

Work for a Workers World;
Join the Workers Party!

LABOR ACTION

SEPTEMBER 8, 1947

A PAPER IN THE INTERESTS OF LABOR

FIVE CENTS

RISING PRICES AND ANTI-UNION LAWS DICTATE NEED FOR LABOR OFFENSIVE

Stalinists "Win" Hungary Vote By Terror, Fraud

In an "election" in which Stalinist agents voted as often as 40 times each and which was marked by outright frauds and terrorization of opponents, the Stalinist party of Hungary has succeeded in getting only 21 per cent of the total vote. While the vote "results" will not actually change the power relations in Hungary where the bayonets of the Russian army are the real rulers, it is still extraordinary that after having terrorized their opponents, tampered with election lists, disqualified 1 1/2 million voters, used powerful high-pressure methods, intimidated voters and openly resorted to floaters in a way that puts Tammany Hall to shame—after all this, the Stalinists could only roll up 21 per cent of the vote!

(Someone will no doubt be purged for having done a very bad job of election snatching.)

In the previous Hungarian election of 1945 the Stalinists polled 17 per cent of the vote. That figure may be taken as a fairly accurate index of

their strength. Now they have been able to increase it by a puny four per cent despite their open resort to the most outrageously undemocratic devices. That, we think, is the outstanding result of the Hungarian election: a decisive if indirect indication that the masses of Hungary reject the Stalinist police regime.

The tragedy of the situation is first that the election figures do not in any way influence the actual relationship of political forces in Hungary (the Stalinists remain in the saddle) and second that large sections of the population have been driven by the Stalinists into the arms of the reactionary and right-wing parties.

The Small Landowners Party, which represents the capitalist and semi-feudal agricultural landowner classes of Hungary, had its vote knocked down from 57 per cent in 1945 to 15 per cent in 1947. But it must be remembered that this party has been ripped apart by the Stalinist regime and that its most aggressive sections formed new organizations. When to its vote there are added the votes of several other bourgeois and Catholic groups, it is seen that the total bourgeois vote is not very much less than it was in 1945. From this we may conclude that the Stalinist regime has not succeeded in breaking masses of the Hungarian population from their attachment to the bourgeois parties, but have on the contrary solidified their adherence to these parties.

SOCIAL DEMOCRATS LOSE

An interesting aspect of the election is the setback of the Social Democratic Party. The Social Democrats expected a tremendous increase (they calculated on getting the votes of those dissatisfied with both the Stalinists and the Small Landowners Parties) but their vote dropped from 17 to 14 per cent. The most important reason for this decline is that the Stalinist rulers disfranchised 188,000 Socialist Party members or voters. In addition, most of the Social Democratic leadership had been playing ball with the Stalinists in precisely the same miserable fashion of most of their fellows in eastern Europe. It is easy to see that under conditions of a free elec-

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His Police Boss Hungary Election



Rader Challenges County Commission On Ballot Ruling

PHILADELPHIA — The Workers Party is under vicious attack by the two capitalist parties, which are seeking to bar its candidate, I. Jack Rader, from the ballot. Not once during the two hearings which have been held has the fact been challenged that 1,200 workers in the Fifth District have signed a petition desiring the Workers Party and its candidate's name on the ballot. The wishes of these people are not considered important. Instead, the decisive matter for the Democrats and Republicans has been to reject the expressed political desire of these 1,200 workers on a number of flimsy technical pretexts.

The hearings and procedures before the County Board of Elections have been farcical. What appears in the record are a mass of irrelevant technical pretexts. It is always possible to find some technical "errors" because of ambiguities in the law and because the law was written by and for lawyers and not by and for the masses of people. It is the function of the courts to place these technicalities above the needs and demands of the people.

At the hearing on Tuesday, September 3, no decision was announced by the County Commission. The commission did, however, cite for contempt I. Jack Rader and Frank Carver of the Workers Party for refusing to recognize the "competence and jurisdiction of the commission." They refused to answer any of the irrelevant questions addressed to them on the grounds that the Democratic Party, which is the challenger of the petitions, has already filed in Common Pleas Court. It will be the decision of this court at its session this Friday which will determine whether or not the Workers Party will appear on the ballot. Similar charges have been presented against the Socialist Workers Party and the decision in their case will be made at the same time.

The hearings before the County Commission have been rendered purposeless by the intervention of the Democrats to the Common Pleas Court. It was on this basis that David Felix, attorney for the Workers Party, advised the representative of

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On the Capitalist Conveyor!



Two Independent Labor Candidates Named for Cleveland Wards 22, 32

By G. McDERMOTT

CLEVELAND, Aug. 28—It can happen in your town, too. Labor can break with the two political parties of big business and stand on its own feet. The workers of Cleveland, as they fight to elect two independent labor candidates to the City Council, are proving this.

Here is the picture in Cleveland. The 32nd Ward, the Collinwood industrial district, is a working class neighborhood of Slovenians and Italians. Last year, the local unions in this area banded together and ran Mathew DeMore, an IAM official, for Congress. Although unsuccessful, the unionists found that the idea of independent labor candidates was popular. They kept their political organization intact as the 32nd Ward PAC Club and set out to build an organization that would fight the capitalist parties right down to the last precinct. This PAC Club includes representatives from the UAW-CIO, UE-CIO, Mine, Mill and Smelter-CIO, various AFL locals, IAM locals, MESA locals and rail brotherhood lodges. The policies of the club are arrived at democratically by the membership and candidates are picked the same way.

The club is running John DeVito, chief steward of Fisher Body Local 45 for City Council. Brother DeVito has a fine record in the labor movement and is a veteran of World War II. He was a leader in the sit-down strike that organized the Cleveland General Motors plant. He is a militant committeeman, veteran of more than one wildcat strike and picket line clash. Although his local is dominated by Stalinists, he has defied them to defend the miners' strikes and has condemned their speed-up tactics during the war. As a delegate to the Cleveland Industrial Union Council, he called for a

nation-wide general strike against the Taft-Hartley bill.

The PAC Club voted to support DeVito, provided he abide by the principles of the club. These principles are that he run as an independent labor candidate, opposing the Democrats and Republicans, and that he run on a program drawn up by the PAC Club. Although the Stalinists in DeVito's local objected to this, they had no choice but to go along. The PAC Club is the real power in the ward.

Inspired by the events in Ward 32, unionists in Ward 22 have formed a PAC Club and are backing an independent candidate. Ward 22 is a working class area in the heart of the city populated by eastern European immigrants, Negroes and Jap-

anese-Americans. Led largely by workers from the same locals represented in Ward 32, the club is backing Bob Sivert, a militant IAM unionist. Sivert is a veteran of the DeMore campaign and an advocate of independent labor political action. These campaigns are not just a "token" or "gesture." They are being fought to win! Both candidates acquired sufficient signatures with ease after mobilization of the membership of the clubs. Both are safely on the ballot.

It is interesting to note that each of these ward clubs grew out of the CIO-PAC. The city PAC director assisted in organizing and advising each club. The two candidates are officially endorsed by the city PAC. Many other ward clubs have been

formed or are forming in Cleveland. Should these clubs, too, choose to break with the two old parties, Cleveland would be well on the road to a city-wide Labor Party organization.

Interest in the two independent campaigns among the rank and file in the shops is considerable. Everyone realizes that this is something different. It is also interesting to note that in both clubs, UAW militants have led in organizing and leading the clubs.

The Cleveland Branch of the Workers Party has voted full support to both candidates and members of the party living in the two wards have already thrown themselves vigorously into the two campaigns.

