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LABOR ACTION

AUGUST 5, 1946

A PAPER IN THE INTERESTS OF LABOR

FIVE CENTS

We Know Who the Georgia Murderers Are!

BREAK THE LYNCH SYSTEM!

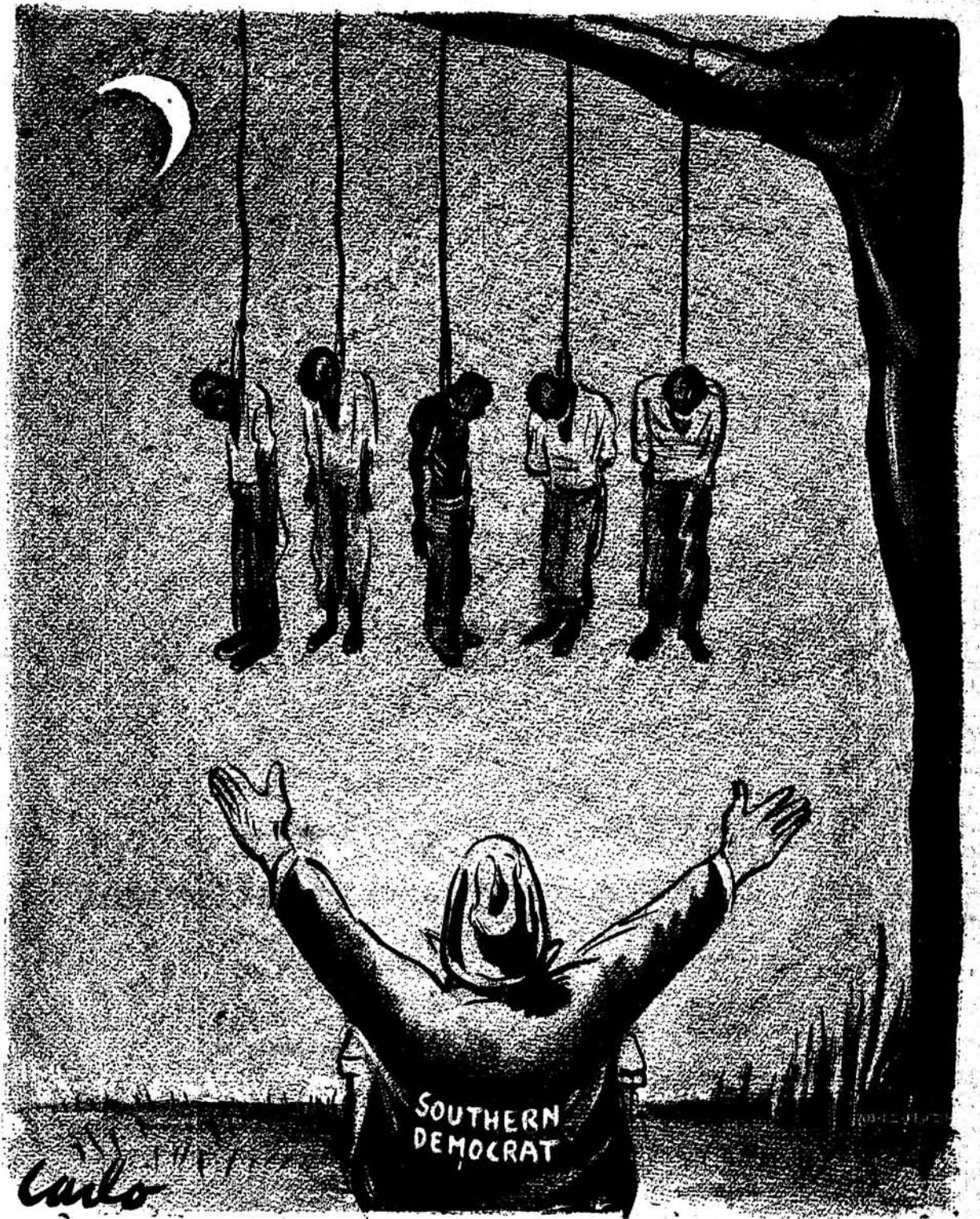
By ERNEST RICE MCKINNEY
Workers Party Candidate for Congress
22d Congressional District, New York

Two Negro men and their wives were brutally and savagely murdered in Georgia last week by a band of 20 white men. They were dragged from the automobile of another white man; the two men were shot and then the two women were murdered. "The upper part of the grotesquely sprawled bodies," says the New York Times, "were scarcely recognizable from the mass of bullet holes."

One of the men had just been discharged from the army. He had been overseas five years fighting, so he was told, to make the world safe for the "Four Freedoms," for "democracy," for "the American Way of Life." This man had been told that he was fighting against fascism: against cruelty, savagery and barbarism. This Negro, just out of the army, had been told that he must leave Georgia and the United States and travel thousands of miles to Germany and Japan to accomplish the aim of civilization. He, and his black and white comrades in arms must kill Germans and Japanese if they and their families were to be free and secure.

And so, after five years of killing the "bestial Germans" and the "savage Japanese," after five years of torment and sacrifice, Roger Malcolm came back to the United States and to Georgia. Back to "democracy," to the "Four Freedoms" and to the "American Way of Life." Roger Malcolm, George Dorsey and their wives found the American Way of Life just as it has always been, from the horrors of the Middle Passage in the 17th century down to the very minute they were done to death by the Georgia mob.

All through the five years



when Roger Malcolm was fighting fascism in Europe and the Pacific, his masters in the United States and in Georgia were preserving The American Way of Life for the day of his return. He must not be disappointed or disillusioned. He, his friend George Dorsey, their wives and 15 million other Ne-

groes. Everything was just as Malcolm left it in the United States and in Georgia.

Hate and brutality, exploitation and misery, the chain gang and the cabin in the cotton; rope, faggot and lash, hunger and raggedness; insult, degradation and proscription. This is America. This is the United

States, Georgia, South Carolina, Mississippi and New York for the Negro.

This is what Roger Malcolm came back to. The travail and the agony; this is the United States his wife, his family and all of black America suffered under while Malcolm was kill-

(Continued on page 7)

Murray, Reuther Pull Back on Pay Raise

By EMANUEL GARRETT

It is necessary that we be plain-spoken: we have been pushed back in the fight against rising prices! We have been pushed back by Congress; we have been pushed back by Truman; we have been pushed back by Philip Murray and Walter Reuther. We expected this from Congress; we expected this from Truman; we have

a right to expect the contrary from Murray and Reuther.

When Truman signed the new OPA bill handed him by Congress he perpetrated a fraud. The new OPA bill is not a price control bill; in many essential respects it is a DECONTROL bill. In fact, its principal provision is for a decontrol board that can lift ceilings. Says the New York Times on

its editorial page on Sunday, July 28: "the decontrol board may be a powerful factor and . . . the extent to which price controls are continued or gradually eliminated may depend to a considerable extent on the views of its members."

The new bill extends the life of OPA until June 30, 1947, restores rent ceilings at the level of June 30, exempts from control meat, poultry, grains, dairy products and other key commodities until August 20, creates the three man decontrol board to lift prices AT WILL, establishes 1940 prices (plus "increased costs") as a basis for new price ceilings. There it is—a price control measure in which only rent appears likely to be controlled—and that not too certainly if the decontrol board decides otherwise.

Already, increases have been granted on any number of commodities. The new bill had hardly been signed when increases were permitted to

(Continued on page 8)

UAW Board Meeting Will Discuss Prices

By JACK WILSON

DETROIT, July 30—Another crucial meeting of the International Executive Board of the UAW-CIO is to be held on August 5 to take up major questions of policy and organizational matters.

Before the board will be two diverging sets of proposals for adoption by the UAW-CIO as its official policy to meet the inflationary crisis in this country.

One rounded-out plan will represent the point of view of Walter P. Reuther, union president, and another

will be the program advocated by the Stalinist Party through its supporters on the board, headed by George Ades, union secretary-treasurer.

On the question of wage increases, the Stalinists now are making considerable agitation for reopening of wage negotiations with all big auto corporations.

REUTHER'S NEW FORMULA

Until this week Walter Reuther was also speaking along those lines, but following a series of conferences with Philip Murray, CIO president, Reuther has virtually abandoned for the moment the GM program of fighting for wage increases without price increases.

The formula which Reuther presented to a caucus meeting and which was accepted enthusiastically by his followers was: "We must make the dollar mean more. We've got to keep prices down. That is the main job now."

This formula is essentially the same miserable policy statement which the national CIO Executive Board issued at its recent session in Washington.

As part of this "strategy," Reuther issued a call to the auto manufacturers to meet with the UAW-CIO to discuss the problem of full production. No one, of course, thought that the auto barons would take this invitation seriously. Naturally, Reuther has another "plan" to present which is expected again to create nationwide publicity and discussion. What

(Continued on page 2)

WP Election Campaign in Flying Start

Starting with a really intensive drive, the New York Local of the Workers Party rolled up 2,600 signatures on one day, Saturday, July 27, in the two election districts in which it is attempting to get Workers Party candidates on the ballot. The goal of the party branches is 12,000 signatures, 6,000 in each of the two election districts. Actually only 3,000 are needed in each district. But to make certain that there are no excuses for barring the two revolutionary socialist candidates from the ballot, the Workers Party will file double the number for each district. All friends and sympathizers are urged to help us in the drive. Petitions may be obtained at 2143 Seventh Avenue, Room 106, or at 114 West 14th Street, third floor, on any Saturday between 1:00 and 6:00 p.m.

The Lynch Record for Ten Years

We print below a record that Talmadge and Bilbo will be proud of. It consists only of those lynchings between 1935 and 1945 that are known and unmistakably identified as lynchings. The count for 1946 is of course not yet completed.

Scores of others were undoubtedly committed, but the facts are either unknown or they do not comprise lynchings in the legal meaning of the word. Such legal lynchings as that of Odell Waller in Virginia in 1942 are not included.

We lack the space to detail the facts of each of the lynchings, but we can supply them to our readers on request. The criminals? The same as those who are guilty of the lynching of the four Negroes in Georgia—the entire bigoted Jim Crow system of capitalist rule.

Alabama	9
Arkansas	2
Florida	11
Georgia	15
Louisiana	3
Michigan	1
Mississippi	20
Missouri	1
North Carolina	2
Oklahoma	1
South Carolina	1
Tennessee	3
Texas	2

Total—71 for the years 1935 to 1945.

Here Are the Goals of Our Eight-Page Paper

Labor Action Fights in Socialist Cause!

After several delays and considerable difficulties we present this week the new EIGHT-PAGE LABOR ACTION. We owe its appearance above all to the members of the Workers Party whose hard work and sacrificing financial contributions made this expansion possible. Our problems are by no means solved. And, frankly, we doubt that they will ever be—until the workers of this country take over the reins of government in a socialist America. It will be a tussle, especially in these days of inflated printing prices, to bring LABOR ACTION out every week. But we are confident of YOUR response and of our ability to manage it—as we did for six years with the four-pager.

What is it that we and the Workers Party hope to achieve? What are we striving for?

Let us first establish that we are not expanding our size because a four-pager does not allow us room for news coverage of all world and domestic events. That is not our intention; nor would we be able to fulfill it if it were. A weekly paper, whether it were four or eight pages, could not possibly do so. It is our intention to publish all the news that we have room for, particularly those facts that will not be found in the capitalist press. Our columns will carry first hand reports of the labor movement, of veterans' activities, of labor's struggle in Europe, Asia and

South America, and so forth. But more than that, we propose to subject these events to socialist analysis and interpretation. For that is the purpose of our paper generally and of our expansion particularly.

A SOCIALIST PAPER

Like the Workers Party, with which we have been intimately related throughout the six years of our existence, we are socialists, aggressive, fighting, revolutionary socialists. In socialism we see the only hope of humanity. And it is to present the meaning of socialism, its necessity, its relation to every aspect of our lives, that LABOR ACTION is published. It was, in our opinion, one of the weaknesses of our four-page paper that we did not have space for more general argumentative, explanatory articles on socialism and the teachings of its great thinkers. That we shall try to correct in the eight-pager.

We are not, however, satisfied merely to explain the theory and necessity of socialism. For us, socialism is a philosophy of action that must enter into each of our activities and guide them. We are not satisfied to stand by and "educate." There are organizations and papers that pretend to do that and wind up doing anything but. We seek to INFLUENCE events, change them, control them, direct them to the victory of the working class over capitalism.

We are frankly biased—biased on the side of the working class, the down-trodden and oppressed everywhere against their oppressors. We start from the premise taught us by the great socialist teacher, Karl Marx: there are two main classes in society—workers and bosses; today we live under a boss, a capitalist system; we must strive to rid ourselves of the exploitation of this rotting system by replacing it with a workers' commonwealth, a socialist government, for only in that direction lie progress and liberty for mankind; we can be successful only if we engage in militant socialist action as a class, winning to our side all those who see themselves in the blind and bankrupt alley of capitalism.

Thus we participate in every action of the working class. If there is a picket line, we are on it. If there is a debate over policy, we enter the debate. Our news reports therefore are more than factual coverage. They are written with a view to explaining what is taking place; and, where indicated, they explain what should take place. That is why you will find so often in our articles the conclusion that labor must build an independent Labor Party and establish a workers' government. We have sometimes been criticized on the ground that it is unnecessary, and artificially done. Perhaps so. But we think it serves a purpose. We publish many articles spe-

cially arguing the necessity of a Labor Party. In addition, however, we try to use every occasion to hammer home, to emphasize and emphasize once again, that central point.

MORE INTERNATIONAL NEWS

In the EIGHT-PAGE paper we will have more room for more interpretation. We will have room to cover many things that previously had to be omitted, notably in international events. But we do not propose to lose our punch by spreading our material thinly. We are agitators who understand and seek to present the profound theories of socialism as Marx and Lenin and Trotsky understood them, as guides to action. Currently we are concentrating our fire on the price situation as the principal issue before the people. For weeks our lead articles have been on prices and what we can do to hold them in line. Only the horror of the Georgia lynching that exposes the capitalist system in all its depravity compelled us to give the price story secondary space this week.

Throughout the war years we kept punching away at the central issues before the working class: the war as an imperialist war, the no-strike pledge, the War Labor Board, etc. Since the war we have concentrated on the GM Program and similar issues. We are proud of our record during the war and since. A continua-

tion of that record is what we promise in the EIGHT-PAGE LABOR ACTION.

FACE ISSUES BOLDLY

With the Workers Party, we have tackled every major event boldly and creatively, contributing significantly to the literature of the Marxist movement. As Trotskyists we have tested our ideas in the best tradition of socialist thought, amending them, revising them where the facts and investigation so dictated. We have not hesitated to discuss our policies freely and critically. We have published pre-convention discussion articles of the Workers Party in our columns, and propose to make one of the main features of our eight-page paper a section devoted to discussion.

How well we succeed in what we aim to accomplish in the eight page paper depends on you, our readers. Your criticism, your material, is of the utmost importance in fulfilling our goals. We have a letter column to which we should like to devote the better part of a page weekly—if you will write for it, make suggestions, discuss our policies, report the life of your union and your neighborhood. We want this to be your paper, a paper you will give to your fellow worker, a paper that will help you in your work.

Above we said that we aim to INFLUENCE events. We cannot do so

if we are small. The bigger our circulation, the bigger our influence. The bigger our circle of friends who actively promote the paper, the bigger our influence.

We have a tremendous job to do. We know we can do it. We have been doing it for six years and for many years before that as members of the Trotskyist and socialist movement. We can do it better in the EIGHT-PAGE paper. Many thousands know us now. We want to magnify ten and a hundred times—building the socialist paper of the American working class.

UE LOCAL 107 ADOPTS UAW PRICE PROGRAM

PHILADELPHIA—Throwaways were recently distributed at the Westinghouse plant gates here urging employees not to pay increased rents. The union offered legal assistance and protection to those threatened with eviction.

This action, together with an "in plant" milk strike, implemented a resolution passed by the membership adopting the UAW Program for price control.

Philadelphia Local Prepares for Electrical Workers Convention

Local 107 Votes Fighting Program

PHILADELPHIA—At the last meeting of Westinghouse Local 107 in Lester, the membership adopted a program which will urge upon the UE convention in early September. This program really derives from the lessons of the recent strike in which this local played a leading role in the Philadelphia area.

all UE members to demonstrate for the 6-hour day, using this day which has historically been Labor's Holiday to launch the new struggle for a reduction in the working day."

AN ESCALATOR CLAUSE

When the strike was still in its early stages the local passed a motion instructing its representatives at the Westinghouse Conference Board to introduce into the negotiations the question of an escalator clause. To this reporter's knowledge it was the only local in the UE to do so. At that time it was pointed out by the progressives that a wage increase meant nothing if prices were not held, and that the only contractual protection we had against a rise in the cost of living was an escalator clause. At that time, too, all the more active members supported the program of the UAW in its struggle against General Motors, although the question was never formally put in a motion or resolution. This resolution concludes:

"Therefore be it resolved that Local 107 go on record in favor of national negotiations for escalator clauses in all UE contracts and calls upon the convention to instruct the leadership to negotiate such provisions in all contracts, and be it further

"Resolved, that this shall be the main feature of the coming negotiations on the part of the union, the principal demand which is to be made on all employers in order to insure the protection of our real wage rates and to protect our members against an inflationary price rise."

FOR A LABOR CONFERENCE

When Reuther issued his call for a conference of all organized labor to plan a joint campaign against the offensive by capital the local passed a resolution supporting that call. The local has always supported every movement which could produce labor unity, and has striven in the past to accomplish as much as possible to have more harmonious relationships between the many labor organizations. Reuther's call offered a new opportunity and the members backed it up by the following resolution:

"Whereas, labor today is passing through its 'years of decision' (Phil Murray) and faces a powerful onslaught from the united forces of Big Business whose strategy is planned by a single organization—the National Association of Manufacturers, and... "Whereas, the UAW has already

demand or campaign is again launched by the Union."

LABOR PARTY RESOLUTION

The culmination of all these progressive resolutions should quite naturally have been another favoring the creation of an Independent Party of Labor. But this met the combined opposition of those who are prominent in PAC work, and those who are opposed to all political action because they regard it as trap for labor. The debate was lively and detailed, and although the resolution itself lost by a single vote the sentiment of a large portion of the members was definitely for a labor party. Opponents used the old argument that "the time is not ripe" and that labor should not be tied to any one party, etc.

ON A GENERAL STRIKE

After four months on a picket line a man begins to wonder if there isn't a faster and surer way of winning a strike. In the UE there are men out on strike for over six months against the Phelps-Dodge Co. When the men were brutally struck down by cops in the mass demonstration around the GE plant during the strike, they demanded a general strike in the city. Many locals voted for a general strike of the industry. Harry Block, president of the UE District Council, killed it by his do-nothing policy. Albert Fitzgerald, National President, came out openly against it with talk about the necessity of preserving the "sanctity of our contracts" with other companies.

In answer to the problem of strike strategy, the local adopted a resolution which said, among other things:

"Resolved that Local 107 call upon the convention to return to the time-honored motto of 'An Injury to one is an Injury to All' and instructed the national leadership to plan for a general strike if at any time a universal

demand or campaign is again launched by the Union."

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CARRYING THE FIGHT

A tremendous task awaits the delegation of Local 107 when it reaches Milwaukee in September. For there they will face the powerful and well-oiled machine of the Stalinist (CP) party which will be determined to perpetuate itself in office and avoid any criticism of its betrayals during the war. The progressives cannot expect victory at this time but they do hope to create the basis of a national progressive caucus in the UE which will offer a program of militant class action against that of the Communist Party.

