

Roosevelt Speeds War Plans

Revolutionary Course In Spain Can Check Franco

Politicians Scurry For Safe Cover

Scapgoats Sought For Series of Heavy Defeats

Having utilized the People's Front to the fullest extent to insure a Fascist victory the bourgeois politicians of Loyalist Spain began last week to flee like scurrying rats or to cast about for scapegoats upon whom to place the blame for the catastrophes that have befallen the Loyalist cause.

An "exodus of government officials" has begun from Barcelona, the dispatches report. First among them were Jose Antonio Aguirre, ex-president of the Basque Republic, Marcelino Domingo and Manuel Portela, rightist politicians who were clasped to the bosom of the People's Front while it was shooting down in the streets of Barcelona and other Spanish cities revolutionary workers who wanted to steer a course toward a real anti-Fascist, i.e., anti-capitalist struggle.

Prieto Dumped

Premier Juan Negrin has dumped Indalecio Prieto, right-wing Socialist defense minister, whom he hopes the masses will hold responsible for the military debacle. He has assumed "personal command" of the armies for a "last-ditch" fight. That is, Negrin hopes to make sure that it will be the last-ditch and will not leave until he has effectively prevented any resolute turn in policy that could still mobilize the masses for a stand against Franco.

Most significant of all is the summary dismissal of those heroes of the Communist Party and the People's Front, the regular army generals headed by Gen. Sebastian Pozas, who have been removed from the high command. They have been replaced, interestingly enough, by ex-civilian officers who played a role in the first months when raw militia composed of scantly-armed workers turned back Franco's legions.

Pozas Led Terror

Pozas was brought to Barcelona last May to conduct the brutal repression of the Barcelona workers. It was he who brought Catalonia under the heel of G.P.U. terror and assumed full command of all Catalan forces. All the bluster about the front and all the real bloody terror against the workers in the rear are now producing their inevitable results. Franco is cutting through a weakened Loyalist force that has suffered from more than just a lack of mechanized equipment. It has been deprived of the driving (Continued on page 3)

Palestine C. P. Joins Fourth International

The Communist Party of Palestine has announced its withdrawal from the Communist International and its adherence to the Fourth International according to Jerusalem reports which appeared in European newspapers last week.

Leaflets distributed by the Communist Party denounced the Moscow trials and executions.

W.A.A. Gathers In Convention

Progressives To Urge Militant Program As Reply To Policies of People's Fronters

NEW YORK.—The convention of the Workers Alliance of Greater New York opened at the Hippodrome on April 7. This convention marks a year of "successful" People's Front activity on the part of the Alliance leadership, and a year of steadily worsening conditions for the unemployed.

Chief success of the past year was the election of "labor's" Mayor. Thus the unemployed have a "friendly" president, a "friendly" governor, and a "friendly" mayor. Let us see what these political "friends" have brought to the unemployed during the past year.

The "Successes"

First, the Relief Administration appointed by these "friends" cut down the number allowed on

WORKERS HOLD POWER PLANTS IN MICHIGAN

Murphy Steps In Again To Head Off New Sitdown Strike

JACKSON, Mich.—The first major use of the sit-down tactic in many months won workers striking against Consumers Power Co. a partial victory when the C.I.O. Utility Workers Organizing Committee was granted exclusive bargaining rights for all employees and the company renewed the contract expiring April 1 until August 4.

Within a few hours after the collapse of negotiations last Friday, members of the union peacefully took over the plants and service stations in Saginaw, Bay City, Flint and Lansing.

(Continued on page 2)

Workers Resist Scab-Herding Police in Detroit Battle

Force Closing Of Screw Plant

Thousands Join Strikers To Prevent Movement Of Scabs

DETROIT—Two days of bitter picket-line battles involving injury to 25 strikers and strike sympathizers as a result of clashes with the police, shut down tight the plant of the Federal Screw Workers here last week. Militant members of the United Automobile Workers put to rout the scabs and their police protectors.

The 300 strikers were aided in holding the picket line firm by nearly 5,000 sympathizers, mostly residents of the industrial neighborhood around the plant. Cops and scabs were bombarded with a barrage of bricks from the huge crowd of workers.

Fight Wage Cut

The strike was called Monday of last week by the U. A. W. members when the company arbitrarily cut the wage-scale ten per cent. Tuesday morning, police, using their clubs freely and armed with tear gas, broke through the picket line and escorted 20 scabs into the plant.

At closing time the police again brutally clubbed their way through the picket line and hurried the scabs away.

News of the encounter swept through the neighborhood, and Wednesday found the strikers prepared for a real battle. A first-aid tent was set up, the pickets nailed their placards on heavy sticks, and the huge crowd of neighborhood residents gathered, in solid sympathy with the strikers.

Scabs Escorted

At closing time, the police again prepared to evacuate the strike-breakers from the plant but this time the strikers were ready. When 150 foot policemen and 15 mounted officers attempted to escort the scabs to their automobiles parked five blocks away, they were forced to fight every foot of the way. The battle lasted over 45 minutes and extended over the entire five blocks.

While the scabs escaped, the cops got more than a taste of their own medicine. Five were forced to undergo hospital treatment. "Cracked heads" among the officers were numerous.

Ten strikers were arrested and sixteen treated for injuries at the union's first-aid tent. That the real victory lay with the strikers was shown when the company announced that the plant would remain closed. Negotiations between the union and the company are expected to begin shortly.

WORKERS HOLD POWER PLANTS IN MICHIGAN

(Continued from page 1) Foremen and supervisors were ejected, but operations were maintained, with power still flowing throughout this vast industrial area.

