

by JAMES P. CANNON

SOCIALISM ON TRIAL

**the official
court record**

**of James P. Cannon's testimony in the
famous Minneapolis "Sedition" trial**

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With an Introduction by

JOSEPH HANSEN

Published by

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INDICTMENT

ected by said defendants and their co-conspirators
"The said defendants, accept as the ideal formula for
the carrying out of their said objectives the Russian
Revolution of 1917, whereby the then existing Gov-
ernment of Russia was overthrown by force and
violence, and the principles, teachings, writings,
counsel and advice of the leaders of that revolution,
chiefly of V. I. Lenin and Leon Trotsky, would be,
and they were, looked to, relied on, followed and held
out to others as catechisms and textbooks directing
the manner and means by which the aforesaid aim of
the defendants could, and would be, accomplished;
and accordingly, certain of the defendants would,
and they did, go from the City of Minneapolis, State
and District of Minnesota, and from other cities in
the United States to Mexico City, Mexico, there to
advise with and to receive the advice, counsel,
guidance, and directions of the said Leon Trotsky."

Second edition, March 1944

First edition, January 1942

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Introduction

Since publication of the first edition of *Socialism on Trial*, the 18 defendants in the famous Minneapolis "sedition" trial have been imprisoned. Fourteen are now at Sandstone penitentiary in Minnesota, three at Danbury, Connecticut, and one at the federal prison for women, Alderson, West Virginia. Prison gates closed on these socialists and trade unionists in "democratic" America despite the fact they were guilty of no crime other than exercising their right to free speech.

They were incarcerated because they opposed imperialist war, and because they advocated building a socialist society as the only means of ending such wars and all the other evils of capitalism in its death agony. The views for which they now sit behind bars are presented in this booklet, which is a reprint of the official court record of the testimony of James P. Cannon, America's No. 1 Socialist and principal defendant at the trial.

Although the Minneapolis case was the first peacetime federal prosecution for sedition in the history of the United States, it was clearly engineered by the Roosevelt administration as part of its war program. The facts prove this beyond honest dispute.

In the spring of 1941, Daniel J. Tobin, head of the Teamsters International and one of the political hatchet men of the Roosevelt regime, came into conflict with the leaders of Minneapolis Teamsters Local 544. In May 1941 Tobin published a bitter attack in his personal organ, the *Teamsters Journal*, denouncing the Trotskyists in the Minnesota teamsters' movement. Shortly thereafter, he ordered the democratically elected leadership of Local 544 to stand trial before his International Executive Board at Washington the first week of June. When the leaders of Local 544 refused to concede to his appointment of a receiver over the union with absolute powers, including the power to expel anyone, Tobin proceeded to move in on the union—all this because the Trotskyists in the union refused to abandon their vigorous struggle to improve working conditions and to give political support to Roosevelt in the then rapidly approaching entry of the United States into the second World War.

As a result of Tobin's actions, 4,000 members of Local 544

at a regular membership meeting on June 9 voted virtually unanimously to disaffiliate from Tobin's organization in the AFL and to accept a charter from the CIO.

Tobin lost no time. Four days after the vote of Local 544, on June 13, Roosevelt's secretary, Stephen Early told the White House press conference, as reported in the *New York Times* of June 14, 1941, that Tobin had complained to Roosevelt by telegram from Indianapolis, and that: "*When I advised the President of Tobin's representations this morning he asked me to immediately have the government departments and agencies interested in this matter notified . . .*"

In addition to granting Tobin a personal favor, Roosevelt had a much weightier political reason for initiating prosecution. The administration, expecting momentarily to plunge the United States into the catastrophe of World War II, wished to isolate and silence the advocates of socialism so that their ideas might be prevented from gaining a hearing among the masses driven into the slaughter.

Swift action followed the White House assurance to Tobin. Just 13 days later, on June 27, 1941, FBI agents raided the branch offices of the Socialist Workers Party in St. Paul and Minneapolis, carting off large quantities of Marxist literature, much of which could have been obtained in any public library.

On July 15, 1941, less than a month later, an indictment drawn up by the Department of Justice was handed down by a federal grand jury against 29 men and women.

Count one of the indictment, based on an 1861 statute passed during the Civil War against the Southern slave-holders, charged a "conspiracy to overthrow the government by force and violence."

Count two of the indictment charged: (1) Advocating overthrow of the government by force; (2) Publishing and circulating literature advocating this; (3) Forming organizations "to teach, advocate and encourage" such overthrow; (4) Becoming members of such organizations; (5) Distributing publications which "advised, counseled and urged" insubordination in the armed forces. This count was based wholly on the Smith "Omnibus Gag" Act, invoked for the first time in the Minneapolis case.

Like the infamous Alien & Sedition Acts of 1798 the Smith Act makes the mere advocacy of ideas a federal crime. Its constitutionality has been challenged by the American Civil Liberties Union, *The Nation*, *The New Republic*, and numerous others. Sponsor of this ultra-reactionary law is poll-tax Rep-

representative Howard W. Smith, leader of the anti-labor bloc in Congress and co-author of the vicious Smith-Connally anti-strike law.

On October 27, 1941, the trial began in the Federal District Court at Minneapolis. The principal government "evidence" consisted of innumerable quotations from articles in the American Trotskyist press going back to 1929. Public writings, public addresses of the defendants, radio speeches, leaflets distributed by tens of thousands—these were the main government proofs of "conspiracy."

The government further introduced as evidence photographs of the great teachers of Marxism (including a portrait of Daniel DeLeon). It introduced such leaflets as the one advertising Vincent Raymond Dunne as speaker at a public forum on the action of the Trotskyists in combatting "20,000 Fascists in Madison Square." In the indictment and in the prosecution arguments, the government flatly characterized as criminal the doctrines of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky.

This infamous attack was met unflinchingly by the proletarian defense. Never before in a labor trial in this country have defendants so unswervingly, so consciously and so systematically defended their revolutionary doctrine, utilizing the courtroom as a forum from which to proclaim their ideas. The conduct of the defendants at the trial and throughout all the subsequent stages of the case belongs to the best traditions of international Marxism.

The jury returned a verdict of not guilty on the first count of the indictment, thereby revealing the utter flimsiness of the government case. On the second count, involving a new law, the constitutionality of which had not yet been tested, the jury returned a verdict of guilty against 18 of the defendants. Of the remaining defendants, five were released by a directed verdict of the court; five others were acquitted by the jury. Grant Dunne, Local 544 organizer and one of the original 29 defendants, committed suicide three weeks before the trial began. He had suffered ill health for a long time from shell shock incurred during the first World War.

The Civil Rights Defense Committee, handling the case in close collaboration with the American Civil Liberties Union and with the support of labor and defense organizations, assisted the 18 in appealing their conviction to the Eighth U. S. Circuit Court of Appeals.

Meanwhile Tobin had instigated proceedings against the Secretary-Treasurer of Local 544, Kelly Postal. When the

Minnesota teamsters voted to accept the CIO charter, they likewise voted unanimously to turn \$5,000 in the local treasury over to the Union Defense Committee. Kelly Postal turned over the funds as instructed. Brought before one court on a charge of grand larceny, Postal was vindicated when the judge threw the case out of court. But the wheels of capitalist justice did not stop because one judge could not overlook the rawness of the frameup. Hailed before Judge Selover, Postal was declared guilty and sentenced up to five years in Stillwater penitentiary. Judge Selover, who pronounced this cruel sentence, turned down a motion to appeal the case. Kelly Postal is now behind bars because he obeyed the will of the union membership which placed him in office.

On September 20, 1943, the Eighth Circuit Court handed down its decision. In defiance of the law, the Constitution and all the principles and traditions of democracy, this court upheld the Smith "Gag" Act, giving unconditional endorsement to the prosecution. The defendants, deprived of their elementary democratic rights, were being railroaded to prison. The circuit court judges declared that all this was done in a correct legal way. Thus did the Court of Appeals uphold the right of free speech, one of the "four freedoms" which Roosevelt has solemnly promised to export to other countries.

The Civil Rights Defense Committee then carried the case to the United States Supreme Court. What did this august body, composed almost entirely of Roosevelt appointees do? Did they safeguard the inviolability of the Bill of Rights? Or did they act like the "government departments and agencies interested in this matter" whom Roosevelt's secretary, Stephen Early, notified upon receipt of Tobin's complaint?

On November 22, 1943, barely more than two months after the appeal was made, the Supreme Court handed down its decision. *It denied the petition of the 18 to hear their case.*

This decision will undoubtedly go down as historic. Here is a peacetime law, manifestly unconstitutional, a law directly abrogating the right of free speech. The case is the first to be tried under this law. The President who appointed the judges is waging a war ostensibly to make the world free for democracy. The law has been universally denounced—even in the halls of Congress—as "enough to make Thomas Jefferson turn over in his grave" and as "without precedent in the history of labor legislation." Yet the last court of appeal denies—without a word of explanation—the petition of 18 defendants to hear their case!

It is impossible to brush this reactionary decision aside as "accidental." Twice more, the Civil Liberties Union petitioned the Supreme Court to hear this important case. Twice more, the Supreme Court denied the petition without explanation.

In the words of the great socialist agitator, Eugene V. Debs, who was imprisoned in the last war, "It is extremely dangerous to exercise the constitutional rights of free speech in a country fighting to make democracy safe in the world."

On December 31, 1943, headed by James P. Cannon and Vincent R. Dunne, fifteen of the defendants formed ranks at the Minneapolis branch offices of the Socialist Workers Party and marched in a body through the crowded streets of the city to the Federal Court House. There they were received by the United States Marshal. On the same day the other three defendants appeared at the Marshal's office in New York. New Year's Day, 1944, the defendants began their transfer from the local jails to the federal prisons.

The flagrant injustice of this imprisonment aroused indignation throughout wide circles. Many newspapers and liberals protested the action of the Supreme Court. Declared the American Civil Liberties Union, "This is a case which should never have been brought to court under a law which should never have been passed. Never before has the Supreme Court refused to review a case of this importance."

Recognizing the vital importance of the Minneapolis case to the entire labor movement and the cause of civil liberties, more than 135 unions have already given support or contributed to the work of the Civil Rights Defense Committee. Among them are the United Transport Service Employees—CIO, the New Jersey State CIO Council, the St. Louis, Mo. Joint Council CIO, the San Francisco Industrial Union Council, 40 UAW-CIO locals, 11 United Steel Workers locals, 7 United Rubber Workers locals together with dozens of other CIO, AFL and independent unions.

The present campaign of the Civil Rights Defense Committee to obtain unconditional presidential pardon for the 18 has met with encouraging response. The alarm of thinking workers over this case is well justified. The imprisonment of the 18 sets a dangerous precedent which threatens the freedom of every trade unionist and of every American who may disagree with the policies of the Roosevelt administration. The upholding of the Smith "Gag" Law now makes it a crime to exercise the right of free speech and creates a weapon which can be

used to deprive other trade unionists and working class political parties of their democratic rights.

Socialism on Trial has already proved its popularity. The first edition has been sold out completely. It not only occupies a place on the shelves of advanced workers throughout the United States but has been made available to British workers through two editions printed in Great Britain. In Latin America, where workers long aware of Wall Street's role in world politics are keenly interested in obtaining allies among American workers in the common struggle, the booklet has been read avidly. In the Middle East a translation into Arabic is projected.

The form of the contents, of course, was bound to prove attractive. Here is the unrehearsed, unretouched battle between the prosecuting attorney and the chief defendant. Here are the penetrating questions of the defense attorney, Albert Goldman, himself a defendant, as he attempts to make plain what the Trotskyists actually believe, despite constant efforts of the prosecution to create obstacles, becloud the issues, trap the defendant. But the mere form alone is not sufficient to account for the absorbing interest of *Socialism on Trial*. More important is the fact that here is presented the revolutionary program that discloses the only road out of the accumulating horrors of capitalist society in its death agony.

From the court room in Minneapolis where the Roosevelt Administration hounded the leading representatives of the society of the future has come a remarkable document that will undoubtedly prove a powerful instrument in the difficult struggle to build that coming society of peace and plenty. Just as in World War I the imprisonment of Debs succeeded only in further spreading and popularizing the idea of socialism, so in World War II the imprisonment of the Minneapolis defendants will succeed only in hastening the day of the final victory.

Debs spoke prophetically when he said: "They may put those men in jail—and some of the rest of us in jail—but they cannot put the socialist movement in jail."

JOSEPH HANSEN

February 15, 1944

Socialism On Trial

District Court of the United States,
District of Minnesota, Fourth Division.
Tuesday, November 18, 1941
Afternoon Session

JAMES P. CANNON

was called as a witness on behalf of the defendants, having been first duly sworn, testified as follows:

DIRECT EXAMINATION

By **MR. GOLDMAN**:

Q: Will you please state your name for the reporter?

A: James P. Cannon.

Q: Where do you live, Mr. Cannon?

A: New York.

Q: And your present occupation?

A: National Secretary of the Socialist Workers Party.

Q: How old are you, Mr. Cannon?

A: Fifty-one.

Q: Where were you born?

A: Rosedale, Kansas.

Q: How long a period is it since you began your career in the Marxist movement, Mr. Cannon?

A: Thirty years.

Q: What organization did you first join that was part of the working class movement?

A: The I. W. W., Industrial Workers of the World.

Q: And did you join any other organization subsequent to that one?

A: The Socialist Party.

Q: And after that?

A: In 1919, at the foundation of the Communist Party, I was one of the original members, and a member of the National Committee since 1920.

Q: How long a period did you remain in the Communist Party?

A: Until October 1928.

Q: Now, will you tell the court and jury the extent of your knowledge of Marxian theory?

A: I am familiar with the most important writings of the

Marxist teachers—Marx, Engels, Lenin, Trotsky, and the commentators on their works.

Q: Have you ever read any books against the Marxian theory?

A: Yes. In general I am familiar with the literature against Marxism, particularly the most important book.

Q: Which one is the most important book?

A: Hitler's "Mein Kampf."

Q: Have you ever edited any labor papers, Mr. Cannon?

A: Yes, a number of them. In fact, I have been more or less a working journalist in the movement for about 25 years.

Q: Do you recollect the names of any of the papers that you edited?

A: The *Workers' World* in Kansas City. The *Toiler*, published in Cleveland, Ohio. I was at one time editor of *The Militant*. I was editor of the paper called *Labor Action* published in San Francisco, and I have been on the editorial board of numerous other papers and magazines published in the movement.

Q: Have you ever delivered lectures on the theory of Socialism and other aspects of the Marxist movement?

A: Yes, I have done that continuously for about thirty years.

FORMATION OF THE SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY

Q: Tell us the reasons why you severed your connection with the Communist Party, Mr. Cannon.

A: Well, at the time of the controversy that developed in the Russian party between Trotsky on the one side, and Stalin and his group on the other, a controversy that touched many of the most fundamental principles of Socialism, this controversy gradually became extended in the Communist International, and became the subject of concern in the other parties of the Communist International. I and some others here took a position in support of Trotsky and that led to our expulsion from the Communist Party of the United States.

Q: Can you give us in brief an idea of the nature of the controversy?

A: It began over the question of bureaucracy in the governmental apparatus of the Soviet Union and in the staffs of the party in Russia. Trotsky began a struggle for more democracy in the party, in the government and unions and the country generally. This struggle against what Trotsky—and I agree with him—characterized as an increasing bureaucratization of the whole regime, this controversy originating over this point, gradually developed in the course of years into fundamental

conflicts over virtually all the basic principles of Socialist theory and practice.

Q: And as a result of this controversy, the expulsion took place?

A: As a result of that, the expulsion of our group took place here in the United States, as was the case also in Russia.

THE SPLIT IN THE COMMUNIST PARTY

Q: In what year was that?

A: 1928.

Q: Tell us what happened to the group that was expelled.

A: We organized ourselves as a group and began to publish a paper called *The Militant*.

Q: And give us some idea of the size of that group, Mr. Cannon.

A: Well, there were only three of us to start with. Eventually we got supporters in other cities. Six months later, when we had our first conference, we had about 100 members in the country.

Q: And subsequent to that, was there any party organized by this group?

A: Yes, this group called itself originally the Communist League of America, and considered itself still a faction of the Communist Party, attempting to get reinstated into the party, with the provision that we would have a right to hold our views and discuss them in the party. This proposal of ours was rejected by the party, so we developed as an independent organization.

In 1934 we came to an agreement with another organization, which had never been connected with the Communist movement, which had grown out of the trade unions. This organization, originally known as the Conference for Progressive Labor Action, took the name of the American Workers Party. In 1934, in the fall of that year, we had a joint convention with them and formed a common organization which we called the Workers Party of the United States.

Q: And how long did this Workers Party exist?

A: From the fall of 1934 until the spring of 1936.

Q: And what happened then?

A: At that time our party joined the Socialist Party as a body. The Socialist Party had had an internal discussion and controversy, which culminated in the last month of 1935 in a split, in the withdrawal of the more conservative elements. The Socialist Party had then issued an invitation for unaffiliated radical individuals and groups to join the Socialist Party.

We accepted the invitation and joined the party in 1936, again with the express provision which we had originally con-

tended for in the Communist Party, that we should have the right to maintain our particular views and to discuss them in the party—that is, when discussion was in order, and we on our part obligated ourselves to observe discipline in the daily work and common action of the party.

Q: How long did your group remain in the Socialist Party?

A: Just about a year.

DIFFERENCES WITH THE SOCIALIST PARTY

Q: And what happened then?

A: Well, the Socialist Party began to impose upon us the same kind of bureaucratism that we had suffered from in the Communist Party. There were great questions disturbing the minds of Socialists in that period, particularly the problems of the Spanish Civil War.

Q: And that was in what year?

A: That was in the year 1936, but it became very acute in the spring of 1937. We had a definite position on the Spanish question. We studied it attentively and we wanted to make our views known to the other party members. This was permitted for some time, and then the National Executive Committee issued an order prohibiting any further discussion, prohibiting even the adoption of resolutions by branches on the subject, and we revolted against that provision and insisted on our rights.

At the same time, a big dispute arose in New York over the election campaign—this was the second campaign of LaGuardia, and the Socialist Party officially decided to support the candidacy of LaGuardia. We opposed it on the ground that it was a violation of Socialist principles to support the candidate of a capitalist party. LaGuardia was a candidate of the Republican and Fusion Parties, as well as of the Labor Party.

We also insisted on making our views on this question known and this led to the wholesale expulsions of our people.

Q: When was the Socialist Workers Party organized?

A: The last days of December 1937 and the first day or two of January 1938.

Q: Who participated in its organization?

A: The branches of the Socialist Party which had been expelled—these were banded together under a committee of the expelled branches and this committee was instructed by a conference to arrange a convention, prepare it, and the expelled branches of the Socialist Party sent delegates to the foundation convention of the Socialist Workers Party.

Q: Did this committee of the expelled branches publish any paper?

A: Yes, it published a paper following the expulsions, which began in May or June 1937. We published the *Socialist Appeal*,

and that become the official organ of the party after the convention. Later, about a year ago, we changed the name back to our original name, *The Militant*.

Q: To the best of your recollection, how many delegates were present at the founding convention of the Socialist Workers Party?

A: I think about a hundred.

Q: And they came from all over the country, did they?

A: Yes, from about thirty cities, I think—twenty-five or thirty cities.

THE FUNDAMENTAL AIM OF THE SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY

Q: Now, what did that convention do?

A: The most important decisions of the convention were to set up its organization, adopt a Declaration of Principles, and some collateral resolutions on current questions, and elect a National Committee to direct the work of the party on the basis of the Declaration of Principles.

Q: Did it elect some committee to take charge of the party during the interval between conventions?

A: Yes, that is the National Committee.

Q: Now, you say that it adopted a Declaration of Principles. I show you Prosecution's Exhibit 1, being the Declaration of Principles and Constitution of the Socialist Workers Party, and I ask you whether that is the same that was adopted at the Socialist Workers Party Convention?

(Document handed to witness.)

A: Yes, that is it.

Q: Who presented the Declaration of Principles to the convention, do you remember?

A: Yes, it was presented by the Committee, the National Committee of the expelled branches, which had been selected at a previous conference of the group.

Q: What did the convention, the founding convention of the Socialist Workers Party, adopt as the fundamental aim of the party?

MR. SCHWEINHAUT (Prosecutor): When?

WHAT SOCIALISM MEANS

Q (By Mr. Goldman): At that time, and subsequent to that time, up until the present, when you are sitting in the stand here?

A: I would say that the fundamental aim of the party then and now is to popularize the doctrines of Marxian Socialism and to aid and lead in the work of transforming society from a capitalist to a communist basis.

Q: Give us the meaning of the term Socialism.

A: Socialism can have two meanings, and usually does

among us. That is, Socialism is a name applied to a projected new form of society, and it is a name also applied to the movement working in that direction.

Q: What is the nature of that projected society?

A: We visualize a social order that would be based on the common ownership of the means of production, the elimination of private profit in the means of production, the abolition of the wage system, the abolition of the division of society into classes.

Q: With reference to any government for the purpose of instituting such a society, what would you say is the purpose of the Socialist Workers Party?

A: We have set as our aim the establishment of a Workers' and Farmers' Government, in place of the existing government which we term a capitalist government. The task of this government would be to arrange and control the transition of society from the basis of capitalism to the basis of Socialism.

Q: When you say "capitalist government," what do you mean?

A: We mean a government that arises from a society that is based on the private ownership of the wealth of the country and the means of production by the capitalists, and which in general represents the interests of that class.

Q: And in contradistinction to this government you propose to establish a Workers' and Farmers' Government?

A: Yes, we propose in place of the capitalists a Workers' and Farmers' Government which will frankly represent the economic and social interests of the workers and the producing farmers.

Q: Well, what would happen to the capitalists?

A: Under the Workers' and Farmers' Government, the main task of the government will be to carry out the transfer of the most important means of production from private ownership to the common ownership of the people.

Q: Well, what would happen to the individual capitalists who would lose their wealth?

A: What do you mean, "happen to them," in what way?

CAPITALISTS AND THE MIDDLE CLASS IN THE WORKERS' STATE

Q: Would you kill them or put them to work, or what?

A: Well, under our theory, citizenship participation in the benefits of society would be open to everybody on a basis of equality. This would apply to former capitalists as well as to workers and farmers.

Q: When you use the term "productive wealth," do you mean any property that an individual owns?

A: No—when we speak of the means of production, the wealth of the country, we mean that wealth which is necessary for the production of the necessities of the people. The industries, the railroads, mines, and so on. We don't propose—at least, Marxist Socialists have never proposed anywhere that I know—the elimination of private property in personal effects. We speak of those things which are necessary for the production of the people's needs. They shall be owned in common by all the people.

OUR ATTITUDE TO THE MIDDLE CLASS

Q: What would happen to small businesses, the owners of which do not have labor to hire?

A: Well, the best Marxist authority since Engels is that small proprietors, who are not exploiters, should be in no way interfered with by the Workers' and Farmers' Government. They should be allowed to have their farms, their small possessions, their small handicraft shops, and only insofar as they become convinced, by the example of socialized collective farming and voluntarily would agree to pool their land and their resources in a collective effort, only to that extent can collectivization of small farming enterprises take place.

In the meantime, it is a part of our program that the Workers' and Farmers' Government should assist such enterprise by assuring them reasonable prices for their implements, for fertilizers, arrange credits for them, and in general conduct the government as a government which is concerned for them and wants to represent their interests.

