

# Workers Age

A PAPER DEFENDING THE INTERESTS OF WORKERS AND FARMERS

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## Spanish Blockade Aids Franco In Civil War

Portugal Continues As Base For Fascists; U.S.S.R. Withdrawal Puzzles Friends of Spain; Bloody Battles Around Madrid

A rapid survey of the weeks fighting in Spain shows the fascists halted at last in the Malaga region, held at bay on the Aragon front, pushed back around Madrid to give the embattled city another breathing spell, and beaten in Oviedo after most bloody fighting. The latter victory is significant in that fighting for this city—an important arms manufacturing center—has been going on since the beginning of the civil war. After a short respite heavy fighting around Madrid has broken out again. The strategy of the fascists appears to be to keep the Madrid forces on the go all the time, something that the fascist rebels are able to do because of the steady influx of huge armies of foreign fascist troops. Foreign Minister Julio Alvarez del Vayo estimates that there are at least 60,000 Italians now engaged in the fighting. A similar number of German troops are to be found among the Franco fascists.

Now that all the arrangements for the blockade against volunteers for the civil war have been perfected, all parties are strangely quiet. France did speak up against the 250 observers assigned to watch her borders while only 130 were assigned to watch the several hundred miles of Portuguese border. The mere raising of the issue indicates how ridiculous is the idea of guarding such borders with a few observers hanging out in border-town coffee houses. Portugal will continue to be a main highway for aid to Franco's butchers while France with 250 or 130 or no observers at all, will continue its policy of sabotaging the struggle of the proletarian masses against fascism—in the name of neutrality.

The withdrawal of Portugal from participation in the blockade is easily understandable. Puzzling is the same act by the Soviet Union. Having, theoretically, won its point on the right of Soviet warships in the Mediterranean, the Soviets then gracefully withdrew. Why? No satisfactory explanation has been forthcoming. Certainly, no one will take seriously the official explanation that distance from naval bases precludes the Soviet's participation. Was its withdrawal the price of its recognition as a naval factor in the Mediterranean? Did Germany and Italy place the choice as Russia's withdrawal or theirs? Does the Soviet Union wish to absolve itself of responsibility perhaps for some new treacherous acts against bleeding Spain? These questions cannot be answered yet.

What can be stated with some assurance is that the pressure against the neutrality policy of Leon Blum is being lifted now. No longer are the communists even shouting about planes to Spain. The participation of both France and the Soviet Union in the blockade—even tho the Soviet ships do not ride anchor in Spanish ports—preclude any such campaign. In addition the Communist Party of France has again been thrown into the arms of Blum by the attack against the people's front policies from the right. Spokesmen for the French Communist Party now

whisper their criticisms and shout at the top of their voices their praise of the people's front. Under the circumstances even the duplicity campaign previously conducted is not to be expected now.

The blockade, just as other forms of the neutrality farce, will aid Franco and throttle revolutionary Spain.

## WHAT THE FASCISTS WANT IN SPAIN



## Auto Union Expects Victory In Chrysler

Union Strength in Chrysler Main Cause, Martin Says; GM Negotiations Still Continue; Union Stands By Sit-Down

At the moment the pending negotiations of the auto-union with the Chrysler corporation hold the center of attention, since the negotiations with General Motors appear to be making progress. Discussing the prospects in the Chrysler negotiations President Homer Martin stated in the course of a press conference that he expects a

favorable settlement without the necessity of resorting to strike action. This he said was due to two factors. First, the union is well organized and controls a decisive majority of the workers. Second, Chrysler's attitude to unionism is more advanced than that of General Motors. Union committees will get together with the company on Wednesday.

In the meantime, progress is being made in the talks with General Motors. Agreement has been reached on method of handling grievances, seniority rights, elimination of speed-up on the assembly lines. Negotiations are now snagged around the issue of hours, the union demanding thirty. A compromise will probably be reached and then the difficult problem of minimum wage will come up.

The union is also opening negotiations with the Murray Corporation—the third largest auto body builders.

In the course of the press conference President Martin was questioned closely on the legality of the sit-down as a strike method. He stoutly insisted that the sit-down is legal. "It is as legal," he continued, "as the action of the corporations which refuse to obey the laws to permit workers to organize without interference." If it is a matter of property rights, he said, the "property right of the worker in his job outbalances the property rights of the employer." Asked whether labor intends to await the action of the courts before further use of the sit-down, Martin replied "if labor had waited on courts to gain their rights they would still be in slavery."

The eviction of sit-down strikers in Waukegan and Santa Monica came in for considerable comment by President Martin. "No employer methods will stop the workers from organizing. They can't stop the ocean tides and the tides are running in the United States." He attributed the eviction particularly in the Fansteel factory to lack of preparations by the sit-down strikers inside of the plant and to insufficient mass support on the outside.

the opinion that the Congress should boycott the elections and have nothing to do with office holding. Anything else he regarded as a deviation from fundamental Congress policy and would mean: "—a kind of partnership with Imperialism in the exploitation of the Indian people." The extreme bourgeois right was strong enough within the Congress to block a resolution embodying Nehru's attitude. The decision on office holding was postponed to March.

Considering the strength of the right bourgeois wing, the decision will probably be for participation. The perspective is therefore for the Congress to fritter away valuable energy in internal wrecking tactics in a parliamentary structure which keeps the clamps tightly on the oppressed Indian masses. The new Constitution is an instrument of rigid imperialist control and allows of no effective attack from within.

## P.O.U.M. ANSWERS SLANDERS OF C.P., SOCIALISTS AND TROTZKYISTS

The P.O.U.M. has become the center of interest nationally and internationally. Many are those who come to us to discuss our position, or who write to use sending advice. But the opportunists only insult us, defame us, and spread lies about us. International opinion is naturally curious: "What party is this about which they talk so much and over which a governmental crisis is provoked? Why is it insulted and fought so bitterly? What is it, what does it want, where is it going?" We shall try to answer, but first let us present a historical parallel.

Lenin and the Bolsheviks during 1917 also passed through the same critical moments. The Mensheviks and the Social Revolutionaries—the opportunists of the Russian revolution—tried to mislead them and turn them from their political line. If the Bolsheviks had been dissuaded they would have been welcomed with flowers and praise. They preferred however to commit the crime which we are now committing: to speak the truth, to maintain an unswerving revolutionary line even at the price of a momentary unpopularity. They too

were insulted and slandered; they too were threatened with physical extermination. They call us agents of Hitler; Lenin was called an agent of the Kaiser. They say that we are in the service of the fifth column (of fascists behind the lines)! Lenin was said to be in the service of the "Black Hundred." After June, he had to hide in Finland with Zinoviev, while Trotsky and many others were imprisoned and prevented from publishing the party papers. Who can doubt that without the unyielding attitude of Lenin the revolution would have failed? We do not draw the parallel simply for historical comparison; we do not believe that the events in one country necessarily are followed in another. Still there are experiences which are repeated in almost every revolution.

What is the P.O.U.M.? Is it a Trotskyist party? This is the accusation hurled most often at us. Stalinism appears to desire to perpetuate this story as if the issue were "Stalinism or Trotskyism." We are neither. A proof of this is the fact that we are attacked both by the Stalinists and the Trotskyists. We are simply ourselves, just as the Bolsheviks were Bolsheviks. We are

a revolutionary Marxist party, forged in the struggle against capitalism and the opposition to opportunism, and firmly standing by our class position.

What do we want? We do not want governmental posts when they mean political concessions. We want the complete victory of the working class, that is, socialism. We want the socialist revolution in Spain and throughout the world. To reach our goal—which is the final goal of our class—we will ally ourselves with whoever works for its victory. Persecution does not frighten us; it only shows that we are right, and our strength is proved by it. We do not seek an easy way out; we can face the lies and persecution and even a passing unpopularity. Our party is ready for struggle and sacrifice.

This is what we are and what we stand for. This is why we are attacked more violently every day. But every day we gain more support, and more messages saying, "Stand firm, comrades! Do not yield! Follow the correct line and win, as Lenin won in 1917!"

Reprinted from "Spanish Revolution," English Bulletin of the P.O.U.M., of Jan. 6, 1937.

