

At First Glance

—By Jay Lovestone—

NO surprises can come out of Czechoslovakia. Nothing is impossible there. There is every indication that we are headed for a transition government, a military dictatorship swiftly preparing the ground for an open fascist setup. This government, ruling over the remains of what was once Czechoslovakia, will be in the Nazi orbit, insofar as world and even domestic affairs go. We must never forget that when old friends become new enemies it is inevitable and entirely understandable to try to make new friends out of old enemies.

We might ask the chiefs of the Stalinern (formerly Comintern) how much success did their line bring them in warding off a Nazi victory over this "great little democracy" and in preserving the vanishing parliamentary system inside this very unfortunate land. To ask the question is to answer it—for all except those who have sacrificed every right to class consciousness and to thinking.

LET'S GET IT STRAIGHT!

WE are extremely anxious to get some things clear. For instance, in the pre-convention discussion of the British Communist Party, some questions arose that merit international attention. A certain Mr. D. F. Springhall is announced by the London Daily Worker of September 20 as having said during his report on "The Party Organization and the Daily Worker" at the fifteenth congress of the British Communist Party: "Despite great efforts, the party membership has grown only from 12,500 to 16,000 since the last congress, whereas we confidentially expected to be able to reach a membership of 30,000 in that period. Why is this? We can not fall back on objective conditions, because ferocious fascism is winning millions of normally non-political people to our point of view."

This remark about "our point of view" might be a discovery or a joke. We ourselves would like to know precisely what Mr. Springhall means, tho we have some inklings and suspicions. Has not the venerable new "Bolshevik comrade," the Duchess of Atholl in her illuminating book "Searchlight on Spain," told us that the Spanish Communist Party must definitely be considered "as anti-revolutionary?" This notorious Soviet-baiter is now dined, wined and feted thruout the Empire and the Anglo-Saxon world as an authority on socialism and on "Trotskyist wreckers and fascist agents." What is true of the Spanish Communist Party is, in varying degrees, in place for the British Communist Party, the American and other sections of the Comintern.

There would be little use in going into an elaborate explanation of the why and wherefore of the whole trend. However, perhaps our reproducing the following item which appeared as a letter from a reader in the London Daily Worker of July 26 might serve as a sort of plebian searchlight on Spain and several other places and problems. Here is the enlightening epistle:

"As a new recruit to the labor movement, may I make a few criticisms? I think more care should

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Workers Age

A PAPER DEFENDING THE INTERESTS OF WORKERS AND FARMERS

Vol. 7, No. 42

NEW YORK, N. Y., SATURDAY, OCTOBER 15, 1938

5c a Copy

Save the P.O.U.M.ists!

FROM Paris, we have just received the following cable: "CONFIRMED FROM GOVERNMENT SOURCES THAT TRIAL OF EXECUTIVE OF P.O.U.M. OPENS ON OCTOBER 11. DEATH PENALTY THREATENED. DO EVERYTHING IN YOUR POWER."

The Stalinist conspiracy to railroad the P.O.U.M. leaders to death on framed-up charges along the lines of the "Moscow trials," is apparently reaching its culmination. These P.O.U.M.ists, together with the Left socialists, anarchists and trade unionists who are in jail with them and would share their fate sooner or later, are among the most militant and devoted anti-fascist fighters in Spain. For the sake of a united and effective resistance to Franco, every friend of the anti-fascist cause should protest immediately against the reactionary repressions in Loyalist Spain. Send letters and telegrams of protest to the Spanish embassy at Washington for transmission to Spain.

Tobin Urges Unity at AFL Meet; CIO Calls Convention

Craft-Union Die-Hards Move To Block Peace Efforts

In a message to the annual convention of the American Federation of Labor meeting at Houston, Texas, last week, President Roosevelt called upon the leaders of organized labor to make peace for the sake of increasing labor's prestige and preventing "the reaction which otherwise is bound to injure the workers themselves." Taking his cue from this message, Daniel J. Tobin, president of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, the A. F. of L.'s biggest affiliate, and head of the Democratic Labor Committee in the 1936 campaign, appealed to the convention in a sudden move to instruct the Executive Council to take steps to resume unity negotiations with the C.I.O. Caught by surprise, President Green referred the matter to the Executive Council session scheduled for Saturday, but when the council met, it decided that it could not act and placed the matter before the convention again. There is strong sentiment for the Tobin proposal among the delegates but it is understood that the die-hard forces dominating the Federation are distinctly hostile. The whole matter will come up for consideration some time during the second week of the convention on the report of the resolutions committee.