Detroit WP Asks Meeting Permit

Campaign Committee Gets Run-Around as Common Council Stalls Request for Open Air Permit

DETROIT — The Workers Party Campaign Committee has applied for permission to hold two open air meetings per week during the election campaign. Although the Mayor has been recently transformed into a liberal and the President of the Common Council has been a liberal for years, the city ordinance governing the holding of open air meetings is a relic of the past. According to Walter M. Nelson, this ordinance is probably an unconstitutional violation of the rights of free speech. Here is the procedure:

First we file a petition with the City Clerk. He transmits the petition to the Common Council, which considers these requests only once a week on Tuesday nights. If it so

desires, it transmits the request to the local police precinct, which investigates. The local police department transmits its findings back to the Common Council, which thereupon acts upon the request. This action is reported to the Mayor, who may or may not veto the action of the Council. If one has jumped all these hurdles and if the election campaign is not over by that time, one may go ahead with the open air rally. This procedure, however, is only for those without political "pull." If you have an "in" because of your noble services to the political machines which run the town, you may simply laugh it off. Our petition was handed in on August 19, but the Common Council, which

was supposed to meet that night, had decided to call off the meeting.

After learning of this red-tape procedure, we sent a letter in protest to George Edwards, president of the Council. He is probably a very busy man, for we have not received a reply up to now.

The PAC radio handbook informs us that all radio stations are supposed to furnish free radio time as a public service on public issues. It says: "Every station, when it obtains its license, commits itself to provide freedom of speech on the radio. If the station presents a public issue, that station is obliged to present all sides of that issue fairly and without bias. However, in many controversial issues, one side might be rich

and the opposing side poor. Then only the rich man's side would be presented to the public. That obviously would not be to the 'public interest.' For this reason, fairness requires that on all vital public issues a non-profit organization get free time on the radio to refute arguments presented by opponents."

It sounded logical, so we wrote to all the radio stations in this area requesting free time. So far, we received one reply: WJR (the Goodwill Station, Inc.) says that we can buy radio time on the same terms as anyone else. It is good to know that we, the poor people referred to above, don't have to pay any more to get on the radio than the politicians supported by rich capitalists.

Long lines formed in front of banks throughout the nation on Tuesday, September 2, as veterans rushed to cash in their terminal leave bonds despite repeated government pleas to the contrary. Questioned by reporters, veteran after veteran asserted that inflated prices compelled them to seek cash in order to pay bills and meet the staggering cost of living. Many added that what little savings they had managed to accumulate had been wiped out in the effort to keep abreast of living costs.

Generally they reported that their immediate need was so urgent as to leave them no alternative, regardless of the presumably attractive interest rate which is the government's chief talking point for retention of the bonds. Some said that, given

the price spiral, they had no confidence in the bonds being worth anything five years from now, despite accumulated interest.

One day earlier, in a Labor Day address, Philip Murray, president of the CIO, declared that the mass of working men and women "are being squeezed economically and pushed around politically."

Minneapolis People Seek Rent Freeze

Special to Labor Action

MINNEAPOLIS, Aug. 29 — As in every large city in the United States, the terrible problem of housing exists in Minneapolis, too. And, as everywhere, the lack of sufficient new dwellings priced within the means of the average earner is the main cause. The failure of government on a federal, state and local scale to initiate a building program commensurate with the crying need is evident to all.

There are additional factors that have contributed to the housing shortage in Minneapolis. One of these is the population growth in tens of thousands since the outbreak of World War II until the present time. Another is the returned veterans who have formed many more thousands of new family units and whose needs are especially severe since these new family units contain infants and babies and small children. A third factor is the deterioration of dwellings which fall from an already sub-standard condition into disuse because they are unfit, unsafe

(Continued on page 2)

and undermining its rights. William Green, president of AFL, speaking on the same day also linked the problems of reversing the price trend and upsetting the Taft-Hartley law. Green laid down a labor platform for 1948, listing five principal planks:

1. Action to reduce "exorbitant prices."
2. Sound measures to maintain full year-around employment at wages commensurate with decent American standards of living.
3. Enactment of a broad housing program.
4. Increasing the present 40-cent minimum wage law, "an economic blight upon our nation."
5. Strengthen and improve social security laws.

Thus, it is noteworthy that both Green and Murray found it necessary to bracket the price situation and the Taft-Hartley law. It is a sign that even the labor officialdom

(Cont. on page 3, edit. col.)

NEWS AND VIEWS FROM THE LABOR FRONT

Demand Rent Freeze In Minneapolis - -

(Continued from page 1) and unrepairable. One can go on and on.

As a consequence, families have been compelled to double up, triple up and even quadruple up in dwellings originally constructed for single family occupancy.

RAISED RENT SPECTER

In addition to the crucial shortage of houses (a shortage which the Mayor of Minneapolis tabulates at 25,000), the federal decontrol measure of July has raised the specter of increased rents and evictions for the already harassed tenants of this city.

He pointed the finger of responsibility at a heartless and reactionary Congress, home state Senator Ball and Congressman McKinnon of Minnesota, who had voted for the removal of federal rent controls.

measures, Humphrey concluded his radio speech by fervently promising to do SOMETHING about rent control.

A week ago in front of an audience of 500 thronged in a special Council committee hearing, Humphrey spoke in support of SOMETHING just as he had promised. It was an ordinance "Regulating hotel rents and prescribing the length of time for the termination of all tenancies in the city of Minneapolis."

Boiled down to essentials, the Mayor's proposed ordinance embodied two ideas. One, to allow an immediate 15 per cent increase in hotel rentals; two, to extend the time limit for evictions from 30 to 90 days.

DEMAND RENT FREEZING

Between the interval of the two hearings, the Minneapolis branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People released a communication from its newly organized Rent Control Committee.

to get to the microphone. Among those speaking against the landlords was Grace Carlson of the Minneapolis branch of the SWP. She insisted that no landlord was being forced to remain a landlord; that if any were losing their investments because of rent control, there was no law preventing them from disposing of their properties.

The following Tuesday evening a record crowd, estimated by the daily papers at 700, jammed the Council chambers and overflowed into the hallway, where loudspeakers had been set up in advance so that the proceedings could be heard by all.

On the other side of the "barricades" were the landlords, hotel keepers and the real estate organizations and their attorneys. The meeting lasted until 11 o'clock that night with both sides given equal time for speaking.

Gigantic Combines, Gigantic Profits

A Survey of the Petroleum Industry

By JOHN DILLON

On the present-day checkerboard of international power politics, in this period of mutual distrust, carefully planned and premeditated ill-feeling between empires, nations and peoples, we find petroleum put to a use which must have been but vaguely foreseen when Billy Smith and Edwin L. Drake drilled the first oil well to prove its commercial value in 1859.

Petroleum, the raw material source of high octane aviation gasoline, standard motor fuel, fuel for diesel motors and the source of essential lubricating oils, has proved to be the number one crowned checker for outright economic control by monopoly-capitalism in the United States over the lesser, second-rate "sovereign" states of the world.

The petroleum industry, needless to mention, is an extremely large one. The corporations have piled up tremendous assets, both financially and in plants and properties. Of the one hundred largest industrial corporations in the United States in 1946, eighteen were oil companies.

WHO PULLS THE STRINGS IN THIS INDUSTRY?

Who pulls the strings in this industry? Not the small town banker, lawyer, doctor, dentist or the over-emphasized horde of widows and orphans whose money is willingly accepted by the captains of industry. They may own stock in these corporations, voting stock if fortunate; otherwise they just go along for the ride and put their trust in the more attentive owners of larger blocks of stock and hope that they will receive a worthwhile dividend each year to justify their investment in "free enterprise."

The public does not meet these corporations on such personal terms as "a Mellon company," "a Morgan company" or as "a Royal Dutch-Shell subsidiary." To the public, petroleum means merely the corporate name which appears over their local gas station. Of the more powerful corporations, the following are here presented to show the acquisitive powers of the petroleum industry and of monopoly-capitalism as a whole.

For Minneapolis the rent control issue cannot remain a dormant one. It contains unfathomed and perhaps explosive possibilities.

Sales Tax Shows Face of Maryland "Friend of Labor"

BALTIMORE — Announcement of large returns from the first month's use of the sales tax in Maryland has reminded the workers of the state that Governor Lane turned out to be a very poor "friend of labor."

