

NEWS BULLETIN

AMERICAN COMMITTEE FOR THE DEFENSE OF LEON TROTSKY

22 East 17th Street, Room 511, New York City

Telephone: GRamercy 7-6025

Louis Adamic
Devere Allen
David P. Berenberg
Franz Boas
Anita Brenner
Paul F. Brissenden
Lewis Browne
James Bunnham
Witter Bynner
V. F. Calverton
John Chamberlain
Eleanor Clark
Sarah N. Cleghorn
John Dewey
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and others

This Committee Exists (1) To Safeguard Trotsky's Right to Asylum and (2) to further the Organization of an Impartial Commission of Inquiry.

Bulletin No. 4.

FEBRUARY 19, 1937

357

Five Cents

Commission Demands Supported by 6,500

Nearly 6,500 people jammed the New York Hippodrome on Tuesday night, Feb. 9 for what proved to be one of the most impressive labor defense meetings this city has ever seen.

The great crowd had come to hear Trotsky speak over a direct telephone wire from Mexico City. For reasons not yet satisfactorily explained by the telephone company officials, the wire circuit at the last minute failed to function and Trotsky was unable to speak as scheduled.

While attempts were being made to get a line through the crowd waited patiently for nearly an hour. Trotsky's speech, an analysis of the trials and an appeal for a commission of inquiry, was read by Max Shachtman, editor of Trotsky's works in this country.

Trotsky's challenging offer to place himself at the disposal of the Moscow authorities should an impartial commission find him guilty of any of the charges levelled at him in Moscow made a profound impression on the audience. From the crowded press table at the Hippodrome word of the challenge went out to the farthest corners of the world.

(The text of Trotsky's speech has been published by Pioneer Publishers, New York, under the title: "I Stake My Life".)

Other speakers on the program included Max Shachtman, who denounced as reactionary the Communist Party's attempt to deny Trotsky the free and democratic right of asylum; Angelica Balabanoff, first secretary of the Communist International; Roy Burt, national executive secretary of the Socialist Party, U.S.A.; George Novack, secretary of the American Committee for the Defense of Leon Trotsky; and Prof. Emmett E. Dorsey, acting head of the Political Science Department of Howard University, who acted as chairman.

Endorsing the demand for an impartial commission of inquiry, Roy Burt said: "We stand or fall together. There is no hope or future for the workers of the world unless all suspicion of frame-up, all doubt of justice, is divorced from the attitude of the Soviet Union."

At the close of the meeting, with a few scattered nays, the thousands present adopted the following resolution:

"Human progress being indivisibly one with the truth, we, 6,500 New York workers and friends of civil liberties assembled in the Hippodrome on the call of the American Committee for the Defense of Leon Trotsky, endorse the proposal to create an impartial commission of inquiry into the truth of the charges made against Leon Trotsky at the Moscow trials. We appeal to enlightened public opinion in the United States and abroad to add its voice to ours and we call especially on the trade union movement to take the immediate initiative toward the creation of such a commission of inquiry, on whose decisions Trotsky has staked his honor and his life."

Trotsky's Challenge

"Why does Moscow so fear the voice of a single man? Only because I know the truth, the whole truth. Only because I have nothing to hide. Only because I am ready to appear before a public and impartial commission of inquiry with documents, facts and testimonies in my hands, and to disclose the truth to the very end. I declare: if this commission decides that I am guilty in the slightest degree of the crimes which Stalin imputes to me, I PLEDGE IN ADVANCE TO PLACE MYSELF VOLUNTARILY IN THE HANDS OF THE EXECUTIONERS OF THE GPU."

From Trotsky's speech, read at the Hippodrome meeting, New York, February 9, 1937

Mass Meetings on Trials Held in Many Cities

Meetings on the Moscow trials and in support of the demand for a commission of inquiry have been held during the past few weeks in New York, Brooklyn, Chicago, Boston, Minneapolis, and San Francisco and Paris, France.

On Feb. 2 in Paris more than 3,000 workers met and heard a list of speakers including Magdeleine Paz, Georges Pioch, Felicien Challaye, representatives of the Socialist Youth, of the Workers International Party, and M. Arker, delegate of the Workers Party of Marxist Unification of Spain. Messages were read from Victor Marguerite and Georges Duffamel. Andre Breton, novelist and writer, read a message from Victor Serge.

