

Teachers Face Problem of Strike Action

By A TEACHER

NEW YORK — Governor Dewey's message to the state legislature urging immediate enactment of the pay schedules recommended by his special Committee on Education and his recommendation to punish teacher-strikes with the automatic loss of their positions, puts squarely up to teachers throughout the state the question of striking to win their demands for adequate pay. The Buffalo teachers who spurned the Dewey proposals have accepted assurances by Mayor Dowd of increases ranging from \$300 to \$600 a year and averaging \$525 a year, to be paid out of local funds when the state enlarges the city's taxing powers. The increases are to take effect July 1. Apparently Buffalo's teachers will not be included in any strike which may develop out of the present situation.

Interest now centers on New York City where the sparring in the teachers' salary conference, which claims to represent a majority of the city's more than 30,000 teachers, between the CIO Teachers Union and Tammany politician, Mrs. May Andres Healy, president of the conference, will probably come to a head. The Teachers Guild, AFL, has a clear mandate from its delegate assembly, to proceed to strike action; but its leaders have hung back trying to win their demands by lobbying and pressure in Albany. If the latest public utterances of its leaders can be taken seriously, Dewey's decision not to modify his committee's recommendations, leaves them no alternative except to vote in the Teachers Salary Conference with the Teachers Union, for a strike vote in the city's 800 schools.

Dewey's schedules establish higher minima than are the case now; make permanent the recent cost-of-living bonuses granted teachers in 1945 and '46; increase the pay of substitutes to discourage the current practice of

saving money by withholding their appointment to permanent positions with paid vacations and tenure; and establishes a single salary schedule for elementary, junior and high schools. These are gains attributable to the fight the teachers have made, in the first place, to the strike of the Buffalo teachers.

But these schedules provide very little in the way of increases for the overwhelming bulk of the teachers in the state, involve pay cuts for a good many, give nothing at all to teachers in rural areas, and clerical employees in the school system. One of their worst features is the restoration of a "merit" system as a basis for giving yearly increments after six years of automatic increases. The "merit" system was discarded more than thirty years ago because it made teachers' standing and income the victim of supervisors, administrators and politicians for whom education was a patronage plan.

If Dewey thought to ally the protest teachers are making and deceive them into thinking they were going to be treated fairly, the clamor of dissatisfaction which has arisen should disabuse him. Even Superintendent of Schools Wade, number one bureaucrat in New York City's educational system, was moved to associate himself with the criticism of Dewey's proposals made by the Teachers Salary Conference, the essential points of which have been given above. Wade even went along to Albany with a Teachers Salary Conference delegation in the futile effort to persuade Dewey to amend his schedules, after warning New York's teachers against a strike.

EXPECT STRIKE

The Board of Education here apparently expects a strike. The police are visiting schools to establish what they need to do should one take place. The teachers themselves are excitedly thinking about it. The labor move-

(Continued on page 2)

U. S. to Pay British Troops in Greece

Great Britain declared last week that it had reached such a degree of political crisis and economic desperation that it could no longer maintain its troops in, and its economic aid to, Greece. It dumped the problem into the lap of U. S. imperialism, the mightiest power in the world, which was quick to act when faced with the prospect of seeing the strategic but poverty-stricken little nation in the eastern Mediterranean abandoned to the power of Russia.

The U. S. responded to the British appeal by promising that it would help defray the cost of maintaining British troops in Greece. So far, there has been no public suggestion that the U. S. might send troops. It is understood that the contemplated financial aid will total approximately \$350,000,000, of which some \$250,000,000 would be required for the first year.

In a report from London, Mallory Brown of the New York Times wrote on March 1 that "Although officially no reference is made to the Soviet Union, there is no attempt in quarters close to the British government to hide the serious concern lest the withdrawal lead to a political vacuum in Greece on which communism (they mean Stalinism—Ed.) would certainly try to capitalize for the benefit of Moscow."

The British are in truly desperate straits: India is in turmoil and they will have to make serious concessions there; Palestine is in an uproar and martial law has just been instituted; and in England itself a terrible economic crisis shows no sign of abating, for it is basic to the crisis of British capitalism. Under the circumstances, Britain can no longer afford to maintain its troops in Greece, crucial though the control of that nation is for the Anglo-American imperialist bloc. It frankly admits its incompetence and throws the situation into the lap of the senior partner in the firm, the U. S.

Reactions in Congress to this sit-

uation are highly interesting. Except for a few flannel-mouths who are simply trying to snare a vote here and there, the responsible Congressmen—responsible that is to their basic allegiance: the capitalist system—know that U. S. imperialism must, in its own interests, provide the money to maintain British troops in Greece. The alternative is the overthrow of the unpopular and wobbly Greek monarchy and the substitution of a régime within the Russian sphere of influence. Hence the Republican leaders, much as they would like to utilize the situation to drive partisan blows against the Truman administration, hesitate; for they know that the Truman administration's action in rushing to maintain British troops in Greece is in the basic interests of U. S. imperialism.

As Hanson W. Baldwin, military expert of the New York Times, wrote on March 2: "All this means that today the United States and Russia are face to face in a struggle for the world, a conflict short of war, but a struggle, nevertheless, that will alter world history. The weakness of Britain and France, and the virtual dissolution of the rest of Western Europe, means that the United States, and only the United States, is capable of sustaining Western civilization."

If we merely substitute for the phrase "Western civilization" the more accurate description of private capitalism, the statement of Baldwin is an excellent summary of the current situation.

Around this wretched, starved little country of Greece there is little centered one of the basic conflicts of inter-imperialist struggle. The U. S. will not allow Britain to surrender Greece to Russia; it will send dollars to buttress the British bayonets. And so the imperialist conflicts sharpen, the mad scramble for the revision of the world continues. The people of all the nations are the losers while their rulers struggle for the control of the world.

LABOR ACTION

MARCH 10, 1947

A PAPER IN THE INTERESTS OF LABOR

FIVE CENTS

Tenants Must Act Now To Save Rent Control!

FULL STORY IN NEXT WEEK'S LABOR ACTION

Trotsky Murder Plotted In N. Y. by GPU -- Budenz

LABOR ACTION has just learned that a book, "This Is My Story," written by Louis F. Budenz, former editor of the "Daily Worker," and leader of the Communist Party in this country, is to be released for publication next week by Whittlesey House. The book is certain to be one of the biggest political sensations known in this country for a long time. In the book, Budenz, from his direct personal knowledge, gives the first detailed factual story of the Moscow GPU underworld in the American Stalinist Party, as well as the detailed facts of how this GPU underworld, working with the

American Stalinist leadership, organized and executed the plans for the assassination of Leon Trotsky in Mexico City on August 22, 1940. The details given by Budenz confirm the charges we have made for the past six and a half years against the Moscow assassins and their tools and accomplices in the Communist Party leadership of this country.

In our next issue, which coincides with the date of public release of the book, our readers will be given the Budenz story in the fullest detail together with complete background material on the murder of Leon Trotsky.

By SUSAN GREEN

Rent control is being given the works by Congress, not only openly but by unadvertised flank attack. The latter is being done by gently removing financial support from OPA, whose remaining function is primarily rent control. Thus the House a few weeks ago, in its budgetary action, favored that OPA return to the Treasury its uncommitted moneys and refused to allot an additional sum. This week Senate recommendations, also in budgetary maneuverings, would cut the appropriations for OPA to such a figure as to compel that agency to fold up by June 30, 1947.

This flank attack comes on top of the direct move by the Senate Banking and Currency Committee, before which rent hearings have been held, for a 10 per cent across-the-board rent jump and for the end of OPA by December, 1947, along with other landlord-favoring recommendations.

Call March For Housing Rent Control

NEW YORK—A giant parade will march through the streets of the lower East Side on Saturday, March 15, at noon, when organized tenants and consumers will urge their neighbors to join with them in the fight for better housing and rent control. Banded together in the United Tenants and Consumers Organization, the marchers will protest the State Legislature's refusal to hear their representatives in Albany on February 18. The parade will be another step in the campaign to enroll every resident of the lower East Side in a concerted effort to defeat the schemes of the landlords. The UTCO represents all the various tenant groups in the area.

Among the participating groups will be the Manhattan Branch of the Workers Party marching under its own banners. The Workers Party has pledged full support to the tenants' movement and it urges all its members and friends to meet the Workers Party demonstrators at Straus Square, East Broadway and Rutgers Street, at noon on March 15.

The parade is being supported by tenants' groups, veterans' organizations, settlement houses and social and political organizations of the East Side. Each organization will bear its own banners and placards, and all slogans will be on the issues of housing, rents and the high cost of living. Plans are being drawn up by each group to flood the neighborhood with leaflets, posters and circulars publicizing the parade. A sound truck will tour the streets a few days before the fifteenth.

All LABOR ACTION readers on the lower East Side who are not yet participating in their neighborhood rent organizations are urged to communicate with the Manhattan Branch of the Workers Party in order to help in the distribution of leaflets and to assist in other necessary preliminary work to make the parade a success.

The demonstration is to begin at Straus Square at twelve o'clock, march east on E. B'way to Pitt Street, north on Pitt Street to Avenue C, north on Avenue C to East Third Street, west on East Third Street to Second Avenue, north on Second Avenue to East Eighth Street, east on East Eighth Street to First Avenue, north on First Avenue to East Twelfth Street, east on East Twelfth Street to Avenue B, south on Avenue B to the southwest side of Tompkins Square Park. A giant rally, addressed by several speakers, will be the culmination of the parade.

Unless tenants and workers give organized resistance and show by mass demonstrations their determination to keep rents where they are, Congress will go ahead. While there have been some demonstrations and while tenant organizations have come to life here and there, the demonstrations have been too thin and sporadic, and the great mass of the 50,000,000 tenants are still not moved to take organized action.

ADDED HARDSHIP

The lifting of rent ceilings will bring added, unwarranted hardship upon those least able to stand it. A rent boost will step up the cost of living by another three or four per cent. And where will the extra rent money come from then in the average working class family? It will be made by cutting down the consumption of necessities. More rent for the landlords spells less food, less clothing, less medical and dental care for the population as a whole. It is estimated by those who watch the consumer market that a rent increase will take an extra \$500,000,000 from consumers every month and slash the purchasing power of all of us by that much.

The end of rent control through OPA, even had it been a Roman holiday for the realtors. While OPA has been little more than a laughing stock—since it allows upward of 30,000 rent increases a month and sanctioned one million "legitimate" evictions in 1946—it has still been a buffer between the tenant and the grabbing landlord or the latter would not be so eager to get rid of OPA. Without this buffer and with rents beyond the ability of many families to pay, evictions will inevitably increase. The housing shortage, the inability of tenants to find other accommodations, will result in the disruption of families who may have to separate among relatives in order to get roofs over their heads. This is already happening.

How stop such a scandalous development? BY TENANT ORGANIZATIONS FORMED FOR MUTUAL PROTECTION! Tenants and workers must indeed protest in mass meetings against the further squeeze Congress is fixing for them, but self-reliance is the basic thing. Tenants must themselves be able to resist rent increases, to fight evictions, to get from landlords redecorating and other services to which they are entitled. By solidarity in joint action, they can succeed and win these results.

"UNBIASED" DECISION

What induced the Senate Banking and Currency Committee to recommend that 10 per cent rent increase and the end of OPA? The committee heard the side of tenants and of la-

(Continued on page 8)

Faction Fight Intensified In UAW Local Elections

By WALTER JASON

DETROIT, March 2 — An intense campaign for control of the local union offices is now taking place between the pro and anti-Reuther forces in a series of important local elections as the factional struggle in the UAW-CIO reaches new heights of bitterness. The outcome is by no means certain.

A major upset occurred last week when the Reuther forces carried a majority of offices and executive board members in the election at Local 155, for ten years an undisputed Stalinist stronghold. Nat Ganley, member of the Central Committee of the Stalinist party, was driven from office. Only John Anderson, incumbent president, was re-elected, and his victory was by a handful of votes.

In turn, another upset was the defeat of the Reuther camp at Briggs Local 212, where the indictment of John McManus, financial secretary, on charges of being involved in a 70,000 gas stamp embezzlement just before the run-off elections, took the entire Reuther slate to defeat.

In this connection, Emil Maze, co-director of the East Side and former Briggs Local president, charged that the indictment was timed to coincide with the elections, and McManus, for ten years the financial secretary of the local, fled suit for \$100,000 for false arrest. Nevertheless, the slate was defeated.

At Packard Local, Whitey Urban, in the Stalinist camp, won easily from a right-wing candidate.

At Ford Local 600, the biggest local union in the world, a bitter and vicious struggle began this week as unit elections and general elections began.

Following the personal appearance of Walter P. Reuther, international president, at Local 7, the home local of R. J. Thomas, where Reuther did a devastating job of answering Thomas' recent accusations against him, interest focused this week on the elections there between pro and anti-Reuther slates.

In each of these campaigns, various kinds of attacks were being made and answered, depending on the kind of opposition and the character of the contestants. But there was one common feature in all of the local elections. It was generally a pro and anti-Reuther battle.

At Local 155, where the Stalinists admittedly ran the union, the Reuther forces concentrated mainly on the lousy trade union job the Stalinists had done. Not one single leaflet

attacking the Stalinists as such was issued. "Red-baiting" was conspicuous by its absence! The Reuther forces won.

At Local 600, where the pro-Reuther forces consist primarily of a small handful of Association of Catholic Trade Union leaders (ACTU) there was a red-baiting campaign against the Stalinist administration.

At Local 7, the Stalinist bloc has put on a red-baiting campaign (Continued on page 2)

Draper Lashes Jim Crow Ghettos in Los Angeles

LOS ANGELES, Feb. 28—It will be a long time before the smug business men of the Crenshaw Chamber of Commerce recover from the jolt delivered by Harold Draper, Workers Party candidate for councilman from the Seventh District, when he addressed them at their luncheon meeting today. Pulling no punches, Draper, identifying himself as a worker and a socialist, uncompromisingly opposed to Jim Crow, challenged the right of these restrictive covenants to use words like freedom and justice while they plot to confine Negroes to "overcrowded ghettos to the detriment of their health, their happiness and their very lives." (See page 8 for text of Draper's remarks.)

The Chamber of Commerce had naively assumed that the color of his skin would inevitably line up Draper with the other candidates invited to appear. The report given on the "Ninth Avenue Front" in the business meeting preceding the addresses by the candidates was a bold and bald statement of the anti-Negro purpose of this outfit. Ninth Avenue divides the Negro and white residential areas. It is the battle front of white real estate interests and racist property owners against the "infiltration" of Negroes seeking space in which to live and breathe. Latest word

from this front was that four or five Negroes had slipped through the lines and found homes in the lily white section. One of these is Slim Gailard, the well known Negro musician and entertainer.

The speaker who told of these "dread developments" warned that unless the battle lines were closed, Crenshaw would soon become a "dark complected neighborhood" and issued a call for financial reinforcements in the crusade to "protect property values." Lawsuits have been instituted against the "invaders" of the sacred preserve of profit and property.

A stunned silence followed the weak scattering of applause that marked the end of Draper's speech. One man was overheard to whisper, "That guy certainly has courage." The candidates who spoke after Draper felt obliged to make a weak pitch for a vague "fairness to Negroes"; as did even Rasmussen, the incumbent. But this representative of business and real estate interests had a political office to lose by too much talk of compromise and before he sat down cautioned his white audience to "remember" the significance to them of the fact that 45 per cent of the Seventh District's population is Negro.

2,000 New Labor Action Subs by March 30!

The March campaign long planned by LABOR ACTION for 2,000 new readers and subscribers to the paper is now officially on. Within the first few days of the campaign, we have already had the encouraging results of receiving 50 subscriptions, with more coming in daily. As the campaign increases in momentum, we expect to be swamped by a flood-tide of subscriptions, but we're all prepared to meet this!

An introductory offer to LABOR ACTION by which a new subscriber will receive the paper for one full year, together with a copy of Ernest Erber's 25c pamphlet, "Plenty For All," is being made as an inducement

to readers. This combination sells for \$1.00 total; a 20 per cent saving. Six month subscriptions at the regular rate of 50 cents (it would be impossible to offer a cheaper subscription than this) are likewise available.

We take this opportunity to urge every reader of LABOR ACTION to ask their friends who are at all acquainted with the paper, and even those not yet acquainted with it, to take out a subscription. We hardly need tell our regular readers about the paper's merits, which more than speak for themselves.

Throughout the country, branches of the Workers Party are swinging into action behind the March Sub-

scription Drive, and have already begun to send in subs toward fulfilling their suggested and accepted quotas. An active competition among the branches of the party and among individual friends of LABOR ACTION toward winning one of the four prizes being offered is expected.

Here is a concrete and excellent opportunity for every friend and reader of LABOR ACTION to do something on behalf of the paper. We want these extra subs, we need the money it represents, we welcome the added circulation that it signifies. So—during the month of March particularly—see what you, our readers, can do about getting some subs for your paper.



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NEWS AND VIEWS FROM THE LABOR FRONT

Factions Vie in UAW Local Elections --

(Continued from page 1) against the Reuther forces! It has dragged in the standard cries about "outsiders," "Communists," "Socialists," "Trotskyites!" in a truly amazing example of the degeneracy of this group within the labor movement.

NEGRO CAUCUS

At a large caucus meeting of George F. Addes forces, Richard T. Leonard, international union vice-president, made a vicious speech against the Reuther forces in which, as his main point, he charged that "the three major dangers to the labor movement in America today are Gerald K. Smith, Walter Reuther and Senator Bilbo." In Stalinist locals, Reuther is attacked as a fascist!

