

**Labor
Day
1938**

An Editorial

IN 1882, the New York Central Trades Council, the organized labor movement of the city, resolved to petition Congress for the establishment of a Labor Day, a legal holiday which would memorialize the growing strength and the ideals of the wage-earning class. It was an era of great strikes on the railroads, in coal, farm-implements and other big industries. It was an era of agitation for social and labor reform, rooted in the mighty movement for an eight-hour day, a rising tide which was to sweep the country in the next decade. The demand for a Labor Day was a sign that the American unions were pulsing with a sense of their new-found strength as a distinct and separate force in society.

The development of our movement, however, underwent significant changes in the next few decades under the impact of the expanding industrial system. Labor dissipated its political strength in dubious alliances chasing after futile middle-class panaceas. Labor's economic strength was undermined when it permitted itself to be deluded by a period of limited and one-sided "prosperity" into an unquestioning faith in the economic system of capitalism.

In 1929, not merely did the old economic system reveal clearly its tragic consequences to the masses of the people, not merely did the political structure reveal its utter inadequacy, but the limitations and shortcomings of labor were brought home to the movement itself. The severity of the crisis of world capitalism demanded, more forcefully than before, a new and militant program for American labor and brought to the forefront the need for the industrial organization of the workers and their political independence.

Under the Committee for Industrial Organization, American labor has begun its new march forward, reviving the militancy, sacrifice and heroism of our class. With that rebirth of the mass labor movement, the stigma once attached to Labor Day in the eyes of the active progressive workers is being removed. Labor Day can no longer be one of "celebration" of the backwardness, of the limited scope, of the servility and timidity of the American labor movement. Labor Day can no longer be the occasion upon which the leaders of labor announce the "brotherhood" of labor and capital and labor's support of the old employing-class parties.

Under the C.I.O., the new labor movement must wipe clean the slate of inaction and old-line conservatism. The new labor movement will make of Labor Day the occasion for the proclamation of labor's independence as a class, of its militancy and unity on the economic field, of its determination to victory against the enemy within and without.

Labor Day 1938 will be a sign that our labor movement is pulsing with sense of its new-found strength as a distinct and separate force in society, a strength the consciousness of which leads, despite all obstacles, to socialism and to freedom.

Workers Age

A PAPER DEFENDING THE INTERESTS OF WORKERS AND FARMERS

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U.A.W. FIGHTS FOR ITS AUTONOMY

WHO SAID HOUSING REFORM?



"What's All This Talk About Better Housing?"
"Probably Just That."

—St. Louis Post Dispatch

A.F.L. PREPARES FOR NEW ATTACK ON C.I.O.

Executive Council and State Federation Lay Plans

At Atlantic City and Buffalo, top leaders of the A. F. of L. met last week to map out plans for the immediate future, with main stress laid upon spreading and intensifying the campaign against the C.I.O.

At Atlantic City, the Executive Council of the A. F. of L. convened in quarterly meeting. Just before the sessions opened, Mr. Green conferred with President Roosevelt on the Wagner Act and came away with the assurance that the President, too, was in favor of "revising" it. Acting upon Mr. Green's report, the Executive Council immediately went on record urging the "amendment" of the Wagner Act along lines that would hamper the C.I.O. and promote craft unionism. At Buffalo, the annual convention of the New York State Federation of Labor was dominated by a similar spirit. Echoing the Executive Council's denunciation of the National Labor Relations Board and its demand for the removal of two of the three members of the latter (D. W. Smith and E. S. Smith), the State Federation of Labor adopted a strong resolution endorsing this stand and "roundly condemning the present administration" of the N.L.R.B. At Atlantic City, John P. Frey also urged certain amendments to the recently passed Wage-Hour Act, amendments designed, according to Mr. Frey, to limit the

arbitrary powers of the administrator.

At a session early last week, the Executive Council laid plans for organizing a powerful maritime department embracing an estimated 500,000 seamen, longshoremen, truckmen, radio telegraphists and other classes of maritime workers on all coasts. This move was the first step in mobilizing for a concerted attack upon the C.I.O. at its weakest point, where it has been badly undermined by the Stalinist intrigues of the Bridges-Curran clique.

At the State Federation of Labor, George Meany led an attack against the American Labor Party, which he branded as a "tool for the C.I.O." Alex Rose, secretary of the A.L.P., immediately pointed out how thoroughly false such an accusation was in view of the big part that A. F. of L. unions and A. F. of L. officers are playing in the American Labor Party. The A.L.P., he emphasized, represents organized labor as such and does not, either in its policy or leadership, favor one or the other of the rival labor organizations. From the tone of the remarks made by the leaders and from the character of the "non-partisan" committee set up by the Buffalo convention, it seems pretty clear that the state A. F. of L. will be lined up with the Democratic machine in the Fall elections.

The Executive Council also considered a number of international questions.

Lewis "Peace" Plan Hit As Aid to Dualist Clique

By GEORGE F. MILES
(Our Michigan Correspondent)

Detroit, Mich.

"I will not turn over the U.A.W. to John L. Lewis." With these words, uttered at the Wisconsin state conference of U.A.W. locals, President Homer Martin picked up the challenge thrown by John L. Lewis when the latter appealed over the heads of President Martin and the International Executive Board to the locals of the U.A.W. for his one-sided and factional "peace" proposal.

Ending a week of hectic conferences in Washington, C.I.O. Chairman Lewis emerged with a set of so-called "peace" proposals which included the chief demand of the expelled officers for complete reinstatement and provided for the transfer of union issues to the C.I.O. for settlement. In effect, the latter provision would have taken the union out of the hands of the elected International Executive Board and its officers and turned it over to the control of a group hand-picked by Chairman Lewis.

President Martin interpreted the "peace" proposal as an open declaration of war on the part of Chairman Lewis, thru which Mr. Lewis transformed himself from an apparently "impartial" arbiter into an open ally of the splitters and disrupters. Emphatically declaring that he had no right to speak for the International Board, President Martin refused flatly to make any commitments. He insisted the U.A.W. was an autonomous and democratic body. Its autonomous character makes such intervention as proposed by Chairman Lewis highly improper and even dangerous, while its democratic set-up makes it quite impossible for anyone but the International Board to decide on matters upon which may well hang the very life of the organization.

Having presented a statement to this effect to Mr. Lewis and having extended to him an invitation to attend and present his "plan" before the coming meeting of the Board, the union delegation, consisting of President Martin, Vice-President R. J. Thomas and a group of International Board members, returned to Detroit.

Martin Proposes Convention

It became known later that so certain was President Martin of the overwhelming support he has in the ranks of the U.A.W. that he offered Chairman Lewis to call an emergency convention of the union to which he would present his complete case. This offer was turned down by Mr. Lewis. This is obviously conclusive evidence that, regardless of the fantastic claims of membership support made by the dual-unionists, they know very well that they do not have the support of the majority of the membership—hence their rejection of Martin's proposal for an immediate emergency convention.

