

**Work for a Workers World;
Join the Workers Party!**

LABOR ACTION

AUGUST 18, 1947

A PAPER IN THE INTERESTS OF LABOR

FIVE CENTS

These Are The Facts....

Food:

We pay \$19 for food that cost \$10 in 1941.

Clothing:

We pay \$91 for clothing that cost \$50 in 1941.

Housing:

We pay \$9,100 for a house that cost \$5,000 in 1941.

Wages:

In June, 1946, the average factory worker with a wife and two children earned, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, \$43.31 a week.

This same worker in June, 1947, receives \$48.91, pays \$1.54 in taxes and has his wage further reduced, in comparison with 1946, by \$6.55 in the shape of higher prices during this one year.

Production and Prices:

According to industry spokesmen, when OPA was killed, production would rise with the end of price control, and prices would automatically come down. The CIO, however, says that production has indeed gone up, but so have prices, and offers the following figures:

	Production Up	Prices Up
Iron and steel	28%	17%
Other metals	40%	45%
Lumber	13%	53%
Sewing machines	52%	28%
Vacuum cleaners	78%	31%
Washing machines	67%	44%
Radios	12%	70%
Refrigerators	39%	31%
Butter	22%	17%
Lard	106%	34%
Beef and veal, slaughtering	156%	85%
Cattle and calves, receipts at stock-yards	25%	49%

This Is What We Can Do....

Prices and Rents:

1. Organize consumer and tenant committees, made up of union representatives and housewives, to police the price and rent situation and force price reductions:

2. Demand a price and rent control system, with rigid enforcement in the hands of union and consumer committees.

Wages:

1. Demand a guaranteed annual wage in every contract.
2. Demand an escalator clause in every contract.
3. Demand WAGE INCREASES WITHOUT PRICE INCREASES.
4. Demand a national, democratically elected strategy board of unions to map a common strategy.

Sees Ford Victory Guide for UAW Labor

By WALTER JASON

DETROIT—The headlines in the last issue of LABOR ACTION described accurately what happened in the UAW-CIO showdown with Ford over the Taft-Hartley law provisions giving corporations the legal "right" to sue unions for damages. The headlines said: "UAW Wins First Round at Ford on Taft Act."

For as long as one year, the UAW-CIO is assured of protection from damage suits by Ford. Here is the essence of the agreement, as announced jointly by the union and the Ford company: "That a four-man committee, two from the union and two from the company, will be appointed to work out a solution to the question of the liability of the union, its officers and members, for damages by suit for breach of contract.

"If this committee is unable to arrive at a unanimous solution within three months of the date of the contract, it will choose a fifth member. The Ford UAW umpire will serve as the fifth member if the committee cannot first agree on some other person.

ADDITIONAL TIME

"The committee will continue its efforts to arrive at a solution for an additional three-month period if necessary, or longer, if additional time is required and voted for by a majority of the committee. Any solution reached by the committee must be unanimous and will be binding upon both company and union.

"In the event of failure to arrive at a solution the union may reopen direct negotiations on this issue with the company. However, the total time spent in such deliberations and negotiations shall not exceed one year in all.

(Continued on page 2)

The Boss's Dictionary

Free-Enterprise:



CIO Seeks Roll-Back And Control of Prices!

Philly WP Tops Quota On Petitions

PHILADELPHIA—With 1201 signatures gathered, 685 more than the number required, the initial period of the campaign to place Jack Brad Rader on the ballot for councilman in the Fifth Councilmanic District of Philadelphia ended last Thursday, August 7.

This work was accomplished by a group of devoted friends and comrades, some of whom worked from 6:30 p.m. until dark every evening, after a hard day's work in a factory.

Party members met with very little antagonism on the part of workers interviewed. Most people approached were extremely receptive. Activity was concentrated in two areas of the Fifth Councilmanic District. One area consisted mainly of Negro workers, who received the signature collectors very favorably. Considerable enthusiasm was met with also in the second area, composed of white mill workers. Everywhere there was evidence of the desire for an independent political party. Innumerable workers articulated this need to our people. Invaluable contacts were made and will be followed up among those from whom signatures were solicited.

A letter was addressed to the Industrial Union Council informing it of our candidate in the Fifth Councilmanic District and inviting its support since the IUC is not supporting any candidate on the ballot in this area. The letter expressed the need for a labor party and stated that the Workers Party is ready to withdraw its candidate in this district in support of a candidate from the ranks of the organized labor movement designated by the IUC.

Herman Benson for Mayor!



Don't throw away your vote on capitalist politicians who represent big business!

Stop the Democratic and Republican Parties in their nation-wide attack against labor!

Cast a working class ballot for the candidate of the Workers Party and for its fighting socialist platform!

Issued by the WORKERS PARTY, 6341 Gratiot St., Detroit

Primaries: TUES., OCT. 7

Read: LABOR ACTION

Platform of the Workers Party in the Detroit Elections

1. For real rent and price control laws enforced by committees representing unions, consumers, housewives, tenants. Against rent and price increases. Fight against evictions.
2. For a \$250 billion five-year program of public works on a national, state and city basis to provide low-cost housing, slum clearance, modern transportation, community and recreational facilities. Of this, \$3 billion to be utilized in the Detroit area for such purposes and to provide new housing for up to 200,000 families. Finance this program by taxing the profiteers.
3. For a guaranteed annual living wage for all workers, with automatic increases to meet rising costs of living.
4. Defend labor's rights. Against the Taft-Hartley and Callahan laws and all such anti-labor legislation.
5. Full social, political and economic equality for Negroes and all minorities. Enforce the Diggs law. Abolish restrictive covenants.
6. Open the doors of the United States to the homeless Jewish people and other victims of the war and oppression.
7. Freedom for all nations. Against the occupation and domination of countries by the United States, by Russia, or by any other imperialist powers.
8. Expropriate America's Sixty Families. Operate big industry under the control of democratically elected shop committees.
9. For an Independent Labor Party. For a Workers' Government.
10. For a world of security, peace and equality through the socialist reorganization of society.

Unions Challenge Taft-Hartley Act

But Leaders, in Calling for Political Action, Deliberately Skirt Need for a Labor Party

The CIO this week directed a new challenge against the operation of the Taft-Hartley Act. Having already, in a special Maryland election, defied, without prosecution, the provisions of the Taft-Hartley Act which deny unions the right to participate in political campaigns, Philip Murray addressed an open letter to the CIO membership and accompanied it with a "1947 voting guide," which cited the record of the members of the 79th Congress and advised labor to defeat those who "voted against the people."

In various states, as in Pennsylvania and Connecticut, PAC has intensified its plans for participation in the 1947 political campaign, and the CIO generally has made it clear that it considers political action the cornerstone of labor activity today.

At the same time, the AFL, through the office of its general counsel, reaffirmed its intention to exclude no-strike pledges from future contracts, asserting that this did not constitute an evasion of the Taft-Hartley Act.

Why the AFL should be concerned with establishing the point that something is not an evasion of the act, when according to previously stated policy it is the object of the AFL to challenge the legality and operation of the act as a whole, is not at all clear. However, the affirmation of the right to strike, whether it is or is not in violation of the act, is a welcome sign. There was never the slightest justification for yielding this basic right of labor, not during the war, not at any time. In many respects the signing of no-strike pledges represented the lowest level of treachery by the bureaucrats of the labor movement.

So far only one important AFL leader, David Dubinsky of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union, has announced his intention to disregard the policy of other unions on this issue by agreeing to no-strike clauses. When even a cabage-head like William Green, as archaic a union leader as can be found in the entire labor union movement, sees the danger, at least in this situation of no-strike pledges,

Dubinsky's declaration speaks volumes for the "progressive" trade union leadership he is supposed to represent.

With few exceptions, the union leadership, no matter how backward, reactionary or incompetent they may individually be, have recognized the necessity of an all-out assault on the Taft-Hartley Act, politically as well as economically. Even Dan Tobin, teamster union head who is generally more concerned with fighting militants in the teamsters' union than in promoting the welfare of the working class, made a speech this

week in California stressing the need of political labor action.

Too much cannot be expected, of course, from a Tobin. He doesn't intend to do anything about it anyway, being one of the principal labor chieftains in the Democratic Party; and in any case he advocated a third party, not a Labor Party. Still, there is considerable significance in his speech. For when a Tobin is led to say anything that in his mind, if not in reality, is meant to serve as independent labor politics, it is an indication that the ranks of the union movement are mightily disgusted with the Democratic and Republican Parties, and wish to assert themselves politically.

Los Angeles Consulate Picketed

LOS ANGELES, Aug. 9—A small but vociferously effective picket line before the Dutch consulate today called attention of downtown noontime crowds to the Workers Party position in defense of the Indonesian people against their imperialist oppressors. A great deal of interest was aroused among the many hundreds of people who witnessed the demonstration as they passed on foot or in street cars and automobiles. Copies of LABOR ACTION and a mimeographed bulletin were distributed. Camera men and reporters from three metropolitan papers made an appearance to get pictures and ask questions.