Taking advantage of the fact that there are Jim Crow elements in the Reuther camp or, to be exact, more Jim Crow elements in the Reuther camp than in the Addes-Thomas-Leonard-Stalinist camp, the Stalinists are using their big influence among the Negroes to whip up sentiment against Reuther and all his supporters. As a powerful weapon in this campaign, the Stalinists have organized a secret all-Negro caucus and this development is causing grave concern because it tends to sharpen existing differences and prejudices!

This secret caucus was attacked by Reuther in his speech at Local 7 in which he accused the Stalinists of exploiting the Negroes for their own political purposes. The demand of this caucus that the UAW-CIO elect a Negro as a special Executive Board member, with no vote, but to head the FEPC department, was called another form of Jim Crow by Reuther. "Sure, the popular way to get support among the Negroes is to support that demand, but it is just another form of Jim Crow, and I am against it," Reuther said. All union officials should be elected on merit, on union ability, he emphasized. To which the Stalinist hatchmen reply: "See! He's another Bilbo!"

ATTACKS STALINISTS

Besides repeating what LABOR ACTION reported last week on the Allis-Chalmers strike dispute between him and Thomas, Reuther made a major attack on the Stalinist party for being an agency of Moscow and for putting those interests above the interests of the workers in the shops.

He pointed out that the J. I. Case strike was solid after 15 months, a strike longer than the Allis-Chalmers walkout, and that the strikers were solid. At Allis-Chalmers over 5,000 have now gone back to work! Reuther said the difference was because the Allis-Chalmers strike leaders permitted the Stalinists to exploit the picket lines, and divided the strikers, so they became prey for company propaganda. He said a full report would be made to the UAW membership as soon as the strike was settled.

Of course, the flip-flops, the piece-work advocacy of the Stalinists during the war, their demand for a five-year no-strike pledge after the war until their line was changed—all these were pointed out by Reuther, who was enthusiastically received by the overflow membership meeting. "Any criticism you make of the Communist Party brings from them a cry of red-baiter. It is a neat formula for them," Reuther pointed out. "The only way to avoid being a red-baiter in their eyes is to follow the flip-flops of the party line."

Far too many militants in the UAW-CIO, be they Socialists, Trotskyists or independents, have been called red-baiters by the Stalinists when they have attacked reactionary policies of this notorious gang, for the ranks to be fooled by the Stalinist shouts of injured innocence.

REUTHER'S ERROR

Reuther's error, and this may become dangerous, is the fact that in his attack on "outsiders," referring to the Stalinists, he makes no distinction between that dangerous political tendency within the union movement, and the progressive and revolutionary tendencies who have "no special axe to grind," but devote themselves to fighting for a program based exclusively on the needs of the men in the shops! The overtones of "red-baiting" in Reuther's speeches come from this opportunistic approach. In this he is

no different, of course, from his opponents in the Addes-Thomas-Leonard bloc, whose views are as opportunistic. Even R. J. Thomas, in the speeches written for him by the Stalinists, uses Reuther's formula, "I am against control of the union movement by Communists, Socialists or Trotskyists."

Quietly working behind the scenes in this furious struggle is George Addes, financial secretary-treasurer, who is rapidly building his fences to be a "third camp" candidate for president in the event R. J. Thomas continues his reckless actions which are discrediting him. Thomas is not

just stooging for the Stalinists, but is also doing Addes' dirty work.

Already key Addes men are saying: "We need a strong man for president who isn't a factionalist like Reuther or Thomas. Now Addes is a real strong man; he could unite this union!" All of which would mean that the Addes-Leonard-Thomas-Stalinist bloc would simply drop Thomas and his handful of supporters into the dump heap and take over full control of the UAW-CIO. As against this, the Reuther tendency remains the progressive one in the struggle and deserves the backing of the militants in the union.

Sees "Operation Dixie" Succeeding in Textile

By CHARLES KENT

Forty of the 125 CIO organizers now operating in the South are concentrated in the textile plants in the Piedmont Belt of North and South Carolina, where the CIO has yet to make a dent. Here, as in no other Southern industry, capitalism has strengthened and bulwarked its dikes against the rising tide of industrial unionism. When the CIO first announced its intention of organizing the unorganized in the South, the Cotton and Wool Journal, the textile industry's official journal, announced in a leading editorial the intention of the industry's determination to resist organization by legal and illegal means. The editorial further outlined in detail a plan, comparable to the infamous strike-breaking "Mohawk Valley Plan," to prevent organization. (An article in the near future will outline and analyze this plan.)

The "Piedmont Plan," as the writer shall hereafter refer to it, has been largely successful and thousands of Southern textile workers in this region remain unorganized. Those who evinced the slightest interest in the CIO have been summarily fired, told that they were fired for union activity, and blacklisted from work in any other textile plant. This has served to frighten the less militant workers.

In carrying out these firings, the textile bosses have not hesitated to tell the workers that they were fired for joining a union. So frequent has been the incidence of such firings that the NLRB's efforts to prevent such flagrant violations of the Wagner Act have been laughable. The board, however sincere and scrupulous its members might be in enforcing the law of the land, is helpless before the organized efforts of a powerful industry.

CIO HAVING EFFECT

Those in charge of the textile drive report, however, that the situation is about to break in favor of the CIO. Constant effort by the organizing staff is beginning to have its effect upon the textile workers.

Pressured by the increasing exploitation of capitalism, they are beginning to see the advantage of organ-

izing themselves into an industrial union. Then there are those who remember the bloody and explosive strikes of the Thirties, when, under the leadership of the AFL, they formed unions, struck for something more than a starvation wage and lost. They are realizing that their heroic struggles of an earlier period can be repeated with a greater chance of success.

They are not as isolated as they were then, for many thousands of Southern workers in other industries in that area will help them. The incomparably greater strength of the entire American labor movement is another factor in their favor. Undoubtedly they will be organized.

STANDARD OIL TARGET

Another stronghold of the anti-labor forces is to be found in Baton Rouge, La., where Standard Oil Company of New Jersey operates the largest oil refinery in the United States. This oil refinery has been for many years a target for organization by the CIO with the SOC (Southern Organizing Committee) intensifying the drive during the past six months.

Here organization has been retarded. The Standard Oil Company has simply kept one step ahead of the gains won by organized oil workers. Its workers, receive more pay, longer paid vacations, seniority rights, etc., than the organized workers in other companies in this area. The company can afford to do this because of its more favorable monopoly position and because of its infamous alliance with the still very much alive Huey Long political machine, which has for years granted the company unbelievably low tax rates per barrel of Louisiana oil pumped.

Other industries which the SOC finds largely unorganized are the furniture and tobacco industries. It is in the latter that the drive has been most successful, however, to the present date.

Certain measures are being adopted by the SOC to speed up the drive. The most important from every aspect is the South-wide formation of volunteer rank and file organizing committees based in the locals. This, too, will be the subject of a later article on "Operation Dixie."

THE PORTAL PAY PIPE DREAM

Federal Judge Franc A. Picard, of Detroit, after a fine show of impartiality ("I am both pro-labor and pro-business") did what this column predicted he would do. He took the tip thrust upon him by the U. S. Supreme Court and threw out the Mt. Clemens Pottery Co. portal pay suit, on grounds that the claims of the workers were "too trifling to merit damage." What a pious fraud! The federal courts didn't find it too trifling to fine John L. Lewis and the United Mine Workers some \$15 millions. But the portal pay suits—poof.

There are only 1,515 suits on file in 85 federal district courts, for claims totaling a mere \$5,785,204,606. Through their legal arm, America's 60 Families dismiss the suits on the grounds they are "too trifling." Through their legislative arm, a subcommittee of the Senate judiciary committee, they spread the agitation that the suits involve such tremendous sums that to grant them would "seriously impair" the credit of many employers, and "would bring about the financial ruin of many employers." When your class is in power, you don't have to be bothered by inconsistencies or abstract justice. Justice is power, and your class has the power.

Just look at how the federal judges all over the nation clicked their heels and went to work on the unions' portal pay claims. In Camden, N. J., Federal Judge Thomas M. Madden ruled that a union bringing a portal pay suit must have signed declarations made under oath from each of the complainants it represents. In Chicago, Federal Judge Philip L. Sullivan dismissed a portal pay suit brought by the International Union of Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers, Local 758, when the boss showed up with signatures of 60 workers who had caved in under boss pressure and asked that the suit be dropped. Sullivan denied a request from union counsel that the suit be thrown out "without prejudice," and directed that the dismissal order carry the "with prejudice" terminology, a legal barrier to the refile of a similar suit. In Congress a House judiciary committee has drawn up a bill under which a boss who claims he had "acted in good faith" could thereby establish a defense against suits filed for back pay under the portal principle.

So much for the portal pay suits. It is doubtful if one will hear much about them from now on. Understand—I believe that the workers are entitled to every cent claimed in the suits, that they should receive pay for every minute they have to give the bosses. But when the Stalinists and the labor lawyers direct a fight like this into the capitalist courts, they are losing the case before the game even starts. The courts represent the home field of the bosses. They OWN the courts, they OWN Congress, they OWN the White House. They can whip us every time at their own game. The place to win portal pay is the place the miners won it—on the old picket line. That's OUR field. The bosses and their finkies are really so few. We are so many. But they occupy the key political and industrial posts. They own the means of production and they own Congress—until we challenge that ownership with a labor party of our own. When that day comes, the gains we make on the picket line will stay won.

"THE GREAT HOUSING BOOM OF 1947"

There isn't going to be any building boom in 1947, any more than there was in 1946, or will be in 1948 and

the years to come. Nevertheless, I predict that within two or three years all the talk about the housing crisis will die down. How explain this paradox?

What is meant today by the housing crisis is the peculiar intensification of the bad housing conditions of the masses, as the result of the following circumstances: The tearing down of hundreds of acres of buildings in the depression of the 1930's in each big city; the sudden rush of population to the big towns during the war-time industrial boom; the fact that few new apartments have been built since 1929; the demobilization of millions of veterans; the sharp increase in population with no parallel increase in building; a creeping increase in rents; a still further aggravation of overcrowding in the individual homes, and, for some, the impossibility of finding a place to live in at all. And THIS housing crisis gets talked of so much only because it is not limited to the working class but affects other classes as well.

The fact is, that under capitalism there never has been and never will be a solution to the housing needs of the masses. In every city, in every country, the working class lives in bad, overcrowded and unhealthy dwellings. This housing shortage will be overcome only by abolishing altogether the exploitation and oppression of the working class by the ruling class.

The Wall Street Journal recently made a survey in eleven key cities about the "building boom" that the boss politicians refer to so glibly. "It's only a pipe dream," because of high costs, reports that paper. A big Philadelphia builder has given up plans for 500 homes. "I won't do anything about them for at least another year," said he. In Pittsburgh, a builder who planned to construct 50 houses in 1947 said: "I've already started ten of them—but I'm going to hold off on the rest." In Cleveland a builder who had planned for 120 houses this year will build only five. A Detroit construction firm which originally planned to start 300 units for sale this year has slashed that figure in half. The same story comes from the West Coast. The head of Associated Home Builders of San Francisco says there will be no building boom in 1947, that "costs are too high." In Chicago, 18,766 homes were begun in 1946, and only 6,373 were finished. It is doubtful if the remainder of the homes will be completed even in 1947, say some real estate operators. January, 1947, building permits in Chicago totaled only \$11 millions, less than in December, 1946, and far under January, 1946.

Of course, much of this pessimism of the real estate sharks is directed at finally killing rent ceilings, now destined to expire June 30 under present law. Once the rent ceilings are off, "a considerable number of new apartment projects would doubtless be started," according to the N. Y. Journal of Commerce.

You see, it is more profitable for the housing sharks to put up expensive apartment buildings for the upper middle class than it is to put up low-rental units or cheap houses. When rent ceilings are off, a lot of luxury apartments will be built, despite "high costs." The housing needs of the upper middle class will be met within a year or two. The housing "crisis" will then disappear from the pages of the boss press and the speeches of the politicians. The mass of the American people will continue to be housed in the regal splendor to which they have become accustomed under capitalism. For example: 21 per cent of U. S. homes have no electricity; 43 per cent have no private bath; 31 per cent have no running water; 27 per cent have no refrigeration. The only road to decent housing for ALL the people is the socialist road.

Cleveland Banks, Landlords Thrive on "Circles of Rot"

By GERALD McDERMOTT

CLEVELAND, Feb. 22—Truth about Cleveland's Negro ghettos has hit the front pages of this city. In a blistering statement by Sidney Williams, retiring head of the Urban League, the capitalist masters of Cleveland have been directly accused of breeding Jim Crow for profit. What Sidney Williams said is true of every city in the nation and should be of interest to the whole labor movement.

Cleveland boasts that this city has never had a race riot. Race relations here are supposed to be superior to most other large cities. But Cleveland does NOT boast that 100,000 Negro citizens in this "civic-minded" city are forced to live in a slum area under conditions that rival the worst. This fact is so naked, so stark, and so forceful that the charges hurled by Williams could not be ignored by the daily press.

Even Williams, in laying much of the blame with the "Union Club gang"—which means in Cleveland what Wall Street gang would mean in New York—did not tell all the truth about the ruling clique which he correctly says "toil not, but live on the fat of the land." But if Williams didn't tell all the truth about the city's rulers, LABOR ACTION will supply the rest.

CIRCLES OF ROT

Williams spoke of "circles of rot" in the race relations of the city. "Circles of rot" has a special meaning in Cleveland—it describes not only the race relations, but the city itself. The center of the city is a depressive wasteland of crowded fire traps, rotting hulks and ugly shambles which nevertheless continue to enrich the Union Club gang, who long ago moved to the exclusive suburbs.

The responsibility for the circles of rot in race relations was outlined by Williams. Some of the causes he listed are only half true, because unfortunately Williams did not tell the other half of the truth.

First, Williams blamed the landlords. What he didn't say was that the landlords are largely the banks, and the banks are—the Union Club gang.

Secondly, he named the school board, who "ghettoize Negro teachers and students." What he didn't say was who the capitalist politicians on the school board represent. You fill in the answer.

Third, he blamed the "city fathers bunch" directly. Nothing need be added, although it is surprising that Williams complained that these powerful people, who could help the Negro, do not. They know a good thing—for them—when they see one.

Fourth, in an effort to be "fair," Williams blamed "newly arrived

Southern Negroes who lose their heads in new-found freedom." It is, at best, an exceedingly unfortunate formulation. "Freedom" for Cleveland's Negroes cannot decently be measured by comparison with Bilbo's South. Who is responsible for the explosive resentment that Southern Negroes often show in the North? No one but the "Union Club gangs" of Memphis and Birmingham, Atlanta and Richmond.

Lastly, Williams stated that Cleveland's large foreign-born population "seem to think anti-Negroism is the first step toward Americanization." For Negroes to blame their fellow workers and fellow inhabitants of the "circles of rot" would be a dangerous mistake. Does Williams think that foreign-born citizens brought their Jim Crow notions from Poland and Yugoslavia? No, the immigrants learned this not before, but after they passed the Statue of "Liberty" into a land where capitalist rulers MAKE Jim Crow part of America.

Cleveland is better off because Williams turned the spotlight on the shame of ghettos and discrimination. Not, of course, that the Negroes and other working people of Cleveland really needed to be reminded.

WHERE TO START

Williams, whether he likes it or not, turned the spotlight on himself, too. He has been in Cleveland many years, but he made his speech just before leaving Cleveland for a new—and better—job in Chicago. Had he just discovered conditions here the day before his train left? That is hard to believe. Maybe he didn't want to start a fight he was afraid to lead.

It is not hard to find a place to start the fight against Jim Crow and bad housing for Negroes, and miserable housing for the rest of Cleveland's workers. The place to start is in the union halls on Euclid and 79th and Coit Road and throughout the industrial sections. The fight against the fat boys is already started there, and white and Negro workers are fighting together, school board or no school board. And if the average Negro working man took the Urban League and NAACP and Future Outlook League away from people who wear white collars seven days a week, that would help a lot too. Finally, an independent labor party growing out of the union halls and the Negro and minority organizations could fight the Union Club bunch politically like the auto and steel and electrical and other locals fight them economically.

And that goes not only for Cleveland but for Kansas City and Kalamazoo and Kokomo and every other city in this nation where capitalism thrives on "circles of rot."

Ohio Vets Seek State Bonus

CLEVELAND—On Tuesday, February 25, 500 veterans from many parts of Ohio converged on Columbus to present their demands for a state bonus. The call for this action was made by the Provisional Committee on Veterans Affairs, an outgrowth of the Collinwood (Cleveland) Veterans Committee, which is composed of vets from the heavy industrial area of Collinwood. Most of the delegates responding to the call were sent by their unions, while some came from veteran and other groups.

After traveling to Columbus by various means, the vets first met at the Chittenden Hotel and were briefed on the various parts of the program of the day. Delegates were to parade to the State Capitol, call their Senators and Representatives from the floor of both legislative bodies and impress on these gentlemen in a "gentle but firm" manner the vets' stand on state bonus and other issues.

Five planks were presented for the veterans' program: For a state low-rent housing program; for an improved state GI Bill of Rights; for a state FEPC; for a state veterans' health program; and for a state bonus, with the emphasis put on the method of financing the bonus. The Provisional Committee advocated paying for the bonus by a corporate tax, by a tax on high income groups and by taxing horse racing and other gambling.