That he intended his "peace" plan to be a declaration of war against the union and its administration became clear when Chairman Lewis, not deigning to await action by the International Board,

went over its head and mailed his "peace" plan to the locals of the U.A.W. urging immediate action! The purpose of this action was obviously to arouse the local unions to revolt against their International officers and to support the expelled clique of Stalinists and Stalinist stooges whom Mr. Lewis finds it necessary to support at this time.

Union spokesmen point to this act of Mr. Lewis as being in line with the type of activities conducted for many months by the expelled clique, which refused to recognize the authority of the officers and the discipline of the organization. They further point to the fact that Mr. Lewis must have been aware that he was violating basic union procedure when he mailed docu-

(Continued on Page 2)

Daladier Kills 40-Hour Week

Pursuing his basic policy of strengthening the position of the French employing class at the expense of the working masses, Premier Daladier last week announced his intention of scrapping the 40-hour week, one of the chief gains of the great strike movement of June 1936. He justified his move by "urgent considerations of national defense," under cover of which his whole reactionary policy has been carried out in recent months.

The immediate response to the Premier's declaration was generally hostile. Two ministers of his cabinet, both members of the Socialist-Republican Union, an extremely reformistic socialist group, resigned and were promptly replaced by two others of the same group. The Socialist Party, the Communist Party and the C.G.T., the French trade-union federation, loudly protested and proclaimed their "bitter opposition" to the Daladier proposal. But, within a day or two, it became clear that these violent gestures of opposition were largely for public consumption, in order to head off the indignant protests of the masses and gradually get them into the mood where they would acquiesce in silence.

The Radical-Socialists, the Premier's own party, promptly endorsed his stand. The socialists and communists, the other sections of the block on which the Daladier cabinet is based, continued grumb-

(Continued on Page 2)

Our Program of Action

(The paragraphs below constitute part of the Program of Action adopted by the recent convention of the Independent Labor League of America. Other sections have appeared in previous issues of this paper and publication will continue in subsequent issues. The whole will soon appear in pamphlet form.—Editor.)

PUBLIC HOUSING AND OTHER SOCIALLY-USEFUL PUBLIC WORKS

AS conditions grow worse and it becomes clearer that the brief period of recovery a few years ago was only the forerunner of a new depression, the vital necessity of a comprehensive program of public housing and other public works comes strongly to the fore. Such a program would help to provide jobs for millions of workers, decent homes at reasonable rentals for large masses who have never had such before, as well as other types of valuable services to the people. At the same time, it would help take the wind out of the sails of those who go around preaching rearmament and militarism as the only road to recovery.

For these very reasons, the reactionaries and big-business interests are violently hostile to such useful forms of governmental spending, altho they have not the slightest objection in the world to receiving millions from the government as loans and subsidies or to having the government spend additional billions for armaments. On its part, the Administration, despite its big promises in earlier years, is now rapidly cutting down on these socially-useful expenditures because its war-preparations program demands the diversion of vast funds for rearmament.

A genuine program of public housing and public works requires:

1. Expansion of the federal public-works program at trade-union or prevailing wages.
2. A large-scale low-cost federal public-housing program—including extensive slum-clearance projects—to provide jobs and homes for workers.

SOCIAL LEGISLATION

WHILE in the rest of the capitalist world, especially in the fascist countries, social legislation, in existence for many decades, is being ruthlessly slashed under the impact of the crisis, in this country federal social legislation is still in its initial stages and in a period of expansion. Relatively, American capitalism, tho also in the grip of a permanent crisis, still has far greater resources at its command than the collapsing capitalisms of Europe.

The Federal Social Security Act is of vast significance in this respect: despite some very grave defects and shortcomings, it is the first big step taken by the federal government in providing a measure of security to the masses against the hazards of modern industrial society:

A vigorous program for social security requires:

1. Support of the Federal Social Security Act against reactionary efforts to undermine it and destroy federal social legislation.
2. Reform, extension and improvement of federal social-security legislation along the following lines:

a. a uniform federal system instead of the present duplicating and inefficient federal-state system.

b. inclusion of the many categories of workers now excluded from the benefits of the law.

c. an all-around increase in the present thoroly inadequate benefit rates.

d. elimination of the tax on workers wages—the entire cost to be borne by the employers and the government thru taxation of the rich.

e. expansion of the social-security program to fields not yet covered (maternity, health, etc.)

f. abandonment of the so-called actuarial basis of the social-security program, which has always proven a failure and been given up wherever it has been tried. Instead of attempting to run the social-security system along conventional insurance lines, it should be operated frankly as a government security service maintained by taxation.

LABOR LEGISLATION

ALONG with social legislation, legislation affecting labor has rapidly expanded in the last few years, reaching its high point in the Wagner Act. For the New Deal, such legislation has always had a double and contradictory aspect: as reforms and concessions to labor which, at the same time, are moves in the direction of governmental control of labor and the integration of the trade unions, deprived of their class independence, into the governmental machinery of economic administration.

At the present time, a reactionary campaign is under way to destroy labor's new-won rights of self-organization and collective bargaining thru "amending" the Wagner Act and establishing governmental regulation of the unions. The danger from this direction is especially great in view of the blessing President Roosevelt has given to the effort to hamstringing the unions and deprive them of their effectiveness and freedom of action.

An effective program of labor legislation requires:

1. Defense of labor's rights of self-organization and collective bargaining against the reactionary campaign to destroy them by "amending" the Wagner Act, crippling the N.L.R.B., or the like.
2. Strengthening and improvement of the Wagner Act in scope and effectiveness as experience may indicate (written contracts, stronger enforcement, etc.). Passage of the amendments to the Walsh-Healy Act to compel concerns with government loans or contracts to abide by the Wagner Act.
3. Uncompromising resistance to all efforts to impose governmental regulation upon the trade unions in any form whatsoever, to restrict their independence or limit their right to strike in any way. Opposition to any scheme of forced arbitration, whether under legal compulsion or under so-called "public pressure."

(Further sections of this Program of Action will appear in the next issue of this paper.—Editor.)

WHERE TO BUY WORKERS AGE IN NEW YORK CITY

- 42nd St. near 5th Ave. (in front of Library).
- Rand School, 7 E. 15th St.
- Labor Book Shop, 28 E. 12th Street.
- 14th St., and 6th Ave., N.W. corner.
- 14th St. and 6th Ave., N. E. corner.
- 14th St. and 4th Ave., N. E. corner.
- 14th St. and 4th Ave., S. E. corner.
- 14th St. and 4th Ave., S. W. corner.
- 14th St. near 3rd Ave.
- 14th St., midway between 4th Ave. and Broadway.
- 14th St. and University Pl.
- Luncheonette, University Pl. and 12th St.

Daladier Kills 40-Hour Week

(Continued from Page 1) ling and threatening but very obviously began preparations to yield to Daladier's proposals for modification of the 40-hour week. Meeting last Saturday, the so-called "Left delegation," consisting of the People's Front parties, decided to accept the Premier's demand "in view of the needs of national defense." Of course, some high-sounding formulas will be found acceptable to the government and yet appearing to defend the gains of the workers. But the substance will be that Daladier will have his way in breaking down the 40-hour week by instituting overtime at the rate of one and one-tenth normal wages.