LABOR PARTY OPPORTUNITY

On the whole, the CIO is pursuing its political activities more energetically than the AFL, although the AFL has also sent a voting record of Congressmen to the membership as a test of the Taft-Hartley Act. William Green has, in addition, dared Taft to run. But, while the CIO activity, both in the sense of defying the law and in the sense of mobilizing the political energies of labor, is commendable, the manner in which it proposes that both these be accomplished leaves much to be desired.

There is in this situation a golden opportunity to organize a Labor Party. And there is no doubt that in one way or another the ranks of labor either already want, or would welcome, a Labor Party—that is, an instrument through which they could put forward their political needs as unions assert their economic needs. But Murray, on this issue, is no different from Green or Tobin. And we see no important CIO leaders who differ in this respect from Murray. For all the vigor of their political campaigning, through PAC and through union locals, they seek to prevent real independent political action by diverting the political energies of labor into the aimless, futile, disorienting channel of finding "friends" among the capitalist politicians.

Thus the CIO voting guide listed

ten Senate issues and twelve House issues as tests of how the Congressmen voted. Some months ago we commented at great length on a similar list that appeared in the CIO News. In our opinion it proves nothing beyond the fact that some Congressmen voted, for one reason or another, one way on a given bill, and others another way. The selection of issues is, by and large, arbitrary. But even were it not, it would not alter the fact that Congressmen, whether they voted for or against a bill, are capitalist representatives.

(Continued on page 2)

Government Probe Ducks Main Issue

Simultaneously with an announcement that Attorney General Tom C. Clark's office was ordering an investigation of conspiracies to hike prices on essential living needs, Emil Rieve, CIO vice-president and chairman of the CIO's Full Employment Committee, told a press conference that the CIO was demanding a special session of Congress to roll back prices and to restore price control. Rieve coupled his statement of the CIO position on price control with a warning that the USA faced a depression against which the 1930s would "look like a Sunday school picnic." Rieve, in making the demand for a special session of Congress, conceded that Truman was unlikely to call one.

Though Attorney General Clark's announcement made the headlines, it promised little in the way of price relief for the consumer. The statement which accompanied the probe directive dealt largely with the growth of monopoly, and the violations of various anti-trust laws by the giant trusts. A bushful of "trust-busters" have found it politically expedient to holler about this in the past, especially near election time, without being able to do a thing about it, or wanting to in any fundamental way that would disrupt the operations of the system they are committed to uphold.

With the scandal of rising prices causing increasing fury all over the nation, the Attorney General's order, issued presumably with the agreement of President Truman, at best tackles a peripheral aspect of the problem. It might conceivably result in a few downward revisions of prices, though that is unlikely, through prosecution of a few who are found guilty of conspiring to boost prices, while the basic structure of untrammelled price increases is left intact. As with Truman's several speeches appealing to industry to limit prices voluntarily, the Attorney General's threats call attention to the intolerable situation. And, as with these same Truman speeches, they steer away from the key need, namely, a rigidly enforced price control system, with enforcement in the hands of those who have a genuine interest in control.

(Cont. in ed. col. on page 3)

Detroit Election Circus

What Are the Qualifications Of Mr. Murphy?

By HERMAN BENSON
Workers Party Candidate for Mayor

I have one more rival in the race for mayor. His name is George Murphy and he has been a Recorder's Judge for some time. Remember the name: Murphy. It is his chief asset. What is his platform? What does he stand for? I don't know. No one else does, least of all Murphy himself. His platform could be summarized as follows: "He wants to be Mayor." His friends who "surprised" him by filing his name and paying the \$100 fee, said that they "represented" the "people" of Detroit and they were filing his name because the housing situation was a "disgrace." I grant them that out of hand. There are 100,000 families in Detroit who live in slum areas. There are thousands of others who have no homes at all. But what do they propose to do about it? They don't say. How will Murphy wipe out the slums? They

don't know. No one else knows, least of all Murphy himself.

"NON-PARTISAN" HOKUM

The Detroit elections are "non-partisan." The candidates run as "individuals" without party designation. They seldom have any platform. Where they go to the trouble of devising one, it consists of a series of meaningless platitudes. Only in the most exceptional circumstances, due to the intervention of the CIO, do the elections take on any serious meaning for the people. The whole structure and methodology is arranged to create the greatest possible confusion and the maximum amount of emptiness. In this hodge-podge of an election the people seek some rule of thumb method of distinguishing one candidate from another. Therefore the NAME of the candidate plays a tremendous role.

A Frank Murphy was once Mayor (Continued on page 2)

NEWS AND VIEWS FROM THE LABOR FRONT

Unions Challenge Taft-Hartley Act - -

(Continued from page 1)

We do not want to discuss the whole business of "friends of labor" as we have frequently done in recent issues of LABOR ACTION, except to say that the policy of "rewarding friends and punishing enemies" is ruinous. Labor needs as its representatives, not "friends" (as Truman is supposed to be now, although the labor leaders denounced him a year ago as a strike-breaker), but men and women who are PART of the labor movement.

A TOUGH POLICY

We should give every ounce of possible support to the CIO and PAC's activities aimed at directing labor toward political action. With that must go severe and uncompromising criticism of the objectives and methods of the labor officialdom which negate the value of that action.

It is good to read of the unions and union leaders advocating a tough policy. But toughness requires something more than talk or even gestures. A case in point is the recent issue of the CIO's news service sheet in which Allan L. Swim, the new editor who replaced Stalinist Len de Cauw, declares in an editorial that this is a "Time for Fighting—Not Crying." That much of what he says is absolutely right. So too when he says:

"It's time for the kind of fighting that, built the CIO from a frail weakling into a mighty organization."

And he is right when he lists the two steps necessary:

"One calls for organization. The other calls for increased political action."

"The first provides strength. The second permits the democratic exercise of strength."

"Designers of the Taft-Hartley Bill knew this to be true—because their measure impedes organizational work and attempts to place curbs on political activity."

"But Congress couldn't place restrictions on the fighting spirit that makes real unionists forge ahead when the going is toughest."

"There are some very good cards in the new hand that the CIO now holds."

"There are the millions of men and women who make up the Congress of Industrial Union Organizations."

Every word, a word of truth. And when he says it is a job for every person who carries a union card, that we must "roll up our sleeves and get to work," he is again speaking the truth. But when he gets down to cases, he becomes pitifully weak. One piece of specific advice is good—"sign up a new member—and another—and another." The other, "make a voter out of that fellow who thinks political action is just a phrase coined by a publicity man," sounds exactly like... "a phrase coined by a publicity man."

We've got to make a voter out of "that fellow." But a voter for what? And a voter for whom? The answer will not come from Swim or Murray.

or Kroll, PAC director. These men are interested in making "that fellow" a voter for Truman or some other Democratic or Republican politician, with an occasional flyer on someone who can possibly be called an independent labor candidate.

That is not the way to use our "cards." That does not "permit the democratic exercise of strength." On the contrary, it depletes our strength, make us throw our good "hand" away.

Members of the CIO have to take advantage of their union's stand for political action, and take advantage of it by pressing for a Labor Party which will strive for a workers' congress in a workers' government.

Militant action on every front, political and economic, is the path that leads to victory over the Taft-Hartley Act as on other things. Union resistance has already had its effects. Taft and Hartley are squabbling over their brainchild. The Department of Justice has so far chosen not to apprehend union leaders who have deliberately violated the law. A bill has been introduced to repeal some of the provisions of the law, and even Taft is said to be willing to go along on some revisions. The whole business can be wiped off the books, formally or in practice, by an aggressive labor policy. And the aggressive policy is an all-out effort for the creation of a LABOR PARTY!

WDL ASKS ACTION TO RESTORE CIVIL RIGHTS IN JERSEY

NEW YORK CITY (WDL)—Turner Smith, head of the U. S. Department of Justice's Civil Rights Section, has been urged to "restore civil rights in Fort Lee and Cliffside, N. J., where for two successive Sundays police and Palisades Park guards have maintained a Mississippi-style reign of terror."

The request for federal intervention came from Rowland Watts, acting national secretary of the Workers Defense League, when the New Jersey attorney general failed to act.

"On August 3 eleven members of an interracial group were beaten up and then arrested for merely exercising their civil rights," Watts wrote Smith. "Seven were arrested at the pool's entrance after being refused admittance. The other four were arrested outside the park while picketing and distributing leaflets protesting the pool's ban on Negroes. Members of the group not arrested were also manhandled."

"Among the seven seized at the pool's entrance was our news editor, James Peck, who was bloodied up by a park guard while two policemen were hauling him into a police car. Inside the police car, right in front of Peck, a policeman blackjacked Morris Horowitz, who was also arrested."