Governor Lane was elected with the endorsement and campaign help of most of organized labor. CIO-PAC endorsed him, though he was embarrassed by the endorsement. Thomas Healey of the Teamsters Union in Baltimore headed a labor committee that supported him.

Nothing was said about the sales tax, of course, during Lane's campaign, since it is the kind of tax that soaks the working man far out of proportion to his ability to pay. In spite of that, it was one of the first measures pushed through the last Legislature.

Many workers say they learned their lesson on Lane, but it seems that they only mean that they won't support Lane any more. They still haven't learned their lesson that neither a Democrat nor a Republican will look after the interests of anyone except big business. Since Lane was elected, organized labor in Baltimore has supported two Democrats, D'Alesandro for Mayor of Baltimore and Garmatz for Congress. We may expect that these two will eventually slap labor in the face by anti-labor and pro-big business acts, proving again that capitalist candidates have no use for labor except to vote them into office.

West Coast News Items

SAN FRANCISCO, Aug. 29—The Luckenbach Steamship Company has answered the seven-week strike of the longshore walking bosses, members of the CIO Longshoremen's Union, with a new type of lockout. They have announced that they are discontinuing "stevedoring operations" in the San Francisco area. Independent companies will be given all of the company's loading work. The union has announced that it will continue picketing the Luckenbach ships, despite the bosses' threats of invoking provisions of the Taft-Hartley Act and similar California legislation against "secondary boycotts."

Despite the fact that the arbitration proceedings had decided that the walking bosses are not to be considered foremen under the terms of the Taft-Hartley Act, there is little doubt that the Luckenbach action is part of a well-planned campaign by the shipowners to drive a wedge into the ranks of the union. A group of independent stevedore outfits in Los Angeles have already announced that they will not even negotiate with their walking bosses unless they leave the longshoremen's union.

San Francisco newspapers this week carried headlines exclaiming that the fight against higher prices was still alive. A group of mothers, accompanied by their children and large placards appeared en masse at a hearing of the Bureau of Milk Control to discuss a proposed increase in milk prices.

A new "third party" has been formally started in California. Called the "Independent Progressive Party of California," the new group was launched at a conference of many labor unions and other groups in Los Angeles last week. Its officially stated aim is to become a West Coast edition of New York's American Labor Party. The program starts with the statement that the founding group is "determined to continue the fight for progress in the tradition of Franklin D. Roosevelt," and then lists a series of vague general demands for all things good and against all things bad.

They are obvious attempts at channelizing the growing sentiment for independent labor politics, revealed in the recent Oakland elections. It is imperative that trade unionists wake up mighty soon and realize that those behind both groups, whether Stalinist or liberal in complexion, are striving to keep the growing resentment against capitalist politics in safe, capitalist bounds. California is more than ripe for a genuine, independent Labor Party.

The retail meat dealers of San Francisco and some nearby areas are trying to scuttle the gains made by the AFL Butchers Union, Local 115, in their long strike just a few months ago. Led by the giant Safeway chain, the retailers are asking that shifts be changed to eliminate the overtime pay for Monday work, most significant gain of the strike. The union is demanding a continuation of the present contract and is all prepared for another strike to enforce that demand.

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: International Fellowship House, 21 West Preston St., 2nd floor.
BUFFALO: 639 Main St., 2nd floor.
CHICAGO: 1501 W. Madison Ave., 2nd floor.
CLEVELAND: W.P. Branch meets Sundays, 8 p.m. in Room 4, Slovenian Hall, 6409 St. Clair Ave.
DETROIT: Election rally: Friday, September 12, 8 p.m., at Venetian Hall.
LOS ANGELES: 3214 So. Grand, Los Angeles 7, Cal.
LOUISVILLE: Write to: Robert Durant, Box 1181, Louisville, Ky.
NEWARK: 248 Market St., Newark 2.
NEW YORK CITY: CITY CENTER: 114 West 14th St., 3rd floor.
SEATTLE: Write to: P. O. Box 29, University Post Office.
YOUNGSTOWN: Write to J. P. Walters, Box 605.

- p. m., at Wilkins Hall, 1330 Wilkins Ave., Bronx.
HARLEM BRANCH: Wednesday, 8:15 p.m., at the Workers Party headquarters, 2143 Seventh Ave.
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 City Center, 114 West 14th St.
BKLYN-DOWNTOWN BRANCH: Thursday, 8:15 p.m., at the Workers Party headquarters, 276 Fulton St., Brooklyn, 2nd floor.
BKLYN-BROWNSVILLE BRANCH: Wednesday, 8:15 p.m., at the De Luxe Palace, 538 Howard Ave.
SOCIALIST YOUTH LEAGUE: Friday, 8:15 p.m., at the Workers Party headquarters, 276 Fulton St., Brooklyn, 2nd floor.
SOCIALIST YOUTH LEAGUE Manhattan Unit: Meets every Monday at 8:00 p.m. at City Center, 114 West 14th Street.
Brooklyn Unit: For more information write to Socialist Youth League, 4 Court Square, Long Island City 1, N. Y.
PHILADELPHIA: 1133 West Gerard Ave., 3rd floor. Meetings Wednesdays at 8 p.m. Forums every Friday, 8:15 p.m.
READING: Write to P. O. Box 1671.
ST. LOUIS: Write to: Douglas Bridge, 6517 Corbitt Ave., University City 14, Mo.
SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA: Write to: Labor Action, 466 Tenth St., Room 206 Oakland 7, Calif.
SEATTLE: Write to: P. O. Box 29, University Post Office.
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On the Standard empire, "the sun never sets." As of December 31, 1945, the corporation owned or leased an aggregate acreage of the earth's surface to a total of 40,469,100 acres, of which 21,709,000 acres were in the Standard Oil Company are the Humble Pipe Line Co., with 7,939 miles of pipe; Interstate Oil Pipe Line Co., Transit & Storage Co., Tuscarora Oil Co., Ltd., and the Plantation Pipe Line Co.
Number one competitor of Standard Oil in the world market is the ROYAL DUTCH-SHELL COMBINE. The U. S. subsidiary of this combine is the Shell Oil Company, Inc., which although incorporated in the state of Delaware in 1922, is controlled through other Royal Dutch-Shell subsidiaries set up in England and The Netherlands. In 1929 the corporation acquired the New Orleans Refining Company, Inc., and the New England Oil Refining Co. In 1938 the Wolverine Petroleum Corporation was acquired. The directors of Shell Oil as a group combine interests in both the U. S. and England. Such as: Gayer B. Dominick, one of the top U. S. investment bankers (Dominick & Dominick); James H. Doolittle of New York, well known AAF general whose bombing command took a punitive interest in foreign oil refineries; J. C. Hunsaker of Cambridge, Mass., a famous Massachusetts Institute of Technology scientist and head of the National Advisory Committee on Aeronautics. The president of the company and also a director is J. C. van Eck of London, England. Other directors in England are Sir Frederick Godber, G. Leigh-Jones and J. B. A. Kessler. As Shell Oil Co. is a foreign owned corporation, it is not allowed to operate tankers in coastwise service. Therefore it must depend on pipelines for long hauls of crude and refined oil. The company has 23.3 per cent interest in Planta-

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Editorials

A Labor Offensive--

(Continued from page 1)

which has tried to fragment labor's battle by seeking to deal with its problems piece-meal now sees the necessity of joining the issue on multiple fronts of labor interest simultaneously. It is also proof that a comprehensive program which transcends the traditional limits of trade unionism, and which embraces a wide circle of problems, is urgently needed.

Murray and Green both recognized this... in part! Both stressed, above all else, the necessity of political action in countering the price rise and the Taft-Hartley law. But what they said, and the manner in which they said it, offers little encouragement for labor, and indicates once more that pressure for the kind of labor offensive which alone is capable of meeting the situation will have to come from the ranks.

It is progress for the likes of a Bill Green to see the utmost importance of political action. But when Green couples that call with a declaration that political action must take the place of strikes, and further explains that what he means by political action is another ride on the endless merry-go-round of supporting "friendly" capitalist politicians, he strips his remarks of whatever militancy might mistakenly be read into them.

