

Tennessee Labor Defends Unions In State March

By CHARLES KENT

NASHVILLE, Feb. 21—An impressive throng of 2,500 AFL, CIO, Railway Brotherhood and independent union members marched upon the Tennessee State Capitol at Nashville last week to oppose the passage of a bill by the Legislature which would outlaw all forms of union security. This was probably the most impressive demonstration of the growing unity between all sections of Southern labor ever seen.

This huge crowd of peaceful but determined workers overflowed the House chambers, where a public hearing was being conducted on the so-called anti-closed shop bill. Members of the Senate and House Labor Committees conducting the hearing had to elbow their way through crowded hallways and entrances in order to reach their seats on the House floor. They and other capital hangers-on had watched with amazement the eight-block-long parade of workers which had marched up the hill to the Capitol.

The sheer weight of the demonstration evidently frightened the proponents of the measure—the Christian-American Association and the Tennessee Business Association—for none of their highly paid stooges and kept legislators appeared at the hearing to testify for the bill. Earlier in the legislative session they had succeeded in pushing through the Legislature two other anti-labor bills. One of these forbade the payment of unemployment benefits to strikers; the other makes unions responsible for strike damage. Similar bills are being pushed in all Southern Legislatures.

Eight representatives of labor and one Catholic priest spoke against the

bill. They gave the usual trade union answers to the arguments against the closed shop and were vociferously applauded by the assembled workers.

The demonstration had its effect upon the House committee, which voted to table the bill, but the reactionary Senate committee reported it to its parent body, which promptly and overwhelmingly passed it.

The reaction of the state's trade union leadership is that of acceptance of defeat without a fight. A demand from many advanced sections of the labor movement for a one-day protest strike is greeted with horror. Fear of "public opinion" and of the bosses will prevent them from taking decisive action. One of the worst of the lot, Lev Loring, chairman of the Memphis AFL Central Trades Council, spent a great deal of space in the newspapers condemning the CIO for causing such legislation. It is to be pointed out, however, that Loring is owned, lock, stock and barrel, by Boss Crump's political machine, which is secretly supporting the legislation.

Another progressive element noted at the hearing was the joint participation of both Negro and white workers. Jim Crow rules were ignored by the workers, intent upon preserving their unions. Black and white, male and female, were jammed together in a manner that under ordinary circumstances would have caused a riot. This gave the social implications almost equal importance with the economic and political aspects of the event. It demonstrated again that the class interests of the Southern worker can overshadow and engulf the racial antagonisms that have been operating to his detriment for generations.

N.Y. Court Upholds Jim Crow 'Covenant'

A court decision upholding a covenant restricting the sale of real estate to "Caucasians" has been obtained by real estate interests in St. Albans, Queens, within New York City's limits.

Supreme Court Justice Jacob H. Livingston, in affirming the legality of this manifestation of Jim Crow in New York, granted an injunction forbidding the sale of a Queens house to Samuel Richardson, a Negro owner of a chain of stores in Washington.

Since all federal, state and local laws providing for residential racial segregation have been declared unconstitutional by the United States Supreme Court, the method of restrictive covenants has been widely used to force Negroes into their crowded, unhealthy and expensive ghettos. These covenants are contracts into which real estate owners of a given neighborhood enter in order to regulate future disposition of their property. The signatories agree not to sell or lease buildings to specified racial or national groups; usually, these covenants are specifically directed against Negroes, though terms like "Orientals," "Mexicans," "South Europeans," "Jews," or "Balkan races" are often also used.

Naturally, restrictive covenants could not be effective unless they had the legal backing of court decisions. In the Corrigan v. Buckley case of 1926, the U. S. Supreme Court held that restrictive covenants do not constitute violations of the Constitution or of the Fourteenth Amendment. Since then, however, courts in different states have handed down a variety of decisions, and the legal status of restrictive covenants remains ambiguous. For this reason, the decision to appeal the present case is of great significance and should be watched as a test of the extent to which the courts dare go in this flagrant violation of the most elementary democratic rights of racial minorities.

Among the organizations which have shown an active and sympathetic interest in the appeal of this case are the New York CIO, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and the American Jewish Congress.

LABOR ACTION

MARCH 3, 1947

A PAPER IN THE INTERESTS OF LABOR

FIVE CENTS

Senators Plan Scheme To Knife Rent Control!

Labor, Students Support Buffalo Teachers Strike

FEBRUARY 25—Buffalo schools remained almost entirely closed today as the teachers' strike entered its second day. Less than 500 of the city's 2,968 teachers and less than 10,000 of the city's 72,000 school children were in school today. Striking teachers said they would remain out, in their fight for a decent wage, for the rest of the year if their demands were not granted. (See edit., p. 3)

Acting in sympathy with the teachers who are joining the strike in increasing numbers, coal drivers refused to cross teacher picket lines. With school buildings rapidly running out of coal, the few remaining classes now in session will be forced to close shortly. Milk and other cafeteria supplies have been held up.

Students have joined picket teachers in picketing despite the bitter cold. At Lafayette High School, students ran through the rooms checking such notices on blackboards as "Good for strike teachers," "Give teachers a raise," and "We don't want scabs."

Raymond J. Ast, president of the Buffalo Teachers Federation, hit public officials who are trying to duck the blame for the situation and declared that the teachers were waging a "battle to save free public education." With Governor Dewey expected to announce his educational proposals tomorrow, union officials said, "We are not pinning our hopes on the Governor's plan. If it meets our salary demands we will accept it; otherwise we will continue on the picket line."

Elementary teachers now receive a start at \$1,775 a year and reach \$2,575 after eight years. High school teachers go from \$2,175 a year to \$2,975. The teachers are asking for increases totalling \$1,025 plus a \$500 cost of living bonus. Under the union plan, elementary school teachers would start at \$2,400 and go to \$3,600; high school teachers would start at \$2,800 and go to \$4,000.

BUFFALO—On Monday, February 24, more than 3,000 of Buffalo's approximately 3,500 school teachers went on strike for higher pay. Striking members of the Buffalo Teachers Federation, who called the strike, Local 755-CIO, Locals 39 and 377-AFL, successfully picketed school

buildings despite the heavy snow. On the first day of the strike, School Superintendent Robert T. Bapst rounded up a few hundred strike-breaking teachers and assigned them to Lafayette High School and Technical High School in an attempt to keep these two schools open. However, due to the militancy and solidarity of the teachers and the sympathy shown by the students, by 10:20 a.m. every high school and the overwhelming majority of elementary public schools were closed down.

Despite the lack of planning and general disorganization that existed in the teachers' groups prior to the strike, the determined teachers were able to push the leaderships of their various organizations to carry out the strike threat. President Raymond J. Ast of the Buffalo Teachers Federation stated that the teachers "would absent themselves from the schools until our salary demands are satisfactorily met. More and more teachers are solidifying this stand for a living wage...No plan has yet been offered to the teachers. Until such a time as something definite is offered there is no point in calling the Council of Delegates of the BTF to meet."

At Public School 74, where an attempt was made to staff it with scab teachers, many of the children listened to explanations from the pickets. "Would your daddy cross a picket line?" "Despite threats from the scab principal, who stood in the doorway ordering the children past the picket line, many of them did not go into the school."

The Buffalo teachers are setting the pace for the rest of the underpaid teachers in the country. And it is the Buffalo teachers who are learning the greatest lessons in the strike. They are learning something about the capitalist press when they read the vicious attacks in The Buffalo Evening News. They are learning something about the labor movement when they see the AFL truck-drivers refusing to deliver milk to the school cafeterias. And they are learning these lessons in the only classroom in the world where it is taught—the picket line.

They are now speculating as to whether other teachers in the

state will follow them in strike action. (See last week's LABOR ACTION for a complete survey of the plight of the teachers and the state of education in New York State and the country generally.)

Rising Prices Show Need of Pay Boost

Prices are going up!

They are going up despite all the ballyhoo spread by the capitalist press when price control was wrecked. You may remember what they said then: that if price control dropped, that mysterious thing they call "the normal workings of free economy" would bring about a reduction of prices.

Well, the "free economy" has been working normally all right—that is, it's been snafu for the people—and so far there's been no significant price decline. On the contrary, there's a sharp price increase recently.

For instance, that staple food, pork, has been climbing to new dizzy heights: a dollar a pound. Hog prices on the Chicago market passed the \$29 a hundredweight level, beating the high mark set when the OPA was junked. All other meats are going up in price, too.

Wheat is now selling for \$2.00 a bushel and is still climbing. Butter has gone up 15 cents a pound since January 22. In New York City, prices are running between 80 and 85 cents for a pound of butter in grocery stores and about 77 cents a pound in self-service stores.

On beef, retail prices stood at about 80 cents a pound. (Incidentally, the workings of the capitalist system are glaringly seen when it is noticed that this same beef sells wholesale for from 39 to 42 cents a pound. Once all the profiteers and middlemen get their cut, the price of the meat has doubled.) The price tendency was general, ranging from food to clothing to furniture. The Federal Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that prices were just slightly below the all-time peak of last November 19.

All of these facts—taken together with the preparations to knife rent control and raise rents—provide the clinching proof of the urgency and validity of the claims now being made by many unions for increased wages.

The cost of living has gone up and is continuing to go up. Workers are finding it increasingly difficult to live. That means one thing: we need higher wages. That means a policy of militant struggle for these wage demands and not polite conferences and statements. The unions must prepare now to enforce their demands with something more than mere words.

Presents WP Housing Plan

Pro-Landlord California Committee Cuts Off Spokesman

OAKLAND, Feb. 19—A representative of the Workers Party appeared yesterday before the Joint Legislative Committee on Housing to give testimony on the housing shortage and to present the Workers Party program for solving the housing problem in California.

The committee, headed by State Senator O'Gara of San Francisco, was set up by the current Legislature to investigate the shortage and to convince the people of California that the Legislature is concerned with doing something about it. The committee has held hearings in San Francisco and Oakland and will hold other hearings throughout the state.

Gordon Haskell, speaking for the San Francisco Bay Area Branch of the Workers Party, followed a long list of representatives of the contractors, apartment house owners and others, headed by the famous capitalist, Henry J. Kaiser, on the witness stand. All of these men representing the interests of the capitalists and rent gougers advocated the lifting of rent ceilings and opposed government building of low-rent

Rent control is being killed. Not by a forthright thrust but by hacking blows which leave the torso bleeding and helpless though not quite dead yet.

Though elected by the votes of the very people whose rent they are now preparing to raise, the wretched agents of big business in the Senate are too cowardly to pass a bill which would abolish rent control outright and give the landlords the field day for which they have been preparing so long. They are, however, sneaking through legislation which will come to the same thing in the end.

The subcommittee of the Senate Banking Committee, which has been preparing legislation on rent control, has voted to

boost rents 10 per cent above the levels of December 31, 1946. This means that these Senators have voted a pay cut for every American family.

This subcommittee further recommended:

• That rent control be retained until December 31, 1947, but that, in the words of the United Press dispatch, "rent control (be removed) from OPA's jurisdiction and leave enforcement of rent ceilings to the courts."

This is a farce. To kill the one agency which has done even a little to keep rent ceilings—the OPA—no matter how ineffectively it has done it, and to hand rent control to some other unspecified agency, means to invite landlords to violate ceilings. And to leave enforcement to the courts means that tenants will have to engage in lengthy, wearisome and expensive litigation in order to TRY to get chiseling landlords to enforce ceilings. In the meantime, they'd be in a jam. This provision merely gives landlords still another means by which to jack up rents.

Finally, the provision that controls be removed by December, 1947, allows landlords to run hog-wild much too soon. Controls should be maintained so long as there is a housing shortage and there will certainly still be a housing shortage by the end of this year.

DECONTROL SCHEMES

• That all new construction, newly reconditioned rooms and all hotel rooms be decontrolled.

Why should new buildings be exempted from control? Since landlords of such buildings know how eager people are to move into them, removal of controls is merely an invitation to the landlords to take the skin off tenants' backs.

• That landlords may charge tenants still more rent than the ceilings in the event both "agree that certain repairs will be made."

Can you imagine this? The landlord comes down and scratches the radiator or fixes the leak in the sink and asks for \$15 more rent a month "by mutual agreement." If not... Or if you're moving into a new apartment, then the racket is really without limits. The landlord can refuse you the apartment unless you "agree that certain repairs will be made" and then he increases the rent.

(Continued on page 7)

As Capitalist Politicians Prepare the Next Budget:

The Rich Get Another Windfall

By SUSAN GREEN

The conflicts within American capitalism today, but more especially the headaches of the Republican majority in Congress produced by these conflicts, have been on display in the current controversy over the federal budget.

Thus Senator Vandenberg, taught by his experience in international diplomacy that American imperialism must carry a mighty big stick these days, argued against a six billion cut, endorsed by the House, in President Truman's proposed \$37,500,000,000 budget. Said Vandenberg: "The war is not over for us until German and Japanese occupation is over. Any lapse in our purpose or resources in this connection will be an open invitation to Soviet Russia to fill the vacuum. Economy which produces any such results is penny wisdom and pound foolishness of the bitterest and most expensive sort."

But, while worried about the military needs of American imperialism, Vandenberg is also burdened by the campaign promises of the Republican Party to cut taxes, to reduce the \$260,000,000,000 national debt, et cetera, et cetera. Especially is he mindful of the pressure from the class upon which high taxes "tend to impede business activity"—as the saying goes. So Vandenberg, along with most other Republicans in the Senate, favors a less drastic cut than six billion from Mr. Truman's figure, the still substantial reduction of \$4,500,000,000—or else how will those taxes on the rich be reduced?

The New York Times, watchful of the over-all needs of American im-

perialism, had a neat answer to a four and a half billion cut. Taking up Senator Lodge's comment that the Congressional approach to budget-cutting is like a man wielding an axe in a dark room who might cut off his own head, the New York Times editorially comments: "Mr. Lodge omitted only one point to make his comparison complete. He might have added that in the dark a man's head could be severed by a meat-axe with a 4.5 inch handle quite as effectively as by one with a 6 inch handle."

HELP THE POOR RICH

Here you see capitalist spokesmen caught between the imperialist need for an expensive military set-up and the displeasure of capitalists in paying for some of the expense—with the politicians' eyes, of course, on election capital for themselves. Has anybody inside of Congress or in the capitalist press raised a voice throughout this budget dispute in favor of spending more money for what the people need? Yet President Truman's proposed budget, which Congress is revising, provided a really picaresque sum for public welfare. For instance, out of a \$37,500,000,000 total, the President set aside a bit over two billion for both public works and housing. This same budget provides almost as much for tax refunds mainly to you-know-whom as it does for public works and housing combined.

No Congressman got up on his high oratorical horse to demand that the tax refunds to the rich be scaled down. No Congressman who favored

reducing the overwhelming figure of \$11,300,000,000 for military expenditures wanted to spend on housing the money thus saved. Neither did anyone clamor that the three and a half billions for "international affairs" be cut down, so that there might be developed and financed a program for building homes—a program less insulating to the people who are without those homes.

To be sure, Democrats in Congress, opposed to any revision downward of Mr. Truman's figures, rose in indignant protest against taking a half billion off that small sum allocated to public works, as those who are cutting the Truman estimates propose. For instance, Senator Myers, Democrat of Pennsylvania, declared: "No, Mr. President. I cannot vote to cripple flood control, soil conservation or all the other federal programs we all know mean so much to the people of this nation." Politicians want something to boast of in their localities when they come up for re-election! But what about an adequate program for nation-wide housing? And what about a respectable figure even for such public works as flood control, valley developments, reclamation, irrigation, roads, parks and so on?

The majority in the House that voted for the six billion cut in Mr. Truman's figures are presumably willing to slice \$2,250,000,000 off the Army, Navy and War Department allotments. Of course, Secretaries Patterson, Forrestal and Marshall predicted doom if such a cut were actually made, as did the generals and the admirals. Secretary Patter-

son warned that such economies might leave the United States with a second-rate air force, might lead to abandonment of United States occupation abroad and other dire consequences for American imperialism in the international robbers' game.

Senator Taft, high in Republican prestige, is impressed but not floored by the predictions of cabinet members and military brass. He says: "Most of us [meaning Republican Senators] agree that by rigid economy and cutting out a lot of popular projects, we can cut from three and a half to four billion dollars without touching the armed forces." But anyway he believes that the military budget can take a ten per cent cut without any harm to its chances as the biggest big stick in the world arena.

NOT BINDING

In the course of the debate, from here, there and everywhere came bright ideas for reducing federal expenditures. For example, Arthur Krock, Washington editor for the New York Times, would slash two and a quarter billion off the budget by firing 800,000 federal employees and by making the rest of them work more than forty hours a week, shortening vacations and sick leaves and in other ways worsening their conditions. Krock also points out that it costs \$1,000 a month to maintain one American soldier in Japan and not much less than that in Europe. Therefore, he wants Congress to pass a universal military training

(Continued on page 7)

NEWS AND VIEWS FROM THE LABOR FRONT

Michigan "Red Scare" Aimed at Labor

DETROIT, Feb. 21—The groundwork for an all-out assault on the militants in the labor movement is being prepared by Michigan state authorities. In the name of an "anti-Communist" crusade, the most aggressive and uncompromising elements in the union movement will be singled out for the axe of Governor Sigler.

For the last month, the ex-cowboy from Nebraska who rides in the governor's saddle in Lansing has tried to create an atmosphere of public hysteria over the "Red menace." The first victims of his defense of Americanism were the young Stalinists who were supposedly undermining the American way of life by means of their American Youth for Democracy clubs in the state universities. Against the "threat" of the less than twelve members of the AYD in Michigan State College, the fearless governor forced action which resulted in placing six AYDers on "social probation" for the rest of their college careers. This prevents them from participating in campus activities. Also, the AYD was enjoined from operating as an organization, soliciting members or distributing handbills. A similar drive is on against the AYD in Wayne University without any punitive result yet.

This campaign against the AYD is only the first step in the governor's campaign to investigate "every phase of Michigan life." The next and already indicated action will be against the labor movement. In an interview with reporters which appeared in the Detroit News of February 15, Governor Sigler revealed that he had had "a very satisfactory" conference with the FBI. He asked them for assistance in ferreting out the "agitators, radicals and communists" among the Michigan state employees, college students and labor unions.