Governor Frank Murphy, returning from a sojourn in Florida, promptly called a conference between the strikers and the company in Detroit, where the agreement was reached this Monday. Evacuation of the plants was the first demand of the company, and Murphy backed them completely in this. He declared that the seizure of the plants was "indefensible, illegal and cannot be justified." Such aggressive and significant strike tactics cannot be condoned by even a "labor-loving" governor.

The union was demanding the renewal of a contract won a year ago, when similar strike shut off the power for twenty-four hours, and a guarantee of no wage cuts.

One of the company's chief weapons has been the Independent Power Employees Association, Inc., a paper union fostered by the company. This outfit, equipped with high-powered legal advisers, is demanding a National Labor Relations Board election. The maneuver has only one purpose—to give the company a legal cloak for refusal to sign with the C.I.O. union.

Trailing along on this path is the Electrical Workers Union, an A.F. of L. affiliate, which is also demanding an election and threatening to call a strike if the company signs with the C.I.O. Such tactics are completely exposed when the real union men go on strike and demonstrate

Electrical Workers Score Fine Victory

MINNEAPOLIS.—The electrical workers have smashed the union-busting scheme of the Northern States Power Company, the full story of which was published in the Socialist Appeal of March 26.

After all its bluster, the company resumed relations with the union under the existing agreement, and abandoned its demand for the ousting of militant union leaders.

The union, Local 292 of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, is in better shape than ever. The crisis precipitated by the company's action in breaking off relations and its demand for ousting of the union leaders, actually served to rally the union membership in solidarity with the leaders, and to cement together the Utilities Section and the Inside Workers, who were in two separate unions a year ago.

The whole membership is toned up by the short and successful fight, and the company is faced with a firm body determined to secure every concession to be gained on the basis of the agreement, which has another year to run.

FOOD WORKERS TO TAKE POLL ON APRIL 12

NEW YORK.—The election of officers in Waiters Union, Local 16, will take place at Palm Garden, April 12. This election is of vital importance to all members of the Union and to the entire union movement of New York. It is a clear-cut fight. All progressive and honest elements in the Union on the one side, and the Communist Party and racketeer combination on the other.

The Progressive Group, gathering around themselves all honest members of the Union, have an excellent chance to defeat the remnants of the Coulcher gang, and their corrupt Stalinist allies. The platform of the Progressive Group calls for one industrial union of all food workers in New York, and is steadfastly opposed to all racketeering elements. It is for democracy in the Union, and against domination of the union by any political organization.

The present leadership, upon getting into office, began to throw all responsibility for organizing upon the membership. "Every member an organizer" was their slogan. To effect this, rank-and-file organizing committees were set up. At the head of the general organizing committee was placed an incompetent who could not even call a meeting to order, et al alone lead the work of organization. The or-

Chicago Office Workers Reject C. P. Attempt To Oust Organizer

CHICAGO.—At a recent membership meeting of Local 24 of the United Office and Professional Workers of America, C.I.O., the rank-and-file administered an overwhelming defeat to the rule or ruin tactics practiced by the Stalinist leadership for the past six months.

The test occurred on the proposal of the Stalinist executive board to abolish the post of paid organizer for purposes of economy. The real purpose was to remove the organizer, Sandra Slotkin, because she could not be swung into the line of the Communist Party in its attempt to force its views on the union membership.

Why Stalinists Won

The Stalinists had obtained the majority of the executive board at the last election chiefly because the progressives and militants had organized too late to combat them. The net result of their leadership has been to alienate the general membership to a point where attendance at meetings has fallen to less than half that prior to their administration.

The membership who voted the Stalinists into office are now voting with their feet. The average member had no interest in long discussions on affiliation to the American League for Peace and Democracy, or an investigation into the Women's Charter. He felt that the union had no interest in his problems, his job, wages and conditions.

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ganizer of the local was pushed more and more into the background.

Committees Disintegrate

Almost every committee rapidly disintegrated and very few members were brought into the local. Although these committees were supposed to be a step in the direction of union democracy, they were allowed no initiative, held no discussions to plan their work, but were called together primarily to be given assignments.

The local has been suffering financially for some time now. Its expenses rise constantly, and it cannot pay the excessively high per capita tax to the International. But the local has a good foundation and good possibilities for growth, which alone can overcome the financial difficulties.

The leadership, however, seized the present situation to strike a blow at the progressive elements. Remove the organizer and save money—that was their solution.

Proposal Voted Down

In this move, they had forgotten to reckon with the membership which has the union at heart. The last meeting was the largest membership meeting in over a year. The members turned out in full force because they understood that without full-time organizers the union cannot grow and overcome its present critical condition. By a vote of two to one, they defeated the proposal of the executive board and instructed the budget committee to include as one of its necessary expenditures the maintenance of an organizer in the field.

The plans of the Stalinists are quite clear now. If they cannot smash the opposition (and that means the majority of the members), they will undertake to destroy Local 24. They will propose to divide our small local

into several smaller ones, with the aim of controlling each one separately.

They tried to smash the opposition by calling it "Trotskyite"—but that failed. A leading Stalinist member of the executive board explained to a newcomer that the trouble was being caused by a lot of Reds who had got into the union. But such "explications" have acted as boomerangs against the Stalinists. They will therefore attempt the other method—ruin Local 24.

Members—On Guard!

The membership must be on guard against any moves for division which the Stalinists propose. Such a policy is suicidal at the present time. Against such policies, and against the bureaucratic control of the leadership, the membership must now organize.