Watts recalled how, the previous Sunday, six members of the group were manhandled and forcibly deported to New York and how Samuel Scott, a Negro, was blackjacked. He also pointed out that on both occasions Irving Rosenthal, the pool's owner, and Fred Stengel, Fort Lee police chief, supervised operations.

Philly Rally

On Saturday, August 23, at 8:00 p.m., a victory social will be held to celebrate the completion of the petition campaign in Philadelphia. The Workers Party invites its friends to Labor Action Hall, 1139 West Girard Avenue.

politician, with an occasional flyer on someone who can possibly be called an independent labor candidate.

That is not the way to use our "cards." That does not "permit the democratic exercise of strength." On the contrary, it depletes our strength, make us throw our good "hand" away.

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Benson, WP Candidate, Makes Suggestion to "Detroit News"

August 8, 1947

The following is a copy of a letter sent to the Detroit News which it did not print:

Editor of the Detroit News:

In a recent editorial you display a sanctimonious concern with the alleged lack of law enforcement during the strike at Benton Harbor, where, apparently, the lack of legalized violence against pickets leaves you dissatisfied. Strikers generally are defending their standard of living and the future of their families. It is to be expected and to be greeted that a man will place the welfare of his children above any law guarding the "sacred" rights of private property.

But doubtless you will disagree. The welfare of all of society is based upon respect for the law, you will insist. Therefore, in order to give you a proper outlet for your law-enforcing propensities and at the same time permit them to be directed along constructive channels, I would like to remind you of a law on the statute books of this state which is not only systematically violated but whose violation is deliberately aided and encouraged by the very officials who are responsible for law enforcement. You need not travel to Benton Harbor or any other scene of strikes. This law is violated before your very eyes, within a few dozen feet of the typewriter which pounds out your editorials, and in fact in the whole downtown area (at least) of our fair city.

I refer to the Diggs Act, which illegalizes discrimination against minority races in the restaurants, hotels, recreational centers, etc. Surely an alert editor like you is not unaware of this fact. But if in the haste and bustle of the many editorials you must write about strikers this well known fact has escaped you, why not try it out yourself (incognito, of course) with any of your Negro employees?

May we expect a flurry of editorials and indignant cartoons in protest against this officially abetted law violation? Or do you place the rights of racial prejudice above the enforcement of this law? Or can the whole matter be explained much more simply? Is your paper, and your office with it, merely prostituted to the needs of big business, which pays you? Is your concern for "law enforcement" a fig-leaf cover for the nakedness of your service to the capitalist class?

Herman Benson, July 28, 1947.

Detroit Election - -

(Continued from page 1)

of Detroit; he was once Governor of Michigan; he is now a Supreme Court justice. When there was a New Deal (remember?), he was a New Dealer. So what could possibly be more natural than that his brother, George Murphy, should run for Mayor. Childish? But no more so than many other ways of choosing a candidate in Detroit.

The Detroit Free Press welcomes the candidacy of Murphy and devotes a special editorial to it. Does it praise his platform, his program, his ideas? Not at all. It welcomes his entry into the primary race because now there will be a "contest." A contest? Between what and what? No one knows, least of all the Free Press. But, you see, there is going to be an election and in an election there must be a "contest." Otherwise it doesn't look right. Otherwise the people wouldn't realize that they had the right to "decide." To "decide" what? Nobody seems to know.

But now that there will be a "contest," the Free Press will be able to run a fine editorial on Election Day urging every voter to fulfill his duty as a citizen. If Jeffries, or if Murphy, or if any other individual is elected and things do not improve, the Free Press will solemnly point out that only 20 or 30 or 40 per cent of the voters performed their "duty" in 1947. Therefore they themselves are to blame, etc., etc. But without a "contest" it might be clear to all that the "choice" is a farce.

THE REAL CONTEST

Truly there IS a contest going on in this city. It is part of the great national contest, the class struggle, between the capitalist class and the working class. The capitalist class carries on this struggle shrewdly enough. On the political field it gives the workers a choice between one capitalist candidate or another. It is a game of "Heads, I win; Tails, you lose." The whole set-up of American politics is designed to conceal the struggle between the workers and capitalists. The Free Press welcomes the farcical "contest" between a Murphy and a Jeffries because the circus fanfare will deafen the ears of the workers to the real conflict.

The leaders of the labor movement could easily explode this farce. All they have to do is to organize an independent Labor Party and run independent labor candidates in the name of the working class. The Free Press and the other papers published in the interests of big business would quickly forget the trivial differences between the Murphys and the Jeffries and urge them to patch up their childish quarrels in order to unite against the workers.

But the short-sighted mediocrities who head our powerful labor movement make themselves part of the capitalist political deception. They too will lecture the workers: get out and vote. Or, you should have listened to us and gone out and voted. For whom and for what? Why? They do not know.

This election CAN be of significance. Let the workers break out of the capitalist political trap. One way is to cast a working class ballot in the primaries on Tuesday, October 7, for the candidate of the Workers Party and for its socialist platform.

Lesson of Ford Victory - -

(Continued from page 1)

"The union, its officers and members shall not be liable for breach of contract because of any strike or work stoppage which may occur during the period of these deliberations and negotiations. The company will not institute any suit against the union, its officers and members in such event..."

"If the committee is unable to find a solution, after a year of deliberations and negotiations, the union will retain the right to strike on this issue. In the event such a strike should occur, all other provisions of the contract will remain in full force for the entire term of the contract."

What does this agreement mean in practice? First of all, it provides the UAW-CIO a precedent for argument with other manufacturers, notably Chrysler and General Motors, on this same issue.

What effect it will have in negotiations will be revealed later this week when the Murray Corporation on the UAW-CIO negotiate on the strike called specifically to put into effect a "no-penalty" clause in the contract. Two smaller manufacturers already have agreed to this. Another small manufacturer even included a "willing and able" clause in the contract, thus giving the UAW-CIO protections similar to that won by the coal miners in their recent agreement.

The Ford agreement has increased the chances of the UAW-CIO of avoiding the trap set for unions in

the Taft-Hartley law to turn them into docile company unions under threats of huge law suits for strikes or spontaneous walkouts.

What will the auto barons try to do, even when they make agreements such as that concluded in the Ford negotiations? Their aim, and this is the danger which Ford workers must guard against, will be to

obtain some new and stronger form of "company security." Ford will try to set up an agreement under which the union itself will act as policeman against the rank and file protesting major grievances, provocations or injustices.

LABOR'S ANSWER

Let there be no mistake about it. Ford hasn't given up the struggle. The power of the UAW-CIO, used in a "get-tough" policy, forced Ford to retreat. But only temporarily. Ford failed to tame the UAW-CIO by his bluster and threats about the Taft-Hartley law being used against the union. His slick industrial relations director, John Bugas, former FBI official, will be back tomorrow, through his representatives on the joint committee, to find other means of bringing the union under his thumb.

Beginning August 23, the infamous Taft-Hartley law provision goes into effect. No doubt GM and Chrysler will carry the ball for the corporations. Last week, oppressive work conditions in the heat wave led to spontaneous walkout in many auto plants here. Will the corporations sue the UAW-CIO if such a thing occurs again? And what will labor do?

The Ford crisis gave a clear indication of what the correct answer must be for labor. It can be called a "get-tough" policy. The UAW was built in fierce struggle against bitter employer opposition. It is going to keep its independence and strength only by preparing for similar struggle. These are the immediate lessons of the Ford showdown.

DEMAND BREAKING OF JIM CROW UN RENT PACTS

NEW YORK CITY (WDL)—The Workers Defense League has supported the demand of United Nations employees for cancellation of Jim Crow rent pacts between the UN and the Metropolitan and New York Life Insurance Companies for living space in their housing developments.

The demand was made in an overwhelming vote at a mass meeting called by the UN permanent staff committee, which has been acting as the employees' bargaining agent.

For a Price List of Marxist Literature in English and Other Languages Available Through Labor Action Book Service, Write to

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

With the Workers Party

All readers of LABOR ACTION are invited to attend meetings, class lectures and socials sponsored by local branches of the WORKERS PARTY. Visit our headquarters listed below to purchase Marxist literature, the NEW INTERNATIONAL and LABOR ACTION. For information of WORKERS PARTY activities in cities not listed below, write to WORKERS PARTY, 4 Court Square, Long Island City 1, N. Y.