CIO Longshoreman to Hit Shipowners with Slow-Down

By CHISPA

SAN PEDRO, July 26—Meeting the shipowners' slowdown tactics with a job slowdown of their own, West Coast longshoremen (ILWU) are encouraging the shipowners to speed the payment of long overdue back pay.

The longshoremen were awarded a retroactive raise last August 18 by the now defunct War Labor Board. To date the money, \$9,000,000, due for work performed between October 1, 1944 and November 1, 1945, has been promised several times but never paid. The period between the award of the retroactive clause (August 18, 1945) and February 1946 was devoted by the waterfront employers to demanding and receiving from the government, first, guarantees that the government would foot the back pay bill. Second, that the government pay for the cost of compiling the retroactive checks. After these concessions were gained,

the shipowners slowly and with many fits and starts, began to figure the back pay.

The top officials of the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union didn't even attempt to put pressure on the employers to begin their calculating immediately after the retroactive agreement was reached. Now these same top officials feel a bit uncomfortable from the heat their rank and file is generating with the "strike on the job" as the old IWW used to call a slowdown.

In some respects the slowdown is a more effective weapon than a walk-out could be. The weekly pay check continues to roll in. The shipowners scream but can show no contract violation. And finally the union's full energy will be preserved for a scheduled strike on August 1 of longshore workers and a probable full-scale slowdown with the shipowners on September 30.

UAW Exec. Board to Meet - -

(Continued from page 1)

Reuther's plans are remains to be seen.

The fact that the entire top leadership of the UAW-CIO has gone along with Reuther in his latest moves does not indicate agreement among them, but rather the usual "playing politics" for the factional struggle in the UAW-CIO is increasing in intensity.

The "militant" demands of the Stalinists now are, of course, a tactic to gain influence and prestige among the rank and file. More exactly, to cut into the widespread support Reuther won on the basis of the real militant GM program that made him president of the union.

In practice, all elements in the union are working together on the struggle to keep prices down by means of buyers' strikes, special dem-

onstrations, use of flying squadrons to prevent evictions, etc. In some respects, the activities on this problem are healthy competition between the Reuther forces and the Stalinist bloc.

Nor will the dispute in the Executive Board come to a clear difference on wage policy in general. At the national CIO board meeting, the divergent elements agreed on a general statement which means something different to each force in the CIO in concrete practice.

In the UAW-CIO, the burning issue on which ambiguity will be difficult will be the request of the Chrysler conference that wage negotiations be reopened as permitted by the contract, provided a 60-day notice of intention is filed. The decision of the UAW-CIO Executive Board on this crucial situation will indicate the real policy of the union leadership and the factions in the next period.

The Boss's Dictionary

Time-and-a-half!



Picketing Hits Philadelphia Market Sales

PHILADELPHIA — The Central Market at Second and South Streets was recently the target of one of the most successful food price picketing campaigns. Forty-five housewives, banded together in a Consumers and Tenants League, turned out for the picketing and were aided by the CIO. Market sales dropped sharply as less than 10 per cent of the normal purchasers crossed the picket line.

Central Market has long been accused of selling decaying produce and meats at highest prices. Since the repeal of OPA this practice has been accentuated. Only continued militant action by consumers and labor organizations will be able to combat to any effective degree further rises in foodstuffs.

AGAINST INCENTIVE PAY

The men in this shop made high wages on incentive pay during the war, but they realize that it would be almost impossible to maintain the same take-home pay in peacetime as long as the incentive system was continued. They also realize that it is necessary to eliminate incentive pay in order to build a union and stable wage rates on a sound basis. A resolution against incentive pay, adopted almost unanimously, concludes as follows:

"Therefore be it resolved that the Convention instruct its officers and all locals to negotiate for the abolition of any and all incentive systems when the present contracts expire, and that these systems shall be replaced by a straight hourly rate at decent wages."

JOBS AND THE 6-HOUR DAY

When the men returned to work after the bitter four-month strike, they were again faced with the problem of lay-offs. As long ago as V-E Day the local had a 24-hour stoppage and sit-in strike to demand a 30-hour week in order to spread the work. The heart of the resolution adopted on the shorter work-week declares:

"...be it resolved that Local 107 go on record in favor of the 6-hour day—30-hour week—with no cut in take-home pay and that we call upon the convention of the UE to instruct the leadership to launch an immediate national propaganda and educational campaign to attain this objective, and be it further

"Resolved, that on May 1, 1947, there shall be a national stoppage of

Readers of Labor Action Take the Floor...

Good Distribution At Price Rally

Dear Editor: As is indicated by a news story sent to LABOR ACTION (in last week's issue—ed.), we distributed 500 copies at the price demonstration called by the UAW all over the country. Given the nature of the meeting, the headline was very arresting, and the papers went like hot cakes. We could have distributed four times as many. Since the speakers at the rally were rather dull, the paper was read rather widely by the demonstrators, and went home with the people who received it. Not one copy was thrown away or left on the grounds after the rally.

The Daily Worker was sold by vendors, but everyone was reading LABOR ACTION. The Workers Party stole the show.

The branch (Cleveland) was much impressed by the excellence of the price issue, the wide and suitable selection of subject material, excellent presentation, and timeliness of the material included. The branch also appreciates the promptness and efficiency of the business office in getting the bundle to us several days early so that we could cover the demonstration, as we had requested.

We feel the whole idea of the special issue, large press run, and campaign type distribution was very acute politically. Needless to say, the morale of the comrades was raised by the result of hundreds of militants reading such a good issue of LABOR ACTION.

A number of our contacts, sympathizers, and friends were at the demonstration, and were favorably impressed by the distribution.

With socialist greetings, GERRY McDERMOTT, Cleveland Branch, W. P.

The Kielce pogrom was a terrible outrage which, however, as Mikolajczyk, head of the national opposition charges—may have been the work of Stalinist agents provocateur, perhaps to divert attention from the recent Polish "Lidice" affair (the village of Wawolnica in Lublin province was burned to the ground and its several hundred citizens—all members of the Polish Peasant Party—murdered by the Stalinist hooligan—"Bezpieki" security police).

Yours truly, CASEY MUCHA.

Editor's Note: The degree to which the Jews of Poland are supporting the Stalinist-dominated government is something which nobody really knows. It is impossible to get reliable information from a country where terror rules. Nor can we accept the implication of our correspondent that "the Jews" function as a cohesive group in politics; that is an idea which is useful to anti-Semites who try to create the myth of a "Jewish bloc."

Just as our correspondent can say that the alleged support of the Polish government by the Jews of that country "is a major factor in the resurgence of anti-Semitism" (a remark dangerously close to that of Cardinal Hlond), so one can say that the anti-Semitism of some of the opponents of the government drives the Jews into the arms of the government. This kind of thinking, on either side, is futile.

We refer our reader to the July 22 issue of LABOR ACTION where an attempt was made to explain in detail the causes of the Polish pogroms.

Exposes Brass Hat Anti-Strike Scheme

Editor: President Truman's intention to use the army to break the recent Railroad Strike, and the navy to break the scheduled maritime strike is known to everyone. During the last week, however, this writer was able to obtain a copy of a leaflet distributed during the railroad strike to the soldiers at a near-by army camp to prepare them psychologically for their role as strike-breakers.

Here is the text of the leaflet in full: "A situation requiring discussion faces every man or woman who remains in the armed forces of the nation. We in the Army and Navy see the country going through a period of internal crisis and strife. Strikes and shortages accompany our struggle to reconvert and get back to normal production and living after the world upheaval ended last year. Our Army and Navy are composed of people from every walk of life. From factories and farms, from railroads and coal mines, from stockyards, offices, ranches—from all of the thousands of different occupations. It is only natural, then, that we have strong sympathies with different sides in the various industrial disputes which are now taking place. It is only natural that we discuss our views on the rights and

wrongs of the issues involved. That is our right as free citizens. But with our rights as free citizens we also have a responsibility as soldiers of the United States. The Army takes no sides in private quarrels. It has only one role to play. It acts solely as an agent of the government, and therefore, as an agent of the people. Therefore, as soldiers, military representatives of the people, in all cases where the Army is used in industrial disputes you will be asked only to carry out instructions contained in executive orders issued by the President of the United States in an impartial, firm and efficient manner—without consideration of the issues involved. In other words, your duty remains and will remain the same—complete obedience and loyalty to the Commander-in-Chief—who is also the duly elected leader of all the people."

Our question is: "The Army acts as an agent of WHAT people. And of WHAT people is the government an agent in industrial disputes?" Truman did not propose to use the army to put the big bankers and capitalists who own the railroads in stocks and leave them there till they ended the strike by granting one and a half million American workers who operate the railroads their just demands. Truman was not planning to use the Navy to give the profiteering shipowners a little "Lichfield Exercise" till they recognized that seamen are also human beings. Truman, the "leader of all the people," planned to use the armed forces of the United States against the majority of the people, in the interest of the profiteers. In doing so he was a true representative of HIS kind of government.

This anonymous brass-hat propaganda sheet was answered by an anonymous typewritten sheet pinned up to a bulletin board in the army camp. Several of its paragraphs follow:

"We call attention to the unsigned bulletin distributed yesterday which called for discussion of the critical situation of our nation. This present paper is in the interest of discussing another side of the issue...."

"The duty of soldiers in time of internal strife and crisis is to understand the issues; their leaders' responsibility is not to use soldiers to support the minority of the population against the majority, and thus destroy all the people's freedom.

"As a matter of fact, if soldiers break strikes they are taking sides, against the majority of the American people who work for a living. To break strikes means to lower the standard of living of our friends, families, fathers and sons—and of ourselves when we are finally discharged from the Army.

"The use of armed force to destroy labor unions was the first act of fascist, Nazi, and other forms of militarism abroad...."

"We suggest soldiers write their Congressmen and President and urge that the United States Army not be used as a partisan weapon of big business against the American people." Numerous articles in LABOR ACTION have discussed whether or not the armed forces of America were re-

cruited to protect the nation from fascist aggression or to gain for American capital the top position in the world. One look at the wrangling over territory and commercial privileges of the Council of Ministers in Paris will shed further light on this matter. The important thing about the paper tacked up by some GI is that it shows that the government of capital seeks to use soldiers as tools to destroy the very things at home for which they were told they had fought abroad.

And the action advocated by this courageous GI: "write your Congressman and the President" shows even more clearly the helplessness of the

citizen soldier and also of the workers as long as they are ruled by a government of capital. What the working people of America need desperately is not just the opportunity to write letters in futile appeals to those who have clearly shown that they intend to impose military dictatorship in America at the first opportunity. What is needed is that the workers and their brothers in the armed forces organize themselves to take over the reins of government so that they, the vast majority of the people, can rule America in their own interest!

LARRY O'CONNOR, San Francisco.

PRESS MANAGER'S PRESS ACTION BY HENRY JUDD

Here it is! The new, expanded and hard-hitting eight-page LABOR ACTION that you've been waiting for. Take a good look at it—we think it's a good socialist paper and hope you agree with us. We aim to make it better as we go along.

This column is to help stimulate circulation and subscriptions to the new eight-page LABOR ACTION. From next week on, it will be turned over exclusively to the many and devoted LABOR ACTION agents we have all over the country. It will be a column recording their circulation feats, the number of subs they've sold from week to week, and their ideas for increasing the press run of the paper.

SOME FACTS ON THE NEW EIGHT-PAGE LABOR ACTION:

- (1) Eight pages, at five cents per individual copy. (2) Bundle orders to agents at three cents per copy, with additional copies available for special distributions at one cent per additional copy. (3) A six-month subscription anywhere in the U. S. for 50 cents. A year's subscription anywhere in the U. S. for \$1.00. (4) Any bundle orders, or changes in bundle orders, must be in our office by noon on Thursdays.

LABOR ACTION AGENTS SPEAK UP

From Detroit our charming peaches-and-cream agent, Miriam Evans, sends

us a detailed report on the Detroit branch's plans for the new eight-page LABOR ACTION. Writes Miriam: "The Literature Committee has begun to make plans for selling the new LABOR ACTION. So far, this is what we've decided to do: (1) Regular sales at newsstands; (2) Regular sales at local union meetings. We are going to have regular salesmen for each local meeting; (3) Special and city-wide meetings. We are going to sell at veterans' meetings, NAACP meetings, Zionist rallies, PAC and rallies on the OPA question, etc."

From Chicago, irrepressible Dan Leeds, the new Chicago literature agent, sends this idea for consideration: "For contact work we are going to assemble a literature kit made up of LABOR ACTION, The New International, Plenty for All pamphlet and five five-cent pamphlets which will all be for sale at 25 cents."

From San Pedro, Agent Brent writes about future circulation plans of the branch: "We plan to try to get the paper on newsstands. We'll let you know how we make out on this score. Our branch distribution concentration is longshore. We plan to send in an article on the maritime situation every other week to LABOR ACTION. The issues of LABOR ACTION containing these articles will be sold and distributed at the Longshore hiring hall."

LABOR ACTION agents: This column is for you. Write in to it and we will see to it that your ideas, complaints and proposals are circulated.

I Want to Subscribe to THE NEW EIGHT-PAGE LABOR ACTION 114 West 14th St., N. Y. 11, N. Y. Name Address City Zone State 50 Cents for Six Months \$1.00 for a Year

With the Workers Party

AKRON

The Akron Branch invites readers of LABOR ACTION to attend the following classes: (1) Tuesday evenings at 8 p. m.—"THE FIGHT FOR SOCIALISM" (2) Wednesday afternoon at 2 p. m.—"THE WORKERS PARTY, THE COMMUNIST PARTY AND THE SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY." Write to Box 221 for further information.

BOSTON

LABOR ACTION Educational Forum, Otisfield Hall, Roxbury, Mass. Thursday 8 P. M.

BUFFALO

HEADQUARTERS at 639 Main St.

CHICAGO

LABOR ACTION, 1703 West Madison St., Room 3, Chicago 12. Telephone: CHESAPEAKE 8788. Office hours: 3-5:30 p. m. daily, except Sundays, Tuesday and Wednesday evenings.

- 1. A series of classes is being held on each Friday night at party office at 8 o'clock on "The Fight for Socialism." 2. On Wednesday, August 7, Labor Action Forum will present Paul Newman, speaking on "The Role of the Catholic Church in Politics." 3. Attend the picnic held at Dan Ryan Woods on Sunday, August 18. Fun program organized for all to participate in. Food galore. 4. Public meeting at the Atlantic Hotel, 315 So. Clark St., Friday, August 23 at 8 p. m. with Albert Goldman speaking in memorial to Leon Trotsky and with Ernest Erber presenting the program of revolutionary socialism today for popular price control committees.

DETROIT

Headquarters: 3773 Gratiot at Mt. Elliott. Open 11 a.m.-2 p. m. on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

LOS ANGELES

Office: 316 1/2 West Pico Boulevard, Room 1. Office hours: Daily except Sunday, 12-3. Monday, Wednesday, Friday also 4:30-6:30. Monthly Forum: Sunday, August 18: Wages and Prices (watch column for place).

NEWARK

LABOR ACTION HEADQUARTERS in Newark at 248 Market St. A series of three lectures on the

history of the Trotskyist movement will be given by Saul Berg, New Jersey organizer of the Workers Party on Saturdays at 2:45 p. m. on August 3, 10 and 17. Place: Newark headquarters.

The Newark Branch of the Workers Party will hold the following forums at its headquarters: Friday, August 9, 8:30. A review of Kravchenko's book, "I Choose Freedom." Speaker: Hildreth Jensen. Friday, August 16, 8:30. The Fight for Jewish Freedom. Speaker: Ann Gordon.

Friday, August 23, 8:30. Why the SWP Minority Joined the Workers Party. Speakers: Al Russell, Oscar Schoenfeld.

NEW YORK CITY

CITY OFFICE—114 West 14th St.—Open all day until 7:00 p. m. Telephone: CHelsea 2-9681.

MANHATTAN—Meets every Wednesday at 8:00 p. m. Labor Temple, 212 East 14th St., Room 39.

EAST HARLEM—Meets every Thursday at 8:00 p. m. Rand's Harlem Terrace, 210 East 140th St., 2nd Floor.

HARLEM—Meets every Wednesday at 8:00 p. m. Workers Party Headquarters, 2143 Seventh Ave., Room 196 (near 127th St.).

E. R. McKinney will speak on Georgia lynchings at Harlem Headquarters on Wednesday, August 7. Admission, 10 cents.

QUEENS—Phone City Office. Meets every Thursday evening.

BROOKLYN DOWNTOWN—Meets every Wednesday at 8:00 p. m. Workers Party Headquarters, 276 Fulton St., 2nd Floor.

BROOKLYN-UTICA AVE.—Meets every Wednesday at 8:00 p. m. 259 Utica Ave., 2nd Floor.

BROOKLYN—Sunday Evening Branch meets every Sunday at 8:00 p. m., 276 Fulton St., 2nd Floor.

PHILADELPHIA

HEADQUARTERS, 1105 Walnut St. The Workers Party of Philadelphia is sponsoring several neighborhood LABOR ACTION Clubs which will engage in a series of discussions around the topic, "Securing and Maintaining a High Standard of Living." All readers of LA and their friends are invited to participate and are asked to contact 1105 Walnut Street, Phila., Pa. for further information.

For information of other Workers Party branches and LABOR ACTION offices, write to the National Office, 114 West 14th St., New York 11, N. Y.

Program of the Workers Party

I. For Price Control by Labor and the Consumers

Wipe out profiteering and high prices by action. Only the workers can control prices. Labor must have the decisive voice in determining the prices of consumer commodities. For wage increases without price increases. For popular price control committees.

II. For a Living Wage

1. For an immediate wage increase to meet the rising cost of living.

2. For an escalator clause in every union contract to provide for automatic wage increases to cover any additional price rises.

3. For job and wage security through a guaranteed annual wage, providing for a \$2,500 annual minimum.

III. Clear the Slums! Build Homes!

1. For a 250 billion dollar five-year program to provide decent housing at low rental for all and an extensive public works plan to provide schools, hospitals and other needed community facilities.

2. For a national plan to begin work immediately on the erection of 26 million permanent low-cost housing units.

IV. Tax the Profiteers

For a 100 per cent tax on all war-time profits above five per cent on invested capital. For a \$25,000 ceiling on all annual incomes.

V. Nationalize Big Business

For the nationalization of the big monopolies: the industrial establishments, transportation and communication systems and the banks. To be owned by the nation and operated under workers control.

VI. End Discrimination Against the Negro People

For full social, political and economic equality for Negroes.

VII. Open the Doors to the Jews

1. For full and unrestricted immigration into the United States by the persecuted and homeless Jews of Europe.

2. For the right of the Jewish people to unrestricted immigration to Palestine or any country of their choice.

VIII. For Full Economic and Educational Opportunities for Veterans

1. Readjustment allowance, on the job training subsidy provided by the GI Bill of rights, to be based on a wage of \$40 a week for single veterans and \$55 for married veterans, plus \$5 a week for each additional dependent.

2. For immediate granting of a federal bonus of \$1,000 for each year of service.

IX. For Peace and Freedom

1. For the right of all peoples and nations to decide their own future. For self-determination for all nations. For freedom of the colonies.