The only outside speaker to appear before this session was a member of the House Military Affairs Committee, who distinguished himself by advising the delegates of the number of his ancestors who fought in the Civil War, and by begging them not to march on the Capitol. The vets did march to the Capitol, escorted by the local CIO sound truck and the police, carrying pla-

cards explaining their demands. The entry into the Capitol building was made peacefully and orderly and once inside, the men walked upstairs to the Senate meeting room. As the group entered the Senate, they were welcomed by the Lieutenant-Governor, in the presiding chair, who informed them that it was their democratic right to observe the Legislature in action and to speak to their Representatives. Thereupon the Senate meeting was adjourned and most Senators found that they had very urgent duties to perform elsewhere.

As the Senators moved out, the vets moved in, surrounding the men they had come to see, and in most cases succeeded in at least presenting the five-point program to the legislators. The two Senators from Cleveland, Persky and Corlett, were faced by the largest group of men and were most unwilling to speak or be spoken to. Both men had very important committee meetings at once and anyway there wasn't an available room large enough to seat

After much argument and heckling and to prevent the press from reporting that "they wouldn't talk to the vets," these Senators found both the time and the space for an immediate meeting. The group moved to a convenient room and there had an hour and a half meeting. The Senators and most Cleveland Representatives were presented with the five-point program by a committee of five, with further participation allowed by the men in the audience.

As was to be expected, the legislators hemmed and hawed and tried every ruse possible to avoid answering directly the questions put to them. One of them even dug up a law which prevents anyone from asking a legislator to answer yes or

Teachers' Strike Action --

(Continued from page 1)

ment which has as big a stake as any force in the fight to save the educational system is officially silent and strangely aloof.

We should know within a week whether a strike poll will be taken. If it is, the probabilities are it will show an affirmative majority.

A strike by New York City's teachers would be a tremendous experience. Through strike action teachers are becoming a constructive factor in education. They compel the adoption of larger budgets for education and higher salaries which is the only

way to stop the rush of teachers out of the profession, now taking place at the rate of more than 35,000 a year on a national scale. They become spokesmen not only in their own behalf but for the rescue of the educational system as a whole. They emerge from the status of public employee subservient to omnipotent bureaucrats to become a force in the solution of their own and the broader problems of education.

In struggle they discover bonds of solidarity among themselves, with their fellow teachers who come to their support; with their pupils and their pupils' parents who are, in their majority, sympathetic to them; with workers wherever, as in Buffalo, when teamsters refused to cross their picket lines to deliver coal and supplies, labor demonstrates its support.

Perhaps the most significant achievement of the Buffalo strike is that the mayor who denounced it as a revolt against authority was compelled to negotiate a settlement—a mighty change from the hundred year practice of issuing orders that had to be obeyed. In Woonsocket, Rhode Island, the city recognized the Teachers Guild, AFL, as the collective bargaining agent for the city's teachers, to avoid a threatened strike there. Towns in Pennsylvania and other states have recognized teachers organizations as bargaining agents by negotiating with them. Strikes are changing century old relationships in the country's educational system.

TEACHER ORGANIZATION

In New York City, aside from other benefits that might accrue from a strike, there is the possibility that it may provide a solution for the anarchy of teacher organizations of which there are at least eighty among the city's 23,000 teachers. The organization which conducts a strike

Wants to Outlaw Teachers' Strikes



structure out of which, in time, may issue a single organization with sufficient authority to represent and speak for a considerably greater number of teachers than any one of them can do today.

The teachers in New York City have it in their power to strike a blow for education and their own interest which are one and the same. They can pass from long suffering passivity to active intervention in the solution of their situation. The strike is now not only their weapon of last resort but a program to construct a new age in economic relationships in education. One occasion was missed when the proposal to take a strike poll before Dewey made his first recommendation for a \$300 temporary cost-of-living bonus in January, was postponed. If Healy defeats the proposal now the opportunity will be lost.

The New INTERNATIONAL A Monthly Organ of Revolutionary Marxism 4 Court Square, Long Island City 1, N. Y. Six Issues — \$1.25; Twelve Issues — \$2.00 Enclosed is \$1.25 — \$2.00 for Six Month — One Year Subscription to THE NEW INTERNATIONAL NAME ADDRESS CITY ZONE NO. STATE

The 'Devil's Odyssey' of a Ship That Couldn't Find a Port . . .

By JACK ARTHURSON

PARIS, Feb. 14—Steaming slowly into Saigon harbor with 8,000 troops aboard at the beginning of February was France's largest ocean liner, the Ile de France. The French Expeditionary Corps which started out on January 12 was coming to reinforce the weakened French garrison in Indo-China in the war against the Annamites and others of the five peoples who make up this "jewel of empire" in the Far East.

Their three weeks' trip, reports Jacques Bernot in a copyrighted story in France-Dimanche, a big weekly paper, was a "devil's Odyssey." For all along the route from Toulon, through the Mediterranean, down through the Suez Canal and the Red Sea, and along the Indian Ocean, strange troubles beset the biggest liner that ever went through Suez.

In the boiling hot weather each soldier sought means of occupying himself, usually with long and passionate arguments over Indo-China and what they were to do there. The officers did not argue. They played cards.

SHORE LEAVES FORBIDDEN

At each port the hot and weary troops thought they would have an opportunity to go ashore and escape the steam-bath existence aboard-ship. But the arguments about Indo-China had reached others, along the land routes to the Far East.

Reaching Port Said, where the ship was to stop for food, water and refueling, the troops learned they had been forbidden to go ashore. Afraid of arousing mass demonstrations against the French Expeditionary Corps already badly disliked by Egyptian natives who had never so much as seen the troops, the Egyptian authorities dared not permit French troops ashore. Arabs held that France is slaughtering Indo-Chinese natives fighting for their freedom. They threatened grave incidents against the troops if they dared set foot on land. Everyone stayed aboard.

At Suez the troops were again forbidden land liberty for fear of arousing demonstrations.

Hopefully the soldiers looked forward to getting their feet on terra firma at Colombo in Ceylon. After many days of sailing through the hot Indian Ocean, the ship's captain received a telegram that docking in Colombo was impossible. Violent demonstrations had broken out in Bombay, India, before the French consulate. Student groups demanded that the French Expeditionary Corps return to France immediately, and that an unconditional agreement be signed with Ho Chi Minh, the Annamite leader. At Colombo this agitation against the French could no longer be contained if the troops came into port.

A second telegram said workers at the port had decided to sabotage refueling of the Ile de France, including food and water for the troops. Trincomalee was the only alternative port for landing or even docking.

No sooner had the big ship reached Trincomalee in the morning than a strike broke out among the workers on the dock who refused to load the ship. General confusion reigned among the troops who once again were not permitted to land.

To supply the ship the British had to furnish a guard of marines who barely averted grave struggles with Ceylon natives.

COLONIALS STAND SOLID

After such consistent manifestations of hatred, Jacques Bernot concluded, wisely, that Middle East

Labor's Effort Was Decisive In Winning Free Education

The achievement of free compulsory education—as well as the eight-hour day or the minimum wage laws—is due directly and mainly to the struggles and agitation of the American labor movement.

Between the years of 1820 and 1850, this demand was one of the main planks of labor's program in all parts of the country. The Workingmen's Party in Philadelphia, for instance, considered free public education important enough to place it at the head of its program of political demands in 1829, and in a national convention of trade unions held in New York in 1834 a resolution was adopted which urged an "equal, universal, republican system of education."

Proof of the decisive role of the labor movement in the achievement of free education is the fact that in the first half of the 19th century, when agitation for this demand was carried on mainly on a local level, free education existed almost only where trade unions and workers' political organizations were strong enough to enforce this demand. Thus the industrial North enjoyed this reform long before it was half-heartedly instituted in the South.

Another field in which labor took a hand in shaping our educational system is the field of sex equality. Numerous resolutions were passed for this demand all over the country and in 1834 a convention of Massachusetts workers protested that "females—in an especial manner are educated to consider all useful employments or any avocation by which their fair hands may contribute to their own support, as degradation."

and Oriental populations did not like France's policy in Indo-China. He added that all Asia, which is now striving to eliminate European colonial rule, was solidizing itself with Ho Chi Minh against the French.

Among strange voyages in modern times the "devil's Odyssey" of the Ile de France in January-February, 1947, may take its place as the finest demonstration of solidarity of colonial peoples in the Mediterranean, Red Sea and Indian Ocean against European rule. Solidarity against the French Expeditionary Corps leaped as if telepathically from country to country, to bring consternation to 8,000 French troops and inform them in the only way open to these native fighters that all along the land routes and sea lanes to Indo-China nothing but hatred and bitter mass struggles awaited France.

The present threat to free educational institutions can be linked to a growing movement on the part of American capitalism to destroy the hard-fought-for achievements of American workers. The defense of free education—which must necessarily include the demand for a decent salary for teachers—is therefore very properly a part of labor's general strategy of resistance against the encroachments of big business.

FAIRYTALES VERBOTEN

The unfortunate children of Stalinist Russia are no longer to be allowed to listen to fairy stories or the Moscow radio.

A Stalinist critical hack, L. Dubrovina, writing in Culture and Life, finds that many children's broadcasts were stamped with old-fashioned methods. She upbraids the fairy stories for not emphasizing the Five-Year Plan.

She picks out for special attack one children's broadcast which started out "Let us meet the New Year with a heart open for good."

Of course, one could comment that life would be more pleasant for Russian children listening to the simple fairy tales about Cinderella than listening to fairy tales about Five-Year Plans. At least Cinderella is supposed to have been good looking!

MAGAZINE ACTION

March 10, 1947

A Paper in the Interests of Labor

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Does Britain's New Offer Mean India Will Be Freed?

By HENRY JUDD

THE February 20 announcement of Britain's Prime Minister Attlee to the effect that, come what may, Britain intends to withdraw from India by June of 1948, and transfer power into Indian hands ("definite intention to take the necessary steps to effect the transference of power into responsible Indian hands . . ."); this announcement has aroused great interest and speculation. Do the British really mean it this time? Are they about to finally leave India? Has British imperialism proven so generous and flexible that 400,000,000 people are, at long last, to be handed their independence?

Clearly, a significant—if not fundamental—change has taken place in the situation, conditioned by the desperate economic and social plight of England, by the stalemate within India itself between Hindus and Moslems, and by the incessant demand of the Indian nation as a whole that the British quit India. From this point of view, the British announcement is a move forced upon imperialism by forces too powerful for it to control and regulate. It has become mandatory for England to do something about the Indian question.

In the announcement itself there is an implied threat—a threat intended to bring about a compromise agreement between the predominant Hindu-capitalist Congress party, and the Moslem League. "His Majesty's Government," says the announcement, "will have to consider to whom the powers of the Central Government in British India should be handed over on the due date . . ." Since Britain must come to terms with the Indian ruling class, this threat aims to force the Hindus and Moslems into a pact by implying that, otherwise, Britain will deliberately choose one or the other as the recipient of the power it is preparing to abandon.

This is of course a result of the long stalemate, still existent, between Hindu and Moslem political parties. Since the war's end, British imperialism has had one basic strategy in mind during all its dealings with India—the creation of an agreement, a

working arrangement between Britain on the one hand, and the conservative, pro-capitalist and landlord elements in India itself. The purpose of this agreement would be to enable British imperialism to remain in India, although in a modified way, and to continue to exploit the country in partnership with the Moslem League and the Congress Party.

These efforts have, to this point, failed because of the insistence of the Moslem League upon fulfilling its demand for the creation of an independent Moslem state within greater India. Now the British, in a rapidly deteriorating situation both in India and England itself, have issued what amounts to an ultimatum. They hope to force the Hindu and Moslem leaderships to come to terms and then proceed to declare a three-cornered partnership, including the British.

Within India itself, the announcement has had mixed reactions. The Congress Party has welcomed it, and its leader Nehru has indicated his willingness to approach the Moslem League for fresh discussions and possible compromise. The Moslem leaders have blustered about civil war between Moslem and Hindu, have denounced the former British proposal as "dead and incapable of revival," but have also indicated their readiness to discuss with the Congress Party. A new round in India's interminable "deals" and negotiations is about to resume.

As a prelude to this, the Moslem

League has created communal disturbances in widespread areas of the Punjab province. The atmosphere is tense again, and relations between Hindus and Moslems, stimulated by reactionaries on both sides, have deteriorated considerably. It is impossible to predict whether the Congress and Moslem League can come to terms, although such a possibility certainly exists. This would mean that British strategy had worked out, so far as the conservative forces in India were concerned.

But what about the people—the 400 millions?

Would a British withdrawal in 1948 mean independence and freedom for them? To begin with, it is questionable what the British precisely mean by a withdrawal from India. In the House of Lords, when under attack by the Conservative Party, the Labor Government declared it hoped to retain a major share in the "defense" of an independent India! That hardly smacks of independence. Viscount Jowitt said, "the continued security of India would be a matter of great interest to the British Commonwealth."

Furthermore, Britain would be "naturally very willing to enter into discussions with India as to mutual assistance in matters of external defense." And, most important of all is the fact that the present British plan provides that India cannot become free until its provisional government has signed a satisfactory treaty with England. There is, thus, still a long road to the point where it can be said that India is a free, sovereign, independent power.

Nor has the exact content of what the British mean by "withdrawal" been made plain or clear. Withdrawal of their troops and armed forces? What? Withdrawal of all English administrators, officials and bureaucrats? Or only the lesser ones? Withdrawal of British capitalists (and their capital)? British plantation owners, etc.? In other words, the expropriation of all British capital investments, the ending of British ownership rights, etc.? Not one of these matters has been touched upon. Yet these are the real issues involved in India's independence fight—who shall own, control and benefit from the industries, resources and wealth of the country—the British imperialists, along with their new junior partners of the Congress Party and Moslem League; or the hundreds of millions of workers and peasants.

India has not yet won its freedom, nor will British retreat and concessions (both of which are clearly indicated and guaranteed in the situation) necessarily mean this. Between the old régime of open imperialism and a new workers' and peasants' free India stands the native capitalist and landlord class of that country. It will come to terms with imperialism long before it will deal with its own nationals.

A French Socialist Asks Help For Europe's Hungry People!

The letter we are printing here tells its own unfortunate story in more pressing and acute terms than we possibly could. It was written by a French woman, a socialist comrade in Paris. Similar letters come regularly to the LABOR ACTION EUROPEAN RELIEF SERVICE. Above all, from Germany we receive the most urgent requests, the most appealing descriptions of the cold, hunger and misery that exists everywhere—a situation greatly enhanced by the rigors of Europe's most severe winter in decades.

The response, until now, to the appeals of our LABOR ACTION EUROPEAN RELIEF SERVICE, has been gratifying. A considerable number of food and clothing packages have been sent out; and about 10 families have volunteered to regularly assist families in Europe. BUT IT HAS NOT BEEN SUFFICIENT. Despite reports to the contrary, general conditions have not improved to the extent to which aid can be lessened or dropped. Let anyone who thinks this read the letter of this French woman. We still want volunteers to take on European families with the idea of regularly assisting them.

LABOR ACTION EUROPEAN RELIEF SERVICE

Paris, Jan. 27, 1947

Dear Friends:

Right now it is very cold, the streets are covered with snow, and coal is very scarce; we are entitled to one-third of a ton of coal for a household of three people and it is very difficult to get.

The snowy days alarm us for another reason: we are entitled to have our shoes resoled only once a year, so you can imagine how much we fear the snow and rain, since we are, likewise, allowed to buy only one pair of shoes per year.

I may seem to be recounting a very somber story to you but I would like you to understand under what conditions we have to live and what problems are presented to us daily.

In the food field an equally black picture has to be expected: if you do not know what our "rations" are, here is the list:

- Bread: .66 pounds per day.
- Sugar: .11 pounds per month.
- Coffee: .026 pounds per month and for months we haven't received even a grain of coffee.
- Fats: a total of 1.32 pounds per month; 44 pounds of butter, 44 pounds of margarine and 44 pounds of lard per MONTH.
- Preserves: 1.1 pounds per YEAR.
- Wine: 3.3-4.4 quarts a MONTH.
- Meat pastes: around 2.2 pounds per month in winter, nothing at all in summer.
- All these rations are for one person.
- There is no milk or chocolate at all.
- Flour is given only for bread coupons.
- Oranges: 2.2 pounds per year.
- Rice: No distribution.

As to soap: 1 small bar of toilet soap QUARTERLY and .11 pounds of laundry soap per MONTH, besides a package of soap powder per month.

I believe that is about all. Meat is unrationed at a price that permits us to eat it only once a week, when there is any; for the butcher shops have been closed for three weeks for lack of meat. We live al-

most exclusively on meat paste and potatoes, alternating with noodles.

The situation from the point of view of health is very serious and tuberculosis cases are unfortunately more and more frequent.

In the realm of clothing there are other troubles: prices are absolutely prohibitive. The price of a coat in 1945 is the same as that of a small car in 1939; moreover, all articles of clothing are rationed, which does not permit us to buy more than one dress and a little underclothing per year. If you want a coat you have to wait until the next year. As to household linen, the situation is tragic: a pair of sheets costs half the

monthly salary of a stenographer, and it is impossible to buy them without giving up buying the "yearly dress."

If you break a dish you know that you cannot replace it, nor your dish pan if it gets a hole in it. Only the "young married couples" receive the certificates permitting them to equip their kitchen and modestly fill their cupboards.

And most especially—don't have babies. For if you have the strength to finish your pregnancy the question of layette and of necessary clothing will make you pass sleepless nights, and I do not speak of blankets and of the indispensable warmth a baby needs.

I'll stop for a believe I've said everything on this subject. Moreover, I avoid speaking with other friends about it. It is a subject which is taboo, one which is sufficient to demoralize us for a couple of hours. You will rarely hear the French talk about such grave questions among themselves. They know too well how terrible they are, for all of them and their children.