Marine Unions Hit By New Fink Hall

Rose Sends Letter Of Support To Defense Committee

NEW YORK.—Timidly and half-heartedly, as might have been expected, the American Labor Party has gone on record as being "deeply sympathetic" to the case of Fred E. Beal, leader of the 1929 Gastonia textile strike, who is now serving a 10-20 years' sentence in a North Carolina prison. The sentence, which Beal evaded for nearly ten years by escaping to the Soviet Union, was secured on a frame-up charge.

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Newsmen On Coast Vote Strike Action

SAN FRANCISCO.—Authority to call a strike against four San Francisco and one Oakland newspapers if they fail to comply with demands presented by the Northern California Newspaper Guild was voted overwhelmingly here Sunday of last week after an enthusiastic mass meeting of the newspaper workers.

A vote of 247 to 16 for strike action followed a report on negotiations, during which the publishers have repeatedly refused to consider the major demands of the Guild.

If this leadership was docile and meek in the face of the steadily worsening conditions of the unemployed, they showed real ruthlessness to critics of their own administration. Leading members who proposed militant policies were brought up on all sorts of trumped-up charges.

Progressives Rally

Responding to the needs of the unemployed and the threat of expulsions, progressive members of the Alliance formed a Progressive Group and succeeded in checking the expulsion campaign for the time being.

Also by their aggressive criticism they have compelled the leadership to make some moves against the 10 per cent cut. Faint-hearted and weak though these moves were, they will have far more effect in winning back the 10 per cent cut than all the behind-the-scenes diplomacy of the leadership.

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New Crisis Looms As Blum Totters Again

RIGHT PREPARES COUP IN FRANCE

National Union Government Will Pave Way For Repression of Workers To Help Capital Meet Deepening Crisis

By ARGUS

As these lines were being written, the cabinet of Leon Blum was about to disappear. Its imminent fall was greeted by the Parisian stock exchange with a sharp rise in the value of the franc, in anticipation of the long-desired government of Public Safety.

A bourgeois correspondent has accurately described the Blum government as a bull being chased by the toreadors of the right wing in the parliamentary arena. Indeed, Blum's financial proposals represent nothing but the "intention... of being defeated" in the least dishonorable way.

The French reaction has permitted the People's Front government only one function: the stifling of workers' strikes. Completely sabotaging all parliamentary activity, the senators of the future National Union shouted in chorus at the government: "What about strikes? What about the sit-downs?" The Citroën sit-down strikes have spread until there are now 45,000 involved in strikes around Paris.

Clashes Loom

At the same time the class contradictions advance irresistibly toward a violent clash. A little note in the American press gives the key to the present situation in France: In Calais, in Northern France, "a mass meeting of 1,000 unemployed members... of the Socialist Party declared their intention... to join (the fascist) French Social Party 'rather than starve with Blum.' Having excluded the Socialist mayor of Calais from their meeting, the demonstrators unanimously 'voted a resolution denouncing the People's Front program as 'a dream' and charging it had accomplished nothing....'"

This symptomatic incident constitutes a most pitiless accusation against the People's Front and reveals its responsibility for the growth of French fascism. The unemployed, potentially the most determined elements of the revolution, are now becoming the first victims of the hampering of proletarian advance by the reformist-Stalinist conspiracy.

A Danger Signal

Desperately seeking decisive actions, the unemployed fall from the dream of "peaceful penetration" of the capitalist state into the dreadful nightmare of fascist "anti-capitalism." The Calais incident is an impressive danger-signal to the French working class. The revolution has lost much time. Now it is threatened with the loss of important parts of its forces to the fascist camp.

But the counter-revolutionary labor bureaucracy turns an unheeding ear to the warning voice of the proletarian masses. Threatened with dismissal by the bourgeoisie, they concentrate their efforts on proving their sincere concern over France's "capacity for defense."

C.P. on Armaments

A decision of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of March 18 invoking Stalin's famous declaration to Laval of 1935, "understanding and completely approving France's policy of national defense for the maintenance of its armed forces at the level of its security," stated: "the C.P. once more emphasizes that the Communist Party was right, and in the present hour, facing the necessity of raising the manufacture of armaments to the heights required by circumstances, associates itself with the declarations of the Trade Union Confederation (C.G.T.), headed by the reformist Jouhaux and the Stalinist Racamond in favor of augmenting production," that is, the practical liquidation of the 40-hour week.

Confounding the interests of the criminal trade-union bureaucracy and the no less criminal G.P.U. with the intentions of the working class, they continue: "The workers are correct in being ready to act in order to as-

sure the country of the means of defense which it needs, and they are equally correct in demanding that an end be put to the agitation of the saboteurs of national economy and the instigators of civil war, agents of foreign imperialism."

A broad campaign is being conducted in France by the P.O.I. (Workers' Internationalist Party) and the International Aid for his immediate release.

Ta-tu Thau is one of the veteran leaders of the national liberation movement in Indo-China. As editor of *La Lutte* he has been at the center of all mass struggles in the French colony for nearly a decade.

People's Front Repression

Always the scene of bloody repression, Indo-China has never been ground down harder beneath the heel of French oppression than it has been during the past two years of People's Front rule. During most of this period a Socialist, Marius Moutet, sat at the Colonial Ministry in France directing the blows at the national liberation movement in Indo-China, French North Africa, and other parts of the French Empire.

Directly involved in the persecution of Ta-tu Thau was Assistant Minister of Colonies Viollette, the same "Socialist" who played a leading role in hounding out of the French Socialist Party in 1935 the young revolutionists of the Seine Socialist Youth Federation who are now part of the Revolutionary Socialist Youth, adherents of the Fourth International.