- AKRON Write to Box 221.
BALTIMORE 21 West Preston St., 2nd floor. Meetings every Monday, 8 p. m.
BUFFALO 639 Main St., 2nd floor. Office hours: 11 a.m.-2 p.m. Monday through Friday. Open meetings Sunday evenings. Discussion group Thursday evenings.
CHICAGO 1501 W. Madison Ave., 2nd floor. Chicago 7. Telephone: CH8aspeake 5788. Office hours: 3-5:30 p. m. daily, Tuesday and Wednesday evenings.
CLEVELAND WP Branch meets Sundays, 8 p.m. in Room 4, Slovenian Hall, 6409 St. Clair Ave.
DETROIT 6341 Gratiot, Room 10. Telephone: PLaza 5559.
LOS ANGELES 3314 So. Grand, Los Angeles 7, Cal. Telephone: Richmond 7-2330 (if no answer, phone AX 2-9667). Office hours: 2 to 5 p. m. daily.
LOUISVILLE Write to: Robert Durant, Box 1181, Louisville, Ky.
NEWARK 248 Market St., Newark 2. Open house Friday evenings.
NEW YORK CITY CITY CENTER: 114 West 14th St., 3rd floor. Open every day from 10 a. m. to 7 p. m. Wednesday and Thursday until 10:30 p. m. Telephone: CHelsea 2-9681. BRONX BRANCH: Thursday, 8:15 p. m., at Wilkins Hall, 1330 Wilkins Ave., Bronx.
HARLEM BRANCH: Wednesday, 8:15 p.m., at the Workers Party headquarters, 2143 Seventh Ave. (near 126th St.).
CENTRAL BRANCH: Wednesday, 8:15 p. m., at the City Center, 114 West 14th St.
CHELSEA BRANCH: Thursday, 8:15 p. m., at the City Center, 114 West 14th St.
INDUSTRIAL BRANCH: Thursday, 8:15 p. m., at the Workers Party headquarters, 276 Fulton St., Brooklyn, 2nd floor.
BROOKLYN-BROWNSVILLE BRANCH: Wednesday, 8:15 p.m., at the De Luxe Palace, 538 Howard Ave. (near Pitkin Ave.).
SOCIALIST YOUTH LEAGUE: Friday, 8:15 p.m., at the Workers Party headquarters, 276 Fulton St., Brooklyn, 2nd floor.
PHILADELPHIA 1139 West Girard Ave., 3rd floor. Meetings Wednesdays at 8 p. m. Forums every Friday, 8:15 p. m.
SATURDAY, Aug. 23—Pre-election SOCIAL and RALLY. Speeches, dancing, entertainment, refreshments. All welcome.
READING Write to P. O. Box 1671.
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Readers of Labor Action Take the Floor...

Small Parties Get Raw Deal in Detroit

The following letter was sent to the Workers Party candidate for mayor of Detroit. It has been necessary to cut its length. Cuts are indicated by ellipses.

Mr. Herman Benson, Dear Sir: You have paid one hundred dollars for the chance to have votes cast for you for mayor. How about making sure you get credit for those votes? Sir, for twenty-two years the "City Hall crowd" in Detroit has been undermining the safeguards that had been put around elections...

Section after section of the state law is flaunted in Detroit on top of the fact that for twenty-two years nearly every session of the Legislature has seen some law passed that whittled away some safeguard. In 1925, in a book-length bill the Challenger law was wrecked. We had one very like what other states have. Now we have one that is a disgrace to any state. One man cannot properly watch for his party, both the ballot and the tally, as they do in other states. Then one could watch an hour or so, some one else take his place, the ballot box could be watched all day long. Now it is impossible to have the ballot box guarded if the challenger is to do anything at all about watching the count of the vote. The law, Section 3152, that can be seen in any branch library, forbids the doors being locked. That is ig-

nored. The next section is the only place in the whole law that provides any protection at all against "padding the ballot box." It calls for a count of the ballots while they are, still folded up. For if there are more ballots than voters they are all to be put back into the ballot box and the excess drawn out UNOPENED. They can't be drawn out unopened

Charge Russians Operate Slave Camps in Germany

The newspaper of the Berlin Social Democratic Party in its August 2 issue has charged that thirteen "large and well-known concentration camps and forced labor camps" were in operation in the Russian occupation zone of Germany.

The newspaper charged that the camps were run by NKVD (new name for GPU) secret police and had tens of thousands of inmates. It said the inmates included many German Social Democrats and members and sympathizers of the Communist Party, considered "undesirable" by the Stalinist officials.

Among the camps named by the Social Democrats were two former Nazi concentration camps, Buchenwald in Thuringia and Sachsenhausen in Brandenburg. Attempts of foreign correspondents to visit these camps have persistently been rebuffed by the Stalinist occupation authority.

unless they are put in unopened. For instance, they will open up the ballots for mayor, probably sort them out before they count. Just watch how they do. If you were one of the inspectors, could you play any tricks?

They say they sort them to save time. Handling a ballot three times instead of once does not save time. I have watched the count in several other states as well as here in Michigan a generation ago and also of late years. They don't know "up state" what is pulled off here in Detroit and won't stand for it when they are true....

I have seen the small-party ballots sorted out and laid aside and not one thing done with them until they were picked up to be put into the ballot box the last thing. That is one reason for this sorting of the ballots, it gives "them," the City Hall crowd in any city, lots of votes to play with.

In one instance (Port Huron) there were eighteen such ballots, Farmer-Labor, Socialist, and so on. I kept my back to that little pile, for that was the one thing I was checking on that time. But I was conscious of them all the time. The poll book should have been eighteen votes "out of balance," since no vote from those ballots had been recorded at all. That was in St. Clair County, where they delay reporting results until they know how many votes the Republicans need to win. It was a close state election. When the final results were in, the poll books balanced for two state candidates. In just one precinct eighteen votes picked up! Consider how many could have been found throughout the state! If you will consult any Michigan Manual where the vote for

secretary of state is given you will see many counties where practically no small-party votes are cast at all. Human nature does not work that way. Two or three votes here and you and that small party has to go

through the laborious and costly procedure of getting back onto the ballot by petition... Respectfully yours, Mrs. Mary P. Hopkins, Detroit, August 4.

WHERE TO BUY LABOR ACTION AND THE NEW INTERNATIONAL

- AKRON Kallas Cigar Store, 1 W. Market St. News Exchange, 51 S. Main St. National News Co., 333 S. Main St. La Salle Confectionery, 620 S. Main St.
BALTIMORE Fayette and Calvert Streets
CLEVELAND Wheatman's Store, 719 Prospect Ave.
DETROIT Carl's Bookstore, 8109 Woodward, near Clairmont. Cas's Warren Drugstore, opposite Wayne University. Family Newsstand, downtown, in front of Family Theater. Highland Park Newsstand, 13501 Woodward, near Davison.
LOUISVILLE Eilers Bookshop, betw. Liberty and Jefferson on 3rd.
NEWARK For LA: 63 Barclay St. For NI: Moseman's Shop, 20 Academy.
NEW YORK For Your NI: Ask your newsdealer in Manhattan and Brooklyn. Carried on all main newsstands.

- For Your LA: On all newsstands on 14th and 42nd Streets.
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SEATTLE 102 Washington Street.
YOUNGSTOWN Wayside Book Store, 25 E. Commerce St.

Editorials Ask Price Control

(Continued from page 1)

Figures published by every responsible agency prove what every worker and housewife knows, namely, that prices have risen on almost every commodity in every industry. The investigation and arrest of a few caught in criminal conspiracy may deflect nation-wide anger; it will not provide substantial relief. Moreover, we predict that the heads of U. S. Steel and the heads of the meat packing combines, to name but two of the great "free enterprisers," will not be arrested, indicted or jailed.

The National Association of Manufacturers countered Clark's order with a statement in which it said that it was "both absurd and dangerous to intimate... that all current high prices are the result of criminal conspiracies." As criminal conspiracies are judged in the capitalist system, which is, by its very nature, a conspiracy against the people, the NAM is right. The legally-defined conspiracies will affect few individuals in industry, since the law and the government are essentially based upon maintaining and defending the criminal practices of capitalism.

Rieve, in calling for a special session of Congress, proved beyond any doubt that prices in the last year had risen faster than wages, and that labor has consequently suffered a wage cut. This, he said, left the CIO with no other alternative but to seek further wage increases. Specifically on coal, Rieve said: "Much of the increased coal costs (referring to the recent wage gain of the miners) could have been absorbed out of increased productivity as well as the profit margins of the producers."

"Instead, industry followed the policy of gouging the public while they can, and increasing prices...."

"The steel industry, at a time when the steel corporations are making their highest profits in history, has announced price hikes of \$5 to \$10 a ton. (A recent issue of LABOR ACTION documented the facts as they pertain to the rise in the price of coal and steel, and industry's ability to absorb the wage increase won by the miners.)"

Rieve also labeled the House-Senate Economic Committee's inquiry into high prices as "an investigation to forestall action." The facts, said Rieve, "are already well known."

The CIO spokesman approached the heart of the problem when he called for price rollbacks and firm price control. However, he took the wind out of his own sails by asserting that there was little likelihood of a special session of Congress, and by proposing as a second-best measure that Truman convene a national conference of management, agriculture and labor to consider a voluntary price control program. Apart from the fact that the massing of militant labor pressure could force Congress to consider action on what is our number one domestic problem, Rieve's substitute proposal offers nothing at all in the direction of achieving price control.