On Feb. 12 in Boston a meeting of about 700 persons took place under the auspices of the New England Sub-Committee for the Defense of Leon Trotsky. Max Shachtman, editor of Trotsky's works, George Novack, Secretary of the American Committee; and John Newton Thurber, business manager of the Socialist Call, were the speakers. Part of Leon Trotsky's Hippodrome speech was read.

In Chicago on Feb. 1, nearly 1,000 were present to hear Norman Thomas, Socialist Party leader, and Albert Goldman, editor of the Socialist Appeal, in an analysis of the Moscow trials and demands for the formation of an impartial commission of inquiry.

A special 800-word telegraphed message from Leon Trotsky, in which he repeated his offer to place himself at the disposal of the G.P.U. if found guilty by a commission of inquiry, was read and cheered by the meeting.

In Montreal on Feb. 12 at the Youth Forum of the Workmen's Circle, more than 500 persons heard Maurice Spector, former member of the Executive Committee of the Communist International, discuss the trials. More than 100 were turned away. Next day a meeting of more than 100 was held at the Coffee House to plan further activities.

Committee Answers Counter-Campaign

The American Committee for the Defense of Leon Trotsky was launched in provisional form on October 22, 1936, by two leading Socialists and four eminent liberals who have often aided in the defense of the oppressed and persecuted. Their appeal met with immediate response from more than two-score liberals, socialists, trade-unionists and others. The Committee made its first appearance before the general public when it undertook to secure for Trotsky the democratic right of asylum in Mexico. A number of liberal papers commented in friendly fashion on the committee's work. The Socialist Party of the U.S. gave it official endorsement. A number of trade-unions added their approval. At the Committee's first public meeting in New York on Dec. 18, more than 2,500 people were present in the Hotel Delano.

From the outset, the Communist Party, its organs, its auxiliary organizations, and its official and unofficial spokesmen attacked the Committee. Their attacks increased in volume and intensity when the Soviet Embassy added its voice. On Jan. 20, Mr. Mauritz Hallgren of the Baltimore Sun sent the Committee a 3,000 word letter of resignation, at the same time as he sent it to the Daily Worker. The "war of the letters" had begun.

The Communist Party and its friends made the following accusations against the Committee:

- (1) That it is composed of Trotskyists;
- (2) That it is composed of liberal marionettes and Trotskyists who pull the strings;
- (3) That its object is to destroy the Soviet Union in order to help Fascism;
- (4) That its object is to agitate for "meaningless justice", thus objectively helping Hitler, Hearst and the Japanese Mikado in their anti-Soviet plans.

The Communist Party and its friends, basing themselves on these arguments, have employed the following methods in an attempt to break up the Committee:

- (1) A steady barrage of propaganda in the Communist-controlled press;
- (2) Pressure on liberal editors to close the pages of their papers to expressions of the Committee and its members;
- (3) Individual letters to Committee members presenting the C.P. arguments and urging resignations;
- (4) A letter signed by several dozen C.P. supporters and liberals urging all Committee members to resign. (This letter is peculiarly disingenuous. It condemns the Committee's aim of establishing an impartial commission of inquiry, and disposes of the other aim of the Committee by stating that Trotsky now has asylum in Mexico and that therefore the asylum issue is dead. It conceals the fact that neither when he was seeking asylum in Mexico nor now when the Mexican C.P. is demanding that Trotsky be deported—where to?—have any of the signers of the anti-Committee letters

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SECOND THOUGHTS FROM THE "TIMES"

The New York Times, which some weeks ago in its editorial columns indicated quasi-belief in the Moscow charges, still publishes Mr. Walter Duranty whose dispatches characterized the accusers of Trotsky as men who spoke words that "ring true as gold." Editorially, however, the Times is reconsidering its position, as the following editorial from the issue of Feb. 17 indicates:

TROTSKY'S DEFENSE

If it is still good legal doctrine that falsehood in one thing is falsehood in everything, then Leon Trotsky in our pages yesterday disposed of the case built up against him in the recent Moscow treason trial. It was there testified by Vladimir Romm, the Soviet newspaper man in whose behalf many American colleagues have intervened, that on July 24, 1933, he met Trotsky in a dark alley near the Bois de Boulogne in Paris, and from him received messages which he agreed to smuggle into Russia. But on that day and for many weeks thereafter, says Trotsky, he was living in the south of France under continuous police supervision. Testimony to his absence from Paris can be had for the asking.

