

The O'Connell Bill

by Will Herberg

THE Roosevelt Administration has never hidden its hostility to Congressional neutrality legislation, especially to the law now in effect. Quite naturally, it regards such legislation as a serious obstacle to its fundamental line of foreign policy which, at the present moment, is orientated upon an Anglo-American alliance disguised as "quarantining the aggressors," "concerted action of the peace-loving democracies" or "collective security." Roosevelt, it will be remembered, has openly expressed his dissatisfaction with all of the neutrality laws, except the January 8, 1937 joint resolution on Spain; he is especially displeased with the refusal of Congress to grant the Executive more ample discretionary powers. Clearly, the practical implementing of the "quarantine" policy is gravely hampered by any sort of mandatory provisions binding on the President but, without some sort of mandatory provisions, there can be no neutrality legislation in the proper sense of the term.

What the Administration is aiming at, therefore, is really the repeal of all neutrality legislation whatsoever. For a number of reasons, however, the Administration campaign cannot take this form directly. In the first place, popular sentiment is so strongly in favor of legislation to keep us out of war that it would be foolhardy to risk a head-on collision with it. A more indirect approach, moreover, has its own advantages. Might it not be possible to "amend" the existing laws so ingeniously as to convert them in reality into an instrument of Administration diplomacy, while allowing them to retain the name of neutrality legislation for the sake of effect? This is essentially the purpose of the so-called O'Connell "peace" bill, now so vociferously hailed by the Stalinists and other jingoes.

What "modification" does the O'Connell bill propose in the present laws? Merely this: to empower the President, should he find that a state of war exists anywhere, to "brand the aggressor"—that is, to designate one of the belligerents as the aggressor and the other as the aggrieved party—and then to order the application of the sanctions provided for (prohibition on the export of munitions and war materials, ban on loans, etc.) against the one but not against the other. Is it necessary to point out that this would facilitate exactly what all neutrality legislation aims to avoid—the involvement of the United States in foreign war situations? Whatever else the O'Connell bill may be, whatever may be its merits or demerits, it is certainly not a neutrality law!

It has become almost a platitude that, in most modern wars, the very concept of "aggressor" is meaningless and largely a matter of diplomatic camouflage, as far as the imperialist powers are concerned. In picking the "aggressor" to "brand," the President would obviously be guided not by moral considerations of right and justice but by the demands of his general foreign policy. Naturally, he would designate as "aggressor" that power or group of powers to whom the United States stood in a particularly hostile relation at the moment because of imperialist rivalries, while the other side would be made to appear as the inoffensive victim of aggression. In the hands of the President, the arbitrary power to "brand the aggressor" would inevitably become an instru-

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Workers Age

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FDR Urges "Spending"

Outlines Four And A Half Billion Dollar Plan; Expect Opposition

A four-and-a-half billion dollar lending-spending-credit expansion program to meet the new depression was proposed to Congress last week by President Roosevelt and reinforced by a "fireside talk" the same evening.

The general objective of the plan, according to the President, is to increase national income in the next few years from the present level of \$56,000,000,000 to about \$80,000,000,000 a year. The plan itself falls into three general divisions:

1. Treasury expenditures of \$1,250,000,000 for the W.P.A. to carry it to February 1, 1938, and smaller sums for the N.Y.A. and other relief agencies—a total of \$1,550,000,000.

2. R.C.F. loans amounting to \$1,500,000,000 to aid business as well as states and their subdivisions.

3. Expansion of credit thru the sterilization of \$1,400,000,000 of gold and the reduction of Federal Reserve requirements by \$750,000,000.

4. A public-works program amounting to \$1,462,000,000.

These proposals are expected to meet with considerable opposition in Congress despite the fact that so much government "spending" in an election year will be generally welcome. Very probably efforts will be made in the House and Senate to "earmark" certain funds, especially those assigned to the W.P.A., in order to limit the President's freedom of action in this field which is as political as it is financial.

(Read the editorial on page 4.
THE EDITOR.)

British-Italian Pact is Now Signed

The much-heralded treaty between Great Britain and fascist Italy was finally signed last week at Rome. In its main lines, it follows the account given in the last issue of this paper. Relations in the Mediterranean and Africa are covered in special instruments. England promises to work in the League of Nations for the recognition of the Italian conquest of Ethiopia. Italy, on its part, promises to withdraw its troops from Spain upon the conclusion of the civil war, the victory of the fascist insurgents being taken for granted on both sides. Despite these promises, the Anglo-Italian struggle for Spain will, of course, continue.

From Paris, it was reported last week that negotiations with Italy for a similar agreement will soon be initiated. It is understood that neither the Ethiopian nor the Spanish question will serve as an "obstacle"; that is, the "proper concessions" will be made to Italy in these fields.

The Italian treaty is the first big result of the Prime Minister Chamberlain's vigorous prosecution of

VIENNESE WALTZ



DALADIER IS GRANTED DICTATORIAL POWERS

France Enters Pre-Fascist Period Thru Emergency Decree Rule; Socialists And Communists Give Support To New Rightist Regime

The administrative committee of the French Socialist Party, dominated by the Blum right wing, took action last week to dissolve the socialist federation of the Paris region, the party's chief stronghold, because of its militant socialist activities in the recent governmental crisis. The secretary of the Seine Federation is Marceau Pivert, and the Revolutionary Left tendency of which Pivert is the head has decisive influence in the Paris region. Pivert himself was barred from holding party office for three years.

The official reason for the dissolution was the anti-Senate demonstration arranged by the Seine Federation on Thursday, April 8. Altho this demonstration was essentially a protest against the reactionary Senate's sabotage of the Blum cabinet, the S.P. leadership branded it as a "violation of discipline" and threatened to "rebuild the party from top to bottom" in order to stamp out such activities. Thus the deep crisis in French politics is beginning to penetrate the Socialist Party. . . .

France's pre-fascist period of emergency-decree rule has been launched. By the almost unanimous vote of 508 to 12, the Chamber of Deputies last week granted Premier Daladier virtually dictatorial power until July 31, "power . . . to take measures judged indispensable to meet the needs of national defense and to restore the economy and finances of the nation." The very next day, this action was endorsed in the Senate by a vote of 288 to 1. It is now generally expected Parliament will adjourn until November so that the new "National Defense" cabinet

the Tory policy of "wooing the dictators." There is a firm belief in well-informed London circles that Chamberlain is now planning a new move of "conciliation" towards Germany.

can very likely count on a six-month period of unhampered rule unless some extraordinary crisis breaks in the meanwhile. The grant of emergency powers will probably be extended when it expires.

Earlier in the day, Daladier had received a vote of confidence in the Chamber of 507 to 5. Virtually the entire Right supported him as did his own party, the Radical-Socialists, and other Center elements. The socialists decided to back the government by the close vote of 58 to 45. The communists also fell in line, with some meaningless reservations, despite the fact that the Daladier cabinet is avowedly an anti-Red regime. "Communists joined in the applause," according to an A. P. dispatch dated April 12, "when the Premier said the government was determined to 'defend the integrity of the empire.' The socialists remained silent." Daladier's declaration was "categorical and firm enough," according to the New York Times (April 13), "to satisfy even M. Marin and M. Flandin," two notoriously reactionary figures.

Thru the instrumentality of socialist and communist leaders, Daladier also attempted to break the back of the great strike movement that was beginning to get under way in protest against worsening economic conditions and the increasing reaction in domestic and foreign policy. Strikers in nationalized airplane and airplane-motor factories were "prevailed" upon to abandon their right under the 40-hour week law and work 45 hours "in the interests of national defense" at a wage increase of 7%—for a 12½% increase in hours!