Before the Tobin incident, the main burden of the convention proceedings had been a bitter denunciation on the N.L.R.B., coupled with a demand for the "revision" of the Wagner Act so as to promote craft unionism. Attacks on the C.I.O. also figured largely at the sessions. Joe Ozanic, of the Progressive Miners, reported on his futile efforts to push dual unionism in the mining field. President Green threatened to break off fraternal relations with the Canadian Trades and Labor Congress if the latter hesitated any longer to expel the C.I.O. unions from its midst. The delegates of the International Typographical Union were seated only "on probation," after they had promised that another referendum vote would be initiated in their

union authorizing payment of the extra assessment for the A. F. of L. war chest to fight the C.I.O.

Resolutions were also adopted pledging support to the railroad unions in their present controversy with the managements.

* * *

A call for a constitutional convention for the Committee for Industrial Organization with instructions as to the basis of representation, was issued last week by John

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C.I.O. COMMITTEE REINSTATES EXPELLED OFFICERS IN U.A.W.

Detroit, Mich.

The four expelled officers of the United Automobile Workers of America were reinstated to full membership rights last week by the International Executive Board meeting in Washington, D. C. The action came upon the recommendation of the committee consisting of Sidney Hillman and Philip Murray, which had been given full power to review the case of the expelled officers at the previous meeting of the International Board, when an agreement with the Committee for Industrial Organization was arrived at.

The statement issued by Murray and Hillman on the reinstatement of the expelled officers is noteworthy for what it omits. Carefully avoiding any discussion of issues, it simply states that a feeling of responsibility and authority was lacking "for diverse reasons" and that "the committee makes no finding with respect to the responsibility or blame of any specific individuals in this situation." In this manner, the committee avoids any need for justifying the decision rendered and provides a complete coat of whitewash for as destructive a clique of union busters as ever plagued a union.

Simultaneously with the announcement of the reinstatement

Swing to Reaction Grips All Europe

Popular Front Collapses, Opens Way For Fascist Domination; Soviet-German Alignment Seen

A far-reaching shift in the foreign and domestic policies of the European "democracies" is taking place in the wake of the "Munich agreement." By last week, the main outlines of this shift were already discernible.

French People's Front Bankrupt

In France, whatever semblance there was of the People's Front—and it had been no more than a semblance for months—collapsed. By a vote of 535 to 75, the Chamber of Deputies endorsed Daladier's line in the four-power negotiations over Czechoslovakia. Only the communists voted against, reflecting the sharp change in Soviet Russia's international position and foreign policy; the socialists, despite all their high-sounding talk, went along in the showdown. The Chamber also voted, by 331 to 78, to grant Daladier semi-dictatorial decree powers over economic and social affairs. Here the socialists abstained, while the communists repeated their negative vote.

Spokesmen of the government made it clear that French foreign policy would hereafter be oriented openly towards "appeasing" Mussolini and "winning over" Franco. Normal diplomatic relations are to be resumed with Italy

and the Ethiopian conquest is to be recognized without delay. In line with this, the French government will also take measures to cripple the Loyalist struggle in Spain and to aid the fascist insurgents. The Franco-Soviet pact, as the semi-official Temps points out, is altogether a thing of the past.

In domestic policy, the swing to the right is proceeding at break-neck speed. No longer having to depend on socialist or communist votes, the Daladier government is looking to the extreme right for its support. The present cabinet is recognized as largely temporary and transitional, soon to give way to one based on a right-wing coalition. The regime itself is distinctly pre-fascist in character; the tendencies towards an authoritarian dictatorship in France have become markedly stronger.

Such is the fatal logic of the People's Front strategy—clearing the road for fascism and reaction!

English Policy Of "Appeasement"

In England, the House of Commons endorsed Chamberlain's policy at Munich by a vote of 366 to 144. A few dissident Tories abstained but only Labor took a stand in outright opposition—in welcome contrast to the French socialists who supported Daladier on exactly the same issue. The British Foreign Office is now energetically at work completing the Anglo-Italian "understanding" reached some months ago. The Ethiopian con-

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is any indication of future policy, then almost anything can be expected.

