The Zinoviev-Kamenev Trial.

by Alexander Bittelman

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The trial of Zinoviev-Kamenev and of the Trotsky-Gestapo agents, which took place in Moscow, is of tremendous importance.†

For one thing, the conspirators and assassins did not succeed in their dastardly plans. And every friend of the Soviet Union, every decent human being, will bless the Soviet authorities for their vigilance and energy in discovering in time the conspiracy and checking it.

Every friend of human decency, let alone anti-fascists, Socialists, trade unionists, will give a sigh of relief at learning that the conspirators, excepting their “master mind,” Trotsky, were safely disposed of and were unable to carry through their murderous plans.

Under the guidance of Trotsky, they adopted the way of assassination and murder of the leaders of the people in order, as they say, to overthrow the Soviet government. They couldn’t, of course, succeed in overthrowing the Soviet government. This they must have felt in their corrupted hearts. But they might have succeeded in assassinating some of its leaders — our leaders, the pride and path-blazers of the oppressed throughout the world.

They did succeed in assassinating Kirov. And Kirov is no more.

But this time they did not succeed. And blessed be the power of the Soviet people that brought this about.

Some are wondering how the hand even of degenerated Zinoviev and of a counterrevolutionary Trotskyite could raise itself against Stalin, Voroshilov, Kaganovich?

†- The “Case of the Trotskyite-Zinovievite Terrorist Center,” the first of the three great Soviet show trials of the late 1930s, was held in Moscow from August 19-24, 1936. The most prominent names among the 16 defendants tried in tandem were former members of the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party and the Council of People’s Commissars Grigorii Evseievich Zinoviev and Lev Borisovich Kamenev, who were accused of engaging in a long-running terrorist conspiracy. The alleged plot detailed by the prosecution may be outlined as follows: From the fall of 1931, helpless in its political isolation, the underground Trotskyist organization moved towards the tactic of individual terrorism against leaders of the Stalin faction. This change of line from political struggle to personal terrorism is said to have been delivered verbally by Trotsky’s son, Lev Sedov, to Ivan Smirnov in Berlin. The instructions were then personally relayed back to Russia by Smirnov. In the middle of 1932, a decision was made on the ground in Russia to unite the weak underground Trotskyist and Zinovievist organizations in order to increase the underground’s combined strength, a decision which was confirmed by Trotsky in a letter back to Russia that fall. A secret “United Center” combining key members of the Trotskyist and Zinovievist undergrounds was organized in the summer of 1932, meeting at Kamenev and Zinoviev’s dacha at Ilinskoe in accordance with this strategy. Discussion about the need for terrorist action was begun. Preparations were said to have been disrupted from late 1932 through the middle of 1933 by Zinoviev and Kamenev’s implication in the “Riutin Case,” which cast a shadow over them necessitating a go-slow approach. In the summer of 1934, a secret conference was held at Kamenev’s Moscow apartment at which Leningrad and Moscow terrorist cells were formed and the decision was made to “expedite the assassination of S.M. Kirov.” Leningrad terrorist groups were put on the case shadowing Kirov as they “waited for an opportune moment to commit their terrorist act.” Zinoviev and Kamenev are said to have transmitted the instruction to the assassin Leonid Nikolaev to shoot Kirov via verbal directions delivered by Ivan Bakaev, also a defendant at the trial. Trotsky is said to have communicated further written instructions (by means of invisible ink in a German cinema magazine) in October 1934 to “accelerate the assassination of Stalin and Voroshilov.” The terrorist conspiracy is said to have managed to kill Kirov but not Stalin, Voroshilov, or any other ranking member of the Soviet elite. The group continued to function “up to 1936,” according to Zinoviev’s testimony at the trial. All 16 defendants in this trial were sentenced to death and executed shortly thereafter and their property confiscated by the state.
Well, some of their agents couldn’t; and com-
mitted suicide rather than carry out the assassina-
tion orders of their “masters,” Zinoviev and
Trotsky.

But it is well to remember that the hand of a
counterrevolutionary assassin was raised also
against Lenin; and it was the hand of a “Socialist-
Revolutionary.”