## Harlan County To Be Probed

NEW YORK CITY—Immediate investigation of conditions in the Harlan coal fields by the LaFollette Civil Liberties Committee was requested in affidavits filed by William Turnblazer, president of District 19, U.M.W. of A., and Thomas C. Townsend, the union's general counsel for the South, following the failure of a Harlan County special grand jury to return indictments in connection with the slaying and shooting of union organizers during recent weeks.

Declaring "there is complete industrial autocracy and a reign of terror," the affidavits call for a "full investigation of the acts of lawlessness in Harlan County," by the LaFollette Committee which is authorized to investigate violations of labor's right to organize and bargain collectively.

Five specific cases were referred to the grand jury: the killing of Bennett Musick, 19 year-old son of a union organizer; the dynamiting

of two union-owned automobiles; the tear-gas bombing of the union's tentative campaign headquarters at the New Harlan Hotel; an attempt to shoot W. A. Musick on Jan. 31, ten days prior to the murder of his son; the shooting and wounding of Tom Ferguson, an Ohio organizer who was serving temporarily in the Harlan field; and the riddling with bullets of Bill Klontz's car, while he was driving on the highway.

## SIGNIFICANCE OF AUTO STRIKES

Will be the subject of three articles by JAY LOVESTONE, beginning in next week's WORKERS AGE. The significance of the movement, the new problems of strategy and tactics that have arisen from it, and some theoretical problems involved, will constitute the subject matter of this series.

Begin to read this important material in next week's

WORKERS AGE

## Congress Party Scores Gains

On the basis of the evidence so far available, the Indian National Congress Party is making an extremely good showing in the provincial elections, being held preparatory to the introduction of the New Indian Constitution. The latter goes into effect April 1, 1937.

In the central provinces the Congress party has already won a majority, 59 seats out of 112, tho only 90 seats have as yet been completely recorded. In the Bombay region, the Congress has won 55 out of 124 seats to date, carrying 8 out of 9 in the city of Bombay itself. The party has captured an absolute majority in the upper house of Madras Legislature and all the 32 seats so far recorded for the assembly.

The recent convention of the National Congress Party, held during Christmas week of 1936 was divided on the question of office holding under the new Constitution. Nehru, outstanding leader of the Congress and a socialist, was of



# Socialist Confusion On The Question Of Unity

by WILL HERBERG

IN the Socialist Call of February 20, there is published a very interesting document, worth more serious consideration than may appear at first sight. It is entitled "About Socialist-Communist Unity" and is a statement of the National Executive Committee of the Socialist Party on that subject. For an official declaration of a responsible political party, it is most extraordinary: rambling and incoherent in form, more than questionable in tone, positively reckless in its political implications. If it represents the considered opinion of the S.P. on the question, it certainly bodes no good as far as the future political relations between the socialist and communist parties are concerned.

### Remedies Worse Than Disease

Taken as a whole, the N.E.C. declaration is a curious compound of political criticism of the C.P. and vague, self-contradictory conclusions as to the possibility of joint action with the official communists. The political line of the C.P., of course, deserves the sharpest criticism, and such criticism has not been altogether absent from the columns of the *Workers Age*, but the kind of criticism that the spokesmen of the S.P. here offer is frequently worse than the disease itself. It is the kind of criticism the C.P. seem so plausible to many sincere, revolutionary workers.

The statement opens with a rather irrelevant attack on the official communist policy in the recent elections; as against it, the S.P. offers its own standpoint—a sterile, abstract radicalism that can see no difference between the New Deal administration of Roosevelt and the Republican, Conservative-Democratic opposition. But suppose the S.P. is absolutely right and the C.P. entirely wrong, what does that imply? Clearly that there can be no organic unity between the two parties—but how about the possibility of a united front, of united action? No answer!

The discussion of the labor party question is vitiated from the start by ironical reflections on the checkered career of the C.P. in this field, reflections that may be quite justified in fact but are assuredly not very helpful in the present connection. Then we are told that the socialists "most certainly do not agree on agitational slogans for a labor party such as the communists raise" and that they "consider preachments about a labor party being a people's front and removing the dangers of war and fascism, to be wrong, misleading and dangerous." Fine, very true, indeed! But what is the conclusion? The declaration answers very profoundly: "Hence we must withhold any formal program of unity on this task until we decide what is meant by a labor party. . . ."

In the first place, to "withhold a formal program" on a question of such vital importance does not seem to be a very serious attitude for a responsible party to take. What prevents the S.P., it may be asked, from taking the initiative in formulating such a program of united action for a labor party according to its own lights? In the

second place, disagreement on "agitational slogans" is hardly reason enough for giving up all hope of united action on this issue. If it is, then with whom can there be united action? With no one but those who support the line of the S.P. down to its "agitational slogans"! A fine united front that would be—with yourself and your followers!

### On The Labor Party Question

On the trade union question, there is confusion of another sort. With some degree of justice, the C.P. is criticized for "forming solid blocks with bureaucrats and untrustworthy elements. . . ." But what is the conclusion? Is united action with the C.P. possible in the trade union movement, in this or that trade union situation? No answer!

The N.E.C. statement grows quite heated on the war question. The opportunistic course of the C.P. since the seventh congress of the C.I., deserves the severest condemnation—but the S.P. goes to absolutely impermissible extremes in sarcastically advising the C.P. to make its "appeal for programmatic unity (on the war question) . . . to the House of Morgan. . . ." This is contemptible pettiness, a mere degenerate and frivolous form of the late-lamented doctrine of "social-fascism"! But again what is the conclusion? Do the differences on the war question make impossible any sort of cooperation with the C.P. in this field? If some sort of joint action is possible, why is no word said about it in the statement, why are the conditions for such action not clearly defined?

The rest of the statement consists of some incoherent remarks on the lack of inner-party democracy in the C.P. and on the Moscow trials. To what purpose all this is brought up, I must confess I don't know. Must the C.P. win the approval of the socialists for its party regime and its attitude to the Trotskyist trials, for united action to become possible? Nonsense! Everything the S.P. points out as to the bureaucratic centralism in the C.P. and the latter's anti-Trotskyist fanaticism may be perfectly true, and a good deal of it is, but the fact remains that the Communist Party is a working class organization, a proletarian political party with some influence among the more advanced sections of the workers. Is a united front with this organization on this or that issue or on a whole series of issues possible and, if so, on what basis? No answer!

### What's Behind The Declaration

It seems to me that the N.E.C. declaration is not altogether as naive in its inconsequence as may appear at first glance. There is a method in its madness. And that method is: to discuss the problem of united socialist-communist action as if it were a question of organic unity between the two parties. Since, at the present moment, there does not exist any political basis for organic unity, the conclusion is implicitly drawn that united action is impossible. But the two are utterly different, even mutually exclusive. If organic unity were possible today, there would be no need of raising the question of the united front. The whole problem of the united front arises

# EUROPE TODAY

By LAMBDA

THE capture of Malaga by the rebels is a terrible blow. On February 7 and 8 a new contingent of sixteen thousand Italian soldiers was landed and immediately sent into battle. Strengthened by these reinforcements, new supplies of war material and aided by the German battleship "Spee," the fascist forces won.

Confronted with the fact that the British and French governments remain passive while fascist Spain with troops and war material, Peri, foreign News editor of L'Humanite was forced to make the following statement:

"We regret to say, but truth compels us to do so, that it looks as if no solution would be forthcoming before the struggle against Malaga and Madrid is over." But Peri refrained from making any inference from this. All he had to say was that "this is a situation that cannot last. We must prevent Hitler and Mussolini from conquering Spain." (L'Humanite, Feb. 9, 1937)

The spokesmen of the French people's front do not think of mobilizing the workers and calling them to demonstrate so as to bring pressure on the Blum government. Under the paralyzing influence of the people's front policy the demand that planes and arms be sent to Spain was silenced and a deaf ear turned even to the demand that no more German and Italian troops be sent to Spain. After a delegation of four radical socialist deputies of the French parliament had returned from a trip to Catalonia, one of them, Mr. Galimand, expressed himself, according to L'Intransigent of Feb. 10, 1937, in the following way: "If I had to choose for France I think I would prefer the Burgos to the anarchist government."