Ta-tu Thau is the outstanding representative of the national revolutionary movement in Indo-China and it is as the symbol of that movement that the People's Front regimes of Blum and Chautemps have relentlessly hounded him.

Arrested and Expelled

Ta-tu Thau, as a young student in Paris, was one of the first Indo-Chinese revolutionists to rally to the Left Opposition, joining the group of La Verite in 1929. He participated in a demonstration organized by that group before the Elysee Palace

of the 40-hour week law.

France's internal and external situation has reached a decisive turning-point. The French bourgeoisie needs complete freedom for maneuvering in its foreign policy along with England. Public expenditures have exceeded 50 per cent of the national income. An "equilibrium" can be reached only through more intensive exploitation of the working class, at a level and tempo incompatible with the hesitant course of the People's Front.

Back At Starting Point

Thus the working class has arrived, after two years of People's Front government, at the starting point of its fight against fascism and reaction. The emphatic promises of workers' and peasants' liberation through parliamentary democracy now face complete collapse. Jouhaux, secretary of the C.G.T., who has broken one strike after another through "loyal opposition" to the People's Front government, now threatens that "if the present People's Front government should resign, his organization would set it up again by our own means."

It remains to be seen whether Jouhaux will dare to carry through his threats. He knows too well that direct actions of the working class would inevitably get out of hand. On the other hand, even if the bourgeoisie succeeds, with the complicity of the People's Front bureaucracy, in setting up a "moderate," transitional National Union government, its class program will force lead to an open clash between the working masses and the bourgeois state with its fascist auxiliaries.

FUND FOR CHINESE COMRADES MOUNTS

The fund being raised by the Socialist Workers Party to aid the Communist League of China (Fourth Internationalists) is still mounting—but not fast enough. We are still quite a way off the minimum goal set, namely, \$200. Following are the results to date:

Previously acknowledged \$143.71
Akron Branch 2.02
Lynn Branch 2.00
Los Angeles Branch 3.80

TOTAL \$151.53

Comrades throughout the country are urged to put the collection over the top by not later than the current month. It can be done. It must be done!

SHARFIN EVADES QUESTIONS

Last week Sharfin, who is still at liberty in the custody of his attorney, M. Edelstein, was brought before a Federal Judge

Ta-tu Thau, Indo-Chinese Militant, Held In Prison of People's Front

His right side paralyzed as a result of hunger strikes in the People's Front prisons of Saigon, French Indo-China, Ta-tu Thau, leader of the Indo-Chinese Fourth Internationalists and a member of the Municipal Council of Saigon, is serving a sentence of two years' imprisonment imposed upon him by a People's Front court for his leadership of the struggle against French imperialism.

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Garber, Sharfin, Known As C.P. Supporters Or Members

Arthur Sharfin, member of Section XV of the Communist Party in the Bronx and "fall guy" for the G.P.U. in the Robinson-Rubens frame-up plot which was and may still be intended to involve the Trotskyist movement in this country in some kind of "conspiracy," has been indicted by a Federal Grand Jury in connection with a series of passport frauds.

Sharfin, who has been an employee of the Royal Egyptian Consulate in New York City, helped Adolph Arnold Rubens (alias Robinson), a G.P.U. agent now imprisoned in Moscow, secure the phony passports made out in the name of Robinson on which he and his supposed wife, also a prisoner in Moscow, travelled last fall to the U.S.S.R.

Garber Indicted

Along with Sharfin, a Fifth Avenue photographer named Ossip Garber, also a Stalinist and formerly of Springfield, Mass., has been indicted on a similar charge. He is one of the few persons who has admitted publicly that he knew the mysterious Rubens.

The Grand Jury returned a third indictment which is sealed, and which presumably will remain so until the persons named in it are arrested. There is reason to believe that the contents of this indictment will confirm statements made from time to time in the *Socialist Appeal* ever since the case began—statements backed up by well-authenticated facts—that all trials in the Robinson-Rubens "mystery" lead straight to the lair of the American branch of Stalin's G.P.U.—the Communist Party.

The indictments made public

in 1930 in protest against repressions in Indo-China. He was arrested and expelled. Back in Saigon in 1931 he founded *La Lutte*.

La Lutte and the group around it was unique in the international revolutionary movement up until 1937. The newspaper was the organ of a united front between the Stalinists and Trotskyists of Indo-China. They fought side by side in united front actions and elections. Ta-tu Thau led the ticket of this unprecedented coalition in an election some two years ago which made him a member of the Saigon Municipal Council, a body created by the French in a niggardly attempt to satisfy the aspirations of the Indo-Chinese to independence.

The paper, and in particular its editor, became the target of police attacks which grew sharper as the group grew in influence and prestige as the leading party in numerous strike movements and agitation for political and civil rights. Arrested in 1935, Ta-tu Thau and several of his collaborators were held for several months and then heavily fined.

Moutet Orders Suppression

In August, 1936, after the victory of the People's Front, the *Lutte* group started agitation for the creation of committees of action throughout the country with the aim of setting up an Indo-Chinese Congress. Orders arrived in September from Moutet for the suppression of this movement. The governor-general promptly arrested Ta-tu Thau on September 28. He went on hunger strike for 11 days and was finally released on November 15. During the winter of 1936-37 great strikes swept the French colony and once more Ta-tu Thau was put behind People's Front bars.