The recent developments, expressed both in the reinstatement of the expelled and in the proposed firing of Martin's closest associates, is in strange contrast to President Martin's public interpretation of the agreement with the C.I.O. Speaking over the radio on September 20, President Martin declared: "To be specific, the Communist Party, while it may seek to misinterpret the intent and purpose of this paragraph (dealing with pledge not to tolerate activities of individuals and groups which are detrimental to the union) and to turn the attention of the nation from its evident significance, knows full well that this paragraph means that not only has our administration been supported in its stand against communism, but that it expresses the future national policy of the C.I.O. relative to communists and communist activities."

If this interpretation is accurate, then the Committee for Industrial Organization and the International Board of the U.A.W. are taking surprisingly strange measures for realizing it.



REGISTER, ENROLL IN A.L.P.—OCTOBER 10-15

At First Glance

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be taken with the writing of songs. For instance, the "United Front Song" appeals for unity for three verses, and in the last we find the words "the emancipation of the working class in the task of the workers alone."

"I feel like adding 'aided by the middle class and all intelligent bourgeois people.'—Recruit, Crouch End."

Browder and the Duchess of Atholl, Pouitt and "Comrade" Duff Cooper, who now apply the Stalinist approach to music as well as to the revolution, will soon have to learn to sing in chorus the funeral song of "collective security" and the People's Front.

TRENDS OF DECAY

NOT even the most eloquent fireside chat can hide the serious trends towards social and economic decay in the United States, the strongest capitalist country.

A sure sign of decay in the socio-economic organism is the growth of a strictly parasitic group, a pack of rentiers. For some years, we have been witnessing such a trend in America. Recent times have seen a terrific acceleration of this development. We have in mind the marked growth of coupon-clippers who do nothing for a living, who contribute nothing at all to the economic process—not even in the form of tax payments.

Here are some startling figures. Within the last twenty-five years, the population of the United States increased about one-third. In the same period, the volume of federal, state and local government securities, partially or wholly exempt from national taxation, multiplied ten-fold. In 1913, these totaled \$4,910,000,000. Today, they total \$50,522,000,000. These securities are held mainly by those with biggest income. Thus, these people dodge to a great extent even tax responsibility. Add to this the fact that the trend towards so-called indirect taxation (sales tax, etc.) is continuing at an accelerated pace and you have more reason for the increasingly crushing burden on the average person who has to work for his or her existence.

Mexican Oil Crisis

By ELLEN WARD
(Continued from the last issue)

THERE is no question but that the pressure applied by both imperialist countries is tremendous. They have caused a deep-going crisis thruout Mexico. And, for the moment, no solution seems in sight. It is obvious that the seizure of foreign oil properties has not solved the petroleum problem for the Mexican workers. It is true that, at the convention of the American Communist Party, at the June 2 session (Daily Worker, June 3, 1938), Herman Laborde, secretary of the Mexican Communist Party, stated that "the development of the nationalized oil industry will not be along capitalist lines. It will be under the administration of the government and the workers, with the complete exclusion of private capital. . . It is one of the outstanding characteristics of the Mexican revolution that it is now introducing a new type of large enterprise not under the control of finance capital, in which the working class plays a main role."

Attitude Of C.T.M.

It is interesting to compare the above with the analysis made by the C.T.M. official paper, El Futuro, May 1938. The leaders of the C.T.M., having their following of hundreds of thousands of workers in mind, cannot afford to be as reckless as Laborde. In a very sober editorial, El Futuro warns the working class that the "expropriation decree has not solved the problem of the workers. It has merely shifted the activities of battle from one plane to another. It tells the workers that complete national and social liberation can come only under the system of socialism. Despite the expropriation, Mexico remains a semi-colonial land. Its basic relations with the economics of imperialism will not be fundamentally modified by this new step. Mexico's oil must be exported and the only real customers are the imperialist powers themselves—"and we shall have to come to terms with them. The stupidity of Great Britain will force us to tie up more closely with the United States. . . Many Mexican workers have a blind faith in Roosevelt, but his recent attitude on silver purchases from Mexico shows that after all, he is the head of an imperialist state."

"It goes without saying," El Futuro continues, "that in Mexico,

How About It?

THE October 1 issue of the Socialist Call, official paper of the Socialist Party of America, features on its front page: "French Socialists Fight War."

Look closer and you will find that the "French socialists" are the members of the Socialist Workers and Peasants Party of France, of which Marceau Pivert is leader.

Very interesting—but how about Leon Blum's Socialist Party of France, the French section of the Socialist (Second) International, with which the American Socialist Party is also affiliated? This is the S.P.'s "brother party" and a little more on this party in the columns of the Socialist Call would be welcome.