No wonder this delegation was so strongly opposed to the conclusion of any commercial treaties with Catalonia for it is more than because there are in existence working class organizations of widely different and, temporarily at least, irreconcilable political viewpoints between whom unity of action on the basis of a common minimum program is both possible and necessary. Just because the merger of the socialist and communist parties may be ruled out for the immediate future, in view of the programmatic differences that separate the two, for that very reason does the problem of developing joint action in specific fields become so acute. This the authors of the N.E.C. statement either do not understand or else see fit to ignore. They approach the question of the united front in exactly the same spirit as the C.P. used to do in the frantic days of the "third period": If you want our party program and follow us!

At a mass meeting of the PSUC (C.I. party) in Barcelona which was attended by Comrade Thorez, secretary of the CPF, and Comrade Diaz, secretary of the CP of Spain, Diaz declared:

"We are not permitted to requisition chickens from the peasants in the name of a revolutionary phrase. Today we must not even think of any form of socialization or collectivization." (Report of the Deutsche Zentral Zeitung of Feb. 5, 1937.)

"Away with the committees," he exclaimed, "enough of the committees! All power to the government! No Socialization!"

In Barcelona the PSUC wages a systematic campaign against the "workers patrols," the proletarian cheka. At the Aragon front the workers militia which chiefly consists of CNT and POUM columns is completely neglected. But the Catalan government saw to it that from forty to fifty thousands of men who were recruited from the police forces and regular army receive training and the best equipment. It is clear that this serves a definite political purpose. The new regular troops will be used to abolish the workers militia and to reestablish the bourgeois republic.

At a conference of POUM and CNT militia men held in Lerida, Catalonia, the following demands were made:

1. The militia of the hinterland is the sole guarantee of revolutionary order.
2. Dissolution of the state police and transference of its members to the front.
3. Formation of a revolutionary workers army.
4. Organization of committees of combatants to control the military leaders.
5. Only revolutionary workers should be admitted to the military academies.
6. Compulsory military service for all from the age of eighteen and decay.

# Labor Play Takes Road

## "Steel" Gets Support From Trade Unionists

Representatives of trade union and fraternal groups met at Labor Stage February 28th, to act upon plans for touring "Steel," a John Wexley play, through Pittsburgh and mid-western steel areas. Similar conferences will be held shortly in Pittsburgh and Chicago.

The movement to send one company to Pittsburgh and surrounding regions and another to Chicago, Indiana, and Ohio was started when leaders of the Steel Workers Organizing Committee were fired with enthusiasm by the Labor Stage production of "Steel." Keen interest in the project of sending "Steel" through the regions where the SWOC is conducting a drive to organize the steel workers has been manifested by outstanding figures on the Steel Workers Organizing Committee, among whom are John L. Lewis, Philip Murray, David J. McDonald, Clint Golden and Julius Hochman.

to forty five, but no arms to the bourgeoisie.

7. For the position of the POUM and the CNT against that of the PSUC.

### GERMANY PRESENTS THE BILL

Hitler's emissary Herr von Ribbentrop informed the British government about the German demand for colonies. This means that Germany presents her bill for intervention in Spain. The manner in which it is presented, however, suggests that she will be satisfied if concessions are granted to her in other fields. It is obvious that Great Britain will not conform to German demands. Such a step would call forth a storm of protest which might evoke great dangers in the dominions especially in South Africa.

News reaches us from Germany that the relatives of some of the "volunteers" who fell in Spain organized protest demonstrations. If the number of Nazi soldiers who were killed in Spain amounts to several thousand and if this fact has become known inside of Germany, the news is probably authentic. Protest demonstrations of the international working class would help strengthen this movement.

### CONVENTION OF PARIS UNIONS

The number of trade unions from Paris and vicinity who had come to the recent Paris convention represented more than a million workers as compared with two hundred thousand last year. However, the militancy of the working class is not equal to its organizational strength. The huge trade union machine is systematically used to prevent strikes. With many apologies the leaders recommended that compulsory arbitration be recognized by the convention and the convention did recognize it. This shows that the Parisian workers, under the influence of the people's front, have lost much of their militancy in the interests of "national economic prosperity." The advocates of the people's front counteract working class action against the daily mounting prices.

A resolution offered by the leaders approving the Moscow trial of Radek and containing a pro-Soviet declaration was withdrawn in the face of stormy protests from the ranks of the delegates. This may serve as proof of the regrettable fact that the method of procedure in this trial and the policy of the French C.P. has created an anti-Soviet feeling among the Paris workers.

London, Feb. 10, 1937.

# P.O.U.M Adopts Resolution For Constituent Assembly In Spain

WE recommend to our readers a careful study of "The Political Resolution of the Central Committee of the P.O.U.M." which we reprint from its English bulletin "The Spanish Revolution" of January 6, 1937.

The resolution outlines the tasks of the P.O.U.M., calls for the destruction of the remnants of capitalism with its bourgeois parliament, urges the convocation of a constituent assembly of workers', peasants' and combatant's delegates (soviets), and proposes the establishment by that body of a workers and peasants' government.

Regardless of minor differences, the fact remains that this declaration constitutes the nearest approach to a genuine communist solution—the only solution—of the present difficult situation in Spain. With this statement the P.O.U.M. differentiates itself sharply from the reformist, self-defeating course of both the socialists and the official (C.I.) communists who are fighting for the reestablishment of the bourgeois republic destroyed by the fascists when they struck on July 19.

This revolutionary policy of the P.O.U.M. has been answered by socialists and official communists alike with a vicious and unprincipled slander campaign in which charges of Trotskyism and agents of fascism are leveled against the P.O.U.M. These charges are the sheerest fraud. At the same moment as these charges were made, the British Communist Party, also affiliated with the Communist In-

ternational, found it possible to make a common front with the Independent Labor Party of Great Britain, which agrees with the P.O.U.M. on every single point of any importance. If the P.O.U.M. is Trotskyist and fascist then so is the I.L.P. By the consummation of the united front in Great Britain the Communist International showed that it does not believe its own slander campaign.

The real cause for the drive against the P.O.U.M. is not Trotskyism but the fear that a genuine revolutionary course, such as the P.O.U.M. proposes, will undermine and destroy the essentially reformist policy of the Communist International which hampers and destroys the possibility for effective revolutionary action by the Spanish proletariat. The victory of the P.O.U.M. policies implies the liquidation of the people's front strategy. Hence the representatives and spokesmen of proletarian revolution must be destroyed by all means, they must be slandered as Trotskyites, and discredited as agents of Franco. What matters it that, in the process, the hopes and aspirations of the Spanish proletariat are trampled under foot, the bourgeoisie revived and encouraged, and the fascist butchers strengthened?

To an increasing extent revolutionary workers are beginning to recognize that the P.O.U.M. is fighting for the best interests of the proletariat in much the same way as Lenin did in Russia in 1917.—Editor.

### THE POLITICAL RESOLUTION OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE POUM

THE revolution, started on the 19th of July as a direct consequence of the military fascist uprising, is passing through serious moments. The capitalist class, terrorized during the first phase of the movement, is now trying to raise its head, working its way back into the new institutions created by the revolution and reoccupying the strategic position it had lost. Of course, it does not reveal its intentions openly, but rather, as is customary in all popular revolutions, it uses middle class and even working-class parties and groups to carry out this hidden work the more effectively and unhampered.

Their design is especially favored by the unusual situation created by the war. The absolute necessity of winning it as well as the special requirements and complicated problems which it raises, lead to a situation which, if skillfully handled, may find the masses easily swayed and may favor the plans of those who are trying to strangle the revolution, confining it within the channel of the democratic republic. The working class should realize that its whole future is being decided, that the war and the revolution are inseparable and that only by destroying the roots at the base of the capitalist regime can the possibility of a fascist victory be destroyed.

### THE WORKERS STOPPED FASCISM

If fascism did not triumph completely on the 19th of July, that is due only to the heroic might of the working class, which, abandoned and without arms, was able to block the fascist advance and, taking the arms from the enemy,

to destroy the sources of power of the old regime and to abolish the rights of private property and to initiate a profound revolution.

In these historical moments the working class came to control the absolute hegemony of the revolutionary movement, and the middle class parties, which the working class had followed for years, disappeared almost completely from the political scene.