The course of the new government is not difficult to forecast since some of its authoritative spokesmen have already outlined the main points: a financial policy that will place heavier burdens than ever on the masses; restrictive labor legislation and vigorous

CIO Plans Convention

Conference Takes Steps To Set Up Permanent Organization

Steps towards broadening the responsibility for the guidance of the organization and towards a more permanent setup, were taken last week at a national conference of the Committee for Industrial Organization in Washington.

The most significant decision of the assembled union leaders was to call a regular constitutional convention of the C.I.O. in September or October in order to establish the movement on a more permanent basis; a committee of Philip Murray and Sidney Hillman was designated to make the necessary arrangements. The vote on this proposal was unanimous, with Julius Hochman, representative of the I.L.G.W.U. abstaining since he did not have the power to act on such a question without previous authorization of the general executive board of his union.

Spokesmen of leading C.I.O. unions emphasized that the consolidation of the C.I.O. on a permanent basis did not close the door to eventual trade-union unity. The stronger and more effective the CIO becomes, they pointed out, the greater the likelihood of the achievement of unity on an equal basis, with the A. F. of L. making the necessary concessions in the direction of industrial unionism. Another effort at negotiations with the A. F. of L. will be made before the convention is finally called, it was rumored at Washington.

In order to broaden the leadership of the C.I.O., which has hitherto been functioning in an informal manner, two new vice-presidencies and four standing committees were created. The two vice-presidents are Philip Murray, chairman of the S.W.O.C., and Sid-

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government action against "industrial disorder"; war preparations at an even more feverish pace; a foreign policy hewing closer than ever to the line of the British Foreign Office and implying a "conciliatory" approach towards the fascist dictators and an increasingly anti-Soviet attitude. Premier Daladier's pro-German orientation and Foreign Minister Bonnet's anti-Sovietism are notorious. Significant also is Daladier's intimate connection with the French General Staff.

Thus France continues to tread the path along which Germany descended to the hell of Hitlerism. The People's Front, which was to save the country from fascism and lead to a socialist France, has actually served as a transition to an increasingly right-wing regime already outside the People's Front and ruling by means of emergency decrees. Yet this regime is being supported by the parties of the People's Front even more completely than the emergency-decree regime of Bruening was supported by the social-democrats!

France's road to fascism is by no means identical with Germany's but in both cases the way is opened by a People's Front coalition leading to the abandonment of independent working-class action for the sake of suicidal alliances with the so-called "democratic" sections of the bourgeoisie.

Philadelphia:
SUNDAY, APRIL 24
8:30 P.M.

JAY LOVESTONE
"Europe in Flames"

Philadelphia:
YWCA, 18th and
ARCH STREETS

Viewed from the Left

By Politicus

Profits and Principles

IN THE midst of the anti-New Dealers' lamentations about government interference in business comes the request of the railroads for some serious "interference" of any sort, so long as it is built around a substantial subsidy, and preferably if it includes wage-cuts or some sort of regulation of the labor unions. Not a single employing-class voice is raised against this proposed grant of billions (to start with) to the diseased railroads. Nobody seems excited about "state socialism"; everybody wants the government to step in deeply. Why? Well, the choice in the railroad industry is government financing, and concomitant regulatory practices, or complete bankruptcy. The gentlemen of industry and finance take as their premise not the tenets of any particular political philosophy but their economic needs of the moment—at all times must profit-making be preserved, with or without, thru or against, the government, and let principles fall where they may!

The railroads are an industry of basic importance in the structure of American capitalism both economically and historically. As a matter of fact they are the trail-blazers of capital expansion in this country, riding rough-shod over the Western farmers and the shanghaied immigrant workers, corrupting the political democracy of the frontier, conniving with the up-and-coming young capitalists of the Rockefeller type to crush small-time rivals and foster monopoly, pioneering in "frenzied finance" and corrupt stock manipulations, defying the most elementary rights of labor by the use of the armed forces of the government and triumphantly forestalling any attempt at government regulation by means of the wholesale purchase of politicians and blustering defiance of the demands of the farmers, shippers and workers.

Now these railroads, broken and sick, toothlessly mumble their repentance for the sins of their youth and seek to lead the way to a typical American form of state capitalism, just as once they led the campaign against any sort of government regulation. Whatever final form state capitalism takes here, it stands out as the increasingly dominant politico-economic tendency of our time. On the one hand, it arises from the aid rushed to the ailing industries of which railroads, mining and shipping are outstanding examples, while, on the other, the "healthy" industries—steel, machinery, autos, oil, etc., play such an important role in war as to demand close governmental supervision as early as the present period of war preparations. The general crisis in which American capitalism finds itself was marked most significantly by the creation of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation under Hoover's regime and by its increasingly dominant role under the New Deal, especially as regards "spending" to fight the depression.

The critical situation, such as exists in the railroad industry, is made the most of by the employing-class group, as such, and by the government. It becomes a "situation calling for sacrifices," for "common efforts" of both capital and labor. Thus, at the very beginning, labor is called upon to make a choice between a threatened dissolution of the industry or yielding some of its hard-won rights for the dubious benefits of artificial respiration. Wage-cuts, either outright or thru road consolidation and mass discharges, now have government sanction. The power of the state, moral and economic, is used to undermine the unions. And in this sense, the reliance upon, and naive faith in, the New Deal that characterizes the American unions

Can War Stop Fascism?

A READER of the Workers Age from New York asks the following question: "You want to stop fascism—yet you are against a war of the democratic powers to stop fascism. Isn't there a contradiction? How can fascism be stopped as it develops?" Another reader from the same city writes: "What can be done to check fascism?"

1. About A "War To Stop Fascism"

No, there is no contradiction. Because it is our conviction, based on political logic and experience, that a war of the so-called "democratic" powers, such as England, France and the U. S. A., to "stop fascism" would not really stop fascism but would actually tend to bolster up reaction and stimulate the development of fascism where it does not yet dominate.

The "democratic" powers are imperialistic powers and therefore reactionary powers. They are interested not in bringing freedom and democracy to people abroad but in extending their imperialistic sway, in consolidating their imperialistic gains, in multiplying their imperialistic profits. Such powers are no longer capable of fighting progressive wars. Do you expect England, which has always adopted the friendliest attitude to fascism abroad, which more than once saved the Mussolini regime from collapse, which abandoned Ethiopia under cover of some sanc-

tionious phrases, which deliberately plotted to strangle Loyalist Spain thru the criminal "non-intervention" fraud, which is now "expecting this England to wage an anti-fascist war for freedom and democracy? Do you expect France, which is nothing but the continental errand-boy of the British Foreign Office and shares the guilt of strangling Republican Spain—do you expect this France to wage an anti-fascist war for freedom and democracy? Do you expect the United States, the patron of despotism and reaction in Latin America, without whom such bloody tyrants as Batista of Cuba or Vargas of Brazil or Trujillo of Santo Domingo could not maintain themselves for a moment—do you expect this United States to wage an anti-fascist war for freedom and democracy? You might just as well ask Ford, General Motors or U. S. Steel to wage a labor campaign for unionism and collective bargaining!

Should these "democratic" powers—whose democracy, such as it is, is strictly for home consumption—ever be engaged in a war with Germany, for example, what would be their aims and objectives? To lick Germany, of course, and to set narrow limits to its imperialistic strivings and pretensions. But that would not be all! The "democratic" powers would also be intensely interested in maintaining "law and order" in Germany, that is, in stifling the forces of popular revolution there, out of fear that the contagion might spread beyond the borders and infect their own sacred precincts. Should such danger of popular revolution arise, the "democratic" imperialists would eagerly rush to the assistance of their class brothers, the fascist imperialists, their enemies of yesterday, and help them ward off the "Red menace." Our army "to make the world safe for democracy" would then be turned into a police force of reaction to help keep the masses down. Let us recall how the "democratic" powers in 1918-1920 strove to destroy the new revolutionary regime in Russia and how they actually helped deliver Hungary to the butcher Horthy, a bloody fascist before his time. What, then, may we expect today, with the world situation so much tenuous, with international capitalism so much more jittery and uncertain of its future?