There is no contradiction between strikes and political action, except in Bill Green's head. It is true that labor cannot everywhere and at all times go on forever with strike actions aimed solely at a wage increase which is promptly wiped out by price increases. But all that means is that the strike demands have to be organized, and so integrated with other forms of struggle, notably political struggle, as to prevent what has been happening.

We won't presume to say here that this situation or that one is ready for strike actions! We assume that the labor leaders, and the ranks in the unions know that better than we do. All we do say is that the strike is, and must remain, a major weapon of class struggle, the Taft-Hartley Act notwithstanding. In fact, to rule out strikes is to yield victory to the framers of the hateful law, for it was largely aimed at crippling this most elementary and essential of labor weapons.

Moreover, there is at least one type of strike action, which can be judged independent of the situation in any union or industry, a type of strike action which, in the circumstances, can be specially designed to serve the political purpose of declaring labor's stand and mood... namely, a 24-hour general protest strike. Murray, Green and other labor officials speak of labor's resentment, labor's determination not to let the Taft-Hartley law remain operative, labor's insistence that something be done to turn the price spiral downwards. Just as a national protest before passage of the Taft-Hartley law would have served as a warning against enactment of the law, so would such a demonstration today serve notice of labor's fighting intentions. And with various moves already afoot in Congress to repeal the Act, it would have a tremendous effect.

This is a time that requires an unequivocal declaration that labor will tolerate no invasion of its rights, and no attack on its standards of living. We speak of a declaration of defiance, something more than a Labor Day address, in which there is bold talk but little direction. Murray and Green speak of prices and profits and wages. They recognize that more than ordinary wage demands are required. Very true! At its last national convention the CIO went on record as favoring wage increases without price increases. This has in no way been concretized on a national scale, and the situation grows daily worse, as witness the testimony of the veterans. We think it inescapable that the cry must rise in the unions for implementation of the union's stand. As we have a thousand times stated in LABOR ACTION, the program of the General Motors strikers in the winter of 1946 FOR A WAGE INCREASE WITHOUT PRICE INCREASES, remains the core of any wage-price program, along with such necessary measures as consumer-trade union action to halt and reverse the price trend.

With that, too, we see the necessity of a general union offensive in which the ranks play a leading part. We have said that labor is faced with a situation that cannot be left entirely in the hands of the union officials. Nor can it be properly handled by individual unions, however militant and well-led they may severally be. The very linking of prices with the Taft-Hartley law establishes the need of a broad strategy, involving all sections of the labor movement, AFL, CIO and independent, a strategy worked out and directed by democratically elected joint union boards on a national and local scale.

There is nothing one can object to in the five-point program listed by Green, although there are many vital things omitted from it, such as a guaranteed annual wage. Green, however, did not indicate how his program was to be effected, except through the vague generalization of going to the polls. A common strategy, a coordinated direction of this strategy, with full rank and file participation, are essential methods of implementation in our opinion.

Getting back to political action, Murray and Green state a need, and then "cleanse" it of all meaning. More than anything else, we read in the price rise, passage of the Taft-Hartley law, and so forth, the necessity of independent labor action. But that phrase has no meaning whatsoever, at least no meaning of value to labor, if it is interpreted to mean the tawdry "independence" of voting for capitalist candidates who, have not in the last few weeks broken any strikes. That "independence" the capitalist politicians are always ready to grant, and even to invite. It will, however, get us nowhere. It will, indeed, leave us in the swamp

of voting for one set of scoundrels against another because the first set deemed it politically expedient to vote against the Taft-Hartley law.

Prices, anti-labor laws, various assaults on labor's standard of living and political and organizational rights... these dictate the need of a labor offensive! That offensive can best be mounted under the banner of an INDEPENDENT LABOR PARTY that will challenge the profiteers with a political class instrument of labor, fighting to replace the rottenness of capitalist government with social health of a workers' government. It is a conclusion absent from the Labor Day addresses of Green and Murray. But is a conclusion that should force itself on labor's consciousness with each passing day.

The Elections In Hungary

The Hungarian elections should dispel any illusions radical and socialist workers might have concerning Stalinist rule in Europe. Under the defensive wing of the Russian army and GPU the native Stalinists conducted an election that puts to shame any of the famous municipal political machines in this country.

The election in Hungary was a gross farce in which the forms of an election were adhered to but nothing more. The Stalinist gang in power, although it does not even command the support of the majority of the workers, let alone the rest of the people, utilized its police powers to guarantee an electoral victory of its bloc, and this it did through terror and the "legal" disfranchisement of almost two million voters, certain that if anything went wrong, the Russians would soon avenge matters.

Already the Russian chairman of the Allied Control Commission for Hungary has summoned Socialist party leaders to confer with him on their threat to withdraw from the Stalinist-dominated coalition. The Social Democratic Executive Committee, highly resentful over the disfranchisement of 1,860,000 of their members and voters, Stalinist "repeater" votes, decided by eleven to two to issue an ultimatum to the Stalinists demanding the Ministries of Justice and Interior, as well as other posts; and that the present Minister of Interior, the Stalinist Laszlo Rajk, be dropped from the government. No sooner had the Social Democratic executive voted this decision when they were all called up by Lieut. Gen. Sviridov to explain themselves. The general will tell them what to do.

There are some workers and socialists, and some calling themselves Trotskyists, who think we are too much exercised by democratic questions. They are always ready to point out that democracy is a bourgeois prejudice, and assert that it is impossible to go against the tide in the Stalinist dominated countries. Granted there are excesses, say these people, one must not become lost in secondary issues, such as democracy, but see the broader social implications in the struggle. And by some "sleight-of-hand" thinking and theorizing the Stalinist lands are pictured as something economically and socially progressive to which all democratic rights must be subordinated.

Unfortunately such people do not begin to understand the meaning of democracy and the revolutionary socialist attitude toward it. We are the best democrats, Lenin was always fond of saying. Our opposition to bourgeois democracy is not that it is evil, but that it is not democratic enough; that democracy in bourgeois society is always incomplete and that under the guise of democracy, the bourgeois establishes its own dictatorial rule.

This "radical" thinking on the part of those above-named would make it appear as if socialism and democracy are mutually exclusive forms of social existence. On the contrary, socialism will provide the greatest possible democratic existence for all the people. Democratic existence means the fullest realization of free speech, free press, free assembly and free thought—conditions which are never and can never be fully realized in a class society. When the bourgeoisie boasts of their democracy, they are rank hypocrites, whose understanding of democracy hardly goes beyond their own freedom to profit off the labor of others. When the Stalinists say they achieve the most "democratic" of all governments they are totalitarian liars.

Revolutionary socialists fight for democracy as a means of fighting for socialism. The fight for socialism under the conditions of totalitarianism and police terror is a thousand times more difficult. That is why the fight against Stalinism is an indispensable requisite in the struggle for socialism. Those who find "mitigating" circumstances in the Stalinist coup in Hungary, need to relearn their Marxist, socialist lessons. There is nothing, absolutely nothing, in the Stalinist regime in Hungary that merits the support of revolutionary socialists. On the contrary, everything that has been happening in that country since the Stalinist coup, and everything that has happened in the election point to the need of a never-ending vigilant democratic socialist struggle against this totalitarian scourge in the ranks of the working class.

Hollywood's "The Hucksters" Will Not Upset the World

By IRVING HOWE

In Hollywood's eyes, "The Hucksters" is a bold, even a crusading movie: it dares to ridicule advertising. And in America advertising, like George Washington, free enterprise and Mother, is sacred.