### ATTEMPTS TO UNDERMINE OUR POSITIONS

They are now trying to undermine the positions captured by the workers, and in part they have succeeded. The Central government at Valencia, in spite of its composition, is a typical "national union" government, jealously preserving the capitalist democratic constitution, which is completely behind the times; this government differs in no fundamental way from the former peoples' front government. The government of Catalonia, although of an analogous composition, has been infinitely more progressive than the Central Government, since it here has operated in a different political climate, one determined by the C.N.T. and the P.O.U.M., which have held revolutionary positions and have prevented the middle class ideology of the peoples' front from infecting the workers' movement or placing it at the service of the capitalist democratic interests.

### THE ELIMINATION OF THE P.O.U.M.

The elimination of the P.O.U.M. from the Council of the Generality is the first step in (Continued on Page 5)

# TAILORS FIGHT FOR DEMOCRACY IN UNION

We reprint below extracts of a statement issued by the Amalgamated Progressive Circle and Rank and File Committee on the nomination meeting of Local 25 held Feb. 17 at Webster Hall, N. Y.—Editor.

The nomination meeting clearly demonstrated that the leadership of the local and the New York Joint Board of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers have not yet learned to take into account the new developments within the trade union movement, and the sentiment of the membership to in-

stitute real democracy within the union. It appears that for this, tailors will still have to wage a bitter struggle.

At the above meeting, at which nominations for the executive board and elections for an elections and objections committee were to take place, the administration clique practiced the same old methods of packing the meeting and ruling out all forms of discussion on the elections. When a progressive worker insisted on making a motion to the effect that the election and objections committee

# Four Lean Years Of Fascism In Germany

The pompous speech Hitler delivered on January 13, 1937, the fourth anniversary of the Nazi rise to power represents a complete rejection of the offers made by the English and French governments. Hitler's Germany does not want to discuss any problems pertaining to disarmament or reduction of armament. It holds that the strength of German armaments is a matter of German concern only. It will uphold the four year plan and reject any offer of economic cooperation.

Hitler's speech left no doubt that his regime will continue to support Franco in Spain. He also emphasizes anew that Germany must have colonies. It is not mere formality that Germany repudiated its signature to the Versailles treaty. Since this paragraph serves as the legal ground for depriving Germany of her colonies the repudiation implies that Germany considers itself free to reclaim her colonies. Hitler let it be known that Germany directed her demands for colonies only to the powers that had annexed hers. This is chiefly directed against England, but also against France. Furthermore, he announced that Germany would insist on a revision of the territorial regulations of the Versailles treaty. Cockily, he assured that Germany was not isolated but had won friends. He distinguished between the haves and the have-nots, and the victors and the vanquished and made himself the spokesman of the movement for general treaty revision. Again he stirred up feelings against the Soviet Union with the design of helping to break the Franco-Soviet pact and win the English conservatives for an anti-Soviet alliance. Czechoslovakia was not mentioned in his speech, a fact which implies that the German campaign against that country will go on.

From all of this we may draw the conclusion that the Anglo-French offers have missed their purpose completely and that German preparations for a war of revenge proceed unimpeded. Hitler's boasting of what the Nazis have accomplished during the four years of their rule is nothing but a piece of crude propaganda. He pretended to have prevented Germany's complete economic collapse which threatened her, he said, by the turn of the year 1932. In reality, the crisis had reached its lowest point by the middle of 1932 and an upward swing was clearly noticeable by the time Hitler came into power. The Nazis succeeded in crushing all labor organizations and forcibly kept the working class standard of living as low as it had sunk during the crisis. With their hands and feet tied the workers were delivered to capitalist exploiters. A considerable number of the unemployed found work thru the expansion of the armament industry, but in many cases the standard of living was not much higher than that of the jobless.

Under the four year plan Hitler promised to provide permanent employment for all who have to quit work in the armament industry. From this we may infer that Hitler's army will soon have received its full war supply so that Nazi Germany can go to war. War preparations include the manufacture of substitute goods (Ersatz) which is just as unproductive as the manufacture of war materials. Hitler's talk about the "fictitious value of money" seems to indicate that the plan for the concealed inflation of German currency is under consideration.

His remarks about the new bloom of German culture and art and the uniqueness of the German theatre must strike one as comical. The so-called statements of Europe's mouth empty phrases but the armament race goes on. There is absolutely nothing in Hitler's speech which could open the way for negotiations on how to check this race. All parties seem to share the belief which the English press referred to when it said that talk lessens the danger of outbreak of open hostilities. Such beliefs sufficiently prove the fact that it is considered impossible to hold Hitler Germany in check and that war is inevitable.

The statement concludes, with a strong appeal to the membership of the union to alter this shameful state of affairs. It further points out that while the Amalgamated Clothing Workers plays such a progressive role in the general trade union movement, within its own ranks such a state of affairs as has been portrayed by the nominations meeting, can still exist.

The statement also appeals to the leadership of the union to correct its mistake and carry thru the elections in a democratic fashion, demanding that voting be done in private booths, enabling the membership to vote unhindered and that the election and objections committee should permit watchers during the elections and the counting of ballots.

This statement was signed by one of the Amalgamated Progressive Circle and the Rank and File Committee.

Under the four year plan Hitler promised to provide permanent employment for all who have to quit work in the armament industry. From this we may infer that Hitler's army will soon have received its full war supply so that Nazi Germany can go to war. War preparations include the manufacture of substitute goods (Ersatz) which is just as unproductive as the manufacture of war materials. Hitler's talk about the "fictitious value of money" seems to indicate that the plan for the concealed inflation of German currency is under consideration.

His remarks about the new bloom of German culture and art and the uniqueness of the German theatre must strike one as comical. The so-called statements of Europe's mouth empty phrases but the armament race goes on. There is absolutely nothing in Hitler's speech which could open the way for negotiations on how to check this race. All parties seem to share the belief which the English press referred to when it said that talk lessens the danger of outbreak of open hostilities. Such beliefs sufficiently prove the fact that it is considered impossible to hold Hitler Germany in check and that war is inevitable.

The statement concludes, with a strong appeal to the membership of the union to alter this shameful state of affairs. It further points out that while the Amalgamated Clothing Workers plays such a progressive role in the general trade union movement, within its own ranks such a state of affairs as has been portrayed by the nominations meeting, can still exist.

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## WORKERS AGE

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# C. E. RUTHENBERG

By JAY LOVESTONE

The following excerpts are taken from Jay Lovestone's introduction to a pamphlet entitled "Charles E. Ruthenberg," published by International Publishers in 1928—Ed.

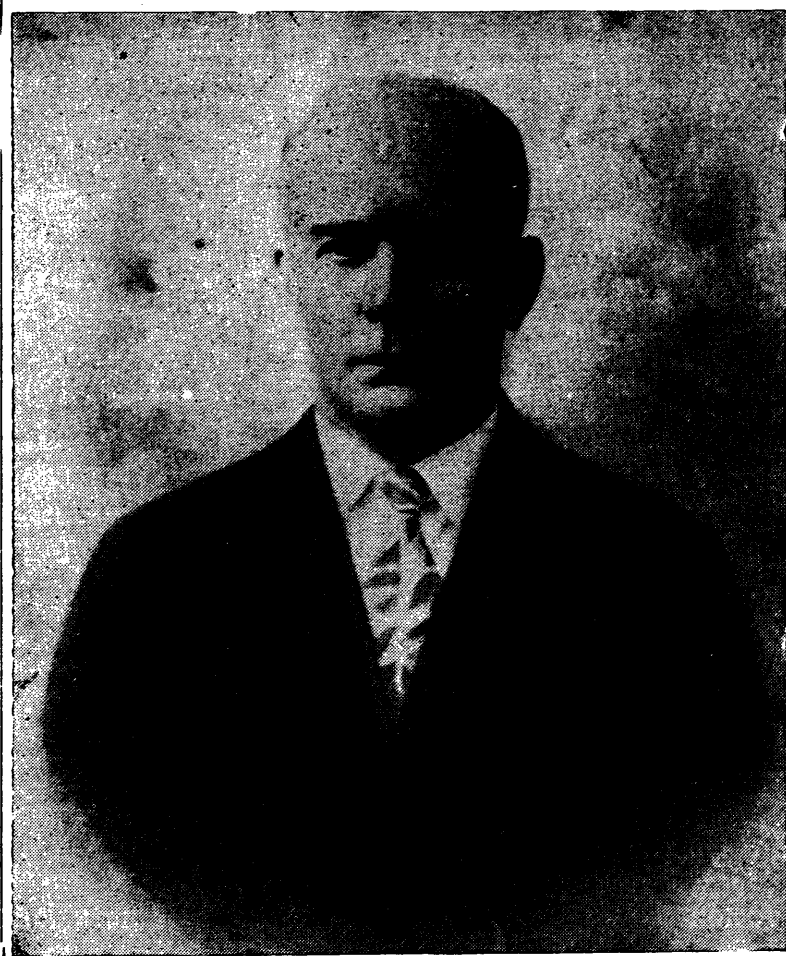
RUTHENBERG was an organizer par excellence. Immediately after he joined the Socialist Party in 1909, he assumed responsible organization work in the Cleveland organization as recording secretary of the City Central Committee. The Cleveland organization, the former Socialist Party symbolized strength, stability, and mass influence. Proportionately it far exceeded many local city organizations in this respect at the time. Ruthenberg was quick and able to utilize the local issues for the purpose of building a Cleveland section of the national movement.

