

SOCIALIST ACTION

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OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY
CANADIAN EDITION OF THE 4TH INTERNATIONAL ----

THE MINNEAPOLIS FRAME-UP

Significantly the Canadian Press had sealed lips on the trial of the 29 members of the Socialist Workers Party and Local 544 CIO that was held in Minneapolis from late October to December 10. Our American comrades not only bravely defended themselves and their ideas but boldly turned the tables---the defense became the prosecution. The courtroom, so often the scene of savage persecution was transformed into a forum where our ideas on the state, seizure of power, Russian Revolution etc., were explained in their smallest detail. The fundamental purpose of the trial----to intimidate and destroy the only serious anti-war movement in the country failed miserably.

The trial had its origin in Minneapolis, centre of Mid-West isolationism and where our comrades were most deeply entrenched in the labor unions. Local 544 of the Teamster's Union AF of L of which our comrades were the mainstay and inspiration had long been an embarrassment to President Tobin for its militant and courageous union drives and its deep political influence. As the United States became more and more involved in World War II the Stalinist Social Democratic and liberal labor leaders slid into line---all but the Trotskyist. It became Tobin's task once again to purge Minneapolis of this group which stuck to its guns. Last May Tobin demanded that Local 544 submit to a receiver from his office who was to supersede the elected officers of the Union. On June 9 the membership replied with an overwhelming vote to affiliate with the CIO. Tobin's subsequent telegram to President Roosevelt; "that I consider 544's withdrawal from the AF of L a dangerous and regrettable condition. The officers of the local Union were requested to disassociate themselves from the radical Trotsky organization....Those disturbers must in some way be prevented from pursuing this dangerous course", caused that vociferous democrat to turn the case over to the FBI who raided the SWP headquarters in Minneapolis on June 27 and got an indictment from the Department of Justice on July 15 against 29 SWP and Local 544 CIO members for conspiring to overthrow the government by armed force.

The prosecution, handled by the Assistant Attorney General of The United States Schweinhaut himself, developed in court around the Union Defense Guards, which the party built principally in New York and Minneapolis as a defense against vigilante and Coughlin-Silver Shirt groups, our comrades dissemination of the works of Lenin, Trotsky and Karl Marx including the widely read Communist Manifesto, and the section from their Declaration of Principles that states, "that in event of war we will not under any circumstances support that war but will on the contrary fight against it".

The defendants were charged with no open seditious or conspiratorial acts but with having certain ideas and propagating them, criticizing and opposing government policies, educating and organizing people for socialism. At the very moment that the American people were celebrating the 150th Anniversary of the Bill of Rights, Roosevelt transformed it into another scrap of paper.

From coast to coast trade unions passed resolutions condemning the Minneapolis prosecution and donated funds to the Civil Rights Defence Committee. The Worker's Defence League, the American Civil Liberties Union, prominent labor figures and intellectuals rallied to the aid of the Committee. Well known friends of labor such as Carlo Tresca, James T. Farrell, John Dos Passos, Roger Baldwin and many others added their voices in the cry of disapproval.

In the course of the trial, charges were dropped against all but 18. On December 10, 12 of the 18 were sentenced to 15 months and 6 were sentenced to a year and a day. All were released on the condition count but were found guilty of violating the Smith Act 1940--an Act declared to be unconstitutional by the Civil Liberties Union. This is the first conviction under the Smith Act. The Committee intends to appeal the case even to the Supreme Court if necessary.

The Socialist Workers League of Canada is proud to associate itself with the SWP, proud of the way that the party rallied around the defendants and the inspiring defense to our ideas that they conducted before the court. Attorney Schweinhaut warned the jury that "small though the Trotskyists are today, they might make a revolution soon by preying upon the distress and despair of people during war and depression." Yes! We are convinced that the American and Canadian workers and farmers dragged by a decaying capitalism through depression and war, poverty and mass slaughter will find their liberation in our ideas. The Roosevelts and the other capitalist lackeys notwithstanding.

HONOUR ROLL

16 months	1 year and a day
James P. Cannon- national secretary SWP.	E. Palmquist, organizer, local 544.
Farrell Dobbs- national labour secretary, SWP.	Clarence Hanel, organizer, local 544.
Albert Goldman- attorney, SWP.	H. de Boer, organizer, local 544.
V.R. Dunno- organizer of local 544, National Committee of SWP.	Alfred Russell, former organizer of Omaha Teamsters.
Felix Morrow, editor of Militant, SWP.	Oscar Schoenfeld, youth organizer, local 544, Federal Workers.