2. For the withdrawal of all armies of occupation. Bring the American troops home. For an end to conscription.

X. For an Independent Labor Party and a Workers Government

For an independent labor party of the workers and working farmers based on the trades unions. Break with the Republican and Democratic Parties. For a government of and by labor.

FOR A SOCIALIST AMERICA AND PLENTY FOR ALL.

LABOR ACTION MAGAZINE

August 5, 1946

A Paper in the Interests of Labor

Page 3

The Recent Strike Struggles and the Political Tasks of American Labor

By ALBERT GATES

THE first post-war wave of labor struggles has already taken place. A second is now in its first stages. These struggles surpass the ordinary "bread and butter" strikes of earlier years. The cause for these socially heightened labor struggles is found in the present character of United States capitalism.

Of the two real victors in the war, the United States and Russia, the former is by far the strongest economically and militarily. Its international political strength, while dependent upon its economic power, is difficult to ascertain, for the world political struggle within the "United Nations" is still in its early stages. The aim of American capitalism, however, is frankly clear. It seeks nothing less than the economic, political, and therefore, military domination of the world.

CAPITALISM'S GREAT DIFFICULTY

The vast expansion of American industry and production makes mandatory the realization of these aims for the future existence of U. S. imperialism. American capitalism cannot produce profitably, nor continue expansion which is inherent in capitalist production, on the basis of its domestic market, or even by merely retaining its pre-war world markets. The new and vast expansion of industry and production which took place during the war to meet the military needs of the "United Nations," makes it impossible to carry on the economy on pre-war levels, even those of the "prosperity period" of the '20's. This would mean a decline of profits for the capitalist class as a whole, chaos for many segments of that class, mass unemployment and the reduction of the standard of living of all the people. Herein lie the great inescapable difficulties for American capitalism.

But the great power of U. S. imperialism rests upon shaky foundations. Europe is a devastated continent whose peoples are restless, hungry and poverty-stricken. South America, more clearly under the domination of U. S. capitalism, is slowly reviving its old anti-imperialist struggle against the "Yankee dollar." Asia and the Far East have emerged from the war with a new will to struggle for national independence. The collapse of world economy makes the prospects of recovery upon a capitalist profit basis quite dim.

The long range plan of American imperialism rests on two hopes: that it can achieve its world aim based upon the chaos and weakness of Europe and Asia; and that it can win the support of the working class at home through "bribing" it with the drippings from super-profits of imperialist exploitation. But the political factors of European and colonial discontent plus the increasing maturity of the American working class challenges this grandiose perspective of U. S. imperialism.

BURDEN OF RECONVERSION

During this post-war period the monopoly capitalists with the aid of their government put the burden of reconversion upon the shoulders of the working class. Since the relatively high war wages of the workers were primarily due to long hours of work, overtime and doubletime, the end of war production meant an immediate cut in wages and a sharp decline in the standard of living. Coupled with the steadily rising cost of living it means that the entire burden of reconversion fell on the people at large.

Capitalism could have weathered the post-war period on this basis alone, but it had other sources of strength. These other sources were political. Through its control of government, monopoly capitalism passed legislation guaranteeing profits at a high wartime level, rebates on paid taxes, elimination of price control, limitation of housing construction, etc. These advantages give American capitalism strength to pursue its world aims.

In what sense have recent labor struggles differed from previous ones? This time the labor movement, spearheaded by the United Automobile Workers Union (CIO), was compelled to strike for something more than wages and hours. The UAW touched the very foundations of capitalist property relations when it demanded the right to examine the books of the company, to achieve a wage increase out of the profits of the company, without a rise in prices. If the conservative labor leaders (Green, Murray, Lewis) did not understand the real significance of the "GM Program" the most important section of the monopoly capitalist class did.

CAPITALISTS SHOWED ALARM

The big capitalists responded to the UAW demands in the GM strike with alarm, denouncing the auto workers as enemies of free enterprise, property rights, production and progress. In contrast to most labor leaders, the capitalists exhibit an acute class consciousness.

This has been demonstrated anew in the present struggle on the price front in which the auto workers have proposed to the labor movement a program of action, which, if coupled with the "GM Program," can win a significant victory over the profiteers.

But here again the top leadership of the CIO has watered down the UAW program in favor of reliance on the Truman

administration and a host of so-called "friends of labor" in Congress. In the field of political action, which is the real hope of the working class, the leadership of the union movement reveals a lack of consciousness which results in a reactionary policy.

A MILITANT WORKING CLASS

On the economic front, the American working class is well organized and fiercely militant. The union movement in this country has become the most powerful in the world. Strike struggles in the United States are always vigorously prosecuted. American workers do not hesitate to take to the streets to defend themselves. If this wonderful militancy in economic struggle were joined to politically independent action, the future of the American working class would be more secure.

The amazing contradiction in the class struggle is the enormous gulf which separates the high level of economic struggles from the backward political character of the labor movement. In recent years there has been a stirring in the rank and file whose understanding is superior to an officialdom which has a vested interest in "business unionism." The formation of the PAC was not merely an effort by the CIO to organize labor support for the Democratic Party; it was also a measure to forestall some form of independent political action.

But it is becoming clear to many workers that unless their economic struggles are joined to progressive political struggles, they are always severely handicapped and often defeated by reactionary legislation.

The political conservatism of the American labor movement is breaking down. Whereas early American capitalism gave the workers a rising standard of living because of its expansion of

industrial productivity, this is no longer possible for a declining capitalism. In the immediate future, the monopolists will attempt to "bribe" the working class by super-profits from international expansion and exploitation. Already it seeks support from labor for its imperialist aims with the excuse that success in its world program will guarantee jobs at home. Thus the American workers are asked to secure a doubtful divelhood at home by agreeing to the exploitation of the peoples of Europe, Asia and South America.

The experiences of the past period show that the workers are not at all inclined to accept this prospect. But the struggle of labor cannot be confined to the factory alone. That is a losing fight. The economic struggles of the workers will have to be joined to political struggles. The fight for "bread and butter" which is the ever-present instigator of the class struggle, catapults the working class into a struggle to control production, wages, prices and conditions of labor, and to fight for legislation to aid the fight on the economic front. The political struggle is inescapable. What is wrong with the politics of the labor movement is its subservience to capitalist politics.

The great task of American labor is to break with capitalism politically: TO HAVE NOTHING WHATEVER TO DO WITH THE DEMOCRATIC AND REPUBLICAN PARTIES OF BIG CAPITAL. This conclusion flows logically and necessarily from the whole position of the working class. At present the main impediment to this progressive development of the rank and file of the labor movement is the hard-shelled, conservative, capitalist-minded labor officialdom. The first progressive political step by American labor toward independent political action and a labor party will require the breakdown of the conservative influence of this officialdom.

Diplomatic Hypocrisy Is Keynote of Big Four Peace Conference at Paris

By HENRY JUDD

On July 29, one year after the cessation of the war, twenty-one victor nations will convene in Paris to draft and sign peace treaties with certain of their former opponents, Italy, Finland, the Balkan nations. This Conference, we are reliably informed, will end the state of war and post-war tension that exists in Europe and pave the way for that continent's transformation to a peaceful, unified area.

This optimistic picture, unfortunately, does not describe the Conference as it really will be when it gets down to business. To begin with the convenors of the Conference, the Big Four, have already worked out the terms of the treaties to be signed and the Conference will be largely a formality. The small powers present, each one of which is under the domination of one of the Big Four to one degree or another, will have little to say on the real issues. Whatever disagreements or disputes take place will, therefore, merely reflect the differences among the Big Four themselves.

Is the Peace Conference a democratic assembly of peace-seeking delegates? Or is it an assembly of bargain-hunting, deal-seeking and double-dealing slick capitalist politicians? We believe the latter to be true, based upon the whole manner in which the Conference has been organized.

Each of the Big Four imperialist powers, anxious to extend and consolidate her sway in Europe is responsible for this pre-arranged gathering. Not a single delegate has been elected by his people. All are self-appointed by the same government that is trying to outmaneuver its rivals. Not a single one of the issues involved in the various treaties, the internationalization of Trieste, reparations from the Balkan countries and Italy, transfer of lands from one nation to another (Breda to France; Bessarabia to Russia; Tyrol to Italy, etc., etc.), not a single serious issue has been submitted to popular vote for ratification by the people. The dirty deals have been made between Messrs. Bidault, Bevin, Byrnes and Molotov and now 17 additional imperialist politicians will endorse them. What has all this to do with peace and the reorganization of Europe?

The most striking issue facing Europe today is the fate of Germany. Yet it is clear that this Conference cannot settle that problem. Perhaps it will not even consider it. Any issue on which the Great Powers do not have a pre-arranged agreement cannot

even be talked over by the twenty-one ostensibly peace-making powers! Yet nothing is more revealing of the general state of Europe than the condition of Germany with its divided economic and political life.

PROBLEM IN GERMANY

The Big Four are basically divided on the issue of Germany. In this division the chief rivalry is between the United States and Russia. The issue is: Which power shall most successfully milk the German cow. To achieve this, each power has its own scheme:

FRANCE wants to annex the Saar (a clearly German region), separate the Ruhr and Rhineland from Germany, and, in general, dismember and weaken that nation beyond recognition.

ENGLAND wants to retain the Ruhr within Germany, organize a decentralized Federated Germany, and get production going again for its own trade purposes.

THE UNITED STATES wants to organize a Western Germany together with the British; keep the country under firm control with a Federation of German States and, in general, prepare bases in its portion of Germany for use in a future war against Russia.

RUSSIA wants to consolidate its totalitarian, Stalinist rule in Eastern Germany and then continue its expansionist efforts toward greater influence over the rest of Germany. Of all the powers, Russia wants the strongest Germany PROVIDED it will be under Stalinist domination. Molotov, in his final speech at the Big Four July Conference, appealed to German nationalism to join with him in political war upon the Western Powers. Whether he is heading for an ultimate renewal of the Russian-German alliance against Poland and France, as Walter Lippman believes, is too early to state definitely.

What may be expected to come out of the Paris Conference? Treaties with the defeated minor powers that will legalize the situation of stagnation prevailing today, with Russia in control of huge portions of Europe. Little or no effort will be made to settle the problem of Germany since the powers are still too far apart to make a deal. There will be much talk about peace, of course, but everything about the Conference, the manner of its calling, its domination by a few big powers, and its evasion of fundamental problems, will give the proper hypocritical tone to the diplomatic words. The Paris Peace Conference assemblies not for peace, but to rubberstamp the imperialist deals already negotiated.



First in a Series: "To Our New Readers"

How Has LABOR ACTION Affected Your Political Ideas?

By ERNEST ERBER

(This article, and those to follow in this series, are directed primarily to the 5,292 subscribers who became readers of our paper as a result of the drive conducted last April in preparation for the expanded 8-page LABOR ACTION.)

It is natural that most new readers of LABOR ACTION should still have many questions about and objections to the ideas it represents, even after three months acquaintance with the paper.

To a person totally new to the ideas we hold, much of what we say sounds strange and, like all strange things, is not easy to accept. Some of our views are objected to because they seem extreme. Still others are dismissed as being a mere "pipe-dream" that will never come true. And toward the whole there inevitably remains, to greater or lesser degree, a certain amount of "show me" skepticism, if not outright suspicion.

We say that this is but natural because we are familiar with the manner in which the thinking of the average person is shaped. Everyone likes to pride himself upon the fact that he "makes up his own mind." But few people realize how extremely difficult this is and how seldom it hap-

pens. The views which the vast majority of people hold on public questions are thought out for them.

From the day we start going to school (and even before) and throughout a lifetime of reading newspapers, hearing radio commentators, and just generally absorbing ideas through the various channels of what is called "public information" we submit our minds to a process of shaping, hammering, gouging, pruning, grinding and coloring that makes them fit the pattern of thought that accepts things as they are as the best possible arrangement.

"Ours is the best system of government." "You have got to have rich and poor." "Someone will always be on top." "Without the rich people to run things we would starve." "Wasn't this country built up under the present system?" "Aren't American workers the best paid in the world?" "Without profit there would be no production and no jobs." "Everybody with money in the bank or an insurance policy is a capitalist." "This is the country of opportunity. Every boy can become president." "There are no classes in America. Here every worker can own his own business some day." "Even if things are not so good, radical changes will ruin everybody." "Radicals are screwballs." "Radicals are only people who are jealous of the rich and want to get on top themselves." "Radicals

cause trouble." "Radicalism leads to violence and bloodshed." "Americanism is good enough for me." "We want no foreign 'isms' in this country." "If people don't like this country, let them go back to where they came from."

HOW THE IDEAS AROSE

Are not the above ideas, in one form or another, accepted by the vast majority of Americans, including the majority of the workers? Of course, they are. How did they get these ideas? Did each person sit down and think them out for themselves? Or did each person, when he heard them, at least sit down and say to himself, "I wonder whether this is so or not" and then decide that these ideas are right? Or are these ideas so logical that everyone with any intelligence cannot think otherwise?

Far from it. As we will show in this series of articles, the ideas held by the average American worker are compounded of misinformation, lack of political education, prejudice and bad logic. And, above all, they are opposed to his own best interests.

How did he get them? He just acquired them by FORCE OF HABIT because the majority of the people he came in contact with had them. Just like men just naturally wear ties and women just naturally powder their noses. But how did the majority hap-

pen to hold just THESE ideas? Because these are the ideas that are logical and natural to that class of people who set the pattern and whom the majority tries to imitate—that is, the well-to-do and rich. Ever since there have been classes in society, the poor, seeking to get ahead, have used the rich as their model. The more examples there are of poor people actually getting ahead by individual effort (as often happened in the past periods of American history) the more do the poor seek to pattern their lives, including their ideas, upon the rich.

(This tendency existed even among the chattel slaves of the South, who had as much chance of becoming slave-owners themselves as the camel getting through the needle's eye. Those slaves who worked in the master's house and were given his cast-off clothing sought to imitate his manners and his way of thinking, even to the extent of sharing his contempt for the slave class by looking down on the field hands as an ignorant and uncouth lot. When a slave revolt was being hatched, the word would be passed around among the slaves, "Don't trust those working in the master's house. They will betray you.")

Trying to imitate the rich in their way of life is not easy for the working man (or his wife who seems especially attracted to this notion) be-

cause his income as a wage earner forces him to worry most about paying next month's rent or, at best, the next payment on a second hand car. But it's cheap to imitate the rich in their way of thinking. All one need do is spend 3c or 5c to buy a daily newspaper full of capitalist ideas, either disguised in the form of news stories or straight stuff in the form of editorials and feature columns. If one cannot afford to call at the store patronized by the Du Ponts, Morgans and Rockefellers to buy a rod and reel for \$75 or a "casual jacket" for \$45 or a \$35 hat for the wife (latest creation by Madame Featherhead) as advertised in the paper, one can always share the Du Pont's notion that Socialism is a fantastic idea or the Morgan's wisdom that industry cannot operate without capitalists, or the Rockefeller's advice to the labor movement to stay out of politics and, above all, to stay away from radicals. Even if one cannot afford to buy the clothes to look "respectable," one can always at least hold "respectable" ideas.

WORKERS ARE LEARNING

Does this mean that the bulk of American workers see eye to eye with the Du Ponts, Rockefellers and Morgans? Far from it. Most certainly, further from it today than ever before in this country. Despite the best ef-

forts of the capitalist-owned press and radio to convince the working class that unions are bad for them, the overwhelming majority of wage earners (15 million) belong to unions today. There was a time, however, when the workers swallowed the capitalist propaganda against unions hook, line and sinker. Many a union organizer was beaten up and run out of town by the very workers whom they had come to help because these workers had no understanding of unionism other than that which the capitalist press fed them.

However, workers discovered over the years that they could not live on editorials denouncing labor organization. They needed higher wages and union security on the job. They quit sharing the ideas of the Du Ponts, Morgans and Rockefellers on the question of unionism. They had listened to the capitalist side of the question. Now they began listening to the union side. They made up their minds that unions were necessary. ON THIS QUESTION THEY FREED THEIR MINDS FROM CAPITALIST CONTROL.

Today, there are few capitalist papers that come out against the idea of unions. Not because they have come to change their minds on the matter. But they see that it is useless to try to influence the workers against the idea of unionism after the long ex-

perience which has taught the working class the benefits of organization. Furthermore, the capitalist editors realize that if they were to continue to preach against unionism as such they would only antagonize the workers who read their papers and make them so hostile to it that the papers would lose all influence over the thinking of workers.

As a result, the capitalist press has shifted its tactics. They say, "Unions are all right but they must be properly run." Then they go on to tell the workers how the unions should operate. They tell them that strikes are bad. They tell them that the unions have too much power for their own good. They tell them that what is good for the employer is good for the union and that capital and labor must work together. They tell them that unions must keep out of politics; above all, the unions should not entertain the idea of forming a Labor Party of their own. They tell them that the worst enemies of unions are, not the capitalists, but the radicals. They tell the unions to beware of radical ideas. And so on and so on. The capitalists have learned that they cannot prevent the existence of unions so they must seek to control them through controlling the thinking of the workers.

Once they have decided that it is

(Continued on page 4)

A PAPER IN THE INTERESTS OF LABOR

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EMANUEL GARRETT, Editor

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ALBERT GATES

IRVING HOWE

HENRY JUDD

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Editorials

Behind the CIO Price Program

We should like to continue our discussion, begun in last week's issue of LABOR ACTION, of the Price Program worked out by the CIO's Executive Board at its recent meeting. Parts of the Program seem to us valid, provided they are properly implemented by action. It is with its central plank for a labor-management conference that we take sharp issue.

Let us first review the CIO proposal. After arguing, with unassailable fact, that the cost of living has risen some 40 per cent in the last two months, it declares, with equally unassailable logic, that in addition to other price control measures wage increases must be granted. So much is good. But then it concludes with the completely unwarranted and unjustifiable position that the way to get this increase is for Truman to call a labor-management conference, one in which the government will participate actively.

There are two things to comment on here: this business of running to Truman; and the labor-management idea itself. We discussed the latter last week, recalling the record of labor-management conferences, and quoting the CIO News Service which, in reporting Murray's press conference, described the last labor-management conference as a fiasco. The point is precisely this: any such conference must be a fiasco from labor's point of view, if, as is

likely, it is not worse. We referred to the record of labor-management conferences, which should be sufficient of an experience for even the most dismal mind. Think of the countless "fascos" that were held during the last four or five years. Consult your own experience. Doesn't it prove in almost every case that labor got a rooking, that where labor got anything at all it did so only because it was prepared to go after much more, and capable of getting it, by its own independent union means?

Ignore the experiences for the moment, however. Even had there not been a single such "fiasco," were this the first one proposed, the smallest amount of reasoning would establish an irrefutable argument against labor-management conferences. Why? Because labor and management, facing each other on wage demands and so forth, have nothing in common. They have no common class interest, none whatever. How can they possibly confer on an equal, fraternal "labor-management" plane? They can't. To do so is merely to cater to the illusion that labor can achieve its ends without recourse to its class weapons, unions acting as class representatives of labor, strikes, etc. And this is a dangerous illusion, for which labor pays dearly in disorientation, and the sacrifice of gains which it could achieve by proper union means.