The strongest pressure for suppression of the popular movement in Indo-China was brought to bear by the French Communist Party, which had now become the staunchest flag-waver for French imperialism. The Stalinists openly called in their press for police action against the Indo-Chinese revolutionists. Thus spurred, the People's Front police acted and dealt their blows indiscriminately at the Trotskyists and the Stalinists in Saigon and other cities in the colony.

From his prison Ta-Tu Thau

has sent out word of his unshaken faith in the proletarian revolutionary movement and of his dependence upon its support to force his release.

We must add our voices to those that have already been raised in behalf of Ta-Tu Thau as the representative of the national movement in Indo-China. It is the duty of American workers' organizations to protest to all local French consulates and to the French Embassy in Washington demanding his immediate release!

Politicos In Spain Flee For Cover

Scapegoats Sought For Series of Heavy Defeats

(Continued from page 1) power of a revolutionary policy and the upsurge of the masses behind it.

Thousands are fleeing and deserting. There is confusion and demoralization at a time when all forces have to be gathered to make a stand against the Fascist drive and its Italo-German spearheads.

Anarchist Sabotage!

The leaders who have been responsible for these defeats now seek by all means to divest themselves of responsibility. "Anarchist sabotage," cried Gen. Pablo Martínez, was responsible for the Fascist victories.

But not all the whining in the world can provide enough of a cover for the foul betrayal and treachery of the Stalinist People's Front which is now leading Spain into the hands of Fascism. The military victory of Franco will be complemented by an accord between "democratic" England and "Fascist" Italy putting a cross, if they can, over the Spanish revolution.

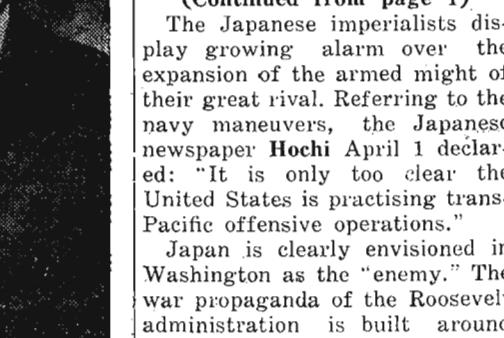
On this the last word has yet to be said, by the Spanish working class, and by world labor. The unleashing, even now, of a resolute revolutionary struggle which will hold out to the workers and peasants of Spain the hope of really breaking with the belligerent bourgeois regime can still turn the tide against Fascism.

International Solidarity

Active solidarity by the world working class, applying its own sanctions against the shipments freely going to Franco, direct aid in providing material support to the Spanish masses, can still become the most potent factor in transforming defeat into victory.

But the conditions of such a victory, as the Bolshevik-Leninists of Spain have ceaselessly said, is the pursuit of the revolutionary aims of the masses and not the abandonment of those aims in favor of a bloc with treacherous bourgeois politicians whose only aim is to preserve the capitalist system and to keep the masses in subjection.

Fall Guy



OSSIP GARBER

and ordered to answer questions put him by the Grand Jury. He particularly desired to avoid questions relating to his connection with Harry Zukerman, who has charged that it was Sharfin who passed to him the phony Robinson-Rubens passport applications.

Sharfin apparently knew not only Zukerman but also Attorney Peter Targun, of the Tenants Research Bureau Inc., 401 Broadway. Zukerman was employed by the Bureau, and on occasion Sharfin used its address.

Stalinists Keep Mum

Whether Targun has political connections is not yet known, but it is already clear that at the heart of the whole affair are 14-karat Stalinists—Rubens himself, his wife (who is still in Butirky Prison while the G.P.U. tries to decide what to do with its latest frame-up), Sharfin, Garber, Shaw, Helen Ravitch (who accepted the phony passport from Washington to "Donald L. Robinson"), Rubens' attorney, who was acquainted with Rubens, is mentioned in the sealed indictment cannot yet be learned.

In view of these facts, the Daily Worker naturally continues silent as the grave on the subject of the Robinson-Rubens-G.P.U. case. And the "fall guy," Arthur Sharfin, continues equally silent.

Sharfin Evades Questions

Last week Sharfin, who is still at liberty in the custody of his attorney, M. Edelstein, was brought before a Federal Judge

SOVIET UNION NOTES

Stalin's Bloody Purge Surpasses All Previous Bonapartist Excesses; Red Army Decimated; Soviet Transportation Disorganized

By JOHN G. WRIGHT

The Purge in Progress

The current blood purge bids fair to surpass all those that preceded. Hardly an issue of *Pravda* appears without an attack on some department. The "criticism" of the Northern Sea Route Administration headed by Prof. Otto Schmidt has attracted most attention abroad. But it is only one of the departments under fire. In recent days the Soviet press has carried ominous charges against the Commissariat of Transportation, the People's Commissar for Agriculture in White Russia, the Presidium of the Moscow Soviet, its Chairman, H. Sidorov, and its secretary, Dedkov, etc.

The appointment of two new deputy Commissars for Heavy Industry, M. I. Tselishev and P. P. Kucherenko, which is reported in *Pravda* for March 20, denotes still another purge in that department—for the third time since last October!

According to the leading article in the same issue of *Pravda*, 132,000 employees in the trade network have been "brought up on charges for alleged embezzlement and dissipation."

The Purge in the Red Army

From top to bottom the Red Army has been decimated by the purge. As was to be expected, the Young Communist League

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MAX SHACHTMAN

Editor.