2. How To Stop Fascism

How, then, can we stop fascism? To answer this question, we must understand how fascism arises and under what conditions it becomes a real menace. All our experience teaches us that the danger of fascism arises in times of profound economic and social crisis under the impact of which the great masses of the people, especially the lower middle classes, are driven out of their usual political apathy, begin to grow discontented and rebellious, to seethe with unrest, to demand a change. If, under such circumstances, the labor movement is powerful, united and militant, it can win the confidence and support of these masses by showing them labor's way out of the crisis and thus lead them to socialism. But if, for any reason, labor fails in this duty history places upon it, the rebellious and discontented masses become the victims of pseudo-

"radical" demagogues who build a fascist movement out of them by promising them everything under the sun but who are really operating in the reactionary interests of big business. This is the real substance of the menace of fascism.

How shall we stop fascism? By winning away the great masses of the middle classes from the fascist demagogues, by destroying the social base of fascism-on-the-make! And this can be done only by the labor movement coming to the masses of the people with a program of far-reaching economic and social reform pointing towards socialism, only by the labor movement showing a real way out of the crisis as an alternative to the fascists. It is precisely here that the People's Front operates in such a suicidal manner. For the People's Front ties the labor movement to the capitalist parties in defense of the economic and political status-quo—which has become so thoroughly discredited and with which the popular masses are so discontented, or else there would be no real danger of fascism. In effect, the People's Front alienates the middle-class masses from the labor movement by identifying labor with the defense and maintenance of those conditions that have become hateful in their eyes; it leaves the field clear for the fascist demagogues. Thus the People's Front actually and in sober fact opens the way for fascism.

The only way to block fascism is to build up a strong, united and militant labor movement able to win the confidence and support of the masses of the people on the basis of a program of far-reaching economic and social reform. There is no other way. That is the lesson of history.

Furthermore, let England France or the United States be drawn into a war today and fascism, or a military dictatorship very close to fascism, would be raised into the saddle almost overnight. Totalitarian war, the only kind of war that can be waged today, requires a totalitarian regime. Let us not forget the "industrial-mobilization" plans of the War Department and what they will mean for our democracy at home.

In short, the "war to stop fascism" would not stop fascism at all; it would actually bolster up reaction abroad and promote the triumph of fascism at home. That is why we are against it!

What shall be done with the present neutrality legislation? Shall it be applied in the present Far Eastern crisis? Shall it be retained unchanged or shall it be modified? And, if so, how? These questions will be discussed by Will Herberg in the last article in this series.—The Editor.)

People's Front and Imperialist War

By JAY LOVSTONE

(The article below represents the second section of an address delivered by Jay Lovstone at the recent International Congress at Paris. The first section, dealing with the People's Front in America, appeared last week.—The Editor.)

WE ARE witnessing in our country gigantic and very clever preparations for arming the country to the teeth and for insuring its decisive role in the coming world war. At the same time, we must know that there is, alongside of the rising fever of chauvinism, a tremendous, tho confused, sentiment against imperialism. In no small measure is this sentiment pacifist. Yet, there is a good deal of feeling in the country that there is no earthly reason for the United States waging any war today. Very many have not forgotten how the United States got into the last war, "to make the world safe for democracy." As many are cynical about Wilson's promise "to keep us out of war" and about his saccharin coated "fourteen points." The element of revolution, the proletarian opposition to imperialism was never so small.

Our organization has joined the broad anti-war movement to carry on work along with other labor organizations, like the Socialist Party and big trade unions, on a common program. At the same time, we are also propagating our own revolutionary position.

The Stalinists are working overtime in their fight against the

The Stalinist Policy

Some serious problems arise here. It is, of course, correct to utilize the divisions amongst the imperialist powers for the purpose of aiding international working-class solidarity and for strengthening the international working-class movement. Especially is this correct for a working class in the U.S.S.R. However, on the basis of the People's Front policy, the Stalin regime is dividing the workers of the world rather than uniting them. Stalin and his puppets are working to help one group of imperialist powers against another—the so-called "great democracies" against the fascist powers.

The American Communist Party carries out this Stalin policy in the most criminal fashion. One will find in the New Masses, a Stalinist organ in New York, an appeal to Wall Street and its government to aid China on the basis of Wall Street's own imperialist interests. When the U.S.S. Panay was bombed and sunk on the Yangtze River, the Communist Party's auxiliary organizations issued the battle cry "Once is Enough!" Incidentally, let me say that the Panay was escorting and protecting Standard Oil tankers. The People's Front policy, as we know, is supposed to be based on the theory of collaboration between the working class and the middle class, or the little capitalists, for the purpose of aiding the latter. We need not wonder too long about the Standard Oil Corporation as a little capitalist. You all know that this is a Rockefeller outfit. You can all see how in practice the People's Front not only does not help the proletariat but, in the last resort, does not really protect even the little business man. In reality, the People's Front policy is conducive to the defense of the best interests of the bourgeoisie.

And in the big industrial districts where there is considerable labor opposition to Roosevelt's war program, the Communist Party goes out of the way to mis-educate its own members and to mislead the workers in order to have them become chauvinists in order to have them become willing

THEN AND NOW

I THINK we shall find ourselves drifting into war with Germany. . . . Regrettable as this would be, there would be compensations. The war would be more speedily ended and we would be in a strong position to aid the other great democracies in turning into the right paths! —Colonel House to President Wilson, in a letter dated June 16, 1915.

Just substitute "Japan" for "Germany" . . .

forces striving for peace. They have gone as far as to denounce these forces to the government and to pledge to the government that, in the event of a war, they will be the first to fight against any organization or group that is "disloyal." The Stalinist leader, Browder, has declared: "If there should arise in America anything similar to the situation in Spain, where the democratic republic, while repulsing the fascist invasion, was stabbed in the back by the uncontrolled extremists, then we, like our brothers in the Spanish Communist Party, would be in the forefront of the struggle to suppress such extremists who are the real agents of fascism, and render them harmless."

Everybody now knows what a Stalinist means when he says "render them harmless." Try to count the countless Bolsheviks murdered in the U.S.S.R. This is Stalin's way of "rendering them harmless."

(Continued on Page 5)

Changing Character Of Labor Law

By LYMAN FRASER

THE scope and aims of labor legislation offer one of the most important problems confronting the organized workers today. We are definitely in a period of increasing legislation to determine the rights and status of labor. And much of that legislation may prove a pitfall to ensnare the workers. The workers know how to react to labor legislation that is openly hostile. But "labor laws" fostered by the capitalist state and its liberal apologists may be in the nature of Greeks bearing gifts. Apparently "friendly" legislation may hide a threat to labor's independence and future.

It is elementary, of course, that every piece of labor legislation must be considered not only on its own merits but in relation to such legislation as a whole. That involves consideration of a series of other factors. For there is no such thing as labor legislation "in general." Labor legislation is always concrete, particular, immediate; not the expression of "general principles" or of "eternal justice" or of the abstract "rights of labor," but an expression of class interests and the balance of class forces which, in turn, are determined by the particular stage of capitalism.

The various stages of capitalism are important in relation to labor legislation. There have been three different stages in which, by and large, the character of labor legis-

lation was fundamentally different.