Swing to Right Grips Europe

quest will soon be recognized and an Anglo-French-Italian combine will move to take hold of Spain in order to crush all anti-fascist resistance and establish a "reliable" regime in power. It is said that Britain is contemplating the re-establishment of a monarchy in Spain.

Changes In Czechoslovakia

The most striking shift in policy occurred in Czechoslovakia. As the Nazi troops continued their Munich-sanctioned invasion, a thorough reorganization took place in the Prague government. Under pressure of the army, which desires to reach an "understanding" with Germany, President Benes was forced to resign as "unacceptable" to Hitler, and a number of important cabinet changes took place, completing the reorientation to Germany. The present regime, however, is purely transitional and is bound to give way in the near future to one of a pronouncedly fascist and openly pro-German character. Czechoslovakia, or what remains of it, is now rapidly becoming a German vassal-state, with its foreign and economic policies linked up with those of Germany.

Soviet Russia Isolated

The stark isolation of the Soviet Union and the complete bankruptcy of the Stalinist diplomacy became clearer than ever with last week's developments. The Franco-Soviet pact, but yesterday the cornerstone of Soviet foreign policy, is now completely gone. "France no longer has an ally in Europe except Britain," declared the Journal de Moscou, Soviet Foreign Office organ. "What is the value of France's word—the value of her pledges to the U.S.S.R. and of the Franco-Soviet pact?" There are strong indications that, in a move to break its dangerous isolation, the Soviet Union may turn towards an "understanding" with Germany; a Soviet-German alignment is by no means

Dan Tobin Urges CIO-AFL Unity

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L. Lewis, chairman of the C.I.O. The convention is to meet in Pittsburgh on November 14. The call had been authorized by the October 1937 and April 1938 conferences of the C.I.O.

SUBSCRIBE NOW TO WORKERS AGE

Big Anti-Nazi Meet in N.Y.

New York City.

Spirited protest against the imperialist war plans driving ahead in Europe and against the abandonment of Czechoslovakia to Hitler, was the keynote of the meeting held on Friday, October 7, at Hotel Center in New York. The hall was crowded to capacity and a considerable collection was raised for immediate dispatch to Czechoslovakia to aid the revolutionary anti-fascist forces there.

D. Benjamin, recently returned from Europe, where he attended the first congress of the P.S.O.P., the newly formed Socialist Workers and Peasants Party of France, pointed out the fatal results of the "collective-security" policy of reliance on the "great democracies." The danger of wars has not been eliminated but intensified, he emphasized and will probably take the form of a four-power act directed against the Soviet Union.

Jay Lovestone, the main speaker, examined the new European situation after Munich, and called for the reorganization of the working class forces on the basis of a militant and realistic class-struggle program. He hailed the cooperation between the London Bureau of Revolutionary Socialist Unity and the I.C.O. and placed special stress on the recent conference at Geneva.

improbable within the next period of time. Of course, the U.S.S.R.'s new international position will bring with it a "turn" in Communist line, probably in the direction of an anti-governmental super-nationalism.

The Only Road

And so, following the course marked out by a Munich, a reactionary, pro-fascist, anti-Soviet four-power block is arising to dominate the fate of Europe and, to a degree, of the whole world. Yet in this very block, it must be remembered, there are deep-going economic and political antagonisms, reflecting the clash of imperialist interests. These, too, must be taken into consideration.

The European labor movement, hitherto committed to the policy of the People's Front and reliance on the "great democracies," now finds itself in a dangerous blind-alley. The old policy has completely collapsed but the socialist-Stalinist leadership of the labor movement shows not the slightest sign of offering a new lead. Yet it is only in a policy of militant, aggressive class independence that the salvation of labor in this crisis is to be found!

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Are We Headed for Prosperity?

By LEWIS COREY

MILLIONS of workers are watching, waiting. Millions of them wholly unemployed, or on relief, or on skimpy short-time work, are asking: Are we moving toward prosperity?

Capitalists and speculators are asking the same question. But for them it simply means adding something extra to their income, increasing their luxuries. For the workers, however, it means life itself. And for labor unions the question of whether or not we are moving toward prosperity involves grave problems of organization and policy, of strategy and tactics.

The question of whether or not we are moving toward prosperity (assuming that no destructive war intervenes to change the situation) requires two answers, and one answer is as important as the other.

Limited Prosperity

It is now definitely clear that economic activity is moving toward recovery and prosperity—slowly and agonizingly, with many heartbreaks in between.