Labor Must Depend on Its Own Strength

There is, we have said, a time and place for labor to confer with management; that is, in direct negotiations with the employers, as union *against* management, the power of one against the power of the other. LABOR-MANAGEMENT CONFERENCES ARE A SUBSTITUTE FOR COLLECTIVE BARGAINING. That is why Roosevelt and his advisors cooked up the scheme, to weaken the processes and machinery of collective bargaining; to replace it by the dangerous (for labor) machinery of class collaboration. Thus, with or without the experience of past labor-management conferences, but doubly so in view of this experience, we must expose this scheme, and criticize president Murray's proposal for such a conference in the present price situation as an evasion of his responsibility as the leader of one of the two mighty organizations of labor in this country.

We have so far omitted mention of government's role in this projected conference because we wish to make several additional points on Murray's relation to government. The CIO Board's plan calls for the active participation of government in the labor-management conference to discuss wage increases to offset price increases. And what purpose will that serve? The governmental agency of the capitalist class will sit in this conference with representatives of capitalism and of labor, and participate actively. How is labor to gain from this? Not at all. On the contrary, it merely lays the ground for a bigger rooking.

UAW Price Program More Effective

The Board's program declared itself against a price control bill that would be a fraud. But Truman has signed just such a fraud. What will Murray propose now? Since the Board met there have been no important announcements, or indications of CIO strategy, except for a report by the CIO's Cost of Living Committee. (See last issue of LABOR ACTION.) We take it for granted that the CIO, and Murray as head of the CIO, are not letting the matter drop. We take it for granted that the CIO will go out for wage increases, and seek somehow to control prices. But how this is done is of utmost importance.

The UAW has a five-point program to meet the price situation. While far from completely adequate, while departing from the real program that gave the UAW strength during the General Motors strike, the GM Program, it is infinitely better than Murray's. Beyond that, however, there IS a program to meet the need. It has many points, such demands as an escalator clause in union contracts, and others. But its real basis is the GM Program which demands wage increases without any price increases, and Popular Price Control Committees to hold prices in line. That way, not in labor-management conferences, lies successful action on prices.

A Tribute to a Fine Socialist Spirit - - Antoinette Konikow

(Albert Goldman was the leader of the Minority Group in the Socialist Workers Party, a large section of which joined the Workers Party. This article on Antoinette Konikow is the first contribution by Comrade Goldman to LABOR ACTION. He will be a regular contributor to the new eight-page LA. In appraising the deceased Antoinette, Goldman writes of a comrade with whom he was in close association.—Editor.)

By ALBERT GOLDMAN

Antoinette Konikow's contributions to the revolutionary movement were considerable. But even if that were not the case, the fact that she was active until she reached the age of seventy-seven, when she died, would by itself be a great achievement. Rarely do we find a comrade remaining active in a revolutionary party until ripe old age. Especially is this true at the present time when many who were devoted to the socialist idea have faded out of activity because of the dreadful defeats which the revolutionary movement has suffered at the hands of the Stalinists.

Not very many of those who left the movement embraced bourgeois democracy, as Max Eastman did. They simply became disheartened and discouraged and ceased being active. But not Antoinette Konikow. She remained in the struggle practically to her last days with an unswerving faith in the ultimate victory of the socialist revolution.

The fact that she was a professional person and did not have to toil in a factory in order to make a living made it somewhat easier to remain active in her old age. But if it is easier for a professional person to remain active, the regrettable fact remains that very few professional persons do remain active in the revolutionary movement during old age. Antoinette, however, to the very end remained devoted, and actively devoted, to the ideals of her youth.

Her last year of life was not a happy one—primarily because of the factional struggle in the Socialist Workers Party. I cannot, I must admit, produce documents to prove my statements. I can only say that she poured out her heart to me in several

conversations. If I am challenged by the Canonites then there will be no alternative for those who read the controversy except to believe either one or the other.

HER ATTITUDE TO SWP MAJORITY

Politically she was with the majority. This means that she was opposed to the raising of democratic demands in Europe. She was opposed to the slogan of the democratic republic because, as she told me, the workers of Europe did not want and did not need a bourgeois republic. On this question she was an honest ultra-leftist together with the vast majority of the rank and file of the SWP. The leaders of that Party refused to say openly

that she should have participated in that struggle. Her heart was failing her, she said, and she could not become involved in the struggle—especially since that might mean making her situation at home somewhat difficult. She was very sad because customs and attitudes strange to her freedom-loving, socialist spirit were visible in the SWP.

The cheap build-up of the "leader," the sneering attitude towards those who wanted to discuss and the name-calling that served as a substitute for argument were all obnoxious to her.

AN INDEPENDENT SOCIALIST SPIRIT

Antoinette knew that there was something wrong with the training that the youth received in the SWP. What she wanted was a freer atmosphere. She wanted a party with a critical and independent membership and not with people who were blind fanatics. She promised that she would join the struggle for such a party if and when she would recover her health.

At bottom the difference between an Antoinette Konikow and the old functionaries of the party (and among functionaries one should include also those who are not actually on the payroll but are members of the clique) is, that for Antoinette socialism was not only a theory to be accepted perfunctorily but a great ideal in the struggle for which petty maneuvers and distortions can never find a place.

Women of noble character like Krupskaya and Zetkin died without raising a voice—at least openly—against the Stalinist degeneration. I can attribute it mainly to fear that by raising their voices they might harm the Party which they helped to build. They did not realize that if by raising their voices in the interests of truth they would harm the party, then the Party is not worth while saving. It is useless to speculate whether Antoinette Konikow would have broken openly with Cannonism had she lived another five years. I can only say that her independence and understanding of what a Bolshevik party really is justifies my strong feeling that she would not have remained silent for long.



ANTOINETTE KONIKOW

that they were for or against the slogan, but left the rank and file the impression that they were against it.

The question of unity was raised in the later stages of the factional struggle and in the one short conversation I had with Antoinette on that question she told me that she was definitely opposed to it, mainly on the ground that she did not like some of the comrades in the WP.

It was because of the struggle on the organizational questions that she was very depressed. Several times she apologized profusely to me. She felt

The Lurid Tale of Ship Profits

By PAUL NEWMAN

In a series of recent articles, the Chicago Sun carried a story of the "war scandal" in the shipping industry, compared to which the affair involving Rep. May is peanuts. In this story it is clearly seen how the big corporations fared during the war, how the 60 families who own the industrial empire of the U. S. grew richer and more powerful from the imperialist war. And from the few figures presented here on the profits of the shipping corporations, their claims to be unable to meet the demands of the seamen's unions in recent negotiations for shorter working hours and a 30 per cent wage increase will be seen for the lies they are.

During the war, the shipping companies could in no way lose a cent. Rather, they could in no way make millions of dollars. Even if a vessel "owned" by a shipping company were sunk, the company lost nothing. In fact, the company made money on the sinking of a ship—for the government paid off in insurance many times the value of the ship. While thousands of seamen went to their death at the bottom of the sea, shipping companies were "insured," or rather, secured, by the government merely because they were in the shipping business. Here's how it worked.

Here is one example, in the case of the Waterman Steamship Company, of how the deal paid off. In 1931 the government sold four ships to this company for \$277,922. These ships had been built at a cost to the govern-

ment of \$6,672,613. The ships were then chartered to the government and the company made a total of \$1,348,445 in charter fees. Then in 1943, the Waterman Company sold the ships back to the government for the sum of \$2,736,500. This means that after having collected charter fees from the government nearly five times what was paid for the ships, the company twelve years later sold the ships back to the government for about ten times the price for which the government originally sold them. In other words, the company's earnings on its original "investment" were almost 1500 per cent.

Another example is the case of the United Fruit Co. on which the Maritime Commission allowed the company \$3,417,940 in trade-in allowances on nine ships valued at \$256,000. The average age of the ships was 33 years, and they had already made the company millions in charter fees.

Then there's the case of the Lykes Steamship Co. which started out after the last war with \$115,000. With this \$115,000, it was able to buy on cash and credit from the government 52 vessels for \$2,462,000, which had cost the government \$98,000,000. With huge subsidies from the government plus charter fees, this company increased its assets between the years 1938 and 1942 from \$5,019,849 to \$39,644,438. The Lykes Co. now has \$25,515,824 in a tax-free pool from which to buy modern vessels from the government.

And so the story goes of the mounting profits of the giant shipping com-

panies, most of which are owned by the large steel and railroad trusts. But with the end of the war the story does not end. As a matter of fact, the shipping business is in for as big or bigger profits in the next few years as they were during the war. For with the law passed by the Senate and the House, and signed by the President on March 8, the companies will continue to receive millions of dollars in subsidies. Also under the bill, the companies will be able to purchase from the Maritime Commission the fastest and most modern vessels for a fraction of their cost.

In addition, the shipping companies have built up a "reserve" fund of \$145,705,120, which is tax-free. It is from this fund that they are to buy their new ships.

From this sordid and fantastic picture of the shipping industry, we can get a glimpse of how the wealth of the nation produced by the workers is squandered for the benefit of the monopoly corporations. But this is just part of the process which takes place thousands of times in all the major industries.

So long as the 60 families control the government through their political parties, they will continue to guard their unbelievable profits while the standard of living of the workers steadily decreases. It is up to the labor movement to begin today to break away from the politics of the capitalists and form an independent labor party based on the trade unions. This is the first step in the battle for the society of plenty for all.

To Our New Readers - -

(Continued from page 3)

necessary to put up with unions, what is the big danger, from the capitalist point of view, which they must guard against? The big danger to capital is that the workingclass will not remain satisfied with economic organization but will also organize its own political movement.

Has the capitalist press succeeded in prejudicing the mind of the workers against "radicalism" and "reds"? Of course they have. One need but go door to door with LABOR ACTION trying to sell subscriptions to see what a thorough job they have done and kept doing. The treatment given workers who stuck their necks out and thought for themselves on the question of trade unions in the past is now reserved, with extra doses, for those workers who think for themselves on the question of the profit system, of capitalist ownership of industry, of workers' control of production, of workers control of prices, of a Workers Government and Socialism,

Today unions are accepted and being an active union man is considered "respectable." But since no "respectable" man is a radical, the average worker shies away from that which is labelled "Socialist" as did his father from the message of unionism. Every new idea makes headway only when the ground is ripe for it. In another article we will discuss why the political thinking of the workers has lagged so far behind their trade union understanding. However, we have full confidence that the next few years will see this gap closed up and the socialist thinking of the American workers take real shape. Today, however, the thinking of the American workers on social and political questions takes place under a thick crust of prejudice and miseducation, the result of years of capitalist poisoning of his ideas. Though some workers are completely steeped in such capitalist thought and think on these things just as does "the boss" while others have reached various stages of

progressive liberation from such capitalist ideas, everyone living in a capitalist society like ours has his thinking influenced to some degree, even if only slightly, by the capitalist environment.

Is it any wonder then, that even you, the subscribers of LABOR ACTION, who have had enough independent intelligence to subscribe to our paper, should still regard it with skepticism, unbelief and misunderstandings to one degree or another? That is why at the outset of our article we began by saying that this is but natural and that we understood the reasons for it. However, we have full confidence that the events unfolding in the United States and the world, today, together with our analysis and explanations will clear up these matters and along with it clear up the accumulated results of years of capitalist propaganda.

(Next Week: The Workers Party—Who Is Behind It and Why It Will Succeed.)

OFF LIMITS

By

James M. Fenwick

The article in the paper was plain enough. It read: "FRANKFORT, July 12—(AP)—Ninety-six American soldiers were arrested by U. S. Third Army military police during the last six days for public petting with German frauleins, it was announced today.

"The arrests were made following General Joseph T. McNarney's crackdown on displays of affection."

What a madhouse this world of capitalism is! For participating in the basic and humanizing relation existing between man and woman anonymous G.I.'s are arrested and fined, or "turned over to their commanding officers for disciplinary action." For having helped organize the destruction of a continent and the death and mutilation of millions of both Germans and Americans General Eisenhower is enthroned as a national hero!

And thrice-mad seems a world in which the incident can pass without even rippling the public conscience.

I cannot help thinking of Bavaria a year ago. The war had just ended. The six-year agony was over. Out of that nightmare of air raids, constant fear and despair, of husbands or lovers dead or prisoners in Russia—and good as dead, hunger, destruction, and a bleak future, German women began to piece together their lives.

It would have been in opposition to all laws of nature had these women and lonely American soldiers not sought each other out. To see couples laughing together in the bars, or strolling through the green shade of the benches in the parks was to reassure oneself that beneath the fierce nationalistic propaganda of both the nazis and the American government the desire of the common people of the earth for peace and friendship would reassert itself.

THE ARMY'S REPLY

The response of American officers was typical. Normal human relations with the population were prohibited or discouraged. As a result, relations between the sexes sank to the level of intrigue or shabby relations from which all love and companionship soon were driven.

This policy, of course, was not a product of the arrogance, petty meanness, and ignorance which characterize the officer caste. It was part of the plan of United States capital for keeping Germany in the status of a subject nation powerless to compete with the United States on the world market.

But every noble political abstraction in Washington ends in most human consequences in Germany. The result is the punishment of enlisted men for the impudence of desiring a woman's warmth, the commercializing of human relations, the suicides of German women whose lovers have been redeployed to the United States, and the driving out of Germany of men who wish to take German women as wives.

There is the world from which hate was to be abolished!

THE WORKING CLASS' ANSWER

In the midst of the national hatreds which seethe in Europe the working class, however, is slowly, very slowly, reestablishing the great principles of international solidarity.

In Belgium, German soldier slave labor is used to work the coal mines. Despite despicable threats upon their lives these German workers recently struck in solidarity with Belgian miners who were protesting horrible working conditions which produced a disaster in which many German and Belgian workers were killed. Belgian workers in turn later demonstrated against burying the German victims separately in paupers' graves.

In that courageous action lies the answer to the capitalist program of hatred in perpetuity in which they would like to drown every human decency doggedly established by mankind in its long ascent from primeval darkness.

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TERROR - - THE BARBARIC MASTER OF EUROPE

By IRVING HOWE

THE human imagination has obvious limitations. It is a platitude that the sight of a child with a cut finger moves us more than a report that millions of people are hungry in some distant nation. Our sensitivities are calloused by the age in which we live: suffering, death, horror and cruelty have become such commonplace things, that we take them for granted as if familiar parts of a landscape. And we deliberately harden ourselves to our world; it is almost necessary to do so if we are to survive the mad society in which we live.

As I would read through an issue of LABOR ACTION after it had been put "to bed" at the printshop, I would wonder to myself: here is an article written about hunger in India, which says that 20,000,000 people face starvation in that country. Does it, can it really convey the emotional impact which it should?

Can these abstract, general words really describe what has happened to this world?

Take a glance at the drawing accompanying this article. It is done by a boy of 13 who was in one of Hitler's concentration camps and who survived death by a miracle. His parents were shot. He himself was led one day with 150 children to be shot. The bullets hit him on the left arm. He fell down, and with the blood of his arm he colored his face and remained the only survivor among the 149 dead children. He then escaped in the darkness.

The drawing which this child made represents the execution. Perhaps in this remarkable drawing we can understand the fate of society under capitalism; perhaps if we try to imagine what horror this child went through as we look at this drawing we learn something about capitalist society which no words can suggest.

I myself was moved by a small detail even more than by the little figures falling under the fire of the SS guards. Notice the row of prisoners' huts drawn on the side with numbers on each of them. That this child should have been so impregnated with the regimented orderliness of a totalitarian society—the meaning of his meticulous numbering of the huts—seemed to me the final, ultimate condemnation of the world which already had brought so much suffering to him. For capitalism means not only starvation and war and insecurity; it is the debasement of a man to the point where he is a mere robot-slave.

And then the robot-slave numbers the huts of his concentration camp...

Europe is a continent in ruins. The story of its desolation as a result of the war has been told often enough. What is important is this:

Whole generations are growing up who know nothing but death and destruction. (We are reminded of the child in London who, when lights were turned on after the war, thought of them as unusual and yearned for the blackout which to him represented normality.) There is no longer a "normal" way of life under capitalism in Europe. Europe witnesses whole shifts of population; mass starvation; destruction of peoples, and disorganization of personalities.

It is a continent of nightmares. And what characterizes it most strongly is the constant use of terror as a means of social action.

Terror has become the normal way of running a society. Terror means not only physical violence and oppression. Of that we can see the most blatant examples in Eastern Europe where the Stalinist imperialism shifts people as if they were mere puppets. Just last week the Russian ruling militarists decided in Austria to exile all

those of German origin: 54,000 helpless people were forced to make their way back to Germany, from one land of starvation to another. Under present conditions in Europe such a movement means endless misery and deprivation for these people.

The rulers of Europe shift peoples as if they were sand on a beach which one molds with one's toes. Trieste: what shall happen to it? Does anyone think of consulting the people who live there? Does anyone think of holding a free plebiscite? Of course not. The future of Trieste is decided in secret conference among the big powers in Paris. This too is a form of terror.

In the modern highly organized, bureaucratically run capitalist state, the worker, the member of the lower middle class, feels himself a helpless individual whose fate is decided by powers stronger than himself. Does he dare to oppose the powers that rule? Does he dare to think for himself? Does he dare to dissent from the chorus of years? Then he has the entire state apparatus against him.

The capitalist decline which has struck Europe and Asia so dramatically, and which is making itself felt in this country, too, results in a destruction of all the traditional relationships and values which to some little extent once made life bearable. During the war, whole countries were uprooted and whole peoples shifted. Families

were broken up; human beings degraded in concentration and work camps. Nor was it Hitler only who did these things. As the most terrible manifestation of capitalist society, Hitlerism was the most barbaric government in Western Europe; but let it be remembered that on the other side stood the British Empire and the French Empire which were soon to suppress colonial revolts in the Far East and the totalitarian Stalinist regime which had exiled millions to forced labor camps and which was as tight a dictatorship as any country in the world.

The decline of capitalist society in Europe manifested itself in every country and in every way. Perhaps the most dramatic manifestation was, socially speaking, its effect on children. I recall reading a few months ago the brief letter a little girl wrote from a Nazi concentration camp: "Now I must say goodbye. Tomorrow mother goes into the gas chamber, and I will be thrown into the well." That was all she wrote, so matter of fact in its story, so devoid of any emotion for her death had become a normal, everyday event.

Capitalism in decline, capitalism hanging on simply because there is no force powerful enough to push it in its grave, exacts this toll. Starvation is the most dramatic manifestation of it, but by no means the only one. Yet, when you try to imagine people in Austria living week in and week out on a diet of 800 calories—and when you try to imagine the gradual decline of their bodies, their constant state of weakness from constant hunger, the destruction of morale and energy which must result from all this—you can understand how starvation is at the bottom of the whole business. People who are starving cannot live independently, with courage and strength for very long. Their bodies force them to do things against which their minds rebel.

Together with starvation comes the rest: the degradation of individuals and groups; the callous disregard by the ruling powers for any desires of people themselves; the disruption of normal family life; the indoctrination of children into the ways of destruction and war.