Grace Carlson, organizer, SWP	Karl Kucha, organizer of 544
Oscar Coover, organizer, SWP	Federal Workers
Emil Hanson, organizer 544C10	
Carl Skoglund, organizer 544C10	
Carlos Hudson Editor, Industrial Organizer, organ of 544C10	
Jake Cooper, Minneapolis Truck Driver	
Earl Goldman, formerly Secretary of Federal Workers Section Local 544	

MANIFESTO of the 4th. International on the

Imperialist War and the Proletarian Revolution—CONT'D

-----DEFENSE OF THE USSR-Cont-----

Extremely eloquent in its unanimity and fury was the campaign which the world bourgeoisie launched over the Soviet-Finnish war. Neither the perfidy nor the violence of the Kremlin prior to this had aroused the indignation of the bourgeoisie, for the entire history of world politics is written in perfidy and violence. Their fear and indignation arose over the prospect of a social overturn in Finland upon the pattern of the one engendered by the Red Army in Eastern Poland. What was involved was a fresh threat to capitalist property. The anti-Soviet campaign, which had a class character through and through, disclosed once again that the USSR by virtue of the social foundations laid down by the October revolution, upon which the existence of the bureaucracy itself is dependant in the last analysis still remains a worker's state, terrifying to the bourgeoisie of the whole world. Episodic agreements between the bourgeoisie and the USSR do not alter the fact that taken on the historic scale the contradiction between world imperialism and the Soviet Union is infinitely more profound than the antagonisms which set the individual capitalist countries in opposition to each other; (War and the Fourth International)

Many petty-bourgeois radicals, who only yesterday were still ready to consider the Soviet Union as an axis for grouping the "democratic" forces against Fascism, have suddenly discovered, now that their own fatherlands have been threatened by Hitler, that Moscow, which did not come to their aid, follows an imperialist policy, and that there is no difference between the USSR and the Fascist countries.

Lies! Will respond every class conscious worker--there is a difference. The bourgeoisie appraise this social difference better and more profoundly than do the radical windbags. To be sure, the nationalization of the means of production in one country, and a backward one at that, still does not insure the building of socialism. But it is capable of furthering the primary prerequisite of socialism, namely, the planned development of the productive forces.

To turn one's back on the nationalization of the means of production on the ground that in and of itself it does not create the well-being of the masses is tantamount to sentencing a granite foundation to destruction on the ground that it is impossible to live without walls and a roof. The class conscious worker knows that a successful struggle for complete emancipation is unthinkable without the defense of conquests already gained, however modest these may be. All the more obligatory therefore is the defense of so colossal a conquest as planned economy against the restoration of capitalist relations. Those who cannot defend old positions will never conquer new ones.

The Fourth International can defend the USSR only by methods of revolutionary class struggle. To teach the workers correctly to understand the class character of the state--imperialist, colonial, workers'--and the reciprocal relations between them as well as the inner contradictions in each of them enables the workers to draw correct practical conclusions in every given situation. While waging a tireless struggle against the Moscow oligarchy, the Fourth International decisively rejects any policy which would aid imperialism against the USSR.

The defense of the USSR coincides in principle with the preparation of the world proletarian revolution. We flatly reject the theory of socialism in one country, that brain child of ignorant and reactionary Stalinism. Only the world revolution can save the USSR for socialism. But the world revolution carries with it the inescapable blotting out of the Kremlin oligarchy.

FOR THE REVOLUTIONARY OVERTHROW OF STALIN'S BOMPARTIST CLIQUE

After five years fawning on the "democracies", the Kremlin revealed cynical contempt for the world proletariat by concluding an alliance with Hitler and helping him to strangle the Polish people: it boasted with shameful chauvinism on the eve of the Finnish invasion and displayed no less shameful military incapacity in the subsequent struggle; it made noisy promises to "emancipate" the Finnish people from the capitalists and then made a cowardly capitulation to Hitler--this was the performance of the Stalinist regime in the critical hours of history.

