several of the bombs were thrown by fascist youth and at the protest meeting before the Mayor, the police were accused of having given them to these youth.

As soon as the gas drifted away, the entire picket line reorganized and again began marching in front of the theater. A bottle thrown from the balcony of the theater struck a woman picket in the face.

The fascists began taunting the marchers but this time their efforts to provoke a fight were quickly stopped.

## Second Barrage

No sooner had the demonstrators again resisted the fascist attack against their picket line than a second barrage of tear gas was fired against them. By this time the ranks of the police had swelled to 80 uniformed and plain clothes policemen, several radio cars, state police cars and motorcycles.

When the pickets made a third effort to resume the demonstration, tear gas shells were fired at them again, this time enough to choke the entire area with gas. Police continued firing tear gas until the demonstrators were compelled to retreat.

## Hear S.W.P. Speaker

A large number of the pickets gathered at a vacant lot across the street from the theater to listen to a speech by Dave Stevens of the S.W.P., who pointed out that the united front between the "democratic" police and the fascists made necessary the organization of Workers Defense Guards.

## Many Groups Protest

The S.W.P., Y.P.S.L., American Fund for Political Prisoners and Refugees, the American League for Peace and Democracy, the North American Committee to Aid Spanish Democracy, the Civil Liberties Union, and the Municipal League sent representatives to the Mayor today protesting the police brutalities at the demonstration last night.

The representative of the Medical Bureau for Aid to Spanish Democracy brazenly injected a disruptive note in the protest meeting by accusing the S.W.P. of joining with the fascist youth in attempting to disrupt the demonstration and encourage clashes with the police. His story was spiked as a lie by several of the delegates who gave the actual facts of the event.

## Stalinists Disgusted

The S.W.P. delegate explained our efforts to enter a united front with the North American Committee and our conduct in the picket line. Several of the Stalinist observers expressed disgust at the dishonest tactics of the Medical Bureau representative.

Mayor Bowron made a short speech declaring that he was for civil liberties but that he was also for law and order. He said nothing about stopping future illegal activity of the police except that he understood the organizations present had the right to picket.

## Build Workers Defense Guards

The S.W.P. has made clear its position on anti-fascist activity. Police support of the fascist youth in their attacks on the picket lines proves that the only real defense for the workers against the fascists is Workers Defense Guards.

The Los Angeles section of the S.W.P. is directing all its energy to carrying out this slogan in Southern California.

las and shot him. They passed the same verdict on Rojo, but he was able to escape and place himself under the protection of Largo Caballero in the war ministry. He emerged to become—Chief of the General Staff.

Innumerable other examples like this could be cited to show the attitude of the professional soldiers who remained "faithful" to the "Republic."

# On the Line . . . with Bill Morgan

Eight years ago this month a young student walked out of a class room in a Connecticut high school and hitch-hiked to New York City and hung around the waterfront for a week trying to find a ship which would take him around the world.

The first three or four days were wasted in trying to get aboard some liner to apply in person for a job. Then, after sleeping in Battery Park and talking with friendly workers, a sympathetic seaman showed him the ropes. After acquiring the necessary papers — a "life-boat ticket," copy of birth certificate, etc.—the shipping office of a steamship line was the next step. Then, almost before the young man could catch his breath, he was signed on for a round the world trip. The first leg of a long, long journey had begun.

The sudden change from a dull, dreary classroom to an active, exciting and entirely new life aboard a ship was hardly noticed by the youth in his anxiety to forget the past and begin a new life of adventure and association with his fellow shipmates. New faces, new lands, new customs, and above all, new ideas! This was the life and nothing could ever take its place.

## Class Struggle Unfolds Before His Eyes

That journey around the world and the new friends made and the new ideas acquired changed the whole life of the young man. The great class struggle was unfolded before his eyes and each event was translated to the student by veterans of every land, of every color and every description. The older workers were ever ready to tell and retell endlessly the story of the working class and its history to the youth, who listened with increasing interest and curiosity.

Endless hours of discussions and questions were followed by the reading of every available book. Working hours were spent in observing intently each habit and characteristic of the workers and planning questions for the all-night gab-fests which followed.

Trade unions, socialism, anarchism, religion, syndicalism, and world politics were the subjects with which, for the first time, the youth found himself at grips. And the various views and conflicting theories only made the new life the future life and activity of the former school-boy.

The conditions of the working class under Fascism were vividly and indelibly engraved on his memory after visits to several Italian sea ports. The small, and seemingly ridiculous beginnings of reaction in Germany—Hitler was considered a foolish and idle threat at the time—where the short-sighted and fat-headed Social Democracy was drinking beer under the trees and the make-believe Socialism in Vienna were all examined with conflicting doubt and enthusiasm of youth.

## Italian Anti-Fascists His Teacher

Paris at the time was, for most Americans, a haven of refuge against the harsh and painful problems of a capitalism in the early stages of an incurable disease — unemployment. But for the youth it was no bohemia, no escape. It was in Paris that first contact with revolutionary work and revolutionary fighters was established.

The valiant Italian anti-Fascists who carried on the struggle against Mussolini from Paris garrets and basements welcomed the raw recruit and made possible the desire to participate in the active movement.

The Rosas brothers — since murdered by agents of Italian Fascism—were good teachers. They were tireless workers and hardened revolutionists. They insisted, after a period of initiation and experience, that the youth return to America where comrades were needed and where the danger of a knife in the back from an unseen hand was less likely.

Back to the U.S.A. and the depression and the youth began his search for work. From stock-boy in a shoe store to bus boy in a cafeteria to clerk in Wall Street to truck driver for a department store delivery service, to unemployment and W.P.A. Night school and organizing locals of the unemployed followed job after job. Street corner meetings, mass-meetings, distributing endless bundles of leaflets, picketing and speaking for the trade unions,—in and out of work—all combined with periods of hope and enthusiasm and discouragement and fear for the future.

## Leans Need of Revolutionary Party

Once again, restlessness and the desire to shake off the feeling of confinement, the youth set out. This time to meet and talk with the workers in other parts of America. By hitch-hiking and riding freight cars he travelled across the country with the jobless youth who were in search of work. From New York to New Mexico, from New Orleans to Chicago he walked and rode and slept in "jungles" with every kind of worker from every section of the United States. Odd jobs in gas stations, on wheat fields, in packing plants and canneries provided contact with many active workers in the revolutionary movement.

This trip, above all others, established once and for all in the mind of the youth, the firm belief in the future of the working class and the necessity for a revolutionary party to carry on and direct the activities of the thousands of workers who were preparing to take up the fight.

Back again to New York in time to assist in the building of a new party out of the ashes of the moribund Socialist Party which was bogged down with petty reformers and lawyers and "lady-sympathizers in big hats." And all the years of experience with reformers and dilettantes, all the years of experience with semi-socialists and careerists, only sharpened the youth's ability and experience and made possible the quick understanding and acceptance of the need for a revolutionary party based on the program of Lenin and Trotsky.

The jump from a Connecticut class room and the dull meaningless life of casual contact with the outside world to an active worker in the ranks of the Socialist Workers Party is still to be made by many young students and workers. It is a difficult jump for many but the time is short and the distance is growing ever wider as events pile upon each other. The coming war and the decisive show-down between the workers and the bosses cannot be long postponed. Fascism is a ruthless destroyer of the calm, detached life. A choice must be made and made soon.