MOONLIGHT BOAT RIDE

to aid German and Austrian Victims of Nazism
Saturday, Sept. 17
"CITY OF NEW YORK" leaving Pier 1, the Battery at 7:30 P. M.
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Entertainment
Dancing
Refreshments
•
Auspices: International Relief Association, 20 Vesey St., N.Y.C. Subscription \$1.00.

Auto Union Fights to Save Autonomy, Hits Dualists

(Continued from Page 1)

ments directly to the locals without presenting his proposals to the International Board. This also, it is said, is consistent with Mr. Lewis's efforts to curtail and strip the U.A.W. of its rights as an autonomous organization. Now it is difficult to discover where Mr. Lewis secured a complete list of the officers of the local unions. Outside of the International Union itself, the expelled clique is the only body having such a list and this was stolen from the union by the former secretary-treasurer, now expelled. Thus Mr. Lewis is even making use of the dualist machinery of the expelled group in his attack against the administration of the union.

Lewis Endangers C.I.O. Unity

This ill-considered act of Mr. Lewis, which encourages the splitters in the U.A.W. and may have a serious bearing on the unity of the C.I.O. itself, has aroused a storm of indignation in the ranks of the U.A.W. A first indication of this resentment was to be seen at the U.A.W. state convention in Wisconsin last Sunday.

Four hundred local union officers representing 70 locals made clear their stand by rejecting Mr. Lewis's "peace" proposal, endorsed President Martin's drive for a unified and responsible union, voted to urge the International Board to cease payment of per-capita taxes to the C.I.O. because of Chairman Lewis's action, and censured Mr. Lewis for interfering in the internal affairs of the union by lining up with the discredited clique of expelled disrupters. The resolution was carried unanimously.

The Wisconsin Resolution

Especially resentful was the conference over the attempts of the C.I.O. to infringe on the autonomous rights of their union. Claiming that Mr. Lewis's proposals "would violate every fundamental law of the union" the resolution proceeds as follows:

"The autonomy which our membership now enjoys was secured only after several years of struggle and is a sacred possession. This conference goes on record as vigorously protesting and resenting the unwarranted and unprecedented interference of Mr. Lewis.

"Each local is requested to notify Mr. Lewis and the C.I.O. of our resentment and disapproval of his acts and of the desire of the U.A.W. to control its own affairs and operate as an autonomous union, as has the United Mine Workers.

"This conference requests the International Executive Board to deal with this matter in a manner consistent with the principles and industrial unionism, founded on democratic procedure, to the end that our union may maintain and preserve its autonomy."

Union spokesmen insist that nowhere in the history of American trade unionism is there to be found another example of such crass violation of autonomous rights of a powerful international union. The fight made at the Tampa convention of the A. F. of L. by the late Charles P. Howard of the International Typographical Union is being relegated. Mr. Howard, then secretary of the C.I.O., fought against the concentration of executive power in the hands of the Executive Council as dangerous to the autonomous rights of the affiliated international unions. How much more true is this of the C.I.O. which as yet is not a federation of international unions but merely a coordinating and organizing center?

To union leaders the fight now being waged is of historic im-

portance, since it will have a decisive influence in determining the kind of organization American labor is ultimately to have. The U.A.W. wants to have a labor movement built on the firm rock of democratic procedure as against dictatorial rule, and upon international union autonomy as against interference and intervention in the internal affairs of affiliated unions.

Martin Issues Warning

A delegation from Detroit consisting of William Marshall, president of Chrysler Local 7, and Edward Hertz, president of Chrysler Hyland Park, appeared before John L. Lewis last week to shed some light on the method of operation of the Stalinists in the union. Both Marshall and Hertz, in the past loyal supporters of the Stalinists, broke with the disrupters when they heard expelled leaders state that they would "either take over the union or smash it." These local presidents gave names and dates to corroborate this testimony but apparently Mr. Lewis had his mind made up for he paid scant attention to their report.

President Martin meanwhile issued advice to all local unions and officers on relations with the expelled dual-unionists. Since it was clear that the latter had failed in their bid for power and would therefore now resort to whatever means they could to ruin the U.A.W., Martin warned members and officers of local unions to stay away from meetings arranged by the expelled and not to permit any of the expelled to participate in meetings of the U.A.W.

"These former officers," said President Martin, "have no relationship and should not be allowed to participate in any union meetings. The administration is determined to establish a disciplined union."

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Collective Bargaining in Auto

By WILLIAM MUNGER

FEW industries have experienced as dramatic a rise of unionization and collective bargaining as the automobile industry. Almost overnight, the great mass of automobile workers who never belonged to a trade union were confronted with all the problems and difficulties that collective bargaining in a highly complicated industry presents. It is true that a handful of plants in outlying automobile centers had written contracts with their employees. Their experience, however, was too inadequate to serve as a pattern for the hundreds of written contracts which were signed by the United Automobile Workers of America during the last two years.

Blazing The Trail

Without precedents to follow, the United Automobile Workers of America had to blaze a new trail in collective bargaining. Altho the efforts were made to make contracts with various companies as uniform as possible, the fact that so many agreements were negotiated simultaneously resulted in variation. There was no time available for the U.A.W. to compare the separate contracts to determine precisely what form of agreement would be most satisfactory to solve a particular problem.

If the union in the automobile industry had no precedents to follow, neither had the employers. There had been no cases in American history before where a huge corporation such as General Motors or Chrysler, had dealt with a labor organization on a national basis thru a written contract. In addition there was the handicap of operating in a territory and in an industry that had been traditionally opposed to unionism and to collective bargaining.

The intense period of organization was accompanied by a series of strikes in the plants of several large automobile corporations. The situation continued tense even after the strikes ended and agreements had been signed between the union and employers. It was only afterwards that the way was cleared for the regular processes of collective bargaining in the industry.

In many ways this phase of collective bargaining is even more difficult than the first stage of organization work, as it requires stability and intelligence on all sides. Direct demands have to give way to a discussion of grievances and bargaining committees, and regular conferences between union representatives and management.

The automobile industry is a highly coordinated and complicated mechanism and the problem of collective bargaining in the industry is vastly different from collective bargaining in the building trades, for example, or in other less highly developed industries. In view of these facts, successful collective bargaining necessitates that labor be thoroughly familiar with the intricacies involved in the processes of manufacture and understand more and more how the industry is operated.

The local union's bargaining committee must be acquainted with conditions and operations in their plant and its relations to other plants. In order to negotiate properly, they must be fully equipped with accurate information of the financial structure of the company, its competitive position, its manufacturing policies, the relative obsolescence of the machinery in use, and other factors which enter as important elements in negotiations.

On the other hand, the employers are no longer in a position to pursue their policies and to operate their plants oblivious of the workers and their attitude to these policies. Management had to learn that efficiency of operation is not purely an engineering problem but that it must take into consideration the health and welfare of the workers affected. As a result, most of the larger corporations have completely revised their personnel policies and many have set up special departments of industrial relations devoted entirely to the problems of relations with organized labor.