I am speaking now of small producing farmers, not of big landowners and bankers, who exploit a lot of people, or who rent land out to sharecroppers. We certainly intend to socialize *their* land in the very first stages of the Workers' and Farmers' Government, turn it over to the administration of the people who actually till the soil. That also, I may say, is the standard Marxist doctrine since the earliest days, and the doctrine of Lenin and Trotsky in the Russian Revolution.

THE WITHERING AWAY OF THE STATE

Q: How will this Socialist society be controlled and directed?

A: Well, Socialism naturally would have to grow out of the new situation. After the social revolution has been effected in the political arena, and the capitalist government has been replaced by a Workers' and Farmers' Government, which proceeds to the socialization of the industries, the abolition of inequalities, the raising of the level of the income of the masses of the people, and the suppression of any attempts at counter-revolution by the

dispossessed exploiters, the importance and weight of the government as a repressive force would gradually diminish.

Then as classes are abolished, as exploitation is eliminated, as the conflict of class against class is eliminated, the very reason for the existence of a government in the strict sense of the term begins to diminish. Governments are primarily instruments of repression of one class against another. According to the doctrine of Marx and Engels and all of the great Marxists who followed them, and based themselves on their doctrine, we visualize, as Engels expressed it, a gradual withering away of the government as a repressive force, as an armed force, and its replacement by purely administrative councils, whose duties will be to plan production, to supervise public works, and education, and things of this sort. As you merge into Socialist society, the government, as Engels expressed it, tends to wither away and the government of men will be replaced by the administration of things.

The government of a Socialist society in reality will be an administrative body, because we don't anticipate the need for armies and navies, jails, repressions, and consequently that aspect of government dies out for want of function.

Q: What is the Marxian theory as to the social forces making Socialism inevitable?

A: Capitalism is a state of society that did not always exist. Like preceding social systems, it went through a period of gestation in the womb of the old feudal society. It grew and developed as against feudal society, eventually overthrew it by revolutionary means, raised the productivity of mankind to undreamed of heights—

MR SCHWEINHAUT (prosecutor): Well, now, just a moment, Mr. Cannon. It seems to me this question could be answered much more simply than this. I suspect the gentleman is going to make a speech now, and I don't see that the question calls for it at all.

INTERNAL LAWS WHICH DRIVE CAPITALISM TO BANKRUPTCY

Q (By Mr. Goldman): Well, as briefly as you can, describe the social forces—

A: I did not want to make a speech. I wanted to say in a few words what are the social forces that are pushing capitalism to bankruptcy. The laws by which—

MR. SCHWEINHAUT: That was not the question that was asked you, Mr. Witness. You were asked what were the social forces that would make Socialism inevitable, or some such thing. Well, I give up. Go ahead.

THE WITNESS: I assure you that I am anxious to compress the explanation as much as possible.

Capitalism operates by certain internal laws which were analyzed and laid bare for the first time by Karl Marx in his great works, first in the *Communist Manifesto* and then in *Capital*.

Now, the two internal laws of capitalism which are making inevitable its decline and its replacement by Socialism are these:

THE PROBLEM OF OVER-PRODUCTION

One, the private ownership of the means of production and the employment of wage labor at wages less than the value of the product produced by the wage laborer. This creates a surplus which the capitalist proprietor has to sell in the market. It is obvious that the wage worker, who receives for his labor less than the total value of his product, can be a customer only for that amount of the value that he receives in the form of wages. The balance is surplus value, as Marx explained it, for which the capitalist must find a market.

The more capitalism expands within a given country, the more productive becomes the labor of the worker, the greater is this surplus, which cannot find a market because the great mass of the people who produce the wealth do not receive enough wages to buy it. And that leads capitalism into periodic crises of what they call over-production, or as some popular agitators call it under-consumption, but the scientific term is over-production.

Capitalism from its very inception, for more than a hundred years, pretty nearly two hundred years, has gone through such crises. Now, in the past, capitalism could solve these crises eventually by finding new markets, new fields of investment, new fields of exploitation, and as long as capitalism could find new areas for the investment of capital and the sale of goods, the capitalist system could extricate itself from this cyclical crisis which occurred about every ten years, and go on to new heights of production. But every time capitalism experienced a new boom, and began to develop some new territory, it narrowed down the world. Because every place that capitalism penetrated, its laws followed it like a shadow, and the new field of exploitation began to become also surfeited with a surplus.

For example, the United States, which was a great reservoir for the assimilation of surplus products of Europe and gave European capitalism a breathing spell, has itself developed in the course of 150 years to the point where it produces an enormous surplus and has to fight Europe for a market in which to sell it. So this tremendous contradiction between the private ownership of industry and wage labor presents capitalism more and more with an insoluble crisis. This is one law of capitalism.

CAPITALIST COMPETITION BREEDS WAR

The second law is the conflict between the development of the productive forces and the national barriers in which they are confined under capitalism. Every country operating on a capitalist basis produces a surplus which it is unable to sell in its domestic market for the reasons I have given you before.

What, then, is the next step? The capitalists must find a foreign market. They must find a foreign market in which to sell their surplus and a foreign field in which to invest their surplus capital. The difficulty confronting capitalism is that the world doesn't get any bigger. It retained the same size, while every modern capitalist nation was developing its productive forces far beyond its own domestic capacity to consume. Or to sell at a profit. This led to the tremendous explosion of the World War in 1914. The World War of 1914 was, in our theory and our doctrine, the signal that the capitalist world had come to a bankrupt crisis.

Q: What would you say about the law of competition working within the capitalist system?

A: The law of competition between capitalists results inevitably in the bigger capitalists, the ones with the more modern, more efficient, and productive enterprises, crushing out the small ones, either by destroying them or absorbing them until the number of independent proprietors grows continually less and the number of pauperized people increases by leaps and bounds, until the wealth becomes concentrated in the hands of a very few people; and the great mass of the people, especially of the workers, are confronted with ever-increasing difficulties of an economic and social nature.

I mentioned the World War of 1914 as the signal that capitalism on the world scale wasn't able to solve any of its problems peacefully before. They had to kill eleven million men, and then make a peace and prepare to do it all over again the second time. That, in the view of the Marxian Socialists, is the sign that capitalism has outlived its possibility to solve its own problems.

THE ROLE OF MARXIST AGITATION

Q: What would you say, then, with reference to the relative importance of the economic factor moving toward socialism, and the agitation for Socialism of the various parties, including the Socialist Workers Party?

A: Well, now, if I could just explain here, Marxian Socialism is distinct from what is known in our terminology as Utopian Socialism—that is, the Socialism of people who visualize a better form of society, and think that it is only necessary to

see that a better society could exist, and to persuade the people to adopt it and solve the problem. Marxian Socialism proceeds from the theory that the very internal laws by which capitalism operates drive society to a Socialist solution.

I mentioned the war—I mentioned the conflict between the various capitalist nations which are always now in either a state of war, or of an armed truce preparing for war. I should mention also the experience of the 1929 depression, as it is called, with its fifteen million able-bodied American workers who were willing to work, unable to find employment. That was another sign of a terrible unhealthiness in the social organism called capitalism; and the unemployment scourge operated on a world scale.

Now, these are the forces that are driving society to a rational solution, in our opinion, by the nationalization of industry, the elimination of competition, and the abolition of private ownership. Our agitation could never effect the transformation of one social order to another unless these powerful internal economic laws were pushing it.

The real revolutionary factors, the real powers that are driving for Socialism, are the contradictions within the capitalist system itself. All that our agitation can do is to try to foresee theoretically what is possible and what is probable in the line of social revolution, to prepare people's minds for it, to convince them of the desirability of it, to try to organize them to accelerate it and to bring it about in the most economical and effective way. That is all agitation can do.

SIGNIFICANCE OF FASCISM

Q: What role does the factor of fascism play?

A: Fascism is another sign that unfailingly appears in every capitalist society when it reaches that period of decay and crisis, and isn't any longer able to keep an equilibrium of society on the basis of democratic parliamentarism, which has been the governmental form of rule of capitalism in its heyday. Fascism grows, becomes a terrible menace to mankind, and a terrible warning to the workers that if they don't bestir themselves and take things in their own hands, they will suffer the fate for years that has befallen the people of Germany and Italy and other countries now in Europe.

THE PARTY'S DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

Q: Now, what was the purpose for the adoption of the Declaration of Principles?

A: The general purpose was to put down in written form

a clear statement of our principles, to inform the world what our party stood for, and to guide the party in its actions following the convention, to lay down a body of doctrines and ideas which could govern the work of the party and guide its National Committee, in editing its paper, and so forth.

Q: Were there any secret agreements entered into by this committee that formulated the Declaration of Principles, agreements which were not revealed to the convention or to anybody else?

A: No,—everything we stand for we put in the Declaration of Principles. We couldn't do it otherwise.

It is impossible to build a political movement on the basis of one program, and expect that it will serve another program. That, I could tell you, is a political law that is known to every serious politician; a political party or a political man is bound by his own slogans. If a party puts forward a slogan or a program—

MR. SCHWEINHAUT: Well, now please, Mr. Cannon. You have answered—

THE COURT: Don't you think this is argumentative?

MR. GOLDMAN: All right!

Q: Now, how long was the Declaration of Principles in effect?

A: From the first week in January 1938, until the last month in 1940.

Q: And what happened in December 1940?

A: A specially called convention of the party adopted a resolution to suspend the Declaration of Principles and to instruct the National Committee to prepare a new draft for the consideration of the party at a subsequent convention or conference.

Q: What were the reasons for this action of the convention?

A: The principal reason, I may say, was the passage by Congress of a law known as the Voorhis Act, which penalized parties belonging to international organizations. That was the principal reason.

Subsidiary reasons were that in the meantime the party had changed its position on the question of the Labor Party. Some questions had become outdated by the passage of events, and in general we felt the necessity of a new draft.

THE QUESTION OF THE LABOR PARTY

Q: Can you tell us in brief the nature of the change on the labor party?

A: It was a change in the opposite direction. At the time of the adoption of the Declaration, we refused to support these proposals for the organization of a labor party—that is, a party

based on the trade unions. By the summer of 1938, we changed our mind about that and came to the conclusion that this movement would have more progressive potentialities than otherwise.

Q: And tell us what the method used was in adopting that change.

A: The National Committee adopted a resolution setting forth its changed position. This resolution then was sent to the party members in the internal bulletin, and a discussion period, I think of sixty days, was opened up in which anybody could express his opinion for or against the change. It was discussed very thoroughly in the party. In fact, not all members of the National Committee agreed with the change. At the end of the discussion period a referendum vote was taken of the membership, and a majority voted in favor of the amended resolution.

Q: What, if anything, was done subsequent to the suspension of this Declaration of Principles with reference to the adoption of a new set of principles?

A: We appointed a committee to make a new draft of a Declaration.

OUR PRINCIPLES HAVE NOT CHANGED

Q: And was that draft made?

A: The draft was made. We held a Conference in Chicago just on the eve of this trial—I think October 10, 11 and 12—we held a Conference of the party in connection with a meeting of the National Committee, where the new draft was submitted and accepted by the Conference, for submission to the party for discussion and possible amendment.

Q (By Mr. Goldman): Does the Declaration of Principles that was originally adopted, and subsequently suspended, teach the necessity of social revolution, Mr. Cannon?

A: Yes.

Q: What is meant by "social revolution"?

A: By social revolution is meant a transformation, a political and economic transformation of society.

Q: And the nature of the transformation is what?

A: Is fundamental and affects the property system, affects the method of production.

Q: Is there a distinction between political and social revolution?

A: Yes.

Q: What is the distinction?

A: Well, a *political* revolution can occur without any radical transformation of the underlying economic structure of society, the property basis of society.

A *social* revolution, on the other hand, affects not only the government, but affects the economic system.

Q: Can you give us any examples of both the social and political revolutions?

A: Yes. The great French Revolution of 1789 —

MR. SCHWEINHAUT: Was that a political or social revolution?

THE WITNESS: That was a social revolution, because it transformed the property basis of society from feudal property to capitalist property.

Q. (By Mr. Goldman): What do you mean by "feudal property"?

A: That was the whole economic system of society that was based on rights and privileges and restrictions, and serfdom, and so forth. Capitalist private property, which transformed the farms into privately owned enterprises of individual farmers, eliminated entirely all vestiges of serfdom and substituted wage labor, made a fundamental change in the economy of France.

Q: And can you give us an example of a political revolution?

A: Two of them occurred in France subsequent to the great social revolution, they occurred in 1830 and 1848 — that is, revolutions which were designed merely to change the ruling bureaucracy of the country and without touching the property system.

A revolution such as occurred in Panama the other day, a simple replacement of one regime by another in a palace *coup d'etat*, that is a political revolution that doesn't affect the economic character of society at all.

We consider the American Civil War was a social revolution, because it destroyed the system of slave labor and property in slaves, and replaced it by the complete domination of capitalist enterprise and wage labor.

THE NECESSARY CONDITIONS FOR THE REVOLUTION

Q: Enumerate the conditions under which, according to Marxist theory, the social revolution against capitalism will occur.

A: I can give you quite a number.

The first one is that the existing society must have exhausted its possibilities of further development. Marx laid down as a law that no social system can be replaced by another until it has exhausted all its possibilities for development and advancement. That is, you may say, the fundamental prerequisite for a social revolution.

Then I can give a number of collateral prerequisites which have been accepted by our movement.

The ruling class must be unable any longer to solve its prob-

lems, must have to a large degree lost confidence in itself. The misery and desperation of the masses must have increased to the point where they desire at all costs a radical change. Unemployment, fascism and war become problems of increasing magnitude which are patently insoluble by the existing ruling class. There must be a tremendous sentiment among the masses of the producers for Socialist ideas and for a Socialist revolution.

And, in addition to these prerequisites I have mentioned, it is necessary to have a workers' party that is capable of leading and organizing the movement of the workers in a resolute fashion for a revolutionary solution of the crisis.

Q: Now, what would you say as to the actual existence at the present time of the factor of the decline of capitalism and the fact that it has exhausted the possibilities of further growth at the present moment, as far as the United States is concerned?

A: Taken on a world scale, capitalism had exhausted its possibilities of further development by 1914. On a world scale, capitalism has never since that time attained the level of productivity of 1914. On the other hand, America, which is the strongest section of world capitalism, experienced an enormous boom in the same period when capitalism as a world system was declining. But American capitalism, as was shown by the 1929 crisis, and now by the war preparations, has also definitely entered into the stage of decay.

SYMPTOMS OF CAPITALIST DECAY

Q: And what are the symptoms of that decay?

A: The symptoms were the army of fifteen million unemployed, the decline of production from 1929; the fact that the higher productive index of the present day is based almost entirely on armament production, which is no possible basis of permanent stability.

Q: What would you say as to the existence at the present time of the second factor that you enumerated as a prerequisite to a revolutionary situation, namely, the inability of the ruling class to solve their problems?

A: I do not think it has by any means yet reached the acute stage in this country that it must necessarily reach on the eve of a revolution. They can't solve their problems here, but they don't know it yet.

MR. ANDERSON (prosecutor): What was the last of that answer, Mr. Reporter?

THE WITNESS: I say, the American ruling class cannot solve its problems, but is not yet aware of it.

MR. ANDERSON: I see.

THE WITNESS: I didn't mean that as a wise-crack, because as I stated previously, the ruling class must lose confidence in

itself, as was the case in every country where a revolution occurred.

Q (By Mr. Goldman): What is the position of the Party on the attempt of Roosevelt to improve the social system in this country?

A: How do you mean, "improve the social system"?

ROLE OF THE NEW DEAL

Q: To set capitalism into motion again, after the depression of 1929.

A: Well, all these measures of the New Deal were made possible in this country, and not possible for the poorer countries of Europe, because of the enormous accumulation of wealth in this country. But the net result of the whole New Deal experiment was simply the expenditure of billions and billions of dollars to create a fictitious stability, which in the end evaporated.

Now the Roosevelt administration is trying to accomplish the same thing by the artificial means of a war boom; that is, of an armament boom, but again, in our view, this has no possibility of permanent stability at all.

Q: With reference to the misery and suffering of the masses, what would you say as to the existence of that factor in the United States?

A: In our view, the living standards of the masses have progressively deteriorated in this country since 1929. They haven't yet reached that stage which I mentioned as a prerequisite of an enormous upsurge of revolutionary feeling, but millions of American workers were pauperized following 1929; and that, in our opinion, is a definite sign of the development of this prerequisite for the revolution.

Q: Has the Party, or any responsible member of the Party, made any prediction as to the length of time that it will take before the masses reach a stage of misery and suffering where they will look for a way out by accepting Socialism?

MR. SCHWEINHAUT: Just answer that yes or no.

MR. GOLDMAN: You can answer that yes or no and then I can proceed further.

MR. SCHWEINHAUT: Here is what I want to know, whether it was in writing, or verbally, and under what circumstances?

THE WITNESS: I don't recall any prediction in terms of years, but the question has been raised and debated, and different opinions prevail. I can tell you very briefly about that, if you wish.

MR. SCHWEINHAUT: I object to that.

MR. GOLDMAN: The evidence is full, your Honor, on the side of the Government, as to what the defendants said about

when the revolution will come, and under what conditions, and I want an authoritative statement from the head of the Party.

MR. SCHWEINHAUT: I will withdraw the objection.

THE WITNESS: I don't recall any prediction as to the number of years. We are trained in the historical method, and we think in terms of history.

MR. SCHWEINHAUT: Please answer the question. You said that you don't remember anybody's prediction in terms of years, but it has been debated. Tell us who debated it, and where, instead of what you think about it.

TROTSKY'S PREDICTIONS

THE WITNESS: All right. Trotsky advanced the thesis in the early days of our movement that America will be the last country to become Socialist, and that the whole of Europe, Socialist Europe, would have to defend itself against the intervention of American capitalism.

At a later stage, in the time of our 1929 crisis, Trotsky modified his prediction and said it is not by any means assured that America cannot be the first to enter the path of revolution.

Different opinions of that kind have been expressed in our ranks, but there is no settled opinion that I know of—no settled decision.

Q (By Mr. Goldman): Calling your attention to that factor that you enumerated as a prerequisite for the social revolution here in the United States, namely, the one of acceptance by the majority of the people of the Socialist idea, what would you say with reference to that factor at the present time within the United States?

A: Somewhat lacking, I would say.

Q: Well, explain that.

A: The great mass of American people are still unfamiliar with Socialist ideas. That is shown in various ways—by our election results, by attendance at our meetings, circulation of our press, and so on. It is shown that a very small percentage of the American people are interested in Socialist ideas at the present time.

Q: How many votes did you receive as candidate for Mayor in New York?

A: I don't know whether they counted them all or not—

THE COURT: We will have our recess.

(Afternoon Recess)

THE COURT: Proceed.

Q (By Mr. Goldman): I call your attention to the condition which you mentioned as a prerequisite for a social revolution in the United States—that is, the one dealing with a party,

and ask you whether that exists at the present time in the United States?

A: No, a party sufficiently influential, no, by no means.

Q: What function does the party play prior to the transformation of the social order?

A: Well, the only thing it can do, when it is a minority party, is to try to popularize its ideas, its programs, by publishing papers, magazines, books, pamphlets, holding meetings, working in trade unions—by propaganda and agitation.

THE CLASS STRUGGLE IN MODERN SOCIETY

Q: Will you tell the court and jury what is meant by "class struggle" as used by Marx?

A: I can't do it in two sentences, of course. Do you refer to the class struggle in present society?

Q: Yes, confine yourself to the class struggle in present society.

A: Marx contended that present day society is divided into two main classes. One is the capitalists, or the bourgeoisie. The bourgeoisie is a French designation which is used by Marx interchangeably with the expression "the modern capitalist."

The other main class is the working class, the proletariat. These are the two main classes in society. The workers are exploited by the capitalists. There is a constant conflict of interests between them, an unceasing struggle between these classes, which can only culminate in the eventual victory of the proletariat and the establishment of Socialism.

Q: Whom would you include under the term "working class"?

A: We use the term working class, or proletariat, to designate the modern wage workers. Frequently it is broadened in its application to include working farmers, sharecroppers, tenant farmers, real dirt farmers, and so on, but that is not a precise, scientific use of the word as Marx defines it.

Q: What other classes, if any, are there outside the working class and the capitalist class, according to Marxian theory?

A: Between these two main powerful classes in society, is the class which Marx describes as the petty bourgeoisie—that is, the small proprietors, the small operators, people who have their own little shops, small stores, the farmer who owns a small farm—they constitute a class which Marx called the petty bourgeoisie.

Q: What would you say with reference to the professional classes?

A: Yes, roughly they are included also in this petty-bourgeois category in Marxian terminology.

Q: And what is the attitude of the Party towards this middle class?

A: It is the opinion of the Party that the wage working class alone cannot successfully achieve the social revolution. The workers must have the support of the decisive majority of the petty bourgeoisie and, in particular, of the small farmers. That, reiterated time and time again by Trotsky on the basis of the Russian and German experiences, is an absolute prerequisite for success in a revolution—that the workers must have the support of the petty bourgeoisie. Otherwise, the fascists will get them, as was the case in Germany, and instead of a progressive social revolution, you get a reactionary counter-revolution of fascism.

WORKERS' DEMOCRACY IS OUR AIM

Q: Define the term "Dictatorship of the Proletariat."

A: "Dictatorship of the Proletariat" is Marx's definition of the state that will be in operation in the transition period between the overthrow of capitalism and the institution of the Socialist society. That is, the Workers' and Farmers' Government will, in the opinion of the Marxists, be a class dictatorship in that it will frankly represent the workers and farmers, and will not even pretend to represent the economic interests of the capitalists.

Q: What form will that dictatorship take with reference to the capitalist class?

A: Well, you mean, what would be the attitude toward the dispossessed capitalists?

Q: Yes, how will it exercise its dictatorship over the capitalist class?

A: That depends on a number of conditions. There is no fixed rule. It depends on a number of conditions, the most important of which is the wealth and resources of the given country where the revolution takes place; and the second is the attitude of the capitalist class, whether the capitalists reconcile themselves to the new regime, or take up an armed struggle against it.

Q: What is the difference between the scientific definition of dictatorship of the proletariat and the ordinary use of the word dictatorship?

A: Well, the popular impression of dictatorship is a one-man rule, an absolutism. I think that is the popular understanding of the word dictatorship. This is not contemplated at all in the Marxian term dictatorship of the proletariat. This means the dictatorship of a class.

Q: And how will the dictatorship of the proletariat oper-

ate insofar as democratic rights are concerned?

A: We think it will be the most democratic government from the point of view of the great masses of the people that has ever existed, far more democratic, in the real essence of the matter, than the present bourgeois democracy in the United States.

Q: What about freedom of speech and all the freedoms that we generally associate with democratic government?

A: I think in the United States you can say with absolute certainty that the freedoms of speech, press, assemblage, religion, will be written in the program of the victorious revolution.

CAPITALIST VIOLENCE

Q: Now, what is the opinion of Marxists with reference to the change in the social order, as far as its being accompanied or not accompanied by violence?

A: It is the opinion of all Marxists that it will be accompanied by violence.

Q: Why?

A: That is based, like all Marxist doctrine, on a study of history, the historical experiences of mankind in the numerous changes of society from one form to another, the revolutions which accompanied it, and the resistance which the outlived classes invariably put up against the new order. Their attempt to defend themselves against the new order, or to suppress by violence the movement for the new order, has resulted in every important social transformation up to now being accompanied by violence.

Q: Who, in the opinion of Marxists, initiated that violence?

