

**WORK FOR A WORKERS WORLD;  
JOIN THE WORKERS PARTY!**

# LABOR ACTION

AUGUST 23, 1948

A PAPER IN THE INTEREST OF SOCIALISM

FIVE CENTS

## UAW Head Makes Political Commitment to Members

# REUTHER CALLS FOR A NEW PARTY!

## Housewives Fight High Meat Prices

By SUSAN GREEN

While the big-party politicians kick the inflation problem about and do nothing but hope that somehow they can get credit for doing something, housewives have definitely expressed their lack of confidence. Throughout the nation housewives have gotten together to try to prick the inflation balloon by boycotting meat.

It is indeed a hopeful sign that the people who suffer most from ruinous prices are doing something about it.

In one month New York City housewives saw the price of meat rise eight per cent. Porterhouse steak was marked at \$1.10 a pound and loin lamb chops at \$1.20. That seems to have been the straw that broke the camel's back. A campaign was started in New York for a Boycott Meat Week from August 9 to 16. To gain support for the idea 500,000 leaflets were prepared, 200 outdoor rallies were planned, the women were aroused by the chain telephone method, baby carriage parades were staged. In front of butcher shops and markets, picket lines could be seen. For instance, in front of the city-supervised market at First Avenue and Tenth Street, housewives and children in a baby carriage parade, marched and chanted: "Roll back prices! Don't buy meat!"

### SPONTANEOUS PRICES

But even in places where there are no organized consumer councils as in New York City, Chicago and other large cities, housewives spontaneously banded together to make a meat boycott effective. As an example, in Dallas, Texas, an old lady of seventy-one, Mrs. R. D. Vaughn, started a boycott that spread to eighteen other Texas cities. In Camden, N. J., thirty-three women organized a "Peticoat Brigade" with the purpose of gaining support for a meat boycott. They circulated pledges among housewives to undertake a ten-day stoppage of meat purchases. In the town of Lakeland, Fla., women picketed butcher shops with placards bearing the slogan: "Leave the pigs in clover while we put this over."

An example of a wider and better organized effort is what happened in Memphis, Tenn. There 20,000 members of the Shelby County Civic Club were mobilized to fight meat and milk prices, and they proceeded in getting support and action from the 30,000 members of the Memphis Trade and Labor Council.

In upper New York State the  
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## New Opposition Group Bucks CP Steamroller in UE Local 475

By MAX BURT

In a turbulent meeting attended by 1200 of the 15,000 members in Amalgamated Local 475 of the United Electrical & Radio Workers (CIO), the Stalinist officers and business agents last week rammed through a series of "party line" resolutions by their usual roughshod methods of silencing opposition speakers, character assassination and indefinite prolongation of the meeting. When the actual vote on the resolutions was taken late at night, fewer than 500 members remained in the hall.

This meeting marked the first attempt of the newly formed Committee for CIO Policy, led by a group

of rank-and-file militants and four local business agents who have broken with the Stalinists, to openly challenge the leadership of the local. At a caucus meeting earlier in the week the committee had drawn up a resolution embodying its viewpoint and had laid plans for future action.

The committee has expressed its intention of remaining independent of the UE Members for Democratic Action, national anti-Stalinist caucus, since MDA leaders in the local had discredited themselves by withdrawing the 4500 members in shops under their leadership from the UE in a secession move now made permanent by the NLRB elections which

placed Mergenthaler Linotype, Parker-Kalon, Intertype and Metropolitan Devices under the jurisdiction of the UAW.

### EMPTY BOASTS

To prepare the way for pushing through their motions, the Stalinist officers at the Local 475 meeting introduced James Matles, director of organization of the UE, in an hour-long speech he attacked Philip Murray and the CIO leadership for their present policies, asserting that the UE had rescued the rest of the CIO from utter failure in this year's wage negotiations. He singled out the UAW in particular as an example of CIO failure, pointing to the high proportion of workers who voted against a strike during the GM negotiations. He stated that, in contrast, only the UE was able to rally the solid support of the workers and thus crack the employer front for the CIO.

Even the least informed members at the local meeting were somewhat puzzled by Matles' failure to explain what appeared to be a strange coincidence: that the UE wage negotiations with Westinghouse and General Electric had been definitely broken off and were resumed only after the UAW had forced a settlement with General Motors and the Chrysler Corporation, and after this settlement had become generally accepted as the basis for a "national wage pattern."

Matles concluded with a threat that the opposition in the UE, "stooges of the bosses," would be "cleaned out" of the union.

### STALINIST STEAMROLLER

This speech was followed by a recommendation from the local Executive Board to remove from office one of the business agents who has broken with the Stalinists. Although he has served the local in various capacities, including that of president, for a period of eight years, the Executive Board suddenly discovered that he was unfit to serve as business agent.

One of the charges against him stressed by the board was his al-

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WALTER REUTHER

By EMANUEL GELTMAN

In a signed column in the August issue of the United Automobile Worker, official publication of the United Automobile Workers Union, CIO, Walter Reuther, union president, this week pledged his "complete support (and) full energy" in fulfilling and implementing a resolution adopted by the UAW executive board months ago directed toward "the formation, after the 1948 elections, of a genuine progressive political party."

Appearing as part of a 4-page supplement on political action and the work of the extra session, Reuther's statement makes "a commitment to every one of our members that political action by, with and for all who feel as we do, shall have first call upon my time and energy as president of this International Union."

Though the statement leaves much to be desired, and contains within it an orientation that stands in contradiction to its objectives, it is of the highest importance for American labor. The commitment, if fulfilled, will mark an enormous step forward for the American people. There is every reason to believe that Reuther will live up to his commitment. And it is certain that the auto workers, who many times have stood in the vanguard of their class, will demand its fulfillment.

Reuther apparently does not have a labor party in mind, but rather a vague combination which will unite liberal elements in the two big capitalist parties with the strength of the labor movement. On the face of it this would seem a futile effort to blend unmixable elements which can achieve little. However, in architecting a break with the Democratic and Republican Parties, the dynamics of the development will themselves resolve the confusion and misdirection in the Reuther position.

The decisive base of support for such a new party exists only in the labor movement, which is increasingly discontented with the party system as it now stands—offering a choice only between two agencies of capitalism—and which is groping continually toward independent expression. Based upon the unions, as it must be if powered by the UAW, the test of its direction toward a third party of capitalism or toward a militant labor party will tend to resolve itself in the pressures that the component elements will be able to supply from the beginning. Regardless of what confusion attends its birth, regardless of what Reuther himself may intend, a new party can be a beginning toward cementing a political force through which the masses of American people will shape their own future.

Much will depend on the intelligent intervention of those who have long worked in the labor movement for a labor party which can express and exert the class strength of American labor in the political arena. It is they who must seize upon Reuther's statement with the greatest excitement and interest, and strive to encourage the further initiative of the auto workers. In this sense, the mere commitment to a break with the old parties, and the promise to create a new party outweighs the crying deficiencies with which the statement is larded.

However, these deficiencies must be noted. They cast a cloud on the intent of the statement, and actually serve to impede the very thing for which the statement speaks. The full text of the statement has not yet arrived in the mail, and we are compelled to write on the basis of excerpts that have appeared in the  
(Continued in edit. col. on page 3)

## Russian Teacher Leaps From Window to Avoid Going Home

By WILLIAM BARTON

The mystery-thriller case of the two Russian teachers in New York remains clouded by a mass of assertions, denials and counter-denials that has enveloped the stories of these two human beings in the police atmosphere of current international relationships.

What happened to Mikhail Samarin and his family is comparatively simple. The former mathematics and art teacher for Russian nationals stationed in New York, scheduled to return home in two weeks, decided to hide out to avoid shipment, possibly after previous contact with White Russian refugees. Concealing himself and his family in a vegetable truck, they sneaked away to a New Jersey farm. As soon as news came that the Russian Consulate had reported them kidnapped, Samarin shipped his wife and three children to another farm, made his way by devious means to New York City and put himself in the custody of the FBI.

Meanwhile, an intermediary arranged a subpoena from the House Un-American Activities Committee, thereby assuring that he would not be molested by either the Russian Consulate or the New York police. He has already been secretly questioned by the House committee, which declared that he had said nothing of "pertinent significance."

Gossip columnists claim that Hollywood studios are already examining the bizarre care of Mrs. Kosen-

kina for possible film material. It will be a long time until the entire affair is unraveled, if ever. It is known that she found herself at a farm of the Tolstoy Foundation, run by the daughter of the famed novelist, some thirty miles from New York City. There are two versions of the story, Russian Consul Lomakin's and Countess Tolstoy's. Both agree that Mrs. Kosenkina was kidnapped, but they disagree as to where and by whom. The consular version was that she was dragged from the streets of New York, with the help of a hypodermic, and that various people tried to hold her forcibly at the farm when she desired to return with representatives from the Consulate. The other version was that she had voluntarily come to the farm and was forcibly abducted to the consular building.

Mrs. Kosenkina remained hidden, while the House investigating committee attempted to get her to testify. Refusals and protests about the American handling of her case came from high echelon Russian figures, up to Ambassador Panyushkin and Molotov. An attempt was made to get a writ requiring the consulate to release the woman for court testimony. While a New York judge was considering his decision, the State Department requested that the proceedings be held up.