It did not take long for Ruthenberg to become nationally known as an organization builder and an outstanding local political leader. From 1909 to 1912 he served as recording secretary of the Cleveland Central Committee of the Socialist Party. In 1910 he was Socialist candidate for State Treasurer of Ohio; in 1911, candidate for Mayor of Cleveland; in 1912, for Governor of Ohio. In 1913 Ruthenberg became the Secretary and City Organizer of the Cleveland organization; he was also candidate for United States Senator of Ohio during the same year; in 1915, candidate for Mayor; in 1916, candidate for Congress; in 1917, again candidate for Mayor. In the last campaign Ruthenberg ran especially on a platform of opposition to the imperialist war, while he was appealing against his conviction for anti-war activities, and received 27,000 out of a total of 100,000 votes cast in Cleveland. In 1918 Ruthenberg was candidate for Congress and in 1919 candidate for Mayor of Cleveland.

It was Ruthenberg who was primarily responsible for making the left wing in the Socialist Party nationally organization-conscious. There were many who were active propagandists for the then left wing socialism, but few, if any in 1919, realized sufficiently the need of crystallizing a definite left wing organization on a national scale.

Immediately after his release from Sing Sing Prison on the reversal of the decision of conviction by the lower court by the New York State Court of Appeals, Ruthenberg became the second national secretary of the Workers' Party in 1922. Under his direction, the Workers' Party immediately made great progress in its membership rise and political influence. To the party membership, Ruthenberg appeared very clearly as the party builder. In every campaign of the party he was the dynamic force lending push, plan and momentum to it with his unbounded energy and inspiration. The drive for the Labor Party, the campaign to root the party in the trade unions, the efforts to win the Negro masses for the Workers' (Communist) Party, the first attempts to secure a firm foothold among the exploited agricultural masses, were all marked by Ruthenberg's intelligence and industry.

Ruthenberg hated capitalism with an immeasurable vengeance. He hated capitalism for what it meant for the workers. He always wrote about the meaning of capitalism and exploitation in simple but telling language. He wrote in 1912: "The capitalist system means the existence of a master class and a dependent class. The wealth which the workers produce but do not receive is paid to an idle, parasitic class in the shape of interest and dividends. The evils of



BORN JULY 9, 1882—DIED MARCH 2, 1927

the capitalist system which are everywhere apparent in the squalor and misery of the tenements in which millions exist, in the diseases resulting from poverty which yearly take the lives of thousands, with its consequent suffering for the unemployed and their families, in the general insecurity of the lives of those subject to the whims of the industrial masters, who know not whether on the morrow their means of livelihood may not be gone, are the by-products of the private ownership of industry and profit making through the exploitation of the workers."

In 1911 and 1912, while the Socialist official leadership was driving headlong to the right, Ruthenberg emphasized Leninist faith in the masses which was a welcome revolutionary antidote. "The rank and file are not subject to the influence which capitalism can bring to bear. They are the victims of capitalism. They suffer from capitalist institutions. They can be depended upon to remain an uncompromising opposition to capitalism until the organization which they are building up will have acquired the strength to transform existing social institutions into a new social organization which will realize the aim of socialism.

"We socialist have faith in the working class. We believe the workers have advanced too far and are too subject to industrial slavery and therefore are confident that they will assert their power to bring into existence the only alternative to capitalist despotism. . . . The working class has the power and to save itself must establish socialism."

Ruthenberg was born at a time (July 9, 1882) when American imperialism was being reared. He imbibed the weaknesses, the haziness, as well as the spirit of militancy which characterized the early movements of opposition to the rule of monopoly capital in the United States. As imperialism grew, the clarity of revolutionary perspective and program of the most advanced workers grew. Ruthenberg symbolized this growth in all its stages. The selections from his speeches and writings arranged chronologically in this little volume bring in bold relief

# THE PEOPLE'S FRONT COMES TO MEXICO

By BERTRAM D. WOLFE

Last week Comrade Wolfe discussed the fall of Calles and the rise to power of the present president Lazaro Cardenas.

In this article the author destroys a lot of illusions about the "workers' and peasants' socialist government of Mexico" as it is being called in the radical press.

Next week Comrade Wolfe discusses the relations of the Communist Party to the Cardenas regime.—Editor.

WHEN in 1935 General Calles, for over ten years Mexico's strong man, left him a favorable opening, President Cardenas broke with his boss and creator and attempted to become boss of Mexico himself. Like Calles in 1924, he started his regime in a whirl of demagoguery so necessary to the consolidation of mass support. The circumstances of the break, repeating those of 1924, gave Cardenas the support of the Communist Party, the organized labor movement and the peasantry against Calles just as the latter had possessed the same support against De La Huerta at the beginning of his presidential career. But this time the Communist Party was in the throes of its People's Front policies which made a big difference in the nature of its support, as will become clear in the next article. At any rate, Cardenas had no reason for anticipating any trouble from the Left for some time to come. His most immediate concern was the Right: the Church and the landowners. By the peculiar logic of politics there was danger of the Clergy's rallying to the support of their arch-enemy of yesterday, General Calles, before the latter's hold on the government apparatus and his revolutionary prestige could be completely liquidated. In that case he would have a combination of forces capable of making an effective bid for power. If the reader wonders how the Church might support the arch Jacobin and arch anti-clerical of the past decade, he may be helped to grasp the logic of politics involved by contemplating the evolution of such a figure as Alfred E. Smith from the shining hero of the liberals into the darling of the Liberty League and the Union League Club.

### Distribution of Land

To consolidate his peasant base and emphasize his differences with Calles, General Cardenas greatly speeded up the program of land distribution. In the first twenty months of his administration he awarded nearly four and one-half million hectares of land to about three thousand villages. Thereby he distributed over half as much land as all of his predecessors together. However, one must not get the impression that the Mexican agrarian problem is now in a fair way to being solved. Here are a few of the reasons:

1. Only the larger villages are eligible. About two-thirds of the recorded rural settlements in Mexico are not entitled to receive any land under the law.
2. The majority of those eligible are too terrorized to apply for land. Cardenas may not be expected to slow up, not only on the basis of the precedents of Mexican history and the superior sweeping powers of new brooms, but because the Agrarian Department is actually running out of applications for land, with the bulk of the eligible villages not yet benefited.
3. The law does not propose to do away with the latifundia. The great estates, where touched, have been trimmed, not carved up, and generally only of their poorest lands.
4. Precisely those states where land concentration is greatest are the ones with the smallest rural settlements ineligible under the law.
5. The land is not being confiscated except where previous robbery of village lands can be legally proved. Out of the first 1,649 distributions only sixty-six were such "restitutions" of stolen lands. Since then (January 1st, 1937) "restitutions" have practically ceased.
6. The economic and hence political power of the hacendados is not being seriously impaired. They are compensated for the land taken by payment in agrarian bonds, which bonds are acceptable in payment of taxes. Where improved lands are taken, some improvements are paid for in cash.
7. The amounts distributed even to the eligible villages are in general inadequate for the maintenance of life. The average per

Cardenas set about at once quietly patching up the deliberately aggravated conflict with the Church: he permitted the harshest laws to lapse, let the closed churches reopen, arranged for the courts to "revise" the legal seizures of Church property by the government. The Clergy had long been trying to evade these property laws by "selling" their holdings to trusted parishioners and lay leaders of the Church apparatus. Now the courts repeatedly found that these "innocent third parties" as "purchasers in good faith" should not have been disturbed in their possession of the properties in question, and that restitution should be made. The Church-State tension grew noticeably weaker.