In the Early Stages Of Capitalism In the first stage of capitalism, up to and including the industrial revolution, labor legislation was definitely hostile to the workers. From Elizabethan times down to the beginnings of the nineteenth century, law after law was enacted against the workers: laws to "fix" (and lower) wages when scarcity of labor in England threatened to raise wages, laws to create artificially and brutally an "adequate" labor supply, laws to prevent the organization of labor unions. Somewhat similar laws were enacted in the American colonies, especially laws to "fix" wages and to prevent workers from migrating to the vacant lands of the frontier. The American "anti-conspiracy" laws, which made it a crime to strike or form unions, were not abolished until roughly fifty years after the Revolution of 1776. The labor legislation of this stage of capitalism was intended to fetter the workers; there was, moreover, no hypocrisy about it—the legislation was brutal and unashamed in its anti-labor intentions.

The second stage of capitalism and of labor legislation was marked by enactment of laws which, by and large, were intended to liberate labor within the limits of capitalist relations. Legislation against unions and strikes was repealed and the legality of both was recognized. One restriction after another upon labor unions was lifted, including the ban on picketing. In one domain after another, the "rights" of labor were recognized by law. That was the broad trend of labor legislation in the United States after the 1820's. Of course, that was

New Rivalries in Argentina

By Ellen Ward

IN THE Argentine, Dictator Justo has just turned over the government to Dictator Ortiz. It is true that the country went thru the forms of an election in September 1937, and the election mumbo-jumbo is somewhat more complicated and lifelike than it is in Mexico, let us say. In February of this year, the people "celebrated" the inauguration and the United States sent its six largest bombers—flying fortresses we call them—to help celebrate whose victory?

Roberto Ortiz, millionaire, lawyer, gambler, represents the interests of the rich landowners who are not unfriendly to the embryonic fascist movements which they held in reserve. On the day of the inauguration, John White, New York Times correspondent, cabled from Buenos Aires:

"Ortiz has the complete confidence of the business interests, both foreign and local, and he is pledged to continue those policies which have made Justo's administration one of the most successful in the country's history."

Successful for whom?

Why shouldn't the business interests be well pleased? Ortiz was finance minister in Dictator Justo's cabinet. At the same time, he was attorney for British interests in the Argentine—this means all utilities and railways—and he was the preferred candidate of the landowners and the reactionaries of the land. It is no secret that his election was secured by force and fraud. He has no majority in the present Chamber of Deputies but soon they will hold a new election and the political gangsters will secure him a majority in the next Chamber.

Fascism in Argentina is not the unified, organized force that it is in Brazil. It has as yet no important national leader like Plinio Salgado. The fascist Argentine Legion Civica is made up of some government employees, members of army

officers families and sons of large landowners.

There are over ten fascist groups defending the interests of the landowners in the different regions of the country.

Industry In Argentina

Argentina's extreme nationalism began to develop during the years of the depression. As in other Latin American lands, the economic crisis resulted in considerable expansion of native industry which began to supply articles purchased abroad before the depression. During the last half-decade, there has been considerable growth in the manufacture of shoes, textiles, canned goods, toilet preparations, glass, furniture, pneumatic tires and other commodities. Argentina's shoes are today as good as the British in quality and workmanship and the development in textiles is making Argentina independent of the foreign market, so much so that some of our own New England manufacturers, who in former years supplied the Argentine market, have been losing so rapidly that they have been compelled to transfer their whole plant to Buenos Aires.

Both of these groups are carrying on a campaign to win over the army to their program. The growing provincial newspapers are offered news telegraphed free of charge from Buenos Aires by Italian and German information bureaus. And even more influential than the newspapers is the propaganda bombarded by short wave from Rome and Berlin and from secret radio stations in the mountains of Peru and Chile.

People's Front In Argentina

To combat the activities of these fascist organizations a Popular Front was organized consisting of the Radicals (among the most conservative of the political groups, even more conservative than the French Radicals), the Progressives, the Democrats, the Socialists and the communists. This combination makes up about 85% of the electorate of Argentina but, up to the present, they have found that they could unite on one issue only—to carry thru one public act—a demonstration for the unveiling of the monument of President Saenz Pena—author of the secret ballot!

This public demonstration was followed by the withdrawal of the conservative Radical party, which controls 70% of the vote, while the socialists refused the support of the communists on any terms.

We see, then, that the opposition to the fascist groupings and to the

dictatorship in the government, is even less unified than the incipient fascist organizations themselves.

The United States government is most anxious to bring Argentina closer to her own imperialist scheme. This will be a little easier now that she has a little easier understanding with Great Britain. Prior to this understanding, it would have been much more difficult. American eagerness for closer friendship explains the sending of the flying fortresses to the inauguration of Ortiz, and White, the New York Times correspondent, cables:

"The presence of the giant U. S. bombers at the inauguration associated the United States with Argentina on this occasion in a manner in which no foreign country has participated in any inauguration in recent years."

The bombers carried President Roosevelt's good wishes for Ortiz's administration and the Argentine people seized upon this visit as an opportunity to reaffirm their faith in democracy and express their disapproval of the totalitarian states.

The same dispatch says that Argentina, like the other Latin American countries, has been subjected to such intense propaganda from Europe, especially Italy and Germany during the last year, that this propaganda has now become what the Spaniards call "contra-productive"—working to defeat its own aims.

Dr. Ortiz, in reply to President Roosevelt, pledged himself to an administration of democracy. But the working class knows that, in the name of peace and democracy, political knaves have carried out many a program against its interests, and in Argentina it appears that the workers have a long way to go before they can wring any political or economic concessions from their bosses, for they have not yet hammered out a leadership capable of speaking in their name.

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ROOSEVELT AND CONGRESS

THE dissension in the Democratic party, which has already reached the point where Roosevelt finds himself confronted with a hostile majority in a Congress overwhelmingly controlled by his own party, is not, of course, anything essentially new...

The country finds itself today in a deep economic depression but this depression is being faced with the attitude engendered by the previous period of economic revival. Decisive sections of big business want no more of Roosevelt liberalism which has given them—as the price of security for their economic system and the restoration of their profits to new high—social legislation, huge government "spending," new and relatively heavy taxes, the Wagner Act and the "encouragement" of the labor movement.

What is new at the moment is that these big-business interests are operating not merely thru the Republican party but thru an important section of the Democratic party as well. Among the Democrats in Congress, there is a strong reactionary element, almost indistinguishable from the Republicans in its hostility to the New Deal.

What we really have here is not merely dissension within a party but, in effect, a political struggle between two distinct and hostile parties. For a number of historical reasons, there has developed in this country a rigid and ossified two-party system that bears no relation to existing political realities.

The Congressional insurrection against the Administration has been greatly facilitated by the course the Administration itself has taken within the last year. Driven on by its foreign policy and war preparations, yielding to the growing pressure from the right, it has gradually scrapped one essential feature of the original New Deal after the other to the extent, indeed, that it soon reached the point where its first reaction to the recession was almost a carbon copy of Hoover's futilities of 1930 and 1931.

In this situation, labor's most valuable asset is its political independence. Its very effectiveness as a force against the anti-New Deal reaction depends upon it. And the final outcome of the far-reaching changes now under way on the political scene will be largely determined by the vigor and independence of labor's action in this moment of crisis.

British Imperialism and The Labor Movement

By GEORGE PADMORE

London, England. WHATEVER might have been the illusions of the British workers about imperialism in the past, today the mask is off. Imperialism stands condemned as the greatest enslaver of the overwhelming majority of humanity (Chinese, Indians, Africans, West Indians, etc.), and the chief cause of modern wars, as witnessed by Japan's conquest of Manchuria, Italy's war on Abyssinia, Berlin-Rome intervention in Spain, Japan's invasion of China, Hitler's insistent demand for colonies and his most recent "peaceful" annexation of Austria.