The alleged meeting with Romm in Paris thus takes its place with an alleged conspirative Trotsky meeting in a Copenhagen hotel which had burned down many years earlier and with an alleged conspirative airplane flight to Oslo during a month when, according to Trotsky, it can be conclusively shown that no foreign airplane arrived in Oslo. Where three vital pieces of evidence can be manufactured by a secret police an entire body of evidence can be manufactured. To many readers of the testimony in the course of the trial it must have occurred that a prosecution which

marshaled a grotesque human exhibit like the witness Arnold must be prepared to have all its witnesses regarded with distrust.

And yet, the other side will insist on arguing, holes picked in the evidence against the alleged Trotskyists do not explain the psychological puzzle. If those were lies told by Romm, Radek and others on the witness stand, why were they uttered by men who had every reason to believe that they had nothing to gain by false confessions? The outcome of last Summer's trial would preclude the theory of a bargain. If Zinovieff and Kamenef were promised mercy in return for besmearing themselves and were then doublecrossed, why should last month's batch of breast-beaters go through with their comedy?

The puzzle is there. Examinations are conceivable but difficult. The accused of last month, like the accused of last Summer, may after all be hidden away somewhere in prison, as their price in the elaborate bargain. Or intimidation of relatives and friends may have driven them to confess to non-existent crimes. These are difficult answers and the puzzle remains. Nevertheless the burden of proof lies not on Trotsky but on Stalin. Three confessed acts have been shown to be impossible. That taint extends to the whole trial.

The educational work of this Committee is in part the cause for growing clarity on the Moscow trials. Trotsky's revelations concerning the Romm statements have also had a profound effect. Incidentally, they constitute a defense of the still untried Romm against his accusers and against his own confession.

COMMITTEE ANSWERS COUNTER-CAMPAIGN

(Continued from Page 1)

raised a voice on behalf of the democratic right of asylum.)

(5) Circulation of the Hallgren letter of resignation by the New Masses with requests for replies. (The New Masses has received a number of replies, most of them flatly rejecting Mr. Hallgren's anti-Committee arguments. The New Masses, however, has printed only three letters—those which gave way to the views of Mr. Hallgren. It has suppressed the letters of Messrs. Norman Thomas, Paul Brissenden, William Ellery Leonard and others who reaffirmed their stand in support of the Committee. It has made passing references to letters of other loyal Committee members in such a way as to distort their real meanings);

(6) A campaign of telegrams, telephone calls (especially around midnight) and delegations. These tactics have been aimed especially against the senior (in point of age) members of the Committee, with the effect of making their lives almost intolerable.

(7) A campaign of false rumors, to the effect that Trotsky is an employe of Hearst (The fact is that neither Trotsky nor the Committee has any relation with Hearst, even to the extent of refusing him copies of official news releases made available to the press in general; that the Hearst press has from the outset distorted news about the Committee and about Trotsky in a manner similar to that of the Communist press; and finally, that Trotsky has taken steps toward instituting libel suits against the Hearst interests.)

(8) A campaign of false rumors to the effect that there have been scores of resignations from the Committee.

(9) Employment of physical violence against Committee representatives who try to exercise peacefully and legally their right to distribute Committee literature.

One result of this campaign has been to make committee members wary of jangling telephones in the wee sma' hours. For a

few there have been frayed nerves; for the many intense irritation. Meanwhile, the Committee has had to spend a great deal of time correcting misrepresentations and getting detailed information to members throughout the country who were being mystified by false rumors emanating from C.P. sources.