But his problems with the peasantry were by no means completely solved either. In breaking with Calles he was glad of all the band-wagon jumpers he could get. Among them were Fortes Gil, chairman of the National Revolutionary Party, and official patron of the National Peasants League. He was a potential rival for the post of Jefe Maximo: Cardenas could not altogether trust him, nor could he rest secure until he had grouped the organized peasants

around his person. Another Callista whose support he was glad to accept was General Cedillo. An old revolutionary leader, a military man, the governor and absolute boss for the better part of a decade of the rich state of San Luis Potosi, and the possessor of a vast and well equipped private armed force, he was a power to be reckoned with. In latter years, following the trajectory of the other "Men of the Revolution," Cedillo had become rich, a big landowner, conservative, and increasingly popular with the Catholic clerical party. Cardenas put him in his cabinet in the influential post of Minister of Agriculture. This was effective in retaining Cedillo's support, but made it necessary that the President should keep his Minister of Agriculture from attending to the duties of his office which would bring him into contact with the peasantry outside his domain of San Luis Potosi: it was more than ever imperative that General Cardenas should continue his trips around the countryside and personally attend to land distribution, irrigation, school installations, and road openings. The presidential palace still continues to be vacant most of the time.

### Books of the Age

## The Majesty of Reaction

By LYMAN FRASER

Reaction seldom appears in its own face; it disguises itself in the face of something that is calculated to impress the victims of reaction. At this moment in history British reaction pursues its unclean purposes wrapped in the majestic trappings of a monarchy that is becoming increasingly awesome and sanctified, thrust always further beyond the level of the multitude. Criticism of the king is discouraged and there is practically none of it. No anti-monarchical sentiment is evident, at least none that is vocal, not even in the Labor Party. The only good form is to sing: God bless the king!

But this contrasts strongly with the situation a century ago. Then, too, the monarchy was the centre of reaction, but probably more people damned the king than blest him. There was violent criticism of the monarchy and much remained of the republican sentiment created by the Jacobin revolution. When George IV died, amidst the dead monarch overwhelmed the cries of "Long live the king!" William IV was contemptuously described in the press as "weak, ignorant, commonplace." There was bitter criticism, too, of Queen Victoria, so bitter that the lady threatened in 1854, as Kingsley Martin relates, to resign "and retire to private life." Much republican sentiment existed in later years; many of Swinburne's poems throbbed with the anti-monarchical spirit, while the imperialist conservative Joseph Chamberlain speculated on abolition of the monarchy. The early labor movement was republican and shortly before the World War the king was characterized by Keir Hardie in parliament as a man who might have been a loafer if not born within the royal purple.

Why the change? Kingsley Martin toys with a number of answers but nowhere makes the "why" clear. He sees vaguely that imperialism was a factor but does not realize that it is the basic factor, involving a fundamental change in capitalism. One hundred years ago Britain was still in the stage of competitive industrial capitalism. The bourgeoisie had not completed its liberal revolution. Britain was still a colonial power but colonial possessions were condemned by many people, among them the future imperialist Disraeli, who described colonies as "millstones" around the nation's neck. By 1870-80 Britain was definitely in the stage of finance capitalism and imperialism, and the sanctification of the monarchy began and steadily grew. There was constantly more reaction against liberalism, the financial oligarchy identified itself with the aristocracy, and the Crown became the mystical symbol of empire used to awe the Indians and other subject peoples. The monarch was useful in the intrigues of imperialist diplomacy—King Edward VII, who apparently reigned but did not govern, has been revealed in recent historical literature as a potent factor in forging the pre-war imperialist alliance of Britain, France and Russia against Germany.

The irrational majesty of monarchy was rationally conceived to serve the purposes of reaction. That is all the more necessary today as British capitalism and imperialism are definitely in decline. Britain is economically shrinking, but it would shrink still more if not for the imperialist profits of overseas exploitation, and the shrinkage objectively prepares the way for a struggle against the monarchy, which serves

the imperialist bourgeois, might permit an independent revolutionary struggle of the working class. As capitalism declines, it emphasizes the irrational, and the irrational majesty and sanctity of the monarchy becomes a means of preventing a rational approach to social problems. It is no historical accident that fascism, the final expression of declining capitalism, erects the irrational into a system in all realms of social life. We, too, have the irrational majesty of the Supreme Court, which acquired its awesome character only after the Civil War, its increasing power correlating perfectly with the increasing power of American finance capital. . . . Kingsley Martin explains the majesty and awe created around the monarchy in psychological terms—providing the masses with splendor and color to "compensate" them for their drab lives and a chance to indulge the "natural capacity for devotion to an ideal personality." What that means, in simple words, is that the monarchy is opium for the masses who are robbed by those who profit from the system that uses the monarchy to promote their interests.

Nor is that the only way, however, in which the monarchy serves reaction against the people. The royal family had much to do with seducing Ramsay MacDonald and his associates from their allegiance to the Labor Party and the working class, in forming the "national" government that struck such a severe blow at the political progress and power of the working class. But like all good British liberals (and, unfortunately, laborites) Kingsley Martin accepts the monarchy while urging people to be "sensible" about it. And he justifies that acceptance by arguing that the monarchy is a bulwark against fascism—"if we drop the trappings of monarchy in the gutter, as one radical put it, Germany has taught us that some gutter-snipe (or house painter with a mission) may pick them up." There is liberalism in all its glory today! Observe the contempt for the masses: they need and must have the irrational majesty of monarchy or of a substitute, children who can never grow up. Observe the dangerous illusion (which the Communist Party of Britain may yet come to share, as it now shares in the illusion that the Empire must be defended against the threat of the imperialism of fascist Germany) that the monarchy is a progressive force that may save the people against fascism. On the contrary, when the situation becomes tense, the monarchy may itself aid the coming of fascism (as in Italy) or it will be brushed aside by the very reaction it serves if a new face is needed to disguise reaction.

There are other reactionary aspects to the British monarchy, among them the ideological sanc-

### Censor Stifles Workers Press

(Continued from Page 1)

Under the Negrin government, reaction grows apace in Loyalist Spain. We have before us the issues of La Batalla for the week of May 16 to 22. They are pitifully mutilated by the censor. Established originally to prevent news stories from revealing military secrets, the censorship has been extended to politics. The degree to which labor and revolutionary papers meet with political censorship is a measure of the growing reaction in Spain. On one day La Batalla appears with its front page all smashed in, blanks and blurs where the editorials and leading articles should be. For five successive days they try in vain to publish a restrained editorial analyzing the May clashes in Barcelona and Catalonia. They are forced to develop new ways of hinting to their readers that the editorials they publish do not represent their full position. One of the devices meant to warn the reader, which finally got by the censor largely because it was addressed to him, and in Spain even ruthlessness is tempered with personal chivalry, is printed below. It gives the American reader some slight idea of what La Batalla is up against: It is taken from La Batalla of May 20:

Mr. Censor: Will you permit us a few brief observations? We do not know the ideas you profess. We do not wish to know them. We know only one thing: that since the censorship was established in Barcelona and especially for the last three days, all the newspapers of Barcelona have been able to publish articles and political manifestos concerning the actual political situation while La Batalla has been unable to do so. A concrete case: All the newspapers have been able to express their opinions on the recent government crisis in Valencia and its solution.

La Batalla has not been permitted to do so. The two editorials written on the subject, in the most restrained manner, were not permitted publication. We venture to formulate a question: Are you making an exception of the P.O.U.M. and its central organ? Furthermore: Even when we publish extracts from other newspapers, sections are crossed out. Is it that the very act of our reprinting them gives them a special, subversive importance which they did not have before? We do not protest against all this. We know that it is absolutely useless to indulge in such protests. We only permit ourselves to make this observation.

It gives to an undemocratic spirit of caste. They will all totter and crash when the British working class begins its final struggle for power. For in the rational world of socialism there are no reactionary interests which must be served by the irrational.

The Action of the P.O.U.M. For months the P.O.U.M. had been denouncing the continual provocations of the counter-revolution and it immediately denounced the Assault Guard's attack on the Telephone Building as the decisive provocation of the reactionary sectors of the anti-fascist front. It upheld the armed protest of the workers.