If there is any doubt that this drive against the "communists" imperils the unions, it is dispelled by

Sigler himself. In his interview he said that the infiltration of "communists" into labor unions in the state was "a serious problem," accounting for "a great part of our labor trouble." He cited the case of a "communist" who was trying to stir up dissatisfaction among state employees under the guise of organizing them into a union. For the bosses—and for Mr. Sigler, their devoted servant—all unions "stir up dissatisfaction." All strikes are "labor

trouble" and anyone who leads them or calls for them is a "radical or agitator." And according to the new catalogue of menaces you don't even have to be a pure and simple "communist" to qualify for special FBI attention. All you have to be is a "radical or agitator," that is, anyone who makes "trouble" for the bosses. This category would include large numbers of the best fighters in the UAW. The drive against the "Reds" will prove to be a drive against the

spearhead of militancy in the UAW. The unions, in simple self-defense, must take a firm and emphatic position against this government campaign. It must tell the governor and the FBI: "Keep your hands off the unions! We want no outside intervention in our problems. We denounce the undemocratic practice of persecution in the name of democracy. We will resist your attempts to hound union members with all our strength."

Admiral Moreell Rewarded For Service to Big Business

The collaboration between government and private strike-breaking was exposed again on February 13 with the election of Admiral Ben Moreell as president of the Jones & Laughlin Steel Corp. (What could be a more fitting celebration of St. Valentine's Day among the bosses?) Moreell, who only recently resigned from his position as Federal Coal Mines Administrator, which he assumed when the government stepped in to seize the strike-bound bituminous mines last May, has many other strike-breaking activities to his credit. Famed for organizing the Seabees, Moreell, during his tenure as commander, seized 54 strike-bound oil refineries and pipe lines in 1945. For this and his other wartime services, he was awarded the Distinguished Service Medal, the Legion of Merit, a Gold Star, and the Order of the British Empire.

It will be interesting to note the fate of the foremen's negotiations in Jones & Laughlin, which has been

before the regional NLRB for arbitration for many months. The company has contended hotly with all weapons at its control, including the injunction, which it has tried unsuccessfully to use, that the foremen shall not have the right to choose their bargaining agent, in this case District 50 of the UMW.

During his comparatively ineffectual tenure as Coal Mines Administrator, Moreell, after a trip through the coal camps, made a statement to the press that living conditions there were sub-standard. Will he, as president of J&L, try to improve the living conditions in the many camps owned by that company?

According to the eulogies of the capitalist press, Moreell's genius in solving wage disputes acts in this way: As in the settling of the oil refineries strikes in 1945 (and by the way, it was in his office that the 18-cent wage raise pattern of 1946 was reached), he calls the company representative and the union president

to his office, puts his feet on the desk and pretends to read his mail. The other two dicker meanwhile, the union wanting a 30-cent raise and the company agreeing to only 15 cents. Moreell puts in a word, suave and humorous, here and there. After a time the dispute is settled with everybody agreeing to 18 cents. Everybody satisfied, everybody happy, peace on the industrial front—victory for the company and Ben Moreell.

Moreell is first, last and always a business man. At present he is president of the Turner Construction Co. of New York City and after June 1 will continue to serve as a director of that company. But he is not the ordinary business man. He is accustomed to wielding the mailed fist on servicemen and civilian strikers. He has influence in Washington for his services in the past. What better qualifications could Jones & Laughlin ask of their new president in these troublous times?

U. S. IMPERIALISM REVERSES TARIFF POLICY

Some weeks ago this column called attention to the historic reversal of tariff policy upon the part of southern agricultural interests, who petitioned the federal government to place a high tariff on all major agricultural products—cotton, wheat and others. For generations previous to this petition, the Cotton South had been a free-trade advocate. The cotton interests suddenly awakened to the fact that the recent war has destroyed industry in Europe, that other nations who want dollar credits will have to obtain them by sending us what they have, agricultural products. In addition, U. S. cotton interests know that their product, now selling at a terrifically inflated price, could not compete on a free market with foreign cotton. Hence the reversal of policy.

Now U. S. Big Business has taken a keen gander at what remains of the world after the blessings of capitalism's Second World War. The war removed the chief imperialist rivals to American industry, German and Japanese capitalism, and weakened British and French capitalism to the point where they are no serious threat to Wall Street, Chicago and Detroit. Why then do we need a tariff protecting the American market from foreign rivals, America's 60 Families asked themselves? Almost on the same day a representative of the House of Morgan; the Republican presidential aspirant, Stassen; the head of the National Foreign Trade Council; Secretary of Commerce Harriman; and an assortment of business executives came out for the lowering or abolition of American tariffs. This action marks another historic reversal of American policy. What lies behind it?

Capitalism in the United States, even before the revolution which freed the country from the British, has pursued a protectionist policy. It insisted that its government protect it by placing a tariff or tax on products of rival capitalist countries so that the rival products could not compete for the U. S. market. Though U. S. capitalism had, by the First World War, become the mightiest nation on earth, Big Business here has continued to insist on the preservation of high tariffs—supported by the phoniest excuses, of course, and accompanied by fine talk about "protecting the jobs of our workers," and so on, the way the wealthy always talk.

Just prior to the outbreak of the Second World War, Roosevelt and Hull were making desperate efforts to try to lift capitalism out of its crisis, and some slight reductions in U. S. tariffs were made through Hull's reciprocal trade program. Then came the war, and the tariff problem became unimportant. Wall Street achieved its major war aims. Its imperialist rivals were smashed. Now it wants to have business as usual with what remains of the world.

But I am going to let the speakers at the World Trade Conference, held February 17 in the Stevens Hotel, Chicago, tell you the rest of the story.

The past few months have seen a revival of U. S. world commerce on a heartening scale, said John Abbink, chairman of the National Foreign Trade Council, and president of Business Publishers International Corporation. While the government in this country has abandoned many business controls, continued Abbink, overseas the trend generally has been the other way. "Wartime controls over foreign trade in these countries have persisted and in some areas have been multiplied. Bilateral trade arrangements, import and exchange quotas and a variety of other devices continue to spread their debilitating poisons through the bloodstream of international trade. To the seasoned observer," said Abbink, "these measures have every appearance of a world pattern that is being drawn by others in self-defense to confront our private enterprise system with a dilemma which it must face sooner or later—whether to forego our traditional, politically-rigged tariff policy, or bow to statism in foreign trade.

"The fundamental issue confronting us in world trade today is not whether present tariff structures are to be adjusted by relatively narrow margins upward or

downward; it is whether tariffs are to play any part at all in regulating the flow and volume of exports and imports in the future. We have the extreme example of what I mean in the case of Russia. Russia's foreign trade is a complete state monopoly. Our own trade with Russia is through that monopoly, and tariff considerations are without effect. How much we sell to Russia, or buy from her, depends entirely upon Moscow's decisions. There is little freedom or scope for private trade in such arrangements. The import quota system now so widely prevalent abroad is only a little less vicious and restrictive. It is an iron curtain equally difficult for trade to penetrate."

Now Abbink gets down to business, and talks as cynically and bluntly as ever I have heard a Big Business spokesman talk. Listen:

"It is mortifying to observe," he said, "that (Republican) political leaders . . . repeat the aphorisms their prototypes used in 1912, and are applauded for their ignorance by some sections of American business. Republican wheelhorses in and out of Washington can make no greater mistake than to delude themselves or their supporters into believing that it is possible to resume tariff thimberligging where they left off, so disastrously, in 1932. The world has gone a long, weary way since then, on a down-hill path toward economic self-destruction."

Now for the facts: "Excepting for a comparatively few commodities and manufactured items—so few they could almost be counted on the fingers of two hands—there are nowhere in the world any productive facilities which could possibly threaten industry or agriculture in the U. S. during the next few years."

Abbink urged that now, if ever, is the opportunity "to change our approach to the question of protectionism, to repudiate the hypocracies we have parroted in the past."

Thousands of responsible business and political leaders, he said, "are ashamed of the devious tariff structure with which we have been saddled through generations of chicanery." During the next five years, he continued, while "our economy is in little or no danger from imports, enlightened political guidance should evolve a new tariff system."

Even more biting in his criticism of those old-fashioned businessmen who have yet to realize the realities of the post-war world was A. B. Sparboe, head of the overseas division of Pillsbury Mills, Inc., giant Minneapolis wheat concern. Sparboe is lacking to repeat Sparboe's cynical description of the history of U. S. tariffs. He said: "When it comes to business—the very life blood of our civilization—Uncle Sam suddenly feigns anemia and wants more than an even break, or he won't play. If the most powerful nation in the world seems afraid to engage in international trade without exacting special advantages for itself (in the form of high tariffs), can we blame many weaker nations for courting Russia or adopting various forms of so-called state trading. . . . Unless we set out immediately to demonstrate both by precept and example that our vaunted private enterprise system succeeds from real enterprise instead of protection and special privilege, it is doomed," etc.

A dozen other big industrialists and representatives of the State Department talked in the same vein.

Readers should not gather from this that there is no opposition to the foreign trade policy as expounded above by the most able spokesmen of America's 60 Families in the field of foreign trade. There are still many businessmen who, largely from force of habit and "cultural lag," want to hang on to the supposed advantage of a protective tariff. Perhaps in a later column I'll analyze this opposition.

Incidentally, readers who are interested in a Marxist analysis of the U. S. tariff, and an explanation of how and why monopoly capitalism and high tariffs normally go hand in hand, are advised to read Trotsky's brilliant essay, "Marxism in the United States," just published by the Workers Party.

Chicago Workers: Vote Socialist! Vote Labor!

The Housing Problem Can Be Solved!

Speech of Albert Goldman delivered over Radio Station WJJD, Sunday, February 16, at 1:45 p.m.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

The urgent need for housing has finally penetrated places where sit men of wealth, power and influence. Before a meeting of the State Street Council, Mr. Randall H. Cooper, executive secretary of the Council, informed the men of State Street that:

"The blighted areas must be rebuilt. Housing must be provided both as a source of revenue to the city and as a source of business for State Street and the Loop."

To convince you how grateful we should feel toward the State Street business men, I shall cite a few figures in connection with the housing crisis in Chicago. A year ago there were 32,500 ex-servicemen and their families in this city, without a place to live; one-half of the 480,000 ex-servicemen are living doubled up with relatives. After 20,000 persons applied for apartments in the Ida B. Wells public housing project which has 1,600 dwelling units, the manager stopped accepting any more applications.

INFANT MORTALITY HIGH IN SLUMS

Chicago has 15,000 acres of blighted and near-blighted areas. A study has indicated that in these slum areas the general mortality rate is 6 per cent above the city's average; the infant mortality rate is 25 per cent above the city average and juvenile delinquency is 8 per cent above the city average.

Eleven people were burned to death recently as a direct result of over-crowded conditions in slum areas.

Does the honorable executive secretary of the State Street business men mention any of the above compelling reasons for his interest in housing? Not at all. He is concerned only for the profits of those who own the stores and real estate on State Street and in the Loop.

In reality the remark of the representative of State Street clearly explains why there will be and there can be no real solution to the housing problems under the capitalist system. The State Street business men, like all other business men, are interested in profits and there are no profits to be made in building decent homes and apartments for a rental that a worker can afford to pay. Only under socialism will the housing problem be solved for the great masses because under socialism the profit motive will be eliminated and things will be produced for the use of the people.

MAJORITY DO NOT HAVE DECENT HOUSING

It should be understood by everybody that the housing problem is not something that has come into existence recently, with the return of the servicemen to civilian life. The majority of the working people of this country—and surely of all other countries—have never had a decent place in which to live.

Even when good apartments were available for what might now be called a reasonable rental, a large proportion of the workers had to live under miserable conditions. In 1940 almost half of all American families had an income of less than \$1,500 a year. On such an income it was impossible to get a decent apartment, even in 1940. The main reason for the widespread recognition of the housing problem at the present time is the fact that even people in higher income brackets are suffering from the housing shortage.

If there were no capitalists interested in profits, if the government were interested in the welfare of the people, there would be no housing shortage. This country was not subjected to bombings, as was England or Germany. There has been no flood or other natural catastrophe.

During the war the government needed warships costing tens of millions of dollars; it needed huge bombers and all kinds of armaments. This tremendously wealthy country found no difficulty in producing them.

The war is over. Millions of people are in great need of a place to live. We have the materials, the skilled and unskilled labor and the technical force necessary to build homes just as we had them during the war for the production of armaments. But we do not produce houses! Why?

Because the government was willing to spend any amount of money necessary to produce weapons; because the capitalists were willing to permit the government to tell them what, where and when to produce, in order to defeat their rival capitalists in the fascist countries. Of course the big business men made huge profits out of the war and this was a factor that reconciled them to the temporary liquidation of free enterprise.

Now that the war is over the capitalists want their profits but they do not want the government to interfere in their business. And the government is not interested in producing for peace and for the welfare of the masses.

The last two wars, the depression of the Thirties and the present housing crisis prove conclusively that the capitalist system has reached a stage where it can produce only for war, for destruction and death. It is unable to produce, during peace, for the welfare of the people. That is in effect what the executive secretary of the State Street business men told us when he said that he is interested in housing in order to make profits for State Street and the Loop.

KIND OF HOUSING WE NEED

Both Kennelly, the Democratic candidate for mayor, and Root, the Republican candidate, insist that housing is basically a matter for private enterprise. President Truman, the head of the Democratic Party, has turned the job of solving the housing problem over to private industry. This means that new buildings and homes will be erected but that the great majority of the workers will derive no benefit from such a solution. Most workers cannot afford to pay the rent that private owners will ask for new apartments. By far the most profitable housing is that built to rent at high monthly rentals. It is this type of housing that will be built.

The only housing that would be of value to those in the lower income brackets is government subsidized housing where a four-room apartment could be rented for about \$30 a month. This is the kind of housing we of the Workers Party are for. Just as the government built warships and bombers, so must it build apartment buildings and homes and charge a rental which a worker earning an average wage can afford to pay.

If anyone asks where the money is to come from, my answer is: If the government could raise hundreds of billions of dollars for war, it can and should raise all the money necessary to build homes and apartments for the people. In my last talk I told you we socialists consider the welfare of the people to be above the interests of property. We would not hesitate to raise money by taxing the wealthy people in order to build homes for the workers.

WHAT CAN BE DONE IN CHICAGO

Can a mayor of Chicago solve the housing problem of its inhabitants? I do not claim that. I insist, however, that he can agitate effectively for a state and national solution. He can also, with the aid of the City Council, allocate part of the city funds for erecting apartment buildings for the neediest and most desperate cases.

At a public hearing held by the Finance Committee of the City Council, I suggested that in this emergency the sum of ten to fifteen million dollars should be used for construction of housing. I know that this is a drop in the bucket but it will be of

some aid until the state and federal governments come to the city's rescue. The Republican candidate for mayor is especially loud in his demands for economy. I am also for economy, provided that the money saved should be used for housing. My Republican opponent and 338 Mr. Kennelly want to reduce taxes for the wealthy. I am not interested in that; I am interested in building homes for the workers who need them.

In the late 1920s the city of Vienna, Austria, under a socialist municipal regime, built blocks of houses for the workers of that city. Beautiful apartments were rented at reasonable prices. Chicago is a much wealthier city and certainly could do at least what Vienna did. But it will not be done by Root the Republican or Kennelly the Democrat.

ORGANIZE TO STOP RENT BOOST!

Right now there is grave danger that the landlords will be allowed to raise rents. A combination of Republicans and Democrats is very likely to pass legislation permitting a substantial raise in rents. The real estate operators and landlords have exerted all their influence on Congress and the members of Congress are about to yield to their pressure, unless a counter-pressure of the great masses is organized.

The party I represent strongly urges the organization of tenants' committees to defend the interests of the tenants. The fact that Congress may pass a law permitting a raise in rent does not mean that the landlords get that raise automatically. A great deal depends upon an effective organization of tenants. We should have a state law and a city ordinance barring any increase in rent. I challenge Mr. Root and Mr. Kennelly to state their position on this question.

The reactionary laws which require more than 88,000 signatures in order for me to be on the ballot make it impossible for me to get on the official ballot. We shall, however, continue with our campaign; We ask everybody who wants to vote for socialism to write in the name of our party—the Workers Party—and my name as your choice for mayor.

Since its inception our party has favored the creation of a Labor Party—a party organized by the trade unions with a program representing the interests of labor and the general public. One of the most progressive local unions in Chicago—the Revere Copper Local of the United Auto Workers, CIO, has put up candidates for alderman in three wards. Our party has no organizational ties with these candidates and we can assume responsibility only for our own members. But we urge you to vote for them if you live in their wards. Voting for them indicates approval of the idea of a Labor Party. Vote for Frank Wesolowski, candidate for alderman in the 32nd Ward; vote for Charles Chikalus, candidate in the 35th Ward; vote for S. Salvatore Mazza, candidate in the 36th Ward.

We also urge you to support Homes Lewis in the 3rd Ward. He is a member of the Socialist Workers Party. We are opposed to defending Stalinist Russia; the Socialist Workers Party favors defending it. There are other differences between us. Nevertheless Homer Lewis is a socialist and we support him.

For further information and for literature write to our headquarters, 1501 West Madison Street.

NEXT WEEK:

THE CLOSED SHOP AND DEMOCRACY

By Ernest Erber

Phila. Needs a Labor Paper

By F. HARPER

Philadelphia's only morning newspaper, the *Inquirer*, is running serially a labor story. Two courageous members of the paper's staff, Richard J. O'Keefe and Kos Semonski, were sent down into the dark dreary basements of the library to dig through the numerous biographies of John L. Lewis for all of the cruel and despotic tactics that he has used to maintain his control over the coal miners. The green mold was scraped from the type and the public is being offered another *Story Behind John L. Lewis*.

Each year, about this time, the Pennsylvania papers offer the public a story "behind John L." Last year when March and the miners' strike arrive the public will be in possession of "all of the facts." Last year the now defunct *Philadelphia Record* carried the major burden. That "liberal" paper couldn't forgive Lewis for turning on the Democrats in 1940. This year "An Independent Newspaper for All the People" accepts "the added responsibilities" thrust upon it when the strike-bound *Record* sold out and suspended publication.

TONGUE IN CHEEK

The acceptance, was done of course with tongue in cheek for possibly a few might remember that only several short years ago the *Inquirer* praised Lewis when he defended "free enterprise" in the mining industry and again when he supported Dewey.

The *Inquirer* articles have enumerated practically all of Lewis' blackmail, sellout, and strong arm tactics in the intra-union fight from the struggle with the hard coal miners Pennsylvania Miners Union in 1927 to the present day. With its self-avowed "thoughtful, carefully written editorial policy" the *Inquirer* has failed to mention any actions of the mine owners, any programmatic issues at stake in the intra-union quarrels, any economic gains made by the miners during Lewis' rule and most important has failed to differentiate at all between the autocratic Lewis and the rank and file members of his

union. In reality the attack is against the union because the impression the reader gets is that the miners are blind followers, are hopelessly caught in the Lewis vise without the chance of gaining control over the union and that the principal enemy of the miner is John L. Lewis and not the mine operators.