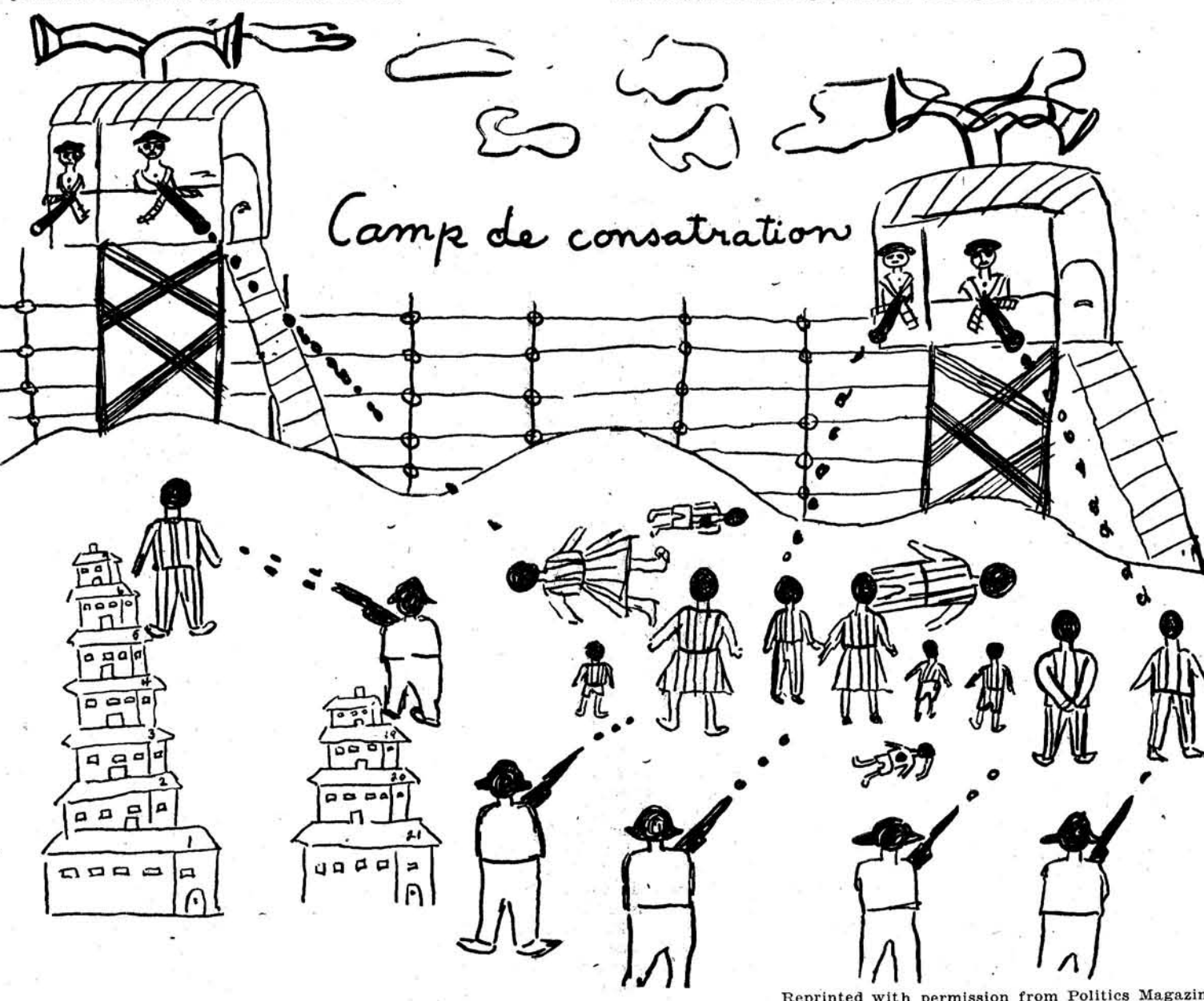
Some individuals, including former socialists, have seen in this situation reasons for the belief that all that is possible in Europe today is for scattered individuals to live nobly, to try to salvage for themselves alone a decent way of life. We reject this conception. Precisely because capitalism tends so much to break the bonds between them, to make them feel helpless before the massive powers of the modern police state—precisely because of this do the workers and people of Europe need more than ever organization on a collective plane: trade unions and revolutionary parties. The individual is helpless in the police state. That is true. But to retire to a life of private nobility is neither possible nor helpful. Where the capitalist decline tends to scatter and disorganize people, there especially do the workers need more than ever the sense of solidarity and the possibility of effective action which can come from a genuine revolutionary party.

Socialism has become a condition for survival; it is a reality in the here and the now, for we have already crossed the threshold of the barbarism produced by capitalist decline.

If men would live as human beings, drawing from the earth and the machines that which can give them plenty and security—they must fight for socialism.

If men would gain a sense of dignity and purpose, a feeling that their lives are more than tribulation and suffering, they must fight for socialism.

That is the path out of the desert.



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How the Italian Workers Seized the Factories in Their Strike Wave

By J. R. JOHNSON

On Thursday, July 18, the workers of Turin and Milan, Italy, seized the factories in a general strike. Some of them were armed. They ejected the owners and the managers. By Friday the strikes had spread over the area so that all activities throughout Piedmont and Lombardy had been brought to a standstill. The strike seems to have petered out. News of it disappeared from the press. But on July 25, De Gasperi, Prime Minister of Italy, complained that the workers in Mantua had refused to let people enter or leave the city without union passports.

These are remarkable happenings and show the completely disordered conditions in one great European country. Milan and Turin and the areas surrounding them form the industrial center of Italy. They have always been the vanguard, first of democracy and then of revolutionary socialism in Italy. In the last months of war these were the workers who carried out tremendous strikes against Mussolini's "social republic." In collaboration with Partisans, they drove out the Germans. They executed thousands of fascists, including Mussolini. By the vigor and speed of their actions they saved the factories from being demolished and wrecked by the retreating Nazis. They held on to the factories for months, running them with joint committees of workers and technicians.

ROLE OF THE OCCUPATION

The capitalists, however, were protected by the occupation forces of Britain and the United States. The Stalinists worked hard to restore

"peace." Order, i.e., capitalist order, was restored. Of course in the recent plebiscite North Italy voted overwhelmingly for the republic and against the monarchy. But the social and political chaos remain and once more the struggle has been transferred to the factories. We haven't much information, but such as it is it cannot be overlooked.

The workers in Turin demanded an immediate bonus of 2,000 lire a person. The employers said that they could not pay it unless the government gave them a loan. Note that they did not say the demand was preposterous. They were ready to make a loan for the purpose. Presumably the government would not or could not supply the loan because the strike followed. It was complete. Even mail delivery was suspended. The New York Times correspondent, after describing the completeness of the shut-down, goes on to say:

"A particularly alarming feature of the strikes in Milan, Turin and the surrounding area is that the workers who took possession of factories have automatic weapons."

These workers have obviously learned a great deal during the past period. Ordinary strikers do not begin their strikes with machine guns and tommy guns. Nor do they begin by ejecting owners and managers from the factories. Yet all this happened on the first day.

These details, meager as they are, are particularly significant when seen against the background of the general situation in Italy. The new Christian Democratic Party, which won the largest number of seats at the last election, has been as powerless to form a stable government as the pre-

vious coalition of Socialists, Stalinists and Liberals. Economic recovery, in fact any semblance of economic order, is dependent upon charity from the United Nations. Italy is incapable of recreating a functioning economy by her own strength. The forces of occupation are a burden and a drain. Finally, the compromise between Byrnes and Molotov over Trieste is a bitter blow to the Italian people. It seems to them that they have been betrayed by Britain and the United States.

Under these general circumstances the strikes in northern Italy represent a serious threat to the fragile stability of the young republic. The

workers in northern Italy are the most powerful and the most dynamic social force in the country. Not only did the strike have complete support in northern Italy, but the printers followed with a general strike that closed down every newspaper in Italy. For weeks now the oil workers have been on strike. And all this is taking place despite the presence of occupation forces in the country.

The decisive question for any observer at a distance is: Who leads the Italian workers and what is their policy? The Italian Stalinist Party is the most influential party in the Italian working class, especially in the organized union movement. Yet such

is the treachery, the betrayal of Stalinism in Europe today that nobody has so far reported in the press what is its policy on the actions of the Italian workers.

Have the Italian workers acted on their own initiative? Were they encouraged by the Communist Party? If so, was it carrying out its usual policy of trying to bring pressure on the Italian government for its own political purposes? Do the Italian Stalinists propose to support the workers against the government, or support it against the workers?

In France the Communist Party controls the union movement of over five million members. For months the

party, like some national association of manufacturers, drove the workers to produce to their limit in order, according to them, to help economic recovery. Today, with the CP losing influence, the party has been leading an agitation for a 25 per cent increase in wages.

But if the CP and the government were to agree on some urgent issue of foreign policy favorable to Stalinist Russia, the CP in all probability would call off or moderate the wages agitation. In the U. S., in France, in Italy it is the same.

Writing about the sharp strike situation in Italy, a Times reporter said recently: The Socialist Party supported the strike, the attitude of the Community Party is not yet known. Imagine that. Their attitude was not known! They were busy working out whether it suited them to support a strike which the Socialist Party had endorsed. That is Stalinism today. And that is why these great events in northern Italy have such little repercussions either in Italy, in the countries around Italy, or in the U. S.

WHEN THERE WAS A CHOICE

In the old days of 1919-23 at least the workers could choose between reformist or revolutionary leadership. The Socialist Party was for the maintenance of the capitalist system. The Communist Party was for its overthrow. The Socialists met a political or an industrial crisis with their reformist policy. The Communist Party came before the workers with a revolutionary policy adapted to the stage of development of the crisis. But all

militant workers, at home and abroad, understood clearly their revolutionary goal and revolutionary methods. With such events as have taken place in northern Italy, the Communist Parties of the old days, inside and outside of Italy, would have used all their resources to bring them to the notice of the workers of the world.

Today, however, the workers move into large-scale action and the political world as well as the workers wonders whether the CP is for or against them. The masses of the workers can never be clear where this party is leading them.

The Socialist Parties continue their reformist policies. When the workers break away from them and look to the so-called revolutionary party, the Stalinists welcome them with propaganda about Marx, Engel, Lenin and Stalin. They organize these workers, they penetrate into their unions and control them with a tight hand; they inject them with anti-Trotskyism, i.e., hostility to the genuine revolutionaries.

But where exactly are they themselves leading the workers? Nowhere. They are concerned with one thing—how to exploit the situation for the benefit of Stalinist Russia. In that essence of the situation not only in Italy but in Western Europe as a whole. Not only do the Stalinists fail to lead, they actively repress the revolutionary instincts of the masses. The day that the European workers understand their role not only capitalism but Stalinism as well is doomed.

Spanish Socialist Tells of Escape from Stalinist Bands

The following letter received from abroad was written by a veteran of the Spanish revolutionary socialist movement and one of the leaders of the revolutionary working class of Catalonia during the Spanish Civil War. As an anti-Stalinist, his life was in constant danger. We think his letter will be of interest to our readers as a picture of the manner in which the Stalinists hound revolutionaries who oppose their anti-working class, anti-socialist practices.

Since 1936, when the Spanish War began, I do not know exactly how many times I have escaped from the Stalinist attempts at assassination. You know that in 1939 and 1940 the repression against the Communists was very strong in France. It was necessary that the militants of the POU (a centrist party containing many revolutionaries) and among them I, as one of the most well known, disappear. We were denounced to the police by the Stalinists themselves as "dangerous communists." I went before the Military Tribunal, which condemned me as an "agent of the Third International." I went through various prisons of France until, finally, I arrived at the Military Prison of Bergerac. There, all of the prisoners, 91, were Communists and included were five members of the Central Committee of the French Communist Party. (I should add that I was transported to the military prison of Bergerac as a "dangerous Communist" as a consequence of a rebellion that had taken place in the prison where I was before owing to the food.) Nothing to do but enter Bergerac, this reunion of the Communist Committee. The agreement was decisive: it was absolutely prohibited that anyone talk with me, a "counter-

revolutionary Trotskyite." As it was toward the end of 1943, the prison guards and the gendarmes had already a good relationship with the Communists. All of them by agreement arranged to make my life impossible. To make me hated by the guards and gendarmes, the Communists explained that I was "anti-patriotic."

Through the mediation of the guards and gendarmes, the Communists made an agreement with the "Maquis" to flee together. One night, the 31st of July, 1944, at 11, the door of the "chamber" where I was with fourteen other Communists was opened. They called me by name. I went out and even in the doorway they began to strike me with the butts of rifles and pistols. It was the Maquis who were in the prison. They shut me up alone in a cell. The Germans were still in the city and they prepared the escape with great precautions while I was locked up. At two in the morning they left all together, leaving me locked up. In the morning the Germans arrived and questioned me. I "knew nothing from nothing." Thus I stayed a few more days in prison.

The Communists had been freed by 25 Maquisards, including ten Spaniards. Among the Communists there were also ten Spaniards. En route, the ten Maquisards struck up conversation with the ten Spanish Communists. The latter explained that they had me left locked in the prison, but that they were desirous of having me taken to the Maquis to shoot me. They thought that the ten Spanish maquisards were Communists. But it chanced that none of them was Communist, but all were anarchists who knew me from before.

On arriving at "their Maquis" the anarchist Maquisards had a change of feeling. All were in accord and decided to liberate me immediately. As the Maquis they were in were all Communist, they decided to desert and to go in search of the other Spanish Maquis in which there were no Communists. After a few days of traveling through the mountains, they came upon a Maquis composed only of anarchists and some POU-ists. They traced what had happened to me. They made it a point of honor to free me. The day before the Germans had abandoned Bergerac and the Communists were masters of the city. They had agreed to shoot me. When I least thought of liberation, an automobile containing six anarchist comrades presented itself at the prison; they were armed with machine guns. They put me at liberty.

But when I was already in the automobile ready to leave, several roads filled up with Communists armed to the teeth, to prevent my leaving, for I was "condemned to die as a traitor." The one who was leader of the anarchists, like a good Spanish anarchist, had enough practice in similar cases, took account of the situation. Then he addressed himself to the leader of the Stalinists and told him that those who were taking me were also Spanish Communists who were going to execute me. In spite of this, all of us were taken to the Commissariat of Police, where the anarchist was so able that he convinced them that they were Stalinists and they permitted us to leave. To throw off the Stalinists for a few weeks everyone believed me dead. Thus I could escape with my life once more.—A.

New ABC of Marxism Out

The ABC of Marxism by Hal Draper is a popular and complete booklet on the fundamentals of Marxism. It is the latest addition to a series of basic publications now being issued by the Workers Party. Originally printed in 1939 and reprinted in 1941 it is being re-issued this week in a third printing because of the widespread demand for it.

The first chapter, entitled "The World We Live In," outlines the Marxist approach to capitalist society. "We do not seek merely to understand what is what, like a god-like philosopher who is above the battle in his ivory tower. Marxism is nothing if not a combination of theory and practice." This sets the keynote for the entire book and prepares the way for the succeeding chapters.

Chapter Two deals with the development of society from primitive communism through capitalism. Following this, "Historical Materialism" explains the underlying forces that cause change, describing the interrelation between the economic structure of society and the ideological superstructure.

Chapter Four, "The Economics of Capitalism" is a lucid exposition of the labor theory of value, rate of profit, falling rate of profit and the causes of capitalist crises.

Chapters Six through Nine explain the political rule of the capitalist class by means of the modern State and the need for the working class to establish its own state. This leads to a discussion of "The Road to Socialism": the road of the reformers or the road of the revolutionists.

The ABC of Marxism is indispensable as an outline text either for class or individual study. It answers the pressing need for a simple analysis and presentation of Marxism. Order copies from the Workers Party, 114 W. 14th St., New York 11, N. Y. 40 cents a copy.

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WORLD POLITICS

Reviewing Kravchenko's "I Choose Freedom"

A Powerful Indictment of Stalinism

I CHOSE FREEDOM by Victor Kravchenko, Publisher Charles Scribner's Sons. Price \$3.50.

Reviewed by SUSAN GREEN

Every person in whom capitalism has not dried up the fountain of human feelings cursed the Nazis from the very depths of his soul. In the same way one hates the Stalinist gang as one reads this detailed record of Stalinist barbarism. Victor Kravchenko's book is additional proof that Hitler learned his first lessons in Stalin's school, making a few improvements compatible with a country of more advanced technology.

Those who have consistently followed the advance of the Stalinist counter-revolution and the crystallization of the new exploiting class of bureaucrats will not learn any basic political truths from "I Choose Freedom." The annihilation of the old Bolsheviks, the false amalgams, the mass purges, are common knowledge. The disappearance of the last shred of workers' control and workers' democracy, the use of slave labor, the thin line which separates slave labor from the rest of labor, the gulf between the poverty of the masses and the well-being of the ruling bureaucrats, all these features of Stalinism have not been concealed even by the "iron curtain."

FORCED COLLECTIVIZATION

Kravchenko shows us how forced collectivization looked to the peasant whose cow, pig and broken plow made him a dangerous kulak to be liquidated by the government. To the Stalinist policy-makers the peasants who resisted collectivization were no obstacles. They had no human value to the commissars who tortured them into submission or exiled them to a living death. Thereafter these commissars boasted of one hundred per cent collectivization. And what a success that was!

The Kremlin-created famine which resulted needs a Dante to describe it, though Kravchenko does pretty well. He does not forget to compare the heaps of corpses with the heaps of food available to Russia's new ruling class, to recall for us that butter was being exported out of Russia to show how prosperous this Russia was, when actually thousands upon thousands of children perished for lack of milk, to record that while peasants could get no grain to eat, the grain they had harvested was stocked as reserves in government granaries.

Of all the vile effects of the police system which honey-combs every apartment house, every street, every factory, the vilest is what it does to the human feelings of friendship and loyalty. In most cases, the urge to protect one's own skin from the purge

surmounts all other considerations. Should the NKVD become "interested" in an individual, he becomes at once a social leper, turned away by his erstwhile friends.

How does the intricate spy system seep into all the crevices of life? Here is a father purged and exiled to a labor camp. His frantic family knows nothing about him, whether he is alive or dead, or where he is incarcerated. The NKVD keeps the family on tenterhooks. There may be a grown daughter that the NKVD wants to press into the spy system, or maybe the wife, or perhaps both. Finally a visit is arranged and the loved ones see with their own eyes what a human wreck has become of their husband or father. In return for a measure of mercy, the daughter or wife, or both, do anything asked of them.

THE AUTHOR'S BACKGROUND

Who is Victor Kravchenko? He was sent to Washington by the Russian government as a member of the Soviet Purchasing Commission, and chose freedom on April 4, 1944, by abandoning his post, fleeing to New York, and seeking whatever protection American publicity might give against the agents of Stalin's NKVD? Kravchenko describes himself as a member of Russia's ruling class. He climbed to the topmost rungs of the bureaucratic ladder, not so much by choice as from an inevitable sequence of events.

As an engineer of note and many accomplishments, he finally found himself behind a desk in the Kremlin as Chief Engineer of one of the departments under the Council of Peoples Commissars. Though the picture of Stalin under which he sat was not as large as the one under which sat his immediate superior, still there he was in the Kremlin. However, Kravchenko is one of the few who retained enough personal integrity to let his hatred and enmity for the regime dominate him. His one aim was to get out of Russia to be able to write what he knew about it. He finally maneuvered himself into a foreign appointment. "I Choose Freedom" is a personal history. He hopes to write a more political work next.

As an engineer at the head of factories and combines he had occasion to see many ramifications of Stalinism from the inside. The misrepresentation of the Stakhanovist speed-up system by the Kremlin did not take in Kravchenko. When this plague descended upon him, he was at a plant where he had been sent to increase production that had reached only thirty-five or forty per cent of the goal set. After superhuman effort he and his colleagues, despite obstruction from the NKVD, had succeeded in reaching eighty-five per cent of the goal. However, in Moscow it was de-

cidated that a bit of Stakhanovism would bring production not only to the top but over it. All the technical staff at the plant knew this was impossible.