Another result has been the resignation from the Committee of nine members. These are Messrs. Hallgren, Paul Ward, Frederick Schumann, Manuel Komroff, Le Roy Bowman, Sam Jaffee and the Misses Evelyn Preston, Sara Field Bard and Freda Kirchwey. The last resignation was dated Feb. 11. (Mr. Lewis Gannett did not resign, not having been a member; his name appeared on an early letterhead of the Committee due to an error).

The resigning members have given a variety of reasons for their action. The total reasons are as follows:

- (1) Trotsky is safe in Mexico; (no thanks to the C.P. or its friends),
- (2) Trotsky can present his case in the newspapers and does not need a commission of inquiry;
- (3) The Committee is anti-Soviet;
- (4) The Committee is dominated by Trotskyists;
- (5) The Committee has Trotskyists on it;
- (6) Trotsky is just as bad as Stalin;
- (7) The Committee is futile.

The counter-campaign, in fact, has clarified the Committee and its members as to the nature of the effort they will have to make to achieve their aims. The Committee as a result, is more solid than ever. A number of Committee members who joined at the outset with no expectation of playing a particularly active role in the Committee's work have reacted to the pressure brought upon them by entering the lists aggressively. They are matching the anti-Committee agitation letter for letter, and if they are not so successful in getting their letters printed either in the liberal or the Communist or Hearst press, they have at least the consolation of knowing that their letters make sense while the others do not.

They have greater consolation. The

CARL VON OSSIETSKY ON MOSCOW TRIALS

Carl von Ossietzky, who was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize while in a Nazi concentration camp, has been unable to have his say on the recent Moscow trials; but he spoke out clearly on similar Russian trials prior to his arrest.

On March 9, 1931, Ossietzky wrote of the Menshevik trial:

"Party members and friends of Russian Communism are shaking their heads. They know the accused, and know that these men are neither conspiratorial types nor the type which goes in for sabotage or interventionist plots, although they do reject Stalin's present course. Informed persons therefore, regard the guilt of these prisoners as psychologically impossible. Into the bargain, Abramowitsch has conclusively established that he could not have been in Russia at the time the prosecutor speaks of. The basis of the prosecution is weak, the motives are obscure. The only thing that is clear is the outcome."

On January 24, 1933, a month after Ossietzky's release from the prison where he had been put by the Bruening regime—and a brief five weeks before he began his four years in Hitler's concentration camp—Ossietzky published in his magazine Leon Trotsky's letter to the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the U.S.S.R., protesting against the persecution of Trotsky's daughter, and appended this editorial comment:

"We publish in full this letter of Trotsky, portions of which have appeared in numerous papers, because it cannot become too well known what the Muscovites out of blind party hate have done to their greatest living hero. No sensible person will doubt Stalin's right to defend himself against Trotsky's critical genius as best he can. But the means of struggle must correspond to the spirit of the proletarian revolution, rather than be taken from the worst arsenal of the bourgeois police regime. The innumerable non-Communist defenders of the Soviet Union throughout the world who have year after year come out against idiotic red scares, who are endeavoring to wrest one after another the red prisoners of their respective governments, are entitled to an answer."

Committee is growing. Since the counter-campaign hit the 250 decibel level, the Committee had added to its members Prof. Franz Boas; Sidney Howard, the playwright; Dwight Macdonald, "Fortune" editor; Rabbi Edward L. Israel of Baltimore; E. Dorsey and Abram L. Harris, Professors at Howard University; Tom Tippet, labor writer; Justus Ebert, labor editor; James Casey, former managing editor of the Daily Worker, and others. A month ago, the Committee had 70 members; today, despite resignations and without a mass membership campaign, the Committee has more than 100 members.

They stand together today not because they have listlessly acquiesced in a request to join 'just another Committee', but because after due consideration they have made up their minds to assume an erect posture in the face of a howling gale of criticism, insults, slanders and general botheration.

The letters printed elsewhere in this issue make clear the new determination with which Committee members are fighting for something which, despite all their differences in age, profession and political creed, is dear to all of them: the simple proposition that no man shall be declared a pariah on the face of the earth before he have adequate opportunity to answer his accusers. On this platform the Committee is moving ahead, as its increasing membership, the splendid meeting in N. Y., Boston, Chicago, Newark and Montreal, the growing circulation of the Bulletin and increasing calls from labor and other organizations for speakers, all indicate.