But it is now just as definitely clear that the new prosperity, when it comes, will be limited and incomplete, with millions upon millions of workers still unable to get the work they want and need.

The substantial recovery that is now under way, it may be noted, was altogether unexpected by the masters of industry and their experts, by the very men who will get most out of the business pick-up. Three months ago, when the movement of recovery began, the masters of industry and their experts were convinced that the depression would become worse, that stock prices would go lower, that steel and automobile output would not increase until the end of the year, that recovery was still far in the future. Then the stock market and business activity moved upward, and the summer months staged the beginning of recovery instead of sagging to lower levels of economic activity.

How little understanding they have, these masters of industry and their experts, who ignorantly and maliciously blame the unions for all our economic troubles! How little creative control they have, these men who control our means of livelihood!

Signs Of Recovery

Signs of the beginnings of recovery are multiplying. Contrary to the usual summer slump, most forms of economic activity are moving upward. Steel output is now almost twice its low point of this year. The textile industry has shown renewed activity. Preparations are being made for a much larger output of automobiles than was anticipated three months ago. The construction industry, which employs millions of workers, is moving encouragingly upward, especially residential construction. Other industries are increasing their activity, if often hesitatingly and slowly. All this is reflected in an increase of railroad freight business during the summer months, with the fall upswing beginning three weeks earlier than usual. And the banks are increasing their commercial loans, a sure sign of improving business.

It is true that economic activity and employment are still below the summer levels of 1937, but it is also true that the beginnings of recovery are definite. What factors brought about that recovery? One factor, of a general nature, is the character of the economic breakdown which took place in

the fall of 1937. Early this year, I said that the breakdown was a recession which would become a minor depression but not a major depression, and predicted that recovery would begin toward the end of the spring. The analysis and prediction are now proven correct. After every recovery and new prosperity arising out of a major depression there are always one or two minor depressions before the coming of the next major depression. Thus, after the recovery from the 1920-21 depression, there were two minor depressions, which did not last very long, in 1924 and 1927, before the great crash in 1929. Hence, recovery this year had to begin earlier than in the major depression of the earlier 1930's.

By spring, the recession, or minor depression, had scraped bottom. Altho one factor in the economic breakdown was over-accumulation of inventory (that is

to say, that production increased more than consumption because of insufficient consumer purchasing power), the inventories were not very large and they were steadily reduced. The reduction was largely due to relative maintenance of purchasing power because of the maintenance of wage rates; the unions, by preventing wage-cuts, helped to shorten the recession.

Revival Factors

Then came the new program of government spending to revive economic activity, the most important factor in the stimulation of recovery. Altho this spending will not become a real force until the fall and winter months, it is now already affecting recovery thru the renewal of spending and its influence on business men and speculators. (It was the main factor in the rise of stock prices.)

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Labor Faces New Menace in France

Daladier Drives Toward Fascist Control

By CHARLES VINCENT
(Charles Vincent is a leading figure in the French P.S.O.P.—Editor.)

Paris, France

IN June 1936, the French workers, thru mass strike action, obtained wage increases, a 40-hour working-week, paid holidays and collective contracts. Factory occupations created a revolutionary situation and showed the path towards the conquest of power. But socialist, communist and trade-union leaders preferred to take another course; they held back the mass movement and pretended to limit themselves to the defence of bourgeois "democracy." For the sake of opposing German and Italian fascism, they decided to support capitalist war preparations.

Rotten Excuses

The necessity of national defense, the gravity of the international situation, were always given as excuses by the Popular Front leaders for such capitulations. In March of this year, at the time of the Austrian crisis, Leon Blum undertook the job of building up a "national government" including all parties from the communists to the extreme right; but he was unsuccessful. After remaining in power a few weeks—enough to introduce a 45-hour working week in war industries—the socialists were definitely eliminated from the direction of affairs. A coalition of Radicals and still more right-wing groups came into power. It was led by Daladier, the latter receiving full support from the two working-class parties and the trade unions, who showed a complete disdain of democratic forms and very seldom consulted the Chamber.

With Daladier, the powerful metal-workers strike—which had been shamelessly sabotaged by the Stalinist trade-union officials—was definitely liquidated. Rearmament and the organization of the nation for war entered a phase of intense activity. The Spanish frontier was closed and a military alliance was concluded between France and Great Britain.