INCREASE OF CIRCULATION

It is evident that the *Inquirer* is not fairly presenting Lewis' case to the public. The suspension of the *Record* meant to the *Inquirer* only increased circulation. The *Evening Bulletin* which bought out the *Record* is doing no better. All it prints of the "liberal" *Record* is two pages of syndicated columns and comics.

The only paper presenting a pro-labor viewpoint is the striking *Guild's paper the Real Reporter*. The readers of the paper appreciate this fact—in the Mail Bag column of the current issue there are eight letters asking that the *Real Reporter* be issued on a permanent basis.

Rent Control - -

(Continued from page 1)

Why don't these scoundrels in the Senate just abolish rent control, you may ask, if they're going to hack it to death? Because they're clever. They're out to give the real estate lobby a plum, but they want to do it gradually and subtly. There won't be any demonstrative vote against rent control; just one morning, you'll wake up and it won't be around any more.

We're reaching the last round in this fight. Either the labor movement swings into some real action, setting off a series of gigantic demonstrations and protests till the Senators tremble, or we'll be paying through the nose.

And now the tenant committees that have been springing up in the neighborhoods, must get ready to fight against increases no matter what Congress does. Remember:

The Local 10 members still on strike naturally enough want to go back to work. Most of them are sticking together and surviving by holding down part time jobs, by strike funds donated by other unions, by strike assessments, and by unemployment insurance. A few, however, are drifting away. Tom O'Neill, former political editor of the *Record*, has taken a position as publicity director of the Pennsylvania Manufacturers' Association. Others are leaving and more will be forced to leave the strikers ranks soon.

The labor unions in the city, particularly the CIO Regional Council, is letting a golden opportunity slip through its fingers if they do not soon come forward with a practical plan for issuing a permanent labor paper in Philadelphia as an outgrowth of the Guild strikers' *Real Reporter*. Every unionist in Philadelphia is failing in his duty if he does not press in his local for a *Permanent Labor Daily* in Philadelphia now.

Congress can make rent increases permissible, but not mandatory. The rest is up to the tenants—their preparations for and readiness to fight against gouging landlords.

But the proposed bill can be smothered by labor and consumer and tenant action. That means action—demonstrations, protest meetings, organizations of tenants. It is a primary responsibility of the labor movement today.

You Can Subscribe To Labor Action For Six Months For 50 Cents!

Ten Years Ago GM Workers Held the First Sit-Down Strike!

By MIKE STEVENS

Ten years ago this month, the General Motors workers in Flint and other cities forced that huge open-shop corporation to its knees by applying the then new strike technique—the sit-down. By using this new weapon, the workers at General Motors not only defeated the entrenched might of American big business but also laid a solid base for the just born organization that was to become the largest union in the world, the United Automobile Workers of America.

Every worker in every industry was immediately electrified and encouraged. Sit-down strikes broke out strikers pitting themselves against one of the largest monopolies in the country. Sit-down strikes broke out in plants of the other automobile manufacturing companies, and these strikes were followed by sit-downs in other industries.

The automobile workers had been trying to organize for many years before the sit-downs, but at every turn they were faced with insurmountable hurdles. Shortly after World War I the AFL made some headway among the body plants, but its attempts to divide the workers into outmoded craft unions ruined this organizational effort completely. The automobile industry, with its inhuman conditions and pitiful wages, remained unorganized throughout the twenties and into the early thirties. The health-destroying speed-up was in full force. Anybody working in an auto plant for a number of years was played out and physically unfit by the time he was 40.

NO JOB SECURITY

In between the periods of terrific speed-up there were long periods of unemployment and poverty. During these periods of unemployment no worker knew whether he would be called back when the next production season began. There was no security whatsoever, and the turnover in manpower was terrific. The corporations wanting to perpetuate these inhuman conditions developed one of the largest spy systems ever seen in industry. No worker dared speak to the man working next to him for fear that he was a company stooge. These stooges were either hired by the company directly or through an "agency." General Motors paid \$419,000 to the Pinkerton Agency alone in a two-year period for supplying spies.

By 1933 conditions had become intolerable. The average auto worker's weekly income was \$19.80. Sporadic strikes broke out in many auto plants throughout the entire country. The workers won some important concessions such as a half to all wage cutting and the elimination of dead time. A number of local unions developed during this period of struggle. Some of these unions played a healthy role, others did not, but all of them soon disappeared except the tool and die makers' union, the Mechanics Educational Society.

THE FEDERAL LOCALS

In the last months of 1933 the AFL set out to drive to organize the auto workers into federal locals. (These federal locals are attached to the national office of the AFL and are not part of any of the craft unions. They are set up to organize workers on an industrial basis, whenever workers refuse to go into craft unions. Once the workers are organized and contracts signed, they are then split up into the craft unions.) The workers flocked into the federal locals and began to demand action. The AFL leaders stalled, accepted Roosevelt's promises and accomplished nothing. Eventually the AFL's 200,000 auto workers dropped out of the union, leaving only a handful.

The Colonel Brings Home Some Souvenirs from Japan:

When Officer Loots, He Calls It "Legitimate"

By GERALD McDERMOTT

"Join the Army and get your share of the Legitimate Loot." If that slogan ever appears on the billboard in front of your post office, a lot of veterans who got nothing from the Army but a ruptured duck, a purple ribbon, and a case of malaria, will be surprised.

But when these veterans learn that "legitimate loot"—excuse us, we mean legitimate "souvenirs"—is reserved for colonels, they will not be surprised at all.

This time, the colonel did the looting in Japan. When San Francisco became flooded with smuggled diamonds, customs officials arrested one Colonel Edward J. Murray, just returned from Japan. A little investigation revealed that his safety box contained a few more diamonds—five hundred, to be exact. By the purest coincidence, the worthy colonel had just been relieved of duties in charge of the vaults of the Bank of Japan. (Colonels are the people who court martial enlisted men for overstaying furlough twelve hours, and who complain that only officers could make up a fair court martial board.)

The diamonds, explained this resourceful brass-hat, were "legitimate

During 1934, the AFL was involved with do-nothing government committees and boards that eventually resulted in labor board elections where the workers voted against company unions, against the AFL, but for "unaffiliated representatives." The vote showed the workers wanted organization, but they certainly didn't want what was on the ballot. Although this was the only type of "activity" going on in Detroit, a few things were going on elsewhere. The tool and die makers had pulled a number of strikes and some of the federal locals had also gone on strike against the wishes of their leaders.

But the real flame was touched off in Toledo when the workers in the Auto-Lite strike were backed solidly on their picket line and in their relief work by the very active participation of the Lucas County Unemployed League. An injunction issued against mass picketing was defied by the strikers and thousands of unemployed who had prevented the bosses and their scabs from leaving the shop until the National Guard was called in to release them from the plant. The workers' solidarity at Auto-Lite impressed workers in many other cities, who went ahead defying injunctions, but the basis for a real organized struggle—an industrial union for auto workers—was still lacking.

Following the example of Auto-Lite, other auto parts plants in Toledo went on strike and organized. Eventually the General Motors Chevrolet plant in Toledo went on strike. The company and the AFL tried desperately to break the strike and eventually succeeded. But the Chevrolet strike was a real milestone in the development of the auto worker as a union man.

The Chevrolet strikers issued their paper, Strike Truth, went to Detroit and other cities and distributed it to the workers at the plant gates in these cities. This is how little contact the auto workers had with each other. Over 50,000 General Motors workers in many cities went out in solidarity with Chevrolet in Cleveland, but the AFL had killed the situation.

From then on things moved fast.

The auto workers now demanded an industrial union charter from the AFL, but William Green gave them a "limited" charter as the UAW and appointed their officers. The auto workers protested all this and appealed to the AFL convention in Cleveland. It was at this convention that Lewis, Dubinsky and others advocated industrial unions in the mass industries. A few months later the Committee for Industrial Organization was formed and UAW joined it.

It was against this background that the workers at the General Motors plants in Flint, Detroit and other cities organized. They had had enough of the speed-up, the lack of job security, the spy and the stoolpigeon, and they had had enough of treachery and sell-outs. The strike started in November, 1936, in the General Motors plant in Atlanta, Ga., and was completed with the success of the sit-down strikes in February, 1937.

The sit-down strikers sat by their machines and refused to budge. The capitalist press was full of the most poisonous propaganda—but the strikers refused to move. A wealthy judge, owner of many hundreds of thousands of dollars of General Motors stock, issued an injunction against the strikers but it didn't help him or his corporation, because the strikers just sat. The armed militia surrounded the plants and aimed their machine guns at the strikers, the "Flint Alliance" of scabs was formed, police with tear gas and guns—nothing could move the strikers from their machines. There could be only one answer to this kind of solidarity and action: victory.

The workers won and General Motors had to sit down and sign exclusive recognition for the union in 17 plants, with wage rates, conditions, all strikers to be rehired, seniority rights, grievance machinery, etc.

More than 113,000 General Motors workers were involved in the strike and its magnificent victory. The General Motors sit-downs were followed by sit-downs in the plants of Chrysler, Packard, Hudson, Briggs and some of the smaller ones. By the end of 1937, the UAW had signed agreements with more than 400 corporations, as compared with the 17 contracts it had the previous year.

Stalin's Russia Starves The People of Rumania!

All of Europe is in a semi-starving condition, as is well known, but the first area to drop to the level of outright, mass starvation, with several million peasants and workers threatened with death from hunger, is the Rumanian province of Moldavia. The mass of people there are reported living on grass, herbs and leaves.

How significant is the fact that this area, among the first to be occupied by the invading armies of Russian imperialism, should be the first to fall to such conditions! The explanation is not hard to find. The invading Russian army of plunderers, looters and requisitioners has been living off the land, continues to commandeer food deliveries from the farmers and has just fastened a treaty of huge reparations around the necks of Rumania. The complete and direct responsibility for the tragedy in Moldavia falls on the shoulders of Stalinist Russia. It is the inevitable consequence of the occupation and domination of the Balkan peninsula by Stalinist imperialism. (Let those who talk about the "progressive" influence of Russia, and the "progressive" aspects of its agrarian "revolution" among the peasantry of Eastern Europe reflect upon the results of this policy.)

The hypocritical behaviour of Truman and the United States in this affair is transparent. Truman has "generously" diverted 7,000 tons of army food (10-in-1 rations and beans) to Rumania. It makes excellent propaganda, particularly against the Russians. But the fact that all this, and any other food that may be shipped, will be paid for in guaranteed gold payments; this fact has passed largely unnoticed.

Torn between Russian imperialism greed and plundering, and American economic power, the future of Rumania is dark. The country has lost whatever independence of action it may ever have had, just as have all the small countries of Europe. The future of Rumania is entirely bound up with the problem of winning back its genuine national freedom, and turning over its economic life to the people of the country.

The Colonel Brings Home Some Souvenirs from Japan:

When Officer Loots, He Calls It "Legitimate"

loot"—souvenirs, that is, he hastened to add. When the occupation troops first landed, he explained, "there were jewels and precious metals hidden all over the country—diamonds by the bucketful." So he brought home a bucket-full of "souvenirs." (When enlisted men leave Japan, they have to sign half a dozen forms before they can take home their last month's pay.) GIs who went into Japan after V-J Day will remember finding only burned homes, people dressed in tatters, starvation, and misery. This writer never even saw a thimbleful of diamonds from one end of Japan to the other.

It is not yet known whether Colonel Murray lifted the diamonds from the bank vaults under his scrupulous care. If he did, all enlisted men know in advance that the army justice system will mete out to him the same swift and terrible punishment which Colonel Kilian, of Lichfield fame, received.

But if Congress or General MacArthur—MacArthur, we meant to say—are interested in obtaining information on how brass hats got their "legitimate loot," there are a lot of GIs in USES lines all over the country who can furnish details.

The method ran like this. Major X

was assigned to investigate a Japanese government official to decide whether or not he should be purged. Major X goes to this chief of police, let us say, asks a few questions, takes a few records, and explains the purpose of the investigation. Then in a casual way, he tells the chief of police that he is "looking" for a "really nice" tea set, and asks the official to "keep his eyes open."

Lo and behold, when Major X returns again, the official has not only located a lovely tea set, but insists on making it a present to Major X. Shortly thereafter, it is discovered that the official in question is a true-blue, died in the wool democrat of long standing, and must never be purged.

As long as the officials hold out, there is no end to the tea sets, cameras, jade, diamonds, ivory, silks, chinaware, and pearls to be sent home as "legitimate souvenirs." And you can always reinvestigate the old officials—can't be too careful about stamping out militarism, you know. And since a Japanese bureaucrat or industrialist cleared by the occupation forces is pretty powerful, the souvenirs can always be wrung from

Magazine ACTION

March 3, 1947

A Paper in the Interests of Labor

Page 3

"Honeymouth Ellis" Arnall, Liberal Dixie Demagogue

By JACK RANGER

TODAY even the radio comedians know that in the state of Georgia there are two governors, that each pretender has no difficulty in obtaining legal sanctions for his pretensions from "his own" judges, and that, a few months after former Governor Ellis Arnall was defeated in the recent election by the late Gene Talmadge, the politics of that benighted state are at the usual wool hat Jim Crow level to which the world has become accustomed since about 1870.

All of Arnall's widely heralded reforms were of such a superficial character that they could not endure his ouster from office. Nevertheless, many good people still look upon Arnall as some sort of hero, a progressive, a politician who represented, or gave promise of some day representing, the interests of the people. Nothing could be further from the truth.

One need not be concerned that Arnall fools the liberals. That is the fate of the liberal, to be fooled anew by each charlatan who comes down the road chanting liberal talk. One is concerned that Arnall has managed to fool some workers and even some Negroes, or more specifically, Negro leaders like Walter White. A brief recital of Arnall's life and career will help to set the record straight.

HIS FAMILY BACKGROUND—BORN INTO MERCHANT FAMILY

Ellis Arnall was born in 1907, into a wealthy family of mill owners and merchants. The Arnalls have been big shots in the South since the Civil War. The grandfather was a merchant and mill owner, and a member of the Alabama legislature. Young Ellis himself worked in the Alabama House as a page boy during legislative sessions. Arnall's father owns the Krazy Kat Super Stores in Newnan and nearby Georgia towns.

Ellis had a good education, for a member of the Southern upper bourgeoisie. A Baptist, he began his college career at Mercer, a denominational college in Georgia. Later, he switched to a school with more academic pretensions, the University of the South at Sewanee, Tennessee. He took his legal training at the University of Georgia, receiving an LL.B. degree in 1931. Arnall was an outstanding success in school. There are two stories told about his early political ambitions, one story having him, at the age of 12, announce his ambition to become a governor. The story is probably true.

Two years after he finished his law course, Arnall entered politics as a candidate for the Georgia House of Representatives. Twenty-six years old at the time, he won handily over five opponents. Talmadge, who knew a slicker when he saw one, called Arnall in, discussed with him, and made Arnall floor leader of the Talmadge forces.

He served in the state legislature

from 1933 to 1937. The aspiring capitalist class of Georgia had no difficulty in recognizing him as one of its own. The Georgia Junior Chamber of Commerce handed him its distinguished service award.

Arnall's actions soon made it evident that he was not just a Talmadge man, but that he had vast ambitions of his own. In 1937 Governor Ed Rivers, a rival demagogue to Talmadge, sought to tie Arnall to the Rivers machine by appointing the young man as assistant attorney general. Two years later, Rivers made Arnall, the attorney general, it being Rivers' hope that Arnall could succeed in blocking any anti-Rivers laws which Talmadge, his successor, might pass. As attorney general, Arnall knew how to keep in the public eye. He distinguished himself chiefly by prosecuting a few petty asphalt contractors.

ARNALL RUNS AGAINST GENE TALMADGE FOR GOVERNOR

With the next gubernatorial election scheduled for 1943, Arnall in 1942 announced his candidacy. He conferred with President Roosevelt, who supported him, as did other liberal politicians in and out of the state.

Arnall's opponent, Talmadge, ran on the usual program, an epitome of Southern bourgeois culture—white supremacy, state's rights, and old-time religion. Arnall's program consisted of vague promises floating around the general slogan: "Reforms vs. Dictatorship."

Political observers in Georgia say that Talmadge would have been re-elected in 1943, except for a grave mistake. During the campaign he fired two educators at the University of Georgia for "favorin' mixin' the races." As a result, ten Georgia schools were suspended from their national accredited status, a serious matter for the Southern bourgeoisie whose children were being educated in the state. Undergraduates from the university marched from Athens to the state capitol, bearing an effigy of Talmadge. The school vote swung to Arnall, and he beat Talmadge in the primaries, 162,889 to 117,731.

ARNALL AS POLITICIAN—A SKILLFUL CAMPAIGNER

To understand some of Arnall's later moves, it is very important for the reader to recall that in Georgia the primary IS the election. The South is a one-party dictatorship.

Arnall is a good campaigner. Early in his career he adopted the habit of dropping people folksy notes, "a custom found useful by Jim Farley," as one columnist noted. Arnall subscribed to all 238 small county newspapers in Georgia. Just before the primary, he wrote people, congratulating them on the birth of a son, a promotion to a new job, the purchase of a measure spreader.

He is a master of Southern campaign oratory. Reporters who followed his progress call him "Honeymouth."

He has been compared to other Southern liberals, New Deal style, like Claude Pepper of Florida and Lester Hill of Alabama, who have their difficulties "when confronted

"It would be a useful thing if every one of our large-hearted liberals put up on the walls of their house in a golden frame the wise police texts: 'Pacify the liberals with a promise that the first step will not be the last.' Offer them, superficialities and hopes for the future.'"—Lenin.

with FEPC bills and other things that touch on white supremacy."

According to reporter John Chamberlain, "Arnall's lack of special-interest identification enabled the school crowd, the women, the young and the growing host of Talmadge's enemies to line up behind him without fear that they are being used."

Arnall was inaugurated in January, 1943. A clever politician, psychologist and ballyhoo-artist, Arnall made an immediate stir in Georgia which drew the eyes of the nation's liberals to him. In his first 24 days as governor, he piloted ten bills through the state legislature, embodying his campaign promises. He called it "revolution," but the bills were of a sufficiently innocuous character so that even Talmadge's supporters could back them. Indeed, the measures were all passed unanimously. An enthusiastic biographer, writing in CURRENT BIOGRAPHY for August, 1945, said that "Arnall succeeded in removing every dictatorial statute of the Talmadge period, without dissent in the legislature."