There is little to be gained by sitting down with the very people who are responsible for raising prices and trying to work out an amicable agreement on price reductions. Leading capitalist spokesmen themselves have scoffed at the possibility of effecting voluntary control. The unlikelihood of business voluntarily reducing prices has been demonstrated over and over again during the past year. The nearest they came to it was in the form of various schemes to push hard-to-move merchandise off their shelves, and then it was accompanied by all kinds of duplicity.

If the CIO is to sit down, for example, with members of the NAM who leave no doubt in anybody's mind that they want no part of any kind of price control, it must be as the representative of six million members who have come to DEMAND, not to plead.

With its power, the power of organized millions, the CIO can achieve tremendous gains in imposing real price control. It has the organization and the ability to organize consumer committees, composed of union representatives and housewives, which will take price control into their own hands!

On Farmers And Workers

The press last week reported that farmers in New Jersey and other states were plowing under bumper crops of tomatoes and other vegetables rather than sell them for two cents a pound to wholesale vegetable dealers who charge the consumer twenty or more cents a pound for the same vegetables.

It is difficult to imagine anything more insane than the destruction of food at any time. It is especially insane today when there are millions in the world crying for food of any kind, and when millions in this country cannot afford to buy such health-giving food as tomatoes because prices are too high. Yet the Jersey farmer is not to blame; although his protest may seem self-destructive. He is a victim of an insane system; he is trapped by the profiteers and food monopolists who are as merciless in their treatment of the farmer as the worker and consumer.

Twenty cents a pound for tomatoes is scandalous extortion, the more so when the farmer

gets only one-tenth of that. This disparity is by itself sufficient comment on our price structure, designed to mulct the consumer of every last conceivable cent. It is as well a burning comment on the rottenness of the capitalist system: farmers forced to destroy their crops because they do not get an adequate return; consumers forced to pay outrageous prices or do without; profiteers, in food as in other industries, unconcerned with anything but lining their pockets.

We think that the farmers made a mistake and that the Jersey unions, for example, made a mistake as well. They could possibly have worked out a scheme to bring the tomatoes to market at a price the consumer can near paying. It is something to bear in mind for the future. However, outside of that there is an important and fundamental lesson in this situation, namely, the community of interest between the small farmer and the worker.

Unlike the worker who has nothing to sell but his ability to work, the farmer is a property owner, in one way or another, and sells his produce. As such his economic class status is more closely related to that of the big capitalists than it is to that of the working class. But the development of capitalism and the progress of monopoly has so changed the nature of that resemblance that the farmer, like the storekeeper and professional, can achieve a permanent advance in his position and through such general social progress as is represented by the aspirations of the working class. Both farmer and worker have interests which are essentially antagonistic to the capitalist-monopolist structure; both are squeezed dry by the giants of industry, trade and finance. And both must consequently cooperate for their mutual benefit.

Prices are a matter of intimate concern to farmer and worker. Just as high prices on meat or tomatoes are a source of serious deprivation for the worker, so are high prices on industrial products a source of injury to the farmer. For this reason, among others, GM strike slogans of 1946 for a wage increase without a price increase were of immense social importance, for all of the people as for labor. They were an essential step forward in asserting the right, and necessity, of labor's leadership of the people.

And leadership must indeed come from the labor movement. There is no other solution for labor's needs than the reorganization of society in socialist directions. By class interest, the working man is the mortal enemy of capitalism. There is no compromising the struggle between capital and labor; it is impossible, it cannot be done, because there is no reconciling their irreconcilable class differences. Our whole economic life is geared to the demands and operations of industry. Labor is the key to this operation; without it everything is paralyzed. Historically, practically, in every way save in that they do not yet realize that in their hands lies the future of society, the powerful millions of working men and women are ready to destroy the monstrosity of capitalism and replace it with the sanity of a social system based on the achievement of plenty for all.

But if labor is to reorganize society, as it is capable of doing and as it is driven to do, it must seek the support of the great mass of people who suffer the barbarities of capitalism. It therefore has an obligation to forge those links which will bind farmer to worker in daily struggle for common advancement. The price issue is one that comes to mind at once. In time, it leads to deeper forms and wider areas of struggle.

It is not the first time that food has been plowed under. Roosevelt, in the severest days of economic crisis, ordered food plowed under. Only recently we reported the wanton destruction of mountains of potatoes in the United States because to put them on the market would have depressed the price. A year ago wheat was burned for fuel in Argentina. Coffee and other food products have frequently been dumped into the sea or incinerated. And there will be repeated instances of the same, no matter how many millions starve or go hungry in the process, so long as capitalism remains. Against all of this, farmer and laborer have a common interest. Cooperating on daily issues of struggle, they can and will, in time, meet the need of joining together in struggle to end the criminal insanity of capitalism, to establish a workers' government, to create a socialist society.

WORLD POLITICS

Forgotten, Forlorn, Without Hope

By IRVING HOWE

Congress has gone home or, on international junkets to buttress its ignorance with first-hand observations. A great many comments have been made by now on its achievements: blows against labor, proposals for taxation which would have helped the rich, refusal once more to pass an FEPC act. But on one matter there has been silence even from the critics, though it is not the least important matter. We refer to Congress' failure to pass the Stratton bill, which would have permitted 100,000 displaced persons to enter this country each year for four years. This total of 400,000 DPs incidentally is not even as many as would have been allowed to enter the country under normal peacetime conditions during the last several years. Yet the Stratton bill was not passed.

In the reactionary political mood which swept Congress during the recent session there seemed little chance for this bill, which merely expresses the minimum of humanitarian concern (perhaps even less than the minimum). Typical of the level of debate which swirled around this issue was the reiterated charge of Representative Ed Gossett of Texas that the Jewish DPs were sent into the DP camps by Russia for fifth-column work in the U. S. And equally typical was the charge of Rep. John Robison of Kentucky that all foreigners are lazy and therefore don't belong in this country. Against such raving lunacy, reason itself is disarmed.

And so we enter another fall, the prelude to another winter, with the DP problem unsolved two long and bitter years since the war's end in Europe. The victims of the war, survivors of concentration camps, of slave labor forces and of ghettos, political dissidents who fear to return to their countries—these are the DPs. The very people whom justice would dictate should have been the first to be helped remain to rot in camps, to waste their years in enforced idleness while deprived of the minimum privacies and comforts.

Exactly how many DPs there are, it is difficult to say. Official figures list 850,000 of them in the western zones of Germany, another 148,000 in Austria, about 100,000 in Italy. Of these, 65 per cent are Catholics, 25 per cent are Jews and the other 10 per cent are Protestants. The largest national group is the Poles—30 per cent; the refugees from Baltic countries comprise 17 per cent and 7 per cent are Yugoslavs. The remainder are Russians, Rumanians and Lithuanians. Half the DPs are women and children. Of the children, 150,000 are under 18, of whom at least 7,000 are orphans.

MILLIONS OF DPs NOT EVEN COUNTED

These are the official figures. But in actuality these figures exclude the main bulk of homeless and roaming people in Europe today. And these are the millions who have been deported from their homes, not by Hitler but by the Allies, not during the war but during the peace. A recent statement of the Committee Against Mass Expulsions gives some revealing information on this matter:

"Among them are millions of Balts deported to slave labor in Soviet Russia; 3,000,000 Poles from east of the Curzon Line; 700,000 Hungarian-speaking former citizens of Czechoslovakia who have been or are being de-

ported from territory they inhabited for hundreds of years; 3,000,000 German-speaking citizens of Czechoslovakia in the same category; about 2,000,000 German-speaking citizens of Rumania, Hungary and Yugoslavia; and, finally, the largest group of all, the approximately 10,000,000 inhabitants of German provinces east of the Oder-Neisse Line. The total approximates 20,000,000, but an unknown number of millions are already dead.

"Those who have been deported eastward into Russia have disappeared into the slave labor camps of the Soviet Union, and no one knows how many still survive. Many of those deported to the west have also perished of hardship or disease. But all of the approximately 15,000,000, actual or prospective victims of deportation who survive in the west (except the Hungarians) are deported to the rump of Germany west of the Oder-Neisse Line. Many millions are there already and 100,000 more arrived from Polish-occupied territory in the last three months."

But officially this DP problem is not even recognized. The recently organized International Relief Organization, which is supposed to take over the functions of UNRRA, is specifically debarred in its charter from providing help to any persons of German origin. Here is the Nazi theory of race discrimination twisted inside out and displayed as the policy of the "democratic nations."