A: Always the ruling class; always the outlived class that doesn't want to leave the stage when the time has come. They want to hang on to their privileges, to reinforce them by violent measures, against the rising majority and they run up against the mass violence of the new class, which history has ordained shall come to power.

Q: What is the opinion of Marxists, as far as winning a majority of the people to Socialist ideas?

A: Yes, that certainly is the aim of the Party. That is the aim of the Marxist movement, has been from its inception. Marx said the social revolution of the proletariat—I think I can quote his exact words from memory—"is a movement of the immense majority in the interests of the immense majority." He said this in distinguishing it from previous revolutions which had been made in the interest of minorities, as was the case in France in 1789.

Q: What would you say is the opinion of Marxists as far as the desirability of a peaceful transition is concerned?

A: The position of the Marxists is that the most economical and preferable, the most desirable method of social transformation, by all means, is to have it done peacefully.

Q: And in the opinion of the Marxists, is that absolutely excluded?

A: Well, I wouldn't say absolutely excluded. We say that the lessons of history don't show any important examples in favor of the idea so that you can count upon it.

AN EXAMPLE IN AMERICAN HISTORY

Q: Can you give us examples in American history of a minority refusing to submit to a majority?

A: I can give you a very important one. The conception of the Marxists is that, even if the transfer of political power from the capitalists to the proletariat is accomplished peacefully, —then the minority, the exploiting capitalist class, will revolt against the new regime, no matter how legally it is established.

I can give you an example in American history. The American Civil War resulted from the fact that the Southern slaveholders couldn't reconcile themselves to the legal parliamentary victory of Northern capitalism, the election of President Lincoln.

Q: Can you give us an example outside of America where a reactionary minority revolted against a majority in office?

A: Yes, in Spain—the coalition of workers' and liberal parties in Spain got an absolute majority in the elections and established the People's Front Government. This government was no sooner installed than it was confronted with an armed rebellion, led by the reactionary capitalists of Spain.

Q: Then the theory of Marxists and the theory of the Socialist Workers Party, as far as violence is concerned, is a prediction based upon a study of history, is that right?

A: Well, that is part of it. It is a prediction that the outlived class, which is put in a minority by the revolutionary growth in the country, will try by violent means to hold on to its privileges against the will of the majority. That is what we predict.

Of course, we don't limit ourselves simply to that prediction. We go further, and advise the workers to bear this in mind and prepare themselves not to permit the reactionary outlived minority to frustrate the will of the majority.

FASCISM AND VIOLENCE

Q: What role does the rise and existence of fascism play with reference to the possibility of violence?

A: That is really the nub of the whole question, because the reactionary violence of the capitalist class, expressed through

fascism, is invoked against the workers. Long before the revolutionary movement of the workers gains the majority, fascist gangs are organized and subsidized by millions in funds from the biggest industrialists and financiers, as the example of Germany showed—and these fascist gangs undertake to break up the labor movement by force. They raid the halls, assassinate the leaders, break up the meetings, burn the printing plants, and destroy the possibility of functioning long before the labor movement has taken the road of revolution.

I say that is the nub of the whole question of violence. If the workers don't recognize that, and do not begin to defend themselves against the fascists, they will never be given the possibility of voting on the question of revolution. They will face the fate of the German and Italian proletariat and they will be in the chains of fascist slavery before they have a chance of any kind of a fair vote on whether they want Socialism or not.

It is a life and death question for the workers that they organize themselves to prevent fascism, the fascist gangs, from breaking up the workers' organizations, and not to wait until it is too late. That is in the program of our Party.

Q: What difference is there, Mr. Cannon, between advocating violence and predicting violent revolution?

MR. SCHWEINHAUT: I object to that.

THE COURT: Is this man qualified to answer that question? Is that a question for him to answer?

MR. SCHWEINHAUT: It is for the jury to determine.

MR. GOLDMAN: I will rephrase the question.

Q (By Mr. Goldman): What is the attitude of the Socialist Workers Party as far as advocating violent revolution is concerned?

A: No, so far as I know, there is no authority among the most representative teachers of Marxism for advocating violent revolution. If we can have the possibility of peaceful revolution by the registration of the will of the majority of the people, it seems to me it would be utterly absurd to reject that, because if we don't have the support of the majority of the people, we can't make a successful revolution anyhow.

Q: Explain the sentence that I read from page 6 of the Declaration of Principles, Government's Exhibit 1:

"The belief that in such a country as the United States we live in a free democratic society in which fundamental economic change can be effected by persuasion, by education, by legal and purely parliamentary method, is an illusion."

A: That goes back to what I said before, that we consider it an illusion for the workers to think that the ruling class violence will not be invoked against them in the course of their efforts to organize the majority of the people.

Q: What is meant by the expression "overthrow of the capitalist state"?

A: That means to replace it by a Workers' and Farmers' Government; that is what we mean.

GOVERNMENT IN A WORKERS' STATE

Q: What is meant by the expression "destroy the machinery of the capitalist state"?

A: By that we mean that when we set up the Workers' and Farmers' Government in this country, the functioning of this government, its tasks, its whole nature, will be so profoundly and radically different from the functions, tasks, and nature of the bourgeois state, that we will have to replace it all along the line. From the very beginning the workers' state has a different foundation, and it is different in all respects. It has to create an entirely new apparatus, a new state apparatus from top to bottom. That is what we mean.

Q: Do you mean that there will be no Congress or House of Representatives and Senate?

A: It will be a different kind of a Congress. It will be a Congress of representatives of workers and soldiers and farmers, based on their occupational units, rather than the present form based on territorial representation.

Q: And what is the meaning of "Soviet"?

A: Soviet is a Russian word which means "Council." It is the Russian equivalent for council in our language. It means a body of representatives of various groups. That is what the term meant in the Russian revolution. That is, the representatives—they called them deputies—I guess we would call them delegates. The delegates from various shops in a given city come together in a central body. The Russians called it the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies.

Q: Now, what is meant by "expropriation"?

A: Expropriation we apply to big industry, which is in the hands of private capitalists, the Sixty Families—take it out of their hands and put it in the hands of the people through their representatives, that's expropriation.

EXPROPRIATION OF THE SIXTY FAMILIES

Q: Is it a question of principle that there should be no compensation for property expropriated from the Sixty Families?

A: No, it is not a question of principle. That question has been debated interminably in the Marxist movement. No place has any authoritative Marxist declared it a question of principle not to compensate. It is a question of possibility, of adequate finances, of an agreement of the private owners to submit, and so forth.

Q: Would the party gladly pay these owners if they could avoid violence?

A: I can only give you my opinion.

Q: What is your opinion?

A: My personal opinion is that if the workers reached the point of the majority, and confronted the capitalist private owners of industry with the fact of their majority and their power, and then we were able to make a deal with the capitalists to compensate them for their holdings, and let them enjoy this for the rest of their lives, I think it would be a cheaper, a cheaper and more satisfactory way of effecting the necessary social transformation than a civil war. I personally would vote for it—if you could get the capitalists to agree on that, which you couldn't.

Q: What attitude does the Party take toward the ballot?

A: Our Party runs candidates wherever it is able to get on the ballot. We conduct very energetic campaigns during the elections, and in general, to the best of our ability, and to the limit of our resources, we participate in election campaigns.

Q: What campaigns do you remember the Party having participated in in the last few years?

A: Well, I remember the candidacy of Comrade Grace Carlson for the United States Senate last year. I have been a candidate of the Party several times for various offices. In Newark, where we have a good organization, we have had candidates in every election for some time. I cite those three examples. In general, it is the policy of the Party to have candidates everywhere possible.

ATTITUDE TO CAPITALIST GOVERNMENT

Q: Does the Party at times support other candidates?

A: Yes. In cases where we don't have a candidate, it is our policy, as a rule, to support the candidates of another workers' party, or of a Labor or a Farmer-Labor Party. We support them critically. That is, we do not endorse their program, but we vote for them and solicit votes for them, with the explanation that we don't agree with their program. We support them as against the candidates of the Republican and Democratic Parties.

For example, we have always supported the Farmer-Labor candidates in Minnesota in all cases where we didn't have a candidate of our own Party. We supported the candidates of the American Labor Party in New York in similar circumstances.

Q: What is the purpose of the Party in participating in these electoral campaigns?

A: The first purpose, I would say, is to make full use of the democratic possibility afforded to popularize our ideas, to

try to get elected wherever possible; and, from a long range view, to test out the uttermost possibility of advancing the Socialist cause by democratic means.

Q: What purpose did you and associates of yours have in creating the Socialist Workers Party?

A: The purpose was to organize our forces for the more effective propagation of our ideas, with the ultimate object that I have mentioned before, of building up a party that would be able to lead the working masses of the country to Socialism by means of the social revolution.

Q: What is the attitude of the Party, and the opinion of the Party, with reference to the government, as it exists now, being capitalist?

A: Yes, we consider it a capitalist government. That is stated in our Declaration of Principles; that is, a government which represents the economic interests of the class of capitalists in this country, and not the interests of the workers and the poor farmers; not the interests of all the people, as it pretends, but a class government.

Q: What opinion has the Party as to differences within the ruling class from the point of view of more liberal or more reactionary?

A: We don't picture the capitalist class as one solid, homogeneous unit. There are all kinds of different trends, different interests among them, which reflect themselves in different capitalist parties and different factions in the parties, and very heated struggles. An example is the present struggle between the interventionists and the isolationists.

Q: Does the Party take an attitude as to whether or not the Roosevelt administration is more or less liberal than previous administrations?

MR. SCHWEINHAUT: I object to that as irrelevant.

THE COURT: Sustained.

DIFFERENCES OF OPINION IN THE PARTY

Q: Is it possible for a difference of opinion to exist in the Party on the question as to whether the transformation will be peaceful or violent?

A: I think it is possible, yes.

Q: So that there is no compulsion on a member to have an opinion as to what the future will have in store for the Party or for the workers?

A: No, I don't think that is compulsory, because that is an opinion about the future that can't be determined with scientific precision.

Q: What steps, if any, does the Party take to secure a correct interpretation of Party policy by individual members?

A: Well, we have, in addition to our public lectures, and press, forums, and so forth—we have internal meetings, educational meetings. In the larger cities we usually conduct a school, where we teach the doctrines of the Party. Individual comrades, unschooled workers who don't understand our program, or who misinterpret it—all kinds of provisions are made to try to explain things to them, to convince them of the Party's point of view. That is a frequent occurrence, because, after all, the program of the Party is a document that represents pretty nearly one hundred years of Socialist thought, and we don't expect an unschooled worker who joins the Party to understand all those doctrines as precisely as the professional Party leaders.

Q: What can you tell us about the differences and degree of knowledge of various members of the Party?

A: Well, there is a big difference of various members and of various leaders.

Q: Is it always possible to correct every mistake that every member of the Party makes?

MR. SCHWEINHAUT: I object to that.

THE COURT: It seems to me the answer to that is obvious.

MR. SCHWEINHAUT: I will stipulate that it isn't always possible.

MR. GOLDMAN: That is fine.

PARTY IS INTERNATIONALIST TO ITS VERY CORE

Q (By Mr. Goldman): What is the position taken by the Party on the question of Internationalism?

A: The Party is internationalist to the very core.

Q: And what do you mean by that?

A: We believe that the modern world is an economic unit. No country is self-sufficient. It is impossible to solve the accumulated problems of the present day, except on a world scale; no nation is self-sufficient, and no nation can stand alone.

The economy of the world now is all tied together in one unit, and because we think that the solution of the problem of the day—the establishment of Socialism—is a world problem, we believe that the advanced workers in every country must collaborate in working toward that goal. We have, from the very beginning of our movement, collaborated with like-minded people in all other countries in trying to promote the Socialist movement on a world scale. We have advocated the international organization of the workers, and their cooperation in all respects, and mutual assistance in all respects possible.

try to get elected wherever possible; and, from a long range view, to test out the uttermost possibility of advancing the Socialist cause by democratic means.

Q: What purpose did you and associates of yours have in creating the Socialist Workers Party?

A: The purpose was to organize our forces for the more effective propagation of our ideas, with the ultimate object that I have mentioned before, of building up a party that would be able to lead the working masses of the country to Socialism by means of the social revolution.

Q: What is the attitude of the Party, and the opinion of the Party, with reference to the government, as it exists now, being capitalist?

A: Yes, we consider it a capitalist government. That is stated in our Declaration of Principles; that is, a government which represents the economic interests of the class of capitalists in this country, and not the interests of the workers and the poor farmers; not the interests of all the people, as it pretends, but a class government.

Q: What opinion has the Party as to differences within the ruling class from the point of view of more liberal or more reactionary?

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A: No, I don't think that is compulsory, because that is an opinion about the future that can't be determined with scientific precision.

Q: What steps, if any, does the Party take to secure a correct interpretation of Party policy by individual members?

Q: Does the Party have any attitude on the question of racial or national differences?

A: Yes, the Party is opposed to all forms of national chauvinism, race prejudice, discrimination, denigration of races—I mean by that, this hateful theory of the fascists about inferior races. We believe in and we stand for the full equality of all races, nationalities, creeds. It is written in our program that we fight against anti-Semitism and that we demand full and unconditional equality for the Negro in all avenues of life. We are friends of the colonial people, the Chinese, of all those that are victimized and treated as inferiors.

Q: What is the position of the Party on Socialism as a world system?

A: We not only stand for an International Socialist movement, but we believe that the Socialist order will be a world order, not a national autarchy which is carried to its absurd extreme by the fascists, who have tried to set up a theory that Germany could be a completely self-sufficient nation in an economic sense, that Italy can be, and so forth. We believe that the wealth of the world, the raw materials of the world, and the natural resources of the world are so distributed over the earth that every country contributes something and lacks something for a rounded and harmonious development of the productive forces of mankind.

We visualize the future society of mankind as a Socialist world order which will have a division of labor between the various countries according to their resources, a comradely collaboration between them, and production eventually of the necessities and luxuries of mankind according to a single universal world plan.

THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL AND THE SWP

Q: Did the Party ever belong to an international organization?

A: The Party belonged to the Fourth International. It was designated that way to distinguish it from the three other international organizations which had been known in the history of Socialism. The first one, the International Working Men's Association* was founded under the leadership of Marx in the 1860's and lasted until about 1871.

The Second International was organized on the initiative of the German, French and other Socialist parties of Europe about 1890, and continues today. It includes those reformist Socialist

*The First International was founded on September 28, 1864 and formally dissolved July 15, 1876.—*Ed.*

parties and trade unions of Europe, or at least did until they were destroyed by the Hitler scourge.

The Third International was founded under the leadership of Lenin and Trotsky after the Russian revolution. It was founded in 1919, as a rival of the Second International, the main motive being that the Second International had supported the imperialist war of 1914 and, in the view of the Bolsheviks, had thereby betrayed the interests of the workers.

The Fourth International was organized on the initiative of Trotsky as a rival of the Stalinist Third International. We took part in the initiation of that movement, and we participated in its work up until last December.

Q: And what caused you to cease belonging to it?

A: The passage by Congress of the Voorhis Act, which placed penalties upon organizations that have international affiliation, made that necessary. We called a Special Convention of the Party, and formally severed our relation with the Fourth International in compliance with the Voorhis Act.

Q: What role do Fourth International resolutions play in the Party?

A: Well, they have a tremendous moral authority in our Party. All the sections of the Fourth International have been autonomous in their national decisions, but the programmatic documents of the Fourth International, wherever they are applicable to American conditions, have a decisive influence with us.

Q: So you accept them, insofar as they are applicable to American conditions?

A: Yes—it is not the letter of the law for us in the sense that our Declaration of Principles is, but it is a general ideological guiding line for us.

THE PARTY AND THE UNIONS

Q: Now, does the Party interest itself in the trade union movement?

A: Oh, yes, immensely.

Q: And why?

A: Well, we view the trade union movement as the basic organization of the workers, that should include the great mass of the workers, and must include them in the struggle to defend their interests from day to day. We are in favor of trade unions, and participate in organizing them wherever we can.

Q: And what is the fundamental purpose of the Party in trying to strengthen the trade unions and organizing them wherever they are not organized?

A: Well, we have a double purpose. One is that we are seriously interested in anything that benefits the workers. The

trade unions help the workers to resist oppression, possibly to gain improvement of conditions; that is for us a decisive reason to support them, because we are in favor of anything that benefits the workers.

A second reason is that the trade unions, which are big mass organizations, offer the most productive fields for us to work in to popularize the ideas of the Party, and the influence of the Party.

Q: What instructions, if any, are given to Party members with reference to their activity in trade unions?

A: Yes, our Party members are instructed to be the best trade unionists, to do the most work for the unions—be most attentive, most active in the union work—to be the best mechanics at their trade, to become influential by virtue of their superiority in their abilities and their actions in behalf of the workers in the union.

Q: Does the Party take a position with reference to the CIO and the AFL?

MR. SCHWEINHAUT: I object to that as immaterial, if your Honor please.

THE COURT: What is the materiality of that, Mr. Goldman?

MR. GOLDMAN: Well, it would explain the fight here in Local 544-CIO, about which the witnesses for the Government testified.

THE COURT: He may answer.

THE WITNESS: Yes, we take a position.

Q (By Mr. Goldman): And what is that position, Mr. Cannon?

A: In general we are in favor of industrial unionism. That is, that form of unionism which organizes all the workers in a given shop or given industry into one union. We consider that a more progressive and effective form of organization than craft unionism, so we support the industrial union principle.

The CIO has found its greatest field of work in the big mass production industries, such as automobile and steel, which hitherto were unorganized, where the workers were without the protection of any organization, and where experience proved it was impossible for the craft unions, a dozen or more in a single shop, to organize them. We consider that a tremendously progressive development, the organization of several million mass production workers, so that, in general, we sympathize with the trend represented by the CIO.

But we don't condemn the AFL. We are opposed to craft unionism, but many of our members belong to AFL unions and we have, in general, the same attitude towards them as to CIO unions, to build them up, to strengthen them, improve the conditions of the workers. And we are sponsors of the idea of unity

of the AFL and the CIO; it was written in our Declaration of Principles; so that while we are somewhat partial to the CIO as a national movement, we are in favor of unity on the provision that it should not sacrifice the industrial union form of organization.

Q: What is the Party policy with reference to the existence of democracy in trade unions?

A: The Declaration of Principles, and all of our editorials and speeches, are continually demanding a democratic regime inside the unions, demanding the rights of the members to speak up, to have free elections, and frequent elections, and in general to have the unions under the control of the rank and file through the system of democracy.

Q: And what is the policy of the Party with reference to racketeering and gangsterism in the unions?

A: Similarly, the Declaration of Principles denounces racketeers, gangsters, all criminal elements—summons our members and sympathizers to fight relentlessly to clean them out of the unions, and forbids under penalty of expulsion any member of the Party to give any direct or indirect support to any gangster or racketeering element in the unions.

OUR ACTIVITIES INSIDE THE UNIONS

Q: Is there such a policy of the Party as controlling the unions?

A: No, a union is an independent, autonomous organization and—

MR. SCHWEINHAUT: Well, now, you have answered the question. He asked you if there was a policy with respect to controlling the unions, and you said, "No."

MR. GOLDMAN: Let him explain.

MR. SCHWEINHAUT: Why does it need explanation?

MR. GOLDMAN: Well, there are at least, I should say, 25 or 50 pages of evidence about the Party controlling unions.

MR. SCHWEINHAUT: And the witness has said that there is no such policy. That disposes of it.

THE COURT: Well, he has answered this question, certainly.

Q (By Mr. Goldman): In what way does the Party try to win influence in the unions?

A: We try to get our members in the unions to strive for the leading influence in the unions.

Q: How?

A: First of all by our instructions to our members in the unions that they must be the best trade unionists in the union, and they must be the best workers on the job. That is first,

in order that they may gain the respect of their fellow workers and their confidence.

Second, they have got to be active in the propagation of our ideas to their fellow workers. They have got to be busy and active in all union affairs—try to get subscriptions to our paper, try to influence union members to come to our lectures and classes and, in general, work to gain sympathy and support for the Party and its program. We do say that, surely.

Q: What policy does the Party have with reference to placing Party members in official positions of the unions?

A: Yes, whenever they can be fairly elected, we certainly encourage them to try.

Q: But through elections?

A: Through elections, yes. Also if they can be appointed by some higher body and the work is not inconsistent with our principles, we advise them to accept the appointment, as in the case, for example, of Comrade Dobbs.

Q: Appointment for what?

A: Dobbs was appointed International Organizer of the Teamsters Union at one time.

THE COURT: Ladies and gentlemen of the jury, you will please keep in mind the admonitions of the court. We will recess until ten o'clock tomorrow morning.

District Court of the United States,
District of Minnesota, Fourth Division.

Wednesday, November 19
Morning Session.

JAMES P. CANNON

DIRECT EXAMINATION (*Continued*)

Q (By Mr. Goldman): Mr. Cannon, will you tell us the position of the Socialist Workers Party on the causes of modern war?

A: Modern wars, in the opinion of our Party, are caused by the conflict of imperialist nations for markets, colonies, sources of raw material, fields for investment and spheres of influence.

Q: What do you mean by "imperialist," Mr. Cannon?

A: Those capitalist nations which directly or indirectly exploit other countries.

Q: What is the Party's position on the inevitability of wars under the capitalist system?

A: As long as the capitalist system remains, and with it those conditions which I have mentioned, which flow automatically from the operation of the capitalist and imperialist system, wars, recurring wars, are inevitable.

Q: And can anybody's opposition, including the opposition of the Socialist Workers Party to war, prevent wars under the capitalist system?

A: No. Our Party has always stated that it is impossible to prevent wars without abolishing the capitalist system which breeds war. It may be possible to delay a war for a while, but eventually it is impossible to prevent wars while this system and its conflicts of imperialist nations, remains.

"OUR PARTY OPPOSED TO ALL IMPERIALIST WARS"

Q: Then is it true that the Party is of the opinion that wars are caused by international economic conflicts, and not by the good will or bad will of some people?

A: Yes. That does not eliminate the possibility of incidental attacks being caused by the acts of this or that ruling group of one country or another; but fundamentally wars are caused by the efforts of all the capitalist powers to expand into other fields. The only way they can get them is by taking them away from some other power, because the whole world has been divided up among a small group of imperialist powers. That is what leads to war, regardless of the will of the people.

We do not maintain that the ruling groups of any of the imperialist powers now at war really desired the war. We have stated many times that they would have been glad to have avoided it; but they could not avoid it and maintain the capitalist system in their country.

Q: What is the attitude of the Party towards a war which it designates as an imperialist war?

A: Our Party is unalterably opposed to all imperialist wars.

Q: And what is meant by opposition to imperialist wars?

A: By that we mean that we do not give any support to any imperialist war. We do not vote for it; we do not vote for any person that promotes it; we do not speak for it; we do not write for it. We are in opposition to it.

Q: How does the Socialist Workers Party oppose the idea of the United States entering into the war?

A: We do it as every other political party promotes its ideas on any foreign policy. We write against it in the paper; we speak against it; we try to create sentiment in any organization we can approach, to adopt resolutions against the war. If we had members in Congress, they would speak in Congress, in the Senate, against it. In general we carry on public political agitation against the entry of the United States into war, and against all measures taken either by the Executive or by Congress which in our opinion lead towards active participation in the war.

Q: What do you mean by "active"?

A: For example, all those measures which have been taken, which put the United States into the war, in effect, without a formal declaration to that effect.

Q: What was the Party's position with reference to amending the Constitution to give the people the power to declare war?