Actually, the Arnall reforms were piddling fool-bait. For instance, one law called for the creation of a "non-political" board of regents for Georgia's University—(as though any such organization under capitalism could be "non-political"). Another law proposed to abolish the pardon racket by establishing a three-man clemency commission (as though three bureaucrats could not be corrupted). A third law proposed to eliminate the use of chains and shackles in Georgia's prisons.

A fourth law, his move to lower the voting age to 18, had a clear personal motive. Georgia's youth had

shown themselves opposed to Talmadge. Arnall returned their support by lowering the voting age.

The move that really warmed the cockles of the liberal heart, however, was an Arnall Special, passed in 1945. This law repealed the poll tax. A poll tax is a tax which citizens must pay before they are eligible to vote in the general election.

The big joker in Arnall's law was that it did not apply to the primary—which, as we have seen, is the REAL election in Georgia and other Southern states. But even had the law applied to the primary, it would still be meaningless, unless the oppressed black and white workers were so organized as to assure that the law would be respected in practice.

ARNALL'S ATTITUDE TO THE LABOR MOVEMENT

Arnall never made any attempt to encourage Georgia's working class, to urge union organization, to break down the barriers against the Negro, to change Georgia's county unit system of voting, which gives rural counties a legislative weight out of all proportion to their population and works against the city workers.

No, Arnall based himself upon an entirely different class, the capitalists. To attract business to Georgia, he relaxed the laws regulating corporations, and pointed out the resources offered by the state to manufacturers. His widely-heralded effort to gain lower freight rates in the South has come to naught. Following the I.C.C.'s Class Rate Decision, the railroads and the northern states immediately tied the case up in the courts, where smart transportation men say it will remain for years.

But back to Arnall's meaningless repeal of the poll tax. This move was greeted with the most rapturous phrases by the liberals. Said a writer in the New Republic: "Arnall has done more to extend the franchise than any other American since women were given the vote." Another liberal wrote: "He has succeeded in lifting his state from the benightedness of Tobacco Road to a position

(Continued on page 6)

Joe Snafu Applauds Col. Kilian's Promotion

February 20, 1947

Colonel James A. Kilian
War Department
Washington, D. C.

Dear Colonel:

Heartiest congratulations, sir, heartiest congratulations! Believe me, not since I lost four pounds on a July dress parade with full pack in honor of a visiting Dutch princess, have I felt so kindly toward the army merit system (known among some of my friends as chicken four letters). When I picked up the papers today and saw that you were being recommended for promotion by the War Department from the permanent rank of lieutenant colonel to the permanent rank of colonel, I said to myself:

"You see, Snafu, what a dope you are! You were once grumbling because you were busted from pfc to private when your CO caught you committing the high military crime of walking with your hands in your pocket. You made dark aspersions about military justice. Now you SEE how wrong you were. Here's a fine upstanding man of military honor, Colonel James A. Kilian (affectionately known as the Lichfield Himmier) who gains his promotion despite the fact that he had a little temporary embarrassment when he was court-martialed and fined for brutal treatment of American GI prisoners while head of the Lichfield Concentration Camp in England. You see that the army takes care of its own."

Yes sir, colonel, those were my very words. You see, colonel, I've always been an admirer of army justice. I never did go for this stuff about giving enlisted men equal rights; I know my place. And so when I read in the papers that you were being persecuted just because you'd been a little rough with the boys, I was mighty indignant. After all, we've known cases where a corporal went on three days a week and was given such a ridiculously mild sentence as three years in the guard house. Now if such leniency could be shown, how, I asked myself, could one justify giving a fine gentleman like you a \$500 fine and a reprimand (written down in your service record, too! oh, the shame of it!).

After all what did you do? Just because you had men beaten by your sergeants; just because you forced sick men to do setting up exercises for hours; just because you ran your detention barracks as if it were a mild version of Buchenwald; just because you forced Negro prisoners to bark like dogs in order to get something to eat—just because you did this, did you deserve the humiliation you suffered?

After all, I ask you, colonel, wasn't your conduct what we might have expected from most true-blue army officers?

I always suspected that your difficulties were due to a plot by those impertinent GIs in the ETO who thought that the army was some kind of democratic picnic and who, having been fed a lot of propaganda pap about "a war for ideals," actually were naive enough to expect the army to be run that way. But we old soldiers knew better. After all, discipline you know; discipline.

Yes, indeed, discipline! So it was good to see that the War Department wouldn't let your promotion be impeded by a little matter like your court-martial conviction. Just between you, me and the Judge Advocate's Office—we all know that you were sort of the goat for things which the really big boys approved. But now you're getting your reward. Yes sir, the War Department takes care of its officers.

Incidentally, sir, I wonder if you happen to be in need of a good dog-robbler. I've been in the army twenty-six years and have attained the permanent rank of pfc; I have also learned how to read and write. I would make an excellent aide to a military gentleman like yourself. I'm very good at licking boots and given the proper incentive, can even aspire even higher.

Respectfully yours,
Pfc Joe Snafu, Regular Army

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WORLD POLITICS

OFF LIMITS By James M. Fenwick

Britain—An Epoch Ends

By IRVING HOWE

So many premature litanies have been sung over the British Empire that one is hesitant to speak of the current British crisis as signifying the collapse of the empire. And yet...

It has never before been in such a terrible situation; that much is certain. To the empire builders and glorifiers of the past, this would be a bleak day; were Rudyard Kipling or Cecil Rhodes to come to life again they would be appalled. For the empire—that once mighty work which ground the bones and blood of millions in Africa and Asia into pounds sterling—is today tottering so badly that it cannot even provide heat and light for the citizens of its capital city.

There is more than a touch of irony in that it is precisely the fact that Britain was the first major imperialist power in the world that today contributes so heavily to her downfall. The first power in which industrialism gained a clean-cut triumph, the first power in the modern era to gather under its flag subject lands and peoples throughout the globe, Britain has today fallen to the rank of a second-rate power with an obsolescent technology and a top-heavy economy badly dependent upon the rest of the world for its sheer existence.

That this tiny country, with an inadequate source of raw materials and exposed to wretched weather, should have become the once largest imperialist power in the world is itself an astounding fact. There are many reasons for this fact, but here we wish to mention only those two which are most important in terms of the current situation: England was the first major industrial power; and resultantly its acquisition of vast areas of colonial dependencies upon which it grew fat.

Today both of these assets are drying up. The industrial primacy of England has become a positive disadvantage. Those nations, the United States and Germany, which followed Britain on the path of industrialization, outstripped her; they developed British technology further than the British themselves and therefore were able, in view of their superior basis in natural wealth, to outstrip Britain.

BRITAIN NOW A SECOND-RATE POWER

Today Britain is a nation the industrial plant of which is in deterioration. In a revealing dispatch in The New York Times of February 24, Michael Hoffman writes that Britain is moving toward a "steady slide into conditions of poverty unknown in the Western world in modern times." Britain, he reports, "is faced with disaster" unless it is able to continue and increase its export program by which it hopes to regain a position of economic solvency. "An increase of forty per cent in the volume of exports must be accomplished this year to maintain even the low level of consumption that is now keeping people alive and able to work. The industries of this region (the industrial midlands—Ed.) must increase their exports by nearly two-thirds for the country to make that target. . . . Otherwise, Britain cannot feed herself, cannot supply her people with cotton, oil and other essential raw materials when the present credits are exhausted. Without these things her industrial economy would simply cease to exist."

But how much longer can the British workers be half-starved and sweated to prostration in order to maintain this export program? "In Sheffield," reports Hoffman, "there are more than 100,000 union members among the employes of the city's high-grade steel and fabricating plants. Many of them are living in conditions that could be described only by a Dickens or portrayed only by a British version of 'Tobacco Road.'"

How badly the industrial plant of Britain has deteriorated during the past several decades is indicated in Hoffman's excellent report: "The conditions of Britain's provincial cities and factories come as an appalling shock to an American observer—not in comparison with the best in the United States, but in comparison with the best in Central Europe, with war damage being discounted on both sides of the comparison. Britain is an old, run-down country . . . the basic industries . . . are moribund . . ."

Is it any wonder then that Britain, so badly battered in the war and now a debtor to the United States, cannot compete with the giant, modern industries of the United States? Is it any wonder that it must try to accumulate reserves by means of heavy exports acquired at the price of the living standards of its workers?

THE SHRINKING BRITISH EMPIRE

What was once the major source of the profits of British capitalism—its colonial empire—is today badly shrinking. British imperialism is being forced to abandon positions in India, in South America, in the Near East. This is not at all due as Dorothy Thompson has been trying to establish, to the anti-imperialist position of the Labor Party. When the Labor Party can, it defends feverishly the maintenance of imperial rule, as witness Palestine.

The retreat of the empire is due rather to the following factors: (1) the internal disintegration of British economy, partly described above; (2) the continued revolt of the restive colonial peoples under British rule; and (3) the ever-present, if not always visible, pressure of rival imperialism, the U. S. and Stalinist Russia, to take over its positions.

Yet if the formal empire structure is disintegrating, that does not by a long shot mean the end of British imperialism. Even if, for instance, the British finally do withdraw their governmental apparatus and armies from India, they will still dominate India's economic and thereby its political life, so long as a dependent capitalist economy continues to exist in India.

But the days of former "glory" are gone. The empire—and who can calculate how many millions of people it doomed to wretched lives and miserable slavery for the profit of The City—is falling away, as is capitalist society in general. That is no tragedy at all; quite the contrary. What is a tragedy is the fact that the government in Britain which tries so hard to patch up the empire, which, despite its piecemeal nationalization of industries, does its best to perpetuate British capitalism—the tragedy, we say, is that in the popular eye this government should be identified as socialist and labor.

Churchill may introduce motions of censure in the House of Commons and fume with rhetorical indignation, but there is little he could do to save his beloved empire which Attlee is not already doing. The structure is crumbling; the job of socialists is to make a clean sweep of it and construct a new, free society in its place.

The Wrangle Over China

PART II

During the war political necessity made mandatory the portrayal of the Kuomintang as a model democratic institution and invested its leader Chiang Kai-shek with an almost apostolic purity.

The new turn in Far Eastern events is causing the press to reveal a little of the real, and not ideological, Chiang Kai-shek and Kuomintang.

Actually, the Kuomintang, which forms the political base of the Chinese government, was never a democratic body. It was established in 1928, following the beheading of the revolutionary working class by Chiang Kai-shek, which brought to a close the period of revolutionary upsurge of the mid-twenties.

The Kuomintang is a highly bureaucratized party of some 3,400,000 members who represent the interests of the Chinese landlords, industrial capitalists, bankers and militarists. The influence of each of these groups within the government has varied according to the political situation. The whole Kuomintang, for instance, had a "left" caste during the period of the shaky alliance with the Communist Party in 1927 when the anti-imperialist struggle was at its height. During World War II the landlords were in the ascendant over the industrial capitalists and the bankers because of the loss of the latter's base in the urban areas in eastern China. But the overall character of the Kuomintang has remained constant for two decades insofar as the workers and peasants of China are concerned.

BENEATH THE PIETY

The London Economist, that acute organ of English capitalism, recently pointed out: "Washington would quite sincerely prefer a real democratic parliamentary system in which the Communists would have equal political rights with other parties. But there is no Parliament, there is no electorate; there is not even a reliable estimate of China's population, let alone such a thing as an electoral register. There are only armies and generals, politicians and party organizations, and beyond them the vast amorphous masses, millions of whom are at the moment suffering from famine."

Protecting this structure is a secret police recruited from the underworld, exercising the familiar and amply used powers of censorship, arrest, coercion, detention, and assassination. The Kuomintang is wormeaten with corruption; graft (there was trading with the Japanese across the lines during the war) carcerism (General Ho Peng-chu, recently reported captured and executed by the Stalinists, successfully served the Japanese during the war, the Kuomintang after the war, then the Stalinists, and lastly—once again the Kuomintang), bribery, close relations with gangsterdom, black marketing, etc.

Chiang himself is well qualified for the role of dictator-arbiter which he plays in China's internal and external relations. "His family," says Lattimore in his book 'Solution in Asia,' "came from that upper stratum of the farming class which is familiar with the outlook both of the landlord and of the tenant, and with business transactions as they are carried on by village merchants and money lenders."

He was for a time himself a broker and businessman in Shanghai. He graduated from Paotingfu, the first modern military academy in China. He later studied in Japan. In 1923 he was sent to Russia for political and military training. Upon his return he headed the Whampoa Military Academy, where officers of the new nationalist army were trained. Through his marriage he gained access to western capitalist circles.

His knowledge of the landlord-peasant question, the confidence he enjoyed among the military cliques within the Kuomintang, his experience in Japan, Russia and with the western capitalist powers permitted him to play a unique role of mediation and coercion which has over a long period of years succeeded in holding together the desperate elements of the Kuomintang.

DUAL NATURE OF KUOMINTANG

The Kuomintang is anti-imperialist only to a quite limited degree. Chinese capital is anti-imperialist only to the extent that it can wrest concessions from foreign capital and not wrest its own working class in doing so. "It rests heavily," the scholar Suhsdorf points out, "on foreign recognition and support, which it gets from every interested nation, including Russia."

This dependence, which is based, in actuality, almost solely upon the United States, has increased tremendously within the past decade. The dual character of the Kuomintang was very baldly revealed in a speech by Chiang Kai-shek on July 7, 1939: "Japan's invasion of China now enters its third year and becomes more vicious every day. It now assumes the added form of an anti-foreign movement calculated to drive all Occidental rights and interests from Asia. The Powers, if only in defense of their own rights, should take more positive action."

There are no serious forces opposing the policy of the Kuomintang within nationalist China. Despite heroic efforts by a handful of Trotskyists the revolutionary movement has been effectively crushed. Such opposition as exists is grouped within the Democratic League. It is composed of professors, students, and urban businessmen. Its line is determined in good part by sections of the capitalist class who are opposed to Chiang Kai-shek because of his close dependence upon the U. S., which inhibits the development of the native bourgeoisie; to the inflation, which has hindered the export trade; and to the governmental commercial monopolies, which exclude the capitalists from sure sources of profit.

To their criticisms Chiang Kai-shek has replied by winning over the conservative elements and by using threats and violence against the liberal wing. The very nature of their program precludes their winning over any substantial portion of the population.

The same applies especially to the Kuomintang. "Lacking a program that could enlist genuine popular support and fearing demands by the people for reform," states Lawrence K. Rosinger, "the right-wing leaders find it impossible, except as a matter of temporary maneuvering, to abandon the policy of civil war."

Editorials

Teachers and Trade Unions

As this issue of LABOR ACTION goes to press, the school teachers of Buffalo are preparing to go on strike in order to enforce their demand for a decent living wage. The inadequate wage scale of this country's teachers—see last week's LABOR ACTION for details—is by now common knowledge and it is unnecessary to repeat here the arguments in behalf of the teachers.

What interests us and what we find highly encouraging at the moment is the fact that the Buffalo teachers, despite a heavy barrage of propaganda and pressure against them, are resorting to the strike weapon. By this step the teachers of Buffalo are indicating in practice the truth of the Marxist idea that the place of such professional groups as teachers is by the side of the labor movement.

For a long time now, many American teachers have been fooled into believing that union organization was, somehow, "undignified" and that they, as teachers, should stand "above the battle." But their own bitter experience taught them that if they did not organize, they could not win any of their demands. Just as the newspaper reporters sweating for \$35 a week found that the pap about "journalistic dignity" was not a satisfactory substitute for organization into the American Newspaper Guild and through it united struggle for better working conditions, so the teachers are discovering the same truth.

Of course, there have been teachers' unions in existence for some time. But even in them the idea of "dignity" and "restraint" was until recently, powerful. Now the teachers, seeing that their wages remained stationary during a period of rising prices, while unionized workers were at least winning some wage increases to catch up to price jumps, have realized that they too must use the methods of unionism and its most powerful weapon—the strike.

Behind this fact there is a still more important idea. As capitalist society disintegrates further and economic conditions worsen, the salaried groups such as the teachers and the lower middle class groups such as small storekeepers feel the pinch most sharply. These groups in society—once so proud of their position of "independence"—now face the choice of disintegration or of taking their place besides the most militant and advanced sections of the working class in its struggle for socialism.

For though the working class is the most powerful and the indispensable group in society for the achievement of socialism, it requires in its struggle the alliance and aid of lower middle class elements. Socialism provides the answer not merely to the needs of workers, but to the needs of the oppressed and insecure of all strata of society.

"White Primary" in Georgia

The legislature of the sovereign state of Georgia, under the prodding of "governor" Herman Talmadge, has just passed a bill which will restrict the Democratic Party primaries to white people and thereby prevent Georgia's Negroes from voting. Since in Georgia the Democratic nomination means certain election to office, this bill in effect bars Negroes from any role in the electoral process.

According to this slicked-up bill, the Democratic Party of Georgia becomes a "private club" and thereby outside the jurisdiction of the U. S. Supreme Court, which recently ruled that Negroes cannot be barred from public primaries. Since Georgia is now to have "private" primaries, the way will be clear, chortle the Jim Crow reactionaries, to keep Negroes from the polls.

There are several important considerations which we wish to notice in connection with this bill.

Here again, in the rawest and most crude form, is Jim Crow rule at work. Let there be any doubt about it, the neighboring state of South Carolina had a lynching last week. It is the same pattern of rope and faggot, of terror and nightshirts, of ignorance and prejudice.

All of the talk about the South gradually changing is so much eyewash. The Southern capitalists, their political accomplices and the masses of misled whites whose minds have been poisoned with prejudice, continue in their Jim Crow way. The action of the Georgia legislature juts through all the whitewash which the newspapers have been trying to apply to the South.

But there is an even more interesting aspect to this case. As you know, many of the soft-brained Northern liberals have been turning cartwheels of delight about the so-called Southern liberals led by former Governor Ellis Arnall. But take a glance at what his followers did in connection with the "white primary bill." The New York Times of February 20 reports that they "had sought consideration of a substitute measure which would have kept state primary laws in effect but would have required vote registrants to undergo

educational examinations if they could not produce proof of having received high school or college degrees."

In other words, Arnall's boys were against the Talmadge bill but not, mind you, because they believe Negroes should be allowed to vote in Georgia. They just want to bar Negroes by more subtle means: "educational examinations" if they don't have high school or college degrees. Since only a tiny minority of Georgia Negroes are able to finish high school or college, that means most would have to take those "educational examinations." And everyone knows what they'd be used for.

