WRITINGS OF
LEON TROTSKY
[1936-37]
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Writings of Leon Trotsky is a collection, in twelve volumes, of pamphlets, articles, letters, and interviews written during Trotsky's third and final exile (1929-40). They include many articles translated into English for the first time. They do not include the books and pamphlets from this period that are permanently in print, nor most of the unpublished material in the Trotsky Archives at Harvard University Library. Five of the volumes cover Trotsky's residence in Turkey (1929, 1930, 1930-31, 1932, 1932-33); two in France (1933-34, 1934-35); one in Norway (1935-36); and four in Mexico (1936-37, 1937-38, 1938-39, 1939-40).
WRITINGS OF LEON TROTSKY
[1936-37]

PATHFINDER PRESS
NEW YORK
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Leon Trotsky and Natalia Sedova in Mexico.
PREFACE

Mexico was the fourth and final country where Leon Trotsky lived after being deported from the Soviet Union in 1929. He spent over four years in Turkey, almost two in France, and eighteen months in Norway before arriving in Mexico in January 1937. He lived there until his assassination in August 1940. This volume is a collection of his pamphlets, articles, letters, and transcripts of interviews and discussions during his first ten months in Mexico, not otherwise available in books or pamphlets permanently in print. It begins in the last week of 1936, when Trotsky and his companion, Natalia Sedova, were passengers on the Norwegian tanker *Ruth* crossing the Atlantic, and concludes late in October 1937, while they were guests of Diego Rivera and Frida Kahlo at their home in Coyoacan, a suburb of Mexico City.

Trotsky's main preoccupation in these months was with the bloody purges that Stalin was then conducting on a mass scale in order to eliminate all opposition to his totalitarian rule in the Soviet Union. A central feature of these purges, intended to "justify" them, was a series of trials in Moscow in which leading Soviet figures, including most of Lenin's closest co-workers in the Russian revolution of 1917, "confessed" that under Trotsky's direction they had conspired with the German and Japanese imperialist governments to assassinate Stalin and restore capitalism in the Soviet Union. As soon as the first Moscow trial was announced, in August 1936, Trotsky threw himself into a campaign to expose it as a frame-up. But the Norwegian government, under pressure from Moscow, gagged Trotsky by interning him and denying him the right to speak with reporters, publish articles, or even go to court. So it was not until he was on the Atlantic that he was able to begin assembling his written refutation of the charges in the first Moscow trial (the trial of the sixteen, headed by Zinoviev and Kamenev). And it was not until he reached Mexican soil that he was able to begin organizing public sentiment for the creation of an impartial international commission of inquiry to hear his side of the story and pass judgment on his guilt or innocence in the Moscow trials.
One literary product of this activity was the book *Les Crimes de Staline*, completed in July and published in France in November. It dealt with not only the first but also the second Moscow trial (the trial of the seventeen, headed by Pyatakov and Radek), which was announced and held a couple of weeks after Trotsky reached Mexico. It also dealt with the hearings of the inquiry commission panel headed by John Dewey, held in Coyoacan in April, and the sensational purge of top Red Army commanders like Tukhachevsky and Yakir, held in June. The entire contents of this book are included in the present volume, except for a chapter called “In Closed Court,” which is in the second edition of *Writings 35-36*, and Trotsky’s concluding speech to the Dewey Commission, which is in *The Case of Leon Trotsky*. (This book, published in the United States in October 1937, is a complete transcript of the Dewey Commission’s thirteen sessions in Coyoacan.) Trotsky also published in Mexico a pamphlet about the second Moscow trial, *El Proceso de Moscú*, whose entire contents were translated for the present volume by Candida Barbarena.

After the Dewey Commission hearings, Trotsky was able to devote more time to writing about the main trends in international politics and their relation to the main objective of his last exile, the building of a new International based on Leninist principles, strategy, and tactics. Thus he wrote in these months about the inexorable drive of the imperialist powers toward World War II (“On the Threshold of a New World War,” printed here in its entirety for the first time), and about the retrograde ideas of radicals and ex-radicals demoralized by the Moscow trials who were beginning to blame Leninism for the crimes of Stalinism (“Bolshevism and Stalinism,” a pamphlet which he subtitled “Concerning the Historical and Theoretical Roots of the Fourth International”). He also wrote many articles about the continuing Civil War in Spain, especially after the crushing of the Spanish left-wing forces by the Stalinists, and about the expansion of imperialist Japan’s invasion of China; these will be found in the books *The Spanish Revolution (1931-39)* and *Leon Trotsky on China*.

The Movement for the Fourth International (MFI), which had been set up at an international conference in July 1936 (the so-called Geneva conference, actually held in Paris), was in a precarious position at this time. Virtually all of its limited energies had to be diverted to answering and exposing the Moscow trial slanders. At the same time the GPU began to
murder "Trotskyists" outside the Soviet borders as well as within them: Erwin Wolf, a Czechoslovakian, a former secretary to Trotsky, and a member of the MFI's International Secretariat, was kidnapped and murdered by the GPU in Spain in August; Ignace Reiss, a top official of the GPU who broke with Stalinism and declared himself a Fourth Internationalist, was murdered by the GPU in Switzerland in September.

Internally, the MFI was also suffering many blows. Several leading figures defected after the first Moscow trial in August 1936: Victor Serge (a Russian), A.J. Muste (U.S.), Peter J. Schmidt (Holland), Ruth Fischer and Arkadi Maslow (Germany), Alfonso Leonetti (Italy), Chen Tu-hsiu (China), and others not so well known. Henricus Sneevliet, the leader of the MFI's Dutch section, and Georges Vereecken, secretary of the Belgian section, were bitterly opposed to the MFI's policy in Spain; a year later, they were to split away from the movement. There was also a vociferous ultraleft minority that wanted the MFI to be neutral in the Spanish Civil War and the Chinese struggle for national liberation.

Trotsky's collaboration with the International Secretariat was necessarily reduced after he left Europe, but in Mexico he came into much closer contact with the American section and achieved an effective working relationship with its leaders that lasted until his death. Together with them he began to plan for another international conference, which he originally hoped could be held by the end of 1937, but which was not actually held until September 1938. Meanwhile, he devoted a great deal of attention to the problems of the American section.

In 1936, before Trotsky reached Mexico, the members of the American section had joined the Socialist Party, then led by Norman Thomas, as a tactical move to help them win over leftward-moving members of the SP and its youth affiliate. By 1937 the left-wing caucus they led in the SP had doubled its forces and won a majority of the youth organization. At this point, Thomas and other SP leaders set out to gag the left-wingers and to expel them if they resisted bureaucratic restrictions on their right to present their views to the members of the SP. Trotsky, who did not agree with all the tactics of the American leadership (especially their tactics on defense policy around the Moscow trials), followed these developments very closely and offered valuable advice on how his American comrades should respond to the campaign against "Trotskyism" in the SP. By May, he
believed that the time had come for them to complete their "entry" into the SP and to work for the creation of an independent revolutionary party, and he was concerned to help the American section avoid the pitfalls and mistakes that had severely damaged the French section in an analogous situation in the French Socialist Party (see *The Crisis of the French Section [1935-36]*). He was satisfied with the outcome when the left-wingers were expelled from the SP in the summer and opened the discussions that led to the founding convention of the Socialist Workers Party at the end of the year. He contributed several articles to the preconvention discussion and sent many letters to the leadership in New York outlining his views on the kind of revolutionary party the new organization should try to be. Most of these letters are printed here for the first time.

The first editions of the *Writings* series devoted three volumes to Trotsky's stay in Mexico, which were designated by the dates 1937-38 (although that volume actually started on December 28, 1936), 1938-39, and 1939-40. After their publication, Pathfinder Press obtained access to a large number of additional articles and letters Trotsky had written in Mexico. This led, in the second editions, to a reorganization and expansion of the number of volumes for the Mexican period from three to four, which are now designated by title as 1936-37 (the present volume), 1937-38, 1938-39, and 1939-40.

Parts of the present volume were originally printed in the first edition of the 1937-38 volume; those that are published here in English for the first time (90 out of the total of 150), including those that are published here for the first time in any language, are listed with an asterisk in the table of contents. Some dates mistakenly used in the first edition of *Writings 37-38* have been corrected here, and passages missing from certain articles have been restored.

Many articles in this volume were signed by pen names or were unsigned, usually for security reasons. The date preceding each selection indicates when it was completed; if that is not known, the date when it was first published is given. Translations originally made in the 1930s and 1940s have been revised to correct obvious errors and achieve uniformity in spelling of names, punctuation, style, etc. Acknowledgments about the articles and translations, and explanatory material about the persons and events mentioned in them, will be found in the
section entitled "Notes and Acknowledgments." A list of Trotsky's 1936-37 books, pamphlets, and articles not included in this volume because they are in print and available elsewhere will be found in the section entitled "Other Writings of 1936-37."

Special thanks are due to the Harvard College Library, for its permission to examine and use material in the "open" section of the Trotsky Archives; to the Library of Social History in New York, for its permission to use the archives of the late James P. Cannon; to Albert Glotzer, for providing copies of letters by Trotsky from his personal archives; and to Louis Sinclair, for the help provided by his *Leon Trotsky: A Bibliography* (Hoover Institution Press, 1972).

The Editors

September 1977
CHRONOLOGY

1936

December—On the Atlantic, after being deported from Norway, Trotsky begins assembling the written refutation of the charges against him in the August 1936 Moscow trial.

1937

January 9—Trotsky arrives in Mexico.
January 23-30—Second big Moscow trial ends with death sentences for thirteen of the seventeen defendants.
January-March—Trotsky writes scores of articles refuting in detail the charges against him in the second Moscow trial.
February 9 and 14—Large meetings to protest the Moscow trials are held in New York and Chicago.
March 3—Stalin makes a speech on the Moscow trials at a meeting of the Central Committee of the CPSU.
March—Trotsky criticizes the conduct of his American cothinkers in the American Committee for the Defense of Leon Trotsky.
March 13—Trotsky calls for the immediate creation of a Committee of Inquiry to investigate the Moscow trial’s charges against himself and his son Leon Sedov.
April 10-17—Commission of Inquiry, headed by John Dewey, conducts preliminary hearings in Coyoacan, Mexico.
May—An insurrection in Barcelona brings the Spanish Civil War to a climax, followed by government and Stalinist suppression of the left wing. Trotsky urges his cothinkers in the American Socialist Party to prepare for the formation of a new party.
June—Fall of the first People’s Front government in France.
July—Sino-Japanese War flares up.
August—U.S. Trotskyists, expelled from the Socialist Party, begin publishing Socialist Appeal as their public paper. Trotsky writes an analysis of the forces driving toward World War II (“On the Threshold of a New World War”) and a response to former radicals who are blaming Leninism for the crimes of
Stalinism ("Stalinism and Bolshevism"). Erwin Wolf, a member of the International Secretariat and formerly one of Trotsky's secretaries, is murdered by the GPU in Spain.

September—Ignace Reiss, formerly a top GPU official who denounced Stalinism and declared himself for the Fourth International, is murdered by the GPU in Switzerland.
IN ‘SOCIALIST’ NORWAY

December 1936

My wife and I spent about eighteen months, from June 1935 to September 1936, in Weksal, a village thirty-five miles from Oslo. We lived in the home of Konrad Knudsen, editor of a working class paper. This residence had been designated for us by the Norwegian government. Our life there was completely peaceful and well ordered—one might even say petty bourgeois. The household soon became used to us, and an almost silent but very friendly relationship was established between us and the people around us. Once a week we went to the cinema with the Knudsen family to see two-year-old Hollywood productions. From time to time, mainly during the summer, we received visitors, mostly people who belonged to the left wing of the working class movement. The radio kept us abreast of what was going on in the world; we had begun to use this magical, and unbearable, invention three years earlier. We were especially amazed at hearing the official pronouncements of the Soviet bureaucrats. These individuals feel just as much at home over the airwaves as they do in their own offices. They give orders, threaten, and quarrel among themselves—neglecting the most elementary rules of prudence regarding state secrets. Without any doubt, enemy general staffs glean priceless information from the intemperate language of Soviet “chiefs”—big and small. All this goes on in a country where even being suspected of opposition carries the risk of immediately being accused of espionage!

The arrival of the mail was the high point of the day in Weksal. About one in the afternoon we impatiently looked for the disabled mailman who, by sled in winter and by bicycle in summer, brought us a heavy packet of papers and letters bearing stamps from every part of the world. Our unusual mail caused the police commissioner of Honefoss (a neighboring village of 4,000 inhabitants) many a sleepless night. It had the same effect on the Socialist government in Oslo—something we were not to learn until later.
How did we come to be in Norway? I think it necessary to say a few words about that. For a certain period of time, the Norwegian Labor Party belonged to the Communist International. It then broke with the Comintern (and the Comintern was not completely to blame for the rupture) without, nevertheless, affiliating itself with the Second International, which was too opportunistic for its taste. When this party came to power in 1935, it still felt some links with its past. I hastened to ask Oslo for a visa, hoping to be able peacefully to pursue my literary work in this calm country.

After some hesitation and some squabbling among the leaders of the party, I was granted an entry visa. I gladly signed the agreement not to intervene in the internal life of the country, etc., having no intention whatsoever of becoming involved in Norwegian politics. From my very first contacts with the leaders of the Labor Party, I got a strong whiff of the stale odor of the musty conservatism denounced with such vigor in Ibsen's plays. It is true that the central organ of the party, Arbeiderbladet, invoked Marx and Lenin, and not the Bible and Luther, but it remained permeated with the shallow, well-meaning mediocrity that inspired such unconquerable aversion in Marx and Lenin.

The "Socialist" government made every effort to be as much like its reactionary predecessors as it possibly could. The old bureaucracy, in its entirety, stayed on. Was that good or bad? I soon had occasion to become convinced, by experience, that the old bourgeois functionaries sometimes have a broader viewpoint and a more profound sense of dignity than Messrs. "Socialist" Ministers. With the exception of a semiofficial visit from Martin Tranmael, the leader of the Norwegian Labor Party (who, during his stay in the United States, had—a youthful aberration!—once belonged to the IWW), and from Trygve Lie, the minister of justice, I had no personal relations with anyone in government circles. I had almost no contact with the radicals, in order to avoid even the appearance of mixing into local politics.

My wife and I lived in extreme isolation, without thinking of feeling sorry for ourselves. A very friendly relationship was established with the Knudsens, politics being, by tacit consent, excluded from our conversations. During the moments of respite my illness afforded, I worked on The Revolution Betrayed, trying to bring out clearly the causes of the victory of the Soviet bureaucracy over the party, the soviets, and the people, and to sketch perspectives for the subsequent development of the USSR. On August 5 [1936] I sent the first copies of the finished manuscript to the American and French translators. The very
same day, with Konrad Knudsen and his wife, we left for the south of Norway, where we were to spend two weeks at the seashore. But the following morning, while still en route, we learned that a group of fascists had forced their way into the house to steal my archives. It was not a hard thing to do: the house was not guarded—even the closets and cupboards were kept unlocked. Norwegians are so accustomed to the peaceful rhythm of their lives that we had not been able to get our friends to take even the most elementary precautions.

The fascists arrived at midnight, displayed fake police badges, and sought to begin the "house search" right away. Our hosts' daughter found this suspicious, did not lose her presence of mind, and stood with arms outspread in front of the door to my room, declaring that she would let no one enter. Five fascists, still inexperienced in this kind of thing, found themselves put out of countenance by the courage of a young girl. Meanwhile, her younger brother gave the alarm; neighbors appeared on the scene—in their nightclothes. The frightened invaders fled, taking with them a few papers snatched at random from the nearest table. The next day, and without difficulty, the police established their identity.

It seemed that life would return to its usual calm. But, continuing our journey to the south, we noticed that an automobile with four fascists, led by the engineer N., their propaganda director, was following us. We succeeded in getting rid of our pursuers only at the end of the trip, by not letting their car onto the ferry that was to take us to the other side of the fjord. We spent ten very peaceful days in the solitary fisherman's cottage built on the rocks of the tiny island.

Elections to the Storting [parliament] were approaching, and the opposing candidates were looking for some sensational issue to enliven their not very original programs. The government newspapers (Norway has a population of only three million, but the Labor Party there publishes thirty-five dailies and a dozen weeklies) launched a rather moderate antifascist campaign. The right-wing press answered with an extremely violent campaign against me and against the government that had granted me an entry visa. The reactionary press collected political articles by me that had appeared in various countries, had them hastily translated, and ran them under sensational headlines. Suddenly I found myself in the very center of Norwegian politics.

The attack by the fascists had aroused the greatest indignation
among the workers. "We must pour oil on the troubled waters," observed the Social Democratic leaders, with an air of profundity. "But why?" "So that the fascists aren't torn to shreds by the workers." The experience of several European countries had taught these gentlemen nothing; they preferred to wait until the fascists tore them to shreds. I steered clear of polemicizing, even in private conversation, because any careless word might find its way into print. There was really nothing for me to do but shrug my shoulders and wait. For several days we continued to climb the rocks and to fish.

Far more threatening clouds were meanwhile gathering in the East. There they were preparing to let the world know that I was working with the Nazis to destroy the Soviets. The Weksal attack and the violent press campaign of the fascists came at an awkward time for Moscow. Confronted with these untimely events, would Moscow have to call a halt to its plans? On the contrary, it was possible for the events in Norway to speed up the setting of the stage for the Moscow trial.  

Needless to say, the Soviet legation in Oslo was not idle. On August 13, the Oslo chief of criminal police, Mr. Swen, arrived by plane to call on us; he wished to interrogate me, as a witness, about the fascist raid. This hastily scheduled interrogation, by order of the minister of justice, boded no good. Swen showed me a letter (the contents of which were completely innocuous) that I had written to a friend in Paris and that had already been published in the Norwegian press. He asked me to account for my activities in Norway. This police functionary justified his questions by telling me that those who had attacked my home insisted on the criminal character of these activities. A fascist lawyer was even demanding my indictment by reason of "plots that could drag Norway into war with other states." Mr. Swen's conduct was most correct. He was obviously aware that the questions he had been ordered to ask me were uncalled for. At the close of my long deposition, Mr. Swen informed the press that he found nothing in my actions to be contrary to the laws or to the best interests of Norway. We could again feel that the "incident was closed." But it had only just begun.

The minister of justice, until fairly recently a member of the Communist International, did not in the least share the police chief's liberalism. Prime Minister Nygaardsvold showed himself even less inclined toward indulgence. He burned with desire to show proof of his firmness—but by no means toward the fascists
who had committed the Weksal raid. My attackers remained at liberty, under the protection of the democratic constitution.

On August 14 the Soviet press agency Tass announced the discovery of a Trotskyist-Zinovievist terrorist plot. Our host, Konrad Knudsen, was the first to hear this news on the radio. But there was no electricity on the island, the antennas were most primitive, and, to make matters worse, the radio was not working well that night. "... Trotskyist groups ... counterrevolutionary activity ..." was all that Knudsen could get.

"What does it mean?" he asked me.

"Some very nasty piece of work," I replied, "but exactly what, I don’t know."

Toward dawn, a journalist friend, who had taken notes of the Tass communique, arrived from Kristiansand, a small neighboring village. Prepared for anything though I was, I still could not believe my eyes—so outrageously unbelievable did the mixture of villainy, impudence, and stupidity in this document seem to me.

"Terrorism, well and good," I repeated, stupefied, "that is still within the realm of comprehension. But the Gestapo! Are you quite sure that it said ‘Gestapo’?"

"Yes."

"So, right after the fascist attack, the Stalinists accuse me of being an ally of the fascists?"

"There is no doubt about it."

"All the same, there are limits to everything! A communique like this can only be the work of a drunken agent provocateur—and an illiterate one, to boot!"

Then and there, I dictated to the journalist my first statement on the announced trial ["Let Us Know the Facts," in Writings 35-36]. It was necessary to prepare for struggle—some terrible blow was in the offing. The Kremlin could not, without strong reasons, compromise itself with so odious a frame-up.

The trial took world opinion, and even the Communist International, by surprise. The Norwegian Communist Party, despite its hostility to me, had held a meeting on August 14 to protest the fascist attack at Weksal—only a few hours before Tass had allied me to the fascists. The French Stalinist organ, l’Humanite, later published a cable from Oslo saying that inasmuch as the fascists had paid me a "friendly visit," the Norwegian government considered my nocturnal interview with them an interference in the political life of the country. These gentlemen of l’Humanite have long since lost all shame and are ready, in all circumstances, to do anything to justify their salaries.
Starting with my very first statement to the press, I demanded a complete and open inquiry into Moscow's accusations. I addressed an open letter to Mr. Swen, to complete my testimony ["Open Letter to the Oslo Chief of Police," in *Writings 35-36*]. The Norwegian government knew very well, the letter said, when it afforded me asylum, that I was a revolutionist and one of the moving spirits in creating a new International. While I rigorously abstained from any interference in Norway's internal affairs, I did not believe—and I still do not believe—that the Norwegian government was called on to control my literary activity in other countries—and even less so since nowhere had my books and articles been the object of legal proceedings. My correspondence was permeated with the same ideas as my books. These ideas are possibly not to the taste of the fascists and Stalinists—about that I can do nothing. In the last few days something new has developed that outdoes everything the reactionary press has written about me. Moscow accuses me, on the radio, of unheard-of crimes. If the tiniest part of these accusations were true, I would not in truth merit the hospitality either of the Norwegian people or of any other people. But I am ready to answer these accusations immediately, in front of any impartial commission of inquiry whatsoever, in front of any public tribunal whatsoever. And I undertake to prove that my accusers are the real criminals.

Most of the Norwegian newspapers published this letter. It should be noted that, from the very beginning, the Norwegian press adopted a most suspicious attitude toward the Moscow trial. Martin Tranmael and his colleagues had belonged to the Communist International recently enough to know just what the GPU and its methods are! Besides, the state of mind of the masses of workers, angered by the fascist attack, was completely favorable to me. The right-wing press had lost its head completely. The day before, it was maintaining that I was acting in secret agreement with Stalin to prepare a revolution in Spain, France, Belgium, and also, naturally, in Norway. Without renouncing this thesis, it then went to the defense of the Moscow bureaucracy against my terrorist attacks. . . .

We had returned to Weksal for the end of the Moscow trial. Dictionary in hand, I puzzled out the Tass reports in the Oslo papers. I felt as if I were in a madhouse. Journalists besieged us—the Norwegian wire service was still conscientiously publishing my rebuttals, which were spread throughout the world. At that moment two young friends, who had at an earlier date been my secretaries, arrived: Erwin Wolf from Czechoslovakia, and Jean
van Heijenoort from France. They were of tremendous help to us in those hectic and anxious days of waiting for two denouements, one of developments in Moscow and the other of developments in Oslo.

If the accused were not put to death, no one would take the accusations seriously. I was convinced that it would all end with executions. Nevertheless, I could scarcely believe my ears when I heard the Paris announcer report, with trembling voice, that Stalin had had all the accused, among whom were four members of the Old Bolshevik Central Committee, shot. It was not the ferocity of the massacre that stunned me; no matter how cruel it may be, this epoch of wars and revolutions is our epoch—our fatherland, in point of time. I was stunned by the cold-blooded premeditation of the frame-up, by the moral gangsterism of the clique in power, by this attempt to deceive world opinion on such a massive scale—over the entire earth, in our generation and for generations to come.

"Cain-Dzhugashvili [Stalin] has reached the very peak of his destiny," I said to my wife when the first minute of stupefaction had passed. The international press reacted with obvious distrust to the Moscow trial. The professional Friends of the Soviet Union were silent, disoriented. Not without difficulty, Moscow activated the complicated network of “friendly” organizations under its complete or partial control. Little by little, the international slander machine went into operation; it did not suffer any lack of grease. The principal mechanism of transmission was furnished, naturally enough, by the apparatus of the Communist International. The Norwegian Communist paper, which only the day before had seen itself obliged to defend me against the fascists, suddenly changed its tune. It now demanded my expulsion, and, above all, it demanded that my mouth be closed. The functions of the Comintern press itself are well known. It uses the time remaining to it after executing the minor tasks of Soviet diplomacy for doing the GPU’s filthiest jobs. The wires hummed between Moscow and Oslo. The very first thing to be done was to prevent me from laying bare the frame-up. These efforts were not in vain. A sudden turn became apparent in leading Norwegian circles, a turn that the Labor Party did not become aware of right away, and later did not understand. We would soon know the hidden causes for the change.

On August 26, while eight plainclothes policemen occupied the yard of our house, Police Chief Askvig and a functionary of the
Central Passport Bureau in charge of the supervision of aliens called on us. These important visitors invited me to sign a document accepting new conditions for residing in Norway: I was to agree to write no more about current political matters and to give no interviews; I was to agree to have all my correspondence, incoming and outgoing, inspected by the police. Without making the slightest allusion to the Moscow trial, the official document mentioned, as an example of my misdeeds, only an article dealing with French politics that had appeared in an American weekly, the Nation, and my open letter to the chief of criminal police, Mr. Swen. Obviously, the Norwegian government was using the first pretexts that came to mind to mask the real cause of its change in attitude. Only later did I understand why they asked for my signature: the constitution of the country makes no provision for restricting an individual's liberties without due process. The ingenious minister of justice had only to fill this gap in the basic law of the land by inviting me, of my own free will, to ask for chains and handcuffs. I categorically refused.

The minister immediately had me informed that henceforth journalists and intermediaries or third parties in general would not be permitted to see me, and that the government would soon assign me and my wife another residence. I made every effort, by mail, to get the minister to understand certain basic truths: that control of my literary activity was not within the jurisdiction of a Passport Bureau employee; that restraining my freedom to communicate with the press, at a time when I was the object of malicious charges, was tantamount to siding with my accusers. All this was very true—but the Soviet legation had more convincing arguments at its disposal!

The following morning, police agents conducted me to Oslo to be interrogated—still in the capacity of “witness” in the affair of the fascist raid. The examining magistrate was hardly interested in the facts. On the other hand, he interrogated me for two hours about my political activities, my connections, my visitors. Long debates ensued on the question of whether my articles criticized other governments. It goes without saying that I did not dispute the point. The magistrate concluded that this kind of behavior was not in accordance with the agreement I had made to avoid all actions hostile to other states. I replied that only in totalitarian states are governments and states considered one and the same. Democratic regimes do not consider criticism of a government as an attack against the state. Otherwise, what would
remain of the parliamentary system? The only sensible interpretation of my original agreement was that I had promised not to engage in any illegal, clandestine activity whatsoever in Norway. But it could not possibly occur to me that, living in Norway, I would not be able to publish, in other countries, articles in no way contrary to the laws of those countries. The judge had other ideas on the subject or, at the very least, other instructions—not very clear to be sure, but (as we were to see) sufficient to cause my internment.

From the courthouse I was taken before the minister of justice, who was surrounded by his highest officials. Again I was invited to sign the document, very slightly modified, agreeing to police surveillance, which I had refused to sign the previous day.

“If you want to arrest me,” I demanded, “why do you want me to authorize you to do it?”

“But,” the minister replied, with an air of profundity, “between arrest and complete liberty there is an intermediate situation.”

“That can only be an equivocation—or a trap; I prefer to be arrested!”

The minister made this concession to me and gave the necessary orders on the spot. Police agents roughly shoved aside Erwin Wolf, who had until then accompanied me and who was getting ready to return with me. Four policemen, this time in uniform, brought me back to Weksal. In the courtyard I saw others pushing van Heijenoort, whom they held by the shoulders, out of the house. My wife, alarmed, came out. They kept me locked in the car while indoors they prepared our isolation from the Knudsen family. Police occupied the dining room and cut the telephone wire. We were thus prisoners. The mistress of the house brought us our meals under the surveillance of two policemen. The doors to our rooms were always kept ajar. On September 2 we were transferred to Sundby, a village in Storsand about twenty-two miles from Oslo, at the edge of a fjord. There we were to spend three months and twenty days under the surveillance of thirteen policemen. Our mail passed through the Central Passport Bureau—which couldn’t see any reason for hurrying. No one was admitted to see us. To justify this procedure, which is contrary to the Norwegian constitution, the government had to pass a special law. As for my wife, she was arrested without even any attempt at explanation.

It would seem that the Norwegian fascists had a victory to celebrate. In reality, it was not they who were the victors. The
secret of my internment was simple. The government in Moscow had threatened Norwegian commerce with a boycott—and had immediately given concrete examples of the seriousness of this threat. Shipowners besieged the ministries:

"Do what you like, but give us Soviet business."

The country's merchant marine, fourth largest in the world, holds a decisive position in public affairs, and the shipowners make policy—regardless of who occupies the seats of government. Stalin used the monopoly in foreign commerce to prevent me from unmasking his frame-up. Norwegian financial circles came to his aid. The Socialist ministers justified themselves by saying: "All the same, we can't sacrifice the country's vital interests to Trotsky!" That was the reason for my arrest.

On August 17, that is, after the sensational revelations of the fascists, after the Moscow charges, Martin Tranmael wrote in Arbeiderbladet that "Trotsky is being strictly held, during his stay in our country, to the conditions that were imposed on him on his arrival." Now Tranmael, in his capacity as editor-in-chief of that paper, was more familiar than anyone else with my literary activity—especially with the articles that were in a few days to furnish material for the report of the Passport Bureau. But no sooner had this report been approved by the government (which had ordered it at Moscow's command), than Tranmael realized that Trotsky was the big culprit in all this. Why hadn't he renounced his ideas, or at least refrained from expressing them? He could then have peacefully enjoyed the benefits of Norwegian democracy.

Perhaps a brief historical digression would not be amiss here. On December 16, 1928, a special detail of the GPU arrived in Alma Ata from Moscow to demand that I agree to abstain from all political activity, and they threatened me with coercive measures if I declined. I wrote the Central Committee:

"To demand that I renounce all political activity is to demand that I abandon the struggle for the cause of the international proletariat, a struggle I have supported ceaselessly for thirty-two years—that is, from the very beginning of my conscious life. . . . The historic power of the Opposition comes from the fact that despite its seeming weakness at this time, its fingers are on the pulse of the world historical process; it clearly sees the dynamics of social forces; it foresees the future and consciously prepares for it. To renounce political activity would be to renounce preparing
In “Socialist” Norway

for the future. . . . In our written message to the Sixth Congress of the Communist International, we, the Opposition, foresaw the very ultimatum addressed to me today: ‘Only a completely demoralized bureaucracy could demand that revolutionists abandon political activity. And only contemptible renegades could agree to such a demand.’ I have no reason to change these words.”

In answer to this statement, the Political Bureau decided to banish me, and sent me to Turkey. I thus paid with exile for my refusal to renounce political activity. The Norwegian government now demanded that I pay for my exile by abandoning all political activity. No, Messrs. Democrats, I cannot agree to that.

In the letter to the Central Committee that I have cited, I expressed the conviction that the GPU was preparing to imprison me. I was mistaken. The Political Bureau settled for banishment. But what Stalin had not dared to do in 1928, the Norwegian “Socialists” did in 1936. They imprisoned me for having refused to halt the political activity that is the very essence of my life—that gives my life its meaning. The official organ of the government justified itself by saying that those days were past when great exiles such as Marx, Engels, and Lenin could write what they pleased against the governments of countries that gave them asylum. “Today there are quite different relationships that Norway has to take into consideration.”

That monopoly capitalism has mercilessly battered democracy and its guarantees is beyond question. Doesn’t Martin Tranmæl’s dreary sentence give us a glimpse of how the Socialists plan to make use of this much-abused democracy to transform society? Moreover, it must be added that in no other democratic country but “Socialist” Norway would it have been possible to flout the norms of legality with so much cynicism! We were interned on the twenty-eighth of August; a royal decree was promulgated on the thirty-first, giving the government the right to intern “undesirable” aliens. Even granting the legality of this decree—which was contested by many jurists—for three days we had been arbitrarily and forcibly imprisoned. But this was only the beginning—and things were to go from bad to worse.

The first few days of internment seemed like a rest cure to us, after the nervous tension of the Moscow trial week. It was good to be alone, without news, without telegrams, without mail, without telephone calls. But from the day we received the first newspa-
pers, internment became torture. The role that the lie plays in the life of society is truly disconcerting! The simplest facts are the most often distorted. I do not refer to insignificant distortions resulting from social contradictions, from minor antagonisms and psychological quirks. Infinitely more formidable are the lies spread by the powerful machinery of the government, which can reach everyone, everywhere. We had already seen this in operation during the war—when totalitarian regimes were as yet nonexistent. In those days, the lie itself retained an element of dilettantism and timidity. We are far from that stage today in our era of the absolute lie, the complete and totalitarian lie, spread by the monopolies of press and radio to imprison social consciousness.

We were, it is true, deprived of the radio during the first weeks of our detention. We were placed under the supervision of the director of the Central Passport Bureau, Mr. Konstad, whom the liberal press called, out of politeness, a semifascist. In addition to his capricious arbitrariness, he had an extremely provoking way of doing things. Intent on consistency in police methods, Mr. Konstad felt that the radio was incompatible with a regimen for internees. Nevertheless, the liberal tendency within the government won out, and we received a radio.

Beethoven was a great help to us, but the music was a rarity. Most often we had to listen to Goebbels, Hitler, or some orator in Moscow. with a muddy tide of lies. Moscow’s orators lied in diverse languages at diverse hours of the day and night—always on the same subject: They explained how and why I had organized the Kirov assassination. (I had paid no more attention to Kirov during his lifetime than I had to some general somewhere in China.)

go through an endless string of sentences, to which only the lie lent any cohesiveness.

“Allied with the Gestapo, Trotsky intends to bring about the defeat of democracy in France, a victory for Franco in Spain, the fall of socialism in the USSR, and, above all, the loss of our great leader, our man of genius, our beloved. . . .” The speaker’s voice was mournful and yet, at the same time, impudent. Obviously, this assembly-line liar was sneering at France, Spain, and socialism. He was thinking of his bread and butter. After a few minutes, listening to this became intolerably painful. Afterward, we asked ourselves several times a day with embarrassment: Can
the human race possibly be so stupid? And just as often, my wife and I would repeat this sentence: "All the same, we cannot believe them to be so low."

Stalin was not at all concerned with plausibility. In this respect, he had assimilated in full the psychological techniques of fascism, which consist of smothering criticism under a massive blanket of repeated lies. Should we refute, lay bare, the lies? There was no lack of material to do this. In our papers, in our memoirs, my wife and I had huge quantities of data for unmasking the lies. Day and night, at every instant, we remembered facts, hundreds of facts, thousands of facts, each one of which annihilated some accusation or some "voluntary confession." At Weksal, before our internment, I had for three days dictated, in Russian, a pamphlet on the Moscow trial. Now I no longer had any secretarial help; I had to write everything by hand. That, however, was not the main difficulty. As I was making notes of my refutations, carefully verifying the sources I was citing, the facts, the dates, inwardly murmuring hundreds of times, "But isn't it shameful to answer such infamous charges?"—printing presses all over the world were rolling at top speed, spreading new and apocalyptic lies through millions of newspapers, and Moscow's announcers were poisoning the airwaves.

What would be the fate of my pamphlet? Would it be allowed out of the country? The ambiguity of our position was especially difficult. The president of the council and the minister of justice visibly leaned toward complete imprisonment. The other ministers feared that public opinion would be against this. All the questions I asked in order to ascertain what rights I had remained unanswered. Had I at least known that all literary work was forbidden me, including all work of self-defense, I would have, for the moment, laid down my arms and read Hegel—there he sat, right on the shelf. But the government was not forbidding me anything—not in clear and distinct terms. It limited itself to confiscating the manuscripts I was sending to my lawyer, my son, my friends. After bitterly laboring to prepare a document, I had to wait impatiently for an answer from the addressee. A week would elapse, sometimes two. Then a petty police officer would arrive, along about noon, to deliver a paper signed "Konstad," bearing the news that such and such letters and such and such documents would not be forwarded. No
explanation—nothing but a signature. But what a signature! It is worth reproducing here, in all its original grandeur:

[Signature image]

One didn’t have to be a graphologist to see in what hands the government had placed our destiny!

Mr. Konstad, however, exercised control only over our spiritual lives—radio, correspondence, newspapers. Our persons were in the care of two highly placed police functionaries, Messrs. Askvig and Jonas Lie. The Norwegian writer Helge Krog, whose judgment can be relied on, calls them both fascists. They comported themselves better than Konstad. But the political aspect of all this is not at all changed by that fact. The fascists attempt a raid on my home. Stalin accuses me of an alliance with the fascists. To prevent me from refuting his lies, he obtains my imprisonment from his democratic allies. And the result is that they lock us up, my wife and me, under the supervision of three fascist functionaries. No chess player, in his wildest fantasy, could dream up a better deployment of the pieces.

Nevertheless, I could not passively submit to such abominable accusations. What could I possibly do? I could try to bring suit against the Norwegian Stalinists and fascists who had slandered me in the press, in order to prove in court the falseness of Moscow’s accusations. But in response to my attempt, the government on October 29 promulgated another special law authorizing the minister of justice to deny any recourse to legal action to an “interned alien.” The minister was not slow to use his new right. The first illegality thus served to justify the second.

Why did the government adopt so scandalous a course? Still for the very same reason. Oslo’s tiny “Communist” sheet, which only the previous day was lavishing on the Socialist government proofs of its servility, now addressed the most outrageously arrogant threats to that government: Trotsky’s attack on “the prestige of the Soviet courts” would bring about the most unfortunate economic consequences for Norway! The prestige of the Soviet courts? But that could suffer only if I succeeded in proving before the Norwegian bar the falseness of Moscow’s accusations. That was exactly what the Kremlin was in mortal fear of.
I tried to prosecute my slanderers in other countries, in Czechoslovakia, in Switzerland. The result was not long in forthcoming: the minister of justice informed me on November 11, in a rude letter (Norwegian Socialist ministers seem to feel that rudeness is a symbol of power), that I was forbidden to attempt legal actions, anywhere. To protect my rights in another country, I would first have to “leave Norway.” These words contained a scarcely veiled threat of expulsion—of delivery to the GPU. And that is the interpretation I gave this document in a letter to my French attorney, Gerard Rosenthal. The Norwegian censor permitted the letter to pass, thus confirming its tenor. Alarmed, my friends began to knock at every door, in search of a visa for me. The result of their efforts was that the doors of far-off Mexico were opened to me. But we shall come back to that.

The autumn was foggy and rainy. It would be difficult to describe the atmosphere at Sundby: a wooden house, half of which was occupied by slow-moving, heavy policemen who smoked pipes, played cards, and at noon brought us newspapers overflowing with slander, or messages from Konstad with his inevitable signature. What would happen next? As early as September 15, I had tried to alert public opinion, through the press, that after the political debacle of the first trial, Stalin would be forced to stage a second. I predicted that this time the GPU would try to move the base of operations of the plot to Oslo. I tried in this way to bar that road to Stalin, to prevent him from setting the stage for a second production, perhaps to save the accused. In vain! My message was confiscated. I wrote, in the form of a letter to my son, an answer to the sycophantic pamphlet of the British lawyer Pritt. But since “His Majesty’s Counselor” was zealously defending the GPU, the Norwegian government felt obliged to defend Mr. Pritt, and my work was impounded. I wrote to the International Federation of Trade Unions, reminding them, among other things, of the tragic fate of the former leader of the Soviet trade unions, Tomsky, and demanding forceful action on their part. The minister of justice confiscated that letter.

Each day the noose tightened. Soon they deprived us of our outdoor walks. No visitor was admitted. The censors held on to our letters, even our telegrams, for a week and more. In interviews with the press, some of the ministers scurrilously attacked those whom they thus imprisoned. Helge Krog, the writer, notes...
that the government appeared increasingly antagonistic toward me, and he adds: "It is not unusual for people to become hostile to those they have wronged, to those toward whom they have feelings of guilt. . . ."

When I look back today on this period of internment, I must say that never, anywhere, in the course of my entire life—and I have lived through many things—was I persecuted with as much miserable cynicism as I was by the Norwegian "Socialist" government. For four months these ministers, dripping with democratic hypocrisy, gripped me in a stranglehold to prevent me from protesting the greatest crime history may ever know.
These lines are being written aboard the Norwegian oil tanker *Ruth*, sailing from Oslo to Mexico, with the port of destination as yet unknown. Yesterday we passed the Azores. For the first few days the sea was agitated; it was difficult to write. I avidly read books about Mexico. Our planet is so tiny but we know so little about it! After the *Ruth* left the straits and turned to the southwest, the waters of the ocean became calmer and calmer and I could now busy myself with setting in order my notes on our stay in Norway ["In ‘Socialist’ Norway’]. Thus the first eight days were spent in intensive work and in speculations about mysterious Mexico.

Ahead of us are not less than twelve days' sailing. We are accompanied by a Norwegian police officer, Jonas Lie, who at one time served in the Saar district, under the jurisdiction of the League of Nations. At the table we make a foursome: the captain, the police officer, my wife, and I. There are no other passengers. The sea is extraordinarily calm for this season of the year. Behind are four months of captivity. Ahead—the ocean and the unknown. However, on the ship we still remain under the “protection” of the Norwegian flag, in the status, that is, of prisoners. We are not permitted to use the radio. Our revolvers remain in the custody of the police officer, our neighbor at the dinner table. The conditions for landing in Mexico are being arranged by radio without our knowledge. The Socialist government does not trifle when the principles of . . . internment are involved!

In the elections, held shortly prior to our departure, the [Norwegian] Labor Party obtained a considerable increase in votes. Konrad Knudsen, against whom all the bourgeois parties combined for being my “accomplice” and who was hardly defended from attacks by his own party, was elected by an impressive majority. In this was expressed an indirect vote of
confidence in me. . . . Having obtained the support of the population who voted against the reactionary attacks upon the right of asylum, the government, as is proper, proceeded to trample decisively upon this right so as to curry favor with reaction. The mechanics of parliamentarianism is wholly constructed upon such quid pro quos between the electorate and the electors.

The Norwegians are justly proud of Ibsen, their national poet. Thirty-five years ago, Ibsen was my literary love. One of my earliest articles was devoted to him. In a democratic jail, in the poet's native land, I once again reread his dramas. A great deal in them seems nowadays naive and old-fashioned. But how many prewar poets are there who have completely withstood the test of time? All of history prior to 1914 appears to be soft-headed and provincial. But on the whole Ibsen seemed to me fresh and, in his northern freshness, attractive. I reread An Enemy of the People with particular satisfaction. Ibsen's hatred of Protestant bigotry, provincial sottishness, and stiff-laced hypocrisy became more comprehensible and closer to me after my acquaintance with the first Socialist government in the poet's native land.

"There are any number of ways of interpreting Ibsen," said the minister of justice in his own defense, as he descended upon me in Sundby with an unexpected call.

"Whatever the interpretation, he will be always found against you. Recall the Burgomaster Stockmann . . ."

"Do you imply that I am Stockmann?"

"To make out the best case for you, Mr. Minister: Your government has all the vices but none of the virtues of a bourgeois government."

Notwithstanding their literary flavor, our conversations were not remarkable for excessive courtesy. When Dr. Stockmann, the brother of the Burgomaster, came to a conclusion that the prosperity of his native town was based upon infected mineral baths, the Burgomaster had him dismissed from service; the columns of the newspapers were closed to him; his fellow citizens proclaimed him an enemy of the people. "Now we shall see," exclaims the doctor, "whether baseness and cowardice can stop the mouth of a free and honest man." I had my own reasons for repeating this quotation against my Socialist jailors.

"We committed a stupidity by granting you a visa!" I was unceremoniously told by the minister of justice in the middle of December.
“And are you preparing to rectify this stupidity by means of a crime?” I replied, repaying frankness with frankness. “You are behaving toward me in the same way that Noske and Scheidemann behaved toward Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg. You are paving the road for fascism. If the workers of Spain and France don’t save you, you and your colleagues will be emigres in a few years like your predecessors, the German Social Democrats.” All this was true enough. But the key to our prison remained in the hands of Burgomaster Stockmann.

I did not entertain any great hopes about the possibility of finding a haven in some other country. Democratic countries protect themselves against the danger of dictatorships by this, that they borrow certain worst aspects of the latter. For revolutionists the so-called “right” of asylum has long since been converted from a right into a question of indulgence. Coupled with this were: the Moscow trial and my internment in Norway.

It is not hard to understand how welcome a piece of news was the cable from the New World stating that the government of distant Mexico would extend to us its hospitality. There loomed a way out of Norway and the impasse. On the way back from court, I said to the police officer accompanying me: “Kindly inform the government that my wife and I are ready to depart from Norway at the earliest possible moment. However, before applying for a Mexican visa I should like to make arrangements for a safe voyage. I must consult my friends—the deputy Konrad Knudsen, the director of the National Theater in Oslo, Haakon Meyer, and the German emigre, Walter Held. With their assistance I shall be able to secure an escort, and to assure the safety of my archives.” The minister of justice, who arrived on the following day in Sundby, chaperoned by three of the highest police officials, was obviously staggered by the extremism of my requests. “Even in czarist jails,” I told him, “the exiles were allowed to see their relatives or friends in order to arrange their personal affairs.”

“Yes, yes,” replied the minister of justice philosophically, “but times have changed . . .” He refrained, however, from specifying in greater detail the difference between the times.

On December 18, the minister once again made his appearance, but only to announce that I had been refused the visits, that the Mexican visa had been obtained without my participation (how this was done remains a mystery to this day); and that tomorrow my wife and I would be deposited on the freighter Ruth, on which
we would have the ship's infirmary. I will not conceal that when we parted I did not give the minister my hand. . . . It would be unfair not to mention that the government was able to pursue its course only by directly violating the judgment and the conscience of the party. And they thus came in conflict with the liberal or merely conscientious representatives of the administration and the magistracy, and found themselves compelled to rely upon the most reactionary section of the bureaucracy. At all events, the police ardor of [Norwegian Prime Minister] Nygaardsvold did not arouse any enthusiasm among the workers. I take the opportunity here to mention with respect and gratitude the efforts of such worthy activists in the labor movement as Olav Scheflo, Konrad Knudsen, Haakon Meyer, to effect a change in the government's policy.22 I cannot but take this occasion to mention once again the name of Helge Krog who found words of passionate indignation to stigmatize the conduct of the Norwegian authorities.

In addition to a night of anxiety, we had only a few hours in which to pack our belongings and books. Not one of our numerous migrations ever took place in such an atmosphere of feverish haste, such feeling of utter isolation, uncertainty, and suppressed indignation. Amid the helter-skelter, my wife and I would exchange glances from time to time. What does it all mean? What lies behind it? And each of us would rush off again with a bundle of our possessions or a packet of papers. “Mightn't it be a trap on the part of the government?” my wife asked. “I hardly think so,” I replied with none too great assurance. On the veranda policemen, with pipes clenched in their teeth, were nailing down the book crates. Over the fjord, the fog was gathering.

Our departure was surrounded with the greatest secrecy. In order to divert attention from the impending journey a false dispatch was issued to the papers to the effect that we were shortly to be transferred elsewhere. The government was also afraid that I would refuse to depart and that the GPU would succeed in planting an explosive device on the ship. My wife and I could by no means consider the latter fear as unfounded. Our own security coincided in this instance with the security of the Norwegian vessel and its crew.

On board the Ruth we were met with curiosity but without the slightest animosity. The elderly shipowner arrived. On his polite initiative we were assigned not to the semi-dark infirmary with its three cots and no table, as had been for some unknown reason ordained by the ever-vigilant government, but to a comfortable
cabin belonging to the shipowner himself, which adjoined the captain’s quarters. Thus I obtained the possibility of working during the voyage. . . .

All this notwithstanding, we carried away with us warm remembrances of the marvelous land of forests and fjords, of the snow beneath the January sun, of skis and sleighs, of children with china-blue eyes, corn-colored hair, and of the slightly morose and slow-moving but serious and honest people. Norway, good-bye!
A SIGNIFICANT EPISODE

December 30, 1936

The greater part of the journey lies behind. The captain surmises that we will be in Vera Cruz on January 8, provided the ocean does not deprive us of its benignity. The 8th or the 10th, does it really matter? Aboard the ship, all is tranquil. There are no Moscow cables, and the air seems doubly pure. We are in no hurry. But it is time to return to the trial. . . .

It is astounding how persistent Zinoviev was, as he pulled Kamenev along, in preparing his own tragic finale over a number of years. If not for Zinoviev’s initiative, Stalin would have hardly become the general secretary of the party. Zinoviev was bent on utilizing the episodic trade union discussion in the winter of 1920-21 for a further struggle against me. Stalin appeared to him—and not without foundation—the man most suitable for the behind-the-scenes work. It was during these very days that Lenin, objecting to the appointment of Stalin as general secretary, made his famous remark: “I do not advise it—this cook will prepare only spicy dishes.” What prophetic words! However, the Petrograd delegation, led by Zinoviev, won out at the party congress. The victory came all the more easily since Lenin did not give battle. He himself did not wish to invest his warning with any exaggerated meaning. So long as the old Political Bureau remained in power, the general secretary could remain only a subordinate personage.

After Lenin’s attack of illness, the very same Zinoviev took the initiative in launching an open struggle against me. He calculated that the cumbersome Stalin would remain his chief-of-staff. In those days the general secretary picked his way very cautiously. The masses did not know him at all. He had authority only among a section of the party apparatus, but even there he was not loved. In 1924, Stalin vacillated sharply. Zinoviev prodded him on. Stalin needed Zinoviev and Kamenev as a political cover for his behind-the-scenes work. This provided the basis for the mechanism of the “triumvirate.” It was precisely Zinoviev who
was the most active. He carried his future hangman in tow behind him.

In 1926 when Zinoviev and Kamenev, after upwards of three years of conspiring jointly with Stalin against me, went over to the opposition to the apparatus, they imparted to me a number of very instructive tidings and admonitions.

“Do you think,” said Kamenev, “that Stalin is now busy thinking how best to refute your criticism? You are mistaken. He is thinking of how best to destroy you. . . . First morally, and then, if possible, also physically. By covering you with slander, by organizing a provocation, by laying a military conspiracy at your door, by staging a terrorist act. Believe me, this is not guesswork. In our triumvirate we had many occasions to be frank with one another, although even at that time our personal relations more than once verged upon an explosion. Stalin wages a struggle on a totally different plane from yours. You don’t know this Asiatic. . . .”

Kamenev himself knew Stalin very well. Both of them began their revolutionary work in the Caucasian organization, in their youth, at the turn of the century; they were together in exile; they returned to Petrograd in March 1917, and together they gave to the central organ of the party the opportunist orientation which it retained until Lenin’s arrival.

“Do you recall the arrest of Sultan-Galev, the former chairman of the Tatar People’s Commissariat, in 1923?” continued Kamenev. “That was the first arrest of a prominent party member, carried out on Stalin’s initiative. Zinoviev and I unfortunately assented to it. Since that time Stalin has behaved as if he had tasted blood. . . . The moment we broke with him, we drew up something in the nature of a testament, warning that in the event of our ‘accidental’ deaths, the one person responsible for it would be Stalin. This document is being kept in a safe place. I advise you to do the same thing. You can expect anything from this Asiatic. . . .”

In the first weeks of our short-lived bloc (1926-27) Zinoviev said to me: “Do you think that Stalin hasn’t weighed the question of eliminating you physically? He has, and on more than one occasion. He was deterred by one and only one consideration: namely, that the youth would place the responsibility upon the ‘triumvirate’ or upon him personally, and resort to terrorist acts. Stalin therefore considered it necessary to crush the cadres of the opposition youth beforehand. And then, you know, we shall
see. ... He hates us, and especially Kamenev, because we know too much about him.”

Let me skip an interval of five years. On October 31, 1931, the central organ of the German Communist Party, Rote Fahne, carried a dispatch to the effect that the White Guard general Turkul was planning to assassinate Trotsky in Turkey. Such information could have emanated only from the GPU. Inasmuch as I had been banished to Turkey by Stalin, the warning by Rote Fahne looked very much like an attempt to provide Stalin with a moral alibi in the event that Turkul’s designs were carried to a successful conclusion.26 On January 4, 1932, I addressed a letter to the Political Bureau in Moscow. The substance of my letter was that Stalin would not succeed in whitewashing himself with such cheap measures: The GPU, through its agents provocateurs, was quite capable on the one hand of spurring on White Guards to a terrorist attempt, while on the other hand exposing them through the organs of the Comintern.

I wrote: “Stalin has come to the conclusion that it was a mistake to have exiled Trotsky from the Soviet Union. He had hoped, as is known from his statement in the Politburo at that time—which is on record—that Trotsky, deprived of a ‘secretariat,’ and without resources, would become a helpless victim of the worldwide bureaucratic slander campaign. This apparatus man miscalculated. Contrary to his expectations it turned out that ideas have a power of their own, even without an apparatus and without resources. ... Stalin understands perfectly well what a grave danger the ideological irreconcilability and persistent growth of the International Left Opposition represents to him personally, to his fake ‘authority,’ to his Bonapartist almightiness.

“It is Stalin’s conception that the mistake needs rectification” [“A Letter to the Politburo,” in Writings 1932]. To be sure, not by any ideological measures: Stalin conducts a struggle on a totally different plane. He seeks to strike not at the ideas of his opponent, but at his skull.

Even in 1924, Stalin was weighing in his mind the arguments pro and con on the question of my physical liquidation. I wrote: “There came the time that I was informed about this by Zinoviev and Kamenev, when they had come over to the Opposition; moreover, the circumstances were such and the details provided were such as to dispel any doubts whatsoever about the veracity of the report. ... If Stalin should now force Zinoviev and
Kamenev to renounce their testimony of that time, no one will be taken in" (emphasis added). Even at that time the system of false confessions and of made-to-order denials was flowering luxuriously in Moscow.

Ten days after I posted my letter in Turkey, a delegation of my French cothinkers, headed by Naville and Frank, addressed to the then Soviet ambassador in Paris, Dovgalevsky, a written declaration:27 “Rote Fahne has published a report about the preparation of an attempt against Trotsky: Thereby the Soviet government itself confirms formally that it is aware of the dangers that threaten Trotsky.” And inasmuch as the plan of General Turkul, according to the same semiofficial communication, “is based upon the fact that Trotsky is poorly protected by the Turkish authorities,” the Naville-Frank declaration placed the responsibility for any consequences upon the Soviet government in advance and demanded that it take immediate practical measures.

These steps alarmed Moscow. On March 2 the Central Committee of the French Communist Party circulated among the most responsible activists, as a confidential document, the reply of the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party of the USSR. Stalin not only did not deny that the communication in Rote Fahne emanated from him but claimed credit for this warning as a special service and accused me of . . . ingratitude. Without saying anything essential on the question of my security, the circular letter asserted that by my attacks upon the Central Committee I was preparing my “alliance with the social fascists” (that is, with the Social Democrats).28 Stalin did not think fit at the time to accuse me of an alliance with fascism, nor did he foresee as yet his own alliance with the “social fascists.”

To Stalin’s reply there was appended a denial by Kamenev and Zinoviev, dated February 13, 1932, and written, as the denial itself incautiously states, upon the demand of Yaroslavsky and Shkiryatov, members of the Central Control Commission and the then Inquisitors-in-Chief in the struggle against the Opposition.29 In a style customary for such documents, Kamenev and Zinoviev wrote that Trotsky’s communication was “an unconscionable lie, whose sole aim is to compromise our party. . . . It goes without saying that there could be no talk of even discussing such a question. . . . And we never said anything of the kind to Trotsky.” The denial ended upon a still shriller note: “The declaration of Trotsky alleging that we could be forced to make false
statements in a party of Bolsheviks is in itself a notorious dodge of a blackmailer.”

This entire episode, which at first glance appears to be far removed from the trial itself, is, however, if observed more closely, of exceptional interest. According to the indictment, I had conveyed, as far back as May 1931 and then in 1932 to Smirnov, through my son Leon Sedov and through Georgi Gaven, the following instruction: To proceed to a terrorist struggle and to conclude a bloc with the Zinovievites on this basis. All my “instructions,” as we shall observe more than once, were straightaway fulfilled by the capitulators, that is, by people who had long ago broken with me and were conducting an open struggle against me.

According to the official version, the capitulation of Zinoviev-Kamenev and the others was merely a military ruse, for the purpose of gaining entry into the sanctuary of the bureaucracy. If we accept for a moment this version, which, as we shall presently see, falls to pieces in the light of several hundred facts, then my letter to the Political Bureau of January 1932 becomes an enigma absolutely not to be grasped by the mind. If in 1931-32 I was really directing an organization of a “terrorist bloc” with Zinoviev and Kamenev, naturally I should not have compromised my allies so irremediably in the eyes of the bureaucracy. The crude denial of Zinoviev-Kamenev, intended to deceive the uninitiated, could not of course have fooled Stalin for a moment. He, in any case, was aware that his former allies had told me the naked truth. This single fact would have been more than sufficient in itself to have deprived Zinoviev and Kamenev forever of the slightest possibility of restoring themselves to the confidence of the rulers. What, then, remains of the “military ruse”? I must have lost my senses to have undermined in this manner the chances of the “terrorist center.”

In turn, the denial of Kamenev and Zinoviev, by its content and tone alike, testifies to anything you please except collaboration. Furthermore, this document does not stand alone. We shall presently see, especially in the case of Radek, that the chief function of the capitulators consisted, year in and year out, from month to month, in defaming and denigrating me in the eyes of Soviet and world public opinion. It remains perfectly incomprehensible how these people could have hoped to achieve victory under the guidance of a leader discredited by themselves. Here the “military ruse” clearly turns into its own opposite.
The denial of Zinoviev-Kamenev of February 13, 1932, sent out to all the sections of the Comintern, represents, in its very essence, one of the countless rough drafts of their future depositions of August 1936: the very same foul invective against me as the opponent of Bolshevism and especially the enemy of "Comrade Stalin"; the very same reference to my urge to serve the "counterrevolution"; and finally the very same vows that they, Zinoviev and Kamenev, are giving testimony out of goodwill, free from any kind of compulsion. Of course, of course! And could it have been otherwise? Only "blackmailers" can allow even the possibility of constraint in Stalin's "democracy." The very excesses of style unmistakably testify to the source of inspiration.

Truly, a precious document! It not only cuts the ground from under the fiction of a Trotskyite-Zinovievite center in 1932, but it also enables us in passing to peer into that laboratory where the future trials with their made-to-order recantations were prepared.
December 31, 1936

The year that is now ending will go down in history as the year of Cain.

In view of the warnings by Zinoviev and Kamenev about Stalin's secret schemes and designs, the question may be asked whether intentions of the very same kind did not arise in their minds in relation to Stalin after they found themselves cut off from all other means of combat. Both of them made no few turns and squandered no few principles in the last period of their lives. In that case why can't we grant the possibility that, despairing of the consequences of their own capitulations, they really did at a certain moment make a frantic turn toward terror? Later, as part of their final capitulation, they might have consented to meet the GPU halfway and to entangle me in their ill-starred designs, as a service to themselves and to the regime with which they once again sought to make peace.

This hypothesis has entered the minds of some of my friends. I have weighed it from all sides, without the slightest proconceptions or considerations of personal interest. And each time I came to the conclusion that it was utterly unfounded.

Zinoviev and Kamenev are two profoundly different types. Zinoviev is an agitator, Kamenev a propagandist. Zinoviev was guided in the main by a subtle political instinct. Kamenev was given to reasoning and analyzing. Zinoviev was always inclined to fly off at a tangent. Kamenev, on the contrary, erred on the side of excessive caution. Zinoviev was entirely absorbed by politics, cultivating no other interests and appetites. In Kamenev there sat a sybarite and an esthete. Zinoviev was vindictive. Kamenev was good nature personified. I do not know what their mutual relations were in emigration. In 1917 they were brought close together for a time by their opposition to the October Revolution. In the first few years after the victory, Kamenev's attitude toward Zinoviev was rather ironical. They were subsequently drawn together by their opposition to me and, later, to
Stalin. Throughout the last thirteen years of their lives, they marched side by side and their names were always mentioned together.

Despite all their individual differences, and in addition to their common schooling in emigration under Lenin's guidance, they were endowed with almost an identical range of intellect and will. Kamenev's analytical capacity served to complement Zinoviev's feel for a situation; and jointly they would explore for a common decision. The more cautious Kamenev would sometimes allow Zinoviev to carry him along farther than he himself wanted to go, but in the long run they found themselves side by side along the same line of retreat. In the stature of their personalities they were peers, and they supplemented each other by their dissimilarities. Both of them were deeply and unreservedly devoted to the cause of socialism. Such is the explanation for their tragic union.

There are no compelling reasons for me to take upon myself any political or moral responsibility for Zinoviev and Kamenev. Discounting a brief interval—1926-27—they were always my bitter adversaries. Personally, I did not place much trust in them. Each of them, to be sure, was Stalin's intellectual superior. But they lacked sufficient character. Lenin had precisely this trait in mind when he wrote in his "testament" that it was "no accident" that Zinoviev and Kamenev were opponents of the insurrection in the autumn of 1917.\(^3\)\(^3\) They failed to withstand the pressure of bourgeois public opinion. When deep-going social shifts in the Soviet Union began to crystallize, combined with the formation of a privileged bureaucracy, it was "no accident" that Zinoviev and Kamenev allowed themselves to be swept away into the camp of Thermidor (1922-26).\(^3\)\(^4\)

They far excelled their then allies, including Stalin, in their theoretical understanding of the processes taking place. Herein lies the explanation of their attempt to break with the bureaucracy and to oppose it. In July 1926 at the plenum of the Central Committee, Zinoviev declared that "on the question of apparatus-bureaucratic repression Trotsky was correct as against us." Zinoviev, at that time, acknowledged that his mistake in waging a struggle against me was even "more dangerous" than his mistake in 1917! However, the pressure of the privileged stratum reached overwhelming proportions. It was "no accident" that Zinoviev and Kamenev capitulated to Stalin at the end of 1927 and carried with them those who were younger and less authoritative. Thereafter they expended no little effort in denouncing the Opposition.
But in 1930-32, when the country's entire organism was convulsed by the frightful consequences of the forced and unbridled collectivization, Zinoviev and Kamenev, like so many other capitulators, anxiously lifted their heads and began discussing in whispers among themselves the dangers of the government's new policy. They were caught reading a critical document which had originated in the ranks of the Right Opposition. For this terrible crime they were expelled from the party—no other charge was brought against them!—and, to top it off, were exiled. In 1933, Zinoviev and Kamenev not only recanted once again but prostrated themselves before Stalin. No slander was too vile for them to cast against the Opposition and especially against me personally. Their self-disarmament rendered them completely helpless before the bureaucracy, which could henceforth demand of them any confession whatever. Their subsequent fate was a result of these progressive capitulations and self-abasements.

Yes, they lacked sufficient character. These words, however, should not be taken too simplistically. The strength of any material is measured in terms of the forces operating on it and tending to destroy it. Between the beginning of the trial and my internment I had occasion to hear tranquil petty-bourgeois people complain to me: “It's impossible to understand Zinoviev. He is so lacking in character!” And my reply to them was: “Have you yourselves experienced the full weight of the pressure to which he has been subjected for a number of years?” [See “Comments on Defense Efforts,” October 3, 1936, in *Writings* 35-36.] Unintelligent in the extreme are the comparisons, so widespread in intellectual circles, with the conduct in court of Danton, Robespierre, and others. Those were cases of revolutionary tribunes who came directly from the combat arena to face the knife of justice, still at the height of their powers, with their nerves almost unaffected, and—at the same time—without the slightest hope of survival after the trial.

Even more inappropriate are comparisons with Dimitrov's conduct in the Leipzig trial. To be sure, compared to Torgler, Dimitrov made a favorable showing by his resoluteness and courage. But revolutionists in various lands and especially in czarist Russia have shown no less firmness under incomparably more difficult conditions. Dimitrov was facing the most vicious class enemy. There was no evidence against him, nor could there have been. The state apparatus of the Nazis was still in its
formative stages, and not adapted to totalitarian frame-ups. Dimitrov had the support of the gigantic apparatus of the Soviet state and the Comintern. From all the corners of the earth the sympathies of the popular masses went out to him. His friends were present at the trial. To become a “hero” one need only have had ordinary human courage.

But was this the situation of Zinoviev and Kamenev when they faced the GPU and the court? For ten years they had been enveloped by clouds of slander paid for in heavy gold. For ten years they had been suspended between life and death, first in a political sense, then in a moral sense, and lastly in a physical sense. Can one find in all past history examples of such systematic, refined, and fiendish destructive work upon the spines and nerves, upon all the elements of the human spirit? Zinoviev or Kamenev would have had more than ample character for a tranquil period. But our epoch of tremendous social and political convulsions demanded an extraordinary firmness of these men, whose abilities had secured them a leading place in the revolution. The disproportion between their abilities and their wills led to tragic results.

The history of my relations with Zinoviev and Kamenev can be traced without difficulty in documents, articles, and books. The *Biulleten Oppozitsii* (1929-36) alone sufficiently defines the abyss which decisively separated us starting from the day of their capitulation. Between us and them there were no ties whatever, no relations, no correspondence, nor even any attempts in this direction—there were none nor could there have been. In my letters and articles, I invariably advised the Oppositionists, in the interests of political and moral self-preservation, to break ruthlessly with the capitulators. Consequently, whatever I am able to say concerning the views and plans of Zinoviev-Kamenev for the last eight years of their lives can in no case be construed as the deposition of a witness. But I have in my possession a sufficient number of documents and facts which are easily verifiable; I am so well acquainted with the participants, their characters, their relations, and the entire background as to be able to state with absolute assurance that the accusation of terrorism against Zinoviev and Kamenev is from beginning to end a contemptible, police-manufactured frame-up, without an iota of truth in it.

The mere reading of the record of the court proceedings confronts every thoughtful person with the following enigma: Who exactly are these extraordinary defendants? Are they old
and experienced politicians, struggling in the name of a definite program and capable of combining the means with the end, or are they victims of an Inquisition, with their conduct determined not by their own reason or will but by the interests of the Inquisitors? Are we dealing with normal people whose psychology is internally consistent and reflected in their words and actions, or with clinical cases who choose the least rational course, and who motivate their choice by the most incongruous arguments?

These questions apply above all to Zinoviev and Kamenev. Just what were their motives—motives that must have been exceedingly powerful—that guided them in their purported terror? At the first trial in January 1935, Zinoviev and Kamenev, while denying their participation in the assassination of Kirov, did acknowledge, by way of compensation, their “moral responsibility” for the terrorist tendencies, and in doing so they cited as the incentive for their oppositional activity their desire “to restore capitalism.” If we had nothing else to go on but this unnatural political “confession,” it would be sufficient to expose the lie of Stalinist justice. And indeed who can believe that Kamenev and Zinoviev were so fanatically set upon restoring the capitalism they had overthrown that they were ready to sacrifice their own as well as other heads to attain this goal? The confession of the defendants in January 1935 so crudely revealed the hand of Stalin behind it that the sensibilities of even the least exacting “friends of the Soviet Union” were jarred.

In the trial of the sixteen (August 1936) the “restoration of capitalism” is completely discarded. The impelling motive to terror is the naked “lust for power.” The indictment rejects one version in favor of another as if it were a question of alternative solutions to a chess problem, with the interchange of solutions made in silence and without any commentaries. Following the state prosecutor, the defendants now repeat that they had no program, but simply were seized by an irresistible desire to capture the commanding heights of the state, regardless of the price. But we should like to ask: Just how could the assassination of the “leaders” have delivered power into the hands of people who had managed through a series of recantations to undermine confidence in themselves, to degrade themselves, to trample themselves into the mud, and thereby forever to deprive themselves of the possibility of playing any leading political role in the future?
If the goal of Zinoviev and Kamenev is incredible, their means are still more irrational. In the most carefully thought-out depositions of Kamenev it is underscored with special insistence that the Opposition had completely isolated itself from the masses, had lost its principles, and was thereby deprived of any hope of gaining influence in the future; and it was precisely for this reason that the Opposition came to the idea of terror. It is not hard to understand how advantageous such a self-characterization is to Stalin: it is his order that is being carried out—that is absolutely self-evident. But while the depositions of Kamenev are suited for the purpose of discrediting the Opposition, they are utterly unsuited for the justification of terror. It is precisely in conditions of political isolation that terrorist struggle signifies swift self-destruction for a revolutionary faction. We Russians are only too well aware of this from the example of Narodnaya Volya (1879-83), as well as from the example of the Social Revolutionaries in the period of reaction (1907-09).39 Zinoviev and Kamenev were not only brought up on these lessons, but they themselves commented innumerable times upon them in the party press. Could they, Old Bolsheviks,40 have forgotten and rejected the ABCs of the Russian revolutionary movement only because they wanted power so very much? To believe this is utterly impossible.

Let us suppose for a moment, however, that it actually occurred to Zinoviev and Kamenev to hope to gain power by a public disavowal of their past, supplemented by a campaign of anonymous terror. (Such a supposition is equivalent in fact to declaring them psychopaths!) In that case, what impulses would have driven those who carried out the terrorist actions, those who inevitably would have had to pay with their own heads for someone else's ideas? A hired killer who acts with the assurance of immunity, given in advance—that is believable. But terrorists without an ideal or a profound faith in their cause, offering themselves up for sacrifice—that is inconceivable. In the trial of the sixteen, the Kirov assassination is portrayed as a small part of a vast plan for the extermination of the whole top layer of rulers. What is presented is systematic terror on an enormous scale. For the direct work of assassination, many dozens, if not hundreds, of fanatical, hardened, self-sacrificing fighters would have been necessary. Such people do not fall from the sky. They have to be picked, trained, organized. They have to be thoroughly imbued with the conviction that the only salvation lies in terror.
Besides the active terrorists, reserves are needed. These can be counted on only if there are broad layers within the young generation inspired with sympathy for terrorism. Only by extensive propaganda in favor of terrorism can such moods be created, and such a propaganda effort would have an especially intense and passionate character, because the entire tradition of Russian Marxism goes against terror. This tradition would have to be broken down, and a new doctrine counterposed to it. If Zinoviev and Kamenev could not have repudiated their entire antiterrorist past without saying a word, even less could they have steered their supporters toward this Golgotha without a critical discussion, without polemics, without conflicts, without splits, and—without denunciations reaching the authorities. Such a drastic ideological rearming, involving hundreds and thousands of revolutionaries, could not have failed, in turn, to leave its traces in innumerable material ways (documents, letters, etc.). Where is all this? Where is the propaganda? Where is the terrorist literature? Where are the echoes of the internal struggles and debates? In the trial materials there is not even a hint of all this.

For Vyshinsky, as for Stalin, the defendants in general do not exist as human personalities. Political psychology is also lost sight of. When one of the accused tried to invoke his “feelings,” which he claimed prevented him from firing at Stalin, Vyshinsky alleged in reply that there were certain physical obstacles: “These . . . are the real reasons, the objective reasons, all the rest is psychology.” “Psychology”! What annihilating contempt! The accused have no psychology; that is, they dare not have any. Their confessions are not the product of normal human motivation. The psychology of the ruling clique, through the mechanism of the Inquisition, totally subordinates the psychology of the defendants to its own devices. The trial is modeled after some tragic puppet show. The accused are manipulated by strings, or, rather, by the ropes around their necks. There is no room for “psychology.”

Nevertheless, without the psychology of terrorism, terrorist action is inconceivable!

Let us for a moment allow the charges in all their absurdity: Driven by their “lust for power,” the capitulator-leaders become terrorists. Hundreds of others are, in turn, so swept up by Zinoviev and Kamenev’s “lust for power” that they, too, obligingly risk their necks. And all this—in alliance with Hitler! The criminal work, invisible, to be sure, to the unwary eye, reaches
unheard-of proportions: the assassination of all the "leaders," universal sabotage, and espionage are organized. And this goes on for not just a day or a month, but almost five years! All under the mask of loyalty to the party! It is impossible to imagine more hard-bitten, cold-blooded, ferocious criminals.

But then what? In late July 1936 these monsters suddenly renounce their past and themselves and pathetically confess one after the other. None of them defend their ideas, aims, or methods of struggle. They vie in denouncing each other and themselves. No evidence is in the prosecutor's hands but the confessions of the accused. Yesterday's terrorists, saboteurs, and fascists now prostrate themselves to Stalin and swear their ardent love for him. What in the world are these fantastic defendants—criminals? psychopaths? a little of both? No, they are the clientele of Vyshinsky and Yagoda. This is what people look like who have gone through the laboratories of the GPU.

There is as much truth in Zinoviev and Kamenev's tales of their past criminal activity as in their protestations of love for Stalin. They died the victims of a totalitarian system that deserves nothing but condemnation!
WHY THEY CONFESSIONS THEY HAD NOT COMMITTED

January 1, 1937

The tanker's two sirens suddenly blared tonight; the alarm gun fired twice; the Ruth was greeting the New Year. No one answered us. During the whole crossing we met, I think, only two ships. We are indeed taking an unaccustomed route. However, the fascist police officer accompanying us received from his Socialist minister, Trygve Lie, a telegram of greetings. All he needed were greetings from Yagoda and Vyshinsky!

My simplest defense against the Moscow accusations would be to say: "For the last ten years, far from bearing the slightest responsibility for them, I denounced Kamenev and Zinoviev as traitors. Have these capitulators, deceived in their hopes and lost in their intrigues, have they really gone over to terrorism? I cannot know. What is certain is that they wanted to buy clemency for themselves by compromising me."

This explanation would be true enough, would contain not one word of a lie; but by giving only half the truth it would be false. Despite my long-since-accomplished break with the accused I can have no doubt for a single moment: the Old Bolsheviks whom I have known for so many long years in the past (Zinoviev, Kamenev, Mrachkovsky) have not committed nor could they have committed the crimes to which they have "confessed."

The uninitiated will find this statement paradoxical or at least superfluous. "Why," they will ask, "make one's own defense more complicated by defending mortal enemies against themselves? Isn't this quixotic?" Not at all. It is necessary, in order to put a stop to the Moscow falsifications, to show the political and psychological mechanism of "voluntary confessions."

In 1931, a trial of Mensheviks was enacted in Moscow, based entirely on the confessions of the accused. I knew two of them personally quite well, the historian Sukhanov and the economist Groman. Although the indictment seemed in places fantastic, it
did not seem to me possible that old politicians whom I considered—despite irreducible differences between our ideas—to be honest and serious men could lie so much about themselves and others. There is no doubt, I said to myself; the GPU has arranged the dossier, has added not a few things—many of them inventions—but there must be some real facts at the bottom of it all. I remember that my son, then living in Berlin, said to me later, in a conversation in France, "The trial of the Mensheviks is a complete falsification."

"But what are we to think of the statements of Sukhanov and Groman?" I answered. "After all, they aren't venal careerists, not worthless people!" By way of explanation, if not excuse, I add that for a long time I had not followed the Menshevik publications; that since 1927 I had lived outside of all political circles (in Central Asia and in Turkey); and I was completely lacking in living contacts. The mistaken judgment I made was not the result, in any case, of my confidence in the GPU (since I knew from 1931 on that this degenerate institution was no more than a band of wretches), but of the confidence I had in certain of the accused. I underestimated the progress made in the techniques of demoralization and corruption; and I overestimated the capacity for moral resistance of certain victims of the GPU. Later revelations and the trials that followed them, with their ritual confessions, lifted the veil on the secrets of the Inquisition, at least for people capable of thinking, long before the Zinoviev-Kamenev trial. I wrote in May 1936 in the Biulleten Oppozitsii:

"The whole series of public political trials in the USSR has shown how readily some of the accused inculpate themselves in crimes which they clearly had not committed. Those accused who seem, in court, to be playing a part learned by heart get off with light, sometimes deliberately fake, punishments. It is precisely in exchange for this indulgence by the law that they made their 'confessions.' But why are fictitious conspiracies necessary to the authorities? Sometimes in order to implicate a third party, known not to be involved in the matter; sometimes so as to cover up their own crimes, such as bloody repressions unjustified by anything; or finally, to create a climate favorable to the Bonapartist dictatorship.\(^{46}\) . . . Forcing fantastic testimony from the accused against themselves so as to hit others on the rebound has long been the system of the GPU, that is to say, the system of Stalin" ["The Spiciest Dishes Are Still to Come," in Writings 35-36]. These lines appeared three months before the Zinoviev-Kamenev
trial (which took place in August 1936), in which I was named for the first time as the organizer of a terrorist conspiracy.

All the accused whose names are known to me belonged in the past to the Opposition; then, terrified by the idea of a split or intimidated by persecutions, they tried to have themselves reintegrated into the party, at any price. The leading clique demanded from them that they announce that their program was erroneous. Not one of them believed it; on the contrary, they were all convinced that events had shown the correctness of the views of the Opposition. Nevertheless, at the end of 1927, they signed a declaration in which they accused themselves falsely of "deviations" and of "errors," grave sins against the party; at the same time they lauded the new chiefs for whom they had not the least esteem. Here we already have in embryo the confessions of the trials to come.

The first capitulation was to be only the beginning. The regime became increasingly totalitarian, the struggle against the Opposition fiercer, the accusations increasingly monstrous. The bureaucracy could not permit political discussion, for its privileges were involved. To put its opponents into prison, deport or shoot them, it was no longer sufficient to charge them with political "deviations." It was necessary to charge the Opposition with the desire to split the party, disorganize the army, overthrow the Soviet power, and restore capitalism. To give some force to these accusations before the people, the bureaucracy unceasingly exhibited ex-Oppositionists as both accused and witnesses. The capitulators gradually became professional false witnesses against the Opposition and against themselves. Invariably my name figured in all the denunciations, as the "main enemy" of the USSR, that is, of the Soviet bureaucracy; without it a denunciation was not acceptable. First it was my Social Democratic deviations; then they went on to speak of the counterrevolutionary consequences of my policy; then of my alliance de facto if not de jure with the bourgeoisie against the USSR, etc., etc. The capitulator who tried to resist these demands heard this reply, "So your previous declarations were insincere; so you are, in secret, an enemy." The successive denunciations became a ball riveted to the feet of the capitulator, and this ball was to drown him. . . . (See The Revolution Betrayed, remembering that this book was written before the trial of the sixteen.)

With the onset of political difficulties, ex-Oppositionists were arrested and deported on pretexts that were insignificant or
fictitious; it was a question of wearing out their nerves, of killing their sense of dignity, of breaking their will. After each sentence, there could be no amnesty except at the price of increased humiliation. They had to declare publicly, "I admit to having deceived the party, to having been dishonest toward the state, to having in reality been an agent of the bourgeoisie; I break definitively with the counterrevolutionary Trotskyists..." etc.

In this way, step by step, the "education"—that is, the demoralization—of tens of thousands of party members was accomplished—and also that of the entire party, accusers as well as accused.

Kirov's assassination brought the party's conscience to an unheard-of degree of decomposition. After many contradictory and lying official communiques, the bureaucracy had to be content with a half-measure, the confession agreed to by Zinoviev and Kamenev that a "moral responsibility" lay on them for this terrorist act. This confession was obtained by way of the following simple argument: "By not helping us to lay on the Opposition at least the moral responsibility for the terrorist acts, you show your sympathy for terrorism and we shall treat you accordingly."

At each new stage in the capitulation, the victims kept finding themselves faced with the same alternatives: either reject all the preceding denunciations and engage in a hopeless struggle with the bureaucracy—without a banner, without an organization, without any personal authority—or sink one step lower again, by accusing themselves and others of new infamies. This was the progress into the depths! It was possible, by determining its approximate coefficient, to foresee accurately the denunciations of the subsequent stage. I did it many times in the press.

The GPU has many complementary resources for achieving its ends. The revolutionaries did not all give proof of equal firmness in the czarist prisons: some repented; others betrayed; a third lot sought clemency. The archives of the past have been studied and classified. The most important dossiers are preserved in Stalin's secretariat. Sometimes it is enough to pull out a single paper to plunge some high functionary into the abyss....

Other bureaucrats—they can be counted in the hundreds—were to be found among the Whites at the time of the October Revolution and the civil war. The present-day flower of Soviet diplomacy falls into this category: Troyanovsky, Maisky, Khinchuk, and Surits. The flower of journalism too: Koltsov, Zaslavsky, and many others. The redoubtable prosecutor Vy-
shinsky, Stalin's right-hand man, falls into this category. The young generation knows nothing about it; the old pretends to have forgotten. It would be sufficient to evoke aloud Troyanovsky's past for that diplomat's reputation to vanish. Stalin has long been able to demand from Troyanovsky all the declarations, all the testimony he needs; the Troyanovskys can refuse him nothing.

The denunciation of some prominent person is normally preceded by false testimonies obtained from scores of people belonging to his entourage. The GPU begins by arresting the secretaries, the stenographers, and the typists of the person they are aiming at, and then promises them liberty, even privileges, in return for depositions that will compromise their patrons of yesterday. Back in 1924, the GPU drove my secretary Glazman to suicide. In 1928, the head of my secretariat, the engineer Butov, replied with a hunger strike to the efforts made to draw from him lying testimonies against me: he died in prison, on the fiftieth day of his fast. Two of my other collaborators, Sermuks and Poznansky, have been in prison and deportation since 1929.48 I do not know what has become of them. Not all secretaries have their courage. The majority have allowed themselves to become demoralized by the capitulations of their patrons and by the corrupting atmosphere of the regime. To draw from a Smirnov or a Mrachkovsky false confessions, the GPU used (false) denunciations first from their close and distant collaborators, then from their former closest friends. The designated victim finds himself at the finish so enmeshed in a network of false testimony that all resistance seems to him useless.

The GPU maintains attentive surveillance over the private lives of the top functionaries. Wives are often arrested before their husbands, the future accused, are attacked. Generally, they do not take part in the trials, but they help the instructing magistrates, at the preliminary examination, to break the resistance of their husbands. It sometimes happens that one of the prisoners takes the road of "confession" through fear of intimate revelations that would compromise him in the eyes of his wife and children. We can find traces of these games behind the scenes in the official verbatim reports.

An abundance of human material is supplied for the juridical amalgams by the large category of bad administrators, responsible truly or falsely for the economic setbacks, or imprudent in the management of state funds. The frontier between the licit and the
illicit in the USSR is very indistinct. Besides their official salary, the administrators receive extras which are unofficial and semi-legal. In normal times, no one thinks of reproaching them for it. But this always gives the GPU the possibility of placing its victim at any time before the alternatives: go to his death for abuse or theft of state funds, or take a last chance for safety by acting as if he were an Oppositionist who was dragged by Trotsky onto the road to treason.

Doctor Ciliga, a Yugoslav communist who spent five years in Stalin's prisons, tells that resisters were taken many times a day into the courtyards where the executions took place, then were led back to their cells. The process worked. No hot irons were used. Probably no special medicines were used. The effect of this kind of walk on morale is enough.

Simple people ask, "Isn't Stalin afraid his victims will denounce the falsifications to the audience?" The risk is negligible. The majority of the accused tremble not only for themselves but also for their closest ones. It is not easy to decide what the effect will be on an audience when one has a wife, a son, a daughter in the hands of the GPU. Besides, how can one denounce the falsification? There was no physical torture. The confessions "freely given" by each of the accused only continue his preceding denunciations. How can one make the audience and the whole of mankind believe that one has done nothing but calumniate oneself for ten years?

Smirnov tried to denounce to the audience the "confessions" to which he had agreed at the preliminary examination. Immediately, his wife's testimony was brought against him with his own depositions and the affirmations of all the other accused. Take into account, too, the hostility in the hall. Telegrams and reports from compliant journalists give the impression of a "public debate." In reality, the hall is crowded with GPU agents who begin to laugh at the most dramatic moments and applaud the grossest interjections of the prosecutor. The strangers? They are indifferent diplomats, ignorant of Russian, or journalists of the type of Duranty, who have come with ready-made opinions. A French correspondent has shown us Zinoviev looking avidly at the audience and, not seeing one sympathetic face among them, dropping his head in resignation. Add that the stenographers belong to the GPU, the president of the court can interrupt the session at any time, the agents who form the audience raise a din. Everything has been foreseen. The parts have been studied. The
accused, who, at the preliminary examination, had resigned himself to his dishonorable task, sees no reason to change his attitude in public session; it would only mean losing his last chance for safety.

Safety? Zinoviev and Kamenev, in the opinion of Messrs. Pritt and Rosenmark, could not have hoped to save their lives by confessing to crimes they had not committed. And why not? The accused in many previous trials had saved their lives by lying self-accusations. The majority of people who, in all the countries of the world, had followed the Moscow trials, hoped for clemency for the accused. The same in the USSR. The *Daily Herald*, the organ of the party whose parliamentary group is honored with the presence of Mr. Pritt [British Labour Party], on this point gives us testimony of the most interesting kind. On the morrow of the execution of the sixteen, this paper wrote, “Up to the last moment the sixteen men shot today had hoped for clemency. . . . It had been widely supposed that a special decree passed only five days ago, giving them the right to appeal, had been issued in order to spare them.” So, even in Moscow, there was hope right up to the last moment. The leaders entertained and nourished these hopes. Those present tell that the condemned men received the death sentences calmly, as if it was self-evident; they understood that this alone gave substance to their theatrical confessions. They did not understand—rather, they made every effort not to understand—that execution alone gave substance to the death sentence. Kamenev, the calmest among them, seemed to have had deep doubts as to the outcome of all this unequal bargaining. He also must have asked himself a hundred times, “Will Stalin dare?” Stalin dared.

In the first months of 1923, Lenin, ill, thought of undertaking a decisive struggle against Stalin. He feared I was inclined to yield, and warned me on March 5: “Stalin will make a rotten compromise and then will betray.” This formula defines marvelously Stalin’s political methodology, particularly with regard to the sixteen. The compromise he made with them through the pleadings of the examining magistrate, the betrayal—with the help of the executioner.

The accused knew his methods. At the beginning of 1926, when Zinoviev and Kamenev publicly broke with Stalin, it was discussed in the Left Opposition with which of the two groups a bloc could be made. Mrachkovsky, one of the heroes of the civil war,
said, “With neither: Zinoviev will run away; Stalin will betray.” Winged words! Zinoviev became our ally and indeed soon ran away. Mrachkovsky did the same, like many another. These “fugitives” tried to rally to Stalin; he agreed to a “rotten compromise” with them, and then betrayed them. The accused drank the cup of humiliation to the dregs. Then they were struck down.

There is nothing complicated, as can be seen, in this mechanism. It needs only a totalitarian regime: that is, the suppression of all freedom to criticize; the subjection of the accused to the military; examining magistrates, a prosecutor and judge in one; a monolithic press whose howlings terrorize the accused and hypnotize public opinion.
Jan. 3, 1937

If we are to believe Vyshinsky (August 1936), the "unified center" had no program whatsoever. It was motivated only by "the naked thirst for power." Of course, I felt this thirst more than others. The people on the payroll of the Communist International and some bourgeois journalists have elaborated this theme of my ambition on many occasions. These gentlemen sought the explanation of my—unexpected—terrorist activity in my impatient desire to seize control of the state. The explanation "thirst for power" fits rather well into the narrow head of the average philistine.

When, at the beginning of 1926, the "new opposition" (Zinoviev-Kamenev) engaged in conversations with my friends and me on common action, Kamenev said to me during the first talk we had together, "The bloc can be realized, it goes without saying, only if you intend to fight for power. We have often wondered whether you were tired and have decided to limit yourself from now on to criticism by writing without undertaking this fight." At that time, Zinoviev, the great agitator, and Kamenev, the "knowledgeable politician," to quote Lenin, were still completely under the illusion that it would be easy for them to win back the power. "As soon as you appear on the platform by Zinoviev's side," said Kamenev to me, "the party will declare, 'There is the Central Committee! There is the government!' The question is, are you prepared to form a government?"

After three years of oppositional struggle (1923-26), I in no way shared these optimistic hopes. Our group ("Trotskyist") already had a rather clear idea of the second chapter of the revolution—Thermidor—and of the growing disagreement between the bureaucracy and the people, of the degeneration of the leading stratum to national-conservatism, and of the profound repercussions the defeats of the world proletariat had on the fate of the USSR. The question of power did not pose itself for me in isolation, that is to say, outside of these important internal and international processes. It would be necessary to form new cadres
and await developments. This is what I said in answer to Kamenev: “I feel in no way ‘tired,’ but my opinion is that we should arm ourselves with patience for rather a long time, for a whole historical period. Today, it is not a matter of fighting for power but of preparing the ideological instruments and the organizational methods of the fight while waiting for a fresh revolutionary upsurge. When this will come, I don’t know.”

Readers of my autobiography, my History of the Russian Revolution, my critique of the Third International, or The Revolution Betrayed will find nothing there about this dialogue with Kamenev. I mention it here now only because it throws sufficient light on the stupidity and absurdity of the “intention” ascribed to me by the Moscow falsifiers: to return the revolution to its starting point in October 1917—by shots from a revolver!

Eighteen months of fighting inside the party dealt with the illusions of Zinoviev and Kamenev as they deserved. But they drew a conclusion from this experience diametrically opposed to mine. “If it is not possible,” said Kamenev, “to seize power from the leading group, we can do nothing but submit.” Zinoviev came to the same conclusion after much hesitation. On the eve of the Fifteenth Congress, at which the exclusion of the Opposition was announced—perhaps even during this congress, in December 1927—I had my last conversation with Zinoviev and Kamenev. Each of us had to settle our destinies for many years to come, perhaps for the rest of our lives.

At the end of the session, which had unfolded in restrained terms—really profoundly pathetic ones—Zinoviev said to me, “Vladimir Ilyich (Lenin) warned us in his testament that the Trotsky-Stalin conflict could split the party. Think of the responsibilities you bear!”

“But is our platform correct or not?”

“Now more than ever!” (Zinoviev and Kamenev were to disavow it publicly in a few days.)

“If that is so,” I said, “the very fierceness of the fight of the apparatus against us testifies that these are not temporary disagreements but social contradictions. Lenin also wrote in his testament that if the divergence of views inside the party coincided with class differences, nothing would save us from a split—capitulation less than anything else!”

I remember that after a further exchange, I came back again to the testament in which Lenin had recalled that in 1917 Zinoviev and Kamenev had recoiled from the insurrection “for reasons which were not accidental.”
"The time is as serious today, in a certain sense, and yet you are preparing to commit the same kind of mistake, perhaps the greatest of your lives!"

That was our last conversation. We were never again to exchange one single letter, not one single message after that, either directly or indirectly. In the ten years that followed I never ceased to brand the capitulation of Zinoviev and Kamenev which, while a terrible blow to the Opposition, was to have for Zinoviev and Kamenev themselves infinitely more serious consequences than I could have foreseen at the end of 1927.

On May 26, 1928, I wrote from Alma Ata to my friends: "The party will need us again, more than ever. Not to become impatient by telling ourselves that ‘everything will be done without us,’ not to torment oneself and others unnecessarily; to study, to wait, to be vigilant, and not to allow our political line to be corroded by the rust of personal irritation with the slanderers and curs—that should be our attitude."

It is no exaggeration to say that the thoughts expressed in these lines constitute the essential motif of my activities. From my youth, I learned from Marxism contempt for superficial subjectivism, which finds virtue in prodding history with a pin. I have always seen in mistaken revolutionary impatience the source of opportunism and the bias to adventurism. I have written hundreds of articles against those who "present bills to history before they are due" (May 1909). In March 1931, I quoted with approval the words of my late companion in struggle, Kote Tsintsadze, who died in exile: "Unhappy are they who cannot wait!" I reject the charge of impatience, as well as many other charges. . . . I can wait. In any case, what does the word "wait" mean in the present case? Prepare for the future! Does not all revolutionary activity come down to this?

For the proletarian party, power is the means of social transformation. The revolutionary who does not aspire to put the state's apparatus of repression in the service of his program is worthless. In this connection, the struggle for power is not an end in itself but corresponds to the whole of revolutionary activity: the education and gathering together of the toiling masses. The conquest of power, quite naturally flowing from this activity and in its turn having to serve it, can bring personal satisfaction. But one would have to be quite exceptionally stupid and vulgar to aspire to power for its own sake. Only people who are good for nothing better are capable of that.
I have still to speak about my alleged "hatred" of Stalin. Much was said in the Moscow trial about it, as one of the motives of my politics. On the lips of Vyshinsky, in the editorials of Pravda, and in the organs of the Communist International, digressions on my hatred of Stalin are appended to panegyrics to the "Chief." Stalin is the creator of "the happy life." His defeated opponents can only envy and "hate" him. Profound psychoanalysis from lackeys!

Toward the greedy caste of upstarts which oppresses the people "in the name of socialism" I have nothing but irreducible hostility, hatred if you like. But in this feeling there is nothing personal. I have followed too closely all the stages of the degeneration of the revolution and the almost automatic usurpation of its conquests; I have sought too stubbornly and meticulously the explanation for these phenomena in objective conditions to concentrate my thoughts and feelings on one specific person. My standpoint does not allow me to identify the real stature of the man with the giant shadow it casts on the screen of the bureaucracy. I believe I am right in saying I have never rated Stalin so highly as to be able to hate him.

Excluding one chance meeting, with no conversation, in Vienna in 1911, at Skobelev's home—he was later to become a minister in the Provisional Government—I came to know Stalin only after my arrival in Petrograd, having come from a Canadian concentration camp, in May 1917. For me, at that time, he was only a militant in the Bolshevik headquarters, less remarkable than others. He is not an orator. His writings are colorless. His polemics are crude and vulgar. In the period of massive meetings, imposing demonstrations and struggles, he scarcely existed—in the political sense. At meetings of the Bolshevik leaders he kept in the shadows. His slow thinking did not keep pace with the events. Not only Zinoviev and Kamenev but young Sverdlov and even Sokolnikov took a larger part in the discussions than Stalin,
who spent the whole of 1917 waiting. Historians who later tried to attribute to him in 1917 a quasi-leading role (in a nonexistent "Committee of Insurrection"), are only impudent falsifiers.

After the seizure of power, Stalin became more confident but still kept in the background. I soon noticed that Lenin kept pushing him forward. Without preoccupying myself with the matter, I thought that Lenin was motivated by practical considerations and not by personal sympathy. I came to learn these considerations gradually. Lenin prized in Stalin his firmness of character, tenacity, even his craftiness, as indispensable qualities of a militant. He expected from him neither ideas, nor political initiative, nor creative faculty. I happened during the civil war to ask a member of the Central Committee, Serebriakov, who at that time was working with Stalin in the Revolutionary Military Committee of the Southern Front, whether he could not manage without Stalin for the sake of economizing forces. Serebriakov thought for a moment and replied, "No, I cannot exert pressure like Stalin. It is not my specialty." Lenin prized in Stalin this capacity to "exert pressure." Stalin's confidence increased the stronger the state apparatus—designed to "exert pressure"—grew. Let us add: the more the state sapped the spirit of 1917.

The present-day habit of placing Stalin on the same level as Lenin is completely shameful. In terms of personality, Stalin cannot be compared even with Mussolini or Hitler. However poverty-stricken is fascist ideology, the two victorious leaders of the Italian and German reaction have from the outset shown initiative, roused the masses and struck out on new roads. We cannot say the same of Stalin. He has emerged from the apparatus and is inconceivable without it. He has no other approach to the masses but through the apparatus.

Stalin began to rise above the party only when the worsening of social conditions, in the NEP period, allowed the bureaucracy to rise above society. He was surprised at first by his own elevation. He advanced only hesitantly, with circumspection, always ready to retreat. Zinoviev and Kamenev, and also, to a lesser degree, Rykov, Bukharin and Tomsky, supported and encouraged him as a counterweight to me. No one among them at the time thought that Stalin would throw them over. Inside the "triumvirate," Zinoviev showed himself prudent and protective toward Stalin; Kamenev treated him with irony. I recall that at a Central Committee meeting, Stalin once used the word "rigorist" in a quite improper way (his language is often improper).
Kamenev glanced at me sneeringly, as if to say, "There's nothing to be done; take him as he is." Bukharin's opinion was that Koba—Stalin used this nickname in clandestine activity—"had character" (Lenin used to say of Bukharin that he was "softer than wax") and that "we" needed people of this temper; if he is ignorant and lacks culture, "we" should help him. This idea was the basis of the Stalin-Bukharin bloc formed after the breakup of the triumvirate. Social and personal circumstances thus helped to elevate Stalin.

In 1923 or '24, Ivan Nikitich Smirnov, who was later shot with Zinoviev and Kamenev, objected to me in private conversation: "Stalin a candidate for dictator? But he is completely colorless and insignificant."

"Colorless, yes," I replied, "insignificant, no."

Two years later, I had talks on the same subject with Kamenev, who, despite the evidence, insisted that Stalin was a chief only "on a district scale." In this ironic characterization there was an element of truth, but only an element. Certain aspects of the intellect such as craftiness, perfidy, an aptitude for exploiting the baser instincts of man's nature, are extremely developed in Stalin and, joined to a strong character, give him powerful weapons. Obviously, not in every struggle. The liberation struggle of the masses demands other qualities. But if it is a question of selecting who are to be privileged, of securing their cohesion on a caste-spirit basis, of reducing the masses to impotence and of disciplining them, then Stalin's qualities become truly invaluable and rightly made him the leader of Thermidor.

And yet, all in all, he remains mediocre. He is capable neither of generalization nor of foresight. His intelligence lacks spirit and buoyancy, and is unsuited to thinking logically. Each sentence of his speeches serves a practical end; never does a speech rise to the height of a logical construction. This weakness makes for his strength. There are historical tasks which can be carried out only if one renounces generalizations; there are periods when generalizations and foresight are a bar to immediate success; such are the periods of decline and fall, and reaction. Helvetius once said that every epoch calls forth men of adequate stature, and if it cannot find them, invents them. Marx wrote of General Changarnier, today forgotten, "With the complete absence of great personalites, the party of Order naturally found itself compelled to endow a single individual with the strength lacking in its class as a whole and so puff up this individual to a prodigy" [Class Struggles in
France, 1848-50, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1969]. To finish with quotations, we can apply to Stalin Engels's words on Wellington: "He is great in his own way, as great as one can be without ceasing to be a mediocrity." Individual greatness is by definition a social function.

Had Stalin been able to foresee where the struggle against "Trotksyism" was to lead him, he would undoubtedly have stopped short despite the perspective of defeating his opponents. But he foresaw nothing. The forecasts of his opponents, that he would become the leader of Thermidor, the gravedigger of the party and of the revolution, appeared to him to be flights of the imagination. He believed in the power of the bureaucracy to solve all problems. The lack of creative imagination, the inability to generalize and foresee, have killed the revolutionary in him. These features have allowed him to cover with the authority of an old revolutionary the rise of the Thermidorean bureaucracy.

Stalin has systematically demoralized the apparatus. On the other hand, it stimulated him. The features of his character which allowed him to organize the most abominable juridical frame-ups and legal assassinations in history are part of his nature. But it needed years of totalitarian omnipotence to give them their apocalyptic importance. I have spoken of his craftiness and lack of scruple. In 1922, Lenin put us on guard against the nomination of Stalin for the post of general secretary: "This cook will prepare only spicy dishes for us." In 1923, in intimate conversation with Kamenev and Dzerzhinsky, Stalin confessed to them that his greatest pleasure was to choose his victim, prepare his vengeance, strike, and then go to bed. . . "He is evil," Krestinsky said to me, "he has yellow eyes." The bureaucracy itself did not like him even when it needed him.

The more absolute became the power of the bureaucracy the more sharply defined became the criminal features of Stalin's character. Krupskaya, who in 1926 joined the Opposition for a short period, told me with what deep distrust and sharp hostility Lenin, in the last period of his life, thought of Stalin. His feelings are to be found in his testament in a very restrained form. "Volodya said to me: 'He (Stalin) lacks the most elementary sense of honor.' You understand? The most elementary human decency!" The last letter Lenin dictated broke off all personal and comradely relations with Stalin. One can imagine what bitterness was needed in the sick man to come to that! Authentic "Stalinism" was, however, to be given free rein only after Lenin's death.
"Hatred of Stalin"

No, personal hatred is too narrow, too domestic, too intimate a feeling to have any influence in a historical struggle which immeasurably surpasses all its participants. It goes without saying that Stalin merits the most severe punishment for having been the gravedigger of the revolution and the organizer of unmentionable crimes. But that punishment is not an end in itself and calls for no special measures. It must—and will—be the consequence of the victory of the working class over the bureaucracy. I do not mean by this to diminish Stalin’s personal responsibility. On the contrary, the unexampled extent of his crimes is such that the idea of replying to it by an act of terrorism would not even enter the head of any serious revolutionary. The downfall of Stalinism, as a result of the revolutionary victory of the masses, will alone bring political and moral satisfaction to us. And this downfall is inevitable.

I must add, to finish with “hatred” and “thirst for power,” that despite the great tests of the last years, I am infinitely far from the psychology of “despair” attributed to me by the Soviet press, the Stalinist prosecutors, and the obtuse “Friends of the USSR” abroad. Not for a single day, in thirteen years, have I felt myself broken or defeated. Not for a single day have I ceased to look down on the slander and the slanderers. The school of great historic upheavals has formed and taught me, I believe, to measure events by their internal rhythm and not by the short yardstick of personal fate. I feel nothing but pity tinged with irony for men capable of seeing their lives grow dark because they have lost a ministerial portfolio. The movement I serve has passed through flow and ebb and flow again. At present it is passing through a great retreat. But the objective conditions of world economics and politics imply for it possibilities of prodigious flow which will far surpass all that preceded it. To foresee this future clearly, to prepare for it through all present difficulties, to contribute to the formation of new Marxist cadres—there is nothing for me outside of this task. . . . The reader will excuse me for these personal digressions, necessitated by juridical falsification.
After the episodic defeat of the Petersburg workers in July 1917, the Kerensky government denounced Lenin, Trotsky, and other Bolsheviks (except Stalin, in whom no one was interested at the time) as agents of the German general staff. The accusation rested on the evidence of Ensign Ermolenko, an agent of the Russian counterespionage. The first session of the Bolshevik fraction of the soviet after the “revelation” was dominated by a feeling of pain, stupor, and was almost a nightmare. Lenin and Zinoviev had gone into hiding the day before. Kamenev was arrested. “Nothing can be done,” I said. “The workers have suffered a defeat; the Bolshevik Party has been driven into illegality. The relation of forces has been modified by the blow. Everything foul and obscure is rising to the surface. Ensign Ermolenko is the inspirer of Kerensky, who is scarcely any better than he. We shall have to go through this unexpected stage. But when the masses understand the line linking the slander with the interests of the reaction they will turn to us.” I could not foresee that Joseph Stalin, member of the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party, would repeat the Ermolenko-Kerensky slander after eighteen years!

Not one of the Old Bolsheviks accused confessed to having had “relations” with the Gestapo. However, they did not manage their confessions well. Kamenev, Zinoviev, and the others hesitated to follow the GPU all the way, from the remnants of human dignity combined with common sense. Their dialogues with the prosecutor on the subject of the Gestapo allow us to perceive the bargaining which preceded the investigation. “You want to vilify and eliminate Trotsky?” Kamenev might have said. “We will help you. We are prepared to portray him as the organizer of terrorist attacks. The bourgeoisie doesn’t understand these questions very well, and they are not the only ones. Bolshevism, terrorism, assassinations, thirst for power, thirst for revenge . . . that will be believed. But no one will believe that Trotsky was in alliance...
with Hitler or that we, Kamenev, Zinoviev, Smirnov, were. By going beyond the limits of plausibility we risk compromising even the charge of terrorism which, as you know, does not rest on a granite foundation. Besides, 'relations' with the Gestapo recalls too closely the charges brought against Lenin and Trotsky in 1917.

The arguments we lend here to Kamenev, though convincing enough, did not move Stalin; he did bring in the Gestapo. At first sight, one would think he was blind with resentment; that's perhaps not wrong, but it is too one-sided. Stalin himself had no choice either. The charge of terrorism had not been enough. The bourgeoisie could simply say, "The Bolsheviks are exterminating one another; we can wait for the outcome." As for the workers, a good many could reason in this way: the bureaucracy is monopolizing the wealth and the power; it is stifling all criticism; maybe Trotsky was not wrong in calling for terrorism. The young and ardent, learning that men whose names they knew well pronounce in favor of terrorism, might take this road, about which they knew nothing before. Stalin would have to consider the dangerous consequences of what he is doing. This is why the arguments of Kamenev and the others had no effect on him. He had to drown his opponents in mud. He could imagine for that nothing more suitable than relations with Hitler! The worker who could believe that would be immunized forever against "Trotskyism." The only difficulty is to make him believe it. . . .

The tissue of the trial, even in the elaborate and falsified dress given it by the official report (published in many languages by the Commissariat of Justice), is such a heap of contradictions, anachronisms, and nonsense that a systematic summary of the verbatim report by itself would annihilate the whole charge. This is no accident. The GPU works without control. It fears no challenge, no revelation, nothing unexpected. The complete solidarity of the press is assured to it. The investigating judges rely much more on intimidation than on their own ingenuity. Even as a forgery, the trial is crude, badly mounted and unbelievably stupid at times. One has to add that the all-powerful prosecutor, Vyshinsky, a former provincial Menshevik lawyer, contributes an excess of stupidity to it. . . .

The design is more monstrous than the execution. For example: the fact that the chief witness named against me, the only Old Bolshevik who is alleged to have visited me abroad, Goltsman, had the misfortune to name my son—who has never visited
Copenhagen—as being present at the interview, choosing as the meeting place a Hotel Bristol long gone out of existence—this fact and others like it have a decisive significance in law. But a man gifted with some moral and psychological sense does not stop at these little “mistakes” in a great fraud. The minting of the coin can be more or less successful. But there is no need to examine it closely; it is enough to take the coin in hand to discover its short-weight, or strike it to hear the suspect ring of the “amalgam.”

The charge that I had allied myself with the Gestapo to kill the Stalinist functionary Kirov is so idiotic that it destroys in any upright and sensible observer any desire to analyze the details of Stalin’s counterfeiting.
ON SENDING TERRORISTS INTO THE USSR\textsuperscript{67}

January 6, 1937

Entered the Gulf of Mexico tonight. Water temperature 27 degrees C. The heat in the cabin is stifling. The police officer and the captain are talking on the wireless, making arrangements for my landing (probably at Tampico, not Vera Cruz, as we thought a few days ago).

One of the most shameful chapters in the history of Soviet diplomacy is related to the preparation of the legal frame-ups: what I mean is Litvinov's initiative in the struggle against terrorists.\textsuperscript{68} King Alexander of Yugoslavia and Mr. Barthou were killed on October 9, 1934, in Marseilles. The assassinations had been organized by Croatian and Bulgarian nationalists who were acting in concert with Italy and Hungary. Marxism rejects terrorist methods, but this does not mean that Marxists may proffer a helping hand to the police in order to wipe out "terrorists." Such, however, was Litvinov's attitude in Geneva. While he quoted Marx, he was understood as making this appeal: "Police officers of all countries, unite!" It is impossible, I told my friends, that this infamy should not have a precise purpose. Stalin does not need the League of Nations to get rid of his enemies within Russia. Who is the target of Litvinov's speech? I could not refrain from answering that I was. I did not know what was afoot. But it dawned on me from this moment that some huge frame-up directed against me in this manner or otherwise was being prepared; the international police, inspired by Litvinov, were to help Stalin to reach me.

Today the plot is obvious. Litvinov's attempts to create a holy alliance against "terrorists" coincide with the preparation of the first amalgam around the Kirov affair. Litvinov had received his orders from Stalin \textit{before} Kirov's murder, i.e., in the hectic days when the GPU was preparing the Leningrad attempt, with the intention of involving the Opposition in it. The plot proved too complicated and met with sundry obstacles. Nikolaev shot too
early; the Latvian consul failed to establish a link between the terrorists and me. The international tribunal against terrorism has not been created yet. The scandalous speech of a Soviet diplomat trying hard to unite the world’s police forces against “Trotskyism” is at present the only thing left from the grand design of reaching me through the League of Nations.

The “terrorist week” in Copenhagen (November 1932) is closely linked to the international tribunal idea. If there is an active terrorist center in Moscow, inspired by me from abroad through messengers whom the authorities cannot catch, the possibility of indicting me before the international tribunal remains dubious. It was absolutely necessary to have me send flesh-and-blood terrorists from abroad. This is the reason why young strangers should have visited me in Copenhagen, one Berman and one Fritz David, and why one conversation would be enough to turn them into terrorists, and into Gestapo agents to boot. Sending them into Russia with orders to kill as many leaders as possible in the shortest time, I would, however, have invited them not to get in touch with the Moscow terrorist center... for reasons of illegality: for the safest way to protect the “terrorist” center was, of course, to keep it out of terrorist attempts. ... Goltsman came to see me, still in Copenhagen, to further the same purpose of preparing evidence to be used against me before the League of Nations tribunal; he had the misfortune to meet, in a hotel which had been torn down long ago, my son, who was in Berlin at that time. As for Olberg and the two Luries, Mossei and Nathan, I am supposed to have launched them into terrorist action without having seen them. In truth, the week in Copenhagen does not win any laurels for great imagination for those who invented it. ... But what else could they imagine?