A: For quite a while now we have supported the proposal that was introduced into Congress, I think by Representative Ludlow, and is known as the Ludlow Amendment, for an amendment to the Constitution requiring a referendum vote of the people for the declaration of a war. Our Party supported this proposal and at times has carried on a very energetic agitation in favor of such an amendment to require a referendum vote of the people before war could be declared.

Q: And that is still the position of the Party, Mr. Cannon?

A: Yes, that is incorporated as one of the points of practical daily policy, in the editorial masthead of our paper. If I am not mistaken, it appears on the editorial page as one of our current principles, and every once in a while there appears an editorial or an article in the paper attempting to revive interest in this idea.

WHAT THE PARTY WOULD DO DURING WAR

Q: If the United States should enter into the European conflict, what form would the opposition of the Party take to the war?

A: We would maintain our position.

Q: And that is what?

A: That is, we would not become supporters of the war, even after the war was declared. That is, we would remain an opposition political party on the war question, as on others.

Q: You would not support the war?

A: That is what I mean, we would not support the war, in a political sense.

THE COURT: May I ask you to develop the significance of that last statement?

MR. GOLDMAN: Yes.

Q: When you say, "non-support of the war," just exactly what would the Party do during a war, which would indicate its non-support of the war?

A: Insofar as we are permitted our rights, we would speak against the war as a false policy that should be changed, in the same sense, from our point of view, that other parties might oppose the foreign policy of the government in time of war, just as Lloyd George, for example, opposed the Boer War in public addresses and speeches. Ramsey MacDonald, who later became Prime Minister of England, opposed the war policy of

England during the World War of 1914-1918. We hold our own point of view, which is different from the point of view of the two political figures I have just mentioned, and so far as we are permitted to exercise our right, we would continue to write and speak for a different foreign policy for America.

ANSWERING THE CHARGES RELATING TO SABOTAGE

Q: Would the Party take any practical steps, so-called, to show its opposition to war, or non-support of the war?

A: Practical steps in what sense?

Q: Would the Party try to sabotage the conduct of the war in any way?

A: No. The Party has specifically declared against sabotage. We are opposed to sabotage.

Q: What is that—what do you mean by "sabotage"?

A: That is, obstruction of the operation of the industries, of transportation, or the military forces. Our Party has never at any time taken a position in favor of obstruction or sabotage of the military forces in time of war.

Q: And will you explain the reasons why?

A: Well, as long as we are a minority, we have no choice but to submit to the decision that has been made. A decision has been made, and is accepted by a majority of the people, to go to war. Our comrades have to comply with that. Insofar as they are eligible for the draft, they must accept that, along with the rest of their generation, and go and perform the duty imposed on them, until such time as they convince the majority for a different policy.

Q: So, essentially, your opposition during a war would be of the same type as your opposition prior to the war?

A: A political opposition. That is what we speak of.

Q: Did the Party ever, or does the Party now, advise its members or any of its sympathizers, or any workers that it comes in contact with, to create insubordination in the United States armed forces or naval forces?

A: No.

Q: Will you explain the reason why?

A: Fundamentally the reason is the one I just gave. A serious political party, which aims at a social transformation of society, which is possible only by the consent and support of the great mass of the population—such a party cannot attempt while it is a minority to obstruct the carrying out of the decisions of the majority. By sabotage and insubordination, breaking discipline and so on, a party would absolutely discredit itself and destroy its possibilities of convincing people, besides being utterly ineffective so far as accomplishing anything would be concerned.

NOT "A WAR OF DEMOCRACY AGAINST FASCISM"

Q: Will you state the reasons why the Party would not support a war conducted by the present government of the United States?

A: In general, we do not put any confidence in the ruling capitalist group in this country. We do not give them any support because we do not think they can or will solve the fundamental social problems which must be solved in order to save civilization from shipwreck.

We believe that the necessary social transition from the present system of capitalism to the far more efficient order of Socialism, can only be brought under a leadership of the workers. The workers must organize themselves independently of the capitalist political parties. They must organize a great party of their own, develop an independent working-class party of their own, and oppose the policy of the capitalist parties, regardless of whether they are called the Democratic or Republican, or anything else.

Q: What kind of a war would you consider a war waged by the present government of the United States?

A: I would consider it a capitalist war.

Q: Why?

A: Because America is today a capitalist nation. It is different from the others only in that it is stronger than the others and bigger. We do not believe in capitalist policy. We do not want to conquer any other country. We do not want to gain any colonies. We do not want bloodshed to make profits for American capital.

OUR PROGRAM AGAINST HITLERISM

Q: What is the Party's position on the claim that the war against Hitler is a war of democracy against fascism?

A: We say that is a subterfuge, that the conflict between American imperialism and German imperialism is for the domination of the world. It is absolutely true that Hitler wants to dominate the world, but we think it is equally true that the ruling group of American capitalists has the same idea, and we are not in favor of either of them.

We do not think that the Sixty Families who own America want to wage this war for some sacred principle of democracy. We think they are the greatest enemies of democracy here at home. We think they would only use the opportunity of a war to eliminate all civil liberties at home, to get the best imitation of fascism they can possibly get.

Q: What is the position of the Party with reference to any imperialist or capitalist enemy of the United States, like Germany or Italy?

A: We are not pro-German. We absolutely are not interested in the success of any of the imperialist enemies of the United States.

Q: In case of a conflict between the United States and Germany, Italy or Japan, what would the Party's position be so far as the victory or defeat of the United States, as against its imperialist enemies?

A: Well, we are certainly not in favor of a victory for Japan or Germany or any other imperialist power over the United States.

Q: Is it true then that the Party is as equally opposed to Hitler, as it is to the capitalist claims of the United States?

A: That is uncontested. We consider Hitler and Hitlerism the greatest enemy of mankind. We want to wipe it off the face of the earth. The reason we do not support a declaration of war by American arms, is because we do not believe the American capitalists can defeat Hitler and fascism. We think Hitlerism can be destroyed only by way of conducting a war under the leadership of the workers.

Q: What method does the Party propose for the defeat of Hitler?

A: If the workers formed the Government I spoke of, if the workers' form of government were in power, we would propose two things:

One, that we issue a declaration to the German people, a solemn promise, that we are not going to impose another Versailles peace on them; that we are not going to cripple the German people, or take away their shipping facilities, or take away their milk cows, as was done in the horrible Treaty of Versailles, starving German babies at their mothers' breasts, and filling the German people with such hatred and such demand for revenge that it made it possible for a monster like Hitler to rally them with the slogan of revenge against this terrible Treaty of Versailles. We would say to them:

"We promise you that we will not impose any of those things upon the German people. On the contrary, we propose to you a reorganization of the world on a fair Socialist basis, where the German people, with all their recognized ability and their genius and labor, can participate equally with us." That would be our Party's first proposal to them.

Second, we would also say to them, "On the other hand, we are going to build the biggest army and navy and air force in the world, to put at your disposal, to help smash Hitler by force of arms on one front, while you revolt against him on the home front."

I think that would be the program, in essence, of our Party, which the Workers' and Farmers' Government of America would

advance so far as Hitler is concerned, and we believe that is the only way Hitlerism will be destroyed. Only when the Great Powers on the other side can successfully prevail upon the German people to rise against Hitler, because we must not forget—

MR. SCHWEINHAUT (prosecutor): You have answered the question, Mr. Cannon.

Q: Now, until such time as the workers and farmers in the United States establish their own government and use their own methods to defeat Hitler, the Socialist Workers Party must submit to the majority of the people—is that right?

A: That is all we can do. That is all we propose to do.

Q: And the Party's position is that there will be no obstruction of ways and means taken by the government for the effective prosecution of its war?

A: No obstruction in a military way, or by minority revolution; on the contrary, the Party has declared positively against any such procedure.

Q: What is the opinion of the Party as to the relationship between war and a possible revolutionary situation?

A: Wars frequently have been followed by revolution; wars themselves are the expression of a terrible social crisis, which they are unable to solve. Misery and suffering grow at such a tremendous pace in war, that it often leads to revolution.

The Russo-Japanese war of 1904 produced the Russian revolution of 1905. The World War of 1914 produced the Russian revolution of 1917, the Hungarian revolution, near-revolution in Italy, and the revolution in Germany and Austria; and in general, a revolutionary situation developed over the whole continent of Europe, as the result of the First World War.

I think it is highly probable that if the war in Europe continues, then the mass of the people, especially in Europe, will undertake to put a stop to the slaughter by revolutionary means.

WAR AND REVOLUTION

Q: So that it would be correct to say that a revolutionary situation is created by a war, and not by the Socialist Workers Party, if a revolutionary situation will arise?

A: I would say it is created by the privations of the capitalist system, which are tremendously accelerated by a war.

Q: What is the policy of the Party with reference to permitting various opinions and interpretations of current events in the Party's publications?

A: Well, it is not prohibited. Usually, individual members of the Party write articles with a certain slant on current events, that is not necessarily shared by the majority of the Committee.

Q: With reference to predictions or opinions about future occurrences, would you say the Party is more liberal in granting that freedom?

A: Yes, it must necessarily be, because predictions are not verifiable, completely, until after the event, and different opinions arise. We have had in the Party, especially since the outbreak of the World War, conflicting opinions as to when the United States would make formal entry into the war, or whether or not the United States would enter the war. There were not very many who doubted that it would, but I heard some people in the Party express such opinions.

Q: And would you say that the opinions of Party members with reference to a possible future revolutionary situation is in that category of opinion, concerning which there are many differences of opinion?

A: Yes, there must necessarily be.

Q: Do you include in that category also predictions as to whether the revolution would not be accompanied by force or not?

A: Well, within limits, within limits. There is more agreement among the educated leaders of the Party who have studied history and Marxism—there is more agreement on that question, than on such a question as to the prospect of entry into the present World War.

Q: But there can be, and there are, differences of opinion as to the exact time of the revolutionary situation and the approximate development of it?

A: As to the time of a revolution, that is absolutely speculative. There isn't anybody in the Party who has anything more than a tentative opinion on that question.

Q: Would you make any distinction between official resolutions of the Party and editorials?

A: Yes. A resolution is a formal document, approved by the National Committee itself, or by a convention. It is thought out, and becomes an official statement of the Party. In my opinion that carries and should carry a greater weight than an editorial which might be knocked out by an editor while he is rushing the paper to press, and is not written with the same care and preciseness of expression which obtains when a resolution is formally signed by the National Committee.

Q: Does the Party accept officially all opinions expressed in signed articles, or even editorials?

A: No, I would say not officially, no. Signed articles by prominent leaders of the Party, in the minds of the Party members, have at least a semi-official status, I think, but they do not have the weight of a formal resolution of the Committee, or of a Convention.

Q: Now will you please explain what is called the military policy of the Party?

A: The military policy of the Party is incorporated in the decisions of the Conference a year ago, in September 1940. At

that time we called a Special Conference of the Party, in connection with a plenary meeting of the National Committee, to consider this particular question, our attitude towards conscription and the further progress of the war situation, and there we adopted a resolution substantially as follows:

OUR PROLETARIAN MILITARY POLICY

Point 1: As long as conscription has been adopted as the law, and once it was law, referring to the Selective Service Act, all Party members must comply with this law, must register and must not oppose the registration of others. On the contrary, the Party specifically opposes the position of such groups as conscientious objectors. While we admire the courage and integrity of a rather high order that it takes to do what the conscientious objectors have done, we have written against their policy and said it is wrong for individuals to refuse to register when the great mass of their generation are going to war. So far as we are concerned, if the young generation of American workers goes to war, our Party members go with them, and share in all their dangers and hardships and experience.

Point 2: Our resolution says that our comrades have got to be good soldiers, the same way that we tell a comrade in a factory that he must be the best trade unionist and the best mechanic in order to gain the confidence and respect of his fellow-workers. We say, in the military service, he must be the best soldier; he must be most efficient in the use of whatever weapons and arms he is assigned to, and submit to discipline, and be concerned about the welfare of fellow-soldiers in order to establish his position in their respect and confidence.

THE COURT: May I inquire whether or not this is an oral or a written policy that Mr. Cannon has just given?

THE WITNESS: I think my speeches at the Conference in Chicago last September were introduced as exhibits here, some extracts from them at least.

MR. GOLDMAN: Yes, I am sure they were.

THE COURT: Mr. Myer, you should be able to put your finger on those particular exhibits, I believe.

MR. MYER: I think they are exhibits 116 and 186.

Q: Now, were there any other points discussed and adopted at that Conference, with reference to the military policy of the Party?

A: Yes. We came out in favor of the idea of conscription, universal military training. That is predicated on the idea that at the present time the whole world is in arms, that all decisions nowadays are being made by arms, or with the threat of arms. In such a situation we must recognize that the workers must also become trained in the military arts. We are in

favor of universal military training, according to our official decision; but we are not in favor, that is, we do not give political support, to the method that is used by the present capitalist government.

We propose that the workers should get military training in special camps under the direction of the trade unions; that the government should furnish a part of its military funds in appropriations to equip those camps with the necessary arms and materials and instructors, but the camps should be under the auspices of the trade unions.

There should be also special camps set up under the auspices of the unions, for the training of workers to become officers. Government funds should be appropriated for this purpose, so that a condition can be created to remove one of the greatest defects and sources of dissatisfaction in the present military apparatus, that is, the social gulf between the worker or farmer-soldier, and the officer from another class, who does not have an understanding of the soldier's problem and does not have the proper attitude towards him.

We believe the workers are entitled to have as officers men out of their own ranks whom they have learned to respect in the course of their work and common struggle with them, such as picket captains, leaders of unions, men who have distinguished themselves in the affairs of workers' organizations, and who come from the rank and file of the workers. Such men as officers would be much more concerned about the welfare of the rank and file of soldiers than a college boy from Harvard or Yale, who never saw a factory, and never rubbed elbows with the worker, and considers him an inferior being. That is, I would say, the heart of our military proposal, of our military policy.

DEMOCRATIC RIGHTS FOR THE SOLDIERS

Q: What is the position of the Party with reference to civil rights in the army?

A: We stand also for soldier citizens' rights. We do not agree with the idea that when you take a million and a half young men out of civil life, that they cease to have the rights of citizens. We think they should have all the rights of citizens. They should have the right to petition Congress; they should have the right to vote; they should have the right to elect committees to present their grievances; they should have the right to elect their own officers, at least the minor officers, and in general they should have the democratic rights of citizens, and we advocate that. We advocate legislation to confer upon the soldiers those rights, and doing away with the present inefficient military set-up.

Q: Did the Party officially, or to your knowledge, did any

Party member now in the service, ever attempt to create in-subordination in the ranks of the armed forces?

A: Not to my knowledge.

Q: In your opinion, if there have been such incidents, what is the cause of them?

A: I think there are a number of causes of discontent and dissatisfaction in the conscript army. That is a matter of public comment in all the newspapers and magazines, and various opinions and theories have been expressed as to the reasons for it.

Q: How does the Party propose to realize the demands for compulsory training under trade union control?

A: Our program is a legislative program. Everything that we propose we would have incorporated into law. If we had a delegation in Congress, they would introduce a bill, or a series of bills, providing for the incorporation in the law of the country of these proposals, these military proposals of ours.

Q: Did any authoritative leader of the Party ever refer to Plattsburg as an example?

A: Yes. In fact, that was part of the origin of the idea. As I said before, the chief sore point in the military set-up is the class distinction between the officers and the ranks. We know that in the period prior to the First World War, special camps were set up for the training of business and professional men to be officers in the army. Plattsburg was one of these. This was a part of the so-called preparedness campaign, before the United States finally got into the war. The government appropriated some funds, and some business men donated funds. The government provided instructors and furnished the necessary equipment for the training of a large number of business and professional men who were ultimately to be officers in the army.

We cannot see why the workers should not have the same rights. We think it is perfectly fair and reasonable, certainly it is compatible with the existing laws. As I said before, it is a legislative proposal on our part. We would, if we could, incorporate that into the law of the country.

THE COURT: We will take our morning recess at this time.

(Morning Recess)

Q: I call your attention, Mr. Cannon, to the testimony of some witnesses for the prosecution to the effect that certain Party members told them to join the army, and then to start to kick about the food and create dissatisfaction. What can you say with reference to the Party policy about that?

A: In the military forces, as far as our information goes from members who have been drafted and from others whom—

MR. SCHWEINHAUT: Now, just a moment. You are not answering the question at all. He asked you whether the Party

had a policy, whether it does or does not. If so, tell us what that policy is, not what you heard from people in the service.

THE WITNESS: I want to explain why our policy is what it is.

THE COURT: We have not heard that there is a policy yet.

Q: Is there a policy?

A: Yes, we have a policy.

Q: What is that policy?

A: The policy is not to support or to initiate any agitation about food. I want to tell you the reason. So far as our knowledge goes, from members of the Party who have been drafted and whom we have seen on furlough, and from other investigation, there is not much dissatisfaction with the food in the present set-up.

Q: And if there is any dissatisfaction with food, what would you say it was caused by?

A: So far as our information goes, there are only isolated cases now. We do not propose to kick about the food if the food is satisfactory. If the food is bad, the soldiers will kick about it themselves, and they should kick about it.

Q: What would you say about the testimony of these witnesses—

MR. SCHWEINHAUT: I object to that.

MR. GOLDMAN: Strike it out.

NO GRIEVANCES WITHOUT FOUNDATION

Q: Then will you state definitely, what is the policy of the Party with reference to creating dissatisfaction in the army, when causes for dissatisfaction do not exist?

A: I do not know of anything in the Party program or Party literature that proposes to incite grievances without foundation. Where causes for dissatisfaction exist, they create the dissatisfaction, not the Party.

MR. SCHWEINHAUT: Just a moment, please.

Q: If there have been grievances, and if there has been dissatisfaction, is the Party in any way responsible for that?

A: No, I don't think so, in any way at all. That is the present situation.

Q: And the people who have charge of feeding the army are the ones responsible for that, or for the grievances?

MR. SCHWEINHAUT: Well, that is leading.

MR. GOLDMAN: Well, he has not objected, so you may proceed and answer it.

MR. SCHWEINHAUT: Then I will object to it now.

THE COURT: I will sustain the objection.

Q: Now, on the question of military training under trade union control—you were speaking about Plattsburg at the time

of the recess. Will you continue and explain further the policy on that?

A: I used that as an illustration of how special camps were instituted and government instructors provided to train business and professional men in the period shortly prior to our entry into the last World War. In the Spanish Civil War all the parties and unions not only had their own training camps authorized by the government, but even supplied their own regiments in the fight against the fascist army of Franco.

Q: Now, the present trade unions are not under the control of the Party, are they?

A: No, they are under the control, essentially or practically completely, of leaders who are in harmony with the present Roosevelt administration.

Q: As I understand, the Party favors military training under trade union control?

A: Yes. The idea is to give to the unions as they are, a wider authority and supervision over their people.

Q: And that policy is not dependent upon the Party controlling the trade unions?

A: No. We can only take our chances that we will be in the minority in those training camps, as we are in the unions.

Q: What measures do you propose in order to effectuate the policy of military training under trade union control?

A: As I think I said before, it is a proposal for a legislative program. We would have such a bill introduced into Congress and passed, if we had the power, or if we could gain the support of Congressmen who are opposed to us on other grounds, but who would agree to this. This is a program that is not necessarily Socialist.

Q: If any member of the Party would either attempt to obstruct the Selective Service Act, or advise the obstruction of it, what would the Party do about that?

MR. SCHWEINHAUT: That is objected to on the ground that there has been no evidence offered by the government that the Party attempted to obstruct the Selective Service Act.

MR. GOLDMAN: Then the government admits that the Party has not attempted to obstruct the Selective Service Act?

MR. SCHWEINHAUT: We have not attempted to show that there was any attempt to interfere with the Selective Service Act.

MR. GOLDMAN: I gathered that questions were asked a number of witnesses, as to their age, and the necessity of their going into service, with an intention on the part of the prosecution to prove that we, somehow or other, tried to interfere. If the government says "No," I will drop that.

MR. SCHWEINHAUT: We will clear the atmosphere on that right now. We do not contend that the Party attempted to

keep anybody from registering for the draft, or in that respect to impede the progress of the Selective Service Act. What our evidence tended to show was what the Party members were supposed to do after they got into the army.

MR. GOLDMAN: Well, that is cleared up, then.

Q: Did you hear a witness for the government testify that he was told by some Party member to go to Fort Snelling and create dissatisfaction? I think that was the gist of the testimony. Did you hear that?

A: Something to that effect.

Q: What is the Party's policy with reference to any creating of dissatisfaction in Fort Snelling or any other military camp?

MR. SCHWEINHAUT: I object to that, because he has answered what it was at least twice.

THE COURT: Objection sustained.

OUR POSITION ON THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION

Q: Does the Party have an official position on the Russian revolution, Mr. Cannon?

A: Yes.

Q: What is that position? Has it ever been adopted in the form of an official resolution?

A: It is incorporated in the Declaration of Principles.

Q: What is that position?

A: That the Party supports—

MR. SCHWEINHAUT: Just a moment. I will object to that on the ground that, the witness having stated that it is incorporated in the Declaration of Principles, therefore, it speaks for itself.

MR. GOLDMAN: An explanation of the Declaration of Principles is in order.

THE COURT: He may answer.

A (*Continuing*): We support the Russian revolution of 1917. We consider that it embodies the doctrines and the theories of Marxism which we uphold.

Q: How many revolutions were there in Russia in 1917?

A: There was a revolution in February according to the Russian calendar, in March according to the modern calendar, which developed into the proletarian revolution of November 7th according to the modern calendar.

Q: What is the general position taken by Marxists with reference to the Russian revolution?

A: The one that I have given here, in support of the revolution.

Q: And what does "support" mean?

A: Well, that is a rather mild—it would be a mild description of our attitude. We consider it the greatest and most progressive event in the entire history of mankind.

Q: And I think you said in your reply to a previous question, that you consider the doctrines embodied in that revolution as Marxist doctrines? Explain that.

A: The theory of Marxism in our opinion was completely vindicated in the Russian revolution, and the theory of Marxism, which is the establishment of a government of workers and peasants, which undertakes to bring about a social transformation from capitalism towards Socialism—all this was undertaken in the Russian revolution.

Q: Now, can you tell us anything about the legality of that revolution?

A: Yes.

THE COURT: Judged by what standards?

MR. GOLDMAN: What I mean by that is to have him explain exactly how the revolution occurred, because counsel for the Government tries to present it as a violent upheaval of the minority against the majority, and the facts are the very contrary. I want the witness to explain the nature of that revolution.

A: The Czar and Czarism were overthrown in March by an uprising of the masses, of the people in the big cities, and the peasants.

Q: Was the Bolshevik Party responsible for that uprising in any way?

A: No. the Bolshevik Party was a very infinitesimal group at the time of the March revolution.

Q: What is the meaning of "Bolshevism"?

A: The word *Bolshevik* is a Russian word meaning *majority*. It acquired a political meaning in the Russian Social-Democratic Labor Party. In the Congress of 1903 a controversy developed which divided the party into groups, the majority and the minority, the majority called the Bolsheviks and the minority called Mensheviks.

Q: Those are Russian words meaning minority and majority?

A: Yes. They split up and divided into parties. Each called itself the Russian Social-Democratic Labor Party and in parentheses on the end "Bolsheviks" or "Mensheviks," as the case might be.

SOVIETS ESTABLISHED EVERYWHERE

Q: Now, will you proceed and tell the jury what happened during the October revolution, or in our calendar in November 1917.