It reminds us of the pointed story about the highly educated Negro who appeared before an Alabama Board of Elections and asked to be given a ballot. They gave him a "literacy test" first. They asked him to read selections in English, French, German, Latin and Greek. As it happened, he was a scholar and read all of them fluently. When they gave him a passage in Chinese and asked him what it meant, he turned around and bitterly replied: "It says here that Negroes can't vote in Alabama."

And Georgia too. The Talmadges and the Arnalls may quarrel among themselves, but they agree on one thing: perpetuation of Jim Crow.

Two Specialists on Free Speech Split an Ethical Hair

"Gen. Mark W. Clark of the United States and Fedor T. Gusev of Russia engaged in a verbal sparring match at today's meeting of the Foreign Ministers' deputies, with General Clark declaring that freedom of speech did not exist in Russia and Mr. Gusev protesting the 'allegations.'"

"The differences arose as the deputies considered a treaty clause that would forbid Austria to unite politically with Germany and would prohibit propaganda designed to bring about such unity."

"United States sources said General Clark had told Mr. Gusev that the Austrian treaty should prohibit 'Pan-German propaganda aiming at political or economic union with Germany.'"

"Mr. Gusev objected. He said all Pan-German propaganda, whatever its aim, should be prohibited."

New York Times (Feb. 12, 1947)

Books You Should Know...

BLACK BOY, by Richard Wright. World Publishing Co. \$1.00.

Reviewed by N. JOHNSTONE

Richard Wright's bestseller published in 1945 is as pertinent today as when it first appeared. It will continue to remain so, as long as there is such a thing as the "South."

Wright has put down in first person narrative the experiences and the background which spawned UNCLE TOM'S CHILDREN, NATIVE SON and TWENTY MILLION BLACK VOICES. The stark, cold, hard hitting impact of his book is brought to mind whenever we witness an injustice perpetrated upon his people. Even in the North where the Negro is supposed to enjoy much more freedom, peace of mind and equality, the price he pays for having been born a Negro is inconceivable to anyone who can't live that life himself. This would appear to be the strongest reason for having such a book; to remind us that all is not as it should be. God definitely is not in his heaven, and all is not right with the world.

Beginning with his first conscious moments in Natchez, Wright takes us through the evolution of his life. The problems, the feelings, the yearnings, the differences of opinion in his own race as pertain to meeting the white man and what his attitude should be toward him, are all set forth. This is not a book begging for tolerance or special attention. It is a defiant book, a book that calls us back from the complacency of everyday life, that should arouse us from our lethargy and smug superiority, a book that gives us a conscience. It is a book that every Negro would probably write were he endowed with Richard Wright's talents.

Scenes of his childhood, where the colored children go about chanting ribald songs at the expense of another minority, the Jews, is significant.

"Red, White and Blue
Your pa was a Jew,
Your ma was a Dago.
What the hell are you?"

The tragic situation of minority fighting minority when they should all be in the fight together in gaining equal rights here reaches its clearest manifestations.

Wright wasn't accepted as being representative of his race. Other Negroes

looked upon him as someone apart, an expression of their own defiant attitude, which when voiced, was regretted, for it was actions such as this that heaped further calumnies on their heads. Indicative of his formulative stages is a story he wrote and published. THE VOODOO OF HELL'S HALF ACRE was a belligerent outcry upon customs taken as eternal truths. His mother, his uncle, his grandmother all had forebodings for his future. They were made uneasy even though he expressed their sentiments. Abjectness and self-inflicted discipline were the only path they could follow if they were to live in peace and comparative safety.

Wright goes from job to job, literally scores of them, only to be fired or quit. The most ignorant white instinctively knows he isn't dealing with an obsequious Negro. He is a militant, and even in striving to hide his feelings his intense hatred for the oppressing class radiates from him. When he finally breaks through the South, his employer chides him for leaving. What does he expect to accomplish by going North? Banalities and platitudes are preached about the erroneous conception of utopia in the North. The librarian is envious of him and calls Wright a "lucky bastard." Wright correctly

replies that there will only be new problems to face. To live in the South, he maintains, he would have to "remain in his place."

On the last page of the book he proclaims his credo:

"... Yet, deep down, I knew that I could never really leave the South, for my feelings had already been formed by the South, for they had been slowly instilled into my personality and consciousness, black though I was, the culture of the South. So, in leaving, I was taking a part of the South to transplant in alien soil, to see if it could grow differently, if it could drink of new and cooling rains, bend in strange winds, respond to the warmth of other suns, and perhaps, to bloom. . . . And if that miracle ever happened, then I would know that there was yet hope in that southern swamp of despair and violence, that light could emerge even out of the blackest of the southern night. I would know that the South too could overcome its fear, its hates, its cowardice, its heritage of guilt and blood, its burden of anxiety and compulsive cruelty. . . ."

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Great Britain: Its Dying Capitalist Economy Staggers Under the Impact of the American Dollar

By HENRY JUDD

"We are fighting our way step by step through a snowdrift of difficulties, which seems to heap up again in front of us just when we think that we are making good progress."—Hugh Dalton, Chancellor of the Exchequer.

The slogan put forward by British capitalism in its present crisis is the familiar one of "Export or Die!" The severity of the present difficulties is revealed most acutely by the fact that Britain's export drive has now come to a full stop, inasmuch as any expansion is concerned. But that export program not only must be resumed but, according to the Labor government's White Paper of last week, must be increased. In 1947 it is proposed to export 140 per cent MORE THAN in the pre-war year of 1938! It is freely admitted that such an effort will require an intensification of Britain's Spartan-like life for the masses of people.

Harder and longer work, more restrictions in the use of various necessities (gas, electricity, smoking stuff, etc.), a continuation of the present food and electricity rationing, even less consumers' goods, efforts to introduce piecework, speed-up production methods in the factories. These are some of the things in store for England's workers, as candidly acknowledged in the government's White Paper.

Britain staggers along under the sign of the American dollar. Over the declining islands hovers the Almighty American dollar, the necessity for whose accumulation is, more than any other single factor, responsible for these reactionary measures of the White Paper. In 1947, England exports a deficit of \$1,400,000,000 in imports over exports. England must get these dollars to cover that deficit; it can only get them by exporting and exporting—that is, squeezing its 40,000,000 people even tighter. This is the White Paper. This is the meaning of "Export or Die!"

Britain is a country that exports manufactured products—machinery, textiles, finished steel and

electrical products, etc. Behind its factories stands the driving force of power—in England, COAL. The coal crisis is, then, a decisive and almost fatal factor in the problem of increased exports. If coal is not forthcoming in proper amounts, then industry cannot run and exports will drop. The drive to accumulate the American dollar will fail.

But no industry in England is sicker than the coal industry! There are many reasons for this. It is an industry suffering all the decrepitudes of old age; it is worn out. There are too many small mines producing inefficiently and at high costs; there is not enough new machinery (or, for that matter, any kind of machinery!) being employed in the operating mines; few mines use conveyors for hauling the coal from the mine faces to the pit-head; very little coal is mined by drills and other machine devices—the ancient system of the hand-pick is most prevalent; the old rope hauling, of coal, as contrasted with American conveyor system, continues, side by side with the pit-pony pulling the cars containing the coal. Loading, weighing, checking, sorting—in a word, all the operations connected with the coal industry—are backward and inefficient. It is estimated that \$500,000,000 would be needed to bring the industry up to American standards. Furthermore, the coal mines themselves are getting exhausted; the veins are becoming smaller and narrower, requiring the use of more labor power and time to keep up production.

But the British Labor government, instead of taking the problem directly in hand and turning over its solution to the coal miners themselves, chose to follow the designs and wishes of the former owners; those directly responsible for the present plight. It took over the mines at their face capital value, issued billions in state bonds to these mine operators and is now paying them off at the rate of 2½ per cent interest per annum on these same bonds! All this, it goes without saying, for doing nothing. The masses of English peo-

ple must pay these interest charges and, ultimately, must pay for the bonds themselves, when they finally mature.

LIVING STANDARDS LOW

On top of this, the Labor government has miserably failed the miners over the issue of improving their living conditions, and their desire to obtain a greater proportion of England's products. There has been no wage increase, no building program in the miners' areas, no inducements to make the miners willing to work more effectively (actually, there has been a drop in the productivity of the individual miner). He has simply been called upon to work harder and longer, in the name of a vague "patriotism" and nationalism. As if the miner, the most class-conscious and advanced of the English working class, cannot see through all that talk! Neither the current labor shortage in the mines; nor the fact that 50 per cent of the miners are in the old-age brackets; nor the fact that the youth refuse to enter the mines for good and substantial reasons—none of these facts can be offset by appeals to patriotism. The miners see that the nationalization of the mines has been, in reality, a fraud and they feel little or no inducement to expand their energies in a hopeless effort.

To this fraudulent nationalization program of the Labor government, the Trotskyists of Great Britain, organized in the Revolutionary Communist Party, have counterposed two simple but essential ideas:

- (1) No compensation to the former owners for the nationalized mines, but the utilization of the profits made in the industry for improving the living and working conditions of the miners, and for the real modernization of the industry.
 - (2) The operation and control and management of the nationalized coal industry by the workers themselves, under the direction of their own committees and their own elected leaders.
- This is the socialist answer to the crisis, to the failure of the British Labor government.

Nationalization is Necessary But Not Enough for Socialism

By STANLEY GREY

A regular assignment for capitalist columnists and editorial writers these days is to dress up England as a scarecrow with which to frighten workers away from socialism. These prosecuting attorneys of socialism seize every opportunity to pass judgment on the theory of socialism by pointing up the failures of its "practice" in England. The recent grave crisis in coal production, which returned wartime conditions to England, was the occasion for a regular campaign on the inherent weakness of socialism and the supreme virtues of private competitive capitalism.

The capitalist refrain follows this pattern: "Britain is socialist; it has a socialist leadership and has nationalized some industries and plans to nationalize still more. Socialism has not been able to pull England out of its crisis. In fact, the crisis deepens, workers suffer more than ever before, they are asked to work harder for the same wages, their rations are reduced. The chronic and insoluble crisis of British production 'proves' the failure of socialism. American workers should therefore be grateful that they live in a capitalist society, which, with all its imperfections, is still the best of all possible societies."

IS BRITAIN SOCIALIST?

For the choristers of capitalism to sing such a tune is to be expected. Equally to be expected is that their "arguments" are less a scientific examination of the British economic system than an attack upon a false notion of socialism in order to defend a decrepit capitalism. Their argument begins where it should end. It starts off by saying that Britain is socialist and then concludes that socialism is as bankrupt as Britain. For their attack on socialism to be valid, they must first PROVE that the system in Britain really IS socialism. This they do not do and this they cannot do. For England is neither socialist nor is it traveling in the direction of socialism.

It is reasonable to ask: does not the Labor Party CALL itself socialist? That it does, easily and readily and any day in the week. But words are cheap, as the editorialists of the capitalist press know. If people or move-

The tendency toward increasing nationalization—that is, state ownership of the means of production—in certain European capitalist countries has raised many questions in peoples' minds. Does this mean socialism? Does it mean the end of capitalism?

We Marxists have contended that nationalization of the basic means of production in this or that individual industry does not mean that capitalism has been abolished or that the workers have achieved socialism. In England, for instance, individual industries have been nationalized as a means of helping private capitalism as a whole. And in none of these nationalized industries have the old capitalists been expropriated; they have on the contrary been given regular interest-bearing bonds. In none of them, too, have the workers actually taken over control; they have merely acquired somewhat new masters.

The article we print here begins a series of discussions on the tendencies toward nationalization in Europe. These articles, which will appear in succeeding issues of LABOR ACTION, will discuss such matters as nationalization in England; nationalization in Russia; the difference between nationalization under a capitalist government and the economic policy of a genuine socialist government, etc. Reader comment is invited.—Ed.

ments were accepted for what they CLAIMED to be, then a Bilbo would be a democrat or a Hitler would be a socialist. It is not what the British Labor Party claims to be but what it IS that is important, and the way to discover what it really is to examine what it has done.

Let us put aside the fact that the Labor Party calls itself socialist and examine just what it is that has DONE to earn the name. The ONLY thing that has been accomplished that might be of a socialistic character is the nationalization of some industries. In some spheres of production, private ownership has become government ownership. Now that is a fact. But it still does not make it socialism or even the beginning of socialism. Why?

Is the mere state ownership of some industries socialism? If it is, then—

Germany in the 1870s and 1880s was socialist because Bismarck instituted a complete system of nationalized state railways;

Poland, before the war with its anti-Russian government was socialist because in it about 60 per cent of heavy industry was nationalized;

Turkey is socialist because the government owns the entire metallurgical and mining industries, finance and transport;

Japan was socialist because the state was an active partner in some of the major industries;

Argentina is going socialist because Dictator Peron is setting up

state-owned industries and five-year plans.

Other examples could be given. The point to note is that nationalization of industry on a scale far exceeding that in England has taken place in many different countries at different times. Poland had about 60 per cent of its heavy industry nationalized. Turkey has nationalized the entire metallurgical and mining industries, finance and transport. And England, even when the Labor Party COMPLETES its nationalization program, will have nationalized only 20 per cent of its industry.

No one would dream of calling Turkey, Argentina, Japan, pre-war Poland socialist governments. Why, therefore, is England a socialist government? Is not that equally absurd? For if the only claim of England to socialism is its nationalized industries, it has less nationalization than prevails in non-socialist Turkey.

The simple truth is that although socialism is BASED on nationalized property, nationalization by itself is not socialism. Nationalization eliminates private ownership of the means of production, but it is PRO-WORKING CLASS only insofar as it replaces the rule of the capitalists by the rule of the working class. But nationalization does NOT NECESSARILY mean the rule of the working class. Why this is so, what the meaning of nationalization is, what is its relation to socialism, will be dealt with in future articles.

A Contrast: Lenin's Method and Attlee's

By J. R. JOHNSON

The British are in mortal trouble with their "socialist" experiment. The cold spell paralyzed the weakened, creaking economy and the Labour Government has been exposed to the world.

The crisis was there long before the cold spell. Major source of Britain's fuel is coal—and the plain truth of the matter is that the British miners do not want to work in the mines anymore. The miserable wages, the primitive conditions of life, the backwardness of the mechanical organization of coal production, the lack of safety devices, the gloomy, pitiless, monotonous labor—against this the miners were rebell-

ing even before the end of the war. Now the older ones are tired and the younger ones do not want to stay in the mining areas.

How deep is this sentiment is proved by the following. Princess Elizabeth was invited to the last Eisteddfod—one of the great singing festivals of the world and a national expression of the life of the Welsh people. The British cabinet, conscious of the hostility of the Welsh miners, decided to use the occasion for some propaganda. Inserted in Princess Elizabeth's speech was a passage to the effect that the Welsh miners, who in the past had always shown such sterling qualities, could be depended upon to stand by the nation in its crisis, etc., etc. Not one single paper in Wales printed the passage.

The British people are, alas, tolerant of royalty and capitalists own newspapers in Wales as elsewhere. But the miners and the whole population are embittered by generations of exploitation and social degradation. They are sick of it, and "nationalization" does not impress them.

THE NATIONALIZED MINES

But isn't the property nationalized? Isn't private profit abolished? Shouldn't things therefore flow smoothly and the benefits of the "new system" be immediately obvious? New system indeed!

We shall show where there was a new system. Russia, in 1918, had an economic crisis to which Britain's cold spell is minor. The whole economy had broken down and the country was in the grip of civil war. This is how the infant Soviet State survived.

On June 27, 1918, Lenin spoke to

the Fourth Conference of Trade Unions and Factory Committees of Moscow. His first words were:

"Comrades, you all know, of course, of the great disaster that has befallen our country, namely, famine." After explaining the causes of the famine he called upon the people. A grain monopoly was needed. Capitalism still existed in Russia. "But . . . in order to assure that every surplus food of grain is transferred to the state, prolonged, difficult and hard, organizational work must be carried on, not by organizers, not by agitators, but by the masses themselves."

Lenin gave the responsibility to the masses themselves, and above all the workers. "The rural poor must be roused, educated and shown that the Soviet government will do all it possibly can to help them so as to carry out the grain monopoly . . . if the workers learn to solve these problems independently—for no one will come to their aid—if they learn to unite the village poor around themselves, they will achieve victory, they will have bread and the proper distribution of bread, they will even have the proper distribution of labor, because by distributing labor properly we shall be supreme in all spheres of labor, in all spheres of industry."

That is how Russia was saved. It is true that Attlee calls upon the British people to help. Even Winston Churchill announced a "blood, sweat and tears" program. But under Churchill, as under Attlee, the whole monstrous bureaucracy of capitalism stifles the creative energies of the people. Yet it was on this energy and creative capacity of the masses that Lenin depended.

"Your factory committees must cease to be merely factory committees, they must become the fundamental state nuclei of the ruling class."

If Attlee said that his whole cabinet would split into half a dozen parts.

"Your organization, your solidarity, your energy will determine whether we shall hold out in this severe transitional period. . . . Take up this work yourselves, take it up from every side, expose abuses every day. Rectify every mistake that is committed with your own experience. Many mistakes are committed today because the working class is still inexperienced, but the important thing is that it should itself take up this work and rectify its own mistakes. If we act in this way, if every committee understands that it is one of the leaders of the greatest revolution in the world—then we shall achieve socialism for the whole world."

Russia overcame the crisis—that and many others. That is the way and the only way to solve the economic crisis of Britain. The British working class is one of the most highly developed in the world. It is bureaucracy and the whole capitalist bureaucratic apparatus which still sits on its back, despite the labor government. The Welsh people and the British will organize and modernize their coal industry and achieve results which will astonish the world. But that will only be when the great body of the nation administers the economy and the workers themselves control production. That is the only true socialism and any thing else is a mockery and a disaster for the people.

British Unions Attack Stafford Cripps For Opposing Labor Control of Industry

By JACK ARTHURSON

LONDON, Jan. 23—A Bristol Trades Council meeting on January 16 refused to accept a letter from Sir Stafford Cripps, Labor Party leader and president of the Board of Trade, in which he tried to clarify his October 27 remarks that workers were not sufficiently experienced or qualified to take over and manage industry. Since the press was accused of misquoting Sir Stafford, the Trades Council had asked him to state his views, which were read at the meeting.

Sir Stafford declared that "the Labor Party did not believe in workers' control as such. It was a fact that there were not today enough trade unionists with experience of managerial functions."

Out of his experience in seeking unionists for "working parties" (investigating bodies in an industry), Sir Stafford said it is difficult to get qualified men when "those who are qualified are already, most of them, hopelessly overworked on their own trade union affairs and just cannot be spared."

In conclusion, Sir Stafford wrote this "does not indicate a lack of confidence in the workers but does entail putting into vital and important jobs which may affect the livelihood of thousands of workers, people with knowledge and with proper qualifications."