EUROPEAN ECONOMY FURTHER UPSET

Not only does this result in great personal tragedy for millions of innocent people; it helps further disorganize European economy. On the one hand, entire areas of Poland have been terribly depopulated and their once-rich agricultural production is no longer available. On the other hand, there is over-population in the West. As the above-quoted statement puts it:

"As a result of this policy of mass expulsions, whole provinces, the size of some American states are being depopulated. At a time of great want and distress, rich agricultural areas are reduced to unproductive steppes and once busy industrial cities are turned into ghost towns. In the western and Soviet zones of Germany, on the other hand, where these deportees have to be resettled, appalling conditions of overcrowding are being created. The resulting food and housing shortages cause disease, unrest and a dangerous decay of all moral standards."

We see here the ultimate madness of capitalist nationalism: whole populations uprooted, millions of people driven from their homes, forced into wandering and exile. And now they are forgotten, forlorn and without hope. A trickle is admitted here and there: England takes a few of those DPs who are skilled laborers, France takes a few; but by and large the DPs remain homeless. And in the meantime there is the constant pressure of Stalinist totalitarianism that the DPs be forcibly repatriated, a terribly brutal and cynical suggestion since everyone knows that if the Stalinist regime got its paws on them they wouldn't have much of a future in this world except to labor in Stalin's slave camps in Asia.

They have been betrayed and neglected, forgotten and left to rot. The great powers have no use for them. They are an incidental sacrifice of capitalism's sacrifice of humanity in Europe during the last few years. Forgotten, forlorn, without hope.



UNCOVERING A NEW MEANNESS

"Capitalism in ALL the manifestations of its plunder, and in all the minutest ramifications of its historical development and its national peculiarities, will NEVER be completely and exhaustively studied," stated Lenin. This week we are going to study just one small manifestation of capitalist meanness—the workers' withholding tax and how the laws surrounding the tax work to the advantage of the capitalist and to the disadvantage of the worker.

Such a tax law could never have been passed were it not for the TREACHERY of the labor officialdom. Yes, treachery. The treachery of the heads of the AFL and the CIO and the railroad brotherhoods to the workers' ranks is shown most clearly in the refusal of these bureaucrats to break with the stupid and old-fashioned political policy of supporting the boss parties and consequently of denying to the workers their own labor party. Such a labor party might have prevented the enactment of the unfair tax law, and indeed might have prevented the imperialist war which called into being the huge government debt and the necessity for heavy taxes.

Think of the monstrous nature of the government's tax law, which forces even the poorest paid workers to pay for the bosses' war, and what is more, to pay a disproportionately high share of taxes. And what is more, forces them to pay a tax every week. And what is more, deducts the taxes from their wages even before they receive the full wage.

But this isn't even the half of it. Recently, the Wall Street Journal, in a carefully written article calculated to soften criticism of the thieving employers, revealed certain aspects of the tax law which deserve to be widely known among all the workers.

Employers, according to the Treasury Department's "T-men," have been taking the tax money deducted weekly from workers' pay envelopes and using it to finance their corporations. About 100 cases are shortly to be submitted to criminal action.

Actually, the tax law is so set up that ALL employers can—and almost all do—use the workers' tax money in their own businesses, for many weeks before turning it over to the government. Though the employer collects the tax from the workers on a weekly basis, he doesn't have to turn it over to the government until the end of each quarterly period. "In practice," as the Wall Street Journal acknowledges, "the money is mingled with other business funds.... THE LAW REQUIRES COMPLETE RETURNS TO BE FILED ONLY ONCE EVERY THREE MONTHS. Thus... the employer has the money in his bank account, in varying amounts, for three months."

Many bosses hold the dough for longer than three months, because the government is "lenient" on employers. "There's always been a certain amount of this delay in employers' paying withholding taxes," said the Journal, but lately the number of delinquent payroll tax returns and payments is on the increase. "There's no official explanation but the suspicion is that more of the employers are being hard pressed for day-to-day working funds and are dipping into the tax money." So the Treasury is preparing to make an example of a few small potatoes among the bosses.

In a case where the workers' taxes have been stolen by the employer, the law is so rigged that each employee must still assume the burden of proving to the collector's office that he actually had the money deducted by the employer. "Proving that may be difficult; impossible, if the employer kept inadequate taxes. In most cases the government would take any loss, but occasionally an employee might have to pay his tax twice," stated the Wall Street Journal. "At the very least, both the employee and the government would be put to a lot of trouble."

What do you think of a tax law which dips into the wage of a worker even before the wage is paid, turns the money over to a boss cost free for at least three months and then if the boss just keeps the money, places the burden of proof for the tax payment upon the workers? When a nationwide Labor Party begins to send its representatives to Congress, this is just one of the ten thousand plundering practices of the capitalist system that is going to be exposed and stopped cold. And the venal Congressmen—the "friends of labor" endorsed by Philip Murray and William Green and A. F. Whitney and Daniel Tobin and John L. Lewis—who put over such a crooked tax law, are going to be called to account.

BIG BUSINESS STAKE IN JAVA

The Chicago Tribune, speaking for those financial interests which have no stakes in Europe or Asia, has exposed the selfish interest of big business in Holland's imperialist war on the colonial Javanese. According to the Trib, the pre-war value of foreign investments in all Indonesia was \$2,160,000,000. The direct holdings of U. S. companies in Indonesia (apart from U. S. financing of British and Dutch commercial interests) in 1940 were estimated at \$140,000,000. Most of this represents rubber and oil concessions in Sumatra. It also includes tea, coffee and sugar plantations in Java and several factories. Sumatra's largest foreign oil concession is that of Standard-Vacuum Oil Co. Largest U. S. factory in Java is the Goodyear Rubber Co.'s plant in Buitenzorg. General Motors owns an automobile assembly plant near Batavia.

To protect these economic interests, the U. S. government has supported the Dutch slave-holders' completely. Washington has urged the young Indonesian republic to accept Dutch sovereignty. Washington has supplied the Dutch army with U. S. planes and guns and has trained that army with U. S. officers. The U. S.-controlled World Bank for Reconstruction and Development is preparing to lend the Dutch government about \$200,000,000 "to finance capital needs in Holland." The receipt of this loan will free an equal amount of Dutch funds for expenditure in the war against the Indonesians. The Workers Party is organizing protest demonstrations against the Dutch consulates in this country and the acquiescence of Washington. If the party had more forces at its disposal we would also organize protests directly against Standard Oil and General Motors and Goodyear and the other U. S. capitalists who are directing the U. S. State Department in its war against the fight of the Indonesians for independence.

Books You Should Know

NO STAR IS LOST, by James T. Farrell; World Publishing Co., 657 pp., \$1.49.

By NORMAN JOHNSTONE

Second in the Danny O'Neill series, No Star Is Lost opens with Danny and his brother Bill on a spending spree. The source of their sudden wealth is a letter to Aunt Peg from Lorry Robinson, her lover, which contained a large sum of money. They spend their money profusely on sodas, candy, ball games and dubious thrills at the penny arcade peep shows. Danny's brother Bill is the one who pilfered the letter and he swears Danny to secrecy while he battles.

Aunt Peg, carrying the torch for her none too attentive lover, Lorry, careers from drunkenness to puritanical goodness in an effort to save her soul of his apparent inattention. Her grief through most of the story is based upon her failure to receive his latest letter. She indulges in fleeting affairs with men whom she despises as a means of self-indulgent punishment. This, with wild forays seeking spiritual balm, dominates her behavior throughout the book.

Jim and Lizz O'Neill, Danny's father and mother, live in squalid surroundings. Filth is the order of the day for this large family; Lizz is too busy pronouncing stations of the cross and giving meager charity to the Poor Clares, a sisterhood "that does so much good" from the paltry offerings of people like the O'Neills who should be the recipients of their bounty rather than the givers of it. Jim works for the express company and between striving to feed and house his large brood, along with sporadic expeditions in cleaning up their home, is defeated and dejected; a product of ignorance and the social strata he occupies, wherein the largest families always contrive to live on the smallest of incomes. His hatred for the O'Flahertys, who are one rung up the ladder and who have taken his son Danny into their home to relieve the situation, is cause for his resentment. His inadequacy as a provider and the fact that his son's affections and companionship are being stolen from him are galling to him. Coupled with Lizz's slovenliness and mystical belief it produces spasms of hatred for

his wife and her family, the O'Flahertys.

Uncle Al O'Flaherty is a shoe salesman who makes periodic visits home. Danny is his favorite and he has taken it upon himself to bring the lad up in the true traditions. At the age of ten he gives Danny Lord Chesterfield's Letters to His Son. He is a believer in the mot juste and insists that Danny be a "sport." His efforts at keeping his sister Peg on the straight and narrow, and his role as arbiter between her and his mother, who are constantly flying at each other's throats, causes him much vexation. His is the mistaken belief that he is in touch with the world and has all the correct answers to financial, international and household affairs. His views on the impending World War are a good example of his thinking.