"The Hucksters" tells the story of an advertising copy writer (Clark Gable) just out of the army who hits it lucky with his boss' 10 million dollar yearly account, Evans Beatee Soap. The copy writer has an occasional attack of conscience, especially when he has to do some dirty work for the eccentric Evans (Sidney Greenstreet); he is horrified by Evans' statement that the basis of advertising is to irritate people into remembering a firm's name. And at the very peak of his success our copy writer denounces Evans as a tyrant and walks out on a \$35,000 a year job. In the meantime the usual romantic complications: love, etc. (in this case, a lot of etc.) with the beautiful English actress, Deborah Kerr, who reminds one of a well-tailored glass of iced tea.

Obviously then we have a Hollywood sermon against "bad" advertising and a plea for creative honesty; like Sherwood Anderson, who once walked out of an advertising chain gang to become a fine and honest writer, Clark Gable too is going to defy the powers that be and assert his integrity. Good.

But yet... not so good. To understand "The Hucksters" one must dig beneath the surface of its story; one cannot ignore that surface for it is very important, but one must correlate it with the inner, often unconscious meaning of the film. In all movies there is a distinction between real and formal meaning. A picture presumably preaching a moral view of sex may, in terms of the major visual-emotional image which it imparts to the spectator in the theater's darkness, actually project the most lascivious and lecherous attitude to sex. A picture presumably preaching a sermon against gangsterism may actually project fascination with violence. In no art form is there so wide a discrepancy between stated intention and the total image of the finished work, between conscious subject matter and the far more powerful, unconsciously developed content. And so it is with "The Hucksters."

THE INEVITABLE MR. GABLE

First Mr. Gable. Unlike the sweet and slender Tyrone Power, Gable represents, for Hollywood, unambiguous male aggressiveness. He is the modern version of the caveman: what the poor old Neanderthal roughneck did by breaking the woman in his hairy arms, Gable does by a combination of a flick of the eyebrows and a slightly smirking leer. He is a sexual storm trooper who doesn't have to use his club—so omnipotent is his organic force. To relapse into the language of copywriting, he is irresistible. When the icy Miss Kerr, who seems competent to resist any other man, is beckoned by Gable to come with him, she slips into his cab like an obedient child. (Of course, she does resist "the ultimate act," but that is because there is one Hollywood power which supersedes Clark Gable: the censor's office; and because her resistance, easy in the certain knowledge that she will succumb in the end, further titillates the audience in the meantime. (We love to be teased by Hollywood; or at least we have been taught to love to be teased by Hollywood.)

So we find an apparently discordant and inharmonious theme in the picture's development: a theme unavoidable in any film where Clark Gable appears and is allowed to play his usual role of Clark Gable. For the film's presumed theme of the copywriter's struggle for independence, his struggle to free himself from the domination of big business, is cut to ribbons by its actual development of the theme of Clark Gable as the sexual conqueror. Of what significance is the formal idea to the moviegoer when he is experiencing

the delights of vicarious conquest by the irresistible Mr. Gable?

NOT AN ATTACK

If we probe a little further we find that, far from attacking advertising, the film actually defends it. (There are, it should be said, a few very funny radio commercials and a fine bit of burlesque by Keenan Wynn; but these are marginal to the movie's actual development.) The idealistic copywriter, as played by Gable, is anything but idealistic; Gable always subordinates the role which he is supposed to be playing at the moment to the habitually calculating and shrewd role which he always plays. The predominant thread of his characterization is that of the advertising man who commits ruthless acts in order to get ahead. Almost nothing of the idealistic and troubled young man comes through. Gable's innate vulgarity fits the outer half, the active half, of the character; the rest, a vestigial remnant of the book, is of little interest to Hollywood anyway.

One cannot accept as genuine—and I am certain that this is the aspect which makes the LEAST impression on the movie goer—Gable's rejection of \$35,000 a year because he wants to maintain his integrity. What integrity? Nowhere in the film is there any realized projection of the values which he wants to save at the last minute. Gable, and for that matter Hollywood, is unable to develop in "living and believable terms the idealistic young writer's rebellion against advertising corrup-

tion; what it actually "puts across" is the copy writer elbowing aside ethical considerations so that he too can have a penthouse with beautiful furniture and a beautiful wife to put into it.

The shallowness of the anti-advertising theme and its actual transformation into a pro-advertising theme gains its final confirmation in Sidney Greenstreet's big business man. As Greenstreet plays him with low comic effects, the business man is an eccentric, a queer, an arbitrary tyrant who does illogical and vulgar things. Few real soap manufacturers will recognize Greenstreet as a portrait of themselves as either an individual or a type. By making the soap manufacturer an oddity, the film implicitly absolves all the quite normal and staid soap manufacturers. In the movies a business man is always honest, sincere, straightforward, a "man of distinction," and slightly rugged; a go-getter and a straight shooter. If that sort of character, a good family man and a member of the Elks were portrayed as a petty tyrant, then the impact of the film would be tremendous. But so long as he is merely Greenstreet's burlesque oddity, he stirs no unorthodox reactions and we are certain the soap industry won't protest. The "attack on advertising" is merely a little mild fun; the emotional content and psychological implications of the film are fully favorable to Beatee Soap and all of its equivalents. The world has not been set on its ear, it has not even been made a little uncomfortable.

THE INTELLECTUAL LIFE IN STALINIST RUSSIA

Life in Stalinist Russia may be comfortable for prison wardens and bureaucrats, but it is mighty uncomfortable for most other people. This must surely be the conclusion to which Georgi Alexandrov has come.

For ten years Alexandrov served as propaganda head of the Stalinist party. For ten years he was in charge of dispensing that combination of lies, fabrications, distortions and nonsense which passes as history and sociology in the Stalinist state. As the Goebbels of Russia he was in charge of one of the most powerful and venal machines for the mass propagation of misinformation that the world has ever seen.

And for a long time it seemed as if his services were not going unrewarded. He wrote a "history of Western philosophy" (no less!) for which the Stalinist state awarded him a prize of 100,000 rubles. Surely it would seem, no living soul could have been more pliant to the dictates of the Kremlin bureaucracy; no one else could have better shifted with the fluctuations in the "party line."

But alas for Alexandrov, he too has been discovered as a sinner. The very "history of Western philosophy" which only recently won the 100,000 rubles has recently been attacked and denounced through the length and breadth of the Stalinist land—that is from the prison camps in the Arctic to the prison camps in the Asiatic wastes.

A convocation of 84 Stalinist theoreticians and philosophers was called in Moscow which sat in session for four days to pass on Alexandrov's... heresies. The very one who had denounced thousands of poor devils for heresies, was now himself found to be guilty of deviations.

And what deviations! The assembled philosophical dignitaries resolved that Alexandrov's "history of Western philosophy" would "lead to objectivism, servility to bourgeois philosophers, exaggeration of their services and the elimination of the fighting, aggressive spirit from our philosophy." After such deviations, you may be sure that brother Alexandrov's goose is cooked.

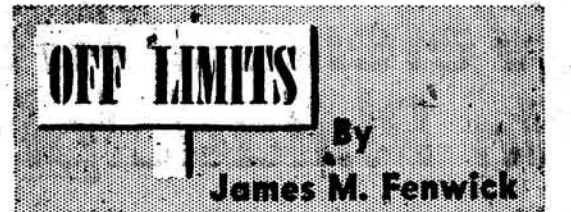
What provoked these awesome charges was a section of Alexandrov's book which stated that Marxism was the product of an evolutionary development with its roots in previous bourgeois thought, rather than a piece of spontaneous inspiration. For this platitudinous but accurate statement, Alexandrov was hailed before the 84-man Inquisition.

But that is not yet the end. If the author of the "history" is guilty, what of all those who praised his book? What of all those who hailed it as a "masterpiece" and a "brilliant work"? That is, what of the very same souls who denounced Alexandrov?

Stalin is an expert at this sort of thing; few rulers in history have been more skilled at making his flunkies humiliate each other. He sent a policeman named Andrei Zhdanov, one of his trusted brutalitarians, to the philosophers' convocation. Zhdanov, a character not noted for genteel manners, bluntly remarked that the very philosophers now denouncing Alexandrov had previously praised him; he declared that "other philosophers apparently share Alexandrov's mistakes, and this indicates serious trouble on our theoretical front."