As collective bargaining becomes an accepted fact, the employer's or the union's demands become less prominent, except perhaps when an agreement is about to be renewed. Even at that time, the new demands usually deal with improvements in the existing agreement rather than with drastic departures. Under these circumstances, the most common function of collective bargaining is to settle and remove the thousands of minor grievances which arise from the daily routine of employer-employee relationship and which, if allowed to persist, might give rise to serious difficulties.

The New Deal and Plight of South

By M. S. MAUTNER

DESPITE the apparently wide scope of the report on conditions in the South prepared by the National Economic Council, the details of which I discussed in last week's Workers Age, two features immediately strike the reader. One is the lack of any serious discussion of the "Negro problem"; the other is the lack of recognition that New Deal policies have also affected the plight of the South. Obviously, however, to deal with such problems was not the purpose of the report, intended primarily to focus financial interest on the South as an area for capital investment and therefore a "way out" of the crisis, and also to lay the basis for a "native" New Deal party machine in the South in opposition to the traditional "Bourbon Democracy" of reaction.

White Supremacy

To emphasize the depressed living conditions of the white croppers and tenants, we are told they live under conditions identical with those of Negro croppers and tenants. Mention is made that the severe crisis has forced many whites to fill positions formerly held only by Negroes, that is, distasteful and extremely underpaid jobs. It is also pointed out that,

The Mexican Crisis

By Ellen Ward

(This article is one of a series dealing with the background and nature of the Mexican crisis.—Editor.)

By ELLEN WARD

MEXICAN news has returned to the front page after having been quietly tucked away among the financial sections. The events of the moment are almost as dramatic as the oil-expropriation decree launched by President Cardenas on the 18th of March. This decree announced the expropriation of all British and American oil lands in Mexico. The Cedillo revolt, following closely on the heels of expropriation, was provoked cleverly and prematurely by Cardenas for two reasons: first, it was easier to strike at and defeat Cedillo now than later when he might have succeeded in strengthening his movement, and secondly, the mainly gesture of Cardenas himself taking to the field to fight the bad hombys would further consolidate and strengthen the popular feeling for Mexico's already popular president. In a little over a fortnight, he cleared the hills. But the problems created by the oil expropriation and the deep-going economic crisis are not nearer solution than they were four months ago. To get only a glimmering of the crazy-quilt of apparent contradictions in present-day Mexican policy, we must look at the soil from which it stems, and a brief historical summary would seem in place before the discussion of more recent events.

It is now generally accepted by students of Mexican political and social science that, during the last generation, Mexican government has followed some such pattern as this:

Every candidate for the Mexican presidency since Diaz has had to choose between popular peasant-worker support and that of the landowners and the Catholic clergy. The peasants of Mexico are still the most numerous class, but large sections even today are under the domination of the landowners and the Church. The growing working class, despite a much more militant leadership in recent years, is still

immature, badly organized and, in countless ways, tied to the government.

Till a decade ago, the landowners and clergy were still stronger than the masses of workers and peasants. Today, it would be safe to say that the balance is slightly in favor of the latter.

But what the landowners and clergy lacked in numbers they could more than make up thru their economic power. They were always able, at the shortest notice, to rush large numbers of armed forces into the field in an emergency.

This deadlock of class forces makes the government bureaucratic machine relatively independent of class control and capable of developing and fostering vested interests of its own.

Due to the opposing pulls of these two social forces, the government used to be in unstable equilibrium and very much dependent on the army. The army had the power to determine the ruler. It all depended on who could swing it and in which direction. In addition to this, the pressure of an outside force—that of foreign capital—has always existed.

From the point of view of the ruling group, the question of outside pressure was always a very complicated one. During the past generations, the president or the presidential aspirant has had to choose between British and American capital. Diaz favored American at first; but, towards the end of his long reign, he turned towards Europe and granted European, especially English interests, very generous concessions, as we shall see later when we analyze the former holdings of Royal Dutch Shell in Mexico.

President Madero, who followed Diaz, received support from United States interests and rewarded that aid by cancellation of some of the concessions granted by Diaz to the English.

Victoriano Huerta, who succeeded Madero, was supported by the Church and the landowners and was backed by British capital.

It was the World War that pre-

while syphilis is more prevalent among Negroes than whites, this is due not to racial characteristics, but to the greater poverty and lower living standards of the Negroes. That is all that the report has to say on the position and problems of the Negro in the South—in itself, I suppose, an advance, but hardly an exhaustive study. No mention is made of the dual (Jim Crow) system in education, of the virtual disfranchisement of the Negro and his exclusion from political life; of the burning question of lynching; and of the generally depressed caste status of the Negro in American society.

To touch these questions would mean to cast doubt on the very foundations of capitalist society in the South, to open the way for racial and social equality—the bugaboo of Bourbon and New Dealer alike. Yet, in a certain sense, this is the key to the method of wage-depression in industry and in agriculture; for, thru racial separation of white and Negro workers and croppers, the ruling class has made the struggle against the horrible living standards it imposes upon the southern masses extremely difficult. Whatever signs do portend a change here derive not from the enlightened New Dealers but from the organization of the workers and croppers themselves. In that fact lies the key to the solution of the problem of the South.

Triple A

The sorry tale of Southern agriculture, ruined by American industrialism, by the one-cash-crop system, by the heritage of the Civil War, is made even sorer by the effects of the New Deal's agricultural policy. If the problems raised by the report are to be taken as indicating the possibility of solution under the New Deal, then its past record in the field has obvious bearing on the matter. Most, if not all, the facts raised were the stock in trade of the A.A.A. and the Farm Resettlement Administration under Wallace and Tugwell. Yet this report not only does not mention their "achievements" but discusses the plight of southern agriculture just as tho no remedial measures had been undertaken from 1893 on. As a matter of fact, the supposedly remedial measures, as revealed by implication in the report, have served merely to aggravate the very evils they were intended to eradicate.

Triple A in the South accomplished the following:

In attempting to subsidize the croppers and tenants without breaking up the tenant-cropper system, its money flowed into the coffers of the landlords and planters.

In ploughing under cotton, it made it impossible for the tenants and croppers to eke out an existence, and aided the creation of an agricultural proletariat but not of a mass of independent farmers.

Thus, what the New Deal did was merely to intensify the conditions enumerated in the report—a report intended to rally the New Deal against these very conditions!

Purges And The Democratic Party
Jay Franklin, New Deal publicist, recently hinted that the Administration had gotten certain southern votes for the Wage-Hour Act by pledging itself to the elimination of freight-rate differentials discriminatory to the South. That is, the New Deal's strategy is to win large sections of the southern employers to its side, by aiding in the creation of a "native bourgeoisie," by insuring the retention of profits and dividends by south-

(Continued on Page 5)

(Continued on Page 6)

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DIRTY WORK AT ALBANY

THE proposed new state constitution, as it emerges from the Constitutional Convention, is even worse than what we expected to come out of such an assembly. It is a shocking example of the rottenest sort of reactionary machine-politics riding rough-shod over every consideration of the welfare of the people of the state. It represents old-party politics triumphant.