I thank you again for what you have been so completely kind as to send me.

Comradely,

R. D.

Despots Never Hesitate to Utilize Fools

Harold Laski in Stalin's Service

By IRVING HOWE

For some time now a number of journalists have been earning their groceries the easy way by writing about U. S.-Russian relationships. They tell their readers why the U. S. "doesn't understand" Russia, or why Russia "doesn't understand" the U. S.—as if inter-imperialist struggles could be reduced to the level of lovers' quarrels or even problems of mastering unfamiliar languages. A notorious fellow-traveler, Edgar Snow, is presently boosting his income by spinning out a few such pieces for the Saturday Evening Post, in which he ranges from Stalinist apologetics to cracker-barrel philosophy to badly digested "Dostoevskian" reflections on the Russian soul.

Though one expects this from the hit-and-run scribbles of the popular weeklies, it is also to be expected, presumably, that a socialist would try to dig a little deeper into political problems. Especially one who has a world-wide reputation!

Harold J. Laski, author of numerous books and former chairman of the British Labor Party though he is, does not, however, succeed in rising an inch above the level of chatter-box gossip and provincial psychology in his article, "Russia, Why Does It Act that Way?—A Psycho-Political Study." (The Nation, March 1, 1947.)

For Laski the problem of current politics boils down to . . . protocol and psychology. After describing the strained nature of U. S.-Russian relationships, he writes:

"What this requires first of all is the recognition that politics is the art of compromise, and that there must be the skill and insight to find the way to a good compromise when it is necessary. I am not certain that Mr. Molotov has that skill and insight in the degree that Mr. Litvinov had; I am quite sure that Generalissimo Stalin has it."

This quotation, you will admit, is rather dazzling. For Laski the current is not due to such matters as who shall rule Germany, who dominate the Mediterranean, who control Manchuria; for him it is a matter of bad manners: Molotov is not so refined as Litvinov. But if "Generalissimo" Stalin is—"I am quite sure"—trills Harold to the titillated Nation readers—so well-mannered, why does he tolerate the coarse Molotov? Why didn't Laski, in his recent visit to Moscow, inform Stalin that his Foreign Minister is so difficult? Or doesn't Laski make as glaring an ass of himself in the Kremlin as in the pages of The Nation?

How then shall we solve this difficult problem? Laski concludes his "psycho-political study" by urging that "the Russian government needs very badly to humanize its Foreign Office and its diplomatic services. If every Russian ambassador abroad treated the citizens of the country to which he is accredited with the wisdom and good-humor with which Stalin treats his visitors, the legend

PROFESSOR H. LASKI OFFERS DEFINITION OF DEMOCRACY

"I think myself that mutual understanding would be helped if Russian statesmen said plainly that the international situation is not yet compatible with political democracy within Russia, instead of insisting that their political system is more genuinely democratic than that of any other country. It is of real importance, in this matter, to be honest. I think Russia has achieved a remarkable social democracy; it has gone, in my judgment, farther toward an effective democracy in the realm of economic life than any other country I have seen. But on the political plane there is no right of opposition; hostility to the policies of the one-party state brings very quickly the formidable charge of treasonable conspiracy. No writ of habeas corpus is honored. There can be arrest, internment, and exile without trial; a man may be imprisoned or executed without even his wife knowing the offense with which he is charged, or the evidence brought against him, or whether he is alive or dead. The secret police remain an imperium in imperio, reaching long fingers into the control of every aspect of national life."

HAROLD LASKI,
The Nation, March 1, 1947

would soon perish that the Russians are a strange race, anxious at any cost to destroy bourgeois civilization."

Laski's entire "psycho-political study" is on this same incredibly vulgar fishwife level. He does not even try to state what kind of society he believes Russia to be, what its role in current world politics is. Instead, he engages in a farcical sort of psychology a la Dale Carnegie: "The new Russia is not sure of itself. It is looking for insults. It is afraid that someone may forget it has come of age. That leads it to throw its weight about and to be difficult and irritating in negotiation."

Perhaps then the real solution is to send Molotov to a psychiatrist if Stalin fails to heed Laski's advice to set up finishing schools for his diplomats?

Enough of this tomfoolery. Were Laski merely a political nitwit—he is that too, of course—he would be harmless. But together with his advice on manners and his psychological pontificaling, he presents rather slick apologetics for Stalinism. He tries to make the American reader sym-

pathetic to the current Russian imperialism by citing the record of intervention by capitalist powers in the early years of the Russian revolution; but he does not indicate that this intervention was directed against the revolutionary workers state of Lenin rather than the present bureaucratic dictatorship of Stalin. And he attempts to justify Russian imperialism by citing imperialist acts of the U. S. and Britain—that most depraved and cynical suggestion that the oppressive imperialism of the western capitalist powers provides in any way justification for the imperialism of Stalinist Russia!

It is precisely those like Laski, who, permitting themselves an occasional criticism of Stalinism are its most effective apologists. Read, for instance, his central paragraph which is reprinted in a box in this article. Here we have a frank admission that Russia is a political dictatorship and a full list of the facts to prove it. But simultaneously Laski (like his counterpart in American Middlebrowdom, Henry Wallace) writes that Stalinist Russia "has achieved a remarkable social democracy; it has gone farther toward an effective democracy in the realm of economic life than any other country I have seen."

This sort of nonsense is at present very popular: "admitted that Russia is a political dictatorship, still isn't there economic democracy?" Yet neither Laski nor Wallace tell us how it is possible to have economic democracy in a political dictatorship. Let us reduce the matter to its simplest denominator. Suppose a worker in a Russian factory is dissatisfied with something. Can he strike? Can he vote for opposition parties? Can he organize a party of his own or publish a paper urging the removal of the state leadership?

I think it is obvious, or should be, that economic democracy is impossible without political democracy; just as, in turn political democracy cannot be complete without economic democracy. The separation created by Laski and Wallace is a nonsensical absurdity intended to fool those who know Stalinism is a monstrous police dictatorship but who are not as familiar with the workings of this dictatorship in the economic realm.

But that is a great lesson of our time: life under capitalism teaches us that political democracy can reach fruition only when the economic democracy of socialism is achieved; and life under Stalinism teaches us that without political democracy, the necessary step of state ownership of industry is also not enough.

Laski, because he does have a reputation for being a socialist theoretician, does infinitely greater service to Stalinism than its undisguised apologists. That his article proves once more that he has no legitimate title to the proud calling of socialist theoretician does not lessen his service to Stalin. Despots never hesitate to utilize fools.

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Editorials

On Truman and Bevin Again

Several months ago, in commenting on British Foreign Minister Bevin's despicable attack on the Jewish people at the Labor Party conference in Bournemouth, we noted that the hypocrisy of the United States government matched Bevin's revolting policy. At that time Bevin charged that the United States government wanted Britain to permit the Jews to enter Palestine because it "did not want too many of them in New York." Last week Bevin delivered himself of another of his speeches on the Palestine issue which reek of the depravity of British imperialism.

As in the first case, we must not be blinded by our indignation at the spectacle of a man who presumes to speak in the name of British labor, parroting imperialist viciousness, into overlooking the evidence he presents of the depravity of U. S. imperialism.

If Bevin can get away with some of his statements it is only because they have this much truth in them—that what they say of Truman's policies is accurate. Bevin specifically slapped Truman for having "spoiled" British negotiations on Palestine last fall by issuing a statement during the Congressional campaign, on the eve of the Jewish Day of Atonement, calling for admission of 100,000 Jews into Palestine. He begged James F. Byrnes, then Secretary of State, said Bevin to the House of Commons, "that the statement should not be issued, but I was told that if it was not issued by Mr. Truman a competitive statement would be issued by Mr. Dewey." (Dewey did in fact issue such a statement on October 6, two days after Truman.)

None of this is, of course, a justification of Bevin's role. It does not justify Britain's refusal to admit these 100,000 Jews. But it does make a telling point about imperialist practices in general. "I cannot," said Bevin, "settle things if my problem is to be made the subject of local elections." Equally one might say, the Jewish people can gain nothing from being made a campaign convenience of the Democratic or Republican Parties! Neither Truman nor Dewey has proposed to do

anything concrete about the terrible plight of Europe's Jewish population. They will use it to advance U. S. imperialist interests in the Middle East. They will use it as campaign fodder, something to snare votes on Election Day. But they will NOT themselves initiate the essential step of opening the doors of the UNITED STATES to immigration.

And, as socialists in the United States, that is where our principal concern lies. Bevin behaves the way he does, not because he is an anti-Semite, but because he is the agent of the British government in trying to salvage what remains of the sorely pressed British Empire. We demand, as we think the socialists of Great Britain should demand, that immigration to Palestine be opened without restriction. As socialists, we uphold the right of any person or people to migrate from and to ANY country. But we cannot seriously advocate the right of the Jewish people to enter Palestine if we do NOT FIRST advocate their right to enter THIS COUNTRY.

It suits the policy of American imperialism to pressure British imperialism to open the doors of Palestine to 100,000 Jews. But the quotas for admission to this country are so disgustingly low as to mean virtually nothing to those Jews who wish desperately to escape extinction by emigrating to the United States. The immediate issue at stake is the right of the Jews to enter Palestine, and to protest the barbed wire and martial law which hem in the Jewish Palestinian population. We cannot, however, seriously protest British policy unless we simultaneously raise a hue and cry HERE over United States policy! The Jews are not a football to be kicked around for imperialist or local political ends. They are the victims of pogroms and starvation who seek immediate alleviation of their problem. To demand free immigration into the United States is then our first duty. It is the proper answer to Bevin. It is the proper answer to the machinations of U. S. imperialism. Open the doors of the United States!

A Trifle of 5 Billion Dollars

We'll bet you've never heard of the Latin phrase "de minimis non curat lex." Neither did we until last week, to tell the truth.

But now it looks as if we'll have to bone up in our Latin, because that little phrase may be the legal excuse (not the real reason, of course, but only the legal excuse) to deprive the workers of this country of \$5,000,000 which it seemed they might win in portal-to-portal suits.

That phrase "de minimis non curat lex" means "the law cares not for small things." That is, the courts refuse to concern themselves with little trifles. On the basis of this pretext, Judge Frank A. Picard reversed his now famous decision on portal-to-portal pay.

Worried because his ruling had resulted in a flood of law suits by unions, which totalled over \$5,000,000, Judge Picard decided that portal-to-portal pay was unnecessary because the overtime pay claimed by the Mount Clemens Pottery workers (who launched the original portal-to-portal suit) amounted to a mere 14 minutes per day. These 14 minutes were described by Judge Picard as "narrow, picayunish, meager." Even if it came to 25 minutes a day, he said, it would be a mere "trifle."

But if it is merely a trifle, then why not pay it? Why did Big Business scream its head off about the portal-to-portal suits? Why are Big Business' Congressmen preparing legislation at this moment to outlaw portal-to-portal suits? Because they're a trifle? Nuts! The portal-to-portal suits came to \$5,000,000; is that a "trifle?"

These "trifles" when added up over the years amount to a nice sizable chunk for the average worker—perhaps enough to get himself a suit or buy a dress for his wife. And that isn't a trifle; not by a long shot!

This flimsy pretext which Judge Picard discovered as a means of throwing the portal suit out of court is an outrageous piece of sophistry which serves only to help capitalism.

And that has always been the historic function of the American courts: to help Big Business and to preserve its economic system. From strike-breaking injunctions to "de minimis non curat lex" it adds up to the same thing: the courts help Big Business and are the enemies of labor. In this respect, the courts merely reflect the general purpose of the entire government.

Well Informed Source, Close to God, Issues Statement

William F. Russell, dean of teachers' college, Columbia University, sounds off on Russia in his annual report: "They should know that God has blessed America; that human aspirations for thousands of years have come to fruition in the system handed down to us..."

New York Times, Feb. 20, 1947

The Fruition

"PICKENS, S. C., Feb. 17.—AP—A band of armed men early today removed a Negro prisoner, Willie Earl, 25 of Greenville, from the Pickens County jail. An hour and a half later his stabbed and shot-pierced body was found on a road in Greenville County."

WORLD POLITICS

Pacific, Atlantic—A Big Deal?

On February 25, 1947, Stalinist Russia handed a diplomatic note to the U. S. government announcing its agreement with the idea that the U. S. take over sole trusteeship of those Pacific islands wrested from Japan in the war.

These islands number over 600 and were mandated to Japan by the League of Nations after the First World War. They are now in fact controlled by U. S. military forces.

After the Second World War was over, the U. S. government announced, through President Truman, that it insisted on maintaining domination over these islands, for the ostensible purpose of maintaining its "security." Actually, the islands are essential stepping stones in the long chain of Pacific areas controlled by U. S. imperialism.

For a time, both Great Britain and Stalinist Russia challenged this U. S. claim, insisting that the Pacific islands be subject to either joint-power control or United Nations trusteeship! Now, with Russian acquiescence to the U. S. rule, the British are left out in the cold and will undoubtedly have to agree. They have too many other worries anyway.

MOTIVATIONS UNDERSCORE PIRATE'S OUTLOOK

What is interesting in the Russian statement is the motivation it offers. It declares that since the U. S. did most of the fighting in the Pacific and made the heaviest sacrifices, it deserves to retain control of the conquered islands. Is it necessary to underline the cynicism and reactionary political motivation of this declaration? For what the Russians are saying is simply that whichever power exerts most effort and sacrifices more of its men, deserves to keep most of the booty. This is the outlook, not of a socialist state, but of a Frank pirate. ("You did most of the work in getting the swag, so it's only right for you to keep most of it, ain't it?")

The unexpected Russian announcement seemed to have caught Washington by surprise and when Secretary of State Marshall announced the note, he refused to offer any comment. But his silence has not prevented commentators from speculating on the meaning of the Russian note. What they agree to and what seems obvious enough is this:

At the forthcoming meeting of foreign ministers in Moscow, the Russians will say: "We agreed that you

people should keep the islands in the Pacific because you bore the brunt of the fighting there. But we insist on keeping the areas of Eastern Europe, since we did the bulk of the fighting in Europe. Gentlemen's agreement, you know. We weren't hogs in the Pacific and you fellows shouldn't be hogs in Europe."

To make this more specific, James Reston, political analyst of the New York Times, writes on February 26 that there are two possible motivations:

"First, that the Soviet Union might be able to use the concession on the Pacific islands as a bargaining weapon in the still unsettled question of who gets a trusteeship over the former Italian colony of Tripolitania, on the south shore of the Mediterranean; and

"Second, that the move in support of the United States proposal might be part of the Soviet Union's recent campaign to split the United States away from Great Britain."

What is remarkable in the whole business, however, is that it is taken for granted by all "the high contracting parties"—excuse us, that's a fancy name for imperialist robbers—that the islands must be dominated by one or another of the major imperialist nations just as Tripolitania in Africa and the smaller east European nations must be dominated by one or another of the big imperialist powers. Stalinist Russia plays right along with capitalist America in the old imperialist hit-and-run.

WAS THERE AN ADVANCE DEAL?

One possibility has been ignored in the journalistic speculations on this matter. That the Russians are making their statement because they think it might help them in the coming negotiations on European boundaries is a strong possibility. But it is also possible that some deal has already been cooked up, that the Russian statement in support of U. S. domination in the Pacific will be followed by a U. S. recognition, in actuality if not in name, of Russian sovereignty in eastern Europe. Stranger things have happened.

In any case, regardless of which speculation one accepts, what is incontrovertible and significant is that Stalinist Russia plays right along in the imperialist division of the world; that it together with the capitalist powers, ignores the interests and desires of the masses of colonial and subjugated areas and agrees that only their imperialist masters may have anything to say about their fates.

OFF LIMITS

By James M. Fenwick

The Wrangle Over China

PART III

The warfare between the Kuomintang and the Stalinists has been nearly continuous since 1928—that is, for nearly twenty years—flaring up and dying down according to the internal necessities of the nationalist régime, the foreign policy of the Kremlin, and the economic, political, and military activity of Japanese and United States imperialism in particular.

Following the catastrophic defeat of the Chinese Revolution in 1927, with the accompanying destruction of the urban proletarian cadres, the Stalinists regrouped inland south of the Yangtze. Chiang Kai-shek conducted a series of operations against them with the ferocity typical of an exploiter whose property rights have been infringed upon.

"For every landlord or 'bourgeois' killed," says Owen Lattimore, "scores of peasants were slaughtered, tortured or burned in their villages; untold numbers of peasant girls were sold into brothels and boys into bondage." Limited by their isolation from the city proletariat the peasant armies were able to conduct only what amounted to large-scale guerrilla operations.

This phase ended in 1931 with the invasion of Manchuria. From this period dates the slow accession of strength by the Stalinists. By pursuing a policy of mild agrarian reform and by calling for a cessation of the civil war and a united front against the Japanese they began to undermine such spindly support as Chiang Kai-shek possessed. He continued to press the brutal campaign against the Stalinists, however, and offered no effective opposition to increasing Japanese encroachments.

In 1934, impelled by their inability to maintain positional warfare against the Kuomintang and undoubtedly actuated by the necessities of Russian foreign policy, the peasant armies were withdrawn northward in a cruel trek of fantastic length. New positions in Shensi facing the Japanese were taken up.

JAPANESE CONSOLIDATE GAINS

In 1937 the Japanese opened up large scale operations. Hankow and Canton fell in 1938. Though relations between the Stalinists and the Kuomintang were relatively good during this period they were able to conduct little more than delaying operations. Ultimately the Japanese were able to occupy one-third of the country, including the prized developed coastal areas. A population nearly double that of the United States fell under their control.

