



## UAW Gives Reuther Militant Mandate

# FOLLOW THROUGH ON GM PROGRAM!

### Labor Action Tops At Auto Convention

The new eight-page LABOR ACTION arrived in time for distribution to the UAW convention in Atlantic City at the evening session on Friday. The headline, "GM Program Elects Reuther," met with almost universal approval.

The men in the pencil-striped gray suits with big black cigars, the "porkchoppers," looked the other way, but the majority of the delegates reached for the paper eagerly. Most of them knew LABOR ACTION. They had received it at free distributions in front of their plants and in their local union headquarters.

The Stalinists said they "couldn't read" and either ignored the paper or took a copy and dropped it after they had gone a short distance. But the majority of the delegates took the paper and the conversations ran something like this:

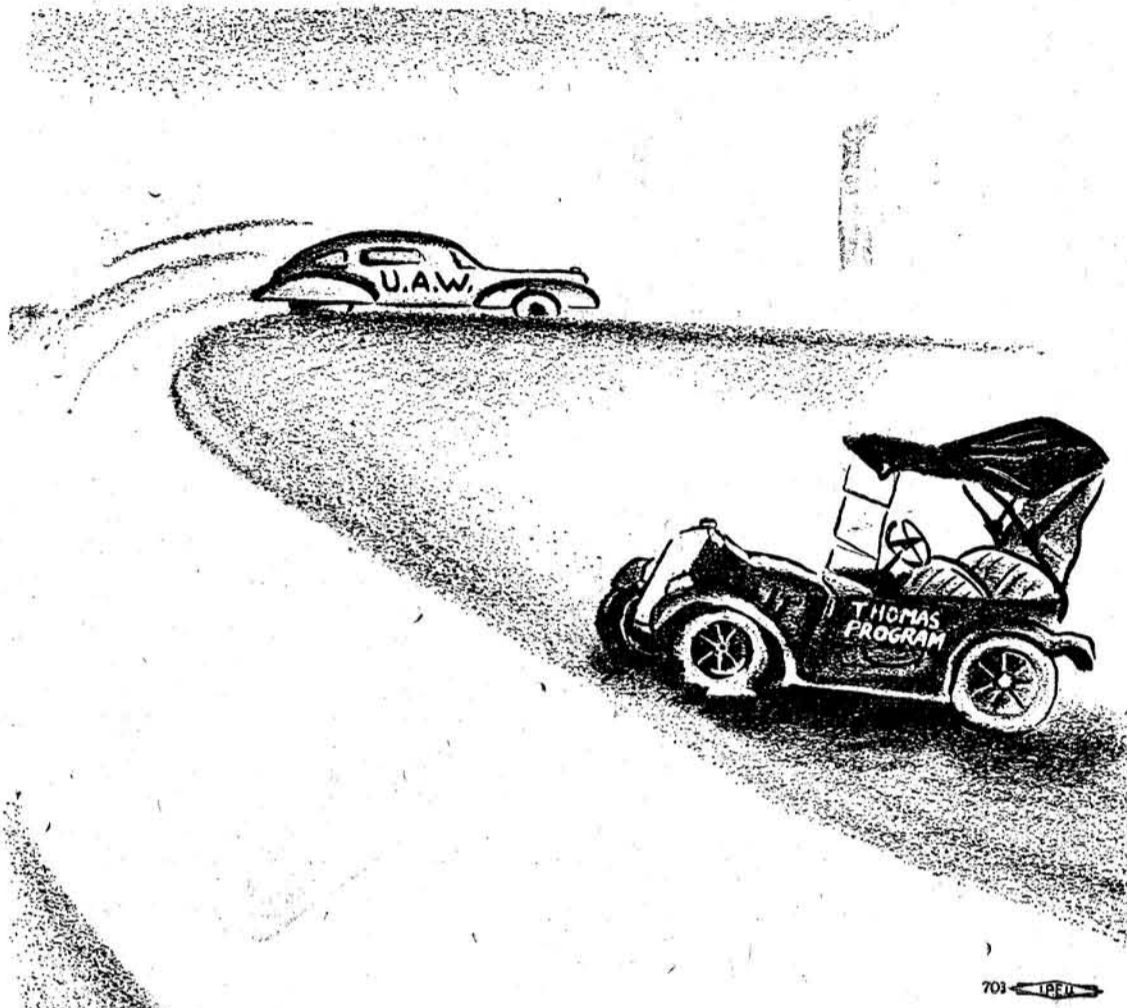
Sub-getter: "Have you seen LABOR ACTION?"