Grandma O'Flaherty, a wild banshee of a woman who smokes a pipe and drinks beer out of cans, dotes upon her grandson Danny. Her son Al is the apple of her eye. She has nothing but scorn and scathing remarks for her daughter Margaret, who has taken up with a Protestant. Danny's associations with the "tinklers" is to her a sign of degeneration of fine Irish stock. Fanatically Irish and deplorably ignorant, her scope of knowledge is constricted

within her own household. She has no time for the O'Neills, and her poor daughter Lizz is the butt of her alternating rancor and pity.

On this wide plane Farrell chronicles the lives of this diversified and heterogeneous family. His insight and understanding of their problems is unique. Nope of his situations is "contrived" or banal. We get to feel that we know and have lived with these people. We witness their innermost thoughts, their utter stupidity, their quarrels; their codes of conduct and the religious influence that lies like a dank quilt and constricts inexorably to numb, stunt and blight their opportunity to emerge as free-thinking people.

Studs Lonigan launched Farrell into the literary world, and in his Irish milieu he has no equal. In this reviewer's opinion, the Danny O'Neill series by far outstrips his initial trilogy in scope and in the diversification and development of his characters.

ALSO RECEIVED:
FATHER AND SON AND MY DAYS OF ANGER, two volumes in the Danny O'Neill series, by James T. Farrell. World Publishing Co., \$1.49 each.

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In Memory of a Titan of Our Times Assassinated by Stalin's Agent

Leon Trotsky: Man, Revolutionist, Thinker

By E. R. MCKINNEY

When Leon Trotsky was struck down by a Stalinist assassin on August 20, 1940, this event marked the passing of the last of the great Marxists. The Marxist movement is left in the form of the organization founded and established by Trotsky and which has become known, the world over, as the "Trotskyist Movement." It is to be expected that other great Marxists will arise out of the proletarian struggles of the future, but for the present and for this generation it can be said very factually that with the death of Trotsky, the last of the Marxian giants has gone.

Trotsky was not only the last great Marxian theoretician and intellectual, but the last of the Marxian thinkers of any outstanding significance. Not only was Trotsky a theoretician and thinker but an organizer of unusual gifts and a literary man who might have been a star of the first magnitude in the field of letters or history. For the proletarian movement to be without the services of such a man is quite a loss at any time; it is especially a loss in these days of Marxian theoretical sterility, intellectual debility and literary boorishness.

It has become the fashion to talk about "Trotskyism." Usually this term is made to apply only to those very narrow and perhaps ephemeral



Leaders of the Revolution, Lenin and Trotsky

aspects of the teaching of Trotsky which relate to the struggle between Trotsky and Stalin. On a far narrower base is the contention that one beholds the full stature of Trotsky in his attitude on the questions involved in the dispute of 1939-40 which resulted in the split in the Socialist Workers Party and the formation of the Workers Party.

Important as is the approach from the viewpoint of the struggle against Stalin, and although this struggle was and is necessary, and however genuine the importance of this struggle for the elucidation of the teachings of Trotsky, it is inadequate and far too restricted. This is particularly true when one considers the concrete way in which the Trotsky-Stalin conflict was dealt with not only in capitalist circles but in the Trotskyist movement itself.

A LEADER IN GREAT TRADITIONS OF MARXISM

Trotsky's greatness does not rest and should not be made to rest solely on the dispute with Stalin, or even primarily on the struggle against Stalinism. His greatness certainly should not be circumscribed by his attitude and position on the questions around which the 1940 split in the Socialist Workers Party took place. While those of us who left the SWP to form the WP disagreed with Trotsky and still disagree with the position he took then, we in no sense considered this very fundamental disagreement as a permanent break with Trotsky or with anything which could properly be called "Trotskyism." Any attempt to illuminate the greatness of Trotsky or to denigrate his greatness by invoking the role he played in the 1939-40 dispute, can succeed only in demonstrating that such persons have no adequate and proper appreciation of the role of Leon Trotsky in history. Such pro-Trotskyists or anti-Trotskyists are merely vociferous intellectual pigmies because they are articulate and capable of copious and perennial quotation.

Trotsky could carry on the incisive and powerful agitation and propaganda assault against Stalin and Sta-

linism because he possessed a basic and pregnant quality: a brilliant mind, superb intellectual equipment and not inconsiderable learning. It was this basic quality which made possible his acute political insight and his theoretical grasp. This was demonstrated again and again. That is, it was revealed over and over that Trotsky was more than a man who had porched over the writings of Marx and Engels. He did not have to drive a point home by recurrent quotation. He had the intellectual capacity to face a problem just as Marx, Engels and Lenin had faced the problems about which they wrote and taught. He had the intellectual equipment and stamina which are prerequisites to the handling of any theoretical or scientific question or any political question of any depth.

I am only saying here that Trotsky knew how to think. He could refute Stalin's theory of socialism in one country, not only because he had read Marx and listened to Lenin, not only because he had participated in the discussions in the political bureau and attended the world congresses, but for the reason that he had learned to think. He did not live, by quotations and the marrow of traditions. There are many who have read Marx and who can repeat accurately what Marx said. There are many who have listened to Lenin. There are many more who have browsed through and studied the works of Marx, Engels and Lenin (and now Trotsky), but who have not learned to think. For these people, quotations, the "traditions of the movement," and the history of the Comintern, "in its best days," serve as an adequate substitute for thinking and as a sufficient answer to all current political problems.

They do what Trotsky himself warned against in his article on "Tradition and Revolutionary Policy." "Leninism consists in not looking backwards, in avoiding being bound by precedents, by purely formal reference to quotations. . . . Lenin can be chopped up into quotations suitable for all cases in life, because for Lenin the formula is never higher than the reality, it is always the instrument that makes possible grasping the

reality and dominating it. One can find in Lenin, without difficulty, dozens and hundreds of passages, which, formally, seem to contradict one another. But it is necessary to see not the formal relationship between one passage and another, but the real relationship of each to the concrete reality in which the formula was introduced as a lever. The Leninist truth is always concrete."

For Lenin in this passage one can substitute Marx. Today one can substitute Trotsky.

WHY STALIN HOUNDED, THEN KILLED HIM

One can find this kind of approach to a great leader and his work in other fields. In the field of physics, philosophy or biology, for example, one will find an Einstein or a really big man in the field of philosophy approaching Newton, Darwin or Aristotle in a similar manner. Such a man would write: Darwin, or Newton, or Aristotle "cannot be chopped up into quotations suitable for all cases in life." Any discipline, any movement, any individual who is bound in this manner or who proceeds in this manner is doomed to stagnation and death. This is true of a political movement no less than of science or philosophy. This is particularly true of the working class revolutionary political movement. Of all groups in capitalist society, it is precisely the working class which cannot afford to permit itself to be led by ineptitude, precedent-hunting and quotation-chopping. If this is to be the case, then any dullard or ignoramus can be a revolutionary leader if he is skilled and judicious in the selection of quotations.

Trotsky was the exemplar of his own dictum: "Learn to think." This is the deep tragedy of Trotsky's assassination. Not that he was right or wrong on this or that or the other occasion, but that out of his great mind there poured a constant stream of solid and imperishable metal to be used in the building of the revolutionary working class political movement. All who do not understand this: whether pro-Trotskyists or anti-Trotskyists, are mere impedimenta to the building of the revolutionary party.

I say again that when Trotsky died the revolutionary movement, not just the Trotskyist movement, lost the last of the profound thinkers who was at the same time a great Marxist thinker and a great Marxist revolutionary. This was the blow struck by the assassin in Stalin's employ. It was, for this epoch at least, an irreparable blow, a blow at the whole revolutionary movement, actual and potential. It was a blow which was bound to dull the edge of the class struggle, because the greatest living exponent of class struggle, in all its configurations, in all its actuality and potentiality, was silenced forever.

Stalin in his animal cunning and shrewdness could appreciate this point. Here was a man who was walled about in an obscure Mexican village. He had been driven from Turkey to France, to Norway and then

to Mexico. He could not travel about and rally the masses as he once had done with the magnificence of his oratory. He could not use his splendid organizing capabilities as he had done in forming and leading the Red Army. He could only fight Stalin and Stalinism with the weapon of his intellect. But that was a sharp and keen weapon. He could only fight with his ideas, but they were potent and decisive when applied and carried into action. That was enough.

It is necessary to repeat that Trotsky was not great merely because he had read and assimilated the teachings of Marx, Engels and Lenin. As important as this was; as important as was his vast experience, his organizing talents, his unusual literary facility, his courage and his revolutionary passion; these alone and together would not have produced Leon Trotsky. He excelled in these qualities because he was a man of great intellectual capacity and determination.