Kamenev asserted insistently before the court that as long as Trotsky was abroad, terrorists would inevitably go on infiltrating into the USSR. A “shrewd politician” up until his complete downfall, Kamenev thus sought to promote Stalin’s chief aim: to make my existence impossible in all capitalist countries. Trotsky abroad—terrorism in the USSR! Kamenev avoided the question of the social circles among which I might recruit my agents. There are two kinds of Russians abroad, though: White emigres and Soviet functionaries. After exiling me to Turkey the GPU attempted, through the sections of the Comintern, to establish relations between foreign “Trotskyists,” especially the Czechs, and the
White emigration. The first articles I published at that time put an end to those schemes. All the groups of White emigres, no matter how hostile they may be toward Stalin, feel infinitely closer to him than to me and do not hide it. As for Soviet circles abroad, they are very narrow in scope, and so closely watched that any organized activity in their midst has to be ruled out. It should be enough to recall that Blumkin was shot for having visited me once, shortly after my arrival in Constantinople; it was my only meeting with a Soviet citizen during my years in exile.72

Who, then, are those five “terrorists” whom I am supposed to have sent to Moscow, and who revealed their intentions at the court hearing only? They are all Jewish intellectuals, born not in the USSR but in the neighboring countries which formerly belonged to the empire (Lithuania, Latvia). Their families fled before the Bolshevik revolution, but the young, thanks to their ability to adapt, to their knowledge of languages, and especially of Russian, succeeded in ensconcing themselves cosily enough in the offices of the Communist International. Coming from the petty bourgeoisie, they have no ties with the working class, no revolutionary experience and no serious theoretical education; these Comintern functionaries, always zealously enforcing the latest directive of the bureaucracy, have become a real plague for the workers’ movement. Some, failing in their careers, have momentarily flirted with the Opposition. I have warned my political friends against those people many times in my articles and letters. And it is precisely those Comintern hacks, right off the bat and without seeing them, to whom I was to have entrusted my most secret terrorist projects and, by the same token, my dealings with the Gestapo. Absurd? But the GPU could not think of any other social layer where I might have recruited “terrorists” abroad. And if I did not send emissaries into the USSR, my part in the plot would have assumed too abstract a character.

One absurdity leads to another: five Jewish intellectuals turn out to be Gestapo agents (Olberg, Berman, David, the two Luries)! It is known that Jewish intellectuals throughout the world, and especially in Germany, have often turned to the Third International, not out of interest in Marxism or communism, but because they sought help against anti-Semitism. That is understandable. But what psychological or political motives could ever bring five Russian Jewish intellectuals to enter the road of terrorism
against Stalin . . . in concert with Hitler? The defendants themselves took great care to evade that enigma. Vyshinsky didn’t show any interest. But it deserves attention. The “thirst for power” was egging me on. Let us admit it. What was egging on those five strangers? They were giving their own heads. Why? For Hitler’s glory?

Besides, Trotsky’s motives are not as clear as Messrs. Rosenmark, Pritt, and other apologists for the Soviet prosecutor pretend to believe. It appears that, out of hate for Stalin, I was doing exactly what Stalin needed most. Since 1927, I had written, not dozens but hundreds of times, that the logic of Bonapartism would induce Stalin to charge the Opposition with a military conspiracy or a terrorist attempt. Since arriving in Constantinople, I had repeated and substantiated those warnings in the press many times. Knowing that Stalin could not do without attempts against his “sacred” person, I was to have set about providing him with them. I was to have chosen occasional and obviously dubious agents; I was to have taken Hitler for an ally, and Jews to collaborate with the Gestapo; so that this collaboration not remain secret—God forbid!—I was to have mentioned it to every Tom, Dick, and Harry. My behavior would have been, in other words, exactly what the imagination of the average GPU provocateur requires!
IN MEXICO

January 9, 1937

In the hot tropical morning our tanker entered the harbor of Tampico. We were still in ignorance of what was awaiting us. Our passports and revolvers remained, as hitherto, in the hands of the fascist policeman, who even in the territorial waters of Mexico maintained the regime established by the “Socialist” government of Norway. I forewarned the policeman and the captain that my wife and I would land voluntarily only if we were met by friends. We had not the slightest grounds for trusting the Norwegian vassals of the GPU in the tropics any more than in the Oslo parallel.

But everything had been safely arranged. Shortly after the tanker halted, a government cutter approached carrying representatives of the local federal authorities, Mexican and foreign journalists, and, most important of all, true and reliable friends. Here were Frida Rivera, wife of the famous artist whom illness had detained in a hospital; Max Shachtman, a Marxist journalist and close cothinker who had previously visited us in Turkey, France, and Norway; and, finally, George Novack, secretary of the American Committee for the Defense of Leon Trotsky. After four months of imprisonment and isolation, this meeting with friends was especially cordial. The Norwegian policeman, who finally handed us our passports and revolvers, looked on with embarrassment at the courteous behavior of the Mexican police chief.

Leaving the tanker, we stepped, not without excitement, onto the soil of the New World. Despite it being the month of January, this soil breathed warmth. The oil derricks of Tampico reminded us of Baku. At the hotel, we immediately felt our ignorance of the Spanish language. At 10 o’clock in the evening we left Tampico for the capital in a special train provided by the minister of communications, General Mujica.

The contrast between northern Norway and tropical Mexico was felt not only in the climate. Torn free from the atmosphere of
disgusting arbitrariness and enervating uncertainty, we encountered hospitality and attentiveness at every step. Our New York friends optimistically recounted the work of the committee, told of the growing disbelief in the Moscow trial and of the prospects for a countertrial. The general conclusion was that a book was necessary, and as soon as possible, on Stalin’s judicial frame-ups. A new chapter of our life was opening very favorably. But . . . what would be its subsequent development?

We observed the tropical landscape from the windows of our car with keen interest. At the village of Cardenas, between Tampico and San Luis Potosi, two locomotives began hauling our train up the plateau. The air became cooler and we soon rid ourselves of the northerner’s fear of the tropics which had seized us in the steamy atmosphere of the Gulf of Mexico. On the morning of the 11th, we alighted at Lecheria, a tiny station on the outskirts of the capital, where we embraced Diego Rivera, who had left the hospital. It was to him above all that we were indebted for our liberation from captivity in Norway. With him there were several friends: Fritz Bach, a former Swiss communist who had become a professor in Mexico; Hidalgo, participant in the Mexican civil war in the ranks of Zapata’s army; and a few young men. At noon, we arrived by automobile in Coyocan, a suburb of Mexico City, where we were lodged in the blue home of Frida Rivera, which has an orange tree in the middle of the courtyard.

In a telegram of gratitude to President Cardenas, dispatched from Tampico, I repeated that I intended rigidly to abstain from interfering in Mexican politics. I did not entertain a moment’s doubt that responsible agents of the GPU would penetrate into Mexico, there to assist the so-called “friends” of the USSR to do all in their power to render difficult my stay in this hospitable country.

From Europe, meanwhile, warning after warning arrived. And could it have been otherwise? Stalin has too much, if not everything, at stake. His original calculations, based upon suddenness and speed of action, proved justified only by one half. My emigration to Mexico sharply changed the relationship of forces to the disadvantage of the Kremlin. I obtained the possibility of appealing to world public opinion. Where will this end? Those who were only too well aware of the fragility and rottenness of their judicial frame-ups must have asked themselves this question with alarm.

One symptom of Moscow’s alarm fairly struck one between the
Trotsky and Sedova arriving in Mexico. Meeting them are Frida Rivera and Max Shachtman.
eyes. The Mexican Communists began to devote to me entire issues of their weekly newspaper, containing old and new materials from the sewage system of the GPU and the Comintern, and even to publish special issues for this purpose. My friends said: "Pay no attention. This newspaper enjoys a merited contempt." And I myself had no intention of entering into a polemic with flunkeys when ahead lay a struggle with their masters. Extremely unworthy was the conduct of the secretary of the National Confederation of Workers, Lombardo Toledano.\(^77\) Political dilettante and a lawyer by profession, alien to the working class and the revolution, this gentleman visited Moscow in 1935 and returned thence, as is befitting, an altruistic "friend" of the USSR. Dimitrov's report to the Seventh Congress of the Comintern on the policy of the "People's Front"—this document of theoretical and political prostration—was hailed by Toledano as the most important publication since the Communist Manifesto.\(^78\) From the time of my arrival in Mexico, this gentleman has been slandering me all the more unceremoniously since my nonintervention in the internal life of the country assures him complete immunity in advance. The Russian Mensheviks were genuine knights-errant of the revolution compared to such ignorant and pompous careerists!

Among the foreign journalists, Kluckhohn, correspondent of the New York Times, immediately distinguished himself.\(^79\) Under the pretext of an interview, he several times attempted to subject me to a police cross-examination. It is not difficult to understand what sources inspired this zeal. As regards the Mexican section of the Fourth International, I announced in the press that I cannot assume any responsibility for its work. I value my new haven too much to permit myself any kind of incaution. At the same time, I warned my Mexican and North American friends to expect absolutely exceptional measures of "self-defense" on the part of the Stalinist agents in Mexico and the United States. In the struggle for its international "reputation" and power, the ruling clique in Moscow will stop at nothing. And least of all at the expenditure of tens of millions of dollars for the purchase of human souls.

I do not know whether Stalin felt any hesitation about arranging a new trial. I believe he must have hesitated. My departure for Mexico, however, must have ended his hesitation immediately. It now became necessary, at any cost, and as soon as possible, to drown out the forthcoming revelations by the sensa-
tion of new accusations. Preparation of the Radek-Pyatakov case was begun as far back as the end of August. As could have been foreseen, Oslo was this time chosen as the operating base of the “conspiracy.” For it was necessary to facilitate for the government of Norway my deportation from that country. But into the geographical outline of the frame-up, which had already become antiquated, were hastily sketched new and fresh elements. Through Vladimir Romm, you see, I endeavored to acquire the secrets of the Washington government, while through Radek I was preparing to supply Japan with oil in the event that Japan went to war with the United States. Only because it lacked sufficient time did the GPU find it impossible to arrange for me a meeting with Japanese agents in the Mexican park of Chapultepec.

On January 19 came the first dispatch regarding the impending trial. On the 21st I answered it with an article. On the 23rd, the trial began in Moscow. Again, as in August, we lived through a week of nightmare. Despite the fact that, after last year’s experience, the mechanism of the affair was clear beforehand, the impression of moral horror increased rather than decreased. The dispatches from Moscow seemed like insane ravings. It was necessary to reread each line several times to force oneself to believe that behind these ravings were living men.

With some of these men I was intimately acquainted. They were no worse than other people. On the contrary, they were better than a great many. But they were poisoned with falsehood and then crushed by the totalitarian apparatus. They lie against themselves to enable the ruling clique to cover others with lies. Stalin has set himself the goal of forcing mankind to believe in impossible crimes. Again one had to ask oneself: Is mankind really so stupid? Of course not. But the thing is that the frame-ups of Stalin are so monstrous that they likewise seem impossible crimes.

How can one convince mankind that this apparent “impossibility” is in fact an ominous reality? The struggle is being waged with unequal weapons. On the one side—the GPU, the court, the press, the diplomats, the hired agents, journalists of the Duranty type, attorneys of the Pritt type. On the other—an isolated “accused,” who has just barely torn himself free from a Socialist jail, in an alien, distant land, without a press or resources of his own.

Nevertheless, I did not for a moment doubt that the almighty
organizers of the amalgam were heading for disaster. The spiral of Stalin’s frame-ups, which has already succeeded in embracing far too large a number of people, facts, and geographical points, continues to extend. It is impossible to fool everybody. Not all want to be fooled. The French League for the Rights of Man, with its ingenuous president Victor Basch, is of course capable of respectfuIly swallowing a second and a tenth trial, just as it swallowed the first. But facts are stronger than the patriotic zeal of the dubious champions of “rights.” Facts will clear a path for themselves.

Even during the court proceedings, I transmitted to the press a number of documentary refutations and posed to the Moscow court a number of precise questions which by themselves destroy the most important testimony of the accused. But the Moscow Themis not only blindfolded her eyes—she also put cotton in her ears. Naturally, I did not expect that my revelations would have any immediate wide effect. My technical possibilities for that are far too limited. The immediate task consisted in providing a factual point of support for the most penetrating minds, and to provoke criticism, or at least doubts, among the next layer. Having conquered the minds of the select, truth would unfold further and further. In the long run, the spiral of truth would prove stronger than the spiral of frame-up. Everything that has transpired since that nightmarish week at the end of January has only confirmed my optimistic expectations.
January 9, 1937

After four months of internment, we left Norway on the night of December 19 in the freighter Ruth. The arrangements for the voyage were in the hands of the Norwegian authorities. The preparations were made under the cover of absolute secrecy.

It is rumored that the Norwegian government feared that I would be the object of an attack by my political enemies.

We were underway for about twenty-one days. The freighter carried no cargo unless 1,200 tons of sea water can be considered as such. During the crossing we had good weather. The captain and the crew treated us very graciously and accorded us a great deal of attention. My wife and I would like to express our gratitude for this treatment.

As far as the Socialist government of Norway is concerned, the only explanation for its conduct lies in the external diplomatic and economic pressure it was subjected to. I expect to be able to give a sufficiently clear explanation of this in the near future.

During our internment two special laws were passed—Trotsky law no. 1 and Trotsky law no. 2—which deprived me of the right to challenge my detractors and those who slandered me, not just in Norway but in all other countries.

In general, this meant depriving me of the right to take the most elementary steps such as, for example, writing letters to obtain the proof needed to refute the claims of my detractors. Fortunately my son Leon, who lives in Paris, was able to publish The Red Book on the Moscow Trial.\textsuperscript{84} Irrefutable proof for unmasking the fraud perpetrated by Moscow is to be found in the 120 pages of this book.

The kindness of the Mexican government in granting me the right of asylum was greeted by us all the more gratefully since the inflexible attitude of Norway made it more difficult for me to obtain a visa for other countries.

During the voyage, we received radio messages from American newspapers asking for replies to certain questions. I wished to
satisfy this demand, but the Norwegians believed it was necessary to protect the United States against my ideas, and deprived me of the right to use the ship's radio. The Mexican government can be sure that I will not violate the conditions that have been imposed upon me, and that these conditions are in keeping with my own wishes, i.e., complete and absolute nonintervention in Mexican politics and no less complete abstention from actions that might prejudice the relations between Mexico and other countries.

My literary activities have always been carried out in my own name and on my own responsibility, and have never given rise to any legal action in any country. I am sure that I will not provoke any such action in the future.

During the twenty-one days of the crossing I put the finishing touches on the statement I delivered for more than four hours before the Norwegian tribunal as evidence in the trial concerning the breaking and entering by a group of Norwegian fascists who were intent upon stealing my archives on August 5, 1936 [see "In Closed Court," in *Writings 35-36*]. But this statement deals not just with the breaking and entering, but with my political activities in general, the causes and reasons for my internment, and the Moscow trial of the sixteen—among whom was Kamenev, who made absurd accusations against me personally, charging me with having attempted to organize terrorist acts in alliance with the German secret police. To this testimony, which was given under oath to a secret session of the tribunal, I am adding an extensive commentary characterizing the recent trials, the past histories of the most prominent defendants, and the methods used to extract the so-called voluntary confessions.

This book of mine, which will be published, will, I hope, aid the majority of the reading public in deciding whether the criminals are to be found among those who were on trial or among those who tried them.

My enemies are skillfully availing themselves of the atmosphere of general alarm, and doubtlessly they will continue their campaign in the New World. I have no illusions about this. My defense consists in placing an exposition of my ideas, plans, and activities before public opinion. My hopes are placed on the impartiality and objectivity of the press in the New World.

I approve with all my strength the idea presented by various representative persons in politics, science, and the arts of many countries that an international commission be created to investi-
gate all material and all testimony concerning the recent trials in the Soviet Union. This evidence is both oral and documentary.

I shall also immediately put before this commission my archives covering all the activities of the last nine years of my life.

I left a Europe torn to pieces by frightful contradictions and convulsed by the presentiment of a new war. The general nervousness explains why countless panicky rumors arise about all sorts of things, including myself. I think there is a 75 percent chance that there will be a war in Europe in the not-distant future.

As for my future plans, I can say but little. I want to acquaint myself thoroughly with Mexico and Latin America, since my knowledge of this sphere is insufficient. Among my literary efforts, first place will be taken by a biography of Lenin that I expect to finish this year. Illness, then internment, interrupted this work for a year and a half.
A TELEGRAM TO NEW YORK

January 11, 1937

Norman Thomas, John Dewey, et al.
American Committee Defense Leon Trotsky

Upon setting foot New World soil, I hasten to greet committee which took initiative in fight for full impartial investigation trial sixteen. Place myself entirely at disposal committee and prepared to provide it all possible information, furnish documents, answer any question that may interest committee. Needless to say, is not merely question concerning me and son, against whom most ignominious accusation in all political history has been launched, nor fate of dozens and hundreds accused, but question involving fate of Soviet Union and even world labor movement for years to come. Concealment of facts, silence, downright protection of falsification, and forgery never served advance of peoples. Humanity attains liberation only on road of truth.

Leon Trotsky
TO THE REPRESENTATIVES
OF THE MEXICAN PRESS

January 12, 1937

“Gentlemen:

"Thank you for the kind attention that you accord me; I can appreciate this attention all the more because I can consider myself a colleague of yours, being a former journalist. At the same time, I believe I am in full agreement with you in thinking that neither you nor I have any reasons to occupy the public opinion of this country with my person. I am here only as a private individual. My wife and I are hoping above all for some peace and quiet. This country has before it tasks that are sufficiently imposing to occupy public opinion and the press, which is its mirror. If in the days and weeks to come I decline to make new statements, you will interpret my attitude, I am sure, not as lack of respect for the press, but as a logical consequence of my situation as a private man.

"Permit me, however, to use your presence here, gentlemen, to raise on my own initiative a question that concerns me personally, but which also has a certain public importance. The government and people of this country have accorded me their generous hospitality. However, I hear people, as you do (I hope isolated ones), who say that by supposedly acting as a terrorist conspirator allied to German fascism I have made myself unworthy of this hospitality. I state categorically that if in these accusations and statements there were a fragment of truth, my stay in this country would be an unspeakable abuse of the confidence that has been placed in me.

"Every honest person, whatever philosophical or political tendency he belongs to, will recognize that there can be no crime more dishonorable than to propagate certain ideas and to commit acts that are diametrically opposed to those ideas. For my entire political life—that is, for forty years—I have fought against individual terrorism, against reaction in all its forms, and especially fascist reaction. Whoever attributes to me acts that are
contrary to my convictions, to my writings, and to my speeches, slanders me before Mexican public opinion. I am prepared at any time to present proof to that effect before any impartial, authorized commission. I have available innumerable and irrefutable documents and testimonies to prove the absolute consistency of my words and my deeds. I trust, therefore, that public opinion will offer me a certain moral hospitality, in the sense that it will not accept defamatory statements against me without demanding proofs, and, if such be forthcoming, that it will afford me the opportunity to refute them publicly once and for all."

"... Do you believe that the rest of the world will follow the same course as the Russian social movement did?"

"When Lenin and I fought together during the revolution, we never believed that the rest of the world would have to follow the Russian road, because Russia has extremely pronounced and strong national and historical characteristics. The other countries also have characteristics that are profoundly different from each other and pronounced historical peculiarities; and that requires each country to find a different road. Nevertheless, we believed that through the Russian revolution we had done something on behalf of all of humanity. Lenin always used to say, and it bears repeating, that you can't try to impose Russian ways on other countries. In the field of medicine, charlatans prescribe the same medicine for all diseases. But in politics, we Marxists do not belong to that school of medicine. It is necessary to study, to observe, and then to strive to find an adequate and correct policy."

Some of the interviewers ask questions about Mexico, and then the former commissar of war upholds his statement that for no reason will he occupy himself with Mexican politics. Trotsky considers that it would be wrong to speak about Mexico so soon after arriving. And speaking on the related point, the development of the social movement of the Mexican workers, he says:

"I must say with absolute sincerity that I only consider myself obliged to study this movement, and for the time being I do not consider myself capable of expressing an opinion. It is not enough to read a dozen books about a country to form a concrete opinion about it; it is necessary to follow the daily press and to observe the life of the country with your own eyes. After one, two, or three years, it may be possible to attempt to make observations about the life of that country, and especially when it is a matter of a country with such complex problems as Mexico."
"What was your first impression of our country?"

"My first impression, and I can say it without exaggerating, is that Mexico is an extraordinary country. My wife and I lived in a Nordic country, where the ground is covered with snow and the means of transportation is skiing. I never visited tropical regions. Now I see how different this country, which has a remarkable countryside, is from what I was familiar with, and I believe that that difference can also affect the national temperaments. I do not mean by this to say anything impolite about the Norwegian people, whom I truly like very much.

"I am sure that during my stay in Mexico I will have the opportunity to make many discoveries, especially about the temperament of the Mexican people. And I feel satisfied, very content, to become a student at a time when I am nearing sixty years of age."

Leon Trotsky refused to say anything about Spain, explaining that in the last four months he did not have access to all types of information, since during his stay in Norway he was not allowed to receive newspapers, much less the letters and messages that his friends sent him. For the first time in his long peregrination through different countries, the former commissar of war lived in isolation at the moment that a great ideological contest was being waged.

When the government of President Cardenas agreed to give asylum to Leon Trotsky, some foreign press agencies transmitted various cables from Norway, which assured the world that Leon Trotsky, when he accepted asylum in Mexico, placed as indispensable the condition that he must be allowed political freedom of action. We asked Trotsky if this story is true, and with real annoyance he replied:

"It's all a lie, and I know the source of those words. When I received the cable from my American friends, telling me that the Mexican government had granted me a visa, I immediately communicated with the Norwegian government, establishing that I was ready to leave the following day, but that there was some question—that didn't depend on the Norwegian government—about the conditions of my visit and Mrs. Trotsky's, and about my papers and archives, etc. It was over that question that I had discussions with the Norwegian government, demanding certain guarantees from it. As for the Mexican consul in the Scandinavian country, I can only say that he treated me with magnificent attention, making all sorts of efforts to arrange the
matter of my papers and finally everything concerning my trip.

"I repeat it, gentlemen of the press: the alleged condition that I am said to have imposed on the Mexican government is nothing other than a malicious lie. What the Mexican government has done for my reception in Tampico, for guaranteeing my personal safety and that of my wife, and also that of my papers, has surpassed by far anything that I could have hoped for even in my wildest dreams.

"Without the slightest doubt, that lie was Moscow's doing. I have just finished writing a book on the future of Russia, which will be published soon in New York, and everyone who wants to know my opinion on contemporary Russia can find it in the pages of this book [The Revolution Betrayed]."

The reporters asked Trotsky to familiarize us with his definition of communism. He smiled mischievously, indicating that he had understood perfectly the question asked through Diego Rivera.

"There is a great deal of confusion on this subject, and I would not like to add to it by speaking about communism in a simple interview. It would be necessary to speak more profoundly. In any case, I want to specify that I have not changed any of my opinions, from the time that I marched shoulder to shoulder with Lenin."

When asked his opinion of the fascist system, Trotsky replied:

"It is absolutely clear that I am the irreconcilable enemy of fascism. I don't believe that there is a single intelligent man in the world who can believe the statements of Moscow that I work in the fascist intelligence network. On the contrary, I believe it is the disastrous policy of the Comintern, directed by Moscow, that assures Hitler's victory."

And they went on to ask him various questions, but Trotsky repeated his statement that he would never speak about the internal politics of Mexico or about anything that could erode the relations that this country has with various friendly nations.

We took our leave of Leon Trotsky, who once again treated us courteously and in a friendly way. And so, this person who excited such intense curiosity in Mexico, is secluded in his private life and is hidden from the public eye. . . .
The Soviet bureaucracy is sabotaging the Spanish revolution in order not to frighten the French bourgeoisie. The Soviet bureaucracy does not give the support it could give if it really wanted to help Spain. It is aiding only enough to save its face with the workers of the world.

Think of the shock for Paris and London if real soviets [workers’ councils] were established in Madrid. The Soviet Union requires international authority, and this authority can only be given by the international working class. That is why occasional successes of the Communist International are required. It is not going too far to say that the Spanish proletariat was prevented from seizing power in Spain because of lack of full Soviet help.

I don't believe fascism is a necessary or universal stage of development. I believe that in Germany fascism could have been averted by systematic activity of the working class. Those responsible for Hitler have only one name—the Comintern.

I still believe in world revolution—war is the danger.
AN INTERVIEW FOR AMERICANS

January 16, 1937

Thank you for your friendly question about my health. During the voyage it was so satisfactory that I was able to write a booklet dealing with the Moscow trial and my internment in Norway and containing my testimony before the Norwegian court for a period of four hours, given, unfortunately, behind closed doors. My booklet, however, opens up these doors and many others.

Prior to my departure from Norway my health was very bad and I cannot say that I am well today. You ask from what disease I suffer. Physicians have named it a "cryptogenic infection," which means that medicine, at least in the Old World, has capitulated to an enigma. I have been examined by some of the best physicians in Germany, France, and elsewhere, for periods of weeks and months. Everywhere the answer was the same. From time to time the malady paralyzes me for several months in succession, and the attacks are becoming increasingly violent.

As to my plans for the future, they are dependent only in part upon my own will; for the most part, however, upon the enigmatic malady that assails me. The conditions under which I now find myself, thanks to the Mexican government, give me full liberty to pursue my studies and my literary work.

My next and most important task is the completion of my book about Lenin. I have already devoted two years to this work and I require another year or more in which to finish it. Lenin is now the most distorted, falsified, and slandered theoretician and revolutionary leader of our time. The machine of distortion and calumny is called the Comintern.

You ask me what are the fundamental differences between the Trotskyists and Stalinists. I prefer to put the question differently—the fundamental difference between Lenin and Stalin. Lenin restored the teaching of Marx as the theory of the revolutionary struggle of the world proletariat and not as a theory of how best to adapt a Social Democratic bureaucracy to
the capitalist state, as practiced by the Second International. Now, a bureaucracy a hundred or a thousand times more powerful has arisen in the Soviet Union. Its interests are absolutely different and even opposed, not only to the interests of the world working class, but also to the interests of the toiling masses of the Soviet Union itself; but the traditions of this bureaucracy are Leninist. This is the historical reason why the official ideological life of the Soviet bureaucracy and the Comintern is a permanent falsification.

In his book *The State and Revolution* [1917], and in other volumes, Lenin purged from the genuine teaching of Marx all the spurious ingredients introduced by the Social Democracy. I will try now in my book about Lenin to purge the teachings of Lenin of the poisonous distortions and falsifications of the Soviet bureaucracy. If I succeed, even to a certain extent, the book can have not only a historical, but also a direct relevance to the immediate problems of today. In these words I give the answer to your question as to the way in which I shall try to exert my "personal influence."

It would be an absurdity to believe, and such an absurdity is too generously attributed to me by many people, that the revolution must occur all over the world at the same time and more or less in the same manner.

One of the greatest crimes of the Comintern consists precisely in the efforts to command the emancipation movement of the working people on a world scale as a military exercise, without any understanding of the peculiarities of each individual nation or even paying any serious attention to ascertaining what they are. This inability to understand the real forces of world developments is not accidental. It is an inevitable consequence of the narrow spirit of regimentation of the ruling bureaucratic caste.

The most imperative task right now is, in my opinion, to shake off the demoralizing grip of the Soviet bureaucracy upon the vanguard of the world proletariat. Only in this way can the revolutionary emancipation of the exploited peoples of the world succeed. And only the international success of this revolution can save the Soviet Union from complete degeneration, because the theory of "socialism in one country" is nothing but a reactionary utopia created for the glorification of the Soviet bureaucracy.91

The differences between Lenin and me on the peasant question were maliciously invented by the ruling bureaucratic clique after Lenin's death in order to combat the ideas of Lenin, which I
attempted to defend. "Trotskyism" does not exist as an original or independent theory. In the name of a fight against "Trotskyism" the bureaucracy combats and slanders the revolutionary essence of the teachings of Marx and Lenin.

During the period of the so-called "complete collectivization," the bureaucracy imposed its will upon the peasantry not by "persuasion" but by unmitigated force. It applied thereby in the worst and most dangerous form the policy which it attributed to me throughout the preceding period. Only the great world crisis, with its enormous international devastating disorders and weakening of the ruling class in the capitalist countries, saved the Soviet Union from utter disaster in this period. You ask me about the progress of the Russian revolution, especially from the viewpoint of the toiling masses. I try to answer this question in my book on the USSR, *The Revolution Betrayed*, which is to appear shortly. The improvement of the living conditions of the masses does not in any way correspond with the efforts of these masses and the statistical successes of the national economy.

There are two interconnected reasons for this disparity. First of all, the purely bureaucratic management of economic life leads to all kinds of disproportions and to excessive waste of productive forces. Secondly, the privileged caste, which embraces several millions of families, appropriates to itself a lion's share of the national income. This is also the reason why the bureaucracy finds that socialism is already established, since the bureaucracy has solved its own "social problem."

You ask me for an explanation of the Zinoviev trial and "particularly the confessions." At the present moment I can only refer to the pamphlet of my friend Max Shachtman, *Behind the Moscow Trial—The Biggest Frame-up in History* (Pioneer Publishers, New York City). I hope that my own pamphlet on the same question will throw additional light on the "confessions." The Western attorneys of the GPU represent the confessions of Zinoviev and the others as spontaneous expressions of their sincere repentance. This is the most shameless deception of public opinion that can be imagined.

For almost ten years, Zinoviev, Kamenev, and the others found themselves under almost insupportable moral pressure with the menace of death approaching ever closer and closer. You will recall the famous story of Edgar Allan Poe, "The Pit and the Pendulum," in which the victim is terrorized and psychologically shattered by the slow and systematic descent of death. If an
Inquisitor judge were to put questions to this victim and inspire the answers, his success would be guaranteed in advance. Human nerves, even the strongest, have a limited capacity to endure moral torture.

It is impossible within the limitations of an interview to give you an analysis of the so-called confessions.

I can, however, draw your attention to one example which is of a piece with the others. The most important witness against me was a man named Goltsman, an old revolutionist with a certain standing in the party. He declared that he had visited me during my brief stay in Copenhagen, during the last week of November 1932. He is the only witness who gave any concrete details—namely, that he met my son in the lobby of the Hotel Bristol in Copenhagen and that from there he went, in company with my son, to meet me for the purpose of receiving my instructions in terrorism.

This "confession" has at least two defects: First, my son was never in Denmark in his life; and second, the Hotel Bristol was demolished in 1917 and rebuilt only in 1936. It was reopened just at the time of the Moscow trial itself! You may ask: Can you prove this? Yes, very easily and with absolute conclusiveness. During my sojourn in Copenhagen my son was in Berlin, and there are any number of witnesses who can prove it.

Moreover, on the way back from Copenhagen to Turkey, passing through France, my wife telegraphed the then Premier Herriot asking for special permission for our son to visit us in Paris. This permission was granted, and our son left Berlin to meet us in France, where we saw him in the train going from Dunkerque to Paris. There are not many eyewitnesses to this, but our lawyers in Paris have recently found the telegram of my wife to Mr. Herriot, as well as the telegraphic order of Herriot to the French Consul in Berlin. In addition, the date stamped at the Franco-German frontier on my son's visa establishes irrefutably the utter falseness of Goltsman's testimony.

Now I permit myself to ask you: If the testimony of the principal witness against me crumbles to dust so completely at the first touch, what reason is there for any intelligent person to accept as genuine or even worthy of consideration the testimony contained in all the other "confessions"?

You ask me about the writings of Anna Louise Strong. Unfortunately, American public opinion, and especially its radical section, has been misinformed for the past few years by such
Moscow correspondents as Duranty, Anna Louise Strong, and Louis Fischer.93

I will not deny their merit insofar as they have fought against reactionary bourgeois prejudices concerning the Soviet Union, but this progressive work, which gave them a certain reputation and authority in the eyes of the progressive element in the United States, ultimately led them to become permanent defenders of the Soviet bureaucracy and consequently to conceal its mistakes, blunders, and arbitrary actions. Such correspondents may serve the cause of the ruling clique, but certainly not the interests of the Soviet state itself or the enlightenment of American public opinion. Even granting a genuine concern on their part, public opinion can only suffer from their political blindness.

You ask me about my plot with the German secret police. The accusation is by no means a new one. The Russian bourgeoisie accused Lenin, and two months later myself, of the same crime in 1917, but not only the Russian bourgeoisie. The German bourgeoisie accused Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg of being agents of the czar.

If I remember rightly, Eugene Victor Debs and many other internationalists were hounded during the war as the allies of German militarism.94 This sort of ignominious slander was one of the means whereby nationalist sentiments were sharpened during the last war.

When the British naval authorities arrested me on a Norwegian ship during my trip from New York to Petrograd, under the pretext that I was connected with the German general staff, Lenin wrote in his newspaper, Pravda, that no intelligent person anywhere in the world would believe that Trotsky, after twenty years of revolutionary activity, had entered into an alliance with militaristic reaction. Now I have forty years of revolutionary activity behind me. . . .

Europe is now passing through a period of preparation for a new war. Every government is endeavoring to utilize, as early as possible, the experience of the last war. Stalin is trying to serve his eventual imperialist allies by hounding the genuine Marxists and internationalists as the allies of fascism.

Please remember, however, that in 1933, when I arrived in France, the Comintern and the Moscow press denounced me as an agent of French imperialism and especially of Daladier, then premier.95 My arrival in France was interpreted as proof of my alleged design to assist French and British imperialism in their military intervention in the Soviet Union.
I must confess that I doubt if the stupidity of these accusations does not vastly exceed their ignominy. Abraham Lincoln said that you can't fool all of the people all of the time. The organizers of the Moscow trials will surely have occasion, in the days to come, to be convinced of the wisdom of this saying.

With regard to the new Soviet constitution, you will find an extensive chapter in my book *The Revolution Betrayed*. The sense of this chapter is that under the hypocritical cover of democratization, the new constitution seeks to perpetuate the absolute domination of the bureaucracy and its enormous material privileges.

You ask: If Trotsky were Stalin and Stalin Trotsky what would Trotsky's major policies be for Russia, domestic and foreign? I cannot accept this way of putting the question. The difference is not personal and not even merely ideological, but social. Stalin never represented the fighting masses. He now represents a ruling caste, *eo ipso*, not the proletarian revolution but the Thermidorean reaction, although on the basis created by that revolution.

My Marxisan program is such as to make it impossible for me to remain in the government and to compel me to take up an irreconcilable opposition during this whole epoch of worldwide defeats of the working people, of the extension of fascist domination, and of the degeneration of the Soviet state. . . . Please do not forget that those processes are closely interconnected.

Many so-called radicals, or, more accurately, the bigots of radicalism, will undoubtedly exclaim: "We don't know if Trotsky's revelations are correct or not, but we do know that they are very dangerous to the revolution, to the Soviet state, especially now in face of the war peril." I can only shrug my shoulders at such cries and warnings. If the facts I denounce are true, then the greatest danger to the revolution, to the Soviet state, arises out of the Soviet bureaucracy, and if its pernicious tendencies are covered up by a conspiracy of silence, they can and will reveal themselves in catastrophic form in the implacable test of war itself. The so-called radicals who, from a safe distance, seek to protect the revolution like a fragile hothouse plant, only reveal their lack of understanding of basic historical processes and their undersupply of political courage.

The road to human emancipation is the road of truth and forthrightness, not puerility and falsehood.
LETTER TO
THE DAILY HERALD

January 18, 1937

My Dear Mr. Editor:

This is the first opportunity I have had since my internment in Norway to write to you on a matter of the utmost importance in connection with a still obscure but intensely significant aspect of the Moscow trial of August 1936.

I have before me the August 26, 1936, issue of the Daily Herald. At the end of a dispatch from your own correspondent in Moscow, it says: "Up to the last moment (says the Central News) the sixteen men shot today had hoped for clemency. Never until their case had any of the Old Guard, founders of the Soviet state, been executed. It had been widely supposed that a special decree passed only five days ago, giving them the right to appeal, had been issued in order to spare them."

It is no exaggeration to say that the special decree mentioned in the last paragraph of your Moscow dispatch throws a glaring light upon the trial which pierces to the very heart of the machinery set in motion to assassinate the sixteen defendants and reveals the whole trial as a ghastly frame-up.

Why? Immediately after the assassination of S. M. Kirov in December 1934, the Central Executive Committee of the Soviets adopted a special decree: those charged with acts of terrorism against soviet or party officials were deprived of the right of appeal against a mandatory death sentence. This decree was adopted in order to facilitate the execution of the so-called "assassins" whose cases were heard in star chamber proceedings.

The sixteen defendants of the August 1936 trial, however, had their cases heard in open court. What has struck everyone as inexplicable—namely, the self-debasing confessions of guilt made by the defendants, followed by their pleas for the death penalty, which was followed in turn by an appeal for clemency—can be explained only by the new special decree reported by your correspondent. It should now be perfectly clear that these "confes-
sions" were extorted from the defendants only by means of a previous promise that, upon appeal, the prearranged death sentences would be reversed by a higher body.

The whole trial was, therefore, carried through in strict accordance with a macabre scheme. The new decree presumably gave the defendants the right to appeal; the defendants "confessed"; they were sentenced to death; they made their prearranged appeal to a higher body; and then they were all hideously deceived.

The *Daily Herald* is apparently one of the very few periodicals that reported this extremely revealing news. You will surely understand the importance and necessity of establishing formally the fact that such a special decree was adopted on the very eve of the opening of the trial. I therefore beg you to check the source of your correspondent's report from Moscow so that this last stone may be fitted accurately into the gruesome mosaic of the frame-up which is, for that matter, sufficiently clear already.

Yours etc., etc.,
Leon Trotsky
INTERVIEW WITH THE JEWISH DAILY FORWARD

January 18, 1937

You ask me a series of questions connected with the Soviet Union. Answering them would require a whole book. I wrote such a book while I was in Norway. The book is called The Revolution Betrayed and it was published two months ago in France. Today I received a telegram from New York that the corrections are finished and the book will soon be out in English. Those interested in my opinion on the current economic, social, political, and cultural situation in the Soviet Union—I can only refer to that book. A part of the book is devoted to the question of the new Soviet constitution. My conclusion is this: everything in the constitution that is historically progressive was included completely and in full in the old constitution, which was worked out under Lenin’s leadership. What distinguishes the new constitution from the old one is the attempt to strengthen and perpetuate the vast economic privileges and absolute dictatorship of the Soviet bureaucracy.

You ask me about the trial of the sixteen. On this matter I am now finishing a small book, in which I hope to prove to every critical and honest person that the Moscow trial represents the greatest falsification in the political history of the whole world. Such historically well-known trials as the famous Beilis trial in czarist Russia, the trial of Dreyfus in France, the Reichstag fire trial in Germany, are child’s play compared to the trial of the sixteen. And new trials are coming up. . . . The more the privileges of the Soviet ruling caste grow, the more sharply must it suppress every voice of criticism and opposition. It cannot, however, openly punish its opponents before the eyes of the people for demanding more equality and more freedom. It is compelled to bring false accusations against the Oppositionists. It was clear to me as early as 1927 that the bureaucracy would pin various horrible crimes on the Opposition, and that it would
have to stifle the independence of the popular masses so that the truth would not burst through. To develop these thoughts, I wrote on March 4, 1929: "There remains only one thing for Stalin: to try to draw a line of blood between the official party and the Opposition. He absolutely must connect the Opposition with terrorist crimes, preparation of armed insurrection, etc." [in Writings 1929].

These lines were printed (Biulleten Oppozitsii no. 1-2) almost six years before the murder of Kirov. During those years, in scores of articles and hundreds of letters, I called on my friends and supporters to take the greatest care in relation to the provocateurs of the GPU. In that sense the Moscow trial is not something I didn’t expect. How it was arranged and how the so-called “confessions” of the unfortunate defendants were extracted is recounted in a series of pamphlets which were published over the last few months. I want to cite the following: The Red Book on the Moscow Trial by Leon Sedov (my son); Sixteen Executed in Moscow by Victor Serge (the famous revolutionary and noted French writer). There is a pamphlet out in New York by M. Shachtman, The Moscow Trial—The Greatest Frame-up in History. This pamphlet has been very successful and I can recommend it to everyone who wants to become seriously and honestly familiar with the Moscow trial.

Friedrich Adler, the secretary of the Second International and a real political opponent of mine, compared the Moscow trial to the medieval witch trials. Adler recalls, quite to the point, that the Holy Inquisition always succeed in bringing forth a "pure-hearted repentance" from those accused of witchcraft. In the hands of the Inquisitors, every witch told in detail how she spent the night with the devil on the nearest mountain.

The GPU uses more refined methods, appropriate to the epoch of airplanes and radio communication; but in essence the confessions are extracted by means of mental torment, prolonged for several years. I talk in more detail about this in my new book.

You ask me whether there is a connection between the Moscow trial and anti-Semitism. Absolutely! That has been shown quite clearly in the press by Franz Pfemfert, a German writer and publisher and a refugee from Nazism. Whoever attentively follows the inner life of the Soviet Union, whoever reads the Soviet press line by line and between the lines, has for a long time clearly seen that the Soviet bureaucrats are playing a double game on the Jewish question, as on other questions. In words of
course, they come out against anti-Semitism; bigoted pogromists are not only brought to court by them but also shot. At the same time, though, they systematically exploit anti-Semitic prejudices in order to compromise every opposition group. In the commentaries on the political trial proceedings, about the artistic taste of the defendants, about the character of their social position, there is always and invariably the hint that the Opposition is an outgrowth of the Jewish intelligentsia. It should be said openly: on this plane the Stalinist bureaucracy has revived in a more polite form the tradition of the czarist bureaucracy. The economic and cultural development of all other nationalities of the Soviet Union also suffers from the dictatorship of the Bonapartist bureaucracy.

The attempts to represent me and my cothinkers as enemies of the Soviet Union are absurd and dishonest. I do not confuse the Soviet Union with the bureaucratic caste that has developed. I believe in the future of the Soviet Union, which will liberate itself from the bureaucracy and will complete the business begun by the October Revolution.

The bureaucracy is not a few hundred people who rule in the Soviet Union, but several million citizens who together represent the workers’ aristocracy. In my recent book *The Revolution Betrayed*, I calculate that in the Soviet Union there are 12-15 percent, or nearly five million people, who constitute the privileged aristocracy. But the bureaucracy does not, of course, consist of a single economic level. The lowest stratum of the bureaucracy lives on the average worse than a European or American worker. The social structure is very divided, which necessarily leads to discontent. For example, there are millions of people who are characterized by the term “employees.” Those who are allowed a dacha vacation, often twice a year, and live quite comfortably, are very different from the majority, who are lower officials or ordinary workers, whose economic situation is much lower than is necessary on the average for a simple life. Then again the big aristocrats, the very highest stratum of the bureaucracy, live like American millionaires, though they do not actually have any capital.

So that no one misinterprets me on the question of whether there is anti-Semitism in the Soviet Union, in connection with the foregoing, I shall explain it. The Jewish intelligentsia play a great role in the Soviet Union in many areas. The old Jewish petty bourgeoisie has, because of its specific capabilities, provided
a large percentage of the bureaucracy. They were taken into service because they had a certain amount of education, and as it is the bureaucracy which is conspicuous, the dissatisfaction is directed against them. For there is still a strong anti-Jewish antagonism, and the masses tend to be doubly provoked against the Jews. The chauvinism that lies within them makes them antagonistic toward the Jews because of the peculiar Jewish appearance and accent; and the dissatisfaction with the officialdom provokes them against the Jews. So, for example, Jews can be removed from the top strata without arousing the masses—as happened, for example, recently in the case of the Polish Jew Yagoda, head of the Commissariat of Internal Affairs, who was replaced by Yezhov—but the same cannot be done to those on the bottom because there are not enough capable people, and Jews must be accepted as functionaries. And so since dissatisfaction exists, the powerful one on top does not care that the blame falls onto the Jewish functionaries—instead of onto the bureaucracy as a whole, which, to be sure, they are a part of.

Take, for example, these trials of the Opposition—there the Jews were constantly pushed to the fore, yet the Jews are no worse or better in that respect. That is to say, the Jewish theme has been fully exploited in the struggle with the Opposition, and that has gone on for several years. In 1927, when I established the bloc of the Opposition, there was on the staff of my group not one Jew except myself. The rest, such as Smirnov, Preobrazhensky, Mrachkovsky, et al., included not one Jew. Also the so-called Zinoviev Opposition consisted, except for Zinoviev, of non-Jews, only the best Leningrad revolutionary leaders, like Bakaev, Yevdokimov, Kuklin, et al.

And in 1927 Stalin was already writing in official documents—very discreetly, but with a clear meaning—that the Opposition consisted in its majority of Jews. He said there: we are struggling against Trotsky, Zinoviev, Kamenev, and others, not because they are Jews, but because they are Oppositionists. The intention was to clearly indicate that at the head of the Opposition stand Jews. I was not the only one to realize that they fought against us in other ways than as political opponents. Just as Stalin did not stop at anything in his fight against the Opposition, this was also possible. At a session of the Politburo at that time, I corresponded with Bukharin through notes which I still have in my archives, in which I told him: they are directing agitation against us as Jews. Bukharin answered me that he simply
couldn’t believe such a thing could play a role. I suggested then to Bukharin that the two of us go to the best factory to determine what the workers were saying. Bukharin agreed, but he confided to someone what we had arranged, and he was forbidden to do it.\textsuperscript{106}

This tendency could be noted here and there in 1924, and by 1926 it had become systematic.

On the Jewish question, first of all, I can say that it cannot be resolved within the framework of the capitalist system, nor can it be resolved by Zionism. At one time I thought that the Jews would assimilate into the peoples and cultures they lived among. This was the case in Germany and even in America, and for this reason it was possible to make such a prediction. But now it is impossible to say this. Recent history has taught us something about this. The fate of the Jews has been posed as a burning question particularly in Germany, and the Jews who had forgotten their ancestry were clearly reminded of it. I foresee a similar situation developing in France, where there are already signs of strong anti-Semitic currents, not to mention the sharp manner in which the Jewish question has been handled in the Eastern European capitalist countries in the last few years.

If capitalism continues to survive for a long time, the Jewish question will be posed in the same sharp way in all the countries where Jews live, including the USA.

I cannot say what will become of the Jews in a few hundred years, just as I do not know what will become of the Mexicans. I do know, however, that the Jewish question will only be resolved by the socialist revolution. I am talking about the Jewish question in general terms, because I know little about the internal problems of Jewish life. I can say, however, that under the socialist order, the Jews, too, can and should lead their own lives as a people, with their own culture, which has undergone a profound development in recent years. The territorial question is pertinent because it is easier for a people to carry out an economic and cultural plan when it lives in a compact mass. Under socialism that question will arise, and with the consent of those Jews who desire it, there might be a free mass emigration, which no one would be forced to join, just as in general there will be no rule of force in the socialist state. For if a group of Jews maintain that they wish to live under socialism in the Jewish culture, which makes it possible for them to live in accordance with their own way and their own spirit, then why shouldn’t they be able to do this?
Concentration in a compact place is necessary for cultural development, because this makes it easier to extend cultural influence to broad masses through a strong mass-circulation press, theater, etc. If Jews desire this, socialism will have no right to deny it to them. I want to underline that I am not saying that Jews must have a territory, because under socialism the Jews, like other peoples, will be free and secure to live wherever they reside.

The Jewish question in all its ramifications can, however, only be resolved by the proletarian revolution. For this reason, the Jewish working masses should work with and fight alongside the workers of all countries for the accomplishment of this goal.
GREETINGS TO JAMES P. CANNON

January 20, 1937

Dear Comrade Cannon:

By the march of events, I have become your neighbor; only four days of travel separate us now. Natalia and I are now ten days in Mexico. I have attempted many times to write to you of our arrival, wished to send our best greetings to you and your wife from two new citizens of the new world. But you can easily imagine the chaos which is about us and to a certain point in us; all the old and new friends, new impressions, and also new attacks on our health. Natalia suffered for more than three days from an attack of malaria. The last two days have brought an improvement in her condition. The most disquieting question for us during our long journey (twenty-one days) was the question of whether I would be able to find a Russian typist here in Mexico, the most necessary condition for all my work. This question is now happily solved. I am again at work and have found my equilibrium, and that gives me the possibility to write to you.

The five American comrades who were invaluable to us here are now about to return to the U.S. We have with us a French comrade, van Heijenoort, who is known to you. The New York comrades propose to send to us for a longer stay Comrade Bernard Wolfe. Also the Czechoslovakian comrade, Frankel, is ready to come here; but there is no definite decision about this matter.

Diego Rivera, who worked so energetically in securing our visa, has now fallen ill because of his hard work and is now in the hospital suffering from a malignant infection. His resistance to his illness is, unfortunately, insufficient, and all of us here are very depressed because of his condition.

Shachtman assured me that your own health has improved a good deal since your sojourn in California, and you can well imagine how satisfied we are with this information.

I saw with great pleasure the first four issues of your paper [Labor Action]. An excellent beginning! And if you find the
material means to continue its regular publication, it should be a great success.

Are you powerful enough in your state to secure for me a very small visa to visit you in California—only for a couple of days? If not, can we hope to see you in the more hospitable Mexico in the very near future? We would be very glad, both Natalia (who speaks of you very often with tenderness) and I.

The United States comrades were all the time so busy with practical things that we had very little opportunity to discuss the situation in the United States. Shachtman gave me only a very general picture of the successes and mentioned only in a few words certain differences that have arisen in the past period; it is unnecessary to point out to you that I cannot form an opinion on the matter at this time. In any case, I would be very glad to have information from you about your work in California, your views on the situation, and your perspectives.

My book The Revolution Betrayed will appear, I hope, in the next few weeks in New York. Naturally, you will immediately receive a copy and I shall be glad to have your opinion on it. I am now finishing a pamphlet on the Moscow trial, in Russian. I hope it will appear in the spring in New York.

I send you under separate cover a photo taken with Diego Rivera. With best greetings and wishes from Natalia and myself to Comrade Rose and you. ¹⁰⁹

Yours,
L. Trotsky
SEVENTEEN NEW VICTIMS
OF THE GPU

January 20, 1937

1. After many unconfirmed rumors, it appears, according to today’s dispatches from Moscow, that a judicial action is definitely to be started on January 23 against seventeen new victims of the GPU. This news was made public on January 19, that is, only four days before the opening of the trial. The text of the indictment is still unknown to me. The aim of this precipitous procedure is once more to take public opinion by surprise, to deprive undesirable foreigners of the opportunity of attending the trial, and above all to prevent me—the main defendant—from exposing the new frame-up in time.

2. The four defendants whose names have been given in the press are old revolutionists, members of the Central Committee of the Communist Party in Lenin’s time. Pyatakov was for no less a period than twelve years the actual director of all Soviet industry. He is charged with being the organizer of industrial sabotage. Radek was the most authoritative spokesman for the foreign policy of the USSR. He is charged with being the organizer of military intervention. Sokolnikov commanded an army during the civil war, restored Soviet finances at the time of the New Economic Policy, and afterwards was ambassador to London. He is charged with being an agent of Hitler. Serebriakov was one of the builders of the party and secretary of its Central Committee, political commissar of the southern front in the civil war, together with Stalin. He is proclaimed a traitor. The whole Political Bureau and almost the whole Central Committee of the heroic period of the revolution (except for Stalin) are proclaimed agents of the restoration of capitalism. Who will believe this?

3. Pyatakov and Serebriakov, from 1923 to 1927, were indeed my political adherents and were very close to me. Radek also, in 1926-27. Sokolnikov was connected, for a brief period, with the oppositional group of Zinoviev, Kamenev, and Lenin’s widow, Krupskaya. All four of them quit the Opposition in 1927-28. Their
break with me was absolute and final. I openly branded them as political turncoats. They repeated all the official calumnies against me. In 1932, my son, then a student in Berlin, met Pyatakov on Unter den Linden [in Berlin], but Pyatakov turned his face away from him. My son bent toward him with the epithet "Traitor!" This little episode characterizes the real relationship between the capitulators and the Trotskyists. Even in the prisons of the GPU within the USSR they remain two irreconcilable groups. The GPU has operated until now exclusively with capitulators, whom it kneads like so much dough, extorting from them the confessions it requires.

4. On September 15, I wrote to the Norwegian government: "The Soviet government does not consider it possible to demand my extradition. . . . The existence of a terrorist conspiracy . . . has now been 'established'. . . . Why do they refuse to present evidence of my guilt . . . to the Norwegian courts? . . . With a single sweep they could have dispelled the doubts about the trial held by the entire civilized world. . . . But in fact they did not do this. Why? . . . Because the whole thing is a deliberate, cold-blooded frame-up, which would not hold up under even the most remote contact with independent criticism" ['Letter to Mr. Puntervold,' in Writings 35-36].

5. In the same letter, confiscated by the Norwegian government, I said further: "Viewed in the mirror of world opinion, the Moscow trial has been a terrible fiasco. . . . The 'leaders' cannot quietly let the matter rest here. Just as the GPU was forced, after the miserable failure of the first Kirov trial in January 1935, to prepare the second trial, . . . they now have no other choice than to discover new 'assassination attempts,' new 'conspiracies,' etc." The present trial is necessary primarily in order to try to correct the contradictions, the scandalous anachronisms, and the downright absurdities of the trial of the sixteen last August.

6. In order the better to arm themselves for this new trial, the GPU organized a nocturnal burglary of my archives in Paris.112 This fact, which was made public by the whole French press, deserves serious attention. On last October 10, by means of a letter which passed through the Norwegian police, I recommended to my son, who is living in Paris, to give my papers over to the care of a scientific institution, because my archives represent my principal defense against the falsifications and calumnies ['The Safety of the Archives,' in Writings 35-36]. No sooner had my son given the first part of the archives to the
Parisian division of the Dutch Institute of Social History, than
the agents of the GPU, on November 7, burglarized the institute,
burned through the door, and bore off 187 pounds of my papers,
without touching either the money or the other objects and papers
there. It may be expected that the stolen documents will serve as
a basis for frame-ups and falsifications in the new trial. I
consider it necessary to give advance warning that I have copies
of all the stolen letters and documents.

7. In the same letter to the Norwegian government, I pointed
out in advance another aim of the coming trial. Since 1928, in the
prisons and places of deportation, there are hundreds of genuine
Trotskyists who remain the avowed opponents of the bureau­
cracy. It is impossible to implicate them in the affair of Kirov, who
was killed in 1934. It is impossible to implicate them in the
sabotage of industry, for they live outside of economic life,
without work and without a crust of bread. The trial of the
sixteen established that the epoch of terrorism dated back only to
1932. It is possible that the GPU has extorted from the accused
confessions of criminal designs going back to the period of 1923-
27, thus making it possible to exterminate the genuine cadres of
the Opposition.

8. The "man in the street" is bewildered primarily by the
confessions of the accused, who seem to be zealous auxiliaries of
the GPU. Few people can imagine the frightful form of the moral
and semiphysical torture to which the accused are subjected for
months on end and sometimes for years.

9. Friedrich Adler, the secretary of the Second International,
my political opponent, justly compares the Moscow trials with the
witch trials of the medieval Inquisition. Every woman suspected
of witchcraft ended up by repenting sincerely for her sinful
relations with the devil. The methods of the GPU are the tortures
of uncertainty and fear. Breaking down the nervous system,
crushing the willpower, trampling human dignity underfoot, the
GPU finally extorts from the accused confessions dictated in
advance by the organizers of the frame-up themselves. In the
pamphlet I am finishing, I hope to disclose thoroughly the
technique of "voluntary confessions," which now constitutes the
very foundation of Stalinist justice. I shall prove at the same time
that every one of the confessions crumbles at the slightest contact
with facts, documents, evidence, chronology, and logic.

10. A part of this critical work has already been done. He who
wants to understand the present new trial ought to know at least
one of the following two works: Leon Sedov (my son), *The Red Book on the Moscow Trial* (in French), or Max Shachtman, *The Moscow Trial—The Greatest Frame-up in History* (in English).

11. The various accusations against me personally, while invariably retaining the character of a frame-up, have changed according to the diplomatic associations of the Soviet government. I have at hand *Pravda* of March 8, 1929, where I am presented as an agent of British imperialism. The same *Pravda*, on July 2, 1931, on the basis of grossly false "facsimiles," accuses me of being an ally of Pilsudski. When, at the end of July 1933, I arrived in France, the Moscow press and all the papers of the Communist International asserted that the aim of my voyage was to help Daladier, then premier, to organize a military intervention against the Soviet Union. Finally, in the last period, I have been presented as an agent of Hitler and ally of the Gestapo.

The GPU is calculating upon gullibility, ignorance, short memories. Bad calculations! Now I have finally emerged from my Norwegian internment. I challenge the organizers of the frame-up! I do not doubt that the Mexican government, which has been so hospitable to me, will not prevent me from presenting to world public opinion the whole truth about the monstrous frame-ups of the GPU and its inspirers.

Throughout the present trial, I shall remain at the disposition of the honest and impartial press.

Leon Trotsky
Three of the January 1937 Moscow trial defendants: (top) Karl Radek (left) and Gregory Sokolnikov; (bottom) Leonid Serebriakov (left), seated with Lenin at a March 1920 party conference.
A NEW MOSCOW AMALGAM

January 21, 1937

On January 19 Tass announced that on January 23, within four days, a new trial of "Trotskyists" (Radek, Pyatakov, and others) would take place. It has been known for a long time that such a trial was in preparation, but there was no certainty that they would really dare go through with it in view of the extremely unfavorable impression created by the trial of the sixteen (Zinoviev and others). The Moscow government is now repeating the same maneuver as in the trial of the sixteen. International working class organizations cannot intervene in four days' time; dangerous witnesses cannot reply from abroad, and undesirable foreigners cannot even attempt to get into Moscow. But as far as the tried and tested "friends" of the stripe of the valiant D. N. Pritt (King's Counselor, Member of Parliament!) are concerned, naturally they have been invited to the Soviet capital in time, on this occasion as well, so that they may later sing paeans to the justice of Stalin-Vyshinsky.

When these lines appear in the press, this new trial will probably be over. The sentences will have been imposed and perhaps carried out. So far as this angle is concerned the design of the backstage directors is absolutely clear: to catch public opinion unawares and to commit rape upon it. It is all the more important to analyze the political meaning, the personal composition, the methods and aims of this ominous frame-up even before it has begun. The author therefore asks the reader to keep in mind that the present article was written on January 21, that is to say, two days prior to the opening of the trial, at a time when neither the indictments, nor even a complete list of the defendants, was known in Mexico.

The trial of the sixteen took place in the latter part of August. At the end of November in distant Siberia a second "Trotskyist" trial unexpectedly took place, a supplement to the Zinoviev-Kamenev case and a preparation for the trial of Radek-Pyatakov. The weakest point in the trial of the sixteen—there were generally no strong points in it, except for the Mauser of the executioner—
Writings of Leon Trotsky (1936-37)

was the monstrous accusation of connections with the Gestapo. Neither Zinoviev nor Kamenev, nor, generally speaking, a single one of the accused of any political standing, admitted this connection, and yet they were not chary in their admissions. Evidently there are some things which an old revolutionist cannot assume upon himself, even in a state of complete moral prostration! This sharpest accusation was sustained only by such dubious unknowns as Olberg, Berman, David, and others, who themselves were unsustained by anything.

Yet Stalin realizes that failing a “tie with the Gestapo,” his juridical frame-up is double-edged in nature. Discontented and politically backward layers of workers might ask themselves: “Terror?” “Well, it may be that there really are no other means against this oppressive bureaucracy than the revolver and the bomb.” Only a tie with fascism could morally kill the Opposition. But how to put this brand upon it? The first trial had to be propped up by a second. But before venturing on a new big show in Moscow, it was decided to have a rehearsal in the provinces. The monstrous court was this time transferred to Novosibirsk, as far as possible from Europe, the correspondents, and uninvited eyes in general.

The Novosibirsk trial was significant in bringing to the forefront a German engineer, a real or fictitious agent of the Gestapo; and in establishing—by means of ritual “confessions”—his connection with Siberian “Trotskyists” either real or fictitious, but in any case not known to me personally. This time the main stress in the indictment was placed not on terrorism but on “industrial sabotage.”

But who are these German engineers and technicians arrested in various parts of the country and apparently chosen to personify the tie between the Trotskyists and the Gestapo? I can venture to express myself only hypothetically on this score. Germans who, under the existing relations between the USSR and Germany, are so bold as to remain in the service of the Soviet government must be a priori divided into two groups: either agents of the Gestapo or agents of the GPU. Could it be otherwise? In any case, a citizen of Hitlerite Germany cannot remain in the service of the Soviets without falling into the noose of the political police either of Germany or of the USSR. A certain percentage of those arrested are, one should think, in the employ of both. The agents of the Gestapo masquerade as Communists and penetrate the GPU; Communists on the instructions of the GPU masquerade as fascists to fathom the secrets of the Gestapo.
Each agent treads the narrow path between two abysses. Could anyone conceive of more suitable material for all sorts of combinations and frame-ups? There is consequently nothing mysterious in the Novosibirsk trial as well as in the subsequent arrests of Germans.

It is much more difficult at first glance to understand the case of Pyatakov, Radek, Sokolnikov, and Serebriakov. In the course of the last eight to nine years these men, especially the first two, served the bureaucracy faithfully and sincerely: they hounded the Opposition, sang paeans to the leaders; in short they were not only servants, but ornaments of the regime. Why then did Stalin need their heads?

The son of a big Ukrainian sugar manufacturer, Pyatakov received an excellent education, among other things, in music, had knowledge of several languages, was a careful student of theoretical economics, and succeeded in familiarizing himself well with the banking business. As compared with Zinoviev and Kamenev, Pyatakov belongs to the younger generation; he is now about 46 years old. In the Opposition, or rather in the various oppositions, Pyatakov occupied a prominent place. During the world war he was aligned with Bukharin, who was at that time an extreme leftist, against Lenin and Lenin’s program of national self-determination. During the epoch of the Brest-Litovsk peace Pyatakov, together with the very same Bukharin, Radek, Yaroslavsky, Kuibyshev (now deceased), and others, belonged to the faction of “left Communists.” During the first period of the civil war he came out in the Ukraine as a violent opponent of the military policy conducted by me.

In 1923 he joined the “Trotskyists” and was a member of our leading center. Pyatakov’s name was among the six mentioned by Lenin in his testament: Trotsky, Stalin, Zinoviev, Kamenev, Bukharin, Pyatakov. But while pointing out his outstanding capabilities, Lenin immediately added that Pyatakov was not to be relied upon politically, inasmuch as both he and Bukharin have formalistic minds, lacking in dialectic flexibility. However, in contradistinction to Bukharin, Pyatakov possesses exceptional qualities as an administrator, which he displayed on a considerable scale during the epoch of the Soviet regime.

As early as 1925, Pyatakov weared of the Opposition and of politics generally. Administrative work provided him with ample satisfaction. By tradition and in his personal contacts he still remained a “Trotskyist” until the end of 1927, but at the beginning of the first wave of repressions he decisively broke with the past, surrendered his Opposition sword, and submerged
himself in the bureaucracy. While Zinoviev and Kamenev, despite their repentances, remained in disrepute, Pyatakov was immediately included in the Central Executive Committee and permanently retained the high post of deputy people's commissar of heavy industry. In his education, in his ability to think systematically, in his administrative outlook, Pyatakov excels the official chief of heavy industry, Ordzhonikidze, who operates rather by his authority as member of the Political Bureau, by domineering and bullying.

And now in 1937 it is suddenly disclosed that the man who in full view of the government had managed heavy industry for some twelve years turns out in reality to be not only a "terrorist" but also a saboteur and an agent of the Gestapo.

Radek—now about fifty-four years of age—is merely a journalist. He possesses the brilliant traits of this category and all its faults as well. Radek's education may perhaps best be characterized as extremely erudite. His definitive knowledge of the Polish movement, his long participation in the German Social Democracy, his attentive study of the world press, especially English and American, broadened his mental horizon, invested his mind with greater mobility and armed it with an innumerable variety of examples, comparisons, and, in the last analysis, anecdotes. Radek, however, lacks that quality which Ferdinand Lassalle called the "physical force of the mind."

Radek was always more of a guest than a fundamental participant among different sorts of political groupings. His mind is too impulsive and mobile for systematized work. From his articles one may gather a great deal of information; his paradoxes are likely to illuminate a question from an unexpected angle; but Radek was never an independent politician. There is no foundation whatever for any talk that during certain periods Radek was the master in the Commissariat of Foreign Affairs and well-nigh determined the foreign policy of the Soviet government. The Political Bureau valued Radek's talents but never took him seriously. At the Seventh Party Congress (1918) during the discussion of the Brest-Litovsk peace, Lenin twice repeated the same cruel statement: "Radek has succeeded today in accidentally expressing a serious thought." In an exaggerated polemical form we find expressed here the attitude to Radek held not only by Lenin himself but also by his closest collaborators.

From 1923 to 1926 Radek vacillated between the Left Opposition in Russia and the Right Communist Opposition in Germany (Brandler, Thalheimer, etc.). At the moment of the open break
between Stalin and Zinoviev in 1926 Radek attempted to swing the Left Opposition into a bloc with Stalin. (That was precisely the occasion on which the ill-starred Mrachkovsky, one of the victims of the trial of the sixteen, spoke the winged words: “Neither with Stalin, nor with Zinoviev. Stalin will deceive, Zinoviev will run away.”) Radek, however, participated for two or three years in the Left Opposition and thus in the Trotsky-Zinoviev Oppositionist bloc.

But even within the Opposition he would invariably fling himself now to the right, now to the left. In 1929 Radek capitulated not with any concealed designs—oh no!—he capitulated full-heartedly, completely burned all bridges behind him to become the most outstanding mouthpiece of the bureaucracy. During the years that ensued there was no accusation that he did not fling at the Opposition, there was no praise that he did not offer up to Stalin. He could not sabotage industry for he had absolutely nothing to do with it. Sabotage . . . the press? But his articles speak for themselves. Terroristic acts? But it is utterly ludicrous to speak of this in connection with Radek. During the trial of the sixteen Radek, as well as Pyatakov, poured buckets of filthy accusations on the defendants, after the fashion of Vyshinsky, the prosecutor. How did Radek, nevertheless, land on the defendants' bench?

Two others no less notable among the accused—Serebriakov and Sokolnikov—are of the same generation as Pyatakov. Serebriakov is one of the most outstanding worker-Bolsheviks. He was among the comparatively narrow circle of the builders of the Bolshevik Party during the hard years between the two revolutions. He was a member of the Central Committee under Lenin—at one time even served as its secretary—and because of his psychological insight and tact, he played a major part in reconciling all sorts of internal party conflicts. Well-poised, calm, devoid of vanity, Serebriakov enjoyed wide popularity in the party. From 1923 to the end of 1927, he, along with I. N. Smirnov, who was shot in the case of the sixteen, occupied a prominent place in the leadership of the Left Opposition. In facilitating the rapprochement with the Zinoviev group (“the Opposition of 1926”) and in mitigating internal friction within the Oppositionist bloc, Serebriakov unquestionably played the principal role. However, the onset of Thermidorean moods broke this person just as it broke many others. Having done with political aspirations for all time, Serebriakov capitulated to the rulers—to be sure, in a more dignified manner, but no less decisively, than the rest. He
returned from exile to Moscow, came on an important mission to the United States, and peacefully did his work in the Department of Railways. Like so many other capitulators he had already half-succeeded in forgetting his Oppositionist past. But Serebriakov, at the order of the GPU, was named by the accused in the trial of the sixteen in connection with "terrorism" with which they themselves had nothing whatever to do. That was the price they paid for the hope of saving their lives.

In April 1917 the fourth defendant, Sokolnikov, arrived in Russia along with Lenin from Switzerland in the so-called "sealed train," and immediately assumed a prominent place in the Bolshevik Party. During the decisive months of the revolutionary year Sokolnikov along with Stalin comprised the editorial board of the central organ of the party. But while Stalin, despite the legend that was manufactured later, assumed during all the critical moments a temporizing or vacillating position, so strikingly reflected in the subsequently published minutes of the Central Committee, Sokolnikov, on the other hand, energetically pushed that line which in party discussions of that time was called "the Lenin-Trotsky line." During the years of the civil war Sokolnikov occupied very responsible posts and at one time was even in command of the Eighth Army at the Southern Front. During the NEP period, in the capacity of people's commissar of finance, he established a more or less stable chervonets [currency]. He later served as Soviet ambassador in London.

A highly gifted man with an extensive education and an international outlook, Sokolnikov, however, like Radek, was given to great political vacillations. On most important economic questions he was more in sympathy with the right than with the left wing of the party. He never entered into the United Opposition center which existed from 1926 to 1927, but retained full freedom of action. He announced his support of the official policy amid the general applause of the delegates at the very same Fifteenth Party Congress (at the end of 1927) at which the Left Opposition was expelled from the party. Sokolnikov was immediately reelected to the Central Committee and, like all the capitulators, ceased to play a political role. But in contrast to Zinoviev and Kamenev, whom Stalin feared, even in their degradation, as far too important figures, Sokolnikov, like Pyatakov and Radek, was immediately assimilated by the bureaucracy as a Soviet dignitary. Is it not astounding that after ten years of peaceful political work this man is now being accused of the gravest crimes against the state? (The latest cable dispatches
mention among the accused the names of Muralov, the hero of the 1905 revolution, one of the builders of the Red Army and later the deputy people's commissar of agriculture; Boguslavsky, former chairman of the Voronezh Soviet, later chairman of the "Small Council of People's Commissars," the most important commission of the Council of People's Commissars in Moscow; Drobnis, the chairman of the Poltava Soviet, whom the Whites placed before the firing squad but in their haste did not wound mortally. If Soviet power was able to maintain itself from 1918 to 1921, it was in a large measure due to people of this type.)

How could these Old Bolsheviks, who went through the jails and exiles of czarism, who were the heroes of the civil war, the leaders of industry, the builders of the party, diplomats, turn out at the moment of "the complete victory of socialism" to be saboteurs, allies of fascism, organizers of espionage, agents of capitalist restoration? Who can believe such accusations? How can anyone be made to believe them? And why is Stalin compelled to tie up the fate of his personal rule with these monstrous, impossible, nightmarish juridical trials?

First and foremost, I must reaffirm the conclusion I had previously drawn that the top rulers feel themselves more and more shaky. The degree of repression is always in proportion to the magnitude of the danger. The omnipotence of the Soviet bureaucracy, its privileges, its lavish mode of life, are not cloaked by any tradition, any ideology, any legal norms. The Soviet bureaucracy is a caste of upstarts trembling for their power, for their revenues, standing in fear of the masses, and ready to punish by fire and sword not only every attempt upon their rights but even the slightest doubt of their infallibility. Stalin is the embodiment of these feelings and moods of the ruling caste: therein lies his strength and his weakness. To perpetuate the rule of the bureaucracy under the cover of democratic phrases—that is the task of the new constitution, the meaning of which is revealed much better by the speeches of Vyshinsky, the prosecutor, the Menshevik careerist, than by the colorless rhetoric of Stalin at the last Congress of Soviets. That is the political basis of the new trials.

The ruling caste is unable, however, to punish the Opposition for its real thoughts and actions. The unremitting repressions are precisely for the purpose of preventing the masses from learning the real program of "Trotskyism," which demands first of all more equality and more freedom for the masses. In the land of the October Revolution, the struggle of the Bonapartist caste against
the Opposition is unthinkable otherwise than by means of lies, frame-ups, and juridical frauds. In all the exposes of "Trotskyism" there is never a single honest quotation, just as in all the trials against it there is not a single piece of material evidence. The articles are based upon fraudulent combinations and abuse (the foreign press of the Communist International is in this respect but a pale image of the Moscow press). The trials are based wholly and exclusively on the so-called "voluntary confessions" of the accused.

The reader should bear in mind that the Left Opposition is already in the fourteenth year of its existence. Through it have passed hundreds of thousands of party members. Tens of thousands were arrested, were exiled, perished in jail and exile, and were shot. If the Opposition were really hostile to the Soviet Union and socialism, and in the service of hostile states, and resorting to terror, etc., then during the innumerable raids, arrests, interceptions of letters, etc., the GPU should in the course of fourteen years have accumulated vast archives of material proofs. Yet up to now not a single genuine letter, not a single document, not a single impeccable piece of evidence has figured at any of the trials. What takes place behind closed doors can only be surmised. But during the public shows the entire court procedure centers around the self-accusations of the defendants. To D. N. Pritt, the idealistic British defender of the GPU, to Rosenmark, his French colleague, and to other jurists of the same stripe, such court procedure may appear to be wholly normal, almost ideal. To ordinary mortals it looks like a mockery of common sense and of human nature.

In the month of August, sixteen defendants vied with the prosecutor and with each other for a death penalty for themselves. The terrible terrorists suddenly became transformed into flagellants, into the seekers of a martyr's crown. Pyatakov and Radek came out in those days with rabid articles in Pravda against the defendants, demanding several deaths for all of them. When these lines appear in the press, Tass [news agency], one should imagine, will have informed the entire world that Radek and Pyatakov had repented wholeheartedly of their own impossible crimes, and had demanded the death penalty for themselves.

Despite all the Pritts and Rosenmarks, I say, together with Friedrich Adler, secretary of the Second International, that what we have before us is a typical Inquisitorial trial, with every witch wholeheartedly repenting of her evil relations with the devil.

The GPU is unable to compel genuine unbending revolutionists
A New Moscow Amalgam

to assume upon themselves despicable accusations, even under the threat of death. To stage a trial against “Trotskyism” the GPU is therefore compelled to make use of capitulators, my bitter opponents, who have been periodically repenting for the last ten years and from whom an admission can be forced at any moment. It is for this reason that we have witnessed the incredible but at the same time inevitable fact that up to now on the defendant’s bench there has not appeared a single genuine “Trotskyist”!

To invest the trials with even a semblance of plausibility, Stalin requires whenever possible well-known and authoritative figures of Old Bolsheviks. “It cannot be that these old revolutionists are slandering themselves so monstrously,” every inexperienced person, every average simpleminded man will say. “It cannot be that Stalin would shoot his own former comrades, guiltless of any crime.” It is precisely upon this lack of information, naivete, and gullibility of the average citizen that all the calculations of the chief organizer of the Moscow trials, the Cesare Borgia of our time, are based.

In the trial of the sixteen Stalin used up his biggest trump cards: Zinoviev and Kamenev. In the psychological narrowness which underlies his primitive cunning, he firmly calculated that the repentance of Zinoviev and Kamenev, sealed by their execution, would once and for all convince the entire world. It proved otherwise. The world was not convinced. The more perspicacious did not believe. Their mistrust, reinforced by criticism, spreads in ever wider circles. The top Soviet rulers cannot abide this in any case. Their national and world reputation stands and falls with the Moscow trial. As far back as September 15 of last year, two weeks after I was interned in Norway, I wrote as follows in a statement intended for the press: “Viewed in the mirror of world opinion, the Moscow trial has been a terrible fiasco. . . . The ‘leaders’ cannot quietly let the matter rest here. Just as the GPU was forced, after the miserable failure of the first Kirov trial in January 1935, to prepare the second trial (August 1936), . . . they now have no other choice than to discover new ‘assassination attempts,’ new ‘conspiracies,’ etc.” [“Letter to Mr. Puntervold,” in Writings 35-36]. Although the Norwegian government confiscated my statement, it has not thereby lost any of its force. The new trial is above all necessary to reinforce the old one, to fill in its cracks, to mask the contradictions already laid bare by criticism.

We may expect that the prosecutor will this time seek to tie up
the "voluntary confessions" of the defendants with some sort of documents. It was for this reason that the GPU burglarized a part of my archives in Paris last November 7. This act may acquire the greatest significance in the mechanics of the coming trial and therefore already merits serious attention. On October 10 of last year I wrote to my son in Paris: "The GPU is going to do everything in its power to get its hands on my archives. It would be best to deposit them with an established scientific institution. . . . It would be even better perhaps to find an American institute. You can write to our American friends as a preliminary measure. This question can become very pressing" ["The Safety of the Archives," in Writings 35-36]. This letter like all the others passed through the Norwegian censors and through my lawyer: its authenticity is therefore beyond any doubt. My son immediately took steps to place the archives in the Paris section of the Dutch Institute of Social History headed by Professor Posthumus.

But no sooner had my son transferred the first part of the Paris archives than the Institute was raided at night. In the morning the outside door was found blown with a torch and 187 pounds of my papers had disappeared from the safes. Only mine were taken, even the money on the premises remaining untouched. The Paris police had to admit that the most qualified French gangsters were unacquainted with such exceptional technique. With the exception of the organs of the Comintern all the newspapers wrote openly or in a semi-masked form that the burglary was the work of the GPU. The investigation is still on. Will it bring any results? I doubt it! Excessive zeal in the investigation would threaten diplomatic complications.

The major part of the stolen material consists, to be sure, of old newspapers. The agents of the GPU were in too much of a hurry with their raid. Nevertheless a small section of my correspondence did fall into their hands. Needless to say, among the stolen material there is not a single line which might directly or indirectly compromise either myself or my friends. And this is not all. In the first place, a man having in his possession compromising documents does not hand them over packed in ordinary paper to a scientific institution. In the second place—and this is primary—my archives are of importance to me precisely because they contain all my correspondence, without any gaps, and can therefore prove at any time my best defense in any open and honest court.
But the GPU will indubitably utilize the seized portion of my correspondence in order better to prepare the factual and chronological canvas for its accusations. Let us not forget that in the trial of the sixteen the GPU compelled the chief witness against me, the defendant Goltsman, to have a meeting in Copenhagen with my son, who was never in his life in Copenhagen (this circumstance can fortunately be proved incontrovertibly), and moreover the meeting presumably took place in the Hotel Bristol . . . which was torn down as far back as 1917. Embarrassing slips­ups of this kind can this time be avoided by Vyshinsky with the aid of the seized archives. But the GPU may go further: it may transform my documents into a sort of palimpsest, superimposing upon them its own revised and improved text. I have already given warning on January 20 through the world press that I possess copies of the seized documents.

Radek, Pyatakov, Serebriakov, and Sokolnikov are—if we exclude Rakovsky, who is as yet untouched—the most authoritative of the capitulators left among the living. Stalin has evidently decided to "use them up" in order to cover up the blunders of the previous trial. But this is not all. In the case of the sixteen only terrorism was involved, and this terrorism of many years' duration was reduced in action to the murder of Kirov, a secondary political figure, by the entirely unknown Nikolaev (with the closest participation of the GPU, as I proved back in 1934). No fewer than 200 people have been executed, after various trials and without any trials, for the assassination of Kirov!

Now it is impossible endlessly to use Kirov's corpse for the purpose of destroying the entire Opposition, all the more so because the real old Oppositionists who did not recant and who did not capitulate have remained in jail and exile since 1928. The new trial therefore advances new accusations: economic sabotage, military espionage, aiding in the restoration of capitalism, and even attempting the "mass destruction of the workers" (one can hardly believe one's eyes on reading this!). Under these formulas it is possible to include anything and everything the heart desires. If Pyatakov, the actual director of industry during the two five year plans, turns out to be the chief organizer of sabotage, then what remains to be said of ordinary mortals? In passing, the bureaucracy will seek to unload its economic failures, miscalculations, disproportions, embezzlements, and other abuses upon . . . the Trotskyists, who are now fulfilling in the USSR the identical function served by Jews and Communists in
Germany. It is not difficult to imagine what vile accusations and insinuations will be thereby raised against me personally!

The new trial, if one is to judge from recent intimations in the Soviet press, must solve still another problem. According to the trial of the sixteen, the history of "Trotskyist terror" dates from 1932 and thereby renders invulnerable to the executioner all the Trotskyists who have been sitting in jail since 1928. There is much that compels one to think that the accused in the new trial will be called upon to confess crimes or plots dating back to the time when they had not yet managed to repent. In that case, hundreds of old Oppositionists must automatically face the muzzle of the revolver.

But is it conceivable that Radek, Pyatakov, Sokolnikov, Serebriakov, and others will take to the road of self-accusations after the tragic experience of the sixteen? Zinoviev, Kamenev, and the others had hopes of salvation. Five days prior to their execution Stalin enacted a special law giving the right of appeal to those sentenced to death by a military court for terrorist crimes. The psychological import of this decree was to maintain to the very end, until the curtain dropped, the flicker of hope in the hearts of the accused. They were duped. In return for confessions, which meant moral death, they were paid with physical death. Has this lesson really taught nothing to Radek and the others? We shall learn about that shortly. But it is not correct to picture the matter as if the new group of victims has any freedom of choice. Night and day, for months, these men have watched the pendulum of death descending, slowly but relentlessly, upon their heads. Those among the accused who stubbornly refuse to confess according to the dictates of the prosecutor, are shot by the GPU without a trial. That is the mechanism of the investigation. To Radek, Pyatakov, and the others the GPU leaves a shadow of hope.

—But did you not shoot Zinoviev and Kamenev?

—Yes, we shot them because that was necessary, because they were hidden enemies, because they refused to confess their ties with the Gestapo, because they . . . etc. . . . and so forth. . . . But we do not have to shoot you. You must help us to root out completely the Opposition and to compromise Trotsky in the eyes of world public opinion. For this service we will make you a present of your lives. After a certain time we may even restore you to work . . . etc. . . . etc. . . .

Of course, after all that has happened, neither Radek nor
Pyatakov nor all the rest (especially if during the investigation they were aware of the shooting of Zinoviev and Kamenev, which has yet to be proved) can place any great store upon such promises. But on the one side they face certain, inevitable, and immediate death, while on the other . . . there is also death but illumined with a few sparks of hope. In such cases, men, especially hounded, tortured, shattered, and degraded men, incline towards postponement and hope. . . .

Such is the political and psychological background of the new Moscow frame-up. The task of this introductory article is to assist the reader in analyzing the greatest political crime of our epoch and, perhaps, of all epochs; or to put it more correctly, a whole series of crimes which pursue the one and only aim of maintaining the rule of the Bonapartist clique over the people of Russia who made the October Revolution.
An Unmistakable Sign of Sharp Political Crisis in the USSR

January 22, 1937

It was scarcely a few days ago that I told the representatives of the Mexican press that my most fervent desire is to live in seclusion and attract as little public attention as possible, devoting all my time to my book on Lenin. But the new Moscow trial has once again obliged me to promote the Mexican press to the top of my agenda. I am profoundly and especially interested in seeing that public opinion in the country that has accorded me hospitality is not influenced against me by this systematic campaign of lies and slanders. And I haven’t the slightest doubt that the primary purpose of the new trial beginning in Moscow is to discredit me before world public opinion.

I must seek the cooperation of El Nacional in order to clarify the real state of affairs.

I am a revolutionist and a Marxist. Next March marks the fortieth consecutive year that I have been active in the revolutionary workers' movement. Conceiving me as its "enemy number one," the Soviet leadership clique wants to convince the entire world that for unknown reasons I betrayed my lifelong ideals by becoming an enemy of socialism and an advocate of capitalist restoration, and that I have entered into an alliance with the German fascists and employ terrorist methods. According to the latest dispatches, my supporters in the Soviet Union have been accused of industrial sabotage, of engaging in military espionage for Germany, and even of planning to eliminate en masse workers in arms supply production centers. Reading these lines gives one the impression of being in an insane asylum. In reality, I remain, as always, a fervent supporter of all the social gains of the October Revolution, but at the same time I irreconcilably oppose the craving of the new caste in power to exclusively
control the gains of the revolution for the attainment of its own selfish ends.

The group that is currently in power says: “I am the state.” However, the Opposition does not equate the Soviet state with Joseph Stalin. If I thought that by means of individual terror or by sabotaging industry, social progress could be hastened and the situation of the working masses improved, I would not hesitate to openly advance these ideas. Throughout my entire life I have been accustomed to say what I thought and do what I pledged to do, but I have always maintained and still do maintain that individual terrorism encourages reaction rather than revolution, and that sabotage of the economy shatters the foundation of all progress. The GPU and its animator, Stalin, impute absurd ideas and monstrous methods to me with the sole aim of discrediting me before the Soviet working masses and the entire world.

When Zinoviev nominated Stalin for secretary general of the Communist Party at the beginning of 1922, Lenin said: “I don’t advise this. This cook will prepare only spicy dishes.” Lenin didn’t immediately realize just how spicy Stalin’s dishes would be. Why has Stalin instituted these loathsome trials, which only discredit the Soviet Union before the entire world? On the one hand, the leadership clique says that socialism has already been established in the USSR and that the era of prosperity has begun. On the other hand, the same people assert that Lenin’s collaborators, the Old Bolsheviks, who carried the weight of the revolution on their shoulders and who were all members of the Old Bolshevik Central Committee, have all, with the exception of Stalin, become enemies of socialism and allies of Hitler. Isn’t this an obvious absurdity? Is it possible to devise any more pernicious slander, not only against the unfortunate defendants, but against the entire Bolshevik Party and the October Revolution? The leadership clique attempts to use such measures to force every worker and peasant to think that criticizing the despotism of the bureaucracy, its privileges, arbitrary acts, and violations of legality, is tantamount to being an agent of fascism.

As the anachronism of the new absolutism and the new aristocracy becomes more obvious to the popular masses, Stalin is compelled to cook up ever spicier and more poisonous dishes. The new Moscow trial is unmistakably symptomatic of the sharp political crisis that is emerging in the USSR.

I am intimately acquainted with seven of the defendants whose
names are mentioned in today's dispatches—Radek, Pyatakov, Sokolnikov, Serebriakov, Muralov, Boguslavsky, and Drobins.\textsuperscript{117} All of them played very important roles in the Bolshevik Party and the revolution, all of them belonged to the Opposition at one time, and all of them—with the probable exception of Muralov, who withdrew from political activity—capitulated to the bureaucracy in 1928 and 1929. The bitterest animosity prevails between the Oppositionists and the capitulators in the USSR. I have not had the slightest contact with any of the defendants since 1928, and I consider them irreconcilable political opponents. However, I do not doubt for an instant that none of the people mentioned could have engaged in terrorism, sabotage, or espionage. If the accused themselves confess their alleged crimes, this is only because the GPU uses methods of interrogation like those of the Inquisition. Any of the accused who refuse to make the statements demanded of them are summarily shot. Only those defendants whose will has been definitively broken and those who have agreed to make statements dictated to them from above are placed in the dock.

Will it be possible to save the seventeen new victims of the GPU? I do not know. This depends precisely on world public opinion. If the working masses, the democratic press, and progressive parties and groups in general raise their voices in a timely protest, they will probably succeed this time in saving the seventeen new defendants.

As for what concerns me personally, I am prepared to go before any free and impartial jury, any preliminary commission of inquiry whatsoever, to demonstrate with irrefutable facts, letters, documents, and witnesses that the Moscow "Trotskyist" trial is a terrible falsification and that the real culprits are not the accused but the accusers.
January 23, 1937

The new trial, as it appears from the first dispatch, is again based on the "voluntary" confessions of the defendants. Where in the entire history of the world is it possible to find an example of terrorists, traitors, and spies who have carried out their criminal work over the course of several years and then, all of them, as though by command, repented their crimes? Only an Inquisitorial court is capable of obtaining such results. All the defendants who refuse to repent upon command are shot right at the time of the investigation. Only those demoralized victims who endeavor to save their lives at the price of moral death land in the dock.

The main witness to come out against me at this time is apparently Radek. In December 1935, I allegedly wrote him a letter about the necessity for an alliance with the Japanese and the Germans. I declare:

1. I terminated all my relations with Radek in 1928. I have in my hands correspondence testifying to a definitive break. For the last eight years, I have written about Radek only in a tone of contempt.

2. Radek is a talented journalist, not a politician. None of the party leaders ever took Radek seriously. At the party congress of 1918, Lenin twice said: "Today Radek accidentally uttered a serious thought." Such was our general attitude toward Radek, even in the years of good personal relations. Why would I choose Radek for the position of confidential agent? Why didn't Zinoviev, Kamenev, and Smirnov, people who were incomparably more responsible and serious, ever mention a word about this letter and my plans for the dismemberment of the USSR?

3. Radek allegedly communicated with me through the Izvestia correspondent Vladimir Romm. I hear his name for the first time. With this personage I had no connections whatsoever, either direct or indirect. The dispatch reports that Romm has been arrested. Let Romm immediately show the court when and where
he met me or my representatives. Let him depict the scene, the situation, and the physical appearance of me or my representatives. In this, let him avoid repeating defendant Goltsman’s blunders: Goltsman allegedly met my son in Copenhagen, where my son never was, at the Hotel Bristol, which had been torn down in 1917.

All these “details” recede to second place, however, in the face of the basic absurdity of the charge. No one will dare to deny that in my practical activities, literary work, and extensive correspondence there can be observed, over the course of forty years, consistent revolutionary thinking on the basis of Marxism. Can any grown person who is not an imbecile imagine even for a minute that I am capable of entering into an alliance with Hitler against the USSR and the Danube countries, or into an alliance with Japanese militarism against China and the USSR? The absurdity of the charge exceeds even its baseness! But precisely as a result of this will it fall apart. The press of the Comintern, i.e., the press of the GPU, will erupt with slanders. The independent and honest press will help me to prove the truth. By means of arguments, witnesses, depositions, documents, and finally, by my entire life’s work, I am immeasurably better armed than all the accusers of the GPU. The Mexican government, which has extended to me the most generous hospitality, will not prevent me, I firmly hope, from carrying through the unmasking of Moscow’s high crimes to the end.
WHY THIS TRIAL SEEMED NECESSARY

January 23, 1937

The new Moscow trial provokes astonishment in the principal circles of public opinion. However, the second trial was prepared during the first. The principal defendants of the present trial were named by the accused in the first trial of sixteen.

It is possible to say that the GPU carefully prepared for a backup trial. If the first trial had convinced the world, the second would not have been necessary.

But the first trial, in spite of its sixteen cadavers, was a cruel fiasco. That in itself makes necessary the second trial. It is necessary to understand that the suspicion provoked by the first trial has expanded more and more and has inevitably penetrated the Soviet Union.

The political destiny of its perpetrators and, in particular, the personal dictatorship of Stalin were directly dependent upon the response of world opinion to the question: Is it true that Trotsky, Zinoviev, Kamenev, and the others were the allies of the Gestapo, the agents of foreign imperialism; or is it that Stalin, struggling to maintain his personal domination, has taken recourse to the methods of Cesare Borgia?

It is in this manner and only this that the present question is put. Stalin plays a great game with an enormous risk. But he is no longer free to do what he wishes. The struggle against the Opposition, and all opposition, has been based for fourteen years on lies, slander, and falsification. This trial represents a geometric progression. Its last step was the trial of Zinoviev. It has discredited Stalin more.

For that reason a new trial seemed necessary to hide the fiasco. The trial of the sixteen was based on terrorism. The new trial, as may be seen from the first reports, gives first place not to terrorism but to the alleged alliance of the Trotskyists with Germany and Japan against the Soviet Union for the sabotage of industry and even mass extermination of the workers.
They tell us that the depositions of Zinoviev and Kamenev were voluntary, sincere and corresponding to the facts. Zinoviev and Kamenev represent me as the principal leader of the plot. Why did they never speak of the plans for the dismemberment of the Soviet Union and the destruction of the military factories?

Perhaps they, the chiefs of the so-called Trotsky-Zinoviev Center, did not know what those now accused, persons of the second category, know.

Here, it seems to us from the prior reports, the Achilles’ heel appears. For a thinking person it is evident that a new amalgam has been prepared in the interval between the execution of the sixteen and today.

In reality, in the new accusation, as in the first, there is not a word of truth. The gigantic frame-up is being carried out in the same manner as a chess puzzle.

I believe it is necessary to recall that since 1927 I have not ceased to warn the Opposition that in the struggle of the despotic caste against the people, Stalin would inevitably have recourse to bloody amalgams. I wrote in the Opposition journal on March 4, 1929, that “There remains only one thing for Stalin: to try to draw a line of blood between the official party and the Opposition. He absolutely must connect the Opposition with terrorist crimes, armed insurrection, etc.” [“What Is the Immediate Aim of Exiling Trotsky?” in Writings 1929].

In this sense, the Moscow trials have not surprised me.

I reserve the right to answer all the revelations of the new trial in detail. At the present moment I wish to appeal again, not in my own interests but in the name of elementary political hygiene, for the creation of an international body of investigation by outstanding personalities from different countries.

To such a commission I will submit all my correspondence from 1928 on. It is complete. Together with my books and articles, my correspondence gives a full picture of my political beliefs and activities.

That is why on November 7 of the past year the GPU tried to steal my archives. They succeeded in taking only an unimportant part.

I reassert my defiance of the organizers of the frame-ups. If they have proof, if they do not fear the light, they will come to face an international commission in the free press. I, for my part, promise to demonstrate before such a commission that Stalin is the organizer of the greatest political crimes in world history.
WHOSE CONSPIRACY?121

January 23, 1937

It is unnecessary to state that since 1928 I have had no relations whatever with Radek and Pyatakov, who have periodically insulted me in the official press. Pyatakov never visited me in Oslo, and I have never been in Oslo, except in company with the Knudsen family and my own secretaries. I have never known Vladimir Romm, who is alleged to have played the part of intermediary between myself and Radek. I have abundant documentary evidence to prove the impossibility of any meeting or personal relations between myself and the men who are now accused in Moscow.

First, how can one accept the fact that all the men who carried through the revolution, with one exception—Stalin—have become terrorists, enemies of socialism, agents of the Gestapo, ready to dismember the USSR?

Second, how is it that these “criminals,” who for nearly ten years have been committing terrible crimes, can suddenly repent and, after having demanded death for others, suddenly demand it for themselves?

Third, how is one to explain that Zinoviev, Kamenev, and other leaders of this alleged “Trotskyist” group, knew nothing about this grotesque plan to dismember the USSR for the benefit of Hitler and the Mikado, while Radek, whom none of us ever took seriously, suddenly reveals himself at the head of a world conspiracy?

If there is any conspiracy, it is the conspiracy of the GPU. It there is any leader, his name is Stalin. Stalin’s totalitarian dictatorship has come into ever more serious conflict with the economic and cultural development of the country. He is the embodiment of the bureaucracy. The spirit of daring which he learned in the school of the revolution is now applied only to maintain his own omnipotence and his own privileges by methods that are fantastic in criminal ingenuity.
This last trial shows that a terrible political crisis is approaching in Russia.
I am ready to denounce Stalin before any impartial and authoritative international commission. I make this appeal to all men of goodwill and to all that section of the press which is honest and independent. I know full well that the *Manchester Guardian* will be one of the first to serve the truth and humanity.
NOT A SINGLE WORD IS TRUE

January 24, 1937

The charges in the present Moscow trial are framed with one object—that of exploiting international relations in order to suppress internal enemies. Stalin has invented nothing new. He is merely repeating several previous cases in an exaggerated form.

It is alleged, for instance, that in 1935 I wrote through Vladimir Romm (ex-correspondent of Izvestia in Washington), of whom I have never heard, to Radek, with whom I have had no relations since 1928, telling him it was necessary to restore the capitalist system in the Soviet Union.

But this is exactly what is now being done by the new aristocracy of which Stalin is the head. Stalin is therefore merely trying to attribute to me through the person of Radek the very policy which I publicly accuse him of putting into practice.

For a fuller statement of this see my last book, The Revolution Betrayed, already published in France, which will soon appear in English.

Then it is also alleged that I insisted in secret letters, which cannot be seen, that German and Japanese capital should be admitted to Russia. In actual fact, I urged in the press, at the very moment when Hitler was stretching out his hands to seize power, that the Red Army should be mobilized on the western frontiers of the Soviet Union as a demonstration in order to support and encourage the German proletariat. In the international press I denounced Stalin, who began to seek Hitler’s favor immediately after his triumph. In articles which I wrote on the Red Army in 1934, which are published in several papers, I prophesied that Japan would come to grief in the plains of Eastern Siberia.

For the last several years, second place in the list of all these international associates who rail against me belonged to Goebbels, who comes only after Stalin himself. In 1934, posters denouncing Trotsky and all Trotskyists covered the billboards in
Berlin. Those workers in Germany who thought as I do are now serving terms of hard labor in concentration camps. The Nazis in Norway, who are closely connected to the German Nazis, broke into the house where I was domiciled on August 6 last year and, like the Stalinists themselves, demanded my expulsion from the country.

Only in the totalitarian state of Stalin, where the soviets, the workers' organizations, the press, and the Bolshevik Party are all stifled, only in that state where the bureaucracy alone can speak—a privilege that has been established as a monopoly of falsehood—only there could a trial so obviously staged as this one take place.

What could I hope to gain from an alliance with the Mikado and Hitler? Power? To what end? Why, even the most stubborn White Russians exiled by the revolution have abandoned the idea of intervention.

As a result of the defeat of the proletariat throughout the world, my views are represented only by a tiny minority in every country. These circumstances cannot now be changed, either by assassinating the Soviet bureaucracy or by forming an alliance with Japan and Germany.

In attributing such aims to me Stalin wishes, among other things, to compromise me before public opinion in democratic countries, and in this way deprive me of finding asylum anywhere.

I reject all the statements concerning me made by the defendants. Not a single word is true. I consider that my political task is, before everything else, to destroy the control which the Soviet bureaucracy now has over an important section of the working class of the world. This political and theoretical work, which is not secret and which anyone may inspect and criticize, gives me every satisfaction because it is devoted to mankind of the future.
ON ROMM

January 24, 1937

Vladimir Romm was not included in the original list of defendants. He is arrested only now, at the last moment.

I put the question: If Romm was the contact man between me and Radek, and if he confessed to carrying five letters, why was he not arrested simultaneously with Radek’s confession? My hypothesis is that Romm’s whole story was concocted after my arrival in the New World. And what is the reason?

They are afraid in Moscow of the fact that I have some sympathy from American public opinion. They want to make it impossible for me to go to the United States for one day, and even to remain in Mexico. Romm’s and Radek’s confessions are made particularly to compromise me before public opinion in the United States.

I can only repeat that I did not send any letter to Radek, and I did not have any idea that Vladimir Romm existed, as was self-evident yesterday when I told news reporters that I believed him to be Rome correspondent of Izvestia, and did not know that Romm was his name.

I will be very happy if Radek or his contact man, Romm, would present to the Moscow court letters written by me or any representative of mine. But I believe that the defendants will be forced to declare that the letters are destroyed.

My hypothesis concerning the objective of the introduction of this new personality is solidly confirmed by the deposition that “he agreed to keep Trotsky informed on Washington happenings.” It would be fine if he would give an example of the type of happening in Washington that I could learn from him and not from the American newspapers, including the Communist press.

That Radek supported the testimony of Romm is completely natural, because both read only the dictation of the GPU.
I state:

1. I have never given terrorist instructions to anyone; nor could I, in accordance with my principles, have done so; and in general I have been unable to recommend this method of struggle.

2. I have always been and continue to be an irreconcilable enemy of both fascism and Japanese militarism.

3. The only time I had the opportunity to meet with Japanese or German officials was when I was a member of the government. Since 1928 I have seen no representatives of Germany or Japan and I have had no contact with them, direct or indirect.

4. I have not recommended, nor could I have recommended, an alliance with fascism or Japanese militarism against the USSR, the United States, or the Balkan or Danube countries.

5. I have not recommended, nor could I have recommended, such absurd and monstrous crimes as industrial sabotage, destruction of railways, or the assassination of workers. The very necessity of disclaiming this kind of accusation, after forty years of activity in the ranks of the working class, provokes physical disgust in me.

6. Since 1928 I have had no relations with Radek, I have written him no letters, and I have given him no instructions whatsoever.

7. I have never had any relations of any kind with Vladimir Romm, who was the alleged intermediary between Radek and me. Only through the most recent dispatches have I found out that Romm was the Izvestia correspondent in Washington.

8. I have sent no letters to Pyatakov through Shestov. I have never seen Shestov and I know nothing about him.

9. Pyatakov never came to see me in Norway and therefore could never have had conversations of any kind with me.

10. Pyatakov did not have, and could not have had, any political or personal relations with me or my son after 1928.
11. Of the seventeen indicted, I previously knew and can now recall knowing only seven: Pyatakov, Radek, Sokolnikov, Serebriakov, Muralov, Drobnis, and Boguslavsky. In the years of my last exile (1929-37) I have had no political or personal relations with any of them, directly or indirectly.

12. The names of the other ten accused or indicted mean absolutely nothing to me, and if there are agents of the Gestapo among them I am not aware of it. I have had no relations of any kind with any of them.

By virtue of the particular circumstances of my existence abroad and the character of my work, I have all the means to prove unequivocally, with the help of numerous witnesses, documents, letters, etc., before an impartial international commission, the absurdity and falseness of the accusations against me and of all the statements concerning me by the Moscow defendants—unfortunate victims of the Inquisitorial trial. I have the right to demand, and I do demand, that the labor and democratic organizations of all countries set up an investigating commission whose authoritativeness would be above all suspicion. It affects not only me and my son, not only hundreds of other victims, but also the dignity of the international labor movement and the fate of the Soviet Union.

I ask all the independent and honest press to reproduce this statement.
In the present trial, the defendant Drobnis is playing the part of chief agent for the GPU in laying the basis for new indictments. Among others, Drobnis named Rakovsky as an accomplice in the alleged terrorist conspiracy. Rakovsky's fate is profoundly tragic. He and I were bound by ties of friendship for more than thirty years. Of all the defendants in both trials he stood the closest to me. After being sent to Siberian exile in 1928, Rakovsky held out longer and more firmly than all the others in spite of illness and age (he is now sixty). He even made an attempt to escape, was captured and wounded; in the end, he capitulated—in 1934, six years later than the rest.

At the trial of the sixteen it was "established" that I first issued instructions for terrorism in 1932. But it was altogether impossible to understand why I would have issued such instructions to capitulators, who had been waging war against me, rather than to Rakovsky, who at that time remained true to the banner of the Opposition. The very fact that Rakovsky was not named as a member of either the main center, or the "parallel" center, or the "reserve" center was in itself the most convincing proof to thoughtful people that none of these centers ever existed. The GPU has now decided to correct its original error. Drobnis has named Rakovsky. The old fighter, broken by life, goes inescapably to meet his fate.
I. What Is the Aim of the “Conspiracy”? 

Crimes can be dreadful, monstrous, grotesque. Such were the crimes of Macbeth. Such were the crimes of Cesare Borgia. Such are the crimes of Stalin in the Moscow trials. But unless a criminal is insane, a crime must have some personal or political purpose. Radek and Pyatakov have confessed to the most heinous crimes. But the trouble is, these crimes make no sense. Through terror, sabotage, and collaboration with the imperialists—so the charges go—they wished to restore capitalism in the USSR. Why? Throughout their lives they have fought against capitalism. In countless articles and speeches, up until a few days ago, they presented arguments showing the immeasurable superiority of the Soviet system over capitalism. Finally, their supposed conspiratorial activity (1932-36) coincided with the years of terrible worldwide depression, unemployment, the rise of fascism, etc. Did Radek and Pyatakov become convinced of the superiority of capitalism precisely in a period like this? The news dispatches give no information on this point. The accused apparently have not a word to say about the tremendous internal upheaval that allegedly occurred in their thinking. No wonder! They have nothing to tell. There was no such upheaval, and judging by all the circumstances, there could not have been.

Or perhaps they were guided by personal motives: a craving for power, or for riches? But until quite recently, they both held very high posts in the Soviet government, enjoying a way of life suited to their station: fine living accommodations, dachas, automobiles, etc. They could not have hoped for a better situation under any other regime.

But perhaps they sacrificed themselves out of friendship for me; or to put it another way, they wished to take revenge on Stalin for my expulsion from the Soviet Union? An absurd hypothesis! In their actions, speeches, and articles of the last nine years, Radek and Pyatakov showed that they had turned from one-time friends
into envenomed opponents. All the foreign journalists in Moscow who have been praising Stalin and dragging my name through the mud (Duranty, for example) had Radek as their inspirer. Is it believable then that these men have abandoned socialism, i.e., their life’s work, and placed their heads on the block only to avenge me?

Lastly, it may perhaps be comprehensible to see terrorist acts against the top ruling circles as acts of revenge (although any intelligent political person would clearly understand that acts of terrorism would mean, first of all, the extermination of the Opposition). But no, the accused were not satisfied with individual terror; they desired—to restore capitalism. And so strongly did they desire it that they established links with German fascism and Japanese militarism! Did they think that they and I could have leadership positions in a capitalist regime? It is hard even to phrase such a question in an intelligible way, so senseless is the political basis of the trial.

The “confessions” of Radek, Pyatakov, and the others suddenly make sense, however, if we leave aside the defendants’ personalities, their psychology, their aims and motives, and consider only the interests of the top bureaucratic clique and the personal aims of Stalin, who uses the defendants as mechanical instruments. At present the Soviet system is organized on the principle of “I am the state!” and “I am socialism!” Whoever fights against Stalin thereby fights against socialism. The mass of the people in the USSR are constantly indoctrinated in this idea. Criticism of the despotism and privileges of the bureaucracy is equivalent to alliance with the enemies of socialism. Stalin stands above criticism, above the party, above the state: i.e., can only be removed by being killed. Thus any persons in opposition thereby place themselves on the same footing as terrorists. Such is the inner logic of Bonapartism. The testimony of the accused, insupportable factually and illogical from the standpoint of the psychology of the defendants themselves, becomes quite rational when viewed from the angle of the ruling clique. Stalin imposes his own interests and his own psychology upon the defendants, with the use of terror. That is the simple explanation of the hidden workings of the Moscow trials.

2. Radek’s Testimony

The testimony of the defendants crumbles to dust when placed alongside facts, documents, chronology, and logic. According to
During the Moscow Trial

Radek's statements, I wrote him about the need to kill Stalin, Kirov, and Voroshilov, and to dismember the USSR. Letters of this kind presuppose, at least, that we had complete solidarity and confidence in one another. But there was neither. Radek has impressed only the foreign journalists. None of the Bolshevik Party leaders ever took Radek seriously as a revolutionist. Lenin treated him with unconcealed irony. In 1928, when I was in exile inside the USSR, all my friends wrote about Radek in tones of complete mistrust. I have all those letters. After his capitulation, mistrust turned to contempt. I can present documentary evidence that I regarded Radek not only as a capitu lator but as a traitor. In the summer of 1929, a former member of my military secretariat, Blumkin, who was in Turkey at the time, paid me a visit in Constantinople. Upon his return to Moscow, Blumkin told Radek of the meeting. Radek immediately betrayed him. At that time the GPU had not yet descended to accusations of "terrorism." Nevertheless, Blumkin was shot, secretly and without trial. The following is what I published, on the basis of letters from Moscow dated December 25, 1929, in the Bulletin of the Russian Opposition, printed abroad: Radek's "nervous prattling is well known. Now he is completely demoralized, a characteristic of all capitulators. . . . Having lost the last vestige of moral balance, [he] did not stop at any abomination." Further on, Radek is called a "hysterical mass of putty." The letters give a detailed account of how "after his conversation with Radek, Blumkin found himself betrayed." Do people really write this way about an ally or a person in their confidence?

Fighting for his life, Radek now tells the court that he himself did not agree with my criminal proposals. Could I write about terrorism, etc., to someone if I was not profoundly convinced of his solidarity beforehand? Or worse, to someone who had discredited himself in my eyes not only by capitulating but also by betraying Blumkin, not to mention the hundreds of embittered articles against me, my views, and my cothinkers?

Radek told the court that he had "confessed" only after all the others had. Here is the key to the Inquisitorial devices behind the confessions: whoever refuses to confess is shot in the course of interrogation. What has become of such accused persons as Arkus, Gaven, Karev, Kuklin, Medvedev, Putna, Fedotov, Sharov, Gaevsky, Riutin, Shatskin, and dozens of others? Most of them were shot while under investigation, for refusing to play the courtroom roles assigned them in Stalin's script. Other are still being processed in the laboratory. Those are the reasons why
Radek, after attempting to resist morally, felt compelled, in December, to assume the unworthy role of false witness against himself, and particularly against me. His behavior at the trial is evidence that he certainly does not wish to die. No, he has not despaired of saving himself. Is this hard to believe after the Zinoviev trial? Only for those who quietly chew their steak in the comfort of a dining room.

Radek supposedly sent me letters concealed in the bindings of books. Radek himself, as far as I know, is not a bookbinder. This means that in Moscow there is an expert bookbinder who accomplished such secret missions for Radek. Why does this binder not figure in the trial? Why has Radek not named him? Why have the prosecutor or presiding judge not questioned Radek about this detail, which any attorney would find of the greatest importance? It is very simple: because the presiding judge and prosecutor are helping Radek conceal the factual insubstantiality of his “confession.” Without such assistance the whole trial would be impossible!

3. Vladimir Romm

I am totally unacquainted with Vladimir Romm and never had any dealings with this person. I do not know what name he used to sign his news stories in Izvestia. During my latest period of exile (1929-37), incidentally, I never subscribed to Izvestia and have only seen an occasional issue by chance. I follow events in the USSR through Pravda. This fact is easy to verify through postal records. But if Vladimir Romm were really in my confidence, I would presumably be interested in his reports filed from Washington.

As a witness, seated between pointed bayonets, Romm testified that he had acted as an intermediary between Radek and myself, allegedly delivering five letters concealed in the bindings of books from Radek to me. It is unclear what was in those letters. It is equally unclear how Romm, who was living in the United States, carried out his function as intermediary. Perhaps the mysterious books traveled the route of Moscow-Washington-Oslo? If so, the conspiracy has distinguished itself by its unusually relaxed pace. However, it is possible that the vagueness on this point is the result of the brevity of the news dispatches from Moscow.

The same Romm, who for some reason figures as a witness and not a defendant, testifies that he had a meeting with me in a
“dark alley in a park near Paris.” What an imprecise location! A few questions at the trial could have shown without difficulty that Romm was lying at the dictation of a cautious and uncertain GPU. I did not live in Paris. For a few months I lived 88 miles from Paris. My real name was known only to two or three top police officials, who wished to avoid fascist or Stalinist demonstrations or attempts on my life by keeping me strictly incognito. My address was known only to my closest friends, who at the same time constituted my bodyguard. The question arises: How did Romm establish contact with me; that is, precisely through whom? Let him name his intermediary. And that is not enough. How did he find his way to that person? Through whom did he arrange the meeting in the park? Which park was it exactly? Did he have a diagram on which the “dark alley” was marked? Did I arrive on foot or by car? Alone or with a guard? On what date did the meeting take place? Romm surely could not forget such an important date. What was my external appearance?