All these events occurring in rapid succession have served to emphasize what Marxists have been saying for decades: that war is inevitable in the epoch of imperialism. But war is merely "a continuation of politics by other means." And, precisely for this reason, it is necessary to explain to the masses the real international situation.

Imperialism Leads To War

It is necessary to repeat to them again and again how the world, having been divided up among a few great powers, the "dissatisfied" or fascist states are now trying to obtain markets, sources of raw materials, outlets for capital, etc., from the "satisfied" or so-called democratic powers. This question can only be settled by war. Therefore, it is only by abolishing imperialism that we can eliminate the menace of war.

So it is in the interest of the workers, who suffer most from war, to hasten the downfall of imperialism by helping the colonial peoples in their struggle for national freedom as the first step towards real social emancipation. Furthermore, for British workers to think of building socialism without first getting power, i.e., getting rid of the capitalist class at home, is self-deception and it is even more illusory to conceive of getting rid of the capitalists without smashing up the Empire. It therefore follows that the colonial peoples are the potential allies of the workers against a common enemy — the British imperialist class.

It is no accident that the two fundamental questions which stand before the working class in the present epoch are its attitude towards imperialist wars and the right to self-determination of the colonial peoples. These two questions are inseparable and form the touchstone of revolutionary socialism. "The socialists cannot reach their great aim (socialism) without fighting against every form of national oppression. . . . The socialist of a great nation or a nation possessing colonies who does not defend this right (self-determination) is a chauvinist" (Lenin). These, then are two principles of Marxist Leninism which admit of no compromise.

Let us examine the attitude of the three working-class parties in Britain on these questions. The Labor Party is basically a reformist organization and must of necessity be opportunist in practice. Its leaders suffer from all the illusions and deficiencies which have characterized the whole history of social-democracy. But, unlike many of their continental colleagues, they have remained typical Bourbons. They have learned nothing and forgotten nothing, despite all the tragic events of the post-war period.

Whatever illusions the rank-and-file may have about its leaders, the bourgeoisie knows that, in every great crisis of British imperialism, the overwhelming majority of the Labor leaders will line up behind them. Their support of the National Government's armament program is the best indication of coming events. The only scruple of the British Labor Party is that its imperialists should select the "right" enemy. In other words, they will not have the slightest embarrassment in supporting the National Government in war, if only the enemy is Italy, Germany or Japan.

On the question of self-determination, the record of the Labor governments is too well known. People who can bomb Indians struggling for independence and apply the most repressive measures to safeguard the interests of British capitalists in the African and West Indian colonies, are the last people in the world to support the cause of self-determination. About this the colonial peoples have no illusions.

Stalinism Betrays

The present attitude of the Communist Party towards imperialism war and colonial oppression is a tragedy. On no major issue does the party's policy so clearly demonstrate the contradiction between theory and practice as on these. While its Moscow leaders still continue to admit that war is inevitable under imperialism (see Stalin's famous interview with Roy Howard) and imperialism and Socialism are incompatible, the British Communist Party, in order to accommodate itself to the foreign diplomacy of the Soviet Union, pursues a policy identical with that of the Labor Party. Instead of taking advantage of the international situation to mobilize the workers for independent action, its leaders are re-echoing all the shibboleths of Transport House about "democracy" and "collective security thru the League of Nations."

And, in order to make their apostasy seem consistent with Leninism, they have found it necessary to divide world imperialism into two categories: the "good, peace-loving" powers (Britain, France and America) and the "bad, warlike" nations (Germany, Italy and Japan). And, as a corollary to this, the workers of Britain are to support the former group against the latter.

Similarly, the colonial peoples living under the yoke of British, French and American imperialism must forego their struggle for self-determination. (Continued on Page 6)

Four Special Lectures

Problems of Soviet Dictatorship

A critical examination of certain basic problems arising out of the experiences of the Soviet Union

By WILL HERBERG

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By Lambda

WORLD TODAY

French Revolutionary Left Appeals To C. P. Members On Stalin Purge

(We publish below the most important sections of an appeal to the rank and file of the French Communist Party issued by the Seine (Paris) Federation of the Socialist Party of France. The Seine Federation is headed by Marceau Pivert, leader of the Revolutionary Left tendency. The appeal opens with a moving description of the havoc wrought by the Stalin purge in recent years. In 1937, it is declared, no fewer than 6,000 executions took place, 70% of the victims being members of the Communist Party.—The Editor.)

COMRADES, if it were true that the country where socialism is being built produces such a proportion of traitors, spies and fascists in its directing and organizing sections, it would be the most terrible condemnation of the socialist civilization to which we aspire.

This is not possible. What then is the solution? Is it not rather that Stalin is destroying the old revolutionary basis to replace it by a new bureaucratic generation docile to the dictatorship? Is he not seeking to place on others the responsibility for the grave errors of his authoritarian policy?

In this case, it is the very foundation of the socialist state which is in danger.

Communist comrades, we are prepared with all our force to defend Soviet Russia against the calumnies, the greed and the menace of fascism arising on all its frontiers. But really effective protection lies as much in the vigilant solidarity of the international proletariat as in the material force of the Red Army.

It is this solidarity which is being imperilled by the Moscow trials, which have caused consternation and anguish in the ranks of the workers. . . . With you, we shall struggle for the social revolution.

With you, we shall lead the workers of the world to power.

With you, in full liberty, proletarian democracy and fraternity, we shall create a great united workers party.

But how can we do this if the workers everywhere are horrified, discouraged and demoralized by methods of repression, by calumnies and by proceedings which are death-wounds to socialism itself?

How can we create the atmosphere of loyalty and mutual esteem necessary to unity, if you allow it to be said that such irreproachable socialist fighters as Madeleine Paz or Theodore Dan are "spies" and "traitors"?

How can we defend the October Revolution if its founders are presented to us as objects of contempt and contumely?

How can we close up our ranks if you place before us the cruel alternative, defined by Leon Blum, "where speech is a danger and silence is cowardice"?

We refuse to be silent.

Communist comrades—speak! New massacres are being prepared. The extermination of the Marxist revolutionary wing is being pursued—the very force which will be most needed by the international working class movement in the coming storm.

Speak—comrades! If, as you say, your party is democratic, you can do much to stop this reign of lies and terror which is leading us all to the abyss. Speak—so that Stalin may hear!

Communist workers: In this hour of tragedy, the unity which together we so eagerly seek, the social revolution which together we so ardently desire, the peace and liberty of the world, these depend greatly on you and on what you decide in our common interests. We count on you!

THE circulation of the London Daily Worker, the C.P. paper, is rising. How? Some time ago, they employed some non-communist, a former oil salesman, as a racing tipster. He has had a very successful run of luck with his tips and the circulation of the Daily Worker is rising. The chief appeal of the party is this racing tipster; even Harry Pollitt has drawn attention to him in his public speeches. Daily Worker posters frequently read as follows: "WE GAVE THREE WINNERS TODAY!"

Jack Carney

Labor Notes and Facts

NEARLY half of the young men and women in this city are suffering from lack of economic opportunity, the Greater New York Fund reported recently on the basis of a study just completed by the Welfare Council. A sampling of 1% of the population between the ages of 16 and 24 indicated that about 400,000 young New Yorkers were unable to find jobs.

The percentage of youth unemployment for the city as a whole was put at 47.8.

Manhattan showed the highest ratio of joblessness, with 54.6% of its young men and women unable to find work. A wide variation in the concentration of unemployment was disclosed by an analysis based on health-center districts within the borough. In East Harlem, 70.3% were jobless, lower West Side 61.5%, central Harlem 61.0%, lower East Side 57.3%, Kips Bay and Lenox Hill 51.1%, Washington Heights 44.4% and Riverside 30.5%.