FROM OUR BULGING MAIL BAG

JAMES T. FARRELL We believe that
JOHN CHAMBERLAIN the right of political

asylum is one of the most precious of human rights. We unequivocally affirm the legal principle that a man is to be adjudged innocent until he is proved guilty. We are convinced that these rights cannot be consistently defended if we remain silent concerning the Moscow trials. Therefore, we have joined the American Committee for the Defense of Leon Trotsky. We are neither Stalinists nor Trotskyists. We adhere to our membership on this Committee in the face of a concerted attack. We feel that the Communist press in the United States is lowering the standards of journalism by its prejudiced campaign to prevent Leon Trotsky from receiving a fair and open hearing before an impartial international investigation commission. We think that such tactics are peculiarly disgusting.

We proclaim our friendship for the Soviet Union. But when the government of the Soviet Union, through its official and unofficial representatives, attacks the right of political asylum, and challenges the right of an accused man to a fair hearing before an open and impartial court, it is no longer acting in consistency with the ideals of human freedom. It is embarrassing its real friends, and it is endangering the defense of civil liberties in every democratic country in the world.

We ask decent-minded American intellectuals to join us in adopting this position.—A statement to the press on Feb. 7.

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To the Editor of the New Masses:

PAUL F. BRISSENDEN Thank you for your letter of February 2 transmitting advance sheets of Hallgren's letter to the American Committee for the Defense of Leon Trotsky and requesting a statement of my position on its subject matter.

I consented to become a member of this committee because I was in accord with its announced purposes. "(1) to safeguard Trotsky's right to asylum and (2) to join in the organization of an impartial commission of inquiry." As Hallgren points out, the fact that Trotsky now has asylum in Mexico apparently gives realization to the first purpose. I think that the furtherance of the second objective is a task in which all must share who wish, as I do, to see the successful establishment of a democratic workers' republic in Russia. The careful reading of Hallgren's letter, which I have given it, discloses nothing which seems to me to justify any change in my attitude.

Hallgren's position shifts because, whereas he first believed that there was a "frame-up," he now entertains no doubt of the defendants' guilt. What is convincing to him is not to me. I remain in doubt of the guilt of the defendants—and of Trotsky.

But, even though I were convinced of their guilt, I do not think I should deem that a warrant for abandonment of the quest for an impartial inquiry. I think that punishment should only follow proof of guilt and not be meted out (as it appears to have been meted out in Russia) upon mere confession of guilt.

In other words, I am of the opinion that the crucial question is whether the processes of Soviet justice are processes calculated to be anything but fatal to all hope of the successful achievement of a workers' republic in Russia. In so far as such a workers' community has come into being in that country its integrity, its very life, is threatened, I believe, by what looks, at this distance, like a judicial and bureaucratic yoke upon the very workers in whose name the Bolshevik Revolution was precipitated. I may be wrong in these suspicions. Indeed, I hope that I am wrong. But the Moscow trials, to put it mildly, are not reassuring.

While I believe the purpose of the committee to effect an impartial inquiry is a laudable one, and while I subscribe to that purpose, I am under no illusions as to the

A REAFFIRMATION OF PURPOSE

During the past week a number of us have been called on the telephone, visited by friends and received letters, urging us to resign from the American Committee for the Defense of Leon Trotsky. The pressure exercised upon us, however devout in intention and disinterested in motive, involves so profound a misunderstanding of the reasons that led us to accept membership on the American Committee for the Defense of Leon Trotsky, that we deem it necessary once and for all to make these reasons public.

We have no concern whatsoever with Leon Trotsky's political views in this connection; nor are we interested in prejudging the question of the truth or falsity of the charges made against him. Our sole concern is to secure for him those plain human rights before the court of public opinion and under the law of the land to which, according to immemorial liberal tradition, all people in similar circumstances are entitled. Were Stalin in the same precarious position, we would just as willingly defend his right to be heard before being adjudged guilty or innocent. The fundamental issues involved are far more important than those which specifically concern Trotsky, for if the right to lay his case before the world is denied him, the rights of all others are imperilled. In the past many of us Americans have spent a considerable amount of time, energy and means in defending the rights of Communists, regardless of whether they were guilty or innocent, in order that they might receive justice before the law. They should be the last to deny those rights to others which they demand for themselves. Certainly, no honest liberal can fail to take his stand with us.