It was the P.O.U.M.'s duty to stand actively with the workers who were spontaneously and heroically defending the threatened conquests of the Revolution with the general strike and barricades. The P.O.U.M. fulfilled its duty and met its responsibilities. Throughout this struggle it played its part as a revolutionary Marxist party, organizing the workers and attempting to bring them the leadership which they lacked.

The P.O.U.M. insisted upon the formation of the "Revolutionary Workers' Front," which now has taken hold of the imagination of the working class. The P.O.U.M. demanded the immediate organization of "Revolutionary Defense Committees." These Committees were set up in some districts and the Anarcho-Syndicalist workers of the F.A.I. and the C.N.T. were seen rubbing elbows with the Marxists of the P.O.U.M. During the week of fighting, the P.O.U.M. showed itself to be the only Party of the Revolution, and

# POUM Hits Slanderers Of Barcelona Workers

(Continued from Page 1)

The Bourgeoisie Regain the Power The likely desire of the working class to put an end to the power of reformism, not crowned with success, however. For four days, the workers stood ready, vigilant, awaiting the C.N.T.'s order to attack. The order never came. In fact the struggle was little more than a passive siege of the bourgeois forces. The National Confederation of Labour, held by the workers as the mass organization of the Revolution, recoiled before the question of workers' power. Caught up in the reins of the government, it tried to straddle the fence with a "union" of the opposing forces. That is why the revolutionary workers' fight of May 3 of 7 was essentially defensive instead of offensive.

The attitude of the C.N.T. did not fail to bring forth resistance and protests. The "Friends of Durruti" group brought the unanimous assent of the C.N.T. masses to the surface, but it was not able to take the lead.

The workers were fighting in the street without any definite goal or responsible leadership. The P.O.U.M. could only order and organize a strategic retreat. It helped the working class to avoid a desperate action which could have had sad consequences.

### The Partial Victory of the Bourgeoisie

The Generality of Catalonia, realizing that it was not able to throw off the force of the working class of all Catalonia, had to give up its police power to the Valencia Government. Five thousand Assault Guards from Madrid descended upon the city of Barcelona. At the same time the Central Government of the Republic obtained the complete transfer of the Aragon Army to its command. It is now no more than the Army of the East. "A provisional Minister" was set up with one representative each from the U.G.T., C.N.T., Esquerra and Peasants' Union.

The working class, although not getting their objectives, by this struggle obtained the discharge of those who were directly guilty, that is, Rodriguez Sala (P.S.U.C.) and Arteni Agude (Esquerra). By its action in the street, by its energetic struggle, it likewise forced the Stalinist and counter-revolutionaries to resign. The working class withdrew in order and showed that it was ready for the new struggle, which would be necessary to achieve its goal—the freedom of the working class.

### The Lesson of This Struggle

Friday the workers abandoned the struggle, remaining alert, however, and keeping their arms. The role of the P.O.U.M. grew with the experience in revolutionary struggle. The workers, who were deeply wounded by the capitulation of their trade unions federation, are now looking for a new lead in other directions. The P.O.U.M. should provide it for them.

The May days showed that the only way out of the present situation is for the working class to take power. To arrive at this, it is necessary to coordinate the revolutionary action of the masses by building the Revolutionary Workers' Front, gathering in all the organizations determined to completely crush fascism—a work which can only be realized with a military victory at the front and the triumph of the revolution behind the lines.

Thus the P.O.U.M., the revolutionary party, although attacked, slandered and threatened by the bourgeoisie, forges ahead to the end.

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The Magic of Monarchy, by Kingsley Martin. New York, Alfred A. Knopf, \$1.25.

(Continued on Page 5)



## DETROIT AUTO WORKERS CELEBRATE THEIR VICTORY

By STUART MEFFAN

On Sunday, February 21st at 6 p. m., there came together outside Ford's old plant in Highland Park, the largest number of union men ever assembled together in a parade in this town. In spite of rain and sleet all day, and cold winds and the threat of more rain at night, well over a thousand people on foot and about 6,000 in cars held a torch light parade from the plant of the Great Open Shopper (now shaking in his shoes) to the Michigan State Fair Grounds two and half miles away, tying up traffic on Detroit's Main Street for miles. Floats, workers garbed in historic costumes, led the way followed by a swell auto workers band, then the marchers, amongst whom the red and green tams of the Women's Emergency Brigades (Flint and Detroit) were very prominent. Lastly came workers in cars, five abreast blocking completely one side of Woodward Avenue, Detroit's proudest street. Torches lit up the whole parade, adding dramatic power to an already impressive sight.

### Disruption Fails

At the Fair Grounds however, the paid agents of the auto bosses tried another of their violent but futile attempts to break the workers morale, by exploding tear gas in various parts of the huge hall. Many, including women and small children, were driven out of the hall temporarily as union men opened windows and doors to disperse the fumes. One man who was caught (masquerading as a camera man) was beaten by indignant workers before being removed by police. Despite this upset, nearly everyone remained to hear the speeches and to applaud the narration of past victories and the hopes of more to come. The Womens Auxiliary paraded their float around the hall midst great cheering.

Chairman W. Reuther made a brief introductory talk, pointing

### Joint Program In Local 22

A joint declaration has just been published, signed by the Dressmakers' Progressive Group and the Left Wing Group of Local 22 I.L.G.W.U. The statement outlines a program on which both organizations will cooperate and upon which a joint ticket for the coming elections is being prepared.

The statement calls for:

1. The effective enforcement of the agreement.
2. Protection of minority crafts such as finishers, drapers, sample makers.
3. Prevention of racial discrimination.
4. Strict enforcement of guaranteed minimum wage scales.
5. Unemployment: (a) placing unemployed on jobs, (b) establishment of 30 hour week in order to absorb unemployed, (c) unemployment insurance and other social security legislation.
6. Support of the work-week system.
7. Control of hours and elimination of open shops.
8. Enforcement of conditions in out-of-town dress shops.
9. Unionization of the cotton garment industry.
10. For higher minimums in allied trades.

The joint statement closes with an appeal to dressmakers to support the platform and to vote for the united ticket.

out that now we are on the very doorstep of Henry Ford, the man whom, most of all, the workers of Detroit would like to put in his place. Several sit down strikers spoke briefly and to the point, warning that G. M. would still try to use company unions, and thanking other locals for their help. One stressed the importance of periodic demonstrations in the streets, another related his experience of graduating from a one man striker—always losing his job, clear thru to a sit-down striker now back at work. Mrs. Averill of the Womens Auxiliary of Detroit made an eloquent appeal to the women present to join the Auxiliary. Brother Hartney of the Workers Alliance who spoke next was greeted with much applause, on account of the splendid fight he put up as helper to the Welfare Committee of the Cadillac and Fleetwood strikers. He spoke of plans to get welfare for union men until they got their first pay.

At this point a very agreeable diversion was caused by the singing of a song by that oldest of sit down strikers Brother Bill Purley, who has a good voice despite his 62 years. The refrain was "The old G.M., it ain't what it used to be." Then a masked figure of a Ford worker from the assembly line was introduced. Those who know Ford and his system will understand that this was no stage act. It created a profound effect. In a few words, the figure assured us that very soon he would be back without the mask.

### Chrysler Is Next!

The next speaker, the head of the Detroit Organization, Frankenstein told the meeting that 75,000 men were organized in Detroit, and that the result was already shown in \$75,000,000 increase in wages. He added that the next step (now being carried out) was to get union recognition from Chrysler. The applause was prolonged as he announced 10,000 new members in the Briggs Body Corporation, one of the worst shops in Detroit. In the regretted absence of Phil Murray, chairman of the S.W.O.C., unavoidably detained in the miners negotiations for a new agreement, Paul Fuller, Sub-Regional Director for Ohio, gave us an outline of the C.I.O.'s immediate program. He congratulated the U.A.W.A. on its victories, told us of the approaching battle in the steel industry to be followed by an attack on the textile manufacturers, noted payers of starvation wages. He reaffirmed the solidarity of the workers in the mass production industry.