It is hardly necessary at this time to examine in any detail the results of the many weeks of deliberation of the Constitutional Convention. There are a few proposals, indeed, that have some merit, such as the provision prohibiting discrimination against a person in his civil rights because of race, color, creed or religion. On the whole and in their overwhelming majority, however, the provisions of the new constitution to be submitted to a referendum in the November elections, deserve but short shrift at the hands of the voters.

The new apportionment plan is grotesquely unfair and undemocratic; it is merely a brazen piece of political trickery designed to entrench the upstate Republican machine permanently in control of the Legislature. Equally brazen is the proposal to outlaw proportional representation, in this case a bipartisan conspiracy to restore New York City to the tender mercies of the Tammany tiger. The convention virtually approved the vicious practise of wire-tapping by admitting as evidence information thus illegally obtained. The power of the people over publicly-owned power resources was seriously undermined in the interests of the Power Trust. A thoroughly inadequate, almost meaningless housing program was approved. Restrictions on the taxing power were voted for the benefit of the rich. A scheme of judicial control over administrative agencies, fairly certain to operate in the interests of reaction, was adopted. The proposals on transit are more than dubious. The "labor section" of the constitution is a joke. So are some of the "social-welfare" provisions. This enumeration could be extended indefinitely but the general picture would remain pretty much the same.

To some extent, at least, the labor movement itself must take responsibility for this miserable situation. It cannot and should not be denied that the American Labor Party underestimated the importance of the Constitutional Convention to the point of almost ignoring it. It limited itself to endorsing a number of old-party candidates, some of whom have not made a particularly brilliant record for themselves at the convention. In general, labor influence, not to speak of independent labor strength, was reduced to a minimum at this gathering chosen to frame the fundamental law of the state for two decades at least. It was a costly mistake.

What now? To have this monstrous document saddled on to the people of this state for twenty years at the very least, would be a disaster. With the new proposals being submitted separately in nine groups, it may prove possible, upon examination, to support some of them. But still the great majority will undoubtedly have to be opposed and rejected. Fortunately, resentment among the masses of the people of the state seems to be so strong and so widespread that there need be little doubt as to the outcome at the polls.

From Girdler to Roosevelt

CONSIDERABLE perplexity and irritation were aroused in the labor world some months ago when President Roosevelt suddenly appointed a commission to "study" British labor law. Intelligent observers immediately detected some dubious purpose, hostile to union interests, behind this move, and the C.I.O. refused to participate in the venture.

Now the story behind the story is beginning to come out—and it appears that the whole idea was the "brain-child" of none other than Tom Girdler, head of Republic Steel, and one of the country's prize labor-haters. Here is the story as told in the August issue of the C.I.O. News.

"John W. Hill, senior partner of the firm of Hill and Knowlton, which handled the steel companies anti-union propaganda during the 'little steel' strike, told the Senate Committee that Girdler first suggested to him a study of British labor laws. Charles

C.I.O. on Labor Day

By JOHN L. LEWIS

SINCE last Labor Day, industrial workers and the nation as a whole have suffered from a sudden and pronounced depression. Such movements gather momentum as they move on. One after another, the barriers to deflation are broken down. Money goes into hoarding and credit disappears when most needed; workers are discharged, wages cut, farm-commodity prices fall, family reserves are exhausted and the buying power of the masses dries up.

At its conference last September, the Committee for Industrial Organization gave warning of the impending depression and called upon government to take timely steps to reverse the movement and to mitigate its evils. While the debates went on over corporate taxes and government guaranty of mortgages, the Committee for Industrial Organization and Labor's Non-Partisan League organized public demand for federal relief for the unemployed and destitute and for renewed governmental participation in public works. Already this program, belatedly adopted, is turning us into the direction of renewed prosperity.

But the C.I.O. is committed to a broader policy for promoting sound economic balance in our country. It stands for a fairer sharing in the national income by both farmers and industrial workers. It seeks to mobilize labor that its power may be effectively exercised to that end.

It seeks to organize labor that its rights may be respected in the play of our economic institutions and that its counsels may be respected in the functioning of our political institutions. It seeks no

change in either, but believes that under both there can be more justice done to those who toil.

The C.I.O. was born of the complacency and inertia of those who had so long assumed direction of the labor movement in America, who insisted that labor unions must be patterned on craft distribution and who denounced as heretical any effort towards industrial organization. They have met our efforts to organize the unorganized with sneers, reprisals, sabotage and vilification. Professing a desire for unity, they have engaged in a civil war to destroy the labor movement which the C.I.O. has carried to such extraordinary success. They have denounced labor laws and repudiated political friends of labor on the announced ground that the one might shelter the rights and the other befriend the interests of their fellow workers.

But the labor movement marches on. The industrial spies will go, the machine guns and gas bombs will be outlawed; the union busters will disappear from managements; contracts for wages and working conditions will be negotiated between corporations and employees upon a basis of common rights. The labor union will become one of our cherished economic institutions and industrial democracy will take its proper place under our flag.

Unemployment reserves, old-age pensions, the labor-relations act, the wage-hour law, all are the result of the militant crusading of those who have seen the common interests of all workers and not of those who regard the labor movement as having culminated in a few skilled craft organizations.

In the justice that is done to all who toil lies the prosperity of the nation and the perpetuity of our democratic institutions.

Collective Bargaining in Auto

(Continued from Page 3)

gaining is the responsibility placed on both sides to keep agreements. Neither management nor the union can claim immunity from charges of violation of agreements in the automobile industry. Considerable work will have to be done by both sides to prepare the ground for the elimination of such practises in the future. On the union side, this can be accomplished only thru educating and training the leaders, particularly in the local unions, to the responsibilities which go with their jobs. Raw, inexperienced workers cannot be expected suddenly to acquire overnight all the virtues which go with long experience in collective bargaining.

Employers, too, must realize that the contract should be entered into in good faith and can not be used as a club against the union. No one wants responsibility more than the union. No sane trade-

union leader relishes the charge of irresponsibility and no union leader can underestimate the harm done to the cause of unionism in the public eye thru irresponsibility.

As the experience of the union grows and precedents in collective bargaining are established, the problems arising from minor grievances, from unauthorized strikes, or from violations of contracts will appear less frequently and will be easier to deal with. Steps are already being taken to make available to union locals, to committeemen and to shop stewards the experiences of other locals and other plants in dealing with the question of labor relations. In this manner, the local leaderships, the shop stewards, and the committeemen will be better trained and will be in a better position to defend the interests of the workers and maintain stable collective bargaining relations.

(William Munger is research director of the United Automobile Workers and editor of its paper. This material also appeared as an article in the June 1938 issue of the Labor Information and Review, published by the Labor Department.—Editor.)

R. Hook, president of the American Rolling Mill Co., and of the National Association of Manufacturers, was then approached to help finance such a survey by the firm. It was after Hill and Knowlton got busy on the idea that the agitation started for a government commission; and, when the President's commission was finally appointed, Hook became a member of it."

Thus is justified the fear of those who denounced the President's "investigation" and refused to have anything to do with it. But another question arises immediately, demanding serious consideration from those sections of the labor movement that have supported President Roosevelt thru thick and thin since 1933: "Can the President be the loyal and steadfast friend of labor that you believe him to be when he can take over and make his own an anti-union scheme hatched by Tom Girdler."