Soon those sent by Moscow also saw the impossibility of raising production, but instead of rendering an honest report, they sought to protect themselves. The stock piles of the plant were treated as if currently produced and added to the normal production to make up the one-hundred-per-cent-plus that Moscow demanded. In spite of this fraud the "new norm" was taken as standard, the production required from the workers was increased, and since they could not produce the new norm, they suffered wage decreases. This is Stakhanovism in action.

DISILLUSIONMENT SETS IN

This incident shows, in part, the status of the workers in Russia. They are the slaves of the bureaucratic state. The "unions" are agencies of the state. Each worker has a card on which his record is kept, and is at the complete mercy of his superiors. This ties him to the factory like a serf to the soil in old Russia. Sometimes the difference between the ordinary worker and the slave laborer is twenty minutes. For if a worker is late by twenty minutes and if his excuse is not considered good enough by the factory doctor—the only excuse is sickness—then he is submitted to "trial" and is sentenced to slave labor. The slave labor camps throughout Russia include many millions of "purged" people who no longer resemble human beings, so unspeakable is the treatment they get. The NKVD hires these wretched beings to industry under contracts making wages payable to the NKVD for its own use.

There is no reason to doubt the authenticity of Kravchenko's report. He was a member of the new ruling class and was in a position to know intimately the workings of the Stalinist regime. He came from a working class family, with a revolutionary father who fought against the Czar, but without joining any political party. And with a mother whose pure and deeply religious spirit influenced the son. Kravchenko's background merged with his own disillusionment from the ideal he had seen as a young Communist immediately after the revolution. In Russia he could do nothing; outside Russia he tries to make known the gruesome facts.

Kravchenko can hardly conceal his contempt for certain American liberals, well-meaning and otherwise, who praise Russia. For Davies and his "Mission to Moscow" he has a scathing rebuke. Whitewash of the Wilkie and Wallace variety is naive and dangerous. The usual dribble seeking to

excuse the Stalin-Hitler pact can't stand up against Kravchenko's facts. The pact was not, as the Kremlin claimed after Hitler's attack on Russia, an expedient the Russians used in order to prepare themselves better against Hitler.

The Kremlin took the pact on trust, believing in Hitler. If this were not so, the propaganda machine would not have stopped grinding out anti-Nazi propaganda as completely as it did. Not only that, but there was positive pro-German propaganda, including songs of praise for the culture of the new Germany. From his position in industry, Kravchenko could see that war preparations were halted, defense works lagged, no preparations were made to meet invasion from the west. Instead industry exerted itself to fulfill the trade agreements with Hitler and supply him with the sinews of war, while the Russian masses waited for ordinary living needs and remained exposed to attack.

Of course, the complete astonishment at the Kremlin and the utter rout of the Russians when Hitler attacked, evidenced the mistake the Stalin gang had made. Then, to cover up its mistakes, it instituted a most ruthless purge against a so-called "fifth column."

IN A BLIND ALLEY

There is much more of absorbing interest in this book which remains indelibly on the reader's mind. For example, the panic in Moscow as the Germans approached; the evacuation of the rulers in their fine cars, with their fine luggage, while their household furnishings got space on the overloaded railroads. In contrast, the panic-stricken poor, confused, dazed, milled around the railroad stations, unable to get a toehold on a train, unable to get food in Moscow, left by their rulers to forage and pillage to survive. Kravchenko declares that Hitler could then have entered Moscow and taken it practically without resistance.

As to Kravchenko's political development, his book reveals that he has been "taken in" by American democracy. This is understandable. The contrast between the Stalinist police-spy system and even capitalist democracy is to him like the difference between hell and heaven. Furthermore, the absurd picture of capitalism that Stalinist "education" has given its citizens finds little justification even on a surface acquaintance with American capitalism. Perhaps Kravchenko's future political education will bring to him a truly scientific evaluation of capitalism and capitalist democracy in this period of the decline of that system, and thus lead him into the path of socialist revolution—a path now made surer since the Stalinist pitfalls are well marked.

Terrorism in Palestine

By IRVING HOWE

Palestine is in the news these days, for the bitter three-sided conflict between the Jews, Arabs and Britain has broken out into a boil of violence and terror. In past issues, LABOR ACTION has printed articles about the general political situation in Palestine, and it will continue to do so; in this article I wish to discuss only one aspect of that situation: the use of terror by the extreme nationalist wing of the Jewish community.

It is necessary to approach this matter with a certain balance, and above all with a perspective which flows from a firm socialist opposition to all imperialism. At the present moment, the world is filled with cries of anguish, righteous indignation and holy wrath because of the terrorist attack which the extreme nationalist group, Irgun Zvei Leumi, launched against the British headquarters—an attack which resulted in the death of over 50 people and the wounding of some 70 more.

How the air is rent with righteous and moral indignation! Prime Minister Atlee is "appalled" at this "terrible" act; President Truman, also noted for his social sensitivity, adds his two Missouri pennies with a statement "viewing with alarm..."

Opposed though we are to the use of individual terrorism, we socialists nonetheless do not accept as genuine the moral indignation of the heads of imperialist states. For consider: these are the men who acquiesced to the killing of millions of individuals in the imperialist war; these are the men who daily acquiesce to the continuation of imperialist domination over the entire world. Only yesterday, Atlee's government was shooting down in cold blood thousands of people in Indonesia whose sole crime was their desire for liberation from Dutch rule. Where was Atlee's moral indignation?

And where was Truman's?

Atlee is, furthermore, head of a government which has instituted a black reign of terror in Palestine, a government which has deprived that country of the right of habeas corpus. Truman is head of a nation in which recently a Negro in South Carolina had his eyes gouged out by some racially-blinded barbarian.

DOUBLE STANDARD IMPERIALIST MORALITY

These imperialist governments have an utterly shameless degree of hypocrisy. When a few imperialist satraps are knocked off by desperate anti-imperialist terrorists, they shed crocodile tears in every capital on the globe; when victims of imperialism are killed every day, not a peep of protest is heard. For they are the ones who do it!

If, then, the sight of the imperialists weeping over the Palestine terror is sickening, what then of the young Jewish terrorists themselves?

Terror is a phenomenon as old as national and imperialist oppression. It flourishes in situations of desperation. When an oppressed people sees no way out, no road open to liberation, then it turns, in a last desperate

frenzy, to individual terror as a means of opposition. Or, more accurately, tiny sections of that oppressed people turn to terror; for by its very nature terror cannot be utilized by masses or it would quickly develop into mass revolt. Terror is the work of tiny minorities, usually desperate youth or students or intellectuals who feel that the masses are in a state of torpor or that mass resistance is impossible.

Terror cannot be and never has been a substitute for mass struggle. At best it creates a momentary diversion, a momentary twinge of fear in the rulers; but the oppressors whom it strikes down are always replaced by others. If the terrorists kill one British police commissioner, there will be another to take his place.

Terror leads up a blind alley. Sooner or later the terrorists are destroyed, for they lack the protection which a mass movement might afford them. The masses, though perhaps temporarily stirred by the heroism of the terrorists, soon lapse into apathy; for they have not been involved, they have not been brought into action.

THE HEROISM OF THE JEWISH TERRORISTS

No one can help feeling a certain sense of admiration for these Jewish terrorists in Palestine. They are men of great heroism and daring; they risk their necks without flinching. The behavior in court during the recent trial of some who were detected by the British police was a model of revolutionary defiance and intransigence. And yet their policy is wrong, their politics reactionary, their heroism futile.

These terrorists of Irgun Zvei Leumi—a group much smaller than and not to be confused with the main body of Jewish resistance, the Hagana—have succumbed to the fatal error of making their struggle into an exclusively nationalist one. They are admittedly anti-Arab, ignoring the fact that the Arab masses suffer as much under British imperialist rule as do the Jewish masses, and that unity between the two would be the one sure way to drive the British out of Palestine. The terrorists are, many of them, even against organizations of Jewish workers into trade unions, for they oppose prosecution of the class struggle if it means conflict between Jewish workers and Jewish capitalists.

The result of this policy is obvious: their fanatical nationalism drives the Arab masses directly into the hands of both the reactionary Arab League and the British rulers. The Jewish terrorists, by their extreme nationalism, their refusal to cooperate with the Arab masses and their rejection of trade union unity between Jewish and Arab workers, sharpen the fatal split between Arab and Jewish masses in Palestine. And so long as that split exists, British rule in Palestine is secure.

Think, however, what a powerful anti-imperialist blow could be struck by the heroism, daring and devotion of the Jewish and Arab masses in a joint anti-imperialist bloc to drive out the foreign oppressor and substitute a democratic independent Palestine in which the rights of both majority and minority were respected. In that case, British rule would not be secure; it would be trembling for its future.

Books You Should Know...

MARTIN EDEN, by Jack London, Penguin Books reprint, New York, 1946, 346 pp. 25 cents.

Reviewed by JAMES T. FARRELL

One of the most pronounced traits of Jack London was his vigor, his energy, his sheer love of life. He regarded realism as a way of writing which permits a writer to reveal this love of living. And this trait of his is significantly embodied in his novel, *Martin Eden*.

As is commonly known, this novel has an autobiographical basis. It is the story of a young man of the working class who suddenly discovers the world of ideas and the world of art and poetry. As London has observed, *Martin Eden's* mind had long lain fallow, and because of this, *Martin* was all the more responsive, the more excited, the more eager to learn. The novel deals with *Martin Eden's* struggle to learn, and to write, and, at the same time, with his love for a bourgeois girl, Ruth Morse. As such, it involves class relationships presented on the plane of personal experiences, and bound up with a story of love.

SOCIAL-DARWINIST THEORY

London was influenced by Herbert Spencer, by Nietzsche, and by Marx. His novels are one of the reflections of the current of thought, known as Social Darwinism, which exerted such a pervasive influence in America in the latter part of the nineteenth century, and in the earlier part of this century. *Martin Eden* can be described as a novel of Social Darwinism. The hero, *Martin*, is subjected to a process of social adaptation and struggle. Motivated by his love for a girl, and his eagerness to learn and to write, he is successively exposed to disappointments, frustrations, poverty. Not only must he learn how to write, but he must even learn the simple rules of etiquette and manners.

When he first enters the bourgeois home of the Morse family, he does not know how to walk in a comfortable room, nor how to use a knife and fork. The problem of survival and with that, the problem of adaptation, are posed for him on the social plane. *Martin* is an eager, powerful and honest giant of a youth, bursting with health and vigor. Temperamentally and physically, he is admirably suited to survive. His struggle to survive; his disillusionment in love which is a consequence of the bourgeois values of his sweetheart; his experiences in trying to write for bourgeois magazines—all results in his developing a profound melancholia.

Success comes too late to be meaningful. He becomes a famous writer overnight, but he is treated like a matinee idol, and looking down on all

Most book publishing businesses have been conducted by small companies. During the last few years, the business has tended to become centralized; large financial interests have entered the field. The tendency towards centralization in publishing has, of course, a number of dangers—there is likely to be a greater standardization of taste; there will probably be an increasing subservience to Hollywood.

But there has been one more desirable result. For the first time in American history, books are being sold for 25¢. These books are within the reach of millions of people for whom the usual book was too expensive. This new availability of good books at 25¢ a copy offers great possibilities for spreading knowledge of good books.

This is especially true because of the mass distribution channels through which pocket books are available: drug stores, railroad stations, candy stores, etc.

In view of this situation, the new enlarged eight-page LABOR ACTION will begin a new feature. We will print under the heading of "Books You Should Know About" short reviews of the better reprints. We shall try to avoid two extremes: these short reviews will not have as their primary purpose formal literary criticism as practiced in literary magazines, nor will they, we hope, be mere vulgarizations palmed off as "popularizations."

Among the books we plan to discuss are: *Shone's BREAD AND WINE*; *London's MARTIN EDEN*; *Koestler's DARKNESS AT NOON*; *Dos Passos' MANHATTAN TRANSFER*; *Lewis' RABBIT*; *Foster's PASSAGE TO INDIA*; *Hasek's GOOD SOLDIER SCHWEIK*; and *Ruth Benedict's PATTERNS OF CULTURE*. All of these books are available in cheap reprint editions.

of this from the standpoint of his adopted attitude of the Nietzschean Superman, he rejects it. In the end, he quotes Swinburne, and commits suicide.

LONDON'S DUAL INSIGHTS

The insights of London in *Martin Eden* are dual in character. On the one hand, there are sound and sharply observed insights into the social aspects of class relationships and class differentiations; on the other hand, there are insights which are bound up with Nietzschean and Social Darwinian attitudes. *Martin Eden's* melancholia has the character of being derived too much from this second type of insight. In this way the element of attitudinization plays too strong a role in the motivation of his suicide. It is not a necessary suicide, and in this sense, is not deeply tragic.

However, there are many parts of this novel which still have a suggestively contemporary aspect. The problems of *Martin* as an aspiring writer are, at the same time, the problems of any eager and ambitious youth of the working class who wants to learn, to grow in his own inner life. And if seen from such a standpoint, it should become clear that *Martin Eden* is a work containing truly prophetic insights. Just as London revealed such prophetic grasp into the mechanisms of capitalism in his novel, *The Iron Heel*; here he revealed parallel insights into the nature of bourgeois society in terms of social relationships. *Martin Eden* will more than

stand comparison with many contemporary novels. It is one of important works of twentieth century American fiction.

What's So Funny About Lollipops?

The capitalist press is acting cute and coy about the fact that the price of lollipops has gone up from 1 cent per 3 to 3 for 10 cents.

Maybe we're a little sour today, but just what is so funny about this?

Lollipops are part of the things which make up the cost of living. If you have a kid, you pay for the lollipops. (Among other things.)

Later on, you may make the kids go out and work for their lollipops. But with the child labor laws and simple human feelings about sending your kids out to work before they're at least old enough to walk, there's a time in every married man's life when he has to make a note in his budget—so much for lollipops.

Now if the price of lollipops goes up, Junior comes howling for more pennies to buy them. And you give them to him. (What else can you do?)

So your cost of living goes up not only for bread, milk and meat—but also for lollipops.

And what's so funny about that, as we said, escapes us.

SP and Social Democrats in Unity Negotiations

Is Norman Thomas Going Home Again?

The Socialist Party has announced, through its organ, *The Call*, that negotiations are now under way between it and the Social Democratic Federation for an organic unification of the two organizations. In a statement unanimously adopted by the SP's National Committee, only one condition is made for such unification: that the Social Democrats agree to run independent electoral candidates in the name of their newly unified party.

There is really no political reason why the Socialist Party and Social Democratic Federation should not be united. They are both reformist and anti-revolutionary organizations; they are both ideologically or organizationally tied to the moribund Second International which serves as the agent of Anglo-American imperialism in Western Europe. In Eastern Europe elements of these movements have gone over to Stalinism. Whatever the original differences between the SP and SDF they are today entirely secondary.

The SP has consistently been moving to the right politically. Its stand towards the imperialist war was highly ambiguous, though its official leader, Norman Thomas, made statements during the war which were nothing else but outright political support to Allied imperialism. Its political spectrum included all colors from pacifist to war-monger; only one was absent: revolutionary socialism.

PLUMPING THE U. N. Evidence of the reformist social-democratic line of the SP is offered in a resolution adopted by its recent national convention and printed in *The Call* of July 22, 1946. This resolution entitled "The Road to Lasting Peace" discusses among other things the role of the United Nations Organization. Says the SP resolution:

"...certain changes in the Constitution of the United Nations are essential. At the very least the Security Council must be revised in composition and the veto power abolished. The Trusteeship and Economic Councils must be built up.

"If these things are done the UN may serve an interim use pending the creation of a better type of world government. To the working out of that better type, the UN itself must contribute..."

"So great is the power and influence of America that with reasonable hope of success she might take the initiative in proposing this program for peace..."

Now, with all the necessary moderation, we wish to say that this typical excerpt from the SP resolution is sheer nonsense and what is worse: support of imperialism.

What is the United Nations Organization? It is the trust, the holding company of the major world imperialist powers. Though serious internal conflicts exist inside of it, they are all inter-imperialist conflicts—who shall rule this oppressed people? who shall dominate that strategic area?—and neither side in these disputes represents the interests of the workers. The only "interim use" that the UN serves is as an arena and propaganda agency for imperialist powers. To say as does the SP resolution that it can serve an "interim use pending the creation of a better type of world government" towards which the "UN itself must contribute..." is ridiculous.

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lous. The working people of all countries have no interest in the preservation or "improvement" of the UN just as they had no interest in the preservation or "improvement" of the League of Nations. (Lenin called the League of Nations a "den of imperialist thieves"—but when one compares the League with the UN, one can see that this description would be just as apt for it.)

And then to look to imperialist America as a hope for proposing a "program for peace"—is this not the height of reformist delusion, the kind of nonsense one expects from such liberal magazines as *The Nation* and *The New Republic*?

Under the circumstances, it is understandable why the SP should gravitate towards the Social Democrats. The pretensions towards "leftism" which the SP once had are now long forgotten. And when it comes to real Social Democratic politics, aren't the New Leader and the Rand School much more appropriate than the SP? The wayward son is going home, back to the arms of Algernon Lee and August Classens. The marriage is appropriate; and we await the publication of the bans...

James Maxton, British ILP Leader, Dies

By BRITANNICUS

The death of James Maxton, leader of the Independent Labor Party, will be widely regretted all over Great Britain. All his life he was an enemy of capitalism and of British imperialism. He was an indefatigable orator, in the House of Commons and out, always denouncing the evils of capitalist society. For many years he enjoyed the reputation of being the finest labor speaker in Great Britain; perhaps his only rival in the country as a whole was the late David Lloyd George.

The oppressed colonials of Britain's Empire will miss him also. Every grievance, every imperialist scandal that was brought to his attention found him ready to expose it and denounce not only the individual perpetrators, but the system in general.

He opposed both World Wars. He went to jail for his anti-war sentiments and all who knew him knew that to the end he was ready to go to jail again rather than compromise on any of his principles. He was incorruptible.

He was incorruptible, but that was all he had in him of the Great Robespierre. Maxton, with his oratorical gifts, obvious sincerity and shrewdness, never became the force in British politics that he might have become. When the Labor Party began to be restless under the treacherous policies of Ramsay MacDonald and Philip Snowden, Maxton led the opposition. But he was incapable of crystallizing it into a hard revolutionary core.

In 1932 a remnant of the Independent Labor Party split away from

One word, however, to those members of the Young Peoples Socialist League who still think of themselves as revolutionary socialists. Regardless of whether the merger with the SDF actually takes place, the very fact that SP has even consented to negotiating with Social Democrats shows how hopeless it is as a possible revolutionary party. Certainly this flirtation which Norman Thomas is conducting with the New Leader crowd should be sufficient evidence that revolutionary youth must turn elsewhere.

We do not propose in this article to discuss the political differences which may or may not exist between us of the Workers Party and leftward-inclined Socialist Party youth. But we do wish to say this to them: Our party is a thoroughly democratic revolutionary socialist party; in it a wide divergence of opinion within the framework of revolutionary socialism, is accepted and encouraged. There is a welcome mat at our door for those socialists who, whatever their theoretical differences with us, are eager to build a revolutionary socialist party in this country. And there is a welcome mat at our door for those who wish to discuss with us the present situation in the SP. Certainly such discussions are long overdue.

The result was that during World War II, the young Revolutionary Communist Party section of the Fourth International surpassed the ILP both in its impact upon the national consciousness as an anti-war party and in its contacts with the masses.