Delegate: "Yes, I've read it three times already. It's a pretty good paper but it's too optimistic. Socialism is too far off. We have to fight for what we can get now."

Sub-getter: "LABOR ACTION believes that only under a socialist system will the workers be able to get their full rights but we are the first to fight for the demands of the workers today. Do you want an independent Labor Party? So do we. Do you want GM to open its books? So do we. Do you want an end to discrimination in industry? So do we."

Delegate: Okay, give me a sub for six months.—C. W.

### Junked!



By DAVID COOLIDGE

Nearly two thousand men and women from automobile factories and shops, and representing their locals in the UAW-CIO, put in eight days in Atlantic City at the tenth convention of their international union, the biggest union in the world. Their great international had just come through a test of strength with the giant General Motors Corporation, part of the du Pont industrial dynasty in the United States. These men and women workers had aided their brothers and sisters in the longest strike ever conducted by their union. They had heard a new slogan in the trade union movement: "Open the Books." They had been told that to go on strike for an increase in wages without having anything to say about prices, profits and production must become an out-moded procedure for the labor movement today. Labor must correlate a demand for a wage increase with the demand for no increase in prices, and labor must share in the profits not only of years past but of the year in which the labor has been performed.

### Transit Strike Challenges Detroit Mayor

By BEN HALL

DETROIT, April 1—The city-owned public transportation system was completely shut down at 4 A.M. this morning when 5,200 street car and bus drivers, members of District 26 of the Amalgamated Association of Street Railway and Motor Coach Operators (AFL) rolled their busses and cars into the car barns for the beginning of a city-wide strike.

The strike was voted by a large majority of the union membership at a mass meeting yesterday afternoon which followed six weeks of futile negotiations with the city administration of Mayor Edward Jeffries. These negotiations continued up to midnight yesterday when the contract between the union and the city expired.

The workers are demanding an increase in wages of 18 cents per hour. Jeffries has made a phony offer of 15 cents which is tied up with various concessions by the union. The real extent of his offer amounts to no more than 10 cents per hour. This offer has been categorically rejected by the union.

At the union mass meeting the rank and file voted for the strike despite the pleading of its local and international officials who urged going slow and continued negotiations and despite the threats of city officials that the strike was illegal and would be broken. Philip Weis, chairman of the State Mediation Board, had demanded that the strikers wait for thirty days as allegedly provided for in a state law relative to municipal services. Jeffries demanded that the issues be sent to arbitration.

But these appeals, threats, and demands went unheeded. One bus driver, a young veteran named Paul Michalewski, replied to these arguments in heated terms.

"I am a returned GI," he said, "and I am telling you we want to strike and end this damned business once and for all. The people of Detroit all want us to strike. They know what Jeffries and his rotten commission are doing to us."

Mayor Jeffries, who is a candidate for the Republican nomination for Governor of Michigan, hopes to be.

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These delegates also had seen their unions assaulted by the big corporations with a demand for "company security" and by the Truman Administration with a new "Little Steel" formula. They knew that there was an internal dispute among the top leadership of their international. Some of them knew that this dispute was concerned with what kind of program the union should have, whether or not the GM workers should have gone on strike first and how the strike should have been conducted. They knew furthermore that there was dissatisfaction with the leadership of R. J. Thomas and that a real contest was developing around the question of whether or not Thomas should remain at the head of the union.

### WANTED NEW PROGRAM

These two thousand men and women workers came to Atlantic City to discuss all of these problems and exercise their democratic right to make decisions about them. Hundreds of these delegates really wanted to adopt a new program for the UAW. They did not want to go on in the old way. These were the genuine progressives and militants. Many of them went away at the adjournment of the convention, dissatisfied and disappointed. They had not had the opportunity to discuss important resolutions which had been submitted for the consideration of the convention.