On Thursday, August 12, came the melodramatic climax. Mrs. Kosenkina jumped from her third story  
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## Repudiate Stalinist Gangsterism, Sell-Out; Vote for UAW Local 365

NEW YORK, Aug. 17—Workers in two sample card firms, H. MacCallis Co., Inc. and E. Feibish & Co., today firmly repudiated Stalinist hoodliganism and sellout tactics by unanimously voting for Local 365, United Automobile Workers Union, CIO, to represent them.

The vote capped a week marked by violence and kidnapping as the Stalinist leadership of Local 65, Wholesale & Warehouse Union, CIO, sought by every means, including a disgraceful wage offer to the companies, to block the swing of the workers to Local 365 and to hold on to their contracts.

Local 65 leaders last week loosed full-scale Stalinist methods in an all-out attempt to intimidate the workers in the two shops. With all but a couple of workers signing cards asking the UAW local to represent them in NLRB balloting and with the employers unwilling to engage in a wage deal because the UAW was in the picture, Local 65 threw mass picket lines around the two shops solely as a means of terrorizing the workers. Four men from one shop and four women from another shop were kidnapped and taken to Local 65 headquarters, where they were held until freed by police.

The kidnapped workers were subjected to a one and a half hour lecture in which the leaders of the UAW were labelled as "gangsters" and during which the workers were threatened and offered the alternatives of

staying home, picketing for Local 65, or "scabbing." The kidnapped workers refused any of the alternatives, and remained firm on their choice of Local 365 as bargaining agent.

Two days later, on Thursday, August 12, with regular Local 65 pickets patrolling the plants and claiming a lockout (though all but a couple were working), Local 65 hoodligans severely beat up Michael Laiara. Laiara was identified by his assailants, four in number, by a "finger-woman" who has since admitted her complicity.  
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## Behind the Fighting Front in Israel

Below we present extensive excerpts from the May-June and July-August issues of the highly interesting Bulletin of the Council on Jewish-Arab Cooperation which present a picture of the everyday life of the Israeli people while the fighting is going on. We have taken the liberty of making minor editorial changes in the interests of continuity so that continuity and clarity will not be lost in the excerpting.

### THE CAPITALISTS

Employers refuse to raise wages or meet workers' demands as before. Clothing manufacturers disregarded an arbitration order for a cost-of-living raise issued by the Jewish Department of Labor (April 5). Textile manufacturers reduced salaried personnel to wage workers in order to be able to fire veteran clerks (April 6). The electric company refused to pay cost-of-living bonuses in spite of an earlier agreement, and counted on the Histadrut (Federation of Labor) to keep workers from striking in this essential industry (April 8).

Speculation and a black market, chiefly in food, create big fortunes for a few businessmen, making many

staples hardly available to the public; prices skyrocket beyond the reach of wages. The daily news items show an extreme situation, with the already high cost of living rising 9 per cent in two months. Bread is frequently unobtainable, because the bakery owners detour the flour into the black market. The wheat content in bread is illegally cut (April 2). Stores of meat and flour are hidden and dispersed in small warehouses scattered through the city, to avoid city inspection (April 1).

Municipal authorities, belonging to business-class parties, operated against the workers and for the speculators. Not only cost of living (enhanced by speculation) but also taxation has vastly increased, and in such a way as to place the burden on the poor. Tel-Aviv municipality instituted a sales tax, as against the workers' demand of a luxury tax (April 1). Taxes on people who occupy apartments are far above those imposed on house owners (who rent them out); the tax on the latter has been increased from 8½ per cent to 10 per cent in the last ten years, whereas the tax on people who rent an apartment has increased during

that period from 10 per cent to 50 per cent. Tel-Aviv and other municipalities do practically nothing against speculation. Speculators are rarely fined, and of 8,500 Palestine pounds in fines imposed on speculators by April 5, only 2,950 were paid; there are very few cases of jailing for non-payment of fines. Jail sentences are not imposed for speculation, although demands have been made that such sentences be instituted (April 18). Mayor Bokach of Tel-Aviv even attempted to save the good name of the speculators by asking that the court on speculation be given a different name, so as not to hurt the reputation of the people brought before it (April 5).

### THE CLERICALS

The clerical party (Mizrachi) and its labor section have jockeyed to impose their religion on others in the new Jewish state. Like the Catholics who receive in America a large share of founding children to be brought up in their church, so the Jewish clerical groups have imposed an arrangement whereby they are handed over, to be brought up under

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## WP Approaches Signature Goal In 19th Congressional District

NEW YORK—The petition drive to place Emanuel Gelzman on the ballot as a candidate for Congress in the East Side is proceeding on schedule to the goal of 6,000 signatures set by the committee.

Many of the circumstances of the coming campaign in the 19th Congressional district hold the promise of furnishing effective ammunition for Comrade Gelzman's campaign. One factor that may prove to be of importance is the report, circulated by the daily press, that Klein, the Democratic Congressman now representing the district, will not only run on the American Labor Party ticket, but has also pledged himself to actively participate in its campaign.

In view of the fact that he has supported the Marshall Plan, while the ALP is concentrating on pushing its pro-Russian foreign policy platform, Klein may find it embarrassingly difficult to actively campaign for both the ALP and the Democratic Party. It will take an unusual bit of straddling.

NEWS AND VIEWS FROM THE LABOR FRONT

# Buck CP Steamroller in UE Local - -

(Continued from page 1)

leged failure to service several shops properly, particularly the Eagle Electric Company, a large shop unit under his jurisdiction. The shop chairman, stewards and workers from this shop turned out for the meeting in large numbers to testify in his defense, but were without exception refused the floor. They finally resorted to shouting in unison in an effort to convey their sentiments to the meeting. The confusion was so great, however, that the board's recommendation was passed.

When the time finally arrived for discussion of convention resolutions, the resolution of the opposition was ruled out of order, even when sub-

mitted in the form of an amendment to a resolution already before the meeting. An endless succession of business agents and officers then monopolized the floor, speaking for the resolutions presented by the Executive Board.

In their resolution on political action, the Stalinists, unwilling to risk a direct proposal for the support of Wallace and his third party, used the subterfuge of endorsing "independent political action" and the political-action committee of the UE.

Revealed at the meeting was the extremely vulnerable position in which the Committee for CIO Policy has placed itself as a result of limit-

ing its program merely to endorsing the outworn stand of the national CIO on the important issues of the day. The Stalinists have not been slow in exposing the deleterious effect upon labor of the CIO's ties to the Democratic Party machine and in denouncing the imperialism of the Marshall Plan.

In spite of the shortcomings of the

committee, however, it is performing an important service for the membership by fighting the stifling rule that the Stalinists have clamped upon the local. Upsetting Stalinist control will set in motion new currents of thought among the workers and will permit the membership to take the initiative in local affairs for the first time.

## The Leonard Caucus? Well, It's Having a Hard Time

By WALTER JASON

DETROIT—It happened even more rapidly than we assumed possible. The "new caucus" in the United Automobile Workers, CIO, headed by Dick Leonard, former vice-president, found itself divided and denounced by two members of its national steering committee for "red-baiting."

The Daily Worker on Monday, August 8, carried a story from Detroit that spilled some beans on his "new caucus." Just read the story and imagine the discomfiture of the self-proclaimed "progressives" and true-blooded "revolutionists" who are involved in that miserable conglomeration called the Leonard caucus.

"Leonard, professing to speak for 100 locals in Michigan, lifted a leaf from Reuther's own campaign for UAW presidency a year ago by announcing that his group will not allow the Communist Party to have a voice in union affairs." When Reuther said that, he was denounced by the CP and the SWP for "red-baiting." What does the SWP say now? Thus far, it has given the impression of taking full political responsibility for the line of the Leonard caucus.

Tracy Doll and Whitey Urban denounced this part of Leonard's statement. "Urban said Leonard issued his statement without Leonard's caucus leaders getting an opportunity to see it, despite the fact that their names were signed to it." Is this an example of the "democracy" to be practiced by a Leonard regime in the UAW-CIO? Or, even worse, was this statement released with the approval of Ernie Mazey and John Anderson?

"To make the red-baiting dish palatable to the auto workers, who are dissatisfied with the wage-cutting GM escalator settlement and dropping of a number of basic demands in the Ford settlement, Leonard took a fly swat at Reuther's handling of these settlements," the Daily Worker said. We must admit that the characterization of Leonard's program as a "fly swat" is rather accurate.

### NO SIGN OF LIFE

Incidentally, as the time nears for the GM workers to obtain an automatic wage increase due to the escalator clause, it is becoming more and more uncomfortable for the alleged "left wing." Leonard included, to talk about the GM contract approving "wage cuts."

We forgot to mention three other prominent individuals in this "new caucus." They are Paul Silvers, Mel Bishop and Lloyd Jones. The inclusion of Mel Bishop is especially interesting. Certain self-styled "progressives" used as one of their main reasons for not supporting the Reuther tendency the fact that he had "reactionaries" like Mel Bishop in his. Bishop, according to these sources, was guilty of "slugging and beating up progressives." But, then, that is a trifle, for Bishop apparently has "reformed," about as much as Leonard has become a progressive.

Now that the Wayne County CIO convention has been ordered for September 2, 3 and 4, it will be very interesting to watch this new caucus in action. Its birth, or more exactly, its still-birth, hardly gives assurances of any healthy life.