Lastly Homer Martin, president of the U.A.W.A., whose fighting speeches have inspired the auto workers in their recent struggles told us how the big business men were desperately trying to resurrect "ghosts" to hold back the march of labor. He mentioned Hoover's attack on Supreme Court changes and the futile mumbblings of Green. Urging the union on to even greater accomplishments, Martin pledged the efforts of the officials towards getting a living annual wage, a slowing down of the speed-up, a reduction in hours, thus giving all workers a chance to live a decent life. After this the meeting dispersed amidst congratulations and optimism as to the future.

One of the problems facing the union is the hiring of a larger hall for mass meetings. The only place in Detroit likely to hold the union in a few months is Navin Field, half-owned by Walter O. Briggs, of infamous reputation amongst auto workers! In spite of the difficulty this correspondent wishes all our problems were of this nature.

## ON THE LABOR FRONT

● "DOUGLAS STRIKERS quit before guns" is the N. Y. Times caption describing the eviction and arrest of 343 sit-down strikers in the Douglas Aircraft plant in Santa Monica, Cal. To oust these 343 strikers it took 350 officers armed with tear gas and machine guns, besides the usual arms carried by the minions of the law.

● HENRY DISSTON & SONS granted a 10% raise to its 2,000 employees in Philadelphia. The raise came after the Amalgamated Association of Iron and Steel Workers had organized the plant and demanded a 25% raise.

● 1400 "SANDHOGS" (subway and tunnel workers) returned to work after an adjustment of a jurisdictional dispute among a number of unions. It is in the course of this strike that Norman Redwood was slain.

● STEEL WORKERS have joined the Amalgamated Association in large numbers recently. Clinton Golden, Pittsburgh Director, claimed a membership of 150,000 and

hoped to have a majority of the workers signed up within a month.

● FANSTEEL sit-down strikers were finally ejected after a surprise attack by sixty deputies. Using tear and knockout gas in great profusion, the police met stiff resistance but finally overcame the strikers who were ill from the tear and knockout gas.

Owners of the firm had steadfastly refused to accept any settlement which implied even tacit recognition of the union.

● RAILWAY WORKERS have made demands upon the companies for a 20% increase in wages. This demand made by the Railway Labor Executive Association applies to some 800,000 workers in 16 unions. In addition the "Big Four" transportation brotherhoods, speaking for 300,000 workers have also asked for a 20% increase.

Other demands include full time employment for regularly assigned forces and two-thirds of full time for all stand-by forces. The 16 unions have also made proposals on how to handle the negotiations.

## Chinese Communist Party Renounces Class Struggle

By JIM CORK

THE New York Times of February 20 carries two dispatches on the Chinese situation, one from Nanking of a decision of the executive committee of the Kuomintang regarding its relations to the C.P. of China and the Chinese soviets, the other from Sian, giving the reaction of Chou En Lai, vice-chairman of the Soviet government to the proposal of the Kuomintang leadership. The Nanking dispatch by A. T. Steele reports that:

"... the Kuomintang (Nationalist party) decided at a plenary session yesterday to bury the hatchet with its long standing enemy, the Chinese Communist Party, if agreement is possible."

The conditions set down by the Kuomintang Executive as a basis for agreement were as follows:

1. Break-up of the Red Armies.
2. Liquidation of the Soviet Government in northwest China.
3. Cessation of all propaganda for Communism.
4. Renunciation of the doctrine of class struggle.

### Communist Party Surrenders

The Sian dispatch by Anthony Billingham, the result of a direct personal interview, reports Chou En Lai as saying that if Nanking stops the civil war against the soviets, widens the basis for representation in the government (i.e., includes the C.P.) and conducts a united national struggle against Japan, then the C.P. will agree to the following:

"First, to cease all opposition to the Nanking government.

"Second, to cease confiscation of lands and other properties of landlords and wealthy persons.

"Third, denunciation of the soviet system of communism, and arrangement for a special area for Communist occupation under the authority of Nanking.

"In this region," Mr. Chou explained, "we will establish a truly democratic form of government with all people voting, instead of restricting the vote only to peasants and workers as obtains under the soviet system."

"... will put our army under the direction of the Nanking Military Affairs Commission. . . ."

It is quite evident from the above that the People's Front patch-up is practically an accomplished fact. Chou's proposals mean virtual acceptance of the terms of the Kuomintang. There are no fundamental points of disagreement between the two sets of proposals, which cannot be adjusted. This is thoroly indicated by Chou's answer when asked what he thought of Nanking's possible reaction to his proposals:

"Nanking will follow a middle path. It will finally agree to sufficient of these terms that the Communists, by also seeking middle ground, can come to terms with the central government."

The C.P.'s agreement to give up the struggle for Communism, to give up the class struggle, to liquidate the class base of the Soviets, to subordinate the Red Army to Nanking all of which are contained in Chan's proposals comes as no surprise. It is an inevitable and logical result of the People's Front line. As in 1925-28, the C.P. agrees to disarm itself in pursuit of a chimerical "unity," at a time when the concrete situation calls for the exact opposite tactic, a resurgence of bold independent leadership.

### Partners In Treachery

It is clear why the Kuomintang made the proposals, and what they hope to gain from their acceptance. The feeling of the Chinese masses is at such white heat against the Japanese oppressors that the Kuomintang must seem to make some show of resistance against Japan. Only in this way can it place itself at the head of the anti-Japanese movement. The only other possible competitor for leadership is the C.P. The proposals of the Kuomintang to the C.P., therefore, have the double purpose of destroying the potential leadership of the C.P. and insuring its own. The demand by the Kuomintang that the C.P. give up the class struggle is therefore a good piece of class struggle strategy on its part. The acceptance by the C.P. of self-disarmament guarantees leadership to the bourgeoisie in the coming events. How many more haunting spectres of 1925-28 are necessary to educate the Comintern as to how the bourgeoisie will use this leadership? Chiang Kai-Shek came to terms with imperialism then, and he will do it again,

to salvage the interests of the bourgeoisie at the expense of the worker and peasant masses. Having the whole "nation" behind it, a welcome result achieved with the kind cooperation of the C.P., only gives the native bourgeoisie greater bargaining power for wresting greater concessions from world imperialism.

### How To Fight Japan?

It would be idle to deny that the concrete situation in China today calls for a vigorous launching of the national anti-imperialist drive against Japan as the next step. The mistake of the Comintern, however, is the incorrect conclusions it draws from the necessity of making that fight, and the wrong social base from which it predicates the fight should be made. The fight against Japanese imperialism must not be limited to it alone but must be broadened into the fight against world imperialism as such. No illusions as to the innocence of England and America as potential friends of the Chinese people must be nourished. Secondly, the struggle against Japanese or any other imperialism cannot succeed under the leadership of the bourgeoisie. A successful struggle against imperialism in a colonial or semi-colonial country is possible only by the disruption of capitalist productive relations and consequently, only under the leadership of the proletariat. The bourgeoisie understands this well enough and therefore its readiness to compromise with imperialism at some stage of the struggle. And finally and most important, the readiness for sacrifice, for continuous struggle on the part of the masses can be guaranteed only if they understand that its success means their economic and social emancipation inside China. Therefore the class struggle inside China against the bourgeoisie, landlords and military cliques must not be dropped; on the contrary, it must be intensified. In other words, only a revolutionary struggle led simultaneously by the Communist Party against the twin evils of imperialism and class exploitation inside can guarantee success to the Chinese revolution.

### Opening Gates to Fascism

Chou En Lai ended his interview with the following remarks, amongst others:

"... we will not . . . alter our fundamental aims. We carry these purposes in our minds and hearts. . . . We probably will never achieve our aims within my lifetime but we will win in the end."

What criminal self-deception—to hold on to the name, the shadow, and give up the substance. One doesn't arrive miraculously at Communism by giving up the principled struggle for it. His fear about not realizing Communism in his lifetime is thus well founded!

I close with the mention of a third dispatch on China in the same issue of the 20 of February, Chiang Kai-shek's radio appeal for support of his so-called "New Life Movement," as the agency for national revival. It is a little known fact that his agitation for this movement exhibits the earmarks of a Fascist authoritarian outlook. As a matter of fact, he has quoted Germany and Italy as examples of countries which in his opinion have achieved by authoritarian rule, a national revival.

The People's Front line, now practically consummated gives direct help to the Chinese bourgeoisie in achieving their long range perspective, so ominously, if yet but faintly outlined by their outstanding leader, Chiang Kai-shek.

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