A: Well, to show the chronology: When Czarism was overthrown by the masses of the people, the whole structure of that tyranny was destroyed. A new government was constituted, but the new government machinery was based on the Soviets, which sprang up spontaneously in the revolutionary upheaval. Soviets of workers and soldiers were established everywhere. In Petrograd, the workers and soldiers sent delegates—deputies—to the central council or, as they called it, the Soviet; similarly in Moscow and other places. This body was recognized as authoritative.

The government that was constituted after the overthrow of the Czar was headed by Prince Lvov, with Miliukov as Foreign Minister; it derived its authority from the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies and the Soviets of Peasants' Deputies. In April they had a National All-Russian Conference of the Workers' and Soldiers' Soviets, and there they elected an All-Russian Central Executive Committee of the Workers' and Soldiers' Soviets. In May, the Peasant Soviets had an All-Russian Congress and elected an All-Russian Central Executive Committee of the peasants.

Q: What proportion of the population did those Soviets represent?

A: They represented the people, the great mass of the people. I think it was impossible even to speak in terms of majorities or minorities. They were the masses themselves. The peasants and the soldiers and the workers were the people; those two bodies, the All-Russian Central Executive Committee of the Workers' and Soldiers' Soviets and the All-Russian Central Executive Committee of the Peasant Soviets, formed a joint body which was recognized as the most authoritative and representative body in Russia. It was by their consent that the government cabinet ruled.

The All-Russian Executive Committee of the Soviets repudiated Miliukov, who was the leader of the bourgeoisie. The Soviet body opposed him because of his foreign policy, involving secret treaties that had been exposed. He therefore had to resign, because without the support of the Soviets, authority was lacking; and I think that could be likened, as an analogy, to the French system of the resignation of the Prime Minister when there is a no-confidence vote in the Chamber.

THE ROLE OF THE BOLSHEVIKS

Q: So that the Soviets constituted the authority of the people of Russia?

A: That is right.

Q: In what way did the Bolsheviks progress to power?

A: I wish to go on with the chronology, if you will permit

me. Following the fall of Miliukov, Kerensky rose—there is a popular impression in this country that he became Premier with the fall of the Czar. That is not so. Kerensky became Premier in July. He was made a Minister and eventually Premier because he was a member of the Social Revolutionary Party. That was the peasant party, which then lead the Soviets. He was also supported by the worker element, because he had been a labor lawyer. That was the basis of Kerensky's office; that is, his authority was derived directly from the Soviets.

Now in this period the Bolsheviks were a small minority. They did not create the Soviets. The Soviets were created by the masses; they were initiated by the masses. Neither the Bolshevik Party nor any other party could do anything without the support of the Soviets. In the midst of the revolution of 1905 and again in the overthrow of the Czar in 1917, the Soviets sprang up simultaneously.

The most influential one naturally was in Petrograd, which was the seat of government. The Bolsheviks were a small minority in this Soviet at the time of the overthrow of the Czar. When Kerensky became Premier, the combination of his Social Revolutionary Party and the Menshevik Socialist Party—those two parties together had an overwhelming majority in the Soviets, and ruled by virtue of that. The Bolsheviks were an opposing faction.

During that time Lenin, as the spokesman for the Bolsheviks, said over and over again, "As long as we are in the minority in the Soviets, all we can do is patiently explain." The Bolshevik Party opposed any attempt to seize power by a putsch.

Q: What is a "putsch"?

A: An armed action of a small group. The Bolshevik Party demanded, with Lenin as their spokesman, that the Social Revolutionary Party and the Menshevik Party take complete control of the government by removing the bourgeois ministers and make it a completely labor and peasant government, and they issued the promise that, "If you do that, we promise that as long as we are in the minority, we will not try to overthrow you. We will not support you politically, we will criticize you, but we will not undertake to overthrow the government as long as we are in the minority." That was the policy of the Bolsheviks in the March days of the revolution against the Czar, and into July.

In July the workers in Petrograd staged a demonstration with arms, against the advice of the Bolsheviks. The Bolsheviks advised against it on the ground that it might unduly provoke the situation, and tried to persuade the workers in Petrograd not to go into that action. It was not a rebellion; it was simply a parade with arms. This action, carried out by the Petrograd

workers against the advice of the Bolsheviks, brought repressions against the workers on the part of the Kerensky government.

Then the Kerensky government undertook to discredit and frame-up the Bolshevik Party. They accused Lenin and Trotsky of being German spies. This was the predecessor of Stalin's Moscow Trials. They accused Lenin and Trotsky and the Bolsheviks of being German spies. Trotsky was thrown into jail, Lenin was forced into hiding, and repressions continued against the Bolsheviks, but it did not do any good, because the policy and slogans of the Bolsheviks were growing in popularity. One by one the great factories and soldiers' regiments began to vote in favor of the Bolshevik program.

In September an attempt at counter-revolution was made under the leadership of General Kornilov, who could be properly described as a Russian Monarchist-Fascist. He organized an army and undertook to overthrow the Kerensky government in Petrograd, with the idea of restoring the old regime.

The Kerensky government, that had put Trotsky in jail, had to release him from prison to get the support of his party to fight down the counter-revolutionary army of Kornilov.

Trotsky was brought from prison and went directly to the Military-Revolutionary Committee, in which government men also sat, and there drew up with them plans for a joint fight against Kornilov. Kornilov was crushed; the counter-revolution was crushed primarily by the workers under the inspiration of the Bolshevik Party. They tied up his railroad trains; he could not move his troops; his best troops were induced to fight against him, and his counter-revolution was crushed.

As this was going on, the Bolsheviks became more popular all the time, as the genuine representatives of the revolution. They gained the majority in the Petrograd Soviet, the most influential Soviet in the country, and in Moscow and others. The Kerensky government was losing ground because it was not solving any of the problems of the people. The Bolsheviks' slogans of "Bread," "Peace," "Land," and other slogans—those were the slogans that the masses wanted.

On November 7th was held the Congress of the All-Russian Soviets of Workers and Soldiers. The Bolsheviks had a majority there, and simultaneously with the meeting of the Soviets, where the Bolsheviks had a majority, they took the governmental power.

VIOLENCE AND THE OCTOBER REVOLUTION

Q: And was there any violence connected with the gaining of the majority by the Bolsheviks?

A: Very little—just a little scuffling, that's all.

MR. SCHWEINHAUT: That was in Petrograd?

THE WITNESS: In Petrograd, yes. That was also where the Czar was overthrown.

Q: And subsequent to the gaining of the majority by the Bolsheviks what violence, if any, occurred?

A: One point more first. A month or so later, a special All-Russian Congress of the Peasant Soviets met, and there also the Bolsheviks had a majority. Then the minority withdrew from those authoritative bodies of government, and began an opposition struggle against the Bolshevik government.

Q: What violence, if any, occurred, and who initiated the violence?

A: That began following the armed struggle against the government.

Q: Who began it?

A: The Czarists, the White Guard Russian element, the bourgeoisie generally, the deposed capitalists and others. They undertook a counter-revolution, and the civil war that ensued lasted until almost 1921. The civil war lasted so long because the White Guard and bourgeois elements received the support, first of the Germans, and then of England and France, and even the United States sent an expedition.

The Soviet government had to fight against the whole capitalist world, on top of fighting against their own opposition at home; and the fact that the Bolsheviks represented the great majority of the people was best evidenced by the fact that they were victorious in this civil war, not only against their opponents at home, but also against the outside powers who supplied the opposition with arms, soldiers and funds.

Q: How were the Soviets in these days elected?

A: They were elected in the factory workers' meetings; that is, the factory workers would gather to elect their delegate. Each Soviet constituted a unit of government, and the combination of Soviets constituted the government.

In the Soviet system, the factories select delegates, according to their number, one for each 1,000, or whatever the proportion may be. The soldiers' regiments do the same; the peasants or dirt farmers do the same, so that the government established in that way, by those Soviets, represents the whole mass of the people who are involved in productive activity.

Q: What was the number of members of the Bolshevik Party at the time of the Russian revolution in November 1917?

A: The most authoritative figure I have seen given is 260,000, or a quarter of a million. That seems to be the figure that has the best authority.

Q: And what proportion of the population supported the Bolshevik Party at that time?

A: In my opinion, the great majority of the workers, peas-

ants and soldiers supported them at the time they took power and afterwards.

Q: From which group or class of society did the Bolshevik Party get most of its members?

A: From the workers. It was a workers' party, a party of industrial workers and agricultural laborers. There were some peasants in the party, but the party was primarily constituted of industrial workers in the cities, agricultural laborers and some intellectuals, some educated people who had put themselves at the service of the workers in the party.

Q: What is the best authority as to the number of workers in Russia at the time of the revolution—by "workers" meaning industrial workers?

A: 5,000,000.

Q: And the majority of the population consisted of peasants?

A: Peasants, yes.

Q: What is your opinion as to the number of members that the Socialist Workers Party will probably have when the majority of people in this country adopt the program of the Party?

MR. SCHWEINHAUT: I object to that, your Honor.

THE COURT: What is the basis of your objection?

MR. SCHWEINHAUT: He is asking this witness to guess today as to the number of members that the Socialist Workers Party will have when a majority of the people in the United States adopt its policy.

THE COURT: There are too many elements of speculation in that. Objection sustained.

WHAT TROTSKY FOUGHT FOR

Q: Will you tell the court and jury what differences arose between Stalin and Trotsky subsequent to the revolution?

MR. SCHWEINHAUT: I object to that, because I do not see any materiality or relevancy in it.

MR. GOLDMAN: The prosecution has contended, and I think Mr. Anderson has made many statements, to the effect that Trotsky, being the arch-conspirator in this case, had certain ideas and certain doctrines. I think the jury is entitled to know in a general way—it is impossible to go into great detail—but the Government has opened up its case in such a way that it is essential for the jury to know at least some of the basic principles of Trotsky, who it is alleged was one of the arch-conspirators.

THE COURT: Well, if you will agree to limit it to a reasonable amount of testimony.

MR. GOLDMAN: I certainly will—otherwise, we might be here two years.

MR. ANDERSON: All we ever brought out, on Trotsky,

was some literature and speeches and pamphlets, in the Party press.

MR. GOLDMAN: I should think that after the prosecution takes three weeks, that they should give me a week at least to try the case.

THE COURT: I don't think it is necessary to try it that way.

Q: Will you describe briefly the fundamental differences that arose between Stalin and Trotsky subsequent to the revolution?

A: I mentioned the other day that the fight originated in the struggle over democracy. That was the origin of the fight, really inspired by Lenin, during his last illness, in collaboration with Trotsky. Lenin did not survive to take part in the fight, and Trotsky had to lead it. This soon developed further.

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN TROTSKY AND STALIN

It soon became apparent to critical observers, this tendency of Stalin to crush democracy in the party, and in the life of the country generally. It was based on Stalin's desire to change the program and the course of direction of the revolution, which could only be done by this means. Trotsky struggled for free discussion of the problem, with the confidence that the majority of the workers in the party would support his program. Stalin and his group represented, in our opinion, the conservative tendency, based upon a certain stratum of the party and the government that had acquired official positions and privileges and wanted to stop there.

Q: Stalin then represented in your opinion the party of the bureaucratic?

A: The bureaucratic and conservative. As a matter of fact, Trotsky designated it as the bureaucratic-conservative faction, at one stage in the struggle.

Q: Interested in what?

A: It was interested in preserving its privileges, and not extending and developing the benefits for the great mass of the people.

Q: What form did this dictatorship of Stalin assume?

A: It assumed the form of crushing democracy inside of the Communist Party and establishing a dictatorial regime there. For example—

MR. SCHWEINHAUT: Well, while Mr. Cannon is pausing; may I object now to this line of testimony because it is immaterial and irrelevant to the issues here? It is immaterial what form of government Stalin set up in Russia. What do we care?

THE COURT: I do not see any reason why he should go into all the details. I think you should recognize that, Mr. Goldman. I want to give you every opportunity, every reasonable

opportunity, to present your theory of the case before the jury, but I do think that there is much here that is immaterial and unnecessary.

Q: What is the position of the Party on the Soviet Union at present?

MR. SCHWEINHAUT: I object to that, Your Honor.

THE COURT: He may answer that.

A: The characterization we make of the Soviet Union as it is today, is of a workers' state, created by the revolution of November 1917, distorted by the bad present regime, and even degenerated, but nevertheless retaining its basic character as a workers' state, because it is based on nationalized industry, and not on private property.

WHY WE DEFEND THE USSR

Q: Now, what is the position of the Party towards the defense of the Soviet Union, and why?

A: We are in favor of defending the Soviet Union against imperialist powers for the reason I just gave, because we consider it a progressive development, as a workers' state, that has nationalized industry and has eliminated private capitalism and landlordism. That is the reason we defend it.

Q: That is, you consider the Russian or the Soviet State, a state based on the expropriation of private industry from the capitalists?

A: Yes, the operation of industry as a nationalized industry.

Q: And you are defending that kind of a state?

A: Yes.

Q: Isn't it a fact that Stalin has killed most all of the so-called Trotskyists in Russia?

A: Yes. We are against Stalin, but not against the Soviet form of industrial production.

THE COURT: The jury will keep in mind the admonition heretofore given them, and we will now recess until two o'clock this afternoon.

District Court of the United States,
District of Minnesota, Fourth Division
Wednesday, November 19, 1941
Afternoon Session

THE COURT: Proceed, gentlemen.

JAMES P. CANNON

resumed the stand, having been previously duly sworn, and testified further as follows:

DIRECT EXAMINATION (Continued)

By MR. GOLDMAN:

Q: And the Party would exhaust all the possibilities for a

peaceful transformation if the democratic rights are given to the working masses?

A: In my opinion, to the very end, yes.

Q: Even to the end of trying to amend the Constitution of the United States, as provided for by the Constitution of the United States?

A: If the democratic processes are maintained here, if they are not disrupted by the introduction of fascist methods by the government, and the majority of the people supporting the ideas of Socialism can secure a victory by the democratic processes, I don't see any reason why they cannot proceed, continue to proceed, by the democratic method of amending the Constitution to fit the new regime.

Naturally, the amendments would have to be of a very drastic character, but parts of the Constitution I would be willing to write into the program of the Party at any time—that is the Bill of Rights, which we believe in. That section of the Constitution which protects private property rights, we think, would absolutely have to be changed in the society which we envisage, which eliminates private property in industrial enterprises of a large-scale nature.

Q: But it is your belief, is it not, that in all probability the minority will not allow such a peaceful transformation?

A: That is our opinion. That is based on all the historical precedents of the unwillingness of any privileged class, no matter how it is outlived, to leave the scene without trying to impose its will on the majority by force. I cited examples yesterday.

Q: What is the —

A: I might give you another example on the same point. For example, the Bolshevik revolution in Hungary was accomplished without the shedding of one drop of blood, in a completely peaceful manner.

Q: When was that?

A: That was in 1919. The government that was established following the war, of which Count Karolyi was Premier, came to what it considered the end of its resources—it could not control the country, did not have the support of the masses, and Count Karolyi as head of the government, on his own motion, went to the head of the Bolshevik Party, or the Communist Party, rather, of Hungary, who was in prison, and summoned him to take charge of the government in a peaceful, legal manner, like the change of a cabinet in the French Parliament—of course, prior to the Petain regime.

Then this Soviet government, having been established in this way, peacefully, was confronted by an uprising of the privileged class, of the landlords and the big owners, who organized an armed fight against the government and eventually overthrew it.

The violence on a mass scale followed the change of the government, did not precede it.

OUR ATTITUDE TO KARL MARX

Q: What is the position that the Party gives to Karl Marx and his doctrines?

A: Karl Marx was the originator of the theories and doctrines and social analyses, which we know as Scientific Socialism, or Marxism, upon which the entire movement of Scientific Socialism has been based since his day.

In the *Communist Manifesto* of 1848 his ideas were sketched, and then in other big volumes, notably in *Capital* he made a most exhaustive scientific analysis of the laws governing the operation of capitalist society, showed how the contradictions within it would lead to its downfall as a social system, showed how the conflict of interests between the employers and the workers would represent an uninterrupted class struggle until the workers gained the upper hand and instituted the society of Socialism.

So Karl Marx can be viewed not only as the founder of our movement, but as the most authoritative representative of its ideology.

Q: Does the Party accept all of the statements found in all of the books written by Karl Marx?

A: No, the Party has never obligated itself to do that. We do not consider even Marx as infallible. The Party accepts his basic ideas and theories as its own basic ideas and theories. That does not prohibit the Party or members of the Party from disagreeing with things said or written by Marx which do not strike at the fundamental basis of the movement, of the doctrine.

MARXISM OUR GUIDE TO ACTION

Q: And you interpret Marx, or you apply the Marxian theories, under conditions that prevail at the present time, is that right?

A: Yes. You see, we don't understand Marxian theory as a revelation, as a dogma. Engels expressed it by saying our theory is not a dogma but a guide to action, which means that it is a method which the students of Marxism must understand and learn how to apply. One can read every letter and every line written by Marx and still not be a useful Marxist, if one does not know how to apply it to the conditions of his own time. There have been such people, whom we call pedants.

Q: You are acquainted with the *Communist Manifesto*, are you not?

A: Yes.

Q: And you remember — I think it is the last clause of the *Manifesto*, where Marx and Engels, co-authors, say: "We disdain to conceal our aims," and mention something to the effect about violent revolution. Do you remember that?

A: Well, it says, "We disdain to conceal our aims. We openly say that they can be achieved only by the forcible overthrow of all existing social institutions."

Q: When was the *Communist Manifesto* written?

A: 1848.

Q: Subsequent to the writing of the *Communist Manifesto*, did Marx ever write anything with reference to the possibility of a peaceful revolution in democratic countries?

A: Yes.

ENGLAND AND EUROPE

Q: Where was that written, and explain to the jury what was said.

A: Well, the most authoritative place where it is stated and explained is in the introduction to the first volume of Marx's master-work, called *Capital*, the introduction by Frederick Engels, who was his co-worker, who was the co-author of the *Communist Manifesto*, and is recognized universally in the movement as completely identified with all of Marx's ideas and theories. Engels as a matter of fact edited and compiled the second two volumes of *Capital*, after the death of Marx.

Q: What did he say in that introduction?

A: This was the English translation of *Capital* and the introduction was presenting the volume to the English public. Engels stated — I think I can quote almost literally — that he thinks the work of a man who, during his entire life was of the opinion that the social transformation in England, at least, could be effected by purely peaceful and legal means — he thought such a book should have a hearing from the English public. That is very close to a literal report of what he stated in this introduction.

Q: And why did Marx have that opinion with reference to England?

A: Well, he had that opinion with reference to England as distinct from the autocratic countries, because of its parliamentary system, its democratic processes, and civil libertarian method of political procedure.

Q: So at the time that Marx and Engels wrote the *Communist Manifesto* in 1848, there was no democracy in existence on the European continent, is that right?

A: The whole of Europe was seething with revolutions at that time.

Q: And no democratic processes were available?

A: At least not in the stable system that had been established in England. I think I should add, to get the whole picture of this introduction which I am speaking of, that Engels said, after he had made this remark which I have reported, he said: "To be sure, Marx did not exclude the possibility of a pro-slavery rebellion on the part of the outmoded and dispossessed ruling class." That is, after the transfer of power.

THE COURT: Pardon me, Mr. Cannon. Would you be good enough to elaborate a bit upon the significance of that pro-slavery phrase?

THE WITNESS: Yes. I think he had in mind the American Civil War. Marx and Engels attentively followed the American Civil War, wrote extensively about it in the *New York Tribune*. A collection of those writings, both political and military, has been published as a book, which is a classic in our movement. And what Marx undoubtedly had in mind when he spoke of a "pro-slavery rebellion," was an analogy with the American Civil War, which he had characterized as a pro-slavery rebellion on the part of the Southern slave owners. Of course, he did not maintain that the English bourgeoisie are slaveholders in the same sense, but that they exploit the workers.

Q: Now what, in your opinion, is the relationship between the Declaration of Principles of the Socialist Workers Party and the theories of Karl Marx? ..

A: I would say that insofar as we understand Marxism and are able to apply it, it is an application of the Marxian theories and doctrines, his whole system of ideas, to the social problem in America.

Q: That is, the Declaration of Principles is based then upon the fundamental theories of Karl Marx?

A: Yes, we consider it a Marxist document.

OUR ATTITUDE TO LENIN

Q: What is the position that the Party gives to Lenin?

A: Lenin, in our judgment, was the greatest practical leader of the labor movement and the Russian revolution, but not on the plane of Marx in the theoretical field. Lenin was a disciple of Marx, not an innovator in theory. To be sure he contributed very important ideas, but to the end of his life he based himself on Marx, as a disciple in the Marxist movement of the world. He holds a position of esteem on a level with Marx, with this distinction between the merits of the two.

Q: Does the Party, or do Party members agree with everything that Lenin ever wrote and published?

A: No. The same attitude applies to Lenin as to Marx. That is, the basic ideas and doctrines practised, promulgated and carried out by Lenin, are supported by our movement, which

does not exclude the possibility of differing with him about this or that particular writing, or of individual members of the Party differing with Lenin in important respects, as has been the case more than once in our Party.

Q: By the way, is it true that there is a Communist government in the Soviet Union?

A: No, not in our view.

Q: Is it true that there is Communism in the Soviet Union?

A: No there isn't any Communism in the Soviet Union.

Q: Is there Socialism in the Soviet Union?

A: No — well, I would like to clarify that now. Socialism and Communism are more or less interchangeable terms in the Marxist movement. Some make a distinction between them in this respect; for example, Lenin used the expression Socialism as the first stage of Communism, but I haven't found any other authority for that use. I think that is Lenin's own particular idea. I, for example, consider the terms Socialism and Communism interchangeable, and they relate to the classless society based on planned production for use as distinct from a system of capitalism based on private property and production for profit.

Q: Could there be a Socialist society and a dictatorship like Stalin has at the present time?

A: No. According to Marx and Engels, as you approach the classless Socialist or Communist society, the government, instead of becoming more of a factor in human affairs, becomes less and less and eventually withers away and disappears, and is replaced or evolves into an administrative body that does not employ repression against the people.

So the very term government implies, in our terminology, a class society—that is, a class that is dominant and a class that is being suppressed. That holds true whether it is a capitalist government, which in our views oppresses or suppresses the workers and the farmers and represents the interests of the big capital, or a workers' and farmers' government immediately following a revolution which represents the interests of the workers and farmers and suppresses any attempt of the displaced capitalist class to resist its authority or to re-establish its rule.

But once the resistance of the old outlived exploiting class is broken, and its members become reconciled to the new society and become assimilated in it, find their place in it; and the struggle between classes which is the dominating factor in all class societies is done away with, because of the disappearance of class distinctions; then the primary function of government as a repressive instrument disappears and the government withers away with it. This is the profound conception of Marx and Engels that is adhered to by all their disciples.

WE REJECT BLANQUISM

Q: Did Lenin ever use the term "Blanquism" to designate a certain type of movement?

THE COURT: What is that?

MR. GOLDMAN: Blanquism.

THE WITNESS: Yes, he wrote more than one article in the course of the Russian revolution, more than once he wrote, "We are not Blanquists."

Q: Now, what is meant by "Blanquism"?

A: Blanqui was a figure in the French revolutionary movement who had followers in the Paris Commune of 1871. Blanqui had his own conception of party and of revolution, and his ideas are known among the students of the history of the labor movement as Blanquism.

Q: What are his ideas?