The attack on Pearl Harbor permitted the United States to extend more substantial help than the previous "unofficial" military aid and "economic" loans. Costly military operations were initiated merely to ensure a land route for convoys to carry supplies to the Nationalist forces. Nearly a billion dollars and an unknown number of lives were consumed building the Lend-Lease material was sent to China, a great portion of it airborne over "The Hump."

Chinese troops were trained and equipped by American personnel. A military mission headed by General Stilwell was flown into China to take charge of military aid, in the nature of things, political operations as well. The Chinese liberation movement, deformed as it had been under Chiang Kai-shek, became the almost totally responsive tool of United States imperialism.

The abrupt end of Stilwell's attempt to create an efficient fighting machine foreshadowed the Marshall fiasco. An effort by Stilwell in 1944 to eradicate the "inertia, corruption, inefficiency, and questionable motives" in the Kuomintang, and an attempt to force the lifting of the blockade of the Stalinist troops, which prevented their receiving U. S. materiel, led to the recall of Stilwell at Chiang Kai-shek's insistence. Chiang Kai-shek could not risk the arming of the Stalinist troops who menaced the property rights of his backers.

THE IMPERIALIST LAND RUSH

Following V-J Day the imperialist land rush began for the territory formerly held by the Japanese. Blackmailed by the fear of Stalinist penetration, the United States flew nearly 500,000 Kuomintang troops to strategic areas. For similar reasons large quantities of surplus materiel were turned over to the Kuomintang by the United States. The Kuomintang occupied the main eastern and northern cities such as Shanghai, Nanking, Tientsin, Tsingtao, and parts of the countryside. The Stalinists took over large rural areas from the Yangtze river north, including such cities as Kalgan, Chengteh, Huaiyin, and Harbin.

Before the news could be assimilated that the war which had begun fourteen years before in Manchuria had ended, the prostrate country was subjected once again to civil war between the Stalinists and the Kuomintang.

Superimposed upon this was a catastrophic economic crisis. Transportation, vitally necessary for the delivery of food in a country where hunger is endemic, was in chaos. Railroad lines existed in segments, ties having been used for fuel and rails for scrap iron. During the war eighty per cent of coastal and river craft had disappeared. Food and other commodities piled up in seaports and could not be distributed.

Food production had dropped off drastically. Severe requisitioning by the Japanese and the Kuomintang, the destruction of the war itself, the blowing of the Yellow river dikes, which alone flooded two million acres of the most fertile land in the country, the lack of "seeds, fertilizers, livestock, veterinary supplies, insecticides and fungicides, farm implements and machinery, and equipment for the rehabilitation of flooded areas, fisheries and rural industries"—all contributed to an internal crisis which Chiang Kai-shek was both unwilling and unable to solve.

Nine million people had died in the war, and countless millions of others had starved to death or had been wounded. Some 50,000,000 displaced Chinese who had fled from the coastal areas had to be relocated. Some 40,000,000 more rooms for dwellings had to be created.

Foreign trade had come to a standstill. Industry was crippled: ninety per cent of China's machine and light metal plants had been lost in the war and seventy per cent of the capacity of her coal, electric power, and iron and steel plants.

An inflation which had begun in 1938 was shaping up into an economic tornado. This was the condition of China when Marshall intervened.

International Socialist Notes

FRENCH TROTSKYISTS WIN DAMAGES FROM STALINISTS

The Stalinists in France continue to contribute financial support to the Trotskyists in the form of damages in libel suits. In the latest suit, Alain Signor, member of the Central Committee of the French Communist Party, and two other Stalinists in the Brest area, were found guilty of libel against Alain Le Dem, local Trotskyist leader. The Stalinists were assessed fines, and in addition forced to pay damages and expenses to the suitors. Court action was resorted to only after the Stalinists had refused a proposal to submit the whole question to a workers jury of honor.

What the Stalinists find hardest to swallow is their legal compulsion to print the court's verdict in full in

their local paper. The court's judgment includes a summary of the leading testimony which tells the story of Comrade Le Dem's heroic activity in the underground movement against the Nazis. Furthermore, to insure the widest publicity for the verdict in the case, the court's judgment requires its publication also in the local Socialist paper. Undoubtedly it will become more and more difficult to get the Stalinists to make openly their despicable charges of Hitlerism against our comrades. The record during the war years is too clear for all to see.

VIET NAMED CONTRIBUTE TO LA VERITE SUPPORT

A heartening feature in Verite, our French comrades' paper, is the strong support that it receives from the 25,000 Viet Namee soldiers and

workers in France. Recently, on the occasion of their native New Year, called "Tet," the Viet Namee organizations all over France sent messages of support to Verite, the only French language paper that consistently defends their cause. Every week Verite reports long lists of contributions from the Viet Namee in France. In a way even more significant is the listing in the latest Verite of a substantial contribution from Tranh Dau, the Trotskyist paper in Saigon, Indo-China, recently suppressed. For this, must be viewed in the light of the terrible conditions under which the Trotskyists their work. Yet they were able to give concrete evidence of their international solidarity, although compared with Indo-China the French movement is privileged.

S. BERG.

Books You Should Know...

WHEN BOYHOOD DREAMS COME TRUE, by James T. Farrell. Vanguard Press. \$2.75

Reviewed by N. JOHNSTONE

This latest collection of short stories bears the Farrell stamp and is in the same style for which the author has become noted. Here is life neither exaggerated nor polished; and for this reason the literary world is content to generally pass it by. Needless to say they cannot make it balance, and they wonder why a man of his apparent talent and ability wastes his time in depicting life as it really is when he could be writing best sellers with a little ingenuity and a more flexible code of morals.

Samuel Lord, whose first novel, a story of the torment of a dipsomaniac, finds himself famous, and is being tendered a cocktail party by the literati of New York City in the rooms of one of the ultra-smart hotels. As the party progresses the guests become less and less capable of controlling themselves and after an entire afternoon of drinking and saluting the new genius, the Genius, Sam Lord, sneaks out and finds his way to his penthouse where he is left reflecting to what extent if any, his contribution will do toward awakening his readers to the evils and excesses of drink. (THE POWER OF LITERATURE.)

Willie Collins is a shadow or perhaps a reincarnation of the ubiquitous employee that runs through Farrell's stories. Like most of his predecessors Willie works for the express company. (WILLIE COLLINS.) He is wandering the streets of Chicago on his lunch hour drinking in the sights and wondering at the magnitude and brutal magnifi-

cence of the city. Coming upon a jewelry store where an auction is going on, he is held in the crowd by his curiosity. Farrell has treated this episode very well, for anyone who has stood half willingly, half apologetically in a crowd being rearranged, intimidated, cajoled, threatened and insulted by a loquacious auctioneer, relives his experience once more. He finally buys a watch of dubious origin against his better judgment, but satisfied after having bought it that he will impress his underlings at work with his apparent discrimination and taste.

Later we find him at a meeting held by members of his church who are formulating plans for erecting a parish house for their priest. He is awed by a personage, Eddie Chance

by name, who puts up five hundred dollars toward the project. He is driven home in his limousine, and despite the fact that the man is an operator of poolrooms, speakeasys, and whorehouses, Willie realizes what a little fish he is. He has to satisfy himself with regaling his fellow employees of his acquaintance with Eddie Chance, and they in turn ridicule him and hold him in contempt for being as he is.

Another is a story of a family of poor means. (TWO BROTHERS.) One brother is an intellectual with a conscience, who wants to get to know girls, and goes to his brother who supplies him with information. The esthete enjoys listening but is shocked at the depravity of which his brother is capable. He steals money from his hardworking mother in order to enjoy sins of the flesh and finally repents and is confessed. We see him as the story ends leaving to study for priesthood.

The play, THE MOWBRAY FAMILY is a satire of Park Avenue Stalinism, where socialites learn class consciousness and picket against Franco Spain and boycott Japanese imports. The only restriction is that they don't picket in silk stockings; a mink coat is perfectly in good taste. The mistress of the household is a dupe of a GPU agent, who places his own spying secretary in the employ of Mrs. Mowbray. The denouement comes when the agent broadcasts his prediction that Russia will never appease Adolf Hitler. After his speech an announcer flashes the news that Ribbentrop and Molotov have just concluded a non-aggression pact. The household returns to its former prosaic activities and everything is patched up between the wife and her corporation lawyer husband who swore anathema on the whole proceeding.

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Closed Shop: Senators and Industrialists Begin a Drive Against a Basic Right of American Labor

Two Conceptions of Democracy Are Tested in Closed Shop Fight

By ERNEST ERBER

Out of all the anti-labor bills introduced in the present Republican-controlled Congress, the one given the green light for speediest action is Senator Ball's bill to outlaw the closed shop.

It is not as yet entirely clear what considerations of strategy led the Republican chiefs to choose the closed shop as the first target in their anti-labor offensive. Doubtless, however, one of the reasons is the tremendous opportunity for demagoguery which the closed shop issue permits the reactionaries. From constant defenders of the rights of stockholders and property owners, the Republicans suddenly emerge as the champions of the "right to work."

(The last Republican Congress, under Hoover in 1936, had precious little to say about the "right to work" of some twelve million unemployed.)

The propaganda about the "right to work" makes a deep impression upon middle class people, especially small employers, business men, farmers with hired help, etc. The "little man," himself a victim of the mighty capitalist monopolies, lends a ready ear to Republican spellbinders who launch forth about the "undemocratic" and "tyrannous" character of the closed shop, above all when they wring the last drop of emotion out of the appeal on behalf of the "individual worker who is crushed between the forces of capital and the forces of organized labor." The small employer who responds to this line of propaganda envisions himself as a crusader on behalf of "freedom" and "democracy."

We have no basis for doubting his devotion to "freedom" and "democracy." We are forced, however, to observe that there must be more than one concept of "freedom" and "democracy" since the union man who fights to defend the closed shop is equally convinced that his is a struggle on behalf of "freedom" and "democracy."

CLASS CONCEPT OF DEMOCRACY

This controversy over the closed shop, if carefully followed and intelligently understood, lays bare what Marxists refer to as the *class concept of democracy*. It reveals the basic conflict between the fullest expression of the ideals of freedom and democracy and the economic interests of the capitalist class. It proves that freedom and democracy in the freest and most democratic of capitalist nations can only operate in a restricted, hemmed-in and crippled manner; that it must conform to the economic interests of the dominant class and must be shaped by their needs. That is why Marxists refer to it as *capitalist democracy* (or *bourgeois democracy*).

It is permitted to operate in a meeting hall or a polling place on election day, but it is not permitted to be carried into a plant and applied to the foundations of social existence, the planning, control and management of production. In the latter sphere, the capitalist is an absolute monarch. Here "freedom" and "democracy" are

viewed as the very enemies of civilization and the *fuehrer-prinzip* (principle of the leader), the hierarchy of superintendents, assistant superintendents, foremen, and sub-foremen, all appointed and commanded from the top down and all other concepts of dictatorial organization are extolled as the very fountainhead of wisdom.

A few years ago, Cecil de Mille, millionaire movie magnate who has recently had his hands full in Hollywood defending the "sacred rights of management" against his striking employees, appeared before a Senate committee to testify on behalf of the Ball bill. Following his fervent appeals for legislation to outlaw the closed shop, he proceeded to New York where he delivered the main address to the public school children in a commemoration of the Bill of Rights. He advised the children to hold our liberties as a sacred trust, above all else. He said that the key to the superiority of our political system lay in one word, freedom. He told them that their fathers could publicly say what they think of any government official and go to bed without fear that a knock at the door means the secret police coming to take them away. But de Mille's passionate oratory on behalf of "freedom" reached its highest pitch when he proclaimed, in a thinly-disguised reference to the closed shop, that it was the right of every man to work when, how and where he sees fit, without interference or coercion.

THE CAPITALIST VIEW OF FREEDOM

If we are to assume that de Mille's defense of "freedom" and "democracy" is not compounded of pure cynicism we have here a typical example of how the most liberal of capitalists see the issue of "freedom" and "democracy" solely through the windows of their class whenever these concepts touch upon the basic economic questions, which, of course, are the fundamental questions of our day and the ones around which the class struggle revolves.

We have no doubt that de Mille is sincerely glad, that he does not live in a country ruled by the secret police. Nor need we assume that he fears only a GPU. Like most German capitalists, the average American capitalist has no special longing for life under a Gestapo, either. The experiences of a capitalist like de Mille, who has been confronted by a militant union organization seeking to win a little economic freedom and democracy for its members, have bred a fear of the business agent, the walking delegate and the union organizer that equals, if it does not eclipse, his fear of the secret police of the totalitarian state.

"Liberty" and "democracy" are fine concepts to de Mille which he would not only like to enjoy himself but is willing to extend to every one. But when his employees give expression to their devotion to these fine concepts by organizing to establish some democratic control over such important economic questions as hiring and firing, these fine concepts suddenly lose all appeal for de Mille and he sees in them only the "tyranny of organized labor" and the "coercion of the minority by the majority."

"Freedom" means to de Mille the "freedom" to run his enterprise as he sees fit. After all what rights have the employees to band together and tell de Mille that he can hire and fire only with union approval? Is this not a dictatorial restriction of his "freedom"? So it is. As long as we live in a society divided into classes, as long as we have exploiters and exploited, as long as we have those who live by owning the means of production and those who live by operating them, so long will it be impossible to speak of "freedom" and "democracy" as if it meant the same thing to everyone.

A CONFUSING CONCEPT

The concepts of "freedom" and "democracy" are causing a lot of confusion these days. Due to the example of Stalinist Russia and to the incalculable harm done to the concept of Socialism by Stalinist propaganda, a notion has gained currency which poses the Marxist concept of democracy in a way that is thoroughly alien to the views of the founders of scientific Socialism. The spokesmen of capitalism, especially such ideologists as Hyack, state that the essence of democracy is political democracy and that the latter is only possible as long as there is private ownership of industry. State ownership of the economy and political democracy are incompatible according to their view.

On the other hand, the Stalinists, and more openly the Stalinist apologists like Henry Wallace, state that the essence of the "Russian system" is economic democracy. They state that the essential importance of eco-

nomic democracy makes it possible to sacrifice political freedom and democracy. The latter, they say, has importance only for intellectuals and such, while the masses want bread and are consequently interested only in their participation in economic life. We will not here argue with Hyack that political democracy under capitalism gives way to fascism nor point out in detail that there is as little economic democracy in Russia as there is political democracy.

The point we want to make is that Socialism is impossible if political and economic democracy are separated. There can be no Socialism if one or the other is absent. Nor is one form of democracy possible in the long run without the other. The pernicious concept that the workers state, as the first step in building the Socialist society, marks a curtailment of freedom and democracy in favor of something called "economic democracy" must be everywhere labelled for what it is—a Stalinist notion. Socialism will conquer through breaking down all barriers which have been erected by capitalism against the penetration of democratic organization into the economic life. The nationalization of industry is not the essence of Socialism. It is merely the necessary form in which democracy in economy finds its expression. But to express itself in economy, it must simultaneously exist politically.

We will return to this theme in a later article in which we will examine in detail the manner in which the closed shop is related to the penetration of economy by the workers' concept of freedom and democracy.

A Welsh Miner Describes Britain's Coal Crisis:

"It's Just More Work and the Same Conditions"

By JOHNNY JONES GWAUN-CAE-GURWEN

January 1, 1947, brought to the miners of Great Britain nationalization of the mines. On that day a few weeks ago, the flag of the National Coal Board, green in color with "NCB" in red letters in the center, was to be seen on every pithead.

The flag denoted a change of ownership. Yet also on that day the managerial representatives, the same personnel as before the new régime, with due ceremony proceeded to all the pitheads to address the miners. With a change of heart bordering on the miraculous, these managers of the old hard-boiled school stressed their desire for the success of the new venture.

At the same period, as if in a coordinated effort, the capitalist newspapers of the whole country featured as their "hot news," the scarcity of coal, and also published the closure of various enterprises because of lack of fuel.

While on "our" side, A. L. Horner, miners' secretary—a bitter opponent of capitalist nationalization in the past—dashed with haste to South Wales because of a "No Confidence"

vote of a delegate conference of miners of that area in the personnel of the administrative body in charge of the region.

HORNER'S PROMISES

The spectacle of Mr. Horner marching in a manner which is no surprise. He is now a staunch believer in state nationalization under capitalism. In the (London) Daily Worker of January 1, 1947, he wrote:

"All things now become possible. The future is in our hands. The Mineworkers' Charter can speedily be realized. Wages can be higher, conditions safer, work less arduous, compensation raised to level of wages, these and other reforms can come about.

"The Coal Board is prohibited from acting in a manner which may be contrary to the well-being of the miners and their families, or be detrimental to the efficient production of coal our country needs so badly." Perhaps Horner can reply to the host of "unbelievers" in the coal field. If he sincerely believes, as he states, "All things now become possible," why is it necessary to pay such fabulous salaries to the gentlemen who comprise the National Coal Board?

NINE MEN—£48,500 SALARIES

As most miners know, these are: Lord Hyndley, chairman, £8,500 yearly. Sir Arthur Street, deputy chairman, £5,000.

Lord Citrine, manpower and welfare, £5,000. Ebbey Edwards, labor relations, £5,000.

Sir Charles Ellis, scientific, £5,000. J. C. Grindly, marketing, £5,000. L. H. Lowe, finance, £5,000. Sir Charles Reid, production, £5,000.

B. Young, production, £5,000. This question answered would ease the minds of many miners, who invariably are told in "bit-bits" on the radio and in the press that they (the miners) are earning alarmingly high wages. These "high" wages are,

By SUSAN GREEN

The insincere and demagogic argument of such willing agents of the National Association of Manufacturers as Senator Joseph Ball, the reactionary newspaperman David Lawrence, and others busy trying to stir public opinion against the closed shop and other union security clauses in contracts, are worth a going-over.