The Moscow trials had already revealed that the totalitarian oligarchy had become an absolute obstacle in the path of the country's development. The rising level of the increasingly complex needs of economic life can no longer tolerate bureaucratic strangulation. The gang of parasites is not, however, prepared to make any concessions. In struggling for its position it destroys everything that is best in the country. It should not be thought that the people who accomplished three revolutions in twelve years have suddenly become stupid. They are suppressed and disoriented but they are watching and thinking. The bureaucracy reminds them every day of its existence by its arbitrary rule, oppression, rapacity and bloody vengefulness. Semi-starved workers and collectivized farmers among themselves whisper with hatred about the spend-thrift caprices of rabid commissars. For Stalin's sixtieth birthday the workers in the Urals were forced to toil a year and a half on a gigantic portrait of the hated "father of the peoples" made out of precious stones--an undertaking worthy of a Persian Xerxes or an Egyptian Cleopatra. A regime capable of indulging in such abominations cannot fail to arouse the hatred of the masses.

Foreign policy corresponds to domestic policy. Had the Kremlin government expressed the real interests of the workers' state: had the Comintern served the cause of the world revolution, the popular masses of tiny Finland would inevitably have gravitated towards the USSR and the invasion of the Red Army would either not at all have been necessary or would have been accepted at once by the Finnish people as a revolutionary act of emancipation. In reality the entire previous policy of the Kremlin repelled the Finnish workers and peasants away from the USSR. While Hitler has been able to count upon the assistance of the so-called "fifth column" in the neutral countries he invades, Stalin did not find any support whatever in Finland despite the tradition of the 1918 insurrection and the long existence of the Finnish Communist party. Under these conditions the invasion of the Red Army assumed the character of direct and open military violence. The responsibility for this violence falls wholly and indivisibly upon the Moscow oligarchy.

War is the acid test of a regime. As a consequence of the first period of the war, the international position of the USSR, despite the window-trimming successes, has already obviously worsened. The foreign policy of the Kremlin has repelled from the USSR broad circles of the world working class and the oppressed peoples. The strategic bases of support seized by Moscow will represent a third-rate factor in the conflict of world forces. Meanwhile Germany has obtained the most important and the most industrialized section of Poland and gained a common frontier with the USSR, that is, a gateway to the east. Through Scandinavia, Germany dominates the Baltic sea, transforming the Gulf of Finland into a tightly corked bottle. Embittered Finland comes under Hitler's direct control. Instead of weak neutral states, the USSR

now confronts a powerful Germany on the other side of its Leningrad border. The weakness of the Red Army decapitated by Stalin has been demonstrated to the whole world. The centrifugal nationalist tendencies within the USSR have intensified. The prestige of the Kremlin leadership has declined. Germany in the West, Japan in the East now feel infinitely more confident than before the Kremlin's Finnish adventure.

In his meager arsenal Stalin could find but one and only one answer to the ominous warning of events; he replaced Voroshilov by an even artier nonentity, Timoshenko. As always in these instances the goal of this manoeuvre is to divert the anger of the people and the army away from the main criminal responsible for the misfortunes and to place at the head of the army an individual whose reliability is guaranteed by his insignificance. The Kremlin has once again revealed itself as the central nest of defeatism. Only by destroying this nest can security of the USSR be safeguarded.

The preparation of the revolutionary overthrow of the Moscow ruling caste is one of the main tasks of the Fourth International. This task is not simple or easy. It demands heroism and sacrifice. However, this epoch of great convulsions upon which mankind has entered will strike the Kremlin oligarchy with blow after blow, will break up its totalitarian apparatus, will raise the self-confidence of the working masses and thereby facilitate the formation of the Soviet section of the Fourth International. Events will work in our favor if we are capable of assisting them!

COLONIAL PEOPLES IN THE WAR

By its very creation of enormous difficulties and dangers for the imperialist metropolitan centres, the war opens up wide possibilities for the oppressed peoples. The rumbling of cannon in Europe heralds the approaching hour of their liberation.

If a program of peaceful social transformation is Utopian for the advanced capitalist countries, then the program of peaceful liberation for the colonies is doubly Utopian. On the other hand, the last of the semi-free backward countries have been enslaved before our eyes (Ethiopia, Albania, China...). The entire present war is a war over colonies. They are hunted by some; held by others who refuse to give them up. Neither side has the least intention of liberating them voluntarily. The declining metropolitan centres are impelled to drain away as much as possible from the colonies and to give them in return as little as possible. Only the direct and open revolutionary struggle of the enslaved peoples can clear the road for their emancipation.