A: Blanqui's idea was that a small group of determined men, tightly disciplined, could effect the revolution with a coup d'etat.

Q: What is a "coup d'etat"?

A: That is a seizure of power, a seizure of state power by armed action of a small, determined disciplined group; they would, so to speak, make the revolution for the masses.

SUPPORT OF THE MAJORITY

Q: And what did Lenin say about that?

A: Lenin opposed this view and his articles were written in answer to opponents who had accused the Bolsheviks of aiming to seize power without a majority. He said, "We are not Blanquists. We base ourselves on mass parties and mass movements, and as long as we are in the minority, our task is to patiently explain the problems and issues until we gain the majority, and as long as we are in the minority we will not try to overthrow you. You let us have our freedom of speech and press, give us the opportunity to expound our ideas, and you don't need to fear any Blanquist putsch on our part." Putsch, as I explained before, is an attempt of a small group to seize power by surprise tactics.

Q: So Lenin depended upon mass parties and upon gaining a majority for those mass parties, did he?

A: Yes, in the early days of the Communist International — it is a period that I am familiar with through close study and personal participation in the movement — he hammered at this idea all the time, not only against his critics in Russia, but against various individuals and groups who came toward support of the Russian revolution, and had some distorted ideas.

In Germany, for example in March 1921, the German party, which had been organized, attempted an insurrection without

having the support of the masses; this became famous in the literature of our international movement, as "the March Action." The tactics embodied in it, the conception of some of the German leaders that they could force the revolution by their own determination and sacrifices—this whole idea, the March Action, and all the ideas embodied in it, were condemned by the Third Congress of the Communist International at the insistence of Lenin and Trotsky. They refuted this theory, and they counterposed to it mass parties, mass movements, gaining the majority.

They put out the slogan to the German party that it should aim to have a million members. Zinoviev, who was Chairman of the Comintern, made that one of his leading ideas on the German question, that the task of the German party was not to get impatient or to try to force history but to be busy with agitation and propaganda and have the goal of a million in the party.

Q: These million members would not by themselves make any revolution, would they?

A: Naturally not—Lenin did not expect to have a majority of the population become members of the party, but to support the party. But the very fact that he proposed—or rather, Zinoviev, who was the lieutenant of Lenin, acting as Chairman of the Communist International proposed—as a slogan, "A million members in the German Party," certainly was a powerful indication that they did not expect to get a majority of the people until they had a numerically powerful party.

OUR ATTITUDE TO LEON TROTSKY

Q: Now, what relationship, if any, did Leon Trotsky have to the Socialist Workers Party?

A: Our movement in 1928—when our faction was expelled from the Communist Party—we had adopted the program of Trotsky.

We supported his program from the very beginning—and this was long before we had any personal contact with him. He had been expelled from the Russian party and was exiled in the Asiatic wilderness at a place called Alma Ata. We had no communication with him. We did not know where he was, whether he was dead or alive, but we had one of his important programmatic documents which was called, "The Criticism of the Draft Program of the Comintern." This book elaborated his theories as against those of Stalin at great length and in fundamental respects. This was adopted by us as our own program and from the very beginning we proclaimed our faction as Trotsky's faction.

We worked for about six months here without any communication with him until he was deported to Turkey—Constantinople.

tinople—and then we established communication with him by mail. Later, various leading members of the party visited him. We had very extensive correspondence with him, and in this correspondence and in visits by individual members, we had an extremely close relation to him and regarded him all the time as the theoretical inspirer and teacher of our movement.

Q: When did you first visit Trotsky?

A: I visited him in France in 1934—that is, for the first time after our expulsion from the Communist Party.

TROTSKY'S ROLE

Q: And what role, if any, did Trotsky play in formulating the doctrines of the Socialist Workers Party?

A: He played a very important role. Although he did not write our party documents, his ideas interpreting Marxism in our time were the source from which we got our main concepts and rewrote them in American terms, tried to apply them to American conditions.

Q: Did he write any articles about conditions and developments in the United States in those days?

A: I don't recall that he wrote much in those days about America.

Q: Did he at any time in those days tell you as to what practical action should be taken in the United States by your group?

A: Yes. One of the subjects of controversy in our early days was what kind of activity we should occupy ourselves with.

He supported the idea of a purely propagandistic activity in our early days—that is, as distinguished from what we call mass work. We were so few in numbers, we could not hope to do anything except to try to publish a paper and convert some people to our basic ideas: a very, very modest task of routine propaganda was assigned by the necessity of the situation to our group at that time, and he supported that.

Q: When did you first make frequent contact with Trotsky?

A: He was driven out of France and then out of Norway and finally received asylum in Mexico by the action of President Cardenas. If I am correct as to the exact month, I think it was January 1937.

Thereafter he lived in Mexico until August 21, 1940, when he was assassinated. In the period that he was there we made frequent visits to him. I personally was there to see him twice, once in the spring of 1938 and again in the summer of 1940. Other party leaders and party members visited him frequently. I personally maintained a very active correspondence with him, and so did other members of the party, and I would say we were in very, very intimate contact with him after he came to Mexico.

NATURE OF DISCUSSIONS

Q: What did the Socialist Workers Party do with reference to helping Trotsky guard himself, and also with reference to aiding him in his expenses?

A: We knew that Trotsky was marked for assassination by Stalin, who had killed off practically all the important leaders of the revolution through his mass trials and his purges and frame-ups and so forth. We knew that Trotsky, as the greatest of all the opponents of Stalin, was marked for assassination, and we undertook to protect him. We set up a special committee which had the sole purpose of collecting funds to support this endeavor.

We supplied guards, we supplied money regularly and systematically for transforming his house into as close to a fortress as possible. We collected and supplied the funds to buy the house for him. We supplied the expenses of the guards who were sent there, and in general, in every way possible extended ourselves to protect his life and facilitate his work.

Q: What was the nature of the discussions that you held with Trotsky while you were there?

A: All the important problems of the world movement.

Q: Any problems of the American labor movement?

A: Yes.

Q: Did you ever discuss the question of Union Defense Guards and Local 544 with him?

A: No, I personally had no discussion with him about 544 Defense Guards. We discussed with him the question of Defense Guards in general. This, I think, was in our visit in 1938.

Q: Do you know of your own knowledge whether Trotsky had many visitors?

A: Yes, I know that he did. I know that he had many visitors, because in my capacity as Secretary of the Party I frequently was called upon to give letters of introduction to people who wanted to visit him. He was visited, not only by our members, but by journalists, by school teachers, a history class which used to tour Mexico, and he was visited by public people of many kinds and opinions while he was there.

Q: Then the discussions that you had with Trotsky referred and related to general political questions, did they not?

A: Yes — questions of the war, of fascism, trade unionism —

Q: But they had nothing to do with party activities, branches or of particular sections of the party?

A: No, I don't recall that Trotsky ever interested himself in the detailed local work of the party; I don't recall that.

Q: How busy a man was he?

A: He was the busiest man I ever knew. Trotsky, in addition to all his political work and his enormous correspondence,

and his journalistic work—and he wrote innumerable articles and pamphlets for us—he wrote for magazines and newspapers, such as the *New York Times*, *Saturday Evening Post*, *Liberty* and other magazines—and in addition to that, he produced in the eleven years since his exile to Turkey in 1929 to his death in 1940, a literary output greater by volume than that of the average writer who does nothing else but write.

He wrote the three huge volumes on the history of the Russian revolution which, from the point of view of literary labor, could be considered a life task by any writer. He wrote a full-sized book called, "The Revolution Betrayed," and he wrote his autobiography and innumerable smaller books and pamphlets and articles in that period.

Q: The party, then, never bothered him with minor questions of policy and activities?

A: Not to my knowledge; I know I never did.

Q: Will you tell the court and jury the position of the Socialist Workers Party on Workers' Defense Guards?

A: Well the party is in favor of the workers organizing defense guards wherever their organizations or their meetings are threatened by hoodlum violence. The workers should not permit their meetings to be broken up or their halls to be wrecked, or their work to be interfered with, by Ku Klux Klanners or Silver Shirts or fascists of any type, or hoodlums, or reactionary thugs, but should organize a guard and protect themselves where it is necessary.

WE ADVOCATE WORKERS' DEFENSE GUARDS

Q: How long ago was the idea of a Workers' Defense Guard first put forth by the group of which you are a member?

A: I may say that I have known about this idea, which we didn't invent at all, all my thirty years in the labor movement. I have known about the idea of Workers' Defense Guards and seen them organized and helped to organize them more than once long before I ever heard of the Russian revolution.

Q: And did the Trotskyist group ever start organizing these guards before it became the Socialist Workers Party?

A: Yes, in the first year of our existence, in 1929. The Communist Party, the Stalinists, tried to break up our meetings by hoodlum violence. They did break up a number of meetings and we reacted to that by organizing a Workers' Defense Guard to protect our meetings, and invited to participate in this guard not only Trotskyists, but other workers' organizations, which were also being attacked by the Stalinist hoodlums.

Let me explain this. The Stalinists had a system in those days of trying to break up meetings of the Socialist Party, of the I. W. W., of a group called the Proletarians, of anybody who

didn't agree with the Stalinists. They tried the Stalin game of breaking them up, so in self-defense, without any theory from anybody, we reacted by organizing Workers' Defense Guards to protect our meetings. And I may add, parenthetically, we protected them so well that we put a stop to that monkey business at the cost of a few cracked heads, which I personally greatly appreciated in those days.

Q: I show you a volume of *The Militant*, marked 1928 and 1930, and ask that you refresh your recollection from that volume, and tell the jury on what occasions Workers' Defense Guards were organized by the Trotskyist group. Just read the item, and then tell the jury, without reading the item to the jury.

A: The first one is dated January 1, 1929. It refers to a meeting addressed by me in New Haven, Connecticut, under the title, "The Truth About Trotsky and the Platform of the Opposition." It is a news account of the meeting.

Q: Well, Mr. Cannon, just read that and then tell the jury what you remember about that incident.

A: I remember it very well, because they sent a gang of hoodlums to the meeting and they broke it up and didn't permit me to continue my speech, and created a fight, and in the midst of the fight the police came to the hall and declared the meeting dissolved. That is a report of a meeting in the Labor Lyceum at New Haven, Connecticut, December 21, 1929.

ATTACKS BY STALINIST HOODLUMS

Q: And did you subsequently organize any Defense Guards to protect your meetings?

A: Yes, in the same account is the report of a second meeting held in Philadelphia on December 27th, with Max Schachtman as the speaker and it states there that, profiting by the experience in New Haven, they organized a Workers' Defense Guard which came and protected the meeting, and the speaker was allowed to continue without disruption.

Q: Did you ever hold a meeting where you spoke where Workers' Defense Guards protected the meeting?

A: Yes. Here is *The Militant* (indicating) under date of January 15, 1929, which reports a meeting addressed by me in Cleveland, Ohio, on the same subject about which I was speaking then, "The Truth About Trotsky and the Russian Opposition," and the account in the paper tells about a gang of Stalinists who came there and tried to disrupt the meeting, and heckled the speaker, and they began to try violence—

Q: You were the speaker, were you?

A: I was the speaker, and I recall very well that I was protected by a guard which we had organized, and the report says that the Workers' Guard finally formed a flying wedge and

put the disrupters out of the meeting, and the speaker was allowed to continue to the end.

Q: And subsequent to that, did you ever speak at meetings where Workers' Defense Guards were organized to protect those meetings?

A: Yes, here is a report in *The Militant* of February 1929, and it tells about two meetings addressed by me in the city of Minneapolis.

Q: And do you remember what happened at those meetings?

A: Yes, the first meeting we attempted to hold in some lodge hall here—I forget the name, A. O. U. W. Hall, it is reported here—I recall at this meeting, before the meeting started, a gang of Stalinist hoodlums invaded the meeting and attacked Oscar Coover with blackjacks, where he was standing at the door taking tickets, I think, and forced their way into the hall before the crowd had come, got front seats, and then as the crowd came in and I went to the front and tried to speak, they got up and interfered and heckled and disturbed and disrupted the meeting until it finally ended in a free-for-all scuffle, and I didn't get a chance to make my speech. Then this account here tells—

Q: Well, what do you remember?

A: Yes, it is reported here in this issue of the paper that we then went to the I. W. W. Hall here—that is another radical organization which we are not affiliated with, but who had also suffered from these Stalinist tactics, and asked them if they would cooperate with us in organizing a guard to protect the meeting, so that I could speak on the subject that I was touring the country then on, "The Truth About Trotsky and Our Platform." They agreed.

We formed a Workers' Defense Guard in Minneapolis in January 1929, and the I. W. W. gave us the use of their hall. They had a hall of their own somewhere down here on Washington Street. We advertised the meeting widely and announced that this meeting was going to be held under the protection of the Workers' Guard. And I personally know that there was such a guard, that they equipped themselves with hatchet handles, and stood along the side of the hall, and stood out in front and announced that nobody should interfere with this meeting. I spoke for about two hours there without any interference, under the protection of that Workers' Guard.

INCIPIENT FASCIST FORMATIONS

Q: So that you can say from your knowledge that the Workers' Defense Guard—

A: There are more news accounts here, if you want them. That was a period until we finally established our right to be let alone, and then there was no more need for the guard, and we dissolved.

Q: Now, with reference to the Workers' Defense Guard advocated by the Socialist Workers Party, what formal action did the party take at any time?

A: Well, in this later period of 1938 and '39, in some parts of the country we were confronted with an incipient fascist movement. Different organizations with different names began preaching Hitlerite doctrines in this country, and tried to practice Hitlerite methods of physical intimidation of workers' meetings, of Jews, Jewish stores, and suppressing free speech by violent methods.

In New York it became a rather acute problem. The various Bundists and associated groups in New York developed the practice of breaking up street meetings when either our party or some other workers' party would attempt to speak under a permit given by the city authorities. They had a habit of going around and molesting Jewish storekeepers, picketing them, and beating them, and challenging them to fight, and so on.

There was an organization rampant at that time called the "Silver Shirts." I don't recall them in New York, but at various points in the West and Mid-West.

Q: Do you recall the Christian Front?

A: Yes, in New York the Bundists and the Christian Front, and two or three other would-be fascist organizations, used to combine on this kind of business. At this time free speech was being very flagrantly denied in Jersey City under the authority of this man Hague who announced that he was the law, got the habit of chasing people out of town and permitting meetings to be broken up ostensibly not by the authorities, but by the "outraged citizens" whom he and his gang had organized for that purpose. In general there were signs then — there was a lot of discontent and unrest in the country — there were signs of a fascist movement growing up, and the question arose of how we could protect, not only ourselves, but how could the unions protect themselves. For example, in Jersey City picketing was denied by these means and the right to strike infringed upon — very serious questions of the invasion of civil liberties by unofficial bodies.

Basing ourselves on the experiences of the German and Italian fascist movements, which began with gangs of hoodlums and ended by destroying completely the labor unions and all workers' organizations and all civil rights — we came to the conclusion that the fascists should be met on their own ground, and that we should raise the slogan of Workers' Defense Guards to protect workers' meetings, halls and institutions against hoodlum violence by the incipient fascists.

We discussed that with Trotsky; his part in it was primarily an exposition of the development of the fascist movement in

Europe. I don't recall now whether he originated the idea, but at any rate he heartily seconded it that our party should propose that the unions, wherever their peace was menaced by these hoodlums, should organize Workers' Defense Guards and protect themselves.

Q: And did the unions follow the advice of the party?

A: I recall that we organized, in cooperation with some other radicals and some Jewish people — even some Jewish Nationalists who didn't agree with our Socialist program, but agreed on defending their human rights to live — we formed at that time a Workers' Defense Guard in New York. To protect not only the meetings of our party but of any organization menaced by these hoodlums. To protect citizens from molestation in the Bronx, where these hoodlums were intimidating and insulting Jewish people. This guard had several scuffles and fights with these gangs.

Then conditions in the country began to change. The economic situation in the country improved a bit. The question of the European war began to absorb attention, and take it away from these provincial American Hitlers. The fascist movement dropped into passivity and our Workers' Defense Guard in New York didn't have anything to do and it just passed out of existence. In Los Angeles, if I recall correctly, there was a similar experience.

UNIONS DISCUSS PROBLEM

Q: Did any International trade unions ever adopt that idea, as far as you know?

A: I don't know. I know the question was raised in the Garment Workers Union, which had a double concern about the matter because, first, as a labor union they were menaced by the growth of fascism, and second, a large percentage of their members are Jews who are considered proper victims by these hoodlums. A resolution was passed in favor of the idea in one of the garment locals in New York, and was referred then to the International Executive Board for consideration, and some correspondence and some interviews between our comrades who had sponsored the idea and the officers of the International Ladies' Garment Workers Union took place. I don't think it developed any further, either positively or negatively, because the fascist movement subsided and the issue got cold.

Q: So that the issue of the Workers' Defense Guard died down because a change of conditions occurred?

A: Yes. We retained the proposal for Workers' Defense Guards in our program. I believe it is on the editorial page of *The Militant* as one of the points we are proposing as a practical program.

Q: And it becomes vital especially in view of a possible fascist movement in our country?

A: Yes. At that time our paper was full of stories and articles about the Bundists and the Christian Fronters, and so on, but if you look over the files, they show a gradual recession of reports about fascist violence. And the question of the Workers' Defense Guard left the pages of the paper and is only occasionally raised there now in a slogan.

(Defendants' Exhibit H was marked for identification.)

THE WITNESS (Continuing):—I might add, Mr. Goldman, that so far as I know, there doesn't exist now any functioning Workers' Defense Guard in any part of the country that our members are associated with, not to my knowledge. But we retain the idea for practical education in case the unions should again encounter the experience of those days.

MR. GOLDMAN: I offer in evidence, Your Honor, Defendants' Exhibit H-1 to H-5, inclusive, being a copy of a resolution entitled "Convention Resolution on Workers' Defense Guard," published in the *Socialist Appeal* of July 7, 1939.

THE COURT: It will be received.

MR. GOLDMAN: I do not intend to read it, because the witness made an exposition of it.

You can take the witness.

THE COURT: I think we might recess at this point.

(Afternoon Recess)

PROSECUTION BEGINS CROSS-EXAMINATION

CROSS-EXAMINATION

By MR. SCHWEINHAUT (Prosecutor):

Q: Now you stated on direct examination that the expropriation of private property, without compensation, was not a principle of the Socialist Workers Party, but I want to read to you from the Declaration of Principles this sentence, and ask you a question about it:

"The most important of the social economic measures to be taken by the workers' state in its initial period is the expropriation and socialization, without compensation, of all monopolies in industry and land, or mines, factories, and shipping, all public utilities, railroads, airplane systems, and other organized means of communications, all banks, credit agencies, and gold stores, and all other supplies and services that the revolutionary government finds it necessary to take over in order to lay the foundations of a socialist society."

What have you to say about that, Mr. Cannon?

A: If I remember correctly, I said it is not a principle of

Marxism that property taken by the government cannot be compensated for.

Q: Are you quite certain you were discussing Marxism as distinguished from the program of the party at the time?

A: I think I referred to Marxist authorities. I had in mind particularly the authority of Trotsky.

Q: Well, in any event it is a principle of the Socialist Workers Party that such property shall be taken without compensation?

A: That is in the Declaration. But it is not a principle.

Q: Would you mind explaining why the present owners of the property, who have acquired their ownership, at least, by constitutional means, would be given nothing for it? Why is that principle embodied in the program of the party?

A: The Sixty Families who own the bulk of the industries and banks of America are not rightfully entitled to so much ownership and power over the lives of the people who produced this property by their labor.

Q: You would give them, then, no credit for their own industry and effort, education, intelligence —

A: Yes, I would give them the same credit that every citizen will have who participates in the production of the wealth of the country — that is, the opportunity to function in the new society on the basis of equality.

Q: Yes. But I am talking about the time when you take the power and with it the property, as of that time you would take it over without any compensation, and I ask you therefore, why you do not at that time take into account the effort, the industry, the intelligence, and I might add, the risk of loss, that has been constantly present, of those people?

THE WELFARE OF THE MASSES

A: What we are concerned with is the welfare of the great mass of the people. Their welfare categorically requires that the productive plants of this country be transferred from private hands into the hands of the public. That is what we are concerned with first of all. Industry must be nationalized — private property must be eliminated in the industrial process. The question of the rights and the interests of the comparatively small number of the population who are affected by that drastic measure is naturally secondary to what we consider this public necessity, public interest.

I don't see any principled reason why such people, who are deprived of their ability or their power to exploit labor any more, cannot be given consideration on condition that they acquiesce in the will of the majority. They can be pensioned, they can be given consideration in view of their age, or their incapacity for

labor, or their agreement not to resist by force the mandate of the majority.

As a matter of fact, I think we would be in favor of that.

Q: You would give them a pension?

A: Possibly, yes.

Q: Well, now, is it your theory that no person who has acquired large property holdings could have done it in other ways than by the exploitation of the workers?

A: That is the way property is created under capitalism.

Q: Now, will you please tell us what you mean by "exploitation"?

A: That means the employment of wage labor at a rate of pay less than the value of the product of the labor.

AMERICA'S SIXTY FAMILIES

Q: Well, then, it is an arbitrary dogma, shall we say, of the Socialist Workers Party that no person who labors is adequately paid under this present system of government?

A: I wouldn't say "no person." Some people are very badly overpaid.

Q: I am talking about the workers — the same workers you are talking about.

A: Yes, I can conceive of even a worker being overpaid — that is, an unproductive, an unskillful or negligent worker.

But when we speak of wage labor we speak of the average, and the general rule. Marxism deals in the general and not in the analysis of each and every individual worker. The workers, taken collectively and an average struck, produce an enormous amount of wealth for which they do not receive the equivalent in wages. That is surplus value, according to Marxist terminology. That is profit that goes into the hands of the capitalists, not in return for labor but as profit on investment.

Q: And you think they should have no profit on their investment?

A: We want to eliminate the whole profit system. We want to have production for use, not for profit.

Q: Well, now, you would expropriate the property, not only of the Sixty Families, but of anyone who owns property in a large measure, is that correct?

A: Our program specifically excludes the expropriation or interference with small proprietors. We speak of people who have big holdings and exploit labor. Their property shall be transferred to the ownership and control of the public as represented by the Workers' and Farmers' Government.

Q: Where did the term "Sixty Families" originate?

A: To my knowledge, it first came to public attention through a book written by a brilliant journalist named Ferdinand Lundberg.

Four or five years ago Mr. Lundberg conducted researches into the ownership and control of American industry, banks, and so forth. Out of an exhaustive research he produced a remarkably documented book entitled, "America's Sixty Families," in which he set out facts and figures to prove that the decisive control of American industry, banks and other institutions which represent the real economic wealth and power of this country—that this is concentrated in the ownership and control of sixty families whom he listed.

Mr. Lundberg's work, as far as I know, has never been seriously controverted. I recall that even such a representative figure of the present Administration as Secretary Ickes spoke on the radio and referred to this book as authority for some position he was taking in a current political dispute.

Q: Now, then, you have used the term—when you use it in the party literature—literally then, have you not, having specific reference to sixty specific families?

A: I wouldn't say it is an iron-clad literal description. It is an approximation of the real situation. We don't propose to limit the thing exactly to that, but the expression "Sixty Families" graphically illustrates what has been happening in the country. While the workers were working and the farmers were farming, Sixty Families were getting control of the country, and it is a very graphic figure to use in our agitation. A lot of people don't realize what has been going on in the concentration of wealth in this country.