## Vote for Local 365 - -

(Continued from page 1)

ty to police. He was taken to Beekman-Downtown Hospital in critical condition, suffering from a possible skull fracture and concussion.

Employers of the two companies involved, one of whom was also beaten, filed charges before the NLRB on the kidnappings and the beatings. It is not known at the moment whether the District Attorney's office is pursuing an investigation of the kidnapping. The NLRB, however, is reported investigating on the basis of the companies' charges which name Local 65 officials as responsible.

In view of the situation and the threats against workers who had indicated their desire to vote for Local 365, UAW, in a collective bargaining election, the NLRB had to move the site of the balloting to its own office at 120 Wall Street.

### OFFERED WAGE DEAL

From the workers' viewpoint the real key to the story was supplied by a spokesman for the companies, Murray Baron, labor consultant to the two companies, in a statement to the press, said that "Local 65 had made overtures offering wage concessions provided the companies would accept a reciprocal discharge

# One-Tenth of the Nation

By E. R. McKinney

### "JUST LIKE WHITE FOLKS"

There are people in this country who are also worried. For instance, there is the man who wrote to the New York Herald Tribune, H. C. Tutthill from Eastport, N. Y. Tutthill is outraged by people who write and talk about Negroes being mistreated in the South. Tutthill knows what he is talking about because he left the North to run a tobacco plantation in North Carolina after his 48th birthday. "I had some 40 tenants, about 30 Negro and 10 white." Tutthill found that the division of the crops "was exactly the same with the Negro as the white." He also discovered that the Negro was equal to the white in other ways. For instance: "each bought their supplies at the same places at the same price, and they sold their crops at the same price." Tutthill does not say, but presumably they bought from him and sold to him. "Also, they (Negroes) have their hospitals and schools and buses go over the same routes to carry their children to school. So how can anyone make such statements as some that I have read?" Another proof that Negroes are not abused is that "many of them own their own automobiles; you will see them outside of their churches on Sundays."

There we have it. Negroes in the South are not mistreated. They are allowed to own automobiles and to park them in front of "their churches on Sundays," just like the white folks. The police don't tow them away. Furthermore, buses carrying Negro children to Negro schools run on the same roads as buses carrying white children to white schools. Southern states don't build separate roads for buses loaded with black children. There are Jim Crow schools and Jim Crow buses but by the beard of Robert E. Lee, neither Southerner nor copperhead Northerner (Tutthill) will tolerate Jim Crow roads.

A correspondent who signs himself Reb Hull writes to the Herald Tribune. He objects to the series by Ray Sprigle now running in that paper. Reb doesn't like "the emotional manner in which Mr. Sprigle presents his material." He objects to the statement of Sprigle that the Constitution is a mere scrap of paper to the Southern Negro. Reb knows better. "The Constitution, I believe, insures freedom of worship, freedom of expression, freedom from want. Nowhere in the South will one find a Negro deprived of his church. If the Negro expresses himself courteously, he will not be mistreated because his opinion is averse to the Southern white." Reb is also convinced that any Negro will be supplied with food and lodging in the South "if he applies in the proper channels."

### MISSISSIPPI LIBERALISM

One can laugh at Reb and Tutthill. They are mere ignorant nobodies. Ten to 15 years in a New York State night school might do them some good. At least they might learn how not to make a complete ass of oneself in print. But down in Mississippi there is a man by the name of Hodding Carter. Carter is the editor-owner of the Delta Democrat-Times in Greenville, Miss. Last year Carter won the Pulitzer Prize for his articles on racial intolerance. I suppose that one should be thankful for any small ray of light which shines out from Mississippi, probably the most backward spot in the civilized world. About the best which can be said for Mississippi is that Negroes there are not so bad off as the Jews under Hitler or the unfortunates in Stalin's Siberian slave labor camps.

This man Hodding Carter is alleged to be a "liberal," or better a "Southern liberal." I suppose, to be precise and careful, one should say a Mississippi liberal. Carter is just as wobbly as Reb and Tutthill. In fact, he is worse because he is an educated man, a man of experience and ability. Reb and Tutthill are just two big-mouth ignoramus.

Carter has written an article for the New York Times Magazine, entitled "A Southern Liberal Looks at Civil Rights." Carter wants to talk to the "extremists within and outside the South." This is an old game of the Southern "liberal." He is against all extremists, North and

South. But who are the Northern extremists and what do they advocate? What do the Southern extremists advocate? I would like for this liberal Carter to tell us who are the Northern Bilbos, Rankins, Talmadges, Eastlands, Dorns, Thurmonds? Where are their counterparts in the North? Certainly not in Congress. There is not a governor in the whole North who can be compared with the governor of Mississippi. Senator Taylor of Idaho is the only Northerner who goes through the ignorant clownish antics and monkeyshines of the Southerners in Congress. But otherwise Taylor is one of the Northern extremists Carter is talking about.

Carter, the liberal, takes solace in the fact that the poll tax "in itself does not discriminate against the Negro alone." That's what the Civil Rights Report said. Carter goes on in his role as advocate for the Southern lynchers, disfranchisers and segregators. "The proposal to make lynching a federal offense appears to most white Southerners as evidence of a gratuitous disregard for the South's own success in reducing lynchings to a nearly non-symptomatic incidence." I don't know what this sentence means, but I am certain that it will have no effect on the next Mississippi mob bent on lynching some Negro woman or burning the Negro section of the city.

This Carter is a scoundrel. He knows that whatever reduction in lynching which has taken place in the South was not due to any initiative on the part of Southerners. It was due to shifting economic conditions which include the organization of Southern workers and the attempt to increase industrialization in the South. It was due also to merciless public criticism heaped on the South from the North and the exposure of Southern savagery in all the enlightened countries of the world. This is what brought the Southern liberals into the struggle. Whatever of improvement which has been initiated by the Southern leadership has been in order to head off action of the federal government. If there had been no campaign in the North and no pitiless publicity of the South, one would have heard very little from the Dixie liberals.

### VICIOUS AND IGNORANT

Carter finds that although segregation may be wrong in theory, "it is also an actuality which the white majority in the South intends to maintain in its mass aspects." What does the liberal Carter think of this? Nothing, except that "as a theory" segregation is wrong. The liberal Carter is convinced that "a standing army would be necessary to end segregation in the South." This is plain nonsense of course, but we don't want to discuss that now. We are interested to inquire what camp Carter would be in on that day.

Carter has discovered that the Negro is becoming less and less vital to the "changing economy" of the South. This is, of course, just more nonsense. Is the Negro to be excluded from the factories as the South becomes more industrialized? Then what will the South do with them—all 10 million of them? How will the South be able to move forward as an industrial area and follow a course which the North has been forced to abandon?

All that Carter has really done in this article is confirm what has already been said about the South: it is a backward, ignorant, vicious, corrupt and incredibly stupid section.

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### Ohio Labor Notes

## One Day Strike Wins Increase

By JOE HAUSER

CLEVELAND, Aug. 15—After three months on strike the workers of Univis Lens Co. in Dayton, Ohio, returned to work this week. As reported in last week's LABOR ACTION, a back-to-work movement was started under the protection of guns and tanks of the Ohio National Guard. Just previous to the calling out of the Guard, the union, a local of the United Electrical, Radio & Machine Workers, CIO, has rejected a settlement proposed by Ohio's Governor Thomas Herbert calling for a return to work of all strikers except a group of unionists accused of picket line violence. Now the union has agreed to these terms, and the question of rehiring the "violent" pickets will be left to arbitration.

One of the shortest strikes in Cleveland's history took place this past Monday, August 9. Local 363, UAW-CIO, struck the plant of PESCO Products Co., a division of Borg-Warner Co., parts manufacturers for almost all automobile and aircraft manufacturing companies. None of the 500 workers in the factory attempted to pass the picket lines, and by late Monday, the same day, the company and the union came to an agreement, which was then accepted by the membership.

A general wage increase of 13 cents had been agreed upon by both sides. The strike was over the general wage structure existing in the plant, with the union trying to correct wage inequities in various classifications. The agreement reached did make some wage adjustments but left an unsatisfactory arrangement in some departments. Also, a 10 cent an hour bonus which had been in effect for over two years, paid monthly on actual hours worked, is now incorporated in the hourly paid rate, and as such as paid for holidays and vacation time. Also, another five cents was added to learners' rates, and the period for merit increases was reduced from six to three months.

In spite of these gains, there was some sentiment against accepting this contract. The local leadership had promised an all-out fight for its various demands, and the membership was certainly strong enough at the end of the one-day strike to hold out and press for further concessions. However, the membership voted to accept the contract and return to work by a vote of about 180 to 100.

Fisher Body Local 45, UAW-CIO, held its membership meeting today. All mention of Wallace was left out of notices of the meeting, and with the threat of considering a one-dollar fine for absence from meetings, a fairly good turnout appeared. The proposed local wage agreement was reported on, with the company still resisting all efforts to factor the last two wage increases into piecework rates. This makes a difference of a

few cents an hour to the majority of plant workers.

Organization of the new Euclid plant was reported on. There the company has cut rates arbitrarily and is doing it all to call a union representation election. The report stated that many of the men are fed up with waiting for union recognition and are ready to strike. One group of 70 men already walked out at 2:30 on a Friday as a protest and the following Monday about half of them were fired. So far General Motors has refused to rehire these men.