WORLD TODAY

By Lambda

Brockway on I.L.P. Policy

By EVE DORF

London, England. THE keynote of the present stage of development of the Independent Labor Party of Britain and its outlook for the future was struck by Fenner Brockway in his address on "Socialist Policy in the Present Situation" before the I.L.P. Summer School in Letchworth on August 4.

How far the I.L.P. has already developed in the direction of a stable, coherent and definitely revolutionary socialist party was well demonstrated by Brockway's very concise but quite lucid analysis of the present situation as a period between two world wars, in which heavy armament expenditures and the concentration on production of armaments must result in serious dislocation of the whole economic system, war or no war.

What should be the policy of the working class in this situation? Certainly not the present "collective-security" policy of the Socialist and Communist Internationals, which Brockway branded as essentially a defense of the existing division of the world among various imperialist powers. The defense of capitalist "democracy" he dismissed as a defense of imperialist dictatorship. For the benefit of those who still held illusions as to the necessity for defending our "democracies" as the most important task today, he described the basis of democratic liberties in the British Empire. The workers in England today, he stated, possess certain democratic rights because, in four-fifths of the Empire, there is no democracy at all. On the contrary, in this four-fifths of the Empire, even Hitlerism is outdone.

The statement of I.L.P. policy in the present situation was crystal-clear. First, to strive to develop the class struggle to such a pitch that there is little hope of that "national unity" without which capitalist governments fear to wage war. Every intensification of the class struggle is in this way a great contribution to the cause of peace. Second, intensification of the struggle of the colonial masses, which will also make capitalist governments fear war. Third, encouragement of workers within the fascist countries themselves by every assistance and far more help than in the past.

Brockway concluded his programmatic talk by listing the hopeful possibilities for the future. First among these is the Paris International Conference, with its participating and collaborating organizations (London Bureau, the I.C.O., and the African Bureau), signifying a consolidation of independent revolutionary forces with enormous promise for the future. Among the hopes for the developing movement, he emphasized the considerable strength with which the new French Socialist Workers and Peasants Party begins; the C.I.O. movement in the United States; the Independent Labor League of America, which he greeted most cordially and which he recognized to be a constructive force deeply rooted in the mass trade unions; and finally, the growing strength of colonial resistance to imperialism.

In order for the I.L.P. to achieve its great purposes, its secretary posed the following chief tasks for the present. First, the emphasis on and the further development of trade-union work. It is of interest to note that, thruout the summer school sessions, this need was urged again and again, and the discussions following the lectures of George Hicks, British trade-union leader, and D. Benjamin, of the I.L.L.A., centered about this as a major necessity recognized by all the students coming from different parts of the country. Second, the workers-front idea and the strengthening of cooperation with mass working-class parties.

Britain, with its Labor Party based on a federated structure, offers good possibilities. Inside the L.P., any affiliate may maintain its independent life, or organization and propaganda. On this matter of affiliation with the Labor Party, Brockway stated that the I.L.P. must ask itself whether the degree of federal structure of L.P. does allow enough liberty to the I.L.P. to give the revolutionary socialist lead. He discussed at length the fundamental difficulty of collaborating with any official Communist Party today in a genuine united front.

Brockway concluded his talk with a plea for faith in labor's cause and for the consolidation of all forces around the banner of revolutionary socialism.

WHERE WE STAND PROGRAM AND POLICIES of the I.L.L.A. Single copies: 5c. Five or more: 4c. WORKERS AGE BOOKSHOP 131 W. 33rd St., N. Y. C.

BOOKS

THE COMING VICTORY OF DEMOCRACY, by Thomas Mann. Alfred A. Knopf, New York. 1938. \$1.00.

HOW bankrupt must bourgeois "democratic" thought be if this puerile homily can be hailed by reviewers everywhere as the supreme expression of its genius! Thomas Mann is undoubtedly a great writer, but in economics and politics he is completely at sea. Ignorance is hardly the word for it; even political illiteracy falls short of the mark. The more absurd, the more shallow, the more discredited a notion is, the more it seems to appeal to him as a profound and significant truth. On the other hand, reasonable and well-founded conclusions, confirmed by decades of living experience, simply make no impression whatever. This pamphlet is, in truth, a remarkable performance—but remarkable on quite other grounds than those that impress the worshipful reviewers.

"The advantage, or the apparent advantage, of the tendencies that are hostile to democracy, is, above all, the charm of novelty—a charm to which humanity always shows itself highly susceptible": such is the empty abstraction that serves Dr. Mann as the point of departure of his analysis. How utterly superficial are all such generalizations! To one philosopher, the human race is "highly susceptible to novelty"; to another, it is "inherently conservative, stagnant, dreading anything new." Either view is probably as right or as wrong as the other—and as trivial, for what humanity is or is not depends much more upon historical conditions than upon an alleged human nature fixed once and for all.

Dr. Mann is ready enough with his sweeping abstractions but he does not seem to have much of an understanding of material facts and economic forces. He does not show that he is at all aware of the agonizing torments undergone by the masses in periods of acute social crisis, torments which drive them to yearn so intensely for "something new, something different" and make them so "susceptible to the charm of novelty."

And yet here, to a large extent, lies the secret of fascism. If the author has no knowledge or understanding of the facts of social life, he has certain social instincts, which are quite as significant in their way: a strong anti-democratic bias and an equally strong tendency towards political and economic conservatism. Yes, Dr. Mann, the champion of democracy, is himself a convinced anti-democrat! He sighs for an "ideal aristocracy"; he bases one of his main objections to fascism on the ground that it is a "barbaric mob-movement, degenerate democracy" and that the fascist dictators are "outright plebeians"; he holds it to be the mission of "democratic education" to "raise the lower classes to an appreciation of culture and to accept the leadership of the better elements"! No word of comment is necessary.

Dr. Mann's thoroly reactionary economic prejudices are frankly avowed by himself. His whole effort is to conserve our present social order—with some reforms, of course. And in fascism he sees a dangerous threat to this social order. That is primarily why he opposes it. To him fascism is "a bolshevism of the ignoble," "a morally low form of socialism, but nevertheless a form of it," "a socialist dictatorship . . . in its economic effect practically identical with bolshevism." His anti-fascism is, at least in part, anti-socialism. This may sound paradoxical, but the paradox lies deep, deep in the

Behind the Soviet 'Purge'

Stalinist and Trotskyist Views Fail to Answer Basic Question

By AUGUST THALHEIMER

(This article first appeared in the June 1938 issue of the English socialist journal, "Controversy."—Editor.)

THE editor proposed the following questions for discussion: "1. What is the true explanation of the conflict (or conflicts) taking place within the U.S.S.R.? Personal? Political? Social?"

"2. Was the cause temporary so that the purge is now ended? Or is it enduring so that the terror must continue whether Stalin desires it or not?"

"3. What are the probable effects of this wholesale destruction of leaders in every branch of the economic, political, military and cultural life of the Russian people? In particular, how will it affect Russia's social development and military security?"