For my part, on the basis of my letters and diaries and the testimony of members of my defense guard, I could establish accurately enough where I was on the day of the imaginary meeting—88 miles from Paris, or 1100 miles from there, in the Department of Isere, where I spent the greater part of my stay in France. The attention paid me by the press, the many enemies I have, and the general conditions of my existence in exile make it absolutely impossible for me to break away from my confinement and make mysterious trips to some nameless “dark alley.” Those who wish to verify this need only acquaint themselves with my present conditions of existence in Mexico!

It is not hard to guess, however, why Romm did not mention a date, address, or intermediary. The GPU burned its fingers too badly in the trial of the sixteen, where the defendant Goltsman gave the precise date and place of an alleged meeting with his “intermediary,” my son, namely, November 23-25, 1932, at the Hotel Bristol. But through precise official evidence (e.g., a telegraphic order from the French minister Herriot, a passport, and the testimony of witnesses), my son proved that he had not been in Copenhagen at all. As for the Hotel Bristol, the GPU discovered it in an old edition of Baedeker: it was in fact torn down as long ago as 1917. No wonder that, this time, the GPU prefers “dark alleys.” It is with such tricks and ruses that these people wish to prove me—in league with the Gestapo!
January 25, 1937

Press dispatches have brought us the news of the murder in Paris of the Russian journalist Dimitri Navashin, who knew too much about the Moscow trial. This is not the first time the GPU has energetically assisted Stalin and Vyshinsky—nor the last. On November 7 in Paris, agents of the GPU stole 187 pounds of my archives. On January 24 they murdered Navashin in Paris. I fear that my son Leon Sedov, who wrote *The Red Book on the Moscow Trial* and now figures as "enemy number two" of the leading Soviet clique, is marked as the next victim. I consider it necessary openly to warn world public opinion about this.
THE ‘VOLUNTARY CONFESSIONS’
OF THE DEFENDANTS

January 26, 1937

The flood of confessions goes on. In the course of exposing each other by rushing to the assistance of the prosecution, the defendants take responsibility for the most heinous crimes. Cheap psychologists attempt to explain this phenomenon by the characteristics of the “Russian soul.” This is as if to say that Russian revolutionaries, including terrorists, lack the courage to defend their convictions before the courts. But in reality, the “terrorists” sitting in the defendant’s dock are not there out of conviction but rather on orders. The GPU has said to them: “Hitler needs to mobilize the bourgeoisie of the whole world against us on the basis of the slogan of saving the existing order from anarchy. We must prove to the French, British, and U.S. bourgeoisie that at the same time Hitler has not dismissed the possibility of allying with Trotsky. In this way we could prevent the isolation of the USSR. On the other hand, the literary activities Trotsky has pursued abroad are weakening the USSR. (Stalin’s clique identifies only itself with the USSR.) You, the old Trotskyists, are the only ones who can assist us in discrediting Trotsky.”

Those who offer resistance are summarily executed in the course of the investigation. It isn’t strange, therefore, that those in the dock pretend to be only zealous assistants of the prosecution. The defendant Boguslavsky stated before the court that his confessions were “absolutely voluntary”; let it be recalled that the same statement was enunciated in the initial confrontation between the accusers and the defendants. The unfortunate victims believe that only by absolute obedience and by singing praises to the bureaucrats will their lives be spared. But there is much to compel one to conclude that the victims themselves have erred in their judgment.
INDUSTRIAL SABOTAGE\textsuperscript{134}

January 26, 1937

The most shocking and improbable confessions appear to be those of Pyatakov, Serebriakov, Boguslavsky, and others, who have been accused of premeditated destruction of factories and setting off explosions in mines. For the careful observer of economic activity in the USSR, it is easy to guess where these accusations and "confessions" originated.

Ever since the Stakhanovite movement began, production has been greatly speeded up.\textsuperscript{135} Any opposition to the system of work under which men are toiling is labeled sabotage by the bureaucracy. Inadequate training of engineers and workers, itself a reflection of over-eagerness to obtain huge returns on investments, has led to the deterioration of machinery, explosions in mine tunnels, numerous railroad accidents, and every kind of mishap and accident. It becomes crystal clear that all these phenomena greatly sharpen discontent among the working masses and that the bureaucracy will need a scapegoat for every crime it commits.

The GPU has distributed the catastrophes among the various defendants. In this way, the responsibility for the crimes of the bureaucracy during the period of Stakhanovism once again falls on the shoulders of Trotskyism.
Pyatakov has testified that my son Sedov urgently pressed him to embezzle funds from the treasuries of two industrial enterprises to finance the Trotskyist movement. However, Pyatakov forgot to specify exactly which factories were robbed and of what amount, and to whom it was given. All the confessions of the defendants are characterized by deliberate imprecision, as any specific contentions with reference to events in a foreign country run the risk of immediately being decisively refuted.

Yet an even more important aspect of the case involves the fact that Pyatakov, like the other defendants, spoke of a Trotskyist alliance with Germany and Japan, which suggests that in forming the aforesaid alliance, these two nations must have first provided the Trotskyists with funds. Considering who the “allies” are and the scope of their purpose, the Trotskyists must have received millions. Yet it is inopportunistely asserted that the conspiracy was financed with dividends that Pyatakov was receiving from certain factories on the request of my son, who in 1932 was a young student in Berlin.

I must remark in passing that the Trotskyist movement receives financial support only from its participants, who are in a continual economic crisis. The Biulleten Oppozitsii is published with the money I earn from my literary work, and the financial situation of all the Trotskyist organizations could easily be laid before an international commission of inquiry. Could the sections of the Comintern perhaps do the same?

So it appears that neither the presiding judge nor the prosecutor at any time bothered to ask Pyatakov or the other defendants the following question: Concretely, what did the alliance with the Gestapo consist of? Who arranged the contacts? What was the nature of the financial or technical aid provided by the Gestapo, and to whom was it given? It is enough to stop and weigh these
few questions to reduce the myth of the Gestapo to dust. This is precisely why neither the prosecutor nor the presiding judge took the trouble to ask these inopportune questions. The Moscow trial is a conspiracy of silence to conceal lies.
MURALOV

January 26, 1937

The defendant Muralov has testified that he was my friend and that he remained loyal to me during the period that "Kamenev and Zinoviev fled like rats." Muralov, my comrade during the civil war, is speaking the truth. However, this remark made in passing throws a revealing light on the trial of the sixteen.

In reality, the capitulation of Kamenev and Zinoviev, like all the accusations, had a purely technical purpose: that is, it contributed toward the making of a conspiracy; and furthermore, after Zinoviev and Kamenev had capitulated, my collaboration with them is to have been even more intimately established on the basis of terrorism. Nevertheless, Muralov, who was satisfied to "make his confession," was, at the last moment, at the eleventh hour, on the eve of the trial, unable to wholly assume his role. This is why he spoke in the way "Trotskyists" do in stating that Zinoviev and Kamenev "deserted like rats." But what kind of terrorist collaboration can Trotskyists establish with men they regard as traitors and deserters?

In this way, an attentive reading of the dispatches enables one to discover in every confession not only the poison but also its antidote.
PYATAKOV’S PHANTOM FLIGHT TO OSLO

January 27, 1937

All the accusations are based exclusively upon the confessions of defendants; no objective evidence whatsoever is at the disposition of the court. Consequently one must ask: Are the defendants’ confessions true, or are they the result of a preliminary agreement extorted by the accusers from the accused? The fate of the trial and the world reputation of Moscow justice, on the one hand, and of the movement to which I adhere, on the other, depend on the solution of this fundamental enigma. No efforts must be spared to reveal the truth. Is this aim obtainable? Completely, and without great difficulty. The question is posed as follows: do the subjective confessions correspond to objective facts, or are they the products of malicious fabrication divorced from time and space?

I propose immediately, before the trial is terminated, to choose the most striking and important confession and submit it to factual verification. This procedure would require scarcely more than forty-eight hours.

We are concerned here with the confession of Pyatakov. He testified that he visited me in Norway in December 1935, for the purpose of conspiratorial plotting. Pyatakov alleged that he came from Berlin to Oslo by airplane. The enormous importance of this testimony is evident. I declared many times, and I repeat again, that Pyatakov, like Radek, has been during the last nine years not my friend but my bitterest and most perfidious enemy, and that there could be no question of negotiations between us.

If it should be proved that Pyatakov actually visited me, my position would be hopelessly compromised. If, on the contrary, I can prove that the story of the visit is false from beginning to end, the entire system of “voluntary” confessions would be thoroughly discredited. Even if we admitted that the Moscow trial is beyond all suspicion, the defendant Pyatakov remains suspect. His testimony must be verified immediately, before he is shot, by putting the following series of questions to him:
1. On what day did Pyatakov come from Moscow to Berlin, in December 1935? What was his official mission? Pyatakov is too important an administrative figure to make the trip in such a manner that it would not be known to the Soviet government. The day of his departure must be known in his commissariat. The German press must have announced his arrival.

2. Did Pyatakov visit the Soviet embassy in Berlin? Whom did he meet?

3. When and how did he fly from Berlin to Oslo? Even if he came to Berlin openly, he must have left secretly: it is impossible to conceive of the Soviet government's sending Pyatakov to plot with Trotsky.

4. What kind of passport did Pyatakov use when he left Berlin? How did he obtain this false passport? Did he also obtain a Norwegian visa?

5. If we admit for a moment that Pyatakov embarked upon this trip legally and openly, his arrival must have been announced in the Norwegian press. In that case, who were the Norwegian authorities whom he must have visited officially?

6. If Pyatakov came to Oslo illegally, with a false passport, how did he succeed in disappearing from the keen eyes of the Soviet officials in Berlin and Oslo? (Every Soviet administrator abroad remains in permanent telegraphic and telephonic communication with the embassies and commercial agencies of the USSR.) How did he explain his disappearance upon his return to Russia?

7. At what time did Pyatakov arrive in Oslo? Did he pass the night in the town, and, if so, in what hotel? (We hope it was not the Hotel Bristol.) The well-known Norwegian paper Aftenposten affirms that at the time mentioned by Pyatakov, no foreign plane landed in Oslo. This must be verified.

8. Did Pyatakov inform me beforehand of his contemplated visit by the regular telegraphic channels of communication? This can easily be verified in the telegraphic offices of Oslo and Honefoss.

9. How did Pyatakov locate me in the village of Weksal? What means of transportation did he use?

10. The trip from Oslo to my village required at least two hours; the conversation, according to Pyatakov, took three hours; and the return trip required two more hours. December days are short; Pyatakov must inevitably have passed one night in Norway. Again: Where? In what hotel? How did he depart from Oslo: by train, ship, or airplane? For what destination?
11. All of my visitors will confirm that it was possible to come in contact with me only through the members of the family of our host, Knudsen, or through my secretaries, who remained on permanent guard duty before my room. With whom did Pyatakov meet?

12. In what way did Pyatakov make the trip in the evening from Weksal to the station of Honefoss: in the automobile of our host Knudsen, or by taxi summoned by telephone from Honefoss? In either case, the departure, like the arrival, could not have been accomplished without witnesses.

13. Did Pyatakov also meet my wife? Was she at home on the day in question? (My wife's trips to her doctor and dentist in Oslo can easily be established.)

It is necessary to add that the appearance of Pyatakov is striking and easily remembered: tall, blond with tinges of red in his hair and beard, very regular features, high forehead, glasses, and very lean (in 1927, when I saw him for the last time, he was exceedingly thin).

Not only a lawyer, but every thinking man as well, will understand the decisive importance of these questions for the purpose of the verification of Pyatakov's confessions. The Soviet government has the full opportunity to utilize the services of Norwegian justice (it was obliged to do this even before the trial).

The authoritative political figures of Norway can immediately, without the slightest delay in waiting for the initiative of the Moscow court, create a special commission for the investigation of all the circumstances connected with the alleged arrival of Pyatakov in Norway.

In passing, the same commission could investigate the matters concerning the defendant Shestov, who is totally unknown to me but who declared that he had received written instructions from me in Norway (?) for Pyatakov and concealed them in the soles of his shoes. When, how, and under what circumstances did he visit me? What Norwegian shoemaker concealed the alleged documents for him? How did Shestov find this conspiratorial shoemaker? And so on.

Are the president of the court and the prosecutor ready to put these cogent questions to Pyatakov? Their attitude in this connection should be decisive for the trial in the eyes of all honest people throughout the world.

I hope that all the papers interested in the truth will publish this statement in full.
A FIGHTER FOR FUNDAMENTAL JUSTICE 139

January 27, 1937

Dear Mr. Cabrera:

If I take the liberty of writing you this letter, it is, of course, not in order to discuss the political problems you touch upon at the end of your excellent article in *El Universal*, January 25, but rather to express my admiration for your courage in taking a position on one of the most sensational issues of our times.

During these incoherent trials in Moscow, pliant spirits have been inclined to treat these developments with phrases like: “It is difficult to see clearly,” “There may be something to this,” etc. In your article you characterize this as worthy of the heirs of Pontius Pilate.

You say firmly and categorically: “This is a falsification.” And you are not in error. Every week will bring new revelations. Before the conscience of the world, the accusers must be the accused. Everyone who raises a voice of protest in time will be counted among the fighters for fundamental justice. And you are among that number. Allow me to convey to you my most sincere greetings.

Leon Trotsky
THE ARREST OF SERGEI SEDOV

January 27, 1937

Yesterday, January 26, I answered a questionnaire for one of the press agencies as follows: "Our younger son, Sergei Sedov, a former professor at the High Technological Institute, a pure scientist never connected with politics, was arrested by the GPU in 1934 only because he is my son, and we are in total ignorance as to his fate."

Today, January 27, we are informed by cable that my son has been arrested again for allegedly attempting to poison factory workers with generator gas! I cannot envy a man who is capable of imagining such a crime. . . .

Almost two years ago my wife wrote: "Sergei was born in 1908. . . . In families where the older members are absorbed in politics, the younger are often repulsed by political matters. So it was with us. Sergei never devoted himself to political questions. He was not even a member of the Communist Youth. In his school years he was passionately fond of sports and the circus, and he became an outstanding athlete. At the university he concentrated on mathematics and mechanics; as an engineer he received a chair in the High Technological Institute. . . ."

His book about light gas generators remains on his mother's desk as a memento of her son, from whom she has been separated for nine years, during the last three of which she has received no news whatsoever concerning his fate.

The arrest of Sergei is an answer to my statements concerning the Moscow trials. It is an act of personal vengeance totally in keeping with the spirit of Stalin.

The Yugoslavian revolutionary Ciliga—who, after five years of imprisonment in Stalin's jails, succeeded as a foreigner in being allowed to leave the USSR—told in the press that as far back as 1930, four years before the assassination of Kirov, the GPU tried to force a sailor to declare himself guilty of participating in a plot to assassinate Stalin. Every day he was subjected to moral
tortures, which are described by Ciliga. Only when the sailor was half insane did they let him go.

What will they do with Sergei Sedov? They will inflict unbearable tortures upon him, with the purpose of extorting from him a confession of horrible and impossible crimes. Stalin desires a confession of my son against me. The GPU will not hesitate to drive him to insanity. They are capable of shooting him. Indirectly, Stalin is already responsible for the deaths of my two daughters. He has subjected my other son and my sons-in-law to a terrible campaign of denunciation. Now he is making direct preparations to kill my son, as he is ready to kill dozens and hundreds of people for the sole purpose of casting a moral shadow upon me, and to prevent me from saying to the world what I know and what I think.

Radek, Pyatakov, and others are political personalities. Their fate is indissolubly bound up with their political activity. But Sergei Sedov is persecuted only as my son. His fate is thereby incomparably more tragic.
STALIN’S VERSION AND RADEK’S

January 28, 1937

The Tass reports on the trial are composed in such a way as to mask the contradictions, absurdities, and anachronisms of the confessions and leave only a massive outline of slander. Terrorism takes second place. The foreground is occupied by the preparation of war by “Trotskyists” in alliance with Germany and Japan. Even from the Tass reports it is possible to trace how the original canvas of accusations was filled in with new and more detailed patterns.

According to the original version, I formed an alliance with Germany and Japan with the aim of overthrowing Stalin (Stalin equals socialism) and restoring capitalism in the USSR. In exchange for these services I promised Berlin and Tokyo enormous stretches of Soviet territory in the future; and in the present—sabotage of industry, assassination of leaders, and massacre of workers. This is how the plan is reflected in the confessions of the less important defendants (of the seventeen I know only seven; the names of the other ten mean nothing to me).

Radek held out until December. Only when they presented him with the “confessions” of all the others and thus drew the noose around his neck (oh, without any physical torture, without fire and tongs) did Radek agree to make voluntary confessions. But as a better educated man, he evidently demanded a reworking of the accusation: Trotsky stands not for the restoration of capitalism, but only for an “approach” to capitalism. While yielding to Japan and Germany, the Far East, the Ukraine, etc., Trotsky calculates on getting back these regions by means of a revolution in Japan and Germany. The GPU tried to present me as a simple fascist. To lend at least a shadow of probability to the accusations, Radek transforms me into a potential revolutionary antifascist, but supplies me with a “transitional” plan, in the form of a “temporary” alliance with the fascists and a “slight” dismemberment of the USSR.
Both versions run through the testimony of the accused: the crude provocateur's hackwork, the source of which goes back directly to Stalin, and the complicated military-diplomatic essay in the style of Radek. These two versions do not mix. One is intended for educated and sensitive "friends of the USSR," the other for the more earthy workers and peasants in the USSR. Nobody in the court asks himself the question: How can the Trotskyists hope that in the case of a victory of the fascist and imperialist countries over the USSR, it will be precisely they, the Trotskyists, who will be called to power?

As far as I am concerned, for nine years (banishment and exile) I have been explaining in hundreds of articles and thousands of letters that the military defeat of the USSR would mean the inevitable restoration of capitalism, in a semicolonial form, with a fascist political regime, the dismemberment of the country, and the crushing of the October Revolution.

Many of my former friends in various countries, indignant at the policy of the Stalinist bureaucracy, have come to the conclusion that we cannot take upon ourselves the obligation of "unconditional" defense of the USSR. To this I objected that it is impossible to identify the bureaucracy with the USSR. The new social basis of the USSR must be unconditionally defended against imperialism. The Bonapartist bureaucracy will be overthrown by the working masses only if the foundations of the new economic system of the USSR can be protected. I have publicly and openly broken with dozens of old and hundreds of young friends over this question. My files contain a huge correspondence on the defense of the USSR. Finally, my new book, *The Revolution Betrayed*, gives a detailed analysis of the military and diplomatic policy of the USSR, especially from the point of view of the defense of the country.

Now we are shown thanks to the GPU that at the time when I was breaking with close friends because they did not understand the necessity for the *unconditional* defense of the USSR against imperialism, I was in fact concluding alliances with the imperialists and recommending the destruction of the economic foundation of the USSR. Can this be "Machiavellianism"? Can my books, articles, and letters be only a front? One would have to be a complete idiot to allow the possibility of such psychological and political duplicity, especially accompanied by intensive mental work, over a long period of years.

To complete the confusion, it follows from the testimony of the
Moscow defendants, both the sixteen and the seventeen, that I did not at all conceal my links with the Gestapo, but on the contrary introduced them at the first meeting with unknown young people, and that my instructions in this respect were "known to all." What purpose then was served by my intense literary work? It is impossible to train terrorists, defeatists, and saboteurs, who have to risk their lives, without passionate and constant propaganda for these methods of struggle. But my open political work, like my personal correspondence, was directed against terror, against sabotage, for the unconditional defense of the USSR. I can prove this before any honest commission, before any honest court, if indeed it requires proof at all. Where is the political and psychological basis for the accusation? There is none. The fraud is apparent to all.

What Is the Conspiracy's Source of Money?

But this is not all. Neither from Stalin's crude version nor from Radek's literary essay is it at all apparent precisely what benefit the alliance with Germany and Japan brought in practice. The Trotskyists sold their lives to Hitler and the Mikado. What did they receive in return? Money is the sinews of war. Did the Trotskyists at least get money from Japan and Germany? Who? When? How much?

I have encountered only two pieces of evidence about the Opposition's financial sources: (1) The Trotskyists are supposed to have gotten 164,000 rubles illegally from Gosbank, and (2) Pyatakov got a percentage from two industrial enterprises for conspiratorial activities. Both these facts, if they were true, would be evidence precisely of the fact that neither Germany nor Japan gave money. What then did they give to the Trotskyists? The opposition's question there is not even the shadow of an answer in the whole trial. The alliance with Germany and Japan has a purely metaphysical character.
A special commission of lawyers appointed by the League of Nations is currently laying the legal groundwork for an international tribunal against terrorism. This matter was thrust into the foreground by the assassination of King Alexander of Yugoslavia and the French foreign minister, Barthou. On October 22, 1936, I sent a statement to this commission saying that in addition to defending governmental interests against terrorist attacks, the upcoming tribunal “must have the opportunity to safeguard the interests of individuals against whom, for purely political reasons, false accusations of terrorism are made. . . . That is my situation today. I am certain,” my letter continues, “that the Soviet government, which has demanded my expulsion from Norway and which has thereby created great difficulties for me and my family, will in no case bring the matter before the international tribunal, after its creation, since a public judgment could only expose the criminal machinations of the GPU. Under these circumstances, as a claimant I must have the right to address myself to the international tribunal. . . . If the government in question should refuse to take part in the tribunal’s deliberations, the official accusations brought by it, with all their international consequences, must be declared null and void” [See “Letter to the League of Nations,” in Writings 35-36].

Because of the conditions of my internment, my attorney signed my letter to the commission of the League of Nations instead of me, and later he received a notice stamped with the number 3A/15105/15085 from the secretariat of the League of Nations, acknowledging receipt of my statement. Today it preserves its full strength. As soon as the international tribunal against terrorism commences its hearings, I will take all the necessary legal steps to make it possible for all the legal accusations against me to be judged in their entirety.
Prosecutor Vyshinsky is not only a prosecutor, but also a symbol. Fate has called upon him to protect the October Revolution from the Old Bolsheviks. In 1905, for a short period, Vyshinsky was a Menshevik; later he abandoned politics and accommodated himself to the czarist regime. In 1917, after the czar was overthrown, he again rose as a Menshevik, led a fierce struggle against the October Revolution, and after its victory disappeared from the political scene for three years. Vyshinsky was waiting. It wasn't until 1920 that this gentleman joined the Bolshevik Party. Now he is rescuing the October Revolution from all those who made it. Let me remark, although in passing, that the biographies of the majority of Soviet ambassadors and other high functionaries exactly resemble that of Vyshinsky. Now they all fawn upon Bolshevikism . . . in the hope of being well rewarded.
Vyshinsky is asking for the heads of the defendants. He conducts the game with the certainty that he will win: the verdict was already decided before the trial began.

It is possible that two or three of the defendants will be spared in order to avoid the appearance of excessive monolithism. In any case, the main defendants will be sentenced to death. Will they actually be executed? Their murder would have a dreadful impact on popular sentiment and would conclusively cast the stigma of Cain on Stalin in the eyes of the international working class. On the other hand, to pardon defendants who have been found guilty of crimes immeasurably greater than those of Zinoviev and Kamenev would make the trial appear like a wretched farce to the world. This is the dilemma facing Stalin.

Pardon involves the other terrible danger that as long as the defendants are alive the workers’ movement of the world will call for a new trial, for interviews with the defendants, and for an examination by an international commission of inquiry. This threat is too great for Stalin! This is what persuades me to believe that Stalin will order the execution of defendants whose lives, during the investigation, he promised to spare. It was not without truth that Lenin said of Stalin: “He will make a rotten compromise, and then he will betray.”
January 29, 1937

The explanations of Moscow concerning the alleged trip of Pyatakov to Oslo represent a series of miserable subterfuges. The organizers of the trial were not prepared to cope with the questions I addressed to them: they hoped that during the course of the trial I would remain in confinement. Let us briefly test Moscow's answers.

1. Pyatakov went to Berlin "around the 10th of December, or, in any event, in the first half of the month." This striking lack of precision immediately unmasks their bad faith. At the time of his departure from Moscow, Pyatakov, by a special order in his commissariat, must have transferred his duties to his assistant. On the order must be noted not only the date but also the hour. Why then does Moscow hide the exact date?

2. Pyatakov came to Berlin for "official business." In that case, the German authorities as well as the Soviet representatives in Berlin must know the exact day and hour of his arrival. It is impossible that the German press should have allowed this visit to go by without notice. Why does Moscow speak so timidly about "the first half of December"? Why? Because the falsifiers fear that their calendar might not coincide with mine (my trips for recreation, days of illness, my visits to doctors in Oslo, etc.). We demand exact dates!

3. In Berlin Pyatakov allegedly met my messenger "in the Tiergarten." (Let us notice parenthetically: Vladimir Romm met with me in a dark alley near Paris; Pyatakov met my messenger in a park in Berlin. Since the GPU burned its fingers with the Copenhagen hotels, it gives its preferences to remote and dark alleys.) To prepare such a meeting, I must have known beforehand of the day of Pyatakov's arrival in Berlin, and my messenger must have known at what hour Pyatakov would appear in the promenade. How did Pyatakov inform me: by telegram? If so, what was the address and the text of the telegram?
4. My messenger delivered a German passport to Pyatakov. Very good! But in what name was it made out? Moscow remains silent about these decisive circumstances. What an eloquent silence! But it is not difficult to verify the entire list of Germans who arrived in Oslo “in the first half of December.”

5. Pyatakov drove from the airport to meet me. He traveled the distance in only half an hour. This means that the meeting was not held in my house in Weksal, since it takes two hours to drive to it from Oslo. Where then did the meeting occur? I am ignorant of the whereabouts, but the driver should know it, and consequently Pyatakov. Not a single word was said about this matter. Let the GPU supply us with the address.

6. It is said that Pyatakov arrived in Oslo at 3:30 in the afternoon and that his trip by automobile lasted half an hour. According to one account, his conversation with me lasted two hours, and according to another, three hours. Pyatakov could not have caught his return flight that night. Yet in December in Norway it is impossible to spend the night outdoors. Where did Pyatakov sleep?

7. The report from Moscow does not mention how Pyatakov managed to evade the cautious surveillance of Soviet institutions abroad for such a length of time. No Soviet administrator could carry out such a disappearance and succeed, for there are very strict rules that govern this behavior.

Deputy Konrad Knudsen established through a preliminary investigation in Norway that no foreign airplane landed in Oslo during “the first two weeks of December.” How can this disagreeable detail be dealt with? I am very much afraid that the GPU will hastily execute Pyatakov to prevent embarrassing new questions from being asked and to deprive an international committee of inquiry of the opportunity to ask Pyatakov for precise explanations in the future.

I selected Pyatakov’s testimony only because it is the simplest and most conspicuous example. It would not be difficult to prove that all the other confessions, particularly as they refer to me, are based on the same miserable subterfuges and falsehoods.
This morning I wrote this about the forthcoming verdicts: “It is possible that two or three of the defendants will be spared in order to avoid the appearance of excessive monolithism. In any case, the main defendants will be sentenced to death.”

The last cable says that four are to be spared, 25 percent more than I had supposed.

But I must recognize that I did not foresee that among those already spared in the verdict of the court would be Karl Radek and Grigory Sokolnikov, for like Gregory Zinoviev and Leon Kamenev they took upon themselves the crime of terrorist action, including the assassination of Sergei Kirov; but more than that, they pleaded guilty also to the charge of high treason.

Sokolnikov confessed—or, more correctly, slandered himself—to the accusation that he transmitted military secrets to Japanese diplomats. Why, then, are they granted their lives? Only one explanation is possible—they are too well known in the Western world as well as in the East.

One cannot avoid seeing in this a partial retreat on Stalin’s part before international public opinion. I say Stalin because it is not possible to entertain the slightest doubt that the verdicts were agreed upon in the Politburo and communicated by secret telephone.

Not only does Stalin not dare to shoot Radek and Sokolnikov in the present situation, but he found it impossible even to condemn them to death in the first instance. By comparison with the proceedings in the first trial of the sixteen, we cannot avoid observing in this a retreat dictated by a feeling of uncertainty.

Thirteen are condemned to death, and Gregory Pyatakov occupies the first place among them.

It is possible that among the accused unknown to us there are genuine traitors and spies, drawn into the affair only for the purpose of amalgamation, but Pyatakov, Serebriakov, Muralov,
Boguslavsky, and Drobni are guilty of terrorism and high treason no more than are Radek and Sokolnikov. They are not guilty at all. Why then is the verdict assassination for them?

Let us remember that they are accused above all of industrial sabotage. We must suppose that the numerous industrial catastrophes costing hundreds of lives have aroused a burning indignation among the working masses. The ruling clique needs, therefore, expiatory victims. Hence the verdict for Pyatakov and the other saboteurs.

It remains to be seen if the verdict is definitive or if on appeal Stalin will commute the death sentences to terms of imprisonment. If the five Old Bolsheviks mentioned above are spared—and we ardently hope they will be—this weakness will reveal the false character of the accusations and at the same time the increasing uncertainty of the ruling clique.

It seems to us, however, that Pyatakov, above all, is in danger, not only because he must pay with his head for all the mistakes of the administration of state industry, but above all because he has incomparably compromised the trial by his description of his voyage to Norway. So long as Pyatakov lives, the discussion, very embarrassing, will continue.

It is, unfortunately, quite possible that Stalin will attempt to extricate himself from this impasse by assassinating Pyatakov. One asks no questions of the dead.

For the final conclusion it is necessary to await the supreme decision. We will not have long to wait.

In official Moscow circles they begin to imply, although in a very vague manner, the possibility of a demand for my extradition. I welcome this idea warmly. What is more, for my part, I demand that the Russian government present such a request.

During the trial of the sixteen I asked Moscow to present their proofs to Norwegian justice for the purpose of my extradition.

In my deposition as a witness before Norwegian courts on December 11, 1936, with regard to the fascist attack on my home, I unmasked under judicial oath the criminal Moscow frame-up. Unfortunately, the doors were closed.

I am now ready to repeat the action with very much more detail, with the doors wide open, before a Mexican court of law. I cannot imagine a better solution of the whole matter.

The truth is that in none of the trials has an authentic letter, document, or any irreproachable testimony figured. We can only
imagine what passed behind the closed doors. But in the public
session all the judicial proofs are based upon confessions of the
defendants.

The trials have for their only and exclusive base the so-called
voluntary confessions of the defendants. The Left Opposition has
existed for fourteen years. For it thousands have been impris­
oned, deported, and martyred in jailed and in exile.

If the Opposition is in truth so hostile to the Soviet Union and
to socialism, if it is at the service of enemy countries, if it employs
terrorism, etc., then the GPU should have been able to accumu­
late in these fourteen years of punishments, arrests, and violation
of correspondence a great number of real proofs.

The GPU had no way of obliging the true Oppositionists to
capitulate even under pain of death. So in order to fake a trial
against Trotskyism they have been obliged to use the capitula­
tors, my most ferocious enemies.
THE ORGANIZATION OF THE TRIAL

January 30, 1937

Through the silence and the distortions of the official Tass dispatches, one can already discover how the trial was really organized, at least in its general characteristics. In addition to its fundamental purpose—the extermination of the Opposition—the trial was, incidentally, to do away with a series of directors of Soviet industry, particularly war-connected industry. All the facts force one to the conclusion that monstrous abuses of confidence, disorders, and deception of the state have been revealed in military industry. It is quite true that foreign espionage flourishes in this atmosphere. Pyatakov himself, I do not doubt, had nothing to do with the abuses and other crimes of the same nature. But he is the head of the service. Stalin consequently had the full opportunity to make Pyatakov responsible and to shoot him.

The chaos and the abuses in industry are not news to me. Even before the two Moscow trials, I demonstrated in my book The Revolution Betrayed that the regime of bureaucratic despotism could not avoid having a fatal influence on economic planning, that is to say, on criticism and control. Military industry is the most enclosed and the least controlled domain. Here all the vices of arbitrariness, favoritism, and negligence undoubtedly assume the most abominable forms.

Of the seventeen accused, thirteen are unknown to me even by name. Are there among them direct agents of Germany and Japan? It is entirely possible. It would be highly improbable that the Gestapo and the Japanese general staff should not have bought off some of the Soviet bureaucrats. In any case, there are several men among the accused who are personally responsible from careerist considerations: to achieve the greatest possible production, without troubling themselves about quality, or the nature of the machines, or the lives of the workers. The firing-squad threatens them.
The task of the GPU was to unite the case of abuses in military industry, railroads, etc., with the case against the Trotskyites: the classical method of judicial amalgam. The GPU demanded that the criminal or negligent directors of industry, over whose heads the sword of Damocles was already suspended, reveal themselves as Trotskyites, promising them, it is understood, a moderation of their fate. On the other hand, former Trotskyites (Pyatakov, Radek, etc.), who had become my sworn enemies a long time ago, were required by the GPU to declare themselves my friends against all evidence. Then they had only to establish a liaison between my pseudo-"friends," the criminal directors of military industry, on the one hand, and myself personally, on the other.

The first job was easy, because the alliance and the plot among the accused took shape in the chambers of the GPU: the depositions were completed, fitted together, corrected, and transcribed, so that the necessary "harmony" was obtained. The second part of the job was revealed as incomparably more difficult.

The Aerial Liaison

How to establish a liaison between the defendants and a man who has lived abroad, in full view of public opinion, under the eye of the foreign press and the police, and who, moreover, constantly expresses his ideas in books, articles, and letters? It is here that the weakest link in the chain appears. Two involuntary stars of the drama were entrusted with the task of entering into a liaison with me: Pyatakov, representing the industrial group of defendants, and Radek, who was assigned the mission of establishing a political foundation for the plot.

Great intentions often come to naught because of the tiniest obstacles. Radek claimed that he was placed in contact with me through the intermediary of Vladimir Romm. It is useless to dwell at the present time on the ridiculous testimony of Romm regarding his nocturnal meeting with me in an unknown park near Paris, where I was supposed to have met a man totally unknown to me, without a guard, without fear of a trap or of a provocation. Let us take the other testimony, which is much more impressive at first glance: that is, the testimony of the principal defendant Pyatakov relative to his special trip to visit me in Norway, in order to receive instructions from me on the subject of terror, sabotage, and high treason.

An average man, accustomed to quiet and peaceful relations, would immediately say to himself: Pyatakov could not himself
invent an accusation that threatens him with death. Upon this simple consideration of good sense are based all the calculations of the organizers of the trial. However, the same Pyatakov accidentally revealed that what was involved here was a manifest and incontrovertible frame-up. Pyatakov allegedly arrived in Oslo by airplane to see me in the middle of December 1935 from Berlin. But the authorities of the Oslo airport, after examining the official records, declare to the whole world: NOT A SINGLE FOREIGN PLANE LANDED AT THE OSLO AIRPORT DURING THE ENTIRE MONTH OF DECEMBER 1935!

The GPU, it appears, has chosen a bad month. I did not know this fact on January 27, when I posed my thirteen questions to Pyatakov and the tribunal in Moscow. But even then I did not doubt for an instant that when the vague, false testimonies were confronted with concrete circumstances of time and space, the falsification would inevitably appear. Naturally, not in the USSR, where the GPU can immediately shoot whoever attempts to raise any refutation! But I have lived abroad for eight years. All the circumstances connected with me can be openly and freely verified. Therein lies the strength of my position, and, at the same time, the desperate weakness of the Stalinist machination, despite its grandiose dimensions.

**The Crumbling of the Frame-up**

If no airplane came from Berlin, that means that Pyatakov did not meet me and did not receive instructions; that means that the unfortunate Pyatakov lied; that is to say, repeated the falsehood dictated to him by the GPU. I do not know what Moscow will say now. Prosecutor Vyshinsky, with the ingenuity which is his, can assuredly say that the criminal instructions of Trotsky were "known" from other sources, apart from the December flight of Pyatakov. But if the instructions were "known," why did Pyatakov go after them? Why was it necessary for him to fly in an imaginary airplane? Who will believe the general confessions of Pyatakov, if in so simple and elementary a fact, which constitutes the cornerstone of his testimony, Pyatakov has lied? Once again: if the GPU can force Pyatakov, an Old Bolshevik, a member of the Central Committee, a high administrator, to bear grossly false witness, what can be said of the defendants of lesser stature?

Stalin's misfortune is that the GPU cannot dispose of the
Norwegian climate, the international movement of airplanes, or even the movement of my thought, the character of my affiliations, and the progress of my activities. That is why the elaborate frame-up, imprudently raised to great heights, has fallen from the nonexistent airplane and has been smashed to bits. But if the accusation against me—the principal defendant, inspirer, organizer, director of the plot—is built upon grossly false testimony, what is the rest of the business worth?

But Pyatakov has made a false denunciation, not only against me, but also against himself. The same holds true for Radek. All these "pseudo-Trotskyites"—in the trial of the sixteen as well as in the trial of the seventeen—serve only as steps to reach me. The GPU has now fallen down all its steps. What remains, in the final analysis, of the trial? Only abuses in military industry, anarchy on the railroads, espionage, either fascist or Japanese, etc. But the political responsibility for these crimes falls, not on Trotskyism, but on the leading bureaucracy.

Let us add again that if I am accused of having transmitted criminal instructions to Pyatakov, my son Sergei Sedov, now under arrest in Krasnoyarsk, an irreproachable engineer, divorced from politics, is accused of fulfilling the instructions of Pyatakov by preparing extensive poisonings of workers. . . . What more can one say? . . .
THE LAST WORDS OF THE ACCUSED

January 30, 1937

The story of Pyatakov's airplane is convincing for all. But those who want to go more deeply into the matter will see that the falsehood of the trial is clear from each piece of evidence and from each reply. In this trial there is nothing natural, living, human. The trial is without psychology, a trial of automatons and not people. Terrible conspirators and terrorists repent in chorus like little children. Old diehard "Trotskyists" stigmatize Trotsky and sing hymns to Stalin, whom yesterday they are supposed to have been planning to kill. Where and when was anything like this ever seen?

Radek explains that the reason for his crime was lack of belief in the possibility of constructing socialism in one country. But for the past eight years Radek has been writing a great number of articles which prove that possibility. It turns out that these articles must not be believed: all that was falseness and lies. Only after December 20, 1936, in a GPU prison, did Radek really, fully, and sincerely become convinced that socialism had triumphed in the USSR.

Pyatakov controlled industry for more than twelve years, working out plans, constructing factories, making innumerable public accounts, delighting in successes, mourning failures. It now turns out that in fact he hated Soviet industry, destroyed it, and massacred workers. All this he did out of hatred for Stalin and love of Trotsky. Only when he had fallen into a solitary cell did he, in the course of one or two months, start to hate Trotsky and love Stalin with a burning love. The highest school of socialism, Stalinism, and sincerity thus proves to be a GPU prison!

All this is like typhoid delirium. But there is method in this madness. To understand it, it is necessary to throw away all standards of human psychology. The defendants do not exist as personalities. They are empty vessels. They are only stooges of
the GPU, which is putting on an edifying spectacle on the theme, “Trotskyism is the source of all evil.” Before the eyes of the whole world they throw themselves under the chariot of the terrible divinity Mahabharata. But unlike the pious Hindus, they do so not voluntarily, not out of blind fanaticism, not in religious ecstasy, but cold-bloodedly, hopelessly, under the club which drove them into the impasse.

Prosecutor Vyshinsky declared that the present trial marks “the end of Trotsky and Trotskyism.” No, the Moscow trial is not the end. The real trial against the organizers of the frame-up is only beginning. Despite all threats, obstacles, and dangers we shall bring this trial to an end.
ANTI-SEMITIC DEVICES

January 30, 1937

On the occasion of the arrest of my younger son, Sergei, word has slipped out that the Soviet press is disclosing the fact that the real name of the arrested man is not Sedov, but Bronstein. Taken by itself the question is not, it would seem, of any significance, but the implications of the revelation are obvious.

The truth of the matter is as follows: Since 1902 I have invariably borne the name of Trotsky. In view of my illegality, my children under czarism were recorded under their mother’s family name—Sedov. So as not to force them to change the name to which they had become accustomed, under Soviet power I took for “civic purposes” the name Sedov (according to Soviet law a husband can, as is well known, take the name of the wife). The Soviet passport on which I, my wife, and our elder son were sent into exile was made out in the name of the Sedov family. My sons, thus, have never used the name Bronstein.

Just why is it now necessary to drag out this name? The answer is obvious: because of its Jewish sound. To this it is necessary to add that my son is accused of nothing more or less than an attempt to slaughter workers. Is this really so different from accusing the Jews of ritually using the blood of Christians?
Filming “Speech for a Newsreel.”
Esteemed Audience:

You will easily understand if I begin my short address to you—in my very imperfect English—by expressing my warm thanks to the Mexican people and to the man who leads them with such merit and courage, President Cardenas. When monstrous and absurd accusations were hurled at me and my family, when my wife and I were under lock and key by the Norwegian government, unable to defend ourselves, the Mexican government opened the doors of this magnificent country and said to us: “Here you can freely defend your rights and your honor!” Naturally, it is not sympathy for my ideas which has motivated President Cardenas, but fidelity to his own ideas; all the more meritorious, then, is his act of democratic hospitality, so rare these days!

Stalin’s trial against me is built upon false confessions, extorted by modern Inquisitorial methods, in the interests of the ruling clique. There are no crimes in history more terrible in intention or execution than the Moscow trials of Zinoviev-Kamenev and of Pyatakov-Radek. These trials develop not from communism, not from socialism, but from Stalinism, that is, from the unaccountable despotism of the bureaucracy over the people!

What is my principal task now? To reveal the truth. To show and to demonstrate that the true criminals hide under the cloak of the accusers. What will the next step be in this direction? The creation of an American, a European, and subsequently, an international commission of inquiry, composed of people who incontestably enjoy authority and public confidence. I will undertake to present to such a commission all my files, thousands of personal and open letters in which the development of my thought and my action is reflected day by day, without any gaps. I have nothing to hide! Dozens of witnesses who are abroad possess invaluable facts and documents which will shed light on
the Moscow frame-ups. The work of the commission of inquiry must terminate in a great countertrial. A countertrial is necessary to cleanse the atmosphere of the germs of deceit, slander, falsification, and frame-ups, whose source is Stalin’s police, the GPU, which has fallen to the level of the Nazi Gestapo.

Esteemed audience! You may have many varying attitudes toward my ideas and my political activity over the past forty years. But an impartial inquiry will confirm that there is no stain on my honor, either personal or political. Profoundly convinced that right is on my side, I wholeheartedly salute the citizens of the New World.
STALIN HAS CONCEDED RADEK, SOKOLNIKOV, AND TWO OTHER DEFENDANTS TO WORLD PUBLIC OPINION, IN ORDER TO SHOOT THE REST OF THEM WITH GREATER ASSURANCE. AFTER THE ACCUSATIONS WHICH HE FORCED THE DEFENDANTS TO HURL UPON THEMSELVES, HE COULD NOT AVOID SHOOTING THEM. HE MUST ALREADY HAVE EXECUTED PYATAKOV IN ORDER TO PREVENT AN INQUIRY INTO HIS FLIGHT TO OSLO IN AN IMAGINARY AIRPLANE. HE MUST SHOOT THE OTHERS IN ORDER TO BOLSTER HIS RIGHT TO SHOOT PYATAKOV. HE WAS FORCED TO KILL THEM TO GIVE SATISFACTION TO "PUBLIC OPINION" IN THE USSR, WHICH HE HIMSELF HAS DECEIVED AND DEMORALIZED.

THE DEFENDANTS WHOM I KNOW—RADEK, SOKOLNIKOV, PYATAKOV, BOGUSLAVSKY, SEREBRIAKOV, MURALOV, DROBNI—HAD BEEN FOR A LONG TIME MY IRRECONCILABLE ADVERSARIES AND ACTED DURING THE TRIAL AS MY MOST BITTER ENEMIES. BUT BEFORE ALL HUMANITY I EXCLAIM FROM THE DEPTHS OF MY SOUL: THESE MEN ARE INNOCENT OF ALL THE CRIMES WHICH THE GPU FORCED THEM TO TAKE UPON THEMSELVES. THESE MEN ARE VICTIMS OF THE MOST HORRIBLE POLITICAL SYSTEM, IN WHICH THERE NO LONGER REMAINS ANY VESTIGE OF CONSCIENCE OR HONOR. THE INSPIRER AND ORGANIZER OF THIS SYSTEM IS STALIN. THE NAME OF CAIN WILL REMAIN WITH HIM FOREVER.
Radek and Sokolnikov have been spared. Even as these lines appear in the press, the fate of the other defendants will be in the hands of the government. It is difficult to say who has been given the worse fate: those who have been executed or those who have been spared. To government elements, each person whose life has been spared represents a threat, a kind of time bomb: in prison he can reveal the truth about what went on behind the scenes during the trial. This threat will increasingly sharpen as the international struggle to review the amalgam in Moscow intensifies.

In 1931 the Mensheviks were brought to trial in Moscow, also solely on the basis of "voluntary confessions." Two of the defendants, the well-known writers Sukhanov and Groman, who were trusted and respected, "confessed" to the court their involvement in an international plot to organize a military operation in the USSR together with Leon Blum and other leaders of the Second International. Sukhanov and Groman were "spared" and incarcerated. However, the promise of their release in the near future never materialized. The victims, who had been deceived by the GPU, told everyone they came into contact with in prison the falsity of the self-accusations that had been extracted from them and how they had been offered complete freedom in return. Sukhanov went on a hunger strike that lasted several weeks, after which he, as well as Groman, vanished from prison. Where are they now? No one knows.

In all likelihood the GPU simply put Sukhanov and Groman to death during the period that Zinoviev's trial was being prepared so that they would not be able to expose the mechanism behind the "voluntary confessions." Could not organizations like the Friends of the USSR and the League for the Rights of Man seek to find out what has become of Sukhanov and Groman?

Will the group behind Radek and Sokolnikov be more fortunate? Of this we are not certain. Radek does not know how to
Those Who Have Been “Spared”

keep a secret, and everyone is aware of this. And every indiscreet word uttered by Radek represents a tremendous threat to Stalin. This is consequently why it is very difficult for us to answer the question: Who has received the worse fate—those who have been executed or those who have been “spared”? 
KAGANOVICH ANTICIPATES MY END

January 31, 1937

Kaganovich, Stalin's brother-in-law, is undoubtedly one of the principal organizers of the Moscow amalgams (Stalin naturally prefers to act in such cases through a reliable intermediary). Moreover, Kaganovich has a direct interest in the recent trial, ever since the service of which he is the head, thanks to the much-vaulted successes and the adventurist "rhythms," entered the arena of accidents and catastrophes. Let us recall once more that an accessory but extremely important task of the trial was to throw the responsibility for all the errors, misfortunes, and crimes of the bureaucracy in the domain of economy onto the Oppositionists, who for a long time had been removed from that economy and even deprived of their daily bread.

Kaganovich knows better than anybody that the accusations against me were fabricated in Stalin's office, and that there is not a word of truth in these accusations. But that is precisely why Kaganovich cried, at a meeting in Moscow on January 29, "Death to Trotsky!" If the Moscow clique hopes to frighten me by such threats and bludgeon me into silence, it deludes itself. Not because I underestimate the strength and the methods of the GPU: no, I understand full well that it would be easier for them to kill me secretly than to demonstrate my "alliance" with Hitler. But there are duties which are immeasurably more important than considerations of personal security. Every good soldier knows that. And as for me, I am an old soldier of the revolution. Moreover, even a successful assassination would not refute my revelations. I have friends. There are more than a few courageous and honest men in the world. The truth will be triumphant!
THE ‘PEOPLE’ CALL FOR PUNISHMENT\textsuperscript{157}

January 31, 1937

The Moscow bureaucracy has mobilized thousands of people in Red Square in order to celebrate its victory. In the first years of the revolution, the great demonstrations really expressed the spirit of the masses themselves; the slogans, the symbols, the joy as well as the anger, all were spontaneous, all rose from the ranks. Now the demonstrations in Red Square express only the power of the bureaucracy. The worker goes to the demonstration in the same manner that he goes to work, most often under the pressure of the same people and suspecting the same informers.

This is true to a still greater degree of the “unanimous” resolutions, which demand the heads of all the accused and my own into the bargain.

Participation in official meetings has for a long time had a constrained character. In the period from 1925 to 1928 the majority of the workers, according to an expression then current, “voted with their feet”; that is to say, they disappeared from meetings before the vote. But in the following years secret agents of the GPU were posted at the doors: whoever tried to leave was deprived of work and, as often as not, arrested. It is therefore not at all astonishing that all the resolutions proposed from above should be adopted “unanimously.”

I do not wish to deny by this that the most backward sections of the population are really deceived by the Moscow trial, with the aid of a monolithic press and a monolithic radio, and that Stalin, imitating the methods of Hitler, exploits the “prewar” spirit with some success in the interests of his personal dictatorship.
WHY DID THE GPU CHOOSE DECEMBER AND NORWAY?158

January 31, 1937

Why did the GPU choose such an unsuitable flying month as December for Pyatakov’s flight to Oslo? It is not difficult to find an explanation. I arrived in Norway in June 1935, and was ill all summer. The GPU, of course, had knowledge of this. Arranging a “meeting” with Pyatakov in the summer would risk hitting on the very period when I was lying in bed. In October I was accommodated in a hospital in Oslo where I spent six weeks, a fact which was known to the GPU from the newspapers. Thus neither October nor November was suitable for Pyatakov’s flight. After leaving the hospital I must, according to the calculations of the GPU, have been perfectly fit for conspiratorial movements, meetings, and plots. It is true that December in Norway is not good for flying. But the later winter months are even less suitable. Put off the flight until spring 1936? But then Pyatakov does not have sufficient time to organize all these wreckings and destruction which developed during the “Stakhanovite” year. We thus come to the conclusion that the GPU was not acting at random, but seriously and thoughtfully, with a calendar in their hands. It is even possible to say that by a combination of circumstances December was the most suitable of all the months of the year. If during that month not a single foreign plane flew into Oslo, that at any rate is not the fault of the GPU.

The answer could be made: If Pyatakov’s meeting with me could not be put off till summer 1936, then it could still have been moved back and “arranged” in 1933 or 1934, in France, where air communications are much more highly developed. But no, France did not fit. At the same time the most important immediate practical task of the trial was to secure my removal from Norway; not legal extradition—for this, legal proceedings in Norway would have been required, which was completely unacceptable and impossible for the GPU—but simple removal. Where? Into the arms of the GPU! (the Mexican visa was not foreseen in...
Moscow). Immediately after the trial of the sixteen (August 1936) Moscow demanded my removal in a special note. The Norwegian government replied firstly, that the actions of which I was accused belonged to the period before my arrival in Norway (speech of the minister of foreign affairs), and secondly, that I was then interned and therefore could not represent any "danger." After this a new Moscow note placed "responsibility for the consequences" on the Norwegian government.

Through my lawyer, Puntervold, I then warned the Norwegian government in writing that the words about "responsibility" should be understood not as a simple diplomatic phrase but as a preparation for a new amalgam, an Oslo amalgam after the Copenhagen one. On September 15 I wrote to my lawyer from Sundby, my place of confinement: "But how can the GPU conjure up an Oslo amalgam? . . . I do not know. . . . In any case, it will not be easy. . . . The GPU’s art will consist of finding new Olbergs, Berman-Yurins, etc., who will have received their orders direct from Oslo. Who knows, Mr. Puntervold, a GPU agent might approach you, in the most cordial way, to ask you about my health, and then later this scoundrel may testify that the reason he visited Puntervold was to receive instructions from Trotsky written in invisible ink concerning acts of terrorism. 'For security reasons' he will naturally have burned the instructions at a later time. In order to make his testimony more complete, he might also steal a few addressed envelopes from your desk . . . ."

["Letter to Mr. Puntervold," in Writings 35-36].

I requested that this warning of mine be published in the press, hoping thus to hinder the organization of a new frame-up. But the Norwegian government preferred to confiscate my declaration and thus gave a free hand to the GPU. . . . It can now be understood why it was that Pyatakov had to fly to Oslo.
February 1, 1937

The moral fiasco of the Zinoviev-Kamenev trial compelled Stalin to have recourse to the Radek-Pyatakov trial. For nine years Radek and Pyatakov were reliable tools in the hands of Stalin, who greatly valued them because they are cleverer and better educated than all his closest collaborators. But he had no other visible, well-known ex-Trotskyists whom he could have brought into play for the new show trial. He was forced to sacrifice Pyatakov and Radek. If at the beginning of the series of amalgams Stalin seemed to himself to be the inventor and creator of a new system for working miracles, he has now already become its prisoner. In order to cover up the fatal story of Pyatakov’s plane, Stalin now has to have a new trial. Where is he to get the people from? To back up the stupid fairy tale of my links with the Gestapo, a special trial of German engineers and technicians in the USSR must be organized. Where will it end? We have already said that Stalin is trying to quench his thirst with salt water.

Judicial amalgams cannot but instill terrible alarm in the ranks of the bureaucracy itself. The majority of those shot after the last trial were not political figures, but middle and upper-middle ranking bureaucrats. They had behind them, probably, some mistake or other, some delinquencies, maybe even crimes. The GPU, however, demanded of them confessions to far different crimes, on a historical scale, and then—shot them. None of the bureaucrats can now feel safe and secure. Stalin has dossiers on all political and administrative figures of any importance at all. These dossiers contain notes on all sins of any kind (incautious handling of public money, love affairs, suspicious personal relationships, compromising relatives, etc.). Local satraps have similar files on their subordinates. At any moment Stalin can overthrow and crush any of his collaborators, not even excluding members of the Politburo. Up until 1936 Stalin, with the help of
his dossiers, did violence only to the conscience of people, by making them say what they did not want to say. From 1936 on he started openly to play with the lives of his collaborators. A new period has opened! Using the bureaucracy, Stalin crushed the people; now he is terrorizing the bureaucracy itself. The bureaucracy fears its own isolation from the people and therefore supports Stalin. Stalin is afraid of his isolation from the bureaucracy and is trying to play the people along; hence the “democratic” constitution and the demagogic trials.

The closest collaborators of Stalin are looking behind them and mentally asking each other: whose turn tomorrow? At the same time the popular masses cannot but ask themselves: who is ruling us? How can people who until yesterday occupied the most important positions suddenly turn out to be serious criminals? How can the Central Committee of Lenin’s day all—with the single exception of Stalin—turn out to have consisted of traitors and betrayers? Is it not the other way around? Is Stalin not perhaps forced to drown in blood the old cadres of the Bolshevik Party because he himself has definitively gone over to the construction of a new aristocracy?

The political system of the USSR has entered an epoch of deep and severe crisis. Only the blind can fail to see this. Only hypocrites, who pretend to be revolutionaries under the cheap title of “friends of the USSR,” can keep silent about this. This gentry justifies itself by saying that exposing the crimes of the Stalin clique is showing support to the fascists. This is like superstitious people who are afraid to name their illness aloud because they believe in word magic. Fascism is helped by the Stalinist bureaucracy taking on the most repulsive features of a totalitarian regime. The Moscow trials have even made world public opinion forget about the Reichstag trial and about Hitler’s bloody disposal of his own opposition (June 30, 1934)!

Can any greater service to the fascist hangmen be given?

The economic foundations of the USSR preserve their progressive character. These economic foundations must be defended by the toiling masses of the whole world and all friends of progress in general with all possible means. But the closest, most direct danger to these foundations is the threat from the direction of the demoralized and demoralizing Stalinist bureaucracy.

The peoples of the USSR are trapped in a net of totalitarian falsifications. The first duty of real, not masquerading friends of
the USSR is to tell the peoples of that great country the truth, the whole truth, and thus help them break out of the blind alley.

The question of an *international investigation commission* is not my personal question, or the question of my family (one of my sons, Sergei, is in danger in Krasnoyarsk, the other, Leon, is in danger in Paris). This is not only a question of the thousands of Soviet Oppositionists waiting for justice. No, this is an international question. It deeply involves the political consciousness and moral standards of all countries. In the most difficult conditions there is no better means than the *truth*! That is why all workers' organizations, all progressive social groups, all honest citizens must support the initiative for setting up an *international investigation commission*!
Dear Comrade Nelz:

I am expressly empowering you to take all steps you deem necessary in order to achieve justice for me in the Swiss courts with respect to slanders against me spread in the Stalinist press. Will you please make the necessary arrangements with attorneys you consider reliable?

Yours truly,
Leon Trotsky
TWO STATEMENTS ON HEARST

Published February 3, 1937

Rumors concerning articles sold to Hearst absolutely false. All articles and statements concerning the trial are not being sold but are given gratuitously to the press. They are not given to the Hearst press and Universal Service, because of their connection with fascism and reaction throughout the world.

Published February 19, 1937

I refused to receive the Hearst representative or to give statements to the Universal Service. The latter has been the only agency refused admittance. Possibly Hearst got the statements through other agencies or from the Mexican papers, which have published them textually, without cutting. When he prints them as being "by Leon Trotsky" he is not formally a liar, because (except for Hearst's distortions and deletions) I am actually the author. But I am not responsible for the channels through which he obtains these statements.
... Indignation, anger, revulsion? Yes, even temporary weariness. All this is human, only too human. But I will not believe that you have succumbed to pessimism. . . . This would be like passively and plaintively taking umbrage at history. How can one do that? History has to be taken as she is; and when she allows herself such extraordinary and filthy outrages, one must fight her back with one’s fists.
AN INCOMPREHENSIBLE POLEMICAL SALLY BY MR. TROYANOVSKY

February 4, 1937

It is with the greatest stupefaction that I read a dispatch from Washington in the Mexican papers today concerning the polemical article directed against me by Soviet Ambassador Troyanovsky, who affirms that in my statements I had acknowledged “the existence of a plot whose aim was to kill Stalin” (!); that I had even motivated the necessity of the plot with the words: “The only way to get rid of Stalin is by assassinating him.” He must have lost his equilibrium entirely—I speak not of the diplomat, but of the journalist Troyanovsky—to resort to such a futile argument. It would, moreover, presume a complete lack of respect for the American press to propose that it prints statements containing direct appeals for assassination!

In reality, in my statement, as is evident to every impartial reader, I explained the political psychology of the ruling group. Stalin, I wrote, believes himself the irreplaceable leader, as uncontrollable as Hitler. Stalin believes that there are not, and cannot be, legal means whereby he can be replaced, that it is not possible through instrumentalities of the constitution or of the party to alter either the policies or the composition of the leadership. That is why he believes that the Opposition, if it wishes to attain its ends, must have recourse to terrorism. That is why every opposition is—for the masters of the GPU—composed of potential terrorists. All political criticism is merely the first step toward the assassination of Stalin and his collaborators. Whereupon Vyshinsky enters into his domain of “jurisprudence” and identifies the first step with the last. The Oppositionists are automatically equated with terrorists. I spoke, however, not of the program of the Opposition, not of its plans, and still less of the plans of the unfortunate capitulators (Zinoviev, Pyatakov, etc.). No, I spoke wholly and exclusively of the internal logic of despotism, of Bonapartism, or of Stalinism.

The Trotskyites (the true Trotskyites and not the puppets of the GPU) do not by any means think that Stalin is a sacred,
irreplaceable, lifetime chieftain. The growth of the well-being and culture of the masses draws them into implacable opposition to Bonapartism. *Therein lies the essence of the present crisis in the USSR.* In the face of this gigantic political process—that is to say, the growing antagonism between the people and the bureaucracy—terrorist acts represent miserable and impotent adventures of isolated and desperate individuals. Stalin can easily be replaced by Voroshilov, Kaganovich, etc. Only the movement of the masses themselves can liquidate the present fatal political regime of the USSR.

The Russian czar was irreplaceable and hereditary. A party of the Russian intelligentsia thought that one could dispose of czarism only by terrorist methods (the party of the "Social Revolutionaries"). In its turn, the czarist bureaucracy was inclined to see a terrorist in every revolutionist. It was only after a long time that we, the Russian Marxists, representing the working class, succeeded in demonstrating in constant struggle against terrorist adventurism that our method of struggle had nothing in common with the assassination of ministers and leaders.

I must say that I cannot quite fathom the source of journalist Troyanovsky's error. He himself, like the majority of present-day Soviet ambassadors and high functionaries, was, during the years 1914-20, an implacable adversary of Lenin and of the October Revolution. In the years of the civil war, Mr. Troyanovsky was one of the leaders of the Menshevik party. But unlike the party of the Social Revolutionaries—who assassinated Volodarsky and Uritsky,\(^{165}\) shot Lenin, and tried to wreck my military train, etc.—the Mensheviks, and with them Mr. Troyanovsky, in spite of their implacable hostility to the Soviet regime, never resorted to terrorist measures. That is to say, is it not, that an opposition is possible even without terrorism? Such is our Opposition, not against the power of the soviets, but against the bureaucratic despotism which has stifled the soviets.

On March 4, 1929, when it was not yet a question of the future trials in Moscow, I wrote, in analyzing the policies of Stalin: "There remains only one thing for Stalin: to try to draw a line of blood between the official party and the Opposition. *He absolutely must connect the Opposition with terrorist crimes, preparation of armed insurrection, etc.*” These lines were published eight years ago! Since that time I have repeated that warning in the press dozens of times. The Moscow frame-ups did not catch me unawares.
Dear Friends:  
Having wanted to do so several times, I should like to tell you in this letter some thoughts I have already formulated in private and personal conversations.  
You belong to a political organization which declares itself in solidarity with the ideas I stand for. You show your solidarity with acts of personal attention and friendship. I do not have to tell you that I am profoundly grateful for those purely human feelings on your part, and, fortunately, also on the part of many citizens, men and women, of this hospitable and generous country.  
Many new friends would like to consult me on various questions of theory and politics. I must repeat most forcefully what I said on the first day I arrived at Tampico: I want to avoid anything, absolutely anything, which could give my enemies an excuse for saying that I am interfering from near or far in the internal affairs of this country. Your organization existed even before my arrival here. It will go on existing in the same way now. I cannot take on myself the slightest responsibility for your activity.  
You have told me, dear friends, that you understand my position well, and that you are in agreement with me on this point. However, I should like to repeat it publicly, so as to avoid any possible misunderstanding. Our relations will remain personal and friendly, but not political.  

Warmest greetings,  
Leon Trotsky
AN INTERVIEW WITH MADAME TITAYNA

February 11, 1937

1. I think that the French public is intelligent enough to grasp the absurdity of the Moscow accusations at the outset. The political goal of the trials is to picture the Trotskyists as the secret allies of the fascists against democracy. By way of proof they use the psychological technique of fascism: an incessant, monolithic, and massive stream of lies. The following facts, in my opinion, will not be without interest to the French public.

On December 13, 1931, Stalin made the following declaration in a discussion with the German author Emil Ludwig: "If we must speak of our sympathy for any nation, it is naturally the Germans." Then later: “There is nothing in the policies of the USSR that can be said to be a recognition of the Versailles system.” “We have never been the guarantors of Poland and we never will be.” “Our friendly relations with Germany will remain just as they have been up to the present time.” In order to give special weight to his words, Stalin added the following: “There are some politicians who promise or declare one thing one day, and the next day either forget or deny what they said without even blushing. We cannot behave that way” (All citations are taken from the official Soviet publication Lenin i Stalin o sovetskoi konstitutsii [Lenin and Stalin on the Soviet Constitution], pp. 146-47).

As everyone knows, both parties to the conversation have managed to change their points of view: Emil Ludwig, the German, has become Swiss; and Stalin has forgotten his “sympathies” for the Germans and his hostility toward the Versailles system and is totally prepared to become a backer of Poland. I leave aside the question of which politicians blush and which do not. I should, however, bring to your attention the fact that until the end of 1933 the Moscow press, and consequently its shadow, the Comintern press, referred to me exclusively as “Mr.” Trotsky and represented me as a British and American agent.
I could give you a whole volume of citations. It will suffice if you take a look at the March 8, 1929, issue of Pravda (I have it in my hands), where a whole page is devoted to proving that I was a defender of British imperialism (at that time in Moscow they did not yet call it “British democracy”) and particularly to establishing my complete solidarity with Winston Churchill and even his secretary, Boothby... in the cause of safeguarding the Versailles peace.\footnote{The article ends with the following words: “It is clear that the bourgeoisie has paid him tens of thousands of dollars for this.”}

The same Pravda, on July 2, 1931, using an obviously forged document, declared me an ally of Pilsudski and, so to speak, an unofficial “backer” of Poland. But there is an even more striking fact: On July 24, 1933, I arrived in France, thanks to the authorization accorded me by Daladier, then president of the Council [premier]. Please take the trouble to leaf through the issues of l’Humanite from that time. The loss of time will be well compensated! L’Humanite called me nothing other than an agent of French imperialism and, in particular, an agent of the Radical-fascist Daladier and the social-fascist Leon Blum for preparing military intervention into the USSR. This seems unlikely now! But we have already learned from Stalin that there are politicians in this world who forget what they said the previous day, and moreover... do not even blush.

Thus, the accusations against me and my supporters were and are nothing more than contradictory reflections of the political and diplomatic zigzags of Moscow. Now that Stalin is anxious for an alliance with France, I am immediately transformed into an agent of Germany and Japan. All of these changes in my political orientation were accomplished without the slightest participation from me. But, on the other hand, I always anticipate them and I have predicted them in the press.

The Moscow trials are nothing but a dramatic staging of the articles in Pravda and the Comintern press. In order to make people believe an obvious absurdity, Stalin shoots scores of absolutely innocent people after having previously used the methods of the Inquisition to reduce them to the final degree of degradation.

I might add that my son Sergei, a young Soviet engineer, was arrested on the charge of having prepared... the extermination of workers on a massive scale. This charge alone throws a tragic and at the same time revealing light on the Moscow trials and Stalin’s justice.
2. I have answered your second question in detail in my book *The Revolution Betrayed* (French edition published by Grasset). As far as I have been able to judge, the book has attracted the favorable attention of French public opinion.

3. The Franco-Russian pact—is it "fortunate" or "unfortunate" for the French people?\(^\text{171}\) I will say that it is neither fortunate nor unfortunate, but inevitable. Let it be said in passing that during my stay in France I wrote a number of articles for *L'Intransigeant, l'Oeuvre, les Annales*, in which I developed the idea of a growing threat to peace on the part of Germany and Japan and the necessity for a rapprochement between France and the Soviet Union. As you see, I very carefully hid my alliance with Hitler and the Mikado.

4. War is not caused by the conflict between "fascism" and "democracy" but rather by more profound social causes. At the moment war breaks out, fascist Italy may find itself on the side of France. Exactly the same thing is true of Poland. The Soviet Union of today has nothing in common with democracy—neither bourgeois nor proletarian. International alliances are determined by economic interests, not political formulas. Do I think that Europe is marching toward war? Yes, I think so. The people can save themselves and civilization only through their own efforts.

5. I was in France during various periods of my life, and outside of France I still follow French literature as far as possible. In this domain French hegemony is incontestable. During my internment in Norway my wife and I read Jules Romains, an artist without equal, and other French authors. Andre Gide's remarkable book *Retour de l'URSS* gave me great moral satisfaction.\(^\text{172}\)

6. The evolution of French politics? A collection of my articles on this subject appeared in Paris under the title *Ou va la France?* [Whither France?]\.\(^\text{173}\) I completely stand by what I said there. I was not a supporter of Leon Blum's policies at the time the Stalinists treated him like a "social fascist." I am not now a supporter of Blum, while the Stalinists, in characteristic manner, have become his followers.

7. How many supporters do I have in the world? It is difficult for me to give you a precise figure, especially since the working class is going through a period of continuous change, and since besides supporters there are semisupporters, 25 percent supporters, etc. I believe at the present time there are several tens of thousands. The recent series of Moscow trials undoubtedly will deal a mortal blow to the Comintern and cause the growth of the
Marxist tendency in the workers' movement, under whose banner I remain.

8. My plans? My principal hope when I went to Mexico was that the slanderers and falsifiers would leave me in peace. But this hope has not been realized. Instead of occupying myself with scientific and literary work, principally with finishing my book on Lenin, I find myself obliged to busy myself with exposing the Moscow falsifications. In the near future my book on the two recent trials and my internment in Norway with my wife will appear. I hope that I will soon be able to return to my book on Lenin. At the same time I wish to study Spanish and the history and economy of Mexico. We plan to stay in this magnificent country as long as the Mexican people are willing to offer us their hospitality.
A TELEGRAM TO CHICAGO

February 14, 1937

Amongst you are representatives of diverse tendencies of Socialist, Communist, and democratic thought of Chicago and of the United States generally. I do not doubt, however, that a great majority of you, all else aside, are sincere partisans of the October Revolution and unshakable defenders of the Soviet Union. Permit me to tell you, above all, that those who are called Trotskyites in the USSR, that is to say, my true ideological friends, not pseudo-“Trotskyites” fabricated by the GPU, will at the hour of danger be found to be the most certain and most courageous defenders of the October Revolution against the plans of fascism. One can count firmly on these men, who are not functionaries but revolutionists, who by long years of prison and deportation have demonstrated their devotion to their banner and their spirit of sacrifice.

The enemies of the working class throughout the entire world try to utilize the Moscow trials to discredit not only the Soviet Union but also the very idea of socialism in the eyes of the popular masses. Such is, above all, the policy of the yellow press of Hearst. From this, certain radical bigots draw the conclusion that it is necessary to give up all revelations and to keep silent. As if it were a question of revelations and not of the trials themselves! As if the danger were in the medical diagnosis and not in the disease, which gnaws cunningly at the organism!

Down with bigotry! The cure for social ills begins with the frank expression of that which is. It is impossible to erase the Moscow trials from history. They did not fall from the sky. They were not invented by Stalin. They were engendered by the interests and spirit of a parasitic caste which menaces all the grandest conquests of the revolution and which, at the same time, through the Comintern, causes demoralization of the workers’ movement of the whole world. It is precisely to protect the toiling masses from despair and to save the honor of socialism and its
future that the workers must learn to distinguish clearly the profound internal contradictions of the Soviet Union, its great conquests, and its barbarous heritage, its socialist possibilities and its social sores.

The Soviet bureaucracy says, “We are the state; we are socialism.” World reaction on its part tries to present the crimes of the bureaucracy as the crimes of socialism. We revolutionists, Marxists, say, “The bureaucracy is not the revolution but a diseased excrescence of the revolution.”

The cause of this growth lies in the isolation of the Soviet Union, in its backwardness, in the poverty of its people, in the great defeats of the world proletariat. If this excrescence is allowed to develop without hindrance it will come to dominate the whole life of the organism and will transform itself into a new ruling class which will definitely erase the social conquests of the revolution.

Other people would like to hesitate eternally in order not to shoulder any responsibility. “Why,” they say, “should we believe Trotsky rather than Stalin?” Such a way of posing the question is radically false. Blind confidence is demanded by totalitarian regimes with infallible leaders at their head. This is equally the case with the fascist Hitler or with the former Bolshevik Stalin.

I do not ask for confidence. I propose a verification. The way of verification is very simple. A commission of inquiry, composed of authoritative representatives of the workers’ movement, of scientific thought, of jurisprudence, of literature and art, must be created.

I take advantage of your meeting to repeat once more: If this commission decides that I am directly or indirectly guilty, even if only in an infinitesimal degree, of the monstrous crimes which Stalin tries to impute to me, I will deliver myself voluntarily into the hands of the GPU.

I am forced, however, to warn you in advance that Stalin will not accept this challenge. He cannot accept it. He prefers to hire the bureaucrats of the Comintern and other individuals of supple conscience to carry contagion to other souls.

But if Stalin recoils before a commission of inquiry, you will not recoil. If Stalin is incapable of demonstrating that his accusations are just, we can demonstrate that they are false.

Let the “Friends” of the USSR with delicate or too prudent nerves step aside. We do not need them. Among them there is a goodly number of careerists and babblers. He who steps aside in
critical moments will betray the workers' movement in time of difficulty.

Glory and honor to the sincere defenders of the Soviet Union, who come out firmly and boldly against the crimes of the Soviet bureaucracy! They will win the confidence and respect of the overwhelming majority of the workers and honest citizens in general. They will save the banner of socialism for the future, the banner soiled by the Soviet bureaucracy. They will aid the Soviet people to crush the new despotism and to establish workers' democracy.

The people can be helped only by truth!

Citizens and friends, demand imperatively the creation of an international commission of inquiry. Support it with all your strength.

Down with the poison of falsehood!
Down with frame-ups! Long live truth! Long live socialism!
February 15, 1937

Vladimir Romm, the former Washington correspondent of the Moscow newspaper Izvestia, declared in the recent trial that he had met me in an alley of a park near Paris. The American news agencies did not give details concerning this meeting. The Moscow papers with the records of the trial have not yet arrived.

Only today did I learn from a letter from my son that my alleged meeting with Romm occurred, according to the Pravda reports, in July 1933. This date bares the falsification at one stroke.

On July 24, 1933, I arrived from Turkey with my wife and secretaries at Marseilles, where we were received by representatives of the French police, who immediately directed us not to Paris but to Royan, on the Atlantic coast, a bathing resort near the mouth of the Gironde.

The prefect of the Department of Charente-Inferieure was immediately informed of our arrival by a secret telegram from Paris. (Our passports during our sojourn in France were stamped only by the highest functionaries of the Surete Nationale in Paris.)

We lived in Royan, as in France generally, incognito. Having already become sick aboard ship, I remained in Royan about two months in a state of infirmity under the observation of a doctor. In Royan I received as visitors more than thirty friends from different countries, about twenty from Paris, seven from Holland, two Belgians, two Germans, three Englishmen, one Swiss, etc.

They all came to Royan because I, due to the condition of my health, as well as to the advice of the police, could not go to Paris. The landlord will certainly confirm that we remained in his house from July 25 to the end of September.

I might add on the first day of our arrival at the country house a fire broke out, which attracted the neighbors' attention to us. At the end of September my wife and myself, accompanied by two
friends and again with the authorization of the police, went from Royan to the Pyrenees, where we lived about three weeks in Bagneres, and from there at the end of October we went to the town of Barbizon, two hours from Paris.

In this way the police records—as well as the testimony of numerous witnesses, among whom there are men with well known names, such as the French author Andre Malraux; the Dutch parliamentary deputy Sneevliet; the former secretary of the British Independent Labour Party John Paton; and others—can prove with absolute accuracy that I remained in a state of infirmity in the south of France from the end of July to the end of October at a place hundreds of miles from Paris.

However, Vladimir Romm declared that he met me in July in the Bois de Boulogne, near Paris. How to explain this new fatal error of the GPU? Very simply: the GPU did not know where I was and the alleged conspirator Romm did not know any more than the GPU.

It must be remembered that at that period the relations between the Soviet and the French governments were very strained. In Moscow they called me nothing other than the agent of Great Britain and France. The Soviet press even affirmed that I came to France with the purpose of helping the then Premier Edouard Daladier, the present war minister, in the preparation of a military invasion of the Soviet Union.

Between the GPU and the French police there could not consequently have been intimate relations. The GPU knew only what was published in the papers about me. Moreover, we went to Royan in strictest secrecy, so that the French press immediately lost track of us.

The GPU proceeded on the supposition that I went immediately from Marseilles to Paris and that from there perhaps I went to the provinces. In order not to commit a mistake the GPU chose the first day of our arrival in France, the end of July, for my alleged meeting with Romm in the Bois de Boulogne.

But precisely in this supposition the GPU committed a mistake because, as has been said, I went directly to Royan and did not leave there for two months.

It seems as if an evil fate persecutes the GPU every time it tries to arrange a meeting with me for its victims, or in general every time it tries to introduce a particle of precision in the formless stream of confessions.

Goltsman chose the Hotel Bristol in Copenhagen, demolished
fifteen years before, as a place of meeting with my son, who exactly at that time, November 1932, happened to be in Berlin. Pyatakov came flying into Oslo in an airplane at a time, December 1935, when not a single foreign airplane reached Oslo. Finally, Vladimir Romm met me in the alleys of the Bois de Boulogne at a time when I was confined in bed hundreds of miles from Paris. All of these circumstances can be verified with absolute accuracy before any kind of commission of inquiry. These proofs are more convincing than the reflections of Mr. Duranty about the Russian soul.
Dear Comrade Henri:

I am writing you this letter to ask a very particular question, but an extremely important and urgent one. It is about some testimony concerning my stay in Copenhagen and Royan. You know that Goltsman, Berman-Yurin, and Fritz David have stated that they met me in Copenhagen. Furthermore, Vladimir Romm has said that he met me in July 1933 at the Bois de Boulogne. Several months ago I formulated a series of very precise questions concerning my stay in Copenhagen. Leon [Sedov] will send you a copy of these questions. The task of the witnesses is very simple. It is necessary to explain who rented the house, and how; what it was like inside; how visitors could get in; in what room I worked; whether I stayed alone in the house, or went out alone, etc. It is also necessary to pinpoint with the help of the press exactly when the news of the death of Zinoviev, which later proved false, reached us at Copenhagen, and all the facts relating to this episode—my two short “speeches” on Zinoviev, etc.—because we must remember that none of the “conspirators” has mentioned that during his stay in Copenhagen the news reached us of the death of Zinoviev, that is, of the chief of the domestic terrorist center.178

As for Royan, the problem is even simpler. It is a matter of collecting all the depositions of persons who visited us at Royan, where I was ill from the day of my arrival, July 25, until the first days of October (it would be better to give the exact date). The testimony on our trip in the Pyrenees and our stay there is also necessary, as well as our trip to Barbizon. We must establish definitively that I went directly from Marseilles to Royan, without going through Paris, that I stayed at Royan continuously for more than two months, and that therefore the meeting at the Bois de Boulogne in the month of July could not have taken place.
I believe that depositions on these two matters could well be collected in two or three days. The signatures must be notarized. It would be very useful to have the text of the telegram received by the prefect of Charente-Inferieure concerning our arrival in Saint-Palais, near Royan. Van is sending you his deposition on this question. I do not need to explain to you the importance of this testimony, since I hope soon to be able to present it before an authorized commission of inquiry.

I would be very happy to have news of your health. Natalia and I are breathing much easier here than in Norway. Our health is satisfactory. Only the fate of Sergei is weighing heavily on Natalia. As for the Moscow trial, I think it is the beginning of the downfall of Stalinism.

With my warmest greetings,
February 18, 1937

Dear Friend:

I have just received a telegram from Leon [Sedov], saying that personal relations make impossible any collaboration with Henri [Molinier]. I don’t understand it at all. If it were a matter of a trial, it would be absolutely indispensable to invite the Molinier brothers and Meichler to testify, and they could not refuse. For the present it is only a commission of inquiry, but it is the prelude to an eventual trial. There are some circumstances that only the Molinier brothers and Meichler can detail and confirm—the trip from Marseilles to Royan, the location of the house, the pressure on the owner to expedite the signing of the contract, the trip from Royan to the Pyrenees, etc. Also, the location of the house in Copenhagen, our staying for one night in the inn near Copenhagen, etc.

How can we give up on these absolutely indispensable depositions, for reasons that have nothing to do with the trial? Really, he must have lost all sense of perspective and proportion, to want to discard such extremely precious testimony. My letter to Henri is still as important as ever. I beg you to make official contact with him and send me a copy of your letter. I think it necessary even to get an interview with him, by someone who has had no personal conflicts with him.

L.T.
Dear Comrade Isaacs:

Wolfe has gone out, so I am writing you in French. Please translate this letter into English for all the interested comrades. The Norwegian paper *Tidens Tegin* (a yellow journal that serves everybody and is for the moment, I believe, in the pay of the GPU) says that since I had American visitors in February 1936, it is proof that Pyatakov visited me in December 1935. It is staggering logic. But the American comrades who came to visit us, starting with you and your companion, must immediately make a deposition on the conditions in which we lived at Weksal, near Honefoss: Was it possible to come from Honefoss to our place without being seen by the residents of the house? Could someone get into our rooms without passing through the common anteroom and the dining room—that is, without being seen by the members of the Knudsen family? What were the relations between us and the Knudsens? Did our visitors meet the Knudsens, did they drink coffee and eat meals in common with us and the Knudsens in the dining room? Was it possible to get an appointment with me without going through my secretary at the time, Jan Frankel or Erwin Wolf? Where did our visitors live during their stay in our area (state whether the hotel was in Honefoss or elsewhere, and name of the hotel)?

I think you should also ask Muste and his wife these same questions, as well as the two comrades from Minneapolis, the railway workers—father and son, I believe—who visited us a few days before our internment (they even took moving pictures of us).\(^{182}\)

All these depositions are important, because they show the opposite to what the [American CP's] *Daily Worker* would like to show: that the real American visitors came by boat or by railroad, with documents, left names in hotel registers, came into contact, without exception, with the Knudsen family, etc. One
copy of these depositions should be sent to the [Trotsky Defense] Committee and the other to me. I am not sending you a list of the Americans who visited us in Norway, since you can establish that perfectly well yourself.

It is absolutely incomprehensible why the comrades have not done these things on their own initiative. Erwin Wolf is the only exception. His deposition in London has gone around the world. The comrades who were with us in Copenhagen should have already given their collective declaration to the press five months ago, on the conditions of my stay in Copenhagen. They have done nothing. They are keeping all that for posterity. I am absolutely incapable of understanding this mentality. The same applies to Royan. The day after the deposition of Vladimir Romm, or at least after the arrival of Pravda, they should have given the press a collective declaration signed by all the witnesses. Nothing was done. What criminal thoughtlessness! All the depositions should be legally notarized. But the first copy should be sent unnotarized immediately.
MAX EASTMAN AS INTERPRETER

February 23, 1937

The translator of my new book [The Revolution Betrayed], Max Eastman, in an interview published in the Sunday Times, said, so far as I can ascertain, that the book identifies the Soviet and fascist regimes. That is possibly Mr. Eastman’s opinion, but not mine. I carry no responsibility for the interpretations of Max Eastman. I hope that my readers will understand my ideas better than my translator.
TWO ANNOUNCEMENTS

February 25, 1937

I. A few months after his capitulation, Rakovsky was sent to Japan as a representative of the USSR to the international conference of the Red Cross (which took place at the beginning of 1935, I believe, although it is very easy to find the exact date from the newspapers of the period). It is clear that while Rakovsky was sent to Japan, members of his family were held in Moscow as hostages. Nevertheless, sending Rakovsky abroad so soon after his capitulation produced some surprise at the time. The "friends" of the USSR in England—inspired, of course, by the GPU—used Rakovsky's trip to prove the sincerity of his repentance. Now we can hypothesize with some certainty that the only reason Rakovsky was sent abroad was to better catch him in the toils of the amalgam in preparation. It is quite certain that in the next trial, with Rakovsky participating as the accused, there will be charges of conspiratorial dealings between Rakovsky and the Japanese diplomats and military (under orders from Trotsky, of course).

II. One year later, Bukharin was sent to Czechoslovakia and France to attend some conferences and, as was admitted at the time, to purchase the archives of the German Social Democrats. Bukharin's trip caused a certain sensation, all the more so because the stormclouds were already gathering around his head. It can be assumed that Bukharin was sent abroad especially to create the technical framework for the judicial amalgam. While in Czechoslovakia and France he could have met with my son or with my Czechoslovakian and French friends. In any case it is quite certain that this trip will be used in the next trial for the purpose of an amalgam.

These two trips by Rakovsky and Bukharin were not accidental. They were part of the grand scheme that Stalin has had planned for many years.
February 25, 1937

Dear Comrade Henri:

Vladimir Romm has said that he saw me in Paris at the end of July, whereas I landed at Marseilles on July 24 and went straight to Royan without going through Paris. All the circumstances of the journey must be established, especially in relation to the passports. The Turkish passports Natalia and I had bear one stamp which says:

Special Commissariat—Ports
SEEN ON DISEMBARKING
Marseilles July 24, 1933
The Special Commissioner
(signature illegible)

together with a round stamp: French Republic—Marseilles—Special Commissariat—Ports.

Then our passports were taken from us and sent to Paris, where both of them were inscribed: “Approved for residence in France. Paris, July 25, 1933,” followed by a stamp, “Divisional Commissioner, Head of Passport Service,” and a rather illegible signature beginning ‘L. Lamb . . . ,” which could be Lebrun or something of the kind, and finally a circular stamp: “French Republic—Surete Generale—Central Passport Service—Divisional Commissioner.”

It is important to establish how our passports were taken from Marseilles to Paris (probably by a policeman who had come to Marseilles from Paris), whom they were delivered to in Paris, and who brought them back from Paris to Royan. If all these circumstances are cleared up, and if it is possible to get personal depositions from the people involved, it will be a decisive blow against Romm’s evidence.
STATEMENT ON SENIN AND WELL

February 27, 1937

The written testimony of Comrade Jan Frankel on February 26, regarding his unexpected and undesired encounter with Mr. Senin (Sobolevicius) and the latter’s efforts to engage Comrade Frankel in a mysterious conversation (although his “courtship” was unsuccessful), coincides with the arrival of a letter from my son, who communicates rumors about dark machinations of the brothers Senin and Well. The matter can assume a certain importance. It is therefore necessary to clarify it in advance.

When, in August 1936, the first cables regarding Berman-Yurin’s visit to me in Copenhagen appeared, I supposed that he was really Senin (Sobolevicius), since the latter was the only Russian-speaking man who actually visited me in Copenhagen—naturally, not “secretly” but entirely openly, that is, with the knowledge and agreement of my closest friends and the comrades on guard. He remained with me for an hour or an hour and a half, during the last moments before my departure for Esbjerg. The conversation revolved around the attitude of his older brother, Well, who was already at that time highly suspected by me and by some of my friends. I had the impression that Senin, who was always under his brother’s influence, had been sent by him to dispel the suspicions of myself and my friends. He succeeded only to a small degree. The content of our conversation, moreover, is very extensively reflected in my correspondence with both brothers and in my articles. It concerned the question of the struggle against fascism in Germany, of our evaluation of the political system in Russia (Thermidor and Bonapartism), and also of our differences in evaluating the economic successes of the Soviet Union, etc.

The brothers Senin and Well—especially the latter—played a certain role in the German organization of the Left Opposition. Both of them and Well’s wife visited us in Turkey (Kadikoy). They did not come on an official mission but rather as wealthy
summer tourists who were able to finance such trips. For my part I could only welcome their visit. During that period friends, quasi-friends, sometimes even unknown people, came from different countries to Turkey, staying either in Constantinople or in Prinkipo and Kadikoy (the closest friends staying in our house), and associated with us, often for some weeks, especially in the summertime.

This was also the case with Senin and Well. They stayed in a neighboring house but they ate and passed a great part of their time with us, the time being occupied with discussions, always in the presence of Frankel and other visitors.

We also had some little discussions regarding the brothers. My wife found both of them strange and philistine. I defended them both a little, from a purely political point of view. Perhaps they could be developed into Marxists. In any case, Well gave the impression of being an impatient careerist. Thus, he declared in a surprising manner during a private conversation with Jan Frankel that sometime he might go to the Soviet Union as a doctor. To the question as to how he could do this as a marked Oppositionist, he answered with some confused and embarrassed remarks.

The attitude of both of them in Germany was always more or less ambiguous; about this the already-mentioned correspondence gives totally clear testimony. As Comrade Frankel has already established in his statement, Senin's visit to Copenhagen preceded by a few weeks the crafty little coup d'etat accomplished by Well and Senin (together with the arrivist turncoat Graef-Frank) in the German organization. Such coups d'etat were at that time on the order of the day. The GPU and the Comintern still hoped in that period to kill the Left Opposition by little splits, crises, etc. That is the explanation of the fact that the GPU did not let the brothers Sobolevicius (and also Graef-Frank, Olberg, Mill) stay in our organizations but employed them impatiently for splits and little coups d'etat. It is clear from the whole situation that the brothers Senin and Well were connected with the GPU in organizing their coups d'etat and consequently also in other things. It seems that both of them are now outside of Russia. It is absolutely certain that they will no longer agree to travel to Russia like Olberg, Fritz David, and others. But since Senin, who really visited me in Copenhagen and who is well informed of all the circumstances, remains obstinately silent, it is clear that he has not given up his relations with his masters, and that, as his
attempt in the case of Jan Frankel shows, he intends to make himself useful outside of Russia.

Since both of them really had relations with me, visited me in Turkey, one of them even in Copenhagen, they can be utilized for an amalgam better than the Berman-Yurins, Fritz Davids, and their like, who are unknown to me.

Therefore I consider it necessary to make this statement in good time.
ON THE SUBJECT
OF JACQUES SADOUL

March 5, 1937

Dear Friend:

You know as well as I what the press of the Comintern is. To pick up a copy of *l'Humanite* is always to injure one's own feelings. My young friends drew my attention to Jacques Sadoul's article against you, an exceptional article even for that prostituted publication. I confess that more than a week went by before I could force myself to read those two short columns. What a despicable era! What despicable people! Jacques Sadoul judges you and excommunicates you in the name of the revolution. He bestows titles in his capacity as an official participant in the Russian civil war. He places himself between you and Lenin as Lenin's right-hand man.

How could I not feel it necessary to express my sympathy and solidarity with you, and at the same time say to the French workers: *Jacques Sadoul is lying!* Every line in his article is a lie, either material or moral.

Jacques Sadoul, who all his life has been a cowardly parasite on the labor movement, speaks of your lack of moral courage. One reads but cannot believe one's eyes. Moral courage and Jacques Sadoul! When this individual arrived in Russia he was a French patriot. But he preferred to serve his beloved country as a deserter rather than on the battlefield.

During the Russian revolution, he was an expectant observer, a careerist who latched on to the Bolsheviks to the degree that they had become a force. Jacques Sadoul was above all concerned not to break his ties with his embassy, with its military mission; that is, with the milieu to which he was incomparably closer than to the Russian workers and peasants.

Lenin had ironic contempt for Sadoul. I can say this all the more easily since it happened that more than once I defended Sadoul against Lenin. My responsibilities made it necessary for me to utilize Sadoul's services, his connections and information,
and so I was interested in him. I confess that I was too lenient toward him!

Lenin said to me: “He’s a tiny little Jean Longuet!” I replied, jokingly: “Even Longuet can sometimes have some use.” Circumstances had it that Sadoul attended the First Congress of the Communist International. Quite a few incidental persons were joining the movement at that time. The Soviet revolution was victorious, the war was dragging on, and Sadoul risked less in Moscow than in France. I remember his speech at the congress, in which he had the impudence to speak of none other than Jean Longuet as a possible ally: “He will come to the revolution, perhaps not five minutes before victory but five minutes after, but he will come . . .” I felt Lenin glance ironically at me: “There he is, your Sadoul, one of those who come five minutes before victory!”

But the slanderer reaches the depth of ignominy in the lines where he speaks of your careerism, of your concern for “material advantages,” and where he, Jacques Sadoul, calls you, Victor Serge, a literary servant of others.

Nothing is more repugnant than a servile philistine who has been told by powerful masters: “You can do anything.” Victor Serge, you remained in the ranks of the Opposition without wavering, in the midst of an unprecedented repression, when less steadfast persons were capitulating one after the other. In prison and in exile, you belonged to the band of those whom the Thermidorean hangmen could not break. You chose, my dear friend, a very bad route to ensure your “career and material advantages.” Why did you not follow Jacques Sadoul’s example? He moved around the Soviet revolution until he could return to France, where he became a correspondent for Izvestia. From Paris, he sent insipid scribblings, dictated by GPU agents. What a courageous, valorous, heroic post!

Persons who had approached Sadoul in recent years told me: “Sadoul is sympathetic to you, but . . .” I answered them with the Russian proverb: “You cannot make a fur coat out of Sadoul’s sympathy.” The sympathy of these gentlemen does not take material form until five minutes after victory.

They are all the same, people like Cachin, Duclos, Vaillant-Couturier, Thorez: literary servants of others and servants pure and simple. On a whistle from Moscow they rush to the trial, like the false witnesses that they are. They listen to the speeches of the Inquisitors and the victims without understanding a word of
Russian. What would be the use of understanding? The character of their testimony is known in advance: “We have heard with our own ears . . . ,” they will swear. As though their long ears were the gauges of truth!

Dear Victor Serge! We know how to have contempt for these people, as you do. We will teach this contempt to the revolutionary youth. A single article by Sadoul permits an infallible diagnosis: “Stalinism is the syphilis of the labor movement.” The Comintern is doomed to destruction. The Sadouls will desert the sinking ship like rats. They will betray the Soviet Union five minutes before serious danger. So let us teach the youth to have contempt for this human fungus. A few more years and the vanguard of the proletariat will pass over not only the servants but also their masters. You will be among those whose names will be linked to the revival of the liberation struggle of the working class!

L. Trotsky
The secretary of the Independent Labour Party of Great Britain, Fenner Brockway, runs to the aid of Pritt, the King’s Counselor, with a plan to save the Moscow falsifiers. Pritt No. 1 tried to resolve the task juridically. Pritt No. 2 considers the task politically. An international inquiry into the Moscow trials, according to Fenner Brockway’s way of thinking, is impermissible because it might arouse “prejudice in Russia and in Communist circles.” Fenner Brockway thus recognizes beforehand that an impartial verification could not confirm the Moscow accusations and justify the executions. On the contrary, Brockway is convinced that an honest and open inquiry can only “prejudice” Stalin’s clique and “Communist circles.” That is precisely why Pritt No. 2 proposes to organize an “inquiry into the role of Trotskyism in the working class movement.” In other words: instead of establishing the objective truth regarding the monstrous, criminal accusations, Brockway proposes a partisan political trial against his ideological adversary. Furthermore, Brockway considers—and who can know Brockway better than himself—that he is marked in advance by the finger of fate to assume an initiative of this nature. He even points magnanimously to a future jury of “four or five persons” who have “objective analytical minds.” As candidates Brockway names: the Austrian Social Democrat Otto Bauer, the “Danish” (Swedish?) lawyer Branting, the head of the Socialist Party of the United States, Norman Thomas, and . . . a “good Frenchman.”194 This commission, to which he hopes, according to his own words, to assure the indispensable finances, will pass a judgment on “the role of Trotskyism in the working class movement.” It is difficult to imagine a more ridiculous and, at the same time, a more cunning project!

My “attitude in respect to the working class movement,” leaving aside my forty years of revolutionary activity, is ex-
pressed at present in the following formula: The guiding apparatuses of the Second and Third Internationals have become obstacles on the road to the emancipation of the proletariat. If a new war is bearing down on humanity with implacable force, the responsibility for that circumstance falls on the leadership of the Second and Third Internationals. I believe that the creation of a new International is inevitable and necessary, on the basis of the program which is explained and developed in my books and articles as well as in the works of my ideological friends. At the same time the so-called Trotskyites are always and everywhere ready to sustain every practical step of the Second and Third Internationals against fascism and reaction in general, when it is a question of real acts of struggle and not of cheap parades, deceitful shows of unification, or, in general, of all those things which throw dust in one's eyes. With bureaucratic charlatanism and "democratic" verbiage we have nothing in common!

For these ideas I fight entirely openly. My adversaries have the full right and the full possibility to submit me to the most severe criticism. Up to now they have made great use of this right. I have never complained on that score. The struggle goes on for the supreme purposes of humanity. Only the ultimate advance of the historical process can resolve these implacable discords. I patiently await its verdict. If, however, Brockway, together with Otto Bauer and the anonymous "good Frenchman," wishes to anticipate the verdict of history, I can only wish them great success. It is not the first time that such attempts have been made.

Messrs. Fenner Brockway and Otto Bauer have more than once judged Lenin, especially from 1914 to 1917, and also later, together with the Russian Mensheviks, as a sectarian, a splitter, a disorganizer and an auxiliary of counterrevolution. Such men, in alliance with "good Frenchmen" and also "good" Germans, in the middle of the nineteenth century, more than once judged and annihilated Marx and Engels. I am ready to submit to the same fate to which my great masters were very often subjected.

However, Brockway's plan takes on a manifestly dishonest character at the point where he tries to replace a juridical inquiry into the criminal accusations and the trials, more exactly, into the greatest frame-ups in the world, with a factional political intrigue to avoid the "prejudice" of Stalin and his agents. Here the advanced workers will say: Stop! Brockway's fears, whatever may be their source, will not hinder the truth from triumphing over the lie!
As to the candidates indicated by Brockway for his political intrigue, I can say the following: In recent years I have written a dozen articles in which I attempted to explain in a friendly manner to Fenner Brockway himself and to his friends that their unprincipled politics, zigzagging from right to left under the whip of the Stalintern, would inevitably destroy the Independent Labour Party. Now this prognosis, alas, is completely confirmed. I have known Otto Bauer for thirty years as a political invertebrate, who has always adapted himself to the class enemy (to the defunct Habsburg monarchy, to the Austrian bourgeoisie, to Wilson, to the Entente), and who, precisely because of that fact, has become chiefly responsible for the crushing of the Austrian proletariat. Again, in 1922 Bauer thought that the Soviet dictatorship arrested "progress," which, in his opinion, then demanded the return of Russia to the road of capitalism. Now Bauer bows low before the Soviet bureaucracy, which is arresting progress toward socialism.

The analysis of Otto Bauer's rotten politics is given in dozens of my writings. Bauer himself has never tried to reply to them. I cannot say anything about Branting, who is recommended as a "lawyer," although it is not a question of juridical, but of theoretical and political, problems.

As for Norman Thomas, he has never hidden his disagreements with me, and on my part I have no reason to attenuate their profundity. But Norman Thomas thinks that however profound these differences may be, and however acute the struggle of tendencies and factions, certain methods are inadmissible, criminal, corrupt, menacing equally all parts of the proletariat. Without purging the workers' ranks of terror, sabotage, espionage, etc.—if they exist—or of frame-ups, falsifications, despicable juridical assassinations—and they certainly exist!—the working class movement as a whole is menaced by gangrene. Here there is common ground between myself and Norman Thomas and all those who seriously concern themselves with the internal morale of the working class movement. With Brockway such a common ground does not and cannot exist. As a political man, Brockway can judge Trotskyism as he likes; that is his right. But as Pritt No. 2, he must be met with a merciless counterthrust.
A PRESS STATEMENT
ON ANDRE MALRAUX

March 8, 1937

Andre Malraux’s interview in *El Nacional* on Spain, France, the Moscow trials, and Andre Gide, has an entirely official character, as does, one cannot help thinking, Malraux’s trip to New York itself.

When Malraux pays tribute to the courageous and perspicacious policy of the government of President Cardenas toward the Spanish revolution, I obviously have no objection on that score. I can only express my regret that Mexico’s initiative has not found any support. Malraux’s sharp words regarding Leon Blum have a much more equivocal character. It is not for me to defend him. But in all fundamental questions which concern Spain, Stalin has followed and is following the very same policy as Blum. It seems that the responsibility for the consequences of this policy which is pursued in Moscow is made to fall solely on Blum. However, Malraux’s mission does not consist in the clarification of these questions: like other diplomats, above all the nonofficial ones, Malraux speaks least of that which concerns him most.

New York is now the center of the movement for a review of the Moscow trials, which is, be it said in passing, the only way of preventing new judicial assassinations. It is unnecessary to explain how much this movement alarms the organizers of the Moscow amalgams. They are ready to resort to any measures to arrest this movement. Malraux’s trip is one of these measures.

In 1926 Malraux was in China in the service of the Comintern-Kuomintang, and he is one of those who carry the responsibility for the strangulation of the Chinese revolution. In his two novels, Malraux, without wishing to do so, has given a revealing picture of the Comintern’s policies in China. But he did not know how to draw the necessary conclusions from his own experiences.

Malraux, like Andre Gide, belongs to the Friends of the USSR. But there is an enormous difference between them, and not only in the dimensions of their talent. Andre Gide is an absolutely
independent character, who possesses a very great perspicacity and an intellectual honesty which permits him to call each thing by its right name. Without that capacity one can babble about the revolution, but is impotent to serve it. Malraux, unlike Gide, is organically incapable of moral independence. His novels are entirely impregnated with heroism, but he himself does not possess that quality in the slightest degree. He is congenitally officious. In New York he issues an appeal to forget everything save the Spanish revolution. Solicitude for the Spanish revolution, however, did not prevent Stalin from exterminating dozens of old revolutionists. Malraux himself left Spain for the purpose of conducting in the United States a campaign in defense of the judicial work of Stalin-Vyshinsky. To this it is necessary to add that the policies of the Comintern in Spain reflect completely its fatal policies in China. Such is the unvarnished truth.
Dear Comrade Cannon:

Your letter finally brings me news, and good news, from you. To my regret you make no mention of your health. Has it sufficiently improved to permit you to go to New York? I understand the importance of your activity in California very well, but I believe, as you do, that your place is now in New York. I will not speak about purely American topics because I know very little of the real situation, etc., but from the point of view of the coming inquiry, your presence in New York and your direct participation in the work seems to me of the greatest importance.

I am enclosing a short article on the intrigues of Fenner Brockway. Such are the means through which the Stalinists try to give Norman Thomas and others of his kind the possibility of retreat from the inquiry. It would be absolutely childish on our part to cherish illusions about the firmness of such fellow-travelers! A simple liberal can be firmer than a Social Democrat in matters of justice. I am convinced that only a very firm and undeviating attitude (with all the necessary tact, of course, of course, of course) can hinder Norman Thomas from following in Fenner Brockway’s footsteps.

You mention the possibility of expulsion of your group from the Socialist Party at the next convention. I cannot permit myself any definite opinion on this matter, but, a priori, I am inclined to think that we can gain nothing by adaptation. As I understand it, Norman Thomas puts the question on the plane of principles and not of formalistic statutes, as did Leon Blum in a similar situation. It seems to me that you cannot avoid accepting the plane of principles and fighting on this plane with the utmost energy.

A rupture with Norman Thomas in this situation would be disagreeable and prejudicial from the point of view of the inquiry. But it is impossible to improve a situation determined by general political factors through artificial means.
All my time is now occupied with writing my book on the Moscow trials. I even read the papers only by exception, and not as a rule. In six weeks I hope to have completed this very annoying work.

Along with Natalia we enjoy in advance your visit with Rose. Please write about your health and about your plan to return to New York. Can you send us a photo of yourself and Rose?

With best greetings,
L. Trotsky

P.S.—The latest events reflected in the letters from myself and Wolfe to Novack (copies enclosed) fill me with great apprehension. Your presence in New York seems to me absolutely necessary. What do you think about this?

L.D.
Dear George:

The copy of your answer to Devere Allen (concerning the Brockway proposal) arrived only after L.D. [Trotsky] had written and sent a statement on the same subject and after he dictated the enclosed letter ["For a Move to New York"]). He has asked me to write a few words to you in the following vein.

Your answer to Brockway is absolutely unacceptable. L.D. has criticized the tendency of our comrades active in the committee as it is reflected in their attitude to the Nation question, their formulation of the first draft of a constitution for the inquiry commission, their failure to present their own bold resolution instead of accepting Dewey’s resolution without criticism, etc. But the attitude in the Brockway matter, while of the same nature, is incomparably more serious. In effect, you turn L.D. over to Brockway and his cohorts. How else can your conciliatory letter be interpreted?

You say that the names suggested by Brockway (Bauer, Branting, Thomas, Allen) are “excellent.” Excellent for what? It is not at all a question of an inquiry commission, for which, indeed, these people might be eligible. It is a question of the systematic campaign of Stalinist-inspired maneuvers with the sole purpose of sabotaging the inquiry by forcing it into other channels. Brockway does not propose that his commission investigate the frame-ups; he proposes that a group of Social Democrats constitute themselves a high court to pass judgment on the “role of Trotskyism in the working class movement”—no more and no less. Can there be any doubt as to the outcome of such an “impartial” investigation by such “good” men? Can there be any doubt that this is a more subtle maneuver of the Stalinist campaign to strangle every move toward an impartial attempt to discover the truth?

Yet your letter makes no mention of the true intent and political
motivation of Brockway's miserable scheme. Instead, you say that the names suggested (and surely Brockway knew what he was about when he suggested them?) are "excellent"; you go no further than to "hope that, if Brockway's project is carried any further, it will not obstruct our work, which we feel to be important. . . ." Instead of exposing the real hypocritical motives underlying the scheme, instead of launching a ruthless frontal attack upon all these Stalinist agents, you give Brockway leave to proceed as he likes, without opposition from you. Is it a fear of repelling Thomas which causes you to eliminate all political attack and exposure from your answer? But that is surely the best way to make certain that Thomas will follow in Brockway's steps.

By this time you must have received L.D.'s answer to Brockway. In any event, I am enclosing another copy. You will see that his attitude and yours on this matter are diametrically opposed. His statement exposes the unsavory records of these gentlemen and unmasks the only purpose which can lie behind their proposal, without, at the same time, "offending" Thomas or Allen. If Thomas can be retained as an ally, only such an uncompromising attitude can do it.

L.D.'s opinion on the whole situation is as follows: The course upon which the committee is now embarked, as evidenced by many symptoms and particularly by the Brockway incident, is absolutely intolerable; if it remains unaltered, it will lead to complete disaster. The policy of adaptation to the "allies" of the right only assures defeat at the outset. L.D. proposes that a throughgoing discussion of our whole basic orientation is necessary among our leading comrades without delay, as is demonstrated in the above-mentioned symptoms, and asks that you communicate your attitude and decisions to him at the earliest opportunity.

You understand that in this letter I am transmitting L.D.'s attitude as he has asked me to do. However, all of the comrades here share the same anxiety.

With best greetings,

Bernie [L. Trotsky]
To Mr. Barrue, presiding magistrate

Sir:

My lawyer in Paris, Mr. Gerard Rosenthal, has informed me that you deem it necessary to have my deposition on the theft of a section of my archives, which took place in Paris on November 7, 1936, in the Parisian branch of the Institute of Social History. At the outset, I must inform you that I sent you a letter containing my deposition during the first part of December of last year, but it was confiscated by the Norwegian minister of justice, Mr. Trygve Lie. Without attempting to appraise the motives underlying the minister’s conduct, I am obliged to state that the confiscation of my deposition was an aid to the robber against the robbed.

So far as the concrete conditions and circumstances connected with the theft of November 7, 1936, are concerned, I can only confirm the deposition of my son Leon Sedov insofar as it gives circumstances which are known to me (my correspondence with my son relative to the dangers which threatened my archives from the Parisian section of the GPU; my proposal to turn the archives over to the safekeeping of a scientific institute, for example, to the Institute of Social History, etc.).

The method of procedure of the thieves, who went after and carried off only my papers and nothing else, completely unmasks the true organizers of the theft. *Is fecit cui prodest* [He did it who profits from it]. If the head of the Parisian section of the GPU had left his visiting card on the table in the premises of the Institute, he would thereby have added very little to the other indications. Moreover, as I have already said, I warned my son in letters written *before* the theft that it was necessary to expect with complete certainty that the GPU would make attempts to steal my archives. There is not the slightest doubt that the stolen
documents were carried to Moscow in diplomatic pouches.

It could not even have been a question that the organizers of the theft had hoped to find any “indications” against me in my archives. On this subject, assuredly, the directors of the judicial falsifications of Moscow entertained not the slightest illusion. My archives were necessary for them only as a technical aid in the creation of new amalgams. Such aid was sorely needed by them.

I take the liberty of concretizing my thought by giving some examples. Three participants in the Moscow trials, Goltsman, Pyatakov, and Vladimir Romm, testified that they had met me abroad and had received instructions from me. All three of them had the misfortune to choose circumstances of time and place for our supposed meetings which cannot stand up to contact with facts which everyone can verify. Thus, Goltsman deposed that in Copenhagen he had been brought to see me by my son, whom he met in the Hotel Bristol. However, it was definitively demonstrated by undeniable evidence that in November 1932 my son was in Berlin. To this it is necessary to add that the Hotel Bristol had been torn down in 1917.

The defendant Pyatakov testified that he came to see me in Oslo in a German airplane in the middle of December 1935. However, the competent Norwegian authorities have officially established that from September 19, 1935, to May 1, 1936, not a single foreign airplane landed in Oslo and that the secret landing of a plane is out of the question, in view of the surveillance of the customs officials.

The witness Vladimir Romm testified that I had a meeting with him in Paris, in the Bois de Boulogne at the end of July 1933. However, immediately after my disembarkment at Marseilles on July 24, 1933, with the knowledge of the French police and accompanied by French friends, I went to Saint-Palais, near Royan, in a state of illness. There I stayed continuously, until the beginning of October 1933.

I am forced to pass over the citation of a series of other analogous examples only because their exposition would demand much more space. The GPU’s ignorance of the concrete conditions of my life, which appears quite lamentably in all these instances, is explained by the fact that my collaborators are close friends who deny to the agents of the GPU all access to myself and to my papers. That is why it was not difficult to foresee that after being exposed by such scandalous blunders the GPU would attempt to seize my real papers in order to create, on the basis of
dates, addresses, precise names, a more finished picture for a new judicial falsification. My letters on this subject, which went through the Norwegian Central Passport police, are in my son's possession.

From my place of internment in Norway, moreover, I tried to warn public opinion about possible new trials, to predict their character, and, in particular, that of any possible utilization of the papers which were stolen from me. All these efforts were frustrated by the Norwegian government, which systematically hindered me, as defendant and as witness, from helping to reveal the truth and thereby save perhaps dozens of men who were guilty of nothing from the heaviest penalties.

In conclusion allow me to draw your attention to the fact that from the last Moscow trial it follows that I and my son, during the time of our presence on French territory, committed acts directed against the interests of the French state. If the competent French authorities placed an iota of confidence in these accusations and undertook an inquiry into the matter, I, for my part, could only greet such an initiative warmly. It is unnecessary to say that I would voluntarily place all my documents, including my correspondence with my son, at the disposal of the authorities who conduct the inquiry. I would be ready to appear at any time before a French tribunal even if it took upon itself only the examination of those parts of the Moscow accusations which concern the interests of the French state immediately and directly.