HAROLD ROBERTS FRANK GRAVES
Associate Editors.
BOB BROWNE
Business Manager.**Gerson, Meet Gerson!**

This is by way of an invitation to Simon W. Gerson, a member of Browder's Communist Party who not long ago secured, and still holds, a comfortable position as assistant to Borough President Stanley Isaacs of Manhattan. We invite the Gerson of 1938, an adept in crooning "The Star Spangled Banner," to meet the Gerson of 1936.

In 1936—so long ago that he may possibly have forgotten it—Gerson thought, or pretended to think, very little of ex-radicals who became pensioners of the LaGuardia Fusion administration. In fact they made Gerson highly indignant.

Thus in the *Daily Worker* of May 10 in that year of grace, when Gerson and his friends still fancied themselves as "Reds" (at any rate, "pinks") we find in his column, "Civic Virtue":

"This is a column about has-beens—has-been radicals now occupying posts in the LaGuardia administration. They're a rather sad lot, these radicals who have tasted of the political fleshpots and found them sweet. Many know better and frequently feel uncomfortable. The social conscience is willing, but the flesh is weak. Most of them try to justify their present situations to themselves with all sorts of quaint theories."

Assuming Gerson to have been sincere—which in the light of his subsequent record we would hardly be entitled to do—Gerson did not think much of the La Guardia administration in those days. He thought still less of the has-been radicals serving it and "going along" with measures such as, the sales tax and the beating of unemployed demonstrators.

"Such social conscience as they have left," he declared, "dictates that they cry out against these things. In his heart of hearts your ex-radical in the administration knows that were he not a La Guardia jobholder he'd be protesting these infamies."

We do not for a moment suppose "social conscience" is troubling Gerson any more than it did the has-been radicals about whom Gerson wrote so feelingly two years ago. Having himself tasted the political fleshpots and found them sweet, he feels constrained to silence regarding the present-day infamies of the LaGuardia administration, justifying his position with all those "quaint theories" summed up in People's (pardon—Democratic!) Frontism.

We introduce the Gerson of 1938

to the Gerson of 1936. If a Stalinist is still able to feel embarrassment, the face of the 1938 Gerson must be awfully red. Beg pardon—yellow!

Reorganization Bill

After passage by the narrow margin of 49-42 in the Senate, the debate over the bitterly-contested Reorganization Bill has been transferred to the House of Representatives. Present indications are that it will carry the House in an amended and modified form, and be sent to conference within the next few days.

The fight over the Reorganization Bill has stepped far beyond the halls of Congress. Spurred on by raging editorials and stormy radio demagogic, a flood of telegrams, letters, petitions, delegations is swamping Washington. All the mighty pressure, direct and indirect, of the Administration is being marshalled against the opposition.

Nothing in the bill itself can explain the passions which have been aroused over it. Its recommendations, particularly in their now amended form, have been commonplaces in Washington for a decade. Hoover, especially, advocated them both while a cabinet officer and while president: a fact which is now causing him not a little embarrassment.

It is true that the bill, under the guise of efficiency and coordination, increases the concentration of power in the hands of the executive, thus exhibiting the universal tendency of bourgeois democracy in its days of decay and breakdown. It is this which justifies the negative votes of the two Farmer-Labor senators.

Ironically enough, however, the outstanding proposal of the bill—elimination of the comptroller-general, and substitution of an auditor-general who would be an officer of Congress—on the whole increases rather than lessens the control of Congress over expenditures.

But, in any case, it is not the organizational measures in the bill which are in reality the focus of the fight. As always in crucial political issues, questions of organization are subordinated to underlying political interests.

The problem is not whether to "organize efficiently," but, who is to do the organizing, and for what?

The fight here thus takes its place as a further development of the contest over the court bill last spring, over the wages and hours bill in the special session, and over the anti-lynching bill both in the special session and in January.

As in the other contests, the New Deal forces are aligned against a coalition of most of the Republicans plus the right-wing, chiefly the southern, Democrats. The struggle over each succeeding issue hardens the coalition, and drives the wedge ever deeper between the two groups.

As has been repeatedly stressed in these columns, this development is the most momentous in American politics of the past eighty years. It would be absurd to become lost in the abstract merits of specific bills under consideration. We are witnessing the dissolution of the traditional capitalist party line-ups. The process has now gone so far that nothing short of the outbreak or immediate threat of war—and perhaps not even that—can stop it from maturing before the next presidential election.

dangered by an incautious or violent move. Moreover, the American oil investments are mostly of ancient date, long since repaid by fabulous profits.

British Are Losers

The real losses are suffered by the British competitors, who have made recent investments. Roosevelt has no inclination to pull British chestnuts out of the fire. And the last resort—a civil war for exclusively "internal" reasons—still remains in Rockefeller's pocket. American arms will precipitate new internal upheavals in Mexico.

Cardenas was all the more willing "to ease the tension" in the "exchange of diplomatic compliments" since his efforts are directed toward confining the conflict within limits which will preserve the sympathies of the workers for his bourgeois regime, together with a New York financier, Smith, "injected a new element in this situation—the possibility that Mexico could sell her petroleum immediately," thus giving the government adequate funds. (This statement was made by Kluckhohn, oracle of Standard Oil, and he must know.)

Rickett's Role

On whose account Mr. Rickett works is as yet unclear. In any event he freed Cardenas of the necessity of direct dealing with Japan and deprived the "democracies" of Standard Oil and Shell of an important instrument in the deception of the people.