CAPITALIST GOVERNMENT

Q: Let me ask you a question or two, if you please, about the concept of an imperialist, capitalist government. You have said that the present government of the United States is both imperialist and capitalist.

A: Yes.

Q: You believe, then, that the government is the tool of the capitalists?

A: It is the representative of the capitalists.

Q: And then, in order to suppress the capitalists, should they resist you, it follows, of course, that you must suppress the government?

A: We are going to change the government.

Q: So you are going to suppress the government as a natural concomitant of the transaction of suppressing the capitalists. That is correct, isn't it?

A: After we get the majority and get the power—if that power comes into our hands by peaceful, democratic processes, in that case we will radically change the whole structure of the

government, reorganizing it on a basis of council representation, as I described this morning.

Q: Well, now, suppose the government doesn't follow the example of Count Karolyi and turn it over to you. Then you are going to take it, aren't you?

A: You mean if they resist a majority in a democratic election?

Q: Oh, you are going to do it by election?

A: We are participating in elections all the time. All that we have said is that the ruling class of this country will resort to violence before there is a fair opportunity to test the majority or the minority in the democratic process.

Q: Well, now, tell us how you think that is going to come about and work out here in this country. Don't, for the purpose of that question, if you please, use the illustration of any other revolution. But how do you think it is going to work out here? Let me suggest your train of thought upon that: You say that if they resist an election, or something of that sort — tell us what you mean by that; give us the program as you envision it.

A: As things are going now, and as they conceivably can in the near future, we, as a minority party, will keep preaching our doctrines, recruiting members, doing our best to grow bigger, more popular, and get more support.

Naturally, if we have to rely solely on the effectiveness of our arguments, things remaining as they are, we will not grow very fast; but we, as Marxists, believe that historical development will come powerfully to the aid of our ideas. Continued bankruptcy of the present system, its inability to solve its problems, its worsening of the conditions of the people, will push them on the road in search of a solution of what seems to them an absolutely hopeless situation.

Under those conditions our program can appear to the people more and more plausible, more and more reasonable, and we can begin to become a stronger party. It has happened before with parties of similar ideas.

Q: I understand now; you are doing all right. But understand that I want you to tell us how you think it is going to work out in this country.

A: As our party grows, it in itself will be a reflection of the growth and development of the broad labor movement, the trade unions. The unions will be pushed more and more along the lines of aggressive action, because the capitalists of America don't think the workers are entitled to decent living and decent hours and will try to squeeze the workers down.

HOW THE CAPITALISTS WILL TRY TO STOP US

The capitalists will try to use the pretext of "national defense" and the war danger to deprive the workers of the right to strike. And once they have deprived the workers of the right to strike on so-called patriotic pretexts, then the capitalists will begin squeezing down wages and refusing concessions, and pushing the workers on the road to a more radical attitude toward the state of affairs, and our party will grow with that.

The next thing that will probably appear on the horizon is attempts of these Sixty Families and their supporters to stop the popularizing of ideas inimical to the capitalists, and to check by legislation the organization of the workers. You have the beginning of it here in Minnesota with the Stassen Anti-Strike Law.

They will begin arresting people for expressing their honest opinions, and putting them in jail, framing them up. They will begin organizing bands of fascist hoodlums as, in Germany, Fritz Thyssen, the big steel magnate, confessed that he gave millions of marks to finance the organization of Hitler's hoodlums. The task of Hitler's hoodlums was to go around breaking up workers' meetings, and by violent assaults depriving the workers of their civil liberties and democratic rights.

Q: The capitalists will use legislation?

A: Yes, legislation violating the first amendment of the Constitution which prohibits this kind of legislation.

And in this situation they will go through the war. They won't stop with any army of a million and a half; they will organize an army of five million. They will send millions of American boys abroad for imperialist war adventures to protect their markets and their profits. Lives will be lost. Conditions at home will grow worse, because all this sixty to one hundred billions of dollars that they are appropriating for the wasteful expenses of war has got to be paid for by somebody and they will try to make the masses and the poor farmers pay it.

Misery will grow and increase, and demands will grow in this country, among people who want freedom and a right to live, for some way out of this madhouse of war and unemployment and growing fascism.

WE WANT THE RIGHT TO ADVOCATE OUR IDEAS

Q: Will this be during the war now, this part in your story?

A: Well, it can happen during the war, if the war is prolonged. Or it can happen in a catastrophically rapid manner at the end of the war, when millions of men return home from

victories or defeats, as the case may be, to find no jobs waiting for them, and the whole economic prosperity of the day is exploded because it is based on the production of armaments.

The moment they stop building battleships and bombers and guns and ammunition, and all the other implements of war, you will have an army of fifteen to twenty-five million unemployed in this country. The small business men will be ruined and the farmers who have been in a chronic crisis for twenty-five years will have still worsened conditions.

The people of this country are going to begin thinking seriously then about finding some kind of a political solution for this crisis that the present leaders got them into and can't get them out of. That is the way I visualize the development.

What do we want then? We want the simple right to advocate our ideas. We want the right to have free speech and free press and free assemblage.

Q: I know, but I think you are getting a little bit off the track. You have gotten to the point now in your story of how it is going to come about in the United States where everybody is pretty unhappy about the situation, or maybe worse than unhappy—angry. Go on from there and tell us—what is the next step?

A: That is what I intend to do. I said, what do we want in that situation?

We want the opportunity to continue explaining to the people of America what our plan is to solve this problem.

That is what we want, and granted that demand, we will put our program forward in elections. We will introduce resolutions in unions. We will introduce resolutions in farmers' organizations. We will try to bring about conferences between the workers in the cities and the farmers, to see if we can work out a joint program to propose a solution.

We will participate in elections, and if we are elected and are not deprived of our electoral rights, we will begin debating the question in Congress. Given this one small provision, that we retain our Constitutional rights, we have every reason to be confident that we can win over the majority of the people to our program.

And the question of whether the will of this majority will be asserted in an orderly and democratic manner is not going to be determined by us; that is going to be determined by your Sixty Families, whether they want to begin the violence, or whether they want to accept a peaceful solution.

WINNING THE MAJORITY

Q: Wait a minute. You haven't gotten yourself elected to control of the government yet. You are just at a point where

maybe you have won an election or two. You contemplate that you will be able to elect yourself into control of the government?

A: I think it is conceivable, yes.

Q: I mean, that is what you seek? That is your aim?

A: That is the purpose in having candidates, to get them elected.

Q: Do you believe you can accomplish the control or acquisition, shall we say, of governmental power by being elected to it?

A: We can accomplish it if we are not interfered with by violence on the part of the capitalists.

Q: You mean, the capitalists are not going to let you be elected?

A: When we say that it is an illusion to expect that we can effect the social transformation by parliamentary action, that doesn't mean that we don't want to do it, or that we wouldn't gladly accept such a method. We don't believe, on the basis of our knowledge of history, and on the basis of our knowledge of the greed and rapacity of the American ruling class, that they will permit that kind of solution.

Q: Then let's go back to the question that I asked you. You don't believe that the capitalists, the Sixty Families and what-not, will permit you to be elected to power?

A: No.

Q: How are they going to stop you from doing that—won't they let the people vote?

A: They can stop it in various ways.

Q: How are they going to do that?

A: They can abrogate elections.

Q: Tell us about that, please.

A: That has been done, you know, so many times and in so many countries, that there is nothing novel about it.

Q: How are they going to do that?

A: By cancelling elections; and you know, we are not the only ones who anticipate such possibilities.

Q: You mean, they are just not going to permit any elections to be had?

A: Even such a public figure as Lindbergh has raised the question seriously whether there will be Congressional elections permitted in 1942. I think he is ahead of time, but it is not necessarily a Trotskyist idea that they will stop elections.

Q: Possibly I haven't made myself clear. I am trying to find out now, how the capitalists are going to prevent you from being elected into office? You said there were several ways they could do that. One of them is to abrogate elections. Now, I ask you what you mean by that? Do you mean that the capitalists will not permit any elections at all to be held?

A: That is possible, yes.

REACTIONARIES WILL VIOLATE DEMOCRACY

Q: Is that one way you think you are going to be prevented from being elected into office?

A: That is one way, yes; that has been done.

Q: Here?

A: Not here yet, no. In France, the Petain government wasn't elected and doesn't permit any elections to test it. They put an end to the democratic parliament. I personally think that—

THE COURT: I think, Mr. Cannon, you ought to stick to the text suggested by the question. We are not interested in elections in France at this stage of the proceeding.

Q (By Mr. Schweinhaut): Now, I don't want to prolong this, but I do want you to try to answer me. I want to know again how the capitalists in the United States of America are going to prevent you from being elected into office? Now, you have answered one of the several ways. They are going to stop elections from being held at all.

A: Yes.

Q: Tell us what other ways they are going to prevent you from being elected into office.

A: Another way is to pass discriminatory legislation, penalizing workers' parties.

Q: Explain that, please.

A: Restricting the functioning of workers' parties, preventing their full freedom of action, which would be necessary to secure parliamentary victories.

Q: And any other ways?

A: Yes. Another way, the most likely way for the Sixty Families, is to organize and subsidize a fascist movement with the aim of destroying the labor movement by force before it has an opportunity to test its strength in elections.

That is the way it was done in Italy; and I would like to explain that I am only using these references to other countries because they throw light on the process that is possible here. It was not my intention to bring in these examples as an extraneous issue. We think capitalist society operates in one country or another according to similar laws under similar conditions.

Q: Now, how are you going to prevent those things from happening? You want to stop them before they happen, I assume?

A: Yes.

Q: How are you going to do that?

A: First of all, we are going to try to assert our rights. We are going to try our best to get the support of enough people, whether they agree with our political theory or not, to maintain the democratic processes and civil rights of all the population. We are going to try to do that.

When we see fascist bands organizing with the aim of breaking up the labor movement, we are going to advise the workers, before it is too late, to organize Workers' Defense Guards and not permit the fascist hoodlums to break up workers' organizations and meetings.

Those are two of the most important and immediate ideas we have about protecting the rights of the workers and their possibilities to develop their movement in a democratic process.

PROTECTING THE WORKERS' RIGHTS

Q: Now suppose there is no abrogation of elections. You are going to continue to propagandize only, is that correct?

A: That is right.

Q: To try to get yourselves elected into office?

A: That is right.

Q: No matter how long it takes?

A: We can't determine the time at all.

Q: Now how do you expect the capitalists to abrogate the elections? How will they accomplish that purpose?

A: They can do it in various ways—by decree, by vote of Congress declaring there is a state of emergency which requires dispensing with election struggles, and handing the power over to the President or somebody to rule for this period, which may be long or short—but most likely it would be long.

That is precisely what was done to a legally constituted parliament elected by the suffrage of the French people, containing representatives of various parties—Socialists, Radical Socialists, Conservative, Communist and other parties. This parliament was dissolved, and a dictator appointed with power to rule the country at his will until further notice. That is what happened just like that (indicating).

Q: Supposing they don't do those things that you anticipate, and you get yourself elected into control of the government, control of the Senate and the House, let us say, and you elect a President, too. Do you expect then that the army and navy are going to turn against you and try to resist your authority?

A: I anticipate that some of the officers would—those who are tied most closely to the upper circles of the ruling class. I would expect some of them to attempt to dispute the authority of the people's government. That happened in other instances.

Q: Yes, I know you are illustrating by that. I am talking about this country. You have got yourself elected into control of the government now. Now tell us how you expect the resistance against your authority is going to be made. Who is going to do it, and how is it going to be done?

A: It would be done by the agents of the ruling class that is facing dispossession.

WE'LL DO WHAT LINCOLN DID

Q: Do you expect the army and navy of the United States government to turn its guns against you when you are in duly elected control of the government?

A: Yes, I would expect some of the officers to do it—not all of them. If all of the army and navy would be of such a mind, it would be manifestly impossible to be elected in the first place, because the army and navy are more or less in their ranks reflective of the general population, and if we are elected by a majority vote, you can be sure that our popularity in the masses of the people will be reflected in the military establishment. That is always the case.

Q: Well, how would you resist this uprising against you?

A: The same way Lincoln did in 1861.

Q: Would you already have an army, or would you use the army that you find standing when you came into power?

A: We will just use what measures are possible. A good section of the American army and its best officers in 1861 revolted against the authority of the legally elected government of Lincoln. Lincoln took what he could and recruited some more and gave them a fight, and I always thought it was a wonderfully good idea.

Q: But in the meanwhile you want to build, do you not, a workers' militia?

A: A Workers' Defense Guard, yes.

Q: I mean, not alone for the purpose of defending the union halls, but for other purposes, isn't that right? Don't you want to build, while you are advancing toward power, a workers' militia? To help you when you get into power?

A: We use the expression "Workers' Defense Guard" because that is most American and most easily and precisely defines what we want. The Workers' Defense Guards will grow in size and strength insofar as the guards have a task to perform, not because we want them to grow.

If the fascists grow and fight the unions, the unions must inevitably counter that movement by developing their Defense Guards, and if the Defense Guards are overpowered by fascist gangsters and hoodlums and thugs, the only answer of the unions can be to strengthen the Guards, and in the course of that struggle between the fascist gangs and the Workers' Defense Guards, we hope the Workers' Defense Guards will grow strong and eventually become a very effective power.

Q: Well, let's sort of boil the thing down a little bit. You do not expect that you will be able to be elected into office, do you?

A: No, our program says we do not expect that, and for the reasons that I have given you.

Q: But you expect to take power, nevertheless, do you not?

A: Yes, the revolution can't be stopped by suppression, because the revolution is a tremendous social movement of great masses of people.

Q: So your party looks forward to an inevitable civil war brought about by the difference between your views and those of the capitalists?

A: If you will permit me, I would like to say we don't look forward to it in the sense of wanting it.

Q: I understand you, yes.

A: And we don't consider it inevitable. A variation of historical processes is possible.

But we say the overwhelming weight of possibility, based upon historical experience, is that the ruling class of this country will attempt to resolve the conflict with the workers by fascist violence before we gain a majority in Congress. Or if it should come to the point where we gain a majority in a democratic election, the ruling class would stage a slaveholders' rebellion against it. And we will undertake to put down that rebellion as decisively as possible.

Q: And to that end you want to start in advance to build up a workers' army, don't you?

A: You can't by mere program build up a workers' army to confront such a thing. The force of the workers will grow up out of their unions, out of their Workers' Defense Guards, out of the rank and file of the soldiers and the farmers who are in the armed forces, who will not support the slaveholders' rebellion. We will not be without resources if we have a majority of the people.

Q: I understand that. Now, the setting up of Union Defense Guards in all trade unions would be very beneficial to your program if the resistance you anticipate occurs, wouldn't it?

A: It will be an absolutely indispensable thing, yes.

DEFENSE GUARDS WILL GROW

Q: So that it is a good idea for your ultimate purposes to have Union Defense Guards right now?

A: It is a good idea, if you can organize them. But you cannot organize Workers' Defense Guards merely because you want them—only when there is a pressing need for them that is obvious to the workers, regardless of their agreement with our ideas.

Q: It would be a pleasing thing, would it not, to the Socialist Workers Party to be able to establish Workers' Guards in all trade unions for the ultimate purpose of the party?

A: I would go further than that and say that the establishment of Workers' Defense Guards is an almost automatic

process as the unions encounter the violence of fascist hoodlums. Our task will be to accelerate it, to say it is a good idea, build it up and make it stronger and don't let the fascists break up your movement and drive you into slavery.

But the Guard is not something we can suck out of our fingers. It is a natural process growing out of the development of the struggle and we try to see it in advance, try to accelerate it, try to popularize the idea, convince the workers it is a good thing, and bestir themselves about it.

But no matter how many books we write, or how much we holler, we couldn't organize a Workers' Defense Guard in any place where a union is operating uninterfered with. That is illustrated, you may say, by way of Minneapolis where we have very good friends and influential comrades in the unions—but when the Silver Shirt menace disappeared, the Union Defense Guard just didn't find any function, and dropped into quiescence. It can't be built artificially.

Q: Are you saying that the Union Defense Guard doesn't exist any longer?

A: I don't know whether it exists formally, but it doesn't function, as far as I was able to judge from the testimony.

Q: Now, let me ask you this question: After you get into power, you are going to establish an army, aren't you?

A: Eventually, yes.

Q: Your Declaration of Principles says the workers' state will not have a professional army, but will depend upon a mass workers' militia in which distinctions other than those required for technical efficiency will be abolished and democratic control over officers will be exercised by the ranks.

A: That has always been the Marxist conception of an army.

Q: Well now, would you mind elaborating on that a little bit?

A: We want to do away with professional soldiers. The workers' state would probably for some time need a military establishment even if it came to an agreement with the dispossessed capitalists here to pension them off in return for their submission to the decision of the majority. There is the possibility that a capitalist Europe, a Hitler or something like that, would menace our country, and we would have to maintain a military establishment to defend the country.

Our idea is not to have a professional soldier class except, of course, in technical competence. Every able-bodied citizen would be liable for military service, alternately. The people should be armed.

Q: I think I probably understand that, but specifically will you tell us what this means (reading from the Declaration of Principles): "in which distinctions other than those required for

technical efficiency will be abolished and democratic control over officers will be exercised by the ranks." Let's take the first one: "distinctions other than those required for technical efficiency will be abolished." What does that mean?

A: There have to be certain people in the military establishment who are proficient in certain techniques—artillery, aircraft, and so on.

The distinctions that we want abolished are the distinctions of privilege in the army, the distinctions which make it possible for the officers to have greater compensations than the soldier, and not only greater, but so far greater that the officer lives in a different world. It is possible for the officer to marry, to have a social life, to live something like a human being; while the soldier, because of his low wages, is deprived of these possibilities.

If we had our way, we would abolish these distinctions of privilege and secure to every member of the military apparatus a more or less similar compensation, regulation of privileges, and so on. Of course, I don't say that applies only to the army. That applies to society in general, in our theory.

RELATION OF OFFICERS TO MEN

Q: The private would be equal to the major-general under that theory, in all respects, to use an extreme basis, I suppose?

A: Equal not in his military knowledge—equal not in his military position, but equal in his right to have a decent living and social life. Why shouldn't he?

Q: I am asking you. Take the captain, would he be able to give orders to his privates?

A: Yes.

Q: Would they have to take the orders?

A: Yes, you can't have a military establishment without discipline, without command.

Q: What do you mean by "control over officers exercised by the ranks"?

A: We are in favor of the ranks having the privilege of electing their officers in the military establishment, the same way they have the privilege of electing their city officials in civil life, or their union officials in the unions. We believe that on the whole they would get a better grade of officers, and ones in whom they would put more confidence, than by having officers imposed upon them. You will get a better discipline because of the democratic right granted to the rank and file to select their officers.

POLITICAL COMMISSARS

Q: Now, will you have a sort of political commissar, if that is the proper word, which would have control over the officers in the army?

A: That all depends on whether the officers are considered reliable or not.

Q: They had it, I believe, did they not, in Soviet Russia?

A: Yes, in the army after the revolution they had a lot of officers trained in the Czarist regime.

Q: Would that be what you mean by democratic control of the officers?

A: No, that is an entirely different thing. By democratic control of the officers, we mean the right of the ranks to elect them and to recall them.

Q: But would you have any representative of the state administrative office, or whatever you call it, with the troops, and in control of the officers?

A: You are speaking of the institution of commissars in the Russian army?

Q: I don't know whether I am or not. I am asking you.

A: I will explain that, but that is a different point. In the reconstituted army, organized by Trotsky after the revolution, they naturally had to rely on tens of thousands of officers who had been trained under the Czarist regime. The workers had had no chance to train any of their people to be officers. Many officers rallied to the support of the Soviet government for various reasons. Some of them became converted to the revolution. Others remained hostile to the revolution but were patriotic to the country, and were willing to fight to defend it against the interventionists. Others reconciled themselves to reality, and made the best of it.

But many of them, naturally, were considered politically unreliable. The control exercised by commissars over them was not a control from the ranks such as we propose by election. This was control from the top of the government. The commissar was appointed as a trusted representative of the central government to work with the officer and see that he conducted himself loyally. That is what was worked out in life in the Russian experience.

We haven't even mentioned it in our program, because we don't know what will happen here.

I should add that insofar as these officers became assimilated into the new regime, and new officers were trained, the necessity for the commissar over the officer of doubtful loyalty was eliminated, and to that extent the institution was reduced.

Q: I would like to know whether or not having those political commissars is embraced within the program of the Socialist Workers Party?

A: No, I don't think it is stated in our program.

Q: I am asking you.

A: No, it is neither incorporated nor rejected. It is one of numerous ideas that remain to be answered.

Q: They had the same system in the Spanish Civil War recently, didn't they?

A: To some extent they did, yes.

Q: Will you explain to us a little bit, or use the Spanish Civil War as an illustration of the desirability of your own program that there be training under trade union control and that sort of thing? Will you elaborate on that for us a little bit?

A: I mentioned that the People's Front coalition secured a majority in the elections. The reactionary minority then revolted and started a rebellion by armed force, taking with them a considerable section of the staff of the army. On the other hand, as is nearly always the case, a section of the staff remained loyal to the legally constituted government, as was the case here in our Civil War—there was a division in the army.

The workers previously had clamored for arms, but the People's Front government had refused to give them arms, and delayed so long that the workers hadn't acquired any training in the use of arms. That is one of the reasons for the victory of fascism in Spain.

The workers' organizations were the most aggressive opponents of the fascists. Our party in Spain, while it did not give political support to the People's Front government, did support and participate in the military struggle to beat back the fascists, fought in the army side by side with the republicans and democrats and so on.

The unions and workers' organizations found that they could organize and equip and put men in the field far better through their own machinery than they could through the People's Front government. The powerful unions there organized their own regiments. The political parties organized their own regiments, and they were incorporated in the fighting lines side by side with the republicans and the official forces, and fought together. Without them, a serious military struggle wouldn't have been possible in Spain. If the workers of Spain had had opportunity for military training in the previous years, particularly had they had a chance to train men to be officers, I think it is quite possible that the military outcome in Spain would have been different.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Q: Let me ask you this: The Loyalist army during the war had adopted, had it not, a theory of democratic control over officers and election of officers somewhat like that advocated by your party?

A: I believe to a certain extent that prevailed at first in

some of the regiments controlled by the unions. Whether it prevailed in the army as a whole, I don't really know. I am not acquainted with sufficient intimacy with the military side of the Spanish Civil War to know that.

Q: Your party believes that the present army of the United States should be run that way, doesn't it?

A: Yes, we believe the ranks should have the right to elect their officers.

Q: Right now?

A: Right now.

Q: And in the event we get into war?

A: Yes, all the more so then, because then it is all the more important to the ranks of the soldiers to have officers that they want and that they can trust because they are going into dangerous situations. It is a very, very unhappy business to be sent into danger of one's life under officers who are not trusted.

Q: Your party members are instructed, are they not, to continue to be faithful to the party principles and theories after they are inducted into the army?

A: They are not instructed, but it is taken for granted that a man who is educated in our movement never forsakes his principles under any circumstances.

MR. SCHWEINHAUT: Would your Honor be willing to suspend at this point?

THE COURT: Ladies and gentlemen of the jury, tomorrow is Thanksgiving Day, and we shall observe it. I hope you have a pleasant day and a comfortable one.

You will please keep in mind the admonitions of the court.

We will recess now until ten o'clock on Friday morning.

(Whereupon, at 4:35 o'clock P. M., a recess was regularly taken until 10:00 o'clock A. M., Friday, November 21, 1941.)