Unfortunately, there is small hope that such an initiative can be expected. The falsehood of the Moscow accusations is too evident and the very fact of an inquiry, absolutely natural and indispensable under other conditions, would in the present case be considered by the Moscow government as an act of hostility.

That is all that I can say at the present time on the subject of the theft of my papers by the Parisian section of the GPU.

Signed:
Leon Trotsky
March 12, 1937

Dear Comrade Gerard:

I have been told by letter that the interview concerning Spain created some difficulty. I said on another occasion that the Havas bureau in New York had consciously worked in the interests of Stalin and reaction. You must have received the original text, furthermore. For future interviews, I will insist that Havas transmit them exactly as they are. I am ready to give Havas briefer interviews, but on the condition that they be transmitted without alteration. Van holds the theory that what created the difficulty was not a distortion but the real content. I know nothing about it, since we have not seen the Havas dispatch.

Everyone who defended Nin's policies against us today carries a share of the responsibility for the defeat of the Spanish revolution if, in spite of everything—that is, because of Stalin, Caballero, and Nin—the Spanish proletariat does not attain victory.

Warmest greetings,
Grossness of expression, the general characteristic of the Stalinist camp, does not change things at bottom. I have never said that Mexico was the only country which has given aid to Spain. I have said that Mexico has done the most that it could do, and that all peoples knew it. Whatever may be the destinies which await the Spanish revolution, there will always be gratitude in the hearts of the Spanish people toward the people of Mexico.

A magnanimous and perspicacious policy always bears fruit at the very end.

As against Mexico, the Soviet bureaucracy has done the least that it could do; just enough to avoid discrediting itself definitively in the eyes of the proletariat. To that it is necessary to add that the policy which the Stalinist bureaucracy imposes on the Spanish revolution is, in the full sense of the word, fatal. It has already led to terrible defeats in a series of countries. However, it is senseless to discuss the problems of the revolution with Mr. Malraux. As long ago as 1931 I wrote, in the *Nouvelle Revue Francaise*, that Malraux had learned nothing from the experience of the Chinese revolution and had not assimilated the ABC of Marxism. Since then he has not advanced one step.

A much more important question of the moment is the mission which Mr. Malraux is at present carrying out in the United States. He has come to declare that the Moscow trials are a "personal" question of Trotsky; it is not worthwhile to trouble oneself with the "personal" fates of the Bolshevik Old Guard, when there are on the order of the day "political" problems as important as the Spanish revolution.

Here Mr. Malraux betrays himself completely. The defenders of the judicial Moscow frame-ups are divided into three groups. The first repeats, parrot-like, the formulas of the accusation, adding a few insults; of this type are the "journalists" of the Comintern
Some Concrete Questions for Mr. Malraux

who carry out the direct instructions of the GPU. No one takes these individuals seriously and no one has any respect for them. The second group, bearing a semblance of impartiality, justifies the Moscow trials with the aid of abstract arguments and sophistries; under the guise of a “purely juridical analysis” these people embellish what occurred on the judicial stage, refusing resolutely to cast a glance behind the scenes. But the whole frame-up was prepared over a series of years behind the scenes, and only a fraction of the tragic spectacle intended to deceive public opinion is played on the stage. This “purely juridical” defense can with perfect justice be called Prittism, after the British attorney Pritt. However, even this system has succeeded in discrediting itself. There remains a third course, which is to turn public opinion, with the aid of pathetic pleas, from the enormous frame-ups and assassinations to other tasks. Such is the mission of Mr. Malraux and others like him.

Is his declaration that the Moscow trials are my “personal” affair not, in fact, monstrous? Either one thing or the other: If the accusations are true, and the entire old generation of the Bolshevik Party except the small Stalin clique has really taken the road of fascism—then this symptom alone testifies to a crisis of unbelievable profundity in the whole Soviet system. If the accusation is false, then the fact of these judicial frame-ups, unprecedented in history, indicates that the bureaucratic apparatus is completely rotten. In both cases, thus, the Soviet state finds itself gravely sick. It must be looked after. It must be saved. By what means? Before determining the medicine, it is necessary to establish the diagnosis. It is necessary to say what is. The truth must be explained. I have nothing but pity for those people who see in this a “personal” question. In this connection it is impossible to avoid noticing the following little contradiction: When I express myself on political matters, the friends of Stalin cry out: “He must be expelled, because he intervenes in politics!” But when I defend myself against the frame-ups, the same friends exclaim: “You see, he is not interested in political but only in personal questions!” It is difficult to please these gentlemen.

To uncover Mr. Malraux’s real function still more clearly, I ask him some entirely concrete questions before the public opinion of the world. What has become of the Old Bolsheviks Kuklin and Gertik, who were accused together with Zinoviev but who did not appear on the defendants’ bench? Is it true that, along with dozens of others, they were shot in the course of the judicial
inquiry for having refused to chant the melody composed by the
prosecutor—yes or no? What has become of Sosnovsky, an Old
Bolshevik, a friend of Lenin, and a remarkable writer? Is it true
that he was destroyed for opposing the frame-ups—yes or no? I
will continue the list when I receive the first answer.

Mr. Malraux prides himself on having always "defended" the
antifascists. No, not always, but only on those occasions when it
coincided with the interests of the Soviet bureaucracy. Mr.
Malraux has never defended the Italian, Bulgarian, Yugoslavian,
and German antifascists who were granted the hospitality of the
Soviet bureaucracy but who, because they were critical of its
despotism and its privileges, subsequently fell into the hands of
the GPU. Where are the three Yugoslavian revolutionaries
Deditch, Dragitsch, Haeberling? Where is Zenzi Muehsam, wife of
the anarchist poet and militant Eric Muehsam, who was tortured
by the Nazis? Where are the Italian and Spanish revolutionaries
Gezzi, Gaggi, Merino, Caligaris, whose liberation has already
been demanded more than once by the same Spanish militiamen
for whom Mr. Malraux is so solicitous? Perhaps at the same time
Mr. Malraux will communicate to us the complete list of all those
antifascists, in particular the Bulgarian ones, who were shot
without either inquiry or judgment, among the first 104 persons
executed "on the occasion of" the Kirov assassination, but
without any connection with it?

Is there a liaison between these crimes of the Soviet bureau­
cracy and its policies in the Iberian peninsula and throughout the
world? I affirm that such a liaison could not but exist. The single
policy of Bonapartism leads to equally fatal consequences in
many domains. But if Mr. Malraux refuses to understand this
liaison, he cannot, in spite of everything, avoid answering the
concrete questions which I have directed at him. Or perhaps his
Moscow friends will refuse to inform him? Such a refusal will be a
confirmation of the worst accusations against the Soviet bureau­
cracy.
My Dear Miss La Follette:

Permit me to say that your letter is excellent, both in the spirit which permeates it and in its characterization of the people involved and of the political circumstances. But now I will not enter into the matters which you touch upon. My aim is very concrete and precise: to put before the committee, with your help, the necessity for the immediate creation of the inquiry commission, or at least of the first active nucleus of such a commission. This is the aim of the committee. All the other things are secondary.

It is utopian to wait for an ideal commission, above all attack and reproach. The commission must and will gain authority during its work, because the facts, the logic, the arguments, the documents are all on its side. The commission can be very modest at the outset—no matter. It will become the axis of crystallization for all intelligent, honest discussion about future action.

I cannot hide my apprehension from you: The committee opened the door for an inquiry commission to world public opinion; if the committee postpones action, the Stalinists will pass through this door. They have begun to create a commission of inquiry here in Mexico. They will do the same thing in every country (possibly this is Malraux’s mission, with the aid of the Nation or the New Republic). Under such circumstances the committee may produce results diametrically opposed to its aims. This is the danger.

It is not necessary to tell you how highly I appreciate the participation of such remarkable and unique personalities as Mr. Dewey, or of such an outstanding political adversary of mine as Mr. Norman Thomas, in the work of the committee. But I permit myself to say that it is their moral duty not to hesitate at the threshold of the investigation, but rather, to pass over it. Norman Thomas says he is too exposed to the fire of the Stalinists to
participate in the commission. If we want a commission which will be recognized and approved by the Stalinists, we will never have it. Mr. Thomas is known as my irreconcilable adversary. Is that not sufficient for every honest worker, for every honest man?

I understand that Mr. Dewey is hesitant about descending from philosophical heights to the depths of judicial frame-ups. But the current of history has its own exigencies and imperatives. Voltaire tied his name to the Calas affair, Zola to the Dreyfus case, and neither lessened his stature in the eyes of history by this “sidestep.”211 The Moscow frame-ups are ten, a hundred, a thousand times more important than the Calas and Dreyfus affairs. The most famous American historian [Charles A. Beard] told one of my friends that he cannot, in spite of his interest in the matter, give his time to the investigation because he is going to write a new book. I permit myself to say: the greatest historical, philosophical, and psychological book of our time will be written by the commission of inquiry. By all the juridical objectivity of its aims, the results of its research will contribute enormously to an understanding of the dialectics of the historical process in general, and of the revolution in particular.

It is necessary to make the first step during the next two weeks. The committee does not have the right to waste any more time. The next step can consist of a trip to Mexico (alas, I cannot at the moment come to New York) by a preparatory commission of three or five members, in order to hear my case and to decide if the facts and arguments are sufficient for the immediate opening of the inquiry. If Mr. Dewey is prevented by his age and his work from participating in the investigation itself, which will require months, all the more important is his participation in the pre-commission.

I cannot and will not write about this matter to the committee officially, but I take advantage of your friendly letter to answer openly and in a friendly fashion. Please make whatever use of this letter you deem necessary. For my part, I can only repeat: the committee does not have the right to lose another hour. My insistence is justified by the fact that this is not my “personal” question (as Malraux and other agents of Stalin affirm), but a question of general political importance and, in the first instance, a question of the fate of the Soviet Union.

With my best wishes and greetings,
Sincerely yours,
Leon Trotsky
Dear Comrade Shachtman:

I am sending you a copy of my letter to La Follette. I must say to you that the seriousness and energy of our comrades in this matter in the next days is for me the *sine qua non* for our further collaboration.

Best greetings,
Leon Trotsky
THE ATTITUDE OF OUR COMRADES IN THE COMMITTEE

March 15, 1937

Dear Comrade Cannon:

I am sending you a copy of my letter to our comrades on the committee, as well as a copy of my letter to Suzanne La Follette, and a note to Shachtman. These letters are self-explanatory. I must add only one thing: your presence in New York in this crucial period seems to me to be absolutely necessary. I will not hide from you the fact that the attitude of our comrades in the committee cannot be isolated. It must represent part of a general line which seems to me particularly dangerous. I believe it would be good to translate Braun's study about the crisis of the French section.²¹⁴

With best wishes,
Leon Trotsky
Dear Comrade Francis Heisler:

I gratefully received your book, *The First Two Moscow Trials*. I did not write you at once because I wanted to read your book first. I congratulate you heartily on this work! By the carefulness and conscientiousness of its analysis, in which jurisprudence combines happily with politics, the book must produce a great impression upon every serious and thinking reader, especially and particularly upon a lawyer. With all my heart I wish the widest circulation for your book. I would also wish for you a serious analysis from the adversaries. But such a wish is unfortunately utopian. To arguments of thought the Stalinists are capable of answering only with insults. But this will not hinder the truth from making its way.

With warm comradely greetings,
To the President of the Commission
of the Socialist Lawyers’ Front

Sir:

I have noted with great interest your information concerning the creation of a commission for “a juridical study of the recent Moscow trials.” The very fact of the creation of a commission of this sort is an obvious indication of the lack of confidence which the Moscow trials have provoked in large sections of public opinion.

You undoubtedly know that a special committee in New York, of entirely authoritative composition, has taken upon itself the initiative in the organization of an international commission for the investigation of the Moscow trials.

The New York committee has the confidence and cooperation of similar committees in France, England, Czechoslovakia, Switzerland, and other countries, which are rapidly extending their base, and now have within their ranks qualified representatives of the worlds of politics, science, art, jurisprudence, and the workers’ movement.

Through the New York committee and through the press I have already declared that I stand ready to place at the disposal of an international commission of inquiry all my archives, which comprise several thousands of documents. Further, many dozens of extremely important depositions from France, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Norway, Belgium, Switzerland, the United States, and other countries are already in the hands of the committee. The most important witnesses will undoubtedly come from Europe to give their testimony under the fire of cross-examination.

The principal task of the New York committee, as it appears from all its declarations and activities, is to assure to the
investigating commission a composition such that it will enjoy general authority. The importance of this aspect of the matter cannot, of course, escape you. I do not permit myself to question the impartiality of your commission for a moment. But whatever may be its intentions, alongside it and in opposition to it there can develop in various countries dozens and even hundreds of commissions from the professions, trade unions, political parties, and other sources, motivated not by a disinterested solicitude for the truth, but by political passions, intrigues behind the scenes, and even corruption pure and simple. It must not be forgotten that for the organizers of the judicial Moscow frame-ups it is a question of their whole existence, that is, of power and privilege, and that they will not hesitate to use any means whatsoever to introduce the poison of demoralization into the public opinion of the world. That is why the interests of the matter demand that the investigation be concentrated in the hands of this international organization, which is above suspicion for all.

The only correct course, in my opinion, would be to have your commission enter into an agreement with the international commission in a form best suited for collaboration or for division of labor. In any case, it would be disloyalty on my part to participate in an investigation by a national professional commission without the agreement and consent of the international commission to which I have promised beforehand my full collaboration.

I do not doubt for an instant that you will fully appreciate the importance and the gravity of these considerations and that you will direct your initiative into channels which will protect you from all reproach. On the other hand, there is nothing that I could welcome more than the participation in the inquiry of authorized representatives of the country which has extended to me its generous hospitality.

Leon Trotsky
March 15, 1937

Farrar & Rinehart
New York

Gentlemen:
I am now reading with great pleasure the book *American City*, by Charles R. Walker, which you have published. The book is original in conception and excellent in execution. It is difficult, it seems to me, to introduce the reader with greater art and greater simplicity (the art and the simplicity coincide here) into the circle of the deepest and most intimate social problems of the United States. The book is irreplaceable, particularly for the foreigner who wishes to study and understand North America. I warmly hope for Mr. Walker's book the widest circulation and translation into foreign languages.

Yours sincerely,
Leon Trotsky
A MOCKERY OF JUSTICE

March 16, 1937

The People's Commissariat of Justice in Moscow has published in foreign languages the "verbatim" report of the trial of the seventeen (Pyatakov, Radek, etc.). As is known, the report of the trial of the sixteen (Zinoviev-Kamenev) was a purely journalistic product. The dialogue was suddenly interrupted by phrases like these: "... Smirnov tries again to evade, calling attention to the lack of meetings. ... The accused debated stubbornly, trying to deny his leading role ... ," etc. All testimony which detracts from the trumped-up unity is purely and simply waived aside or replaced by reprimands to the accused. This "report" apparently has satisfied only two men on the whole of the earth's surface: the lawyer Pritt of London, and the Parisian lawyer Rosenmark. We are not including the so-called leaders of the Comintern: they were satisfied even before the publication of the report.

The Zinoviev-Kamenev trial had been extremely unfavorably received by the world press. The trial of the seventeen had as its most important task the correction of the bad impression produced by the trial of the sixteen.

The report which has just been published is made up not of 150 but of 600 pages. The whole text is couched in dialogue form. The editor does not bother with reprimands to the executed defendants. Thus in publishing the "verbatim" report the GPU wishes to show its regard for public opinion. Certainly in its material essence the Pyatakov-Radek trial reveals even more holes, contradictions, ineptitudes than the Zinoviev-Kamenev trial. It is difficult, however, to accuse the organizers: ancient philosophy has already taught that from nothing, nothing can be made. The construction of the accusation, for which there is no real base, belongs in its essence to the domain of juridical alchemy. The laws of matter will inevitably take the upper hand over inventive fantasia. The fundamental inconsistency of the January trial, like its partial material contradictions and its pure and simple
absurdities, have been briefly revealed by me in my statements to the press and in my speech for the meeting at the New York Hippodrome.\textsuperscript{219} I give a detailed analysis in my new book, \textit{Les Crimes de Staline}. But if the alchemists of the GPU could not this time also change the laws of matter, they have, at any rate, tried to utilize their experience from past defeats and to give their new product the greatest possible external resemblance to gold.

The report of the Pyatakov-Radek trial, judged by its dimensions alone, is prepared for specialists. The GPU is now trying, through the intermediary of its political and literary agents, to organize in various countries a "juridical evaluation," that is, to receive proof from authoritative lawyers that the victims of the Inquisition have been shot in full agreement with the rules established by the Inquisitors.

At bottom, a certificate of a purely formal observance of external rules and the ritual of jurisprudence has an importance which is close to zero. The essence of the affair is in the material conditions of the preparation and the conduct of the trial. But even if one disregards for the moment the decisive factors which are to be found outside the courtroom, one cannot help recognizing that the Moscow trials are a pure and simple mockery of justice. The investigations, in the twentieth year of the revolution, are carried on in absolute secrecy. The entire old generation of Bolsheviks is judged before a military tribunal composed of three impersonal military functionaries. The whole trial is directed by a prosecutor who all his life has been and remains a political enemy of the accused. Defense is waived and the procedure is deprived of any independent character. The material proofs are not presented to the court. The witnesses mentioned by the prosecutor or the defendants are not questioned. A whole series of accused persons who form a part of the judicial inquiry are absent from the defendants' bench for unknown reasons.

Two of the principal accused (and even convicted but never arraigned!) who happen to be abroad are not even apprised of the trial. In spite of the extremely grave character of the accusations against them, the government has not even made any attempt to ask their extradition. The accusation is published four days before the sessions, at the same time that the announcement is made of the imminent trial. The principal accused, as well as the witnesses who are outside of Russia, are thus deprived of the possibility of giving depositions, of producing material proofs, and in general of undertaking any steps whatever in clearing up the truth.
The judicial dialogue is entirely constructed on a game made up of question and answer. The prosecutor does not address a single concrete question to any of the accused which might cause them any difficulty and expose the material inconsistencies of their testimony. The presiding judge respectfully covers up the work of the prosecutor. It is precisely the “verbatim” character of the record which reveals the malevolent silence of the prosecutor and of the tribunal, and consequently their actual participation in the frame-up, not only before the trial but also during the course of the trial itself after the curtain has already risen. To this it is necessary to add that the authenticity of the report inspires not the least confidence. The first step in an honest evaluation should be the examination of the original of the verbatim report. Comparison with the published text would undoubtedly reveal a multitude of omissions and corrections on the part of the directors of the trial.

But however important these considerations are in themselves, they have, in spite of everything, a secondary and tertiary character, since they concern the form of the frame-up and not its essence. Theoretically one can imagine that if Stalin, Vyshinsky, and Yezhov, over a period of five or ten years, still have the possibility of putting on their trials with impunity, they will attain such a high technique that all the elements of jurisprudence will be found in formal accord with each other and with the existing laws. But the perfection in juridical technique of falsification will not come even one inch nearer the truth.

The point is, however, that a “purely juridical” evaluation does not aim to establish the truth at all; otherwise from the very beginning it would be recognized and stated that in a political trial of such exceptional importance the jurist cannot cut himself off from the political conditions out of which the trial arises, and under which the inquiry was conducted—to speak more concretely, the totalitarian oppression to which, in the last analysis, all are submitted—accused, witnesses, judges, defenders (as many as there are) and even the accusation itself.

Here is the knotty aspect of the question! Under an uncontrolled and despotic regime which concentrates in the same hands all the means of economic, political, physical, and moral coercion, a judicial trial ceases to be a judicial trial. It is a judicial play with the roles written in advance. The accused appear on the scene only after a series of rehearsals which give to the director the advance assurance that they will not overstep the limits of their roles. In this sense, as in all others, the judicial trials only
represent a coagulation of the whole general political regime of the USSR.

In all the meetings the orators say one and the same thing; they put themselves in step with the principal orator in absolute disregard of what they themselves said the night before. In the newspapers all the articles expound one and the same directive, with the same expressions. Following the movement of the orchestra leader’s baton, the historians, the economists, even the statisticians, rearrange the past and the present without any regard for the facts, documents, or the preceding editions of their own books. In the kindergartens and schools, all the children in one and the same words glorify Vyshinsky and curse the accused. No one acts this way of his own volition; everyone violates his own will.

The monolithic character of the judicial trial, in which the accused try to outdo each other in repeating the formulas of the prosecutor, is thus not an exception to the rule but only the most repugnant expression of the totalitarian Inquisitorial regime. It is not a court before our eyes but a drama, in which the actors play their roles in front of the barrel of a revolver. The play can be performed well or badly; but it is a question of the Inquisitorial technique and not of justice. Counterfeit money can be made so clumsily as to be apparent to the most casual inspection. Clever counterfeitters, on the contrary, can attain a high quality of production. But sorry is the “expert” who limits his examination to the external form of the money, to its stamp, without taking into account its specific weight and other material properties. The “purely juridical” evaluation of the Moscow trials reduces itself at bottom to the question of whether the frame-up was well or badly carried out. Such a manner of posing the question already represents in itself a form of assistance to the falsifiers.

To clarify the question more vigorously, to the degree that it needs clarification, let us take a fresh example from the domain of constitutional law. After Hitler took power he declared, contrary to all expectations, that he had no intention of changing the fundamental laws of the state. Most people have evidently forgotten that even today in Germany, the Weimar Constitution remains intact: into its juridical shell, Hitler introduced only the content of totalitarian dictatorship. Let us imagine an expert, adjusting his scholarly glasses with the idea of studying by the official documents the structure of the German state “from a purely juridical point of view.” After several hours of intellectual effort, he will discover that Hitler’s Germany is a crystal-clear
A Mockery of Justice

democratic republic (universal suffrage, parliament which gives full power to the fuehrer, independent judicial authorities, etc., etc.). Every sane man, however, will cry out that a juridical "evaluation" of this nature is, in the best cases, a manifestation of "juridical cretinism."

Democracy is based on the unconfined struggle of classes, parties, programs, and ideas. If one stifles this struggle, there remains then only a dead shell, well suited for cloaking a fascist dictatorship. Contemporary jurisprudence is based on the struggle between the accusation and the defense, a struggle which is conducted in certain juridical forms. Where the competition among parties is stifled by the aid of extrajuridical forces, the judicial forms, whatever they may be, are only a cover for the Inquisition. The person who, in the determination of the character of Stalin's justice, refuses to analyze the political situation which engenders these trials, unique in the extent of history, is a simple lawyer for Vyshinsky. That Vyshinsky needs lawyers there is no doubt. But such servants of "pure" justice are capable of only obscuring and not illuminating the material truth. A genuine investigation of the Moscow trials cannot avoid embracing all these aspects. It will, of course, utilize the "verbatim" reports. However, not as things in themselves but as a constituent part of a grandiose historical drama, whose determining factors remain behind the scenes of the judicial play.
ON DEFENSE WORK IN FRANCE

March 17, 1937

Dear Comrade Naville:

I have not written you sooner because I am really overwhelmed with work and also because I was and still am quite struck by the extraordinary nonchalance with which the depositions have been made (yours is an exception). I have written many times on that subject to L. [Leon Sedov] and others. I strongly hope that most of these depositions will be reworked to include the necessary details. Of what use are little anecdotes about visits to Royan, without giving exact dates, without saying why the trips were made, without reporting what others have said about the trip from Marseilles to Royan, without giving details of the political discussions, especially about the USSR and how to defend it?

You have informed me that the French committee is spreading out over the country and is preparing for the creation of a commission of investigation. That is very good, provided that they do not imitate the methods used to collect the depositions, but act quickly and forcefully.

But—and here I touch on the main point—we cannot have two commissions of inquiry of equal authority, one in New York and the other in Paris. That would cause the worst confusion. All the materials are now concentrated in New York and Mexico. The center of the inquiry is indicated by the whole situation; and that is New York. Perhaps I may have the opportunity to go there to make my depositions. If not, I will make my depositions here before an interrogatory commission. In summary, the French committee must voluntarily subordinate itself to the American commission. If it could send one or two of its representatives to New York, at least for a few weeks, that would be excellent. These representatives could direct the investigatory work in Paris, under guidelines elaborated in common in New York. For now, it is a matter of supporting the New York committee in its path to the creation of the commission of inquiry.
It would be excellent if all the committees in Paris, Lyons, etc., would send telegrams to the New York committee, inviting it to take the initiative for the investigation into its hands immediately, deriving its authority from the European committees. Such telegrams could and should be sent by the respective organizations of Belgium, Holland, Switzerland, Czechoslovakia, etc. Is it really impossible to make such an effort, which is in no way extraordinary? We have been marking time for too long.

I am sending a copy of this letter to Nicolle, Held, Nelz, Dauge, Sneevliet, and to Czechoslovakia, and I expect an immediate reaction. In such an exceptional situation, on which many important things depend, comrades who show thoughtlessness and lack of concern and waste more time should be considered absolutely foreign to our cause. At least, that is my personal opinion.

I hope that you and the others will work to full capacity.

My warmest greetings to Denise and all our friends.

L. Trotsky

P.S.—I have not mentioned here the leadership of the POUM or the famous London Bureau. All artificial things decompose rapidly in the terrible atmosphere of this epoch. Those of our friends who pay court to the POUM leadership instead of helping the party with severe Marxist criticism will be punished by events, and when the best elements of the POUM draw the bitter lessons of its incorrect politics, they will turn to us, their true friends, and not to the kindly conciliators.

L.T.
To all the comrades in the committee

Dear Comrades:

The work of the committee is of historic importance, but I cannot agree with the attitude of our own comrades in the committee. I have been very cautious during the first two months in expressing my doubts, apprehensions, and criticisms: my information was not adequate. But now I say without any hesitation: the general line of our comrades in the committee is not correct. The weakness of the policy of our comrades, or better, the full absence of any policy, paralyzes the activity of the committee and threatens to lead it into an impasse. I will enumerate some examples and symptoms and then draw the conclusions.

1. We had three or four discussions [in January] with Shachtman, Novack, and the other comrades, concerning the activity of the committee. The center of the discussion was the necessity of immediately creating the inquiry commission. The American comrades made concrete personal suggestions for the composition of the commission. This was the aim, the real aim, the general aim, of all further work.

I was absolutely sure that the plan was in a state of realization. Only now do I understand that under the attack of the Stalinists, and due to the weakness of our comrades, the question of the commission was pushed aside, first by the internal crisis of the committee, and then by the lack of firmness, of clarity, of a consistent line.

I suppose that the crisis of the committee was the result of a certain dilettantism, joined by a political confusion, during the creation of the committee. But I will not enter into this matter because I am not sufficiently informed. The fact is that the crisis
was overcome thanks to the masses, in spite of the hesitating attitude of our comrades.

The Hippodrome meeting showed the desire of the workers to help the committee. It was absolutely necessary to use this upswing for the immediate creation of the inquiry commission by presenting to the meeting a list of the first members of the commission, and by using the meeting to stimulate and encourage the liberals in this decisive matter. Solow asked me yesterday why I did not propose this before the meeting. Good: I am guilty of not having foreseen this possibility from Coyoacan. But the question was decided here in the middle of January and I could not believe that the committee would do everything but the decisive thing.

2. The first draft of the statutes was one of the revelations to me of the general spirit of our comrades in the committee: not a fighting one but purely adaptive and expectant. I said to the friends here: if this is the mood of our comrades, victory is impossible. A new orientation is absolutely necessary. That was the sense of my amendments. Even at that time I was sure that the nucleus of the commission was ready to begin its work and that the statutes were this beginning. Yesterday I learned from Solow that the statutes are a thing in themselves, a means of taking up time in the hope that from good statutes an ideal commission will arise. This is a purely formalistic, purely juridical, unpolitical, and un-Marxian conception.

A small inquiry commission, even though composed of modest rank-and-file people (if the authoritative persons hesitate), can accomplish some very good work. When it publishes the first collection of depositions, documents, etc., about, say, the Copenhagen chapter, it will win an authority, attract to itself the "nobility," and open up new possibilities. However, the best statutes in the world are sterile if the will to create the inquiry commission immediately is lacking.

3. I have written sufficiently about the Nation episode. All that I read and all that I heard from Solow confirms my conviction that the opposition of our comrades was not accidental, and involved not merely the wisdom of one isolated step, but the general political line of the committee and in the committee. You would now have an incomparably better situation as regards Malraux and the perfidious initiative of the New Republic, if my letter to the Nation had been sent and published in time. It was an act of delimitation. This is a most necessary step.
4. I appreciate highly the participation of Mr. Dewey in the committee. I understand that he cannot act otherwise than he does. He is not for Stalin and not for Trotsky. He wants to establish the truth. But your position is different. You know the truth. Have you the right to hide it, even as members of the committee? You have the same duty as the liberals to preserve your political identity within the committee. The declaration of principles or purposes must reflect the presence of both parties to the committee. At least, if you accept Dewey's declaration of principles as the common basis, you are obliged to make a special declaration to the effect that you are not above both the Stalinists and Trotskyists, that on the basis of the whole proceeding, the facts, etc., etc., you know where the frame-up lies and where the truth lies. But you enter into alliance with honest liberals on their ground in order to convince public opinion of the justice of your case. You invite the Stalinists to do the same on a common basis. Such a declaration, dictated to you by the whole situation, would have been of inestimable value to you in your propaganda among the masses—in any case, more important than the abstract declaration of Dewey.

5. The episode with Fenner Brockway is so fresh in our memory that I do not need to remind you of it. This episode was also not accidental. It is part of the general line, which is characterized by a lack of will for firm delimitation.

Every political action, especially when based upon a bloc, begins with a delimitation from the open and perfidious enemies. Only when the arena is demarcated can we permit ourselves maneuvers, alliances, and concessions. Otherwise we can only betray ourselves and our genuine friends. Nothing is more dangerous in politics than to help the enemy preserve a friendly mask until the decisive moment.

In the matter of the investigation I am totally in favor of a bloc with liberals, even with honest conservatives, with Social Democrats, etc. But it must be a bloc with people who are really willing to courageously oppose the attacks, slanders, and intrigues of the Stalinists and not to betray simple justice. The liberals who don't want a delimitation from the Nation or from the enterprises of Fenner Brockway cannot be our fellow travelers at this time. Better to leave them aside. They can come to us tomorrow when the commission of inquiry is active and successful.

We have written many things about the Marxist rules of coalition: (a) not to lose one's own identity; (b) to view the ally as
a possible adversary; (c) to preserve for oneself the full rights of criticism; (d) to supplement the bloc action with independent actions; (e) to be ready in favorable circumstances (Hippodrome meeting) to take the full initiative of action when the allies are hesitating, etc., etc. But recent experience shows that there is a difference between the explanation of general formulas and their practical application. The failure of our comrades belongs in principle to the same category as the failure of the Chinese Communists after their entrance into the Kuomintang.

Yesterday I wrote to Suzanne La Follette about the next practical steps to save the situation, with copies to yourselves. Not only the trial question but all questions will in the next period be decided in dependence upon the inquiry commission. The delegation of a subcommission to Mexico must be decided and organized in two or three days. *Mon Dieu*, the matter is not so complicated, if the committee is willing to accomplish its duty. But, at the same time, it is necessary to establish the list of people for the commission itself or for its first nucleus, to begin the work immediately after the return and report of the delegation. At the same time, we must ask all the committees throughout the world to give you their mandates for the opening of the inquiry. This is the only way to regain the lost time and begin a new chapter in the history of the committee.

This letter is the result of a long talk with Comrade Solow. I beg of you to see to it that all the comrades involved become acquainted with it.

With comradely greetings,
Leon Trotsky
TWO TELEGRAMS

To New York
March 19, 1937

Await with highest appreciation and esteem arrival of commission headed by such unassailable world authority as Mr. Dewey. Am preparing the necessary documents in order to save time for commission.

My heartiest greetings,
Leo [Trotsky]

To San Francisco
March 22, 1937

Sent you two letters, but no answer. Very disquieting.
Leo [Trotsky]
March 26, 1937

Dear Friends:

I am writing this time on a particular question (I am completely swamped with work in preparation for the investigation of the commission that is coming here in a few days, at the beginning of April, under the leadership of Dewey, the famous American philosopher).

In his deposition at the last trial (see the French "steno­graphic" report, p. 28), Pyatakov said he had procured for me, with the help of the German firms Borsig and Demag, some money for my "counterrevolutionary purposes." He implicates L. Sedov as my intermediary with the German firms. The question seems important enough to me, for we can present a crushing refutation. My "counterrevolutionary purposes" can be nothing other than our international movement: none of the accused has said that I gave money for activities in the USSR. Now, the accountability of the international movement, from the point of view that interests us, can be very well established. That would also help the French comrades very much against the treachery of de Kerillis and others like him. It seems to me absolutely necessary to establish briefly for the Commission of Inquiry the history of the special bank account created with my literary resources and managed jointly by you and us. I certainly hope you have kept the records, at least the most general ones. As for me, I possess none of them, at least not here. We would have to establish first the receipts, that is, exactly what fees were involved in each case. As far as I can remember, there were only two or three contributions. We would also have to list the withdrawals, to give the commission the opportunity to verify the accounts completely. Naturally your report will not be intended for publication, but for the exclusive use of the commission. We must try simultaneously to obtain the confirmations of the publishers, etc., from whom the deposits to this account orig-
inated, so that the exact balance might exclude any possibility of other sums coming from . . . Borsig and Demag. I consider this a question of very great importance, for here we are dealing with a specific fact and not wandering statements without content.

I believe you could perhaps give a general deposition concerning, for example, my attitude toward the defense of the Soviet Union, or another question that you might choose yourselves. If Alfred writes several good pages in the nature of his history of the labor movement during the war, with a few documentary and personal illustrations, the document cannot help but make a great impression on the most serious elements both inside and outside the commission, and the New York committee proposes to publish a book containing the most important depositions and documents.228

Natalia and I are in more or less good health. What a shame that you are so far away and the cost of travel is so dear! The altitude would be good for Alfred, and, I hardly need say, we would be very happy to see you in our house again.
Dear Comrade Rous:

I was very pleased to hear your news, and I hope there is more to come.

We are jubilant here with your success. On the other hand, we are astonished that you are having the same financial difficulties as before. It suggests that something in the organizational mechanism is not working. The same goes for the [defense] committee. The Americans have the greatest expenses, especially in connection with liaison with the Commission of Inquiry, and yet the whole of Europe cannot cover the minimal expenses that are incumbent on them.

The question of my attitude toward defense of the USSR, and toward German fascism and its enthusiasts in France, is of very great importance to the investigation. The French comrades are perhaps the best qualified to give depositions on those questions and to present certain documentation. Why couldn't Craipeau do this piece, based not only on quotations, but also on our personal discussions? He would even have an opportunity to accuse me in passing of inconsistency and timidity on the question of the defense of the USSR. Too bad. Lasterade could do it with much more vigor, invoking my "defensist" attitude as one of the most decisive causes of our parting of the ways. It would be necessary to distribute the questions among the most competent and most involved comrades, and to give depositions or memoranda as soon as possible to the commission of investigation. The files with my French correspondence are not here. Unfortunately, I have heard nothing from Paris on this subject, despite my repeated appeals. Perhaps the comrades involved have kept my letters, and they could provide copies, or the most characteristic quotations.

I well remember that I have many times warned the French comrades against the provocations and amalgams that Stalin threatens us with. There was on the part of certain French
comrades a certain lack of attention to this question. I criticized them, I sought to persuade them, to win them to my point of view, etc. All these letters would be very valuable, especially when seen in the light of the circumstances that provoked them. The depositions received are for the most part very careless. Concerning my stay at Saint-Palais, each relates only his own visit in the month of August or September, without explaining the important fact that it was necessary, as early as the end of July, to establish a certain schedule of visits precisely because I had not been to Paris and had not been able to go there. The comrades who knew about our trip from Marseilles to Saint-Palais, at least indirectly, through R. Molinier, Lasterade, Leprince, L. Sedov or others, do not make the slightest mention of it, and consequently the depositions lose 99 percent of their value. Those people in the know could be asked to give supplementary depositions with more precision and fuller details on the political discussions.

The last trial, like the one to come, is based on the premise of our liaison—our fusion, almost—with the Right Opposition, given that since 1932 our programs supposedly became identical. The rightists represent an international tendency. It would be very important for someone who is very conversant with the question (Blasco perhaps) to bring to light our attitude toward the cothinkers of Bukharin—Souvarine, Tasca, Laurat, the Brand-lerites, the SAP, etc. I am sending a copy of this letter to Comrades Naville and Nicolle, and I expect from everyone a bit more attention to these decisive questions.

L.D.
MORE ON PYATAKOV'S FLIGHT

March 28, 1937

Dear Friends:

The Stalinists are now trying to confuse the quite clear affair of Pyatakov's alleged flight to Oslo. Every escape must be barred to them.

I need some supplementary information for this.

1. The whole story seems to have been constructed out of a real, open, and official trip of Pyatakov to Berlin. Pyatakov gives his date of arrival as December 10, 1935. He adds the remark that his photographs were published in the German newspapers. This involved him in a great risk, etc. A very important task is to establish on the basis of the German and Russian papers of December 1935 the exact dates of Pyatakov's arrival in Berlin, as well as of his departure from Berlin for Moscow (the two dates can be established with absolute certainty from Izvestia and from Za Industrialisaziyu).

Perhaps there will be found in some newspapers and magazines, especially economic reviews, more or less exact data on Pyatakov's daily appointments, which would show that he had no time for a forty-eight-hour trip to Oslo. The most important point, however, is the duration of his stay in Berlin.

2. The Stockholm newspaper Dagens Nyheter of February 8, 1937, is reported to have said that the meeting took place in Knut Hamsun's villa. It is the job of our Norwegian friends to establish whether Knut Hamsun has a villa in some suburb of Oslo, thirty minutes from the airport. In advance I can state only that Pyatakov can have no grounds for concealing the place of the meeting from the court. Could he himself have been ignorant of whose house he was meeting in? I, at least, must have known it. And if I poured out my heart to Pyatakov about my most secret plans and dreams, why should I have hidden from him the name of the owner of the villa? Moreover, is there not on Knut Hamsun's villa a sign indicating the resident's name?
3. The Copenhagen newspaper *Dagens Nyheter*, according to the *New Masses* has given the world the information that the meeting took place in Konrad Knudsen’s cabin. That is the stupidest notion that could have been hit upon.

a. Pyatakov spoke of a not badly furnished residence in a suburb of Oslo. Knudsen’s cabin is, in fact, a cabin, hardly more than sixteen square yards in total area and, except for a few wooden benches and primitive bunks, not “furnished” at all.

b. Pyatakov’s trip from the airport to the “not badly furnished” villa took thirty minutes. The trip to Knudsen’s cabin from the airport would require at least three hours, after which it is necessary to go another forty or sixty minutes on foot. In winter it is possible to go only on skis, or by following somebody who cuts a path on skis.

c. The *Dagens Nyheter* asks the sly question, why I went to this cabin for just twenty-four hours in December, when I was sick. I will not conceal this secret either. I was overworked, suffering from insomnia, etc., and we decided after a family discussion to spend Christmas week in the cabin. Konrad Knudsen himself was rather opposed, because of the severe winter conditions. And he was right. The road to the cabin was a punishment in itself. And then one was really trapped, because it was impossible to leave the cabin for the shortest walk because of the snow, one and a half yards deep. To keep from freezing, one had to spend the whole day fetching wood and feeding the iron oven. Consequently, quite desperate, we abandoned the whole business after twenty-four hours and came back to Knudsen’s house.

d. According to Pyatakov’s statements, his visit took place not later than December 16, 17, or 18 (it is very important to establish the exact date of Pyatakov’s return to Moscow from Berlin because that date is concealed in the official record). Our stay in the cabin, however, was on December 22 and 23, just before Christmas. Thus the thing does not click even as to dates.

Leon Trotsky

P.S.—I need not refer again to the fact that Pyatakov made no airplane trip at all, as has been established by facts obtained from the Norwegian authorities.

P.P.S.—In the declaration of the witness Bukhartsev (about whom I have no knowledge at all), it is stated that I sent my representative, Gustave Stirner, from Oslo to arrange Pyatakov’s
trip. I hear this name for the first time. Has any of my friends ever heard this name? I assume that the name was not brought into the trial accidentally. It will perhaps still play a role in the forthcoming trial of the German engineers or in the Bukharin-Rykov trial. Hence it would be important to be informed in time.

P.P.P.S—The Stalinist press speaks of two *Dagens Nyheter*, one in Stockholm, one in Copenhagen. This also may be a conscious falsification and it may be in reality that only one story appeared.
At the time of the “Kirov trial” (December 1934-January 1935), the rapprochement between Paris and Moscow was well under way. The “national” discipline of the French press is only too well known. The representatives of the foreign press, notably the Americans, were unable to find me because of my “incognito.” So I was isolated. My reply to the first Zinoviev-Kamenev trial was printed in a small pamphlet with a very limited circulation. Moscow noted the fact with satisfaction; it facilitated the stage-management of the coming great trial whose preparation was to take a further eighteen months. During this interval, the friendship between Stalin and the parties of the People’s Front was strengthened to the point where the GPU could count with certainty on the benevolent neutrality not only of the Radicals but also of the Socialists. In fact, *Le Populaire* closed its columns completely to revelations on the activity of the GPU in the USSR and even in France. The fusion of the “red unions” with the reformists in the meantime set the seal of silence on the lips of the General Confederation of Labor. If Leon Blum postponed his quarrel with Thorez, Leon Jouhaux exerted himself to live on good terms with both. The secretary of the Second International, Friedrich Adler, did his utmost to reveal the truth. But almost without exception, the Socialist International boycotted its own secretary. Not for the first time in history the leading organizations became instruments of a conspiracy against the interests of the working masses and the demands of their conscience. Never yet, perhaps, has this conspiracy been so cynical. So Stalin could well believe he was backing a sure thing.

He was mistaken. A vague resistance, not always articulate, arose in the depths of the masses. They could not readily accept that the Old Bolshevik general staff should suddenly be accused of being in alliance with fascism, and be wiped out. The most
honest and sensitive of the radical intellectuals sounded the alarm. Under these conditions the importance of the groups standing under the banner of the Fourth International was revealed. They do not, they cannot constitute mass organizations in the period of reaction through which we are passing. They are cadres, the leaven of the future. They were formed in the struggle against the leading workers’ parties in a period of decline. No group in the history of the workers’ movement has been persecuted so fiercely, has been assailed with such poisonous slanders as the one called “Trotskyist.” What tempered it politically filled it with the spirit of sacrifice and accustomed it to swim against the stream. Our young, persecuted cadres learn a great deal; they think seriously and consider their program honestly. By their capacity to orient themselves in a political situation and anticipate its outcome, they are already far in advance of the most “authoritative” leaders of the Socialist and Communist Internationals. They are deeply devoted to the USSR—that is, to what persists in the USSR from the October Revolution—and, unlike the majority of the “Friends of the USSR,” they ably prove it in difficult times. But they hate the Soviet bureaucracy as their worst enemy. Falsehoods and amalgams cannot deceive them. Each of these groups was itself in different ways the victim of some falsehood, not followed by executions, it is true, but accompanied by attempts at moral assassination, and often physical violence. Behind the falsehoods of the Communist International the GPU invariably showed up. The Moscow trials, therefore, did not take the “Trotskyists” abroad by surprise. They were the first to give the signal for resistance; immediately they were supported by the sympathy of different circles and groups from the working class and the radical intellectuals.

The essential task was to initiate a public inquiry into the juridical crimes of Moscow. Under the given conditions this could not be such a commission as would be helped by official workers’ organizations. The only thing to do was to appeal to individuals of authority, who were well known and beyond reproach. That is how the American Committee for the Defense of Leon Trotsky saw the matter; the French Committee of Inquiry into the Moscow Trials followed their example. Immediately, Stalin’s agents raised the cry throughout the whole world that the inquiry would be “partial.” These people have their own conception of impartiality; for them Yagoda, who prepared the Zinoviev-
Kamenev trial, is its incarnation. In vain the New York Committee tried to bring the Soviet legation, the Communist Party of the United States, the "Friends of the Soviet Union," to participate in the inquiry. In the new and old worlds, raucous barkings answered their invitations. The most zealous defenders of impartiality testified in this way to their solidarity with the justice of Stalin-Yagoda.

But there is an old proverb, "The friends bark, the caravan goes on its way." A commission was formed. John Dewey, philosopher and educator, one of the veterans of American liberalism, quite naturally headed it. Suzanne La Follette, radical author, Benjamin Stolberg, publicist of the left, Otto Ruehle, veteran Marxist of the German left, Carlo Tresca, well-known militant anarchist, Edward Alsworth Ross, most distinguished of American sociologists, Rabbi Edward L. Israel, and others took their places beside him. Contrary to absurd Comintern press statements, not one of the members of the commission was or is among my political friends. Otto Ruehle, who as a Marxist is nearer—in the political sense of the word—to me than any of the others, was an unyielding opponent of the Communist International at the very time when I belonged to its leadership.

Something entirely different, however, is involved. The Moscow tribunal has accused me not of "Trotskyism"—not, in other words, of defending the program of the permanent revolution—but of being in alliance with Hitler and the Mikado, that is to say, of betraying Trotskyism. Even if the members of the commission had been sympathetic to Trotskyism (which, I repeat, is in no way the case), they would not have been able to show indulgence for my relations with Japanese imperialism against the USSR, the United States, and China. Otto Ruehle has proved his hostility to fascism by the work of his whole life, and more particularly in exile. He is certainly less disposed to show indulgence toward the allies of Hitler than functionaries who curse and bless on the orders of their leaders. The partiality of the members of the commission consists in their not believing the word of Yagoda, Vyshinsky, or Stalin himself. They want proofs; they ask for them. And it is no fault of theirs if Stalin refuses to give what he does not have.

The Paris commission which is guided by that of New York has as presidents men who are clearly my political opponents: Modigliani, Italian lawyer, member of the Executive of the Second International; Mr. Delepine, member of the Permanent
The Preliminary Inquiry at Coyoacan

Administrative Committee of Mr. Leon Blum's party. Of the other members of the commission (Mrs. Cesar Chambrun, chairman of the Committee for Aid to Political Prisoners, Mr. Galtier-Boissiere, editor of Crapouillot, Mr. Mathe, former secretary of the National Union of Postmen, Mr. Jacques Madaule, a Catholic writer), not one is a Trotskyist. I add that I have never had personal relations with any member of the New York or Paris commissions.

Before doing anything else, the New York commission decided to have me heard by a subcommission, to learn if I really had material that would justify a further investigation. The subcommission was composed of Mrs. La Follette, Messrs. J. Dewey, B. Stolberg, O. Ruehle, and Carleton Beals, a journalist. The latter took the place of individuals of greater authority who were prevented at the last moment from coming to Mexico. Mr. John Finerty, a lawyer, a former militant Irish revolutionary, defender of Sacco and Vanzetti and of Tom Mooney, was invited to act as counsel. From my side, I invited Mr. Albert Goldman to look after my defense. The Stalinist press denounced him as a Trotskyist, this time with reason. Far from having ever concealed his solidarity with me, Goldman was to announce it publicly during the inquiry. Would I perhaps have done better to invite Mr. Pritt to take care of my interests?

As soon as it arrived in Mexico, the subcommission invited the Communist Party, the trade unions, and all the workers' organizations of the country to take part in the investigation with the right to ask any questions and to demand the verification of all allegations. The so-called Communists and the official "friends" of the Soviet Union replied with demonstrative refusals, whose haughty tone tried to cover up for their cowardice. Just as Stalin can bring to court only those accused from whom he has first extracted all the confessions he wants, so the friends of the GPU speak only when they are sure they will not be contradicted. Neither he nor they support free speech.

The subcommission first thought of choosing a public hall in Mexico for its work. The Communist Party threatened to organize demonstrations. This party, it is true, is rather insignificant; but the GPU has at its disposal considerable funds and technical means. The Mexican authorities had agreed not to interfere in any way with the work of the subcommission, but the protection of public sessions would have asked too much from them. On its own initiative, the subcommission decided to meet at the home of
Diego Rivera, in a room which could accommodate about fifty people. Representatives of the press and of the workers’ organizations were admitted irrespective of their tendencies. Several Mexican trade unions sent delegates.

The subcommission sat from the tenth to the seventeenth of April. Professor Dewey said in his opening: “If Leon Trotsky is guilty of the acts with which he is charged, no condemnation can be too severe. The extreme seriousness of these charges is, however, an added reason for securing to the accused the full right to present whatever evidence is in his possession, in rebuttal of them. The fact that Mr. Trotsky has personally denied these charges is not of itself a matter of concern to the commission. That he has been condemned without the opportunity of being heard is a matter of utmost concern to . . . the conscience of the whole world.”

Nothing expresses the spirit in which the commission undertook its work better than these words. No less characteristic are the closing words in which, speaking for himself, Mr. Dewey explained why he accepted the heavy responsibility of presiding over the sessions. “I have given my life to the work of education, which I have conceived to be that of public enlightenment in the interests of society. If I finally accepted the responsible post I now occupy it was because I realized that to act otherwise would be to be false to my lifework.” No one present misunderstood the moral significance of these words, so remarkable in their simplicity, spoken by an old man of seventy-eight.

My short reply contained the following passages: “I am entirely aware that the members of the commission are guided in their work by motives incomparably more important and more profound than an interest in the fate of a single person. But all the greater is my respect, and all the more sincere my gratitude! . . . I beg your indulgence for my English which—I must say in advance—is the weakest point of my position. For everything else I do not ask the slightest indulgence. I do not demand any a priori confidence in my affirmations. The task of this Commission of investigation is to verify everything from the beginning to the end. My duty is simply to help it in its work. I will try to accomplish this duty before the eyes of the whole world.”

The commission took extraordinarily broad views of its work. A stenographer, sworn in, recorded the sessions the report of which, 250,000 words long, will soon appear in America and Great Britain. Whoever wants to learn the truth, or at least to come
The Dewey Commission hearing, April 1937. Seated around table are (left to right): Van Heijenoort, Trotsky (with arrow), Frankel, Ruehle, Beals, Dewey, La Follette, Stolberg, Finerty, Glotzer, Goldman.
near to it, should begin by comparing the two stenographic reports, the one from Moscow, the other from Coyoacan.

The first two sessions were devoted to my political biography, more particularly to my relations with Lenin. Once more I had the opportunity of observing that the massive lying campaign pursued by the Communist International for twelve years had penetrated into the minds of men who are honest and who think. Many of the members of the subcommission did not know the real history of the Bolshevik Party, especially of its degeneration. The rebuttal of the inventions and legends forged by the Moscow historians might have been done more thoroughly, but required more time and . . . more fluent English than mine. It is possible that this first part of the investigation would then have given a more rounded-out political picture. But all I could do was refer to my different works and ask that they be added to the file.

The two following sessions were given over entirely to my relations with the principal accused in the two great trials. I tried to bring out before the subcommission that the accused had not been Trotskyists but the worst enemies of Trotskyism and especially of myself. The facts and texts I produced so shattered the Moscow falsifications that the members of the commission were manifestly quite surprised. When, in reply to questions from my defense lawyer, I showed the history of the groupings and the personal relations inside the Bolshevik Party, I was myself surprised more than once that Stalin had dared to try to present Zinoviev, Kamenev, Radek, and Pyatakov as my political friends! But the key to the riddle is very simple: in this as in other cases, the impudence of the lie is in direct proportion to the power of the Inquisition. Not only did Stalin compel my enemies to declare they were my friends, he forced them to demand the death penalty for themselves as punishment for this imaginary friendship. Did Vyshinsky, using this juridical comfort, after that still need to occupy himself with facts, figures, chronology and psychology?

Almost three sessions were devoted to the analysis and rebuttal of the most important charges pronounced against me: Goltsman’s alleged visit to Copenhagen in November 1932; my alleged meeting with Vladimir Romm in the Bois de Boulogne at the end of July 1933; and finally the alleged airplane trip Pyatakov made to Norway to see me in December 1935. On these three decisive points, I presented the originals of my correspondence of that time, different official documents (passport, visas, telegram
inquiries, photographs, etc.), and more than a hundred affidavits from all parts of Europe. All the details of my life in these three short but important periods were clarified in such detail that the falsifiers could not find room to insert a pin. I add that the proofs from my writings are at present being verified by the Paris commission. It was here that the Coyoacan inquiry reached its highest point. The members of the commission, the journalists, and the public all were equally conscious of the fact that the establishment of my alibi in the only three cases where the accusation is precise as to place and time deals a mortal blow to the whole of Moscow justice. Mr. Beals, whose role is worth coming back to briefly, tried, it is true, to support the official Moscow version and to expose contradictions in my answers. I could only be grateful to him for this, whatever his intentions. My position was most favorable: I was speaking to intelligent and honest people who were trying to learn the truth; I demonstrated the facts as they were on the basis of unchallengeable documents; newspapers, books, letters, people’s recollections, logic, psychology, they all came to my aid. After I had answered each of Mr. Beals’s questions, this singular member of the commission kept silent, completely disoriented. Those among the public who prompted him kept passing him little pieces of paper. In the depths of men’s consciousness, judgment was already pronounced. That was only, no doubt, in the little room of a little blue house in Coyoacan. But the rest is only a matter of time and putting it into print.

The subsequent six sessions were occupied with the study of sabotage, my attitude to the Soviet economy, my relations with my political friends in the USSR, terrorism, the defense of the USSR, the activities of the Fourth International, and, finally, my attitude toward fascism. I was unable to use a twentieth part of my material. The main difficulty was in selecting promptly the most striking documents, the briefest texts, and the simplest arguments. Two collaborators of long standing, Jan Frankel and Jean van Heijenoort, were a precious help to me in this matter. The members of the commission gave the appearance of complete reserve. Nevertheless, it seemed to me that the facts and the arguments had reached and entered their consciousness.

Conforming to Anglo-Saxon procedure, in the second part of the session, the interrogation passed from my lawyer, Albert Goldman, to the commission’s counsel, J. Finerty. The Stalinists were to accuse him of being “too lenient” in his handling of the
case. Possibly he was. For my part, I hoped for nothing so much as sharp, distrustful and combative questions. But Mr. Finerty's position was not easy. My depositions and documents had completely destroyed the accusation. Formally, there was nothing left to do but check critically my depositions and documents. That was partly the task of the Paris subcommission but mainly of the New York plenary commission. In the phase we are dealing with, even Mr. Beals's prompters were unable to put any question which might, even indirectly, support the thesis of the Moscow tribunal.

Mr. Finerty and many members of the commission zealously tried to clarify whether the "Stalinist regime" is really profoundly different from the "regime of Lenin and Trotsky." Relations between the party and the soviets, and the internal regime of the party at different times were closely studied. The majority of the members of the commission clearly tended to believe that the Stalinist bureaucracy, charged with all the crimes of which I accused them, is the inevitable product of revolutionary dictatorship. Naturally I could not allow the question to be put in this way. The dictatorship of the proletariat for me is not an absolute principle which logically determines good and evil results; it is a historical phenomenon which, according to internal and external circumstances, can evolve along the line of workers' democracy and the complete abolition of authority, or can degenerate into a Bonapartist apparatus of repression. The profound difference between the formal democratic way of thinking and the dialectic, when faced with historical problems, will forcefully emerge from these passages of the Coyoacan investigation, showing how far from "Trotskyism" are the majority of the members of the commission.

Mr. Beals's letter of resignation was read at the twelfth session; it was couched in very equivocal terms. This demonstration surprised no one. Immediately on his arrival in Mexico, Mr. Beals, former correspondent of the Soviet agency Tass, began collaborating with Messrs. Lombardo Toledano, Kluckhohn, and other "friends" of the GPU. His colleagues in the commission were unaware of his address. Many of the questions he put to me bore no relation at all to the Moscow trial but sought to compromise me in the eyes of the Mexican authorities; they were deliberate provocations. Mr. Beals, having exhausted his slender resources, could do nothing but resign from the commission. He informed his journalist friends of his intention and they
published it immediately in the Mexican press, with praiseworthy imprudence, three days before Mr. Beals resigned. It is superfluous to say that the press bought by Stalin made the most of this carefully prepared resignation. At the same time, Moscow's agents tried to compel other members of the commission to resign, using arguments which will not be found in any dictionary under the heading of either philosophy or morals. But that is a story for another time.

The thirteenth and last session was devoted to two speeches: my lawyer's and my own. In the following pages will be found the complete text of mine.²⁴² I hope it will allow the reader, even if he is unfamiliar with the stenographic report or the documents, to decide if anything at all is left of the Moscow amalgams after the Coyoacan sessions.

The immediate aim of the subcommission, as we said, was to learn whether I really had at my disposal any facts which would justify a further investigation. On the ninth of May, at a meeting in New York, John Dewey read his report to the International Commission. Here is the gist of it:

"Mr. Trotsky As Witness.—It is an established rule even in legally constituted courts that the bearing of the witness may be taken into account in weighing the value of his testimony. We are guided by the same principle in reporting our impression of Mr. Trotsky's attitude and bearing. Throughout the hearings he seemed eager to cooperate with the commission in its efforts to ascertain the truth about all phases of his life and his political and literary activity. He answered readily and with every appearance of helpfulness and candor all questions put to him. . . ." The practical conclusion of the report says: "Your subcommission submits the verbatim report of its proceedings, together with the documents submitted in evidence. This record convinces us that Mr. Trotsky has established a case amply warranting further investigation. Therefore, we recommend that the work of this commission proceed to its conclusion."

I can ask for nothing more. The New York International Commission will resume its work. The verdict it will formulate will enter into history.
Dear Comrades:

We will discuss the tasks subsequent to the Coyoacan hearings with Novack. Now I want briefly to make some comments and suggestions.

We here assess the hearings as totally successful. The Beals incident, as the report will reveal, must end only in our favor. The most important thing is not to lose a single moment. The first job is to publish as soon as possible—in any case before the dog days—the full report of the Coyoacan inquiry, that is, the investigation, Goldman's speech, my closing speech, and the most important documents in English translation as an appendix. I am also writing to Harpers to the effect that I must abandon the idea of the book [The Crimes of Stalin] in view of the coming publication of the report. Possibly Harpers will accept the report for publication. (Stolberg believes that Harpers has some advantages as against the others, McGraw-Hill, etc., but this is a matter of secondary importance.)

The most important question is to create a network of sympathetic workers' groups around the committee, and in this way to give the committee itself a more proletarian character. The commission brings in its report. All our comrades must concentrate their efforts on bringing this report to the workers, even through small meetings. Every meeting of 100 or even five workers must not only adopt a motion of support of the commission, but also elect a permanent representative or a permanent delegate for liaison with the committee. If you succeed in the next weeks in organizing the election of some dozens of such delegates, with mandates from their groups for the work of the committee, you can in a short time select a couple of dozen new members for the committee from these people. A simple worker who becomes a member of the committee has the possibility of educating himself, of broadening his horizon, and of gaining authority in the eyes of
his associates. In this way you will educate worker leaders and create very important channels for your political influence. This point seems to me to be the most important one. We must introduce simple and modest workers alongside the most illustrious liberals. Otherwise we will accomplish only one one-hundredth of our duty.

Next, the fact that the commission is more or less isolated from our comrades is, permit me to repeat, a punishment for some faults of our previous work. But the consequences of the faults are a material fact and we cannot change the situation by some sharp turn or by purely administrative measures: on the contrary, these would only disrupt the work of the commission, which is of the greatest value. Only by the systematic creation of a workers’ network around the committee is it possible to change the relationship of forces, to establish a sound alliance with the necessary political independence of our own friends.

If you succeed (and you must succeed) in publishing the report before June 1, then I will publish my book at the beginning of the fall. In case you are hindered by unpredictable handicaps (which I cannot imagine) then I will publish my closing speech with some additional chapters immediately.

With best comradely greetings,
Leon Trotsky
[Trotsky's deference to me] was not due to my diplomatic status—Trotsky told me he did not cultivate relations of that kind—but the fact of the matter was that a few days earlier he had read a review of my book *Agrarian Reform in Bolivia* in *El Nacional* of Mexico, and had been surprised that a South American should be interested in these problems, given the traditional conservatism of our countries. When he received my card he wished to get to know me. . . .

What interested me extraordinarily in that interview was exploring the mind of the Red leader: What his advice was on the education of the peasant masses. . . . And how he had achieved victory over the indifference of the *muzhiks* [peasants] in the land of the Soviets, the *muzhiks* who, like the Indians of our altiplano, had been accustomed for ages to conducting routine systems of agricultural life without any desire to improve their own individual lives ever awakening. . . . Through this I wanted to know: how the leaders of the Russian revolution had reached the spiritual resources of the peasants; what material means they had used to raise up the peasants and make them large-scale producers; why they had taken the surprising step from the traditional property system of the *mir* (that is, the great landed property formed by the accumulation of cultivated parcels, preserving the concept of small individual property, like the Indian community of Bolivia), to the system of the *kolkhoz*, also a great landed property but now the property of the state, which regulates and technically directs the work and has great resources at its command for developing agriculture by means of machinery. I wished to know his opinion about the methods that in his judgment should be used in Bolivia to achieve the same miracle Russia had achieved. That is how I posed it to Leon Trotsky.

The Red leader listened to me attentively. It appeared to me
that at that moment he had not completely studied our agrarian problem; but he told me, as if propounding a general concept on this matter, that in spite of not knowing the character of our Indian masses and not having closely followed the evolution of property in the land of the Incas, that as a start he thought the traditional systems of property and the "activity" of the Indian should basically be respected, but the organization of work and the cultivation of crops should be given a new direction. The exploitation of agriculture and husbandry should be placed on a broad basis, he told me, as had been done in all the countries of Central Europe, to improve the quality and quantity of production and therefore the nutrition of the peasant masses, and in the same manner give our country the capacity to export agricultural products native to our climate, since well-managed agriculture is the most stable of riches, one which keeps currency high.

"That," he continued, "is the first thing you should do. Your government should make the big landowners transform cultivation, making available to them the means for achieving large-scale production, of course. Only that way could you permit them to retain a proportional part of their lands, when they are of vast size and are not entirely cultivated." He told me he had been informed that in all the countries of Latin America it was difficult to destroy the great landownings because the low density of population did not demand solutions of this kind, and because of the conservative ideas the political leaders had about the right of property.

"But the Western nations," he added with keen irony and flashing a brilliant smile, "also have more refined procedures, although slower than ours, for expropriating and confiscating, in order to put land to social use: progressive taxes on idle land; increased charges on personal rent, which goes up not due to work on the land but due to the immoderate extension of great landownings."

He said to me that if our peasant masses were "spiritualist" (I had referred to this aspect of the Indian psychology), it was necessary to reach their great spiritual resources, roughly shaking them out of their customs, using strict discipline on them, but at the same time being protective and affectionate in order to transform them (Trotsky had changed while in America)! . . .

"Bringing the Indian out of his 'static' culture," he added, "to a fully mechanized manner of doing things is the only way to fight
his indifference. To separate the millions of Indian serfs from the static communal parcel—” (“That is the Aymara [Andean Indian] ayllu,” I remember interrupting him with) “... and from the routine cultivation of the Spanish type of hacienda,” he continued, “which is almost the same system as the ancient mir, but exclusively in the service of the great landowner—”

“A system that does not exist in Bolivia,” I pointed out. “There the Indian peon must pay a tax consisting of his personal services and his services as a cultivator to the landowner, at the same time that he cultivates his own sayano.”

“It is necessary,” Trotsky continued, “for the Indian peasants to go over to the Russian system of the kolkhoz, scientifically directed and organized, in order to get them out of their routine, in order for them to become active members of the collective farm. Each peasant would keep his own small piece of land for his home, for cultivating garden vegetables, and raising yard animals, for consumption by his own family.”

Then he made this astute observation to me: “The simple avarice of the peasant is present before he is born. It is the same all over the world, the same in the Indian as in the Russian muzhik. For that reason the usefulness of intensive production must be made clear to him so that he will become interested and make progress. With the money that he earns, necessities will arise and he will later ask for commodities. The Indians must work the communal lands of the estate.”

[On this point, Sanjines, who had agreed with everything Trotsky had said, had a disagreement based on the Indians' tie to individual property, which fits perfectly with cooperatives and collectives alongside of it; but because of the Indians' historical land-owning tradition, Sanjines excluded a change wherein the Indian would work completely deprived of the feeling for property.]

“From everything that you say,” Trotsky told me, “it appears to me that the Bolivian Indians’ system of rural property is closest to that of the artel, another type of collectivist agrarian organization in Russia. We have modernized the artel by adapting it to the present epoch, and you should do the same. In the artel the Russian peasant owns a small individual parcel, as a proprietor, in order to assure his own maintenance and family installations and small farming works, the breeding of fowl and yard animals, the same as you told me the Bolivian Indians have; this does not exclude their belonging to the collective farm where
they work, which could be established in Bolivia by expropriating certain lands from big landownings only, and placing the collective farms certain distances apart. In this manner the individual economy of the peasant would be assured by giving him his own parcel; at the same time he would work on the collective farm, thereby contributing to the social well-being; the haciendas of limited size would not be destroyed; the great landholdings so rooted in the traditions of the Spanish American republics would come apart little by little through the establishment of collective farms, if it is not possible to completely destroy them all at once."
Q: Will the new constitution adopted in Russia actually give more freedom to the laboring classes and to the population as a whole?

A: Constitutions cannot in general change the regime. They only inscribe on paper the real relationship of forces. In the USSR the relationship of forces during the last ten years has definitely changed in favor of the privileged bureaucracy and to the detriment of the laboring classes. The new constitution sanctifies this new relationship of forces. It officially consolidates power in the hands of the bureaucracy, which appears in the text of the constitution under the pseudonym of the “Communist Party.” Under the new constitution still more than under the old, whoever attacks the rights and privileges of the bureaucracy will be declared a Trotskyite and placed outside the law.

Q: Do prosecution and death sentences against the loyal old Communists constitute a definite policy of the present Russian administration, or are they just the result of individual revenge against people disliked by Stalin?

A: Stalin is only an instrument in the hands of the new leading caste. His personal vindictive character naturally plays a certain role. But the extermination of the old generation of Bolsheviks is dictated by the interests of the privileged summits of the bureaucracy.

Q: What kind of political regime now prevails in Russia? Is it state capitalism or dictatorship?

A: In my book The Revolution Betrayed, I tried to show that to call the Soviet regime “state capitalism” is neither scientific nor
correct. The forms of property created by the October Revolution are still preserved. On this basis—with favorable international and internal conditions—the development of socialism is possible. However, the growth of the bureaucracy shakes and weakens the new forms of property, in the degree that the bureaucracy more and more arbitrarily disposes of the productive forces of the country and swallows up a larger and larger portion of the national income. The economic regime of the USSR has a transitional character, that is, represents a certain stage between capitalism and socialism, closer to capitalism than to socialism. This transitional regime, however, is more and more disfigured by the parasitism of the bureaucracy. In the political sense the regime represents a historical equivalent of Bonapartism. The further development of the bureaucratic autocracy threatens to undermine the forms of property created by the October Revolution and to throw the country far back. That is why the overthrow of the Bonapartist bureaucracy is the most important condition for the further movement of the USSR toward socialism.

Q: Is it fear which keeps the Russian population at peace, or is it because the majority supports the present regime?

A: The terrible defeats of the world proletariat, inspired by the false policies of the Second and Third Internationals, are the principal cause of the strength of the Soviet bureaucracy. The Russian workers now see a choice only between Hitler and Stalin. With sinking hearts, they tolerate Stalin. The Bonapartism of Stalin feeds on the growth of reaction in Europe.

Q: Has the “piecework” system improved the conditions of the working classes or not?

A: Piecework has ameliorated the situation of the summits of the working class, creating a new aristocracy of labor. So far as the situation of the principal mass of workers is concerned, piecework has worsened it, at least relatively, and in many cases absolutely.

Q: Does the activity developed by the Soviet government at Birobidzhan follow strategic plans to fortify this section in the event of war with Japan, or does it actually represent the creation
of a free, autonomous state for the Jewish nation within the Soviet Union?²⁴⁶

_A:_ Both tendencies have played a role since the creation of Birobidzhan. Under a regime of Soviet democracy, Birobidzhan could undoubtedly play a serious role as regards the national culture of Soviet Judaism. Under a Bonapartist regime which nourishes anti-Semitic tendencies, Birobidzhan threatens to degenerate into a sort of Soviet ghetto.

_Q:_ Can a revolution in Russia against the present regime be expected to develop in the near future?

_A:_ The revolution against the Soviet bureaucracy will become possible only after the European proletariat has succeeded in dealing the first serious blows to fascism and to capitalist reaction in general. It is possible that the Stalin regime, in spite of its obvious weakening, will maintain itself so long as the regimes of Mussolini and Hitler are maintained. I think that all three will not last long.

_Q:_ Should Stalin and his supporters lose power, would you go back to Russia?

_A:_ Any sort of plans on this subject are premature.

_Q:_ Do you find the people, characteristics, habits, and atmosphere of the country which you have chosen as a residence pleasant?

_A:_ I am satisfied with my sojourn in Mexico in every respect. On the part of the people as well as on the part of the authorities I have met with nothing but magnanimous hospitality. Unfortunately, the recent Moscow trials have prevented me from learning the Spanish language. I hope to recover the lost time in the near future.

_Q:_ Have you been well-informed about the standpoint of the _Forward_ with reference to the attacks made upon you in Russia and America?

_A:_ My friends in New York have kept me regularly informed of the position of the _Forward_ as regards the judicial frame-ups in
Moscow. I deeply appreciate the objective reports which the Forward has given and is giving to its readers on this question. It is unnecessary for me to recall here the profound difference between our principled positions. However, all the parties of the working class and of the laboring masses in general are interested in seeing that the ideological struggle is not poisoned by slander, falsifications, frame-ups, and juridical assassinations. That is precisely why I hope that the Forward will open its pages to the work of the Inquiry Commission presided over by Professor Dewey.

Q: Do you consider satisfactory the results attained by the Inquiry Commission of which Professor Dewey was a prominent member?

A: I am satisfied to the highest degree with the first step of the work of the New York commission. The report of the investigation which it made will shortly be published. Every thinking man will be able to compare the verbatim report of the Moscow trial with the verbatim report of the Coyoacan investigation. I do not doubt for an instant that the truth will find its way over all obstacles.
THE TRIAL OF
THE DANZIG TROTSKYISTS

April 29, 1937

Twelve days before the trial of fake “Trotskyists” in Moscow—Pyatakov, Radek et al.—the fascists in Danzig held a trial of genuine Trotskyists—Dr. Jakubowski and nine of his associates. The grandiose Moscow trial, which staggered the whole world, naturally attracted attention away from the Danzig trial. The great world press reported almost nothing about the manner in which the Gestapo legally disposed of the Danzig revolutionists. Meanwhile, the Danzig trial is well worth noticing for itself as well as for the light it casts upon the Moscow trial, or rather, for the glaring exposure of the latter.

Only a few days ago I received from friends a copy of the fascist newspaper Der Danziger Vorposten, containing an account of the court trial; also copies of the illegal publication of the Danzig organization of the “Trotskyists”: namely, their paper Spartakus and several of their proclamations.

Der Danziger Vorposten for December 9, 1936, writes: “After careful surveillance and preparation on the part of the political police, the latter was able a few days ago to expose a secret Communist organization, the Spartakus, and to arrest most of the members.” All told, some sixty individuals were seized. The criminals, according to the police, tried to “make their organization the rallying center of all the enemies of the state. They carried on intensive work, issued leaflets, distributed secret literature smuggled in from abroad, collected funds, etc. One of the leaders of the organization even paid a visit to Trotsky in Norway in the summer of this year (1936). . . . Prior to the time the secret organization was apprehended, a lively correspondence with Trotsky was in all probability conducted through the Polish post.”

In these first few lines the familiar melodies already ring: You have a Trotskyist organization as the “rallying center of all the enemies of the state” (this time the fascist state); you have a trip
by one of the leaders to Trotsky—which reminds us of Pyatakov's
"flight" to Oslo; a lively correspondence between the defendants
and Trotsky, and the receipt of "instructions" from him. . . . It
would seem as if Vyshinsky's indictment a month and a half
later was patterned on the Danzig model.

Of the sixty who were arrested only ten, ranging in age from
twenty-three to fifty-seven, were brought to trial. How the Nazis
dispersed the others remains unknown. Dr. Franz Jakubowski,
a German citizen, was stipulated as the leader of the organization
and the principal accused. All the others are citizens of Danzig.
The report of the court proceedings declares that the "leader of
the Trotskyist gang" gave a brief account of his revolutionary
work.

In Danzig they use the same terminology as in Moscow: the
organization of the opposition is invariably referred to as a
"gang." The twenty-five-year-old Jakubowski became a Marxist
in 1930, a Communist in 1932, and a Trotskyist in 1935. Jaku­
bowski was intimate with another young Marxist, Dr. Siegfried
Kissin, who was, according to the indictment, the individual that
visited Trotsky in Oslo.

To quote the indictment, the Danzig Trotskyists in their
proclamation and newspaper "trampled into the mud everything
German, and, on the contrary, extolled Soviet Russia."

Upon his arrest Dr. Jakubowski was found in possession "not
only of printed materials but also American dollars and English
pounds." This section of the Gestapo indictment likewise seems a
miniature model for the accusations of the GPU, with this
difference, that the Moscow "Trotskyists" trampled into the mud
everything Soviet and kowtowed to fascism, while the Danzig
Trotskyists did just the opposite. While Pyatakov received marks
from German firms, Jakubowski was discovered in possession of
dollars and pounds.

Vorposten for January 12 prints a photograph of the courtroom
during the speech of the state prosecutor, whose name was not
Vyshinsky but Hoffman. The courtroom, as the newspaper
reports, was jammed with spectators. The accused were charged
with maligning the government, disturbing the peace, circulating
false information, violating the press laws, and, lastly, being in
illegal possession of weapons.

If the Danzig Trotskyists "extolled Soviet Russia," then they
evidently made an exception of Stalinist justice. For it was
especially held against Jakubowski that in an article of his "the
Moscow judicial farce is compared with the trial of the Reichstag arsonists.” The state prosecutor (Hoffman and not Vyshinsky) waxed indignant over this “astounding comparison.” The speeches of the accused were not printed. They did not recant nor did they praise Hitler but they did set forth their revolutionary views.

The ten accused, two women among the number, received a total sentence of thirteen years imprisonment, of which Jakubowski’s share—for whom the prosecutor demanded five years hard labor—came to three years and three months in prison. In passing sentence the court declared among other things the following: “The Trotskyist league must be looked upon as a Communist organization. True, differences exist between the Trotskyists and the other Communists, but these concern not the world outlook but only questions of party tactics.”

In conclusion, the presiding judge expressed his regret that the chief criminal, Dr. Kissin, happened to be in Copenhagen and not in the prisoners’ dock. The Danzig government had the intelligence, of course, to refrain from demanding the extradition of Kissin.

Of enormous political interest are the publications of the Spartacus League, which delineate fully the political physiognomy of that organization. We have heard from the Gestapo that the conspirators used to resort to the “Polish post” in order to transmit materials in which insults were heaped upon “everything German.” Yet, the manifesto on the Spanish events begins with the following words: “The German and Polish fascist governments have hypocritically proclaimed their neutrality in the Spanish Civil War. As a matter of fact, they are the constant purveyors of arms to the Spanish fascists.”

A circular which calls upon the dockworkers to do everything in their power to prevent any further shipment of war materials is signed: “Internationalist Communists of Germany, Danzig group (Trotskyists).” Thus the Spartacus League considers itself a part of the nationwide German organization of Trotskyists, the very same that, according to Vyshinsky, entered into an alliance with the Gestapo as far back as 1932. The alliance of Trotskyists with the Gestapo took place, as is well known, even prior to the formation of the Gestapo itself.

In a proclamation devoted to the collapse of the old workers’ parties we find the following declaration: “By their policies they prepared their own doom. As long as they could they continued to
instill their adherents with illusions, and thereby restrained them from struggling against the Nazis." The leaders of the Spartacus League do not sow illusions. They write: "We know that it is no easy thing to do away with fascism. Work, hard and dangerous, long and stubborn work is necessary to prepare for its downfall. . . . Help us build a new Communist Party, which will give revolutionary leadership to the proletariat. Help us build the Fourth International, which will lead the world revolution to victory."

The Danzig fascists have advanced the slogan: "Danzig must become the anti-Bolshevist fortress on the eastern German frontier." According to Vyshinsky, the Trotskyists should have constituted a part of the garrison of this fortress. They refuse, however, to conform in any way to this pattern. They write in their paper: "Not collaboration with the bourgeoisie but the overthrow of fascism by the armed might of the proletariat—that is the task of the Danzig antifascists. The organization of workers in the industrial enterprises, in the unemployed offices, and in the forced labor camps to resist and actively struggle against National Socialism—that is the sole means of overthrowing fascism."

What is the attitude of the Danzig Trotskyists to the defense of the USSR? "Hitler offers himself as a super-Wrangel"—writes the organ of the Spartacus League—"for the imperialist crusade against the Soviet Union. . . ." Stalin and his bureaucracy constitute the greatest danger to the existence of the Soviet power. In their domestic policy they have supplanted the rule of the proletariat with the rule of the bureaucracy; in foreign policy they have given preference to an alliance with the bourgeoisie as against the support of the proletariat. But they haven't as yet succeeded in destroying the most important social conquests of the October Revolution. Private ownership of the means of production still remains abolished in Russia. Therefore the defense of the USSR remains the unconditional duty of the proletariat." Let us not forget that this was written on Hitler's own territory.

In August 1936, a few days before the Zinoviev-Kamenev trial, the Danzig group of the Stalinists turned to the Spartacus League with a proposal for a united front. But no sooner were the negotiations opened than the Moscow trial broke. On the very next day the Danzig Stalinists wrote: "The tie-up with the Gestapo does not come to us as a surprise. After all, the
Trotskyist fraternity in Danzig has long been the espionage and provocationist center of the Danzig Gestapo." This episode provides on a small scale an example of the corruption that the GPU introduces into the ranks of the working class the world over. The Danzig Trotskyists replied with scorn: "Had we been connected with the Gestapo, you would have been clapped in jail long ago, for you yourselves were in negotiation with us."

As matters turned out, it was the members of the Spartacus League who shortly found themselves in jail!!

The traits of resemblance between the Danzig and the Moscow trials should not, however, obscure from our view the fundamental difference between them. The Danzig indictment in all its essential aspects was genuine; the Moscow trial—fraudulent from top to bottom. In Danzig unimpeachable material proofs, seized during the arrests, were produced. No revolutionary organization can exist and function without a program and a press. Through their modest mimeograph machine, the Danzig Trotskyists maintained their contact with the masses. At the trial they renounced neither their ideas nor their publications. They acknowledged their solidarity with me both in their press and in the courtroom. The report of the court proceedings hasn’t a word to say about “recantations.” In the prisoners’ dock in Danzig sat my real cothinkers and not enemies of mine who assumed a mask of friendship by command of the police.

Mention was made in the court of Kissin’s journey to Oslo. In dealing with the “flight” of Pyatakov, I made reference to it. But the whole thing is that Kissin did really visit me in July 1936 while traveling from Danzig to Denmark. At the time this visit was reported in the Norwegian press. The conditions under which I live exclude the possibility of any secret visits.

To be sure, the assertion that I sent “instructions” to Danzig is sheer fiction. Of the Danzig group I learned from Kissin only a few days prior to my internment and I engaged in no correspondence with it. But this does not essentially change anything in the matter. There is between us a bond of close ideological solidarity. As the publications of the Spartacus League eloquently testify, its young leaders were perfectly able to find their way in political questions, without any of my “instructions.”

The fascist prosecutor did not charge the Danzig Trotskyists with terrorism, sabotage, and espionage, nor did he demand their heads. The explanation for this is to be found in the fact that the totalitarian regime in Danzig is still young, and the public
opinion of the ruling party itself is still unprepared for such measures. Stalin is now stepping to the fore as the educator of fascism. The GPU is giving lessons to the Gestapo. When Hitler's position becomes still more difficult, the German Vyshinskys will chop off the heads of the revolutionary workers on the charge of terrorism, sabotage, and espionage. The seeds of the Moscow frame-ups, we need not doubt, will not fall on barren soil. But the seeds sown by the Spartacus League will likewise sprout revolutionary shoots in their time.
TWO MANIFESTATIONS
OF THE SAME TENDENCY

May 12, 1937

The attitude of the Belgian leadership at the time of the by-election was a big blow to the prestige of the Fourth International and above all its Belgian section. On this question we are in complete agreement with the IS and the Paris _Lutte ouvriere_. Comrade Vereecken, it seems, wants to separate the Belgian question from the Spanish question. This is a purely mechanical conception. Opportunism in the attitude towards the POUM is more evident and more profound because it is a case of a revolutionary situation. On the question of the by-election, the same opportunism takes a more trivial, flat, and traditional form. But basically these are only two manifestations of the same tendency. We see anew how formal intransigence can be a cover for basic opportunism. Our Belgian comrades must do some serious heart-searching.
MR. BEALS AS A WITNESS

May 18, 1937

In the May issue of the Mexican magazine Futuro, Mr. Carleton Beals has published an article on the hearings of the Inquiry Commission in Coyoacan. Neither the magazine nor the author in themselves could inspire me to a debate. But the fact that Mr. Beals was a member of the commission throws the reflection of a borrowed authority upon his article and does not permit me to let it pass without attention, unlike innumerable other articles of the same kind.

However, I do not intend to stop at all the false affirmations which constitute the statement of the former Tass correspondent: I am interested chiefly in those cases wherein Mr. Beals "quotes" my depositions, appearing as a peculiar "witness." The fact that Mr. Beals resigned from the commission does not free him from elementary moral obligations. It seems to me that the commission could call Mr. Beals as a witness and ask him to confirm the declarations through which he leads public opinion into error.

1. "'Can you prove this (?) point?' I cry out unexpectedly to Trotsky. . . . Trotsky evidently cannot prove it (?). His archives on this point have been stolen by the Norwegian fascists, but he made a notarized statement and various journalists corroborated it. These journalists turned out to be partisans of Trotsky . . . ," etc. In the whole intentionally formless story there is not one word of truth.

The Norwegian fascists really did make an attempt to seize my archives on August 5, 1936, but they succeeded in stealing only a single letter, which appeared later before the Norwegian court and was reproduced in all the press. Consequently I could not have referred to the "seizure" of my archives by the Norwegian fascists.

In order to render a refutation more difficult, Mr. Beals avoids naming the question which was being discussed. However, by the method of elimination, one can reach the conclusion that it
concerned my mention of the method used by the GPU: to punish the close relatives in order to force false statements from those arrested. Not only Mr. Beals, but also the chairman of the commission, Dr. Dewey, requested evidence from me. I quoted my own experience, introduced a number of facts published in the world press, and proposed that the commission examine a number of witnesses named by me. Furthermore, the next day I introduced a report about the Soviet decree of 1934 which legalizes the arrest of the defendant’s relatives in certain cases. Of what “notarized statement” and of what “journalists” is Mr. Beals speaking? Perhaps he will give his explanation in this regard to the commission?

2. “I ask about Trotsky’s archives. He hems and haws, declining to say where they are. . . . In any case, the archives are not in Mexico; almost all the documents which he has are uncertified copies.” In this story also everything is wrong.

a. I declared from the beginning that I place all my archives at the disposal of the commission. Without waiting for Mr. Beals’s questions, I requested that the commission grant me the right not to reveal the location of my archives in a public session. In that connection I referred to the fact that on November 7, 1936, agents of the GPU stole 187 pounds of my papers in Paris. The official documents relating to this theft have been placed by me at the disposal of the commission. (It is remarkable that Mr. Beals, who several times speaks ironically about my “hatred” for the GPU, himself refrains from recalling the theft of my archives.) Before the commission I referred to the fact that the GPU tries, through willing journalists, to draw out the location of my archives. The commission unanimously deemed it unnecessary to divulge their location in a public session. What does Mr. Beals want now?

b. The affirmation that “almost all the documents” which are in my possession are “uncertified copies” is absolutely false. In the main my archives consist of letters received by me and copies of my replies. The letters received by me are, naturally, originals. The copies of my replies—there are thousands of them—are, of course, uncertified. I have never heard of anyone certifying the copies of his own letters. However, it is not difficult to verify the authenticity of these copies, since the majority of the receivers have preserved the originals. Besides this, the continuity of the correspondence, its internal logic, are a serious criterion for its authenticity or falseness. The verification of the documents is precisely one of the tasks of the commission.
The many dozens of affidavit presented by me are notarized. Furthermore, they will be verified by a direct examination of the witnesses before the Inquiry Commission in New York or the corresponding bodies in Europe.

The documents placed at the disposal of the commission to date are either originals or photostats. I did not have certified only those documents whose authenticity can in no way be doubted, since they were printed many times and never denied by anybody. I add that Mr. Beals did not once express his doubts concerning the documents presented by me. Perhaps he will trouble himself to show the commission exactly which are the documents whose authenticity he is contesting.

3. Concerning the European inquiry commissions which are working under directives from New York, Mr. Beals writes: "I could not find out how these commissions in Europe were created nor who were their members. I suppose (!) that they will be members of the Trotskyite groups."

The following people belong to the Parisian commission: Delepine, chairman of the association of socialist lawyers and member of the Central Committee of the French Socialist Party (Second International); Modigliani, lawyer, member of the Central Committee of the Italian Socialist Party and member of the Executive Committee of the Second International; Mrs. César Chambrun, head of the Committee for the Aid of Political Prisoners; Mathe, former secretary of the national trade union of postal employees; Galtier-Boissiere, writer, editor of the well-known radical magazine Crapouillot. The members of this commission, insofar as they are political figures, have always been and still are my implacable adversaries. I have had and I have no personal relations with any of them. Thus, Mr. Beals's "supposition" that the members of the European commissions are Trotskyites corresponds not with the facts, but with the specific mission which is being accomplished by Mr. Beals himself.

4. "Trotsky vehemently (!) related the persecution of his family, all of whom, it would seem (?), were occupied with secret political activity; told how his sister committed suicide in Paris because of having been deprived of Soviet citizenship."

Here too there is not one word of truth. Actually, it was not my sister who committed suicide but my daughter, and not in Paris but in Berlin. On what does Mr. Beals base his affirmation that she was occupied with "secret political activity"? In reality the Soviet authorities allowed her to leave in January 1931, in order
to receive medical treatment, since she was gravely sick: she came abroad with a pneumothoracic condition in both lungs. For several months she hardly left her bed. Nevertheless she was deprived, together with me, of her rights of citizenship and thus torn from her husband and children, who remained in Russia. Even in this simple case Mr. Beals prefers, as we see, to confuse and falsify everything. But he did not forget to whitewash the GPU with a false reference to "secret political activity." More than this, Mr. Beals extends this summary insinuation against all the members of my family, among them, consequently, also my younger son Sergei Sedov, who was arrested on the accusation of "preparing the mass poisoning of workers." I declared categorically during the hearings of the commission that my younger son was always removed from politics. Thanks to the position I occupied in the Soviet Union, this fact was widely known in the circles of the bureaucracy. What is the basis of Mr. Beals's affirmation to the contrary? Only this: his efforts to confound a serious investigation with aid to the Moscow hangmen.

5. "I decided (Mr. Beals writes) to re-enter the scene with a series of questions to demonstrate the secret (!) relations of Trotsky with the Fourth International and his hidden contacts with various groups in Italy, Germany, and the Soviet Union." In the Moscow trials I was accused of having secret relations with the German government. However, Mr. Beals charges me with having secret relations with the sections of the Fourth International, among them—the German. It is necessary to choose one or the other. My connection with the Fourth International is not at all "secret." I speak about it openly in my books and articles. Perhaps Mr. Beals will explain to the commission in what crimes he intended to unmask me: the alliance with fascism or the alliance with the revolutionary workers—against fascism?

6. "To lay a basis for these questions, I felt myself obligated to clarify the former relations of Trotsky with outside revolutionary groups when he was a part of the Soviet state. I questioned him on the secret activities of Borodin in Mexico in 1919-20.253 The result was a violent explosion. Trotsky branded my informers as liars and lost his composure. My informer, among others, I told Trotsky, was Borodin himself."

In this episode Mr. Beals acted not as a member of the Inquiry Commission, but as a witness for the prosecution. In the capacity of an unexpected witness, he declared that I personally sent
Mr. Beals as a Witness

Borodin to Mexico in 1919-20, and that I personally, in opposition to other members of the government who desired to occupy themselves with "economic construction," intended to foment the revolution in other countries. I answered Mr. Beals that I never had anything to do with Borodin; that I knew him only from his later unfortunate activity in China; that I denounced his policies in public statements. I have never before heard that Borodin was in Mexico in 1919-20. I have never been occupied with Mexican questions. The sending of agents to other countries was entirely in the hands of the Comintern. There can be no talk of the possibility that I sent agents anywhere to carry out my personal line. I could as little send Borodin to Mexico as Zinoviev, then chairman of the Comintern, could name army commanders. Nobody who, like Borodin, knew the internal regime of the Bolshevik Party even slightly could tell such things to Mr. Beals. Finally, in 1919-20 there was not a trace of differences in the party on the question of international revolution and "socialism in one country." Borodin could not, in 1919, anticipate those disputes which arose for the first time only in the fall of 1924, that is, five years later. Consequently, Borodin could not have told Mr. Beals what the witness Beals communicated in the hearing of the commission.

Such is this guardian of objective truth! On several pages he attributed to me references to the seizure of my archives by the Norwegian fascists, although the seizure did not succeed; kept silent about the seizure of a part of my archives by agents of the GPU in Paris, although this seizure did take place; confused my daughter with my sister; mixed up Paris with Berlin; without the slightest justification, attributed "secret political activity" to my sick daughter as well as to my younger son; threw into the same pot my alleged connection with German fascism and my real connection with the German section of the Fourth International, . . . etc. If Mr. Beals, some weeks after, was capable of confounding and falsifying everything which took place with his own participation in the April investigation, can one rely in the slightest degree upon the report given by Mr. Beals of conversations which he had, or allegedly had, seventeen years ago with Borodin or other witnesses not named by him? When I said that Mr. Beals's informer is a liar, it was only a polite expression of the idea that Mr. Beals himself departs from the truth. Or will he perhaps agree to confirm his testimony before the commission?

7. In order to prove his independence from Moscow, Mr. Beals
writes: "... I had telegraphed to President Cardenas months ago, asking him to grant Trotsky asylum in Mexico." Just now we heard from Beals that I was occupied as early as 1919 with secret activity in Mexico, which Mr. Beals considers so criminal that he hastens to unmask it... seventeen years later. One must ask: With what right did Mr. Beals bother President Cardenas with this telegram? It turns out that Mr. Beals hid from the Mexican government the information which he allegedly received from Borodin, and that he misled the Mexican government in asking that the right of asylum be granted me. Mr. Beals transforms himself into a conscious partner in my criminal activity. Perhaps, however, he will explain, as a witness, these acts of his as well before the commission? That is his direct duty to public opinion in Mexico!

At this point I interrupt the chain of Mr. Beals's false affirmations, errors, and falsifications. When the records appear, they will show with what ill-willed caution Mr. Beals avoided in his article all the questions which have a decisive importance for an appraisal of the Moscow trials (especially and above all the documentary refutation of the statements of Olberg, Goltsman, Vladimir Romm, and Pyatakov). From this fact alone it is clear whose interests Mr. Beals is serving. But perhaps Mr. Beals is still further unmasked by the duplicity of his method demonstrated above: on the one hand he tries (indirectly, in a cowardly fashion, by insinuations) to support the Moscow accusations concerning my "alliance" with fascism for the struggle against revolution, socialism, and democracy. On the other hand, he intends, like Kluckhohn, the Mexican correspondent of the New York Times, to inspire certain circles with the idea that I am intervening in the internal life of Mexico and the United States with the aim of there provoking revolution. These contradictory accusations are fed by one and the same interest, the interest of the Moscow bureaucracy. The accusation of alliance with fascism has the aim of compromising me in the eyes of the working masses. But in order to succeed in this operation, I must be deprived of the right of asylum. I must be imprisoned, as they succeeded in doing in Norway. For this aim it is necessary to frighten the interested governments with my "secret revolutionary activity." I do not say that Mr. Beals, former correspondent of Tass, is now also a paid agent of Moscow. I can admit that he is a half-conscious instrument in the hands of the GPU. But this
changes nothing. He applies the same methods as the professional agents of the GPU. For his part he adds only a certain amount of disinterested confusion.

Perhaps the Inquiry Commission will consider it possible:
   a. To call Mr. Beals as a witness;
   b. To propose to him that he now formulate clearly and precisely the questions which the commission allegedly prevented him from formulating or to which I allegedly gave no answer or “unsatisfactory” answers;
   c. To propose to him that he pose all the supplementary questions that he wishes.

For my part, I am absolutely ready to reply to all questions, regardless of their source or those who pose them, without, obviously, excluding Mr. Beals, on only one condition: that these questions be presented to me through the Inquiry Commission.
Dear Comrades:

Your congress, despite the modest size of your organization, has an enormous political importance. The parliamentary fakers, the bureaucratic careerists, the philistines, and the eunuchs cannot understand this—for you, and you alone, represent the revolutionary future of the French workers' movement.

A political organization which is in constant disagreement with its youth is doomed to failure. Such is the outlook for the French Socialist Party. It is completely impregnated with lies. Marceau Pivert can be distinguished from Zyromsky and from Leon Blum only by a different way of lying. In 1934, these gentlemen elaborated a program in which they proclaimed that their task was to "shatter the apparatus of the bourgeois state." In reality, they are forced to shatter the spinal column of the proletariat, with the aim of strengthening the bourgeois state. There is nothing astonishing in these conditions, nor in the fact that the Socialist Party, which boasts of a regime of internal democracy, is forced to cut off from it systematically the revolutionary elements of the youth, who reflect the hopes, the aspirations, and the impatience of the new generation of the working class.

Things present themselves in no better light in regard to the so-called "Communist" Party. It is difficult to find in the history of the workers' movement another example of such a rapid and frightful degeneration. "Our party has now attained its maturity," declared Mr. Thorez not so long ago, a worthy representative of that type of political maturity which can be distinguished from rottenness as easily as two drops of water can be told apart.

The "Communist" Party represents an edifice of several stories. On top, the "hard" bureaucracy—i.e., completely corrupted, without principles, without honor, and without conscience. Below it, the layer of intellectuals, of petty bourgeois, the functionaries,
semi-idealists, semicareerists, like Romain Rolland, Malraux, etc.\textsuperscript{256} These gentlemen want to have the title of revolutionaries without breaking with their bourgeoisie; they want to be considered internationalists while keeping faith with their national imperialism. The Comintern assures all that to them, often enough with a bonus. Then come the working masses, who continue to group themselves around the Communist Party by virtue of historical inertia. There are, assuredly, a number of sincere and courageous fighters among them, especially among the youth. You must direct your main energies in this direction!

The "Communist" Party has extraordinarily powerful resources at its disposal in order to deceive its members and keep them in harness. However, these resources, in the present conditions, will not last a long time. The contradiction between the program and the practical activity, the contradiction between the orders of the Soviet bureaucracy and the interests of the French proletariat have too profound and burning a character for these gentlemen—like Thorez, Vaillant-Couturier, Duclos, and other charlatans—to be able to maintain for a long time the equilibrium of their party, with its edifice of three stories. One can predict in advance that the disintegration will begin with the youth. It is here that a rich harvest awaits you.

The idea, if it corresponds to the exigencies of historical development, is more powerful than the most powerful organization. These gentlemen—the pseudo-Socialists like the pseudo-Communists—have great organizations inherited from the past, but they have no ideas. Their program is a fiction; they live through diplomacy and equivocation; they sow lies and illusions.

Your organization is weak, but you have an idea. Your program corresponds to the character of the present epoch. It expresses correctly the fundamental historical interests of the proletariat. Every great event will confirm your program. With the help of pitiless criticism, of constant propaganda, of bold agitation, you will destroy the old, internally rotten organizations, which have become the principal obstacles on the road of the revolutionary movement. That is why, dear comrades, your congress has a great importance. You must become fully conscious of the great mission which history has placed on your young shoulders.

The pseudo-Socialists expel you, the pseudo-Communists submit you to dishonest reprisals, the Bonapartist clique of Moscow organizes persecutions without precedent in history against your ideological companions, covering them with monstrous judicial falsifications.\textsuperscript{257} At first glance, there is an obvious disproportion
between the modest size of your organization, as in general with all the sections of the Fourth International, and the gigantic scope of the persecutions, repression, and slander. However, this contradiction is only apparent. The parasitic bureaucracy possesses a strong instinct of self-preservation, and it takes clearly into account the danger which your small vanguard, united by a scientific program, welded by an internal solidarity, and capable of the highest sacrifices, represents for it. You project your shadow before you, into the future, and this shadow from today on is ten times, a hundred times, taller than your organization. The persecutions and slanders of enemies give you the necessary strength and prepare you for the great tasks and battles which lie ahead.

The example of Spain shows what an inexhaustible reservoir of heroism and devotion is hidden in the proletariat. Through six years of revolution, the Spanish workers could have assured not one but ten victories. They lacked a party which could utilize their heroism and respond to the objective demands of history. From defeat to defeat. But it is necessary to learn the lesson of these defeats. We see in Spain how the anarchist leaders, who do not understand the concept of the dictatorship of the proletariat, capitulate at the critical moment—being nothing less than exalted liberals. In the POUM, on the other hand, we see left centrisrn in practice, in action. Centrism is an intermediate tendency between reformism and revolution. A revolutionary situation, however, admits of no intermediate position. Thus, the tragic and pitiful end of the POUM. By its words, its formulas, its articles, it kindled the revolutionary passion of the masses. By its indecision, its equivocation, its hesitations, its lack of clear program, it deprived itself of the possibility of giving to the masses that firm revolutionary leadership without which victory is impossible.

In our own ranks were found a certain number of hesitant or sentimental revolutionaries, who by their sympathy for the Spanish revolution were ready to close their eyes to the tragic and criminal mistakes of the leadership. Let us recall it clearly, comrades; that is not our policy. We are bound to say openly what is, and to call a spade—a spade. The working class needs the full truth, however distressing it may be.

I trust that the congress of your organization will be held under the banner of faith in your future, while at the same time criticizing without pity all the faults and weaknesses of your present condition. What the revolutionary organizations in
France have most often lacked is attention to details, system, a well-regulated organization—which must be begun by exact financial accounts and by careful scrutiny of publications. The great quality of the French working class is its spirit of initiative and improvisation, which has more than once left its mark upon history. The proletariat must be given a scientific program and a strict and all-conquering fighting organization.

The weak will perhaps say that it is difficult. Obviously, it is difficult! The socialist emancipation of the proletariat is, in general, a difficult thing. But there are not among us, I hope, weak ones. Through this letter, I address myself to courageous and audacious revolutionaries, ready to see the struggle through to the end. There is no other way outside of the Fourth International. Follow in this direction without hesitation. Victory is assured you.

L. Trotsky
Q: Since the organization of the Fourth International at Geneva, into what countries have its activities extended?

A: Into more than thirty countries.

Q: What, in round numbers, is its membership today?

A: I can hypothetically name some tens of thousands.

Q: Does it envisage the necessity of terminating the present bureaucratic system in Soviet Russia, and the return of that nation to the principles of Marxian socialism?

A: Yes, certainly.

Q: If so, what are the practical methods designed to bring about that end?

A: Only important successes of the world working class can return confidence to the Russian worker. In the event of such successes, the toiling masses of the USSR would find methods to rid themselves of the Bonapartist bureaucracy. Do not forget that the Russian proletariat has a tradition of three revolutions behind it.

Q: Does the Fourth International actively uphold the principles of world revolution? What means does it employ to further that concept?

A: Yes. The Fourth International is based upon the principle of international revolution. The first condition of any success in this respect is the liberation of the vanguard of the international
proletariat from the command of the Soviet bureaucracy, including the GPU. The movement, guided by international principles, must be rooted in national soil and not submitted to mechanical foreign control.

Q: Has the Fourth International experienced attempts at repression in countries other than the Soviet Union, or have such efforts been directed primarily against Mr. Trotsky and his supporters as individuals?

A: In all the fascist and reactionary countries the organizations of the Fourth International are persecuted with extreme vigor. Many dozens of so-called Trotskyists are confined in Hitler's prisons in exactly the same manner as they are in Stalin's prisons. Sixty members of the Fourth International were arrested in Danzig in December 1936; ten of them, under the leadership of Dr. Jakubowski, were sentenced in January of this year to long prison terms. They were accused of acting for the Soviet Union and against the military interests of Germany. The report of the trial was published in the German fascist papers. Some weeks ago, as I learned from the Hungarian press, twenty-five members of the Fourth International were arrested in Budapest. Many supporters of the movement are in the jails of Mussolini; similarly in Austria, etc. In Norway, where the Fourth International had no adherents, the repressions against me led to the creation of a section, with a paper called Fourth International and other publications.

Q: What is Mr. Trotsky's position in the movement—is he the actual, as well as the titular, leader?

A: I have no official position in this movement. I serve it through my books and articles published in various languages throughout the world. I can say with satisfaction that many partisans of the Fourth International (many, but by no means all) attach some importance to my opinions, but my theoretical advice does not in any case have an official character.

Q: Has he been quite free while in Mexico to carry on correspondence with friends, associates, and supporters, and has he been free to write as he pleased for publication, always, of course, abiding by his pledge not to interfere in the domestic affairs of Mexico?
A: I have suffered no restriction of my activity by the Mexican authorities. No control is established over my correspondence. I must, besides, remark that during the more than twenty years of my political existence as an exile, my activity was submitted to special control only for four months—under the so-called Socialist government in Norway at the end of 1936.

During my stay in Mexico, my extremely large correspondence has been and continues to be devoted exclusively to the Moscow trials and to the investigation into them. It is unnecessary to say that in every step I take I am careful to avoid anything that might cause the slightest difficulties for the government of this generous country in its internal or foreign policies. All assertions to the contrary are dictated by the GPU through its literary agents. These gentlemen affirm on the one hand that I support fascism against socialism, and on the other hand that I foment revolutionary uprisings in various countries. The first accusation is designed for workers and democrats; the second, for conservative governments. Both are false.

Q: What does Mr. Trotsky conceive to be the lines of future development, and the historic mission, of the Fourth International? Will it ultimately replace the Third? Will the two organizations continue to exist alongside each other? What grounds exist, if any, for fusion with the “hard” Socialists of the Second International?

A: The Third International is doomed by the contradictions between the interests of the Moscow bureaucracy and those of the world proletariat. The infamous Moscow frame-ups have dealt a mortal blow to the Third International. The next period will be one of the systematic disintegration of the Comintern. It will be replaced by an independent world association based upon principles and honesty and not upon command and money.

Q: What have been the policies and the activities of the Fourth International in the present Spanish conflict?

A: The Spanish section of the Fourth International was founded only two or three months ago. Consequently it must be as yet very small. Regrettably, I have no personal connections with it. The insurrectionary movement, so far as I can judge from here, was a more or less spontaneous movement of the anarcho-
syndicalist masses and partially of the workers of the POUM. The latter party is not only not Trotskyist, but it expels Trotskyists from its ranks. The Comintern calls everybody who is not subservient to its orders a Trotskyist. In my previous statements on Spain I repeated over and over that the absolutely false policies of the Comintern in Spain cannot but provoke dissatisfaction on the part of the masses, and spontaneous uprisings, all to the advantage of the fascists. The most recent events are only a tragic confirmation of this prediction.
Dear Comrades:

I must say that the attitude of our comrades inspires me with the greatest anxiety for the future. It is not a question of specific differences or of concrete issues, important as they may be, but the whole line of our comrades seems to me to be an opportunistic one. I understand that some formal adaptation, some diplomacy, was inevitable, but I must say that quantity is largely transformed into quality. The whole line is nothing but a “critical” adaptation to centrism.

I must cite two recent documents: (a) the private letter of “Max” about the convention; and (b) Shachtman’s article, “Towards a Revolutionary Socialist Party.” The title of this article alone characterizes a false perspective. It seems to me established by the developments, including the last convention, that the party is evolving not into a “revolutionary” party, but into a kind of ILP, that is, a miserable centrist political abortion without any perspective.

The affirmation that the American Socialist Party is now “closer to the position of revolutionary Marxism than any party of the Second or Third Internationals” is an absolutely unmerited compliment: the American Socialist Party is only more backward than the analogous formations in Europe—the POUM, ILP, SAP, etc.—and its backwardness permits the leaders to accept certain general revolutionary motions on war and other distant questions which do not impose any direct responsibility on the party. The American Socialist Party has more freedom in the sphere of revolutionary phraseology, and this freedom gives it the possibility of deceiving some naive people and, in part, itself. Our duty is to unmask this negative advantage of Norman Thomas and Company, and not to speak about the “superiority (of the war resolution) over any resolution ever adopted before by the party. . . .” This is a purely literary appreciation, because every
resolution must be taken in connection with historical events, with the political situation and its imperative needs. From this point of view the war resolution paves the way for patriotism. Further, the rejection of the People's Front with simultaneous acceptance of the Wisconsin actions is not an "advance" but pure charlatanism.\textsuperscript{260}

The article mentions mildly that the convention did not take a position on the Moscow trials and the Spanish Civil War. Politically this signifies that the convention had not the slightest revolutionary value. On the contrary, it prepares the party to enter a bloc with the Stalinists. The "revolutionary" phraseology serves only to fill up the political vacuum until a new turn, which is rooted not in the brains of the leaders, but in the logic of their whole position.

The real developments showed: (a) that the party is far weaker than it was presumed to be; (b) that the composition of the party is bad; (c) that, thanks to these two foregoing circumstances, the centrists are conservative and resistant. It is impossible to lull oneself with the illusion of "conquering" the party. The attitude of passive adaptation threatens, on the contrary, the loss of the members of your own faction. I will not say that the entry into the Socialist Party was a mistake in itself, but the weakness and bad composition of the party gave very limited possibilities to this maneuver and demand from us a new orientation and a new policy. I hope that it is not too late to find the correct line without inner crises and damage for the Fourth International.

Schematically one can say: the Inquiry Commission will finish its work in the fall. It will be a very important stage in the development of our international tendency. We must be ready to regain our full independence at this time. This means that we must have a short and not a long perspective, beginning not with mild criticism but with a vigorous and implacable attack against the Wisconsin flunkeys. The Moscow trials and the Spanish Civil War give us all the necessary weapons with which to reconquer our independence on a higher historical level.

I would be glad to learn your opinion on this matter as early as possible.

With comradely greetings,
Wolfe [Trotsky]
Dear Friend:

I fully understand the immense difficulties created by the existence of two organizations which make use of the same banner but at the same time fight each other bitterly. Moreover, this fact is not accidental. R. Molinier's group, and above all Molinier himself, have shown an absolute inability to work in a working class organization through the normal methods. R. Molinier does not stop at any means of pressure, even financial ones, when he finds that the organization does not immediately adopt his flights of fancy, right or wrong (more often wrong than right).

I had always valued his energy, his devotion to the cause, which in fact he too often confuses with his personality. I had often defended him against occasionally exaggerated criticisms, hoping that the growth of the organization would neutralize his faults and make it possible to use his talents. Unfortunately, the opposite happened. R. Molinier has transferred his businessman's ways, with an absolutely unbearable rudeness and lack of scruples, to the revolutionary organization.

I have tried to warn him many times, directly and through his friends (who, with their blind docility, are his worst enemies). I have never been able to convince him even to moderate his behavior. He has broken with the national and international organizations with a criminal lightmindedness. His organization does not have the slightest chance of success. An attempt at a merger was made. R. Molinier maneuvered with renewed vigor. That is his failure! That is his crime! What rouses comrades to indignation more than anything else, and rightly so, is the way he says to the organization: “You will get the money if you follow me; otherwise, you will have nothing.” The split, then, became inevitable after a merger was attempted.

R. Molinier visited me, at that juncture, in Norway, on his own
initiative. Here is approximately what I said to him: “After the crimes you perpetrated, you can only retire to the background; go somewhere else (USA, etc.); let the organization merge and develop; show in action that you learned the lesson. Then you will be able to reclaim your place in the ranks of the Fourth International.”

He refused to understand anything. Since he had the money he launched his own organization. He squanders his energies and resources for nothing. The bankruptcy of his undertaking is absolutely inescapable. After this experience, I cannot make any further concessions to anyone. The only advice that his true friends can give him is to give up this undertaking, which is condemned beforehand.

That, dear comrade, is my answer to your suggestion, dictated by the revolutionary concerns that are common to both of us.

With my most fraternal regards,
Crux [Trotsky]
Dear Comrade Henri:

All the depositions have been received. They are a valuable element in the investigation, which in my opinion is going very well and which can yield invaluable results for the workers' movement and for the Fourth International above all.

In your last letter you touch upon the political questions that separate us. You mention certain omissions by our section and certain errors by our Belgian section. It is pointless to enter into a discussion of these questions in private correspondence, since the discussion is being conducted in a regular manner. We will always find the means to correct our errors and to strengthen our ranks. All of that has nothing to do with the attitude of La Commune. On that matter my mind is made up, once and for all. I am sending you a copy of a letter to an old militant from Marseilles.

I deeply regret the squandering of precious energies. But I can do nothing about it. It is now up to practical experience to show the way.

With my unshakable friendship,

L. Trotsky
A MILITANT, REVOLUTIONARY, AND CRITICAL MARXIST REVIEW IS NEEDED

May 29, 1937

In the United States of America, overall social development is increasingly pushing the working masses onto the path of struggle. The traditional ideology of Americanism, with all of its variations, as well as the prospects for eternal capitalist prosperity, are crumbling. All the classes of society feel the need for a new orientation. The intelligentsia is the laboratory for ideology. However, it is proving unable to fulfill its historical mission.