One of the most brazen bits of hypocrisy used by the proponents of the open shop is that about the "right to work." Like the discredited "four freedoms," it sounds so good. The other night on the air Senator Ball gave out on this point as follows:

"It [the closed shop] turns over to an outside agency, the union, very often dominated by a militant minority or even a single official, absolute control over the individual's right and opportunity to work and earn a living in his chosen occupation."

Then there is David Lawrence crusading in a long editorial under the headline "The Right to Work—Who Will Protect It?"

The Balls, the Lawrences and the NAM want to protect the American workers' "right to work" via the open shop in the same way, let us say, as British imperialism brought civilization to India, as American capitalism brought democracy to Puerto Rico, or as today Russia brings liberation to Poland. These bearers of gifts to the underdog are only looking after their own "right to exploit."

Ask any worker, organized or unorganized, if he considers the closed shop the great menace to his "right to work," and the foolish questioner will get a horse laugh. Every worker knows that his job is threatened by the bosses' power to lay him off for one reason or another. The workers fear depressions, when goods accumulate in the warehouses and factories close down.

Let us ask Mr. Lawrence whether, in the tragic crisis of 1929, he wrote under a headline: "We Must Protect

the Right to Work—Let Us Open the Idle Factories." Or will he or Senator Ball or any of their kind—to protect the right to work in the coming depression—introduce bills for the thirty-hour week, for government operation of idle factories, for a guaranteed annual wage so that workers and their families may eat and pay rent the year round? These NAM crusaders of "the right to work" are the ones who fight most viciously against those measures which might help really insure the right to work.

However, these open-shoppers are not unmindful of the coming depression. With a large army of unemployed and union control weakened by anti-labor laws, what could be a sweeter set-up for undermining standards of wages and working conditions of the whole working population?

To the argument of unionists that the closed shop is agreed upon between employer and union under collective bargaining, just as any other shop condition may be, the union-busters reply, in the words of David Lawrence: "... everyone who wasn't born yesterday knows that 'closed shop' contracts have rarely been signed voluntarily. They have been signed only as a result of a strike threat or a strike. 'Closed shop' contracts are about as voluntary as the arrangement between the hold-up man and the victim who hands over his money at the point of a gun."

Brushing aside the humor in the picture of powerful corporations as poor victims at the point of a gun, we see here a foot in a mouth, both belonging to Mr. Lawrence. We must ask Mr. Lawrence and the others who claim that closed shop contracts should be outlawed because employers do not enter into them voluntarily, to name gain that labor has acquired by the voluntary action of the employers. Shorter work hours, higher wages, sanitary conditions, workmen's compensation, paid vacations, very little advance has been

won by labor by "force"—the strike weapon. Since all these achievements were forced from the employers or from the capitalist government by labor's militant struggle, then these gains should, by Mr. Lawrence's logic, all be declared illegal by Congress just as he wants the closed shop outlawed. Quite a program even for enterprising reactionaries!

Mr. Lawrence reveals what's eating the open-shoppers. The closed shop is a sign of the ability of the union to pull a solid strike. It's this gun that labor has fashioned that bothers NAM and its spokesmen. The attack on the closed shop ties in neatly with the campaign to bar strikes, to disarm labor and to render it powerless to back up its demands.

Again, we hear the anti-union boys taunting the unions: "If the advantages of the organized workers are so great and if the benefits secured by the unions so outstanding, why do the unions have to have closed shop and other union security clauses in contracts; why do not all workers voluntarily join and pay their dues?"

The taunt is misdirected. The blame is at the door of the capitalist system that all workers do not at once embrace the ideas and discipline of unionism. Workers' thoughts are shaped by the "ideals and morals" of the capitalist competitive jungle. It takes persistent working class education to make workers aware of how the blood and sweat of militant unionism has benefited all workers, and of the responsibilities of each to all and of all to each. When a worker joins a union even because of the requirements of the union contract in his shop, it is to his great advantage. It is an important step in breaking away from the ideology of the capitalists and in becoming a progressive, conscious member of his own class.

There is only one road, however much trade union officials attempt to argue to the contrary, and that is the road of revolutionary socialism which advocates that the miners and the working class as a whole must conduct a struggle for workers' control of the mines, for an end to the payment of compensation which places colossal burdens upon the miners and workers as a whole, and for the immediate application of the Miners' Charter.—Reprinted from the British Socialist Appeal, February, 1947.

tons were produced than in the corresponding period in 1945, despite some 4,000 fewer miners employed in the 1946 period.

Yet still there is a clamor for more coal.

These production figures show that despite misgivings about the fabulous salaries and the composition of the Coal Board, that the miners are doing their best to make the Labor government's nationalization plan work, so that no blame will be attached to them if the project fails.

THE ONLY SOLUTION

The future, unfortunately, will prove the utter hypocrisy of the nationalization plan under capitalism, which up to the present has brought

no higher wages, no better conditions nor less arduous work, but on the contrary more work and the same conditions as of old.

There is only one road, however much trade union officials attempt to argue to the contrary, and that is the road of revolutionary socialism which advocates that the miners and the working class as a whole must conduct a struggle for workers' control of the mines, for an end to the payment of compensation which places colossal burdens upon the miners and workers as a whole, and for the immediate application of the Miners' Charter.—Reprinted from the British Socialist Appeal, February, 1947.

World Stalinist Leaders Plan Campaign in Colonies

An important conference of the British Stalinist party and of the British Empire Stalinist parties has just been concluded. Present at this conference were representatives from almost every European country as well as William Z. Foster, head of the American Stalinists.

The gathering of what is thus virtually an international conference of the Stalinist parties, despite its ostentatious attempt to deny any connections with its real rulers in Moscow, has given rise to speculation that a new shift in emphasis of the Stalinist line is in prospect. As yet, however, no authoritative report has reached us on the conference.

At the Congress of the British Stalinists, it was reported by Harry Pollitt that the British CP had suffered a sharp drop in membership. The New York Daily Worker of March 3 carries a report that there was some sort of left-wing minority at the British CP congress. The report says:

"The major amendment to the political resolution of the executive was put forward by delegates from Hertford. They accused the leadership (of the British CP—Ed.) of having abandoned the perspective of the proletarian revolution and of committing the party to 'the support of a government of social traitors who are leading the country to economic disaster and the victory of reaction.'

"The coal crisis has borne out the fact that it is an expression of the final crisis of British monopoly capitalism," said the mover of the amendment. "We must endeavor to use the economic crisis for the overthrow of the economic system."

This amendment, reports the New York Daily Worker, was severely attacked by the British Stalinist leadership, including Harry Pollitt, its General Secretary, and was overwhelmingly defeated. No other information is at present available on the nature of this opposition grouping.

A report by C. L. Sulzberger, crack political correspondent of the New York Times, dated March 2, speculates on the possibility that what was really held was a secret meeting of the Stalinist parties under the guise of an "empire conference." He remarks that "It would seem curious if men like William Z. Foster had come to London merely to make brief speeches as 'fraternal delegates.'"

Sulzberger describes the keynote speech at the Empire Stalinist conference by R. Palme Dutt, a leading Stalinist theoretician. According to his description the major emphasis of the Stalinists is to be a drive to weaken the powerful rivals of their Russian masters—namely Britain and the U. S.—by giving support, for their own devious reasons, to movements of colonial liberation directed against British and U. S. imperialism. Writes Sulzberger: "One of the most important aspects of this drive (to help Stalinist Russia—Ed.) is the effort to sever the ties of colonies with imperial centers because of their geographically strategic value."

We print the above for the information of our readers without, however, adding any comment, since it is still too early to test Sulzberger's observations. In any case, one thing is certain: Foster and the other Stalinist leaders didn't go to London merely to make holiday speeches and something, perhaps a new emphasis in the present line though probably not a change in the basic line itself, is brewing in international Stalinism.

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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.

CONRAD LYNN

Noted Negro Lawyer
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Former Fascists Take Part in the Stalinist Government

Who Heads the Stalinist Quisling Government in Poland?

By A. RUDZIENSKI

(Continued from last week) Now let us pass to the petty-bourgeois-reformist group of second rank in the bureaucratic hierarchy of the "New Poland." Its spiritual mother is Wasilewska, president of ZPP (Association of Patriotic Poles in the USSR) which was created by Stalin to prepare the way for the policy of conquest in Poland. As a writer, Wasilewska tried to create an organ with a reputation to fight against the government of Mikolajczyk in London, with which Stalin then still maintained "cordial" relations. Wasilewska never played a militant role in the ranks of the Polish labor movement, even though Stalinist propaganda tried to pass her off as an "important Socialist," exploiting the prestige of her father, a Socialist theoretician. Wasilewska fell into disgrace by proposing aid to Warsaw in 1944. In addition she tried to explain to Stalin that to grant the Order of Suvorov to General Berling, (Suvorov was the butcher of the people of Warsaw in the revolution of Kosciuszko in 1794, when 4,000 defenseless inhabitants of Praga were assassinated) would certainly create indignation among the Polish workers. Stalin heard Wasilewska out,

agreed with her, had the order of Suvorov replaced by another decoration, but nevertheless, Wasilewska and her husband, Kornejezki, ex-minister of the Ukraine, fell into disgrace. For this reason she could not return to Poland, and played no part in either the Lublin Committee or the Warsaw government. The same fate befell General Berling, old chief of the Polish army in Russia, who was horrified upon receiving the Order of Suvorov. Also the reformists Drobner and Kaneman, old ministers of the Lublin Committee, have been isolated because they lack the full confidence of the GPU. Edward Osobka-Morawski, first minister of Poland, now heads the group of puppet-Socialists. He has no political past whatsoever. Before the war he was an obscure bureaucrat of a cooperative in Wielun, a small town of 2,000 inhabitants. His career begins in 1943 when he headed the RPPS, a group created by the GPU in order to split the illegal workers movement. In 1944 he appears as an important personality in the Lublin Committee. Then he organizes the "expropriation" of the authentic Underground Socialist Party. He directs the organ "Rabotnik" in Lublin when the true "Rabotnik" is being printed in bloody War-

Who are the people at the head of the present Stalinist puppet government in Poland? Do they have a past 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. Rudzinski, 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.

He organizes two "congresses" of the PPS when the true PPS is struggling against the Nazis.

A CREATURE OF THE GPU

Osobka-Morawski is a creature of the GPU, a mediocre bureaucrat, without personality or character, lacking in the substance of Marxist doctrine and inflated by Stalinist propaganda into a "national figure" of Poland. His lack of political capacity and understanding is proverbial among the Stalinists. He has a loose tongue which at times says more than is necessary. He is a typical puppet-figure, a loudspeaker repeating the record dictated by the Kremlin. Only the naive Laski could consider him as the "representative of Polish Socialism." In spite of his loyalty to Moscow, he is considered "inadequate" in installing the totali-

tarian regime and in eliminating the opposition in Poland. The conflict between Osobka and Gomulka has been solved under Stalin's auspices, in order to consolidate the Stalinist bloc against the right and left opposition. But should the Stalinist regime succeed in consolidating itself, the fate of Osobka will be that of Wasilewska, Drobner, Berling and so many others.

The true Socialist Party (PPS) is in the Underground, in emigration or is grouped around Zygmunt Zuluski. It is fear of this which compels the Stalinists to tolerate the officially-recognized "PPS."

REACTIONARY GROUPS IN GOVERNMENT

A tendency much more pronounced in the Warsaw government than the reformist puppet-group is the reac-

tionary group, composed of adherents of both the reactionary parties of Poland, the old, anti-Semitic National Democratic Party and the fascist party of the Colonels. The National Democratic Party always supported the program of Polish autonomy under the sceptre of the Czar as against the program of the PPS for an Independent Republic. This party introduced anti-Semitism and the pogroms into Poland.

The theoretician of National-Democracy, Stanislaw Grabski, old apologist for Czarism, advocate of the national slavery of Poland, anti-Semitic, is now a vice-president of the National Council. His role is decorative, but is of considerable value to the regime. In his declarations, he always praises the "great Stalin."

After him comes Grubecki, minister of Warsaw, organizer of the anti-Semitic pogroms in Lvov, which we all remember, a fascist of the whole cloth, now a dignitary of the "democratic" Poland.

Piasecki and Dziarmaga, chiefs of the ONR (fascist) and of the Nationalist armed forces have come to an agreement with Bierut and now support the regime. The presence of these anti-Semites may explain to some extent the pogroms of Kielce.

To this same group belongs "Marshal" Rola-Zymierski, who replaced

General Berling, of the Order of Suvorov fame. This cavalier belonged to the rightist opposition to Pilsudski. He wanted a "Poland for the Poles," with the "Jews outside." Now he is quite content because the Stalinists are finishing Hitler's work, organizing the Jewish ghettos in lower Silesia. This same cavalier was once sent to jail for misappropriating army funds. On finishing his sentence he went to Paris where he speculated in arms for the Spanish Republic. He made good money. Now he is "Marshal" of Poland. The Stalinists could find neither a Socialist nor an ex-Communist for this job. Berling himself, ex-legionary of Pilsudski, was too "leftist" for them.

The ex-Pilsudskists group is led by Wicenty Rzymowski, Minister of Foreign Affairs. He was a most ardent defender of the "May Revolution," Pilsudski's Bonapartist coup, his principal theoretician, and "golden pen" of the regime. In the period of the pogroms, when the leaders of the Opposition were imprisoned in Brest-Litovsk, Rzymowski was a most warm-hearted advocate of elections "en bloc." For plagiarizing from Bertrand Russell he was expelled from the Polish Academy of Literature. Now he is a minister of Stalin in Poland. The Stalinists consider him an old fool, and foreign affairs are handled by Modzelewski (true name, Fiszhaut) a GPU creature.

REACTIONARIES COME TO THE FORE

Kwiatkowski, ex-minister of Pilsudski is now a commissar of the coastal maritime, an important figure in the regime; Mlynarski, Nazi

collaborator, one of the few Polish collaborators, continues to head the National Bank as in the time of the Colonels and the Nazis; Kirtiklis, ex-governor of Vilna, "pacifier" of the Communists, the workers and the White-Russian peasants, they also support the Stalinist regime. General Zeligowski, chief of the Polish army in White Russia in 1918, pogromist, organizer of the assault against Vilna in 1921, is now an important figure in the regime.

The most amusing figure of all is that of Prince Krzysztof Radziwill, member of one of the feudal dynasties of Europe, master of half of Lithuania and Eastern Poland, who is now chief of protocol for Bierut. To Stalin, princes, Popes, Bishops, gendarmes, political prostitutes all look alike, so long as they can be of some use to him for a while.

These personal characteristics of the public authority define clearly the political and social character of the regime in Poland. Its political composition demonstrates the reactionary character of the Stalinist regime in Poland.

The true leaders of the Polish proletariat lie under the Russian earth, shot in the back; the remainder, at the head of which stand the Socialists, are in prison, or in the opposition which is still tolerated out of sheer necessity. The working class opposition, whether it be Communist in character or Socialist-reformist, is persecuted savagely.

The peasant leaders are also in opposition. Only this opposition has the legal rights, illusory though they may be, which the regime has been compelled to grant.

Democratic Procedure Stifled in the Name of "Unity"

Stalinists Dominate California AVC Convention

SAN JOSE, Calif., Feb. 25—The first constitutional convention of the California American Veterans Committee held here this week-end symbolized the acute crisis which faces this progressive veterans' organization.

The most striking organizational feature of the convention was its complete control by the well-oiled, ruthless Communist Party (Stalinist) machine, and the complete helplessness and disorganization of the progressive forces in the AVC in California.

The convention was held at a time when AVC in California has some 8,000 members distributed in 115 chapters, according to State Chairman Eby's report. Of the 7,500 members actually represented by delegations at the convention, over half are concentrated in 15 chapters in and around Los Angeles and the San Francisco Bay area. Despite the growth of the organization during the past year, it is plain that the American Veterans Committee has

not been able to capitalize on the real possibilities of attracting even a fair proportion of the 1,000,000-plus veterans in the state.

COMMITTEES GALORE

The Stalinist machine was riding high, wide and handsome from the opening bell. The convention was broken up into a myriad of committees and sub-committees with no clear apportionment of duties among them. This resulted not only in duplication of effort and general confusion, but in the atomization of the disorganized progressives among the committees, while the Stalinists could shift their majority from committee to committee as the issues in which they were vitally interested came up.

The most flagrant example of how this worked was the trickery involved in ramming down the so-called "unity resolution" on the issue of Communist Party activity in AVC without any discussion by the convention. Six different resolutions

on this question, which has become a hot issue in AVC since the recent statement of the National Planning Committee, were submitted to the convention. The issue was first taken up in two separate sub-committees of the Resolutions Committee. In one of these sub-committees, the Stalinists broke the discipline of their caucus and tried to push over a violent pro-Stalinist and anti-NCP resolution. As soon as the leading Stalinist whips at the convention got wind of what their own boys had done, they flooded the sub-committee with well instructed delegates, and had the matter referred to another sub-committee.

The Stalinists were determined that no real discussion on this matter be permitted on the floor of the convention, as such a discussion would have broken their bloc with the "liberals" wide open. As soon as word got around that the second sub-committee was to handle the matter, the room in which it was meeting began to fill up, till from 60 to 100 dele-

gates and visitors were packed into the space where 17 delegates had been handling resolutions on internal AVC affairs. A motion was put to bring the matter up for immediate disposal. The chairman announced that he would read the six resolutions which had been submitted on the question, after which the delegates would have a chance to discuss them and vote on them one by one.