For instance, they had had no opportunity to discuss the two resolutions on "Foreign Policy" one by the Resolutions Committee majority and the other by a minority composed of two Stalinists: Oliver and Ganley. They did not have the opportunity to discuss the resolution on "So-Called Company Security." This was a very weak resolution, and if it had come to the floor the real progressives would have had the opportunity to trounce the leadership for its disgraceful and cowardly capitulation to the Ford Motor Company on this question. Furthermore, they would have had the opportunity to confront Leonard and chastise him for the disgraceful part he played in agreeing to the Ford proposals for "company security." Also Reuther would have been forced to explain what position he had taken in the IEB when this Ford security question was up for consideration.

The leadership provided no opportunity for a discussion of the impor-

(Continued on page 2)

### Shipyard Locals Vote To Strike Bethlehem

NEW YORK—Showing determination to fight and beat the giant Bethlehem Steel Corporation, six of eight union locals in this company's shipyard chain have voted to strike the yards if the union's demands are not met. The union, the Industrial Union of Marine and Shipbuilding Workers of America, CIO, represents the workers in the nine yards the company operates on the Atlantic Seaboard.

The unanimity shown by the men who have voted indicates that the two local unions that have not voted will follow their lead and empower National President John Green to set a strike date.

### WAGE REVIEW

The union's demands on Bethlehem, a corporation that has a long history of union busting, date back to the formation of the tri-partite agency, the Shipbuilding Stabilization Commission. In 1941 this group, composed of representatives of the union, the government and shipyard owners, drew up a set of rules designed to stabilize hours, rates of pay and conditions of work in the shipbuilding industry. Upon the insistence of the union a provision was inserted in

these rules that provided for an annual wage review with wages being tied to any rise in the cost of living. The workers in this industry were jobbed out of this wage safeguard by the Wage Stabilization Board, which outlawed the annual wage review for the war's duration.

The wage review under this program was held in December for the first time since the war's end. After a great deal of conniving on the part of the management, assisted by the government, an award was made giving the workers a general increase of eighteen cents an hour retroactive to December 4, 1945. The company, feeling the union was in no position to fight, simply refused to make the payment of this award, making instead a counter-offer in line with the tradition of union-hating this corporation has usually followed.

Bethlehem and United States Steel, America's largest steel companies and among the nation's largest shipyard operators, with their failure to live up to the zone standard agreement, gave leadership to the rest of the shipbuilding outfits on the Atlantic Coast, and these companies, with few exceptions, also refused to make the payment of the award.

The Bethlehem workers by their militant stand are providing the leadership in the IUMSWA and are calling upon their brothers in the other yards on the coast to join them in a determined fight to get the wage increase, the retroactivity and other contractual demands even if it means "hitting the bricks."

The situation now facing the workers in this industry is another example of the fallacy of trying to deal with corporations such as these through appeasement and collaboration. Only through the most militant and aggressive action, such as the shipyard workers displayed in 1937, can these corporations be made to understand that the spirit that built the IUMSWA is not dead.

### Workers Party Vet Committee Offers Plan on Housing Action

NEW YORK—Hailing the "invasion," as the New York Times called it, by the New York Area Council of the American Veterans Committee, of the offices of the Real Estate Board of New York on Friday, March 22, the Veterans Committee of the Workers Party addressed a letter to the AVC placing itself solidly behind their efforts to obtain housing and suggesting action on a broader scale in which the Workers Party vets would be willing to participate.

The letter, signed by Nathan Gould, chairman of the Workers Party Veterans Committee, pointed to the staggering contradiction of a government which in two brief years built the most powerful war machine in all history, constructed in each year of the war billions of dollars worth of industrial plants at a fantastic rate of speed, yet finds itself impotent to construct suitable homes to meet the veteran housing emergency.

"We know," states the letter, "that if the government appropriated five billion dollars for veteran housing, enough homes could be constructed within one year to relieve the present veteran housing shortage from its present critical stage."