To be sure, during the last few years, some important groups of American intellectuals gave up the traditional "Americanist" prejudices. But they found neither the right way nor the sure method. For them political radicalization meant, above all, a brief and uncritical acknowledgment of the "Russian experience." However, the isolated workers' state came to be crowned with a monstrous, despotic, greedy, and ignorant bureaucratic apparatus. The Communist International became, in its turn, a lifeless tool in the Kremlin's hands and the chief brake on the revolution, in Spain as well as in other countries.

The workers' movement in the U.S., in spite of its powerful spirit, is devoid of program and scientific doctrine. More than anything else, the American intelligentsia lacks roots in the masses; it is unable to offer them anything; and consequently the masses have no interest in the intelligentsia. So the quasirevolutionary intelligentsia, without doctrine or social support, looking for a new orientation, finds nothing better than to kneel before the Soviet bureaucracy. Barely freed from the traditional bourgeois ideology, it becomes the captive of a deadly ideological Inquisition.

Everything must be used to justify, strengthen, glorify the Bonapartist dictatorship—not only politics, but also science, literature, the arts. Any independent thinking is hounded as the
worst danger. Creativity is only permitted upon command. It is not astonishing that the springs of spiritual creativeness, opened by the revolution, have rapidly dried up. Economics, politics, sociology have not produced a single book that can have a place in the library of mankind. Philosophy has degenerated into miserable scholasticism. Literature, painting, architecture, music, all of which could have reached new heights at the service of socialism, are marked with the seal of sterility. This phenomenon is not halted by the borders of the USSR. Through the Comintern all possible means have been brought into play to debase, emasculate, subjugate the liberation movement, in every country. The authority of the October Revolution is being replaced by the authority of the infallible "chief" and is complemented by a historically unprecedented system of corruption. Militarism, Byzantinism, sanctimoniousness, jesuitism, lies, and falsehoods are poisoning the atmosphere breathed by the radical elements of the intelligentsia as well as the advanced workers. This work of demoralization, on a world scale, is covered with the banner of "defense of the USSR."

The review New Masses is, by its insignificance, the expression of this system. The fate of the Nation and the New Republic is a less striking, but nonetheless convincing, illustration of the radical intelligentsia's new servility. We have no reason to idealize the past of these reviews. But it is impossible to deny that despite everything, within their democratic limitations they played a progressive role. During the last few years they formally went from a democratic to a semi-Marxist position, that is, they appeared to have made a step forward. In fact, these formerly democratic papers have fallen into terms of servility toward New Masses, which is nothing but the official organ of the GPU.

The decisive factor in the historical future of the USA, as well as of other countries, is the revolutionary workers' party. We shall not predict the paths or the forms it will take. Our review does not undertake to build it. Out goals are more modest. Before building, it is necessary to clear the ground of rubbish and filth. We must extricate the radical wing of American public opinion from the dead end. We must free it from the gendarme regime. We have to tear Marxism out of the vise of the Inquisition. We must retrieve freedom of criticism and creativity. We must restore honesty, sincerity, truth, to their rightful places. We must restore to revolutionary thought its independence, its dignity, its self-confidence.
Where to begin? Before anything else, with an authentic Marxist review which would not be tied by any other obligations than those of theoretical honesty. Marxism, in its very essence, is a critique which does not recognize any taboo. Down with idolatry! We must carefully sharpen all the cutting and honing tools of thought. We must not be afraid of taking the whip in hand in order to chase from the rostrum the hired prophets and sycophants who call themselves Socialists, the lackeys disguised as revolutionaries, the despicable careerists who impunely replace convictions and knowledge with slanders.

Alarmed flunkeys will cry that we are shaking the foundations of the USSR, that we are weakening democracy, and that we serve fascism. We answer these outcries in advance, with contempt, which will easily avail itself of the weapons of irony and sarcasm, when it does not limit itself to a mere kick. Everything alive wears out and renews itself. Above all, the ossified revolution needs renewal. We have nothing in common with the privileged concentration camps of the “friends of the USSR.” We stand entirely on the basis of the Soviet regime. We hate its exploiters, its parasites, its gravediggers. We declare, in the interests of the USSR and world proletariat, a ruthless war on Stalinist Bonapartism and its international lackeys. The Babylonian captivity of revolutionary thought cannot and shall not last forever. Moscow’s legal frame-ups mark the beginning of the end. We want to accelerate the collapse of police control over the vanguard in the East and West. That is the most important task of the publication we project.

We shall not close our eyes to difficulties. Our epoch poses great problems in all arenas of human creation. There are no ready-made solutions. Marxism means the analysis of the living historical process. Free analysis presupposes the inevitability of disagreements on the fundamentals of Marxism themselves. The deadly spirit of dogmatism will remain foreign to our review. Various shades of revolutionary thinking will meet face to face in its pages. A public forum will occupy an outstanding place in them. The editors will bring to bear all their efforts to draw a timely balance sheet of each discussion.

We begin our work with modest forces and means, but with a resolute faith in the future. Our tasks are internationally important. That is why we count on international collaboration. Despite all the obstacles, and despite all the difficulties, we intend to carry through our work successfully!
STALIN ON HIS OWN FRAME-UPS

June 1937

With his habitual boastful cynicism, Hitler gives away the secret of his political strategy. He writes: "A great leader's genius also consists in the fact that he always depicts even the most widely divergent adversaries as belonging to the same category, because an inkling as to the difference between the enemies very readily becomes for weak and unstable characters a source of doubt as to their own correctness" (Mein Kampf).

This principle is diametrically opposed to the principle of Marxist politics as well as scientific knowledge in general, for science begins by articulating, counterposing, and laying bare not only fundamental differences but also transitional nuances. Marxism in particular has always opposed the treatment of all political opponents as "a single reactionary mass." The difference between Marxist and fascist agitation is the difference between scientific education and demagogic hypnosis.

In its method, Stalinist politics, which received its most finished expression in the judicial frame-ups, coincides completely with Hitler's prescription, while in its sweep it leaves Hitler far behind. Anyone who refuses to bow before the Moscow ruling clique is henceforth a representative of "a single fascist mass."

During the Moscow trials Stalin withdrew demonstratively to the sidelines. It was even reported that he left for the Caucasus. This is wholly in harmony with his style of procedure. Vyshinsky and Pravda received their instructions from behind the scenes. However, the miscarriage of the trials in the eyes of world public opinion, and the growth of alarm and doubt within the USSR, forced Stalin to come out into the open. On March 3, at a plenary session of the Central Committee, he delivered a speech, which after painstaking correction was published in Pravda. It is beyond human prowess to speak of the theoretical level of this speech: it is beyond not only theory but also politics in any serious sense of the term. It is nothing more than a fiat on the
Stalin on His Own Frame-ups

utilization of frame-ups already perpetrated and the preparation of new ones.

Stalin begins with a definition of Trotskyism: “From a political tendency in the working class, which it was seven to eight years ago, Trotskyism has become transformed into an avowed and unprincipled gang of wreckers, diversionists, spies, and assassins. . . .” The author of this definition has forgotten, however, that “seven to eight years ago” he raised the very same accusation against Trotskyism as he is doing today, only in a more cautious form. As early as the latter part of 1927, the GPU linked Trotskyists—lesser known ones, to be sure—with White Guards and foreign agents. My exile abroad was officially motivated by the alleged fact that I was engaged in preparations for an armed uprising. It is also true that Stalin did not then dare to make public the fantastic decision of the GPU. Even in 1929, to justify the shooting of Blumkin, Silov, and Rabinovich,266 Pravda printed reports of train wrecks organized by Trotskyists. In 1930 a number of exiled Oppositionists were charged with espionage because they were corresponding with me. In 1930-32, the GPU made several attempts to extort from Oppositionists, again little known ones, “voluntary confessions” of preparing terrorist attempts. Documents pertaining to these early and rough sketches of future amalgams were presented by me to the American Commission of Inquiry. However, the thing is that seven to eight years ago Stalin had not as yet smashed the resistance of the party or even of the leading bureaucrats, and was therefore compelled to confine himself to intrigues, poisonous slanders, arrests, exiles, and occasional “experimental” shootings. Thus he gradually educated his agents—and himself. For it is a mistake to think that this man was born an accomplished Cain.

“The principal method of Trotskyite work nowadays,” continues Stalin, “is not an open and honest propaganda of its views among the working class but the camouflage of its views, . . . a perfidious trampling in the mud of its own views.” Even ten years ago, those who were in the know avoided looking at each other when Stalin used to indict his opponents on the grounds of a lack of “sincerity” and “honesty”! In those days the sublime principles of morality were being drafted by Yagoda. . . . Stalin refrains, however, from explaining how “open” propaganda could be carried on in a country where criticism of the “Fuehrer” is punished far more bestially than in fascist Germany. The urgent
need to hide from the GPU and carry on propaganda secretly compromised not the revolutionists but rather the Bonapartist regime.

On the other hand, Stalin likewise refrains from explaining how it is possible to "trample one's views in the mud" and at the same time inspire thousands of people to sacrifice their lives for the sake of these views. The speech and its author rest completely on the plane of the reactionary press, which has always insisted that Stalin's struggle against "Trotskyism" was of a spurious nature; that in reality we were mutually bound by a secret conspiracy against the capitalist order; and that my exile abroad was merely a cloak to cover our collaboration. Indeed, is it not really true that Stalin executed Trotskyists and seeks to trample their views "in the mud" in order better to hide his complete solidarity with them?

The orator exposes himself most glaringly on the question of the program of the Opposition. He says: "You will recall that in the 1936 trial, Kamenev and Zinoviev flatly denied having any kind of political platform. . . . There can be no doubt that they both lied in denying that they had a platform." In point of fact they had a platform. It was the "platform of the restoration of capitalism." The word "cynicism" has far too innocent and patriarchal a ring to be applied to this moralist, who compelled his victims to give obviously false testimony, murdered them on an obviously false accusation, and then proclaimed as liars not Yagoda, Vyshinsky, and himself but Zinoviev and Kamenev, whom they had shot. But it is precisely here that the master of frame-ups allows himself to be caught red-handed.

The point is that at the first trial in January 1935, Zinoviev together with all the other defendants confessed, according to the official reports, that he and his friends had been guided in their activity by a secret intention to restore the capitalist regime." That is how the goal of the alleged "Trotskyites" was then formulated in the indictment. Does this mean that the accused told the truth at the time? But sad to say, no one would believe his officially established "truth." That is why in preparing the second Zinoviev-Kamenev trial (August 1936) they decided to discard the program of restoration of capitalism as something too absurd, and to boil the whole matter down to "a lust for power." A philistine would be more readily inclined to believe this. The new indictment was made to read that it was "established beyond doubt that the only motive for organizing the Trotskyite-
Zinovievite bloc was their striving to seize power at all costs. . . .” The existence of any kind of special “platform” among the Trotskyists was at the time denied by the state prosecutor himself. The special degeneracy of the Trotskyists consisted precisely in this fact! It is immaterial whether the hapless defendants had lied or not. The Stalinist judiciary itself had established “beyond doubt” that the “only motive” of the Trotskyists was “their striving to seize power.” For the sake of this they allegedly resorted to terror.

But this new version, on the basis of which Zinoviev, Kamenev, and others were shot, did not produce the expected results. Neither workers nor peasants had any special cause to rail against “Trotskyites” for wanting to seize power. In any case, the “Trotskyists” could not prove worse than the ruling clique. In order to terrify the population, they found it necessary to add that the Trotskyists wanted to return the land to the landlords and the factories to the capitalists. Moreover, the bare accusation of terrorism in the absence of terrorist acts placed too great restrictions on future possibilities of annihilating adversaries of the regime. To widen the circle of the accused, it became necessary to include sabotage, wrecking, and espionage in the case. But sabotage and espionage could be invested with even a semblance of meaning only by establishing a connection between the Trotskyists and the enemies of the USSR. Neither Germany nor Japan, however, would give Trotskyists support solely for the sake of their “lust for power.” Nothing else remained therefore but to order a new group of defendants to return to the program of “restoration of capitalism.”

This supplementary frame-up is so instructive that it is worthwhile dwelling on. Any literate person, by equipping himself with a file of any of the Comintern newspapers, could without difficulty trace three stages in the evolution of the accusation. A Hegelian triad of frame-up sui generis, with its thesis, antithesis, and synthesis! In the period after January 1935, the hirelings of Moscow the world over ascribed to the executed chairman of the Comintern, on the basis of his own “confession,” a program for the restoration of capitalism. Pravda, the private organ of Stalin, set the pace. But upon command issued by Pravda itself, the press of the Comintern jumped from the thesis over to the antithesis and during the trial of the sixteen, in August 1936, branded the Trotskyists as murderers, bereft of any kind of program. Pravda and the Comintern kept to this new version for
only about a month, up to September 12. The zigzags of the Comintern only reflected the gyrations of Vyshinsky who, in his turn, aligned himself in accordance with Stalin's successive orders.

The pattern of the final "synthesized" indictment was suggested by Radek, unwittingly. On August 21, 1936, his article against the "Trotskyite-Zinovievite Fascist Gang" appeared. The hapless author set himself the task of digging between himself and the defendants as deep a moat as possible. In his attempt to draw from the alleged "crimes" the most fearsome internal and international consequences, Radek had the following to say about the defendants, especially myself: "They know that... by undermining confidence in the Stalin leadership they bring... only grist to the mill of German, Japanese, Polish, and all other kinds of fascism. All the more so are they aware that the assassination of the gifted leader of the Soviet peoples, Stalin, implies working directly for a war...

Later on, Radek went one step farther along the same road. He wrote: "It is not a question of destroying ambitious men who stooped to the greatest of crimes. It is a question of destroying agents of fascism, prepared to set ablaze the conflagration of war and facilitate victory for fascism even if to receive from its hands only a wraith of power." These lines constitute not a juridical accusation but only political rhetoric. Heaping horror on horror, Radek did not foresee, of course, that he would have to pay for them himself. In the very same spirit and with the very same consequences Pyatakov and Rakovsky wrote.

In preparing the new trial Stalin seized upon the journalistic productions of the mortally frightened capitulators. On September 12, i.e., three weeks after Radek's article, Pravda unexpectedly proclaimed in an editorial that the defendants had "... tried to hide the true goal of their struggle. They circulated the story that they had no program. In reality, they did have a program. It is the program of battering down socialism and restoring capitalism." Pravda, of course, did not offer the slightest fact to corroborate these words. What facts could there have been!

Thus, the new program of the defendants was not arrived at on the basis of documents, facts, or confessions of the accused, nor even of the logical deductions of the prosecution. No, it was established by a pronunciamento from Stalin over Vyshinsky's head, after the execution of the accused. Evidence? That was to
be supplied after the event by the GPU in the sole obtainable guise—the guise of "voluntary confessions." Vyshinsky immediately proceeded to execute the latest instruction: to alter Radek's formulation from the hysterical into the juridical, from the pathetic into the criminal. But the new schema—and this Radek did not foresee!—was applied by Vyshinsky not to the sixteen defendants (Zinoviev et al.)—they were no longer among the living—but to the seventeen defendants, and the author of the schema, Radek, proved one of its first victims.

A nightmare? No, this is the reality. The chief defendants in the new trial resemble those pious collaborators of the Inquisition who went about zealously digging graves, making coffins, and preparing maledictory epitaphs for others, and then discovered that the Inquisitor intended to enter their own names into the text of the epitaphs and to measure the coffins for them. Once this procedure was concluded, Stalin emerged from the shadow and in the character of an infallible judge issued a declaration about Zinoviev and Kamenev: "They both lied." Nothing more sinister has yet been conceived by human fancy!

Stalin's explanations of sabotage rest on the same level as his entire speech. "Why did our people fail to notice it?" he asks, putting a question which it is impossible to avoid. Here is his answer: "For the last few years our party comrades have been entirely swallowed up by economic work and . . . forgot about everything else." This idea, as is Stalin's custom, is presented in ten different variations, without any proofs. Carried away by economic success, the leaders "simply paid no attention" to sabotage. They did not take note of it. They were not interested. What kind of economic work was "swallowing up" these people, if they contrived to overlook the disruption of economic life? And just who should have "paid attention" to sabotage, when the pretended organizers of it were themselves the organizers of the economy? Stalin does not even attempt to tie the threads together. In point of fact the idea he seeks to express is the following: Carried away by practical work, the economists "forgot" the higher interests of the ruling clique, which demands framed-up accusations, even if to the injury of the economy.

Years ago, continues Stalin, those engaged in wrecking were bourgeois technicians. But "in the intervening period we trained tens and hundreds of thousands of technically grounded Bolshevik cadres." (Hundreds of thousands of "cadres"?) "Nowadays the organizers of sabotage are not nonparty technicians but
wreckers who have accidentally got possession of a party card."

Everything is stood on its head! In order to explain why highly paid engineers willingly reconcile themselves to "socialism" while Bolsheviks oppose him, Stalin is unable to do anything but proclaim the entire Old Guard of the party as "wreckers who have accidentally got possession of a party card," and who, evidently, got stuck in the party for several decades. But how could "tens and hundreds of thousands of technically grounded Bolshevik cadres" have overlooked sabotage, by which industry was being undermined for a number of years? We have already heard the witty explanation that they were far too occupied with economic life to notice it was being destroyed.

However, for sabotage to succeed, a favorable social milieu is required. Whence could it arise in a society of triumphant socialism? Stalin's reply is: "the greater our progress . . . the more embittered will become the remnants of the smashed exploiting classes." Yet, in the first place, the impotent "embitterment" of some kind of "remnants," isolated from the people, would hardly suffice to convulse the Soviet economy. In the second place, since when have Zinoviev, Kamenev, Rykov, Bukharin, Tomsky, Smirnov, Yevdokimov, Pyatakov, Radek, Rakovsky, Marchkovsky, Sokolnikov, Serebriakov, Muralov, Sosnovsky, Beloborodov, Eltsin, Mdivani, Okudzhava, Gamar尼克, Tukhachevsky, Yakir, and hundreds of lesser-known men—the entire old leading stratum of the party, the state and the army—become transformed into "remnants of the smashed exploiting classes"? Heaping frame-up on frame-up, Stalin has arrived at such a blind alley that it is hard to find even a glimmer of sense to his answers. But the goal is clear: everything that stands in the path of the Bonapartist dictatorship must be slandered and massacred.

"It would be a mistake to think"—continues the orator—"that the arena of the class struggle is confined to the boundaries of the USSR. If one extremity of the class struggle operates within the framework of the USSR, the other extremity extends into the boundaries of the bourgeois states surrounding us."* So it turns

*The speech as a whole is distinguished in style. There are "hundreds of thousands of cadres." The class struggle possesses "extremities." An "extremity operates." The deferential editors dare not point out his illiteracy to the "Leader." The style is not only the man, but also the regime.
out that the class struggle does not die out with the entrenchment of socialism in one country but rather becomes more aggravated. And the most important reason for this unnatural phenomenon is the parallel existence of bourgeois states. Stalin, in passing and imperceptibly for himself, arrives at the admission of the impossibility of building a classless society in one country. But scientific generalizations have very little attraction for him. The whole method of reasoning is not of a theoretical but of a police-manufactured character. Stalin is simply in urgent need of extending abroad the "extremity" of his frame-up.

"For example," he continues, "let us take the counterrevolutionary Trotskyist Fourth International, consisting two-thirds of spies and diversionists. Is it not clear that this International of spies will extrude cadres for the spying and wrecking work of the Trotskyists?" The Stalinist syllogism is as a rule a pure and simple tautology: an International of spies will extrude spies. "Is it not clear?"

Far from it! On the contrary, it is absolutely unclear. To convince himself of this, the reader need only refer to the already familiar assertion of Stalin's that Trotskyism has ceased to be a "tendency in the working class" and has become a "narrow group of conspirators." The platform of the Trotskyists is such that it cannot be shown to anybody. The Trotskyists whisper it only in the ears of Yagoda and Yezhov.

Hear Stalin again: "It is quite comprehensible that the Trotskyists could not but hide such a platform from the people, from the working class, . . . from the Trotskyist rank and file, and not only from the Trotskyist rank and file but even from the Trotskyist leadership, composed of a tiny handful of thirty to forty people. When Radek and Pyatakov asked Trotsky for permission (?) to call together a small conference of thirty to forty Trotskyists to inform them about the nature of this platform, Trotsky forbade (!) them to do so."

Let us leave aside the wondrous portrayal of the relations existing within the Opposition—the pretended fact that old revolutionists dare not meet in the USSR without special "permission" from Trotsky in distant exile!

This totalitarian-police caricature, which reflects the spirit of the Stalin regime if anything does, does not interest us now. There is another point of greater importance: How are we to relate the general characterization of Trotskyism to that of the Fourth International? Trotsky "forbade" information regarding espionage and sabotage to be given even to thirty or forty tested
Trotskyists in the USSR. On the other hand, the Fourth International, numbering many thousands of young members, consists “two-thirds of spies and diversionists.” Does Stalin mean to say that while hiding his “program” from tens, Trotsky imparts it to thousands? Truly, venom and cunning are bereft of reason. Behind the ponderous stupidity of this slander there lurks, however, a fixed and practical plan aimed at the physical extermination of the international revolutionary vanguard.

Even before this plan was put into execution in Spain, it was revealed with utter shamelessness in _La Correspondance Internationale_, a weekly periodical of the Comintern (and the GPU), almost simultaneously with the publication of Stalin’s speech, March 20, 1937. In an article directed against the Austrian Social Democrat Otto Bauer, who, however he might gravitate toward the Soviet bureaucracy, cannot bring himself to believe in Vyshinsky, we find, among other things, the following statement: “If any individual has at the present time an opportunity to obtain very authentic information about the negotiations between Trotsky and Hess—that man is Bauer. _The French and English general staffs are very well informed on this point._ Thanks to the friendly relations which Bauer has with Leon Blum and Citrine (who, in turn, is friendly with both Baldwin and Sir Samuel Hoare), all he need do is turn to them. They would not refuse to provide him with any kind of confidential information for personal use.”

Whose hand directed this pen? Whence does an anonymous journalist of the Comintern derive his knowledge of the secrets of the English and French general staffs? Either the capitalist staffs opened their dossiers to the Communist journalist; or, on the contrary, this “journalist” filled up the dossiers of the two staffs with products of his own creation. The first conjecture is far too improbable. British and French general staffs have no need to apply to Comintern journalists for assistance in the exposure of “Trotskyism.” Only the second hypothesis remains, namely, that the GPU manufactured some kind of “documents” for foreign staffs.

In the Pyatakov-Radek trial, mention was made of my “interview” with German Minister Hess only indirectly and in passing. Pyatakov, despite his (pretended) intimacy with me, made no attempts during his (pretended) meeting with me to find out any details whatsoever concerning my (pretended) meeting with Hess. Vyshinsky in this case as in all others passed over this glaring
contradiction in silence. But later it was decided to elaborate on this theme. French and British general staffs were apparently the recipients of some kind of "documents." There is firm knowledge of this fact among the staff of the Comintern. Neither Paris nor London, however, made any use of this precious material. Why? Perhaps because they mistrusted the source. Perhaps because Leon Blum and Daladier did not relish becoming partners of the Moscow executioners. Finally, perhaps because Messrs. Generals are reserving the "documents" for a more auspicious occasion.

The resolution that was adopted after Stalin's report reads as follows: "The Trotskyists were as a rule exposed by the organs of NKVD [i.e., the GPU] and by individual party members, acting as volunteers. But the organs of industry, and to a certain degree those of transportation, did not themselves manifest any activity or, what is worse, any initiative therein! Moreover, some organs of industry even put a brake on this matter" (Pravda, April 21, 1937). In other words, leaders of industry and transportation, despite being prodded from above with white-hot irons, could not discover acts of "sabotage" in their departments. A member of the Political Bureau, Ordzhonikidze, was taken in by his assistant, Pyatakov. Another member of the Political Bureau, Kaganovich, overlooked the wrecking activities of his alternate, Lifshits. Only the agents of Yagoda and the so-called "volunteers," i.e., provocateurs, measured up to the situation. True, Yagoda himself was presently exposed as an "enemy of the people, a gangster and a traitor." But this chance discovery did not resurrect those whom he had shot.

As if further to underscore the import of these scandalous self-exposures, the chairman of the Council of People's Commissars, Molotov, gave a public account of the failure on the part of the government when it attempted to establish facts relating to sabotage, not through the provocateurs of the GPU but through the civic organs of economic control. We quote from Molotov: "In February of this year (1937) a special plenipotentiary commission was sent out, upon the instruction of the People's Commissariat of Heavy Industry, to verify wrecking activities in 'Uralvagonstroy.'"

Here is how the commission formulated its general conclusions regarding "Uralvagonstroy": "On acquainting ourselves with the 'Uralvagon' plant, we have arrived at the firm conviction that the wrecking work of Pyatakov and Marusyan did not spread very far in the enterprise. . . ."
Molotov waxed indignant. Said he: “The political myopia of the commission is absolutely self-evident. . . . Suffice it to say that this commission failed to cite a single instance of wrecking at the enterprise. It would appear that the notorious wrecker, Marusyan, and the other wrecker, Okudzhava, had only vilified themselves” (Pravda, April 21, 1937; our emphasis). One can hardly believe one’s eyes. These people have lost not only all sense of shame but all caution!

But why was it at all necessary to send out an investigating commission, after the defendants had been shot? The posthumous investigation of “facts relating to wrecking” was obviously made necessary because public opinion placed no credence either in the accusations made by the GPU or in the confessions it extorted. Yet the commission, under the guidance of Pavlunovsky, himself a former member of the GPU for many years, failed to uncover a single fact relating to sabotage. An obvious case of “political myopia”! One must know how to uncover sabotage even under the mask of economic successes. “Even the chemical branch of the People’s Commissariat of Heavy Industry,” continues Molotov, “with Rataichak at its head, was able to overfulfill its plan for both 1935 and 1936. Does this mean to say,” merrily quips the head of the government, “that Rataichak is not Rataichak, that a wrecker is not a wrecker, and a Trotskyist not a Trotskyist?”

The sabotage of Rataichak, who was shot in the Pyatakov-Radek trial, consisted, this means, of overfulfilling the plans. It is hardly surprising that the harshest commission is compelled to halt in impotence when confronted with facts and figures which refuse to harmonize with the “voluntary confessions” of Rataichak and others. In consequence, to use Molotov’s expression, “it would appear” that the wrekers had “vilified themselves.” Worse yet, it would appear that the Inquisition compelled many honest militants to besmirch themselves with despicable slander so as to facilitate for Stalin his struggle against Trotskyism. This is what “would appear” from the report of Stalin, supplemented by the report of Molotov. And they are two of the most authoritative figures in the USSR.
THE BEGINNING OF THE END

June 12, 1937

The bureaucracy has become the instrument for undermining, demoralizing, and degrading the country in all spheres of social and political life. Above all this is true in the sphere of economic life. The charges of sabotage flung right and left have thrown the entire administrative apparatus into chaos. Every objective difficulty is interpreted as a failure on the part of some individual. Every failure is identified, whenever the occasion arises, as sabotage. Every province and every region has had its own Pyatakov shot. The engineers in the planning institutions, the directors of trusts and factories, the skilled workers, are all in mortal fear. No one wants to assume responsibility. Everybody is afraid to show any initiative. At the same time one runs the risk of facing the firing squad for a lack of initiative.

The intensification of despotism leads to anarchy. A democratic regime is as indispensable to the Soviet economy as is the good quality of raw materials or lubricants. The Stalinist system of management is nothing but universal sabotage of the economy.

The situation in the sphere of culture is even worse, if that is conceivable. The dictatorship of ignorance and lies stifles and poisons the spiritual life of 170,000,000 people. The latest trials and the purge as a whole, which is utterly dishonest both in its aims and methods, have completely entrenched the hegemony of slander, vileness, denunciation, and cowardice. The Soviet school cripples a child no less gravely than the Catholic seminary, from which the Soviet school differs only in that it is less stable. Scholars, educators, writers, and artists who show the slightest signs of independence or talent have been terrorized, hounded, arrested, exiled, if not shot. All along the line the incompetent scoundrel triumphs. He prescribes the itinerary to science and dictates to art the laws of creativity. The stifling stench of putrefaction is wafted from the Soviet press.
Is there anything more disgraceful than the indifference of the bureaucracy to the international prestige of the country? The representatives of the international big bourgeoisie and the military staffs of all countries make a much more lucid accounting of the Moscow frame-ups and of the seamy side of the purge than do many labor organizations that are duped by their leaders. What must be the attitude of the capitalist augurs toward a "Socialist" government which stoops to such base adventures? Berlin and Tokyo, at any rate, could not but have known that the charges against the Trotskyists and the Red generals of betraying the state in the interests of German and Japanese militarism are sheer twaddle.

We need not, naturally, nurse any illusions about the morality of the Japanese, the German, or any other government. It is, after all, a question not of a competition in the observance of the ten commandments, but of an appraisal of the stability of the Soviet regime. The Moscow government came out completely discredited from the trials it had organized. Its enemies, as well as its possible allies, have a far lower estimate of its strength and authority than they did prior to the latest purge. This appraisal becomes, in its turn, one of the most important factors in international regroupment.

Meanwhile, the government of the USSR has been retreating step by step before its weakest adversary, Japan. The boastful articles and speeches which accompany these capitulations will fool nobody. The Moscow oligarchy is waging internal warfare and is therefore incapable of external resistance. The surrender of the Amur Islands has completely untied the hands of Japan with respect to China. It is quite probable that Litvinov was instructed in advance to tell the Japanese diplomats: "You can do whatever you please with China but don't touch us. We will not meddle." The ruling clique has no concern for anything except its own self-preservation.

Equally disastrous is the brand of diplomatic work that is being accomplished through the apparatus of the Comintern. England and France by themselves would never have succeeded in foisting upon revolutionary Spain a bourgeois counterrevolutionary government like Negrin’s. The so-called Communist International has become an indispensable transmitting mechanism to the diplomats of London and Paris. In the struggle to win the confidence of the French and British bourgeoisie, Stalin's
chief concern throughout has been to prevent the Spanish workers from taking the path of the socialist revolution.

The aid given by Moscow to the “People’s Front” government was always conditioned upon the demand of more stringent measures against the revolutionists. As was to be expected, the struggle against the workers and peasants behind the lines invariably led to defeats at the front. The Moscow clique is as impotent against Franco as it is against the Mikado. And just as Stalin requires scapegoats for his own sins in domestic policy, so too in Spain the defeats engendered by the reactionary policies have compelled him to seek salvation in the destruction of the revolutionary vanguard.

The methods of amalgam and frame-up, developed in Moscow, are transferred full-grown to the soil of Barcelona and Madrid. The leaders of the POUM, who could only be accused of opportunism and lack of resoluteness toward Stalinist reaction, were suddenly proclaimed to be “Trotskyists” and, consequently, allies of fascism. GPU agents in Spain “discovered” letters written in invisible ink by themselves which established the ties of the Barcelona revolutionists with Franco, in accordance with all the rules of the Moscow frame-up. For the execution of the gory directives there is no lack of scoundrels. The former revolutionist Antonov-Ovseenko, who recanted his Oppositional sins in 1927 and who was in mortal fear in 1936 lest he fall into the prisoner’s dock, announced in Pravda his complete readiness to strangle “Trotskyists” with his own hands.274 This individual was promptly dispatched in the guise of a consul to Barcelona, with precise instructions as to whom to strangle. The arrest of Nin on a patently framed-up charge, his being kidnapped from jail, and his being secretly murdered are the handiwork of Antonov-Ovseenko. But the initiative, of course, does not come from him. Important business of this sort is never undertaken except upon direct instructions from the “general secretary” himself.

Amalgams on European soil are needed by Stalin not only to distract attention from his own utterly reactionary international policy but also to reinforce the over-crude amalgams on Soviet soil. The mutilated corpse of Nin is intended to serve as a proof—of Pyatakov’s flight to Oslo. The matter is not confined to Spain alone. Preparations have long been under way in a number of other countries. In Czechoslovakia, a German emigre, an old and impeccable revolutionist, Anton Grylewicz, was arrested on the suspicion of—connections with the Gestapo.275 The accusation
was doubtless manufactured by the GPU and supplied in ready-made form to the obliging Czech police. Genuine and alleged Trotskyists are being subjected to persecution especially in those countries which have had the misfortune to become dependent upon Moscow: Spain and Czechoslovakia. But that is only the beginning. By utilizing international complications, and the hirelings of the Comintern, who are ready for anything, and last but not least, the resources of the expanding gold industry, Stalin hopes to attain the application of identical methods to other countries. Reaction everywhere is not averse to getting rid of revolutionists, especially if the work of frame-ups and murders is taken over from behind a corner by a foreign “revolutionary” government, which operates with the aid of domestic “friends” who receive their pay from the very same foreign budget.

Stalinism has become the scourge of the Soviet Union and the leprosy of the world labor movement. In the domain of ideas Stalinism is a cipher. But by way of compensation it disposes of a colossal apparatus which exploits the dynamics of the greatest revolution in history and the traditions of its heroism and its conquering spirit. From the creative role of revolutionary violence in a given historical period, Stalin, with his congenital empirical narrowness, has deduced the omnipotence of violence in general. Imperceptibly for himself, he has passed from the revolutionary violence of the toilers against the exploiters to counterrevolutionary violence against the toilers. Under old names and formulas the work of liquidating the October Revolution is thus being consummated.

No one, not excluding Hitler, has dealt socialism such deadly blows as Stalin. This is hardly astonishing, since Hitler has attacked the working class organizations from without, while Stalin does it from within. Hitler assaults Marxism. Stalin not only assaults it but prostitutes it. Not a single principle has remained unpolluted, not a single idea unsullied. The very names of socialism and communism have been cruelly compromised, from the day when uncontrolled policemen, making their livelihood with a “communist” passport, gave the name socialism to their police regime. Revolting profanation! The barracks of the GPU are not the ideal for which the working class is struggling.

Socialism signifies a pure and clear social system which is accommodated to the self-government of the toilers. Stalin’s regime is based on a conspiracy of the rulers against the ruled. Socialism implies an uninterrupted growth of universal equality. Stalin has erected a system of revolting privileges.
Socialism has as its goal the all-sided flowering of the individual personality. When and where has man's personality been so degraded as in the USSR?

Socialism would have no value apart from the unselfish, honest, and humane relations between human beings. The Stalin regime has permeated social and personal relationships with lies, careerism, and treachery. It is not Stalin, of course, who determines the road taken by history. We possess the knowledge of the objective causes which prepared the path for reaction in the USSR. But it is no accident that Stalin rode on the crest of the Thermidorean wave. He was able to invest the greedy appetites of the new caste with their most vicious expression. Stalin does not bear any responsibility for history. But he does bear responsibility for himself and for his role in history. It is a criminal role. It is so criminal that revulsion is multiplied by horror.

In the harshest codes of mankind, no suitable punishment can be found for the ruling Moscow clique and, above all, the man who heads it. If, notwithstanding this, we more than once raised in our addresses to the Soviet youth a voice of warning against individual terrorism—which revives so easily on Russian soil, soaked as it is with arbitrary rule and violence—it was not for moral but for political considerations. Acts of despair alter nothing in the system itself but merely facilitate for the usurpers bloody reprisals against their adversaries. Even from the standpoint of "vengeance," terrorist blows cannot offer satisfaction. What is the doom of a dozen high bureaucrats compared to the number and scope of the crimes committed by the bureaucracy? The task is to strip the criminals naked before the consciousness of mankind and to cast them into the garbage heap of history. It is impossible to reconcile oneself to less.

To be sure, the Soviet bureaucracy like that of the Nazis hopes to rule for a thousand years. They are convinced that if regimes fall it is only because sufficiently resolute measures of repression have not been applied. The secret is simple: If every critical head is lopped off in time, it is possible to perpetuate one's rule. During a certain period in which the Soviet bureaucracy was fulfilling a relatively progressive role—in great measure a role that the bureaucracy of capitalism had performed in Western Europe in its day—dizzying successes fell to Stalin's lot. But this period proved to be very brief. Just at the moment when Stalin had become completely imbued with the conviction that his "method" guaranteed victory over all obstacles, the Soviet bureaucracy exhausted its mission and began to corrode even in its very first
generation. This is precisely the source of the most recent accusations and trials, which to the average philistine appear to have fallen from the clouds.

Did Stalin reinforce or weaken his rule by the bloody purge? The answer given by the world press on this point was twofold and equivocal. The immediate reaction to the Moscow frame-ups was such that it suggested almost to everybody the conclusion that a regime constrained to resort to such machinations cannot be long-lived. But presently the more conservative press, whose sympathies are always assured to the ruling Soviet caste in its struggle against the revolution, made an about-face. Stalin had completely crushed the Opposition, had revamped the GPU, eliminated the refractory generals, and during all this the people had remained quiescent. Clearly, therefore, he had reinforced his rule. At first glance each of these two evaluations appears equally convincing. But only at first glance.

The social and political meaning of the purge is clear: The ruling stratum is ejecting from its midst all those who remind it of its revolutionary past, the principles of socialism, liberty, equality, fraternity, and the unsolved tasks of the world revolution. The bestiality of the repressions testifies to the hatred which the privileged caste bears the revolutionists. In this sense the purge increases the homogeneity of the ruling stratum and seems to reinforce Stalin's position.

But this reinforcement is essentially spurious in nature. Stalin himself, come what may, is a product of the revolution. His closest clique, the so-called Political Bureau, consists of individuals who are quite insignificant; but the majority of them are connected by their past with Bolshevism. The Soviet aristocracy, which has so successfully used the Stalin clique to make short shrift of the revolutionists, cherishes no sympathy or respect for the present leaders. It desires to be completely free from all the constraints of Bolshevism, even in the mangled form which is still indispensable to Stalin for disciplining his clique. On the morrow Stalin will become a burden to the ruling stratum.

Infinitely more important, however, is the fact that the bureaucracy is being purged of its motley elements at the cost of an ever-widening gap between the bureaucracy and the people. It is no exaggeration to say that the atmosphere of Soviet society is surcharged with hatred of the privileged leaders. Stalin will have the occasion to convince himself at every step that resoluteness and firing squads alone do not suffice for the salvation of a
regime that has outlived itself. The purges in the army and the GPU are all too eloquent reminders of the fact that the apparatus of coercion itself is made up of living beings who are subject to the influence of their environment. The growing hatred of the bureaucracy by the masses, as well as the muffled hostility of the majority of the bureaucracy toward Stalin, inevitably corroded the apparatus of coercion, preparing thereby one of the conditions for the downfall of the regime.

The Bonapartist rule grew out of the fundamental contradiction between the bureaucracy and the people, and the supplementary contradiction between the revolutionists and the Thermidoreans within the bureaucracy. Stalin rose by supporting himself primarily on the bureaucracy against the people, on the Thermidoreans against the revolutionists. But at certain critical moments he was compelled to seek support among the revolutionary elements, and, with their assistance, among the people against the overprecipitate offensive of the privileged ones. But it is impossible to support oneself on a social contradiction that is turning into an abyss. Hence the forced transition to Thermidorean "monolithism" through the destruction of all vestiges of the revolutionary spirit and of the slightest manifestations of political self-activity on the part of the masses. Saving temporarily Stalin's rule, the bloody purge has shaken asunder the social and political props of Bonapartism.

Stalin is drawing close to the termination of his tragic mission. The more it seems to him that he no longer needs anybody, the closer draws the hour when he himself will prove needed by nobody. Should the bureaucracy succeed in extruding from itself a new property-owning class by revamping the forms of property, this new class will find itself other leaders who are not tied to the revolutionary past and who are more literate. It is hardly likely that Stalin will thereupon receive a single word of gratitude for the work he has accomplished. Open counterrevolution will make short shrift of him, most probably on the charge of—Trotskyism. In that event Stalin will fall victim to the type of amalgam he has himself instituted. This path, however, is not at all predestined.

Mankind is once again entering an epoch of wars and revolutions. Not only political but also social regimes will topple like houses of cards. It is quite probable that revolutionary convulsions in Asia and Europe will forestall the overthrow of the Stalin clique by the capitalist counterrevolution and prepare its down-
fall under the blows of the toiling masses. In that event Stalin will have even less cause to count on gratitude.

The memory of mankind is magnanimous as regards the application of harsh measures in the service of great historical goals. But history will not pardon a single drop of blood if it is shed in sacrifice to the new Moloch of arbitrary rule and privilege. Moral sensibility finds its highest satisfaction in the immutable conviction that historical retribution will correspond to the scope of the crime. Revolution will unlock all the secret compartments, review all the trials, rehabilitate the slandered, raise memorials to the victims of wantonness, and cover with eternal infamy the names of the executioners. Stalin will depart from the scene laden with all the crimes which he has committed—not only as the gravedigger of the revolution but as the most sinister figure in the history of mankind.
FOR THE CREATION OF
A NATIONAL WEEKLY

June 12, 1937

Dear Comrade Isaacs:

In re the magazine:

1. The initiative came from Solow after the hearings. He named Walker, Farrell, Eastman, and also La Follette and Stolberg, if I remember correctly, but hardly mentioned the "Trotskyites." I supported the idea and emphasized the necessity of giving the magazine the character of a coalition between the "Trotskyites" and the various revolutionary anti-Stalinist elements. I discussed the matter with Farrell here in that sense. You see that it is not a matter of turning over to outside elements a magazine which you do not possess . . . and cannot possess by yourselves, but a contrary one: to prevent the creation of a revolutionary magazine which will more or less exclude you, or, in the best case, treat you as poor relations.

2. I believe that as an organization we must have our own publication as soon as possible. When this is realized we can participate in a coalition nonparty magazine. But as an organization we cannot devote our material means and all our forces to an anti-New Masses magazine. It must be created by others. The initiative from here tries to create a link between two allies. This makes it fully possible for you to fight from your point of view for a change of the proposed program, etc.

3. It is entirely incomprehensible for us that just at the moment when the Appeal disappears, Labor Action changes from a weekly into a bimonthly. In spite of certain optimistic reports from letters and visitors, we consider the objective fact of the decline of Labor Action a very unhealthy symptom. Our organization must concentrate all its efforts on the creation of a national weekly, absolutely independent of all outside control, and at the same time have a very flexible policy in re a coalition magazine.

Fraternally,
Wolfe [Trotsky]
Dear Comrades:

I have received a copy of Cannon’s letter of June 9 to Joe [Carter] on the situation in the SP and our next tasks. As far as I can judge from here, I find the letter excellent in every respect. It would be fatal to lose time waiting for a new, more favorable “situation.” If we remain passive, time from now on will work against us. The situation has become so clear and concentrated that we can even establish a five-month plan.

A. During this summer the Spanish Civil War must come to a denouement. The fight on this issue within the proletarian vanguard cannot but become more acute.

B. The persecutions and executions in the USSR are developing at such a feverish tempo that in the next months we can expect a transformation of quantity into quality. In any case, before the twentieth anniversary of the October Revolution, the Stalinist regime will stand revealed before the workers to an incomparably greater extent than it is today.

C. The Blum experiment seems to be approaching its natural end, that is, bankruptcy. The policy of the People’s Front will receive a mortal blow.

D. The full Commission of Inquiry will hold its final sessions in September. We can have no doubts about its conclusions, which must and will be annihilating for the Stalinist clique and for the Comintern bureaucracy.

The coincidence of all these factors promises to open an extremely favorable situation for our activity during the coming fall. It would be criminal to meet this new situation as prisoners of Thomas, Trager, Tyler, and Company. No, we must again appear on the scene as an independent party. It seems to me here that the anniversary of the October Revolution is the deadline for the establishment of our complete political independence.

This plan demands a vigorous mobilization of our cadres for a new strategic line. This is impossible without a weekly. The
The Situation in the SP and Our Next Tasks

question of reestablishing our own weekly is a hundred times more important than all the statutory considerations and diplomatic prudence. Our attack against the right-wingers as the agents of the Stalinist-reformist hangmen of the Russian revolution as well as the Spanish revolution must be so vigorous and relentless that the petty bureaucrats will have to forget the purely formal and organizational questions. We cannot discuss with Altmanites and the Wisconsin people as with comrades. We must denounce them as traitors and rascals. Events will justify our tone in the eyes of the rank-and-file. Only by such an attack can we prevent hesitations among our sympathizers and the best elements of the Clarity faction. In this respect I entirely agree, as I said before, with Cannon's letter. As far as I can judge, on the basis of written reports and conversations with some American comrades, the coming turn can be accomplished without frictions in our own ranks, under the condition that the National Committee gives the comrades clear, precise, and courageous directives.

Permit me to concretize the five-month plan hypothetically:

By July 15 our comrades must be mobilized for the radical turn. The first issue of our weekly must appear in the second half of July.

August and September: our campaign against the right wing and, in the second place, against the centrists.

During October we must reestablish entirely our organizational apparatus.

Not later than November 7 we must appear as an independent party.

Since we are preparing to step beyond the remnants of the SP, we must simultaneously begin more systematic and persistent work within the CP. This party cannot possibly be left intact by the above-mentioned political factors. Crises and splits are inevitable. It is possible that by fall we can prepare an amalgamation of a part of the CP with our own independent organization.

I do not speak here about our work in the trade unions, especially in the CIO. That, generally speaking, is the most important task before us. However, this task too demands our independence as a condition for free and courageous activity in strikes and in the unions.

Fraternally,

Wolfe [Trotsky]
Is there any further need to dig into all the details, to check through the trial reports letter by letter, to bring together all the necessary refutations, to subject the frame-up methods to microscopic analysis? Stalin himself provides the proofs needed to refute him—and on an incomparably more massive scale. Every day brings more sensational news from the USSR testifying that the regime is caught up in its last crisis, which could be called its death agony if that analogy with living organisms did not conjure up the idea of too short a time.

The "Old Guard," in whose name the struggle against "Trotskyism" was opened in 1923, has long since been liquidated politically. Its physical extermination has now been accomplished in Stalin's style, where sadistic savagery alternates with bureaucratic pendantry. It would be too superficial, however, to explain the murderous and suicidal measures of Stalin only by his lust for power, cruelty, vindictiveness, and other personal qualities. Stalin long ago lost control over his own policies. The bureaucracy as a whole lost control over its own self-defense reflexes. The new wave of repressions, which exceeds all comprehensible bounds, is imposed upon the bureaucracy by a logical progression from its previous repressive actions. Any regime that is obliged to stage frame-up after frame-up before the eyes of the whole world, automatically expanding the circle of its victims, is surely doomed.

After his first experiments, Stalin was forced to abandon further "public" trials. The abandonment was motivated semiofficially by the argument that the country had "more important tasks." Using this slogan, the "friends" of the Soviet Union in the West are carrying on a struggle against any countertrials. At the same time, in various parts of the Soviet Union, new centers of "Trotskyism, sabotage, and espionage" are continually being discovered. In the Soviet Far East since the beginning of May,
eighty-three "Trotskyists" have been shot, according to the published figures.* The work continues; nothing is reported about these trials, not even the names of the victims.

Who are the people who have been shot? A certain percent probably are actual spies. There is no shortage of them in the Soviet Far East. Another part is composed of Oppositionists, the discontented and dissatisfied. A third part is made up of the agents provocateurs who have served to link the "Trotskyists" with the spies and have thereby become dangerous witnesses. But there is also a fourth part, and it is growing—that is, the relatives, friends, subordinates, and acquaintances of those who were shot, people who know about the frame-ups and who are able, if not to protest, at least to tell others of Stalin's crimes.

What is going on at the lower levels, especially in outlying areas where the murders take on an anonymous character, can be imagined from what is going on today at the highest levels. Stalin did not manage to stage the public trial of Bukharin and Rykov at the time he had wished, inasmuch as the accused refused to "confess." It became necessary to take up their further reeducation. According to several reports, Rykov and Bukharin, the former head of the government and the former head of the Comintern respectively, were sentenced behind closed doors to eight years in prison—just as in July 1935, between two staged trials, Kamenev was sentenced behind closed doors to ten years in prison. This parallel already forces the conclusion that the sentencing of Rykov and Bukharin is not a final measure. The press, headed by the vulgar know-nothing Mekhlis, a former personal secretary of Stalin's, demands the "extermination" of the enemies of the people. The most surprising thing—if one may be permitted the luxury of surprise—is the fact that Rykov and Bukharin are now called "Trotskyists." After all, the Left Opposition always and invariably directed its main blows against the right wing headed by Rykov and Bukharin. On the other hand, in the struggle against Trotskyism, only Bukharin provided the semblance of a doctrine for Stalin to base himself on—to the extent that he based himself on doctrine at all—over a period of many years. Today it turns out that Bukharin's countless articles and books against Trotskyism, on which the entire apparatus of the Comintern was trained, were only the cover for his secret

*According to the latest Moscow dispatches, this number has risen to 214 [note by the editors of the Biulleten Oppozitsii].
collaboration with the Trotskyists on the basis of terrorism. Just as though the Archbishop of Canterbury used his church functions as a mask for atheist propaganda. But who cares about such nonsense today? Those who know the past are either dead or are forced into silence through fear of extermination. The hirelings of the Comintern, who were groveling before Bukharin a few years ago, now demand his crucifixion as a “Trotskyist” and enemy of the people.

A revolutionary epoch brings the popular masses close together. On the other hand, a period of reaction signifies the triumph of centrifugal forces. During the last fourteen years not one single breach in the Bolshevik Party has been closed up again, not one wound has healed, not one conflict has ended in reconciliation. Capitulations and acts of self-abasement have not helped. The centrifugal forces have acted to enlarge the slightest opening until it is transformed into an unbridgeable chasm. Anyone drawn into this opening, even by his little toe, has been lost irredeemably.

The “Old Guard,” that is, the Bolsheviks of the czarist underground, have essentially been finished off. Now the Mauser of the GPU is aimed at the next generation, which began its rise in the civil war. Of course, even in the earlier trials, younger accused persons figured alongside the Old Bolsheviks. But these were secondary figures, necessary for rounding out the amalgam. Now the testing of the forty-year-olds, that is, of the generation which helped Stalin deal with the Old Guard, has assumed a systematic character. What is involved is no longer accidental figures but stars of the second magnitude of brightness.

Postyshev rose to the post of secretary of the Central Committee thanks to his ardent participation in the struggle against Trotskyism. In the Ukraine in 1933, Postyshev purged the party and state apparatus of “nationalists,” and drove the Ukrainian people’s commissar Skrypnik to suicide by slandering him as a “protector of nationalists.” This fact surprised the party all the more because just a year before, the birthday of Skrypnik, an Old Bolshevik member of the Central Committee and 100 percent Stalinist, had been gloriously celebrated in Kharkov and Moscow. In 1933, I wrote on this subject: “The fact that the Stalinist system needs these kinds of sacrifices shows what kind of contradictions tear it apart even at its very summit” (Biulleten Oppozitsii, no. 36-37, October 1933 [see “Skrypnik’s Suicide,” in Writings 32-33]). Four years later it turns out that Postyshev, who
after his exploits was made dictator of the Ukraine, himself is accused of covering up nationalists. As a disgraced official, he was recently transferred to the Volga region. One may conjecture that this will not be for long. Not only wounds but even scratches fail to heal any longer. Whether Postyshev will resort to suicide or will confess his uncommitted crimes does not matter—there is no salvation for him.

In Belorussia, the chairman of the Central Executive Committee, Chervyakov, has shot himself. In the past he was connected with the right wing, but he long since had joined publicly in the battle against them. The official dispatch shamefully declares that Chervyakov, who according to the constitution had the same rights as Kalinin, put an end to himself for “family reasons.” Stalin decided not to declare the head of the Belorussian Soviet Republic an agent of Germany after all. But simultaneously with this suicide, the people’s commissar of Belorussia, who had been closely linked with Chervyakov, was arrested in Minsk. Was this also for “family reasons”? If you consider the bureaucracy a “family,” then it must be acknowledged this family has reached a stage where its bonds have been loosened in the extreme.

Incomparably more surprising (again if one may be permitted surprise) is the path traveled by Yagoda, who over the past decade has been the closest person to Stalin. No member of the Politburo was ever entrusted with such secrets as Stalin entrusted to the head of the GPU. That Yagoda was a scoundrel everyone knew. But first of all, he did not surpass most of his colleagues in this respect. Second, it was precisely as a consummate scoundrel that he was so necessary to Stalin—for the fulfillment of murkier assignments. The entire struggle with the Opposition, which took the form of a chain of growing falsifications and frame-ups, was carried out under Yagoda’s leadership, following lines directly laid down for him by Stalin. And here this guardian of the state, who had eradicated the older generation of the party, turns out to be a gangster and a traitor. He has been arrested. Will he confess according to the ritual that he himself worked out? That will not alter his fate. Meanwhile, the world press discusses in all seriousness whether or not Yagoda was really connected with . . . the Trotskyists. Why not? If Bukharin eradicated Trotskyism theoretically, then Yagoda could eradicate the Trotskyists physically, the better to mask his connections with them.

But the most astonishing news comes from the War Depart-
ment, beginning with the very highest levels. Stalin, having beheaded the party and Soviet apparatus, has proceeded to decapitation of the army.

On May 11, the celebrated Marshal Tukhachevsky was suddenly removed from his post as vice-commissar of defense, and transferred to a minor post in the provinces. Within the next few days the commanders of the military districts and other prominent generals were likewise transferred. These measures boded nothing good. On May 16 a decree establishing Military Councils in charge of the districts, both of the navy and of the armies, was published. It was evident that the top rulers had come into serious conflict with the officer corps.

"Revolutionary Military Councils" were introduced by me during the civil war. Every council was composed of a commanding officer and two, sometimes three, political members. Although the commanding officer formally retained the full power of command, in fact his orders did not go into effect unless signed by the council's political members. The necessity for this kind of insurance, which we viewed as a temporary evil, flowed from the lack of a reliable corps of commanders and from the soldiers' mistrust even of loyal commanders. The gradual formation of a Red officer corps was expected to bring the councils to an end and to establish the principle of unitary command, unavoidable in military matters.

Frunze, who replaced me as head of the War Department in 1925, introduced unitary command at an intensified rate. After him, Voroshilov followed the same path. It would seem that the Soviet government had sufficient time to train a reliable officer corps and so get around the burdensome necessity of using commissars to supervise commanders. But things turned out differently. On the threshold of the twentieth anniversary of the revolution, the Moscow oligarchy, while getting ready to destroy the officer corps, establishes a collective administration over the army. The new Military Councils are no longer called "revolutionary." And in fact they have nothing in common with their prototype. The Military Councils of the civil war ensured control by the revolutionary class over the military technicians who had come from the enemy's ranks. The councils of 1937 have the task of helping the oligarchy that has raised itself up over the revolutionary class to protect the power it usurped against any encroachments on the part of its own marshals and generals.

When Tukhachevsky was demoted, every informed person wondered, "Who will henceforth take charge of the work of Soviet
defense?” Appointed to replace Tukhachevsky was Marshal Yegorov, a lieutenant-colonel during the world war—and a vague mediocrity. The new chief of staff, Shaposhnikov, is an educated executive officer of the old army, devoid of strategic talent and initiative. And Voroshilov? It is no secret that Voroshilov, the “Old Bolshevik,” is a purely decorative figure. While Lenin was alive, it never entered anybody’s head to include him in the Central Committee. During the civil war Voroshilov, while displaying an indubitable personal courage, showed a complete lack of military and administrative talent and, besides, a narrow, utterly provincial outlook. His only qualification for a seat in the Politburo and the post of people’s commissar of defense is that at Tsaritsyn he supported Stalin’s opposition to that military policy which insured victory in the civil war. Incidentally, neither Stalin nor the other members of the Politburo ever entertained any illusions concerning Voroshilov as a military leader. Just because of this, they had surrounded him with qualified collaborators. The actual leaders of the army in recent years were two men: Tukhachevsky and Gamarnik.

Neither one belonged to the Old Guard. Both came to the fore during the civil war, not without the intervention of the author of these lines. Tukhachevsky gave indubitable evidence of outstanding talent as a strategist. However, he did not have sufficient ability in evaluating a military situation from all sides. In his strategy an element of adventurism was always apparent. For this reason he and I had several clashes, which, however, were handled in a completely friendly way. I was obliged as well to criticize his attempt to create a “new military doctrine” on the basis of some hastily absorbed elementary Marxist formulas. Let us not forget, however, that Tukhachevsky was a very young man at the time and had made an overly rapid leap from the ranks of czarist officerdom to the camp of Bolshevism. Thereafter he apparently applied himself assiduously, if not to the study of Marxism (no one studies that now in the USSR), then to military science. He acquired a knowledge of modern military techniques and, not unsuccessfully, played the role of mechanizer of the army. Would he have succeeded in acquiring the necessary equilibrium of inner forces without which one cannot be a great field commander? Only a new war—in which Tukhachevsky had been assigned the role of generalissimo in advance—would have been able to show.

Jan Gamarnik, born of a Jewish family in the Ukraine, distinguished himself during the civil war by his political and
administrative talents—to be sure, on a provincial scale. In 1924 I heard of him as a Ukrainian "Trotskyist." My personal ties with him had already been broken. The triumvirate (Zinoviev, Stalin, Kamenev) then leading the party tried first of all to break the most capable "Trotskyists" away from their familiar environment, to throw them into new situations, and, if possible, to buy them up with the perspective of a career. Gamarnik was sent from Kiev to the Far East, where he rose quickly up the administrative ladder, having radically finished with his "Trotskyism" in 1925, that is, two or three years before the capitulations of the most prominent defendants in the recent trials. When Gamarnik's "reeducation" was completed, he was transferred to Moscow and soon put in charge of the Political Department of the Army and Navy. For a period of ten years Gamarnik held important posts at the very center of the party apparatus and was in daily collaboration with the GPU. Is it conceivable in such circumstances that he could have conducted two policies: a public one for the external world, the second private? A member of the Central Committee, the highest representative of the ruling party in the army, Gamarnik, like Tukhachevsky, was flesh of the flesh and bone of the bone of the ruling caste.

Why, then, did the ax descend on these two leaders of the armed forces? Zinoviev and Kamenev perished because, in the light of their past, they seemed dangerous; but more importantly, because Stalin hoped to use the fact that they were shot to help him deal a mortal blow to "Trotskyism." Pyatakov and Radek, former prominent Trotskyists, proved to be the only suitable figures for a new trial that would correct the oversights of the first concoction, which had been made too crudely. Neither Tukhachevsky nor Gamarnik was appropriate to those aims. Tukhachevsky had never been a Trotskyist. Gamarnik was briefly involved with Trotskyism, but at a time when his name was as yet unknown. Why, then, was Radek instructed to name Tukhachevsky during the pretrial investigation? And why has Gamarnik now, after his mysterious death, been added to the list of "enemies of the people"?

As educator of the commanding staff and future generalissimo, Tukhachevsky could not but value talented military leaders. Putna was one of the most outstanding officers of the general staff. Did Tukhachevsky really send him to Radek for certain information? Radek was a semi-official spokesman on foreign policy. Putna was a military attache in Britain. Tukhachevsky
The Decapitation of the Red Army

may have gotten information from Radek through Putna just as Stalin himself often used Radek’s material for his own speeches and interviews. It is possible, however, that this entire episode, like so many others, was simply made up. That does not change matters. Tukhachevsky undoubtedly intervened in behalf of Putna as he must have done in the case of other officers dragged into the amalgams of the GPU. It was necessary to teach him a lesson. What was Voroshilov’s role in this? Up to now Voroshilov’s policies have been determined to a far greater extent by his ties with Stalin than by his ties with the army. Moreover, Voroshilov, a man of limited horizon and rather a scatterbrain, could not but have cast jaundiced glances in the direction of his far-too-talented vice-commissar. Such could very well have been the source of the conflict.

Gamarnik took a leading part in all the purges of the army, during which he did all that was demanded of him. But what was involved there, at most, was Oppositionists, malcontents, and suspect types—consequently, the interests of the “state” were involved. But over the past year it became necessary to expel from the army people who were guilty of nothing, but who, because of old ties, or the posts they occupied, or for purely accidental reasons, turned out to be useful in the process of organizing new judicial frame-ups. Gamarnik, like Tukhachevsky, was linked with many of these commanding officers by bonds of friendship and comradeship. As the head of the Political Department of the Army and Navy, Gamarnik was obliged not only to deliver his collaborators into the hands of Vyshinsky but also to participate in the fabrication of false charges against them. It is highly probable that he came into conflict with the GPU and complained about Yezhov . . . to Stalin! This in itself was enough to endanger him.

Moved by the interests of Soviet defense, the commanders of the districts and the responsible generals might have intervened in Tukhachevsky’s behalf. The whirl of transfers and arrests in the month of May and the first days of June can be explained only by panic in the ruling circles. On May 31 Gamarnik either shot himself or was shot. The commanders of the military districts no sooner arrived at their new posts than they were placed under arrest and turned over to the court. Then the following were arrested: Tukhachevsky, who had just been appointed to Samara; Yakir, who had just been transferred to Leningrad; Uborevich, commander of the Belorussian military district; Kork, head of the Military Academy; Feldman, chief of
the Personnel Section of the Army; Eideman, head of the Osoaviakhim [Society for the Promotion of Defense, Aviation, and Chemistry]; and, somewhat earlier, both Putna, former military attache at Tokyo and London, and Primakov, a cavalry general. All eight were sentenced to death and shot.

The army must have been stirred to its very depths. In the mind of everyone was the question: Why kill the legendary heroes of the civil war, the talented field commanders and organizers, the heads of the Red Army who only yesterday were the mainstay and hope of the regime? Let us recall briefly who they were.

Tukhachevsky, an officer in the czar's army, became a Bolshevik, while Yakir developed from a young tubercular student into a Red commander. From the very outset Yakir revealed the imagination and resourcefulness of a strategist. Veteran officers more than once cast astonished eyes on the gaunt commissar as, matchstick in hand, he traced moves on a military map. Yakir had occasion to prove his devotion to the revolution and the party in a much more direct way than Tukhachevsky. When the civil war ended he plunged into serious study. The authority he enjoyed was great and well merited.

Alongside Yakir we may place Uborevich, a somewhat less brilliant but thoroughly tested and reliable field commander of the civil war. It was these two men who were entrusted with the defense of the Western frontier, and they prepared themselves for years for their roles in the coming great war.

Kork, a graduate of the czarist military academy, successfully commanded one of the armies during the critical years, was later given command of a military district, and finally was placed in charge of the Military Academy in succession to Eideman, who belonged in Frunze's close periphery.

For the last few years, Eideman directed the Osoaviakhim, which links the civil population and the army.

Putna was an educated young general with an international outlook.

In Feldman's hands was concentrated the power of direct supervision over the commanding personnel. This alone indicates the measure of confidence he enjoyed.

Next to Budenny, Primakov was unquestionably the most outstanding cavalry commander.

It would be no exaggeration to say that in the Red Army there is left not a single name, with the exception of Budenny, that as regards popularity, not to speak of talent or knowledge, is comparable to the names of the alleged criminals. The destruc-
tion of the Red Army’s leadership, then, was carried through with full knowledge of what it implied!

Careful attention should be paid to the way the trial was organized: under the chairmanship of that low-caliber bureaucrat Ulrich, a group of senior generals headed by Budenny were forced to impose on their comrades-in-arms a sentence dictated from the Secretariat by Stalin. Thus the devil put truth to the test. The military chiefs remaining alive are bound to Stalin from now on by the shame that he intentionally covered them with. But the system of intrigues goes even farther.

Stalin feared not only Tukhachevsky but Voroshilov as well. Testifying to this in particular is the appointment of Budenny as commander of the Moscow military district. As an old noncommissioned officer in the cavalry, Budenny always scorned Voroshilov’s military dilettantism. During the time when they were working together in Tsaritsyn, they more than once threatened each other with revolvers. Their important careers smoothed over the outward expression of their enmity but did not moderate it. Military power in the capital is now given to Budenny as a counterweight to Voroshilov. Which of them stands next on the list of the doomed the future will tell.

The accusation that Tukhachevsky, Yakir, and the others were agents of Germany is so stupid and so shameless that it does not merit refutation. Stalin himself did not hope that this foul slander would be believed abroad. But for the Russian workers and peasants, he had to provide overpowering arguments to justify the extermination of these talented and independent people. In this he relies on the hypnotic impact of the totalitarian press and radio.

But what are the real reasons for his extermination of the best Soviet generals? On this subject only hypotheses can be posed, on the basis of a certain number of direct and indirect symptoms. Given the danger of approaching war, the most responsible commanders could not help becoming alarmed by the fact that Voroshilov stood at the head of the armed forces. There need be no doubt that in these circles the candidacy of Tukhachevsky was put forward to replace Voroshilov. In its first stage, the generals no doubt tried to base their “plot” on Stalin, who had been playing his usual ambiguous game for a long time, exploiting the antagonism between Voroshilov and Tukhachevsky. Tukhachevsky and his adherents apparently overestimated their forces. Placed in a situation where he had to choose at the last moment, Stalin preferred Voroshilov, who until then had remained his
submissive instrument, and surrendered Tukhachevsky to the executioners as one who could become a dangerous adversary. Deceived in their hopes and angered by Stalin's "betrayal," the generals might have held discussions on how the army ought to be freed from the yoke of the Politburo altogether. From this to an outright conspiracy is still a long way. But under the conditions of a totalitarian regime it is already the first step.

If the past of those who were shot and the particular features of each are weighed accurately, it is hard to conclude that they were connected by any common political program. But a part of them, headed by Tukhachevsky, could have had a program in the sphere of national defense. Let us not forget that after Hitler's rise to power Stalin did everything possible to preserve friendly relations with Germany. Soviet diplomats did not stint in making obliging declarations in regard to fascism that today have a scandalous ring. The philosophy for this policy was provided by Stalin: "Above all we must protect the construction of socialism in our country. Fascism and democracy are twins, not opposites. France will not attack us and the threat from Germany can be neutralized simply by collaboration with her." Following this signal from above, the leaders of the army tried to maintain friendly relations with the German military attaches, engineers, and industrialists and to convey to them the idea that collaboration between the two countries was entirely possible. Some of the generals took up this political line the more readily, the more German technology and "discipline" were urged upon them.

As it turned out, though, Stalin was obliged to supplement his "friendly" relations with Germany by a defense pact with France. Hitler could not go along with this. He required a free hand in either direction. In reply to Moscow's rapprochement with Paris, he gave Stalin a demonstrative rebuff. Mussolini followed quickly with the same. Despite his original intentions, Stalin had to abandon his theory of "twins" and take a tack toward friendship with the Western "democracies." In the Ministry of Foreign Affairs a symbolic shift was made: Litvinov's deputy Krestinsky, former Soviet ambassador to Germany, was removed; taking his place was Potemkin, former Soviet ambassador to France. At the top levels of the officer corps it was not possible to make a changeover with such ease; by its very nature the military caste is much more numerous and less pliable than the diplomatic corps.

If Tukhachevsky actually adhered until recently to the pro-German orientation (of this I am not certain), he did so at any
rate not as an agent of Hitler but as a Soviet patriot on the basis of strategic and economic views that until recently even Stalin shared. Some generals, too, undoubtedly felt personally committed by their previous friendly statements regarding Germany. Since Stalin kept maneuvering over a long period, leaving both doors open, he consciously did not give the generals the signal to retreat. Counting on his support, the generals might have gone farther than they originally intended. It is entirely possible, on the other hand, that Voroshilov—who, as a member of the Politburo, was informed in good time of the new orientation—deliberately had Tukhachevsky overstep the bounds of military and party discipline and then, with his characteristic rudeness, demanded of him an abrupt change of course. The question whether to go along with Germany or with France was suddenly transformed into the question, “Who rules the army: Voroshilov, member of the Politburo, or Tukhachevsky, with the flower of the commanding staff behind him?” And since there is no public opinion, no party, no soviets, and the regime has lost its last iota of flexibility, every acute problem is solved with the help of a Mauser. Stalin was all the less opposed to a bloody settling of accounts in that he needed to prove his reliability to his new international allies by finding some scapegoats for the policy he had followed until only yesterday.

What was the relation of the generals to the Left Opposition? The Moscow papers called Gamarnik a “Trotskyist” after his death. Several months earlier, Putna was mentioned in the trials of Zinoviev and Radek as a “Trotskyist.” But no one called the others by this frightful name before the trial, nor, one must suppose, at the trial, since neither judges nor defendants had any need to indulge in such comedy behind closed doors. The absence of any overt links with Trotskyism was not the only factor keeping Tukhachevsky, Yakir, Uborevich, Eideman, and the others from being turned into Trotskyists; there was also the wish not to overly inflate the influence of Trotskyism within the army. Nevertheless, in Voroshilov’s order of the day, published the day after the executions, all those who had been shot were proclaimed Trotskyists. Frame-ups, as we have seen, have their own logic: if the generals, like the Trotskyists, had served Germany with the aim of “restoring capitalism,” then Germany must have brought them together to serve its interests. Moreover, “Trotskyism” has long since become a catchall concept, encompassing everything deserving extermination.

In our observations about the causes for the decapitation of the
army there is a decided element of guesswork. In its details, which will not become known quickly, the affair may have originated differently. But the political meaning of this new bloodletting is clearer even today. If Stalin had wished to save the generals, it was entirely possible for him to open some bridges in time for them to retreat. But he did not wish to. He is afraid to show any weakness. He is afraid of the army. He is afraid of his own bureaucracy.

And for good reason. Thousands upon thousands of officeholders and commanders who came from the ranks of Bolshevism or who adhered to Bolshevism, supported Stalin until the most recent period out of conscience, not fear. But recent events have roused their fears—for the fate of the regime and their own fate. Those who helped Stalin rise have turned out to be less and less suitable for supporting him at his dizzy heights. Stalin is forced more and more often to renew the instruments of his power. At the same time he fears that these new instruments may place a different chief at their head.

This danger is especially great in relation to the army. When the bureaucracy has freed itself from popular control, the military caste inevitably tries to free itself from the yoke of the civilian bureaucracy. Bonapartism always has the tendency to assume the form of naked rule by the sword. Regardless of the real or alleged ambitions of Tukhachevsky, the officer corps must have been increasingly steeped in consciousness of its superiority over the dictators in waistcoats. On the other hand, Stalin could not help but understand that the police rule over the people, which he enforced with the help of the hierarchy of party secretaries, could be realized more simply and directly by one of the “marshals” through the military apparatus. The danger was too apparent. As yet there was not a conspiracy—that is certain. But it was on the agenda. The bloodletting had a preventive character. Stalin made use of a “happy” incident to teach the officer corps a bloody lesson.

One can say in advance, however, that this lesson will not stop anything or anybody. Stalin has successfully played the role of gravedigger of Bolshevism only because he himself is an Old Bolshevik. This cover was necessary for the bureaucracy to stifle the masses and crush the remaining shell of the Spartan tradition. But the camp of Thermidor is not homogeneous. The upper layer of the privileged is headed by people who themselves are not yet free of the traditions of Bolshevism. The regime
cannot pause at this intermediate layer, of Postyshevs, Chervyakovs, Tukhachevskys, Yakirs, not to mention Yagodas. The layer after them is headed by indifferent administrators, if not plain shysters and careerists. Stalin sees through these layers better than anyone. Therefore he feels that after stifling the masses and exterminating the Old Guard, the salvation of socialism lies in him alone.

What is involved is not just personal cruelty and lust for power. Stalin cannot help but strive toward the juridical confirmation of his personal power, whether in the capacity of “leader” for life, president with extraordinary powers, or finally crowned emperor. At the same time he cannot help fearing that from the midst of the bureaucracy itself, especially from the army, opposition to his Caesarist plans will arise. This means that before falling into the abyss—with or without his crown—Stalin will try to exterminate all the best elements of the state apparatus.

In any event he has dealt the Red Army a fearful blow. As a result of the latest judicial frame-up it has been brought lower by many heads. The morale of the army has been shaken to its very foundations. The interests of Soviet defense have been sacrificed to the interests of self-preservation of the ruling clique. After the trials of Zinoviev and Kamenev, Radek and Pyatakov, the trial of Tukhachevsky, Yakir, and the others marks the beginning of the end of the Stalinist dictatorship.
Stalin’s policies leading to complete collapse, internal as well as external. Only salvation lies in radical about-face toward soviet democracy, beginning with public review of last trials. On this matter offer total support.

Trotsky
THE TIME FACTOR IN POLITICS

June 25, 1937

Dear Comrade Burnham:

After receiving your important letter of June 22, I reread my letter of June 15 and could not find in it any of the hidden plans which you discovered behind my five-month plan. It is indisputable that political questions are not resolved according to the calendar. But when we begin a concrete campaign in a concrete situation with a concrete issue we can and must foresee such an important element in politics as time.

You say the “intensity” and the “tempo” of our activities are important, and not dates established a priori. Agreed, regarding the intensity and tempo: with the aid of the time factor, and time is measured by the calendar. Our plans, whether they concern proletarian insurrection, economic construction, or the split with the Socialist bureaucrats, must have an elastic character. It is possible that the separation will occur in two or three months. It is not excluded that the campaign may last a half-year. But if you say that we can remain in the SP two more years, or even one more year, then I will reply that the “intensity” and “tempo” which you propose are not sufficiently intensive and speedy. This is the sense of my five-month plan. It is a working hypothesis—no more, but also no less.

You express the supposition, or better, the suspicion, that I wish deliberately to promote “sallies, so that the leadership, confronted with ‘irrevocable’ facts, will not draw back.” I must, in a friendly fashion, protest against this entirely unwarranted suspicion. I addressed a series of letters to the leading comrades, and only to them. I felt it necessary to support Cannon’s initiative before the same leading comrades. That is the sense of my letter of June 15 and of my cable. It is absolutely clear for me that the coming campaign can be successful only on the condition that it is prepared and conducted by the guiding body in a centralized manner, with assured discipline and cohesion. If
anybody tries to use the very important, delicate and complicated turn for some "private" factional purposes, he must immediately be restrained, not only by the pressure of our own public opinion, but also by administrative measures. If anybody begins to look for personal revenge ("I was right to have opposed the entry," etc.) he must be severely called to order. The practical results can be evaluated only after the definite delimitation, and they can be improved, not by an unworthy discouraging of comrades in a critical moment, but only through an energetic and disciplined fight.

In this connection your criticism of my remarks about SP legality is a pure misunderstanding. I never proposed, naturally, to break discipline demonstratively or to shock the opinion of rank-and-filers by extravagant sallies. The only thing I affirmed—and it is important enough—is that we must entirely subordinate our assessment of party legality to the necessities of the new political line, that is, the line of ideological delimitation and organizational separation. It is an elementary rule of the game that we must throw responsibility for our emergency measures squarely upon the bureaucrats and their state of siege in the party. We must give to every step of our own the most comprehensible and convincing form. But the decisive steps must be taken in the next months, even at the risk that some sympathizers will remain in the SP. The best of them will come to us later. The "intensity" and "tempo" of our campaign must be determined by general political considerations and not by those of individual psychology.

In the next week, if my physical recovery continues satisfactorily, I will try to write an article on Spain. It would in any case be an error to make the appearance of the paper dependent on this article.

With best greetings,
Wolfe [Trotsky]
PREFACE TO
LES CRIMES DE STALINE

July 5, 1937

The revolution, in its upswing, might have been brutal and cruel, but it was truthful. It said aloud what it thought. Stalin’s policies are lies. That is how his mind shows itself reactionary. The reaction tells lies because it must hide from the people its true aims. The reaction built on a proletarian revolution lies twice over. It can be said without fear of exaggerating that Stalin’s Thermidorean regime is the most lying regime known to history. And for fourteen years the author of these lines has been the principal target of the Thermidorean lies.

Until the end of 1933, the Moscow press and, accordingly, its shadow, the press of the Communist International, portrayed me as a British or American agent, even calling me “Mister Trotsky.” Pravda of March 8, 1929, devoted an entire article to demonstrating that I was an ally of British imperialism (Moscow did not yet call it “British democracy”), not without establishing my complete solidarity with Winston Churchill. The article concluded with these words, “We see why the bourgeoisie pays him tens of thousands of dollars!” This time it was dollars—not marks!

On July 2, 1931, Pravda, with the help of crudely falsified facsimiles—which it was to forget on the morrow—denounced me as an ally of Pilsudski and a defender of the robber Versailles treaty. At that time, Stalin was working not for the maintenance of the status quo but for the “national liberation” of Germany. In August 1931, Les Cahiers du Bolchevisme, the theoretical magazine of the French Communist Party, denounced “a united front stretching . . . from Blum, Paul-Boncour, and the French general staff on the one side to Trotsky on the other.” I was firmly attached to the countries of the Entente!

On July 24, 1933, after the definitive advent of Hitler in Germany, I arrived in France by way of Marseilles, having obtained a visa from the Daladier government. According to the
retrospective revelations of the Moscow trials, I was preparing the defeat of the USSR and of France. At the Radek-Pyatkov trial in January 1937, it was "established" that, exactly at the end of July 1933, in the Bois de Boulogne, I met Vladimir Romm, correspondent of the Tass agency, in order to establish through him a liaison between the Russian terrorists and Hitler and the Mikado. L'Humanite had no doubt about it; on the day I arrived, it denounced my occult relations with Mr. Daladier. "By permitting the intrigues of the White emigres and by inviting Trotsky," wrote the paper of Stalin-Cachin-Thorez, "the French bourgeoisie shows its true policy toward the USSR: discussions out of necessity, compulsory smiles, but in the background aid and support for all the saboteurs, interventionists, conspirators, slanderers, and renegades from the revolution. . . . From France, from this anti-Soviet hearth, he can attack the USSR. . . . It is a strategic point! That is why Mr. Trotsky is coming." All Prosecutor Vyshinsky's formulas are here, with one difference: I was undertaking this criminal activity in agreement with the French bourgeoisie, not German fascism.

But perhaps the unlucky L'Humanite was not in the know? No; Stalin's Paris organ was expressing very well the views of its employer. The ponderous ideas of the Moscow bureaucracy were unwilling to leave their customary orbit. Alliance with Germany, independent of that country's internal regime, was an axiom of Soviet foreign policy. On December 13, 1931, Stalin said to the German writer, Emil Ludwig: "If we must speak of our sympathy for any nation, it is naturally the Germans. . . . Our friendly relations with Germany remain as they were until now." Stalin was even imprudent enough to add: "Some politicians promise or declare one thing one day, and forget it the next without even blushing. We cannot behave that way."

True, we are still in the epoch of Weimar. But fascism's victory did not change Moscow's orientation. Stalin did all he could to earn Hitler's goodwill. Izvestia, the organ of the government, wrote on March 4, 1933, that the USSR was the only country in the world which felt no hostility toward Germany, "independently of the form and composition of the Reich government." Le Temps declared on April 8: "While European opinion is highly concerned by the advent of Mr. Hitler and everywhere comments on it, the Moscow newspapers remain completely silent." Stalin was trying to win the friendship of the victor by turning his back on the German working class.
The whole picture is clear. When, according to the retrospective version invented later, I was organizing my collaboration with Hitler, the press of Moscow and the Communist International made me out to be an agent of France and Anglo-Saxon imperialism. I was to be put alongside the Germans and the Japanese only when Hitler rejected the hand stretched out by Stalin, obliging him to seek the friendship of the “Western democracies,” which was contrary to his plans and his previous calculations.

The charges brought against me were and are nothing but complements to Moscow’s diplomatic evolutions. These different changes of direction were imputed to me without the slightest participation on my part in them. However, there is a very considerable difference between the two opposing but symmetrical versions of the slander. The first, which made me out to be an agent of the Entente, had above all a literary character. The slanderers slandered, the newspapers spread the poison, and Vyshinsky had not yet emerged from the shadows. It is true that from time to time the GPU had shot some Oppositionists on the charge of espionage; but they were only obscure militants assassinated in the background, by way of experiments. Stalin was still preparing his investigating magistrates, his judges, and his executioners. Time was still needed to bring the bureaucracy to such a degree of demoralization and the public opinion of the old and new worlds to such a degree of degradation that it would be possible to mount the enormous juridical frame-ups against the Trotskyists.

One can follow, documents in hand, all the stages of this preparatory evolution. More than once Stalin met with resistance which made him retreat, only to continue his activities more systematically. The aim of his policy was to build a guillotine that would operate automatically against every opponent of the leading clique: whoever is not for Stalin is in the pay of imperialism. This crude schematism, spiced with personal rancor, is entirely in the spirit of Stalin. He seemed not to have doubted for a single moment that the “confessions” of his victims would convince the world and secure the inviolability of the totalitarian regime. It was not to be so. The trials operated against Stalin. The reason lies not so much in the crudity of the falsifications as in this fact: the vise of the bureaucratic system had become incompatible with the country’s development. Under the pressure of the growing contradictions, Stalin had to widen the radius of the fraud from day to day. The bloody purge continues with no
end in sight. The bureaucracy, devouring itself, cries in frenzy for more vigilance. Its cry is the cry of a beast mortally wounded.

Let us once more recall that all the members of the Political Bureau of Lenin’s time—with the sole exception of Stalin—figure at the head of the list of traitors: among them were the former leader of the country’s defense in the civil war, two former leaders of the Communist International, the former president of the Council of People’s Commissars, the former president of the Council for Defense and Labor, and the former head of the Soviet trade unions. Then follow many members of the Central Committee and of the government. The acting head of heavy industry, Pyatakov, was, it is alleged, at the head of the sabotage; the deputy people’s commissar for transport, Lifshits, was an agent of Japan and the organizer of derailments; the supreme head of the security services, Yagoda, was a gangster and a traitor; the deputy people’s commissar for foreign affairs, Sokolnikov, was an agent of Germany and Japan, as was the most influential publicist of the regime, Radek. And more: the entire high command of the army were all in the service of the enemy. Marshal Tukhachevsky, recently sent to Britain and France to familiarize himself with the latest military techniques, sold the secrets he held to Germany. . . . The political head of the army, Gamarnik, was a traitor. The representatives of the French, British, Czechoslovakian armies recently paid tribute to the excellent organization of the Ukrainian maneuvers conducted by General Yakir. This Yakir prepared the conquest of the Ukraine by Hitler. Responsible for the defense of the Western frontier, General Uborevich was prepared to hand over White Russia to the enemy. Two of the former heads of the Military Academy, Generals Eideman and Kork, outstanding commanders in the civil war, instructed their pupils with a view to defeat, not victory. Tens of superior officers, less known but scarcely less important, are accused of treason. All the wreckers, saboteurs, gangsters, and spies went on with their criminal work for years. But if the Yagodas, the Pyatakovs, the Sokolnikovs, the Tukhachevskys and the many others were spies, what good were the Stalins, Voroshilovs, and the other “leaders”? What good are appeals for vigilance from a Political Bureau that has shown itself so blind and unworldly?

The regime has emerged from its latest “purge” so discredited that the world press is seriously asking if Stalin has become mad. The hypothesis is too simple! First it was held that Stalin owed
his victory to his exceptional intellect. Later, when the bureaucracy's reflexes became convulsive, yesterday's admirers wonder whether the leader has taken leave of his senses. The two judgments are equally false. Stalin is no "man of genius." In the literal sense of the word, he is not even intelligent—if by intelligence we mean the capacity to comprehend phenomena in their correlations and development. But neither is he mad. The wave of Thermidor carried him up on its crest. He believed that the source of his strength lay in himself. The caste of upstarts who proclaimed his genius has quickly become corrupt and demoralized. The land of the October Revolution demands a different regime. The situation of the ruling clique does not allow it to have a rational policy. The madness lies not in Stalin but in the regime, which has exhausted all its possibilities. This explanation does not carry the shadow of moral justification for Stalin. He will leave the stage as one of the filthiest figures in human history.

This book was written in fragments, in varying circumstances. First it was to be an answer to the Zinoviev-Kamenev trial (August 1936). The internment of the author in Norway prevented the continuation of his work. I could resume the manuscript only when on board a tanker, crossing the Atlantic. In the hospitable land of Mexico, I had scarcely begun to put my papers in order when the Pyatakov-Radek trial was launched; this called for detailed analysis. While criticizing the Moscow frame-ups, I had at the same time to gather my material for the juridical investigation prepared by the New York committee for my defense. An important part of this book is a speech delivered to the Commission of Inquiry, which had come from New York to Mexico, in April, to hear my explanations. Finally, just as I was about to hand over the manuscript to the publishers, the news agencies announced the arrest and execution of the most distinguished generals of the Red Army. So the structure of the book follows closely the course of events. I add that over and over again, writing these pages, I have observed how limited is our vocabulary and the range of our feelings in the face of the enormity of the crimes being committed today in Moscow!
Esteemed Comrade:

I do not think that the questions which you asked me have a direct relationship to the investigations of the New York Commission and can have an influence on its conclusions. Nevertheless, I am fully prepared to reply to your questions in order to familiarize with my actual views all those who are interested.

Like many others, you see the source of evil in the principle “The end justifies the means.” This principle is in itself very abstract and rationalistic. It permits the most varied interpretations. But I am prepared to take upon myself the defense of this formula—from the materialistic and dialectical viewpoint. Yes, I consider that there are no means that are good or bad in themselves or in connection with some absolute suprahistorical principle. Those means that lead to raising the power of man over nature and liquidating the power of man over man are good. In this broad historical sense the means can only be justified by the end.

Does this not mean, however, that falsehood, treachery, betrayal are permissible and justified if they lead to the “end”? All depends on the nature of the aim. If the aim is the liberation of mankind, then falsehood, betrayal, and treachery can in no way be appropriate means. The Epicureans were accused by their opponents of sinking to the ideals of a pig when they advocated “happiness.” To which the Epicureans replied, not without foundation, that their opponents understand happiness... in a piggish way.

You make reference to Lenin’s words that a revolutionary party has the “right” to make its opponents hated and despised in the eyes of the masses. In these words you see a principled defense of amoralism. You forget, however, to point out where, in which political camp, are the representatives of lofty morals. My observations tell me that political struggle in general widely...
utilizes exaggeration, distortion, falsehood, and slander. The revolutionists are always the most slandered: in their time Marx, Engels, and their friends; later, the Bolsheviks, Karl Liebknecht, and Rosa Luxemburg; at the present time, the Trotskyists. The hatred of the possessors toward the revolution; the dull conservatism of the petty bourgeoisie; the conceit and superciliousness of the intellectuals; the material interests of the labor bureaucrats—all these factors combine in the hounding of the revolutionary Marxist. At the same time Messrs. Slanderers do not forget to be indignant at the amoralism of the Marxists. This hypocritical indignation is nothing but a weapon of the class struggle.

In the words quoted by you, Lenin merely wanted to say that he no longer considers the Mensheviks proletarian fighters and he makes it his task to make them hateful in the eyes of the workers. Lenin expressed his thought with his characteristic passion and made ambiguous and unworthy interpretations possible. But on the basis of the complete works of Lenin and his life's work I declare that this irreconcilable fighter was a most loyal opponent, for despite all exaggerations and extremes he always strove to tell the masses what is. The struggle of the reformists against Lenin, on the other hand, was thoroughly permeated with hypocrisy, falsehood, trickery, and frame-ups, under the guise of universal truths.

Your evaluation of the Kronstadt uprising of 1921 is basically incorrect. The best, most self-sacrificing sailors were completely withdrawn from Kronstadt and played an important role at the fronts and in the local soviets throughout the country. What remained was the gray mass with big pretensions (“We are from Kronstadt”), but without political education and unprepared for revolutionary sacrifice. The country was starving. The Kronstaders demanded privileges. The uprising was dictated by a desire to get privileged food rations. The sailors had cannon and battleships. All the reactionary elements, both in Russia and abroad, immediately seized upon this uprising. The White emigres demanded aid for the insurrectionists. The victory of this uprising could bring nothing but the victory of the counterrevolution, entirely independent of the ideas the sailors had in their heads. But the ideas themselves were deeply reactionary. They reflected the hostility of the backward peasantry toward the worker, the self-importance of the soldier or sailor in relation to “civilian” Petersburg, the hatred of the petty bourgeoisie for revolutionary discipline. The movement therefore had a counter-
revolutionary character, and since the insurgents took possession of the arms in the forts they could only be crushed with the aid of arms.

No less erroneous is your estimate of Makhno.\textsuperscript{305} In himself he was a mixture of fanatic and adventurer. He became the concentration of the very tendencies which brought about the Kronstadt uprising. The cavalry in general is the most reactionary part of the army. The equestrian despises the pedestrian. Makhno created a cavalry of peasants who supplied their own horses. These were not the downtrodden village poor whom the October Revolution first awakened, but the strong and well-fed peasants who were afraid of losing what they had. The anarchist ideas of Makhno (the ignoring of the state, nonrecognition of the central power) corresponded to the spirit of this kulak cavalry as nothing else could. I should add that the hatred for the city and the city worker on the part of the followers of Makhno was complemented by a militant anti-Semitism. At the very time when we were carrying on a life-and-death struggle against Denikin and Wrangel,\textsuperscript{306} the Makhnovists attempted to carry out an independent policy. Straining at the bit, the petty bourgeois (kulak) thought he could dictate his contradictory views to the capitalists on the one hand and to the workers on the other. This kulak was armed; we had to disarm him. This is precisely what we did.

Your attempt to conclude that Stalin’s frame-ups flow from the “amoralism” of the Bolsheviks is basically false. In the period when the revolution fought for the liberation of the oppressed masses it called everything by its right name and was in no need of frame-ups. The system of falsifications flows from the fact that the Stalinist bureaucracy fights for the privileges of the minority and is compelled to conceal and mask its real aims. Instead of seeking an explanation in the material conditions of historical development, you create the theory of the “original sin,” which suits the church but not the socialist republic.

Respectfully yours,

L. Trotsky
Question: Do you agree with Max Eastman that the experiment of socialism in Russia is at an end and would you sketch for us the successive steps by which the Soviet Union dropped overboard every vestige of socialism?

Answer: Permit me, ladies and gentlemen, a preliminary remark. In this same room, under the chairmanship of Mr. Dewey, the hearings of the Inquiry Commission took place. I had very often to say "my terroristic activities," "my life with Hitler," "my wrecking activity"; and my lawyer, Mr. Goldman from Chicago, who sat over by the window, interrupted me every time and said, your alleged alliance with Hitler, your alleged terroristic activities, because it was a strict report and by and by I learned to employ his cautious word. But one of my friends (you know friends are dangerous people) said Trotsky's alleged English. In the last four months my English did not become better, I regret very much, and the first thing and in the same manner as in the inquiry hearings I must ask your indulgence toward my alleged English.

The question itself. I disagree with my friend Max Eastman that it is the end of socialism. It is not so easy to find the beginning and the end in a historical process. It is a question of fight and the result of the fight will be seen later. I can only say that new factors arose which greatly endangered the possibility of building socialism in the Soviet Union. Eastman says in the same article that barring revolutionary events, the degeneration toward capitalism is inevitable. The question is to organize and help the progressive factors in the process against the reactionary forces.

Imagine a sick man or woman and the relatives ask me, as I am a doctor, about the situation, about the ill man or woman and I answer, barring the resistance of his organism and the scien-
tific intervention of medicine, he will die. It is not the answer of a doctor, it is an astrological answer.

The same concerns the Russian revolution. The October Revolution created certain premises of socialism. It is the new form of property, a new political power of a new class. It is necessary for the building of socialism and the development of new economic conditions that the level of productive forces be decisive. This level is too low. From the point of view of socialism, if you ask today if it is the end of socialism or not I would answer, the form of property created by the October Revolution persists and remains, the forms are deformed, but not annihilated; they exist. The productive forces are becoming higher. It is progress, but the political power has degenerated.

The question of the building of socialism and the transition period depends upon the state. The new state of socialism, when it will exist as socialism, as a socialistic society, will not need any intervention of the state; the state will disappear. The fact that the state must guide the development toward socialism indicates that socialism does not yet exist and, if the state degenerates, it is the same danger as if a captain of a ship became hostile to his passengers. If the interests of a new ruling caste are against socialism, the whole question of the building of socialism becomes problematic. This is the situation of the Soviet Union. If the toiling masses have the power, we are sure that their interests will push them in the direction of socialism. If, however, a new aristocracy, if a new privileged caste is crystallized and concentrates power in its hands, the danger is clear that the development toward socialism must be stopped because the new caste has every interest in fortifying and intensifying its position as a new ruling caste.

This is the situation in the Soviet Union. We have some premises for a new socialism. We have growth of the productive forces, and at the same time we have a new ruling stratum which is by its nature hostile to socialism. The question of whether it is the end or not depends upon the fate of the new ruling stratum. If the people overthrow this stratum, then it is not the end. It depends upon the activities in the country and those abroad whether the new ruling stratum succeeds in fortifying its position and dominates the people. If so, then it would be the end of socialism.

Q: What is your attitude toward the trials in Russia and the executions which took place?
A: The first thing I can say about my alleged crimes will appear in a publication of Harper in August, in a stenographic and verbatim report of the hearings here, and I can only recommend to anyone who has a sincere interest in my personal crimes, alleged or real, and the fate of the Soviet Union, to read this verbatim report. Here I can only say that the very fact of the Moscow trials is a very important social, historical symptom of sharp conflict between the new bureaucracy and the people. The fact that the new bureaucracy is forced to employ such means, unique in human history, shows that the position of this new aristocracy in a society that issued from the greatest revolution in history is very problematic and dangerous.

Some people believe sincerely that all the accusations are true, because our minds are lazy minds. We have recourse to historical precedents so far as we know them; imagine a new historical situation created by the greatest revolution, which can create a new situation for the ruling class and force it to employ extraordinary means against crimes; not alleged crimes, difficult for our minds to follow; it is easier to have confidence in Mr. Duranty, Louis Fischer, or Anna Louise Strong, agents of the GPU. If you have concrete questions regarding the trials I should be glad to answer.

Q: During the first trial the condemned persons confessed, it has been said, because of the promise made to them that their lives would be spared. During the second trial certainly there could be no hope for the condemned persons because of their knowledge of the fate of those involved in the previous trial. How do you account then for the confessions in the second trial by the individuals involved, with the certain knowledge that after confessing they would be executed?

A: This is an important question. This doubt with regard to the nature of the confessions is a product of a too rationalistic analysis of the psychology of the defendants. I will begin at the end. In the second trial several were condemned and shot, but not all. In the first trial all were shot. In the second trial four were saved. You know that if I should say before the trial to the defendants, “You are seventeen; thirteen will be shot, four will be saved; I will not say you will be saved, I will not say who the four will be”—it is a hope, it is a spark of hope, and everybody will try to save himself, especially if his mind and character are totally destroyed by long education by the great GPU. It is a fact that
the only people who are invited to confess are those who are previously demoralized by years of persecution and then, when I have seventeen such people, I say yes, we shot all in the first trial, but they were real criminals, every one was dangerous. But you, Mr. Radek, you are not a criminal, you must help us to save your life because for ten or twelve years you were a part of the ruling group and we can do anything we wish for you or to you and you can save your life and we have no interest in shooting you because you are not dangerous. This Mr. Radek is a journalist without any political influence and what interest could we have in shooting him? Under the condition that you help us we are ready to save you, but if you refuse, the executioners are ready to do their duty. And then he confesses. It is absolutely the same.

Everybody who came into the hands of the Inquisitors confessed. It was not fire or torture, but the methods were more psychological. I do not believe that Stalin and his former friend Yagoda, who is now considered a criminal, employed fire and iron. We are now in a more mild epoch and we learn such things from Freud, and it is possible to destroy the psychology of a very strong man, if he is absolutely isolated. If the whole press is a totalitarian press, if the judge or investigator is of the same mind as Mr. Durandy, Mr. Louis Fischer, and the foreign representatives of the ruling regime, the prisoners read the exact statement prepared for them in confessing. If the prisoner does not confess, his wife is arrested, his son is arrested, and again the investigator comes and says the fate of your wife and son depends on your confessing. The same thing is said to the son if he does not confess; then the investigator goes to the father and says, your son has confessed; will you confess? You know all the power is in the hands of the judge. It is not such a great art to produce such confessions when the man is without any hope.

Q: Are we to believe then, Mr. Trotsky, that all of the leaders of the October Revolution who were placed on trial were men without honor, without courage, without devotion to the cause for which they gave so much of themselves and that they were ready to perjure themselves and make false confessions to save their lives rather than stand up for their convictions?

A: Mankind is not divided into simple people and absolute heroes. There is a difference between a common man of the street and a man who plays a more of less heroic role in history. They are made from the same clay but one is more resistant than the
other. You know the resistance of materials; it is the same with 
human nature. The second answer I would give is that in order to 
be a hero in political activities it is necessary to have a perspec­
tive, a hope, an idea of a program. The people who confessed had 
long ago lost any individual ideas. They had long ago capitulated 
to the bureaucracy, not once, but many times. Those on trial were 
isolated from the external world, they were not strong enough 
theoretically to analyze the situation, they lost every perspective, 
and it was said that the bureaucracy was victorious and then 
those on trial said to themselves, what can we do in this 
situation? Fascism has spread its power over the world, our 
workers are more or less disillusioned and in a depressed mood, 
what can we do? We are helpless; we must capitulate before the 
bureaucracy. They lost the small support they had before. 

After their capitulation the bureaucracy said to them, it is not 
sufficient, friends, your capitulation, you must help us to exter­
minate totally all opposition. What could they do? If they refused, 
they were not devoted to the Soviet state and they would be shot. 
And then the poor isolated men said to themselves: we will 
sacrifice ourselves. I recognize in my capitulation that the Soviet 
state, as it is today under Stalin, is the only one hope. I recognize 
that the Opposition has no perspective, and if I refuse to confess, 
it would be only because of abstract moral considerations. Then 
they capitulated morally just as they had done before.

**Q:** What would have been the difference in Russia if you had 
been Lenin’s successor instead of Stalin, and what would have 
been your program?

**A:** This question cannot be answered realistically. It is not a 
pure accident that I am not the successor to Lenin. The reason is 
that after the revolution a new chapter began, the chapter of 
decline and degeneration, and the bureaucracy, following the 
instinct of a new ruling caste, ejected from its ranks everybody 
who represented the October Revolution. You see now the cleav­
age of the party, hundreds of thousands are expelled from the 
party, many of them arrested. It is not an accident; it is a new 
crystallization of social elements. The first crystallization was a 
revolutionary one; the new ruling caste is a reactionary one; the 
development is a historical law. It is not an accident that the 
new ruling caste found leaders who defended its interests, and my 
personal defeat was not personal but a defeat of the trend that I 
represent. It is not the result of a duel of two men, as the stupid
bourgeois journalist press asserts, or because I was not present at the funeral of Lenin, as the very intelligent Mr. Duranty states, but it is the result of a conflict between the bureaucracy and the revolutionary vanguard of the working classes. This is why I cannot answer this question abstractly, as I cannot go into conditions which exist now, but under other conditions we will try to do better things. With revolutionary conditions, with a new rise of the workers in the world, this will give the Russian working class much hope and perspective. Thus I cannot always analyze the situation until these events occur.

Q: Do you believe in a worldwide revolution as against a purely Russian revolution?

A: It is not a question of belief only. The interests of the new ruling stratum in the Soviet Union are conservative. The fight against my ideas began with a fight against the so-called permanent revolution. Many of you ladies and gentlemen know it. The average bureaucrat said: "We are accomplishing our revolution; what will Trotsky do with the permanent revolution? We will have our rest, and we will take advantage of the results of our revolution." And the strongest opinion was expressed by the people who did not participate in the October Revolution. Now, if you eliminate all of the high bureaucrats who were in the October Revolution, you will find that all the people who now occupy the most important positions were on the other side of the fence.

Mr. Troyanovsky, the ambassador in Washington, was a counterrevolutionary. I discussed with Lenin whether he should be arrested in 1920 or 1921. He was heard of only in 1921, when the outcome of the civil war was quite clear and the revolution began to distribute important posts; then there were no real sacrifices to be made. Now Mr. Troyanovsky is a representative of the revolution and I and my friends are considered counterrevolutionaries.

The present Russian ambassador in London, Maisky, was a representative of the White government forces during the civil war. When his army was defeated, he remained in isolation and by and by he became a terrible Bolshevist. Now he is a leader of the October Revolution.

All of the other ambassadors, except Kollontai, were on the other side of the fence. The same thing is true of all the higher stratum of the bureaucracy, with the exception of Stalin and a
few other people. When I read the Soviet newspapers, my feelings are mixed with irony. If you open Lenin’s works, they are here in this room, you will find Lenin’s works are very bitter. He describes these present leaders as rascals and with other idioms of contempt, I do not know the American way of expressing it, but the expressions in Russian are very concrete. Koltsov, now in Spain, was in the White camp during the civil war, and now he is the highest journalist represented in Russia and he accused me of being an agent of Hitler.

Stalin is another personality who took part in the revolution, but the bureaucrats need such a personality in authority, one with a genuine revolutionary past; and there are others of a like kind but they have a new kind of quasi-revolutionary character. Vyshinsky, the prosecutor, was in the Ukraine during the revolution and in the White Army against us as an officer. He is the man who sent all the Old Bolsheviks to their death. Because of the same leaders it was impossible for me to come into the position of Stalin.

Q: If it should become necessary to invoke the intervention of foreign powers to aid the true forces of socialism in Russia, would you favor such intervention?

A: The question is very important and very interesting. The first part of my answer follows; but the question supposes that I am in favor of genuine socialism and that in order to help toward genuine socialism, I am ready or could be ready to invoke foreign intervention. Please do not forget that I am accused of invoking foreign intervention, not in order to help genuine socialism but in order to guide Russia to the restoration of capitalism. And it is not an accident that the question is formulated here in such a manner. Why? Because in the Soviet Union, the bureaucracy could then say to the workers, Trotsky wishes a genuine socialism, more equality, more freedom of the people, and therefore he invokes foreign intervention for this purpose. A simple worker would say, it is a very doubtful thing, but Trotsky may be right. In Russia, however, this is not being said about me. In Russia the bureaucracy says to the workers that Trotsky wants to replace socialism with capitalism. The friends of the Soviet bureaucracy, they read my writings, they are more critical, and they answer Mr. Browder. But you know it is not so, it is not likely that Trotsky especially wishes capitalism. I cannot believe, says a good educated friend of the Soviet Union, I cannot believe that
Trotsky killed Kirov or wrecked the railroads. I cannot believe that Trotsky would become a friend of Japan. Then for these people a new invention takes place. Trotsky has his own ideas of a genuine socialism but, as a fanatic, he will employ every means and every crime for his genuine socialism. There are two versions, for internal and external use.

Now the second part of the question. We revolutionary Marxists were defeatists in the czarist regime and we said openly during the war we were for the defeat of the czarist army. The same was true of the revolutionary elements in Germany, with Karl Liebknecht and Otto Ruehle. The general staff and the GPU of that time accused us of being in alliance with foreign powers. Lenin was accused of being a German agent the same as myself, and I was arrested by the British authorities in Canada and detained in a concentration camp as an agent of Germany. Liebknecht and all his friends were accused of being agents of the czar. But we answered: We are for the defeat of the czar through the revolutionary action of the toiling masses. As the Germans are for the defeat of the Hohenzollerns they will not take any part in the war. A military defeat is not important for us, we are for the revolutionary victory. A revolutionary victory, in Russia as in Germany, will change the defeat into a victory for the toiling people.

That we of the Russian revolution can enter into an alliance with Germany or the Mikado is too stupid to believe. And now is it imaginable that not under a czarist regime, but under a degenerated state, a Soviet state (where socialism is not at an end, as your and my friend Max Eastman states, where socialism possibly still exists), that I will enter into an alliance with a Mikado or a Hitler? For what purpose? To establish the capitalists. I am not a bondholder in any capitalistic enterprises and all my life I have been more or less a socialist. So in the interests of genuine socialism I would solicit the help of a Mikado or a Hitler—it is too stupid a hypothesis to answer.

Q: Do you believe that the Soviet Union is still the greatest hope of the proletariat?

A: This is too abstract a formulation of the question. I will say that if we teach the workers not to believe in the Soviet bureaucracy; if we teach them everywhere, and especially in Spain now, to reject the domination of the Soviet bureaucracy; if we teach the
workers to stand on their own feet; then they cannot help but save the remnants of the Russian revolution and open a new perspective to the new socialism.

Q: Do you believe that the Stalin regime could be overthrown without the loss of the real revolution?

A: Not only do I believe it but I am absolutely sure of it. The fate of mankind and the fate of the Soviet people are bound up with an overthrow of the new ruling clique which dominates, oppresses, and exploits the people. We overthrew the czar and the Russian bourgeoisie; we will also overthrow the Stalin clique and liberate the October Revolution for a new future.

Q: Under what circumstances, if any, do you advise your followers to enter into a united front, as in France?

A: The question of a united front is totally falsified by the Comintern in the last two or three years. We Marxists were and are for the united front of workers against the exploiters; for the united front of workers with the exploited petty bourgeoisie, the petty artisan, against the banks and against the exploiters; but we are against the united front of workers and exploiters. The French Radical Socialist Party with Herriot, with Chautemps, is democratic in form, but in its essence it is a party of French capitalists; otherwise it would have been impossible for this party to have been in office so long. As a result, we see that the capitalists are very prosperous. If the Radical Socialist Party is for the oppressed people, then this party must act in favor of the people against the capitalists. This was not the case. The French united front is a capitalist party. Capitalists are very intelligent; they can use different instruments: they can use Hitler, they can use Mussolini, they can even use democratic parties for the same purpose as they do the French Radical Socialists. Our duty as socialists is to say we do not believe in the good formulas of Mr. Herriot because he is a representative of the capitalists, and if I enter a united front with him I help him to betray the toiling masses. If anyone really wants my advice, my answer is: I will enter into a united front only of workers and exploited masses against capital and the exploiters.

Q: What is your attitude toward the conflict in Spain?
A: I have expressed my opinion in articles and newspapers. My opinion was, from the beginning of the conflict, that the outcome of the Civil War will be decided only for 25 percent of the people, or even for 10 percent, by arms. For 75 percent, or even for 90 percent, it will be determined by a revolutionary program. I believe that during the first interview with Mr. Herring I gave him no hope of a true military victory of these so-called Republicans because their program is the same as that of Franco. A simple Spanish peasant sees large landholdings and asks: Why must I fight for democracy? He saw democracy in the past, but during the Civil War democracy does not exist. There is a very sharp military censorship and workers or peasants do not see any difference. From both sides it is a military regime. The social program is the same. This is the reason the peasants and the workers have become indifferent to the Civil War. I am not ready to become indifferent; even in this case I am for the victory of the Republican army, but it is not a question of my opinion. It is determined by the feeling of millions of poor, oppressed people that this is the revolution, and I say that the Republicans did everything they could to prepare their own defeat.

I repeat, we were victorious in our civil war not by our military genius but by our good revolutionary program. Every peasant, every worker, knew that it was a war for his freedom. In your Civil War I believe that the part of Grant was 25 percent and the part of Lincoln 75 percent. This is a very generous percentage for Grant. It was the program for the liberation of the slaves which assured the victory. It is good to have a good commander, but it is better to have a program.

Q: Do you agree with the disruptive tactics employed by the American Trotskyites within the Socialist Party?

A: Permit me not to enter into American policies. You know I declared in the press the first day I came to Mexico that I would not interfere in the politics of this country or any country with whom Mexico is a neighbor; I will do nothing which can create difficulties for the Mexican government. You know that Mexico is the only country where I can continue my literary activities and I highly appreciate the generosity of the Mexican government. In spite of some information given to American public opinion by the correspondent of Time, I have no point of view on American questions. I am a pupil, I am learning. I began with the language, with English and then Spanish. It is not possible to have a
concrete opinion without reading the daily press. I am now reading the daily press of the United States and Mexico. When I have an opinion I will communicate it to you.

Q: Going back to the Moscow trial, is it merely your opinion that perhaps four of the seventeen had been promised their lives, or is your statement based on facts?

A: Both. I do not have concrete information about the investigation of every individual defendant. Stalin or Vyshinsky did not confess as to what were their methods but we have now in Europe some people who escaped from the Soviet Union by the help of their ambassadors or by other means. We have Victor Serge, an author, Dr. Ciliga, a Yugoslav Communist, we have a German, Weiss, a Russian, Tarov, and others.312 A sailor was in the jail of the GPU in Leningrad, he was with others and with Ciliga, who met him at that time. The GPU asked him to confess that he participated in a plot against Stalin and if he confessed he would be set free. If not he would be shot. The man became mad in the prison and they freed him. There are many others.

The accusations of terrorism began not with the assassination of Kirov; they began in 1928 and 1929. The French say in order to prepare rabbit stew it is necessary to have a rabbit. History continues from 1929 until 1935; then they began organizing a terrorist plot to kill Kirov. Nikolaev was used. But in order to prepare this plot it was not possible to use only the agents of the GPU. It was necessary to find fresh elements. They found Nikolaev, who was ready to do anything. They used him. They gave him all of the means in order to stop him at the last moment, but he was sincere in his feeling and he fired too early. It was an accident produced by the machine of the GPU and they began to construct all of the story on that basis. They said: You are morally responsible for it.

It was in January 1935 that they (Zinoviev and Kamenev) were condemned to five years in prison. Then the public was acquainted with the details. It is a very elastic expression of moral responsibility. At the same time the press wrote that they were morally responsible. Really, they [the GPU] were in connection with Nikolaev; then they prepared their own conspiracy and evidence and by and by it was necessary to begin to educate the people. If Stalin and Vyshinsky had said "Shoot Kirov" five or six years before, they would have said, "No, it is a
reactionary policy." Stalin and they succeeded in 1935 by a series of trials. Stalin was not a reactionary as he is now, but a revolutionist. The bureaucracy created by the new privileged caste demoralized the leader. Such is the influence of the reactionary group.

Q: Can you be a little more specific about the condition of the Russian people under Stalin's bureaucracy?