For reasons which are not at all clear, the Stalinists made quite a fuss at the meeting over two issues. Several months ago the membership voted, over the opposition of some CPites, to mail the local paper, the Eye Opener, directly to the members' homes, rather than to distribute them at the plant gate. In brief, the argument was that this would guarantee all members getting the paper, which a gate distribution could not accomplish, due to so many men on odd shifts, going home early, etc. After two such mailings, the Stalinists tried to reverse this decision in the Executive Board and failed, and then tried at the membership meeting. After many peculiar arguments, the question was called and the members were ready to slap the CPites down with their vote, when one of their boys moved to refer back to the Executive Board, and that was rushed through.

The other issue involved sending a trustee to a UAW school for financial officers. While this seemed unimportant, the Stalinists fought this tooth and nail, first protesting strongly in the manner in which the decision to send this officer was reached, and after this point was taken care of, objecting rather violently to sending the trustee. As their arguments made sense to no one, they were really smashed on this vote, only four voting for the CP side. A short report was made on the Wallace convention, with the reporter proclaiming his desire for a real labor party, "but gosh we can't get it, and this is, the next best thing!"

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## Fight High Meat Prices - -

(Continued from page 1)

"Budget Brigade," consisting of 3,000 Utica women, pledged themselves not to buy beef for two weeks. And in Syracuse by chain telephone calls and chain letters women were rallied to a one-week meat boycott and a pledge to buy meat only three times a week after the boycott.

How effective has this nation-wide boycott been? Almost immediately upon the commencement of the boycott the Grand Union Company announced cuts in prices of two to four cents a pound on various meats. Just a drop in the bucket, to be sure, but still the result of the boycott. Some retail butchers have given the boycott support. In Los Angeles twenty-five retail butchers planned to close down until wholesale prices ease. A Camden, N. J., butcher in expressing his sympathy for the boycott, said: "I'm tired of feeling like a thief every time prices take a jump." Further, the New York City market commissioner reported that purchases by butchers for week-end sales to housewives dropped markedly because of the boycott.

### MUST BE WIDENED

However, this is not the whole story. Most butchers pooh-pooh the whole idea and declare the boycott is just a rash of dissatisfaction that will pass. More serious than this is the fact that the New York Department of Markets weekly food survey showed pork prices at brand new highs, climbing two to four cents a pound on different cuts, in spite of the boycott.

That seems to be the situation seven days after the beginning of the movement by housewives not to buy meat until the prices come down.

The movement should be continued. It should be continued and it should be widened in scope. While many women all over the country participated, the vast majority did not. More housewives must be induced to take action. There can be no doubt at all that if the meat boycott is widespread and persistent, it must result in a drop in prices. Once this happens to meat prices, the profit-laden manufacturers of other foods will see the handwriting on the wall.

Unless action is taken on what we might call the home front, there will be no relief for the working people. Predictions are for further spiraling of prices. A Professor Rasmussen, professor of marketing at Cornell University, speaking before the convention of International Apple Associations—yes, there is such a group—sadly told the delegates that because meat, eggs and dairy products will continue to be so high-priced, the people will be unable to buy apples, other fruits, vegetables and similar foods essential for a healthy, balanced diet. It was not reported that the professor said anything about the unreasonable prices of apples.

It is noteworthy that the New York Tribune, which is inclined to go along with the do-nothing policy of the Republican Party on the inflation question, shows definite wrinkles of worry. In a recent editorial, it fretted: "The only question is whether something more drastic may not be necessary . . . people are going into debt at an alarming rate . . . mortgage debt, installment debt, personal debt are all rapidly rising."

Undoubtedly it is true that people are going into debt just to enable them to live—not to buy durable goods, not to buy luxuries, just to live. But nothing drastic will be done

now that the Democratic president has gone through the campaign stunt of calling a special session of Congress and the Republican Congress has unashamedly met and done nothing. Only the people themselves can take drastic action.

Such actions as the meat boycott, but involving great masses of people, participated in by unions and all peoples organizations, will proclaim that the people will not, docilely allow their pockets to be picked by inflationary prices only to swell corporation profits.

### Bosses Aren't Happy— They Can't Cut Wages

"The nation's labor force is being strained to the utmost at the present time. A condition of hyper-employment like the present involves dangers. A shortage of labor weakens resistance to wage increases that are not justified by higher productivity, and so promotes inflation. It lessens management's ability to bring about a gradual rise in labor productivity, which alone can assure rising living standards over the long run." —Editorial in the Journal of Commerce, August 13.

### Spare a Dime?

The shockingly low figure of \$2,900,000,000 is the total amount of funds left in the hands of American corporations from profits last year for real economic expansion. —Earl Bunting, president of O'Sullivan Rubber Corporation and managing director of the National Association of Manufacturers in a speech to students at the University of Toledo.

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# Editorials

## Reuther Calls for New Party - -

(Continued from page 1)

press. The excerpts make it clear that emphasis for the present is to lie in the direction of electing "good" congressmen now. Thus, Reuther says: "The first step in implementing the resolution is the hard plugging and campaigning that is needed to elect as many good congressmen and senators as possible in the 1948 elections. That will give us a base from which to work. The next step is to proceed immediately with the organization of forces that will work with us to achieve in America a new political alignment."

Restated, this means campaigning for various "palatable" Democratic and Republican congressmen. As such it stands in the way of embarking on a new political path. As such it contradicts the creation of an independent political force. For it repeats the endlessly deceptive choice between lesser and greater evils.

Commenting on the UAW executive board proposals we have a number of times written that, although it may be impossible at this date to launch a national labor party for the 1948 elections, much can be done now to ensure its eventual creation. A new and genuinely progressive political force cannot be imagined after the handful of liberal faces in the Democratic and Republican parties, even if one or another of these, for whatever reason, should elect in a showdown to stick with labor. The direction of independent action must be clearly stated now, and acted upon to the extent possible. Anything else is not only evasion, it amounts also to undermining the new creation at its very beginning by inserting into its foundation shoddy material.

We can concede that a national formation is impossible before November of this year. But no one can concede that local actions are impossible. In the past months we have offered our opinion that auto workers ought to ask the UAW executive board for an earnest of its intentions in the shape of local candidates and other activities designed to culminate eventually in a new, independent party. Reuther's personal commitment is a step forward, but the context in which he frames his immediate advice cannot be considered that. Why cannot the auto workers union, in Michigan, let us say, put forward candidates for the various municipal and Congressional offices? It does not require the machinery of a national party. In Detroit, certainly, there are no obstacles. Such a demonstration, an independent ticket promoted by the UAW, would have a thousand times the effectiveness of promises and commitments. It could and would be duplicated, we are sure. But even by itself it would be sufficient of an inspiration to guarantee the successful launching of a national independent labor party in 1949.

Beyond that there is much else that could have been done, that can and must still be done. It may be that in a few days we will have details as to how Reuther proposes to effectuate his proposals. In the meantime we suggest that committees formed now, that conferences called now, are essential if anything is to be done later.

### His Concepts Secondary to Party

Given the over-all importance of the commitment, we are little concerned for the moment with the glibish Reuther introduced into his statement. When Reuther inveighs against monopoly and writes that "the government we elect must be for something. For example, for an economy that is both free and enterprising," he is proposing something that is... nothing, the rotten, bankrupt nothing of capitalist enterprise. Monopoly is the heart of capitalist production, the product of "free and enterprising" economy. Such fiddle-faddle merely proves that the one-time socialist Reuther has peddled backward in his understanding along with his progress in other directions. The addition of "government expansion and even operation of necessary productive capacity when private enterprise refuses to expand," does nothing to improve his formulations.

But, we repeat, we are little concerned for the moment with Reuther's theoretical conceptions. We are deeply concerned with the creation of a party which the working class can seek to make its own, programmatically and in every way. We have worked consistently and energetically for the creation of a labor party. And so we pledge ourselves to work in the new party when it is formed for a program that alone meets the needs of the working class people. We are utterly convinced that the new party must necessarily gravitate toward a labor party, a class political instrument. We are equally convinced that in it there will be an increasingly receptive audience for the ideas of socialism, and that out of this audience will come the

### Wages in Stalinland

The most vicious wage payment system devised is that of piecework pay, as every worker knows. The labor movement has been fighting it for years. The degree to which a union has abolished piecework is often a good barometer of that union's strength.

How are workers paid in Stalinland? The USSR Information Bulletin published by the Russian Embassy in Washington, July 1948, has an article entitled: Soviet Labor and Its Pay, which has the following fulsome description: "The predominant system of pay for industrial workers is direct, unlimited piecework. A quota of output and a rate of pay for each article produced is fixed for all workers. This system applies to almost all Soviet production." (Quoted in The Labor Review, No. 17)

movement which will seek to establish a socialist society.

That, as reported, the timing of Reuther's statement is intended as a blow at the Wallace movement is all to the good. The only effective way to head off the Wallaceite creation of the Stalinist totalitarians is to present the working class with the clear alternative of an independent political party. Other aspects of the timing do not appear in the same favorable light.

We have already commented briefly here (and at great length on other occasions) on the proposal to support "good" Democrats and Republicans. And the timing is obviously calculated to buttress the campaigns of these "good" capitalist candidates. In addition, there are conflicting rumors as to the importance of the timing with respect to the national candidates.