At this point a delegate from the Richmond-San Francisco chapter got the floor and moved that his "unity resolution" be substituted for all six which were on the table. Cheers and handclapping by the Stalinist rooting section, reinforced by liberals who were swept along with the tide greeted this motion. One delegate who tried to point out that such a motion was completely out of order was booed and heckled and himself ruled out of order on the ground that he was "not speaking to the motion on the floor." In this lynch atmosphere the resolution was railroaded through, 33 to 6, without any discussion.

REAL DISCUSSIONS OUT

What happened here was only a foretaste of what was to happen in the plenary sessions of the convention. The Stalinist machine was interested in only one thing: a phony unity with their "liberal" allies in order to get their votes for Stalinist candidates for state posts, as well as in the interest of trimming their sails for the big fight with the NPC at Milwaukee. As any real discussion of issues such as the bonus, the stewardship of the state executive or the role of the Communist Party would have shown up the real problems of AVC and thus led to a possible split in the "liberal"-Stalinist bloc, all such discussion was com-

Workers Control of Industry Is Essential Part of Socialism

By STANLEY GREY

We showed in last week's article that nationalization of industry is necessary for socialism but not sufficient, that although socialism without nationalization was impossible, nationalization without socialism was not only possible but an actual historical fact. Let us now demonstrate this.

Socialism is anti-capitalist. It believes that the continued rule of the capitalist class can lead mankind only to deeper crises, more devastating wars and the ultimate destruction of civilized society. But while it is anti-capitalist it is also pro-working class. When it claims that the capitalists are no longer capable of leading society out of chaos, it adds that this task can be accomplished only under the leadership of the working class. Thus the aim of the socialist revolution is the destruction of the capitalist system IN ORDER to establish a workers' government and a socialist society.

Now when private property in the means of production is taken over by the state and "nationalized," does that in itself mean that the workers and people of the country are the real owners of the means of production? That is the crux of the matter. Does the end of capitalist ownership automatically mean the beginning of workers' ownership? It is the momentous lesson of the Russian experience that this is not necessarily the case; that same ownership is not the same as workers' ownership of the means of production. To understand how this is possible it is necessary to examine more closely the meaning of the concept "ownership."

WHAT "OWNERSHIP" MEANS

Under capitalism, the power of the capitalist class derives from its ownership of the means of production, which is sanctified by law and protected by the state. But the ownership of property is not simply the possession of a material thing; it is more in that it denotes certain rights and powers that come with possession. Thus ownership gives the owner the right to exclude others from his property and the right of disposal of his property. If, it suits his profit

interests, the capitalist can move his factory to another state, can tear it down, can close it for an indefinite period. In a word, the essence of ownership is the control it gives the owner over his property. That his power over his property is socially harmful—as it is under capitalism—does not deter the law from protecting the capitalist's possession. This simply reveals the law as an institution which serves the basic interests of the capitalist class.

If the meaning of ownership is therefore the power to control which it entails, then ownership of the basic industries is socially meaningful only in so far as it leads to control. To illustrate the point, consider the small stockholder in a large corporation who owns three shares of stock in General Motors. Technically speaking, he "owns" a part of General Motors. Capitalist propaganda makes a great deal of this point. It argues against the socialists that there really is no small capitalist class which controls the life of the country, since the stock of the corporations is owned by such wide layers of the people including workers. This capitalist propaganda tries to defend the indefensible system of rule by a minority of capitalists by concealing it behind the cloak of mass and popular "ownership."

But this "ownership" of the small stockholder has only trivial significance. He does not and cannot exercise any control over the policies and practices of the corporation. Because he owns an infinitesimal portion of the total stock, his vote in the election of the board of directors carries no weight. In addition, by means of techniques such as proxy voting, small groups of capitalists can gather up the votes of the small stockholders and manipulate them for purposes of their own control. Thus the ownership of the small holder is an ownership without control and therefore no genuine ownership.

MINORITY CONTROL

Conversely, there are capitalists who have full control over corporations on the basis of a partial ownership. It is well known that in many huge corporations with millions of

dollars worth of stock distributed among thousands of people, a small bloc of stock, sometimes as small as 5 per cent of the total, is sufficient to have the deciding voice on the board of directors.

The rise of monopoly capitalism has created a separation between ownership and control, not a complete separation, it is important to note, but one which has great social importance. It has revealed that ownership and control are not necessarily the same thing, that the power of the capitalist minority of the population is their power to CONTROL the means of life. It is because they CONTROL the means of life for the purpose of making profits that they stand in the way of peace and security. And it is because this control stems from their ownership—complete or partial—of the means of production that it is necessary to abolish private ownership in order to establish a socialist society.

For a revolution to be a SOCIALIST one, it must not only take the control out of the hands of the capitalists but lodge it in the hands of democratically elected bodies of the working class. It is only when workers have control that one speaks of a genuine ownership of the means of production. It is not sufficient to say that the state owns the means of production, therefore the people own them. Such a people's ownership can be, like the ownership of General Motors by the worker with three shares of stock. Genuine ownership means active and democratic control. Anything else is either a cover for tyranny, as in Russia, where the state owns the means of production and oppresses the workers who have no control, or the pious rhetoric of "socialism" as in England, where nationalized industries are run in the interests of the old capitalist class with no workers' control. Workers' control is the touchstone of socialist nationalization. That is the indispensable key for any analysis of the social meaning of nationalization.

What would workers' control look like? How are the nationalized industries operated in "socialist" England? These questions will be taken up in a future article.

Program of the Workers Party

I. For Price Control by Labor and the Consumers

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

II. For a Living Wage

1. For an immediate wage increase to meet the rising cost of living. 2. For an escalator clause in every union contract to provide for automatic wage increases to cover any additional price rises. 3. For job and wage security through a guaranteed annual wage, providing for a \$5000 annual minimum per family.

III. Clear the Slums! Build Homes!

1. For a 250 billion dollar five-year program to provide decent housing at low rental for all and an extensive public works plan to provide schools, hospitals and other needed community facilities. 2. For a national plan to begin work immediately on the erection of 25 million permanent low-cost housing units.

IV. Tax the Profiteers

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

V. Nationalize Big Business

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

VI. End Discrimination Against the Negro People

For full social, political and economic equality for Negroes.

VII. Open the Doors to the Jews

For full and unrestricted immigration into the United States by the persecuted and homeless Jews of Europe. 2. For the right of the Jewish people to unrestricted immigration to Palestine or any country of their choice.

VIII. For Full Economic and Educational Opportunities for Veterans

1. Readjustment allowance, on-the-job training subsidy provided by the GI Bill of Rights, to be based on a wage of \$40 a week for single veterans and \$55 for married veterans, plus \$5 a week for each additional dependent. 2. For immediate granting of a federal bonus of \$1,000 for each year of service.

IX. For Peace and Freedom

1. For the right of all peoples and nations to decide their own future. For self-determination for all nations. For freedom of the colonies. 2. For the withdrawal of all armies of occupation. Bring the American troops home. For an end to conscription.

X. For an Independent Labor Party and a Workers Government

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

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Indo-Chinese Leader Seeks Deal With French Cabinet

By ARTHUR STEIN While reports from Indo-China within the last two weeks have indicated a tightening of the French military dictatorship in that country, new efforts were made by the pro-Stalinist president of the Viet Nam republic, Ho Chi Minh, to effect an immediate cessation of hostilities, on the basis of Viet Nam "independence within the framework of the French Union." These developments, especially when coupled with the recall of the reactionary Admiral d'Argenlieu as high commissioner of the col-

ony, make further analysis necessary. The colonial policy of the French government seems now to be almost completely controlled by the Stalinist and Socialist ministers in the cabinet. The two cabinet members most concerned with the Indo-Chinese war belong to these parties, Marius Moutet of the SP is Minister for Overseas Territories, and the Stalinist Billoux sits in the defense ministry. Thus Ho Chi Minh finds himself in the peculiar contradiction of leading a war against his own "comrades" in the Paris cabinet. This contradiction, of course, is intolerable to him, and he must seek to solve it in one manner or another.

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Youth Corner... FEWER JOBS FOR YOUTH

By JULIUS FALK, Nat'l Sec'y, SYL February 14), it was pointed out that the agency finds it more and more difficult to place young applicants in industrial positions and with the same scale of pay as it did during the war years. Industrial firms do not feel the same labor shortage and are unwilling to hire young, inexperienced workers when they can once again fill in whatever vacancies exist with older, skilled workers. As Emilie Stevens, placement secretary of employment service, observed: "Adolescents with no previous work experience are the hardest hit of those for whom we are seeking jobs."

Further on the report notes that "While employment opportunities seem plentiful for stenographers, typists and domestic workers, jobs for unskilled and semi-skilled men who during the war worked in metal industries are hard to find." She continues: "Employers since the war have become more rigid in their hiring policies with respect to skills, stability, physical strength, youth and flexibility."

Open Lecture—New York Labor Action School SIGNIFICANCE OF SECOND VOLUME OF "CAPITAL" FOR OUR DAY Instructor: F. Forest LABOR ACTION SCHOOL TUESDAY, MARCH 18, 8:15 P. M. Admission 50 Cents

PRESS MANAGER'S "Wall Street" Column Dear Editor: That "Tapping the Wall Street Wire" by Jack Ranger is really top stuff and two-fisted. Can the guy have more space and a larger range of available facts on corporations, goon squads, agreements, stooges? A rewrite of any ordinary business column with appropriate substitutions should be a riot!

PAYMENTS TO LABOR ACTION: Many branches of the Workers Party and literature agents have fallen sharply behind in their payments to LABOR ACTION for the bundles they are receiving. This is offsetting a lot of the financial improvement made recently during the Christmas LABOR ACTION Fund Drive.

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Readers of Labor Action Take the Floor...

Anti-Semitism and Polish Underground

Dear Editor: No doubt this slipped in to LABOR ACTION by mistake, but mistake or no the following statement that appeared in the Dec. 30 issue of L.A. under the by-line of your Polish correspondent, Rudzienski, should be corrected. In discussing with favor the underground opposition in Poland against the Stalinist regime there, Rudzienski said, "The people defend themselves with arms. It is estimated that there are still around 100,000 guerrillas, among whom the strongest organization is the WIN (Liberty and Independence), led by the ex-Pilsudskyst, the NSZ (nationalist armed forces), whose right-wing and anti-Semitic character is of minor importance." (My emphasis.)

Hits "Militant" Line on Palestine

Dear Editor: For years the question of Jewish immigration into Palestine has been a political problem requiring an immediate and forthright answer. Being careful politicians, but having no quotation from Trotsky to guide them, the Socialist Workers Party's specialists in politics—to use Cannon's happy phrase—maintained discreet silence. Now they have come out with their "line."

Anti-Semitism and Polish Underground

The insidious rule of Stalinism in Poland and their agents abroad can only take advantage of such a stupid statement by slandering revolutionary socialists along lines that they support reaction and anti-Semitism so long as this will hurt the "Communists." It is of the utmost importance that L. A. separate itself from that part of the Polish underground that fights the Polish regime on a positive anti-democratic, anti-Semitic basis. How can the right-wing and anti-Semitic character of the NSZ be of minor importance? What then is its major line? That it fights the government? Upon what program? On the program, among other reactionary and vile campaigns, of anti-Semitism! Are these elements not in the same identical class with "our own" America-Firsters who opposed (and sometimes exposed) the Roosevelt regime on their neo-fascist and outright fascist program?

Anti-Semitism and Polish Underground

The task of revolutionaries is to channelize the struggles of the Jewish people for their lives into a struggle against capitalism—the breeder of anti-Semitism—and to fuse their struggle against the British with that of the Arabs for an independent Palestine. To accomplish that, a little more than correct economic slogans are needed. Cliff calls for a constituent assembly that will decide all problems, including "immigration and colonization." The postponing of all questions to a future constituent assembly only evades the problem. The problem—Cliff should understand—is by what kind of CONCRETE program can the revolutionary party rally the masses of BOTH the Jewish and Arab nations, living in the same country. That can be done only by a program guaranteeing the national rights of BOTH nations.

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The San Francisco Workers Party Branch Presents Its Detailed Program for California Housing

In our last issue we published a news report on the testimony of Gordon Haskell, speaking for the San Francisco Bay Area branch of the Workers Party, before the Joint Legislative Committee on Housing. Below we publish the greatest part of Comrade Haskell's testimony. We wish also to take this occasion to correct an unfortunate typographical error that appeared in our news report. The sentence which read that the WP spokesman and the NAACP representative "opposed government housing" should obviously have read "proposed government housing."

By GORDON HASKELL
For the San Francisco Bay Area Branch, WP

FACTUAL INFORMATION AND A PROGRAM TO SOLVE THE HOUSING CRISIS PRESENTED TO THE JOINT LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AT OAKLAND, CALIF., ON FEB. 18, 1947

In the present housing crisis in California we confront a problem which has not come upon us unawares. It existed here and in the rest of the country, not only before the Second World War and not only since the depression of the thirties. Inadequate housing—housing shortage, these are and have been an integral part of the much ballyhooed American way of life.

The editors of Fortune Magazine, men who can hardly be charged with excessive opposition to the capitalist system, wrote in 1932, "Housing is the one field where private enterprise and individual initiative have notoriously failed, and it is by no means an overstatement to say that the housing situation is the disgrace of American industry." They charged further that in that year "Less than one-half of the homes in America measure up to minimum standards of health and decency."

In 1923 in its "Report on the Housing Shortage" the Commission of Immigration and Housing of California stated that in "1919 to 1920 the crisis came for California and industrial and social bodies saw a necessity for action" and at that time "Every conceivable means of shelter was utilized as congestion... became almost unbelievable." (California Commission of Immigration and Housing, Report on the Housing Shortage, p. 1.) In concluding the Committee wrote,

"Something must be done, for unless the housing conditions of our people of moderate income are improved, there will be no improvement in our civilization. Nothing so closely touches the individual or the race as its type of shelter—nothing has so forceful an influence on the individual as his immediate surroundings, and this is particularly true of the young individual." (Ibid., p. 21.)

If we accept the analysis of the commission referred to above, no improvement has taken place in our civilization since 1923. In fact, it has deteriorated as the housing situation has deteriorated. The influx of population to California, during and since the war has simply aggravated the housing shortage until it has taken on the aspects of a true social catastrophe.

THE HOUSING SHORTAGE IN OAKLAND

During the five-year period from 1940 to 1945, the population in Oakland has increased 32.6 per cent while family housing increased only 13.4 per cent. As of January, 1946, the Oakland Housing Authority estimated requirements of new family dwelling units at 23,789 and the number of substandard units which needed to be rehabilitated at 29,800. These estimates were based on existing need without any provision made for population growth during the time required to build or rehabilitate the 54,589 dwelling units in question. (Oakland Housing Authority, Analysis of the Oakland Housing Shortage as of January, 1946.)

The testimony before this committee to date has been virtually unanimous in its insistence that private industry be permitted to solve the housing crisis. With few exceptions, the men testifying before your committee have advocated as their program some form, concealed or otherwise, of governmental subsidy to private industry for this purpose. I propose to analyze these suggestions below. To date in Oakland the private housing construction industry has miserably failed to provide for more than a microscopic fraction of the existing need.

The Oakland Chamber of Commerce reports that in the first eleven months of 1946 a total of 1,273 new living units were built in Metropolitan Oakland. The total building permits for single family dwellings granted during the same period amounted to 911, with an estimated value of over \$5,000,000. At a time when the whole community was crying for housing above all else, permits were granted for a total value of over \$16,000,000 of non-housing construction. In other words, permits were issued for industrial commercial construction of triple the value of housing construction. This, despite all the public utterances of politicians and laws purporting to guarantee priority to the housing of veterans over all other construction.

The testimony before this committee has established the fact that private industry cannot build housing units to rent for less than \$50 per month. The Oakland Housing Authority estimated at the beginning of last year that 60 per cent of the families in Oakland cannot afford to pay more than \$35 per month for their total housing cost. At that time the Authority stated that 30,000 Oakland families were by income and due to their present housing situation, eligible to live in the permanent public housing projects. Only 922 family dwelling units of that type were then available, and to my knowledge none have been built since. In the face of this crying need for housing of 96,000 people in this city, the Oakland Housing Authority had at that time applied to the federal government for a loan sufficient to provide for only 5,000 additional units, or one-sixth of the estimated need.

HOUSING SHORTAGE AS A SOCIAL CATASTROPHE

Statistical treatment alone can never adequately portray the devastating social effects of the housing shortage. In human terms it presents one of the darkest chapters of the black book of life of the poor under American capitalism. The problems of crime, of broken homes, of disrupted families, disease, juvenile delinquency and of mass neurosis if not caused by, are at least aggravated by the crowded, cheerless, unsanitary conditions under which the poor are forced to live by the failure of both private industry and government to meet the minimum needs of decent housing....

The relation of over-crowding to juvenile delinquency can be illustrated by the following. In High School District No. 1 in West Oakland, 25 per cent of the city's population is crowded into 15 per cent of its land area. This high school district had 38 per cent of the juvenile delinquency cases in the city, or a rate of 5.3 per hundred juveniles living in it. (Research Dept., Council of Social Agencies, Community Chest, Oakland, Calif., Juvenile Delinquency 1940-1945, Table L, p. 20.)