In our view the developments in Russia, which have put Trotsky in jeopardy, are so astonishing, so disturbing to the commonsense of the liberal world, that for the good alike of the Russian Government and of Trotsky, every aspect of it should be laid open to inquiry by an impartial board composed of outstanding figures of unimpeachable authority. This inquiry should be as scientific and as public as possible. Trotsky has offered to submit himself and whatever evidence he possesses to such an inquiry. We believe in all fairness that such an offer must not be declined, and we therefore look to the organization of such a board, and invite the cooperation of all right-minded persons, regardless of party or sect, in helping to make such a board a reality and to implement its work.

HORACE M. KALLEN
JOHN DEWEY

Endorsements of this statement have been received, so far, from Prof. Franz Boas, Prof. Gaetano Salvemini, Norman Thomas, Ludwig Lore, Suzanne LaFollette, Prof. Paul F. Brissenden, Prof. William Ellery Leonard, Prof. William H. Kilpatrick, John Dos Passos, Dorothy Kenyon, James T. Farrell, Gorham Munson, Margaret de Silver, Clara Gruening Stillman, Martha Gruening, Eleanor Clark, Evelyn Scott, John Brooks Wheelwright, Sidney Hook, Oscar Jaszi.

difficulty, in the circumstances, of accomplishing it. In fact, I think it impossible of accomplishment. Yet I think that the vigorous assertion of the desirability of such an inquiry will not be without beneficial effect.

I am not a Trotskyist. There are persons on the committee who, I suppose, may be so cataloged. I have not yet seen evidence that persuades me that the committee is being steered by Trotskyists or others toward an objective different from the ones announced.

Dobbs Ferry, N. Y. Feb. 7, 1937.

To the Editor of The New Masses:

NORMAN THOMAS I have read with interest proof of Mauritz Hallgren's letter on which you ask me to comment. Nothing that Mr. Hallgren says makes me alter my position, which is one of desire to defend the right of political asylum and to get as near as we can to the truth of the charges against Trotsky, which threaten disruption of the working class movement and the weakening of the position of any type of Socialism.

With the defendants in either the first or second group in the Moscow trials, as individuals, I am not primarily concerned. There is no explanation of what has happened which does not cast a deep stain upon them. But neither is there any explanation which successfully establishes the truth of their charges that Trotsky deliberately conspired not merely to overthrow Stalin's regime from within, but to betray Russia and the revolution to Japan and Germany. It is in finding out as well as we can where lies the truth, and not in championship either of Trotsky or Stalin that my interest lies. This I have made plain in all my writings and speeches which in any way deal with the matter.

Feb. 3, 1937.

* * *

Dear Members:

MEYER SCHAPIRO Mr. Kenneth Durant, the director of the American branch of TASS, the official Soviet news agency, called me by phone on Friday, February 5, in order to find out—as a matter of journalistic fact—whether I was still a member of the Committee for the Defense of Leon Trotsky. He informed me that several members had resigned and urged me, as a known friend of the Soviet Union and supporter of socialism, to do the same before it was too late. He characterized the committee as a tool of Trotskyites and a dangerous fascist counter-revolutionary force. The effort of Durant to detach me from the committee is part of an organized mission of members of the Communist Party and its sympathizers to destroy the committee. Durant's intervention and his unscrupulous statement are all the more shocking in view of his professional position. Other members will undoubtedly be approached in the same way; I urge them to mistrust statements about other members of the committee issuing from such sources, and to verify them through the secretary.

New York

Feb. 8, 1937

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To Miss Mary Van Kleeck:

SIDNEY HOWARD I could not consider signing your message to liberals. It seemed to me precisely the kind of document which might have been written by Oswald Mosley to oppose the Marley investigation of the burning of the Reichstag, and as such thoroughly objectionable.