Now the party of the Socialist-Revolution-
aries was a revolutionary petty-bourgeois party
fighting against tsarism. As a party it became coun-
terrevolutionary when the Socialist Revolution
began to mature. As a party, it then joined hands
with the monarchists and foreign intervention to
defeat the Socialist Revolution. And when this
took place the rest followed as a matter of course.
The worst elements of this counterrevolutionary
party undertook to strike at the Socialist Revolu-
tion by trying to assassinate its head. Hence they
struck at Lenin.

Trotskyism developed from an opposition to
Lenin within the Bolshevik Party into the vanguard of bourgeois counterrevolution against the
Soviet Union. When this happened the rest had
to follow. This is no fatalism. It is merely point-
ing to the inescapable logic of a political position.

More than that: when fascism raised its ugly
head and the struggle for socialism in the capital-
ist world became a struggle between the camp of
democracy and the camp of fascism, between re-
action and progress, between peace and war, Trots-
kyism inevitably became an ally of fascism.

Yes, some say, that may be so objectively, as
a result of Trotskyite policies; but does it follow
that Trotsky wanted to help the fascists? Does it
follow that he had to resort to assassination when,
as he claims, in his entire career he was against the
use of individual terror?

The answer to this is: as a result of the facts
brought out at the trial, Trotskyism today stands
exposed not only as an ally of fascism objectively
but as a current in fascism. *Trotskyism today is fas-
cism.*

In this “transformation” of Trotskyism there
is nothing especially new. It is no news that cer-
tain ideologists of petty-bourgeois “revolutionism”
have turned fascist. Mussolini is an outstanding
case. And as to Trotsky’s career, it is precisely three
that the key will be found to his present transfor-
mation into a fascist terrorist.

Lenin had shown long ago that Trotskyism
as a political current was never anything else but
petty-bourgeois “revolutionism.” And as such, it
always could become transformed (almost over-
night) into the handmaiden of the wildest capi-
talist reaction. Trotskyism was always “Left phrases
and Right deeds.” This had its logic.

Trotsky is a mortal enemy of the socialist suc-
cesses of the Soviet Union. Zinoviev and Kamenev
were working with Trotsky. But their counterrevo-
lutionary fight failed. Socialism triumphed and
with it Soviet democracy as demonstrated by the
new Constitution. The Soviet people stood united
as never before around their government and the
Communist Party and around Stalin.

What was Trotsky’s answer to that? Red-
doubled incitement against the leaders of the So-
viet Union, especially the world leader of the camp
of socialism and progress, Comrade Stalin. Incite-
ment that was already carrying within itself the
kernels of incitement to assassination. And these
kernels came pretty soon to maturity.

Seeing the hopelessness of his counterrevo-
lutionary efforts among the masses, Trotsky be-
gins to unfold a line which, though still indirectly,
openly calls for assassination. In an article entitled
“The New Constitution of the USSR,” published
in the New Militant on May 9 [1936], Trotsky
writes:

> ...At the dawn of the Soviet power the terrorist
acts were perpetrated by the S-Rs and the Whites in
the atmosphere of the still unfinished civil war. When
the former ruling classes abandoned all their hopes,
terrorism disappeared as well. Kulak terror, traces of
which are observable even now, was always local in
character, and was an accompaniment of the partisan
war against the Soviet regime. This is not what
Molotov had in mind. The new terror does not lead upon the old ruling classes or the kulaks. The terrorists of recent years are recruited exclusively from among the Soviet youth, from the ranks of the YCL and of the Party. While utterly impotent to solve those tasks which it set itself, individual terror is, however, of the greatest symptomatic importance because it characterizes the sharpness of the antagonism between the bureaucracy and the wide masses of the people, especially the younger generation. Terror is the tragic accompaniment of Bonapartism.”

In print, publicly, Trotsky “only” gives justification for assassination. Through his agents and secretly, as now disclosed at the trial, Trotsky gives orders to assassinate.

Publicly and in print both Trotsky and Goebbels denounce the new Soviet Constitution. Goebbels calls it “tyranny”; Trotsky calls it “Bonapartism.”

Secretly both Trotsky and Goebbels’ friend, Himmler, the head of the Gestapo, fit out false passports and other equipment for Trotskyists to enter the Soviet Union to assassinate Soviet leaders.

These are facts. And these established facts spell out one thing:

_Trotskyism is fascist terrorism._

We want to hope that the Socialist Party, invaded as it has become by Trotskyism, will find within itself enough proletarian and socialist strength to draw the proper conclusions from this fact.