### Can Mold New Developments

One view holds that the timing was intended to lay the ground for support of Truman (who is scheduled to open his campaign in Detroit on the invitation of CIO and AFL unions). If there is any truth in this report, the auto workers ought in our opinion to do everything they can to show that they will not permit that disgraceful bit of politicking. Whether direct or indirect, support of Truman cannot be tolerated. It would be a swindle of huge proportions, an insult, an act of conspiracy against labor.

There is, however, another view which holds that Reuther's statement is intended as a means of ducking a statement of position on the national election. Whichever of the two it is will soon be clear. We wish merely to note that the second is in our opinion not very much better than the first. Evasion may have its advantages over outright support of an injunctivist. But there is no excuse for evasion.

We are not insisting that Reuther adopt our policy, which is to support the three socialist candidates in the field—or one of the three if he should prefer (though there is nothing to prevent a union leader from endorsing a socialist candidate except his own backwardness). But we do think that the auto workers have a right to insist that, at the very least, he refuse to have anything to do with the candidacy of either capitalist party, with Truman or Dewey—to aggressively, avowedly abstain, and to do so with a denunciation of both capitalist candidates. No union leader has a right to support a strikebreaker and an injunctivist. And, breaking it down to the local level, no union leader has the right to support any candidate who is allied with a strikebreaker and an injunctivist.

In conclusion, the Reuther statement must be seized upon by the labor movement, especially by the workers in the union which he represents, with the greatest eagerness. To step forward toward the creation of a political force which can be shaped into a labor party is to advance American labor immeasurable strides. The political disorganization of labor does not conform to its immense economic might. To fuse the political potential of labor with its demonstrated economic power is to take the first long step in the rebuilding of society along lines of human sanity. In so far as Reuther advances that objective with whatever limitations of his own, he performs a service in his own way. Intervening today, we can help mold the new developments that are taking shape, bend them toward meeting the requirements of labor and of the people.

### Another Chunk Off the Paycheck— For the Rail Barons This Time

Railroads move a lot of food—and rail freight rates are going up again—so your cost of living is going up some more. That's the long and short of the complicated freight rate order issued last week by the Interstate Commerce Commission. The ICC issued three temporary orders last winter boosting the freight rates. It didn't dare make them permanent at that time because public attention was focused on the issue. But last week it made the three orders permanent and in addition added another boost to freight rates. These increases will give the railroad barons an additional \$1,500,000,000 (that's right, one and a half billion dollars) a year more revenue.

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# WORLD POLITICS

## Korea Proclaims "Independence"

On Sunday, August 15, the third anniversary of the American occupation, Korea celebrated its "independence." The new state, formed in our tragic era between world wars, is not "a new birth of freedom." Its fitting symbol was the guest of honor at the ceremonies—General Douglas MacArthur, chief U. S. military representative in the Pacific, Syngman Rhee, first president of the new republic, fittingly declared, on the eve of statehood, that the U. S. Army must remain in full occupation until peace and unification are achieved. This foreign force is the protector and defender of the new Korea. Its power alone is the measure of the power of the state.

For the republic of Syngman Rhee is neither national, nor independent, nor viable. It is a truncated monstrosity without historic, political, cultural or economic justification. It is limited to the American area of occupation below the 38th parallel, which bisects Korea into two helpless territories. It is not national because the Korean nation includes the Russian zone, and because in that zone the Russians have sponsored a puppet state of their own which claims sovereignty over all Korea. It is not independent because its sole source of power is the U. S. Army, which operates a military dictatorship.

It is not viable because it is solely a product of inter-imperialist antagonisms, and as these shift so will South Korea's boundaries and the nature of the state. The Korean people number 29 million. Of these, 19 million are in the American zone. This area has the bulk of the food supply but not industry, very little transportation or minerals.

### U. S. AIDED CONQUEST BY JAPAN

To the north, the Russian zone, stretching from the artificial boundary at the 38th parallel to the natural boundary of Korea, the Yalu River, live nine million people. There exists a chemical, coke, textile and iron working industry as well as railroads and coal mines. Together these areas have an integrated economy to serve as a base for the nation. Separately, each zone becomes dependent upon the occupying power for supplementary goods and the entire nation is ravaged by hunger, inflation, desperate poverty and mass unemployment. It is a common saying that under Japanese domination at least the people ate.

Korean national history dates back at least to the 12th century. The capital, Seoul, with one million population, was founded in 1392. Koreans are a proud people. Their special pride is in their cultural heritage. They were the inventors of movable type, the basic idea of the modern printing press, a unique system of writing, and they also made great contributions to the art of navigation. For centuries Korea rivaled China as a cultural center and Japan in military prowess. The curse of Asiatic poverty, however, afflicted the people. Korea remained an agricultural nation, based on hand labor, with almost none, not even the most primitive, tools and very few draft animals. Stagnating feudalism left the country helpless before the rapacity of 19th century imperialism.

Korea was Japan's first conquest. As a result of the Sino-Japanese War of 1895 Japan acquired a dominant economic and political position. When the government appealed to the U. S. for aid under a mutual assistance pact of 1882, its appeal was ignored. This was the first instance in a long chain of American betrayals of Korea of which the proclamation of independence is only the most recent. Japan's conquest was not only facilitated but was abetted by U. S. policy, for the U. S., together with Britain, at that time favored a strong Japan to offset Russian Czarist expansion.

Japan was the "policeman of the Pacific." Its role was ratified in the Anglo-Japanese Alliance of 1902. The Russo-Japanese War was brought to a close by the intervention of Theodore Roosevelt, who, while playing the neutral, stated privately: "Japan is playing our game." At the peace conference, the Koreans again pleaded for independence, again recalling the pact of 1882 with the U. S. But Roosevelt supported Japan's demand for full colonial dominance. His Secretary of State remarked that this "would directly contribute to permanent peace in the East." This was the second American betrayal.

### STRUGGLE FOR NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE

The day after the Japanese conquest, the struggle for liberation began. Unrelenting war for national independence was conducted inside and outside of the country, and with the mass support of the people. The Korean language was practically outlawed under a regime of Japanization. Yet the people not only continued to speak it among themselves but taught it to their children. In 1906 demonstrations swept the country; thousands were killed or jailed, and then began the migration into exile of the flower of Korean fighters. An army of 6,000 was formed in Manchuria under General Li Tun-hui which for years harassed the conqueror.

The Russian revolution transformed the colonial struggle. Like a giant beacon of hope, the Korean

movement, joining that of most Asiatic emancipation movements, became transformed. The leadership shifted to the newly-formed workers' organizations and to the Communist Party. General Li joined the CP, together with Kim-San and thousands of others in exile all over Manchuria and China. The struggle was given an international orientation as the Korean movement linked itself to the developing Chinese revolution. Thousands of Koreans escaped from their native land in chains to join the armies of Sun Yat-sen.

On May 1, 1919, half a million people paraded through Seoul. A proclamation of independence was issued. At the same time, Japan herself was shaken by the first mass movement in her modern history—the famous Rice Riots. In the wake of Russia's October, all Asia was aflame. In Shanghai, a provisional Korean government was formed which received recognition from Sun Yat-sen.

The Korean CP became the backbone of the struggle even though it remained in the united movement with the conservative bourgeois Syngman Rhee. The twenties were active years for the Korean underground. Trade unions and peasant unions were formed. Youth organizations flourished. The underground was the complement of the struggle in exile and both were linked to the Chinese revolution. Those who did not enter the CP became anarchists and active terrorists. The Japanese had no respite. As late as 1935, after thirty years of occupation, ten Japanese arrested 206,214 political.

When Chiang Kai-shek beheld the Chinese revolution and suppressed the CP, he also struck a sharp blow at the Korean movement. Many Korean militants were assassinated in the White Terror of 1927. Inside the independence movement, power swung to the right; Rhee became an American puppet, hoping for liberation through American intervention. Kim Koo became Chiang's man for Korea, hoping for Chiang's victory. The exiles were dispersed and disoriented by the international catastrophe.

In the 30s the struggle revived. The CP emerged as the dynamic force inside of Korea, while Rhee and Koo held the diplomatic stage. In Yenan, the Stalinists prepared a puppet government of their own under Wu Ting. Stalinism transformed the movement into an appendage to Russia's Asiatic expansion plans. However, inside the Korean CP there developed several distinct tendencies. Precise information is hard to come by, but it is known that several groups exist in Seoul which are split-offs, based on disillusionment with Russian imperialism.

With Stalin's participation in the war on the allied side the theory of Rhee, of dependence on an imperialist solution to Korean independence, was accepted by the CP. The sole difference lay in which power to support.

### IMPERIALISTS DECIDE KOREA'S FATE

At Yalta and at Potsdam the imperialists decided Korea's fate. With bland unconcern for the struggle of two generations they decided to occupy Korea for a year and give it "eventual independence" after a five-year trusteeship. Subsequently, a military delineation was made at the 38th parallel between Russia and the U. S., and Korea was cut in two.

Korea was swept by great political demonstrations after V-J Day. Hundreds of organizations were formed; peasants began to divide the land. Labor organizations sprouted everywhere. The working class, not yet under CP control, took the lead. A people's republic was declared under the liberal-left leadership of Lyuh. All parties supported the republic as the expression of the native independence movement, but the rightists only tepidly so.