PROSECUTION READS SOME QUOTATIONS

District Court of the United States,
District of Minnesota, Fourth Division.

November 21, 1941

10:00 o'clock A. M.

JAMES P. CANNON

One of the defendants, previously sworn, recalled, testified
as follows:

CROSS EXAMINATION

By MR. SCHWEINHAUT:

Q: Mr. Cannon, I want to read to you a clause from the *Communist Manifesto*, about which Mr. Goldman interrogated you on Friday or whenever it was: "The Communists disdain

to conceal their views and aims. They openly declare that their ends can be attained only by the forcible overthrow of all existing social conditions." Does that represent the Party's view or not?

A: Insofar as it is incorporated in the Declaration of Principles it does. We have interpreted that, as all other Marxist writings, in our own way, as it appears in the Declaration of Principles.

Q: You will agree, will you not, that, taken as it stands, and without anything else, it amounts to advocacy of the overthrow of the government by force?

A: No, I do not interpret it that way.

Q: You do not agree that that is what it means?

A: We do not interpret it that way, but in the Declaration of Principles—

Q: I am asking you whether or not, taking this language alone, and without anything else, do you not agree that it amounts to advocacy of the overthrow of government by force?

A: No, not necessarily because the authors of that same document, in the statement that I cited the other day, stated specifically that they thought their aims could be attained, at least in England, by the process of parliamentary democracy.

Q: Now, you know that that is not in answer to my question, don't you, Mr. Cannon? Let me ask you this, please: Taking that language which I just read to you alone, and without anything else, don't you agree that it amounts to advocacy of overthrow of government by force?

A: No, I don't think so, because the authors themselves have interpreted it differently at least in the case of England.

Q: All right—we will let that go. When you give out the *Communist Manifesto* to your members, do you caution them against that sentence?

A: I don't know, particularly, that we do. We publish it as a historic document, 93 years old.

Q: You would expect the members of the Party, when they read that, to understand when they read it, that it does not represent the views of the Party, and that it does not advocate overthrow of government by force?

A: We expect the members of the Party to be governed by the Declaration of Principles.

REFORMS AND REVOLUTION

Q: Now, I wish to read to you from the "Founding Conference of the Fourth International," where I find this phrase: "The strategical task of the Fourth International lies not in reforming capitalism but in its overthrow." Doesn't that mean that you do not even intend to attempt anything by legislative reformation?

A: No, it does not mean that.

Q: What does it mean?

A: On the contrary, we are constantly proposing legislative changes.

Q: What does that sentence mean to you, as found there?

A: We do not expect to attain the final aims of Socialism by the reformation of capitalism which we consider an outlived system. Meanwhile, we are constantly looking out, on the road to the time when we will be able to accomplish our final aims, for suitable occasions to propose timely reforms.

Q: Isn't it a fact that throughout your literature there is constant ridicule of any idea of reforms?

A: We do not think the final aims of Socialism can be accomplished by reforming a state or system which has to be replaced. But we do not consider reforms and revolution incompatible, not at all.

Q: Now, I find this line in "The Revolution of 1905" by Lenin: "It is our duty—"

MR. GOLDMAN: That was not admitted in evidence, your Honor.

MR. SCHWEINHAUT: I am not saying it was. I want to ask the witness something about it.

Q: (*Continued*): "It is our duty in time of an uprising to exterminate ruthlessly all the chiefs of the civil and military authorities." Does that represent the Party's views?

A: No, we have never made any such declaration.

Q: You disagree with that?

A: Yes, I don't know that that is in any way a statement of our Party policy.

FORMULAS AND INTERPRETATIONS

Q: That is part of the philosophy and dogma of Lenin with which you do not agree—is that correct?

A: We do not agree with the extermination of anybody unless it is in case of an actual armed struggle, when the rules of war apply.

Q: Then in the event that your Party leads an uprising, would you agree then that the chiefs of the civil and military authorities should be exterminated ruthlessly?

A: I do not want to be made responsible, or I do not want the Party made responsible, for such statements that are not in our official declarations.

Q: But you have told us that the basic views of Lenin are the basic views of the Socialist Workers Party, have you not?

A: That is right and I told you at the same time that that does not mean that we take every letter and line written by Lenin as dogma.

Q: And this is one that you do not regard as dogma, is that right?

A: Certainly not with the interpretation you give it.

Q: Let me read to you some quotations from the publication "What is Trotskyism?" designated as "Outline Course No. 2, by Jack Weber," also distributed by your Party: "To realize socialism Marxism posits that it is first necessary to destroy the state machinery of the capitalist ruling class: namely, the army, the police and the state bureaucracy." And then: "The policy of Marxism remains that of utilizing the war and the arming of the workers to further the interests of the world revolution, to turn the imperialist war into civil war, to look upon the bourgeoisie at home as the main enemy." And then: "The working class cannot win power by pursuing a policy of fascism." Doesn't that mean that you and your Party intend, in the forthcoming war, if we get into it, to use that means for fomenting civil war?

A: I would not put it in such a bald manner as that. I have explained here in some detail that we would continue to propagate our ideas under all circumstances, insofar as we are permitted to do so. We believe that the prolongation of the war conducted by the imperialist powers will have the inevitable effect of accelerating the decay of the system represented by the imperialist powers, of increasing the mass misery and discontent, and the demand for cessation of the slaughter, and our Party will certainly undertake to offer to the public in such a situation the alternative of Socialism, that is right.

Q: And you will seek to utilize war, during the war, to destroy the present form of government, will you not?

A: Well, that is no secret, that we want to change this form of government.

WE OFFER THE ALTERNATIVE OF SOCIALISM TO WAR

Q: And you look forward, do you not, to the forthcoming war as the time when you may be able to accomplish that?

A: Yes, I think the forthcoming war will unquestionably weaken the imperialist governments in all countries.

Q: You said, I believe, that you will not support the war? You do not believe in national defense at all, do you?

A: Not in imperialist countries, no.

Q: I am speaking of this country.

A: I believe 100 percent in defending this country by our own means, but I do not believe in defending the imperialist governments of the world—

Q: I am speaking about the government of the United

States as it is now constitutionally constituted. You do not believe in defending that, do you?

A: Not in a political sense, no.

Q: You do not believe in defending it in any sense, do you?

A: I explained the other day, that if the majority of the people decide on war, and participate in the war, our people and the people under our influence will also participate in the war. We do not sabotage the war, we do not obstruct it, but we continue to propagate our ideas, calling for a cessation of the war and calling for a change in government.

Q: Do you mean by that statement that your people, when inducted into the army, would be good soldiers?

A: Yes.

Q: And that they would seek to further the military efforts of the United States?

A: We say that our people must be good soldiers in the army, in the same sense that they are good workers in the factory, and good unionists in the union. Otherwise, they could not possibly have any influence over their comrades.

Q: How can you reconcile that statement with the statement appearing in the *Socialist Appeal* of August 1, 1939: "A Socialist who preaches national defense is a petty-bourgeois reactionary at the services of a decaying capitalism." How do you reconcile your previous answer to my question, with the statement made there?

A: We are not in favor of defending the present regime. We are opposed to the present regime.

Q: And your members who are soldiers in the army, when they are inducted into the army, will be opposed to it?

A: So far as their ideas are concerned, yes, so far as their expression of opinion is concerned, insofar as they are permitted to express their opinion.

We do not believe in capitalist authority and direction in the factory, either, but as long as we are in the minority and cannot prevent it, we work in the factory, and insist that our people be good workers.

Q: And while you are working in the factory, you try to do everything you can to fight against the bosses?

A: We do everything we can in the way of explaining and propagandizing to our fellow-workers the idea that it is better for them to own the factories than to be wage workers under the control of a private owner.

Q: And personally, you ridicule the idea of defending the United States government, don't you?

A: In the sense of giving political support to all forms of capitalist government, yes.

Q: I will read from one of your own speeches, and see

whether that means political opposition. On November 14, 1939, in a speech of yours, you said—

A: What was the date again?

Q: November 14, 1939. This speech of yours was reported in the *Internal Bulletin*, for members only. You said: "Some comrades speak nowadays of giving 'conditional' defense to the Soviet Union. If you stop to think about it we are for conditional defense of the United States. It is so stated in the program of the Fourth International. In the event of war we will absolutely defend the country on only one small 'condition': that we first overthrow the government of the capitalists and replace it with a government of the workers." Did you mean political opposition by that?

A: I meant, that in that case we would withdraw our political opposition and become political supporters as well as military participants of the war.

Q: Do you think that statement is consistent with what I just read, which was stated by you in your speech?

A: That is what I meant by it. We have never at any time said we would not fight in the army of the United States alongside of the rest of our generation, in time of war. We said, "We will not give political support to war."

Q: Let's see whether your statement in the Declaration of Principles is consistent with what you just said: (Reading) "If, in spite of the efforts of the revolutionists and the militant workers, the U. S. government enters a new war, the S. W. P. will not under any circumstances support that war but will on the contrary fight against it. The S. W. P. will advocate the continuance of the class struggle during the war regardless of the consequences for the outcome of the American military struggle; and will try to prepare the masses to utilize the war crisis for the overthrow of U. S. capitalism and the victory of socialism." Does that mean that you are supporting the war effort?

A: No, I have never said that we support the war effort. We do not. We oppose it.

Q: And could one of your Party members observe that principle and be a good soldier?

A: He could be; he not only could, but he will, in the same way that he can be a good worker in a shop while opposing wage labor in the shop. We cannot prevent it as long as we are in the minority.

Q: The Declaration of Principles also says: "The Socialist Workers Party opposes and will continue at all times to oppose every form of social-patriotism, all advocacy of 'national union' or 'suspension of the class struggle' during war time"—

A: That is under conditions of a capitalist government.

Q: You mean under the present conditions in this country today, do you not?

A: That is right.

Q: But still you say that you would not obstruct the military?

A: No, not in a military sense.

Q: I want to ask you whether what I am about to read now does not mean that you want to foment and bring about a civil war, from the pamphlet "Are You Ready for War" published by the Fourth International, Young Peoples Socialist League: "Do we believe in turning imperialist war into civil war? This is the way by which the Russian workers secured peace in 1917 while their brothers in other lands were still struggling under the yoke of imperialism. This is the only way by which permanent peace can be gained and war abolished from the face of the earth." Doesn't that mean that you intend to foment and deliberately try to bring about civil war during the forthcoming period of war?

A: Conditions mature for the development of a revolutionary movement in war time. We continue our opposition to the imperialist system, the imperialist regime, and try to lead it in the direction of Socialism. There is no doubt whatever but what that is the aim of our Party.

Q: This is from one of your convention resolutions to the same general effect, and I suppose your answer would be the same: "If the working class is unable to prevent the outbreak of war, and the United States enters directly into it, our party stands pledged to the traditional position of revolutionary Marxism. It will utilize the crisis of capitalist rule engendered by the war to prosecute the class struggle with the utmost intransigence, to strengthen the independent labor and revolutionary movement and to bring the war to a close by the revolutionary overturn of capitalism and the establishment of proletarian rule in the form of a workers' state." Is that your idea of not obstructing the military effort of this country?

A: Yes, that is a clear statement of our aims. We are going to oppose the war; we are going to speak against it.

OPPOSITION DOES NOT MEAN SABOTAGE

Q: Do you suggest that this language means that you will only speak against it?

A: If you try to construe that to mean that we are going to instruct our people, or the people under our influence, to obstruct the military prosecution of the war, to break discipline, to commit sabotage, to create actions of this kind, that does not mean that. It means political opposition.

Q: Reading now from the *Manifesto of the Fourth International on the Imperialist War and the Proletarian Revolution*, I read this: "Every rank and file member of our organization

is not only entitled but is duty bound to consider himself henceforth an officer in the revolutionary army which will be created in the flame of events." Do you think your members could be good soldiers and not obstruct the military effort if they obeyed that principle?

A: That does not necessarily mean officers in a military sense. When we speak of the revolutionary army, we use it in many senses. We speak of the Party as the revolutionary army; we speak of the movement of the proletariat as the revolutionary army; not always in a military sense. That would not mean literally in a military sense because —

Q: I am not asking you if it does. I am asking whether one could be a good soldier in the American army and obey that principle?

A: Yes, if not, he would not have influence enough to be an officer anywhere.

Q: Let me read to you from one of your speeches on military policy, appearing in the *Socialist Appeal* of October 26, 1940: "How do we work in a conscript army, someone asked. We work the same way as in a shop. Indeed, the main purpose of industry now is supplying the army. Where would you draw the line? There is hardly an industry that won't be mobilized either for the manufacture or transportation of materials for the army. The masses are in the army, or working to supply the army. The workers are subject to military exploitation. We go in and defend the interests of the slaves of military exploitation, just as we go into the factory and fight against the capitalist exploitation there. Our basic line everywhere is the class line.

"The second point is to be careful, cautious. Make no putsches, make no premature moves that expose us and separate us from the masses. Go with the masses. Be with the masses, just as the Bolsheviks were in Kerensky's army. Why can't we do that here? And how otherwise can we do it? How otherwise, in a world dominated by militarism, can we see our way to world salvation except through military means? And how can we get these military means except by penetrating the army as it exists?"

You mean by that, do you not, that you want your members, when inducted into the army service, to preach your doctrines to other soldiers in the army, and thereby defend them against military exploitation by their commanding officers? Isn't that a fair statement of what that means?

A: Our Party is in favor of defending the rights of the rank and file soldiers, their democratic rights to decent treatment, their rights to express their opinions and to petition Congress, to elect their officers, at least their lower officers, generally protecting them against capitalist mistreatment.

Q: And that is what you want your members that are in

the army now to do, to speak in favor of and to propagate those ideas?

A: Yes.

Q: In the army?

A: In the same way that they do it in the shop.

Q: But you do not think that would obstruct the military effort of the army?

A: If you will read that again you will see that we do not want any putsches. We say to the members "Do not make any putsches, and do not obstruct the army." It is our direct instruction to our people not to create obstruction of the military operation, but to confine their efforts to propagandistic work, to gain the sympathy and support of the rank and file masses.

Q: And you believe that your people can propagate that kind of stuff in the army and not obstruct the military efforts?

A: Yes, I think so. I think military life, as a matter of fact, will be a whole lot better, the more the rights and feelings of the rank and file soldiers are considered. The whole conception of militarism based on a rank and file without organization rights, and with arbitrary discipline imposed from above, without any expression of opinion or consideration for the feelings of the masses — we are just as much against that in the army as in the factory or in civil life.

Q: And the way you are talking now is the way you want your members to talk in the army, is it?

A: Each in his own way.

OUR INDEPENDENT TASKS IN WAR TIME

Q: Now, on June 29, 1940, the *Socialist Appeal* published this from the report of the *Manifesto of the Fourth International*: "Independently of the course of the war, we fulfill our basic task: We explain to the workers the irreconcilability between their interests and the interest of blood-thirsty capitalism; we mobilize the toilers against imperialism; we propagate the unity of the workers in all warring and neutral countries; we call for the fraternization of workers and soldiers within each country, and of soldiers with soldiers on the opposite side of the battle-front; we mobilize the women and youth against the war; we carry on constant, persistent, tireless preparation of the revolution — in the factories, in the mills, in the villages, in the barracks, at the front and in the fleet." You want the soldiers to do that, don't you?

A: Yes, I think that is a summation of the idea, for the soldiers and everybody to do that. That is the way to put an end to this slaughter.

Q: And you do not think that promulgating those ideas in the army during the war would obstruct the military efforts?

A: Not in the sense of opening up the front for the advantage of opposing armies, no. We are offering this solution to the soldiers of all the imperialist armies, but it does not mean and could not mean in any sense that we want to sabotage the operation of the American army in the interests of an opposing army. You will not find it there, or anywhere else in our literature.

Q: Well, that is a difference in points of view. In the *Socialist Appeal* of March 30, 1940, appears this editor's note in the Workers Forum, which says: "Entering the army upon being drafted is necessary for our work." What do you mean by that?

A: Is there a connecting sentence with it?

Q: It is from Exhibit 215-A. Mr. Smith will get that for us. While Mr. Smith is looking for that, I will ask you about this from the *Socialist Appeal* of June 29, 1940, an article entitled "Enlistment Lag Forces Compulsion": "Meanwhile, let the workers remember this. When they are conscripted, let them not waste the period they spend in the army. They must learn everything there is to be learned about military training so that when the time comes they can use that training for the interests of the labor movement." What do you mean by that?

A: Meaning that the better trained the workers are, the better instructed in tactics and in military acts, the better they will be able to defend their Socialist regime against the efforts of the minority reactionaries to overthrow it.

Q: This is the context from the Workers Forum, editor's note, March 30, 1940: "We follow Lenin; we oppose war, not as a measure of self-expression, but as an integral part of our struggle for the overthrow of capitalism. Entering the army upon being drafted is necessary for our work."

A: For our people, or people under our influence, to refuse to accept conscription, the only thing they would accomplish would be to simply isolate themselves from the generation who are going to decide things in the future, and such individual or minority actions are utterly false and incompatible with the aims of a Party that can only realize its program by support of the majority.

That is why we oppose conscientious objectors, and why we oppose draft-evaders. We oppose all people who try to set themselves up as individuals against the majority. Our policy is to submit to the decision of the majority, but to oppose it in our political activities, to speak against it.

Q: In October 1938, you made a speech on "Ten Years of the Fight to Build a Revolutionary Party in the United States"

in which you said this: "In the great Minneapolis strikes 'Trotskyism' revealed itself in the most dramatic fashion, as no bookman's dogma but a guide to the most militant and most effective action." What did you mean by that?

A: That in the strike in Minneapolis in 1934 some comrades affiliated with our Party played a leading influence, or a part of the leading influence, and demonstrated in practice that the principles of Trotskyism are the best and most effective principles, and can be applied most effectively in the interests of the workers.

Q: Would this be a demonstration of this principle? In *The Militant* of July 12, 1941, under the heading, "Local 544-CIO's Proud and Stainless Record" this was said: "During the first drivers' strike of May 1934, the employers threw against the embattled transport workers the entire police force of Minneapolis and 5,000 special deputies armed with clubs and guns. In a historic battle—the 'Battle of Bulls Run'—the drivers fought the police and deputies to a standstill and chased them off the streets of the city." Is that Trotskyism demonstrating itself?

A: Well, I can give you my own opinion, that I am mighty proud of the fact that Trotskyism had some part in influencing the workers to protect themselves against that sort of violence.

Q: Well, what kind of violence do you mean?

A: This was what the deputies were organized for, to drive the workers off the street. They got a dose of their own medicine. I think the workers have a right to defend themselves. If that is treason, you can make the most of it.

LEGALITY OF THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION

Q: When you were tracing the history of the Russian revolution, you said this: "The Kerensky government was losing ground because it was not solving any problems of the people. The Bolsheviks' slogans of 'Bread' and other slogans—those were the slogans that the masses wanted. The Bolsheviks got a majority in the Petrograd Soviet. On November 7th was held the Congress of the All-Russian Soviets. The Bolsheviks had a majority there, and simultaneously with the meeting of the All-Russian Soviet, where the Bolsheviks had a majority, they took the power from the government." Now, do you want us to understand from that, that the Bolsheviks took power by virtue of a majority vote of the Congress of the Soviets?

A: That is right.

Q: Do you not mean that the contrary was true?

A: No, I do not.

Q: Don't you know that there was a planned insurrection before the Congress, and that the insurrection actually took place before the Congress met?

A: No. The Congress met the morning after the struggle had begun, and confirmed the new government.

Q: The fact is that the insurrection was started and was completed before the Congress ever met, isn't it?

A: No, the power was in the Congress, and the Congress was the real power.

Q: Well, just answer my question, please. Isn't it a fact that the insurrection had been planned and actually carried out before the Congress ever met?

A: No. The question was submitted to the All-Russian Congress of the Soviets on November 7th. That is why they call it the November 7th Revolution.

Q: Don't you know, further, that Lenin persistently warned against waiting for the Congress and doing it in a legal way?

A: Oh, that was one time that Lenin was overruled.

Q: And who won?

A: Trotsky won.

Q: Isn't it also a fact that Trotsky ridiculed the notion that it was done legally?

A: No, on the contrary, Trotsky commented on the legal sanction of the action by the Soviets. That was why it was delayed to November 7th.

Q: Isn't it also true that he lulled Kerensky into inaction by pretending to wait until the Congress met, so that it could be decided legally who was to take power?

A: He did not pretend to wait. He waited.

Q: I submit that the contrary is true, in that Mr. Trotsky said so, and I would like to read to you about ten pages or so from the "Lessons of October," and then you can tell me whether I am right or wrong.

(MR. SCHWEINHAUT reads from pages 74 and 80 of Trotsky's "Lessons of October.")

MR. GOLDMAN: I submit, your Honor, that this book was ruled out of evidence. I have no objection if he wants to read one or two or perhaps three sentences, but to take advantage of cross-examination and put into evidence what the Court has ruled out, I think is going a little too far.

THE COURT: Well, this has to do, I suppose, with the dispute between counsel and witness, as to the facts with reference to which the witness takes one position and counsel takes another. Now this is an attempt to impeach the statements of the witness by the means indicated. I assume he has a right to do that. He may continue to read it.

MR. GOLDMAN: Exception.

(MR. SCHWEINHAUT reads pages 80-91 from Trotsky's "Lessons of October.")

MR. SCHWEINHAUT: Now, am I right or wrong, Mr. Cannon, that the insurrection actually started and was concluded before the Soviet Congress put its seal of legality on it?

A: If you will permit me, I will show you where you are wrong. You misunderstand the whole thing; my authority for the evidence I gave here was Trotsky. He wrote the most authoritative and authentic history of the revolution. Perhaps I should mention several things to show where you are wrong:

First, those pages you have read show that there were three different opinions in the Central Committee of the Communist Party. Lenin said they had a majority, and they should take the power without waiting. There was the opinion of Zinoviev and Kamenev who thought the Bolsheviks did not have a majority and should not take the power. And the third opinion was Trotsky's that they could base the assumption of power on the legality of the Soviets.

Second, those pages you read prove that both the Mensheviks and the Bolsheviks derived their authority from the Soviets. In November it became clear that the Bolsheviks had won the majority in the Soviets. Kerensky, who formerly had the majority in the Soviets, prepared to move troops from the capital. What did the troops do? The troops refused to go until ordered by the Congress of Soviets. The Congress of the Soviets convened on November 7th. It was revealed that the Bolsheviks had the majority, and their assumption of power was confirmed.

In this All-Russian Congress of Soviets were present the other parties who had been the majority of yesterday. They spoke and debated there. When the vote was taken, the Bolsheviks had the majority. The Bolsheviks offered to give proportionate places in the government to the other parties. They refused and walked off. The Bolsheviks did, as a matter of fact, incorporate into the government, a section of Kerensky's party, the left wing of the Social Revolutionary Party.

It seems to me that here is an excellent illustration of how a revolutionary party, after long propagandistic work, succeeded in a political crisis in winning over to its side a majority of the population represented in the most authoritative body, the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies. And the Bolsheviks, adapting themselves to the legality of this authoritative body—

Q: Now, just a minute. Are you still telling us how it occurred, or are you just telling us now that you think it was a mighty fine thing?

A: No, I am explaining the legality of the development, as against your interpretation that it was illegal. And it seems to me—

Q: I don't want your opinion on that. If you want to go on and tell us what happened, all right. Don't characterize it.

A: I don't think you will ever get a more legal revolution than that.

MR. SCHWEINHAUT: That is all.

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