Keeping the anti-imperialist fight always within the bound-

aries of his capitalist regime, Cardenas has at his disposal only a limited range of maneuvers with rival imperialisms. The Rickett deal would give him a certain breathing spell. But, at the same time, it shows that the national bourgeoisie of a semi-colonial country, when it advances two steps in its anti-imperialist struggle, must immediately retreat one step by leaning upon another foreign financial group. It remains to be seen whether the oil rivalries operating behind the scenes will precipitate new internal upheavals in Mexico.

Another factor has undoubtedly played a certain role in the verbal retreat of the State Department, which originally intended to confine themselves for the present to mere economic reprisals, were frightened by the perspective of "unwanted consequences... rupture of diplomatic relations, anti-American... warlike measures, civil strife," which "might have impaired" American relations with other Latin American countries... undoing... patient effort... in developing the "good neighbor" policy."

At a pace unforeseen by the State Department, there arose the danger of violent collisions, the responsibility for which would have fallen, directly and in the eyes of the whole world, upon the New Deal government.

Cardenas' Note

Cardenas' note to Hull provides unmistakable clarification in this respect. He said:

"The Mexican Nation has lived in these last few days through moments of trial in which it did not know whether it would have to give in to its patriotic feelings or to applaud an act of justice of the neighboring country represented by your Excellency."

Indeed, the newspapers reported the day after the presentation of Hull's provocative note that

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Keeping the anti-imperialist

fight always within the bound-

A LETTER FROM CHINA

Following is the second and concluding installment of a letter received from a Chinese comrade in Shanghai, describing the present situation in China. The first installment appeared in last week's issue of the "Socialist Appeal." —ED.

At first sight, the present situation is quite difficult to understand, for, on the one hand, Chiang Kai-shek, against the will of all other leaders, takes a decided stand in favor of continuing the war, while on the other hand H. H. Kung, who was opposed to the war from the very beginning, is made president of the reorganized Executive Yuan, with Gen. Chang Chun, notoriously pro-Japanese, as vice-president. Both appointments are symptomatic of a desire for capitulation to Japan.

This seeming contradiction is explained by the following facts. Continuance of the war is impossible. In my journeys over the various war fronts I found widespread apathy towards the war. All classes, from workers, peasants, soldiers and merchants, to the Kwangsi clique and other military forces, including the Eighth Route Army. Since the commencement of hostilities both the forces of the Kwangsi clique and of the Eighth Route Army have been greatly strengthened.

Chiang Kai-shek's present position may therefore be described thus: Continue the war until the time for capitulation has ripened. When will the time be considered ripe? When Chiang's twenty new mechanized divisions, now being completed and trained in Hunan province, are established!

When that time arrives, Chiang will continue the war against Japan until the final victory only if the international situation has changed in China's favor. Otherwise, with his new army guaranteeing his superiority over other military cliques, he will make peace with Japan. The latter alternative, in my opinion, is the more probable. That is why

not fight in cold weather.

Now the mood of the soldiers is well known to Chiang Kai-shek. He realizes more than the others that continuance of the war, in view of the passivity of the U.S.S.R., Britain and the U.S.A., is impossible. But to end the war now is also quite impossible, for (1) the Japanese insist on Chiang Kai-shek's retirement from politics and (2) Chiang's own army has been all but destroyed in the battles near Shanghai and by the mass desertions at Nanking.

Chiang's Danger

If peace were to be concluded now, the Kuomintang government would be dominated by the Kwangsi clique and other military forces, including the Eighth Route Army. Since the commencement of hostilities both the forces of the Kwangsi clique and of the Eighth Route Army have been greatly strengthened.

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A few months ago, about 100,000 revolutionary youth went to northern Shensi (territory occupied by the Eighth Route Army —ED.), but during the past few weeks many of them have returned, disillusioned, with the bureaucratic control of the Eighth Route Army. The outlook for this army is not bright. Having abandoned its revolutionary social program, it can be no longer distinguished from the armies of the Kuomintang. Soon its revolutionary authority will be completely exhausted.

two instructions: (1) Attack the "Trottskyite bandits"; (2) prepare the seventh congress of the Chinese Communist Party (the sixth took place in 1928!).

Stalinist Slanders Protested

So far as I know, the shameful slander of the Stalinists has won them nothing, but has lost them the sympathy of many progressive intellectuals. Publication of a story in their daily stating that our comrades in Hsichow had organized hundreds of peasants to serve as "plain-clothes troops" of the Japanese imperialists, caused many Communist Party sympathizers to send in strong protests to the Hankow office of the Eighth Route Army.

The Eighth Route Army still gets a monthly subsidy of \$800,000 (Chinese currency —ED.) from Chiang Kai-shek. Numerically, this army has increased greatly, since it has not yet waged any heavy battles against the Japanese invaders. At the beginning of the war, its prestige grew from day to day. But now its prestige is declining, because of the bureaucratic regime instituted by the commanders and the passivity of the U.S.S.R. towards China's struggle.

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Masses Feared

The Kuomintang still fears a rising of the masses more than it fears the Japanese invaders. All mass organizations are obliged to register with and submit to the control of the C.C. Group, that is, the Sixth Department of the Military Affairs Commission. All partisan troops and political training departments in the army are dominated by the Blueshirts and the C.C. Group. Political prisoners are not everywhere released, but only those fortunate enough to have been imprisoned in such big cities as Nanking and Hankow, or in places close to the fighting fronts. Relations between the Kuomintang and the Communist Party are not good. Only the offices of the Eighth Route Army in the big cities are legalized. Organizations of the Communist Party in various cities are still obliged to exist secretly and illegally, except in the territory occupied by the Eighth Route Army. But the top bureaucrats of the Communist Party, such as Wang Ming and Chou En-lai, enjoy full "democratic rights."