The study pointed out that the districts with the highest rate were those with unusually large foreign or Negro population. The Negro youth, as evidenced by the Harlem figures, face "more depressing conditions than any other group," the report said.

Information on the prevalence of unemployment in local districts has not been available in the past, the report says. In submitting the findings to the Greater New York Fund, the Welfare Council emphasized that some of the areas with high rates of joblessness have long been regarded as "sore spots" by social agencies.

DISTRESS OF RURAL YOUTH

A survey of "Rural Youth on Relief" was recently published by the Works Progress Administration and was cited by Aubrey Williams, Acting W.P.A. Administrator, as offering proof that federal aid to such youth must be continued and extended.

"During the past five years, more than 2,000,000 rural youths have received some form of government assistance," Mr. Williams said. "With the present surplus of youth on the land whom industry cannot immediately absorb, and with the oncoming masses of youth in both farm and non-farm rural territory who will be pressing for employment opportunities, federal aid is essential for the attainment of economic security by those impoverished young men and women."

The survey indicated, Mr. Williams added, that the status of young men and women in the low-income strata of rural society was largely the result of long-time trends in agriculture.

"All of the federal emergency agencies which have given direct or indirect aid to youth in relief limitations which have prevented a long-time approach to the problem of rural youth. . . . Most federal possibilities were set up primarily in urban terms, altho they have recently expanded their programs in rural areas."

I have already referred to the work of our organization in the struggle against imperialist war. It is most encouraging to us to be able to tell you that such mighty trade-union organizations as the Steel Organizing Workers Committee, the United Automobile Workers Union, the Aluminum Workers Union—all affiliates of the C.I.O.—have gone on record for an amendment to the Constitution of the country to require that the government shall not be able to go to war without first getting a referendum of the people on this question. It is rather "quaver" (to the superficial observer only, of course) that the Stalinists who are so anxious, in words, for defending the democratic rights of the workers, are the bitterest enemies of this proposed amendment which seeks at most, to give the workers the little right of at least laying something to say about their being butchered in an imperialist war.

Besides the above mentioned national trade-union organizations, the Chicago Federation of Labor, aggregating \$40,284,463, was distributed between January 1 and March 16, according to figures given the association by the Social Security Board. The average size of checks ranged from "the pitifully low figure of \$3.85 weekly in Tennessee to \$12.02 in Oregon." The New York average was \$11.66.

War and the Popular Front

(Continued from Page 3)

harmless," because they disagree with him and are loyal to the international revolutionary working-class movement.

The supporters of the People's Front policy make a lot of noise that the reason they resort to this course is that they desire to defend and preserve the rights of the workers at home. In effect, however, the supporters of the People's Front are the very first ones to abandon and to make impossible the preservation of the rights of the workers in the imperialist countries. In which way? How? The People's Front policy is based on undermining and excluding independent action by the working-class movement. And in the colonies, the People's Front governments and supporters resort to and render support to the most reactionary acts of the bourgeois democracies. The administration and domination of colonial peoples at the hands of the People's Front government do not differ in the slightest from the treatment accorded these peoples by the fascist regimes. We need but turn to French Morocco.

The watchword of the People's Front is supposed to be "unity." Unity with whom? Unity for whom and for what purpose? For unity in the ranks of labor against capitalist exploitation and oppression? No! It is the unity of the working-class organizations with the organizations of the enemy class on the basis of the program and defense of the interests of the enemy class and the perpetuation of its socio-economic system—capitalism, imperialism. This is not unity but disunity in so far as the working class and its interests are concerned.

I have already referred to the work of our organization in the struggle against imperialist war. It is most encouraging to us to be able to tell you that such mighty trade-union organizations as the Steel Organizing Workers Committee, the United Automobile Workers Union, the Aluminum Workers Union—all affiliates of the C.I.O.—have gone on record for an amendment to the Constitution of the country to require that the government shall not be able to go to war without first getting a referendum of the people on this question. It is rather "quaver" (to the superficial observer only, of course) that the Stalinists who are so anxious, in words, for defending the democratic rights of the workers, are the bitterest enemies of this proposed amendment which seeks at most, to give the workers the little right of at least laying something to say about their being butchered in an imperialist war.

Besides the above mentioned national trade-union organizations, the Chicago Federation of Labor,

Stalinists Drive Student Confab to Pro-War Stand

By M. G. D.

Philadelphia, Pa. ON March 19, there took place a conference called by the Student Peace Service at Swarthmore. Of course, the Young Communist League had the thing packed with its people. But there were some of ours, some Y.P.S.L.ers and some liberals as well.

The program for the conference was as follows: Five commissions met in morning and afternoon session, morning session being devoted to discussion and debate and afternoon session to the formulation of resolutions. At an afternoon session of all delegates, the secretaries of the various commissions reported on general findings of each commission. Then there was an intermission during which the chairman of all five commissions met and drew up final resolutions for the conference, based on resolutions submitted by each commission. In a final session of all delegates, these resolutions were read and ratified by a vote of the entire conference.

The commissions were: 1. world economic cooperation; 2. the Far East; 3. the Far East; 4. militarism in the United States; 5. religious and ethical problems and peace.

We divided our forces as best

affiliated with the A. F. of L., has also adopted a sound position on the war question. The United Mine Workers of America, led by John L. Lewis, has moved in the same direction. So have the Minnesota and Wisconsin Federations of Labor, affiliated to the A. F. of L., and the Illinois Labor Party. It is clear to all of you that too great importance cannot be attached to the fact that the unions in such basic war industries as steel, motors and aluminum, have taken a sound position on the war question.

Let me say, in concluding, a few words about some questions raised here in the course of the debate. There never can be any real antagonism between mass activities and a revolutionary Marxist, or communist, theoretical position. We yield to none in our desire and effort to participate in the mass movement of the working class in our country. We have always striven, and shall continue to strive, to lend life to our revolutionary position thru such participation in the class struggle.

Let me say also that it would not be correct to maintain that the present People's Front strategy is simply identical with the class collaboration game played by the old social-democratic parties. There are several differences between the first edition and the present edition of the People's Front. The first edition of the People's Front, led and fostered by the social-democrats, made possible and helped insure the victory of fascism over the workers. This People's Front did not have the communists in it. At that time, the communists were against the People's Front policy. The second edition of the People's Front has the communists in it as its loudest and most energetic proponents and makes impossible a victory of the workers over fascism. These differences, I submit, are not unimportant. It should be folly for any one to believe that the right way to fight the People's Front is by being in it and by being responsible for it. We should be against it; we should be outside of it and we should call and hold to responsibility those in it and those for it. Unless we pursue this course, we will sacrifice our right to aid and duty of independent working-class action and will ourselves resort to a policy of dependence on the bourgeoisie or their labor partners.

we could amongst the first four commissions.

1. In the commission of world economic problems, there developed a clash between certain liberal forces, who advocated reciprocal trade pacts as the road to peace, and the Y.C.L. with its "collective-security" policy, centering here on economic measures to be applied jointly by the "democracies" against fascist aggressors. We did a good job in pointing out the dangers of the whole "collective-security" idea but, of course, we couldn't change the result. The Stalinist position went thru and the liberals walked out of the commission in protest.

2. In the commission on the Far East, we succeeded in leading the entire discussion during the morning session and were pretty well set to put thru a resolution favoring removal of American armed forces from the Far East. In the afternoon session, however, the Y.C.L. packed this commission to the rafters, voted down our resolution and put one thru calling for "collective security" against Japan.

3. In the commission on militarism in the United States, a Y.P.S.L.er presented the Ludlow referendum proposal. Discussion was very hot and there was a great deal of support for it. Seeing this danger, the Stalinites put thru a motion to table the resolution indefinitely. This shameful act of railroaded went thru even though the conference was a one-day affair and tabling meant refusing to let it come to a vote, because there would never be an opportunity for this commission to meet again. Unfortunately the Y.P.S.L. put up no fight.