Bristol's Trades Council promptly refused to accept the letter.

Sir Stafford's argument is, if anything, worse than his October 27 remarks that workers are not qualified to run industry. At first blush he appears to be declaring what an ordinary employer tells a new hand asking for his first job: "We can't hire you because you don't have any experience." Workers have replied to this: "If you don't hire me, how can I get the experience?"

WORKERS LEFT OUT

Far from permitting workers to get experience in management or any kind of control in industry, Labor Party leaders, despite Sir Stafford's letter, have excluded workers from participation in industrial management or control.

In the structure of the nationalized Bank of England no workers or bank employees were introduced onto the 16-man court or board of directors. Where the former court's 24 directors

had represented "moneyed interests of the city and industrial corporations in the provinces" (New Statesman and Nation, Oct. 20, 1945), the new court consists of practically the same bankers who continue to represent London and provincial moneyed interests and industrial corporations.

In the organization of the National Coal Board, nearly all leading positions were given to top leaders of the coal industry. Lord Hyndley, chairman, himself a leading coal capitalist, selected his assistants almost exclusively from the board of directors of coal companies. (Daily Graphic, Sept. 13, 1946.) Of 23 appointments to regional boards, all key positions except for chairman go to coal company directors.

An outstanding feature of the coal bill "is the absence of any provision for control by the workers other than through their representative or representatives on the board. In this it differs notably from the coal nationalization bill introduced under, though not by, the socialist government of 1924" (Daily Telegraph, Dec. 21, 1945).

Under the 1924 bill, ten members of the Council would have been appointed by the government and ten by the mine unions. "In the present measure the extent and authority of the pit production committees, for example, appear to lie at the sole discretion of the board, and anything in the nature of 'joint control,' if not excluded, is neither prescribed nor even mentioned" (Daily Telegraph, Dec. 21, 1945). Toward miner participation in control, contrary to 1924 proposals and to Sir Stafford's letter, the Labor government has taken the same attitude as Robert Foot of the mine owners, said the Daily Telegraph.

NO WORKERS' CONSULTATION

In addition, the bill marks "the abandonment by the Socialists of their former idea of direct administration by a government department on the lines of the Post Office. What we have here is a public utility corporation managed by a board of nine responsible to the relevant Minister" (Daily Telegraph, Dec. 21, 1945). This board has broad powers and makes its own decisions, without consulting mine workers.

Ideas that the "pit production committees" mean the workers will "take a direct part in the management of

the industry" (Bruce Bliven, New Republic, Dec. 1, 1945) are seriously mistaken. No part of the coal bill, nor of the structure of the National Coal Board and its regional boards, has altered coal company capitalists' control over production.

The Economist declared, "it was frequently assumed by some of the critics of the Labor Party that nationalization of the coal mines would mean dictation by the miners' union. The text of the coal bill itself belied this view" (Feb. 19, 1946). Far from "dictation" over the coal industry, the miners' union has accepted the same coal capitalists on the national and regional coal boards.

Instead of attempting to introduce workers into management, the Labor Party has done the opposite. It is important to note that "although the bill provides for a consumers' council, it does not make similar provision for a workers' advisory council" (The Economist, Feb. 19, 1945). In every legal way the coal miner has been excluded from any voice in control or management of nationalized industry; and it may be said that the old coal capitalists have actually been reinforced by Labor Party measures.

It is no wonder that the Bristol Trades Council rejected Sir Stafford Cripps' letter of January 16.

The entire incident in which the evil that one man spoke lived to haunt him reveals the departure from Labor Party programs and actions of the old demand for "the progressive elimination from the control of industry of the private capitalist" (Labor and the New Social Order, 1918, p. 12).

"Progressive elimination" has turned out to be permanent retention of the private capitalist at the helm of industry from which he continues to receive the same profits on his state stock holdings, guaranteed by the Labor Party in perpetuity. What the Labor Party formerly called the "dictatorship of private capitalists in industry" is continued by Labor Party "nationalization."

Where the Labor Party formerly declared it is the skilled workers—engineers, technicians, experts—who run industry for the capitalist, today Sir Stafford says, "Ain't so. Capitalists, once pictured as inefficient and incompetent, have suddenly become leaders of industry."

In rejecting Sir Stafford's letter, the Bristol Trades Council may have begun to participate in however small a measure in the growing worker objection to Labor Party "nationalization" which has reinforced the private capitalist and continued the subordination of worker to capitalist at the point of production.

Wanted! Marxist Literature In the German Language!

We have an urgent request from German socialists and workers for Marxist literature in the German language. We are therefore appealing to any of our readers who may have any of the writings of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Trotsky, Luxemburg, Liebknecht, etc.—be they books or pamphlets—to please contribute these works for a worthwhile purpose. Send them to

LABOR ACTION
4 Court Square, Long Island City 1, N. Y.

and we shall forward them to the proper hands.

The Labor Action Sunday Forum:

ETHEL GOLDWATER
Author of "The Independent Woman—A New Course"
"Do Women Want Independence?"
March 2 — 8:30 P. M.

ERNEST ERBER
Education Director, Workers Party
"Marxism and Moral Values"
March 9 — 8:30 P. M.

PARKER TYLER
Poet, Critic, Editor of "View"
"Hollywood Hallucination—An Examination of American Movies"
March 16 — 8:30 P. M.

Admission: 50 Cents — Series of Four: \$1.50
ALL LECTURES AT 114 WEST 14TH STREET, NEW YORK CITY

GPU Agents Masquerade as Life-Long Revolutionists

Who Heads the Stalinist Quisling Government in Poland?

By A. RUDZIENSKI

STALINIST propaganda is trying to present the present Warsaw government as a "democratic" and "socialist" government headed by veteran Communists and Socialists against whom the reaction fights precisely because of their political past. This affirmation is a cynical political fairy tale.

In order to arrive at the complete domination of Poland through the Warsaw government, Stalin was compelled to annihilate three successive leaderships of the Polish Communist Party (CPP); first, the old Luxemburgists and Trotskyists; secondly, the right wing "Majorityites" and thirdly, Stalin's own clique imposed by him in 1930. Thus the painful labor of almost 80 years of Polish revolutionary socialism was destroyed, as were also the principal figures of the Polish labor movement, the old and experienced teachers of the Marxist movement.

However, the annihilation of the Communist Party did not suffice. There still existed an old reformist-socialist party, but with a glorious revolutionary past going back to Czarist times. Behind the cover of the Popular Front, Stalinism tried to infect and corrupt this other working class party in order to annihilate it. The Socialists showed more resistance than the Communists, since they did not share a common past with the Russian Bolsheviks and consequently had not been caught up in the process of degeneration that had taken hold of the Russian Revolution. Neither before the war nor during the period of occupation was the GPU capable of dominating the Polish labor movement, which was grouped around the Polish Socialist Party (PPS).

RESISTANCE MOVEMENT RUN BY SOCIALISTS AND UNIONS

Like the nationalist right wing, the Socialists remained on the fringe of the resistance, whose backbone was the workers' movement, led by the

PPS and supported by the Communist oppositionists and the illegal unions. The workers, led by the Warsaw organization of the PPS and the unions, constituted the striking arm of the Warsaw uprising. This fact explains the main reason for the Stalinist hatred of the Polish underground and the Warsaw insurrection. In order to install a Stalinist puppet régime in Poland it was necessary to annihilate this insurrection.

The present régime came to power over the cadaver of the CPP and the Socialist and petty bourgeois underground; it came on the bayonets of Russian imperialism. To speak, therefore, of the socialist character of the régime is a bloody jest at the expense of the Polish and international proletariat, a jest that can be permitted only the "court jester" of Stalinism, Harold Laski.

When the first outposts of Stalin's conquering army passed the Bug line, there had already been conducted in the provincial city of Chełm the infamous Lublin Committee, headed by Boleslaw Beirut and Osobka-Morawski. In this committee, three groups were already distinguishable: (1) the old officialdom of the GPU; (2) the "intellectuals," petty bourgeois poisoned by Stalinism, without revolutionary past and theoretical background, who had fought the Russian Revolution in the days of its glory, and "discovered" it after the Stalinist purges; (3) the old reactionaries, ardent collaborators of Pilsudski and, worse still, of the colonels, hangmen of the revolutionary workers' movement, enthusiasts of Mussolini and Hitler, nationalists and anti-Semites, organizers of pogroms against old Jews (against the robust Jewish workers of Warsaw, these gentry never dared make a move nor did they ever have the courage to penetrate the Jewish north side of Warsaw).

This, therefore, is the political and social character of the Warsaw régime; the GPU spies, Stalinist political gangsters; the naive petty bourgeois "fellow-travelers," cowardly opportunists; and the reactionaries of "pure blood and noble coat of arms."

Who are the people at the head of the present Stalinist puppet government in Poland? Do they have a part in the great revolutionary movement of Poland, or are they mere officials of the GPU created by Stalin?

These were the questions LABOR ACTION addressed to its special correspondent on Polish affairs, A. Rudzienski, whose exclusive dispatches on the subject have been unrivalled in the American press for wealth of information and depth of Marxist analysis. The adjoining article is his answer to the above questions. Too long for publication in one issue, his article will be completed next week.

Let us now examine the individuals in this government:

Boleslaw Beirut, "Puppet President" of Poland, cryptonym derived from his two police pseudonyms, Bienkowski and Rutkowski. He is the assassin of 10,000 Polish prisoners at Katyn. In his youth he belonged to the Social Democracy without playing any role. After the Russian Revolution, he passed into the service of the GPU and travelled the road of police degeneration. He became chief of the Polish GPU. When Stalin had won definitive control of the CPP he sent into it a group of GPU officials in order to "consolidate" the organization. This group was headed by Beirut. When the "consolidation" failed to satisfy Stalin, the "consolidator," Beirut, became the hangman and assassin of his comrades. Beirut never distinguished himself by any programmatic or theoretical work; he never presented any political platform. For him, the police criterion of Beria and the other Stalinist hangmen was sufficient. Thus he won the confidence of Stalin, who named him "president" of Poland.

THE "GRAY EMINENCE" OF POLISH STALINISM

Henrykowski - Amsterdam, "gray eminence" of the régime, of whom it is whispered that he is Stalin's direct "courier." He hardly belongs to the old guard. He came to the Communist Party from the Jewish Poale Zion and through his talent for intrigue converted himself into a "person of importance." Because of his cynicism and jesuitism, he has been called the "Pope of the left." He supported the Stalinist ultra-left turn of 1929-31, but later managed none the less to become a "consolidator." He managed to save himself from all the purges, betraying his companions in the process. He is insolent, cynical and totally lacking in character. He is capable of committing the greatest infamies without fear or shame.

Catherine II, famous for her unrestrained love affairs with the officials of the Palace guard, forced the election of her ex-lover, Poniatowski as King of Poland, "guaranteeing the golden liberties of the Polish nobility." Stalin surpassed Catherine by naming his police agent as the president of the "democratic and independent Poland."

Wladyslaw Gomułka, vice-premier of the cabinet, is a mediocre bureaucrat of worker origin, who began his political career as late as 1929-30 among the oil workers, who lost a strike and with it the local Communist Party and the union. In spite of

this defeat and his theoretical nullity, he rose rapidly in the Stalinist hierarchy and became a member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Western Ukraine (KPZU). Afterward, in the period of "consolidation," when the comrades of Rosa Luxemburg and Lenin, were isolated, slandered and assassinated, Gomułka rose to be a "leader" of the Polish proletariat by Stalin's grace. It is he who is the author of the current "strong" course against the workers and peasants, the instigator of Stalinist totalitarianism in Poland against the opposition.

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Hilary Minc, Minister of Industry, hardly represents the old stock of the CPP. He came to communism from the Jewish Bund. He belonged to the rightist "majority," but when the latter had been defeated, adapted himself to the "consolidation" and later on to the régime of the GPU.

As his reward, he received his puppet ministry. We must recognize that he is the most honorable of the Stalinists and does what he can to reconstruct Poland. In his time he was an honorable, self-sacrificing revolutionary, although somewhat inclined toward opportunism. This was the characteristic, no doubt, which saved him from the purges.

Radkiewicz, Minister of the "Biezpieka" (Security Guard), real boss of Poland, hangman of the striking workers, the opposition Socialists and the rebellious peasants. Author of the anti-Semitic pogroms in Lodz, Krakow and Kielce. He has no past in the CPP, is a professional police agent, an official of the GPU, a White Russian who can hardly disguise himself as a Pole, a "Pop" (the name for Russians who "fulfill the duties of a Pope").

Radkiewicz is the hangman of the Polish underground, he is the author

and executor together with Beirut of the massacre of 15,000 Polish prisoners of war in Katyn and Starobielsk. He has publicly admitted the figure of 80,000 prisoners in Poland, a country of 23,000,000 inhabitants. He is the chief of the powerful army of the "Biezpieka," which reaches the number of 300,000 men. He has the power of life and death over Poland.

At his order, the peasant political are assassinated. At his order, thousands of people disappear into the

night, swallowed in the darkness like stones in water. At his order, the election lists of Mikolajczyk's Peasant Party were prohibited in eight districts and thousands upon thousands of workers and peasants seized. Radkiewicz stays in the shadows, for he is the most hated figure in the Warsaw régime, "the hangman of Poland."

These are the principal figures of the régime, the "revolutionaries" admired by the charlatan, Harold Laski. (To be continued)

Ellis Arnall - -

(Continued from page 3)

of runner-up to North Carolina for the title of 'most progressive southern state.' His reforms read like an agenda for half a century of liberal crusading, but they are all on the books in operation."

The New York Herald Tribune congratulated him and urged similar action in the seven other poll tax states.

Such a lot of praise for a little man whose chief asset has been a great talent for representing the interests of the bourgeoisie in such a way as to "send" the liberals.

ARNALL'S TRUE PORTRAIT: THE JIM CROW ARTIST

Actually, Arnall is just a cracker with a coat of varnish.

When the U. S. Supreme Court in April, 1944, nullified the "white primary" in Texas, Arnall disavowed the high court's ruling giving the Negro the right to participate in the primaries. Said Arnall, "the court's decision is a blow to liberalism."

As the sketch in CURRENT BIOGRAPHY makes clear, "Arnall upholds the traditional Southern system of segregation."

Says Arnall, "Segregation is conducive to the welfare of both the white and colored races. We of the South do not believe in social equality with the Negro. The important thing for the Negro is not social

equality but economic equality, the right to work and earn a decent living."

Arnall is going to help him get this right, by striving to keep him a social pariah.

Arnall has sternly opposed the government's gesture to guarantee such economic equality through an FEPC, a law for fair employment practices and against barring a person from a job because of his race, creed or color. Arnall rejected the mild FEPC as "unworkable," and as "an irritant to harmonious race relations."

As John Chamberlain observed in Life Magazine, "Somehow Arnall manages to run with the possum and hunt with the hounds in balancing a concern for New Deal rights with the white primary and segregation of the races. Arnall's concern with the common man is more of the head than of the heart and he is a little contemptuous of people like Pepper and Wallace who 'get themselves tagged.' Arnall combines old things in a curious mixture that makes him seem new. Every facet of his political character is in an ancient southern tradition."

Arnall is only a New Dealer with a southern accent. New Dealism, which is already dying in our generation, was that new style of hypocrisy in the long capitalist depression which the recent war interrupted. To make meaningless concessions to the workers, to keep the machinery of oppression intact, to encourage divisions among the oppressed, to talk liberal and act reactionary, to occasionally bait the rich publicly while acting in their interests at all times—that was the New Deal.

As I write this, word comes that Governor Herman Talmadge, one of Georgia's governors, has signed a new white primary law which makes the Democratic Party in effect a private club whose acts are not subject to review by federal courts. By this means, the primary law sought to get around the Supreme Court ruling that Negroes are entitled to vote in all primaries.

Also comes word that President Truman has just offered Arnall the job as chief of the Justice Department's anti-trust division, the position which Wendell Burge vacated a few days ago.

Though Arnall supported Henry Wallace at the 1944 Democratic National Convention, Truman and Arnall have no difficulty in reaching an understanding. Earlier, Truman had offered the ex-governor the solicitor generalship. But Arnall has high ambitions and wants a job more fitting to his talents.

Says Mrs. Arnall: "Politics is sham and hypocrisy," to which her politically successful husband murmurs, "She's absolutely right."

The Story of Jim Crow in Los Angeles - V

We herewith conclude the pamphlet written for the Los Angeles campaign by Hal Draper, candidate of the Workers Party in the Third Ward.

The Communist Party Sell-Out

Can we look to the Communist Party to lead the fight?

To many people the Stalinist CP is a puzzle. On the one hand, they remember when the CP used to lead militant struggles like the defense of the Scottsboro boys. On the other hand, more and more Negroes in latter years have been disillusioned as they realize that Uncle Joe Stalin's boys use the Negro question only as a football, as it suits their changes in line.

During the war, for example, the CP line was "National unity" for the war and soft-pedal the Negro fight. No "fuss" that might "divide the home front." So in the CIO here they voted down resolutions of protest against Jim Crow in the armed forces; they gave up their organization in the South; they liquidated their "National Negro Congress" in Los Angeles and elsewhere; they denounced the March-on-Washington movement because it was too militant. It was a policy of lying down and keeping mum just when the powers-that-be were most afraid of Negro discontent.

This sell-out line of the Stalinists wasn't confined to the Negro fight. The CP was telling ALL labor to play dead, not to strike, let itself be kicked around, for the sake of the war.

The key to this "puzzle" is really very simple. The CP line-changers are interested in only one thing: What helps Stalinist Russia's world policy at the moment?

During the Stalin-Hitler alliance, Russia was hostile to American imperialism because it was allied with the Axis. So—the Stalinists here went all out for militancy, to weaken the American war machine in the interests of the Axis. Then Russia became an ally of American capitalism, and the Stalinists here followed suit. So—the line was "no trouble," "national unity," no strikes. Today Russian imperialism and Wall Street imperialism are again quarrelling over the division of the spoils. So—the Stalinists once again begin to favor "militancy," against the American capitalists, because they are the agents of the Russian rulers. They set about reviving their National Negro Congress in Los Angeles, and their local mouthpiece, the California Eagle, toes the new line.

This outfit, which still calls itself the Communist Party, is no more "communist" or "socialist" or "red" than the Democratic Party of Bilbo and Rankin is truly democratic. Socialism or the real communism of Lenin and Trotsky—means political and economic freedom. It is not the totalitarian horror under Stalin in Russia. We want neither Uncle Toms nor Uncle Joes who wish to use the Negro people as catspaws.