The American armies were greeted as liberators. But the arrogance, ignorance and plunder by American troops soon cast doubts about U. S. intentions. One of the first American decrees re-established the hated Japanese police, who had been disbanded amid great popular enthusiasm and hope. The second step of the occupation was to select for its Korean administration the men of the tiny reactionary Korean Democratic Party. The People's Republic movement was first by-passed and then attacked. The liberation had become the conquest, and the conquerors were daily more and more hated as betrayers.

The growing antagonism between Russia and the U. S. transformed the 38th parallel from a temporary military expedient to a hard boundary patrolled on both sides by armed foreign troops. This is the context of the new Korean state.

In the North there is a Russian-sponsored regime with a native army of 500,000, which claims jurisdiction over all of Korea. The Stalinists have entrenched a police regime. When the U. S. sponsors the new state in the UN, Russia will present its creature as a counter-weight. Neither "state" will have one inch more jurisdiction or power than their respective imperialisms. The tragedy of Korea is the frustration of its long struggle for freedom in the vise of the world imperialist antagonism. The future is a black one indeed; the independence which was proclaimed on August 15 is a tragic farce.

Jack BRAD

## Russian Teacher Attempts Suicide - -

(Continued from page 1)

room. Although she was considered critically injured and was closely guarded, reports were issued of statements she had allegedly made. A White Russian newspaper man claimed she had said "I was like a bird in a cage. I had to get out." A Russian-speaking New York cop quoted her as shouting to the visiting Russian vice-consul Chepurnykh, "You kept me prisoner, you would not let me go."

She is reputed to have made the further allegation that Ambassador Panyushkin made a secret visit to the consulate and assured her that all would be forgiven if she would only sign an affidavit that she was not a prisoner. The long hand of the House Un-American Activities Committee has again reached out; it has subpoenaed Mrs. Kosenkina and she is now under its exclusive jurisdiction.

### SIGN OF WORLD TENSION

After intimating that Mrs. Kosenkina "fell" from her window, the Russian consulate has now officially declared that she attempted suicide because of a "nervous breakdown" resulting from her "kidnapping," distress over the American press and radio reports of her likely fate in Russia, and the presence of menacing

crowds outside the building. Shades of Jan Masaryk! Newspaper reports declare that there was only the usual number of people in the area at the time, and the New York police have publicized a stenographic report of Mrs. Kosenkina's allegation that she heard only one radio broadcast in which her name was mentioned, and her insufficient knowledge of the English language prevented any extensive comprehension of what was said.

Two average Russian educators, one a war veteran and the other a war widow, have become international incidents because, as firsthand participants, they felt that Stalinist Russia was not worth returning home to. To the extent to which the respective governments have become concerned is indicative of present world tension and the propaganda importance of the two people. When highly-placed Russian official Victor Kravchenko resigned his job and decided to remain in the U. S. in 1944, his former government violently attacked him in print, but took no official action.

It is to be expected that Samarin and Mrs. Kosenkina will soon have themselves denounced by the Stalinist press as never having been worth anything. And the propaganda mill of the House Un-American Affairs

Committee will attempt to exhort testimony from them to prove widespread espionage activity. Our sympathy can only go out to these unfortunate people whose only apparent goal is refuge from a slave society in which they were and would continue to be better off than the average slave.

Another kind of sympathy is also in order for consul Lomakin and assistant consul Chepurnykh. They have failed their masters, who know what to do with such misfits. The latter is slated to return to Russia very soon. He told reporters that he was slated to go last month, but duties held him up. He fervently added: "Now I wish I had. There has been so much trouble." And he knows it's only the beginning.

Samarin and Mrs. Kosenkina are not the only travellers who are trying to avoid returning to the lands behind the Iron Curtain. Six Czech and two Hungarian athletes at the London Olympic Games are trying to stay in England. The representatives of the governments involved assure everyone that there was no politics in their choice. They may be right this time. But the evidence of scores of new voluntary exiles every week from Eastern Europe indicates that they could just as easily be wrong.

## SCIENTISTS

### "ORGANIZE WITH SHOP WORKERS," SAYS ONE

Last week's LABOR ACTION reviewed the excellent pamphlet issued by Local 107 of the United Electrical, Radio & Machine Workers of America which detailed the case of two anti-Stalinist union militants, Frank Carner and Herbert Lewin, who were fired by the Westinghouse Corporation in a "loyalty" purge and then reinstated after the workers in the South Philadelphia works of the corporation had staged a sit-down.

In the words of the pamphlet, these "American trade union workers... sounded a significant note for the preservation of basic democratic rights in the United States." The case, which was fully reported in LABOR ACTION, roused wide interest, received much attention in the press, and brought the active intervention of the CIO through James B. Carey, secretary-treasurer of the CIO, who hit the entire set-up of guilt by association, denial of right to work, intervention of military, etc. (The pamphlet can be obtained by writing to Local 107, 345 Bartram Avenue, Essington, Pa.)

We wish here to add two valuable supplements. The first, and more interesting one in our view, is a letter written by Frank Carner to his fellow scientists and which came to us with another copy of the pamphlet. It is in our opinion an excellent statement of the role of the scientist and engineer. The second, a quotation from Business Week, indicates the importance attached to the case by a magazine which speaks for the interests of the capitalist class.

### Letter of Frank Carner

Dear Fellow Scientists and Fellow Workers: On Wednesday, July 28, I returned to work in AGT on a temporary basis pending the hearing of my appeal to the Industrial Review Board. I wish to thank you for your active support of the action taken by Local 107 (United Electrical & Radio Workers, CIO) which made my reinstatement possible. The personal sacrifice of income made by each of you enabled our union to protest effectively against the contract and civil rights violations. I am also appreciative of the friendly manner in which I was greeted by you on my return to work as well as the kind offers of financial aid made by some of you.

Your action will be of help to the entire scientific profession. The National Association for the Advancement of Science and the Federation of American Scientists have been following the case and have requested to be present at the hearing. As you know, scientists have been a particular target in the current "witch hunts." This must not continue, for science cannot exist in an atmosphere of suspicion and fear.

### ROLE AND FUNCTION OF SCIENTIST

Scientists bear no special responsibility for the social usage to which the fruits of their labor is put. Scientists can only perform their specialized tasks with efficiency, initiative and imagination. A transmission can be used in a tank or a tractor; a jet engine can be used in a military plane or in a commercial air transport. The decisions of usage are not in the realms of natural science. Nevertheless many scientists are deeply troubled because inventions are being used for destructive instead of constructive purposes. As a personal escape, some scientists are quitting the field. The result of this merely reduces the productivity of science. A simple analogy will indicate that such an individual protest is a mistake.

Years ago, shop workers smashed machines because they brought speed-up and unemployment instead of shorter hours and higher real wages. Such actions failed. Later the shop people organized into industrial unions and improved working conditions and reaped the benefits of the increased machine efficiency. It seems evident to me that now the scientists and engineers must organize with the shop workers to guarantee that the results of all their labors will be used to advance civilization and to raise the living standards of the entire world.

I chose the scientific profession. I feel that it is the most interesting and stimulating of vocations. Science plays a large role in creating the material basis for the abundance necessary for a world of peace and equality. Science must be free to play a role in solving the social, political and economic problems of our times—and to have the right to work.

With best personal and fraternal greetings,  
Francis E. (Frank) CARNER  
July 31, 1948.

### Business Week Reports

"Strike [the sitdown on July 12 and 13—ed] should have jolted every employer who has military contracts and a leftist union problem. It served notice that the left wing intends to fight the firing of workers who are felt to be 'poor security risks.'"

"The Westinghouse strike points up a situation which has been developing for some time. Leftist unions—particularly the UE—have complained before of 'risk' transfers of members in defense plants. But in the past they have not sought a showdown on the real issue involved—whether labor-management contract terms or security regulations should get top priority."

"Here's why the leftists are so deeply concerned. They already have seen that management has an interest in ousting left wing union leaders. They are afraid that as more and more plants go into military production the armed services might become a lever to get rid of leftist unionists."

"That is why the union sought strike action to establish that workers have job rights that can't be ended on the say-so of military probers."

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Chapters From a New Pamphlet by Jack Ranger

# A Labor Party—A "Must" for American Workers

## Chapter 3

### What Are Political Parties?

THE Constitution of the United States, of course, makes no mention of political parties.

When this nation was organized in the heat of revolutionary struggle against the British, there were no political parties as we know them today. Nor were there in the early days of the republic. It was only as opposition developed among the Southern plantation owners to the steps taken by Alexander Hamilton, secretary of the treasury, on behalf of Eastern business interests that the people of the new nation gradually divided into two parties.

These parties, solidly grounded in class economic interest, grew steadily in coherence and definiteness of program. They were known as the Federalists and the Anti-Federalists. The Southern Anti-Federalists later took the name of Republicans and still later the name of Democrats, the present party of that name. The Federalists, during the regime of Andrew Jackson, took the name "National Republicans," then "Whigs." The party was more and more torn by class issues, by trying unsuccessfully to represent more than one class. One splitoff was the Know-Nothing or American Party, a sort of forerunner of today's anti-labor, anti-Semitic, anti-Negro movements like Gerald L. K. Smith's.

In February 1854 a number of Whigs and Northern Democrats assembled at Ripon, Wisconsin, and organized the new Republican Party—to fight, not against slavery, but against the extension of slavery into new territories.