"We also know that on Fifth and Park Avenues, in the exclusive sections of New York, as well as in other cities, there are innumerable boarded up estates and mansions, each large enough to adequately house from

three to eight veteran families. These estates and mansions are the part-time residences of families who spend their fall and winter months in their Florida homes, and their summer months in their equally spacious mansions at Lake Placid and in the Adirondacks. There seems to be no really pressing housing shortage for these people. I may say that it is an inhuman, a criminal act to permit these mansions to remain neatly cased in their unoccupation while veterans of the war tramp through a jungle of "No Vacancy" signs. The National Emergency Act is still in effect. By it the government justifies its demobilization "slow-down." Washington could, if it so desired, requisition these boarded-up mansions, sub-divide them, and open them to the veterans as a source of immediate relief in this incredible housing crisis.

"We know, too, that as they once

### FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

If you would like to have the full text of the letter sent to the AVC, or any other information relative to the Workers Party program for veterans, write to the Workers Party Veterans Committee, 114 West 14th Street, New York 11, N. Y.

requisitioned hotels during the war to house military personnel and military and naval installations, Washington can, if it so desires, repeat this performance to provide decent temporary housing for the veteran to fill the urgent need until a five billion dollar one-year veteran housing program could be completed."

The letter of the Workers Party Veterans Committee then suggests, because of the national magnitude of the housing problem, that the American Veterans Committee, "call upon all of the veterans' organizations to summon a national conference, designed to organize a united effort on behalf of housing for veterans." Such a conference could coordinate a nation-wide campaign and invite support from unions, prominent individuals and political parties.

The Veterans Committee of the Workers Party consists of: Nathan Gould, Chairman, 1st Lt. Infantry, Merrill Marauders; Alex Wollod, Vice-Chairman, Pfc., 32 Infantry Division; Saul Berg, Secretary, T4, F.E.A.F. Signal Bn.; Emanuel Garrett, Press Secretary, Pfc., 368th Engineers; James M. Fenwick, Labor Secretary, Pfc., 1st Infantry Division; Harry Milton, in charge of Housing, Sgt., 5th Infantry Division; B. J. Wilson, Research Dir., S/Sgt., 76th Infantry Division; A. Victor, in charge of Veterans' Benefits, S/2c, U.S.N.R. Seabees.

### NEXT WEEK

Analysis of UAW Convention

—David Coolidge

First of a Series on Anti-Semitism

—Jessie Kaaren

Significance of Greek Elections

—Tom Tanakos

# Boost the Fund Drive for a Permanent 8-Pager!

By NATHAN GOULD, National Organizer, Workers Party

Last week our readers were treated to an issue of an eight-page LABOR ACTION. This was offered as a sample—a sample of what LABOR ACTION will be like every week beginning June 17. For June 17 is the scheduled date for the appearance of a regular eight-page weekly LABOR ACTION! Eight instead of four pages of unflinching assault by the Workers Party against capitalist injustice.

We offered the sample eight-pager as testimony to our readers of the greater possibilities, the improvement, the great advance which our projected plan will make possible. Every reader, we are certain, will hail the advance, will encourage us to realize our goal for an expanded weekly paper.

The revolutionary voice which cried out its defiant opposition to the imperialist war, which championed the struggle of labor against exploitation and tyranny, must be amplified. The bosses and the government are engaged in a conspiracy to crush the gains of labor, to divide labor, to revitalize "lynch law" and labor persecution. The conspirators have launched an offensive. Labor needs

the clear, bold, courageous fight of LABOR ACTION augmented to meet the challenge of government and capital, to direct and champion labor's adamant refusal to yield an inch or to slacken its pace forward.

That is why an eight-page LABOR ACTION is an imperative necessity today.

### SUCCESS OF FIRST ISSUE

Appearing in the midst of the UAW convention, the sample eight-page LABOR ACTION was able to cover this important event in labor's struggle more adequately than ever before. We were able to provide our readers with a more complete account and an analysis of the proceedings. Moreover, it was possible to accomplish this without sacrificing treatment of a wide variety of other issues significant to the working class. Featuring the UAW convention and recent developments among the longshoremen and railroad workers, LABOR ACTION's sample eight-pager devoted six articles to strikes and union news, four articles to American social and economic problems, six articles to the activities of the Workers Party, ten articles to international news; published four

letters from readers, two articles on the struggles of the Negro workers (one book review), two articles on veterans' problems and one article dealing specifically with Stalinism. The issue was impressive in its well balanced coverage of labor's struggles on many fronts. It was possible only because there were eight pages.