Whom Can We Trust?

By their deeds shall ye know them. They told us "Trust Roosevelt." They tell us "Trust Wallace." They tell us "trust somebody"—but don't you dare take your own fight into your own hands. We of the Workers Party tell you:

Trust NO ONE, black or white, who promises to "do you good" while YOU sit back and watch. No one ever got his rights handed to him by somebody else!

YOU have to act. YOU have to join the fight. YOU have to organize, from the bottom up. THEN you will see those who are fighting consistently at your side.

Here in the Los Angeles city government we have a glaring example of the practical result of supporting capitalist politicians who are elected as "progressives," friends of the people, and so on. The same Mayor Bowron whom we have had to mention so many times was elected to office with the complete support of the CIO leaders, the PAC and the Communist Party!

This is really an eye-opening fact. You might say: Well, they got stung. Right, but labor has been getting stung just this way for a couple of hundred years, by supporting "good" capitalist politicians against "worse" capitalist politicians. The capitalists always give you a choice, a better and a worse, and whichever gets in, they are still on top.

It's about time that labor quit wasting votes on any capitalist party and went into politics for itself. That means it must organize its own independent political action not to support a Bowron or a Wallace or another "good" capitalist, as the PAC does today, but in order to put labor's men in the government. Workers cannot depend on anything but a workers' government, which will really oust monopoly-capital and run our economic and political life for the masses of people.

To this end, says the Workers Party, labor must break with all the Democrats and Republicans and form ITS OWN INDEPENDENT LABOR PARTY, based on the trade unions. Only an independent Labor Party which has a sweeping program of basic social change can represent the interests of Negro and white workers in their joint struggle for a world fit to live in.

The Final Answer to Jim Crow

The first answer is a fighting program for immediate action against Jim Crow. Such a program for Los Angeles is on the next page. It is the platform of the Workers Party. It should be part of the fight of any organization worth its salt.

But the Workers Party goes beyond this first answer. We have already tried to show why. We have tried to bring out that the Jim Crow evil is only a part of the greater evil which besets the world we live in. That greater evil is the exploitation of all labor by the small minority of capitalists who control our lives because they are the private owners of the means of life—of the factories, mines, machinery we work on.

They divide and rule. They wage wars for their profit. They make a farce of democracy. They throw us out on the streets when their system breaks down. The Negro people are victims caught in the gears of the capitalist profit system.

That is why the Workers Party fights Jim Crow, as part of the fight for a better world for all. That is why the Workers Party was the organization which initiated the struggle against Gerald L. K. Smith in Los Angeles last year. That is why it brings you this pamphlet. That is why its national newspaper, Labor Action, hammers away at the race hatred which the capitalists use to hogtie all labor.

We stand for the proposition that the workingmen must take the means of production into their own control, under their own ownership—and organize industry through a democratic Workers' Government which will abolish exploitation and profit-squeezing.

This is economic democracy, and it is called Socialism. We believe that those who see straight and fight clear to the end cannot stop at merely patching up evils here and there. They must band together in a fighting vanguard for the radical abolition of capitalism and for a SOCIALIST DEMOCRACY.

Don't just grumble, curse or weep. Understand, organize and fight! ALL THE WAY—WITH THE WORKERS PARTY!

Plan of Attack on Jim Crow in Los Angeles DEMAND OF THE GOVERNMENT:

(1) Outlaw restrictive covenants—ban any contract based on racial discrimination. Withdraw city building rights and licenses from landlords and real estate companies that practice or organize race discrimination.

(2) Abolish all race quotas in housing projects, public and private.

(3) Initiate an adequate low-rent housing program which will permanently alleviate the congestion in the Negro districts.

(4) Make all race-discriminatory practices by landlords and employers a criminal offense.

(5) Set up a city Fair Practices Commission on Employment and Housing, with power to put teeth into its decisions, the commission to include representatives of labor and minority groups.

(6) Demand that the city police and county sheriff authorities cease shielding and giving protection to Ku Klux Klan and vigilante terrorist groups.

(7) City Council to set up a commission to try police officers accused of racist brutality, with power to fire and institute action against the criminals in uniform, the commission to include labor and minority representatives.

(8) Immediate appropriations to improve transportation, lighting, recreation and library facilities in the Negro districts.

FIGHT IN YOUR TRADE UNIONS AND NEGRO ORGANIZATIONS FOR:

(9) Labor and minority groups to organize their own defense formations against vigilante and KKK threats and outrages and fascist campaigns like those of Gerald L. K. Smith.

(10) Equal rights for members of minority groups in all trade union locals. AFL and CIO Councils to demand the revocation of the charter of any local guilty of race discrimination.

(11) An independent Labor Party, based on the trade unions—aiming at a Workers' Government and basic social change.

(12) Get the Negro organizations, and other organizations to which you belong, to adopt these planks as part of their platform and to organize militant action to carry them out.

AND FOR YOURSELF—

(13) Join the socialist vanguard in the Workers Party, to push this program everywhere and to lead the fight for a revolutionary Socialist Democracy!

Spread this pamphlet around. Order a bundle now, at 10 cents per copy—or send in payment with names and addresses of those to whom you want it sent.

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With the Workers Party

AKRON

Write to Box 221 for information.

BALTIMORE

Headquarters: 21 West Preston St. Meetings of Socialist Youth League held every Friday at 8 p.m.

Public forums held second Friday of each month.

For details of Workers Party branch, contact above address.

BUFFALO

HEADQUARTERS: 639 Main St. Open meetings on Sunday evenings.

CHICAGO

LABOR ACTION, 1501 W. Madison, 2nd floor, Chicago 7.

Telephone—CHESAPEAKE 5798

Office hours: 3-5:30 p.m. daily, except Sundays, Tuesday and Wednesday evenings.

CLASSES—every Friday night at 8 o'clock on a series of Marxist classics. Led by Albert Goldman.

SOCIALIST YOUTH LEAGUE business meetings held every Sunday at 7:30. Forums held three times a month on Sundays at 8:30.

CLEVELAND

The Cleveland branch of the Workers Party meets every Sunday at 8:00 p.m.

The Cleveland branch of the Socialist Youth League meets every Friday at 8:00 p.m.

A class in basic Marxism meets every Monday at 8:00 p.m.

Definite headquarters are not yet established for these meetings.

Does not press in his local for a Permanent Labor Daily in Philadelphia now.

DETROIT

Headquarters: 6341 Gratiot, Rooms 9 and 10. Telephone: Plaza 5569.

Write or phone for information about the discussion group on "Stalinism."

LOS ANGELES

Headquarters at 316 1/2 W. Pico, near Olive. Telephone: Richmond 7-3230.

Office hours: 2 to 5 p.m. daily except Sunday.

March 16, Sunday, at 8 p.m.—Hear Max Shachtman, national chairman of the Workers Party, on "Socialism in the Atomic Age," at the Embassy Auditorium, South Hall, 9th and Grand.

All LABOR ACTION readers in Los Angeles are invited to help in our election campaign now going on in the 7th Councilmanic District. We need your aid. Write or phone the above address (if no answer, phone AX 2-9067) to find out how you can participate. Pitch in!

LOUISVILLE

For other information regarding LABOR ACTION, New International and Workers Party—Write Robert Durant, Box 1181, Louisville, Ky.

NEWARK

HEADQUARTERS: 248 Market St. OFFICE HOURS: Tuesday—3 to 6 p.m.; Wednesday—12 to 3 p.m.; Saturday—3 to 4 p.m.

Forums every Friday at 8:30 p.m. at Labor Action Hall, 248 Market St.

"The Truman Budget, Peanuts for Housing, Gravy for Armaments." Speaker: Walter Weiss, Friday, Feb. 28, 8:30 p.m.

"The Paris Commune," by Ann Gordon, Friday, March 7.

Review of "Thieves in the Night," by Al Findley, March 14.

NEW YORK CITY

CITY CENTER: 114 West 14th St., third floor. Open every day from 10 a.m. to 10:30 p.m. except Saturday until 6 p.m.

Telephone: CHelsea 2-9681.

You are welcome to attend all open branch meetings of the Workers Party in New York City.

BRONX BRANCH: Meets every Thursday at 8:15 p.m. at Wilkins Hall, 1330 Wilkins Ave., Bronx.

HARLEM BRANCH: Meets every Wednesday, 8:15 p.m. at the Workers Party Headquarters, 2143 Seventh Ave. (near 126th St.), room 106.

CENTRAL BRANCH: Meets every Wednesday, 8:15 p.m. at the Workers Party City Center, 114 West 14th St., third floor.

CHELSEA BRANCH: Meets every Thursday, 8:15 p.m. at the Workers Party City Center, 114 West 14th St., third floor.

SATURDAY AFTERNOON BRANCH: Meets every Saturday at 2:30 p.m. at the Workers Party City Center, 114 West 14th St., third floor.

BROOKLYN BOROUGH HALL BRANCH: Meets every Wednesday at 8:15 p.m. at the Workers Party Headquarters, 276 Fulton St., second floor.

SOCIALIST YOUTH LEAGUE: Meets every Friday at 8:15 p.m. at the Workers Party Headquarters, 276 Fulton St., second floor.

For further information concerning the WORKERS PARTY, the SOCIALIST YOUTH LEAGUE and LABOR ACTION SCHOOL in New York City please write or visit the Workers Party City Center at 114 West 14th St., third floor, or phone CHelsea 2-9681.

READING

For information regarding the activities and affairs of the Reading Branch of the Workers Party address: P. O. Box 1671.

Regular class on the "Role of the Party in the Fight for Socialism" every Monday evening at 8:30.

PHILADELPHIA

HEADQUARTERS: 1139 West Gerard Avenue (3rd floor).

WP branch meets Wednesday at 8 p.m.

Socialist Youth League meets Friday at 8:00 p.m.

LABOR ACTION FORUMS each Sunday at 8:15 p.m. LABOR ACTION HALL, 1139 West Girard Ave., N. E. corner of 12th and Girard.

March 9—Henry Judd speaking on "The New Colonial Freedom."

ST. LOUIS

Write Douglas Bridge, 6517 Corbett Avenue, University City 14.

SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA

For information on the activities of the Workers Party in the San Francisco Bay area write: LABOR ACTION, 466 Tenth St., Room 206, Oakland 7, Calif.

Open forums held every other Sunday, starting Sunday, January 19. Forums held at above address (a few doors off Broadway on Tenth). Forums start at 8:00 p.m. Admission free. Refreshments served. For exact schedule of dates and subjects, write above address.

SEATTLE

Write to P. O. Box 29, University Post Office, for information.

Philadelphia Labor Action Forum

WILL INDIA BE FREED?

Speaker: HENRY JUDD

Sunday, March 9, 8 p.m.

Labor Action Hall, 1139 W. Gerard

Discussion — Refreshments

Leaders Convert Rent March Into Democratic Party Rally

In an attempt to hold rents down and obtain permanent housing, 1,000 delegates, representing workers, housewives and veterans, left New York City to march on the State Capitol. These men and women were serious. Many took off from work and lost a day's pay. They wanted to tell "their" legislators that HOMES AND RENT CONTROL are a MUST. But Governor Dewey, hand in hand with Senator Feinberg and Speaker Heck, leaders of the Senate and Assembly, barred the doors to the delegation with 300 state troopers.

The delegates paraded to the steps of the State Capitol, where Alfred K. Stern, chairman of the Emergency Committee on Rent Control and Housing, sponsor of the march, read off a blast at Dewey. Then ten of the leaders attempted to enter the legislative chambers while the rest proceeded to Chancellors Hall.

The rest of the day the delegates spent listening to speeches by Senators and Assemblymen of the Democratic Party as well as those of the Stalinist-dominated American Labor Party. These capitalist politicians could voice nothing but self-praise and denunciation of the Republicans. The Republicans and only the Republicans are always to blame, according to the ALP and Democratic

politicians. The fact that the Democrats did nothing about lack of decent housing when they were a majority was not referred to at all. Discussion from the floor was discouraged and squelched by the leaders of the Emergency Committee on Rent and Housing. A motion to come back with 10,000 delegates in two weeks was ignored. Alfred K. Stern as well as the state executive secretary and the legislative representatives of the ALP, Arthur Schuster and Leo Isaacson, emphasized and reemphasized that everyone must be orderly, disciplined and law-abiding.

STALINISTS POOR LEADERS

It is unfortunate that the leadership of the ECRH is obviously dominated by Stalinists. This could easily be seen from the fact that each time it was necessary to soothe the delegates to be "decent, law-abiding citizens," the ALP did the job. When the leaders observed that the delegates were becoming impatient to take action, they took a recess. ALP Leader Isaacson then reported that all action would be decided the next day by the Steering Committee. At this point the foul character of the Stalinist line on rent control became clear to many of the delegates.

The men and women in the march, unlike their leaders, came to Albany

for action on housing and rent control. They didn't even get to speak to their supposed legislators. All they did was sit and listen. Not a slogan was chanted, nor even a march around the state Capitol planned. This is the very least that could have been done. The Stalinist leaders, however, stressed order and nothing was done.

HOW TO GET CONTROL

Instead of marches led by do-nothing ALP leaders, the labor movement, the CIO, the AFL and the rank-and-file must lead in the fight for rent control and housing. Every worker knows that a rent increase is the same as a wage cut.

The struggle for decent housing and rent control must begin with and be coordinated with the unions, cooperating with consumer tenant groups and veterans organizations. And last but not least, the shysters, fakers and servants of the landlords, real estate lobbies and other big business agents must be replaced with working men and women who would be responsible to labor and who would represent the broad mass of the people and not the corporations. This must be done, in Albany, in every state and in Congress at Washington.

Food Cannery Workers Discuss Profits

Consumers' Needs Do Not Figure in Industry Deliberations

By GEORGE UNDERWOOD

Last week, while Europe and Asia clamored for food, and an undernourished America tried to stretch the buying power of its wages, the food canners met in Atlantic City to discuss their problems. During three days of business and technical sessions (along with other activities peculiar to business conventions), not one minute was given to the problem of how they could best process food and satisfy the hungry millions. Rather, their only concern was how to maintain the high profits they have enjoyed these last five or six years. In particular, the canners considered the phenomenon that is slackening off; that is, they consider a problem critical by the inability of the great mass of people to buy back the food they have helped produce.

THE CANNING INDUSTRY

The canning industry is a relatively backward section of the capitalist economy. Because of low concentration, scattered distribution and diversity of products, it sharply reflects the rise and decline of capitalist production. Control of policy, markets and distribution is more difficult among the canners than in such industries as steel where a handful of companies produce 90 per cent of the output. During the war years there was a tendency toward concentration as the big money boys poured funds into this high-profit industry. In the process, many large canners bought up smaller producers. Yet, today, the "top ten" of the canners probably do not produce more than

50 per cent of the food, the remainder being divided among over 2,000 other canners.

As a result, there has been, over the years, a high mortality rate among the individual canners, and the most stable factor in the industry has not been the canners themselves but their suppliers, particularly the can companies among which the three largest produce 95 per cent of the cans (American, Continental, Crgwn).

Given the nature of their industry, the canners cannot manipulate the market as easily as is the case in other industries. Instead, by exchanging information and statistics, they try to regulate the supply of canned foods to fit the demand. It is a kind of capitalist planning—planning for profits rather than for the needs of the people. Thus, the canners, in solemn session, came up with three propositions to solve their problem, that is, to maintain their profits.

SQUEEZE FARMER, LABOR

The first of these is to put the squeeze on the farmer by lowering prices for raw products. The net effect of this, as the farmers retaliate, is to lower production at a time when the world desperately needs food. Already, in the citrus industry, fruit is being left on the trees to rot.

The second of these is in the time-honored tradition of capitalist enterprise—to lower labor costs by intensifying the exploitation of the workers under the guise of improving "efficiency." The canning industry is infamous for its intolerable working conditions. Men and women work under the poorest of sanitary conditions, often on wet floors and usually for wages that are not a penny more than prescribed by law as a minimum. A Department of Labor survey for 1943 showed that three-fifths of all women workers, and one-fourth of all men earned less than 55 cents an hour. In some places, like Texas and Arkansas, the average hourly rate was only 40 to 38 cents an hour. Even in "high-wage" New York, hourly rates for men were only 62 to 72 cents an hour. In rural areas, canning workers are herded like cattle in trucks from canneries and fields to miserable company-owned shacks.

Further, cannery workers put in long overtime hours without extra compensation. Through the notorious "area of production" clause, owners have been able to flout the Fair Labor Standards Act. This clause exempts canners in towns with

a maximum of 2500 inhabitants from compliance with the act. It is interesting to note that in the citrus canneries and packing houses recently organized in Florida, the principal demand has been for overtime payment.

QUALITY AND FAKERY

As a third proposition, the canners declare their intention to improve the quality of their product. They face the competition of frozen food companies and improved handling of fresh foods, and must improve their own product if they are to save their profits.

The canning industry has always fought grade labelling, which would be one way of forcing an improvement in quality. Also, the canners were little concerned with maintaining quality, when, to beat OPA rules, they marketed a slightly changed product at higher prices, and usually did it by leaving out a few expensive ingredients like tomato sauce in pork and beans.

One of the most scandalous deals pulled by the "quality concerned" canners was that on canned tomatoes which were in short supply all during the war. Toward the end of 1946, when it became apparent that OPA would shortly die, distributors bought canned tomatoes at ceiling prices, adding separate checks to be cashed after OPA's death. The wholesalers then held on to the goods until ceilings were removed, added their own heavy tribute, and tomatoes were again available. Thus, a healthful food, which was once a low price item, became a luxury item above the means of average pocket-books.

AMERICAN POLICY IN JAPAN DISCUSSED AT SUNDAY PHILADELPHIA FORUM SERIES

"MacArthur Over Japan," a talk presented by Jack Brad this Sunday evening, unfolded Japan's historic and economic background to explain Japan's present-day predicament. Passing from feudalism to a capitalist revolution in 1868 through the incentive of a section of the feudal ruling class itself, Japan's transformation took place through political control. This rapid change, however, found Japan with little developed industries and dependency on the international market and its fluctuations, which led to constant competition and warfare.

From 1931 to 1939 a second industrial revolution occurred with a 500 per cent growth of industry resulting. With mass boycott of Japanese goods by England and America, the only alternative of survival under capitalism in Japan was warfare, and so "Pearl Harbor."

Between 1941 and 1944 whole Japanese factories were destroyed, and with a growing war-weary population, defeatism setting in, 600 workers' strikes took place, and the Japanese nation was defeated.