A: It is absolutely correct that during the last ten years the productive forces are persistently growing and that the growth of the productive forces created the possibility to elevate the standard of living of the workers. That is not socialism. In capitalism we have had and still have similar growth. But this growth of the productive forces under capitalism was accomplished by a different organization of society. Nations became bigger and bigger and gave even to the workers a greater part of their national income, but the privileged strata received a lion's share of the spoils. A similar process is now going on in the Soviet Union.

There are no honest statistics given out in the Soviet Union. It is the greatest evidence against the bureaucracy in a socialist state that its statistics are falsified or colored. In a state which moves to socialism the statistics must be as clear as the air of spring. I affirm that there are no more dishonest statistics anywhere than in the Soviet Union. I have a thousand times more confidence in the statistics of every capitalist country than in the statistics of the Soviet Union, because the bourgeoisie is a class which openly possesses the means of production and the statistical reports are more or less open. It is impossible for the bourgeoisie in a democracy to conceal the numbers. Impossible because there is always the struggle of different parties, of different and opposing papers. In the Soviet totalitarian state there is only one party and it is possible for the bureaucracy to conceal its income. I estimate in my book that a privileged 15 percent of the population in Russia consumes at least 50 percent of the national income of the Soviet Union.

Q: Where did you get these statistics?

A: The falsification of the statistics is a complicated thing. If, however, you have experience in the matter and if you know the psychology of the people you can compare numbers given out at
the bottom with numbers at the top and establish the coefficient of falsification.

Q: We have been told that you differ very seriously from Stalin on the peasant and agricultural program. How do you differ and what has been the effect of the Russian peasant program?

A: Until '29, even '30, I was accused of ignoring the peasant in order to accelerate the industrialization of the country. There was a need to industrialize and tax the kulaks. With exaggeration they accused me not of heavily taxing the kulaks but of trying to exterminate them, even [of being] ready to exterminate the peasants in general. Until 1929 and 1930 the bureaucracy was very friendly with the rich peasants. Whenever a bureaucrat came into a village he looked for a good house and a good horse, which were exclusively owned by the kulaks. If he wanted to marry, he looked for a better-educated girl among the kulaks and then became the son-in-law of the kulak. It was not until 1929 and 1930 that they accused me of being an enemy of the peasants in general. But the rich peasant became richer and he regained his consciousness of power and he said, now I want more power in the state, more than the bureaucrat. The bureaucrat then became afraid that he was losing his power to the peasant aristocracy.

It was a fight between the bureaucrat and the rich peasants. It was a fight between two privileged strata of society. Both were absolutely terrible when they defended their new possessions. It was not a fight in favor of socialism but between two privileged strata. Then they began to accuse me of being the Little Father of the Russian kulaks. The result was that in 1931, 1932, 1933, the fate of the country was hanging in the balance. If at that time Hitler had come into power he could have taken possession of Russia almost without resistance. There was a great famine and millions of people were victims. This bureaucracy stated that this was the result of socialism. Not true! But it took place because of the development of a new petty-bourgeois caste.

Q: What do you consider is the influence of the present war and armament psychology on the Russian program?

A: It helps the bureaucracy. It is a very important thing. If you make a clear report of the situation in Russia you must consider the question which we have now, that with the growth of the
fascist movement, with the growth of the war danger and the growth of armaments, the Soviet bureaucracy becomes omnipotent. It is a parallelism of interest between the war reaction and the Soviet reaction. If we had an upsurge of a revolutionary social movement in the world, including in the fascist countries, the domination of the Soviet bureaucracy would be impossible. The Russian worker would not tolerate it. Now he says, what can I do? He is helpless. I have only the choice between Hitler and Stalin, what can I do? And he becomes paralyzed. Hitler helps Stalin, not me. I do not say that because of my feelings but because history will prove that Stalin helps Hitler and Hitler helps Stalin.

**Q:** Is there any correspondent who gives a fair picture of the situation in Russia today? Would you say Chamberlin, Fischer, Strong, Duranty do?\(^{313}\)

**A:** Unfortunately, I am not sufficiently informed. I read regularly one paper, the *New York Times*, and clippings from other papers not so regularly, and I do not care to have the responsibility of recommending any correspondent. But the situation of a correspondent in the Soviet Union is very difficult. It is difficult for a correspondent to know the truth. Even if he knows the Russian language he has a very narrow circle of observation. If he begins his own investigations he becomes immediately suspected and he loses the possibility to approach the authorities. Radek was the educator of Duranty. He speaks English and is very adroit and an excellent journalist. He knows the psychology of the correspondents and he had the job of educating the foreign journalist. He accomplished his task with success. A journalist must be a hero of truth to resist the influences in the Soviet Union. If he writes favorably he has all the possibilities for traveling in the country. He is invited to the diplomatic dinners, the luncheons. He is a human being generally without any serious moral education. By and by he becomes an instrument of the bureaucracy and then because of professional pride he denies his previous opinions. For ten years he has said very good things. He must continue in order not to lose his professional reputation, and then the trials come and in order not to lose the respect of the authorities he continues as an instrument of the bureaucracy. If you would have a personification of two periods of the Russian revolution, it is John Reed for the first chapter and Walter Duranty for the second.\(^{314}\)
Q: Some people have held that the new constitution of Russia is a new Magna Carta. How do you feel in regard to the new constitution?

A: The constitution had the purpose not only of deceiving a people but also of increasing the friends of the Soviet Union and giving the Communist leaders the opportunity for deception. The essence is absolutely contrary. It is the stabilization of bureaucratic absolutism, because for the first time the absolutism of the party is expressed textually. The party is no longer the party of the masses but a machine of the bureaucracy. Only the bureaucracy has the power, but in order to legalize the absolutism of the bureaucracy, the new constitution introduces the plebiscite the same as with Hitler. Hitler has also the voting of all of the population. You have the Weimar constitution now living and existing in Germany. Hitler did not change the old democratic constitution but only broke the backbone and said now it is all right. He organized from time to time general elections but he names the candidates and everyone who is against the candidate is shot. That is the fascist plebiscite; the new constitution is an attempt to continue absolutism.

Q: Insofar as the ordinary working man is concerned, do you believe that there is no choice between Stalin and Hitler?

A: If you would say barring the Russian development, there is no choice. If Franco is victorious in Spain, if de la Rocque is victorious in France, if Mosley is victorious in England, then the Russian workers would not have a choice between Stalin and Hitler or others, but in that case Stalin will fall and be replaced by a genuine Russian fascist.

Q: I have a friend who was thrown out of Germany and who believes that the next political and military coalition will be between Russia and Germany against Asia.

A: It depends upon the same factors I characterized before. For Hitler it is a question of conquest because German capitalism cannot exist as it is now without raw materials. The Soviet Union possesses enough territory and enough raw materials so it is not necessary to have a territorial conquest. It is possible to push Stalin into the arms of Hitler. Everybody feels that war is inevitable, even firm pacifists proclaim it openly. Everybody
knows that war is inevitable but no one knows who will fight with whom. Because the world situation is not stable as it was before the great war [World War I]. There was an Entente, an alliance, and other combinations. Now you have a combination between Italy and Germany. It is a very problematic alliance because Hitler wishes a friendship with England and Mussolini hates England. The identical interests of Germany and Italy are questionable. The relations between Great Britain and France are also questionable. The first shot will be the appeal to the powers to find their places. In the last war it was so with Italy. Italy looked for her place in the war. It was with Greece during the war, but the United States waited for the moment to intervene. But the most important belligerents knew before the war who would fight with whom. Now no one knows yet.

Q: You are speaking of war between countries. What about working people, will they go to war?

A: I believe at the beginning they will go because the Second International and the Third International are now instruments for hindering the workers' opposition to war. The pacifists in the last war were the best supporters of the military machine. Only independent working classes can oppose the war. From the other side I am sure, and I believe many arguments are in favor of this opinion, that the reaction of the working classes during the war will come earlier than in the last war because the memory of the older generation remains. The next war will be ten times more terrible than the last one for the civil population too. All of this will create a terrible revolution and opposition to the war. The only one factor now working toward peace is the fear among the ruling classes of the revolutionary consequences of the war.
This book was written at a time when the might of the Soviet bureaucracy seemed unshakable and its authority incontestable. The danger represented by fascist Germany naturally turned the sympathies of democratic circles in Europe and America toward the Soviet Union. English, French, and Czechoslovakian generals attended Red Army maneuvers and praised its officers, soldiers, and technical equipment. This praise was fully deserved. The names of Generals Yakir and Uborevich, then in command of the Ukrainian and Belorussian military districts, were referred to respectfully in the world press at that time. Marshal Tukhachevsky, it was expected with good reason, would soon be made a generalissimo. At the same time, numerous “left” journalists—not only gentlemen of the Duranty type, but even completely well-meaning people—were writing with rapture about the new Soviet constitution, “the most democratic in the world.”

If this book had appeared immediately after it was written, many of its conclusions would have seemed paradoxical or, even worse, dictated by personal bias. But certain “accidental factors” in the fate of the author resulted in the book appearing with considerable delay in several countries. In the meantime the succession of Moscow trials has been played out, and has shaken the world. The entire Bolshevik Old Guard has been physically exterminated. Among those shot were founders of the party, participants in the October Revolution, builders of the Soviet state, leaders of industry, heroes of the civil war, and the best generals of the Red Army, including the above-named Tukhachevsky, Yakir, and Uborevich. In each of the separate republics of the Soviet Union, in every region, and every local district, the blood purge goes on, no less savage than in Moscow, but more anonymous. To the accompaniment of mass shootings, wiping
the revolutionary generation from the face of the earth, preparations are underway for elections that will be "the most democratic in the world." In reality, what lies ahead is a plebiscite of the kind whose secrets are so well known to Hitler and Goebbels. Whether Stalin receives 100 percent or "only" 98.5 percent of the vote will depend not on the population but on the instructions handed down from above to the local upholders of the Bonapartist dictatorship. The coming Moscow "Reichstag" will have as its assignment—one may predict ahead of time—to enthrone Stalin's personal power, whether it be with the title of president with special powers, chief for life, permanent consul, or—who knows?—emperor. At any rate the overly zealous foreign "friends of the Soviet Union," singing their hymns of praise to the Stalin "constitution," risk placing themselves in an awkward position. We offer our condolences in advance.

The extermination of the revolutionary generation and the ruthless purge of the youth testify to the great severity of the contradiction between the bureaucracy and the people. In this book we tried to give a social and political analysis of this contradiction at a time when it had not yet burst so violently to the surface. The conclusions which just a year ago might have seemed improbable now stand before humanity in all their tragic reality.

Some official "friends," whose zeal is paid for in sound ten-ruble notes as well as in foreign currency, have had the indecency to reproach the author with the charge that this book lends aid to fascism. As if the bloody repression and judicial frame-ups would not be known to world reaction without this book! In fact the Soviet bureaucracy is today one of the most malignant detachments of world reaction. To equate the October Revolution and the peoples of the USSR with the ruling caste is to betray the interests of the workers and to aid reaction. Whoever wishes to truly serve the cause of human emancipation must have the courage to face the truth no matter how bitter it may be. This book tells the truth about the Soviet Union. It is inspired by irreconcilable hostility toward the new caste of oppressors and exploiters. And thereby it serves the interests of the workers and the cause of socialism.

The author trusts firmly in the sympathy of sincere and thoughtful readers in the countries of Latin America!
ON THE THRESHOLD OF A NEW WORLD WAR

August 9, 1937

The Uncertainty of International Alignments

Each day the press peers out toward the world horizon, looking for smoke and flames. In order to draw up a list of the possible hearths of war, it would be necessary to refer to a whole primer of geography. At the same time, international antagonisms are so complicated and confused that no one can predict the point at which the war will break out, not to speak of the alignments of the belligerent parties. There will be shooting, but who will shoot at whom, nobody knows.

In 1914, the chief factor of uncertainty was Great Britain. She was preoccupied with "equilibrium" until she helped Europe to plunge into an abyss. The second unknown factor was Italy, which for thirty-five years was in alliance with Germany and Austria-Hungary, only in the end to turn her guns on her allies. A mighty but distant sphinx was the United States, which entered the war only in its final, decisive stage. The little states added yet more to the number of unknown quantities in the equation. On the other hand, the Austro-German and Franco-Russian alliances were from the outset stable factors in the situation, determining the axis of war activities. All the other participants were obliged to align themselves along this axis.

Today there remains not the slightest remnant of the stability of camps of the "good old days." It is incomparably more difficult than before August 1914 to submit Britain's policies—determined by the contradictions between empire interests in the various parts of the world—to a prognosis. In every question, His Majesty's Government is compelled to fall in line with that dominion which manifests the greatest centrifugal tendencies.

The imperialist expansion of Italy led that country to the necessity of liberating herself once and for all "friendly"
British tutelage. Mussolini’s successes in Africa and the growth of Italian armaments signify an immediate threat to the vital interests of Great Britain. Contrariwise, Italy’s uncertain friendship signifies in more lengthy perspective an instrument for Germany in the struggle to secure Great Britain’s benevolent neutrality. Germany could renounce this stage on the road to world domination only in case of an agreement with the Soviet Union. Such a variant is also not excluded, but it remains in the background as a reserve. Hitler is fighting against the Franco-Soviet alliance, not out of principled hostility to communism (not a single serious person any longer believes in Stalin’s revolutionary role!), but because he wants a free hand for an agreement with Moscow against Paris if an agreement with London against Moscow does not materialize. But neither is the Franco-Soviet pact a factor of stability. As distinct from the old Franco-Russian military alliance, it is but a nebulous blur. French policy, ever dependent upon Great Britain, vacillates between conditional rapprochement with Germany and unconditional friendship with the USSR. The longer the time, the greater will be the amplitude of this vacillation.

The situation is still further complicated by the middle and small states. They are like heavenly satellites, not knowing around which planet they should revolve. Poland is allied with France on paper, but in practice collaborates with Germany. Rumania formally belongs to the Little Entente but is drawn by Poland, not unsuccessfully, into the orbit of German-Italian influence. Belgrade’s growing rapprochement with Rome and Berlin evokes ever-increasing anxiety not only in Prague but also in Bucharest. On the other hand, Hungary fears, with complete justification, that her territorial aspirations will be the first to fall victim to the friendship between Berlin, Rome, and Belgrade.

They all want peace, especially those who can expect no good from war: the Balkan countries, the little Baltic states, Switzerland, Belgium, Holland, the Scandinavian states. Their ministers come together at conferences, conclude agreements, and make speeches about peace. The whole thing resembles a puppet show on the crater of a volcano. Not one of the minor powers will be allowed to remain on the sidelines. They will all shed blood. The idea which only yesterday seemed absurd, that the Scandinavian countries might fight among themselves, is today becoming a probability. Germany need only find support in Sweden, and Great Britain in Denmark, and the Scandinavian “sisters” will
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discover themselves in antagonistic camps. On the condition, naturally, that Great Britain and Germany fight each other.

The United States is now anxious above all to steer clear of the European conflagration. But it was exactly the same in 1914. It is impossible to be a great power, much less the greatest of powers, with impunity. It is easier to decree neutrality than to preserve it in practice. Moreover, apart from Europe, there is also the Far East. During the years of world industrial crisis, which paralyzed the will of the majority of great powers, Japan definitively conquered Manchuria and has now occupied the northern provinces of China, threatening a further dismemberment of that great and unfortunate country. The internal political crisis of the USSR, the decapitation of the Red Army and Moscow’s lamentable capitulation in the question of the Amur Islands, gave free rein to the Japanese military clique. The fate of the entire Far East is now in question.

The Washington government is changing its course. The concentration of the American navy in the Pacific, the construction of dreadnoughts and long-range bombers, the development of aerial communications in the Pacific, the program of fortification of ocean islands, prepare all too eloquently for a renunciation of the policy of voluntary isolation. But in the Far East as well, one can still not predict with assurance the combination of forces. Japan proposes to England an “entente cordiale” for collaboration in China, in order little by little to reduce the British lion to rabbit’s rations. Before accepting or rejecting this proposal, however, Great Britain intends to enlarge her navy, fortify the Singapore base, and erect new fortifications in Hong Kong. In the East as well as in the West, Great Britain remains the principal factor of uncertainty. In the East as well as in the West, war alliances are taking shape far more slowly than war conflicts are maturing.

The “wait and see” policy was sensible as long as this remained Great Britain’s privilege before a Europe broken into two camps. But when all the states without exception are forced to adopt the expectation “betray or be betrayed,” diplomatic relations become an insane game in which the players lead each other around with blindfolded eyes and revolvers in hand. The great as well as the small powers will obviously have no choice but to arrange their military alliances hurriedly after the first shots of the new great war have been fired.
Pacifism, Fascism, and War

It was not long ago that pacifists of various stripes believed or pretended to believe that a new war could be prevented with the aid of the League of Nations, show congresses, referendums, and other theatrical enterprises, the majority of which were financed from the budget of the USSR. What has remained of these illusions? Of the seven great powers, three—the United States, Japan, and Germany—are out of the League of Nations; a fourth, Italy, is destroying the League from within. The other three find it ever less necessary to cover their special interests with the League label. The melancholy partisans of the Geneva institution, yesterday the "hope of mankind," have reached the conclusion that the only way to "save" the League consists in not confronting it with any important questions. In 1932, when the famous disarmament conference was opened, the European armies numbered 3,200,000 men. In 1936, this number had already risen to 4,500,000 and continued to grow uninterruptedly.

What has happened to Lord Cecil's referendums? Who will receive the next Nobel Peace Prize? The Geneva disarmament policy has ceased to be even a worthy object of caricature.

The initiative for the new armament fever belongs to fascist Germany, which, with that infallible instinct which sometimes accompanies violent insanity, succeeded in wrenching itself free from the shackles of Versailles. But the inevitability of a new worldwide collision appears most convincingly in the case of England. The conservative pacifism of that country was inspired until recently by the desire to expend as little as possible for the protection of old conquests. However, the humiliating defeats of British policy in Manchuria, Ethiopia, and Spain demonstrated to Baldwin and his colleagues that one cannot live indefinitely on the inertia of past glory. Hence the almost panicky reflex of self-preservation, expressing itself in the most grandiose of all military programs. Great Britain is preparing to become, during the next years, the mightiest power on the sea and in the air—in the name of peace and the status quo! But thus she gives an irresistible stimulus to sea and air armament on the other side of the Atlantic. This is the road of the most satiated, "peaceful," and "democratic" country, which headed the disarmament conference: from free trade—to protectionism; and from pacifism—to armaments. Where, then, are the terrestrial forces which might prevent the passage from armament to war?
But can it not be hoped that resistance will come from the depths, from the working masses, through general strikes, insurrections, revolutions? Theoretically this is not excluded. But if hopes and fears are not to be mistaken for reality, such a perspective must be regarded as not very probable. The working masses of the whole world are now weighed down by the terrible defeats which they suffered in Italy, Poland, China, Germany, Austria, Spain, partly in France, and in a number of small countries. The old Internationals—the Second, the Third, and the Trade Union International—are closely tied to the governments of the democratic states and participate actively in the preparation of war “against fascism.” To be sure, the Social Democrats as well as the “Communists” are defeatists so far as Germany, Italy, and Japan are concerned. But this merely signifies that they are fighting against war only in those countries where they have not the slightest influence. In order to rise against militarism, the masses would have first of all to reject the tutelage of the official Internationals. This is not a simple task. It will not be accomplished in a day or a month. At present, in any event, the political awakening of the proletariat proceeds more slowly than the preparation of the new war.

As justification for their militaristic and chauvinistic policies, the Second and Third Internationals propagate the idea that the new war will have as its mission the defense of freedom and culture against the fascist aggressors: the “peaceful” countries headed by the great democracies of the Old and New Worlds, on the one hand, and Germany, Italy, Austria, Hungary, Poland, Japan on the other. Such a classification evokes doubts even from a purely formal point of view. Yugoslavia is no less a “fascist” state than is Hungary, and Rumania is no nearer to democracy than Poland. Military dictatorship dominates not only in Japan but also in China. Stalin’s political system more and more approaches the system of Hitler. In France, fascism can sweep democracy away even before the new war. The “People’s Front” governments are in any event doing everything within their power to facilitate such a change. In the present world system, as we see, it is not so easy to separate the wolves from the lambs!

As far as the fight of “democracy” against fascism is concerned, it would be better to look at the Iberian peninsula than to speculate about the future. At first, the democracies subjected the legal government of Spain to a blockade in order to avoid giving Italy and Germany any pretext for intervention. And when
Mussolini and Hitler dispensed with the use of "pretexts," the "democracies" hastened, in the interests of "peace," to capitulate before the intervention. Spain is being devastated. Meanwhile, the democratic representatives divert themselves with discussions as to the best methods—of further nonintervention. The Moscow government tries in vain to cloak with radical grimaces its participation in the shameful and criminal policy which facilitated General Franco's tasks and consolidated the general positions of fascism. Spain's mineral riches, and not her political principles, will determine tomorrow her relation with the other countries. A bitter but really invaluable lesson for the future!

The above-mentioned classification of states has its historical meaning, but not at all that which is indicated in cheap pacifist scribblings. The first to arrive at fascism or other forms of dictatorship were those countries whose internal contradictions had reached the greatest sharpness: countries without their own raw materials, without sufficient access to the world market (Germany, Italy, Japan); countries which suffered defeat in the last war (Germany, Hungary, Austria); finally, countries in which the crisis of the capitalist system is complicated by precapitalist survivals (Japan, Poland, Rumania, Hungary). All these historically backward or unfavored nations are naturally the least satisfied with the political map of our planet. Their foreign policies have, therefore, a more aggressive character than those of the privileged countries, which are concerned above all with the preservation of the loot they have already acquired. Hence arises the very conditional division of states into partisans and adversaries of the status quo, the fascist and semifascist countries being, for the most part, in the latter alignment.

But that does not at all mean that precisely these two camps will fight each other. In the event of a new world conflict the program of the status quo will disappear without leaving a trace; it will then be a question of repartitioning the world. The present fascist adversaries of the status quo will be found in both of the fighting camps, since the choice of allies will be determined not by political sympathies but by geographical position, by economic relations, and especially by assessments of the relation of forces. Hitler would be happy to seize France's colonies in alliance with Great Britain, even in a direct war with Italian fascism. For his part, Mussolini may "betray" Hitler, and in all probability will betray him, just as the Italian government in 1914 betrayed Hohenzollern and Habsburg. "Sacred egoism" will triumph in the relation between the fascist countries as well.
To be sure, the totalitarian state is the regime best fitted to the nature of present-day "totalitarian" war. But this means only that the present democracies will, during the world war and possibly even on its eve, inevitably approach the fascist regime, if they do not give way to it entirely. A rapprochement of the political systems, however, would not at all mean a reconciliation of hostile interests. A fascist France would hardly divide its colonies with Hitler. If the excellent Sir Oswald Mosley were ruling over the British Isles—historically this is not excluded—he would be no more inclined than the present government to cede domination in the Mediterranean to Italy. In a word, the composition of the belligerent camps as well as the progress of the war itself will be decided not by political, racial, or moral criteria but by imperialist interests. All else is dust thrown into the eyes of the peoples.

**When Will the War Come?**

The forces making for an acceleration of war, as well as those making for its postponement, are so numerous and entangled that it would be too risky to venture a prophecy with calendar in hand. However, certain elements for a prognosis are available. In London, there is now an inclination to believe that the most dangerous period will come to a close by 1939, when the British armed forces, intended for the preservation of "peace," will have risen to a sufficient degree. From this point of view the war danger is "decreasing"—in direct ratio to the increase in armaments.

But in this case will not Germany or Italy take advantage of the remaining period of grace to intentionally provoke a war in the next twenty-four months? Many circumstances permit a negative reply. The decisive word rests not with Italy but with Germany. But Germany is not ready. To be sure, the living traditions of Prussian militarism, together with the high level of German technology, allow Hitler to carry on the work of armament at tempos such as history has never yet known. But even the most totalitarian government cannot perform miracles. In the interim between the Versailles peace and the Nazi victory the young German generations did not pass through the barracks. There are no ready reserves in the country. In order to submit some millions of men to even elementary instruction, many cadres of officers are needed. To work out the most complete types of war machines, to step up their mass production, to create
reserves of necessary supplies, to educate new cadres of commanders, to mold the human raw material—all this requires time. It is precisely because of its feverish growth that Hitler's war apparatus must at each step expose disproportions and gaps. Today, the German authorities certainly estimate their army's readiness for war far lower than do their adversaries. At least two years are still needed before the general staff of Berlin relaxes its restraint upon the noble impatience of the political leaders.

The status of armaments, however, is only one of the factors of war, and not the principal one. A moment at which all the countries will feel themselves “sufficiently” armed will never arrive. Taken by itself, the growth of armaments drives naturally toward war and not toward peace. The army, however, is not an end in itself but an instrument of politics which, in turn, is an instrument of material interests. The blow which will set off the new war will in all likelihood be struck by a shift in the economic conjuncture.

Let us remember that a tremendous and long-drawn-out industrial rise was succeeded in 1913 by a crisis which even at that time possessed not only a conjunctural but also a structural character: Europe's productive forces were hemmed in by the walls of national frontiers. The crisis of 1913 produced among the ruling classes a nervous tension in which expectation and caution were quickly dissolved. As a result, war broke out in 1914. To be sure, the last crisis (1929-33) did not provoke war tremors. The optimism engendered by the previous “prosperity” was so blinding that the ruling classes obstinately insisted on regarding the crisis as an unpleasant episode. The illusions evaporated only gradually, along with the paralysis of trade and the growth of the army of unemployed. The foreign policies of these years—with the exception of the sickest countries, Germany, Japan, and Italy—were uncertain, indecisive, and feeble.

An entirely different effect on internal as well as external policies will be produced by the new crisis, for whose arrival, all things considered, one will not have to wait very long. The present economic revival, along with a disorganized world market, a disturbed currency system, a chronic army of unemployed, inspires confidence in no one. A conjuncture which is supported mainly by military orders signifies a wastage of the fundamental substance of economy and therewith the preparation of a more profound and painful crisis. Today, the ruling classes are unable to avoid taking account of this. The nearer the fulfillment of armament programs, the less room there will be for
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illusions, the greater will be the nervousness which seizes the masters of destiny.

But perhaps the rulers are still able to defer the crisis, or, what is more important, to restrict it to the proportions of a passing conjuncture and not of a social catastrophe? This would require at least the razing of customs barriers, the restoration of the monetary gold unit, the regulation of the problem of international obligations, and an increase in the buying power of the masses by placing the armament machine in reverse. All but the blind will recognize that there is not the slightest reason to hope for such a miracle.

The commercial representatives of forty nations assembled in Berlin at the end of June to hear Goering's hymn in praise of autarchy.321 The pious speeches of some delegates about the advantages of a liberal economic regime sounded like a mockery of reality. Will those countries which are rich in raw materials be willing to furnish them to their adversaries for purposes of war? Will the colonial empires cede a part of their dominions to the unfavored nations? Will those countries which have concentrated gold in their hands bother themselves with a disinterested treatment of the disrupted monetary systems of their rivals? These simple questions contain complete answers in themselves. The more reactionary the role played by national barriers in the system of world economy, the more bitterly are they preserved. Not everybody sings aloud the praises of autarchy, but everybody does attempt to hide in its illusory shadow. "Autarchy," however, does not at all imply self-sufficiency within national boundaries. As evidenced especially by the programs of Germany and Italy, autarchy needs—conquests of colonies and foreign countries in general. The doctrine of a closed economy is only the premise of imperialist aggression.

The war danger, arising from economic difficulties, renders these difficulties still sharper. Every schoolboy knows today that the breaking off of diplomatic relations, the official declaration of war, and respect for neutrality represent the same anachronism as hoopskirts and minuets. All governments stand on guard. The tension in times of peace, on occasion assuming such forms as were formerly possible only by a rupture of diplomatic relations, is least of all favorable to economic prosperity. Everything points to the fact that the coming crisis will far surpass the crisis of 1929 and the ensuing years. In these conditions the diplomacy of watchful waiting will become impossible. The "New Deal" policy of blood transfusion, after the American example, is hardly suited
to Europe. The new crisis will pose all questions on a knife-edge and force the rulers onto the path of decisive measures which will be indistinguishable from acts of desperation.

Thus war may break out toward the end of the next three to four years, that is, precisely at the time when the fulfillment of the armament programs should "assure peace." Naturally, we indicate this date only for purposes of general orientation. Political events may hasten or defer the moment of the explosion. But its inevitability is rooted in the dynamics of economy, in the dynamics of social antagonisms, as well as in the dynamics of armaments.

The Strategy of the Coming War

On the eve of 1914, the dominant military doctrine was that of a short, annihilating blow. This doctrine cost France especially dearly. The "blow" stretched over fifty-two months. After the evil genius of mankind had invented incomparable machines of destruction, the armies, equipped with them, were forced to burrow into the earth like moles. But the more despotically the trenches shackled operative activities during the war, the more audaciously did military ideas rise to their peak after the peace of Versailles. The humiliation suffered by strategy, as well as the astronomical costs of the mutual extermination of peoples, impelled military fantasy to search for more brilliant and less expensive methods. Hence the new schools: one sought to replace the armed people by a limited army of specialists; another transported the center of gravity into midair; a third based its hopes on the death-ray. General J. F. Fuller seriously calculated that the use of electrical energy would make it possible to eliminate the vulnerable point in all wars of the past, namely, the human factor. General von Seeckt reached the conclusion that in the competition between human masses and technology the latter would emerge victorious. Hence the theory of a small but highly qualified army, which, like a torrent of steel and fire, will burst into the enemy country. In reality, the opposition between "technology" and "masses," or, as it is sometimes put, between "quality" and "quantity," represents a lifeless abstraction. If a mechanized army of 200,000 men can accomplish miracles, then two such armies can accomplish not twice but four times as many miracles. The law of numbers retains its force on the highest technical level as well. To speak more simply, the warring nation
will be obliged to set in motion the largest possible number of soldiers equipped to the highest attainable degree. But it is precisely for this reason that it is impossible to hope for an "annihilating blow."

The doctrine of a small army, set forth by von Seeckt, was rooted not in the material conditions of warfare but in the limiting conditions of the Versailles peace. When the latter fell away Hitler introduced compulsory military service. In England, where traditions and finances prevent the introduction of general military service, there are still theoreticians of man's replacement by machines. However, the first day of war will be the day of conscription for England. The strategists of Rome and Berlin amuse themselves and the people with the prospect of air attacks which will at one stroke destroy the enemy's vital centers. The source of this doctrine lies in the fact that neither Rome nor Berlin possesses gasoline or gold for a lengthy war. Along with glorification of future air raids, the same Goering boasts of his antiaircraft defense, which is to dampen the enemy's desire to undertake attacks from the air. The trouble, however, is that the other countries are in turn also developing aviation and antiaircraft defense! The air duel may yield great tactical successes but no strategical solution.

No better founded is the hope that some exclusive technical “secret” will permit the sudden upsetting of an unprepared enemy. Each new discovery simultaneously stimulates the thinking of inventors in all civilized countries. War technology, more than any other, has an international character: industrial war concerns and espionage are paying ample attention to it. General staffs may keep secrets from their own peoples but not from the general staffs of other countries.

No army can hold in reserve, together with canned foodstuffs, prepared chemical and electrical wonders. Every invention is subjected to a verification which only war can furnish. The inauguration of mass production of a new war machine requires a year and even two. For this very reason one cannot expect at the outset of the war employment of any "decisive" technical means untested in the past. Eclecticism goes incomparably further in warfare than in economy. The next war will, generally speaking, commence on the level at which the last war stopped. New means will be successively added to the old, making the army heavier and more numerous.

In the domain of capitalist economy, where the volume of production is limited by the purchasing power of the population,
machines begin at a certain level to crowd out men. In warfare, this limitation is nonexistent: men are exterminated independently of their "purchasing power." Despite auto transport, modern armies require, as in the time of Napoleon, one horse for every three men. In absolute figures this means an army of millions of horses. Similarly, despite the mechanization of all branches of warfare, the number of men servicing war machines is not diminishing but increasing.

War operations in recent times (in the Far East, Ethiopia, Spain), notwithstanding their fragmentary character, sufficed to recall strategical thought from heaven to earth. The closer the war danger draws, the more official strategy returns to tested models. All the sea powers are now busy with the renewal of old or the construction of new, gigantic battleships, which in the first years after the last war were counted in the category of the ichthyosaurus. It is entirely possible that in this case the pendulum is swinging back too far. In naval matters, where the machine despotically dominates man, strategical thinking is especially conservative and sluggish.

But however it may be with the dreadnoughts, England will again be obliged to defend herself on the European continent. Men live, not on the sea, nor in the air, but on the earth. Sea and air fleets represent only auxiliary instruments for the invasion of foreign or the guarding of home territory. The outcome of the war will be decided on dry land. The army, at least for a European or worldwide war, remains the principal force of attack and defense. The basis of the army is the infantry. The more numerous the infantry, other conditions being equal, the greater are the chances of victory. The next war will have a totalitarian character, not only in the sense that its operations will develop simultaneously on the earth, under the earth, on the water, under the water, and in the air, including the stratosphere, but also in the sense that it will draw into its vortex the whole population, all its material as well as spiritual riches. One part of humanity will battle on a front of three dimensions, the other will manufacture munitions, go hungry, and perish at the "rear." Despite the conquest of the ether, the stratosphere, and the North Pole, despite the death-ray and other apocalyptic horrors, the armies will sit in the mire just as in the past, and perhaps even more deeply.

There remain, naturally, the differences in economic and technological levels between the various countries. The advan-
tages of a higher culture are felt with special force in time of war. Although a "secret" weapon may be known to all participants, their capacities for manufacturing this secret weapon in mass quantities will be unequal. As in the last war, however, such differences will be largely neutralized by the alignment of different countries in each of the belligerent camps. Thus Germany's too evident preponderance over France would provoke a redoubled effort on the part of Great Britain and might at the same time frighten Italy, rousing her to watchfulness and even to a rapprochement with France. If one further admits that Germany's military-technological superiority would assure her important successes in the fight against Great Britain, or vice versa, the United States would again be forced to depart from its expectant neutrality. The interdependence of all parts of our planet is too great to hope for a localized war denouement. No matter where or for what reason the war starts, important successes for one of the great powers would not mean the end of the war but only the extension of its radius. Fear of victory would provoke an enlargement of the hostile coalition. The war spiral will inevitably draw in our whole planet. The only point that may remain neutral is the South Pole; the North Pole will, in any case, serve as an operating base for military aviation.

Left to its own logic, a world war would, with the present conditions of technology, signify for mankind a complicated and costly method of suicide. The same goal could be reached more simply by confining all mankind in a cage with the approximate dimensions of one cubic kilometer and submerging this cage in one of the oceans. For the task of dealing such a "short and decisive blow," modern technology would be entirely adequate, while it would undoubtedly be cheaper than the military program of any great power.

**War and Revolution**

In war, the big and the strong obtain predominance over the small and the weak. Geographical location, territorial dimensions, size of population, resources of war materials, reserves of gold, and technology assure the United States of a tremendous predominance over other countries. If one admits that the world war will proceed to its natural end, that is, to the complete exhaustion of the belligerent camps, one cannot escape the conclusion that domination over our planet will fall to the lot of
the United States. However, domination over decadence and destruction, over hunger, epidemics, and savagery would inevitably signify the decline of America's own civilization. To what extent is such a perspective real? A protracted decay of humanity as a result of the new war is not excluded. But fortunately it is not the only prospect. Long before the mutual destruction of peoples has proceeded to its end, the political and social machinery of each country will be put to the test. The work of war may be cut short by revolution.

I am little inclined to share the hope that the proletariat will be able at the necessary moment to resist with force the commencement of war operations. On the contrary, in the months of approaching war danger as well as during the first period of war, the masses will be dominated by centripetal, patriotic tendencies with the force of a natural reflex. This applies to classes and national groups within the various states as well as, for example, to the component parts of the British empire. But the further progress of war, with its train of destitution, savagery, and despair, will of necessity not only regenerate but also develop to the extreme all frictions, antagonisms, and centrifugal tendencies, which sooner or later will find their expression in insurrections and revolution. Even in this case, naturally, war remains the worst misfortune which can befall humanity. But the earlier the masses of the people make an end of it, the more easily will humanity's self-inflicted wounds heal. What can one say, from this point of view, about the duration of the next war?

Since a new war of nations will start where the old one left off, the extermination of human lives and the expenditure of war materials will, from the very beginning, be several times greater than at the beginning of the last war, and will at the same time have a tendency to further rapid increase. The tempos will be more feverish, the destructive forces more grandiose, the distress of the population more unbearable. There is consequently every reason to expect that the mass reaction will begin, not after two and a half years, as in czarist Russia, nor after a little more than four years, as in Germany and Austria-Hungary, but considerably earlier. But a definite answer to the question of dates can naturally be given only by events themselves.

What, then, will happen to the USSR? Evaluation of the Soviet regime by articulate public opinion in the West has gone through several stages. The chaos of the first five-year plan reduced the specific gravity of the Soviets on the world arena almost to zero. The further growth of industry, including war industry, against a
background of world crisis, greatly enhanced the world prestige of the USSR. France’s fear of the German policy of revenge permitted Soviet diplomacy to become an imposing factor in European politics. Along with this, the reputation of the Red Army grew, not daily but hourly. This, however, did not last long. The bloody political purge, dictated by the interests of the ruling clique and leading to the extermination of the best commanders, everywhere provoked a sharp reaction. The lamentable capitulation of Soviet diplomacy on the question of the Amur Islands fired Japan with courage to deal a new blow against China and reinforce the weight of the advice which London had been giving to Paris: not to rely on Moscow, to seek an agreement with Berlin. However, the current contemptuous appraisal of the Red Army is just as one-sided as yesterday’s belief in the indestructibility of Stalin’s domination. The frame-up and execution of the idols of yesterday naturally induce doubt and demoralization in the ranks of the army. Nevertheless, the displays and maneuvers which demonstrate to the foreign generals the endurance, mobility, and ingenuity of the Soviet soldier and officer remain a reality, together with the high qualities of the Soviet tanks and airplanes, the audacity and skill of the Soviet fliers.

The bloody purges, undermining defense, demonstrate above all that the ruling oligarchy has entered into irreconcilable contradiction with the people, including the Red Army. The sharpness of the contradiction itself bears witness, on the other hand, to the tremendous economic and cultural growth of the country, which reconciles itself with ever-increasing difficulty to Stalin’s regime. A political revolution in the USSR—that is, the overthrow of the bureaucratic caste, which is decomposed to the very marrow—will undoubtedly be one of the first results of the war. However, everything permits the belief that, if humanity as a whole is not hurled into barbarism, the social bases of the Soviet regime (new forms of property and planned economy) will resist the test of war and even be reinforced.*

Japan is far away. In preparation for war against her, independent bases have been created in the Far East, which, despite all their power, retain a provincial character. Even in the event of the greatest—most unlikely—successes, Japan is not capable of penetrating to the vital centers of the Soviet Union. There can be

*The following seven paragraphs were printed in the Yale Review but do not appear in the text Trotsky re-edited for publication in 1940.—Ed.
no question of a separate war between Italy and the USSR. The principal enemy, the nearest and most dangerous, remains Germany.

Hitler's habitual protestation that the absence of "common borders" between Germany and the USSR rules out the possibility of war, belongs to that brand of subterfuge which characterizes all the speeches of this totalitarian "genius." The Baltic Sea not only separates Germany from the USSR but also unites them. Since the withdrawal of Estonia and Finland from Russia, the historic Kronstadt fortress has lain in a cul-de-sac between them. Leningrad, too, second city in the land and a munitions center, is vulnerable. A blow against both might be expected and could be executed not only by sea and air but also by land. Even during the last war, Finland—at that time a part of the czarist empire—became, if only for a short time, a military base for Germany. The same was true of Estonia and Latvia. Hitler can try in this direction to rectify and supplement the experience of Wilhelm the Second.

To the south of these small Baltic countries, Germany is separated from the USSR principally by Poland, and partially by Rumania—for after the Austrian Anschluss, Czechoslovakia became for Germany less a barrier than a bridge on the road to the East. From the eastern borders of Czechoslovakia to the Ukraine, Hitler's Promised Land, there lie only a few score miles.

Poland, of course, and Rumania, would have to choose, in case of such a war, between two adversaries infinitely more powerful than either of them. Whatever their choice, they would become not only the highways of war but also its immediate battleground.

The possibility of auxiliary action from Italy in the Black Sea—against the Ukraine, against the Crimea and the Caucasus—would depend to a great extent upon the stand taken by Turkey; that is, in the final analysis, upon the relationship of forces between the principal adversaries, and more exactly upon the assessment of this relationship in Angora, as well as in all the intermediary capitals of Southeastern Europe.

For Germany, the war in all the strategic senses I have mentioned would be an offensive one; for the USSR, a defensive one. Herein lies an enormous military advantage for the Soviets. In spite of the unfavorable situation of the Soviet maritime base at the bottom of the bottlenecked Gulf of Finland, Russia's strong navy and air force could bring Hitler's Baltic venture to complete collapse. The same is true of the Black Sea, where the Soviet base
is, moreover, incomparably more favorably situated and Italy more distant.

The whole western frontier of the USSR is strongly fortified. Troops there are accustomed to their bases. Soviet distances are great. The dividing wedge constituted by Poland and Rumania neutralizes in an important degree the advantage of the German railroads. The rest would depend upon the "moral factor," that is, the living people: the Red soldier, worker, peasant. The issue of war is decided in the last analysis by war itself.

As regards the capitalist world, one can state in advance, as an unalterable law: the first to fall on the field of battle will be the regimes of those countries in which the agrarian question did not in due time receive a democratic solution and in which the inheritance from serfdom exacerbates the wounds of capitalism. The weakest link in the chain of the great powers this time will be Japan. Under the blows of war, its social machine, a militarized capitalism supporting itself on semifeudal barbarism, will fall victim to a tremendous catastrophe.

Among the states of second and third rank the greatest danger menaces Poland, Rumania, and Hungary, where the peasant masses have never really emerged from the old serfdom.

Next in order will be the fascist regimes: it was not by accident that fascism came to power, especially in those countries where the internal antagonisms had attained the greatest sharpness. To be sure, in the domain of diplomacy as well as war, the totalitarian states have considerable advantages over the ponderous mechanism of the democracies—above all the advantages of free maneuvering, untrammeled by internal resistance. This does not signify, however, that there is no resistance. It is merely in a concealed stage, accumulating under lock and key until the explosion. In Germany and Italy, the insufficiency of food supplies and raw materials will condemn the masses to unbearable distress. If at the beginning of the war these states may and do score imposing military successes, then in the second stage they will become the arena of social convulsions earlier than their enemies.

The difference, however, is only one of time. War will level regimes. Economy will be subjected to governmental control in all countries. Military censorship, as always, will also be a political censorship. Opposition will be stifled. The official lie will be given monopoly rights. The boundary between rear and front will disappear. Military justice will be extended throughout the entire country. Differences between countries as regards quantities of
war supplies will be far greater than the differences between their political principles.

France's international position, as fixed by the Versailles treaty, in no way corresponds to the real resources of the republic. Her population is not growing. Her economy is stagnating. She has no oil of her own. Her supplies of coal are inadequate. Her finances are shaky. More than any other country, France depends for her national security on other states: Great Britain, the United States, if not the USSR. War will mean the reduction of France to a second-rate power. Along with its international position, the social regime of the country will totter.

The centrifugal tendencies of the British empire are the result of the disproportion between the real strength of the metropolis and its historical heritage. By means of gigantic armaments the metropolis intends to demonstrate to the colonies and dominions that it alone is able to safeguard their inviolability. The cost of the preservation of the empire is increasing more rapidly than the advantages the empire affords. Such a household heads inevitably for bankruptcy. The new war will mean the awakening and rending asunder of the empire. The downfall of imperial might will in turn usher in an epoch of social upheavals. Not a single country will escape the heavy consequences of the war. In pains and convulsions the whole world will change its face.

Our prognosis may seem gloomy. The fault is not ours. On the palette of our epoch we can discover neither rosy nor azure hues. We are forced to draw conclusions from the facts and not from our desires. Old Spinoza rightly taught: "Not to weep, not to laugh, but to understand."
ABOUT THE ARTICLE ON WAR

August 10, 1937

Dear Comrade Walker:

I am sending you three copies of my article on war, and an explanation concerning its length. At the same time I am sending the Russian and English texts to Vanzler, in case some misunderstanding of the translation necessitates comparison with the Russian.

I have learned from some American friends who are now here that some comrades are disturbed by the fact that my article will appear in Liberty. I am sending a copy of this letter to Comrade Cannon. It goes without saying that it is necessary to avoid any step which might incur political difficulties for our comrades, especially now that they are under fire. I am asking Comrade Cannon to telephone you immediately about the matter. If his answer is negative, please transmit the manuscript to Mr. Collins. I hope that the article will then be placed in some monthly magazine, even though under less favorable conditions.

My warmest greetings to Mrs. George, Adelaide, and yourself.

Leon Trotsky
The author of the novel is a young German Communist, who worked for several years in Russia and remained fully within the official "line." In 1935, when the GPU was preparing the "Trotskyite" trials, Weiss was unexpectedly arrested, along with a whole number of other Germans. The GPU’s task was to find among the arrested Germans (emigrant-Communists, engineers, and others) suitable defendants and witnesses for the upcoming trials. For this purpose it was necessary to make those who had been arrested confess to being agents of the Gestapo and allies of the Trotskyites.

Weiss's novel is devoted mainly to his stay in the GPU prison and to the GPU’s methods of interrogation. It would be a very great mistake to conclude from what has been said that we have before us a propagandistic agitational work, which has the goal of discrediting the methods of the GPU. No, Weiss’s novel is an artistic work of the highest quality. The author is not concerned with agitation. He makes no political conclusions or generalizations. He recounts what he saw and lived through. The work has been written in the third, not the first, person; as a novel and not as a memoir. The artistic and psychological value of the work is very high. It is for this reason, I will note in passing, that the novel will deliver a terrible blow to the GPU's Inquisitional methods.

The author’s style is in keeping with the character of his experiences: it is a nervous, staccato, and, in places, spasmodic style. The translator must know German and English very well and be an artistic stylist. Diego Rivera, to whom I recounted the contents of the novel, became extremely interested in it and expressed a desire to provide about twenty-five illustrations for this book. There is no need to explain what value the illustrations of a great master can give to the edition.

If, further, the publisher finds it necessary, I would be prepared
to write a preface. By itself the novel does not need elucidation. But insofar as the author is unknown, a preface might not be superfluous. Personally, I am inclined, however, to think that the illustrations of Diego Rivera would be completely sufficient for the success of the book.
INTERVIEW BY MEXICO AL DIA

August 16, 1937

Question: Have you seen a report published on August 10 by El Universal Grafico on page 9? It deals with the motives of your opposition to the Central Committee of the Communist Party. Would you care to say something on this subject and tell us what the real reasons were for your differences with Stalin?

Answer: My struggle with Stalin has deep social roots. The October Revolution was accomplished in the interests of the working masses against all the privileged. However, because of historical causes which we cannot discuss here, a new privileged caste, the all-powerful Soviet bureaucracy, has raised itself over the masses of workers and peasants. Stalin is its leader. Those who call themselves "Trotskyists" are fighting for the interests of the working masses against the new exploiters. If the domination of the bureaucracy were definitely established, then all the conquests of the October Revolution would be annihilated. On the other hand, if the working masses are successful in overthrowing the ruling caste, the country will be able to develop along socialist lines. Consequently, the struggle has an irreconcilable character. The final outcome depends both on internal and international causes.

Q: What do you think about the new Soviet constitution? In your opinion, how far has Stalin followed the signposts mapped out by Lenin?

A: The new constitution of the USSR represents an attempt juridically to consolidate the uncontrollable domination of the ruling clique and its Fuehrer. The constitution has a Bonapartist character, inasmuch as it attempts to cover up unlimited personal power by a false plebiscite.

Q: In your opinion, what will be the future of the Russian
Soviet state, and what, in any case, are the dangers threatening it?

A: We have just spoken of the internal dangers. The external dangers are connected with the war that threatens. By carrying on an uninterrupted struggle against the people, the Soviet bureaucracy weakens the defense of the country. In part this is proven by the recent shameful capitulation of Moscow before Japan on the question of the Amur Islands. The liquidation of the Stalinist dictatorship is also imperatively dictated by the needs for the defense of the country.

Q: We are assured that you are writing your memoirs. Will this book be a continuation or expansion of your book My Life?

A: I have finished the book on the Moscow trials, with the title Les Crimes de Staline. Now I am resuming work on the biography of Lenin.

Q: Are you satisfied, not only politically but especially as a man, with your position in the world? That is to say, will you abandon politics as a consequence of special circumstances and will you devote yourself to enjoying, as a man and not as a politician, what life can offer in modest retreat?

A: To think is the only complete satisfaction given to man. Intellectual work depends relatively little on external circumstances. If one has books, paper, and a pen, nothing more is needed for formulating conclusions on one’s own experience of life or the experience of others, and to participate in this way in the preparation of the future. So it would be incorrect to say that I have withdrawn from politics. I do not participate in current politics; in particular, I do not intervene in the internal life of this country, which has offered me such magnanimous hospitality. But my literary activity, whether it is given over to theory or history, always has the future destiny of humanity in view, and tries to help the liberation movement of the workers in all possible ways. In this broad sense of the word, all my activity has a political character.

During my forty years of revolutionary struggle, I was in power for eight years at the most. I was not happier in that period. In the same way, I see no reason to consider my exile as a personal
misfortune. Exile was conditioned by revolutionary struggle and, in this sense, was a natural, logical link in my life.

Q: What at present is your life? What, in the main, is your activity given over to? Are you satisfied with your stay in Mexico? Do you consider that man, as a human being, interests the public as much as politics?

A: My present life is barely distinguishable from the one I led in the Kremlin: it is given over to work. I have already spoken to you about the character of this work, in its essential aspect. I am altogether satisfied with the conditions of my stay in Mexico. It is true that agents of Stalin (there is no need to name them) do their utmost, here too, to disturb this stay. But long experience has taught me to consider them with indifference, with an added touch of contempt.

To conclude, let me tell you that a considerable part of my time is devoted to the assistance of the work of the International Commission of Inquiry concerning the Moscow trials. I put at the disposal of the commission several hundred original documents, in the major instance letters, and more than one hundred affidavits. The sessions of the full commission will open September 17. The work of the subcommissions in New York and Paris is proceeding uninterruptedly: the verification of documents, the examination of witnesses, etc. In spite of the slander of Moscow's hirelings, both the subcommission and the commission are composed not only not of "Trotskyists," but of many political opponents. Naturally they are not agents of the GPU, but honest, irreproachable people. I will add that the commission repeatedly invited into its staff representatives of the Moscow government, the Comintern, and "Friends of the Soviet Union." The cowards all refused to participate in order afterwards to have the opportunity to shout about the "partiality" of the commission.

At the beginning of September, the stenographic report (600 pages) of the sessions of the Subcommission of Inquiry at Coyoacan will be published in New York. Then will follow a second volume, which will include all the documents presented to the commission. The International Inquiry Commission will in that way have the opportunity to draw up its conclusions on a granite foundation of strictly verified facts. I do not doubt that the judgment of the commission and of world public opinion will be fatal for the Stalinist bureaucracy and its "friends."
Being convinced of the correctness of one's position and struggling for the triumph of truth over lies and falsifications bring the very highest satisfaction possible to a human being. I am filled with the most ardent thanks to the Mexican people and their government, who gave me the opportunity in a critical period of my life to lead unhampered the struggle against the most monstrous of political frame-ups.
1. Japan wishes to turn China into its India. In order to assure domination over this tremendous land, it is necessary to make the western part of the Pacific Ocean into a Japanese sea. Australia will encircle this future “Japanese sea” from the south. It is imperative for Japan to find a point of support in Australia.

The strategic position of your continent can only sharpen the appetite of the Japanese military. You live too far from both England and the United States. The nearest English base, Singapore, can have only an auxiliary and temporary importance.

Besides these purely military considerations, the attractive force of Australia is itself considerable. On the Japanese Islands there are 175 inhabitants per square kilometer; in Australia there is about one inhabitant in the same space. Australia is rich in different primary materials which Japan lacks. Every Australian, including babies in the cradle, consumes about two hundred twenty pounds [of meat] per year while the Italian consumes only thirty-three pounds (Mussolini’s pompous nationalism, as you see, has a distinctly Lenten character) and the Japanese a still tinier amount.

It will not be an exaggeration to say that the fate of Australia, at least 50 percent of it, is being decided in Shanghai and China in general. Support of the war of liberation of the Chinese nation against the Japanese plunderers represents one of the most important conditions for the defense of the independence of Australia and New Zealand.

2 and 3. Unfortunately, I have no close knowledge of the political and social life of Australia. I have never been in Australia and it has not been possible for me to follow its press. But the Russian and world literature devoted to the economic conditions of Australia, its social legislation, is sufficiently
extensive. Our Narodniks (populists) especially, used often to refer to Australia and New Zealand as models of the new social regime. Needless to say that I have followed with interest your social legislation, whose possibilities are conditioned by the natural riches of the country, on the one hand, and by systematic protectionism, on the other.

However, I do not think that your legislation must create a special type of social development different in principle from those of other capitalist countries. The question of the forms of private property has decisive importance. Capitalist competition, as the statistics show, leads in Australia, too, to the concentration of wealth, in the form of finance capital, and to social contradictions, which are deepening.

Without a doubt, social relations in Australia are more stable than in other countries, especially in Europe. But this stability is neither absolute nor eternal. The coming world crisis—which can be expected in two or three years, when the military programs of the great powers near their end—will shake Australia too. The coming war—alas, we won't have to wait long—will inevitably drag Australia into its whirlwind. These perspectives are not very agreeable, but they correspond to reality and it would be criminal blindness to close one's eyes to these facts.

4. Hitler's policy is the policy of aggressive imperialism. Stalin's policy is the policy of self-preservation of a new privileged caste. Hitler seeks the "friendship" of England. Stalin seeks a military alliance with France and through France a rapprochement with England. If these plans do not succeed, a union of Hitler and Stalin will become not only possible but inevitable . . . but only if Hitler and Stalin are still in power at that time. I do not guarantee it.330

5. The Bolshevik Party, in the years of the civil war, considered terror as an inevitable, temporary weapon, connected, as history shows, with every revolution. The aim of this terror was to liberate the country from its old chains and from slavery, and to clear the way for a socialist society.

The present terror of the Soviet bureaucracy has a reactionary, not a revolutionary, character. Its aim: to help the formation of a new ruling class and, above all, to preserve the all-powerful Soviet bureaucracy from all opposition and any kind of criticism.

6. The question of my return to the USSR is not a personal one. I cannot replace Stalin at the head of the present state apparatus, which has a completely reactionary character, directed against
the people. But I hope firmly that the peoples of the USSR, who have carried out three revolutions in this century, will find a way to put an end to the despotism of the Stalinist bureaucracy and to clear the way for a free, socialist development. All my activity is directed to this end.
Question: Many people in America today are greatly concerned over the eventual outcome of the Spanish Civil War. There are many attempts being made by students to foresee the end. In your opinion, what do you think will be the eventual outcome of this struggle and what are the reasons for your opinion? How soon do you believe the end will come?

Answer: The best assistance to General Franco is being rendered by Negrin and his ally Stalin. With the help of their reactionary social politics, and their no less reactionary represions, they are blotting out the hopes for liberation of the Spanish peasantry and the revolutionary enthusiasm of the workers. Only in this way can one explain the military defeats of the Republicans and the protracted character of the war. The people see less and less difference between the programs and regimes of the two warring camps. A mere contrasting of "democracy" to fascism carries little consolation for the mind and heart of the masses, especially during time of war, when an actual military dictatorship reigns in both camps. The workers and peasants are capable of the greatest sacrifices, if they know what they are fighting for. Civil war is won, in the first place, by a bold social program. If the "Republicans" had such a program and put it into immediate operation on the territory occupied by them, nine-tenths of all the population of Spain would be inspired by the powerful revolutionary gust, and General Franco with his gangs would hang suspended in the air. The government of Negrin-Stalin, which, in the rear, leads a struggle against the workers and peasants, is incapable of assuring victory at the front. But even if we allow that Negrin will be victorious over Franco, a new military dictatorship, differing little from the dictatorship of Franco, would arise from such a purely military victory. Without social revolution, the victory of fascism or of a semi-fascist
militarism in Spain is completely unavoidable, regardless of the outcome of the military operations.

If the civil war, in its present form, is prolonged for a lengthy period, in face of the growing indifference of the national masses, it can end in the demoralization of both warring camps and in a compromise of the top generals, with the aim of establishing a joint military dictatorship.

Q: Do you consider that there is any legal or moral basis for the Italian and German interference on the side of the rebels?

A: I do not understand how, in general, one can speak about some sort of "legal" or "moral" basis for the Italian and German intervention in Spain! The actual "basis" for the fascist intervention is: the perfidious wait-and-see policy of Great Britain, the cowardly-impotent politics of Leon Blum in France, and Stalin's policy of slavish dependence on London and Paris. There were sufficient incidents to convince the governments of Berlin and Rome that speeches about an international struggle of democracy against fascism are the purest charlatanry. Actually, the struggle is being led for strategic positions in the Mediterranean Sea and for Spanish raw materials. Rome and Berlin, therefore, have not become frightened in any degree by the supposed "single democratic front" and have decided upon purely piratical invasions of the inner life of Spain. We have here a rehearsal for the future world war, in which principles of "democracy" will play a still lesser role than in the present struggle of the powers around Spain.

Q: Do you consider that there is any legal or moral basis for English, French, or Russian interference on the side of the Loyalists?

A: Of course, England, France, or the USSR had incomparably greater "legal" bases for rendering help to the legal Spanish government than had Mussolini and Hitler for rendering help to the insurgent general. But, as we said above, the roles of the great powers are not in the minutest degree based upon moral or juridical principles. The Soviet bureaucracy wants, upon the back of the Spanish people, to win the confidence of the French and English bourgeoisies. Military help on the part of the USSR was therefore earlier conditioned by the pledge of the Spanish government to enter into open struggle against the revolutionary
workers and peasants. The GPU transported its apparatus to Spanish soil for the extermination of all defenders of proletarian revolution. The murder of the anarchist Durruti,\(^{332}\) of Andres Nin and other leaders of the POUM (who, it may be said in passing, had nothing in common with Trotskyism), were organized by the Soviet agents of the GPU, under the leadership of the Consul Antonov-Ovseenko, upon the direct instructions from Moscow. Stalin says to London and Paris: "You can depend upon me."

\[Q:\] Speaking about Germany and Italy for a moment, do you believe that there is great likelihood of long fascist regimes in those two countries? How long would you say such regimes can be maintained? What do you think will be the termination of those regimes? What sort of social system do you believe will follow the collapse of fascism?

\[A:\] The fascist regimes arose, first of all, in those countries where social contradictions reached a special acuteness. Fascism suppressed these contradictions but did not eliminate them. Sooner or later they will come to the fore. The biggest help to fascism, I repeat, is the present Comintern, which paralyzes the working masses by the most monstrous tactical zigzags, upon command from Moscow, and systematically demoralizes the international revolutionary vanguard, curing the workers’ "leaders" of the habit of thinking, or simply buying them. The rebirth of a real revolutionary International, independent both from bourgeois governments and from the reactionary Moscow diplomacy, will quickly bring to the working masses confidence in themselves and will awaken the revolutionary movement in Germany and Italy. In the event of world war, the fascist governments, in the first period, will be able to demonstrate their superiority over their enemies, but in Germany and Italy, shorn as they are of raw materials and provisions, the inner social contradictions will assume an unheard-of sharpness. The war will overthrow many regimes. But its first victims, one can say with assurance, will be the regimes of Mussolini and Hitler. In their place can only come the political rule of the working class and the socialist reconstruction of society.

\[Q:\] Do you believe that Germany and Italy will be forced by internal affairs in their own countries to go deeper and deeper into the Spanish struggle?
A: I do not think that Germany and Italy will involve themselves more deeply in the Spanish struggle: this would threaten a conflict among themselves. However, at the present stage, they are interested in demonstrating their solidarity. Insofar as there is a question about a struggle against the social revolution in Spain, Hitler and Mussolini could not wish for a better police assistant than Stalin. Finally, the degree of interference is determined by international groupings behind the stage, in particular by the desire of Hitler not to repulse Great Britain. However, precise prophecies in this respect are hardly possible.

Q: In the face of fascist strength throughout the world, don’t you believe in a united front of all liberal groups? Are you willing to cooperate in such a united front aiming at the destruction of world fascism? Do you believe such a united front would be futile against world fascism?

A: From all the above flows, with sufficient clarity, the fact that I do not for a moment believe in the possibility and effectiveness of the international alliance of the “liberal groups” in the fight against fascism. The experience of Italy, Germany, Austria, and other countries, proves that “liberal groups” are completely impotent in the fight against fascism, which counterposes to them a demagogic social program and dooms them to complete annihilation. One can fight against fascism only on the basis of a real, serious revolutionary social program capable of rallying not only the proletariat but the oppressed masses of the petty bourgeoisie. Insofar as “liberal groups” are the opponents of a revolutionary program, they are capable only of paralyzing the initiative of the masses and of pushing them into the camp of fascism. The formula of “antifascism” is very convenient for juggling by the honorable deputies, professors, journalists, and purely salon chatterboxes. The bare formula of “antifascism” does not say anything concrete to the worker, unemployed, poor peasant, ruined farmer, or bankrupt petty merchant—in general, the overwhelming majority of the population. The uproar of all kinds of “antifascist” parades, banquets, coalitions, etc., etc., is capable only of sowing illusions and facilitating the work of reaction. Only millions and tens of millions of the toiling, oppressed, and exploited are capable of wiping the Egyptian plague of fascism off the face of the earth.
Q: Why are there differences among the leaders of the Spanish Republican government?

A: The political differences in the so-called “Republican” camp of Spain are directly or indirectly determined by the antagonism of class interests. The government of Negrin wants, at no matter what cost, to save the regime of private property. As the debacle of the workers’ organizations, the arrests, false accusations, shootings in the back or from ambush show, safeguarding the interests of capital is incomparably more important for Negrin than the observance of the democratic principle. The Spanish peasantry, on the other hand, wants to get the land. The workers want to free themselves from exploitation through the expropriation of the means of production.

During the time of revolution, social antagonisms reach the sharpest tension. Each political person must choose: with the bourgeoisie and with the government of Negrin against the workers and peasants, or with the workers and peasants—against Negrin? Largo Caballero does not wish to break with the workers but he is afraid to break with the bourgeoisie. From this arises his vacillating (“centrist”) politics. The anarchist working masses of Catalonia want the social revolution, though their ideas in that regard are hazy. But the anarchist leaders, at the first contact with bitter reality, threw away their anarchism and became vulgar bourgeois ministers. The leaders of the POUM vacillated, bided their time, concluded blocs from the top, entered into the reactionary ministry and with that disoriented the masses. It is the false politics of the workers’ organizations that explain why the Spanish proletariat, in spite of its exceptional fighting capacity which could doubly and triply assure it full victory, has seen until now only defeats. The proletariat cannot come to victory without a genuine revolutionary party.

Q: May I ask what, in your opinion, is more important—winning the Spanish war first, or first setting up legislation of reform?

A: The question, according to my view, is not correctly put. The experience of the Spanish war, as of all great civil wars, including the Civil War of the sixties of the last century in the United States, shows that it is impossible to win a civil war without an open announcement and factual realization of a
program of great social reforms. He who promises the masses reforms after the end of the war deceives the masses and, in any case, the masses justifiably do not trust him. Precisely because of this the government of Negrin-Stalin is suffering shameful defeats.

**Q:** Why can't all differences among Loyalist leaders wait until the war is won?

**A:** The differences lie in this: How to lead the war—with the help of police terror over the masses or with the help of social revolutionary measures? To “put off” these differences until the end of the war means to give the Negrin government full freedom for the preparation of a catastrophe, i.e., of military defeat and the victory of fascism.

**Q:** If Russia were to lead a united front against world fascism and make war on Germany and Italy, would you be willing to cooperate in that struggle and throw your resources behind Stalin?

**A:** If the USSR were in a war with a fascist government, then all my partisans, and in general all real revolutionaries, would, in that war, support with all their strength the USSR and the Red Army, in spite of the Stalinist dictatorship. Thus, in August 1917, the Bolsheviks fought in the front ranks against the revolt of the reactionary general Kornilov, in spite of the existence of the Kerensky government.333

**Q:** Do you ever expect to make peace with Stalin, or is such a thing beyond the realm of possibility?

**A:** Stalin is the leader of the privileged bureaucracy and the new aristocratic upstarts, and because of that, on the international arena, projects himself as a purely reactionary factor. There can be no talk about my reconciliation with such politics and with one who brings them about.

**Q:** Would you like to return to Russia? Do you ever expect to return?

**A:** I cannot put this question on purely sentimental grounds: everything depends on political conditions. I do not doubt that
the working masses of the USSR will overthrow the tyrannical dictatorship of the demoralized bureaucracy. Of course, I am ready to participate in such a struggle of liberation.

Q: May I ask what reforms or, let us say, changes, you would enact if you returned to Russia and received the necessary authority?

A: The question is not about me personally but about that program which the working masses of the USSR have to realize and no doubt will realize after the overthrow of the present Bonapartist dictatorship. The most important reforms, according to my opinion, are these: the establishment of the widest Soviet democracy and the legalization of the struggle of parties; the liquidation of the never-changing bureaucratic caste by electing all functionaries; the mapping out of all economic plans with the direct participation of the population itself and in its interests; the elimination of the crying and insulting gaps of inequality; the liquidation of ranks, orders, and all other distinctions of the new Soviet nobility; a radical change of the external politics in the spirit of principled internationalism. One of the incidental but important measures I consider to be a public and open review of the last trials, rehabilitation of the innocent, severe punishments for the organizers of the frame-ups.

Q: Have you anything to say, which I can take back with me, concerning the political, economic or social situations in the United States?

A: Permit me not to answer this question as I strictly hold to the principle of noninterference in the inner life not only of Mexico but of her powerful neighbor, the United States.
Dear Friend:
   1. I read with great satisfaction the first two issues of the Socialist Appeal. The manifesto is an excellent document both in content and in form. The tone of the two first issues is firm and militant. A very good beginning! One can only hope for better proof corrections; too many typographical errors.
   2. I discussed here with the visitors from the States the absolute necessity of the establishment of the New International. After the split everybody will look to you in the States with doubled and tripled attention and criticism than before your entrance into the Socialist Party. A weekly is not enough. You must influence public opinion by a serious monthly. It would be excellent if you could launch the first issue in November in order to have at least two issues before the international conference.
   3. I am happy to hear that our section is almost unanimous. An internal conflict during the split with the Socialist Party would greatly compromise and weaken us. But it seems that such conflicts are, for the next months, not very likely.
   4. You know that the International Secretariat is proposing the convocation of an international conference this October. Until today nothing serious has been done for its preparation. The American section, which is destined to play the first fiddle at the conference, would surely not be ready in October to assume this role. From every point of view, the international conference should be postponed until the beginning of the next year, or, at least, until the end of this year, Christmas for example. I hope that our American friends will immediately discuss this matter and determine their opinion, and enter into correspondence with the International Secretariat on the matter.
   5. You remember that Shachtman was chosen at the last conference as a member of the Executive Committee. The American section never took part in the work of the International
Secretariat. Even the letters from Europe were hardly answered. This created in Europe an atmosphere of doubt and even suspicion toward the American section. Now with the appearance of the Socialist Appeal this feeling would, I am sure, be dispelled. But this alone is not sufficient. You know the semi-hostile attitude of Sneevliet and his Central Committee. You are aware of the hesitations of the Central Committee of the Belgian party. In order to assure the success of the conference, it is absolutely necessary that the American section take part in all the preparatory work from today on. Financial support, even a modest one, is absolutely necessary, especially in view of the practical boycott on the part of the Dutch. Together with the French section you can win the Belgian section for the correct policy and isolate Sneevliet. Don't you believe that a special commission could be appointed immediately for this purpose? My impression is that Comrade F. would be very useful for this work, especially on the colonial question.337

This letter has a wholly personal character. The reason is that I can't make suggestions officially because I am not sufficiently acquainted with your situation and I am not sure that all my propositions are correct. For example, you may find that your national conference is necessary before an international conference, that your own conference can be convoked only in January or February and that the international conference must thereby be postponed until March, etc., etc.

You may show this letter, if you find it useful, to other comrades, or answer me before doing so.

With warmest greetings for Comrade Rose and yourself,

Your Old Man [Trotsky]
Concerning the Historical and Theoretical Roots of the Fourth International

August 29, 1936

Reactionary epochs like ours not only disintegrate and weaken the working class and its vanguard but also lower the general ideological level of the movement and throw political thinking back to stages long since passed through. In these conditions, the task of the vanguard is above all not to let itself be carried along by the backward flow: it must swim against the current. If an unfavorable relation of forces prevents it from holding the positions that it has won, it must at least retain its ideological positions, because in them is expressed the dearly purchased experience of the past. Fools will consider this policy "sectarian." Actually it is the only means of preparing for a new tremendous surge forward with the coming historical tide.

The Reaction Against Marxism and Bolshevism

Great political defeats inevitably provoke a reconsideration of values, generally occurring in two directions. On the one hand the true vanguard, enriched by the experience of defeat, defends with tooth and nail the heritage of revolutionary thought and on this basis attempts to educate new cadres for the mass struggle to come. On the other hand the routinists, centrists, and dilettantes, frightened by defeat, do their best to destroy the authority of revolutionary tradition and go backward in their search for a "New Word."

One could indicate a great many examples of ideological reaction, most often taking the form of prostration. All the literature of the Second and Third Internationals, as well as of their satellites of the London Bureau, consists essentially of such examples. Not a suggestion of Marxist analysis. Not a single
serious attempt to explain the causes of defeat. About the future, not one fresh word. Nothing but cliches, conformity, lies, and above all solicitude for their own bureaucratic self-preservation. It is enough to smell ten lines from some Hilferding or Otto Bauer to know this rottenness. The theoreticians of the Comintern are not even worth mentioning. The famous Dimitrov is as ignorant and banal as a shopkeeper over a mug of beer. The minds of these people are too lazy to renounce Marxism: they prostitute it. But they are not the ones that interest us now. Let us turn to the "innovators."

The former Austrian Communist Willi Schlamm has devoted a small book to the Moscow trials, under the expressive title, "The Dictatorship of the Lie." Schlamm is a gifted journalist, chiefly interested in current affairs. His criticism of the Moscow frame-up and his exposure of the psychological mechanism of the "voluntary confessions" are excellent. However, he does not confine himself to this: he wants to create a new theory of socialism which would insure us against defeats and frame-ups in the future. But since Schlamm is by no means a theoretician and is apparently not well acquainted with the history of the development of socialism, he returns entirely to pre-Marxian socialism, and notably to its German—that is, to its most backward, sentimental, and mawkish—variety. Schlamm renounces dialectics and the class struggle, not to mention the dictatorship of the proletariat. The problem of transforming society is reduced for him to the realization of certain "eternal" moral truths, with which he would imbue mankind, even under capitalism.

Willi Schlamm’s attempt to save socialism by the insertion of a moral gland is greeted with both joy and pride in Kerensky’s review Novaya Rossiya (an old provincial Russian review now published in Paris): as the editors justifiably conclude, Schlamm has arrived at the principles of true Russian socialism, which a long time ago opposed the holy precepts of faith, hope, and charity to the austerity and harshness of the class struggle. The "novel" doctrine of the Russian Social Revolutionaries represents, in its "theoretical" premises, only a return to the socialism of pre-March (1848!) Germany. However, it would be unfair to demand a more intimate knowledge of the history of ideas from Kerensky than from Schlamm. Far more important is the fact that Kerensky, who is in solidarity with Schlamm, was, while head of the government, the instigator of persecutions against the Bolsheviks as agents of the German general staff: that is,
organized the same frame-ups against which Schlamm now mobilizes his moth-eaten metaphysical absolutes.

The psychological mechanism of the ideological reaction of Schlamm and his sort is not at all complicated. For a while these people took part in a political movement that swore by the class struggle and appealed, in word if not in thought, to dialectical materialism. In both Austria and Germany the affair ended in a catastrophe. Schlamm draws a wholesale conclusion: this is the result of dialectics and the class struggle! And since the choice of revelations is limited by historical experience and . . . by personal knowledge, our reformer in his search for the Word falls on a bundle of old rags, which he valiantly counterposes not only to Bolshevism but to Marxism as well.

At first glance Schlamm's brand of ideological reaction seems too primitive (from Marx . . . to Kerensky!) to pause over. But actually it is very instructive: precisely in its primitiveness it represents the common denominator of all other forms of reaction, particularly of those expressed by wholesale denunciation of Bolshevism.

"Back to Marxism"?

Marxism found its highest historical expression in Bolshevism. Under the banner of Bolshevism the first victory of the proletariat was achieved and the first workers' state established. Nothing can erase these facts from history. But since the October Revolution has led in the present stage to the triumph of the bureaucracy, with its system of repression, plunder, and frame-up—to the "dictatorship of the lie," to use Schlamm's happy expression—many formalistic and superficial minds leap to a summary conclusion: one cannot struggle against Stalinism without renouncing Bolshevism. Schlamm, as we already know, goes farther: Bolshevism, which degenerated into Stalinism, itself grew out of Marxism; consequently one cannot fight Stalinism while remaining on the foundation of Marxism. There are others, less consistent but more numerous, who say, on the contrary: "We must return from Bolshevism to Marxism." How? To what Marxism? Before Marxism became "bankrupt" in the form of Bolshevism it had already broken down in the form of the Social Democracy. Does the slogan "Back to Marxism" then mean a leap over the periods of the Second and Third Internationals . . . to the First International? But it too broke down in its time. Thus in the last analysis it is a question of returning . . . to the complete works of Marx and Engels. One can accomplish this
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heroic leap without leaving one's study and even without taking off one's slippers. But how are we to go from our classics (Marx died in 1883, Engels in 1895) to the tasks of our own time, omitting several decades of theoretical and political struggles, among them Bolshevism and the October Revolution? None of those who propose to renounce Bolshevism as a historically "bankrupt" tendency has indicated any other course. So the question is reduced to the simple advice to study Capital. We can hardly object. But the Bolsheviks, too, studied Capital, and not with their eyes closed. This did not, however, prevent the degeneration of the Soviet state and the staging of the Moscow trials. So what is to be done?

Is Bolshevism Responsible for Stalinism?

Is it true that Stalinism represents the legitimate product of Bolshevism, as all reactionaries maintain, as Stalin himself avows, as the Mensheviks, the anarchists, and certain left doctrinaires, considering themselves Marxists, believe? "We have always predicted this," they say. "Having started with the prohibition of the other socialist parties, the repression of the anarchists, and the setting up of the Bolshevik dictatorship in the soviets, the October Revolution could only end in the dictatorship of the bureaucracy. Stalin is the continuation and also the bankruptcy of Leninism."

The flaw in this reasoning begins in the tacit identification of Bolshevism, October Revolution, and Soviet Union. The historical process of the struggle of hostile forces is replaced by the evolution of Bolshevism in a vacuum. Bolshevism, however, is only a political tendency, closely fused with the working class but not identical with it. And aside from the working class there exist in the Soviet Union a hundred million peasants, various nationalities, and a heritage of oppression, misery, and ignorance. The state built up by the Bolsheviks reflects not only the thought and will of Bolshevism but also the cultural level of the country, the social composition of the population, the pressure of a barbaric past and no less barbaric world imperialism. To represent the process of degeneration of the Soviet state as the evolution of pure Bolshevism is to ignore social reality in the name of only one of its elements, isolated by pure logic. One has only to call this elementary mistake by its real name to do away with every trace of it.

Bolshevism, at any rate, never identified itself either with the October Revolution or with the Soviet state that issued from it. Bolshevism considered itself as one of the factors of history, the
“conscious” factor—a very important but not the decisive one. We never sinned in historical subjectivism. We saw the decisive factor—on the existing basis of productive forces—in the class struggle, not only on a national but on an international scale.

When the Bolsheviks made concessions to the peasant tendency to private ownership, set up strict rules for membership in the party, purged the party of alien elements, prohibited other parties, introduced the NEP, granted enterprises as concessions, or concluded diplomatic agreements with imperialist governments, they were drawing partial conclusions from the basic fact that had been theoretically clear to them from the beginning: that the conquest of power, however important it may be in itself, by no means transforms the party into a sovereign ruler of the historical process. Having taken over the state, the party is able, certainly, to influence the development of society with a power inaccessible to it before; but in return it submits itself to a ten times greater influence from all other elements of society. It can, by the direct attack of hostile forces, be thrown out of power. Given a more dragging tempo of development, it can degenerate internally while maintaining itself in power. It is precisely this dialectic of the historical process that is not understood by those sectarian logicians who try to find in the decay of the Stalinist bureaucracy an annihilating argument against Bolshevism.

In essence these gentlemen say: the revolutionary party that contains in itself no guarantee against its own degeneration is bad. By such a criterion Bolshevism is naturally condemned—it has no talisman. But the criterion itself is wrong. Scientific thinking demands a concrete analysis: How and why did the party degenerate? No one but the Bolsheviks themselves have up to the present time given such an analysis. To do this they had no need to break with Bolshevism. On the contrary, they found in its arsenal all they needed for the clarification of its fate. They drew this conclusion: certainly Stalinism “grew out” of Bolshevism, not logically, however, but dialectically; not as a revolutionary affirmation but as a Thermidorean negation. It is by no means the same.

The Fundamental Prognosis of Bolshevism

The Bolsheviks, however, did not have to wait for the Moscow trials to explain the reasons for the disintegration of the governing party of the USSR. Long ago they foresaw and spoke of the theoretical possibility of this development. Let us remember the
prognosis of the Bolsheviks, not only on the eve of the October Revolution but years before. The specific alignment of forces in the national and international field can enable the proletariat to seize power first in a backward country such as Russia. But the same alignment of forces proves beforehand that without a more or less rapid victory of the proletariat in the advanced countries the workers' government in Russia will not survive. Left to itself the Soviet regime must either fall or degenerate. More exactly: it will first degenerate and then fall. I myself have written about this more than once, beginning in 1905. In my History of the Russian Revolution (see the appendix to the last volume: "Socialism in One Country") are collected all the statements on this question made by the Bolshevik leaders from 1917 until 1923. They all lead to one conclusion: without a revolution in the West, Bolshevism will be liquidated either by internal counterrevolution or by external intervention, or by a combination of both. Lenin stressed again and again that the bureaucratization of the Soviet regime was not a technical or organizational question, but the potential beginning of the degeneration of the workers' state.

At the Eleventh Party Congress in March 1922, Lenin spoke of the support offered to Soviet Russia at the time of the NEP by certain bourgeois politicians, particularly the liberal professor Ustryalov: "'I am in favour of supporting the Soviet government,' says Ustryalov, although he was a Constitutional-Democrat, a bourgeois, and supported intervention.342 'I am in favour of supporting Soviet power because it has taken the road that will lead it to the ordinary bourgeois state.'" Lenin prefers the cynical voice of the enemy to "sentimental communist lies." Soberly and harshly he warns the party of the danger: "We must say frankly that the things Ustryalov speaks about are possible. History knows all sorts of metamorphoses. Relying on firmness of convictions, loyalty, and other splendid moral qualities is anything but a serious attitude in politics. A few people may be endowed with splendid moral qualities, but historical issues are decided by vast masses, which, if the few do not suit them, may at times treat them none too politely" [Lenin, Collected Works, vol. 33 (1973), pp. 286-87]. In a word, the party is not the only factor of development and on a larger historical scale is not the decisive one.

"One nation conquers another," continued Lenin at the same congress, the last in which he participated. "... This is simple and intelligible to all. But what happens to the culture of these nations? Here things are not so simple. If the conquering nation is more cultured than the vanquished nation, the former imposes
its culture upon the latter; but if the opposite is the case, the vanquished nation imposes its culture upon the conqueror. Has not something like this happened in the capital of the [Russian republic]? Have the 4,700 Communists (nearly a whole army division, and all of them the very best) come under the influence of an alien culture?" [p. 288]

This was said in the beginning of 1922, and not for the first time. History is not made by a few people, even “the best.” And not only that: these “best” can degenerate in the spirit of an alien, that is, a bourgeois culture. Not only can the Soviet state abandon the way of socialism, but the Bolshevik Party can, under unfavorable historic conditions, lose its Bolshevism.

From the clear understanding of this danger issued the Left Opposition, definitively formed in 1923. Recording day by day the symptoms of degeneration, it tried to oppose to the growing Thermidor the conscious will of the proletarian vanguard. However, this subjective factor proved to be insufficient. The “vast masses” which, according to Lenin, decide the outcome of the struggle, became tired of internal privations and of waiting too long for the world revolution. The mood of the masses declined. The bureaucracy won the upper hand. It cowed the revolutionary vanguard, trampled upon Marxism, prostituted the Bolshevik Party. Stalinism conquered. In the form of the Left Opposition, Bolshevism broke with the Soviet bureaucracy and its Comintern. This was the real course of development.

To be sure, in a formal sense, Stalinism did issue from Bolshevism. Even today the Moscow bureaucracy continues to call itself the Bolshevik Party. It is simply using the old label of Bolshevism the better to fool the masses. So much the more pitiful are those theoreticians who take the shell for the kernel and the appearance for the reality. In the identification of Bolshevism and Stalinism they render the best possible service to the Thermidoreans and precisely thereby play a clearly reactionary role.

In view of the elimination of all other parties from the political field the antagonistic interests and tendencies of the various strata of the population must, to a greater or lesser degree, find their expression in the governing party. To the extent that the political center of gravity has shifted from the proletarian vanguard to the bureaucracy, the party has changed in its social structure as well as in its ideology. Owing to the impetuous course of development, it has suffered in the last fifteen years a far more radical degeneration than did the Social Democracy in half a
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century. The present purge draws between Bolshevism and Stalinism not simply a bloody line but a whole river of blood. The annihilation of the entire old generation of Bolsheviks, an important part of the middle generation, which participated in the civil war, and that part of the youth which took seriously the Bolshevik traditions, shows not only a political but a thoroughly physical incompatibility between Bolshevism and Stalinism. How can this be ignored?

Stalinism and “State Socialism”

The anarchists, for their part, try to see in Stalinism the organic product not only of Bolshevism and Marxism but of “state socialism” in general. They are willing to replace Bakunin’s patriarchal “federation of free communes” by the more modern federation of free soviets. But, as formerly, they are against centralized state power. In fact, one branch of “state” Marxism, the Social Democracy, after coming to power, became an open agent of capitalism. The other gave birth to a new privileged caste. It is obvious that the source of the evil lies in the state.

From a broad historical viewpoint, there is a grain of truth in this reasoning. The state as an apparatus of constraint is undoubtedly a source of political and moral infection. This also applies, as experience has shown, to the workers’ state. Consequently, it can be said that Stalinism is a product of a condition of society in which society was still unable to tear itself out of the straitjacket of the state. But this situation, containing nothing for the evaluation of Bolshevism or Marxism, characterizes only the general cultural level of mankind, and above all—the relation of forces between proletariat and bourgeoisie. Having agreed with the anarchists that the state, even the workers’ state, is the offspring of class barbarism and that real human history will begin with the abolition of the state, we have still before us in full force the question: What ways and methods will lead, ultimately, to the abolition of the state? Recent experience proves that they are certainly not the methods of anarchism.

The leaders of the CNT, the only important anarchist organization in the world, became, in the critical hour, bourgeois ministers. They explained their open betrayal of the theory of anarchism by the pressure of “exceptional circumstances.” But did not the leaders of the German Social Democracy invoke, in their time, the same excuse? Naturally, civil war is not a peaceful
and ordinary but an "exceptional circumstance." Every serious revolutionary organization, however, prepares precisely for "exceptional circumstances." The experience of Spain has shown once again that the state can be "denied" in booklets published in "normal circumstances" by permission of the bourgeois state, but that the conditions of revolution leave no room for "denial" of the state; they demand, on the contrary, the conquest of the state. We have not the slightest intention of blaming the anarchists for not having liquidated the state by a mere stroke of the pen. A revolutionary party, even after having seized power (of which the anarchist leaders were incapable in spite of the heroism of the anarchist workers) is still by no means the sovereign ruler of society. But we do severely blame the anarchist theory, which seemed to be wholly suitable for times of peace, but which had to be dropped rapidly as soon as the "exceptional circumstances" of the . . . revolution had begun. In the old days there were certain generals—and there probably are now—who considered that the most harmful thing for an army was war. In the same class are those revolutionaries who claim that their doctrine is destroyed by revolution.

Marxists are wholly in agreement with the anarchists in regard to the final goal: the liquidation of the state. Marxists are "stateist" only to the extent that one cannot achieve the liquidation of the state simply by ignoring it. The experience of Stalinism does not refute the teaching of Marxism but confirms it by inversion. The revolutionary doctrine which teaches the proletariat to orient itself correctly in situations and to profit actively by them, contains of course no automatic guarantee of victory. But victory is possible only through the application of this doctrine. Moreover, the victory must not be thought of as a single event. It must be considered in the perspective of a historic epoch. The first workers' state—on a lower economic basis and surrounded by imperialism—was transformed into the gendarmerie of Stalinism. But genuine Bolshevism launched a life-and-death struggle against that gendarmerie. To maintain itself, Stalinism is now forced to conduct a direct civil war against Bolshevism, under the name of "Trotskyism," not only in the USSR but also in Spain. The old Bolshevik Party is dead, but Bolshevism is raising its head everywhere.

To deduce Stalinism from Bolshevism or from Marxism is the same as to deduce, in a larger sense, counterrevolution from revolution. Liberal-conservative and later reformist thinking has always been characterized by this cliche. Due to the class
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structure of society, revolutions have always produced counter-revolutions. Does this not indicate, asks the logician, that there is some inner flaw in the revolutionary method? However, neither the liberals nor the reformists have succeeded, as yet, in inventing a more "economical" method. But if it is not easy to rationalize the living historic process, it is not at all difficult to give a rational interpretation of the alternation of its waves, and thus by pure logic to deduce Stalinism from "state socialism," fascism from Marxism, reaction from revolution, in a word, the antithesis from the thesis. In this domain as in many others, anarchist thought is the prisoner of liberal rationalism. Real revolutionary thinking is not possible without dialectics.

The Political "Sins" of Bolshevism as the Source of Stalinism

The arguments of the rationalists assume at times, at least in their outer form, a more concrete character. They do not deduce Stalinism from Bolshevism as a whole, but from its political sins.* The Bolsheviks—according to Gorter, Pannekoek, certain German "Spartacists" and others346—replaced the dictatorship of the proletariat with the dictatorship of the party; Stalin replaced the dictatorship of the party with the dictatorship of the bureaucracy. The Bolsheviks destroyed all parties but their own; Stalin strangled the Bolshevik Party in the interest of a Bonapartist clique. The Bolsheviks made compromises with the bourgeoisie; Stalin became its ally and support. The Bolsheviks preached the necessity of participation in the old trade unions and in the bourgeois parliament; Stalin made friends with the trade union bureaucracy and bourgeois democracy. One can make such comparisons at will. For all their apparent effectiveness they are entirely empty.

*One of the outstanding representatives of this type of thinking is the French author of the book on Stalin, B. Souvarine. The factual and documentary side of Souvarine's work is the product of long and conscientious research. However, the historical philosophy of the author is striking in its vulgarity. To explain all subsequent historical mishaps he seeks the inner flaws of Bolshevism. The influence of the real conditions of the historical process on Bolshevism are nonexistent for him. Even Taine with his theory of "milieu" is closer to Marx than Souvarine is.345
The proletariat can take power only through its vanguard. In itself the necessity for state power arises from an insufficient cultural level of the masses and their heterogeneity. In the revolutionary vanguard, organized in a party, is crystallized the aspiration of the masses to obtain their freedom. Without the class's confidence in the vanguard, without the class's support of the vanguard, there can be no talk of the conquest of power. In this sense the proletarian revolution and dictatorship are the work of the whole class, but only under the leadership of the vanguard. The soviets are only the organized form of the tie between the vanguard and the class. A revolutionary content can be given to this form only by the party. This is proved by the positive experience of the October Revolution and by the negative experience of other countries (Germany, Austria, finally Spain). No one has either shown in practice or tried to explain articulately on paper how the proletariat can seize power without the political leadership of a party that knows what it wants. The political subordination of the soviets by this party to its leaders, has, in itself, abolished the soviet system no more than the domination of the Conservative majority has abolished the British parliamentary system.

As far as the prohibition of the other Soviet parties is concerned, it did not flow from any "theory" of Bolshevism but was a measure of defense of the dictatorship in a backward and devastated country, surrounded by enemies. For the Bolsheviks it was clear from the beginning that this measure, later completed by the prohibition of factions inside the governing party itself, signaled a tremendous danger. However, the root of the danger lay not in the doctrine or in the tactics but in the material weakness of the dictatorship, in the difficulties of its internal and international situation. If the revolution had triumphed, even if only in Germany, the need to prohibit the other Soviet parties would immediately have fallen away. It is absolutely indisputable that the domination of a single party served as the juridical point of departure for the Stalinist totalitarian system. But the reason for this development lies neither in Bolshevism nor in the prohibition of other parties as a temporary war measure, but in the number of defeats of the proletariat in Europe and Asia.

The same applies to the struggle with anarchism. In the heroic epoch of the revolution the Bolsheviks went hand in hand with the genuinely revolutionary anarchists. Many of them were drawn into the ranks of the party. The author of these lines discussed with Lenin more than once the possibility of allotting
to the anarchists certain territories where, with the consent of the local population, they would carry out their stateless experiment. But civil war, blockade, and famine left no room for such plans. The Kronstadt insurrection? But the revolutionary government naturally could not "present" to the insurrectionary sailors the fortress which protected the capital only because the reactionary peasant-soldier rebellion was joined by a few doubtful anarchists. A concrete historical analysis of the events leaves not the slightest room for the legends, built up on ignorance and sentimentality, concerning Kronstadt, Makhno, and other episodes of the revolution.

There remains only the fact that the Bolsheviks from the beginning applied not only conviction but also compulsion, often to a most brutal degree. It is also indisputable that later the bureaucracy which grew out of the revolution monopolized the system of compulsion for its own use. Every stage of development, even such catastrophic stages as revolution and counter-revolution, flows from the preceding stage, is rooted in it, and takes on some of its features. Liberals, including the Webbs, have always maintained that the Bolshevik dictatorship was only a new version of czarism. They close their eyes to such "details" as the abolition of the monarchy and the nobility, the handing over of the land to the peasants, the expropriation of capital, the introduction of planned economy, atheist education, etc. In the same way liberal-anarchist thought closes its eyes to the fact that the Bolshevik revolution, with all its repressions, meant an upheaval of social relations in the interests of the masses, whereas the Stalinist Thermidorean upheaval accompanies the transformation of Soviet society in the interests of a privileged minority. It is clear that in the identification of Stalinism with Bolshevism there is not a trace of socialist criteria.

Questions of Theory

One of the most outstanding features of Bolshevism has been its severe, exacting, even quarrelsome attitude toward questions of doctrine. The twenty-seven volumes of Lenin’s works will forever remain an example of the highest theoretical conscientiousness. Without this fundamental quality Bolshevism would never have fulfilled its historic role. In this regard, Stalinism, coarse, ignorant, and thoroughly empirical, lies at the opposite pole.

The Opposition declared more than ten years ago in its
program: "Since Lenin's death a whole set of new theories has been created, whose only purpose is to justify the backsliding of the Stalinists from the path of the international proletarian revolution." Only a few days ago an American writer, Liston M. Oak, who has participated in the Spanish revolution, wrote: "The Stalinists in fact are today the foremost revisionists of Marx and Lenin—Bernstein did not dare to go half as far as Stalin in revising Marx." This is absolutely true. One must add only that Bernstein actually felt certain theoretical needs: he tried conscientiously to establish the relationship between the reformist practices of the Social Democracy and its program. The Stalinist bureaucracy, however, not only has nothing in common with Marxism, but is in general foreign to any doctrine or system whatsoever. Its "ideology" is thoroughly permeated with police subjectivism, its practice is the empiricism of crude violence. In keeping with its essential interests the caste of usurpers is hostile to any theory: it can give an account of its social role neither to itself nor to anyone else. Stalin revises Marx and Lenin not with the theoretician's pen but with the heel of the GPU.

The Question of Morals

Complaints of the "immorality" of Bolshevism come particularly from those boastful nonentities whose cheap masks were torn away by Bolshevism. In petty-bourgeois, intellectual, democratic, "socialist," literary, parliamentary, and other circles, conventional values prevail, or a conventional language to cover their lack of values. This large and motley society for mutual protection—"live and let live"—cannot bear the touch of the Marxist lancet on its sensitive skin. The theoreticians, writers, and moralists, hesitating between different camps, thought and continue to think that the Bolsheviks maliciously exaggerate differences, are incapable of "loyal" collaboration, and by their "intrigues" disrupt the unity of the workers' movement. Moreover, the sensitive and squeamish centrist has always thought that the Bolsheviks were "slandering" him—simply because they carried through to the end for him his half-developed thoughts: he himself was never able to. But the fact remains that only that precious quality, an uncompromising attitude toward all quibbling and evasion, can educate a revolutionary party which will not be taken unawares by "exceptional circumstances."

The moral qualities of every party flow, in the last analysis,
Stalinism and Bolshevism

from the historical interests that it represents. The moral qualities of Bolshevism, self-sacrifice, disinterestedness, audacity, and contempt for every kind of tinsel and falsehood—the highest qualities of human nature!—flow from revolutionary intransigence in the service of the oppressed. The Stalinist bureaucracy imitates in this domain also the words and gestures of Bolshevism. But when "intransigence" and "inflexibility" are applied by a police apparatus in the service of a privileged minority they become a source of demoralization and gangsterism. One can feel only contempt for these gentlemen who identify the revolutionary heroism of the Bolsheviks with the bureaucratic cynicism of the Thermidoreans.

Even now, in spite of the dramatic events of the recent period, the average philistine prefers to believe that the struggle between Bolshevism ("Trotskyism") and Stalinism concerns a clash of personal ambitions, or, at best, a conflict between two "shades" of Bolshevism. The crudest expression of this opinion is given by Norman Thomas, leader of the American Socialist Party: "There is little reason to believe," he writes (American Socialist Review, September 1937, p. 6) "that if Trotsky had won (!) instead of Stalin, there would have been an end of intrigue, plots, and the reign of fear in Russia." And this man considers himself . . . a Marxist. One would have the same right to say: "There is little reason to believe that if instead of Pius XI, the Holy See were occupied by Norman I, the Catholic Church would have been transformed into a bulwark of socialism."

Thomas fails to understand that it is not a question of a match between Stalin and Trotsky, but of an antagonism between the bureaucracy and the proletariat. To be sure, the governing stratum of the USSR-is forced even now to adapt itself to the still not wholly liquidated heritage of revolution, while preparing at the same time through direct civil war (bloody "purge"—mass annihilation of the discontented) a change of the social regime. But in Spain the Stalinist clique is already acting openly as a bulwark of the bourgeois order against socialism. The struggle against the Bonapartist bureaucracy is turning before our eyes into class struggle: two worlds, two programs, two moralities. If Thomas thinks that the victory of the socialist proletariat over the infamous caste of oppressors would not politically and morally regenerate the Soviet regime, he proves only that for all his reservations, shufflings, and pious sighs he is far nearer to the Stalinist bureaucracy than to the workers.
Like other exposers of Bolshevik "immorality," Thomas has simply not grown up to revolutionary morals.

The Traditions of Bolshevism and the Fourth International

The "leftists" who tried to skip Bolshevism in their "return" to Marxism generally confined themselves to isolated panaceas: boycott of the old trade unions, boycott of parliament, creation of "genuine" soviets. All this could still seem extremely profound in the first heat of the postwar days. But now, in the light of most recent experience, such "infantile diseases" have no longer even the interest of a curiosity. The Dutchmen Gorter and Pannekoek, the German "Spartacists," the Italian Bordigists, showed their independence from Bolshevism only by artificially inflating one of its features and opposing it to the rest. But nothing has remained either in practice or in theory of these "left" tendencies: an indirect but important proof that Bolshevism is the only possible form of Marxism for this epoch.

The Bolshevik Party has shown in action a combination of the highest revolutionary audacity and political realism. It has established for the first time the only relation between vanguard and class that can assure victory. It has proved by experience that the alliance between the proletariat and the oppressed masses of the rural and urban petty bourgeoisie is possible only through the political defeat of the traditional petty-bourgeois parties. The Bolshevik Party has shown the entire world how to carry out armed insurrection and the seizure of power. Those who counterpose the abstraction of soviets to the party dictatorship should understand that only thanks to the Bolshevik leadership were the soviets able to lift themselves out of the mud of reformism and attain the state form of the proletariat. The Bolshevik Party achieved in the civil war the correct combination of military art and Marxist politics. Even if the Stalinist bureaucracy should succeed in destroying the economic foundations of the new society, the experience of planned economy under the leadership of the Bolshevik Party will have entered history for all time as one of the greatest teachings of mankind. This can be ignored only by bruised and offended sectarians who have turned their backs on the historical process.

But this is not all. The Bolshevik Party was able to carry on its magnificent "practical" work only because it illuminated all its
steps with theory. Bolshevism did not create this theory: it was furnished by Marxism. But Marxism is the theory of movement, not of stagnation. Only events on a tremendous historical scale could enrich the theory itself. Bolshevism brought an invaluable contribution to Marxism in its analysis of the imperialist epoch as an epoch of wars and revolutions; of bourgeois democracy in the era of decaying capitalism; of the correlation between the general strike and the insurrection; of the role of party, soviets, and trade unions in the period of proletarian revolution; in its theory of the Soviet state, of the economy of transition, of fascism and Bonapartism in the epoch of capitalist decline; finally in its analysis of the degeneration of both the Bolshevik Party itself and of the Soviet state. Let any other tendency be named that has added anything essential to the conclusions and generalizations of Bolshevism. Theoretically and politically Vandervelde, De Brouckere, Hilferding, Otto Bauer, Leon Blum, Zyromsky, not to mention Major Attlee and Norman Thomas, live on the dilapidated leftovers of the past. The degeneration of the Comintern is most crudely expressed by the fact that it has dropped to the theoretical level of the Second International. All the varieties of intermediary groups (Independent Labour Party of Great Britain, POUM, and their like) adapt new haphazard fragments of Marx and Lenin to their current needs every week. They can teach the workers nothing.

Only the founders of the Fourth International, who have made the whole tradition of Marx and Lenin their own, take a serious attitude toward theory. Philistines may jeer that twenty years after the October victory the revolutionaries are again thrown back to modest propagandist preparation. The big capitalists are, in this question as in many others, far more penetrating than the petty-bourgeois who imagine themselves "Socialists" or "Communists." It is no accident that the subject of the Fourth International does not leave the columns of the world press. The burning historical need for revolutionary leadership promises to the Fourth International an exceptionally rapid tempo of growth. The greatest guarantee of its further success lies in the fact that it has not arisen apart from the large historic road, but is an organic outgrowth of Bolshevism.
TO DISCREDIT STALINISM IN THE EYES OF THE WORKERS

September 2, 1937

J. P. Cannon and M. Shachtman

Dear Comrades:

Comrade Rae sent you yesterday a copy of my article "Stalinism and Bolshevism." We are sending you today a new copy of the same article. The question treated in this article is very timely everywhere, and especially in the United States (in connection with the split with the Socialist Party). We must do everything in our power to definitively discredit Stalinism in the eyes of the workers. But, on the other hand, the enemies of Marxism and Bolshevism do everything in their power to identify Stalinism with Bolshevism—and by this to compromise the Fourth International. The aim of this article, like the aim of my short answer to Wendelin Thomas, is to show that Stalinism is the opposite of Bolshevism.

Where can the article be published? It is too long, I believe, for the Socialist Appeal; you don't have a magazine. I doubt if any of the existing magazines would accept the article. Can it be published in the form of a pamphlet by Pioneer Publishers? It seems to me the only way to launch the article immediately. It would be good if the pamphlet appeared at the beginning of the session of the Inquiry Commission.

With best greetings,
Leon Trotsky

P.S.—The translator of the pamphlet, Eleanor Clark, is vitally interested in the totally correct presentation of the text and will appear at the office to do the final corrections of the proofs. Please ask her if she wishes her name to be published as translator of the pamphlet.
The “London Bureau of Revolutionary Socialist Parties” was invited, together with the Second and Third Internationals, to participate in the International Commission of Inquiry on the Moscow trials. On May 21, Fenner Brockway, in the name of the London Bureau, rejected the invitation. The pertinent section of his reply reads verbatim as follows:

“The International Bureau is not able to endorse the American Commission of Inquiry or to be represented on it because it takes the view that a disastrous mistake has been made in initiating the inquiry through a committee which describes itself as a ‘Committee for the Defense of Trotsky.’”

The London Bureau, it would seem, is vitally concerned in the success of the inquiry and if it refuses to give any assistance it is solely due to the fact that the investigation was initiated by the “Defense” Committee. However, Mr. Brockway fails to specify just who should have initiated the inquiry. The new head of the GPU, Yezhov? Or the secretary of the Comintern, Dimitrov? Or the King’s Counselor, Pritt? Or the secretary of the London Bureau, Fenner Brockway? Or, finally, the Archbishop of Canterbury?

The most “impartial” of the above-listed candidates, one should imagine, is Brockway himself. But, as is obvious from his letter of last February to the American Socialist, Devere Allen, none other than Brockway himself not only refused to initiate the inquiry but did everything in his power to prevent others from taking the initiative, and, furthermore, adduced arguments involving not the interests of impartiality but those of the Moscow bureaucracy.

Here is what Brockway wrote to Allen: The inquiry “. . . will merely arouse prejudice in Russia and in Communist circles.” Isn’t it astonishing? In a letter not intended for publication Brockway incautiously spoke up as a member of the “Committee
for the Defense" of—Stalin, Dimitrov, Vyshinsky, and Yagoda. I pointed this out in the press at the time. Not a word came in reply from Brockway. Several months elapsed. In his letter of May 28, Brockway again came out against the inquiry, but this time with a completely different set of arguments. But in essence he still remains a member of the undercover "Committee for the Defense" of the falsifiers against their victims.

There is no juridical or moral ground whatever for the suspicion which Brockway, in the name of the London Bureau, seeks to cast over the inquiry. All that the American committee did was to take the initiative. Furthermore, the sum and substance of its initiative consisted precisely in this: To assure, in collaboration with other organizations, an objective and a conscientious investigation through a special International Commission, entirely independent of the initiators.

The composition of the American committee is not a homogeneous one. There are individuals in it who understood from the very outset the absurdity and vileness of the Moscow accusations. Other members had no settled opinions on this score but they were either alarmed by or indignant over the "totalitarian" character of Moscow justice and over the fact that the Norwegian "Socialist" flunkeys of the GPU had placed me behind lock and key at the very moment when I needed freedom most to defend not only myself but hundreds of others. It goes without saying that had the American committee been composed of hypocrites it might have called itself "The Committee for the Defense of Eternal Precepts of Morality." But it chose to act openly. By "Defense of Trotsky" the committee had and has in mind not to provide the alliance between Trotsky and Hitler with a cover but to provide Trotsky with an opportunity to publicly refute the accusation made against him. Nothing more! It is quite sufficient.

The members of the committee understood from the first just as well as Brockway did that the verdict of the International Commission would carry weight only if the inquiry were conducted with all the requisite guarantees for thoroughness and objectivity, in particular, with the participation in the commission of representatives of the different trends in political thought. The committee began by inviting publicly the representatives of the Moscow government, the Comintern, the "Friends of the Soviet Union," the Second International, the London Bureau, etc. It was, naturally, not a question of the political or moral evaluation of Stalinism, Trotskyism, Bolshevism, or Marxism. No political tendency would agree to be the object of appraisal by an
interparty commission; no rational commission would undertake such an insuperable task. The appraisal of political tendencies is made by the masses in the course of the political struggle. The final verdict is brought in by history.

The task of the inquiry of the International Commission did and does consist only of verifying certain specific charges made against certain individuals. The political conclusions from the verdict of the commission will be drawn by each tendency in its own way. This made it all the more essential for every organization interested in bringing out the truth to participate in the investigation. But the direct and indirect agents and "friends" of the GPU and the friends of friends flatly refused to participate. Some of them, in the spirit of Fenner Brockway's first letter, argued that it was impermissible to arouse any prejudice against Stalin and his Comintern; others, in the style of Fenner Brockway's second letter, adjudged the commission not "impartial" enough. Both the former and the latter had ample justification for fearing an investigation. The London Bureau protected its rear.

To reveal more vividly the unworthy role played by this Bureau we shall dwell on another, and more recent, case. The gangsters of the GPU in Spain murdered Andres Nin, the leader of the POUM. Nin was an opponent of mine. Fenner Brockway, on the contrary, considered Nin a cothinker. If the London Bureau and other "impartial" Pontius Pilates had joined in an investigation of the Moscow frame-ups immediately after the Zinoviev-Kamenev trial, the GPU might not have dared to put in circulation the palpably false charge that the leaders of the POUM are collaborating with General Franco. But this was not done. The "impartial" ones shielded the GPU. As a result, Nin has been murdered, together with scores and hundreds of others. The POUM has been crushed. What has been let slip cannot be retrieved. Do the Brockways think that the time has now come for an international investigation of the crimes of the GPU in Spain—of the frame-ups, pillages, and murders? Or are they waiting for the sterilized priests of impartiality to initiate the investigation? Let Brockway supply me with their addresses and telephone numbers. I will immediately get in touch with them. But if, as I suspect, they do not exist in nature, let the London Bureau take upon itself the initiative of calling the inquiry. Let the Bureau, emulating the example of the American committee, turn to all the existing labor Internationals and to outstanding individuals in science, literature, and art who are known for their honesty and integrity. If someone were to say that Fenner
Brockway would make a "disastrous mistake" by initiating the inquiry instead of allowing matters to rest with Stalin or Negrin, every rational and honest person would call such an "accuser" a brazen hypocrite.

In conclusion, I consider it necessary to recall here another not unimportant circumstance. In the very same February letter in which he expressed his touching concern for the interests of Stalin, Yagoda, and Dimitrov, Fenner Brockway proposed to create an international commission of inquiry... into my political activity and, furthermore, with rather strange "precipitancy" proposed to include in this commission Norman Thomas, Otto Bauer, Branting, and other bitter political enemies of mine. The very idea of an "official" appraisal of the political activity of an individual or a party through the medium of a commission of inquiry is so absurd that it properly belongs only on the pages of a provincial humor magazine. Of course, Fenner Brockway himself could not have failed to understand this. But he attempted to make use of the gory Moscow amalgams in order to deal a blow at Bolshevism ("Trotskyism"), which he hates so much; in addition he tried to cover up his factional struggle with the cloak of an impartial "investigation." Specialists in morals are notoriously fond of fishing in troubled waters.

We, the "amoral" Bolsheviks, proceed differently. We openly criticized Nin's policies when he was alive. We did not alter our evaluation of him after he died. But inasmuch as we never for a moment doubted the integrity of this proletarian fighter, we stand ready to do everything in our power to rehabilitate his name and mercilessly brand his executioners. We declare in advance to Fenner Brockway and all other specialists in morals that not a single one of our friends and cothinkers will attempt to use the investigation of Nin's murder as a pretext to settle scores with Nin's policies. To wage a struggle against opportunism and centrism we have no need to hide behind a "commission" created for a totally different purpose. We leave such methods to the Tartuffes of idealistic morality. We, gross materialists, prefer to call a "nettle but a nettle and the faults of fools but folly." We deal blows to our adversaries openly and in our own names.
Dear Comrade Goldman:

I am very disturbed by the possibility of a special statement of Wendelin Thomas against Bolshevism as the source of all ills of this world generally and of the Moscow trials specifically. Such a statement would diminish the value of the verdict of the commission and will inevitably become for a time the principal topic of public discussion. Neither juridically nor morally has Wendelin Thomas the right to make such a statement in his capacity as a member of the commission.

1. The commission was created for a very definite purpose, delineated definitively by Dr. Dewey in his opening statement. Dr. Dewey asked me if I were ready to answer the questions of the commission for that purpose. My answer was affirmative and positive. Had anyone told me that the commission regarded itself as authorized to issue statements on the value of Bolshevism, Stalinism, Trotskyism, etc., I would have immediately renounced any participation in the hearings. No one can seriously admit that a heterogeneous commission composed of persons of different parties could issue a statement on the philosophy, program, tactics of a political personality.

2. During the hearings, the matter of the moral principles of Bolshevism was not seriously touched upon. Had any member of the commission raised the question that Stalinism results from Bolshevism, I should have answered it first by pointing out that the question is irrelevant and then by showing the falsity of the position.

3. A statement on a political program cannot be a nonpartisan statement but can be dictated only by a specific point of view. Independently and apart from the hearings, Wendelin Thomas, in his private capacity, can write everything he thinks about Bolshevism; but to use his position as a member of the commission to express his personal views constitutes an abuse of his
function as a member of the commission and of the confidence which has been put in him by the other members of the commission and by myself.

4. I wrote an article yesterday on Fenner Brockway, in which I developed in a very sharp form the ideas I have just expressed. The article is directed really against Wendelin Thomas, without naming him. You can obtain the text from Vanzler.

5. I also wrote a more significant article concerning the theoretical question of the relationship between Stalinism and Bolshevism. I hope it will be published as early as possible. In any case, please take notice of it.