In a speech delivered in New York on April 13, 1940, Edith Elmer Wood made the following observations:

"The Bureau of Animal Industry in the Department of Agriculture issues a long series of farmer's bulletins on the housing of live stock, dairy cattle, beef cattle, horses, sheep, hogs, and poultry. It comes out roundly with delightfully dogmatic statements such as: 'Dryness, good ventilation, and freedom from drafts are the first requisites of buildings for sheep.' 'If little pigs are to get the right kind of a start in life, they must have plenty of sunshine.' 'Growing chickens and laying hens need comfortable homes that are dry and roomy with plenty of fresh air and sunlight. It never pays to overcrowd them.' 'Fortunate farm animals! No one writes doctors' theses to prove that there is no causal relation between their health and their housing.' (American Public Health Association, Committee on the Hygiene of Housing, Housing for Health, 1941, p. 7.)

The disparity between the housing conditions provided for our farm animals and those for human beings under the profit system is an index of its real social values. It is profitable to provide housing for beasts. There is no profit in providing houses for men, women and little children.

In 1940 it was estimated that 30,000 fatal accidents take place in homes each year, or, and I quote "nearly as many as are attributable to the automobile. Can it be doubted that rickety steps and rotten handrails, dark stairways, wood stoves and kerosene lamps contribute to a substantial proportion of these fatalities?" (Ibid., p. 8.)

THE NEGRO AND THE HOUSING PROBLEM

The weight of the housing shortage falls with double and triple force on the Negro community in America. They are hit first by the fact that the overwhelming majority of Negroes are in the lowest income brackets due to job discrimination. Restrictive covenants, the rules of the housing authorities, and where these two fail, sheer physical terror are used to keep the Negroes crowded into the American version of the ghetto. For Negroes it is doubly difficult to finance and build homes through the channels of private enterprise. They have to pay higher interest on loans, and it is almost impossible for them to acquire building sites due to the general overcrowding of the so-called "black belts" to which they are confined.

For Negroes, more than for any other section of the population, public housing is the only answer. It is not just a question of curing a patent social injustice. Mr. Robert C. Weaver, Director of Community Services, American Council on Race Relations, testified before the Senate Banking and Currency Committee on December 14, 1945, as follows:

"... there is hardly an aspect of tension involving minority groups which is not related to housing. Restricted areas, high rents, and inferior accommodations spell economic exploitation, ill health, inadequate schools, hospitals, recreation and city services. They bring suffering, despair and disillusionment and frustration. They result in disorganized communities. They encourage adult and juvenile delinquency. They invite and nurture political corruption and cynicism. They foster group antagonism and group chauvinism." (Statement of Robert C. Weaver, Director of Community Services, American Council on Race Relations before the Senate Banking and Currency Committee, Dec. 14, 1945, p. 4.)

I hardly think, gentlemen, that it should be necessary for me to add much to this statement by Mr. Weaver. Suffice it to say, that these tensions are in no way lessened by the fact that the Negro veterans who were segregated and discriminated against while in the armed services now find themselves equally segregated and discriminated against in the post-war housing program. Of the total of 254,000 temporary housing accommodations provided for veterans during 1946, only 5,000 or less than two per cent were specified for colored veterans, and as late as last October, only 1,600 of these were available for actual use. Yet the ratio of Negro to white men in the armed services during the late war allegedly waged against the race hatred of Nazism was about ten per cent and not two per cent. (Statement by Reginald Johnson, housing coordinator of the National Urban League, reported in a NNPA dispatch dated New York, Feb. 15, 1947.)

PROGRAM TO SOLVE THE HOUSING PROBLEM

In presenting the Workers Party program to solve the housing crisis in California, I wish to make it clear to the committee that in our opinion this problem can and must be solved, it should not be played around with. The facts I have presented

here, both in the form of statistics and that of opinions of eminent authorities on the social implications of the housing crisis mean to us, at least, that the proportions of this crisis require the most drastic and complete measures.

Representatives of the Construction Industry, of the State Department, of the American Legion, of the Building Trades Council and the State AFL as well as others who have appeared before this committee have insisted that the government should not enter into competition with what they chose to call "free enterprise" in building houses, except, perhaps, as a last resort. I submit, however, that the government cannot "compete" with private capital in providing housing for those who really need it, for the simple reason that private capital isn't in the game.

It is clear, however, that the same gentlemen who cry out at the thought of government building houses for the people who need them are not at all averse to government subsidizing them to build, own and profit from the construction of multiple-unit, low-cost rental housing for the people.

Mr. Washburn, State Director of Reconstruction and Reemployment, for instance stated in his prepared testimony that "public monies should not be expended for the purpose" of meeting the differential between the cost veterans can afford for housing and the rental owners must get to make as much profit as they believe they are entitled to make. But on pp. 14 and 15 of his report he proposes that this difference be raised by two forms of tax relief for the owners. With the best of will I can see little difference between a subsidy granted outright from the public treasury to our captains of industry who can't provide housing for the people, and a concealed subsidy given in the form of tax relief.

Mr. McDonald of the Building Trades Council and others have proposed to this committee that the government, state and federal, provide the land for privately constructed housing free of charge. Again a subsidy, which will cost the poor heavily in taxes so that the contractors and real estate interests can keep on mulcting them through rents.

Mr. Washburn further proposed that to encourage the construction of multiple-unit dwellings, all rent ceilings be removed from new construction of this type. (P. 13, his report.) That is a good idea, if Mr. Washburn wants to guarantee that no dwellings be built for the average veteran and worker by private industry, and that ample housing be built for those who are already comfortably situated in apartments and homes with a rental of \$75 and up per month.

No, gentlemen, these men who appeared before you must have been joking when they opposed government built housing for the veterans and workers of California. For their own testimony here proves by their own figures, and even more, by their own proposals that no one else is going to build housing except the government either directly or indirectly through concealed subsidy.

Now the question is, gentlemen, is the government actually going to build housing for the poor, or is it also going to make jokes at their expense? When the Oakland Housing Authority says there are 30,000 families in our city who need public housing, and then proposes to build 5,000 units, that is a joke. When the state government proposes to spend some \$200,000,000 on a road building program and appropriates the magnificent sum of \$1,000,000 for a revolving fund to help veterans buy surplus federal building materials, that too is a joke on the hundreds of thousands of veterans now living doubled up in California.

The Workers Party proposes that either the State Government and the Federal Government, and the local governments appropriate the necessary funds to really build the homes needed for the veterans and workers and all the poor people of this country to be housed in decency and comfort, or that they openly admit that all the talk about solving the housing problem is just so much kidding, and that the people might as well prepare themselves to live in dirt and squalor for a long, long time because neither private capital nor the government which supports the system of private capital is going to build homes for them to live in.

The program of the Workers Party is for a 250 billion dollar federal housing program. Surely the government which was able to raise two billion dollars for the atomic bomb and which was able to raise hundreds upon hundreds of billions to fight the war can raise these sums to house its own people.

For the State of California we propose that the \$200,000,000 proposed for the highway program be allocated to the immediate construction of low-cost rental housing, and that the state government raise an additional \$1,000,000,000 by a corporate profits tax to add to this sum.

We propose an immediate state law freezing all rentals, to take effect if and when the federal law is repealed or modified in any way to permit increases in rentals. By no means should the state government leave this matter in the hands of city and county governments as advocated by Mr. Washburn, as these are notoriously subject to the pressure of the building industry and real estate interests.

We propose that a large portion of the moneys appropriated for housing be used to clear the blight of the slums from our cities, after making adequate provision on a temporary basis for those who will have to move while construction is taking place.

And finally, we propose a law rendering all restrictive covenants against racial minorities illegal, and further laws to prevent state or local housing authorities from perpetuating the ghetto system of racial segregation and discrimination in our cities. Housing must and should be allocated according to need, and not according to color.

Draper Hits Jim Crowism In Chamber of Commerce

Below we publish the text of the speech made to the Crenshaw Chamber of Commerce by Harold Draper, Workers Party candidate for councilman in District 7 of Los Angeles. See page 1 for news story.

"In these three minutes allotted to each candidate my remarks shall have to be a bit blunt if what has to be said is to be said. I want to note first in this presentation of candidates before the Chamber of Commerce two out of the eight candidates in the district have not been invited. These two are the Negro candidates. You have refused to give your members an opportunity to meet them. I can only conclude that the Chamber of Commerce heads have already made up their minds on no other grounds than the color of their skin—that is, on the basis of open racial prejudice. This is unfair and it is undemocratic. It is your legal privilege, I suppose, but it is an indication of intolerance. I am aware of your reasons.



Harold Draper

"Your organization is one of the creators of the racial restrictive covenant—the instrument which condemns tens of thousands of Negro people in this city to squeezing into overcrowded ghettos, to the detriment of their health, happiness and their very lives—which puts fictitious property values above real human rights, to the satisfaction of real estate interests and race-baiters.

"I speak not as a lily white candidate nor, of course, as a Negro candidate, not as a racial candidate of any kind—but as a working class and socialist candidate. And I must say that what we socialists say about organizations such as this could not have been more clearly affirmed than by this gathering here.

"I am sure that there are some decent people here; I urge them to be courageous enough to protest this racism so that they may still be able to use the words freedom and justice without hypocrisy."

Save Rent Control - -

(Continued from page 1)

bor, and the committee heard the side of the realtors, whose profits are the highest of all time. Presumably the capitalist politicians brought unbiased minds to the question. But they thought that the arguments of the realtors for more profits outweighed those of tenants and of labor against boosting the cost of living.

The landlords pretend that the whole housing crisis is caused by rent control. The president of the National Association of Real Estate Boards brazenly stated that because "We have fixed rents at about 60 per cent of their proper level... we have caused an expansion in demand—an extravagant and wasteful use of housing." Get that, you veterans living with your in-laws or even you fortunate ones living in Quonset huts. Get that, you Negro veterans especially, who out of 250,000 temporary housing units for all veterans have been assigned 5,000, and of these only 1,600 have been made actually available. Such reasoning can be reduced to this: A quart of liquid would go into a pint measure if the price of the pint measure would only be increased.

But of course the "serious" point in the Congressional mind in boosting rent and relaxing rent controls on new building is to provide "incentive" to private enterprise to invest its money in building homes. To which point there is a human one to counter: Should children be deprived of milk, eggs, vegetables, of shoes or clothing, or a check-up by the doctor, while their parents pay rent high enough to give landlords the profit incentive the latter think they ought to have?

The need for housing is too basic and too compelling to be left to private enterprise, so-called. This great public lack must be filled by a government building program. LABOR ACTION and the Workers Party come out for a \$250,000,000 federal building program for the next five years. The rent question is intimately connected with the building question. Tenants and workers must organize not only for immediate protection against the landlords, but to demand a fundamental solution for

RENTS AND HOUSES

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The rent question is intimately connected with the building question. Tenants and workers must organize not only for immediate protection against the landlords, but to demand a fundamental solution for

the housing crisis. The solution is to take housing out of the greedy clutches of private enterprise. It is not possible for capitalist politicians schooled in capitalist ideology to see this point. The veteran sharing a single room with a wife and three children, the worker whose rent deprives his children of certain foods, clothing or medical care, will have to do something about getting themselves a political party of their own—one that will see the point!

CONTACTS AID WP CAMPAIGN IN LOS ANGELES

LOS ANGELES, Feb. 26—Several new contacts were enlisted in the campaign for Hal Draper, Workers Party councilman candidate from the Seventh District, at a special meeting in Elks Temple tonight. In his informal talk, Draper, who is Los Angeles WP organizer, emphasized that this campaign was different. "Unlike capitalist candidates, I am not interested in getting votes any old way," he said. "For us socialists, an election campaign is an action to win supporters of our program, not a vote for a so-called 'good man'."

This get-together afforded an opportunity for candidate and contacts to become acquainted and discuss not only the political significance of the campaign but also its practical problems. The work yet to be done was outlined with particular mention of the distribution of 5,000 copies of the special March 2 Los Angeles campaign issue of LABOR ACTION. Several people who could not attend the meeting sent postal cards pledging their active support. Evening contacting continues and promises to add additional workers to the force of campaigners.

ELECTION RALLY

Harold Draper will speak on "A Socialist Program to Smash Jim Crow, Sunday, March 30, at 8 P. M. Elks Temple, 40th and Central.

Hoover Report Proposes Soup Kitchen Economy for Germany

By HENRY JUDD

"For all of them (the German people)—in food, warmth and shelter—have been sunk to the lowest level known in a hundred years of Western history."—From Hoover Mission report on Germany.

The published report of the Hoover mission sent to study the economic and food situation in the western half of Germany (British and American zones, less the French zone) has strikingly confirmed the worst beliefs of those who have described what is going on, as well as verifying what has often been charged in LABOR ACTION—namely, that tens of millions of German people, workers, peasants and middle-class, are threatened with extinction by hunger, cold, misery and disease. The facts of the Hoover report were not gathered together by a LABOR ACTION editor; they are the facts admitted and made public by Herbert Hoover, a conservative and reactionary political figure if one ever existed. What does Hoover have to say?

HOOVER FINDINGS

We summarize the most important findings contained in his report as follows:

(1) The population of western Germany has increased by 9,000,000 people

(refugees from the Russian-occupied territories) since 1939; whereas there were 34 million, there are now 43 million people jammed together. Their housing situation is the "worst that modern civilization has ever seen." They average four to five persons per room; unheated rooms were hasten to add.

(2) During the war, 5,700,000 Germans (right out of the most productive layers of the population) were killed, or permanently injured to the extent that they can no longer produce. On top of this, there are 3,000,000 German prisoners in Russia. (Hoover adds, "at least") 750,000 in France; 400,000 in England; 40,000 in Belgium—a total of almost 4,500,000 German men who have vanished from the nation. Or, stated otherwise, over ten million German men—workers and farmers, producers—have been kidnapped or destroyed. Is there any wonder that the German nation is faced with the deepest social problem any nation has ever had to face?

(3) As a result of this, in the age group between 20 and 60 (that is, the important productive and reproductive age levels); there are at least six to seven million more women than men. The effect of this factor upon Germany's birth rate, upon its social and moral standards, is obvious.

(4) In 1946, the agricultural production of the western zones was 65 per cent of the pre-war level. There are, as we have seen, nine million more people to be fed. Little wonder that the 1,500 calorie daily standard prescribed by the military occupation is hardly ever lived up to—a standard, incidentally, that is one-half of the average American food intake. The Hoover report summarizes the results of this slow-starvation diet as follows:

(a) Over half of the western zone's 6,595,000 children and young adolescents are in a "deplorable condition."

(b) A "considerable part" of the normal consumer's group (17 million) are in the same "deplorable condition. This deplorable state means, according to Hoover, a loss of weight, a loss of vitality, a loss in the ability to work. It is a condition of chronic hunger, weakness and susceptibility to illness (Hoover notes the spread of TB, the poor man's disease), reinforced by the cold of Europe's worst winter in decades.

Nothing less than the fate of "western civilization" is at stake, Hoover declares. Let us see what he proposes to do about saving this "western civilization."

HIS RECOMMENDATIONS

Confronted by the above, the answer of any sane person would be

that this country and its people must be given a completely unhampered opportunity to work, to rebuild its shattered cities and industries, to produce. On this subject, Mr. Hoover has little or nothing to say—he is primarily interested in immediate measures to prevent a full prostration.

That is, despite his words to the contrary, he approaches it as a problem of large-scale charity, except that he proposes measures that will assure the German people paying for the charity, in the end, rather than the American "taxpayers," whose interests he is repeatedly concerned with in his report. Any expenditures are to be repaid for by the Germans, in the form of exports they will eventually be able to ship out. And, sound business man that he is, Hoover proposes a nice, profitable tax on any American expenditures (loans) that must be advanced.

But what of his concrete proposals? They are so piddling and insignificant in nature that we hesitate to take them seriously. In effect, Hoover—a man skilled in the manipulation of wasteland, depression, economic existence—would create a network of soup kitchens to cover this devastated land. He proposes a soup kitchen economy!

A hot lunch for the children in the

group listed above, made from army 10-in-1 rations, and aimed to increase calories by 350 per day.

Three hundred and fifty more calories for those of the aged and decrepit who are medically certified as needing such an increase (and who in Germany does not?)

The advancing of a portion of the normal consumers' population from their present ration status to that of heavy industrial workers' status.

STOP-GAG PROPOSALS

All this means more food must be imported to Germany; therefore Hoover proposes the use of 75 idle Liberty boats, manned by German crews. He also proposes use of the huge American potato surplus, now rotting in warehouses and on the fields. And, finally, Hoover proposes to do away with the fantastic regulation that has forbidden German fishermen to fish in the North and Baltic seas.

All these measures are stop-gap proposals, and fail to touch the basic problems of reconstruction, return of the war prisoners, freeing of the German people from the rule and regulation of the foreign occupants, and, in general, the real problem of getting the German economic structure back at work and reconstruction again. These are measures of hypocritical

charity, attempting to offset the worst and most brutal phases of the Allied occupation policy. The failure of this policy, after almost two years, is now admittedly complete.

Germany must be allowed to live; this is the necessary socialist and working class slogan for this tragic land. The present rulers of Germany—in all zones—are rapidly bringing that land to the greatest imaginable catastrophe. The same leaders and "democratic" spokesmen who so loudly condemned the Nazi plans for the conscious extermination of whole peoples (as in Poland, for example) are now pursuing methods that inevitably will lead to similar, if not more severe results. The issue is, in reality—are millions of Germans to be doomed to death from hunger, slow undermining of their constitutions, endemic diseases and cold?

Instead of Hoover's proposals, the socialist movement demands:

An immediate halt to dismantling of plants and factories.

An immediate end of repatriation shipments and payments, no matter to whom they are due.

An immediate halt of all coal shipments outside of Germany.

The turning over of Germany to its people; the withdrawal of any and all foreign, armed forces from the country.

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