Today the American government, ruling through the Japanese state, can guarantee the Emperor his throne, knowing the removal of the Japanese state presents the strong possibility of civil strife, for there is today a labor movement of 300,000 to 400,000 workers. With capitalism already completely discredited among the masses, ousting of American occupation forces becomes necessary for a more open struggle for power between workers and peasants against their oppressors.

Sub Drive Begins In March; Branches Accept Quotas Set

The campaign of LABOR ACTION for 2,000 new readers during the month of March has already begun and is meeting with an enthusiastic response from many branches of the Workers Party. Some have gotten a head start on the drive and have already sent in returns on their quotas of subscriptions. The first new subscription to arrive was from Streator, Illinois. The Los Angeles branch of the Workers Party, busily engaged in its election campaign for Harold Draper, has been right on the ball getting new subscriptions during its house-to-house vote drive and has begun the campaign with no less than 29 new subscriptions, putting them a jump ahead of others!

The Cleveland branch has accepted its quota of 50 subs, while St. Louis, due to local conditions, has been obliged to request a reduction to 10. From Cleveland, literature agent Ray O'Neill writes that "we are going to make four special distributions in connection with the LABOR ACTION Drive." Cleveland is ordering 300 extra papers for the purpose of carrying out these distributions, and then will follow-up with efforts to obtain subscriptions. Comrade O'Neill, who did such an excellent job during the recently concluded campaign for *The New Internationalist* is determined to make off with first prize for his branch this time.

Best plans of all, to date, have been made by the Detroit branch where the campaign is in able hands of that singer of Ballad Blues, Bill Miller. "The LABOR ACTION Drive was discussed in our branch and the following plans have been made. Our comrades in factories are to obtain 80 subscriptions from their fellow workers; public meetings of other organizations should get us 10, and the balance are to be gotten first from renewals, then from house to house in neighborhoods."

Windfall for Rich --

(Continued from page 1)

law pronto, to reduce this cost. The same tune is played by the business man's United States News: "Costs of an Army and Navy would be brought down by universal service, by training for all that would permit a smaller standing army." These opinions show which way the wind is blowing.

Many newspaper readers have the impression that Congress is now actually determining the amount of federal expenditures for the next fiscal year. This is wrong. The legislative budget that Congress will pass—which probably will be a compromise between the six billion cut voted by the House and the four and a half billion that the Senate will doubtless accept—is not binding when appropriations for the different departments and purposes are made. Just as Truman's budget was only a proposal, so will the Legislature's figures be.

Reporters speak of the proposed cuts as "paper cuts." In the House, Rayburn, Democrat from Texas, opposing a cut in the President's estimates, bluntly said to his colleagues: "You know you are not going to live up to it." Indeed, when the Appropriations Committee opens the purse strings to pay out the cash, the generals and admirals will be heard from again, the politicians will clamor for this or that local pork barrel, and so on. Also there is nothing to prevent Congress, after appropri-

ations have been made, from passing bills to increase any appropriation. Political shenanigans are endless.

As a socialist sees it, how a government spends money is of grave importance to the working population whose productive labor alone provides that money. The Workers Party and LABOR ACTION have ideas about how to spend and how not to spend money—also on how to collect it.

Government money should come from taxes on those who can afford to pay them. A 100 per cent tax on all wartime profits above five per cent on invested capital; a \$25,000 ceiling on all annual incomes; a graduated capital tax on accumulated fortunes; such measures would bring lots of money into a government treasury.

Furthermore, an international policy declaring for all nations and peoples to decide their own destiny, for self-determination of all nations, for freedom of the colonies, for international socialist brotherhood, would mean the end of military expenditures and release wealth for constructive measures. For instance, such a constructive measure should be a five-year national building program of \$250,000,000,000 to provide the houses and apartments and schools and hospitals we lack.

Such ideas are part of a working class program and can be carried out only by an independent working class party. No getting away from it.

PRESS MANAGER'S

PRESS ACTION

BY HENRY JUDD

USE SPECIAL OFFER FOR MARCH SUBSCRIPTION DRIVE

Several branches of the Workers Party, Newark, Cleveland and Los Angeles, have begun to make use of the special offer of LABOR ACTION at one cent per extra copy for the March subscription drive.

The general idea is to get extra bundles of LABOR ACTION, to distribute them—without any charge—within a set area that is considered favorable for obtaining subscriptions, and then at a later date, to go back and visit these people with the aim of making them steady readers of LABOR ACTION.

Results obtained by this method during previous subscription campaigns indicate that it works. We urge more and more of our LABOR ACTION agents to take advantage of this regular offer, and to place their orders immediately. Remember that such orders for extra copies must be in our hands no later than *Thursday noon* of the week for which they are desired. Anything later can only be filled on the following week. We will take care of any orders we receive.

Here's a list of new subscriptions that came in the past week. We expect to see this list leaping upwards beginning with the March subscription campaign.

NEW YORK	4
Detroit	4
Minnesota	3
Newark	3
Philadelphia	2
Chicago	1
West Virginia	1
Miscellaneous	2
TOTAL	22

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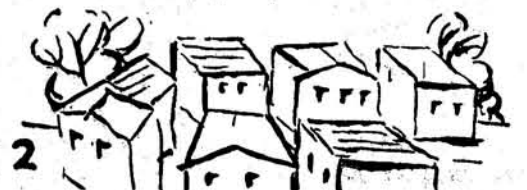
Draper for Councilman in District 7!

VOTE TO CHASE JIM CROW OUT OF LOS ANGELES!

ELECTION PLATFORM



Drive Jim Crow out of Los Angeles! Full economic, social and political rights for ALL minority groups!



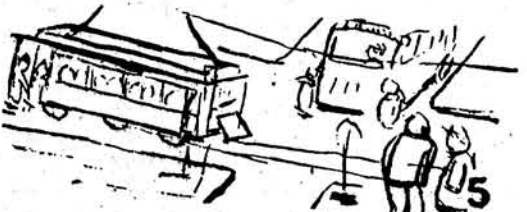
For a \$100 million city-county housing program to house vets, build low-rent projects! STOP commercial building till vets have homes!



For a city law to freeze rents at present levels, to operate if the real estate profiteers get the national OPA ceilings lifted!



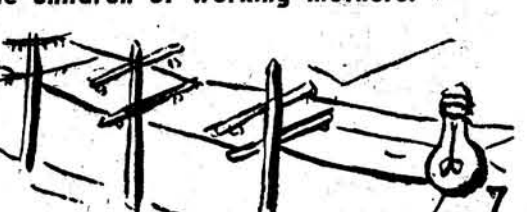
Stop police strike-breaking, as in the studio strike and Elec. Motors strike! Defend laborers' rights! Make Los Angeles a 100 per cent union town!



Unify, under city ownership, the 17 transit companies now operating—to modernize transportation and cancel the latest fare increase.



For a permanent nursery-school program, as part of the school system, for the children of working mothers!



Reduce light and power rates for all consumers, on the basis of the tremendous surplus of capital accumulated by the city bureau!



Vote for a socialist reorganization of society—for security, peace, democracy and equality for all!

Draper Led Fight Against Gerald Smith

Harold Draper, socialism's fighting candidate in the councilmanic race in the Seventh District, is best known to the workers of Los Angeles for his leading role in the fight against Gerald L. K. Smith, the would-be fascist fuhrer.

When Fascist Smith first invaded Los Angeles in 1945, the milk-and-water liberals, radicals and labor bureaucrats (including the Communist Party) decided to "ignore" him.

Immediately after launching this fight and as a second step to awaken mass action against race-baiters, Draper wrote the pamphlet "The Truth About Gerald Smith," a full-length exposé of his record and aims, which sold 6,000 copies in short order and became the main source for the anti-fascist education of the Los Angeles workers in the fight against the would-be Hitler.

discrimination in the city. A real "scoop"—there is nothing else which even tries to analyze and blast the whole picture of local Jim Crowism—the pamphlet also puts forward a hard-hitting plan of attack, as a militant program of action.

IN SOCIALIST CAUSE
The fight against oppression and exploitation has been Harold Draper's way of life for 15 of his 32 years.



Hal Draper

VOTE APRIL 1

If you live between Vernon and 23rd on the east side, or between Vernon and Jefferson on the west side, you're in District 7. Vote for Harold Draper for Councilman!

In District 15 (San Pedro and Watts), vote for Louis Kiser, sponsored by the Socialist Workers Party. In District 6, vote for Harry Brown, sponsored by the CIO Council and Rubber Workers Union. For Board of Education, Office No. 5, vote for Walter J. Turner, sponsored by the AFL and CIO Councils. For more information about the election, about the Workers Party or the program of Socialism, write: WORKERS PARTY, Los Angeles Section 316 1/2 W. Pico (Room 1). Tel. RI 7-3230 (Office hours 2-5 p.m. daily)

Housing Needs Ignored; W. P. Presents Program

Sure, EVERYBODY's for more and better housing. Especially candidates at election time. The rub comes when you ask: "WELL, WHAT DO YOU PROPOSE TO DO ABOUT IT?"

The only candidate for councilman in our district who has put forward a specific housing program is Harold Draper.

That specific demand is for a HUNDRED MILLION DOLLAR HOUSING PROGRAM by the city and county—to house veterans, clear slums, to build low-rent homes OPEN TO ALL, to relieve the congestion which is worst in the minority-group districts.

One hundred million dollars is a lot of money. Are we just picking a big number out of the hat?

NO, SIR! It is easy to PROVE that nothing stands in the way EXCEPT capitalist politicians who are under the thumb of the real estate boards.

HOUSING BIGGEST MUNICIPAL NEED

Here are three FACTS:
(1) On February 8, the papers reported that the present City Council will put on the ballot a "municipal improvement" program costing 60 million dollars.

That money will go for a lot of good things—like sewers, incinerators, playgrounds, and new government offices. (It's interesting, though, that the BIGGEST slice of the wad is for more and bigger jails!)

But—not a cent for public housing!

We say: We're 100 per cent for municipal improvement, BUT THE BIGGEST MUNICIPAL IMPROVEMENT WE NEED IS HOUSING FOR THE PEOPLE! (And not in more and bigger jails.)

Right now, HOUSING COMES FIRST. With the City Hall crew, the real estate interests come first.

izer for the Workers Party. He is at present the Los Angeles organizer of the Worker's Party and has been a member of the party's National Committee since its formation.

Besides being an outstanding speaker and a dynamic organizer, another side of Draper's work is seen in the fact that his "ABC of Marxism," a basic explanation, has been used as a textbook by the socialist movement for several years.

An active trade unionist, he has been a member of the CIO Shipyard Union as well as the AFL Sheet Metal Workers and the AFL Teachers Union in his varied career and is a member of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

In this election Draper is not running as another politician looking for a job. The campaign in District 7 is just one battle in a war on all fronts against racial injustice and for socialism. Vote for HAROLD DRAPER in District 7 on April 1!

Question to Mr. Bowron, Mr. Rasmussen and the rest: On the basis of your own proposition, why isn't there a hundred million for HOMES?

RASMUSSEN WANTS PARKING LOTS

(2) On February 4 none other than the incumbent councilman in District 7, Rasmussen, came out with a plan. It seems there isn't enough parking space at the Coliseum. Rasmussen's plan calls for a big parking lot development there, to cost about 17 million at the last version.

Now match that with Fact No. 3—this one from the L. A. Year Book. There the City Housing Authority states that it would cost 25 million to build 5,000 low-rent homes to replace 5,000 slum dwellings. (One of Rasmussen's parking schemes would cost all of that.)

Question to Rasmussen: Is it more important to provide parking for cars or to provide parking space for human beings in HOMES?

Question to YOU: Why, with all the to-do about housing, do these politicians' plans say not a word about it?

BECAUSE the real estate men don't mind if the city builds sewers or playgrounds—or jails. Many of these "municipal improvements" raise the value of THEIR property. But if you propose that the city build HOMES, you will have to fight them tooth and nail! That's how their profit system works.

Let the candidates who want to "get in bad" with the real estate interests step forward and get specific about public housing; BUT—

The ONLY candidate who is pushing a specific housing program is HAROLD DRAPER, the Socialist candidate for Councilman.

The big issue for the working men and women of District 7 is the fight against JIM CROWISM and RACE DISCRIMINATION.

Because in that fight is involved the whole future of JOBS and HOUSING for the one hundred thousand Negro people of our city who are exploited twice over—once as workers and again as a racial minority.

Any candidate in this district who fails to use his campaign to blast that evil sky-high and to propose a real program of struggle against it—well, he's just running for a job, not for the people.

That's the way to vote—not by whether you like the color of a man's hair, or the color of his skin—but by the fight he puts up for what YOU want. "Pussy-footing" may get more votes, but any vote gotten that way is a vote wasted on an opportunist or a faker.

The fight against Jim Crow in this city is Plank No. 1 in the Workers Party campaign for DRAPER FOR COUNCILMAN. Now let's get down to brass tacks on that issue, because it's too easy to give out with the words "I'm against Jim Crow too," especially at election time.

POINT ONE is restrictive covenants, the basic reason why the south-central and southeast sections are overcrowded ghettos.

The fakers tell us: "I'm against Jim Crow too BUT—the City Council can't do anything about it; it's up to the state and federal governments." That's not true! The City Council CAN outlaw restrictive covenants in practice. Here's how:

Withdraw city building rights and licenses from landlords and real estate companies that practice or organize race discrimination!

TWO: Abolish all race quotas in public and private housing projects! The race quota system smells of Hitler, who didn't invent racism. He got it from the long-standing experts who are still with us in this country. It's here in Los Angeles. The City Council CAN use the city's ordinances to break it. That's what we demand.

THREE: Start a low-rent housing program which will permanently cure the crowding in the Negro districts!

That's what our demand for a \$100,000,000 city-county housing program can do—PROVIDED THAT NEW HOUSING IS THROWN OPEN TO ALL, and first of all to veterans and for minority groups that have been squeezed by restrictive covenants.

FOUR: Make all race-discriminatory practices by landlords and employers a CRIMINAL OFFENSE!

FIVE: Set up a city Fair Practices Commission on Employment and Housing, with power to put teeth into its decisions and to include representatives of labor and minority groups!

Those two go together. The national FEPC, toothless as it was, was wiped off the books by the Republican-Democratic coalition. The state-wide FEPC was defeated last November by a united front of reaction. LET'S GET IT ON THE CITY-WIDE LEVEL!

SIX: Demand that the city police and county sheriff authorities stop shielding and protecting the KKK and vigilante gangs!

SEVEN: City Council to set up a commission, including labor and minority representation, to try police officers accused of racist brutality, with the power to fire them and to institute action to put these criminals in uniform themselves in jail!

We don't have the space to go into the dirty record of the police on these questions: that's done in the pamphlet "Jim Crow in Los Angeles" in detail.

EIGHT: Immediate appropriations to improve transportation, recreation, lighting and library facilities in the Negro districts!

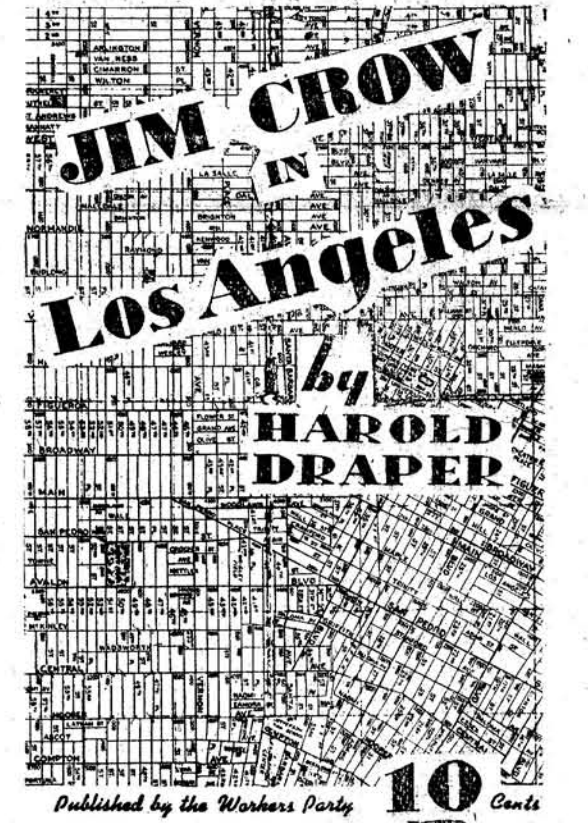
This program is what HAROLD DRAPER and the Workers Party work for all the year around (not only at election-promise time). Support of this program is not a racial question. It is a program that white workers must be won to, that Negro workers must fight for, that ALL labor must support in order to stick together so that they are not stuck separately.

The present councilman from our district, Carl Rasmussen, was elected in 1945 on a campaign that openly appealed to white home-owners to defend their "property values" from the bugaboo of Negro residents. He is the restrictive-covenant candidate in this election. Our job is to keep white workers from getting sucked in by this divide-and-rule method.

We want to make one thing absolutely clear.

We are in this fight against Jim Crow from the standpoint of the interests of the working class. Jim Crow is not only the enemy of the Negro people. It is a deadly poison for all working men, white and colored, and our job is to make them all realize this basic fact.

Rasmussen and his kind draw the color line. Well, we draw a line too! It is the



WORKING CLASS LINE—white and Negro working people united on one side; on the other side, exploiters and reactionary mouthpieces and wishy-washy compromisers OF ANY RACE, CREED OR COLOR.

There it is straight from the shoulder. WHICH ARE YOU FOR? Besides Rasmussen, take two Negro candidates who are in this race for councilman, as a case in point.

One is V. M. Townsend, the candidate of The Criterion, which can give pointers to Hearst and Pegler when it comes to vicious labor-baiting and union-smearing!

The other is the Rev. J. L. Caston, the Baptist minister—who informed a LABOR ACTION reporter that he was opposed to militant action to defend Negro rights; that he was opposed to self-defense organization by Negroes and labor against vigilante attacks; that we must rely on the process of "education" to bring racial peace on earth—as if militant action were not itself one of the best means of education. Such middle class wishy-washy "liberalism" is typical of the small layer of Negro professional and business men, who resent Jim Crow just like their working class brethren but who are in a position where they can afford to "take it easy."

VOTE FOR A FIGHTING WORKING CLASS PROGRAM TO HIT HARD AT JIM CROW WITHOUT PUSSY-FOOTING!

That's what a socialist campaign DOES. That's what a vote for Harold Draper for Councilman MEANS!

ELECTION RALLY! HEAR HAROLD DRAPER
THE SOCIALIST PROGRAM TO SMASH JIM CROW
THE ISSUES IN THE ELECTION

SUNDAY EVE AT 8 MARCH 30

ELKS' TEMPLE
40th & Central