### MAGAZINE A PERMANENT FEATURE

Of equal importance is the introduction in the eight-page paper of the magazine section. It will be a regular feature of the paper. Many of our readers have asked for a section of the paper devoted to a treatment of current news from an educational point of view; a section that would deal with the deeper implications of the news, giving fuller analysis to the various economic and political problems of labor. They have requested something that can serve as a weekly education in Marxism. The magazine section is designed to meet this need.

You have read the sample of the eight-page paper. You can make possible an eight-page LABOR ACTION every week. Let every reader participate in realizing this goal by sending a contribution to the drive for \$15,000 for an eight-page weekly.

### WE'RE GOING TO HAVE AN 8-PAGE LABOR ACTION!

The thousands of dollars required to make this advance must come from our readers. We appeal to every reader to send us a contribution to make the expansion possible. Make all checks and money orders payable to LABOR ACTION, 114 West 14th Street, New York 11, N. Y.

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ Zone \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_

NEWS AND VIEWS FROM THE LABOR FRONT

UAW Gives Reuther Militant Mandate - -

(Continued from page 1)

tant question of political action. There were rumors and more rumors that there was a resolution on political action but it never reached the convention floor.

was adequate, nor how Reuther defended and fought for his program. We are only saying that he advanced a new program with revolutionary implications. This is what is important at this point.

program and refrained from the non-sense which he had uttered at the first caucus. For instance, at the first caucus meeting Reuther spoke about the necessity for keeping outside political influences out of the union.

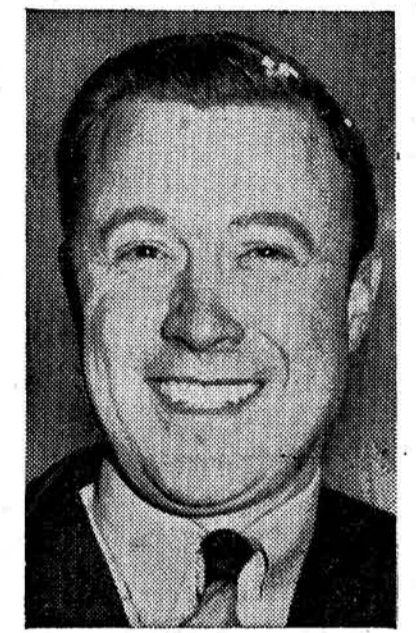
There are many things which these militants forget, however. One is that the convention was divided into factions and that these factions held caucus meetings.

already discussed the fact that Reuther had already moved up forward as a trade union leader. He had a large and important following in the international. He was in combat with Thomas, who had a reactionary, programmatic position in relation to the GM program.

SOMETHING NEW EMERGES

We can understand the attitude of the progressives and militants but we cannot agree with them. Despite what took place and what did not take place at this convention, it was not a flop, it did get somewhere and it was, in an extremely important sense, at a far higher level than the 1944 convention.

Not only did Reuther become the center of attack, veiled or open, by the Murray-Thomas-Addes-Stalinist bloc, but he became the center of attraction for militants and progressives. Virtually all of the progressives and militants, including the revolutionary socialists, aligned themselves with Reuther against the Murray-Thomas-Addes-Stalinist combination.



WALTER REUTHER

There was no opportunity for the militants to assert themselves on the convention floor. The most important resolutions did not reach the convention floor. The real issues involved in the contest for president were not discussed on the floor of the convention.

This struggle was concretized around the GM demands. It is correct to say that the election of Reuther was due in no small degree to his advocacy of a relatively advanced program for the union. It was the Thomas-Addes concern about this GM program which drove them also to concoct some sort of program in opposition to the Reuther program.

They have elected Reuther because they believe him to be a progressive and a militant. He has announced a program. But Reuther will not carry out that program, inadequate as it is, unless the rank and file progressives and militants in the UAW, in all the locals, keep pressing forward in an organized and persistent way.