Best greetings from Natalia and myself to you both.
Dear Comrade Cannon:

1. I don’t believe that personal correspondence with Sneevliet could, in the present situation, change anything. Sneevliet is very stubborn. He broke organizational relations with the International Secretariat; he is very hostile to the Americans, who “betrayed” the Fourth International. He is embittered by the permanent misfortunes of his policy in Holland. He puts more stock in the small bureau of the NAS than in his international connections. He latched onto the POUM in the hope of having a counterweight to our tendency, and the terrible collapse of the POUM embittered him even more. He is totally unapproachable today. After your national convention, if it will be successful—and I am sure it will—you will have more possibility to influence him.

2. That the Brandlerites and Lovestoneites have entered the Noah’s ark of the London Bureau is very favorable: it will only augment the centrifugal tendencies of this famous “revolutionary unity.” I don’t know if the Lovestoneites have any intelligent people, possibly, but their tendency is fundamentally stupid. In the Oehlerites you find at least some geometric construction—useless but curious. The writings of the Lovestoneites are only profoundly boring.

3. From conversations with visitors (and they are numerous) I am under the impression that we are in complete isolation from the Stalinist party. That’s very, very regrettable. The closest obstacle is the Stalinists. Systematic work should be begun immediately. Even a small, modest subcommittee for that purpose could prepare the ground for the larger penetration in this milieu.

4. Our organization will become attractive to very different people in the next period, and not only for the best of them. Public life in the States is very agitated, and the recent announcement of
the new crisis will aggravate the disquietude, the fighting spirit, and . . . the confusion. We can't avoid having this confusion in our ranks. Our comrades are "too" educated, "too" accustomed to precise, elaborated conceptions and slogans. They have a contempt for everybody who is not ideologically "O.K." It is very dangerous. A developing and alive party must represent—to a certain extent—the different tendencies, disquietudes and, I repeat, even the confusion in the vanguard of the working class. Too much confusion is, of course, not good but a sound proportion can be established only through practice. More pedagogical patience is absolutely necessary on the part of our comrades toward the new and fresh elements. That is the genuine meaning of party "democracy." I believe that for the next period the emphasis must be put on the democracy, not on the centralism. The necessary equilibrium between them will be established on the basis of the new experience.

As I see from a short remark in your letter, you plan to come to Mexico. It is not necessary to say that Natalia and I would be very glad to have you again in our home.

With best greetings,
Leon Trotsky
Dear Comrade Glotzer:

The Despres left yesterday for Chicago. We spent some very agreeable days together in Taxco. Before them we had a visit from the Heisler family. We discussed in a very friendly manner the present situation in the Socialist Party, etc. I am very interested to know if the differences with Heisler are now resolved.

The creation of an independent party with about two thousand members is a very important step forward. The inner regime in the party is of the greatest importance. It must be a regime of genuine democracy. I agree with you on the matter totally. Democracy presupposes not only a formal political but a pedagogical approach, to new members and to every workers’ audience. It is correct that the leadership should be patient in its approach to the membership as the party should be in its approach to the working masses. That far I agree with you. But there are methods of fighting for party democracy which are very dangerous to this aim. The present leadership—I mean all its members—is not an accidental one: it is a result of a selection, of a long period of struggle. In three to five years, new experiences can induce important changes in the composition and in the mentality of the leadership. But trying to change the leadership by some too-impatient, too-sharp measures can be fatal, and I can’t conceal my impression that there are some disquieting symptoms in your letter. Possibly my impression is false; all the better.

In an old and warm friendship,

L. Trotsky
September 11, 1937

Question: Does Mr. Trotsky think the Soviets have precise proof of the Italian submarines?

Answer: I do not know if the Soviets have formal proof of the activity of the Italian submarines. But there are sufficient proofs in the coincidences of the words of Mussolini, his general plans, his activity in Spain, and his arrogance, which grows with impunity.

Q: Do you think an Italo-Russian war imminent? Or is Stalin trying to embarrass the capitalist nations of Europe?

A: I do not in any way think an Italo-Russian war is imminent. Besides, it is barely conceivable, unless as a complement to a Russo-German war. Nor do I think Stalin wishes to embarrass the capitalist nations of Europe. On the contrary, he is seeking by all means to impress himself on them as the firm pillar of the status quo and established order. That is precisely why, with the tacit mandate of England and France, he is playing the role of gendarme in the Spanish revolution.

Q: What do you think of the eventuality of Russian intervention in the Far East?

A: The Moscow oligarchy is completely absorbed by the civil war against the flower of the Russian people. That is why it cannot undertake a foreign war. Stalin has already capitulated many times to Japan. He will capitulate to Mussolini. He will withdraw to the extreme limit that is possible. The threats offered by the Soviet diplomats are intended solely for the marginal notes of the Soviet press, and for the press of the Spanish government.
Dear Comrade Glotzer:

I received your letter of September 17 and a copy of your letter to Comrade Cannon. Thank you for both. I’m glad that the Despres enjoyed their stay in Mexico. They both won our sincere sympathies.

Your letter to Cannon emphasizes the importance of the coming discussion. It is indeed clear that the discussion will become a very important introduction to the independent life of the party. But it is very important beforehand to present very clearly the new milieu and the new circumstances of the discussion.

You will have, I assume, the greater half of the party composed of new elements. They agree with you on the principles but lack concrete experience in applying these principles. Their organizational education is totally different from yours. That is why your objections and arguments can assume in their heads a totally different meaning. Let us take, for example, the question whether it was or was not reasonable to enter the Socialist Party. For the “natives” the question does not exist at all. Your entry into the SP helped them to find the genuine, revolutionary road, and they will be at a loss even to understand the clash of opinions among their new leaders on this question. I will not say that therefore the question cannot be posed in the discussion but it is absolutely necessary to consider the new milieu and to observe the necessary proportions.

In this connection, I will shortly enter into the question itself. A couple of months ago a I read a letter from Comrade Abern, and heard the same opinion expressed by some other comrades, that the entry was “nevertheless” a mistake, and that the organization could have had greater success if it had remained independent. I find this assessment absolutely false. If we had only the United States experience, it would be very difficult to establish a
comparison between two possibilities by abstract speculations. But we have other countries. The Dutch party, which opposed the American "entry" vigorously and itself remained as an independent party, lost, at the same time, in membership and influence. You can say the Dutch party had a wrong policy. I agree with this argument. But we have the example of the French and of the Belgian sections. They went out of the Socialist Party approximately at the same time as you entered into the SP. During the period of your sojourn under the tutelage of Norman Thomas, etc., that is, during the period of the Moscow trials, the Spanish Civil War, and the Blum government, etc., our French and Belgian sections were independent parties. They won influence but very modestly and they didn't win in membership, or not much, in spite of the fact that a year ago they were numerically stronger than the American section before the entry into the SP. What is the reason? The Moscow trials prepared the decline of the Comintern, but immediately they isolated our sections and they imposed on sympathizers and half-sympathizers a wait-and-see attitude.

In the United States it was different. Due to the close connections in the same party, the best "natives" gained the personal impression that the accusations couldn't be true, and they became influenced by your political ideas. That is the reason why the American section is the only one which can, for the past year, show important gains. I am sure that the next year will open a wider road for all our sections, with the exception possibly of the USSR: the Russian section will appear on the arena later.

Will you permit me a suggestion concerning Oehler? In view of their general attitude (politically very stupid), it is clear that their demands for reintegration would be only a poor imitation (in pocket-size) of your policy toward the SP. If the independent party consisted only of the old Bolshevik-Leninists, the experience would be prejudicial to the Oehlerites, not to you. But the thousand new members, who must be beset by different hesitations and opposition, could come under their influence. On the other hand, it would be unwise merely to reject their demand for reintegration. Would it not be possible to enter into organizational contact with the Oehlerites and other analogous groups if they desire, in the form of a commission which meets once a week or so, and analyze different current political questions under conditions of a friendly tone of discussion in the press? This procedure will give us the possibility of showing by and by to the
new members the real character of the Oehlerites and possibly causing differentiation in their own ranks. The contact commission should be considered as the commission preparing the merger.

I agree totally with your suggestion, in your letter to Comrade Cannon, that the “most important part” of the discussion must be devoted to the questions of the activity of the independent party and to its initial program. But even this inevitable and creative discussion must be conducted in accordance with the new party milieu. The “old guard” should make every effort—naturally, not at the expense of principles—to present to the party unanimous drafts, or at least reduce the differences to concrete amendments to the common text and not to present opposing drafts and force the party to choose between them. These suggestions presume, naturally, insofar as I can judge, that irreconcilable differences do not exist now in the party, and even less in the leadership.

If above I dwelled on the question of the Oehlerites, it was not with regard to their inherent importance—no, our arena is absolutely elsewhere—but in regard to the internal regime of our own party. The next period will be, in this respect, of great importance. We must give an example of genuine party democracy. But democracy doesn’t signify nonchalance and carelessness. And every outbreak of a sharp clash in the “old guard” at this period would become inevitably prejudicial to party democracy and to the party as such. It is, naturally, not a question of forbidding discussion, or a “gag law” in our own party. It is only a reminder that the character of the discussion must be controlled by a sense of responsibility.

In view of the fact that this letter deals with questions of a general character, I am sending copies of it to Comrades Cannon and Abern. If I am not sending it directly to the National Committee, the only reason is that it would be too “pretentious”: I am too isolated from the organization to be able to make “official” propositions.

My best and warm greetings to Comrade Reva and yourself from Natalia and myself.

Yours,

R. Ruskin [Trotsky]
CATASTROPHE SEEN FOR JAPAN

September 20, 1937

Question: What effect will a Japanese military victory in China have upon the political equilibrium of the Far East?

Answer: An actual and serious victory of Japan over China would signify the forcing of Great Britain out of China, hermetically sealed doors for the United States, and a direct threat to the Soviet Far East and, in the next stage, a threat to French Indochina and to Holland’s islands. I do not believe, however, in the possibility of the execution of this plan. As I have written more than once in the past ten years, the first great war will end in the greatest social catastrophe for Japan.

Q: What effect will the military venture have upon Japan’s own internal political and economic structure?

A: The empire of the Mikado contains within it all the social contradictions which, in its time, exploded the czarist empire: half-feudal agrarian relations; a monarchy by “divine right”; terrible poverty of the people; a tight internal market for industry; a monstrous growth of the military budget; a military caste which reflects in itself all the inner contradictions of the country, and so forth, and so forth.

Q: What are the potentialities of the situation, given admitted opposition on the part of the Japanese masses to the Chinese adventure, if the entire Japanese regular army is sent to the continent?

A: The masses of Japanese soldiers reflect the deep dissatisfaction of the Japanese peasants and workers. In the beginning of the war, the chauvinist wave will, as always, seize the whole army but the reaction to it will not be long in coming.

Great Britain could not, in the twentieth century, win India; on
the contrary, it is getting ready to lose her. Japan is not Great Britain. China is stronger than India. Japanese imperialism will break its head in its Chinese adventure.

Q: Upon what internal factors does Russia's present passive policy toward the Sino-Japanese conflict depend? Is it ready for war with Japan, if that comes? Has its army recovered from the effects of the recent "purge"? Do you consider true the recent assertion in several United States publications that Stalin feels himself once more "firmly in the saddle," and is prepared to take more positive measures in Asia?

A: Stalin is conducting a civil war against the people. In all spheres of public life—in economics, in the army, in literature, etc.—the discontent of the masses with the demoralized bureaucratic caste is manifested through the more honest, gifted, critically thinking representatives. Stalin systematically exterminates them through the GPU. The bureaucracy has become the chief hindrance to the economic and cultural development of the land. The Hydra of dissatisfaction will therefore grow more and more heads. The regime of Stalin is doomed. A good deal of recent correspondence from Moscow, censored or "uncensored," tries to prove that the bloody purge "strengthened" the position of Stalin. The authors of these reports either understand nothing or they understand too much.

The external politics of Stalin are dictated not by the interests of the USSR but by his concern for the self-preservation of the ruling caste. Stalin is retreating and will continue to retreat. War will tame the ruling bureaucratic caste. However, I do not doubt that the USSR will emerge victorious from a war in the Far East.
A TRAGIC LESSON

September 21, 1937

In the death of Ignace Reiss there is an element of great tragedy.

By breaking with the Comintern and the GPU, Reiss gave proof of his courage as a revolutionist. He knew better than anybody else the danger that threatened his transfer of allegiance from the camp of the Thermidorean hellhounds to the camp of revolution. Reiss’s conduct could have been dictated only by high ideological considerations, and thereby alone he has earned respect to his memory on the part of every thinking worker. Yet an enigma still remains: Why and wherefore did Reiss remain in the service of the GPU during the recent years, when Thermidor had already conquered all along the line, and the bureaucracy had ceased to hesitate at any crime whatever?

The corruption of Stalinism, the mendacity and perfidiousness of Stalin, are matters of common knowledge. Members of the GPU are least likely to cherish any illusions on this score. Ignace Reiss had behind him almost two decades of activity in the ranks of the party. Consequently he was not a novice. At the same time, Reiss’s conduct during the last few months proves that he could not have been guided by considerations of personal comfort. Careerists do not join the ranks of the Fourth International, which represents today the most persecuted movement in world history.

War is approaching. New persecutions await the internationalists. Reiss could not have helped understanding this. Through the years of Thermidor he must have succeeded in preserving the living spirit of a revolutionary fighter. But in that case, how could he have remained so long in the same camp with all the Yagodas, Yezhovs, Dimitrovs—and Cain-Dzhugashvili [Stalin]?

To be sure, Reiss performed his work abroad, face to face with the capitalist world. This circumstance acted to facilitate psychologically his collaboration with the Thermidorean oligarchy. Nevertheless, that does not touch the nub of the question. Reiss
could not but have been informed as to what was taking place in the USSR. Notwithstanding this, the monstrous Moscow trials were required, and not only the first but also the second, to bring Reiss to the actual breaking point. We may assume with certainty that in the ranks of the bureaucracy there are quite a number who feel as Reiss did. They have contempt for their milieu. They hate Stalin. And, at the same time, they endlessly toil on and on.

The reason for an adaptation of this kind has its roots in the very character of Thermidor, as a gradual, creeping, and all-enveloping reaction. Slowly and imperceptibly, a revolutionist becomes drawn into the conspiracy against the revolution. Each passing year strengthens his ties with the apparatus and deepens his break with the working masses.

The bureaucracy, especially the bureaucracy of the GPU, lives in an artificial atmosphere, which it creates for itself. Each compromise with the revolutionary conscience prepares a graver conscience on the morrow and thereby renders it more difficult to break away. Moreover, the illusion remains that everything is being done in the service of the “revolution.” Men keep hoping for a miracle which will on the morrow switch the policy of the ruling clique back to the old track—and in this hope they keep on toiling.

Again, it is impossible to overlook the enormous external difficulties. Even in the case of a complete inner readiness to break with the bureaucracy, there still remains a question, at first glance unsolvable: Where to go? Within the USSR any sign of divergences with the ruling clique entails almost certain death. Stalin is besmirched with such horrible crimes that he cannot but see a mortal enemy in anyone who refuses to assume responsibility for these crimes.

Go underground? No other tendency in world history has had to conduct underground work under such difficulties as the Marxists in the USSR today. Underground work is possible only when an active mass exists. Today, this condition is almost nonexistent in the USSR. True, the workers hate the bureaucracy but they do not yet see the new road. A break with the bureaucracy therefore presents absolutely exceptional difficulties of a political and practical nature. That is the main reason both for the thunderous confessions as well as for the silent deals with one’s own conscience.

For the Soviet functionaries abroad, the difficulties have a different but no less acute form. Agents engaged in secret work live as a rule on false passports, issued by the GPU. For them a
break with Moscow implies not only that they will be left hanging in midair, but that they will instantly fall victims to the foreign police, upon the denunciation of the GPU.

What to do? The GPU utilizes precisely this hopeless situation of its representatives to extort ever new crimes from them. In addition, the GPU has abroad a huge agentry of a secondary and tertiary order consisting nine-tenths of careerists in the Comintern, Russian White Guards, and in general various types of scoundrels ready at a sign to murder anybody pointed out to them, especially those who by their revelations might spoil their comfortable existence. No, it is not so easy to tear oneself free from the clutches of the GPU!

But it would be a mistake to reduce the tragic event of September 4 near Lausanne to merely external difficulties. The death of Reiss is not only a loss but a lesson. We would be disrespectful to the memory of a revolutionist if we did not lay bare the political mistakes which made the work of the Kremlin butchers easier. In question are not the mistakes committed by the deceased comrade himself. After he had torn himself away from the artificial milieu of the GPU, it was far too hard for him to orient himself immediately in the new situation. Involved here are our joint mistakes and weaknesses. We failed to establish connections with Reiss in time; we were unable to surmount the minor artificial barriers which were dividing him from us. And so, Reiss could find no one nearby at the critical moment who could have offered him correct advice.

In June of this year comrade Reiss had already resolved firmly to break with the Kremlin. He began by writing a letter to the Central Committee, which he forwarded to Moscow on July 17. Comrade Reiss deemed it necessary to bide his time until his letter reached its destination, before making it public. Gratuitous chivalry! The letter itself, principled in content and firm in tone, contained only the announcement of the break without specifying any facts or making any revelations, and, besides, bore only the signature of "Ludwig," a name which could not disclose a thing to anybody. In this way the GPU had at its disposal ample time to prepare the murder. Meanwhile, the public opinion of the West remained in complete ignorance. The GPU could not have desired more favorable conditions for itself.

The sole serious defense against the hired murderers of Stalin is complete publicity. There was no need to send a letter to Moscow. It is impossible to exert any influence by means of principled letters upon Bonapartists degenerated to the marrow
of their bones. On the very day of the break, a political statement should have been issued to the world press. This statement should have dwelled not on one's passing over from the Third to the Fourth International (this question as yet interests only a tiny minority) but on one's past work in the GPU, the crimes of the GPU, the Moscow judicial frame-ups, and the break with the GPU. Such a statement signed with his own name would have immediately placed Ignace Reiss in the center of wide public attention, and that alone would have rendered more difficult the butcher's work of Stalin.

In addition Reiss could—and in our opinion, should—in the interests of self-defense, have surrendered to the French or Swiss police, supplying a description of all the circumstances in the case. His previous sojourn on a false passport would probably have led to Reiss's arrest. But he himself and his friends would have had little difficulty in establishing that involved here were only violations of formal regulations and that Reiss had been guided in his activities solely by political motives.

It is hardly likely that he ran the risk of a severe sentence. In any case his life would have been shielded. His courageous break with the GPU would have created for him the necessary popularity. A political goal would have been attained and personal security would have been assured, to the extent that it can be at all assured under current conditions.

Unfortunately, the mistakes committed in this case cannot be made good. Ignace Reiss was murdered at the very beginning of a new chapter of his political life. But Reiss is not alone. In Stalin's apparatus there are not a few who are wavering. The crimes of the Kremlin lord and master are prodding and will prod them to take the path of breaking with a doomed regime of falsehood and corruption. Ignace Reiss has set them a courageous example. At the same time, his tragic end teaches us the need of interposing in the future our unbroken ranks between the executioners and their intended victims. This can be done. The cup of the GPU crimes is filled to overflowing. Wide circles of workers in the West shudder with revulsion at the handiwork of Cain-Dzjugashvili. Sympathies toward us are growing. All that is necessary is that we learn how to utilize them. Greater vigilance! Bind more firmly our mutual ties! Greater discipline in action! These are the lessons flowing from the tragic end of Ignace Reiss.
Socialist economics rests on the principle of national and international “links,” and because of this fact demands a rigorous balance among all branches of industry. This presupposes scientific centralization of the entire economy. Anarchism (extreme form of liberalism) rejects centralization and thus comes into conflict with the fundamental demands of the economy. Only a higher degree of centralization can guarantee the full development of the productive forces. The possibilities along this line are unlimited. National revenue will increase ten-, fifty-, a hundred-fold and more, in comparison with the national revenue of the richest capitalist countries.

On this new technological and economic base, the human personality, freed from the humiliating care of “filling one’s belly,” will reach full maturity. Everyone will have at his disposal a quantity of primary commodities and electrical energy (or another form of energy on a higher plane) to do creative work in all spheres: technology, science, sculpture, painting, etc. . . . We can anticipate that manual labor will then develop in the higher context of socialist society; however, not as a semislave task but as an art, with the help of scientific and technical power.

Reactionaries dream of maintaining the artisan of today. As a rule, they mask their aim with aesthetic considerations. In fact, they are trying to prolong the life of the petty bourgeoisie, who are used as a social foundation by large capital. Sometimes these gentlemen seek cover behind “socialist” phrases. As is known, such tendencies nourished fascism, which has exalted the artisan, flattered the petty bourgeoisie and the peasantry, lined them up against the proletariat, and made them its shock troops in the service of finance capital.
Dear Comrades:

I hope that you are sufficiently informed about the fact that my former collaborator, Erwin Wolf, was arrested on the first of August in Barcelona. Van [Heijenoort] sent an excerpt from Held's letter to Shachtman, Isaacs, and La Follette. Please pay the greatest attention to the matter.

Erwin Wolf was my secretary in Norway for a year, including December 1935 when Pyatakov allegedly came to me in the famous German plane. Erwin Wolf led an energetic campaign during the last trial, especially in the British press (Manchester Guardian, etc.). His statements were often quoted, and the photos of him with me were published in many papers. The Stalinists are well aware of his personality and of his role. His arrest in Barcelona was without any doubt effected by the GPU. Our friends are afraid that he was taken to the Soviet Union. Whether that is so or not, the GPU will do—or, better to say, is doing—everything in order to create around him a new amalgam to complete last January's trial. Surely they will submit him to the most terrible tortures in order to extort from him some "confession." This is for the GPU one of the ways to attenuate the impression of the verdict of the Inquiry Commission.

All this requires that we develop a serious and vigorous campaign around the case of Erwin Wolf. He is a Czechoslovakian citizen. The committee as well as other organizations should send delegations to the Czechoslovak embassy as well as to the Spanish embassy, asking for information and intervention in this case. It seems to me that this task is, first of all, one for the Defense Committee.

I don't know what your plans are now concerning this body. It would be, according to my opinion, a crime to dissolve the committee or to let it slide into oblivion. The Erwin Wolf case is a severe reminder: we have many comrades in Spain under arrest.
Now, when the Stalinists have entered into alliance with the Kuomintang, the lives of Chen Tu-Hsiu and others in China are in danger. The kidnapping of the White general Miller in Paris is aimed only to give some "moral" satisfaction to the Comintern. But the more serious aim is the kidnapping of Leon Sedov. I don't know what lies behind the recent "terrorist" attempts in Paris. I hold it absolutely possible that the hand of the GPU is involved in this sinister game, with the aim of implicating the French Trotskyites in some terrorist plot.

Possibly you read the report of the Maxton Commission in Spain, concerning the fate of Nin and other POUM leaders. In spite of the fact that the members of the commission were well informed by our comrades in Paris of the case of Erwin Wolf, Maxton didn't lift a finger in Spain in order to shed light upon the matter.

Erwin Wolf was in Spain as a correspondent of the News Chronicle. Our comrades tried to interest the editorial board of this paper in the case, but in vain. The News Chronicle has good, even too good, relations with the Soviet embassy. Thus, we depend upon ourselves and the genuinely liberal and radical circles in different countries, especially in the United States.

Not to forget the victims in the fascist countries. The Stalinists very largely exploit public opinion and its pockets in order to help the victims of fascism. It would be very good if they did not channel the aid only towards the Stalinist victims of fascism. In Germany, Austria, Italy, China, and the Balkan countries, everywhere where it is not the Stalinists who are the prisoners of reactionary dictatorships, they remain without juridical, moral, or material aid. Not only are they not sustained but they are slandered in the most vicious manner. And nobody comes to their rescue.

Thus there is a very large field for activity. The committee should change its name in accordance with this broader aim and should invite all other analogous committees in Europe to do the same, and to create new ones. The first step in this direction should be the campaign to save Erwin Wolf.

Very comradely yours,
Leon Trotsky

Dear Comrades Cannon and Shachtman:

P.S.—In the Socialist Appeal of November 1, 1936, I find, on the first page, in the editorial, the following sentence: "Revolutionary
workers must continue their agitation for arms for the Spanish workers and peasants, not for the Spanish bourgeois democratic government."

It was written at the time of Largo Caballero, before the bloody repressions against the revolutionary workers. How then could we vote for the military budget for the Negrin government?172

L.T.
My Dear Friend:

Two or three days ago we received the transcript of the hearings, and we again appreciate the tremendous work accomplished by “Albert M. Glotzer, Court Reporter, Chicago, Illinois.” Best thanks to you and Reva, who helped you in your work. The book, I hope, will not fail to produce the necessary effect.

It is very possible that my impression concerning the danger of an inner struggle was false. But please don’t forget that I am an observer from afar and I expressed my impression only in a private letter to yourself. Your assertion, “An inner struggle in the present period would be fatal to the new movement” gives me the necessary assurance. Everything must be done in order to eliminate the psychological remnants of the struggle of '36 [over entry]. For my part I am ready to do everything which could help that purpose.

With best greetings to you both and to all Chicago comrades,

Leon Trotsky
Dear Miss La Follette:

The recent terrorist occurrences in France seemed to me very suspicious from the beginning. To raze to the ground the offices of capitalist companies is pointless and dangerous at the same time. A case of despair? But, first, there are too many; and, secondly, the bombs, according to the police experts, are of exceptionally good fabrication. Only a state laboratory can produce such bombs. But which state does it? Germany? Italy? I don’t see the objective very clearly. Possibly the French fascists fabricate the bombs in the French military laboratories in order to compromise the leftists? Possibly, but not very likely. What can de la Rocque prove with these bombs? More likely that this work is done by the GPU, perhaps not directly, but through some intermediary agents of the second or third rank. The aim in this case could be to compromise the French “Trotskyites.” This was my hypothesis. Now, in the Russian paper Novoye Russkoye Slovo [New Russian Word], published in New York, in its September 22 issue, we find correspondence from Paris, signed Andrey Sedikh, who is also a reporter for the Paris Miliukov paper, Poslednoye Novosti [Latest News]. In his correspondence, he analyzes vaguely different hypotheses concerning the terrorist acts and emphasizes energetically but one of them, namely, the hypothesis concerning the Trotskyites. He writes:

“One also should not forget that now the influence of the ‘Trotskyists,’ whose methods in political struggle have not yet by far crystallized themselves, has grown greatly in France. It is completely indisputable that the Trotskyites—fish in muddy waters, in every way stir up social conflicts, attempt to bring about bloody incidents, and as much as possible complicate the inner regime in France. Who can say what was the exact role of the Trotskyites during the time of the bloody riots in Clichy?"
supplemented their work by [working as] Spanish ‘dynamite-throwers’ (*dynamiteros*), who follow their own, special aims. The workers themselves must now pay close attention to the extreme elements in their ranks, and throw out from among them the provocateurs who push the masses to all possible excesses.”

It is difficult to doubt that the correspondence was inspired by the GPU, especially because Andrey Sedikh is connected, as a reporter, with different police forces and is thus very fit for such “inspiration.” My first supposition receives by this fact a very important confirmation. Even now I am not sure that my supposition is true, but it becomes very probable. In any case, the question must be followed with the greatest attention. The neo-amalgam may be directed not only against the French Trotskyites but also, and even in the first place, against Leon Sedov. For it would be, for Stalin, of the greatest value to “find” on French soil the confirmation of his accusation of terrorism against the Trotskyites.

I am sending this letter to the commission with the purpose that my supposition can be made public, if confirmed by events.

I have received some new information about the arrest of my former secretary Erwin Wolf, who participated as a witness, through affidavits, in the investigation. He worked in Barcelona as a correspondent of a British paper, the *News Chronicle*. He was arrested for the first time only for a few days. During his interrogations the light from a strong projector was thrown into his face: it is one of the technical methods of the GPU to hypnotize the arrested and extract from him the necessary “voluntary confession” (about which method Victor Serge, Ciliga, and Tarov have already written in their writings and depositions). Then Wolf was liberated in order to give him a false assurance of security and to find out his connections and relations. For the second time he was arrested on the first of August, on the eve of his departure. It seems that he disappeared totally. The Czechoslovakian consul answered Mrs. Wolf that he can do nothing in the matter because the police answer as follows: “Mr. Wolf? We don’t know anything about him.” And that is all.

Such successes in Spain naturally encourage the GPU and make possible the organization of terrorist acts in France and tomorrow in the United States.

With best regards,
Leon Trotsky
Dear Comrades:

Yesterday I sent Comrade Sneevliet the following cable:

"Reiss assassination by GPU facilitated by false policy concealment. Only immediate open campaign world press can save his wife. Further procrastination fatal. United action necessary. Leo."

This morning I received the following answer:

"Totally agree common action. Letter underway. Heny."

When I received the mimeographed declaration signed by Ludwig [Reiss] and countersigned by Sneevliet I had the impression that the matter was of slight importance. The declaration had a totally vague content, was signed by an absolutely unknown name and the annotation of Sneevliet was also as vague as possible. In other words, the declaration was sufficient to provoke energetic actions on the part of the GPU but absolutely insufficient to interest public opinion. The matter could not be launched in a more inefficient and dangerous manner. When Bessedovsky or Agabekov broke their relations with the bureaucracy, they did it in a public, open and aggressive manner, and only by this procedure did they save their lives.378 Reiss had in his hands materials concerning the Moscow trials. The first courageous declaration of his—"I was until today a responsible agent of the GPU. I know the secrets of the Moscow trials. I will communicate them to world public opinion," etc.—would make his name internationally known and his assassination by the GPU politically impossible. I could absolutely not understand why a matter of such tremendous importance remained a little private affair between Reiss and Sneevliet instead of becoming immediately an affair of the Fourth International. A communication to me a couple of months ago would not only have been of the greatest value for the investigation in New York but, I am sure, would have saved Reiss's life. Unfortunately, it is impossible to correct the errors that have been committed.
The question now is not to repeat the errors in regard to Reiss's widow. She must make an absolutely open and courageous declaration for the world press, with her photos published in all the important papers. It is the only way to save her life and serve the cause. It is necessary to convince her that secondary considerations of a totally fictitious cautiousness must be dispelled. Naturally, I am ready to do everything in order to help her to enter into contact with the American press. I believe she would be well paid for a series of articles, but the first thing is to establish openly her political identity. That was the sense of my cable to Comrade Sneevliet. I am sending him a copy of this letter.

My best greetings,

L. Trotsky
CONCERN ABOUT MRS. REISS

September 30, 1937

I am hopeful that focusing attention on this case will dissuade the GPU from murdering Mrs. Reiss. However, if they do assassinate her it will be as useless as her husband's murder, since their documentary evidence is now in safe hands and will eventually be published.

Reiss was an agent of the GPU operating in Britain, Switzerland, and Holland. When he was ordered to prepare charges involving himself, Sedov, and others, he broke with the GPU and the Comintern, returned his decoration of the Order of the Red Banner and simultaneously wrote old friends abroad urging them to leave the service.

[A woman] resident agent in Rome whom Reiss had enlisted years ago was ordered to go to Lausanne and lure him to a restaurant on the outskirts for supper. When they left, a car came up, and Reiss was knocked out, dragged into the car, and later thrown out on the road with ten bullets in his body. . . .

I am very concerned about the fate of Mrs. Reiss, whose address is not revealed for obvious reasons.
October 1, 1937

1. Who can challenge Japan: Great Britain? The U.S.? The Soviet Union? But Great Britain is not ready and she is greatly concerned with the situation in Europe. She avoids every decisive step in Europe in view of the situation in the Far East and avoids every decisive step in the Far East because of the situation in Europe. Her whole empire is totally weakened by this inner contradiction in the situation. It is absolutely certain that if Japan is victorious, every European country will be driven away from China. That is why Great Britain can't have a policy of permanent agreement with Japan.

An agreement with the U.S. against Japan? But that signifies war. The United States is a very powerful country, I must admit, but it is very feeble against Japan because it does not have a base on the Asiatic continent. The only possibility for starting a war with Japan would be through a military alliance with the Soviet Union. That is a question of the future. The entire fleet in the Pacific Ocean is only a preparation for the future conflict. Today Washington can't challenge Japan.

The Soviet Union, more than any other country, is dependent upon the situation in Europe. If France concludes a military agreement with the Soviet Union against Japan, and if it has the support of Great Britain, only in that case could the Soviet Union permit itself to challenge Japan. Then there would be the question of the internal situation. And now there is the new orientation of British policy toward an agreement with Italy and, through Italy, with Germany, toward domination by the four European powers, excluding the Soviet Union. The military danger from Germany and Poland with the support of Italy is very great, and I don't believe that in this situation the Soviet Union will dare challenge Japan. On the contrary, I believe Japan began the new conflict in China with the tacit consent of the Soviet Union. That is, the Soviet Union said: “If you will leave us alone, you can do anything you wish in China.” I believe
Moscow is satisfied with the situation because it signifies the paralyzing of Japan's military forces against the Soviet Union. All this is not mathematical but a coefficient of hypothetical elements.

Direct military intervention on the part of the U.S. or the European powers is very improbable, if not totally excluded. Therefore, the development in the Far East will depend upon the military forces of Japan and China and upon the internal situation. We must consider this development from a long-term perspective. It is absolutely excluded that Japan should not only conquer but also dominate China. Even the conquests of Korea and Manchuria weakened Japan from a military point of view. Manchuria today is not the Manchuria of the beginning of the century, when it had a population of but seven million. Now it has thirty million and a peasantry that is accustomed to guerrilla wars. They can be armed at any moment by the foe, Russia or China. China itself is a country of 450 million population—a very dense population. There is no place there for Japan to migrate. We see that Great Britain has some difficulties in India now. During the decline of capitalism such grandiose conquests as that of China are impossible. It was possible to conquer Ethiopia, but not China. When England is about to lose India, Japan, which is not Great Britain, cannot conquer China.

It is necessary also to take into consideration the internal situation of Japan—a country pregnant with the social revolution. World diplomats, who are not armed with Marxism, do not know to what degree Japan is now approaching an internal explosion. Take the agrarian situation: half of the population are peasants and have less than half a hectare of soil, on the average (1 hectare = 2.47 acres). The soldier—the same peasant and worker—and the military caste have different attitudes. Then there are the old traditional militarist and the new petty-bourgeois elements who are militarized fascists and who wish to establish an “anticapitalist,” antisocialist regime, and are for the conquest of the whole planet. All these contradictions must explode. The situation in the Far East will lead to a great explosion in Japan, and the resistance of China will be more successful. That is why we can be sure that at the same time that Moscow pushes Japan against China, it helps China resist Japan. Until today China has shown a remarkable capacity of resistance to Japan, but from the military point of view the Japanese are naturally stronger.

Will Japan achieve its immediate objectives? That depends
upon whether Japan will limit itself. If she wishes only to force China to recognize the conquest of Manchuria and the domination of the five northern provinces by Japanese military agents—it is possible she will succeed. It is also possible that Great Britain is advising China to yield in order to gain a breathing spell. One can say that politically Nanking is 51 percent a tool in the hands of London and that, though the latter is pleased with the resistance of China, she fears that this resistance can be broken by Japan and therefore advises China to give way. In this sense, an armistice is possible. There are two parties not only in Japan but in her military ruling caste, and the program of one of the parties, the younger officers, is to go to the limit. The military budget of Japan, in times of peace, is 50 percent of the total budget. That is one of the reasons for the inner conflict.

If we take the index of industrial production for 1929, the last prosperity year, to be 100, then Japan shows a tremendous growth, from 100 for 1929 to 151 for 1936. For the first months of 1937 it is 157, a growth of 57 percent from 1929. This is due almost entirely to military enterprises. Contrast the growing military budget to the terrible situation of the toiling masses, especially the peasantry. If we again take 1929 to be 100, we see that for 1936 in the U.S. it is 88, and that it is now 95-97-99. At the same time, in Germany it is 105-118, again because of the military industry, the military budget, rearmament. I can say nothing about Italy because Mussolini tells us nothing—it is a secret of the state: statistics end with the year 1935. In France for 1936, the index was 70, and now—the beginning and at the same time the end of "prosperity"—73-75.

Only in Great Britain is there an indisputable growth, but it is not to be compared with the growth in Japan. Taking 1929 again as 100, in Great Britain the index for 1936 is 116, and for 1937, 120-123. This is due to the introduction of protectionism, the abandonment of free trade. But it is only a temporary growth because the protected industries will develop to the level where they cover the necessities of the market, and it seems that this point is now reached. If we compare this with the Soviet Union and again take the index of production for 1929 as 100, for the year 1930 the index is almost 200, for 1935 almost 300, and for this year about 400 and more. I do not have too much confidence in these statistics and it is possible that if we introduce into these figures the necessary correction of reality—prices, productivity, etc.—we will come to the conclusion that these results are doubled by statistical manipulations; but in any case, the growth is
incomparably greater than even in Japan. It would be interesting in this connection to give figures concerning France. Taking the index of production for 1929 to be 100 (it was about the same for 1913, the year before the war), then we find that for 1923 it was 140 (that was the time of German reparations, with its very large payments). We must also not forget that the French won very rich provinces in the war. For 1924 the index was 124, whereas for 1936 it was only at the 1908 figure. In spite of German reparations and the two rich industrial provinces, the industrial level of France is lower than before the war. This year it may reach the prewar level. That this great victorious capitalist power can’t produce at a level it reached before the war is proof that the decline of capitalism is not just a phrase.

It is of the greatest interest to the Soviet Union to involve Japan in a conflict with China, and in order to do this, it must help both Japan and China. Of course, Japan doesn’t need an “invitation” from the Soviet Union. You must also realize that official Tokyo diplomacy has not the slightest confidence in anything Moscow says, nor has Moscow any confidence in anything Tokyo says. But Japan felt out the ground by taking possession of the Amur Islands even before the invasion of China. Moscow protested, but completely retreated. That gave Japan the assurance that Moscow is not willing or not prepared to engage in a military conflict. Litvinov threatened Japan, but if you analyze his speech you can see that Moscow stated it would do nothing to oppose Japan. The bombastic phraseology was only for the Moscow papers—a concession to the patriotic sentiments of the Soviet workers. But in actuality he said: “If you will limit yourselves to these small thefts and no more, we will be tolerant, and if you direct your forces against China, naturally we will remain quiet.”

Thus it assured Japan that it did not mean to make a military alliance with China to oppose her. Japan also foresaw that Russia would help China in an underhanded manner, by sending planes or war materials—but not an army. Japan considered this situation as a whole and found it possible to invade China. It is funny, but in politics both adversaries speculate on the same thing: Japan believes that, given a long-term perspective, it will become strong in China and that within three to five years it will oppose Russia’s intervention in China by military force. On the other hand, Russia thinks that Japan, by being involved in China, has given her a breathing spell.

I don’t know if you are aware that we had a big discussion here
on the question of China. Eiffel attacked me for an interview on the Chinese-Japanese struggle, in which I spoke of the necessity for revolutionists, without giving up their political independence, to participate in the fight against Japan. Eiffel opposed this conception. He said, "We must be defeatists in China." To say that in China, which is a semicolonial country, we can be defeatists is complete political stupidity and even treachery.

It is like saying that we cannot participate in a strike against Ford because it is led by Green. Can we give Green full confidence? No, but we must take part in the strike as the best strikers. Of course, we must prepare for the overthrow of Chiang Kai-shek. If you can, replace him. But if you can't replace him, you must participate in the fight against Japan while politically fighting against him. In Japan, we attack the Japanese militarists for making war, but in China we attack Chiang not for making war but for conducting the war phlegmatically, for not pursuing with the necessary means the confiscation of Japanese industries, banks, railroads, etc. Otherwise, it would be as though we were attacking Green for beginning the strike rather than for not pushing the strike with sufficient militancy. What is important for us is the mobilization of the revolutionary masses under our banner because they are the only historical factor that can assure victory. But we place ourselves totally on the basis of the war and participate in it actively.

2. We can begin with the affirmation that the future military conflict will, in any case, not occur between the "democratic" nations and the fascist ones. At present it may appear that this is not so: on one side we have Germany, Italy, Japan and Poland. (It is absolutely incorrect to call Japan fascist, but for the moment we can accept this vulgar Stalinist characterization.) On the other hand, there are England, France, the Soviet Union—I do not know whether the latter is a "democratic" country but for the sake of simplification, we can accept that characterization. Alongside this combination, the U.S. cooperates.

But all this is only an optical illusion. Those capitalist countries became fascist which had the sharpest contradictions. Italy, Germany, Japan are characterized by the absence of raw materials and the lack of colonies. On the other side, we have countries satiated with colonies or with natural resources—countries like the Soviet Union and the United States. Historically it is clear why Italy and not Great Britain became the first fascist state. Germany, Italy, and Japan are looking for new
possessions. They want to blow up the status quo, whereas England and France defend the legalized robberies. However, England and France defend the status quo only during peacetime. Great Britain, like France, will look for a better partition once war breaks out. It will depend upon the relationship of forces, and not upon the “democratic” form. For Italy the only important question is: will she be victorious with Great Britain against Germany, or with Germany against Great Britain?

Right now it is very difficult to foresee the alignment of the powers in the next war. We don’t have the “good old days” of the German-Austro-Hungarian-Italian alliance and the Entente of France and czarist Russia, with the enigmatic sympathy of Great Britain. Before the war broke out, everybody knew that it would be a war between these two camps—the rest would have to choose one axis or the other. Even the United States was obliged to choose one of the axes, in spite of its “disinterested neutrality.” Even so, Italy changed sides. Now none of the diplomats knows what the alignment will be: that is not a paradox, but a reality.

An alliance of Hitler-Mussolini? They have nothing to give one another. If war comes between France and Germany, Italy can’t go with Germany—she is a small boot totally exposed to the air force and navy. And what help can Germany give her? But why the present alliance? It is only a bluff—a bluff against Great Britain. Hitler’s original plan, the old one, is to win the friendship of Great Britain against France. But Great Britain will not go with Hitler against France. It acts as the arbiter. Great Britain is a small island, as exposed to the air force as Italy. That is the reason for the tremendous rearmament program. Hitler says to Great Britain: “You are accessible to my air force; Italy is your opponent in Africa. We can become reconciled if you will be against the Soviet Union and against France.” If Hitler doesn’t succeed, if Great Britain, because of her contradictory interests in the Far East, in the Mediterranean, does not go with Germany, she may turn her face to Stalin. There is a possibility that the internal situation in the Soviet Union, on the one hand, and the lack of readiness on the part of France for a military alliance with the Soviet Union, on the other, may push Stalin into an alliance with Hitler. That is a possibility and nobody can foresee today, at this moment, what will be the actual alignment of powers. That reflects the terrible contradictions of this imperialist epoch.

It is possible that the war in the Far East will be the real
beginning of the world war. Intervention of the United States is only possible in alliance with the Soviet Union. The war will begin and will involve more and more new powers. It is probable that the U.S. and Great Britain will be in opposite camps. But the U.S. and Great Britain can also be in the same military camp, and Great Britain can still be totally defeated by the U.S. To a certain degree that was true in the last war. The United States was in the Entente, yet Italy emerged as a defeated country, France and Great Britain also to a certain extent emerged as defeated countries, and only the United States was the victor. The new war will end in the total disintegration of the British Empire. The new war will signify that, even as the old signified the disintegration of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The U.S. will then dominate a world of ruins, unless a new factor intervenes—the proletariat.

3. Economically it is altogether possible that the Russian market can be conquered by the capitalist countries. Productivity in Russia is lower than in the U.S. and the prices of commodities are higher than in the advanced capitalist countries. That is why capitalism can conquer her market. By peaceful economic methods, just by the intervention of cheap commodities, it could abolish the so-called socialist economy. But the question is not only economic, but political and military as well. It is not possible to organize an invasion of the Soviet market by capitalist merchandise without a war, and hence the question is political.

If the new war should end with the victory of the capitalist countries, that is, without any proletarian revolution—then it is not only possible but inevitable that the Russian market will be conquered. Then not only will the British Empire disintegrate as an empire, but the Soviet Union also would perish as a social system. As a backward country, it will yield to invasion by the stronger, more developed capitalist countries. I read in *Le Temps* an article, “Realities,” which says: “Do you want war? Don’t you realize that it will be a war without vanquished and without victors, but a prelude to the social revolution?” And one hears in all the speeches of Hitler: “Do you think I am mad? I don’t want war for it can only be a war for the benefit of the Bolsheviks. We understand well enough that the next war will produce more powerful revolutions than the last war.”

4. The drop in business in the United States is not very important, but the decline on the stock exchange is symptomatically much more important. There were two or three terrible
declines on the stock exchange and they signify that the people who direct world business foresee symptoms of a big crisis. Zigzags in business and crises are not antipodes. After this convulsion the business graph can go up but it cannot be a sure line, only a hesitating line, and then a new terrible crisis, more terrible than the crisis of 1929. All this has its connection with the armaments programs. In Europe, in Japan, and to a certain degree in the U.S., the new prosperity is based on the rearmament program. In the U.S., Roosevelt also has the possibility to attempt by New Deal methods to use the armaments program for conjunctural purposes.

In Europe "prosperity" is completely tied to the rearmament program. After the big slump in New York two or three weeks ago, the London press said, referring to the reaction of business in the U.S.: "We can't understand it; why are they so nervous?" Ten days later there was a slump in London. This proves that it is not an accident but that there is an organic reason for the slump, and that reason is absolutely clear. With the growth in population and technique you nevertheless have the same level of buying power of the masses—contradictions sharper than before the war. Rearmament programs create only a fictitious prosperity. These programs will be completed in Germany, France, and Great Britain in the next two or three years—they can't continue them any longer. It is not the ordinary budget but an extraordinary financial effort. In one year the stock exchanges become nervous, and they ask, like a young innocent girl, "What's the reason?" She pretends that she does not know what has happened, but she knows very well what has happened.

The approach of the new crisis will create an impossible situation for the Comintern and a good situation for us. All the contradictions will become sharper—the People's Fronts will crash and there will be only realities, and we are a party of realities. Only we can give a real appraisal to the workers of what is happening. Only we must explain the situation to the working masses—not only sociologically but as it is lived and felt by them. That is what we lack. We can give a good explanation as Marxists, but not in terms that the masses live and feel. But we will learn.

5. I received today a very interesting statistical table concerning the conflicts and strikes in France in 1936-37. The year 1936 I will cite by months, beginning with January, quoting the figures in round numbers. In January 9,000 workers were involved in the
strikes, then 12,000, 13,000, 14,000, and in June 1,830,000. Then follows 180,000, 160,000, 135,000, 66,000, 55,000, 43,000. These are the official figures, which do not include figures for agriculture and probably understate the number of workers on strike. The trade unions gave higher figures. But the general tendency is clear. Blum promulgated his social legislation, which is based on the two million on strike. In the second half of the year 1936, we had sit-down strikes: in June we had 9,000 plants occupied by workers, including practically all the important industries. Then we had 600 plants occupied, later 200, etc., diminishing every month until in December there were but 79 plants occupied by workers.

Blum accomplished the job: he calmed the workers by giving them some reforms, which could have been given them by any government under such conditions. But with Blum it was accomplished by compromise and betrayal. In the first month of 1937 we see that only 9,000 workers were on strike, in February 11,000, in March almost 13,000. This shows a growth, not an important one but possibly it indicates a new tendency. We don’t have figures for the later months. But what we have signifies a turbulent situation socially and psychologically—an infallible symptom of a prerevolutionary situation. Moreover, there is the growth of the Socialist Party from 100,000 to 200,000; the CP from 40,000 to 300,000, and the Communist Youth from 15-20,000 to 100,000. The paper *Populaire* increased its circulation from 100,000 to 300,000; *L'Humanite* from 150,000 to 400,000.

After his effort in social legislation, Blum proclaimed a "pause." He was very tired from his effort and his need for a rest is very clearly explained by the growth of the strikes. He used that "pause" in order to stop the legislative machine. This "pause" continues today. At the same time we have the official devaluation, unofficial inflation, and a terrible rise in the cost of living. All that was gained by the victorious strikes and by social legislation is wiped out by the rise in the cost of living. The standard of living is thus lower than before Blum—wages having gone up 25 percent whereas the costs of commodities rose 35 percent. A new explosion is absolutely inevitable.

The tremendous machine of the SP, the CP, and trade unions is powerful enough to stop the movement of the masses and create a pause, but it can’t annihilate the logic of the situation and the activity of the masses. Thus we will have in France a very turbulent period, especially if the inflation continues, and this is
almost assured. That is why I evaluated the situation two years ago as a prerevolutionary situation. One cannot foretell precisely, but the general direction is absolutely clear. I think that even a defeat in Spain can have a revolutionary effect in France because the workers will say: “We will not suffer another defeat.” However, the question of a revolutionary party remains open. We have an organization that is capable of giving correct slogans and knows how to assess events, but it is not a mass organization.

6. It is very difficult to see what is going on behind the scenes now, but we can assume that Germany can’t have the same interests as Italy in Spain. Germany’s greatest interest is to gain the friendship of Great Britain; that is the fundamental line of Hitler—even if it has to be at the cost of Italy. The interests of Italy and Germany are absolutely not identical. Italy understands that it can’t have Spain as its booty because Great Britain will never permit it. That is why both camps came to the conclusion that they must either begin a war or come to a compromise. It is very interesting that two days ago there was a cable in the press about the coming session of the Cortes in Valencia. There are now in Valencia more and more parliamentary deputies from the right. Maura, for example, was in France all during the civil war and now he is returning to be a parliamentary deputy. And Prieto, too. I believe they were sent by France and Britain in order to prepare a reconciliation. The war will be stopped in order to give the Spanish people the possibility of “self-determination”—some fake elections will be held as a pretext for an armistice. Franco has accepted this proposition and if the armistice is realized, it would be difficult to begin the war. It would be an armistice not only for the evacuation of Italian and German troops, but in order to stop the war with fictitious elections.

7. Italy can’t enter into a war with Russia. Italy is a sea animal, Russia a land animal. Germany is not ready; if she were ready, she would have attacked during the weeks of the beheading of the Red Army. The shooting of the generals created uncertainty and uncertainty is not an element that makes for strength. Germany will be ready in two or three years.

8. I had a very interesting correspondence with Andres Nin—I will publish it. On every question the POUM utilized the conceptions of the Bolshevik-Leninists for opportunistic purposes. This is the first time I have heard that they claim that it did no
good calling for soviets as the workers didn’t build them. As to the question of soviets—here is its history:

In 1931, at the beginning of the revolution, I wrote that I believed that it would not be advisable to begin with the slogan for soviets. During massive strikes, as in Russia in 1905, strike committees are built, but the workers didn’t understand at that time that it was the beginning of soviets. At present the word “soviet” signifies the Soviet government. The worker who is involved in a strike cannot understand what connection that has with a soviet. The Socialists and anarchists would oppose it as the dictatorship of the proletariat. My opinion, therefore, was that it was necessary to create mass organizations but not to give them the name of “soviet,” rather to name them “juntas,” a traditional Spanish name, and not so concrete as “soviet.” But instead an artificial organization was created, not representative of the broad masses, with delegates from the old organizations: anarchists, three members; Socialists, three; and delegates from the CP and the POUM. And they imposed the same relationship in every town.

Revolution is a very dynamic process, with the political sense of the masses developing to the left while the bourgeois classes swing to the right. During one month, the situation changes rapidly. The revolution in its development sweeps away the old organizations, the old conservative parties, and the trade unions. The new leadership in every plant, in every factory, is younger, more active, more courageous. The old organization becomes the greatest brake upon the revolution. It was absolutely necessary to build juntas—or we can call them soviets; we know what we mean—that’s the way to give the revolution a unified expression.

As to the necessity of unification, our fight with the POUM was not over unification—but over the question, will the policy unify the bourgeoisie or the new creative elements from the proletariat? It is not a question of a mathematical unification—it is a class question, not an administrative one. How can they say that the workers didn’t build soviets? They built committees everywhere and these committees took over industry. It was only a question of unifying these committees, of developing them, and that would have been the Soviet of Barcelona.
Dear Comrade Abern:

Thank you sincerely for your letter from September 26. Its content gives me a more precise picture of your position and your perspective. You don’t believe, as I see, that a discussion as to the advisability of the entry into the Socialist Party is necessary or desirable. You wish, so I understand, to limit the discussion only to some tactical steps inside the Socialist Party. I can hardly imagine the possibility of separating the concrete tactical questions after the entrance from the questions concerning the entrance itself. I, for example, have also some objections to different steps during the activity of our comrades inside the SP. But my objections to different steps would have another specific weight than objections on the same topics from a comrade who was opposed to the entry itself, even if not “in principle.” The criticism on the part of the former minority will immediately provoke a question from the representative of the former majority: possibly that in this case the attitude was a mistaken one, but what do you say to your mistake concerning the entry into the SP? A discussion presupposes the existence of at least two participants, and none of them is ordinarily willing to limit the discussion to the degree useful for his opponent.

I reread your letter again and see that the mention of the necessity to discuss some false steps inside the SP was not made by you but, if my memory is correct, by Comrade Glotzer. For my part, I would never oppose a discussion on both questions, which seem to me to be inextricably connected. The question here is only of the proportion and of the character of the discussion. To devote a half hour or an hour to the whole matter in order to have an expression of some nuances placed in the report is totally explainable and may even be advisable. But I agree with you totally that the whole or virtually the whole time should be devoted to the new tasks of the party.
I am very pleased with the news that the publication of the *New International* is under your management, as it was originally. The *New International* was a powerful weapon of the [Communist] League and produced the best impression in every respect. I had the impression that the circulation, which is no less important than the editing, was excellently organized, which in revolutionary publications is more the exception than the rule. To conclude my letter, I will repeat that I am very optimistic concerning the future of our American section.

Natalia and I send our best greetings to Lydia and yourself.

Yours comradely,

L. Trotsky
MORE THOUGHTS ON THE PARTY REGIME

October 3, 1937

Dear Comrade Cannon:

Yesterday I sent you a letter concerning some important matters, but it is necessary to write you again today.

1. I read a moment ago a letter from Harry Milton to Rae [Spiegel].\(^{387}\) I have read some of his letters from Spain, and I heard yesterday from Rae that he made a very good speech on Spain before a large meeting and that everybody was astonished at his success, himself more than anybody. Finally, he mentioned that the National Committee had decided to send him on a tour alone and not with Comrade Goldman, as had been scheduled. This fact seems extremely important and symptomatic. I observed another worker from your organization here, Comrade Lankin.\(^ {388}\) In the presence of [Jack] Weber, F., and other comrades, he remained very silent, but worked all the time. Then he remained for a longer time with us. He revealed a great deal of life and fighting experience, of psychological observation and political considerations of great value. Such comrades are necessary in our party committees, in the central committee as well as in the local committees. I have remarked hundreds of times that the worker who remains unnoticed in the "normal" conditions of party life reveals remarkable qualities in a change of the situation when general formulas and fluent pens are not sufficient, where acquaintance with the life of workers and practical capacities are necessary. Under such conditions a gifted worker reveals a sureness of himself and reveals also his general political capabilities.

Predominance in the organization of intellectuals is inevitable in the first period of the development of the organization. It is at the same time a big handicap to the political education of the more gifted workers. All this is a very elementary truth known to you, naturally, for many years. But what is the practical question? I talked about the question with Comrade Weber. It is
absolutely necessary at the next convention to introduce in the local and central committees as many workers as possible. To a worker, activity in the leading party body is at the same time a higher political school. Some of the new worker members of the party committees will show then that they are not sufficiently fit for the post: they can be replaced at the next convention. A selection of the most capable, devoted elements for the leading bodies can proceed only slowly and naturally is never finished. A certain risk in the placing of these new comrades is inevitable. If only a third of the new worker members in the local and central committees reveal themselves as fit, the result is excellent.

The difficulty is that in every organization there are traditional committee members and that different secondary, factional, and personal considerations play too great a role in the composition of the list of candidates. The task is to break with routine, which is the beginning of bureaucratism; to convince the organization and especially its leading stratum (which is more difficult) of the necessity of a systematic renewal of the composition of all the leading bodies of the party. Naturally, the renewal can never be complete; a nucleus selected by the whole experience of the past is necessary in order to preserve the continuity of the party's politics.

2. The development of these considerations seems to me of some importance also from the viewpoint of party democracy. This aspect cannot be overestimated. What is party democracy?

a. The strictest observance of the party statutes by the leading bodies (regular conventions, necessary period of discussion, right of the minority to express its opinions in the party meetings and in the press).

b. A patient, friendly, to a certain point pedagogical attitude on the part of the central committee and its members toward the rank and file, including the objectors and the discontented, because it is not a great merit to be satisfied "with anybody who is satisfied with me." When Lenin asked for the expulsion of Ordzhonikidze from the party (1923), he said very correctly that the discontented party member has the right to be turbulent, but not a member of the central committee.389 Methods of psychological "terrorism," including a haughty or sarcastic manner of answering or treating every objection, criticism, or doubt—it is, namely, this journalistic or "intellectualistic" manner which is insufferable to workers and condemns them to silence.

c. The solely formal object of the democratic rules as indicated
under (a) and the solely negative measures—not to terrorize, not to ridicule—under (b) are not sufficient. The central committee as well as every local committee must be in permanent, active, and informal contact with the rank and file, especially when a new slogan or a new campaign is in preparation or when it is necessary to verify the results of an accomplished campaign. Not every member of the central committee is capable of such an informal contact, and not every member has the time for this or the occasion, which depends not only upon goodwill and a particular psychology but also upon the profession and the corresponding milieu. In the composition of the central committee it is necessary to have not only good organizers and good speakers, writers, administrators, but also people closely connected with the rank and file, organically representative of them.

3. During the last few weeks I received several letters from Comrades Glotzer and Abern, written to the effect that they don’t wish to have any special group, in view of the absence of principled differences, and that they are willing to cooperate in the most loyal and sincere manner, but that in the party regime there are psychological remnants of a Versailles treaty imposed by the former majority upon the former minority (second-class party and committee members and so on). From the other side, I heard from Comrade Weber that his personal attempts to reestablish comradely relationships with the former minority did not succeed.

Don’t you believe that some concrete and sincere step could be made by the leaders of the former majority in order to eliminate the psychological remnants of the old struggle? What could this step be? In the first place, an open discussion in the committee with the most representative comrades of the former minority: Have we any principled difference with you? What are your organizational, or practical, or personal objections? Now, at the beginning of a great new chapter in the life of the party, we on our own part are absolutely ready to eliminate all the hindrances to close and harmonious cooperation. We are ready, for example, to eliminate anything resembling a factional caucus in the central committee. You find that the party regime is not sufficiently democratic? We are absolutely ready to accept every practical suggestion in order to eliminate any bureaucratic tendency and amplify the general party democracy, and so on. Such a discussion should be conducted without official procedure; that is, without concern for formulation in the minutes, etc. If the
first discussion of such kind reveals itself as more or less promising, it could be repeated during the convention, especially with the consent of the members of the new National Committee.

The initiative should issue from the “majority,” which only by general goodwill can disarm the minority. Let us imagine that some of the minority representatives, in spite of the best will on your part, continue their factional position. But the question is: Who will win by such a march of events? Not the factionalists surely. They will isolate themselves from their own closest friends. For the inner education and cohesion of the central committee, such a sincere attempt to reestablish the full mutual confidence could have only the best influence.

My letter of yesterday, like this one, is written in view of the coming party discussion and the convention. Yesterday I tried tentatively to suggest a political “general line” for the next period of party activity. The present letter considers especially the inner regime. I am a bit embarrassed by my too abstract approach to the concrete questions now before you. Some things in my letters can appear to you only as vague generalities without any application—but there is nothing to be done. In spite of the visits and the airmail I remain only an observer from afar. You and the other comrades will see for yourselves what of these suggestions can be of use and what cannot.

My best regards and wishes,
Hansen [Trotsky]

P.S.—Some comrades continue to characterize Stalinism as “bureaucratic centrism.” This characterization is now totally out of date. On the international arena Stalinism is no longer centrism, but the crudest form of opportunism and social patriotism. See Spain!
PROBLEMS OF PERSONNEL

October 4, 1937

Dear Comrade Sara:

It is necessary to explain precisely my present situation with respect to my English and Russian collaborators.

As I told and wrote you, the arrival of Rae in a critical moment was of inestimable help to me, not only for my English but also for my Russian correspondence. Though it would hardly be possible for me to write my book on Lenin with Rae, I can dictate to her not only Russian letters but also short articles. For my English correspondence I now have the collaboration of Comrade Hansen. We began our work yesterday and it goes all right. But the Russian question remains open. Some weeks ago Comrade Rae told me that Abern is very anxious to have her collaboration in the management of the New International. You know that the New International is very near to my heart. I know at the same time from experience how important it is for the success of common work to have mutual confidence and personal friendship. In spite of this I opposed the departure of Rae. (She did not insist at all: you know her spirit of complete devotion to party work and her warm personal readiness to help me in every respect.) But I repeat, the question of a Russian typist remains open. Rae accomplished miracles in studying Russian, and she is very gifted as a stenographer, even in Russian. But the difficulty arises from the fact that she was not educated in the Russian language from her childhood. She can understand enough in order to translate from the Russian to the English; but she does not have, and I believe it is impossible in a couple of months to gain, the necessary assurance in the subtleties of a foreign language, which is necessary for a stenographer or typist. Until a Russian typist comes, Rae’s collaboration is absolutely necessary for me.

But I ask myself if it would be reasonable and even permissible to have her at the same time as a Russian typist (when and if she comes), given the fact that Hansen will remain here, as I hope,
for an indefinite time. You wrote me that the tentative Russian typist is only a sympathizer. This signifies that her departure from the States will not in any way prejudice party work. With Hansen and with Rae the situation is very different. For purely personal reasons (and selfish in point of view) I should be glad to retain Rae here as long as possible, but from the point of view of elementary party interest it would be an impermissible luxury. My conclusion is that Rae should remain here until we find a Russian typist and until we gain assurance through experience that she is suitable for her work; then and only then Rae can return at the disposition of the party.

I am not writing officially to the committee because a letter in such circumstances rarely enough is self-explanatory; but you, my dear Sara, know all the conditions of my life and work, and you can not only transmit the letter to the committee but also give to them all the necessary explanations.

Comradely yours,
Dear Comrade Pearl:

Thank you for your letter of October 1, which gives me very important information. I am now hurrying to communicate my opinion concerning the coming meeting. I believe the meeting should not be a general political meeting but a meeting for the public report of the commission. That is incomparably more important from a political point of view. The session of the full commission was not public. This fact has the greatest disadvantage. Nobody knows when the commission reached its verdict and why it was done in a closed session. This question will arise again and again in your future activity. The only one possibility of overcoming this difficulty is to give the commission the opportunity to render a public account of its activity and to defend its verdict publicly. All members of the commission, beginning naturally with Dr. Dewey, should speak at such a meeting. Also Mr. Finerty and Comrade Goldman should speak. Such a meeting should be the last public act of the commission as such.

From my point of view, it would be a mistake to substitute for the official commission meeting a public political meeting, even if with the participation of some members of the commission. In this question the most formal, juridical point of view should prevail. Otherwise the political interest would be damaged. It is not a question of a good speech by Cannon, Shachtman, or another comrade at this meeting, but of a detailed official report, explaining all the essential parts of the investigation, with an enumeration of documents, letters, affidavits, etc., in order to crush the falsifiers from the Herald-Tribune, etc. And only the members of the commission, its adviser, and my lawyer can do it with all the necessary authority. Only after this conclusive act can political agitation have the necessary base.

I am sure that every other procedure which our comrades can
propose to the commission would be incomparably less effective from the point of view of the party itself. Had the session of the commission been public, I would totally agree with a purely political meeting. But taking the situation as it is, we must give general public opinion, [which is] absolutely unaware of the proceedings, the possibility to pass “calmly” by the last stage of the commission work.

I can’t give advice to the commission, but I appeal with these considerations to our own comrades in order to avoid a very serious mistake. Please get into immediate contact with the comrades who are responsible for the meeting.

I am simultaneously sending copies of this letter to comrades Goldman, Cannon, and Rosmer (I hope that Rosmer will have the possibility to speak at this meeting, which seems to me of great importance especially for France).

With best greetings,
Leon Trotsky
Trotsky: I believe it would be impermissible to devote an important part of the convention to discussion of this question. The question itself is now resolved by the march of events, by developments. On the other hand, I believe it would be impossible to totally avoid the question of opinion on this question. But there should be just two short declarations, because the NC in its report is obliged to mention the fact of entry into the SP: “We remained a year, we entered with such and such forces, and after a year we have drawn the following balance sheet. We can judge our entry as a success. I personally believed the SP was stronger than it was in reality: I believed it had 20,000 members, but it was weaker. I believe we committed some tactical mistakes during our sojourn: we made some unnecessary concessions, such as giving up the Socialist Appeal and the practical mistake of giving up the printing press, possibly connected with a long-term perspective, but on the whole we gained so and so.” Were I of the majority, I would say that. “Still, I would repeat this experience and I believe the excellent comrades from the minority were wrong and I right.” If anybody asked me, “Do you not believe that as an independent party we would have had more success?” I would say, “My dear friend, it was possible to discuss this question before but now we know by international comparison that that is not so.” The CPs were growing, the People’s Fronts were established, the SPs began to split more or less. I don’t see why our tendency would have been successful only in the U.S. when in Holland, Belgium, and France, where we had independent sections, we did not grow.

M: What about Indochina?

Trotsky: I cannot say, as I know very little about Indochina.
*M:* Our French section says Indochina is the best section and grew.

*Trotsky:* But in Indochina there is no big CP and no SP; thus they are before the working class as the only working class independent party.

*M:* But that shows there were other factors in each country to account for the growth or lack of growth of our section.

*Trotsky:* I know the reasons for our sections remaining stagnant: the "prosperity" created conditions for People’s Fronts in the different countries, and then there were the Moscow trials. Even people who had doubts, who had aversions, even workers, also had doubts about our section. The fact that in the U.S. we were in the SP and connected with the left wing, in daily work, convinced them that we could not have connections with the fascists. That was a factor not foreseen by anybody, of course, but it helped. To deny that means only to have factional pride and stubbornness. That it was unforeseen we can agree. Now it is absolutely clear that the American section is the only one that had important successes. It was covered by the raincoat of the SP, and Thomas was a member of the Committee for Defense, and we could get Dewey and the others. It was a very happy experience. What you won is not from the Hippodrome meeting but from the SP, and perhaps also from the Hippodrome for the SP, and from there for the "Trotskyites."

You say you couldn’t win people because you were enclosed in the SP. But in such a case why didn’t the Oehlerites, or other groups who were independent, win them? They had a bad policy? But the POUM had a bad policy, but since it was the only left group its membership jumped from 8,000 to 40-50,000 in two weeks. Don’t think that these alleged revolutionary elements are so educated in advance that they said, “Yes, Oehler is independent but wrong,” or “Weissbord is not such a good Marxist.”

Does that mean that I would enter another party? Yes, if I could enter the CP as a party of the Fourth International, I would enter today.

*M:* Given the conditions as they are, are we then doomed to stagnation?

*Trotsky:* That’s possible. That is not excluded. I believe during
Results of the Entry and Next Tasks

some months or a year we will not double our membership, we may even remain stagnant—like water before boiling, it becomes warmer and warmer.

Secondly, the reasons are different, but they can be reduced to a general reason: that the organization as an organization is young, was developing under extremely difficult conditions, has too great a number of nonproletarian elements with their individualistic minds; the experience of a small group doesn’t give the leaders the possibility to win the confidence of the members because only the events, the developments, can confirm the correctness of the line of the leadership and affirm its authority. For my part, I believe that the authority of the leadership is more important than before. The members will realize that the leadership, in spite of secondary errors, showed firmness and a capacity for activity and were incomparably superior to the leaders of the SP, not only in matters of propaganda but in conditions based on the political activity of the party.

Naturally, the party must allow considerable latitude to its leaders. But on the other hand, it is impossible to have credit with the organization if the authority of the leadership is not confirmed by experience itself, by a good policy, and by success. It is necessary to accumulate this capital, and only then will the leadership have the necessary latitude in action. To win this authority it is necessary to have a good policy.

It would be fantastic to ask from the leadership that they commit no errors. What we ask is to correct errors in time, so that the errors don’t become fatal.

If the dissolution of the caucus and the abandonment of the paper had continued for a long time, it would have meant the death of our tendency. It retreated to win a breathing spell, and when it realized that there was nothing to be gained and everything to be lost it corrected its error. I consider it an error but it can only be considered as a test of the strength of the offensive, of the plans of the leaders. And a leadership which corrects its errors in time is a good leadership.

It is absolutely necessary to have the confidence of the rank and file. I mentioned the most important condition of this confidence—a good policy. The policy must be prepared with the understanding of the rank and file. It occurs often that the leadership, which sees a situation very well and has a very correct decision, imposes on the organization some imperative action, pushed by impatience, because the leadership feels that if we now begin a discussion of one or two months, we will lose
precious time. It may be a correct idea, but by gaining here a month I may lose a year, because the rank and file regards this change and speed with astonishment; and if success of the policy should be lacking, then the rank and file says, "The leadership was wrong; it bears the responsibility." And thus I lose a year to repair the results of my impatience.

That's why it is important, especially for a young organization, not to be impatient and to prepare for every new decision. First of all it is important to observe very strictly the statutes of the organization—regular meetings of the rank and file, discussions before conventions, regular conventions and the right of the minority to express its opinion (there should be a comradely attitude and no threats of expulsion). You know that was never, never done in the old [Russian] party. Expulsion of a comrade was a tragic event, and was done only for moral reasons and not because of a critical attitude. We had some comrades in opposition after the revolution. We had comrades who became specialists in criticism, not in principled matters but in minor ones. There was Stukhov, an intelligent man and a courageous one, as well as witty, and at every party meeting he found something to say, prefacing with a joke, and he had applause. Imagine during the civil war—there were many things to object to in the leadership, and he took advantage of it. But nobody proposed to expel him, but from time to time we explained to the members, and he began to lose his audience, and after a while Stukhov became a ridiculous figure.

He was one from the top of the party. In everybody there were such Stukhovs. It was not a question of Stukhov but of the education of the party membership, an education that rejects unhealthy criticism, opposition only for the sake of opposition. I believe it is absolutely necessary also for the leadership to be very patient, to listen very attentively, very reasonably to criticism. But the most important thing is to change the social composition of the organization—make it a workers' organization. A worker comes to the meeting; he knows everything is imperfect, his pay is imperfect, his conditions of work are imperfect, his life is imperfect; he is consequently more patient, more realistic. When you have a meeting of 100 people and between them 60-70-80 are workers, then the 20 intellectuals, petty-bourgeois, become ten times more cautious on the question of criticism. It's a more serious, more firm audience. But when there are 100 intellectuals, everybody has something to say. Party life is just a period of
discussion. That's why the social composition is the most important thing, but it cannot be done artificially. If you have a party of 20,000 workers, the unemployed are also workers; but in a party of 1,000, the unemployed only aggravate the situation.
THE SOCIAL COMPOSITION
 OF THE PARTY

October 10, 1937

Dear Comrade Cannon:

I fear that the fragmentary character of my previous letters may lead to misunderstanding. I insist upon the fact that the general line of development of the Fourth International will be connected in the next period with a new crisis and the inevitable disintegration of People's Front policies and the Third International. This perspective seems to me very important for the general orientation. I heard that some comrades are more or less, if not pessimistic, at least reconciled to the idea that the growth of our organization will be very difficult and slow. The perspective of a sharp turn which can open the greatest possibilities for us is thus necessary not only for a clear orientation but also for moral encouragement.

However, the above-indicated perspective is too general. We don't know precisely when the crisis will begin, with what tempo and to what depth in its first phase it will influence the working class movement and its political organizations. Possibly, even probably, the next year will be a transitory period before going into the “great turn.” Such a possibility should be indicated in the basic document [for the coming convention] in order to prevent confusion and disillusionment.

But whether the development in the next period is slower or quicker, one question retains its tremendous importance for us: that of the social composition of the party. It must be considered with the utmost attention.

The party has only a minority of genuine factory workers. This is an inevitable beginning for every revolutionary workers' party everywhere, and especially in the United States. The nonproletarian elements represent a very necessary yeast, and I believe that we can be proud of the good quality of these elements. But the danger is that we can receive in the next period too much “yeast” for the needs of the party. The disintegration of the Communist
The Social Composition of the Party

Party will very probably begin not among the workers but among the intellectuals, who are more sensitive to the ideas and less loyal to the organization. The influx of the new generation of intellectuals to the Communist Party will stop even before the open disintegration of the Stalinist organization. Because of this we can wait for an influx of fresh intellectual elements toward us. Our party can be inundated by nonproletarian elements and can even lose its revolutionary character. The task is naturally not to prevent the influx of intellectuals by artificial methods (such political Malthusianism would be at least premature) but to orient in practice the whole organization toward the factories, the strikes, the unions. It seems that this should be one of the most important tasks of the new convention, if not in an open session then in a closed commission or section work with virtual participation of all the delegates.

The orientation of the whole party toward factory work is intimately connected with the question of the organizational structure of the party. I don't believe that in view of the very small number of our members and the very short experience in mass work, we could establish emphatic rules for the party organization now. We must leave some elbow room for the local organizations. As to the National Committee itself, in order to improvise, adapt, and select the most adequate methods and forms in approaching our new tasks, it would be fatal to imitate a big party with its established forms of activity. The worst of all bureaucratisms is the bureaucratism of a small body which sacrifices practical tasks for an imposing appearance. We should not renounce guerrilla methods, but should continue them upon the condition that the National Committee controls and directs this guerrilla activity. A concrete example: We cannot devote enough or equal forces to all the factories. Our local organization can choose for its activity in the next period one, two, or three factories in its area and concentrate all its forces upon these factories. If we have in one of them two or three workers we can create a special help commission of five nonworkers with the purpose of enlarging our influence in these factories.

The same can be done among the trade unions. We cannot introduce nonworker members in workers' unions. But we can with success build up help commissions for oral and literary action in connection with our comrades in the union. The unbreakable conditions should be: not to command the workers but only to help them, to give them suggestions, to arm them with the facts, ideas, factory papers, special leaflets, and so on.
Such collaboration would have a tremendous educational importance from one side for the worker comrades, from the other side for the nonworkers who need a solid reeducation.

You have, for example, an important number of Jewish non-worker elements in your ranks. They can be a very valuable yeast if the party succeeds by and by in extracting them from a closed milieu and tying them to the factory workers by daily activity. I believe such an orientation would also assure a more healthy atmosphere inside the party. Naturally it is not necessary to emphasize that an adequate corresponding part of the Jewish members should concentrate their forces especially to work among the Jewish masses.

The distribution and alignment of our forces should be done, I repeat, not in accordance with some a priori scheme, but in accordance with concrete and concretely conceived tasks in different parts of the country and even of a town. Only one general rule can we establish immediately: a party member who doesn’t win during three or six months a new worker for the party is not a good party member.

If we seriously established such a general orientation and if we verified the practical results every week, we would avoid a great danger: namely, that the intellectuals and white-collar workers might suppress the worker minority, condemn it to silence, transform the party into a very intelligent discussion club but absolutely not habitable for workers.

The selection of party functionaries from below to the top should be done under the same criterion. We naturally cannot appoint only workers, even not a majority of workers. Not all workers are suitable for the job. But every functionary must be attentive to what the worker faces and what he needs. Many intellectuals and half-intellectuals terrorize the workers by some abstract generalities and paralyze the will toward activity. A functionary of a revolutionary party should have in the first place a good ear, and only in the second place a good tongue.

You can see that my letter consists two-thirds of abstract "generalities" and that many of them are too elementary. I see it very well myself, but in order to avoid any misunderstanding I prefer to say even superfluities, with the assurance that you understand very well the peculiarities of the position of an observer from afar.

With my best wishes,

Comradely,

Hansen [Trotsky]
P.S.—The same rules should be in a corresponding form elaborated for the working and recruiting of the youth organization, otherwise we run the danger of educating good young elements into revolutionary dilettantes and not revolutionary fighters.
A LETTER TO ELSA REISS

October 13, 1937

Dear Comrade:

I make haste to immediately answer your letter of September 30. The letter was of the greatest meaning for me since it contained an authentic presentation of the factual state of affairs as well as of your personal situation. It is painful for me to think that you could have taken my telegram to Comrade Sneevliet as a direct or indirect rebuke of Comrade Reiss or yourself. I can imagine exactly what tremendous difficulties both of you encountered from the moment of your break with Moscow. Torn away from old ties, friendships, technical possibilities, you had as yet no new ones at your disposal and no perspective of the possibilities for action—first and foremost, opportunities for protection—in the newly created situation. It would thus be perfectly impossible to later, *ex post facto*, make complaints about Comrade Reiss. I would not even return to this question if it only concerned Comrade Reiss. But your fate is now at stake. Other agents of Moscow also can and will—of this I am certain—take the same road. That means a correct policy needs to be worked out for such cases. And that cannot be done without criticizing the errors committed in the past.

Comrade Reiss lacked correct revolutionary-political advice. I did not and do not doubt at all that Comrade Sneevliet entirely fulfilled his personal duty to Comrade Ignace and yourself. But it stands otherwise with his political assessment of the situation and the methods employed by him. He spelled them out to me in his letter of September 30, and just from that presentation it came out that the matter was quite incorrectly evaluated and prepared. And I question this: on July 10 Comrade Reiss turned to Sn[eevliet] and only on October 12, i.e., three months later, do I receive the first genuine news about the case. That I could better assess the matter than a West European from my "purely Russian" standpoint and on the basis of my previous experience
should certainly have been evident to Comrade Sn. in good time. Also, I have connections with the world press that are not available in Europe. The entire time since my entry into Mexico I have had the opportunity to get highly important information into the American press, and through it into the European press. A letter to Mexico takes ten to fourteen days. Even in the course of the month of July, a campaign in the world press might have been initiated that would have made Comrade Reiss an internationally known political figure. And that would have been the one effective protection for him personally, not to mention that it would have created the necessary political sounding board for the affair itself. Comrade Sn. writes: Comrade Reiss wanted "first of all" to send a letter to Moscow, and then wait until the letter had actually first arrived, and only then come out with a public declaration. The declaration itself merely purports that one "Ludwig," whom no one knows, has broken with the Third International and professes allegiance to the Fourth. Such a declaration was of significance to the Fourth International, but could in no case count on any response worth mentioning. Later an unknown person was found murdered in Lausanne. There are many acts of murder in the world, especially these days. That subsequently one strives to represent this unknown's murder as a GPU crime against a defector enlightens the public only with difficulty, and in any case cannot in any way awaken the interest of the big bourgeois press.

What advice would I have given to Comrade Reiss, had I been informed in time? I would have said: You know as well as I that the GPU will do everything to get rid of you. The idea of first turning to your one-time colleagues and to Moscow, and only then revealing your real identity in public, is disastrous. Each day lost can be fatal. That means first of all securing your physical existence. Naturally there is no absolute security. But an effective, albeit relative, security can be achieved only through political means. You should, in my opinion, take two steps without hesitation: First, turn to the French government (I think that right now the French is the most fitting) to make the following declaration, with a personal copy to Leon Blum: "My real name is so-and-so, according to my passport it is such-and-such. Until now I was a secret agent of Moscow's; I am breaking with Moscow now and am revealing my true identity to you. I want only to live from now on as a private individual in France. The reason for my break with Moscow is the crimes of the Stalin
regime, which I am prepared to make full account of in public.” (In this letter the name and address of a middleman should be supplied.*) At the same time it is necessary—and this is the second step—to hand over to the world press a political declaration: “I, the undersigned, was for seventeen years in the service of the GPU, of which so-and-so many were in the international field. I worked in sincere belief in my cause. The recent Moscow trials opened my eyes. The trials are criminal frame-ups. I am ready to testify to that before any competent international commission. I know that the GPU will now set all its forces into motion in order to silence me. But the matter stands above any personal considerations. I place myself under the protection of the public opinion of the whole world.”

That is the advice I would have given Comrade Ignace if I had been placed in touch with him in time. Of course, Comrade Sn. and others with him, myself included, would have answered for the security of Comrade Ignace before public opinion. Only after this step could he have turned to his former colleagues with personal letters, if he had considered that at all necessary. For my part, I believe that his appeal to the public opinion of the entire world would have made a much greater impression on his former colleagues than purely personal letters.

The interest taken by public opinion in Moscow and particularly in the GPU rose enormously following the Tukhachevsky trial. At that time, concrete news from Reiss could have been launched in the world press with great success. Every statement of his at that time would have been printed in thousands upon thousands of newspapers. Under those conditions it would have been extremely difficult—if not impossible—for the GPU to carry out an assassination of Reiss. In my first letter I have already mentioned the examples of Bessedovsky and Agabekov. One might retort that these two gentlemen turned out to be traitors, while Reiss was a good revolutionary. This objection is not relevant, however. What was decisive was that the cases of Bessedovsky and Agabekov became a world sensation. On the other hand, there was absolutely no necessity for them [unlike

*It is possible—almost certain—that on purely formal grounds Comrade Reiss would have been taken into custody. Under present conditions a couple of months of French imprisonment . . . [the remainder of this note was illegible].
Reiss] to publicly and from the beginning embrace the Fourth International. At first it was a matter of securing greater freedom of action for themselves, and that could only be achieved by stepping out of anonymity. Take also the example of Leon Sedov. The GPU would have liquidated him long ago had his name not been known to the world. Absolute security, I repeat, naturally does not exist. But the course that was followed in the Reiss case had to lead with almost absolute certainty to catastrophe. Through his letter to GPU personnel abroad and to Moscow, Reiss transformed himself into a practice target for the GPU. At the same time, not the slightest international cover was established for him. He stood there isolated, helpless, naked to the bandits’ revolver shots.

All that can no longer be made right. In relation to your security, only a part of this negligence can be made good. But that must be done. I already gave rather extensive reports of the incident to the Mexican and North American press two weeks ago, after receiving a telegram from Sn. in which he—unfortunately after a delay of three months—recognized the necessity of common action. I enclose the press excerpts available to me, including one from the big American newspaper, the *New York Times*. The information that you and Sneevliet promised has not yet arrived. You write at the same time that I should not make use of it until further notice. You make reference to your security in this regard. From the above you must realize, dear comrade, that I am of the opposite opinion. The better known your name becomes, the more decisively and relentlessly you step forward in public, the more secure you will be. Naturally you must, at the same time, not give up all of the technical precautions. Yet the best measures of concealment will remain ineffective if you are not well covered politically. I give you my opinion here in this blunt form simply because too much is at stake and any glossing over would be a crime.

Please believe me that these lines stem from feelings of the deepest sympathy for your fate and that of your family. I am totally at your service.

P.S.—You naturally may show this letter to Comrade Sneevliet. I could not tell him anything further at the moment.
THE FUTURE OF THE TROTSKY DEFENSE COMMITTEE

October 14, 1937

Dear Comrade Cannon:

You must, of course, know better what to do with the Defense Committee in view of its composition and the mood of its members. But it is a pity to dissolve such an organization after almost a year in existence. I consider it as a great failure and as a consequence of a fundamentally false policy of our organization toward the committee. I discussed the question dozens of times with different comrades here (Novack, Shachtman, etc.), and also by letters. I insisted upon the necessity of surrounding the committee with delegates of workers' groups in order to create channels to the committee from the masses, and at the same time as a lever for our pressure upon the committee. Comrades Novack, Shachtman, and others declared themselves totally in agreement with me on this point. Together we analyzed the practical possibilities to realize this plan. I repeated the same to other comrades who visited me before, during, and after the April hearings. Every one of them answered me politely: "Yes, yes." But later, in spite of repeated questions from me, I never could have information about the matter and only accidentally I heard that Comrade Shachtman was opposed to it. Why? I don't know. But, as I learned from Comrade Lankin and many others, not the slightest attempt was made to create a regular connection between the workers and the committee. Our comrades in the committee had, at the beginning, an attitude of submission toward the liberals; then they opened a period of personal conflicts with La Follette and others, without having the slightest means of organized pressure upon the committee as a political body.

I know very well the tremendous work accomplished by the committee, and especially by our comrades in the committee. The success is an indubitable one, but it is a general political success and not an advance of the party organization on this field. And
the fact that, after a year of work, you must dissolve the committee is a striking demonstration of the lack of a correct organizational policy on this question. We will have in the future many analogous examples of activity and I find it necessary to express my opinion about the matter as clearly as possible.

I am not looking for a book on the Pullman strike that is already known to me, but for some good book containing information about one of the leaders—George Sendern (now called George Selders).

The Russian typist (in Paris) we had in view was a certain Russian totally fit for the job in every respect. Unfortunately, it is absolutely impossible for her to leave Europe to come here.

I am not sure that the report of the Chinese discussion, insofar as my intervention is concerned, is suitable for the bulletin. It would be sufficient, I believe, if the comrades who are concerned with the Chinese question took notice of the report. But you have to decide yourself, in agreement with Comrade F., what use to make of it.

My best greetings,
Your Old Man
My Dear Editor:

You propose that I write an article on war for the Modern Monthly. Before entering directly into a discussion of your amiable proposition, I am forced to put one preliminary question. In the list of your associate editors is inscribed the name of Mr. Carleton Beals. After his "participation" in the Inquiry Commission on the Moscow Trials, there cannot be the slightest doubt about the moral physiognomy of this gentleman. Beals’s article on the commission hearings in Coyoacan was nothing but a series of lies and falsifications dictated by the interests of the GPU. I enumerated the most important of these lies and falsifications in an article, a copy of which, so far as I know, was forwarded to you. You have not yet, however, reacted in any way to the attitude of Mr. Beals.

I can give an article to a bourgeois publication without any concern about the other contributors, as I may ride in a bus without concern about the identities of the other passengers. Totally different is the case with a magazine which appeals to Marxism and revolution. Every contributor in this case is bound by a reciprocal bond to all the others. I consider it impossible to carry any responsibility not only for Mr. Beals himself but also for the publication which tolerates him in its ranks.

Stalinism is the syphilis of the workers’ movement. Anybody who chances to be a direct or indirect carrier of such a contamination should be submitted to a pitiless quarantine. The hour has struck for the unsparing demarcation of honest people from all the agents, friends, lawyers, publicists, and poets of the GPU. Collaboration in a journal like yours is necessary for such as Beals in order to preserve their mask of “independence.” The less reason has an independent journal to give its cover to such gentlemen.

If the name of Mr. Beals remains on your list only through
To the Editor of Modern Monthly

oversight (and I should be glad to hear from you that this is the case) then you can immediately correct this error. In the opposite case I shall be forced to ask you to publish this letter in your magazine in explanation for my taking away my name from the roll of your contributors.

Sincerely yours,
Leon Trotsky
Dear Comrade Cannon:

I am a bit worried over not having received any answer to my last letters. I explain this by the fact that all of you are extremely busy with the preparations for the convention.

In this letter I will discuss two different questions: (1) The general economic and political perspective, and (2) the international conference.

1. My previous letters concerning the general perspective were, I repeat, not sufficiently concrete, and I am worried that they can even produce some misinterpretation and misunderstandings. The political consequences of the coming crisis (and it seems to come with giant strides) will be different in different countries, if not in the general direction, at least in the tempo. In France, the dominating political factor is the People's Front. It became possible only thanks to a relative "prosperity." The last cantonal elections in France show that the political inertia of the People's Front persists. The economic crisis will inevitably give a mortal blow to the French People's Front. What can replace it? Political polarization. That is, the strengthening of the extremes with the perspective of a tremendous clash between fascism and the revolutionary proletariat. The situation in France thus remains prerevolutionary.

In the United States, the "People's Front" took the form of Rooseveltism, that is, the vote of the radicals, Socialists, and Communists for Roosevelt. But the new crisis will deliver to Rooseveltism such a blow as the last crisis delivered to Hoover-ism. What will replace "Roosevelt's People's Front"? Not an immediate polarization of the extremes, as in France, I believe. The American political system has democratic "reserves" which are already exhausted in France. The greatest reserve is the building of a labor party under the aegis of LaGuardia (= Green
plus Lewis), or, more probably, a more radical nuance, that of Lewis plus Browder. In this sense the crisis in the U.S. can signify not an end of the People's Front policy but only its readjustment to the left. We can't overlook this version of developments. Even in this case, of course, the CP will pass through a period of inner conflicts and splits. The Rooseveltian CP, with a large stratum of bureaucrats, conservative intellectuals, etc., will be forced to adapt itself to a sharper class struggle line, or it will lose its worker elements. In any case, we can't affirm that the crisis will immediately create in the States a prerevolutionary situation. It is thus possible that the growth of our French section will be more rapid than that of our U.S. section.

2. The question of the international conference should be placed during the next two months in the center of attention of all our sections. It is absolutely necessary to prepare the conference with the greatest care, ideologically and organizationally.

It seems to us here that we should have two preconferences in America: one in Latin America and the other in New York, the first to be December 24, the second in the first half of January (January 7).

We must for the first time approach seriously the Latin American problem. It can be done only in a conference convoked in Latin America itself. The theses, which will be elaborated here, and which will analyze for the first time the problems of Latin America as a whole and each of its parts in particular, should be definitely adopted at the December conference, which will send one or two delegates to the New York conference in January (if you agree on this matter). Our opinion is that the New York preconference should include representatives of: the United States, Canada, Latin America (including Cuba), China, if possible Japan, India, Australia, and South Africa. We believe that Comrade F. or Isaacs, for example, could have a formal mandate from our Chinese section. Couldn't F. also have a mandate from our South African section? Possibly there are in N.Y. Japanese or Chinese students or workers, sympathizing with us. Even without a mandate, they could be personally invited to the conference, naturally under the condition that they are trustworthy. It seems to us that you must, by and by, concentrate the enumerated countries around a sub-Secretariat in the States, in view not only of the distances but also of the very uncertain situation in Europe.
To have the mandates from Canada, China, South Africa, etc., it is necessary to send out letters *immediately* and to ask them to answer by cable. The New York conference could then send its delegates to Europe with greater authority.

Don’t you think it would be absolutely necessary to immediately create a special commission for the preparation of the New York preconference and of the European conference? By its composition such a commission should have a very authoritative character. *Hypothetically*, we named here the following comrades: Cannon, Shachtman, Spector, F., Isaacs, and John Glenn (about the last I will tell you separately). The task of this commission: (a) To elaborate theses and statements concerning the U.S., Canada, China, etc. (b) To examine other documents destined for the conference, especially the thesis on Latin America. (c) To assure the success of the New York preconference. (d) To name the delegates for the international conference.

The preconference in New York should begin about January 7 so that the delegates from Latin America can come to it *immediately after* the Latin American conference.

We hope that the Latin American thesis will be ready by November 15 and will be sent to you immediately. At approximately the same time we will send you also other programmatic documents, and theses for the conference. We hope that your documents will be elaborated at the same time. It's completely feasible because you will merely have to work over more concisely the most important documents of your national convention. Simultaneously you will naturally send your documents (we will do the same) to all our sections throughout the world, directly or through the International Secretariat.

The preparatory commission in New York, it seems to us, should also create a special organizational and financial subcommission, the task of which would be to find special financial resources for the preconference in New York as well as for sending the delegates to Europe.

What documents should be destined for the conference?

1. A programmatic manifesto, similar to the manifesto of the Second Congress of the Comintern, which, for many years, took the place of a program.
2. United States
3. France and the Blum experience
4. Spain
5. Latin America
6. USSR
7. The war question
8. People’s Front politics on an international scale
9. The fight against GPU gangsterism
10. “Deviations” (the ultralefts, the centrists, etc.)

Now a couple of words about Comrade John Glenn. It is absolutely necessary to fight, from the very beginning, any possible misunderstandings which can create difficulties for John and unpleasantness for us here. In view of the fact that he comes from here, some comrades can consider him as an “ambassador,” a “special agent,” etc., etc. There is not the slightest shadow of truth in this. John goes to the States for personal reasons, without any specific “mission.” I hope you will find the occasion to explain this to comrades who may have some doubts on this matter. At the same time, I can’t miss saying that John is a highly qualified comrade who has an unshakable fidelity to our cause. He knows the history of our tendency in general and of almost each section in all details, and he follows our literature in half a dozen languages. I believe he could be of invaluable help to our American section, especially on the field of its international activity, in the first place in the preparation for the conference. That is why I permit myself to recommend him in the warmest manner in general and for the participation in the conference commission in particular.

Comradely yours,
Hansen [Trotsky]
I have already described the assassination of Ignace Reiss, an important foreign agent of the GPU and the Comintern, near Lausanne, Switzerland. The assassination was plotted by another GPU agent stationed at Rome, Mrs. Gertrude Schildbach. The reason for the assassination: Disgusted by the Moscow trials, Ignace Reiss wrote a letter on July 17, 1937, to the Central Committee in Moscow, proclaiming his definite rupture with them.

When I gave you this information, it must have seemed to the casual onlooker to consist of unwarranted assertions impossible of proof. Now the whole matter has become public. On October 2, two of the assassins of Reiss were arrested in Paris. The Swiss police, who are not tied by diplomatic interests, seem to have done a good job. The police have established that the Chevrolet car in which Reiss was killed had been rented to a Swiss woman, Renata Steiner. She was immediately arrested and after several days of questioning she confessed to having been an agent of the GPU for some years. She named all the members of the GPU gang. Of the two arrested in Paris, one is a White Russian, Dimitry Smirensky, and the other a French photographer, Pierre Ducommet.

The identities of others have been established. They are: a former White Russian officer, Kondratieff, another White Russian, Pierre Schwarzenburg, and an enigmatic person named “Rossi.” It is possible that as I relate this, they have already been arrested. Gertrude Schildbach is also being hunted by the police. In her hotel room a box of chocolates, which is now in the hands of the Swiss police, was found treated with strychnine. Even the French press is now forced to recognize that the assassination was committed on orders from Moscow.

The active utilization of White Guard officers has become a general method of the GPU abroad. The White military organiza-
tion is almost entirely in the hands of the GPU. The kidnapping of General Miller was committed in order to replace him with General Skoblin, an old agent of the GPU, and in this way to have the free disposition of the whole Union of the White Army.

The arrested and hunted persons are professional murderers in the service of the GPU. A series of crimes will be disclosed. Not without interest is the fact that in the bloody Chevrolet abandoned by the assassins on the road, the police found a new overcoat with a Madrid label. It seems very probable that the owner participated in the kidnapping and assassination of Andres Nin, Erwin Wolf, and other revolutionaries in Spain and was, as a high specialist in this work, urgently summoned by Schildbach to Switzerland.

The European “Communist” press, as for example the French L’Humanite and Ce Soir, seems to be totally paralyzed. They seem to have lost the use of their tongues: it is not easy for them to write about the Trotskyite “terrorists.”

In the next period we will thus have in Switzerland a trial of a GPU gang, one of the most sensational trials of our time. I suppose that Mrs. Reiss, the widow of the assassinated man, will appear before the court as a witness. There is no doubt that a powerful light will be thrown on the Moscow trials.

In connection with the assassination of Ignace Reiss and the discovery of his assassins, I disclose very important information coming for the most part from the papers of Reiss himself but also from other sources. It would be premature to make it all public at the present time but I can communicate some of it to you. I must warn the GPU that new assassinations will not prevent this exposure, since the documents are at different points and in safe hands.

1. You know that a part of my archives was stolen in November 1936 from a scientific institute in Paris. There is no doubt that the theft was committed by the GPU in connection with the Moscow trial. Now it seems more than probable that one of the organizers of the theft was the arrested man, Smirensky. It appears that he was living in the house next to the one where my son Leon Sedov lived, with the purpose of having him under his close surveillance. I don’t doubt that Smirensky and Company were preparing to assassinate Leon Sedov, who is inscribed with red ink on the list of the GPU.

2. On August 26, scarcely more than a week before the assassination of Reiss, the French police received an anonymous
denunciation from Switzerland against Reiss, alleging him to be an international financial swindler. All the names under which he lived in Europe were indicated and these names were known only to the GPU, which fabricated false passports for him. On an international scale the denunciation of political adversaries to foreign police with false accusations is one of the preferred methods of the GPU.

3. The GPU thus denounced as an agent of the Gestapo an old German revolutionary, Grylewicz, now an emigre in Czechoslovakia. The affair was directed by Yezhov, the new chief of the GPU. Slutsky, the representative of the GPU in France, expressed many times his indignation at the slowness of the Czechoslovakian police. Finally, Slutsky and his collaborators succeeded in securing the arrest of Grylewicz, but after several months of imprisonment the authorities gave Grylewicz his freedom because the denunciation proved to be false.

This same Slutsky, in the presence of witnesses, described the questioning of Mrachkovsky, a famous general of the civil war and one of the defendants shot in August 1936, as having lasted ninety hours without interruption. This was one of the methods of extracting confessions.

The search of the police in the home of Rakovsky (former head of the Ukrainian government, member of the Central Committee, ambassador to London and to Paris) lasted eighteen hours without food or rest for the sixty-seven-year-old man. The wife of Rakovsky tried to serve him tea. The GPU opposed this on the pretext that she might poison him. It was the preparation of Rakovsky for the first questioning. The story is well known by Mr. Louis Fischer, the semi-official Soviet spokesman. I am wondering if he will try to deny it.

The GPU has an order from Stalin to organize Trotskyist trials abroad at any price in order to confirm before world public opinion at least a part of the accusations in the Moscow trials. The most important agents are engaged in this work. Tremendous sums of money are being spent for this purpose, especially in Spain, France, Mexico, United States, but also in Czechoslovakia and Austria. I hope to give you more detailed information about this in the near future.

The GPU made and is making all efforts to stage a Rykov-Bukharin trial in order to counteract hostile public opinion with new confessions. In May, Rykov, the former head of the Soviet government, and Bukharin, the former head of the Comintern,
were brought from prison to a meeting of the Central Committee of the party. They refused to confess to alleged treason, terrorism, and so on. Stalin shouted out, "Back to prison with them! Let them defend themselves from there!" A series of provisional confessions of the alleged members of the Right Opposition (Rykov-Bukharin) are aimed to break down the two most important defendants and to oblige them to play their role according to the script of the GPU in a new trial.

A characteristic detail concerning Gertrude Schildbach, who organized the assassination of Reiss: she remains a German citizen, born in Alsace. She asked for a substantial sum of money from the GPU in order to become a French citizen. She received the money but she never took corresponding steps before the French authorities.

That is enough for today. Other things no less important will follow. In spite of our sufficiently turbulent times, the question of the activities of the GPU gang merits, I believe, some attention.
ERWIN WOLF: 
A VICTIM OF THE GPU

October 19, 1937

Mr. Trotsky recently furnished the press with the news that his former secretary Erwin Wolf had been caught in Stalin's net in Spain and treacherously murdered. Wolf was, as will be remembered, his aide during his stay in Norway, up to his internment.

In order to amplify the reports published about the events connected with Wolf's disappearance, this correspondent has turned to Mr. Trotsky, who still lives in the house of the painter Diego Rivera, in Coyoacan.

Mr. Trotsky, although busy with literary activities, receives me in his workroom—the same room where five months ago the Preliminary Commission of Inquiry held its hearings into the charges made against Leon Trotsky in the Moscow trials.

My first question is whether the report that Mr. Wolf has been murdered has been definitely confirmed.

"Permit me to begin with a preliminary remark. Your paper, Aftenposten, was and is very hostile to my ideas and to me personally. For my part, I don't have the slightest sympathy for your paper. You came to me only in order to give information to the readers of your paper. I also am interested in giving some information to the Norwegian people, even through the channel of the most conservative Norwegian paper. But in the given situation our relations should be based upon, as the Americans say, a 'gentleman's agreement.' You must take care that your paper will publish my statements verbatim or not print them at all.

"Now to the question of my friend Erwin Wolf. A clear proof has, so far, not been produced. But everything known about the case tends to show that he died in Spain at the hands of GPU agents. Efforts have been made to get information from the Spanish authorities, but nobody knows—or wants to know—anything. A person asks one office and he is referred to another, or is simply met with the answer that no one by that name is
known. In many cases it may be really true that the official asked does not know. There are so many fictitious authorities in Spain now.

“Dozens of people disappear in Spain this way. No information about their fate can be procured.

“His murder was organized by Stalin’s agents, the GPU.”

There is an undertone of irreconcilable hate in Mr. Trotsky’s voice when he mentions the GPU, as there was when, during the hearings of the commission, he exposed the methods of that institution.

“The GPU is the real government of so-called Republican Spain. The army as well as the police of the Valencia government are entirely in its hands.”

I ask whether the GPU influence is exercised by some kind of Spanish subdivision, cooperating with Moscow.

“No,” exclaims Trotsky with emphasis, “it is the real, Russian GPU, directly under orders from Stalin. It was Moscow’s representative Antonov-Ovseenko, the former consul in Barcelona—I know that man!—who gave the orders to kill Andres Nin, Erwin Wolf, and many others.

“The GPU is active everywhere, not excluding the so-called ‘Socialist'-governed countries. It was, for example, behind my expulsion from Norway. Erwin Wolf too was expelled from Norway by order of the GPU. The ‘Socialist’ government in Norway is of the same bad material as the Spanish. It is no less conservative and even reactionary than many other governments which do not claim to be Socialist, but it is less courageous. Messrs. Nygaardsvold, Trygve Lie, and the others wished, at least at one time, to show a firm hand and to strengthen their authority in this way. Really, they demonstrated only their organic weakness. They tremble before every shout of reaction as well as before every order of the GPU. ‘We committed a stupidity in giving you authorization to enter Norway,’ the minister of ‘justice’ (?) told me during our last meeting. ‘Mr. Trygve Lie—now you try to correct your stupidity by a crime,’ was my answer.

“Yes, it was a crime. I, my son, and many of my friends were accused of the most horrible crimes that can be imagined. I had all the proofs of the falsity of the accusations in my hands. And in this moment the ‘Socialist’ government, under the direction of the virtuous and immaculate Mr. Martin Tranmael, interned me and my wife with the purpose of depriving me of the possibility of defending the life of my son and my friends and my own political honor. The pretense was not only fictitious but stupid. What is
the name for such an action? An attempt at moral assassination. This crime was committed under the direct order of Moscow. The efforts of Mr. Tranmael to mask this fact in his *Arbeiderbladet* could produce only a ridiculous impression."

My question as to whether the pressure used to bring about the decision of the Norwegian government was of economic or political nature brings the following answer:

"Economic pressure was used. The government was pressed hard by the shipowners and the fishery interests, and when Soviet Ambassador Yakubovich banged the table, the government yielded. The capitulation of Nygaardsvold before Yakubovich was a betrayal not only of democratic principles but also of the elementary interests of Norway as an independent state. With the same weapon (the state monopoly of trade) Moscow after this first success can blackmail Oslo on every other occasion.

"The expulsion of Erwin Wolf and my other secretary, J. van Heijenoort, was a completely illegal act. They had done nothing against the laws of the country; their only crime was that they were my secretaries.

"Trygve Lie said to me: If you sign a statement that you will submit voluntarily to censorship of your correspondence, your secretaries will not be expelled. I refused. I declared this demand scandalous. The so-called 'Socialist' government, and especially Mr. Tranmael, were totally aware of all my literary and political activities and nobody objected to them with a single word. . . . Just after the severe order from Moscow in August 1936, I declared to Mr. Lie that I did not come to Norway to obey the orders of the GPU: if I had been ready to do so there would have been no need for my going from Moscow to Oslo. My attitude in Norway was one of absolute loyalty to the agreement. I never expressed my opinion upon Norwegian politics even in private conversations. I could not submit my literary activity to the control of some reactionary, ignorant police officer. As punishment, the 'Socialist' government interned me and my wife without any accusation against her; but not satisfied with this, they expelled my collaborators, Erwin Wolf and J. van Heijenoort, in the most brutal manner. My collaborators were not exiles. Their papers were in order. They did not commit any crime. They were good friends of Norway and its people. They were punished only because I refused to accede to an arbitrary demand of Trygve Lie.

"But even this is not all. After my internment, the *Arbeider-
bladet began a campaign of slander against me and my collaborators. Tranmael found for this purpose adequate contributors. The semi-official of the GPU in Norway is Yacob Friis. Not for assassination, not for stealing of archives—Mr. Friis is too cowardly for such exploits. But he is brave enough to attack and slander an adversary who is under lock and key. When I lived freely in Norway, this knight—I mean Mr. Friis—never criticized me; but after my internment he filled the Socialist press with all the slanders and lies fabricated in Moscow by the GPU. This campaign was highly prejudicial not only to me but to all my friends and collaborators, particularly to Erwin Wolf."

What did Mr. Wolf do after he left Norway?

"When he reached Copenhagen he was again arrested, once more by orders of the GPU, this time its orders to the Danish government. The reason given was that since he had been expelled from Norway, he must have done something wrong. Expelled from Denmark, he went to England, where he stayed for some months. During the Moscow trials he led a campaign against Stalin’s type of justice in the British papers, especially in the Manchester Guardian. Knowing the conditions under which I lived in Norway, he was able to disclose the falsehood of the statements about my alleged connections with Russian personalities, such as Pyatakov, who ‘confessed’ that he had made a trip by airplane to Norway to conspire with me. For this reason, Wolf was especially hated by the GPU.

"Then he went to Spain as a correspondent of the News Chronicle. Here he was arrested once, along with practically all foreign correspondents, and spent a few days in jail. This arrest was an official act of the authorities. Later, on July 31, the day before he was to leave Spain, he was again arrested, this time without any kind of legal form. He was treacherously carried off by GPU agents.

"Wolf was a Czechoslovakian, of a prominent merchant family. He was a man of absolute integrity and generosity. His collaboration with me was totally disinterested. He came on his own initiative to help me in my work. He was always helpful to German exiles persecuted by the Nazis. With a great capacity for foreign languages he learned the Norwegian language in a short time, and he had the warmest sympathy for the Norwegian people. . . .

"Efforts to come to his aid were received everywhere with the answer that nothing was known about him."
"He was married to a daughter of Mr. Knudsen, newspaper editor and member of the Norwegian parliament, who was Trotsky's host in Norway. She was with him in Spain, but escaped to France when he was arrested. It was she who by her courageous behavior prevented the six young fascists from getting what they wanted when they tried to penetrate into my rooms."

Mr. Trotsky spreads out his arms to show just how she blocked the doorway, and there is admiration in his voice when he says:

"A brave Norwegian girl! She scared them."

I ask from what source the indications have come that Wolf was murdered after his arrest.

"Through an American, Harry Milton. This man fought as a volunteer with the Spanish Loyalist army. He was wounded, and after his recovery he was arrested. This has happened to many of the volunteers, and the reason has always been that they have been opposed to the GPU. As a result of the intervention of the American consul he was released and left Spain. The American representative was in a position to enforce his release. Milton then wrote me that with his knowledge of the circumstances and the work of the GPU he considered it practically certain that Wolf had been killed.

"As I said," finishes Mr. Trotsky, "a definite proof has not yet reached me, but the very fact that the newspaper report of his death has not been repudiated from Spain is in itself a confirmation. It was just in order to provoke a possible denial that I published the report."

Mr. Trotsky returns to his work. His table is placed in the center of the big room. A reflector throws a dramatic light on the scene. In the dim background books and documents are discerned. The windows are barricaded. It is like a field headquarters.
My Dear Comrade Margaret De Silver:

I warmly enjoyed your letter, so friendly and at the same time so frank. It is not necessary to say how gratifying is the fact that you found such an interest in my book that you devoted to its reading an important amount of time. Attentive readers are very scarce, almost as scarce as conscientious authors, but they are all the more precious.

The objections you make are of very great theoretical and political importance. I tried in my last pamphlet ["Stalinism and Bolshevism"] to treat this matter in a very concise—and, I admit, insufficient—manner. I don’t know if the pamphlet has come to your attention yet. In any event I send you a copy of it. Here I shall try to formulate some supplementary points in favor of my position.

The revolutionary dictatorship of a proletarian party is for me not a thing that one can freely accept or reject: It is an objective necessity imposed upon us by the social realities—the class struggle, the heterogeneity of the revolutionary class, the necessity for a selected revolutionary vanguard in order to assure the victory. The dictatorship of a party belongs to the barbarian prehistory as does the state itself, but we cannot jump over this chapter, which can open (not at one stroke) genuine human history.

The leaders of the Spanish CNT renounced participation in "politics" every time, and renounced having anything to do with the state, but the social reality is more powerful than any such abstract negations. During the Civil War, the leaders of the CNT became bourgeois ministers, but, alas, secondary and powerless ministers. In May the anarchist workers entered into a powerful insurrection. Under adequate direction they could have surely conquered power in Catalonia and by their example could have aroused the toiling masses of all Spain. But they renounced any leadership in the revolution. In Solidaridad Obrera they repeat...
hundreds of times: "The accusation that we provoked the move­ment is totally false. Had we provoked or even only guided it we would surely have been victorious, but we don't want a dictator­ship and that is why we renounced the leadership in the insurrection." And the result? Because the leaders of the CNT renounced dictatorship for themselves they left the place open for the Stalinist dictatorship: social nature like the physical does not tolerate a vacuum.

The revolutionary party (vanguard) which renounces its own dictatorship surrenders the masses to the counterrevolution. This is the teaching of all modern history. Abstractly speaking, it would be very well if the party dictatorship could be replaced by the "dictatorship" of the whole toiling people without any party, but this presupposes such a high level of political development among the masses that it can never be achieved under capitalist conditions. The reason for the revolution comes from the circumstance that capitalism does not permit the material and the moral development of the masses.