The Fourth International had many bitter conflicts with Maxton. But though we retain our views as to his political policies, yet the bourgeoisie could never buy him over nor intimidate him in any way. Such men are rare and the labor movement is the poorer for his death.

One-Tenth of the Nation

By J. R. Johnson

In my last column I gave a general picture of what is taking place in the economic and social life of the South. Let us briefly summarize.

1) The South is not a democracy, as England or France, or the rest of the United States. It is not a democracy because democratic rights are legally and officially denied to substantial millions of the population.

2) The basic cause of this was and is the old cotton plantation system and the role it gave to labor, particularly Negro labor. Industry did develop in the South but the organization of the cotton plantation remained the decisive pattern in the social and political relations. The Cotton Ed Smiths, the Bilbos, the Rankins, the O'Daniels and the rest, the political representatives of the South, have represented and represent essentially the grip of the old plantation economy and social morals upon the South. They were and are fortified by great financial interests in the North, but these interests find it profitable to maintain the old Southern system in its essentials.

3) The war has brought to a head a process which was developing slowly over the years. Heavy industry has penetrated into the South. New economic interests have been created. Cotton no longer dominates.

NEW POLITICAL FORCES

Upon these new interests there are arising new social and political forces. They seek to bring the South more in harmony with the rest of the nation. For Bilbo, Rankin, Ellender, Talmadge and O'Daniel they want to substitute Southern liberals. They are ready to recognize the CIO. They want to relieve the Negroes of some of the worst pressures from which they suffer. They genuinely wish to abolish the poll tax. They are genuinely eager to pull the South out of its ignorance, its backwardness, its burden of racial prejudices. They propose to do this by the processes of capitalist democracy—the right to vote, right of free assembly, equality before the law, equality of opportunity, etc.

These liberals are not very powerful. But they have made the nation and the South aware of their ideas. Some of them are not only ready to receive the CIO. They even fraternize politically with the PAC. To sum it up: On the basis of the new industrial development there have arisen forces in the South which hope to transform it (by degrees of course and without violence) into a possible imitation of states like New York, Pennsylvania or Illinois.

What are their chances of success? In the opinion of this writer, they are doomed to mischievous failure. Capitalist democracy at its best flourished

during a certain period of the economic development of capitalism. That period may roughly be said to have lasted between 1848 and 1914. There were certain countries, however, which never had a flourishing capitalist democracy. The most remarkable of these was Czarist Russia. In Russia in 1905 you had the Czarist government, a combination of reactionary landlords, bureaucrats and great financial interests. You had also a rising industry and, based on it, a combination of capitalists and liberals who wanted desperately to transform their country into a democracy such as existed in Britain, France and the U. S. A. They could not do it. They could not do it because of the peculiar relation that existed between them and the workers. The workers were organized by large-scale industry and grouped in unions and workers parties.

LIBERALS CANNOT LEAD

They were engaged in continuous battles with the liberal capitalists themselves. Thus wherever there was a sharp social or political crisis, the capitalists and the liberals found themselves jammed between the reactionary Czarist government and the organized workers. To put it briefly, organized labor was already so strong, or potentially so strong, that the capitalists and the liberals feared them far more than they detested the reactionary rulers of Russia. The result was that the liberals could make no serious attempt to establish a capitalist democracy. It was too dangerous. In the end, the working class, in order to overthrow the reactionary Czarist regime, had to push the liberals aside and create a workers state—the state of Lenin and Trotsky.

Russia is not an isolated example. We saw only recently a similar situation in Spain. The reactionary landlord regime in Spain was stifling the country. The liberals (and the labor leaders too) wanted to get rid of it. But the best that they could do was to get rid of the monarchy—King Alfonso. Caught between the old regime and the revolutionary workers they vacillated, hesitated, fought a half-hearted civil war and were ignominiously defeated by Franco. You have a similar situation in India, in China and before World War II, in Poland. In all these backward countries the problem was and is the problem of old Russia. How to modernize the country, make it into a modern democracy and at the same time keep the workers quiet and subordinate. When Washington and Jefferson got rid of the reactionary British regime, the working class was small and could be managed. When the French revolution made modern France, the workers gave an immense amount of trouble

but they could also be managed. When Oliver Cromwell first began and two hundred years later the English liberals completed the transformation of England into a flourishing capitalist democracy, the workers were not sufficiently organized to form a serious threat to those who led the struggle for democracy. Even when Lincoln broke the power of the South over the nation, organized labor followed his leadership and did not raise violent demands of its own. But today, 1946, those days are over.

The CIO today is a power in the land. If it organizes a million new workers in the South, then those workers will feel themselves part of the great movement whose power has already terrified all the property owners from one end of the country to the other. The CIO has a political arm—the PAC. Though the labor leaders hesitate and tremble and the PAC is only a shadow of what it could really be, yet it was strong enough in the 1944 elections to draw the concentrated fire of both Republicans and Democrats. The old-line Democrats felt that they were being crowded out of their own party. Imagine a CIO which has organized the South. Add to it the organized force of the AFL. In the face of this, the liberals in the South, as they did in Russia, in Spain, and in China, in India, would forget their liberalism and rush for support to the blackest reaction.

LABOR POLITICAL ACTION

With all the obvious differences between Czarist Russia, India, China and the South the lesson still holds good. The movement to organize labor in the South must place its political confidence in unions. If liberalism and New Dealism were able to play a certain role in the United States as a whole under Roosevelt, that was due to the long tradition and conditions in the North, East and West which approximated to the tradition and conditions of Britain, France, Belgium and Holland. But the miserable backward Southern regime and a highly organized modern labor movement are like oil and water. They can't mix. The CIO's Van Bittner says that he is organizing unions—he is not mixing in politics. That is what he thinks. At any rate that is what he says. That is an illusion. Operation Dixie is no mere union movement.

History has shown that in a social regime like the South the movement by its mere existence poses fundamental questions. And the social questions in the South, even before Operation Dixie, were sharp enough. Farseeing Negroes and militant workers should realize that here more than anywhere else perhaps in the U. S., is the need for clear-cut, independent political action by labor.

We Indict Capitalist Jim Crow Rule As the Murderer in Georgia - -

(Continued from page 1)

ing the German and Japanese "beasts," who stood in the way of the Four Freedoms.

THE WOODWARD CASE

Roger Malcolm came back to the "Land of the Free and the Home of the Brave." And so did Isaac Woodward of South Carolina. Woodward, too, had been away in the army killing Germans and Japanese. He also came back to the "Four Freedoms." Like Malcolm he found his freedom. On the very day he was discharged from the army he had his eyes gouged out by a bus driver.

Just like Malcolm and Woodward, the Ferguson Brothers of Freeport, Long Island, found the Four Freedoms also. They too came back to the "Land of the Free and the Home of the Brave." And they are dead, too. Not shot or hanged or burned at the stake by German and Japanese fascists but murdered by a policeman. This did not happen in Bilbo's Mississippi or the Georgia of Talmadge but in Nassau County in Dewey's New York.

The pattern of the "American Way of Life" for Negroes is the same all over the land: North, South, East and West. Murder. The Mob. Rope and Fagot. This United States. Rapine. Intimidation. Hate. This country ruled over by Talmadge and Dewey. Truman and Taft. Bilbo of Mississippi and the Northern Bilbos. This America of huge wealth and abject poverty. Wall Street and cotton field. Gold Coast and Shanty Town. This is what Roger Malcolm, Isaac Woodward and the Ferguson brothers left and this is what they returned to. This is the way it has been for over three hundred years. This is the way it will always be.

UNLESS—

Negroes and all the oppressed determine, that if we must die we will die like men, like human beings. FIGHTING BACK. Not like stray dogs, hunted in the streets and byways by any mobster with rope, gun and torch. By any roving unformed thug, clubbing and slaying in the name of "the law."

Lamentations are of no avail. Entreaty is a broken reed. Petition and Protest? Petition whom and protest to whom? The Mob? The Government? Which Government? Surely not the government of Georgia, or Mississippi. Perhaps the Government at Washington: The "Conscience of America." But none of these will listen.

"Negroes must be kept in their place." "White Supremacy." "Negroes are inferior." "All of History and Biology for the past 6,000 years have proven that the White Race is Superior." "Slavery is the Natural Condition of the Negro." "A Negro has no Rights which a White Man is bound to Respect." This is the United

States of America. The "American Way of Life."

What do the masters of the country say about these executions "without trial." Listen to the New York Times. "Decent white people everywhere feel a heartsick sense of shame over this ugly event." This is a lie.

The "decent white people" the Times is talking about only feel a sense of embarrassment. Or some fleeting sense of fright. They only ask themselves if the Negroes will always consent to die like vermin. They worry lest the Negro toiling masses enlist the support of their own kind from among the white toilers. Even the white workers in the mob might decide some day to fight at the side of the Negroes as brothers and sisters, as common victims with identical interests. This can and might happen. Even in Georgia! Even in Mississippi!

If the "decent white people" are against these executions "without trial" why don't they do something? Why don't the rulers of the country act? They have the power. They own and control industry and the government. Why don't these "decent white people" demand, fight for and insist on SOCIAL, POLITICAL AND ECO-

NOMIC EQUALITY for the Negro people? Why don't they pass an anti-lynching bill? A Fair Employment Practices Act? Why don't they remove every insult and degradation under which Negroes live? They are liars. They profit materially, socially and politically from the degradation of the Negro, from the hatred of the little white people for the Negro.

WHO ARE THE MURDERERS?

The State of Georgia is having great difficulty in finding and identifying the murderers. The Workers Party can identify the murderers: EUGENE TALMADGE and all the Talmadges. Those in Georgia, Washington, New York and everywhere from coast to coast. The murderers are the protagonists and defenders of hate, exploitation, discrimination, disfranchisement and Jim Crow. Under this head we indict: The Government at Washington, the head and front of Jim Crow of this country. We indict the government of the State of Georgia and of New York State. We indict THE CAPITALIST RULING CLASS. We indict every Negro "Uncle Tom," every "good Negro," every Negro "who knows his place."

When will this murder, exploitation, plunder, degradation, insult and Jim Crow end? Not by the intervention of the "decent white people." These are either the masters and the rulers or the supplicants of the masters and rulers. These are either scoundrels, hypocrites and exploiters or they are quaking cowards. No, we cannot depend on these "decent people." What sense does it make for the slave to depend on the "shame" of the master class for his freedom?

There have been Negroes who understood this. There are Negroes today who understand it and who stand ready to go into action. They are not the Negro congressmen, the editors, the professional people, the politicians, businessmen or the office-holders. They are the great mass of oppressed Negroes in mine, mill, factory and the fields. These are the real oppressed, those who really feel the lash daily. They are the Malcolms, the Dorseys, the Woodwards and the Fergusons.

THE TRULY GREAT NEGROES

The truly great Negroes who led the slave rebellions understood what we are talking about. The real giants in the struggle for freedom, equality and human dignity were people such as Nat Turner, Denmark Vesey, Gabriel and Harriet Tubman. These Negroes knew that human freedom and equality are not attained through supplication, no matter to whom or to what the supplication is directed.

There are thousands of black Gabriels, Turners, Veseyes and Tubmans today. They are in the cotton fields of the South. They are in the mines, mills and factories all over the land. They are the little people of today: the oppressed, the exploited, the murdered. They are ready to struggle for their freedom and for the genuine freedom of all mankind. They only ask to be taught, organized and led. Not by sycophants, cowards, betrayers, seducers and he deputies of the capitalist master class but by brave, sincere and incorruptible men and women of their own class of workers and toilers.

It will all end when, and only when the little people, the Malcolms, the Woodwards and their kind, black and white, sit in Congress and the White House, the state legislatures, the county buildings and the City Halls. When black and white sharecroppers occupy the desks of the Bilbos and the Tafts in the Senate. When black and white steelworkers and coal miners make and enforce the laws of the nation from the capitals, the courts and the White House. When white Georgia "crackers," redeemed from race hatred, stupidity and ignorance, sit in the seat of the Talmadges and the Arnalls, clasping the hands of their Negro class brothers.

This will be the day of genuine democracy in the United States: democracy for the masses, Four Freedoms and all freedoms for the oppressed; justice, equality, peace and plenty for all the little people.

Goldman Completes First Lap of His West Coast Tour

LOS ANGELES — Comrade Albert Goldman, leader of the Socialist Workers Party Minority, who recently joined the Workers Party, completed the first lap of his West Coast tour with a very successful social-reception on Friday, July 26. Some 75 friends of the Workers Party enjoyed themselves at this social and listened with great interest to an informal talk by Goldman on "Leon Trotsky as I Knew Him." Goldman's contact with this great revolutionist during the Dewey Commission investigation and their total rejection by the commission was described in absorbing detail.

The reception in Goldman's honor climaxed an exceptionally busy week for the Los Angeles Section of the WP. On the previous Sunday, July 21, an audience of 80, including several SWP members (despite what one SWP member described as an "official boycott") heard Goldman on: "Why the SWP Minority Is Joining the Workers Party." He detailed the struggle of the Minority for the unification of the two Trotskyist organizations and described the growing Stalinist degeneration of the SWP. Comrade Hal Draper, Los Angeles organizer, also spoke at the meeting, discussing the significance of the group joining the WP.

Comrade Goldman was occupied during the week with a meeting in San Pedro, informal discussions with members and friends, as well as meetings of members on the Fourth International and its program and policies during the past few years.

Hitler and Stalin

The attorney for General Doenitz at the Nuremberg trials charged that Germany occupied Norway with "tactical" Russian approval. The Russian prosecutor denied this. May we quote from Izvestia of April 11, 1940: "Germany was forced to act in self-defense." Just to set the record straight!

E. R. McKinney

Ernest Rice McKinney, author of the article printed elsewhere in this issue dealing with the brutal lynching of four Negroes in Georgia, is the Workers Party candidate for Congress from the 22nd Congressional District (Harlem). For twenty years he has been an active revolutionary socialist and an organizer among workers.



Action. McKinney is now national secretary of the Workers Party.

Rejection of Bell Proposals Weakens Buffalo Price Rally

BUFFALO, July 25—Last week we reported how a committee composed of liberals, top union officials, Stalinists and veterans scheduled a buyers' strike and a protest demonstration against price rises. At this meeting, workers, especially those from UAW Bell Local 501, proposed at least three additions to the buyers' strike to round out a program to fight inflation: (1) wage increases to meet price increases; (2) consumer and union committees to enforce price control independently; (3) a city-wide walkout of all unions.

Except for the consumer's committees, the program was rejected. The reason advanced by the top committee was the old Stalinist argument of "we must limit our program to the buyers' strike because some consumers have succumbed to the line of the Manufacturers' Association—that wage increases bring price increases."

The chairman bureaucratically cut short the attempt of the Bell delegates and steel workers to explain that it is Big Business that is responsible for the rise in prices, and that wage increases necessary to make up for the loss in take home pay must come out of swollen profits.

They abandoned a program to win support but when the question of such support arose, they looked not to the workers who are the majority of the consumers but to the "public." They didn't call them out with the result that, instead of tens of thousands as in Detroit, barely a thousand assembled—a good half of these brought by Bell Local which had called out

the whole shop—had an auto caravan to the rally and held a parade up Main Street followed by some auto workers from other shops. The Bell workers carried posters calling for an Independent Labor Party, wage increases and consumers' committees.

The rally was originally called for Lafayette Square in the heart of the shopping district of Buffalo. The Mayor, police and the City Council refused permission to hold the rally there, however, and shunted it to Niagara Square, also banning the use of loudspeakers. The committee, by not calling out the workers and all those who would have supported them against this discrimination on the part of the Mayor, in effect, capitulated to the industrialist and business interests. It is rumored that the UAW wanted to use sound trucks but others in the committee had threatened to withdraw if the Mayor refused permission.

At the rally itself, Roy Reuther, substituting for his brother, was the main speaker. He spoke for wage increases without price increases and placed the blame for rising prices on big business and a subservient Congress. Reverend Walker received the most applause when he castigated the Democratic and Republican parties and said labor was on the march against exploitation.

The lesson is clear: if a small local like Bell could bring out 500 men, the unions could have brought out 40,000. Professionals and white collar workers would have supported this action. What was needed was a program with guts.

Heresy Invades Los Angeles SWP

The following motion was adopted: "In face of the present critical price situation, the SEC adopts the policy of:

"1. Concentration of our main attention on the re-opening of wage clauses in all union contracts, to fight for the escalator clause as the central demand . . .

"2. To propose to the labor movement that it demand emergency legislation from the City Council and the State Legislature to freeze all prices on rents and other basic commodities as of June 30, 1946, to halt and outlaw evictions and to back up these demands with work stoppages and mass demonstrations."

No. 1 is still called the "central demand," but no longer the "only" way—as the SWP had hitherto maintained—for the workers to fight price rises. No. 2 was absolutely heretical, conceding the precise point demanded by the minority, namely governmental price-fixing legislation. True, Los Angeles SWP'ers were a little timid, demanding such legislation only from

the city and state, but logically it was also a demand leading to a demand for national price legislation, that is, precisely the labor movement's demand to save OPA.

PARTY IS "SAVED"

When this piece of heresy reached San Francisco, the minority there moved the adoption of the Los Angeles formula for price-freezing legislation. On July 13, at a membership meeting, successfully appealed to, save the party from such disruption, the membership voted down the minority . . . and Los Angeles' Section Executive Committee.

Speedy steps were therefore taken to save the party nationally from this heresy . . . by the simple expedient of suppressing the news of the motion adopted by the Los Angeles section of the party. Note that the Los Angeles motion was adopted the Monday preceding July 2. Until yesterday, however, nobody outside California has had official cognizance of such a motion. When, on July 18 in a New York branch meeting, a

Call for Action on Jim-Crow Bombing

By ROBERT FERGUSON

CHICAGO, July 28.—Responding to the call for a "Conference to Combat Terrorist Bombings Against Minority Groups in Chicago," 200 delegates and visitors from Negro, union, liberal, church, neighborhood and working class political organizations came together last week at the Parkway Community House to organize against the rising tide of terrorism directed against Negro homes. Mayor Kelly's cops have permitted or been completely ineffective against 59 such attacks, mostly arson-bombings, within the past 27 months, 8 of these having occurred in the last 3 months.

Brother Montague of the Chicago CIO Council's committee against discrimination demanded that city officials obtain "one good conviction" of the criminals who have been going scot-free under the noses of the police, and promised to call immediately a meeting of all CIO unions to acquaint them with the terrible facts of the terror campaign against Negroes who have dared move out of their "Black Belt" ghettos.

All of the speakers demanded "action" from the Mayor and the police as their principal solution to the wave of bombings. The steering committee which called the conference brought in two resolutions which carried unanimously, the first of which demanded "a public statement from Mayor Kelly and Police Commissioner Prendergast guaranteeing the right of the Negro people to live safely anywhere in this city under the full protection of the legal authorities . . . that the City Law Department enter into court action to secure the complete elimination of restrictive covenants . . ."

A second resolution from the steering committee established an independent committee to investigate the reasons for the criminal negligence of the police. Although these two resolutions passed unanimously, discussion from the floor indicated that many delegates felt that they did not go far enough. One delegate said, "The Mayor and the police know all about this situation, but they're not doing anything about it." Another said, "Let's not appease the Mayor by ineffective resolutions. We should organize to throw him out and make the police our servants instead of our masters."