4. In the commission on European problems, we again succeeded in bringing a war-referendum resolution to the floor and also succeeded in putting it to a vote. It was defeated 40 to 21. We then asked to have it submitted as a minority resolution since it had received the support of one-third of the delegates. Two Y.C.L.ers from Temple University fought the motion to submit a minority resolution. But their caucus leader spoke up for "democracy." Even so the motion was carried by only five votes.

At this commission, a resolution was carried that embodied the entire American Students Union program rolled up into one plus the O'Connell "peace" bill. Again the vote was 40 to 21. We could not present a substitute resolution, the chair ruling there was no time for discussion!

At the last session, the most important one, the rule disqualifying all those who were not then actual students from speaking was clamped down and this did us some damage. (It should be noted that the head of the A. S. U. and some of its leading officials are no longer students themselves.) At this session, we tried to submit a substitute resolution for the one adopted by the committee on "collective security" and the O'Connell "peace" bill all together. Jack Lamping, president of the Methodist Youth, presented the case. Our proposal was defeated as was to be expected. Yet we were able to get a 25% vote. This I consider very good because the conference was Y.C.L.-packed in the first place.

That the Communist Party's jingoism has become so notorious that it is already reflected in current fiction, can be seen from the March issue of Harper's. In a story on the next war, called "Fantasia for Trumpets," the author, A. H. Z. Carr, has his Mr. Miller declare in great perplexity to a young man who had just enlisted in the army: "I can't understand you. If you were a communist or if you were a boy looking for adventure—but you know what it means."

BOOKS

MUST WE FIGHT THIS WAR? By Robert N. Kelso. Youth Committee Against War. New York, 1938.

THIS is the first pamphlet issued by the Youth Committee Against War, affiliate of the Keep America Out Of War Committee and the organization of the genuinely anti-war forces in the American student and youth movements.

The first part of the pamphlet deals with the post-World War period generally and shows that, "when the cards are stacked, nobody wins but the dealer. In the game of international murder, it is the overlords of capital who win." For the youth "who do the fighting and the tightening of the belts, war is always a 'heads I win, tails you lose' proposition."

Most of the young people, amid a tremendous wave of war hysteria which gripped school and shop alike, answered the call of the war-makers in 1917. Today, youth is being mobilized again under the fraudulent slogan of "collective security," to "save the world for democracy" once more.

For years, the most significant student manifestation against war has been the annual students strike at which the pledge was demonstratively taken to refuse to support any war conducted by the American government. In 1935, 175,000 students struck on the anniversary of American entrance into the World War. Students all over the country drew encouragement from this new expression of youth's opposition to war and war preparation. "Coming between the second and third strikes, the 7th congress of the Communist International changed the complexion of a part of the progressive student movement, comprising the Y.C.L. and its followers, from one of uncompromising opposition to imperialist war to the support of democratic collaboration in suppressing fascist nations." "But," says Kelso, former managing editor of the Student Advocate, "the 1936 student strike did not suffer heavily from this deterrent to militant action and, as a result of impetus gained in the two previous demonstrations, nearly 600,000 students took part." But in 1937, the Oxford Pledge was no longer universally administered and "collective security" became the official stand of the American Students Union.

In the United Student Peace Committee, a clearing house for some 17 youth organizations and the caller of the student strike against war, a division on peace policy has arisen to make any effective action of that body impossible. "Under the leadership of the A.S.U.," Kelso tells us, "seven constituent organizations from the communist-controlled American League for Peace and Democracy to the League of Nations Association, have consistently voted against any militant anti-war stand proposed for the U.S.P.C." The U.S.P.C. is therefore issuing a poster which merely says: "Strike Against War, April 27th at 11:00 A.M." This means that the nature of the strike will depend to a large extent on the leadership and initiative of local organizations. In recognition of this fact, the Youth Committee has drawn up a model call for the strike, found at the end of this pamphlet, which is being submitted to its various affiliates on the campuses.

The message that this pamphlet conveys to the youth of America, a message especially timely for this year's student strike, is that "we have a clear choice to make: For or against the coming war. And it is now that the choice must be made."

Joe Elwood

Trade Union Notes

By Observer

FROM F., in Fort Wayne, Ind., we have received the following letter:

"Your column relative to the G. E. national agreement contains a very serious error in that it opposes tying wage rates in agreements to a cost-of-living index. We are concerned with real wages and not money wages. This error is all the more serious because of the possibility of inflation and the fact that many employers, because of the unemployment compensation laws, are attempting to negotiate annual wage agreements.

"The same issue of the Age reports that the cost of living increased 78% in the years 1913-19. If a union is tied to a fixed scale of wages in a time of rising living costs, it is in a very serious position. Its wages then are not determined by collective bargaining but rather by the uncontrolled fluctuation of the economic system. The reference to Lewis's statement is not pertinent either, because he was exposing the policies of the steel companies who said, when they were losing money, that wages were dependent on profits and then, when they began to make prodigious profits, reversed themselves and said that wages bore no relation to profits but rather should be determined by the cost of living."

It seems to us that our correspondent has grasped the point neither of our criticism of the "cost-of-living" wage nor of Lewis's remarks on the same subject. Late in November 1936, some big steel concerns, in order to head off the S.W.O.C. drive, offered their company unions a wage increase, with the provision, however, that, in the future, wage rates be pegged to living costs. The S.W.O.C. and most of the company unions under S.W.O.C. influence turned down this proposal. Why? Here is how Louis Stark, the New York Times correspondent, explained it, virtually quoting Lewis's own words: "The chief objection was that the corporation's proposal would bind them (the steel workers) indefinitely to the present standards of living and that they would never participate in the increased fruits of productivity and of increased profits due to changes of technique and efficiency."

The point is plain enough. If, in times of rising cost of living, money wages rise no more than living costs, then real wages (what the money wages can buy) don't rise at all but stand absolutely still, while profits and other forms of income climb steadily upward. To peg wage rates to living costs means to tie the standard of living down to its present very inadequate level and to exclude the possibility of any improvement at all. Of course, it may be argued that such a system would also prevent any decline of the standard of living in periods of depression, but experience has taught us that the pegging method never seems to work under such circumstances: wages fall and fall precipitately unless there are strong and active unions to keep them up.

Our correspondent makes a big mistake in thinking that, unless wages are bound to a cost-of-living

index, they are "tied to a fixed scale." Contracts are not of perpetual duration and most contracts include provisions for the readjustment of wage rates from time to time or on certain occasions. But these readjustments should not be made automatically on the basis of a cost-of-living index but thru collective bargaining, thru the organized power of the workers matched against that of the employers. Proceeding in this way, it becomes possible not merely to keep pace with the rising cost of living—which means no more than standing still in the same place; it becomes possible to go beyond and win an improvement in the standard of living—something that is impossible if wage rates are really frozen to the cost-of-living index.

A word of caution. The above remarks do not imply that arguments based on the increased cost of living can not be used in negotiating a wage increase. Of course they can be used very effectively for such a purpose. But wage rates should not be officially pegged to living costs if it can possibly be avoided.

Imperialism and British Labor

(Continued from Page 4)
determination and line up in defense of "democracy," something which they have never known.

Position Of The I.L.P.

The Independent Labor Party, in my opinion, is the only working-class party in Britain that has a correct approach to the questions of imperialist war and colonies. It must be stated that the I.L.P. has only recently arrived at this clear Marxist position, for, even up to the Italo-Abyssinian War, the party displayed a lamentable confusion. And this was no accident. It was due to the fact that several leading members of the party were themselves not clear on these basic questions.