The Stalinists have founded a daily paper in Hankow, the *Hsin Hwa Jih Pao*, which devotes much of its space to attacking the "Trottskyite bandits." It slanders the Chinese Fourth Internationalists as the "hired dogs" of Japanese imperialism. This anti-Trottskyist campaign was started by Wang Ming, who arrived in Hankow from Moscow six weeks ago, bringing with him

people, they find not a single word to say. They tremble for only one reason: they fear that Hull's economic war "will weaken and isolate the influence of American democracy (read: colonial exploitation) in Latin American affairs as a factor for promoting peace (that is, the maintenance of American imperialism). It will aid the German, Italian and Japanese instigators of fascism and encourage them to proceed more boldly in Central America and South America along the path undertaken in Brazil."

They merely forget to mention that Roosevelt has, in the meantime, succeeded in buying back the Brazilian pupil of Mussolini and Hitler with thoroughly democratic and peaceful dollars.

For Mexico Liberation!

As faithful lackeys of American imperialism, Foster and Browder climax their appeal with a war cry: "Keep Mexico and Latin America safe for democracy! Enforce the good neighbor policy!"

The class-conscious workers of the United States have as much contempt for the "good neighbor" policy of Roosevelt as for the democratic hypocrisy of the Stalinist leaders. They stand unreservedly for the complete liberation of Mexico from the imperialist yoke. They will not relinquish the struggle against all measures of the Roosevelt administration, economic or military, open or secret—devised in the interests of American landowners, however "honest" or corrupt, and oil magnates, however "democratic" or fascist.

Comradely,

FU LING.

Shanghai, February 22, 1938.

F. L. P. Becomes Cog In Roosevelt Machine

(Continued from page 1)

Sheppard-May Bill by having workers' representatives taken into partnership in the conduct of the war!

Stand On Relief

The platform committee had before it the relief demands of the Minneapolis labor movement, but instead brought in a perfunctory plank providing for continuation of W.P.A. and relief. No mention of the pauper's oath, of unionization, of union rates on W.P.A., etc.! Walter Frank, himself a Benson man, speaking for the Minneapolis Building Trades Council, received short shrift in an attempt to amend the plank from the floor, being voted down by the trained seals. It was only when the Stalinist floor-leaders took flight at the reception this plank would get in the unions, that Frank was called back to make his motion again. It was then voted up by the same people who had voted it down a few minutes earlier! But that was pure lip-service was made clear when Frank and others tried to secure a further series of amendments, providing for a State Housing Authority Act, a special session of the state legislature to deal with relief, etc. All such amendments were voted down in short order.

Support Supreme Court

The conservative, not to say reactionary, tone of the convention was indicated by the debate and vote on the proposal of Robley Cramer, editor of the Minneapolis Labor Review, to include in the platform a call upon Congress and state legislatures to repudiate the right of the U.S. Supreme Court to veto legislation.

In the same spirit, the convention platform recorded itself against increased armament, but was silent on Roosevelt's motivation for expansion of war armament. The peace plank "advocates cooperation with all forces genuinely seeking peace" (which by Bernard's definition and the convention telegram includes Roosevelt!); favors "nationalization of all war munition plants" (that hoary demagogic slogan based on the false theory that not all capitalists but only the munitions makers seek war); calls for prohibition of sales to "aggressor warring nations" (thereby enabling the government to choose sides in any war with the prior benediction of the Farmer-Labor Party); digs up the threadbare slogan of the American Legion, "draft wealth in time of war" (precisely the bit of demagogic which is being employed to make more palatable the Sheppard-May Bill!).

Actually, the proposal to "draft wealth" is a transition to open participation in conducting the war. A further step in this direction was taken by the March 26 issue of the Farmer-Labor Leader, which featured the proposal of Howard Y. Williams (vice-chairman of the convention) for "democratizing" the

National Committee Plenum Meeting In N. Y. Next Week

NEW YORK.—A full meeting of the National Committee of the Socialist Workers Party will take place here from April 15 to 18 in order to review the work of the three months since the founding convention of the party in Chicago and to take up the vital matters currently facing the party and the working class.

The agenda will include Labor Party developments, trade union problems, and the war crisis, with particular emphasis on specific tactics in the anti-war struggle in this country and the tasks of Fourth Internationalists throughout the world. Some of the sessions will be open to all members of the S.W.P. and the Y.P.S.L. Details will be announced later.

Mass Meeting Scheduled

A large mass meeting at the Hotel Center, 108 West 43rd Street, will be held Thursday evening, April 14, as a preliminary to the National Committee plenum.

All branch meetings and other party activities for April 14 are being called off, so that the members of Local New York can turn out for the mass meeting in full force.

Among the speakers will be James P. Cannon, National Secretary of the S.W.P., and Max Shachtman, editor of the Socialist Appeal, one of whom will report on the Mexican crisis revolving around the expropriation of the oil fields. Other speakers will include Vincent Ray Dunne and Farrell Dobbs, of Minneapolis, and B. J. Widick, Labor Secretary of the party who has just completed a two months tour through the East and the Middle West.

Mass Rally Down With The War-makers! Hands Off Mexico!

Speakers

James P. Cannon
National Secretary, S.W.P.
Max Shachtman
Editor, Socialist Appeal
Farrell Dobbs
Mpls. Trade Union Leader
Albert Goldman
Labor Attorney
B. J. Widick
Labor Secretary, S. W. P.
Lois Orr
Just Back From Spain

THURSDAY, APRIL 14, 8 P. M.