You ask me to believe that the American Committee for the Defense of Leon Trotsky will confuse the American liberal point of view. I am not at all disturbed by this prospect. Confusion has the merit of preserving people from becoming too orthodox in their beliefs and thus safeguards that spirit of skeptical inquiry which must always constitute the mainspring of liberalism.

I do not know that it is possible to conduct in this country an effective, impartial inquiry into the rights and wrongs of Stalin's case against Trotsky. In all sincerity I hope, however, that it may be possible, because such an inquiry, properly conducted, would offer the American people a most informative experience. As an American, I should welcome his appearance here to speak in his own defense. I have always believed that he should have been permitted to come to this country for the asylum which our traditions, at least, offer to every political refugee.

Your letter tells me that I cannot ques-

tion the recent trials in Moscow without disowning all of the great achievements of the Soviet Union. That position is, of course, the most obvious nonsense. As Americans, removed from the inner pressure of Stalin's political troubles in Russia, you might well pause to remember that neither Stalin nor Lenin nor any of their accomplishments would have been possible, had it not been for Trotsky's phenomenal organization of the Red Army at the beginning of the Russian revolution.

New York
Feb. 10, 1937

ERNEST L. MEYER Ever since its inception I have been a friend and defender of the Russian revolution, remembering the black days of the Czar. And as a friend of the Soviets, I am disturbed at the black marks which enemies of the republic can check up against it. Such black marks, I earnestly believe, are the unfortunate purges and executions which have splashed the pages of Soviet history in the last few years, climaxed by charges, which seem to me fantastic, that Trotsky conspired with Hitler's agents in a madman's lust for power.

It was solely in the hope of seeing light thrown on dark places that I joined the American Committee for the Defense of Trotsky. And ever since joining the Committee I have been belabored with protests from the Communists, these same Communists whose right to free speech, the ballot and open trial I have defended in print a hundred times. And yet that is all we of the committee ask: an impartial trial for Trotsky. . . .

With much care and interest I have read the letter of Mauritz A. Hallgren. . . . Nothing in his long letter has changed my mind. . . . I am not ready to substitute lynching for law. And until I do I will not resign from the Committee in Defense of Trotsky. —From "As the Crow Flies," New York Post, Feb. 13, 1937.

SUZANNE La FOLLETTE The verdict of a court is not necessarily the verdict of history—as the Dreyfus case proved, to cite only one example. In the minds of innumerable decent people, these recurrent trials and executions of old revolutionists will remain a matter of bewilderment and horror until all the facts concerning them are brought to light and explained in a manner acceptable to an honest intelligence.

Mr. Hallgren believes Trotsky and his followers "want to use the committee, and are using it, for the single purpose of carrying on their campaign against the Soviet Government and therefore, against socialism." As a member of its executive committee, I am able to deny categorically that either Trotsky or his followers are seeking to use the committee for any other purpose than those for which it was organized, namely, to secure an asylum for Trotsky, and to secure for him the fair and impartial hearing to which all of its members, whatever their political beliefs, consider him to be entitled. —From a letter to the New York Times, Feb. 5, 1937.

Trotsky On Hearst

"I refused to receive the Hearst representative or to give statements to the Universal Service. The latter has been the only agency refused admittance. Possibly Hearst got the statements through other agencies or from the Mexican papers, which have published them textually, without cutting. When he prints them as being "by Leon Trotsky" he is not formally a liar, because (except for Hearst's distortions and deletions) I am actually the author. But I am not responsible for the channels through which he obtains these statements."

—From a personal letter by Leon Trotsky

To the Editors of the New Masses:

WILLIAM E. LEONARD There is nothing in Mr. Hallgren's letter that persuades me to follow him in resigning from the American committee. . . . Perhaps we will never know the complete truth but the world of socially conscious men and women has a right, a duty, to try to look deeper than it has thus far been enabled to look. Our committee is, I believe, honestly concerned for that right, that duty.

Madison, Wis.
Feb. 8, 1937

DOROTHY KENYON I am glad to give my unqualified endorsement to the statement prepared by John Dewey and Horace M. Kallen in behalf of the beleaguered American Committee for the Defense of Leon Trotsky. I am happy to say that I have been able to read the barrage of correspondence which has come my way in this connection without for one moment entertaining the notion of resigning from the Committee. The announced purposes of the Committee (1) to safeguard Trotsky's right to asylum and (2) to join in the organization of an impartial commission of inquiry, are purposes with which I am completely in accord. I have seen nothing yet to persuade me that the committee has any other purpose. . . .

