

BOOK REVIEW

The Case of Leon Trotsky

Report of Hearings on the Charges Made against Him in the Moscow Trials

BY LEON TROTSKY

After Trotsky's expulsion from the Soviet Union and Stalin's show trials of the 1930's, the "prophet outcast" demanded a public forum from which to vindicate his innocence of Stalin's outrageous accusations. He was obliged by a number of noted personages, including philosopher John Dewey, who convened a Preliminary Commission of Inquiry (the "Dewey Commission") in April 1937 in Mexico where Trotsky had taken refuge.

Courtroom procedure was followed at the hearing, and for several days Trotsky, the chief witness, was on the stand answering questions put to him by the five commissioners and a number of lawyers. While no one today takes Stalin's charges against Trotsky seriously, especially after Khrushchev's famous secret speech to the Twentieth CPSU Congress in 1956, this simple reprint of the verbatim transcription of the hearing has a value far beyond the original issue.

The report of the findings, published under the title *Not Guilty* (1937, o.p.), provides a companion volume of less contemporary interest. The present work, however, is a virtual treasury of information about Trotsky's political and personal life, his ideas, and the critical events in which he participated. It is a prime source for those interested in the Russian Revolution and the formation of the Soviet state. Excellent index.