The no-strike pledge was the real important concrete issue before the working class at that time. Progressives were able to make organizational and agitational headway with this issue during the war because the workers knew from their own experiences that they were being frustrated by this pledge which their leaders had given for them without their consent.

ISSUES NOT DISCUSSED

Neither on the convention floor nor in the Reuther-caucus was there an opportunity to accomplish anything concrete and significant along these lines. The Thomas caucus was devoted to the most shameful mudslinging, filth, lies and clowning, particularly by R. J. Thomas.

The trade union bureaucracy has learned how to handle conventions in which the rank and file is demanding to be heard and conventions in which the rank and file is likely to have harsh things to say about the leadership. Such a leadership simply organizes and conducts the convention in such a way that many of the most controversial questions are left over for the consideration of the Executive Board after the convention has adjourned.

This important fact, that the GM program was the real focus of the convention struggle, gives this convention its character and its real meaning. Reuther defeated Thomas and it would be a very serious mistake to believe that the victory of Reuther can be attributed primarily to union clique politics, "power politics" or some of the other unsavory happenings at the convention.

(David Coolidge will continue his analysis of the UAW convention in next week's LABOR ACTION.—Ed.)

This was not the situation at the Atlantic City convention. Something new had emerged before this convention convened: Walter Reuther, a top officer of the UAW, with a type of program and demand never before advanced by a trade union leader. We are not discussing right now whether or not the Reuther program

A STRUGGLE OVER PROGRAM These are some of the reasons why many delegates went away dissatisfied.

With the Workers Party

- AKRON "The Development of American Capitalism," a new six-week class series. Albert Gates, Editor of L. A. Instructor. Tuesday evenings at 8. For information write to Bill Ford, Box 221, Akron, Ohio. BUFFALO HEADQUARTERS at 639 Main St. CHICAGO LABOR ACTION, 1703 West Madison St., Room 2, Chicago 12. Telephone: Chicago 6798. Office Hours: 3-5:30 p.m. daily, except Sunday. Tuesday and Wednesday evenings. DETROIT LABOR ACTION HALL—3773 Gratiot (at Mt. Elliott). Office hours: Monday-Friday, 11 A. M. to 3 P. M.; Saturday, 1 to 5 P. M. LOS ANGELES Office, 127 South Broadway, Room 310. Office open daily 11 A.M. to 3 P.M.

New York Workers Party School Announces Six New Courses

An excellent selection of courses has been arranged for the fourth semester of the Workers Party School which begins on Tuesday, April 16. The courses will be held on Tuesday and Friday nights for six weeks concluding on May 24. MAX SHACHTMAN, National Secretary of the Workers Party, will teach a class on "Problems of the Russian Revolution." The class begins with an analysis of the character of the Russian revolution, traces the rise of Stalinism and concludes with a discussion of the future of bureaucratic collectivism.

HARLEM MEETING: Stephen Parker will speak on the UNO Wednesday, April 10 2143 Seventh Ave. Room 106

Table with 2 columns: Year, Price. Rows: 1935 \$15.00, 1938 \$15.00, 1939 \$15.00, 1940 \$10.00, 1941 \$10.00, 1942 \$10.00, 1943 \$4.50, 1944 \$4.50

Chicago Volunteers Fund Quota Raise

By NATHAN GOULD, National Organizer, Workers Party March 30, 1946—Our last report on the progress of our \$15,000 drive for an eight page LABOR ACTION was written on March 26—that is just four days ago. The writer of this column leaves today on a short tour in behalf of the campaign. Hence the listings below reveal the progress of the last 4 days, rather than the usual week.

Table with 4 columns: Branch, Quota, Contributed, Per Cent. Rows: Hibbing \$25 \$35 140, Newark, N. J. 500 500 100, Buffalo, N. Y. 200 110 55, New York, N. Y. 5000 2759.50 55, Youngstown, Ohio 150 70 46, National Office 3850 1652 40, Philadelphia, Pa. 350 83 23, Reading, Pa. 50 10 20, Chicago, Ill. 1000 160 16, Detroit, Mich. 1250 200 16, Los Angeles, Cal. 600 85 14, Louisville, Ky. 200 25 12 1/2, Akron, Ohio 500 60 12, San Pedro, Cal. 400 20 5, Seattle, Wash. 300 5 1, Boston, Mass. 50 — —, Cleveland, Ohio 200 — —, San Francisco, Cal. 500 — —, St. Louis, Mo. 100 — —, Streator, Ill. 25 — —

Readers of Labor Action Take the Floor...