I will attempt to answer these questions as objectively as possible; I mean, on a basis of facts. The difficulty of giving an objective answer is greater perhaps in this case than in any other, for the side which is practising the terror has so vast and so immense a power at its command. This is the case in no other country, not even in those under fascist dictatorship, for this power extends, without limits, over the whole material existence of each individual. Yet I believe that sufficiently accurate answers are possible. A further difficulty appears here for English readers in that the corresponding conditions in the Soviet Union are so uncommonly removed from the conditions in their own country that it requires an unusual effort on their part to conceive and imagine themselves in those other conditions.

To answer these questions correctly they must first of all be correctly put. Here already the discussion begins.

The Meaning Of The Terror

The questions themselves presuppose that Stalin is making use of a terror which directs itself against "leaders in every branch of the economic, political, military and cultural life of the Russian people." This is contested by Stalin and his supporters. According to them, the "terror" is exclusively on the part of those who have been purged with or without trial. This concerns a small circle of persons, mostly earlier communist leaders who, in the course of the factional struggle, have degenerated into mere criminals lacking in all political principle, after losing and because they had lost all influence

confusion and chaos of Thomas Mann's soul.

And Dr. Mann's soul is the soul of the petty-bourgeois democrat faced with the breakdown of the old system that to him is identical with civilization. For all his culture and deep insight into certain aspects of human existence, Dr. Mann is here a faithful representative of the petty-bourgeois philistine cast adrift in a collapsing social order, hopelessly grasping at the straw of illusion to save him from the "twin dangers" of fascism and bolshevism. He is ready to believe anything—provided only it is absurd enough.

In Thomas Mann we have the true philosopher of the People's Front. The road he marks out leads not to the "coming victory of democracy" but to spiritual decay and political disaster. The road to democracy, to genuine democracy rising above the bourgeois class-state in its pseudo-"democratic" as well as its fascist form, lies thru the socialist class struggle of the proletariat. There is no other road. APEX

STALINIZED "LIBERALS"

FROM an editorial in the New Republic of August 31, 1938: "In fact, the communists today are not acting as a revolutionary group; they are so committed to the policy of cooperation with all democratic forces that one can hardly tell them from the New Deal Democrats. If the Dies Committee really wants to look at the revolutionists, they should try to find one of the tiny handful of Trotskyists, who still maintain the position that the communists took twenty years ago."

The intent of this paragraph is obvious: to "exonerate" the Stalinists and to incite the Dies Committee Red-hunters against the Trotskyites. "Liberals" in the service of Stalinism, Stalinized "liberalism," in short, aspires to no higher function than—to use language appropriate to the subject—to serve as finger-men and mouthpieces for the Stalinist wreckers.

has built it up into a solid system. This could not be accomplished in one blow; it happened step by step. We cannot pursue here each separate stage of this development. The result was the elimination of every criticism of the party and of the state administration, and of every kind of control from below thru the mass of both party and non-party members. Hence, the system of "secretariats" was set up after the pattern of General Secretary Stalin. From the head of the party and of the soviet state right down to the local authorities and local party officials, there reigned, high and low, unrestricted and uncontrolled from below, the big, the middle-sized and the little autocrats, who were in part changing themselves into something like oriental satraps. They were no longer chosen from below but were appointed from above; they recruited themselves or supplemented their numbers by co-option, rendered to their organizations no reports or accounts, stamped out any criticism, and organized—Stalin in the foreground—an oriental personal worship of themselves. It is clear that, if for a privileged situation, such an extraordinary authority, endures for some time, it develops the tendency to strengthen itself still further, to perpetuate itself and to quell by any means all opposition. This was not the case with the whole of the bureaucracy, but with a part of it, of which Stalin was the prototype, and which grouped itself around Stalin. Birds of a feather flock together.

The danger of an "abuse of power" by Stalin was foreseen by Lenin, as is well known. An addition to his political testament asked upon these grounds for the dismissal of Stalin from the post of general secretary. (Continued Next Week)

NEW DEAL AND THE SOUTH

(Continued from Page 3)

ern upper-class elements. Such groups could then be utilized for a new or revised Democratic party, thru which the New Deal could operate to bolster the sagging structure of southern economy and to raise the living standards of certain layers of the population. Roosevelt would thus apply his national political philosophy to the southern regions, making certain partial and limited reforms in the life of the masses in order to restore the workings of capitalist economy and forestall independent action of the croppers and super-exploited workers.

But to touch even the outer fringe of these problems is to play

with fire—for those who seek to preserve the rotting body of southern capitalism. That the inner circles of the New Deal realize this and are hesitant and wavering in their attitude is reflected in the lack of fixed policy in regard to the primary purposes.

So "delicate" is the problem that no labor, which in a basic sense has no vested interests in the preservation of the backward set-up of the South, is free to hurdle all obstacles to its emancipation, without regard to any "ties." Only labor can really change the South. And that change must be a fundamental transformation, in the process of achieving which labor itself must transform its program in the direction of socialism.

The picture shown by actual

L.A. Workers Picket Nazis

By EARL LANE
(Our West Coast Correspondent)

Los Angeles, Cal.
In one of the biggest demonstrations of its kind ever held, 6,000 people gathered in front of the Deutsches Haus on the night of August 7 to protest the first Southern California convention of the Nazi Bund, masquerading under the name of the Anti-Communist League. The demonstration was noteworthy for two things: the really spontaneous militancy of the crowd, and the shameful role of the Communist Party in sabotaging and finally breaking up the demonstration.

The demonstration, called by the United Anti-Nazi Conference, a Stalinist-controlled set-up, was hampered and hamstrung by these people from the very start. Altho the Nazi convention was scheduled for 8 p. m., the picket line was called for the same hour. This naturally gave the Nazis time to enter the building before any effective resistance could be built up. The picket line itself marched in two orderly rows, leaving a 15-foot pathway in front of the building thru which late-comers could enter unmolested.

But the militant spirit of the crowd, plentifully sprinkled with trade unionists and non-Stalinist left-wing workers, finally asserted itself, and the picket line broke up to mass in a solid phalanx before the building. The subsequent conduct of the Stalinists becomes all the more disgraceful when we consider that the police made no real effort to prevent this from happening. The sentiment of the crowd was for holding ranks to prevent the Nazis from leaving. At one point, the crowd was on the verge of storming the building. Even an American Legion contingent was urging that this be done.

At this point the Stalinists—and not the police—took the initiative in preserving "law and order." Over boos and hisses which it took five minutes to quiet down, Leo Gallagher, well-known I.L.D. attorney, begged the crowd "to show that you are real anti-fascists and go home now." Stalinist agents circulated thru the crowd with alternate pleas to "pay no attention to the provocateurs but go home now, peacefully now" and attempts to push away and physically break up the fringes and the extreme front ranks of the crowd. But, in spite of all these efforts, eventually aided by the police, the center ranks held solid for a full half-hour after Gallagher's appeal to "let the Nazis go home first."