WORKERS PARTY RESOLUTION
Speaking for the Workers Party, delegate Bob Ferguson, Chicago organizer of the WP, presented a resolution reading in part as follows:
"Whereas, without remitting one instant from exposing police inactivity nor from efforts to educate prejudiced white persons, it is necessary to declare forthrightly that such activities ALONE are insufficient to guarantee the adequate defense of the right of Negroes to live where they please, therefore be it resolved that this Conference goes on record as assuming responsibility for guaranteeing the safety from physical terroristic attack of life and property of Negroes moving into new areas."

Further, "That to carry through this declaration, all delegates or organizations supporting this Conference pledge to urge their membership and

friends to mobilize into defense guard committees, whose work shall be so coordinated that in the event of future threats or hostile actions against the lives or property of Negroes moving into new areas, such defense guards shall be prepared to afford adequate physical defense to the intended victims; and that a sub-committee of this conference composed of one delegate from each organization, be set up and empowered fully to make such defensive preparations and to take such defensive actions whenever necessary."

Because of the fact that this resolution of the Workers Party as well as a similar one of the SWP, came up for discussion only at a late hour in the conference, and because a majority of representatives on the steering committee opposed the whole idea of defense guard committees, the two resolutions were tabled for further discussion by the membership of the organizations participating in the conference.

The distinguished political thinkers who lead the Socialist Workers Party are opposed to the slogan made famous by the General Motors strikers: "wage raises without price increases." Equally they have been opposed to the parliamentary corollary of that slogan—the demand for price-freezing legislation. They have branded the Minority led by Felix Morrow, which has supported the slogan and its parliamentary corollary, as nothing less than revisionist.

But reality has a way of penetrating even into the Socialist Workers Party. In the midst of the fierce onslaught of the SWP majority against the minority, came suddenly a very serious defection. The Los Angeles section of the party, caught up by the workers' fight for price-freezing, found it necessary to yield to it. Hence the Los Angeles SWP City Letter of July 2 announced:

"The Section Executive Committee meeting last Monday discussed the price situation and the immediate tasks of the party in the crisis.

On the motion of delegate Lydia Beidel of the Workers Party, it was unanimously agreed that the conference steering committee should be enlarged to include one representative from all organizations attending, with the idea of broadening and consolidating a genuine united front committee to carry on future work. A mass protest parade-demonstration is to be planned.

This conference marks only the beginning of joint struggle against the terror wave. In particular the unions must be drawn in fully and activated. Yet the real effectiveness of the Conference can be felt only when its leadership understands the inadequacy of its present program, which is one of relying on "pressuring" the Mayor and police into anti-vigilante action. Instead it is necessary to support the Workers Party proposals for formation of defense guard committees to give physical assistance to Negroes, who are victimized by terror.

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May-Garsson Steal is a Small Part Of War Time Profiteering Scandal

By SUSAN GREEN

The only defense that the principals in the wartime munitions scandal brought to light by the Mead investigating committee appears to have is "heart attack." First Murray Garsson, one of the Illinois munitions profiteers, runs away to Havana with a "spasmodic heart," where he nevertheless enjoys his daily swims. Then Representative Andrew J. May, Democrat from Kentucky, chairman of the important House Military Affairs Committee, the political link in the graft chain, suffers a real or convenient "heart attack" that prevents him from appearing before the Mead committee. What else is there for such people to do but try to escape responsibility for their loathsome deeds?

Murray Garsson and his brother, Dr. Henry M. Garsson, received a war contract of \$5,000,000 with an advance payment of \$1,000,000 before they had even organized a corporation to produce anything. While the ordinary workers in munitions plants were minutely investigated, apparently war contracts were handed out to anyone who knew the right people. From nothing, the Garssons organized not only their first corporation on money advanced by the government, but they built a combine of nineteen interlocking companies which received \$79,000,000 in government contracts.

In this network there was plenty of room for shifting assets and for all kinds of tricks to reap the fullest harvest from the war. The Garssons and their associates paid themselves

salaries up to \$500,000 annually, with lavish traveling expenses as well as dividends from the profits of their nineteen corporations. While workers' wages were frozen below the cost of living, while they were paying heavy taxes out of these frozen wages, war-time millionaires were born.

GREASING THEIR WAY

The expense accounts of these war profiteers tell the story of how they greased their way in Washington. There are items of \$10,000 for Murray Garsson's entertaining in Washington; of \$2,213 for gold fountain pens, pencil sets, cigarette lighters; of \$10,822 for liquor; of \$16,000 for a banquet to celebrate an "E" award wangled through Representative May. Then there was what has come to be known as "Operation Pierre." Representative May and generals and top men in the Army left the jobs for which they were being paid to join the Garssons in an extensive and expensive celebration of the wedding of a daughter at the Hotel Pierre in New York. This absenteeism cost the honored guests nothing, for even their hotel bills were paid by the generous Garssons.

However, crossing the palms of the right people cannot be done unless the would-be millionaires get an "in" to the right people. Here's where Representative-of-the-People May enters the picture. He was the "guardian angel," the political link between the aspiring Garssons and the War Department. As chairman of the House Military Affairs Committee he is powerful enough to ask officials handing out war orders to "scratch his

back" because they knew they might want him to scratch theirs.

So May used his influence to get the Garssons those \$79,000,000 in war contracts, beginning with the \$5,000,000 contract and \$1,000,000 advance. He kept these profiteers in liquid funds. He obtained an Army "E" award for a Garsson plant against the opposition of the Army Ordnance of the district, simply by telephoning Under Secretary of War Robert P. Patterson, now Secretary. The award followed, and with it more large contracts, for an "E" award was not valued for sentimental reasons but for what tidbits of war business it brought.

Representative May also did other favors for the Garssons. When Captain Joseph H. Garsson, son of Murray Garsson, was under court martial for disobeying a command, May went straight to Eisenhower to get the charge dismissed. The May touch was felt throughout young Garsson's army career. Drafted as a private, within a month he was in officers' training. Young Garsson also revealed that his Army superiors were under orders to keep him from dangerous combat duty.

HOW MUCH DID MAY GET?

These are no puny favors that May extended, and for such favors the rewards must be commensurate. Just what May took for himself may never be known. However, one dirty deal has come to light in the Mead committee. The phantom Cumberland Lumber Company was organized in May's district in Kentucky by these

very Garssons, with May as fiscal agent, and some \$46,000 went through May's hands for lumber that was never delivered. Of course, all parties concerned deny "with vehemence." It remains to be seen how May will explain this non-existing lumber transaction if and when he testifies before the Mead committee. At any rate there is a record of at least one telephone conversation with the Washington agent of the Garssons in which May demanded his "cut."

Though the Garsson-May scandal produced a front-page furor, it is really small potatoes. For here is involved only \$79,000,000 of contracts out of a total expenditure for war materials of somewhere around \$325,000,000,000. Two-thirds of all the just-est war contracts went to one hundred of America's leading corporations, not to upstarts like the Garssons. Big business had its fists in the fleshpots of war. How far is the Mead committee willing to go in exposing the pillars of American industry—as well as more of its own political brethren?

Here the intricacies of smelly politics come in. Senator Mead will be running for Governor in New York State this fall against Governor Dewey, of crime-busting fame. A little war graft exposure by Mead will serve him well as campaign material. But there is something more definite.

A POLITICAL SCANDAL

Wayne Johnson, attorney for the Garssons, is active in New York democratic Party politics—and has been opposed to Mead for Governor. In fact, Johnson, former assistant treasurer of the Democratic National Committee and manager of O'Dwyer's successful campaign for New York City mayor, is reported to be a potential candidate for Governor on the Democratic ticket.

Is this perhaps why the small-fry Garssons were chosen—so that discredit might fall on a political opponent? And is this as far as Mead cares to go in exposing war contract scandals? At any rate, the Republican Party members of the Mead War Investigating Committee want to push on, feeling that the more scandals are exposed the more will the Democratic Party suffer—and forgetting that the people may remember such post-World War I scandals as Teapot Dome under the wings of Republican "guardian angels."

In the meantime the Democratic Party is running this same Andrew J. May for re-election in the primary in his Kentucky district on August 3 with no opposition—just as if nothing at all had happened. Again this same Andrew J. May is permitted to remain as chairman of the House Military Affairs Committee—as if nothing had happened—and as such is engaged in no less important business for humanity than legislation on atomic energy!

Taken for a Ride Again!



Come to Think of it - Get Ahead With a Letterhead

By HAL DRAPER

My friend Paperhead Pete, who is usually good for an argument, has an altogether different slant on the scandal over Congressman May and the Garsson profiteers.

Take Harry Garsson. This is what Pete says. He starts with nothing but a corporation title and winds up with 78 million dollars' profit from fat war contracts. So what? So it proves you don't even need a shoestring in this land of opportunity. Get Ahead With a Letterhead.

Haven't we enterprising Americans always admired the poor boy who starts with nothing but his pluck, borrows a wad from the kind-hearted old banker, gets to meet the right people by saving all their daughters from runaway horses and then is put on the road to fame and fortune?

What's come over us? Paperhead Pete wants to know. This Garsson chap does 4 Heratid Alger, and instead of applauding his pluck we call it a lot of gall. He gets the wad from the kind old man. And just because said kind old man is Uncle Sam and the wad is advance payment by the government on an upholstered contract for shells to a company that hardly exists, do we admire Garsson as a captain of industry with IMAGINATION? No, he's cussed as a profiteer!

How did old man Rockefeller get his start? How did Astor and Morgan and Mellon and the other great fortunes get up in the world? Maybe

you think it was by being goody-goody and thrifty and industrious and giving some sucker an even break.

No, sir, the American System is at stake in this affair. Do YOU want to be deprived of your INALIENABLE RIGHT to run a letterhead into a few million dollars?

What some mush-heads don't understand, says Pete, is that this here great American System of ours is the profit system, and just see what it's done for us. A locomotive burns coal, and a ship burns oil and a horse burns hay, and this great profit system of ours runs on profit. It isn't geared to operate on sentiment or morals, and you couldn't run Ford's belt line according to the sermon on the Mount, could you now?

What's efficiency anyhow? It means getting something done the easiest way you can. And what's an efficient profit system? Making profit the easiest way you can. That's what this great American efficiency does for you. By gosh, Garsson was in line with all the traditions of American business and Congress ought to strike a medal for him.

Now don't hand me the guff—says Pete before I can get a word in edgewise—about this bird making blood-money while the boys were dying in the foxholes. Sure, politicians made speeches about the foxholes while they were raking in the dough-re-me. When you elect a guy to be congressman, you expect him to act like a congressman, don't you? ?

Look, suppose you manufactured soap. You wouldn't put out a bill-board, would you, that said: "Use Atomic Soap—It's just about as good as sixteen other brands," or "Atomic Soap Floats Because It's 50 Per Cent Water Already." WOULD YOU? Heck no, that's not business, there's no percentage in it. You've got to be a good liar. That's what made our great advertising industry.

So when fellows went out on strike, they put the needle on the record about the boys in the foxholes and the war effort and all out for patriotism. Why get indignant about that? Anyone who believed that hooey must have been so dumb that if they didn't get it in the neck one way they'd get it another way anyhow.

And besides, what were the boys in the foxholes dying for if not for our Great American System? They were fighting for your right and my right and Garsson's right to make a million by rooking the suckers. Under this wonderful profit system, we all get ahead by doing the other fellow out of something. The boys over there ought to be damn glad that Garsson did them out of 78 million dollars because that assures their opportunity to come back here and do somebody else out of a couple of bucks. Opportunity—that's America all over. Ain't it wonderful?

Come to think of it, says Pete, have you got a two-spot till payday?

Murray Pulls Back on Wage Demands - -

(Continued from page 1)

8 per cent on one third of shoe output, and of six to eight cents a ton on coal. Since then there have been added increases, the latest being an 11 per cent rise in the price of shirts, shorts and pajamas with OPA officials admitting that these were only "fore-runners of substantially greater increases the OPA would be required to authorize." (New York Times, July 30)

So great a fraud is the bill, that not even those most gifted in deception dare pretend that it constitutes any kind of price control measure. The capitalist press speaks freely of it as fake. OPA officials content themselves with saying that they will do their best which, according to past performances, means that they will regularly allow price boosts.

And this, in our opinion, represents a setback for labor in a double sense. In the first place, it is a setback because rising prices will cut more deeply into income and living standards. In the second place, because labor's

leaders are retreating although labor is capable of holding prices in line and hurling them back. It is for that reason that we say Murray and Reuther have pushed us back. Having announced that they would seek higher wages to offset the price jump, they have now dropped that plan for some gibberish about "stabilizing the dollar."

THE NEW SALIENT

The price demonstrations and buyers' senses proved that labor and consumer action could retard the upward swing of prices. A buyers strike is certainly not the most effective kind of action, yet it has been already proved that even this limited form of action can bring results, as we reported last week in an article by David Coolidge. Popular price control committees, united labor action, a campaign on wages—these are the measures by which we can defend our interests against those of the profiteers.

Less than two weeks have elapsed since the CIO Executive Board announced its price program. This program was presumably built around the central idea that wage increases had to be granted. We did not like the way in which the CIO Board proposed to get these wage increases, and criticized it sharply in last week's LABOR ACTION and in a long editorial that appears on page 4 of this issue. Now, however, Murray has dropped the scheme altogether. According to newspaper reports, the UAW leaders feel that a new wage demand would set an inflationary spiral into motion. Read that again, because it is truly unbelievable—especially so, coming as it does from the men in the UAW who proved beyond any argument that General Motors could grant wage increases without increasing prices.

One UAW leader is reported to have said that "We want to be sure that there are still one hundred cents to the dollar." And this is presumably going to be the basic policy proposed to the International Executive Board of the UAW when it meets on August 5. A laudable scheme, but how does Reuther or Murray propose to make that generality meaningful in terms

of pay envelopes big enough to count in buying things. So far, we know only that the campaign to raise wages has been dropped, and that the UAW will evidently continue to advocate buyers strikes.

We are therefore driven to the conclusion that Reuther is backing further and further away from the GM program which he was instrumental in developing for the General Motors. The GM Program had contained a basic element of labor's struggle against inflated prices and for a decent standard of living: WAGE INCREASES WITHOUT PRICE INCREASES.

SITUATION DEMANDS ACTION

The fight on prices cannot be waged from a single direction. It demands a variety of action in which labor and consumers cooperate on different levels of activity. One of these levels is the demand for higher wages to meet the increased cost of goods. Another is popular action organized by committees composed of labor's representatives and housewives to hold prices in check in the neighborhoods. Another is independent political action, a Labor Party, which will combine political action with economic action to wage our battle on prices as on other issues. Of this there is virtually none in Murray's and Reuther's program—none at all in Murray's, and a little bit in Reuther's as it pertains to popular price control action.

The situation grows more severe every day. The CIO Executive Board, a body representing millions of organized, militant workers waited weeks to meet. When it met, it devised a program consisting of a few weak, but unobjectionable points, and a central point on wage increases that was very badly stated — and then dropped. Two more weeks have passed and we've heard of no important proposals from the men who are delegated by our unions to represent us. Reuther was mandated by his union to ask the CIO Board to call a conference of all the unions, AFL, Brotherhoods and independent. We doubt that it even came before the Board. In any case, we know that nothing was done about it, and that

Reuther is doing little to promote the idea. Time is passing; prices are rising; what are Murray and Reuther waiting for?

We have the right to speak to Murray and Reuther this way. They are men who represent labor. We expect chicanery, double dealing, fraud from Truman and Congress. From the heads of our unions, especially of the CIO unions, we have the right to demand a consistent militancy in the leadership of the masses.

We have the right to demand of our leaders the same kind of aggressiveness and firmness as the capitalist get from their representatives. For example, the meat packers last week warned Truman and Congress that if meat controls were restored there would again be a meat shortage. There's a lot could be written about that in exposing the operations of this decrepit, bankrupt system of private enterprise: fabricated shortages to keep prices and profits high. For the moment we deal with it from another angle: how the representatives of the packing industry speak in defense of their anti-social interests. Why can't Murray and Reuther who have millions upon millions behind them, not only in labor's ranks but outside them, speak in the same tone? Why do they not warn Truman and Congress (yes, and the meat packers, the auto and clothing manufacturers): "DOWN prices, or we strike!" What is wrong with that kind of language for a labor leader? Isn't that the way labor leaders ought to speak?

We have been pushed back, but not routed. The strength is still with us, and will remain with us. Prices are out of control, but they can be brought into control by action of the people: by a unified union campaign to offset price increases with wage increases; by popular price control committees; by organizing an Independent Labor Party and engaging in vigorous political class action which will win the support of the great mass of people.

Report on French Situation

By ROBERT CHARLES
Special to Labor Action

PARIS, July 24—I want to write to you about the French situation since the elections.

You know the results of the June elections. Since then, the great question in France has been the question of a rise in wages asked by the Confédération Générale du Travail (French trade union movement). Several meetings have been organized by the CGT to obtain this 25 per cent raise in wages. The Bidault government has refused. There have been several strikes already in the departments far from the "Bonzes" (CGT labor bureaucrats).

The French Communist Party is playing a dangerous game. It supported, at first, the CGT demands,

but it consented to form a government with Bidault and the MRP (right wing de Gaulist party), who oppose the CGT demands. Today the government is to take its decision—probably it will give a smaller increase under a complicated system.

A meeting of CGT, CGA (peasant organizations) and bosses agreed to a 25 per cent raise, but a raise supported by the government through subsidies to industry. The MRP Finance Minister has refused this proposal, which would mean a rise in prices, a rise in taxes and maybe another devaluation of the franc (now valued at 120 to the dollar).

The French Communist Party has shown that its first object is to continue its control over the ministries of production (Industrial Production, Labor and Air). It will accept, with embarrassment, Bidault's proposal

and try to explain it away. Will it continue to push the CGT on, or will the CGT—which the Communist Party controls—continue its present action through inoffensive methods (meetings, etc.), perhaps some strikes, brief and confined in scope, until the next elections, when the French Communist Party will strongly attack the MRP and Bidault for their anti-labor policy? This is the policy that the Stalinists will no doubt pursue in their demagogic efforts to retain leadership over the French working class.

Anti-Labor Hoodlums Set Fire to SWP Hall

DETROIT—Aronists set fire to the headquarters of the Socialist Workers Party on Thursday, July 25, at about 9:30 p.m., forcing about 85 people attending a public meeting to flee hurriedly from the hall. The perpetrators of the crime, seen running from the doorway by eye-witnesses, deliberately poured gasoline on the stairways and then started the blaze, which spread rapidly and suddenly. This trap might have seriously endangered the lives of all but luckily those who planned the fire attack overlooked the emergency exit, which proved the path to safety. No one was injured but the damage to the offices was severe.

Arthur Burch, organizer of the SWP, attributed the attack to a gang of fascists and anti-labor vigilantes. Ben Hall, organizer of the Workers

Party, Detroit Branch, in a public statement said:

"The attack on the headquarters of the SWP is an attack against the entire labor movement. This is not the first violent offense in recent months against militants in the labor movement. Several members of Briggs Local 212 were seriously injured some months ago after terroristic beatings. The repetition of this terror should prove that it is not an isolated or accidental occurrence but that it is the handiwork of fascist thugs or similar anti-labor elements. In solidarity with the SWP, we of the Workers Party call upon the labor movement to take warning from these attacks and to form Labor Defense Guards to protect all the organizations of the labor movement against fascist violence."

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