ORGANIZER OF MEN AS WELL AS THINKER

Trotsky would have been a great man in another field: for example, in the field of science or literature. He would have made his mark in the field of bourgeois scholarship. He could have written an exceptional history of the Civil War in the United States just as he wrote a great history of the Russian Revolution. He had the capacity. He wrestled with ideas and conquered them. But he could also organize the Red Army. An organizer is not necessarily a master of theory, but he will never be a first-rate organizer unless he can grasp ideas and make them his own. Trotsky, a non-military man, could organize the Red Army, lead it and inspire it to victory, not by the shouting of slogans, but because he knew that the army which he was forming was a new kind of army, based on a new body of political concepts. He knew that where one is dealing with concepts, particularly with new concepts, or at times with mere hypotheses, one must learn to think and know how to think. One cannot make progress on the basis of precedents or quotation-chopping.

Trotsky was greatly benefited and stimulated by his association with Lenin. Lenin corrected his many errors, both in matters of theory and practice. Here again Trotsky revealed himself as a great man. He acknowledged the stature of Lenin. He said that on nearly every point where he and Lenin disagreed, Lenin was correct. Why could Trotsky do this? For the reason that he himself was also a great man. Lenin was a great thinker, but so was Trotsky. Lenin could help Trotsky because there was something to help, something to appeal to more than in men of lesser capacity. There was something in Trotsky for Lenin to attach his ideas to. He found in Trotsky a man who could think.

Trotsky could acknowledge Lenin's greatness because he was of the same pattern, from the same mold.



Trotsky could accept Lenin's analyses on any certain day without chagrin, jealousy, and with objectivity because he knew that he could make a contribution to Lenin's thinking on the morrow. Not only this but he knew that if on the morrow Lenin was not there, he, Trotsky, could carry on in the manner of Lenin—because he had learned to think. Today the revolutionary movement has neither a Lenin nor a Trotsky. Neither for today nor tomorrow.

HIS LIFE A LESSON FOR REVOLUTIONISTS

Not only did Trotsky know how to think but he also knew how to work. The two qualities are not unrelated. One cannot drive oneself to intellectual or theoretical labors unless one has some ability to discover what the relevant labors are. Brains are necessary in order to know what to do and where to start. The one lacking this capacity must wait for the guidance of someone who has it. If such a one is not present, then stagnation and often times retrogression set in.

It is reported in this connection that Trotsky was very meticulous and careful in the organization of his work day. Trotsky had to organize his time because he really had something to do. He always had a day's work before him. He arranged it that way. Trotsky knew that he had something to do. Not for the reason, as stated by his slanderers and detractors, that he felt himself some kind of Messiah, but because he knew

clearly what kind of world he lived in and what needed to be done to transform that world. He knew that while ideas and theory are basic and fundamental, they are not effective until organized and applied, tried out and tested. This requires hard work and the careful husbanding of one's time. All of these things Trotsky understood because he could think.

This is an all-important lesson for young revolutionists to learn from and about Leon Trotsky. A lesson for all sorts of young revolutionists: the young intellectual in the revolutionary movement and the young worker revolutionist. If the revolutionary movement is to escape a drab routine, an empty formalism, if it is not to be an archivist burial ground and an exercise in chopping up quotations, then it must be given a new birth of intellectual vigor and boldness. This is one important lesson from the life of Trotsky.

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As Organizer of the Red Army

A CALL TO ACTION BY THE WORKERS PARTY-II

Don't Pay More Rent! Fight Against Evictions!

We publish below another section of the pamphlet on fighting the rent increase and evictions, written by Irving Howe for the Workers Party. The first section appeared last week. The pamphlet will appear soon, and will sell for five cents.

DURING the war, there was rent control. There had to be—or the capitalist war effort would have been disrupted. And so long as there was any danger of that, the government made right sure that rent control was fairly tight. For if there hadn't been rent control the landlords would have gone hog-wild, especially in the war-production centers, and that would have created all sorts of difficulties for the war-production program. That's why there was rent control.

As soon as the war was over, the landlords got to work. Now who are these landlords? Are they some special group of devils? No, they're not a special group; they're the usual group of . . . They're the very same bankers, investment houses, insurance companies, capitalists who try to skin you alive in the factories and shops and who then skirt you again in the stores. The same capitalist who has investments, say, in the plant you work in and gets profits from your sweat, is the one who has investments in the food packing company which charges you outrageous prices for meat and who has investments in the real estate company which tries to extort fantastic rents from you. The landlords are part of the capitalist class—the enemy of the workers and poor people in every front.

Congress Helps the Landlords

One thing you have to say about the landlords: they were and are organized. Behind all their phony names—we can't waste the space here to list the high-sounding titles by which they disguise themselves—they steadily worked away to knife rent control and to prevent low cost public housing. What they wanted was a

continued housing shortage and a green light to charge as much rent as they could.

In this noble cause they were helped by their cronies in Washington. It stood to reason that the Congress which passed the Taft-Hartley Anti-Labor Bill—designed as a deadly blow at the rights of American workers—would also be receptive to the desires of the landlords. Congress was ready to do well by every section of . . . the capitalist class. And so under the leadership of Senator R. A. Taft, the reactionary Republican zombie from Ohio, and the lynch-mob Democratic Senators from the South (who intoned Claghornish speeches about "rent control is against our institutions, suh . . .") Congress cooked up that rotten, phony, crooked rent decontrol bill as full of holes as a used-up lottery punchboard. And these enemies of the American people, calling themselves representatives of the American people, passed the bill.

And Truman signed it. He said he had to, that if he didn't sign it there'd be no rent control at all. But that was just a weak excuse for knuckling under to the landlord lobby, which had done a terrific job in Washington. For already the OPA, with Truman's tacit approval, had given the landlords monetary lollipop after lollipop; it had rushed to the defense of poor, stricken landlords (suffering under the burden of the biggest profit rake in history) with that nonsense about "hardship cases." And Truman had let it get through.

Naturally he signed the bill. It was part of the whole trend of the capitalist government in Washington—part of the trend which wrecked price control and passed the Slave Labor Act, part of the trend which shelved the anti-lynching bill and knifed the minimum wage bill. It was the trend to open attack on the workers and the poor people, where formerly there'd been a relatively disguised attack.

And Truman knuckled under because he himself had helped initiate the trend. Both parties—Democrat and Republican—both capitalist parties—were respon-

sible for all the reactionary legislation of this Congress. Labor was paying the price for its support of capitalist parties at election time.

Landlord Profits Shoot Upward

Then came the deluge. Landlords began to put pressure on tenants. Hotels, which had been completely decontrolled by this new legislation, increased rentals up to 400 per cent. (One case was reported in Colorado where a man was charged more rent per month than he earned at his job.) The landlords cried that they were at last getting "justice"—increases in rent to make up for increases in costs. Well, let's take a glance back and see if that is so.

Here are some facts. According to a recent survey initiated by the Office of Price Administration, landlords of large apartment houses increased their net operating income during 1945 by 25 per cent over their net operating income in 1939. (Net operating income refers to the landlord's profits after all expenses are paid.) Similarly, landlords of small houses (those containing less than five apartments) increased their net operating income by 43 per cent.

One of the main reasons why landlord profits increased was that they no longer had vacancies to cut down their profits. During pre-war years there was a "normal" vacancy rate of 15 to 20 per cent in apartment houses; landlords' profits were calculated on that assumption. In 1939 when there was already a housing squeeze that vacancy rate dropped to 9 per cent. And of course during the last few years it dropped to zero. Thus, even during the years when rents were stationary, landlords got a greater total profit from their properties. Which proves that all their weeping about "losing money" was hokum.

For the fact is that during the year of 1944, landlords took in a total profit of \$1,180,000,000—nearly twice as much as in 1940.

The same OPA report to which we have referred said further that "While wage rates and prices in-

creased considerably during the war, landlords' total expenditures were kept close to the 1939 amount." For large apartments, expenses rose five per cent but for small ones expenses actually dropped seven per cent.

There were other ways that landlords used to decrease their expenses. They cut down on vital services in innumerable ways: cleaning, painting, hot water, plumbing, elevator service.

Furthermore, while taxes on many things increased considerably, most real estate tax rates remained stable; in New York City, real estate tax rates actually dropped during the war.

And finally there was always the OPA around to help the landlords. The OPA lent a willing ear to landlords when they complained about "hardships" and since rent control went into effect it has granted over a million individual rent increases. The rate of granting rent increases has gone up; for example, from August to September 1946 it doubled. Since September 1946 it has continued to go up. The landlords have found a helping hand in the OPA.

And the facts are that landlord profits in 1946 and 1947, when finally computed, will without question be higher than ever!

Mind you, we aren't worried at all about landlord profits. We have presented these facts here just to show what liars and hypocrites they are when they scream about the "need" for greater rent levels. But even if the landlords were not doing well, even if they had to struggle along on a mere 50 million a year profit level rather than a 1 billion a year profit level, that wouldn't be any skin off our back or yours. Our primary interest is in the poor people of this country—the great mass of workers, lower salaried employees, professionals, etc., who are having one devil of a time trying to make ends meet in this time of inflationary price rises. It is their interest—the interest of the vast majority of the people that comes first, last and always—not the interest of the landlords.