That phrase "serious trouble" is a precious gem of understatement, as the unfortunate wretches who pass as "philosophers" in Stalinland undoubtedly realize.

And that is the intellectual life of Stalinist Russia.



WHAT'S HAPPENED TO THE LEGION?

Somewhere between holding spectacular crap games in the men's room, listening to Eisenhower saw away on his one-stringed fiddle, squirting girls' legs with water pistols, and gearing themselves up into a fine sodden stupor, the American Legion boys at their recent convention in New York City managed to take a stand on a few national issues.

But something seemed to be lacking. It's not only, as some of the newspapers suggested, that the boys are a little beeper, a little shorter in the wind, and that the hormones now course more quietly through their blood streams. All that is true, of course, since Time impartially lays his restraining hand upon legionnaire and intelligent person alike. It's something more.

A careful reading of the proceedings of the convention shows what it is. The American Legion went on record favoring the following: the Marshall plan; UMT; strengthening national defense; retention of atomic secrets; the stockpiling of atomic bombs and other armaments; the outlawing of the Communist Party; the defeat of the Wagner-Taft-Ellender veterans' housing bill; and the defeat of the Stratton bill providing for the admission of 400,000 DPs over existing quotas.

What is obvious is that, temporarily at least, the Legion is in danger of losing its position as one of the leading reactionary forces on the United States scene. In point of fact, with the exception of the proposal to outlaw the Communist Party, the Legion's program is for all practical purposes the one under which the government itself is operating. That is an index of how far to the right the government has moved since V-E Day.

Congress and the State Department, in short, have stolen the act. If they haven't yet taken to dropping bags of water from the Senate gallery or to pressing electrically-charged suitcases against the posteriors of the female members of Congress it is only, we are convinced, that a good three-fourths of them haven't got the talent for it.

But as for the Legion, its present fate can be summed up with classic finality in Groucho Marx's statement: Time wounds all heels.

AN EDITORIAL

It Is Still the Same Old Legion

The twenty-ninth annual convention of the American Legion has just ended its sessions in New York City. As is usual with a Legion convention, the press overplayed the sidelights, the rowdism of the middle-aged Legionnaires who take time out once a year to go on a binge. This convention had its share of it, but it is only a side-light.

More important, however, was the convention itself which gave a display of the kind of minds that run the Legion. An organization of 3,500,000 members is bound to exhibit in one form or another a cross section of the nation's opinions and interests. There is no doubt that the Legion reflects this in its mass membership; it even has a labor faction which fights the policies of its leadership.

But the convention reaffirmed very firmly that the American Legion is a big business organization. The groups which dominate the organization and its conventions are themselves composed of businessmen who are conservative and starkly reactionary. Although there are tens of thousands of veterans of World War II in its ranks, these young members have little or nothing to say about the affairs of the Legion, which remains in complete control of the "old guard."

Militantly anti-labor, the Legion again demonstrated that its antipathies run strongly against anything which, in its opinion, has a progressive tone. The convention met in the midst of an alarming world situation in which the threat of a Third World War is persistently evident in the post-war relations between the big powers. It was not unexpected therefore that the convention would exhibit the strong militaristic bias of the Legion.

The Legion is preparing a crusade against "world communism" and has called for outlawing the Communist Party of the U. S. It proposes an amendment to the Bill of Rights which would take the citizenship away from any American who would change "this form of government." Since the Bill of Rights grants the people the right to change their government if they see fit, the Legion would change the Bill. In the speeches and proposals which came on the floor of the convention there could be discerned the seeds of totalitarianism which ride strong in the top layers of the reactionary leadership of the Legion—a totalitarian bias with a strong desire to repeat the days of the "Red Raids" of the Palmer days.

When the Legion leaders talk about "anti-communism" they mean not only the Stalinist Party in this country, but every progressive, radical and socialist movement, including the labor movement itself.

Another measure of the completely reactionary character of the Legion is the stand it took on housing, wherein it opposed even the Wagner-Taft-Ellender housing bill which is about as lukewarm a housing bill as can be produced in this Congress. The Legion took the position that the bill would only put the government in the housing business. Instead they voted to leave housing in the hands of the several states and localities and to the judgment of "free enterprise." It sounded as though the real estate and landlord lobbies were running the convention at that point, and we have no doubt that real estate interests ran large at the convention.

Thus ended another war-mongering, anti-labor convention of the American Legion.

THE NEW INTERNATIONAL

You can still get copies of the August issue containing material on the latest developments on the unity negotiations between the Workers Party and the Socialist Workers Party.

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Terror, Fraud in Hungary--

(Continued from page 1)

tion this party would have had a far larger vote.

Having utilized the Social Democrats, the Stalinists proceeded to cut their throats. The Social Democrats complained that the Stalinists applied the same terroristic methods to their campaign meetings as to the meetings of the opposition groups!

Now, when it makes little difference they have resigned from the Cabinet in protest against election abuses. But it is too late: the horse has already been stolen and it makes no difference whether the barn door is shut or open. We may expect that the Stalinists, having no further use for the Social Democrats, will now slice them to ribbons.

The Stalinist-controlled regime will of course remain in power even though it does not represent a majority of the population. The elections were so arranged that the Stalinists, Social Democrats, Small Landowners and National Peasants Par-

ties formed a bloc, which will now control the Hungarian Parliament and will of course be under Stalinist domination.

LACK POPULAR SUPPORT

In Hungary we see a classic manifestation of the fact that wherever the Stalinists push their way into power in eastern Europe they do so against the will and without the support of the masses of people of those countries. Since Hungary is not yet as far down the road of totalitarianization as Bulgaria and Yugoslavia, the presence of this discontent is more readily observable.

What is tragic, however, is that Hungarian peasants and workers turn to the bourgeois and Catholic groups because they mistakenly identify Stalinism with Communism and reject the latter because of the former's terrorism. This is a concrete instance of the way in which the Stalinist movement drives people into the ranks of bourgeois parties.

For Hungary and it spöple there is no freedom. Squeezed in between the two great imperialist power blocs, all of its parties are to one extent or another agents of those blocs. These parties, serving either Anglo-American or Stalinist imperialism, make a mockery of Hungarian independence; they sell their little country to one or another imperialist bidder. And from this conflict the people can only reap misery and hunger.

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Veterans Are Victims of "Chain Reaction" In Philadelphia's Growing Housing Crisis

By JACK RADER, Workers Party candidate for Philadelphia City Council, 5th District.

PHILADELPHIA—The only serious result of the hearings conducted by the City Rent Commission under Judge McDevitt, has been to prove how overwhelming is the housing crisis. What was merely statistical knowledge before to the City Hall, is now the steady parade of 150 to 200 tenants every single day pleading for the right to continue to occupy their homes.

Veterans, forced to buy homes because there are none for rent, are in turn forced to evict their present tenants. This process has been going on for almost two years. Today it has become a "chain reaction."

A veteran buys a home. His landlord, who is also a veteran, has warned him that he now needs a place to live. This second veteran therefore serves an eviction notice on the first veteran who, in turn, seeks to evict the tenant of the house he just bought. This tenant is then forced to look for a place to live and finding none, if he is a veteran and can scrape the money together, will try to buy a house, at a fantastically inflated price. In desperation he will pay a fantastically inflated price. In desperation he will pay and seek eviction.

WARPS LIVES

Is this a movie script or a nightmare? Yet this is just exactly what the majority of cases before the Commission are about. And there is absolutely no way in which the commission can solve these cases. Who is right and who is wrong? Everyone knows that Philadelphia's politicians are among the most corrupt in the country and they certainly are not Solomons. But not even a Solomon could determine the "just" solution in such cases.

The overwhelming fact is simply

that this capitalist system of free enterprise has failed to provide enough homes. Veterans are evicting each other, not out of greed or desire for profit but in the pitiful scramble for a roof over one's head.