(CONTINUED ON NEXT ISSUE)

CEILING ON WAGES A BLOW AT THE TRADE UNIONS

A controlled economy has been introduced in Canada which hamstring working class organizations and progressively lowers the proportion of national income going to the worker-producers. The Industrialists, who control the government, are left a free hand to grab everything.

With the economic basis for labor union organization dealt an under the belt blow by the ceiling on wages, King thinks he can so weaken the workers that he will be able to introduce even more rigorous anti-labor laws without any strong opposition.

Meanwhile he prates about Democracy and the glories of the "Old Country": ignoring the fact that he breaks his own Orders in Council when the workers solidarity overcomes all the legal barriers put in their way, as at Kirkland Lake, where 4000 miners still await company recognition: ignoring, too, that in the "Old Country" the Trades Unions last September decisively defeated the attempt of the Churchill Government to control wages.

The Canadian Government's actions ridicule all pretence to democracy. Every scrap of reactionary legislation has been introduced by Orders in Council. The much boasted democratic parliament, one of the sacred possessions for which we are told we are fighting, is permitted only to rubber-stamp the Administration's orders. And to good purpose too. The old line parties and their capitalist backers do not want a real democratic parliament--a parliament that would really represent the workers and farmers of Canada. Everyone knows, and economic history proves it, that wage increases do not increase the cost of living. Wages always follow the cost of living. If the King government were what it pretended to be it would control prices alone, and leave workers' organizations to arrive at a fair level of wages. And why wait until prices have reached a peak? In Australia, a strong trade union country and a British Dominion to boot, this was done from the commencement of war and the cost of living has risen only 8.6%, food prices rising only 3% against the Canadian increase of 13.8% with 20% rise in the cost of food over the same period. The government has issued orders to manufacturers and distributors that prices must be limited to the highest price at which goods of the same kind and quality were supplied during the period Sept. 15 to Oct. 11, 1941. Thereupon the government sets up boards to see that the law is obeyed,-- to see that the manufacturers and distributors do not overcharge the consumer. But who are seated on these boards but the biggest of manufacturers and distributors!

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What are the odds that the price law will be enforced in the interests of the consumer? These appointees are the representatives of Canada's patriotic industrialists who refused to operate under the legal limitation of profit at 5 per cent. They refused to do that---is it likely that they will enforce the price laws in a way which will limit their profits? The price laws will be operated by them solely to squeeze out the small producers and retailers and concentrate still more the whole of Canadian economy in the hands of a few big industrialists.

The only method of controlling prices and not shoving small shopkeepers to the wall is by controlling industry---by controlling production. The dynamics of a war economy necessitate the concentration and control of industry. But the Canadian workers must not permit the industrialists to take advantage of the situation to further their strangle hold on the resources of the country. Industry must function in the interests of the consumer. Industry must be controlled and planned to meet the needs of the Canadian people and not the already bloated pockets of the Canadian and American money barons. Conscription of Industry ----Yes! A ~~firm~~ ^{firm} hand under the watchful eye and firm hand of the worker consumers---under the control of the trade unions!

The fundamental purpose of the freezing of wages is to weaken the Trade Unions and thereby destroy one of the few remaining defences of democracy in Canada. Strengthen the object of King's attack! Join your Union now! Urge your Union to fight the Order in Council which freezes wages and hamstringing Labor!

The workers and farmers of Canada, after thousands of them gave their lives in World War 1914-18 and thousands more live in torture in Army Hospitals across the country, were solemnly promised that that war was the war to end all wars. As the League of Nations exposed its inability to deal with world problems and reaction and poverty swept across the world the tune changed and we were solemnly promised that this time there would be no war millionaires---that those who controlled Canadian industry would not be permitted to reap tremendous profits at the expense of the workers and the \$1.30 a day soldiers. Last year Finance Minister Hsely announced in the House that there were 21 new millionaires---war millionaires. The Finance Counsels latest figures of Canadian corporations dividend payments to shareholders in 1941 indicate that payments are more than 6 millions higher than last year.