Free Speech For Fascists?

Dear Editor: The issue of free speech for fascists was one of the main issues raised in the letter of D. E. in the March 18 LABOR ACTION. Yet you did not answer it in your comments. I believe that this issue shows a clear-cut difference between democratic socialists and Trotskyites. Stalinists, fascists, Trotskyites and capitalists believe in suppressing free speech under certain circumstances. The only people that are consistent about free speech are the democratic socialists.

democracy. We are striving for the only really democratic society, the society of socialism, which will be realized through the action of the working class in instituting a workers' government which will establish complete political democracy by eliminating economic autocracy. We therefore advocate a platform which will insure the working people, the vast majority of the country, more and more democratic rights, and which will make inroads upon the rights of the capitalists. You understand, as well as we, the danger that fascism represents to the workers and their organizations. Hitler and Mussolini destroyed the unions, the radical parties and every vestige of even the partial democratic rights that existed under capitalist democracy.

Union liberals, they're still against fascism. They direct strong thought-ventures against it, and write nasty editorials in the socialist Call. The manner in which the Socialist Party behaves gives a clue to the answer to the other major argument you make concerning the suppression of other workers' parties by the Russian Bolsheviks. These other working class parties, the Mensheviks, Social Revolutionaries and Anarchists, resembled the Socialist Party. They supported democracy, to be sure—capitalist democracy.

al Secretary of the Workers Party, writes: "... It should be remembered that the Bolsheviks became the only legal party in the course of the civil war. This was in no way due to some priori concept of Bolshevism. Quite the contrary, Lenin emphasized before and after the seizure of power, that one of the advantages of the Soviet system lay in the possibility of one Soviet party replacing another as the ruling group without violence and the clash of armed forces. The idea that the dictatorship of the proletariat is incompatible at all times with the existence of more than one (the ruling) party, or even that it necessarily means the denial of the suffrage to out-and-out bourgeois elements, is utterly without foundation in fact or in Bolshevik theory."

over other weapons of war and the necessity of building a successful military force around it. From their viewpoint, that is, with an orientation towards a third world war, they are perfectly logical in demanding the secrecy of present and future development. What is more, they feel the need of directing the development of atomic energy for war-time needs. The scientists, on the other hand, the most vigorous advocates of civilian control, claim that other countries will soon catch up to us. Secrecy, they say, will breed distrust among nations and involve us in an atomic armaments race. Military control will hamper development in peacetime applications, and they do not fail to add, in the development of the atomic bomb itself. Despite their differences, both groups are in agreement that bigger and better bombs will be built. Both groups reflect in their arguments only the interests of their profession, not the interests of humanity. Both groups are in the service of the capitalists, those for whom imperialist wars are fought, not the workers.

Readers of LABOR ACTION: Send your contributions for an eight-page LABOR ACTION to LABOR ACTION, 114 West 14th Street, New York 11, N. Y. Be a LABOR ACTION Booster.

For Workers Control Of Atomic Power

Dear Editor: The current fight raging over military versus civilian control of atomic power is of the utmost importance to all workers, and should be clearly understood. A reading of the arguments put forward by both sides gives the following picture: The military recognize the tremendous superiority of the atomic bomb

The control of atomic energy must be in the hands of those who produce the materials that go to make up an atom bomb. The control must be in the hands of those who stand to lose and suffer most from its use. The hope of the working class for an abundant life lies in its ability to produce. Every time a factory is blown up the workers' productivity is cut just that much. Another war involving atomic bombings will remove for some time the possibility of plenty for all under socialism. Thus the working class has a great stake in atomic energy. The workers must take control out of the hands of the capitalists who will not hesitate to use the bomb to further their imperialist interests. But to do this the workers must be organized politically. They must have their own party independent of capitalist parties which will carry out a program in the interests of workers. And this program must include "WORKERS CONTROL OF ATOMIC POWER." O. OROZCO, San Francisco