In the 1856 elections, the Republicans ran John C. Fremont for president, against Whig candidate Millard Fillmore and Democratic candidate James Buchanan. Fremont split the anti-Democrat vote and Buchanan won. (The Philip Murrays and A. F. Whitney's of that day uttered agonized cries against the Republicans for "splitting the progressive vote.")

But the Republicans had hold of the red-hot issue of the day—anti-slavery—and it made its own way, as a good idea does and will.

In 1860 it was the turn of the Democratic Party to split wide open, one faction nominating Stephen A. Douglas of Illinois to oppose the domination of the Southern planters, and the Southern Democrats nominating John S. Breckinridge of Kentucky. The candidate of the young Republican Party, Abraham Lincoln,

won, though receiving less than the combined votes of the Democratic factions. The election of Lincoln represented a basic class shift in American political life. The national government ceased being an instrument of the slaveholding South and instead became the pliant tool of the capitalist North.

Ruling classes, however, do not give up power without a struggle. A civil war followed which established the supremacy of capitalism in the nation. The slave system was destroyed. The all-powerful Republicans permitted the Democratic Party to survive. Capitalism bent both parties to its will.

The story of politics in the United States since the Civil War, as related by Beard, Parrington, Lundberg, Josephson and other historians, is the story of the gradual erasing of distinctions between the Republican and Democratic Parties in the North, the subordination of both to big business, and the early attempts by enraged farmers and workers to oppose the bankers and industrialists with Populist, labor, farmer-labor and socialist parties.

At certain stages in history there have been differences between the Republican and Democratic Parties, and one or the other of the parties has served a progressive purpose. But for decades now there have been no vital issues between the two parties.

### No Important Differences

The only political issues permitted in American life have been those involving the interests of one section of big business as against another section. Great social issues affecting the lives of the people—such as the issue of war or peace in 1917 and in 1941, or the issue of monopoly control, or of socialism versus capitalism—these have never separated the two parties under the system of political monopoly obtaining in the United States. Or rather, such issues make their appearance only as vague campaign promises, which those in the know understand perfectly well will never be redeemed.

Political patronage, public plunder and robbery on a colossal scale, debauchery of municipal, state and federal government, corruption of the law, courts and the regulatory commissions have become widespread in American politics. From time to time in various communities, liberal "do-gooders" and disappointed politicians organize "reform" movements to "throw out the rascals." If the reformers succeed, they very often take over all the scandalous practices of the rascals whom they follow into office.

If the American people had all the facts before them, the facts would convince them that this nation is run by the monopolists, and that the monopolists dominate both the Republican and Democratic Parties.

"The men placed in the highest public offices from McKinley through Hoover were all the political creatures of the wealthy," wrote Lundberg in his *America's Sixty Families*.

The monopolists contribute impartially to the treasuries of both old parties. "Families that contributed both to the Republicans and the Democrats," recorded Lundberg, "included the duPonts, Harknesses, Vanderbilts, Fleischmanns, McCormicks, Goelets, Whitneys, Strausses, Guggenheims and Bradys. Where identical estates did not contribute to both parties on a family basis they often did so on a corporate basis. Many corporation officers in the lower brackets of contributors gave funds to the party formally opposed by the head of a particular [financial] clan. In this way the avenue of approach was kept open to the key men, the financial managers, in each party.

"The Wall Street banks, incidentally, while Republican in politics, make a regular practice of keeping a few outstanding Democrats among their chief officers," said Lundberg.

### Two Factions of Wall Street's Party

The Democratic and Republican Parties are themselves only factions of Wall Street's party, maintained by the wealthy to oppose labor's interests and to advance the interests of the wealthy, at home and abroad.

The maintenance of the capitalist two-party system and its ability to mislead the people depend in large measure upon deception, upon the fiction that there are major and decisive differences between the Republicans and Democrats. During the recent war and in the post-war period the differences between the two parties and their candidates have tended to dwindle to a narrow margin, if not to vanish altogether.

Both parties had common war programs, both supported Wall Street's plans for maintaining monopolist control during reconversion. Both agreed on handing over billions in government-owned plants and equipment to private ownership at fire-sale prices. Both are united in support of the aggressive foreign policy which gives support to the most reactionary government in the world, just so the latter be anti-Russian. Both parties

unite in keeping the Negro down, in upholding Jim Crow in the armed forces, in preventing passage of a fair employment practices law. Both parties unite in shackling the union movement, in placing the costs of government on the workers' backs.

What more could the rich have received and the poor have suffered in recent years had a Republican rather than a Democrat been in office?

Today the political parties of big business are united on one program: to place squarely upon the backs of the workers the burden of the recent war and of post-war militarism, expenditures for atomic weapons, the disorganization of the world's monetary systems, and aid to reactionary governments throughout the world.

"If we don't elect Tweedledee, then Tweedledum will be in the White House," the shells of the old parties scream. As though that would make any important difference in the policies of the national government!

### Roosevelt's Role as Capitalist Politician

Candidates and campaign platforms are not especially important to the monopolists today. The current needs of big business always comes first with both old parties.

That the personality of a president is unimportant to the capitalists may be easily indicated by the briefest look at some of our recent presidents—the amiable reprobate, Harding; silent Calvin Coolidge, the sour pickle; the pompous mining millionaire, Hoover, he of the stiff collar; and that unhappy little man in the White House, Truman.

Franklin Roosevelt, one of the most talented politicians the capitalists of this or any other country have ever used, sticks out like a sore thumb amid the political nonentities who preceded and succeeded him on the political scene. The New Deal government of Roosevelt was called into being in 1933 to save the capitalist system and to buy off the growing mass sentiment for revolutionary change. Roosevelt succeeded eminently in his task.

He swerved the masses from a radical road and, with the help of conservative labor leaders, convinced good numbers of workers that he was their friend, while starving them on and off WPA and handing over more and more of the wealth of the country to the rich. Finally, when the policies of his administration utterly failed to revive the capitalist system to anything approaching health, Roosevelt took the country into the imperialist war.

## Books You Should Know...

Jack London's famous novel, "The Iron Heel," has recently been republished and is available through the Labor Action Book Service for \$1.98. Below we print a commentary on "The Iron Heel" written by Leon Trotsky in 1937. Trotsky's observations were originally published as part of a biography, "Jack London and His Times," written by the novelist's daughter, Joan London, with whose permission it was published in *The New Internationalist* for April, 1945, and again reprinted here. The opening paragraph is not included.

The book produced upon me I speak without exaggeration—a deep impression. Not because of its artistic qualities: the form of the novel here represents only an armor for social analysis and prognosis. The author is intentionally sparing in his use of artistic means. He is himself interested not so much in the individual fate of his heroes as in the fate of mankind. By this, however, I don't want at all to belittle the artistic value of the work, especially in its last chapters beginning with the Chicago commune. The pictures of civil war develop in powerful frescoes. Nevertheless, this is not the main feature. The book surprised me with the audacity and independence of its historical foresight.

The world workers' movement at the end of the last and the beginning of the present century stood under the sign of reformism. The perspective of peaceful and uninterrupted world progress, of the prosperity of democracy and social reforms, seemed to be assured once and for all. The first Russian Revolution, it is true, revived the radical flank of the German social-democracy and gave for a certain time dynamic force to anarcho-syndicalism in France. "The Iron Heel" bears the undoubted imprint of the year 1905. But at the time when this remarkable book appeared, the domination of counter-revolution was already consolidating itself in Russia. In the world arena the defeat of the Russian proletariat gave to reformism the possibility not only of regaining its temporarily lost positions but also of subjecting to itself completely the organized workers' movement. It is sufficient to recall that precisely in the following seven years (1907-14) the international social-democracy ripened definitely

for its base and shameful role during the World War.

Jack London not only absorbed creatively the impetus given by the first Russian Revolution but also courageously thought over again in its light the fate of capitalist society as a whole. Precisely those problems which the official socialism of this time considered to be definitely buried: the growth of wealth and power at one pole, of misery and destitution at the other pole; the accumulation of social bitterness and hatred; the unalterable preparation of bloody cataclysms—all those questions Jack London felt with an intrepidity which forces one to ask himself again and again with astonishment: when was this written? Really before the war?

One must accentuate especially the role which Jack London attributes to the labor bureaucracy and to the labor aristocracy in the further fate of mankind. Thanks to their support, the American plutocracy not only succeeds in defeating the workers' insurrection but also in keeping its iron dictatorship during the following three centuries. We will not dispute with the poet the delay which can but seem to us too long. However, it is not a question of Jack London's pessimism, but of his passionate effort to shake those who are lulled by routine, to force them to open their eyes and to see what is and what approaches. The artist is audaciously utilizing the methods of hyperbole. He is bringing the tendencies rooted in capitalism: of oppression, cruelty, bestiality, betrayal, to their extreme expression. He is operating with centuries in order to measure the tyrannical will of the exploiters and the treacherous role of the labor bureaucracy. But his most "romantic" hyperboles are finally much more realistic than the book-keeper-like calculations of the so-called "sober politicians."