Judge McDevitt has said, after two weeks of insoluble "chain reaction" cases: "There is a critical shortage of low cost housing, especially two story houses and apartments. There's a crying need for places for people with children. This shortage may create families without children."

In short, peoples' lives are being warped and frustrated. Married people are afraid to have children. All because capitalism is incapable of providing homes for all.

NO HOUSING PROGRAM

McDevitt is a leading figure, if not the kingpin, of the local Republican machine. His party is running a complete city slate for the November elections. Mayor Samuel, the present mayor, is a Republican. They have not uttered a single word about a housing program. Literally not one word.

There is no housing program in Philadelphia. There is no public housing at all. During the first five months of this year, 1,329 building permits were issued for new private houses. This is 36 per cent below the 1946 figure. However, it is unlikely that even these will be constructed this year. Judging by last year's figures, out of 4,53 construction permits issued, 1,190 are one-fourth finished by the end of this year.

The prices of these new houses are prohibitive. There is no way of really comparing them to pre-war houses because their quality is inferior. Yet the average price is now \$8,683 with most running between \$9,000 and \$10,000. It is estimated that the maximum an average family can spend is \$5,000 to \$6,000,

that is, if they expect to be able to pay it off.

NEED QUICK ACTION

As against these pitiful drops in the bucket, here are some measures of the need for new housing. Fifty-nine thousand veterans' families alone want new houses. Sixty-five thousand families live doubled up with friends and relatives. Ninety thousand homes are considered sub-standard, requiring major repairs. There are 4,000 homes originally built as "temporary structures" seven years ago. These houses will soon not require a demolition program. They are falling apart daily.

In 1945, the Philadelphia Housing Association estimated that 100,000 new homes would be needed during the first five years after the war. Two years have passed and, while the exact figure is not available, fewer than 10,000 new units have been completed and occupied.

The Workers Party of Philadelphia considers the housing crisis to be a serious emergency requiring immediate action. We demand, as a beginning, the construction of 50,000 new units each year for the next five years. These homes, by the way, should be built at low cost, low-rent community projects. They should be

constructed in accordance with a plan of slum-clearance and rehabilitation of depressed neighborhoods. They should be so built as to give people clean air and sunlight and recreation space in place of the ugly redbrick, tightly squeezed houses into which most workers families must squeeze.

These are not very great demands. Modern technology has developed processes for the creation of comfort. The Workers Party program seeks to utilize some of these modern techniques for the benefit of the majority, the working class, the people at large.

POLITICAL INTEREST GROWING IN GERMANY

By MAX STERLING

PARIS—Revisiting the American zone in Germany, which I last visited some three months ago, I find that not much has changed in the material conditions of the German population. The black market continues to flourish despite the ban on cigarette shipments from America to American civilian and military personnel. The only effect of this ban was to eliminate cigarettes as the principal black market item and to put it in the same class with coffee, chocolate, sugar, saccharine and other choice items. If anything, the black market price for cigarettes, which comes now mainly from the PX, is slightly higher than the days of its unlimited importation. Twelve hundred marks or \$120 at the official rate of exchange is the usual price for a carton of cigarettes. This represents about six times the average monthly wage of the German worker.

In the past three months, interest has heightened in the discussions that are taking place among the occupation powers regarding the future of Germany, its unification and centralization and the increase in the levels of production. No perceptible change seems to have taken place regarding the attitude toward Russia which remains one of fear and suspicion. The German people still continue to rely on the western "democratic" powers to feed them and to inaugurate these changes which will once more re-establish Germany in the "community" of nations. Certainly, no growth is perceptible in any new nationalism against the occupying powers.

MARKED GROWTH IN POLITICAL INTEREST

An interesting development in the recent period is the organization of a women's party which already numbers, I am told, more than 100,000 members. This party which appeals to all women regardless of their politics but which itself has a socialist tinge, campaigns on a platform of immediate demands. Of these, the main ones are equal wages with men for equal work and special conditions of work for women, abolition of laws forbidding abortions and birth control, on the ground that there isn't sufficient food to feed properly children which are already born without

forcing women to bear more children. They demand an increase and enrichment of the present miserable diet and real measures against the black market which victimizes the poor while supplying the rich with everything that they want.

The passivity and lack of interest taken by the youth in politics is slowly receding. More young people are beginning to join the political parties and the youth sections of these parties. The churches too are beginning to attract young people to their youth movements. However, the old parties, the Social-Democratic and Communist parties are looked upon as has-beens. Everywhere, and particularly amongst the youth, there is a great desire for a new party which will have no connection with the bankrupt past of the old ones.

As legal parties cannot arise without a prescribed minimum of adherents, small groups with more attractive programs than the old parties have not been able to come to the surface in competition with the ones that are already established. It is largely for this reason that such groups as the Socialist Workers Party (SWP), the Communist Party (Opposition) also known as the Brandlerites, the Trotskyists and others are now considering the formation of a new legal party to be made up of all of these groups. The formation of this party is certain to assure its rapid growth and will introduce a profound change in the German political party scene.

TROTSKYISTS HOLD NATIONAL CONFERENCE

Recently, the German Trotskyists held a national conference. I am informed it was attended by 30 delegates who came from all the zones with the exception, I think, of the Russian zone. The latter continues to have around it an almost impenetrable wall. The conference and the group were naturally illegal since the numerical strength of the Trotskyists does not come up to the prescribed minimum designated by the occupation authorities. This presents all kinds of material difficulties. Organizers of the group cannot circulate freely, no newspaper and literature can be printed, and no meetings, public or party, can be held openly.

Detroit's Election Campaign

What the Policy Of "Lesser Evil" Means in Detroit

By HERMAN BENSON, Workers Party candidate for Mayor of Detroit

How can CIO leaders think of supporting a politician whom they have denounced for years as anti-union and anti-Negro? Mayor Edward J. Jeffries is such a politician. Plenty of CIO leaders in this city will endorse him for reelection if they can only do it gracefully. If only it were possible to burn the books and to falsify the clear records of the past years!

Good union men and sincere fighters for the democratic rights of Negroes are already enraged by the mere hint of a possible endorsement of Jeffries by the CIO. And I should add, by part of the local Negro press.

An endorsement of Jeffries would be a clear desertion of the political interests of the working people. But such an endorsement would NOT be a departure from the "normal" political policy of the CIO. Not at all. It would simply be a logical result of that policy. The labor movement supports politicians in the two old capitalist parties who are presumably "friendly" to labor. Or at least, if they are not so terribly friendly, they are not quite as "unfriendly" as other capitalist politicians. There might seem to be something wrong here. How can the CIO find itself supporting an enemy of labor as a result of its policy of looking for "friends of labor." But it is all very consistent. Also wrong.

The super-clever, highly "practical" political policy now followed by the labor movement and all its major factions from William Green to Philip Murray, to the Communist Party to Walter Reuther has been often called the "theory of the lesser of two evils." According to this amazingly simple theory, whenever labor is confronted by two capitalist politicians, both of whom have their faults, the clever thing is to support the "lesser" of the two evils. By this shrewd device we are able to defeat the greater of the two evils. Of course, things might turn out badly when our "lesser evil" man goes to work. But this is very cagey statesmanship because things could have been worse, you see.

EVILS, SMALL AND BIG

Such a mode of reasoning kept the workers tied to Roosevelt's apron strings even when he advocated the drafting of all strikers and the militarization of the unions; when he demanded that the workers sacrifice during the war but allowed the rich to grow richer. And this same political policy is leading the labor movement and its leaders with their pinpoint vision to endorse Truman for reelection in 1948. Truman has been denounced as a strike breaker by Phil Murray. He broke the railroad strike by threatening to draft all railroad workers into the army and assigning them to run the trains under military discipline. But you see in line with the marvelously simple policy of "lesser evil" it is better to have a president who breaks one or two strikes than one who would break nine or ten strikes. A part time union wrecker is obviously less dangerous than a full-timer and certainly deserves the active and enthusiastic aid of every good union man. (And the stupid labor leaders will complain about the "apathy" of the workers toward PAC.)