To a Communist Party Member who sent copies of the Hallgren letter and other clippings:

OSCAR JASZI Thank you for your letter. There was nothing new in it or in the clippings. The members of the Trotsky Defense Committee are flooded with this type of communication. This political propaganda, however, does not impress me in the least. The issue in question is to me and to the majority of the members of the Committee, not a political one, but a moral problem: Nobody can be deprived of his honor without adequate proof and due process of law. . . .

Why Some Resigned

MANUEL KOMROFF: I would be glad to have you take my name off your list, for now Trotsky has found an asylum and is well able to take care of himself. I am glad he is safe in Mexico.

JACOB BILLIKOPF: When I was asked, some time ago, to give my name to your membership, I did so in order to assist in finding an asylum for Mr. Trotsky in Mexico. Now Mr. Trotsky is living in Mexico. . . . I feel, therefore, that the Committee has served the purpose for which it was presumably created.

PAUL WARD: I joined the committee under the impression that it had no other interest than to see that Trotsky obtained asylum. . . . It seems that, with these things achieved for Trotsky, the committee is now extending its efforts beyond its original objectives and is becoming an instrument of Trotskyism. . . .

(These resignees were reminded in replies by George Novaok, secretary of the Committee, that by joining they subscribed to the Committee's two aims, asylum, and a commission of inquiry. They were invited to give further explanation of their reasons for withdrawing and Mr. Ward was invited to give examples of how the Committee is becoming an "instrument of Trotskyism." The replies are still being awaited.)

EVELYN PRESTON: I hereby request that you remove my name from the Committee. I am not in sympathy with the work of the Committee and feel quite differently about the situation since the last trials. There is no use in any of your Committee discussing the matter further with me.

Some Others

From an ex-member of the Presidium of the Comintern: The need for broadening out the defense movement is most imperative.

The victims of the Stalinist despotism are so numerous . . . that if the working class, liberal and progressive forces of the world do not intervene in defense of the innocent victims, and in defense of those rights and liberties we have gained through centuries of sacrifice and struggle, the whole movement for the liberation of mankind from economic servitude and political despotism will be thrown back for centuries.

—BEN GITLOW.

From the press agent of the Theatre Union: I find to my horror, incredulity and nausea that I am on the mailing list of your committee. Every bit of your activities is so supremely vicious and offensive to me that I find it as sickening as it is embarrassing to receive mail from you. Be good enough to destroy the mailing card containing my name and address immediately.

—EMANUEL EISENBERG.

From a Prominent Novelist: I am perfectly willing for the Communists to tear themselves and each other limb from limb. I am quite unable to understand what I have ever said or done to make anyone think that I would be vitally interested in saving one gangster from the others. To me the Communists' internal and internequine squabbles are of no interest. I regard them and the Fascists and Nazis as all spawns of the devil and think it would be excellent if they could destroy each other.

—WILLIAM McFEE.

One of Many: Because of the low status of my economic position (I am a part-time unemployed worker) I can only donate the sum of twenty-five cents. I regret I can't give more.

—CARMEN MIKOSZ.

HOW YOU CAN HELP THE COMMITTEE

1. Send us a contribution, large or small, in cash or postage stamps, and ask your friends and fellow-workers to do the same.
2. Pass this bulletin around among your friends.
3. Write in for bundle orders of this bulletin and distribute copies.
4. Send us a list of names of people who you think will be interested in our publication.
5. Arrange discussions, meetings, debates, in your town—we can provide speakers.
6. Ask the editor of any paper you read to publish news about the work of this Committee.
7. Have your trade union, fraternal order, or club adopt a resolution favoring establishment of an impartial commission of inquiry into the charges made against Trotsky at the Moscow Trials.
8. Buy copies of WORLD VOICES ON THE MOSCOW TRIALS and distribute them.

American Committee for the Defense of Leon Trotsky
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