Dictatorship cannot resolve all the problems, or prevent new setbacks (reaction, Thermidor, counterrevolution). The develop­ment of humanity is very contradictory but we cannot renounce making a step forward in order to prevent a half-step backward. In spite of the dishonest dictatorship of the Thermidorean bureaucracy in the Soviet Union, the October Revolution as a whole signifies tremendous progress in the history of mankind. Even now under the iron heel of the new privileged caste, the USSR is not the same as czarist Russia. And the whole of mankind is, thanks to the October Revolution, incomparably richer in experience and in possibilities.

I should be very glad to meet Comrade Carlo Tresca some time. Naturally not with the naive aim of converting him (we old revolutionaries are stubborn people) but with the aim of discuss­ing the possibilities for common measures against the Stalinist gangrene. The Mexican member of the [Dewey] commission, Zamora, came back very satisfied with the commission and totally charmed by Tresca.

My wife and I retain the best memory of your short visit to Mexico and we hope that this visit will not be the last.

My warmest thanks for your letter and for your friendship in general.

Yours sincerely,
Leon Trotsky
NOTES


2. Trotsky’s wife, Natalia Sedova (1882-1962), worked in the Soviet Commissariat of Education for several years after the 1917 revolution. She developed differences with the Fourth International in 1941 and severed her ties to it in 1951.

3. The Norwegian Labor Party (NAP) was the major working class party in Norway. It broke with the Second International and affiliated with the Comintern in 1919, then left the latter in 1923. In the mid-thirties it was associated with the London Bureau, but later it returned to the Second International. In 1935 it became the ruling party in Norway and granted asylum to Trotsky, later interning and silencing him after the first Moscow trial. The Communist (or Third) International (Comintern) was organized under Lenin’s leadership in 1919 as the revolutionary successor to the Second International. Stalin dissolved it in 1943 as a gesture of goodwill to his imperialist allies.

4. The Second International began in 1889 as a loose association of Social Democratic and labor parties, uniting both revolutionary and reformist elements. Its progressive role ended in 1914, when its major sections violated the most elementary socialist principles and supported their own imperialist governments in World War I. It fell apart during the war, but was revived as a completely reformist organization in 1919.

5. Karl Marx (1818-1883), along with Engels, was the founder of scientific socialism and a leader of the First International, 1864-76. V.I. Lenin (1870-1924) restored Marxism as the theory and practice of revolution in the imperialist epoch after it had been debased by the opportunists, revisionists, and fatalists of the Second International. He initiated the Bolshevik tendency, which was the first to build the kind of party needed to lead a working class revolution. He founded the Communist International and helped elaborate its principles, strategy, and tactics. He prepared a fight against the bureaucratization of the Russian CP and the Soviet state, but died before he could carry it out.

6. The IWW (Industrial Workers of the World), formed in Chicago in 1905, was a revolutionary anticapitalist industrial union. It rejected political action or work in the mainstream of the American labor movement. Its decline began with severe governmental repression in World War I and was accelerated with the formation of the CP in 1919. Trygve Lie (1896-1968), the former legal adviser to the NAP, was
Norwegian minister of justice, 1935-39, and was responsible for arresting Trotsky and holding him incommunicado so that he could not defend himself against the Moscow trial slanders. He was minister of foreign affairs, 1941-46, and became secretary-general of the United Nations after World War II, 1946-53.

7. In August 1936, Stalin launched the first big Moscow confession show trial, accusing sixteen defendants, headed by the Old Bolsheviks Zinoviev and Kamenev, of attempting to assassinate Soviet leaders and conspiring to restore capitalism. All sixteen were executed. Trotsky and his son Leon Sedov were the main defendants, in absentia, in these proceedings, through which Stalin consolidated his personal rule over the Soviet Union.

8. The Gestapo was the Nazi secret police. Joseph Stalin (1879-1953) became a Social Democrat in 1898, joined the Bolshevik faction in 1904, and was a member of its Central Committee from 1912. After the February 1917 revolution and before Lenin returned and reoriented the Bolsheviks toward winning power, Stalin favored a conciliatory attitude toward the Provisional Government. He was commissar of nationalities in the first Soviet government and became general secretary of the CP in 1922. Lenin called in 1923 for his removal from that post because he was using it to bureaucratize the party and state apparatuses. After Lenin’s death in 1924, Stalin gradually eliminated his major opponents, starting with Trotsky, until he became virtual dictator of the party and the Soviet Union in the 1930s. The chief concepts associated with his name are “socialism in one country,” “social fascism,” and “peaceful coexistence.”

9. GPU was one of the abbreviated names for the Soviet political police; other names were Cheka, NKVD, MVD, KGB; but GPU is often used in their place.

10. Erwin Wolf (1902-1937) was a Czech Trotskyist and a member of the International Secretariat, who served as Trotsky’s secretary in Norway. In 1937 he was kidnapped and killed by the GPU in Spain. Jean van Heijenoort (1912- ) served as a secretary to Trotsky in all four countries of his last exile.

11. After his expulsion from the party in November 1927, Trotsky was exiled to Central Asia at the beginning of 1928. He was there for one year, and was banished to Turkey in early 1929.

12. Frederick Engels (1820-1895) was the lifelong collaborator of Marx, cofounder of scientific socialism, and leader of the First and Second Internationals.

13. Joseph Goebbels (1897-1945) was Nazi minister for propaganda and national enlightenment from 1933 until he committed suicide upon Germany’s defeat. Adolph Hitler (1889-1945) was appointed chancellor of Germany in January 1933 and, at the head of the Nazi Party, led Germany into World War II.

14. Sergei Kirov (1886-1934) was a member of the Central Committee of the CPSU from 1923 and was party secretary in Leningrad from 1926. His assassination signaled the start of the purges that culminated in the
Moscow trials and the extermination of the entire remaining leadership of the Russian revolution. The assassin, Leonid Nikolaev, was tried behind closed doors and shot in December 1934. The assassination evidently resulted from bungling on the part of the Soviet secret police during an effort to manufacture a plot that could be used to smear Trotsky as a terrorist. Many of the details are still unknown to the public, despite the fact that Nikita Khrushchev exposed the official version as a frame-up in his famous speech to the Twentieth Congress of the CPSU in 1956.

15. **Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel** (1770-1831), the most eminent German philosopher of the first half of the nineteenth century, developed the system of dialectics that Marx later adapted to historical materialism.

16. **Denis M. Pritt** (1888-1972) was a British lawyer and Labour MP, 1935-50. An uncritical admirer of Stalin, he stated that the Moscow trial was “an example for the world.” Trotsky’s answer to Pritt’s pamphlet was a rough draft of a lengthy article that later became part of “Shame!” (see *Writings 35-36*).

17. **The International Federation of Trade Unions** (IFTU), dominated by the Social Democracy, had its headquarters in Amsterdam. **Mikhail Tomsky** (1886-1936) was a right-wing Bolshevik who opposed the October 1917 insurrection. As the head of the Soviet trade unions and a member of the Politburo, he worked closely with Stalin in the mid-twenties, until he joined the right-wing fight against Stalin led by Bukharin. He committed suicide during the first Moscow trial. Trotsky’s second letter to the IFTU, dated October 22, 1936, was in the name of his Norwegian attorney, Michael Puntervold (see *Writings 35-36*).

18. “On the Atlantic.” *Fourth International*, June 1941, where it had the title “Pages from Trotsky’s Journal.” *Fourth International* was the Socialist Workers Party’s theoretical magazine from 1940 until 1956, when its name was changed to *International Socialist Review*.

19. After World War I the **Saar** region of Germany was administered by France under the supervision of the **League of Nations**, which was created by the Versailles Peace Conference in 1919, ostensibly as a form of world government and cooperation that would prevent future wars. Its complete bankruptcy became clear when it was unable to have any effect on the Japanese invasion of China, the Italian invasion of Ethiopia, and other links in the chain that led to World War II.

20. **Gustav Noske** (1868-1946), Social Democratic minister of defense, and **Philipp Scheidemann** (1865-1939), right-wing leader of the German Social Democracy, presided over the crushing of the November 1918 revolution. They were responsible for the murder of **Karl Liebknecht** (1871-1919) and **Rosa Luxemburg** (1871-1919), left-wing Social Democrats, organizers of the German CP, and leaders of the 1918 revolution. Trotsky’s prediction that Trygve Lie and his colleagues would become emigres themselves in a few years was borne out when Germany invaded Norway in World War II.

21. **Walter Held** (1910-1941) was a German Trotskyist who emigrated
to Norway after Hitler came to power. When Trotsky was in Norway, Held was one of his secretaries. While traveling legally through the USSR, he was taken off the train by the GPU and executed.

22. **Olav Scheflo** (1883-1959) was a leader of the NAP, spokesman for its left wing during World War I, and an advocate of affiliation with the Comintern. He was also editor of an NAP newspaper in Kristiansand.

23. “A Significant Episode.” *Fourth International*, June 1941, where it had the title “Pages from Trotsky’s Journal.”

24. **Gregory Zinoviev** (1883-1936), the first head of the Comintern (1919-26) and **Leon Kamenev** (1883-1936) helped Stalin initiate the campaign against Trotskyism in 1923, but made a bloc with the Left Opposition from 1926 until they were expelled from the party in 1927. They capitulated, were readmitted, but were expelled again in 1932. They recanted again, but in January 1935 they and seventeen others were convicted of plotting to kill Soviet leaders and of moral responsibility for the murder of Kirov. Imprisoned, they became victims of the first big Moscow show trial in August 1936 and were executed.

25. Disagreements over the role of the trade unions caused bitter debate in the Bolshevik Party between 1920 and 1921. Several groupings were formed before the question was resolved at the Tenth Party Congress (March 1921) by the inauguration of the New Economic Policy.

26. Trotsky’s December 1931 article, “The White Guard Preparation of a Terrorist Act Against Comrade Trotsky,” is in *Writings 30-31*. General **Anton W. Turkul** (d. 1958), head of the Russian All-Military Association, was a former czarist general. **White Guards**, or Whites, was the name given the Russian counterrevolutionary forces, from the civil war on.

27. **Pierre Naville** (1904- ) and **Pierre Frank** (1905- ) were founders and leaders of the French Communist League and members of the IS during the thirties. Frank was also a secretary to Trotsky in France, 1932-33. Naville dropped out during World War II to join a series of centrist groups.

28. The theory of “social fascism,” a brainchild of Stalin, held that Social Democracy and fascism were not opposites but twins. Since the Social Democrats were only a variety of fascist, and since just about everyone but the Stalinists was some kind of fascist, then it was impermissible for the Stalinists to engage in united fronts with any other tendency against the real fascists. No theory was or could have been more helpful to Hitler in the years leading up to his winning power in Germany. The Comintern adopted the theory in 1928, finally dropped it in 1934, and was soon wooing not only the Social Democrats but also capitalist politicians like Roosevelt.

29. **Emelyan Yaroslavsky** (1878-1943) was a top Stalinist specialist in the campaign against Trotskyism and was part of the team that brought charges against him and demanded his expulsion from the party in 1927. **Matvey Shkiryatov** (1883-1954) was a member of the Central
Control Commission of the CPSU from 1922 and a member of the Central Committee from 1939.

30. **Ivan Smirnov** (1881-1936) was expelled from the CP in 1927 as a Left Oppositionist, but capitulated in 1929 and was reinstated in the party. He was rearrested in 1933 and executed after the first Moscow trial. **Leon Sedov** (1906-1938) was Trotsky’s elder son, who joined the Left Opposition and accompanied his parents in their last exile. He was Trotsky’s closest collaborator, coeditor of the *Biulleten Oppozitsii*, and a member of the IS until his death at the hands of the GPU. Trotsky’s obituary for him is in *Writings* 37-38. **Georgi Gaven** was a Latvian Oppositionist until 1926. He was implicated in the indictment of Zinoviev and Kamenev in 1936, but was neither tried nor cleared, and his name disappeared from subsequent proceedings.

31. **Karl Radek** (1885-1939) was expelled in 1927 from the Russian CP for membership in the Left Opposition. He capitulated and was reinstated, but was a defendant and victim of the second Moscow trial (1937).

32. “Zinoviev and Kamenev.” *Portraits, Political and Personal* (Pathfinder Press, 1977). The translation from the Russian, by John G. Wright, was first published in *Fourth International*, August 1941. It was revised for *Portraits* by George Saunders, who also translated from the Russian the last six paragraphs, which were missing from the 1941 version.

33. Lenin’s *testament*, written in December 1922 and January 1923, gave his final evaluation of the other Soviet leaders. Since it called for the removal of Stalin from his post of general secretary, it was suppressed in the Soviet Union until after Stalin’s death. It is included now in volume 36 of Lenin’s *Collected Works*. Zinoviev and Kamenev opposed the October 1917 insurrection and published a statement to that effect in an anti-Bolshevik paper. Lenin condemned the two as strikebreakers and demanded their expulsion from the Bolshevik Party. This proposal was dropped after the insurrection, when they returned to the Bolshevik leadership.

34. **Thermidor** 1794 was the month in the new French calendar when the revolutionary Jacobins were overthrown by a reactionary wing of the revolution that did not go so far, however, as to restore the feudal regime. Trotsky used the term as a historical analogy to designate the seizure of power by the conservative Stalinist bureaucracy within the framework of nationalized property relations (see “The Workers’ State, Thermidor and Bonapartism,” in *Writings* 34-35).

35. The **Right Opposition** group in the Soviet Union was headed by Bukharin, Rykov, and Tomsky. Its program was based upon concessions to the wealthy peasants at the expense of the industrial workers and poor peasants, and upon an extension of the New Economic Policy and the free market, in the hope of averting a famine. After resisting Stalin for about a year, the Right Opposition leaders capitulated to him in 1929.

36. **Georges Danton** (1759-1794), a leader of the French Jacobins’
right wing, was minister of justice from 1792. He and Maximilien Robespierre (1758-1794), who was the leader of the Jacobins and effective head of state from 1793, were overthrown by the counterrevolution and were guillotined.

37. Georgi Dimitrov (1882-1949), a Bulgarian Communist who had moved to Germany, attracted world attention in 1933 when the Nazis imprisoned and tried him and others on charges of having set the Reichstag on fire. He defended himself courageously at the trial and was acquitted. He was executive secretary of the Comintern, 1934-43, and premier of Bulgaria, 1946-49. Ernst Torgler (1893-1963), Dimitrov's codefendant and the leader of the CP delegation in the German Reichstag, was also acquitted.

38. Biulleten Oppozitsii (Bulletin of the Opposition) was a Russian-language publication edited by Trotsky, which printed the most important public documents of the Opposition and practically all of Trotsky's important pamphlets and articles during his last exile. It was first published in Paris, 1929-31, and then was shifted to Berlin, where the Nazis banned it when they came to power in 1933. Thereafter it was published in Paris until 1934, Zurich until 1935, Paris until 1939, and New York until 1941, when it ceased publication. A complete set in four volumes, with all of Trotsky's articles identified (including those that were unsigned or signed with pen names) has been published by Monad Press (New York, 1973).

39. Narodnaya Volya (People's Will) was one of the groups into which the chief Narodnik (populist) organization split in 1879. The populists were the major tendency of the Russian revolutionary movement in the nineteenth century. Their broad peasant following was largely taken over by the Social Revolutionaries (SRs) at the turn of the century. The SRs supported the Provisional Government in 1917 and opposed the Soviet seizure of power. A left wing of the SRs participated in the new Soviet government until 1918.

40. Old Bolsheviks were those who joined the party prior to 1917, that is, members of the party's "Old Guard."

41. Andrei Vyshinsky (1883-1954) was a Menshevik from 1903 until 1920, when he joined the Bolsheviks. He received international notoriety as the prosecuting attorney in the Moscow trials and then was foreign minister, 1949-53.

42. Henry Yagoda (1891-1938) was the head of the Soviet secret police. In 1938 Yagoda, who had supervised the organization of the 1936 Moscow trial, was himself made a defendant and shot.

43. "Why They Confessed Crimes They Had Not Committed." Les Crimes de Staline. Translated from the French for the first edition of Writings 37-38 by A.L. Preston. Another version of this article was sent by telegram to Roy Howard of the New York World-Telegram on January 29, 1937, and was published in part on February 1 in the Scripps-Howard paper San Francisco News.
44. Sergei Mrachkovsky (1883-1936) was a famous civil war commander who organized the insurrection in the Urals in 1917. Expelled from the party as an Oppositionist, he capitulated in 1929 but was exiled in 1933 and sentenced to death in the first Moscow trial.

45. The Mensheviks held that the Russian workers must unite with the liberal bourgeoisie to overthrow czarism. They began as a faction of the Russian Social Democratic Labor Party in 1903 and later became an independent party, which participated in the Provisional Government in 1917 and opposed the Soviet insurrection. They were outlawed during the civil war for giving aid to the counterrevolution. Nikolai Sukhanov (1882-1937?), a Menshevik, was a well-known writer whose book about the October Revolution is in English under the title The Russian Revolution 1917. A defendant in the 1931 Menshevik trial, he disappeared in prison after complaining that he had been doublecrossed by the Stalinists, who had promised him early release in return for his confession at the trial. Vladimir Groman (1874-?), a Menshevik, was in charge of Petrograd’s food supply from the beginning of the February 1917 revolution. By the time he became a defendant in the 1931 Menshevik trial, accused of sabotaging the economy, he was a member of the presidium of the State Planning Commission (Gosplan). He cooperated with the prosecution but disappeared after the trial.

46. Bonapartism was a central concept in Trotsky’s writings during the 1930s. He used the term to describe a dictatorship, or a regime with certain features of a dictatorship, during periods when class rule is not secure. It is based on the military, police, and state bureaucracy, rather than on parliamentary parties or a mass movement. Trotsky saw two types—bourgeois and Soviet. His most extensive writings on bourgeois Bonapartism are in The Struggle Against Fascism in Germany (Pathfinder Press, 1970). His views on Soviet Bonapartism reached their final form in his essay “The Workers’ State, Thermidor and Bonapartism,” reprinted in Writings 34-35.

47. Alexander Troyanovsky (1882-1955), Ivan Maisky (1884-1975), Lev Khinchuk (1868-?), and Jacob Surits (1881-1952) were all Mensheviks who joined the Bolshevik Party after the civil war and occupied prominent posts. Troyanovsky, who had denounced the Bolsheviks as German agents in 1918, became Soviet ambassador to the U.S., 1934-39. Maisky, who had been a minister in the Siberian White government of Kolchak, became ambassador to Britain in the late twenties. Khinchuk was ambassador first to England and then to Germany. Surits was ambassador first to Germany and then to France, and was one of the few diplomats to survive the purges. Mikhail Koltsov (1898-1942) was a well-known writer on literary topics who was arrested after his return from Spain in 1938. David Zaslavsky (1880-1965) was a journalist on the Central Committee of the Bund, who came out against the Bolsheviks during the October Revolution.

48. Mikhail Glazman (d. 1924) and Georgi Butov (d. 1928) were two of Trotsky’s secretaries during the civil war. N. Sermuks and I.
Poznansky were arrested and deported when they followed Trotsky into exile, and later disappeared. Trotsky's obituary essay on Glazman is in *Portraits, Political and Personal*.

49. Anton Ciliga (1896- ) was a leader of the Yugoslav CP imprisoned by Stalin, who was allowed to leave the USSR in 1935. He revealed much about conditions in Soviet prisons before breaking with Marxism.

50. Walter Duranty (1884-1957) was a *New York Times* correspondent in Moscow for many years. He supported the Stalinists against the Opposition and was a defender of the Moscow trials.

51. R. Rosenmark was a lawyer used by the Stalinists as an apologist for the Moscow trials. He operated through the League for the Rights of Man, a French civil liberties organization.


53. Kote Tsintsadze (1887-1930), an Old Bolshevik, was a leader of the Georgian CP and a Left Oppositionist from 1923 on. He was expelled from the CP in 1927, exiled in 1928, and died in 1930. Trotsky's obituary article on him appears in *Portraits, Political and Personal*.


55. Matvey Skobelev (1885- ?) became a Menshevik and was minister of labor in the Provisional Government, the government established after the February 1917 revolution that overthrew czarism. On his way back to Russia from the U.S. after the February revolution, Trotsky was removed from his ship and incarcerated in a Canadian concentration camp by British authorities, on the basis that he was dangerous to the current Russian government and to the Allies in general. He remained there a month, until the Provisional Government, at Lenin's insistence, forced his release.

56. Yakov Sverdlov (1885-1919) was president of the Executive Committee of the Soviets, secretary of the Bolshevik Central Committee, and president of the Russian Soviet Republic. Trotsky's tribute to Sverdlov is in *Portraits, Political and Personal*. Grigory Sokolnikov (1888-1939) was a prominent agitator in 1917. He held many important posts in the Soviet government. He was sentenced to ten years in prison at the second Moscow trial.

57. Trotsky wrote about this falsification of party history in "A Venerable Smerdyakov," in *Writings* 35-36.

58. Leonid Serebriakov (1890-1937) held important posts in industry in the twenties. Briefly a member of the Left Opposition, he was expelled (1927), recanted (1929), was readmitted (1930), but was a defendant in the second Moscow trial and was shot.

59. Alexei Rykov (1881-1938), president of the Council of People's
Commissars, 1924-30, and Nikolai Bukharin (1888-1938), president of the Comintern, 1926-29, and editor of Pravda, 1918-29, were the main leaders of the Right Opposition. They were aligned with Stalin against the Left Opposition from 1923 to 1928, capitulated to Stalin in 1929, but became victims of the third Moscow trial in 1938.

60. Felix Dzerzhinsky (1877-1926) was a founder of the Social Democratic Party of Poland and Lithuania. He became the first Soviet commissar for internal affairs and first chairman of the Cheka (later called the GPU). Nikolai Krestinsky (1883-1938) was secretary of the Bolshevik Central Committee, 1919-21, and became ambassador to Germany in 1921. He was executed after the third Moscow trial.

61. Nadezhda Krupskaya (1869-1939) was an Old Bolshevik and Lenin's companion. She played a central role in the underground and the emigre organization of the Russian Social Democracy. She adhered to the United Opposition for a brief time in 1926.

62. Lenin's March 5, 1923, letter to Stalin, threatening to break off relations with him, is in Lenin's Fight Against Stalinism (Pathfinder Press, 1975).


64. Alexander Kerensky (1882-1970) was one of the leaders of a wing of the Russian Social Revolutionaries. He was minister of justice in the Provisional Government; later he became minister of war and the navy and premier as well as commander in chief. He fled Petrograd when the Bolsheviks took power.

65. Trotsky's analysis of the testimony of E.S. Goltsman (1882-1936) at the first Moscow trial is in "In Closed Court" (December 11, 1936), in Writings 35-36.

66. Amalgam was the term Trotsky frequently used to designate the Kremlin's practice of lumping together different or opposing political tendencies and accusing them of common crimes or sins.


68. Maxim Litvinov (1876-1951) was Soviet people's commissar of foreign affairs, 1930-39. Stalin used him to personify "collective security" when he sought alliances with democratic imperialists and shelved him during the period of the Stalin-Hitler pact and the cold war. Litvinov represented the Soviet Union in an attempt to establish a League of Nations tribunal on terrorism, which the Stalinists hoped to use to gain acceptance for their purges and show trials. Efforts to initiate the tribunal were begun after the assassination of Jean Louis Barthou (1862-1934), French minister of foreign affairs, and King Alexander of Yugoslavia (1888-1934) in France.
69. **Leonid Nikolaev** (1904-1934), accused of assassinating Sergei Kirov, was tried behind closed doors and shot in December 1934. A Latvian consul was alleged to have had a role in the assassination in return for "a letter for Trotsky."

70. **Konon B. Berman-Yurin** (1901-1936) and **Fritz David** (1897-1936) were accused of meeting Trotsky in Copenhagen in 1932 to get instructions from him for assassination plots. Berman-Yurin had been a Russian newspaper correspondent in Germany. David had been an editor of the German CP paper *Rote Fahne*. They were both sentenced to death in the first Moscow trial.

71. **Valentin Olberg** (1907-1936) joined the German Left Opposition in 1930 but was expelled as a suspected agent of the GPU. Trotsky’s 1930 correspondence with Olberg is in *Writings 30*. Olberg was sentenced to death in the first Moscow trial. **Mosse Lurie** was Alexander Emel, a scientist and a former member of the German CP who wrote anti-Trotskyist articles in the Comintern press in 1932. He and **Nathan Lurie**, a surgeon, were agents provocateurs in the first Moscow trial.

72. **Jakob Blumkin** (1899-1929) had been a Left Revolutionary terrorist who became a Communist and a GPU official. He was the first Russian supporter of the Left Opposition to visit Trotsky in exile in Turkey. Bringing back a message from Trotsky to the Opposition, he was betrayed to the GPU and shot in December 1929, the first Oppositionist to be directly executed by the Stalinists.

73. "In Mexico." *Fourth International*, June 1941, where it had the title "Pages from Trotsky’s Journal." Although dated January 9 it is certain that all of it but the first four paragraphs was written several weeks later.

74. **Diego Rivera** (1886-1957) was the noted Mexican painter whose murals were removed from Rockefeller Center in New York because of their Communist subject matter. A founder of the Mexican CP and a member of its Central Committee from 1922, he left the CP in 1927 over the expulsion of the Left Opposition. He was Trotsky’s host in Mexico when Trotsky first arrived there, but Trotsky was forced to break with him publicly in 1939 over the issues of dual unionism, the class nature of the Soviet state, and the Mexican presidential campaign of 1940, in which Rivera supported the candidacy of a right-wing general. The split is documented in *Writings 38-39*. **Frida Kahlo de Rivera** (1910-1954) was his wife and an artist in her own right. **Max Shachtman** (1903-1972) was a leader of the American CP and a founder of the American Trotskyist movement. In 1940 he split from the Socialist Workers Party because of differences over the defense of the Soviet Union. In 1958 he joined the Socialist Party. **George Novack** (1905- ), who became a Trotskyist in 1933, played a leading role in many important civil liberties and civil rights cases. He was secretary of the American Committee for the Defense of Leon Trotsky (ACDLT), formed in 1936, which was instrumental in bringing together the Dewey Commission of Inquiry into the Moscow Trials. The ACDLT was disbanded in March 1938 after the
Dewey Commission had completed its work and after the third Moscow trial.

75. **General Francisco Mujica** (1884-1954) was minister of communications and public works in Mexican President Cardenas's cabinet. He had helped secure Trotsky's admission to Mexico.

76. **General Lazaro Cardenas** (1895-1970) was president of Mexico, 1934-40. His administration was marked by plans for redistribution of the land, industrial and transportation development, renewal of struggle with the Roman Catholic church, and, in 1938, expropriations of foreign-owned oil properties. His was the only government in the world that would grant Trotsky asylum in the last years of his life. Trotsky made a pledge not to participate in Mexican politics, but he also made sure that his views on Mexican affairs found expression, by writing editorially or with pen names in the press of his Latin American cothinkers.

77. **Vicente Lombardo Toledano** (1893-1969), a Stalinist, was the head of the Mexican Confederation of Workers, the major trade union federation in Mexico. He was an active participant in the slander campaign carried out by the Mexican Stalinists against Trotsky, which was designed to prepare public opinion for his assassination.

78. The **Seventh Congress of the Comintern**, its last, was held in August 1935. It adopted the policy of the *People's Front* (or Popular Front), a coalition of the workers' parties (Communist and Socialist) with bourgeois parties on a program of liberal capitalism. In the 1920s the Comintern had condemned such coalitions as class collaboration, but it remained the policy of all Stalinist parties from 1935 until 1939, when the Stalin-Hitler pact was signed. It was revived under different names (antimonopoly coalition, etc.) after World War II. The *Communist Manifesto* was written by Marx and Engels in 1847.

79. According to a letter to Diego Rivera from two of Trotsky's secretaries, **Frank L. Kluckhohn** (1907-1970), correspondent for the *New York Times*, wrote articles emphasizing Trotsky's "revolutionary activity," which he maintained was causing great difficulties to the Mexican government. He continually sought to elicit statements from Trotsky on general political questions, despite Trotsky's refusal to speak about anything except the Moscow accusations.

80. In January 1937 Stalin announced a second show trial, this time with seventeen defendants headed by Radek and Pyatakov. Of those seventeen, all but four were found guilty and executed. **Yuri Pyatakov** (1890-1937) played a leading role in the October Revolution and civil war and held many key posts in the government. A Left Oppositionist, he capitulated shortly after he was expelled in 1927 and was given important posts in industry, but was convicted in the second Moscow trial and executed.

81. In his testimony at the trial, **Vladimir Romm** described himself as an *Izvestia* correspondent in Geneva (1930-34) and then in Washington.

82. The **League for the Rights of Man** was a French civil liberties organization that whitewashed the Moscow trials.
83. “Statements in Tampico.” By permission of the Harvard College Library. This article includes the item published under the same title in the first edition of *Writings 37-38*. That item, based on *New York Times* coverage on January 10, was incomplete. The missing parts were translated for this volume by Russell Block from the Mexican newspaper *El Universal*, January 10, 1937.

84. The *Red Book on the Moscow Trial* is a translation of the French title of Leon Sedov’s book, which first appeared in Russian in *Biulleten Oppozitsii*, no. 52-53, October 1936, where it had the title “The Moscow Trial Is a Trial of October.”

85. The book was published in November 1937 under the title *Les Crimes de Staline*, in a French translation by Victor Serge. Although it was never published in English as a separate work, its entire contents are translated in this volume, except for the chapter “In Closed Court,” which is in *Writings 35-36*, and Trotsky’s concluding speech to the Dewey Commission, which is in *The Case of Leon Trotsky*.

86. The first volume of Trotsky’s biography of Lenin, *The Young Lenin* (Doubleday, 1972), had been published in France in 1936. He never completed the remainder.

87. “A Telegram to New York.” From the personal archives of George Novack. A telegram to Norman Thomas, John Dewey, et al., for the American Committee for the Defense of Leon Trotsky. Norman Thomas (1884-1968) was the head of the Socialist Party and six times its candidate for president of the U.S. John Dewey (1859-1952) was the noted philosopher and educator who presided over the Commission of Inquiry.

88. “To the Representatives of the Mexican Press.” By permission of the Harvard College Library. The initial statement was translated from the French for this volume by Jeff White. The interview in the second part of the article was conducted by Barrera Fuentes for the Mexican paper *El Nacional*, January 12, 1937, and was translated for this volume from the Spanish by Russell Block.


90. “An Interview for Americans.” *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, January 17, 1937, where it had the title “Leon Trotsky Tells His Story.” The interviewer, whose questions Trotsky answered in writing, was Julius Klyman.

91. “Socialism in one country” was Stalin’s theory, introduced into the Communist movement in 1924, that a socialist society could be achieved inside the borders of a single country. Later, when it was incorporated into the program and tactics of the Comintern, it became the ideological cover for the abandonment of revolutionary internationalism
and was used to justify the conversion of Communist parties throughout the world into docile pawns of the Kremlin's foreign policy. A comprehensive critique by Trotsky is in his 1928 book *The Third International After Lenin* (Pathfinder Press, 1970).

92. **Edouard Herriot** (1872-1957) was the leader of the French Radical Party and was premier in 1932. Natalia Sedova's telegram to him requesting a visa for her son and Herriot's reply granting the visa are in *Service d'Information et de Presse* (a Fourth Internationalist information service), no. 17, February 22, 1937.

93. **Anna Louise Strong** (1885-1970) and **Louis Fischer** (1896-1970) were Moscow correspondents and apologists for Stalinism and the Moscow trials.

94. **Eugene V. Debs** (1855-1926) was a founder of the American Socialist Party and the most popular socialist leader in U.S. history. He was jailed under the Espionage Act during World War I for his antiwar speeches. He ran for president in 1920 from his cell in a federal prison, and was amnestied in 1921.

95. **Edouard Daladier** (1884-1970), a Radical, was French premier from 1933 until 1934, when he resigned after an attempted fascist coup d'état. Later he became premier again and signed the Munich Pact with Hitler in September 1938.

96. The **new Soviet constitution** was adopted in 1936, and was formally retained until 1977. Hailed as the most democratic constitution in the world, it provided the framework for the purges and show trials of the late 1930s.

97. "Letter to the Daily Herald." By permission of the Harvard College Library. The **Daily Herald** (London) was the paper of the British Labour Party.

98. "Interview with the Jewish Daily Forward." The first seven paragraphs of this article were translated from the Russian for this volume by Ron Allen, from a manuscript found in the archives of James P. Cannon. The remainder of the interview was translated from the Yiddish for this volume by Marc Bedner, from the *Jewish Daily Forward*, the New York Social Democratic daily, January 28, 1937.

99. **Menahem Beilis** (1874-1934) was a Ukrainian Jew who was charged with the ritual murder of a Christian boy in 1911. The czarist government staged the trial to stir up anti-Semitism and anti-Jewish pogroms. Following a number of protest demonstrations throughout the country, Beilis was acquitted. **Alfred Dreyfus** (1859-1935) was a Jewish officer in the French army convicted of treason for espionage during an anti-Semitic campaign in 1894. His conviction was overturned after a long campaign in his defense by Émile Zola and others.

100. **Victor Serge** (1890-1947) was an anarchist in his youth. After the Bolshevik revolution he moved to the Soviet Union and worked for the Comintern. Arrested as an Oppositionist and then freed in 1928, he was
rearrested in 1933. Thanks to a campaign by intellectuals in France, he was released and allowed to leave the USSR in 1936. He soon developed differences with the Trotskyist movement and left it.

101. Friedrich Adler (1879-1960) was secretary of the Austrian Social Democratic Party from 1911 to 1916, when he assassinated the Austrian prime minister and was thrown into prison. Freed by the 1918 revolution, he was a founder of the Two-and-a-Half International, which he led back into the Second International in 1923, becoming secretary of the amalgamated body. His pamphlet, *The Witchcraft Trial in Moscow*, was published by Pioneer Publishers, New York, 1937.

102. Franz Pfemfert (1879-1954) was editor of the German expressionist journal *Die Aktion*, 1911-32. His wife, Alexandra Ramm, translated Trotsky’s works into German.

103. Nikolai Yezhov (1894-1939?) became the head of the GPU in 1936 but disappeared after the third Moscow trial.

104. Yevgeny Preobrazhensky (1886-1937), an Old Bolshevik, was a veteran of the civil war and a leading Bolshevik economist. He was expelled from the CP in 1927, capitulated in 1929, was expelled again in 1931, and again was readmitted. He refused to confess during the purges and was shot without a trial.

105. Ivan Bakaev (1887-1936) and G.E. Yevdokimov (1884-1936), a former Central Committee secretary, were sent to prison in connection with the Kirov assassination, and then became defendants in the first Moscow trial and were executed. A. S. Kuklin was one of the defendants in the January 1935 trial about the Kirov assassination.

106. Trotsky’s 1926 correspondence with Bukharin is in *The Challenge of the Left Opposition* (1926-27).


James P. Cannon (1890-1974) was a founder of the American CP and of the Left Opposition after his expulsion from the CP in 1928. He remained a leader of the American and international Trotskyist movements until his death. He had moved from New York to California in 1936, after the American Trotskyists had decided to enter the Socialist Party in order to win over its leftward-moving members. Inside the SP the Trotskyists organized a left-wing group called the Appeal caucus or the Appeal Association (after their monthly bulletin, the *Socialist Appeal*). The national center of this group was in New York, and sometimes its leaders and Cannon disagreed on the group’s policies and tactics. The New York leaders, for example, disapproved of Cannon’s initiative in launching a West Coast SP newspaper, *Labor Action*. Cannon did not move back to New York until the middle of 1937, after the right-wing and centrist leaders of the SP began a drive to expel the Trotskyists.

108. Bernard Wolfe (1915- ), an American, spent eight months as a member of Trotsky’s secretarial staff in Mexico in 1937. He is the author of a novel based on Trotsky’s assassination (*The Great Prince Died*.
Notes for Pages 103-125

Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1959). Jan Frankel (1906- ) was a Czech Oppositionist from 1927, who became a member of Trotsky's secretariat and guard in 1929. He left Trotsky's household in 1933 to work in the IS in Paris. In 1934 the French police arrested him and deported him to Czechoslovakia. In 1935 he went to Norway as Trotsky's secretary, but a few months later the Norwegian police deported him, again to Czechoslovakia. In 1937 he rejoined Trotsky, this time in Mexico. He was the only witness besides Trotsky at the April 1937 Dewey Commission hearings on the Moscow trials. He moved to the U.S. in 1937 and broke with the Fourth International to join Shachtman's Workers Party in 1940.

109. Rose Karsner (1889-1968) was a founder of both the CP and the Left Opposition in the U.S. She was Cannon's close political collaborator and companion from 1924.


111. The New Economic Policy (NEP) was adopted as a temporary measure to replace the policy of Military Communism, which had prevailed during the civil war. The NEP allowed a limited growth of free trade inside the Soviet Union, and foreign concessions alongside the nationalized and state-controlled sections of the economy. It stimulated the growth of a class of wealthy peasants and of a commercial bourgeoisie (NEPmen) and produced a long series of political and economic concessions to private farming and trade.

112. Part of Trotsky's archives were stolen from the Paris office of the International Institute of Social History (Amsterdam) on November 7, 1936, a day after they were deposited there.

113. See “Scoundrels and Their Assistants” and “A Letter to Pravda” in Writings 30-31. Jozef Pilsudski (1867-1935), a Polish nationalist, organized his own army to fight against Russia during World War I and was a leader of counterrevolutionary interventionist forces during the Russian civil war. He moved his troops into Warsaw in May 1926 and became virtual dictator of Poland until his death.

114. “A New Moscow Amalgam.” The Truth (About the Moscow Trials), a tabloid paper issued by Pioneer Publishers in April 1937 (“The Meaning of the Moscow Trials”).

115. Nikolai Muralov (1877-1937), M.S. Boguslavsky (1886-1937), and Y.N. Drobnis (1890-1937) were all veterans of the insurrection and civil war and were all executed after the second Moscow trial.

116. Christian Rakovsky (1873-1941), an early leader of the Left Opposition, was deported to Siberia in 1928. He remained firm until 1934, and was the last of the Oppositionists to capitulate. In 1938 he was one of the major defendants in the third Moscow trial, where he was sentenced to twenty years.
117. "The New Trial." *El Proceso de Moscu.* Translated from the Spanish for this volume by Candida Barbarena. The first two paragraphs and the last three are from a version of this item that had been issued as a press release to the Mexican paper *El Nacional,* and are translated from the Spanish for this volume by Russell Block, by permission of the Harvard College Library.

118. "The Truth Behind the 'Voluntary Confessions.'" *El Proceso de Moscu.* Translated from the Spanish for this volume by Candida Barbarena. An excerpt was also published in the *New York Times,* January 24, 1937.

119. There is some question as to whether the Lenin quotation cited by Trotsky actually was aimed against Radek, or whether it was aimed against Ryazanov, who held the same position as Radek at the Seventh Party Congress in 1918. The following note about this quotation appears in the findings of the Dewey Commission, which investigated the charges against Trotsky in the Moscow trials, published in the book *Not Guilty* (Harper & Brothers, 1938, p. 199): "In checking this quotation we find that it appears as Trotsky gave it in Lenin's *Collected Works,* State Publishers, 1925 (volume 15, pp. 131-2). In the third Russian edition of Lenin's *Collected Works,* published in 1935 [and in subsequent editions], the name of Ryazanov has been substituted for that of Radek (volume 22, p. 331). The editors neither explain the change nor even state that in earlier editions Radek's name figured in place of Ryazanov's."


121. "Whose Conspiracy?" *Labor Action* (San Francisco), February 6, 1937. This was a dispatch to the *Manchester Guardian.* *Labor Action* was the West Coast paper of the Socialist Party left wing, 1936-37, edited by James P. Cannon.


124. "The Depositions and First Testimony of the Defendants." By permission of the Harvard College Library. Translated from the Spanish for this volume by David Keil. This statement was published in *El Universal,* January 25, 1937.

125. **A. A. Shestov** was a GPU agent in West Siberia who acted as an agent provocateur in the second Moscow trial, in which he was also a defendant. He was executed after the trial.

127. A fuller discussion of the Oppositionist “centers,” invented by the GPU for the purpose of the Moscow trials, is in Writings 37-38.

128. “During the Moscow Trial.” By permission of the Harvard College Library. Translated from the Russian for this volume by George Saunders. This was published in El Universal, January 26, 1937.

129. Kliment Voroshilov (1881-1969) was an early supporter of Stalin, a member of the Politburo from 1926, and commissar of defense, 1925-40.


131. N. A. Karev, a historian, was also implicated in the Zinoviev-Kamenev trial. Vitovt Putna (1887-1937), a Red Army Corps Commander, was implicated in both the Zinoviev-Kamenev and the Pyatakov-Radek trials, but was not himself brought to trial. He was among the Red officers charged with treason in June 1937 and shot. Fedotov, the head of the Pedagogical Institute, “confessed” to various charges during the first Moscow trial but was not brought to trial himself. Y. V. Sharov was a defendant in the January 1935 trial of Zinoviev and Kamenev, and was given a prison term. M. N. Riutin, a leading Soviet propagandist and a member of the Right Opposition, was arrested in 1932 and expelled from the party for circulating a platform criticizing Stalin and advocating democratic reforms. L. Shatskin was an ideologist implicated in a story about a nonexistent Right-Left bloc in 1930.

132. “The GPU at Work on the International Front.” By permission of the Harvard College Library. Translated from the Russian for this volume by Donald Kennedy. Part of this statement appeared in Avocat de Trotsky, by Gerard Rosenthal (Paris, Robert Laffont-Opera Mundi, 1975), a memoir by Trotsky’s French attorney. Dimitri Navashin was a Russian-born economist living in France, where he was an adviser to several large corporations and director of the Bank of Northern Europe.


135. The Stakhanovist movement was a special system of speedup in Soviet production named after a coal miner, Alexei Stakhanov (1906-1977), who reportedly exceeded his quota sixteen-fold by sheer effort. The system was introduced in the Soviet Union in 1935 and led to great wage disparities and widespread discontent among the masses. For his reward
Stakhanov was made a full member of the CP and a deputy to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR.


139. "A Fighter for Fundamental Justice." By permission of the Harvard College Library. Translated from the Spanish for this volume by Russell Block, from *El Universal,* January 28, 1937. A letter to Luis Cabrera, a Mexico City attorney, whose article "Bloody Carnival" was critical of the Moscow trials.

140. "The Arrest of Sergei Sedov." By permission of the Harvard College Library. Translated from the Russian for this volume by George Saunders. Part of this article appeared in the *New York Times,* January 28, 1937, as an Associated Press dispatch, under the title "Trotsky Scores Stalin." *Sergei Sedov* (1908-1937?), Trotsky's younger son, was the only one of his children who had no interest in politics. He remained in Russia when Trotsky was deported, as a lecturer in technical subjects until 1934. In 1935 he was arrested after refusing to sign a statement denouncing his father. Unofficial reports say that he was shot in 1937.

141. In another translation, the full text of Natalia Sedova's letter about her son Sergei appears in *Trotsky's Diary in Exile 1935* (Harvard University Press, 1958, with a new introduction by Jean van Heijenoort in the second edition, 1976), in the entry under the date June 1.

142. Trotsky's younger daughter, Nina, died of tuberculosis in 1928, at the age of twenty-six, after the imprisonment and deportation of her husband, Man Nevelson. His elder daughter, Zinaida, also tubercular, was allowed to leave Russia (but without her husband, Platon Volkov, and with only one of her two children), and was then prohibited from returning. She committed suicide in Berlin in 1933 at the age of thirty-two. Both of Trotsky's sons-in-law disappeared during the purges.


145. "Prosecutor Vyshinsky." *El Proceso de Moscu.* Translated from
the Spanish for this volume by Candida Barbarena.

146. "Will the Defendants Be Executed?" El Proceso de Moscu. Translated from the Spanish for this volume by Candida Barbarea.

147. "Pyatakov's Story Vague on Time and Place." The Truth (About the Moscow Trials), April 1937.


149. "The Organization of the Trial." By permission of the Harvard College Library. Part of this article was published in the New York Times, January 31, 1937. The statement, in the third paragraph, that "of the seventeen accused, thirteen are unknown to me even by name" contradicts Trotsky's earlier statements that he knew seven of the accused, and is probably a simple error.


151. "Anti-Semitic Devices." By permission of the Harvard College Library. Translated from the Russian for this volume by Donald Kennedy. Part of this article was printed in Trotsky and the Jews, by Joseph Nedava (Jewish Publications Society of America, Philadelphia, 1972).

152. "Speech for a Newsreel." By permission of the Harvard College Library.


155. Leon Blum (1872-1950) was the head of the French Socialist Party in the thirties and premier of the first People's Front government in 1936.

156. "Kaganovich Anticipates My End." El Proceso de Moscu. Translated from the Spanish for this volume by Candida Barbarea. Lazar Kaganovich (1893-1934) was a member of the Central Committee from 1924 and a member of the Politburo from 1930. In 1934 he became head of the CP's Control Commission, responsible for party purges. By the late thirties he also held powerful posts in heavy industry and transportation. He was removed from all his posts by Khrushchev in the 1950s.

157. "The 'People' Call for Punishment." El Proceso de Moscu. Trans-
lated from the Spanish for this volume by Candida Barbarena.

158. "Why Did the GPU Choose December and Norway?" *Biulleten Oppozitsii*, no. 54-55, March 1937. Translated from the Russian for the first edition of *Writings 37·38* by John Fairlie.

159. "The End?" *Biulleten Oppozitsii*, no. 54-55, March 1937. Translated from the Russian for the first edition of *Writings 37·38* by John Fairlie.

160. Hitler launched his "blood purge" on June 30, 1934, to wipe out potential oppositional elements in the Nazi Party and other bourgeois groups in Germany.

161. "For Justice in the Swiss Courts." *Trotz Alledium!* February 1937. Translated from the German for this volume by Russell Block. *Trotz Alledium!* (In Spite of Everything!) was the paper of the Marxist Action of Switzerland, the Swiss section of the Fourth Internationalist movement. This was a letter to Walter Nelz, a member of the group. Trotsky's lawsuit in the courts of Basle named as defendants Georgi Dimitrov, Humbert-Droz, and Bodenmann—all as authors of libelous articles against him in the press—and the editors of *Communist International*, journal of the Comintern executive committee; *Rundschau*, the German Stalinist paper; *Freiheit*, which replaced it in September 1936 and was published in Basle; and *Vorwaerts*, central paper of the Swiss CP. According to an undated issue of the International Secretariat's *Press Information Service* from the spring of 1937, the courts decided against the defendants, awarding damages of 10,000 Swiss francs to the plaintiff, Trotsky.

162. "Two Statements on Hearst." *News Bulletin*, American Committee for the Defense of Leon Trotsky, February 3 and 19, 1937. The American labor and liberal movements particularly disliked the reactionary Hearst press in the mid-thirties. In the excerpts from these two undated letters to New York, Trotsky sought to show respect for their feelings by explaining how the Hearst papers had got hold of his articles and press releases on the trial.

163. "Against Pessimism." *The Prophet Outcast*, by Isaac Deutscher (Vintage, 1965). A letter to Angelica Balabanoff (1878-1965), who had been a delegate to the Zimmerwald and Kienthal conferences preceding the formation of the Comintern, and then a secretary of the Comintern. She left the CP in the twenties and was living as an exile in the United States at the time Trotsky wrote this letter.

164. "An Incomprehensible Polemical Sally by Mr. Troyanovsky." By permission of the Harvard College Library.

165. V. Volodarsky (1890-1918) was commissar for press, propaganda, and agitation. Moisei Uritsky (1873-1918) was one of the organizers of the October 1917 insurrection and then became head of the Cheka in
Petrograd. Both were assassinated by Social Revolutionaries.

166. "No Participation in Mexican Politics." *IV Internacional*, February 1937. Translated from the Spanish for this volume by Iain Fraser. *IV Internacional* was the newspaper of the Mexican section of the Fourth Internationalist movement.

167. "An Interview with Madama Titayna." *Quatrieme Internationale*, March-April 1937. Translated from the French for this volume by Russell Block. *Quatrieme Internationale* was the theoretical journal of the French section of the Fourth Internationalist movement.

168. Emil Ludwig (1881-1948) was a German journalist and a biographer of contemporary statesmen and historical figures.

169. The *Versailles system* was based on the Versailles treaty, which was imposed by the victors in World War I. It required heavy reparations payments by the defeated countries.

170. Winston Churchill (1874-1965), the British Tory leader, was chancellor of the exchequer in 1929. He later became prime minister (1940-45 and 1951-55).

171. In May 1935 Stalin signed a Soviet-French nonaggression pact with French Foreign Minister Laval.

172. Jules Romains (1885-1972) was a French novelist, poet, and dramatist, and a signer of a call for an inquiry into the Moscow trials. Andre Gide (1869-1951) was a French novelist, critic, and essayist who became a fellow-traveler of the Stalinists in the early thirties but broke with them at the end of 1936. His book *Retour de l'URSS* (Return from the USSR) was written after the Moscow trial and was critical of the Stalinist regime.


174. "A Telegram to Chicago." *Labor Action*, February 27, 1937, where it had the title "Trotsky Telegram Repeats Challenge." This was a telegram to a mass meeting to protest the Moscow trials, held in Chicago on February 14, 1937. The meeting adopted a resolution in support of the proposal for an international commission of inquiry into the trials.


176. Andre Malraux (1901-1976) had expressed sympathy for Trotsky in 1933-34 but became a collaborator of the Stalinists in the People's Front period and refused to speak up for Trotsky against the Moscow trial slanders. After World War II he became a Gaullist official. Henricus Sneevliet (1883-1942) was a founder of the Dutch and Indonesian CPs who left the CP in 1927. In 1933 his group allied itself with the Trotskyist movement. However, he broke with the movement in 1938 because of
differences over trade union policy and the Spanish Civil War. He was
arrested by the Nazis and shot during World War II. The British
Independent Labour Party (ILP) was organized in 1893, helped found
the Labour Party, left it in 1932, and was associated with the London
Bureau until 1939, when its leaders returned to the Labour Party. John
Paton (1886-1977) was ILP secretary, 1927-33, and a functionary of
the London Bureau. In 1975 the remnants of the ILP changed its name to
Independent Labour Publications, a publishing group inside the Labour
Party.

177. “For Depositions of the Facts.” From the archives of James P.
Cannon. By permission of the Library of Social History. Translated from
the French for this volume by Jeff White. A letter to Henri Molinier
(1898-1944), a founder of the French section. He was killed fighting for
the liberation of Paris from the Nazis.

178. Trotsky elaborates on this point in his article “A Revealing
Episode” (dated August 22, 1936), in Writings 35-36.

179. “Contact with the Molinierists.” From the archives of James P.
Cannon. By permission of the Library of Social History. Translated from
the French for this volume by Jeff White. The Molinierists were a group
that had been expelled from the French section for violating discipline in
1935. Attempts at reunification in 1936 had failed and relations between
the two groups were bitter in 1937. In this letter, which may have been
written to Pierre Naville, Trotsky was demanding that defense work
around the Moscow trials not be subordinated to narrow factional
considerations. According to Isaac Deutscher in The Prophet Outcast (pp.
364-66), Trotsky complained to Sedov about the sloppiness of the
depositions being collected in Europe and the slowness with which they
were being collected, even threatening to take responsibility for the
defense work out of Sedov’s hands and entrust it to Naville (letters of
February 1, 15, 24, March 5, and 16, 1937, the closed section of the
Harvard Archives).

180. Raymond Molinier (1904- ), Henri’s brother, was a founder of
the French section with whom Trotsky collaborated until 1935, when his
group was expelled for publishing its own newspaper, La Commune. The
Molinier group and the French section were finally reunited in 1943.
Jean Meichler (1896-1942), also a founder of the French section, was a
leader of the Molinier group. He was taken hostage and executed by the
Nazis.

181. “For Depositions from American Visitors.” From the archives of
James P. Cannon. By permission of the Library of Social History.
Translated from the French for this volume by Jeff White. A letter to
Harold R. Isaacs (1910- ), author of The Tragedy of the Chinese
Revolution (1938), to which Trotsky contributed a preface. Subsequent
ditions, which Isaacs revised after he rejected Marxism, omitted this
preface. Isaacs had visited Trotsky in Norway in 1935.

182. **A.J. Muste** (1885-1967), a pacifist and former minister, was head of the American Workers Party, which merged with the Communist League of America in 1934 to form the Workers Party of the United States, of which Muste was secretary. He visited Trotsky in Norway in 1936 and later that year resigned and returned to pacifism and the church. In the 1960s he played a leading role in building the movement against the Vietnam War. The two railroad workers from Minneapolis who visited Trotsky in 1936 were Peter G. Hedlund (1889- ) and his son George.

183. "Max Eastman as Interpreter." By permission of the Harvard College Library. **Max Eastman** (1883-1969) was an early sympathizer of the Left Opposition and a translator of several of Trotsky's books. His rejection of dialectical materialism in the 1920s was followed by his rejection of socialism in the 1930s. He became an anti-Communist and an editor of *Reader's Digest*.

184. "Two Announcements." By permission of the Harvard College Library. Translated from the French for this volume by Jeff White. The text, dictated in French, was sent to Max Shachtman in New York to be used in case of need.


186. "Statement on Senin and Well." By permission of the Harvard College Library. **Adolph Senin** and **Roman Well** (1901-1962) were pseudonyms of the Sobolevicius brothers, who were Stalinist agents in the German Trotskyist movement. They split the German section and led a small group into the CP in 1933. Under the name of Robert Soblen, Well committed suicide in 1962 when under prosecution as a Soviet espionage agent in the U.S.

187. **Jacob Frank**, also known as **Ya. Graef**, was briefly a member of a Left Opposition group in Austria, 1929-31, before rejoining the Stalinists.

188. **M. Mill** was a founder of the French section and a member of the International Secretariat of the International Left Opposition. He was removed from this post because of his personal intrigues and became a Stalinist agent in 1932.
189. “On the Subject of Jacques Sadoul.” From *Le Mouvement Communiste en France* (1919-1939), a collection of Trotsky’s writings on France edited by Pierre Broué (Minuit, 1967). Translated from the French for this volume by Art Young. A letter to Victor Serge. **Jacques Sadoul** (1881-1956), a captain in the French army, became a Communist in Moscow and attended the first congress of the Comintern. He became a member of the French CP and a journalist. His article in the February 2, 1937, issue of *L’Humanité*, the CP paper, claimed to sketch Victor Serge’s biography, especially emphasizing the sentence of hard labor he had received because of his links with the anarchists of the “Bonnot gang.” Trotsky wrote this letter at a time when his relations with Serge were quite strained because of their differences on several questions, above all the Spanish POUM.

190. In his “Letter to the American Workers,” Lenin wrote: “Captain Sadoul, a French army officer who, in words, sympathized with the Bolsheviks, but was in deeds a loyal and faithful servant of French imperialism . . . .” (*Collected Works*, vol. 28, p. 67).

191. **Jean Longuet** (1876-1938), Marx’s grandson, was the leader of the pacifist minority in the French SP in 1915. He remained in the SP after the majority affiliated to the Comintern.

192. **Marcel Cachin** (1869-1958), a right-wing Socialist and supporter of World War I, moved into the French CP with the SP majority in 1920 and became a leader of the CP in 1921. **Jacques Duclos** (1896-1975), a member of the CP from 1920, became a member of its Central Committee in 1926 and remained in its top leadership until his death. **Paul Vaillant-Couturier** (1892-1937) was a member of the SP until 1920, then of the CP, where he became a member of the Central Committee and an editor of *L’Humanité*. **Maurice Thorez** (1900-1964) sympathized briefly with the ideas of the Left Opposition in the mid-twenties, but went on to become secretary-general of the CP. After World War II he was a minister in the Gaullist government.

193. “Fenner Brockway, Pritt No. 2.” From the personal archives of George Novack. **Fenner Brockway** (1890- ), a leader of the British Independent Labour Party and an opponent of the Fourth International, was also secretary of the centrist London Bureau. Instead of supporting Trotsky’s proposal for an international commission of inquiry, Brockway had proposed an alternative that could prevent a commission from being established.

194. **Otto Bauer** (1882-1938) was the chief theoretician of Austro-Marxism and a leader of the Austrian Social Democracy.

195. The **Habsburgs** were the ruling family of Austria-Hungary from the thirteenth century until the revolution of 1918. **Woodrow Wilson** (1856-1924) was Democratic president of the U.S. from 1913 to 1921. The **Entente**, or alliance, between France, Russia, Britain, and Serbia went to war against Austria-Hungary and Germany in August 1914. The new
Soviet government withdrew from the Entente after the October Revolution.

196. "A Press Statement on Andre Malraux." From the personal archives of George Novack. This was written after Mexican reporters asked Trotsky about an interview in which Malraux had refused to answer questions about the Moscow trials.

197. The Chinese revolution of 1926-27 was crushed because the Chinese Communists, under orders from Moscow, had entered the bourgeois nationalist Kuomintang (People's Party), which was led by Chiang Kai-shek, and subordinated the revolution to the interests of their coalition with the Kuomintang. Malraux's two novels about China are The Conquerors (Harcourt, Brace, 1929) and Man's Fate (1934).


199. These passages completely refute the myth concocted by M.S. Venkataramani in his article "Leon Trotsky's Adventure in American Radical Politics, 1935-7," published in vol. IX (1964) part 1 of the International Review of Social History. According to Venkataramani, Trotsky sent the American Trotskyists into the SP "as a deliberate, cold-blooded maneuver to bring into existence an international commission for the investigation of Stalin's charges," and then ordered them to wreck and quit the SP. However, it is plain here that Trotsky is advising Cannon not to "adapt" (avoid a struggle with the SP right-wingers) merely because such a struggle might hamper or injure efforts to involve the SP in the campaign for a commission of inquiry. Cannon had shown Venkataramani all the relevant correspondence. (For George Novack's answer to Venkataramani's article, which the editors of International Review of Social History refused to publish, see "How Trotsky Defense Committee Was Organized," in World Outlook [the predecessor of International Press], October 15, 1965.)

200. "Dangerous Symptoms in New York." From the archives of James P. Cannon. By permission of the Library of Social History. This letter to George Novack reflected Trotsky's concern that the national Trotskyist center in New York and the Trotskyists in the ACDLT were too conciliatory to the Social Democrats and liberals with whom they were working in the campaign to launch a commission of inquiry.

201. The Nation was a liberal weekly strongly influenced by Stalinism in the mid-thirties.

202. "Deposition on the Theft of Archives." From the archives of James P. Cannon. By permission of the Library of Social History. This letter was published in French in Avocat de Trotsky.
203. **Gerard Rosenthal** (1903- ) was a leader of the French Trotskyists and Trotsky's French attorney. He left the Fourth International during World War II and joined the French SP in 1945.


205. **Andres Nin** (1892-1937) had been the leader of the Spanish Left Opposition until 1935, when it merged with a centrist organization to form the POUM. For a short time Nin was minister of justice in the Catalan government. He was arrested by the Stalinists and assassinated. **Francisco Largo Caballero** (1869-1946) was a leader of the left wing of the Spanish SP. He was premier from September 1936 until May 1937.

206. “Some Concrete Questions for Mr. Malraux.” From the personal archives of George Novack. After the United Press wired a shortened and distorted story based on Trotsky’s March 8 press statement, Malraux wrote a letter in answer, which was printed in the *New York Times*, March 13. This second article by Trotsky was issued in reply to points raised in Malraux’s statement.

207. **A.M. Gertik** was one of the defendants in the January 1935 Kirov trial and was given a prison sentence but was never called to testify in subsequent trials.

208. **Lev Sosnovsky** (1886-1937), an outstanding Soviet journalist, was, like Rakovsky, among the early supporters of the Left Opposition and one of the last to capitulate. He was killed without trial or confession.

209. “For the Immediate Creation of the Commission of Inquiry.” From the archives of James P. Cannon. By permission of the Library of Social History. A letter to **Suzanne La Follette** (1893- ), author and former editor of *The New Freeman*, who was a member of the American Committee for the Defense of Leon Trotsky and was to become secretary of the Dewey Commission.

210. The *New Republic* was a liberal weekly much influenced by Stalinism in the mid-thirties.

211. **Jean Calas** (1698-1762) was a French Calvinist convicted and executed for murdering his son to prevent him from becoming a Roman Catholic. Voltaire defended Calas as a victim of religious intolerance.


214. The study Trotsky is referring to, entitled “L’Organe de masse” (The Mass Paper), by Nicolle Braun (Erwin Wolf), is in The Crisis of the French Section (1935-36), Pathfinder Press, 1977. It dealt with the disputes that paralyzed the French section when its members, then in the Socialist Party, were confronted with expulsion by the Blum leadership.

215. “‘The First Two Moscow Trials.’” From the archives of James P. Cannon. By permission of the Library of Social History. A letter to Francis Heisler, a labor lawyer and a member of the SP in Chicago, whose book The First Two Moscow Trials—Why? had just been published by the national office of the SP, with an introduction by national secretary Roy E. Burt. In November 1936 the National Executive Committee of the SP endorsed the work of the ACDLT and set up a subcommittee to collaborate with it.


218. “A Mockery of Justice.” The Truth (About the Moscow Trials), April 1937, where it had the title “A ‘Purely Juridical’ Evaluation of the Moscow Trials.”

219. On February 9, 1937, 6,600 people gathered at the New York Hippodrome to protest the Moscow trial and to hear a speech by Trotsky, which was to be transmitted live from Mexico. Because of technical difficulties the speech could not be heard and had to be read from an advance copy of the text. The meeting passed a resolution endorsing the call for a commission of inquiry into the trials. Trotsky’s speech was published by Pioneer Publishers under the title “I Stake My Life!” (1937). It is in print today in Leon Trotsky Speaks (Pathfinder Press, 1972).


221. Nicolle (Braun) was Erwin Wolf. Walter Dauge (1907-1944) was a leader of the Belgian Trotskyist movement, 1936-39, and was elected to the International Executive Committee in 1938. He left the movement when World War II began and was executed by partisans as a Nazi collaborator.

222. The POUM (Workers Party of Marxist Unification) was founded in Spain in 1935, when the Spanish Left Opposition broke with Trotsky.
and merged with the centrist Workers and Peasants Bloc. Trotsky severed relations with it when it joined the Spanish People’s Front. The **London Bureau**, established in 1935, was a loose association of centrist parties not affiliated to either the Second or the Third International but opposed to the formation of a Fourth International. The POUM was one of its members. The **friends who pay court to the POUM leadership** were Sneevliet in Holland and Vereecken in Belgium.


224. **Herbert Solow** (1903-1964) was a radical American intellectual and labor journalist in the 1930s. He supported the CP until 1932, then became a sympathizer of the Trotskyists. He joined the Workers Party in 1934 and quit in 1935, but supported the Dewey Commission of Inquiry. He renounced Marxism at the beginning of World War II and later became an editor of *Fortune* magazine.

225. “Two Telegrams.” From the personal archives of George Novack. The first telegram, intended for the ACDLT in New York, acknowledged receipt of the happy news that a subcommission of inquiry was being chosen to go to Mexico and that it would be headed by John Dewey. The second, intended for Cannon, expressed concern about Cannon’s silence over Trotsky’s recent complaints about the defense work in New York.

226. “More Evidence Needed to Refute Pyatakov’s Lies.” From the archives of James P. Cannon. By permission of the Library of Social History. Translated from the French for this volume by Jeff White. A letter to Alfred and Marguerite Rosmer, friends of the Trutskys since World War I. **Alfred Rosmer** (1877-1964) was a leader of the Left Opposition until 1930, when he resigned because of political and organizational differences. He and Trotsky became personally reconciled in 1936.

227. **Henri De Kerillis** (1899-1958) was a right-winger and a leader of the French National Republicans. He was a founder of the journal *l’Époque*, which was concerned mainly with military matters, and was one of those who claimed that terrorists, anarchists, and Trotskyists were responsible for clashes between the workers and the fascists.

229. "On Defense of the USSR." From the archives of James P. Cannon. By permission of the Library of Social History. Translated from the French for this volume by Jeff White. A letter to Jean Rous (1908-), a leader of the French section and a member of the International Secretariat. In 1939 he led a minority of the French party into the PSOP (Workers and Peasants Socialist Party). He left the FI during World War II and joined the SP.

230. Yvan Craipeau (1912- ) was a leader of the French section who considered the Soviet bureaucracy an exploiting class rather than a parasitic caste, and urged the FI not to support the Soviet Union in case of war. Trotsky's major polemic against his thesis, "Once Again: The USSR and Its Defense," November 4, 1937, is in Writings 37-38. He left the FI in 1946.

231. J. Lasterade was secretary of a French sect called the Communist Union, whose members had split from the French section in 1933, and an editor of its journal L'Internationale, which polemicized against Trotsky's position on the nature of the Soviet state.

232. Raymond Leprince helped Trotsky get settled in France in 1933. He was not a member of the Trotskyist movement.

233. Shortly after the trial of the seventeen, Stalin announced plans for a third show trial, this time featuring Bukharin and Rykov and alleging a conspiracy between the Trotskyists and the Right Opposition. The trial was held in March 1938, and all twenty-one defendants were convicted. Blasco was Pietro Tresso (1893-1944), a founder of the New Italian Opposition in 1930 and later a leader of the French section and a member of the IS. He was murdered during World War II, probably by Stalinist partisans. Boris Souvarine (1893- ) was a founder of the French CP and one of the first serious biographers of Stalin. He was expelled from the French party as a Trotskyist in 1924. In the 1930s he turned against Bolshevism. Angelo Tasca (1892-1960) was a founder of the Italian CP, a leader of its right wing, and a supporter of the Right Opposition in the USSR. Lucien Laurat (1898-1974) was a founder of the Austrian CP and an economist in Moscow who later joined the French SP and wrote a pamphlet in 1933 on why the Soviet Union could not be considered a workers' state. Heinrich Brandler (1881-1967) was a founder of the German CP and its principal leader when it failed to take advantage of the revolutionary crisis of 1923. He was made a scapegoat by the Kremlin and removed from the party leadership in 1924. He aligned himself with Bukharin's Right Opposition in the USSR and was expelled in 1929. The Brandlerites maintained an independent organization until World War II. The SAP (Socialist Workers Party of Germany) was formed in 1931, after the Social Democrats expelled several left-wingers headed by Max Seydewitz. In 1932 its leadership was taken over by Jacob Walcher and others who had split from the Brandlerites. In emigration, after Hitler took power, the SAP briefly supported the call for a new International in 1933 and then moved rapidly to the right, eventually endorsing a People's Front for Germany. It was affiliated to the London Bureau.

235. **New Masses** was an American Stalinist literary journal, 1926-48.

236. “The Preliminary Inquiry at Coyoacan.” *Les Crimes de Staline.* Translated from the French for the first edition of *Writings 37-38* by A.L. Preston. Between April 10 and April 17, 1937, a subcommission of the Commission of Inquiry conducted thirteen sessions of preliminary hearings into the charges against Trotsky. (The transcript of these hearings, recorded by Albert Glotzer, is published as *The Case of Leon Trotsky*). Convinced that Trotsky had established a case warranting further investigation, the subcommission then returned to New York, where it continued to gather information and where it held further public hearings (in July) before reaching its historic verdict (not guilty).

237. **Leon Jouhaux** (1870-1954) was general secretary of the General Confederation of Labor (CGT), the chief union federation in France, 1909-40 and 1945-47. He was a supporter of both world wars and an opponent of the Russian revolution.

238. **Benjamin Stolberg** (1891-1951) was a labor journalist and author. **Otto Ruhle** (1874-1943) was a former Social Democratic member of the German Reichstag, a founder of the German CP, and a biographer of Karl Marx. **Carlo Tresca** (1878-1943) was a well-known Italian-American anarchist and editor of *Il Martello* (The Hammer). **Edward Alsworth Ross** (1866-1951) was a professor of sociology and an author of numerous sociological books.

239. **Nicola Sacco** (1891-1927) and **Bartolomeo Vanzetti** (1888-1927) were Italian immigrants and anarchists framed up on charges of murder and theft and executed despite international protests. **Tom Mooney** (1882-1942) was an American labor leader convicted in 1916 of throwing a bomb that killed nine persons. He was condemned to death but his sentence was commuted to life imprisonment. He was pardoned and released in 1939.

240. **Albert Goldman** (1897-1960) left the American CP to join the Trotskyists in 1933, left the Trotskyists to join the SP in 1934, and rejoined the Trotskyists when they entered the SP in 1936. He was Trotsky’s U.S. attorney and was elected to the SWP National Committee in 1938. He was chief defense counsel as well as a defendant in the 1941 Minneapolis trial, and left the SWP in 1946 to join the Shachtmanite Workers Party. He later supported the U.S. government in the Korean War.

241. **Carleton Beals** (1893- ) was an American journalist and publicist. Toward the end of the eleventh session, he asked Trotsky a provocative question which sought to prove that Trotsky had intervened in Mexican politics as early as 1919. When his line of questioning was rebuffed by the other commissioners, Beals resigned angrily, issuing a slanderous statement to the press.
242. Trotsky's closing speech is in *The Case of Leon Trotsky*.

243. "Next Steps for the Commission of Inquiry." From the archives of James P. Cannon. By permission of the Library of Social History. A letter to "Cannon, Shachtman, Morrow, et al." **Felix Morrow** (1906–) was a member of the staff of the ACDLT and later a member of the SWP National Committee. He was expelled in 1946 for violating discipline and became a supporter of the cold war.

244. "The Agrarian Question in Bolivia." From *Por los Estados Unidos Socialistas de America Latina*, a collection of Trotsky articles (Argentina, 1962), where it was reprinted from *La Reforma Agraria en Bolivia*, by Alfredo Sanjines G., former minister plenipotentiary from Bolivia to Mexico, who interviewed Trotsky while passing through Coyoacan. Translated from the Spanish for this volume by Catarino Garza.

245. "Answers to the Jewish Daily Forward." By permission of the Harvard College Library. The Forward correspondent's name was Wolos.

246. **Birobidzhan** was a section of the Russian Republic on the border with China, set aside by the Soviet government in 1928 for colonization by Jews. It was made an autonomous region in 1934 and was dissolved in 1938-39 by Stalin, who claimed it had become a haven for opposition elements.

247. "The Trial of the Danzig Trotskyists." *Socialist Appeal*, August 28, 1937. **Socialist Appeal** was an internal monthly magazine of the American SP left wing, supported by the Trotskyists after their entry into the SP in 1936. It became the official newspaper of the SWP after the party's founding in January 1938.

248. **Franz Jakubowski** (1912–), born in Poland, became a Marxist in 1930 and a Trotskyist in 1933. He quit his law studies in 1934 to move to the free city of Danzig, which was governed by Nazi sympathizers. He became the head of a group, the New Spartacus League, also called the Internationalist Communists of Germany (Danzig group), and published a journal calling for the construction of the Fourth International. The Nazi police arrested about sixty members of the group, trying several of them on charges of having trampled underfoot everything German and having glorified the USSR. He was sentenced to three years in prison. His 1935 doctoral dissertation was published in France in 1976 as *Les Superstructures Ideologiques dans la Conception Materialiste de l'Histoire* (Etudes et Documentation Internationales)

249. **Pyotr Wrangel** (1878-1928) was a general in the czarist army who became commander in chief of the counterrevolutionary forces during the civil war. He fled the country after his defeat by the Red Army.

250. "Two Manifestations of the Same Tendency." *The GPU in the*
Trotskyist Movement. This is an excerpt from a letter to the International Secretariat.

251. In March 1937 the Belgian fascist leader Leon Degrelle succeeded in forcing the holding of a by-election in which he ran for a parliamentary seat in Brussels. Premier Paul van Zeeland of the Catholic Party chose to run against him. The Belgian Labor Party and the CP decided not to run candidates of their own in order to help van Zeeland defeat the fascist show of strength. The attitude of the Trotskyist leadership was divided: the Dauge-Lesoil majority was opposed to running their own candidate and called for a vote for van Zeeland; the minority, led by Vereecken, favored an independent candidacy. The IS and Trotsky were sharply critical of the majority position but they also dissociated themselves from Vereecken because of his uncritical, opportunist attitude to the POUM. At that time the Belgian section, at Vereecken's initiative, was refusing to publish the IS's resolutions on the Spanish question. The Paris Lutte ouvriere was the French section's paper; the Belgian section's paper was also called Lutte ouvriere.

252. “Mr. Beals as a Witness.” From the personal archives of George Novack.

253. Mikhail Borodin (1884-1951) worked in the Commissariat of Foreign Affairs and in 1919 was Comintern emissary to the U.S., Mexico, and then Spain. He held a number of Comintern posts before being sent as Soviet representative to China in 1923, where he played a key role in the alliance between the Chinese CP and the Kuomintang. He was arrested in 1949 and died in a concentration camp.

254. “To the Third Congress of the French JSR.” Challenge of Youth, October 1937. Challenge of Youth was the paper of the Young People's Socialist League, retained when a majority of the organization broke with the Social Democracy and adhered to the Fourth International in the summer of 1937. Challenge continued to be published as a Fourth Internationalist paper until the spring of 1940, when a majority of the YPSL split away under the leadership of Max Shachtman and James Burnham. The JSR was the Revolutionary Socialist Youth, the youth group associated with the French Trotskyist party.

255. Marceau Pivert (1895-1958) was a leader of a leftist group in the French SP and served as an aide of Leon Blum when Blum became People's Front premier in 1936. After his group was ordered dissolved in 1937, he left the SP and founded the PSOP (Workers and Peasants Socialist Party) in 1938. After World War II he returned to the SP. Jean Zyromsky (1890-1975) was the leader of a centrist group in the French SP. He advocated “organic unity” with the CP in the middle thirties, and joined the CP after World War II.

256. Romain Rolland (1866-1944), a novelist and dramatist, was a leading spirit of the “left” after his pacifist denunciation of World War I.
In his later years he lent his name to Stalinist literary congresses and manifestos.

257. The Trotskyists were expelled from the French Young Socialists and Socialist Party in the summer and autumn of 1935. The Stalinists demanded that the Trotskyists be outlawed by the People’s Front government and expelled from the unions as “agents of fascism.”

258. “Answers to the Associated Press.” By permission of the Harvard College Library. An AP story about the interview appeared in the New York Times, May 24, 1937. Trotsky released the full text on June 1, after seeing the AP story. The Fourth International was not actually founded until 1938; the reference in the first question is to an international conference for the Fourth International held in July 1936.

259. “A ‘Critical’ Adaptation to Centrism.” From the archives of James P. Cannon. By permission of the Library of Social History. The American SP had a national convention in Chicago in March 1937. The right wing did not have enough support to carry out its plans to expel the Trotskyists, but the convention voted in favor of Norman Thomas’s motion to ban internal papers or journals. This ban was aimed primarily at the left wing’s monthly magazine, the Socialist Appeal. The convention also decided to publish a joint internal discussion bulletin, a decision which the SP leadership ignored after the convention. By general agreement all of the factions, including the Appeal Association, were formally dissolved after the convention, but in fact they all continued to function informally. Lacking their magazine, the leaders of the Appeal group communicated with their supporters nationally through “personal” letters that were mimeographed and widely distributed. Trotsky’s letter, addressed to Cannon and Shachtman, was occasioned by such a letter, from “Max” to “Bill,” dated April 9, 1937, and by an article Shachtman wrote for the American Socialist Monthly, May 1937, presenting the Trotskyist leadership’s appraisal of the Chicago convention.

260. The SP’s Chicago convention adopted a resolution condemning People’s Frontism in general but refused to criticize the right-wing Socialist forces in Wisconsin who were participating in a local People’s Front that was named the Farmer-Labor Progressive Federation.

261. “Molinier’s Organization.” Bulletin Interieur, Parti Ouvrier Internationaliste, December 15, 1937. Translated from the French for this volume by Mary Gordon. A letter to an old member named Lagorce, in Marseilles. At this time there were two Trotskyist groups in France: the POI, which was the official section of the FI; and the PCI, a group led by Raymond Molinier that had split from the section in October 1936. For an explanation of the split, see The Crisis of the French Section (1935-36).

and provided by Jeanne Martin. By permission of Tamara Deutscher. A letter to Henri Molinier.

263. La Commune was the paper of the Molinier group, started in December 1935.

264. “A Militant, Revolutionary, and Critical Marxist Review Is Needed.” By permission of the Harvard College Library. Translated from the French for this volume by Mary Gordon. This article was written for the leadership of the American Trotskyists, to explain the results of talks Trotsky had had with nonparty people like Solow in Coyoacan.

265. “Stalin on His Own Frame-Ups.” Socialist Appeal, October 30 and November 6, 1937.

266. Silov and Rabinovich were Oppositionists executed allegedly for “sabotage of railway transport.”

267. Alexander Beloborodov (1891-1938), a leader of the army and a member of the party’s Central Committee, perished after the third Moscow trial. Boris Eltsin (1875-?), a founder of the Bolshevik Party and former head of the Ekaterinberg Soviet, probably died in deportation. P.K. (Budu) Mdivani (1877-1937), former head of the government of Soviet Georgia and former Left Oppositionist, was sentenced to death by the Georgian Supreme Court in July 1937 and shot. M. Okudzhava, an Oppositionist who had been exiled in 1928, perished with him. Ian Gamarnik (1894-1937) committed suicide at the prospect of arrest. Mikhail Tukhachevsky (1893-1937), a marshal of the USSR, and Iona E. Yakir (1896-1937), a full member of the Central Committee, were charged with treason and executed in 1937.

268. Rudolf Hess (1894- ) was head of the political section of the Nazi party from 1932 and a member of Hitler’s cabinet council from 1934. In 1941 he flew to Scotland, where he was held as a prisoner of war; in 1946 he was sentenced to life imprisonment by the Nuremberg war crimes tribunal. Walter Citrine (1887- ) was general secretary of the British Trades Union Congress, 1926-46. For his services to British capitalism he was knighted in 1935, and was made a baronet in 1946. Stanley Baldwin (1867-1947) was Conservative prime minister of Britain in the twenties and 1935-37. Sir Samuel Hoare (1880-1959), a Conservative, held several cabinet posts and in 1936-37 was first lord of the British admiralty and secretary of state for home affairs.

269. G.K. Ordzhonikidze (1886-1937), an organizer of the five year plans, was commissar for heavy industries.

270. Yakov Lifshits (1896-1937), a former Oppositionist, was assistant people’s commissar of communications.

271. Vyacheslav Molotov (1890- ), an early supporter of Stalin and a member of the Central Committee from 1920, was president of the Council of People’s Commissars, 1930-41, and minister of foreign affairs after Litvinov, 1939-49. He was eliminated from the leadership by Khrushchev in 1957.
272. "The Beginning of the End." Socialist Appeal, October 16, 1937. Trotsky wrote this on June 12, 1937, but later he or an editor added things that happened later.

273. Juan Negrin Lopez (1889-1956) was the final premier of the Spanish Republic, resigning in exile in France after the Civil War.

274. Vladimir Antonov-Ovseenko (1884-1938) was Russian consul-general in Barcelona during the Spanish Civil War. He was made a scapegoat for the defeat of Stalinist policy in Spain and disappeared. He had been a member of the Left Opposition but had recanted by 1927.

275. Anton Grylewicz (1885-1971) was a leading Oppositionist in Germany, listed as the "official editor" of the Biulleten Oppozitsii when it was published in Berlin, 1931-33.


277. James T. Farrell (1904- ), the author of Studs Lonigan and other novels, was a sympathizer of the Trotskyists from the mid-thirties to the mid-forties.

278. "The Situation in the SP and Our Next Tasks." From the archives of James P. Cannon. By permission of the Library of Social History. A letter to Burnham, Cannon, Glotzer, Weber. James Burnham (1905- ) was a professor of philosophy and a leader of the Trotskyist faction in the SP and later of the SWP. He renounced defense of the Soviet Union in 1939 and split from the SWP in 1940. He later moved to the far right, becoming an editor of National Review. Jack Weber (1896- ) became a member of the National Committee of the Workers Party in 1934. He left the SWP in 1944.

279. Joseph Carter (1910- ), a founding member of the American Trotskyists, was acting national secretary in the New York national center in 1937. He split from the SWP with Burnham and Shachtman in 1940.

280. Frank Trager (1905- ) and Gus Tyler (1911- ) were members of the SP National Executive Committee. Trager was the SP's national labor secretary, 1936-37, and later became an Asian scholar. Tyler was editor of the SP weekly, Socialist Call. Tyler was also the leader of the centrist forces in the SP. He withdrew from the SP shortly after helping to expel the Trotskyists, ultimately becoming assistant president to David Dubinsky of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union.

281. Jack Altman was a leader of the SP right wing and the head of the SP's New York Local, which had called on the SP national leadership to withdraw from the work of the ACDLT on the eve of the Dewey Commission hearings in Mexico.
282. The Clarity caucus, led by Gus Tyler, had won a majority of the SP's National Executive Committee at the Chicago convention, where it pledged to resist expulsions. But under pressure from the right wing and Norman Thomas, it expelled the left wing in the summer of 1937.

283. The National Committee refers to the leading committee of the SP left wing, soon to become the Socialist Workers Party. Trotsky's perspectives for the SP did not have unanimous support in the National Committee, despite Cannon's letter of June 9. Shachtman later told Venkataramani that the Trotsky proposal had "petrified" him at first. Burnham was also dubious or uncertain that the time had come to say goodbye to the SP. But the doubts were soon resolved and Trotsky proved to be right about the rank-and-file response once the leaders had made up their minds.

284. The Socialist Appeal, which had been an internal SP magazine before being banned, became the public paper of the Trotskyists with its August 14, 1937, issue. The founding convention of the Socialist Workers Party actually took place December 31, 1937-January 3, 1938, in Chicago.

285. The CIO (Congress of Industrial Organizations) was originally set up in 1935 as a committee within the conservative American Federation of Labor. The AFL leaders refused to respond to the demand for powerful new organizations to represent radicalizing workers on an industry-wide basis, and expelled the CIO unions in 1938, forcing them to establish their own national organization. The AFL and the CIO merged in 1955.


287. Lev Mekhlis (1889-1953) was a member of the editorial board of Pravda from 1930 on. In 1937 he became the head of the political administration of the Red Army.

288. Pavel Postyshev (1888-1940) was an Old Bolshevik who became a member of the Politburo in 1926 and the secretary of the CP in the Ukraine. He was arrested in 1938 and later executed. Nikolai Skrypnik (1872-1933) was at various times Ukrainian commissar for internal affairs and for education, and was a member of the Ukrainian Central Committee. An article on his suicide appears in Writings 32-33.

289. Alexander Chervyakov (1892-1937), chairman of the Belorussian Supreme Soviet, committed suicide at the beginning of the destruction of the Belorussian party in 1937. He was posthumously accused of "national fascism."

290. Mikhail Kalinin (1875-1946), an Old Bolshevik, became a member of the Bolshevik Central Committee and president of the Soviet Central Executive Committee in 1919.

291. Mikhail Frunze (1885-1925) held several important military posts during the civil war and in 1925 replaced Trotsky as chairman of the
Military Revolutionary Council of the Republic.

292. Alexander Yegorov (1885-193?) was a Russian civil war veteran and became the head of the general staff in 1935. He disappeared after Tukhachevsky's execution.

293. Boris Shaposhnikov (1882-1945) was one of the few leading army commanders to escape execution or imprisonment during the purges. At various times during the thirties he was chief of the general staff and deputy people's commissar for defense.

294. During the Russian civil war, the town of Tsaritsyn, which had a strong tradition of partisan guerrilla warfare, was the headquarters of the Russian Tenth Army, under Voroshilov. Under Stalin's influence, it became the seat of the "military opposition," which opposed the use of military specialists from the old czarist army and resented the centralization of the Red Army under a unified command. The CP's Eighth Congress in March 1919 rebuffed the Tsaritsyn group and reaffirmed the military policy that Trotsky, as head of the Red Army, had been implementing. In 1919, when the group began disobeying direct orders and endangering the course of the civil war, Lenin and Trotsky finally had Voroshilov transferred to the Ukraine.

295. Trotsky's writings on this subject are in Military Writings (Pathfinder Press, 1971).

296. I.P. Uborevich (1896-1937) and A.I. Kork (1887-1937), who both commanded armies with distinction in the civil war, and Robert Eideman (1895-1937), all generals in the Red Army, were executed for alleged participation in the Tukhachevsky affair.

297. Semyon Budenny (1883-1973), a hero of the civil war, was one of the few leading army commanders to escape execution or imprisonment in the purges.

298. Vladimir Potemkin (1878-1946) held important diplomatic posts for two decades. He was at various times ambassador to Greece, Italy, and France, and after being first deputy minister of foreign affairs he became commissar of public education.

299. "Telegram to the CEC of the USSR." By permission of the Harvard College Library. Translated from the French for this volume by Mary Gordon. The CEC was the Central Executive Committee of the Soviets, the supreme governmental body in the Soviet Union.


302. Joseph Paul-Boncour (1873-1972) was a right-wing Socialist
until 1931. He was French premier, 1932-33, and minister of foreign affairs in Blum’s second government.

303. “The Questions of Wendelin Thomas.” Socialist Appeal, August 21, 1937. Wendelin Thomas (1884- ) was a former Communist deputy to the German Reichstag (1920-24) and a member of the International Commission investigating the Moscow trials. Trotsky’s letter was in reply to Thomas’s argument that there was a basic identity between Bolshevism and Stalinism, as shown by Lenin’s attitude toward opponents like the Mensheviks, the Kronstadt insurgents, and the independent Makhno bands in the Ukraine during the civil war.

304. The Kronstadt naval base was the site of an uprising of sailors against the Bolshevik regime in 1921. The rebels demanded soviets without Communists and opposed many of the stern measures the Bolsheviks had taken during the civil war to safeguard the revolution. The uprising, suppressed by the Bolsheviks, led to the concessions of the New Economic Policy. Two articles on Kronstadt appear in Writings 37-38.

305. Nestor Makhno (1884-1934) was the leader of small partisan bands of peasants who fought against Ukrainian reactionaries and German occupation forces during the Russian civil war. He refused to integrate his forces into the Red Army and ultimately came into conflict with it. His forces were finally dispersed by the Soviet government in 1921.

306. Anton Denikin (1872-1947) was one of the leaders of the counter-revolution in southern Russia during the civil war.

307. “Answers to the Committee on Cultural Relations with Latin America.” By permission of the Harvard College Library. The Committee on Cultural Relations with Latin America was headed by Professor Hubert Herring, the author of A History of Latin America. Trotsky spoke in English, and the interview was taken down in shorthand by one of his secretaries, who later made an uncorrected transcript that was presented to the group. A few corrections of obvious errors have been made in the text for this volume. Another interview with Herring’s committee, entitled “On the Eve of World War II” (July 23, 1939), is in Writings 39-40.

308. Alexandra Kollontai (1872-1952), the first woman ambassador in the world, was ambassador to Mexico and Sweden. An early member of the Workers Opposition, she separated from all opposition movements before the decisive struggle against the Left Opposition and became part of the apparatus.

309. Earl Browder (1891-1973) became general secretary of the American CP by Stalin’s directive in 1930 and was similarly deposed in 1945 and expelled from the party in 1946. He was the party’s presidential candidate in 1936 and 1940.

310. Hohenzollern was the name of the family that ruled Germany and Prussia until 1918.
311. The French **Radicals**, or Radical Socialists, neither radical nor socialist, were the principal capitalist party of France between the two world wars, and were comparable to the Democratic Party in the U.S. Camille Chautemps (1885-1963), a Radical, was French premier, 1930 and 1933-34, but retired in disgrace because of his involvement in financial scandals. He was premier again in 1937-38.

312. **Wolf Weiss** was a young German writer living in Moscow whose imprisonment and escape are described in *Service d’Information et de Press*, no. 19/20, 1936. Comments on his book about the Moscow trials appear later in this volume. A. Tarov (1898-1942) was a worker of Armenian origin in the Caucasus who joined the Bolshevik Party in 1917 and took part in the civil war. In 1927 he was expelled as an Oppositionist and deported to Siberia. He escaped, first to Iran and then to Europe. During World War II he fought as part of an Armenian Communist resistance group and was executed by the Nazis.

313. **William H. Chamberlin** (1897- ) was correspondent for the *Christian Science Monitor* in Moscow, 1922-34, the Far East, 1935-39, and France, 1939. He wrote several books about the Soviet Union.

314. **John Reed** (1887-1920) was an American journalist and radical who supported the Russian revolution and wrote *Ten Days That Shook the World*.

315. **Colonel Casimir de la Rocque** (1886-1946) was the founder of the Croix de feu and the Volontaires nationaux, right-wing military formations, and in 1934-36 was the chief fascist candidate for dictator. He founded the fascist French Social Party in 1936, after the fascist paramilitary leagues were dissolved. Oswald Mosley (1896- ) was the founder and leader of the British Union of Fascists, known as the Blackshirts. He was interned during World War II and lived thereafter in France.

316. “Preface to the Spanish-Language Edition of *The Revolution Betrayed*.” By permission of the Harvard College Library. Translated from the Russian for this volume by George Saunders. Although the Spanish translation by Andres Nin was completed in 1937, *The Revolution Betrayed* was not published in Spain, probably because of the Civil War. Nin’s translation was published in Argentina in 1938.

317. The Soviet parliament is the Supreme Soviet of People’s Commissars. Trotsky compares it to the German Reichstag of Hitler’s regime in order to emphasize its subservience to a totalitarian leader.

318. “On the Threshold of a New World War.” Parts of this article were published in *Yale Review*, June 1938, under the title “If a New World War Comes,” and were reprinted in the first edition of *Writings 37-38*. Other parts were published under the title “Is Another World War at Hand?” in *Liberty*, September 13, 1937. The full text, presented here for the first time, is taken from the typescript of the article in the archives of James P. Cannon, where it was part of a collection Trotsky had made of his articles
on the coming war, which he tried, unsuccessfully, to get published in 1940 as a book to be entitled "War and Peace." By permission of the Library of Social History.

319. Robert Cecil (1864-1958) was a Tory member of Parliament and president of the League of Nations Union, 1923-45. He conducted a "peace ballot" in 1935 that polled Britons on the popularity of war and rearmament. He was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1937.

320. Hermann Goering (1893-1946) was the top Nazi in the German air force and held various important posts in Hitler's government.

321. John F. Fuller (1878-1966) is credited with recognizing the importance of mechanized warfare in World War I, and wrote several works on the future of warfare that influenced military strategists. Hans von Seeckt (1866-1936) was commander in chief of the German armed forces, 1918-26. Between 1932 and 1935 he was in China as a military adviser to Chiang Kai-shek.

322. In July 1937, the Japanese occupied Peking and Tientsin, later seizing Shanghai and Nanking as well. The Chinese struggle against the Japanese invaders would continue until 1945.

323. Anschluss (annexation by Germany) was not actually carried out until March 1938. Trotsky wrote about it as an accomplished fact because it appeared to be inevitable in mid-1937.

324. "About the Article on War." From the archives of James P. Cannon. By permission of the Library of Social History. A letter to Charles Walker, Trotsky's literary agent, with copies to Vanzler and Cannon. The U.S. left disliked Liberty magazine, a Bernarr McFadden publication, which was viewed much like the Hearst publications. Trotsky was sensitive to this as to the general dislike of Hearst, but he was willing to sell his articles to Liberty anyway, if his American cothinkers did not object. A few months later, when the Hearst press pirated his article about the Bukharin-Rykov trial, he wrote: "If I should have to post placards, warning the people of a cholera epidemic, I should equally utilize the walls of schools, churches, saloons, gambling houses, and even worse establishments" ("On Hearst," March 13, 1938, in Writings 37-38).

325. Joseph Vanzler (1902-1956) joined the American Trotskyist movement in 1933 and was elected to the National Committee of the SWP in 1939. Under the pen name John G. Wright, he was known as a translator of Trotsky's works and as the author of many articles on the Soviet Union and on theoretical questions. He remained on the SWP writing staff in New York until his death. Adelaide was Walker's wife and Mrs. George was her mother. The two women had met Trotsky during the Dewey Commission hearings.

326. "Wolf Weiss's Novel." By permission of the Harvard College Library. Translated from the Russian for this volume by Hilary Jaeger. The title of Weiss's novel was I Confess. Trotsky's comments were
intended to interest an American publisher in the novel, but it has never been published in English.


328. *Not Guilty*, the report of the Commission of Inquiry, was published in 1938. Plans to publish a third volume with the subcommission’s records and documents were never realized.


330. In August 1939, Stalin and Hitler would conclude a “nonaggression” pact and Stalinists all over the world would stop criticizing Hitler.

331. “Answers to the New York Herald-Tribune.” By permission of the Harvard College Library. The interviewer was Alvin M. Josephy, Jr., who accepted Trotsky’s condition that his answers were to be printed “in full and exactly as written” or not at all. The *Herald-Tribune* never printed the interview, but nearly a year later Josephy published a distorted and truncated version in *Ken* magazine, May 1938, omitting all the questions and answers dealing with Spain.

332. Buenaventura Durruti (1896-1936) was the leader of the left wing of the Spanish Anarchists and an organizer of the militias. He directed the defense of Madrid against the fascists and died in that battle.

333. Lavr G. Kornilov (1870-1918) was a Siberian cossack who became Kerensky’s commander in chief in July 1917 and later led a counterrevolutionary putsch against him. Arrested, he escaped to lead the counterrevolution until April 1918, when he was killed.

334. “American Problems and the International.” From the archives of James P. Cannon. By permission of the Library of Social History. A letter to Cannon. By this time the Trotskyists had been expelled from the SP and were preparing for the organization of a new party by the end of the year.

335. “A Manifesto to the Members of the Socialist Party” appeared in the first (August 14, 1937) public issue of *Socialist Appeal*. It was signed “The National Action Committee, Appeal Association of the SP.”

336. The international conference, which proved to be the founding conference of the Fourth International, was finally held in September 1938.

337. F. was Li Fu-jen, a well-known writer on China for the Trotskyist press.

339. **Rudolph Hilferding** (1877-1941) was a leader of the German Social Democracy before World War I, and a pacifist during the war. He was a finance minister in bourgeois cabinets in 1923 and 1928. He died in a German prison camp during World War II.

340. **Willi Schlamm** (1904-1941) was a founder of the Austrian Right Opposition in 1929. After Hitler came to power, he printed several important Trotsky articles in *Die Neue Weltbühne*, which he edited. Later he moved to the U.S., eventually becoming an editorial executive of the Henry Luce publications.

341. **Socialism of pre-March 1848** was the utopian variety, which Marx and Engels refuted and rejected when they first began to build a revolutionary movement.

342. **N.V. Ustryalov** (1890-?) was a member of the Constitutional Democratic Party, called Cadets, a liberal party favoring a constitutional monarchy in Russia or ultimately a republic. It was a party of progressive landlords, middle bourgeois, and bourgeois intellectuals. Ustryalov opposed the Bolshevik revolution but later went to work for the Soviet government because he believed it would inevitably be compelled to restore capitalism. He was arrested in 1937 and convicted of anti-Soviet activity, and disappeared.

343. **Mikhail Bakunin** (1814-1876) was a contemporary of Marx in the First International, and was the founder of anarchism. He put forth a theory of a stateless federation of autonomous communities.

344. The **CNT (National Confederation of Labor)** was the anarcho-syndicalist trade union federation in Spain.

345. **Hippolyte Taine** (1828-1893) was a French philosopher whose deterministic theories that man was the product of heredity, historical conditioning, and environment became the basis of the naturalistic school.

346. **Hermann Gorter** (1864-1927) and **Anton Pannekoek** (1873-1960) were writers in the left wing of the Dutch Social Democratic Workers Party. During World War I they were pacifists and internationalists and moved toward the Zimmerwald left. They joined the Dutch CP in 1918. They opposed Communist participation in trade union and parliamentary work. Criticized for their ultraleftism, they left the Dutch CP in 1921. The original **Spartacists** changed the name of their Spartacus League to the German Communist Party in 1919. But various sects, ultraleft or opportunist, took up the name in Germany and elsewhere during the following two decades. It is to these that Trotsky is referring here.

347. **Sidney** (1859-1947) and **Beatrice** (1858-1943) **Webb** were British Fabian Socialists and admirers of the Stalinist bureaucracy.

348. Lenin’s **Collected Works** (Moscow: Progress Publishers) totaled forty-five volumes by 1977.

349. “The Platform of the Opposition” is in *The Challenge of the Left*

350. Liston Oak (1895-1970), a journalist, broke with Stalinism over the Spanish Civil War in 1937; he wrote for the Trotskyist press briefly before he shifted to the Social Democracy. Eduard Bernstein (1850-1932) was the leading theoretician of revisionism in the German Social Democracy. He held that Marxism was no longer valid and had to be "revised": socialism would come about not through class struggle and revolution but through the gradual reform of capitalism achieved by parliamentary means; the workers' movement, therefore, had to abandon the policy of class struggle for one of class collaboration.

351. The Italian Bordigists were an ultraleft group led by Amadeo Bordiga (1889-1970), who was expelled from the Italian CP for "Trotskyism" in 1929. The Trotskyists tried to work with the Bordigists but failed because of the latter's sectarianism: they opposed the tactic of the united front, for example, on principle.

352. Emile Vandervelde (1866-1938) was a Belgian Labor Party leader and president of the Second International, 1929-36. He was in the cabinet during World War I and signed the Versailles treaty for Belgium. Louis de Brouckere was also a leader of the Belgian Labor Party and a supporter of World War I. He was president of the Second International, 1937-39. Clement Attlee (1883-1967) was the leader of the British Labour Party from 1935 and was in Winston Churchill's cabinet, 1940-45. In 1945 the Labour Party won the elections and Attlee became prime minister, a post he held until 1951.


354. Rae Spiegel (Raya Dunayevskaya) was one of Trotsky's secretaries in Mexico.

355. Eleanor Clark (1913- ), later a well-known writer, had visited Trotsky at his home in Coyoacan and volunteered to help with translations into English. She was not a member of the Trotskyist movement.


359. The Dutch NAS (National Labor Organization) was a small, left-wing trade union federation whose principal leader was Sneevliet.
360. The Lovestoneites were a group around Jay Lovestone (1898- ), a former leader of the American CP, who had been expelled in 1929 shortly after the downfall of his international ally, Bukharin. The Lovestoneites dissolved their organization at the beginning of World War II. Lovestone later became cold-war adviser in foreign affairs for AFL-CIO President George Meany. The Oehlerites (after Hugo Oehler, a member of the Workers Party National Committee) were a sectarian faction in the American Trotskyist movement. They held that entry into a Social Democratic party violated revolutionary principles, and that they could not be bound by the discipline of any party that condoned such entrism. They were expelled in October 1935 for issuing a public periodical without party permission, and operated under the name Revolutionary Workers League for several years. In 1937 they were engaged in a maneuver to split the SP left wing from inside and from outside.

361. “For a Regime of Genuine Democracy.” From the personal archives of Albert Glotzer. Used by his permission.


364. Martin Abern (1898-1949) was a founding member of the American CP and later of the Trotskyist movement. He was a member of the National Committee from the founding of the Communist League of America until he split from the SWP with Shachtman in 1940.

365. “Catastrophe Seen for Japan.” Socialist Appeal, October 9, 1937. The questions were submitted to Trotsky by J.P. McKnight on behalf of the Associated Press, and are reproduced here by permission of the Harvard College Library.

366. “A Tragic Lesson.” Socialist Appeal, November 6, 1937. Ignace Reiss (1899-1937) was the pseudonym of Ignace Poretsky, a GPU agent who broke with Stalin in the summer of 1937 and joined the Fourth Internationalists. He was murdered by GPU agents near Lausanne, Switzerland, on September 4, 1937. He is the subject of a memoir by his widow, Elizabeth K. Poretsky, entitled Our Own People (University of Michigan Press, 1970).


369. Chen Tu-hsiu (1879-1942) was a founder of the Chinese CP and of the Left Opposition. He was imprisoned by the Kuomintang police from 1932 until 1937. Broken in health, he settled in a village near Chungking. Despite this, the Chinese Stalinists launched a slander campaign accusing him of being an agent of Japan. Chen developed differences with Trotsky in the late thirties and broke with the Communist League of China in 1941.

370. General Eugene Miller had been named chief of the Union of Czarist Army Veterans—a White Guard organization—in January 1930, when the current chief had disappeared in Paris, presumably abducted by the Soviet secret police. Miller was in turn kidnapped on September 22, 1937. He left a note implicating General Eugene Skoblin, a GPU agent functioning in White Guard emigre circles in France, but Skoblin escaped.

371. James Maxton (1885-1946) was the principal leader of the British ILP in the thirties. His pacifism led him to hail Chamberlain’s role at Munich in 1938. In 1937 he led a commission to Spain to investigate charges that the Republican police were rounding up radicals, especially POUMists, Trotskyists, and Anarchists, and imprisoning them in order to destroy the revolutionary upsurge of May 1937 in Barcelona.


373. “An Observer from Afar.” From the personal archives of Albert Glotzer, to whom this letter was addressed. Used by his permission.


375. Pavel Miliukov (1859-1943), a leader of the liberal Cadet Party, was minister of foreign affairs in the Russian Provisional Government, March-May 1917, and an outstanding enemy of the Bolshevik revolution.

376. The Clichy riots developed in March 1937 when the fascist French Social Party tried to hold a film-showing in a working class area, which was prevented by large numbers of workers. Barricades were set up and gunfire was exchanged. The CGT called for a half-day strike. The CP refused to associate itself with the action and attributed it to fascist-Trotskyist provocateurs. The Trotskyists were blamed for the upsurge by the fascist representative in the Chamber of Deputies, the CP press, and the Radical press.

378. G. Agabekov (in 1930) and Gregory Bessedovsky (in 1929) were Soviet diplomatic personnel who defected to the capitalist world.

379. “Concern About Mrs. Reiss.” Socialist Appeal, October 9, 1937. This was a telegraphic dispatch to the New York Times, which printed part of it on October 1, 1937.

381. Paul Eiffel was a German refugee who led a small split-off from the Oehlerite Revolutionary Workers League in 1936. He advocated sabotage of the Loyalist struggle against Franco and the Chinese nationalist struggle against Japan.
382. William Green (1873-1952) was the president of the conservative American Federation of Labor.
383. Chiang Kai-shek (1887-1975) was the right-wing military leader of the Kuomintang during the Chinese revolution of 1925-27. The Stalinists hailed him as a great revolutionary until April 1927, when he conducted a bloody massacre of the Shanghai Communists and trade unionists. He ruled over China until overthrown by the Chinese revolution of 1949.
384. Parts of the Trotsky-Nin correspondence were published in an internal bulletin in 1933, and are reprinted as the appendix to Trotsky’s The Spanish Revolution (1931-39).


387. Harry Milton was a Trotskyist active in the New York garment workers’ union, who went to Spain as an antifascist volunteer and, at the front, was arrested by the Stalinists and deported.
388. Sol Lankin was a founding member of the American Left Opposition and a guard at Trotsky’s home in Coyoacan.
389. Here Trotsky is paraphrasing Lenin’s thoughts from memory. Lenin’s actual words on Ordzhonikidze, written December 30, 1922, are in his Collected Works, vol. 36 (p. 307).

390. “Problems of Personnel.” From the archives of James P. Cannon. By permission of the Library of Social History. A letter to Sara Weber (1900-1976), who had been a secretary of Trotsky in Turkey and France, 1933-34, and would come to Mexico to be his secretary again in 1939.
391. Joseph Hansen (1910- ) joined the Trotskyist movement in 1934, was active in a maritime union, and served as a member of
Trotsky's secretariat and guard, 1937-40. His accounts of Trotsky's stay in Mexico, including his assassination, are in *Leon Trotsky, The Man and His Work* (Merit Publishers, 1969) and the introduction to Pathfinder's 1970 edition of *My Life.* After serving for many years as editor of *The Militant* and *International Socialist Review,* and as international representative of the Socialist Workers Party, he became the editor of *Intercontinental Press.*


393. “Results of the Entry and Next Tasks.” From the archives of James P. Cannon. By permission of the Library of Social History. Rae Spiegel, the stenographer who made this transcript, attached a note explaining that it represented only part of a discussion at Coyoacan, “the rest having been held so informally” that she did not transcribe it. The participants did not check or correct the stenogram.

394. Albert Weisbord (1900-1977) resigned from the American CP in 1930, and a year later organized a small group, the Communist League of Struggle, which proclaimed its adherence to the International Left Opposition, although its politics vacillated between those of the Left and Right Oppositions. The CLS disbanded in 1937 and Weisbord supported the U.S. government in World War II.


396. “A Letter to Elsa Reiss.” From the archives of James P. Cannon. By permission of the Library of Social History. Translated from the German for this volume by Warren Dean. Elsa Reiss was Elizabeth Poretsky, the wife of Ignace Reiss.


398. “A Discussion on China,” August 11, 1937, was published in an internal bulletin and is in print now in *Leon Trotsky on China.*

399. “To the Editor of Modern Monthly.” Socialist Appeal, December 11, 1937. *Modern Monthly* (later called *Modern Quarterly*) was an independent radical journal edited by V.F. Calverton from 1923 to 1940. It featured diverse political commentary, as well as literary criticism and fiction. Trotsky wrote for it in the early thirties, but he later dissociated
himself from it because he felt that it did not have a sufficiently critical position on the Moscow trials.


401. **Franklin D. Roosevelt** (1882-1945) was Democratic president of the U.S. from 1933 until his death. **Herbert Hoover** (1874-1964), a Republican, was president, 1929-33.

402. **Fiorello La Guardia** (1882-1947) was a Republican member of the House of Representatives in the twenties and was three times mayor of New York City (1934-45), elected by an anti-Tammany Hall bloc of Republicans and labor unions. He was endorsed by the American Labor Party for his second and third terms. **John L. Lewis** (1880-1969) was president of the United Mine Workers of America from 1920 until his death. He was a founder of the CIO, which he headed until his resignation in 1940.

403. A Latin American conference was held in May 1938 and adopted a number of resolutions which were submitted to the international conference held in September 1938.

404. **Maurice Spector** (1898-1968) was a founder of the Canadian CP and a member of the Comintern’s Executive Committee. He was a founder of the Canadian Trotskyist movement and then a leader of the SWP until he resigned in 1939. **John Glenn** was a pseudonym of Jan Frankel.


406. “Swiss Police Arrest Assassins.” *Socialist Appeal*, October 30, 1937. This was issued in the form of a press release.


408. “Dictatorship and Revolution.” From the archives of James P. Cannon. By permission of the Library of Social History. A letter to **Margaret De Silver**, a member of the ACDLT and the widow of Albert De Silver, a founder of the American Civil Liberties Union. Carlo Tresca was her companion.
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OTHER WRITINGS OF 1936-37

In addition to the material in the present volume, the following writings of Trotsky 1936-37 have been published:

Leon Trotsky on the Jewish Question. 1970. Includes “Interview with Jewish Correspondents in Mexico” (January 18, 1937), and “Thermidor and Anti-Semitism” (February 22, 1937).

Leon Trotsky Speaks. 1972. Includes “I Stake My Life!” (February 9, 1937), a speech for a mass meeting at the Hippodrome in New York.

The Spanish Revolution (1931-39). 1973. Includes “Interview with Havas” (February 19, 1937); “A Strategy for Victory” (February 25, 1937); “The Proposed Barcelona Conference” (March 20, 1937); “To the Editorial Board of La Lutte ouvrière” (March 23, 1937); “Revolutionary Strategy in the Civil War” (April 14, 1937); “Is Victory Possible in Spain?” (April 23, 1937); “The Insurrection in Barcelona” (May 12, 1937); “The Murder of Andres Nin by Agents of the GPU” (August 8, 1937); “The Civil War in Spain” (August 16, 1937); “A Test of Ideas and Individuals Through the Spanish Experience” (August 24, 1937); “Answers to Questions on the Spanish Situation” (September 14, 1937); “Letter to James P. Cannon” (September 21, 1937); “Ultralefts in General and Incurable Ultralefts in Particular” (September 28, 1937); “For Aid to the Spanish Victims of Stalin-Negrin” (October 6, 1937); “On the Revolutionary Calendar” (October 22, 1937).

The Stalin School of Falsification. 1937. Includes “Foreword to the American Edition” and “How the October Insurrection Actually Took Place” (both dated March 3, 1937).

The Case of Leon Trotsky. 1937. The complete text of the transcript of the hearings in which Trotsky answered the questions of the Dewey Commission in Coyoacan, Mexico, April 10-17, 1937.

Leon Trotsky on China. 1976. Includes “Japan and China” (July 30, 1937); “A Discussion on China” (August 11 and September 3, 1937); “On the Sino-Japanese War” (September 23, 1937); “Facifism and China” (September 25, 1937); “Concerning the Resolution on the War” (October 27, 1937).

In Defense of Marxism. 1942. Includes an excerpt of a letter to Max Shachtman on Spain (September 20, 1937).

The Moscow trials and how to expose them as counterrevolutionary frame-ups organized by the Stalinist bureaucracy—

The backlash against Marxist theory and practice that developed in the wake of the Moscow trials, and how to counteract the distortions that tried to equate Leninism with Stalinism—

The drive toward World War II, which was being supported by the Second and Third Internationals—

The need to establish the Fourth International and revolutionary parties in all the countries of the world—

These were the major problems occupying Leon Trotsky when he arrived in Mexico as an exile in January 1937, after being deported from Norway. And these were the main subjects of the 150 articles, letters, and statements to the press collected here from the ten-month period following his expulsion from Norway, many of which are published now for the first time.

In addition, Trotsky writes here about the preliminary hearings in Mexico held by the Commission of Inquiry and chaired by John Dewey, in April 1937; his advice about the tactics being followed by his American comrades, who at the time were members of the Socialist Party headed by Norman Thomas; and the murders, by the Soviet secret police, of two of Trotsky's cothinkers: Erwin Wolf in Spain in August 1937, and Ignace Reiss in Switzerland in September 1937.

This book is also available in a cloth edition at $25.