This policy has led the labor movement backwards in a steady appeasement of big business. Isn't it obvious that there can ALWAYS be and will ALWAYS be a lesser and a greater evil among the capitalist politicians. That is part of the simple division of labor among the political representatives of the boss class. The most reactionary wing (the greater evil) demands a foot length retreat by the workers. In self-defense, the union movement supports the less reactionary wing (the lesser evil). As a result, the retreat takes place by inches instead of by feet.

The process is constantly repeated at an always worse level for the workers. The greater evil always becomes greater. The lesser evil becomes more and more evil. First the unions support a "New Deal" Roosevelt. Then they find themselves supporting a "War Deal" Roosevelt who is demanding that the workers give up their gains; finally they reach the point where they are to support a strike-breaker, Truman. Very clever! The final culmination of this policy can only be the triumph of the greatest evil of all, fascism and the destruction of the whole labor movement.

BREAK OUT OF TRAP

If in this parade backwards, the leaders of the CIO and the Negro press begin to mull over the possibility of supporting Jeffries, can we be surprised? It is the bitter fruit of the poisonous plant of class collaboration.

We must break out of this political trap. We do not look for a capitalist friend of labor to run our unions. They must not be allowed to run our political organizations. They must not be allowed to run the government. We need a political declaration of independence. That means: Form an independent Labor Party.

In the Detroit elections there is only one way in which you can express yourself for a program of workingclass independence. In the October 7 primary: Vote for the candidate and program of the Workers Party.

Rader Challenge - -

(Continued from page 1)
the WP to refuse to answer irrelevant questions. He stated: "When proper questions are asked by a proper tribunal we will answer them. I do not admit for a moment the competence of this tribunal."

JUDGE INTERPRETS LAW

The chief technical charge against the nomination presented by the Democrats is that the same person signed the affidavit on each of the 23 pages of the petition. The viciousness of the charge, if upheld, could disbar any labor or minority political group from appearing on the ballot. This was made clear by M. Witkin, chairman of the commission, who interpreted this section of the law as to require "personal acquaintanceship" of the affidavit signer with each of the 1,200 petition signers.

Not only is this impossible, but it is a fact that this interpretation has only been used against labor and minority parties. It has never been used to challenge, for example, the Democratic or Republican primary petitions. No single person or group of persons could know each signer personally. Even if a dozen people had signed the affidavits they could not have had such knowledge. Nor does the law require it. There are, however, written laws and the interpretation of those laws according to the need of the capitalist parties which have a political monopoly. When the law itself proves inadequate to defend this monopoly, a suitable interpretation is always available. The courts are the second line of defense of the political hacks, the ward heeled, the City Hall drones and the political hatchet-men of the Sixty Ruling Families.

This technical "obstruction" reveals one of the characteristics of capitalist democracy. Its democracy is limited to a choice between the

Democrats and Republicans. The moment the workers attempt to create a political alternative to these fronts for the capitalist class, this democracy becomes lost in a swamp of legal phraseology.

LABOR RIGHTS AT STAKE

The battles of the Workers Party and the Socialist Workers Party to appear on the ballot is thus not only a legal battle in defense of the rights of minority parties. It is also, and primarily, a struggle for the rights of labor on the political field. When a Labor Party of the workers comes into existence it will find itself hindered and dogged at every step by these same professional defenders of the monopolists. Our struggle is the fight of all labor for political rights. A workers' party of great following and trade union support could utilize such a struggle to mobilize very broad support.

It is well known that the Republican and Democratic Parties of Pennsylvania are owned by the giant industrial corporations of the state, United States Steel, Sun Oil Co. and the State Association of Manufacturers. It was common knowledge for many years that before any decision was made at City Hall the question would be asked: "What does Broad Street Station (Pennsylvania Railroad) think about it?" It is these forces which are behind the attempt to disbar all minority parties from the ballot.

At the same time this is a matter of greatest concern to all labor and liberal groups. At this time, when the working class is being forced into political action in self-defense against reactionary federal and state governments, the fight for minority political rights is but a preview of the greater struggles to come.

Poll Shows GOP, Democrats Look Alike

PHILADELPHIA—Sixty-four per cent of the people interviewed in a poll conducted by the Evening Bulletin answered either "No" or "I don't know" to the following question: "Does it make any real difference to you which of the political parties wins in Philadelphia this coming November?" Fifty-nine per cent voted "No."

Other results of the poll are equally interesting. Forty per cent of the Democratic voters and 34 per cent of the Trotskyists said they had not the slightest idea of how they will vote in November. Twenty-one per cent of Democrats and 26 per cent of Trotskyists said their minds were not as yet made up, making an average of 30 per cent of the people interviewed who did not know how they are going to vote.

The breakdown by incomes is even more remarkable. Says the Bulletin: "Indecision was much more marked among people with low incomes than in the groups of average income and high income people. Forty-seven per cent of those with incomes below average said they had not made up

their minds, 40 per cent of the average income group were in the same boat."

CONCLUSIONS ARE CLEAR

The results of this poll are described by the Bulletin as indicating "apathy," there is apparent here, is no evidence in the polls' results to warrant such conclusions.

What is perfectly clear is that the people of this city and especially the one and a half million workers who form the overwhelming majority of the population of this metropolitan area, don't see that it makes any "real difference" to them whether the Democrats win a few more jobs than the Republicans or the Republicans win a few more jobs for themselves.

Instead of "indecisiveness" and "apathy," there is apparent here, especially among those of "low incomes," that is to say, the working class, a high degree of awareness that the two parties are two faces of the same system and that there is no real choice to be made between them. Sixty-four per cent of this city's people think that Tweedledum and Tweedledee are brothers not so far under the skin. This shows a high degree of political sense driven home by years of unjust, inefficient, corrupt and strictly capitalist class rule.

Can anyone choose between two parties, both of which are guilty of the present eviction wave and lack of city housing? Or between parties, both of which refused to outlaw the Ku Klux Klan in the last state legislature and also combined to kill and now refuse to support a city FEPC? Can one choose between the Republican Party of the Taft-Hartley Act or of the Democrats, who proposed drafting strikers into the army? Can one choose between two parties which are equally responsible for the Second World War and for preparations for a third?

LABOR IS READY

The results of the poll are in striking contrast to the experience of the Workers Party and its recent nominating petition campaign. The idea that received almost universal acceptance from the 5,000 or more workers' families visited was the program for an independent Labor

Party, independent of labor candidates and program.

Twelve hundred registered voters in these working class districts signed the nominating petition on that basis. The Bulletin's poll and the poll of the Workers Party give the lie to those union leaders who say "the workers are not ready" for independent action. It is they who are not willing and are afraid of this step.

The Bulletin's poll means that the workers first of all, as well as a large section of the middle class, desire a labor alternative to the capitalist parties. Every working man can take a hand in the building of an independent Labor Party. It can be discussed with neighbors and fellow workers. Action can be proposed inside the unions. Participation in the election campaign of the Workers Party in the Fifth District is part of the fight for building such a Labor Party.

Herman Benson for Mayor!

Platform of the Workers Party in the Detroit Elections

- For real rent and price control laws enforced by committees representing unions, consumers, housewives, tenants. Against rent and price increases. Fight against evictions.
- 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.
- For a guaranteed annual living wage for all workers, with automatic increases to meet rising costs of living.
- Defend labor's rights. Against the Taft-Hartley and Callahan laws and all such anti-labor legislation.
- Full social, political and economic equality for Negroes and all minorities. Enforce the Diggs law. Abolish restrictive covenants.
- Open the doors of the United States to the homeless Jewish people and other victims of the war and oppression.
- Freedom for all nations. Against the occupation and domination of countries by the United States, by Russia, or by any other imperialist powers.
- Expropriate America's Sixty Families. Operate big industry under the control of democratically elected shop committees.
- For an Independent Labor Party. For a Workers' Government.
- For a world of security, peace and equality through the socialist reorganization of society.

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