Two working class organizations, the Independent Labor League of America and the Socialist Workers Party, played a splendid role in the demonstration. With their banners plainly displayed they became rallying points for hundreds of workers who instinctively distrusted the official conduct of the demonstration. It was largely due to the efforts of these organizations that the ranks held as long as they did. It was the I.L.L.A. which took the initiative in consolidating the picket line and cementing the crowd in solid formation by planting its banner directly before the entrance of the building and shouting the slogans. "Shoulder to shoulder," "Close ranks," "Workers front."

Such stirring examples of working class solidarity as the militancy of a large section of the workers at this demonstration, coupled with the close cooperation of the I.L.L.A. and the S.W.P. in this one instance at least, should give genuine hope to all militant workers in their struggle against reaction, against war, and for socialism.

Labor Party on Way

Survey Reveals Wide Favorable Sentiment

THAT labor has already established itself as a definite independent force in American politics, is made clear by the results of the quarterly survey of public opinion recently made by the magazine Fortune two weeks ago.

On the question of whether or not there would be a strong labor party in this country within the next ten years, 36% said yes, 23.2% said no, and 40.8% said they didn't know.

On whether they hoped so, 21.9% said yes, 45.1% said no and 33.0% said they didn't care.

In other words, taking "public opinion" as a unit, 3 out of 5 who have any opinion at all expect a strong labor party in a decade. But, of those who express any concern about the matter, less than one-third find this expectation welcome.

The situation takes on a different aspect, however, if the figures are broken down by economic or occupational groups. Executives and labor have about the same expectation of a strong labor party arising. But executives fear this development which they expect, while labor hopes for a political party of its own. This hope is particularly marked among factory and miscellaneous labor and the unemployed masses.

Yet nowhere, not even among these categories of labor, do more than a bare majority of those with any opinion welcome the prospect of a labor party.

Several important conclusions can be drawn directly from this information:

1. The mass of the people who do any thinking at all on such questions are convinced that a strong labor party is in the offing. This is their expectation, whether they fear or welcome it. In other words, the labor-party idea has already become a definite part of American politics.

2. Support of a labor party is making considerable headway among the masses of the workers, who only a few years ago were largely indifferent or hostile to it. Already a majority of factory and miscellaneous workers and the unemployed desire a labor party. But this majority is still slim, while among other categories of labor, only a minority favor the labor-party idea as yet. Here we have a measure both of the advance in political consciousness labor has made in recent years as well as of how backward it still is by and large.

3. The masses of the farmers and middle classes, while anticipating a labor party, do not by any means welcome it as yet.

The Mexican Crisis

(Continued from Page 3)

pared the basis for a more stable regime by reducing the power of British finance in Mexico and by increasing American investment and influence. It was on the basis of this economic reality that Obregon, when he came to power in 1920, adopted the following combination as a foundation for his policy of government: to woo and win the peasant-worker block as the internal prop for his regime and to secure the support of American capital as the external.

Obregon had, of course, to make solid concessions to American capital without, at the same time, alienating the nationalist-minded, anti-imperialist masses; and to appear to be making concessions to the masses without alienating suspicious, conservative American capital. It was most difficult steering but Obregon appeared to be managing admirably. His rough mathematical formula for his pattern was: the masses could generally be kept contented, or if not contented, quiet at least, with a maximum of radical phrases and gestures and a minimum of actual deeds; while the hard-boiled American bankers were not too exacting as to phraseology but most insistent as to deeds.

This carefully worked-out Obregon policy for remaining in power was adopted by Plutarco Elias Calles, who became "the boss" in 1928, by the few short-lived regimes following his and controlled by him, and then by Cardenas himself.

Cardenas's Policy

President Lazaro Cardenas began where the "strong man" Calles left off, but, during the past year, he appears to be hammering out a policy which aims to upset the earlier balance—a policy which has given a little more land to the peasants, some concessions, which are mostly promises and revolutionary phrases to the workers, but decidedly increased opportunities for the native bourgeoisie to enrich itself at the expense of British and American interests. We assume, of course, in this statement, that Cardenas will be able to carry thru

the oil-expropriation measure. But, before we go into detail on the oil situation, let us see what the predecessors of Cardenas were able to accomplish in pursuit of their general policy.

Thru the methods described above, Obregon completed the relative stabilization of the Mexican political structure. During his four years in office, he had made a settlement satisfactory to the United States on oil, debts and railways; had won American recognition; balanced the budget; restored a sound currency and banking system; and enriched a number of his friends, who were laying the foundation for the development of a native bourgeoisie. He was the first president to appropriate more money for schools than for the army.

He had further developed a stable and docile labor movement under government control and did the same with the peasantry. He checked the direct seizures of land and passed agrarian laws which whittled down the distribution of land to strategically selected peasant groups with provision for compensation of landowners in the form of government bonds acceptable in the payment of taxes.

Obregon handed over to Calles a going concern and a pattern of government which had turned out to be successful beyond belief for the ruling group and for foreign investments.

* * *

(Another article, describing the rise of Cardenas to power and his agrarian program, will appear in the next issue of this paper.—Editor).

DECLARED Maurice Thorez, general secretary of the Communist Party of France, in an address at Grenoble (Humanite, July 18, 1938):

"What is our Popular Front if not a development and even, in some sense, a rehabilitation of bourgeois democracy?"

Labor Day Greetings

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Illinois L.P. Makes Gains

Chicago, Ill.

The Illinois Labor Party has won the affiliation of the Kewanee, Ill., Labor Party, it was reported here last week.

The Kewanee Labor Party, which has now been incorporated in the state-wide organization of unions and labor fraternal bodies interested in a new state labor party, was organized sometime ago under the leadership of Glenn Bullock, president of the Kewanee central labor body of the A. F. of L., with the avowed aim, of entering as an independent party group in the county and city municipal elections of 1939. This aim is unchanged but the local schedule will be speeded up to permit support of the state Labor Party ticket this year.

George A. Meade, secretary of the Illinois Labor Party and an active figure in the Brotherhood of Firemen and Enginemen in Chicago and Joliet, and A. B. Hettick, chairman of the Illinois Labor Party and president of the Tri-City Central Trades Council of the A. F. of L. at Granite City, declared the Illinois

SUBSCRIBE NOW TO WORKERS AGE

Labor Party expects to far surpass 5% of the total vote required by the Illinois election law to become an official legal party with a permanent column on the ballot after November 8. With a column on the ballot, all local labor union bodies and particularly central labor bodies will be encouraged to enter their own tickets in the localities in 1939 and establish the machinery of a new party thruout the state in time for state and congressional elections of 1940.

Bob Lash

Bob Lash (I. Muskat), an active member of the Independent Labor League of America, died of pneumonia on Saturday, August 20. He had belonged to the organization for only one year but, during that time, he had already become favorably known for his loyalty and responsibility.

He was a former member of the Communist Party but broke with it to join the I.L.L.A. as a result primarily of his experiences in the union of W.P.A. workers to which he belonged.

In addition to his activity in the I.L.L.A., Bob Lash was also an active member of his American Labor Party branch where he was recognized for his intelligence and loyalty.

The Independent Labor League of America joins with the family and friends of Bob Lash in mourning the loss of this good friend and comrade.

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