Every revolutionary socialist in Britain and anti-imperialist in the colonies must welcome this new development of the I.L.P. It is my sincere hope that the I.L.P. will continue to hold high the banner of revolutionary Marxism and will maintain an uncompromising and unswerving position, come what may. Under no condition must the British workers support "their" bourgeoisie in imperialist war or help the capitalists to drown in blood the struggles of the colonial peoples. Their battle cry must be: Not a man, not a gun, not a penny for imperialist war! Hands off the colonies!!

Coughlin on March Again

With the return of the depression and widespread unemployment, Father Coughlin, whose Social Justice movement had withered in direct proportion to the improvement of the economic situation, now returns with a program which would set up a federal government remarkably close to the fascist corporate state. Even in his representation in Congress by class he follows closely certain features of the fascist state. Equally interesting and consistent with his fascist philosophy is his proposal to elect a president thru the House of Representatives rather than by popular ballot. Thus does Father Coughlin's new program show itself to be thoroughly anti-democratic, so early in the development of his new crusade.

P.O.U.M. APPEALS FOR HELP AGAINST G.P.U.

WE HAVE just received the following cable from J. Sogas, international representative of the P.O.U.M.:

TWENTY COMRADES EXECUTED AT FRONT. SITUATION SERIOUS. GOVERNMENT IS PREPARING IMMEDIATE TRIAL OF EXECUTIVE (OF P.O.U.M.). SWAMP AUTHORITIES WITH PROTESTS.

At this moment of extreme danger to the anti-fascist cause, the Loyalist government is intensifying its crusade of annihilation against the revolutionary sections of the Spanish labor movement, the best and most devoted fighters against fascism! This is the price that the Stalin murder-regime is forcing the Spanish government to pay for whatever military assistance has come from the Soviet Union.

Every American who has the real interests of anti-fascist Spain at heart should immediately rush his protest to the Spanish embassy at Washington, demanding the release of the revolutionary anti-fascist prisoners in order to strengthen the defense against Franco.

Labor Legislation in Crisis

(Continued from Page 3)

only the trend and laws were not always realized in practice. Labor had to fight for everything it got. Labor laws were frequently ignored by courts hostile to labor and the courts could usually, be depended upon to limit labor's rights in spite of the law. The use of the injunction against labor was a notorious scandal. In addition, legal recognition of the "rights" of labor was made a mockery by powerful corporations who openly flaunted the law, using (especially in company towns) spies, terrorism, the blacklist, police and courts to prevent strikes and unions. Yet, in spite of all limitations, the general character of labor legislation was to liberate labor and grant it rights within the circle of capitalist relations.

It is important to understand what historical conditions determined the differences in the labor legislation of the two stages of capitalism.

The first stage marked the beginnings of capitalism, a capitalism still precarious and incomplete, struggling for its existence against feudalism, using nail and claw to advance, operating within a social atmosphere still tainted with feudal barbarism. The working class was small and unconscious of itself. Workers were simply despised and trampled upon. The rights of labor were not recognized in the bourgeois "Rights of Man."

The second stage marked the upswing of capitalism and its definite consolidation as master of society. It was the expansive and progressive phase of capitalism, during which many of the democratic ideals of the earlier stage were increasingly realized in practice. The growing capitalist wealth (and exploitation of the workers) made it possible to raise wages and grant concessions to labor without impairing capitalist property or privilege. The workers increased rapidly in numbers, from a small minority becoming the majority within society, organizing powerful unions and demanding their share of bourgeois democracy. Labor legislation favorable to the workers was a necessity and yet did not threaten capitalist supremacy. Labor was becoming conscious of itself but the existence of capitalism was not yet placed in jeopardy.

The Third Stage—Capitalism In Decline

Now we are in the third stage of capitalism marked by economic decline and decay. That stage began in Europe after the World War and in the United States after the terrible depression of the 1930's. It is a stage which, in a sense, goes back to the earlier phase but with important differences and modifications.

This third stage is marked by a multiplication of labor legislation apparently and immediately favorable to labor but moving toward the imposition of fetters upon the independence of workers organizations by making them increasingly subject to government control.

Pre-war legislation in England recognized the rights of labor. (The Taff-Vale decision was an exception and it was the work of the courts.) After the World War, however, despite some legislation favorable to labor, the fundamental tendency was to limit labor's rights and independence. That tendency culminated in the anti-labor legislation adopted after the 1926 General Strike. The present British government, in one way and other, carries on a sniping campaign against the rights and organizations of labor, moving toward intensified reaction.

The change in the nature of labor legislation was still clearer in Germany after the war. A large number of labor laws were enacted under the Weimar Republic, all of them apparently favorable to the workers. Indeed, so striking was that legislation that many liberal observers spoke glowing of the "constitutional labor order" that was being created in Germany, a model for other nations to imitate. But what actually happened was an increasing limitation of the independence of the labor unions and their devitalization. The final upshot was the coming of fascism and destruction of all workers rights and of independent labor organization as such.

These same general tendencies are apparent in the labor legislation of the New Deal and the conditions under which it was adopted. Much of this labor legislation is friendly to labor and some of it has been used advantageously in the struggle to organize workers. But, because of the new stage of capitalism, that very friendliness is mixed with a potential threat to labor. Both the Wagner Act and National Labor Relations Board are two-faced, and one of the faces leers threateningly at the independence of labor unions. New Deal legislation contains within itself the potential threat of limitation of the rights of labor in the guise of laws friendly to labor. This is emphasized by the growing demand within Congress and outside of Congress for laws to make unions "responsible," to make them more "democratic," to make them more "amenable to the law," to "protect" members of unions against the "tyranny" of labor leaders. And liberal apologists of the capitalism look favorably upon those proposals.

Organized labor must understand and examine carefully the mixed character of labor legislation in

this stage of capitalism. And the chief danger is legislation, which may be offered in many shapes and forms, to impose controls upon the labor unions. The historical factors which create that danger may be briefly summarized:

The decline and decay of capitalism compels the capitalist class to react against the progressive aspects of the earlier capitalism.

The burdens of capitalist decline must be thrust upon the workers. As the workers resist, their resistance moves beyond the limits of capitalist relations in the direction of a new social order. That resistance of the workers must be increasingly hampered and eventually crushed. Hence labor legislation limiting the rights of workers and the independence of their organizations.

To restrict and crush labor, the capitalist state moves toward a new authoritarianism. That authoritarianism is strengthened by the inability to solve the economic crisis, by the resort to rearmament and war as the means of "easing" the crisis, by the necessity of a monolithic "national unity" to prop up a declining economy. There is an economic drive toward authoritarianism.

These developments may start with very friendly and very liberal labor legislation. But gradually the capitalist objectives become clearer. Finally, all disguise is thrown overboard and naked brutal force is resorted to, the force of fascism. Labor legislation under fascism reverts to the openly hostile legislation of the first stage of capitalism, with this difference: the workers cannot simply be despised and trampled upon; they are too numerous and at least potentially too powerful; so fascism resorts to all sorts of ideological demagoguery and cajolery to "sweeten" its tyranny over labor.

In this stage of capitalism, it is necessary that organized labor scrutinize all labor laws from one angle: Do they limit the independence of labor unions? If they do, the laws must be opposed. For labor offers itself as a sacrifice if it yields one iota of its independence. No control of labor except by labor itself!

C.I.O. PLANS MEET

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ney Hillman, head of the A.C.W. Hillman was appointed to head the committee on legislation; Dubinsky, the committee on housing; James P. Carey, the unemployment committee; and Charles P. Howard, the committee on social security.

John L. Lewis, chairman of the C.I.O., opened the conference with an address on the present economic situation and the problems of the labor movement.

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