### POWERFUL INTUITION

It is easy to imagine with what a condescending perplexity the official socialist thinking of that time met Jack London's menacing prophecies. If one took the trouble to look over the reviews of "The Iron Heel" at that time in the German "Neue Zeit" and "Vorwärts," in the Austrian "Kampf" and "Arbeiterzeitung," as well as in the other socialist publications of Europe and America, he could easily convince himself that

the thirty-year-old "romanticist" saw incomparably more clearly and farther than all the social-democratic leaders of that time taken together. But Jack London bears comparison in this domain not only with the reformists. One can say with assurance that in 1907 not one of the revolutionary Marxists, not excluding Lenin and Rosa Luxemburg, imagined so fully the ominous perspective of the alliance between finance capital and labor aristocracy. This suffices in itself to determine the specific weight of the novel.

The chapter, "The Roaring Abyssal Beast," undoubtedly constitutes the focus of the book. At the time when the novel appeared this apocalyptic chapter must have seemed to be the boundary of hyperbolism. However, the consequent happenings have almost surpassed it. And the last word of class struggle has not yet been said by far! The "Abyssal Beast" is to the extreme degree oppressed, humiliated, and degenerated people. Who would now dare to speak for this reason about the artist's pessimism? No, London is an optimist, only a penetrating and far-sighted one. "Look into what kind of abyss the bourgeoisie will hurl you down, if you don't finish with them!" This is his thought. Today it sounds incomparably more real and sharp than thirty years ago. But still more astonishing is the genuinely prophetic vision of the methods by which the Iron Heel will sustain its domination over crushed mankind. London manifests remarkable freedom from reformist pacifist illusions. In this picture of the future there remains not a trace of democracy and peaceful progress. Over the mass of the deprived rise the castles of labor aristocracy, of praetorian army, of an all-penetrating police, with the financial oligarchy at the top. In reading it one does not believe his own eyes: it is precisely the picture of fascism, of its economy, of its governmental technique, its political psychology! The fact is incontestable: in 1907 Jack London already foresaw and described the fascist regime as the inevitable result of the defeat of the proletarian revolution. Whatever may be the single "errors" of the novel—and they exist—we cannot help inclining before the powerful intuition of the revolutionary artist.

Leon TROTSKY

## Behind the Fighting Front in Israel --

(Continued from page 1)

their control, all European orphans coming from religious homes. The investigation as to whether the orphan comes from a religious family is made cursorily under the watchful eye of the clericals.

The clerical party supports the fascist groups. In various public bodies, the clerical party defends the fascists (Revisionist Party and its associated terrorist IZL), and in effect acts for them in their absence.

### THE TERRORISTS

Despite their claims, the terrorist groups contributed nothing to the defense of the population. Here is the sum total of their activities against the Arabs during the month: On April 4 Irgun Zvei Leumi stole 1,000 head of cattle from Arab villages in the coastal plain; Hagana pursued them and succeeded in returning part of the loot to the Arabs. On April 5 terrorists hi-jacked an Arab truck laden with citrus fruit. On April 6 the Stern group blew up the deserted Arab village of Bir Adas, when the Arabs began to return by day to work their fields.

On April 11 IZL and the Stern group combined to issue a communiqué claiming the massacre of 240 inhabitants of Deis Yassin, a singularly peaceful village which had recently fought off Arab bands; some of the women and children were taken as captives and paraded through Jewish Jerusalem until the Jewish police stopped it. (Since then, Deir Yassin has become the central propaganda item of the Arabs against the Jews.) On April 25 and for the next few days, IZL put on a show of attacking Jaffa, with little military result, except that of endangering the population of Tel-Aviv and its suburbs. Claims of IZL to have contributed to the taking of Haifa by the Hagana (April 22) were given the lie by Davar April 25.

Terrorist actions are aimed primarily at strengthening their standing among the Jews. The more spectacular actions of the terrorists are accompanied by loud publicity and are timed for effect. Thus the Deir Yassin massacre was timed to coincide with the Zionist executive deliberations (April 12) on the proposed pact between Hagana and IZL.

### ECONOMIC ACTION

Strikes continue, though the war is a deterrent. Among the many strikes were those of men's clothing workers throughout the first week of April, the workers and clerks of the electric company in Haifa (April 8), and

in Tel-Aviv (April 13), the workers in a Tel-Aviv flour mill (April 14), the workers in the Ford garages (April 19). But the needle workers did not strike because of the importance of their work for the emergency situation (April 23).

Union organization continues. Unorganized workers are being unionized in such technologically undeveloped industries as cartons and writing implements (April 1). The Histadrut set up a country-wide union of industrial workers, regrouping many of its specialized unions (April 8).

Workers took limited action against speculation. The bakery workers' union had decided to refuse to bake bread that was underweight or with illegal wheat contents (April 1); bakery workers suggested that each bakery be required to post its flour quota, so that the workers could check on the owner to see that he does not divert any part of the flour to the black market (April 8). The workers' committee in the flour mills announced its readiness to serve the authorities on assuring fair distribution (April 18). The workers' council in Tel-Aviv suggested a one-hour general strike against speculation and soaring prices (April 6). The leftist United Labor Party suggested that the Histadrut supervise baking and distribution directly (April 5).

### POLITICAL ACTION

Economic actions of the workers are sometimes held back by political considerations of their leaders. The strikes in the electric company were mere episodes in a long conflict between the workers and the company, and also between the workers and the Histadrut, which opposed the strikes (April 15). Both major labor parties have considered the workers to be "too extreme." The workers have complained that the Histadrut was letting the company get away with a bad labor policy, and that the company's behavior was based on its knowledge that the Histadrut would permit no strike in this essential industry. Workers therefore said that their strike would serve as a lesson to the Histadrut.

The military and political organizations in which the working-class parties are powerful do not show the full effect of working-class character. The first army induction ceremony was opened with a military-religious ceremony based on the custom of the armies of other countries rather than on the people's character of the Hagana (April 27). (In PM for May 21, I. F. Stone reports that

Hagana had decreed separate mess for officers.) In the provisional council and cabinet of the Israeli government, the non-labor parties were given a narrow majority, even though labor parties have a clear majority in Palestine voting (of the Palestine elections of September, 1944). In the Zionist executive vote on admitting the terrorists as a group into the Jewish army, the labor parties voted against admission and lost (April 12); but more serious opposition on their part might have given them the majority. And the labor parties did not prevent the inclusion of a minister of religion in the cabinet.

The Hagana, composed largely of workers, hesitates in taking action against the terrorists. Although the terrorists shoot Hagana guards and others who stand in their way, Hagana has generally tried to avoid situations in which it would have to shoot it out with the terrorists. On several occasions this led to terrorist successes. (A few years ago, when the terrorists were weaker and Hagana had almost completed an operation of putting them under arrest, top leaders of the Jewish community, belonging chiefly to the Mapai Labor Party, ordered Hagana to release the terrorists.)

In the earlier terrorist attack, when IZL and the Stern group massacred the Deir Yassin villagers while Hagana was occupying the nearby Kastel stronghold, one can ask if it would indeed have been so unthinkable for Hagana to have defended the peaceful Arab villagers from the attackers. Instead of protesting the Deir Yassin massacre verbally, Hagana might have stopped it by fighting off the terrorists, thus showing the Arabs a different view of the war.

Only in few cases have workers solved their problems by actions which went beyond the limits of capitalism. The needle workers did not strike on April 23, much as they wished to, because their work was important for the emergency. But they did not attempt the alternative solution of doing their work in the form of a take-over strike, in which the workers would hold the workplace, produce whatever they thought necessary and deliver their products to whomever they wished. Such strikes were carried out by Japanese workers after World War II; and while problems of raw materials, delivery and so on would undoubtedly arise, the workers might have been able to manage, especially if they produced for public bodies or workers' organizations.

Similarly, in the case of the black market and speculation, the workers have failed to take effective action outside the usual framework. They have planned protest strikes (April 6), offered to supervise their workplaces for any illegalities (April 8); the more leftist among them have demanded that the Histadrut should supervise directly (April 5); in Natanya the Histadrut planned to build a co-operative bakery (April 4). More independent action than this was not taken; and in Herzlia, where the workers' parties have a majority in the municipal council, nothing more was done (April 8). Effective controls would require by-passing many of the usual relations of the market and business activities. This could be done by a government, but might in effect be also taken over by an organization as vast as the Histadrut if it set up its own control system over all places where its members worked (about 85 per cent of all workers in essential industries are members of the Histadrut). The one place where this was indeed done was in Jerusalem, under stress of the siege, where distribution of food was placed in the hands of people experienced in the Histadrut network of cooperatives. Business men complained that no "private initiative" was permitted, but there is no black market in Jerusalem, and the limited rations were evenly distributed.

Workers have not yet gone beyond the limits of ordinary politics to meet the attack from the right. Although municipal taxes on workers are far heavier than on business men, workers have carried out no tax strikes or other means of rejecting the decisions of non-representative rightist municipalities. Although municipal elections have been put off for many years, the workers' organizations do not do any of the many possible things to make the position of the business men's municipalities untenable. In Petah-Tikva the workers finally left the municipality (April 20); in Tel-Aviv not even that.

When during the last few years the Hagana was transformed, under centrist labor and middle-class officials, from a workers' force into a national army, the workers did not proceed seriously to recreate a workers' militia to meet the special danger facing them in the growing fascism. The formation of a workers' militia was, however, urged on the occasion of the IZL attack on Jaffa, which brought into evidence the ease with which the terrorists could take control of Tel-Aviv (April 27).