The recent moves of the Daladier (Continued on Page 5)

class rule in those lands, in fear of the colonial struggle for independence, in fear of social revolution; and they show a very great eagerness, indeed, to patch up a four-power pact of two "great democracies" and two great fascist powers, against the Soviet Union.

The Only Way

The downfall of Hitler can only come if we help the underground revolutionary movement in Germany itself to regain its strength and renew its offensive. The safety of a proletarian revolution in Germany can only be assured if, in the "great democracies" themselves, a powerful revolutionary movement is developed against the ruling classes of these countries and their plots to dismember countries like Czechoslovakia and to suppress the struggle for socialism wherever it arises. No, once general war breaks out, a German revolution and the Soviet Union itself would be safe only in proportion as the working class of every capitalist country is strong enough to oppose and defeat its own ruling class.

The rebuilding of the revolutionary socialist movement is the only way! It may seem hard, but does it seem any harder than the task that Lenin and Liebknecht and Luxemburg and a handful more set themselves after the great betrayal of August 1914?

in line with the rising cost of living. Trade-union leaders of the reformist or Stalinist brand supported the government in such circumstances and did their best to prevent the workers from having recourse to direct action. They approved the principle of the "Enquiry on Production," whose real aim was to demonstrate the "necessity" of longer hours, and the "Labor Charter," which set up a new arbitration machinery designed to keep wages a long way behind prices. The strike clauses of the Charter (which the government has not yet dared to introduce) considerably limit trade-union freedom and make strike action practically illegal.

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The recent moves of the Daladier (Continued on Page 5)

But I started to say that New York might give some people a wrong impression. The propaganda for America's entrance into a second war to "make the world safe for democracy" is increasingly unpopular in the metropolis. But, in the rest of the country, feeble indeed is the voice raised for war. Arthur Krock, political commentator of the Times and spiritual follower and mouthpiece of the Administration, phrases it this way (N. Y. Times, Sept. 28, 1938):

"That caution and that guard- edness (of Roosevelt) have a political history. Some of it can be found in the so-called Neutrality Acts and the narrow squeak by which the House defeated the Ludlow resolution, calling for a popular referendum before Congress would be authorized to declare war. It includes the angry and suspicious protest in the United States that followed the President's 1937 Chicago speech about 'quarantining aggressor states,' and his backdown and that of the State Department from this position, the alarmed and disappearing letters and telegrams which overwhelm Congress and the White House whenever this government seems to risk involvement abroad. . . . Few political observers doubt that this sentiment is deeply rooted among the American people. . . ."

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WORKERS AGE

Organ of the National Council, Independent Labor League of America, 131 West 33rd St., New York City.

Vol. 7. October 15, 1938 No. 42

SAVE THE REFUGEES!

WORD comes from Prague that Hitler has officially demanded the return of all German-speaking refugees, including socialists and communists, who left the Sudeten region since its cession to Germany.

The Czech government has declared itself helpless in the matter. It has applied repeatedly to London and Paris to do something, in line even with the "understanding" at Munich, but its inquiries have been ignored.

It is now up to organized labor in England and France. Let it take action immediately to save the Sudeten refugees, socialists, communists, trade unionists, from Hitler's bloody claws.

A Costly Blunder for the C.I.O.

RUMORS are widespread that the C.I.O. is laying plans to invade the building-trades field some time this year in an attempt to set up unions of its own in opposition to the A. F. of L. organizations entrenched in the industry.

If such turns out to be the case, it is bound to prove a veritable calamity for the whole labor movement. For the ranks of organized labor will be ripped wide open in a civil war without parallel in our history and the C.I.O. will be driven towards a path of development that can end in nothing but disaster.

The C.I.O. came upon the scene with a definite mission, clearly recognized in its own earlier pronouncements. It was formed in order to advance the movement for industrial unionism in the mass-production industries and to stimulate the unionization of these industries along industrial lines.

"What must be the revolutionary attitude of organized labor so poorly paid and so miserably exploited?" "First: Working-class unity. No concessions of any kind on wages and hours and decrease in personnel.

Second: The workers must maintain all economic conquests and not permit themselves to be provoked by being forced to go out on strike at this time.

Third: The workers must not permit themselves to be misled by employing-class maneuvers couched in demagogic appeals to nationalism, patriotism or loyalty to the fatherland.

Fourth: Since it is impossible to fight against the inevitable, that is against industrial concentration and the elimination of small plants, we must insist upon new plants of those left jobless by the closing down of the smaller plants.

Fifth: There must be an active, organized campaign against the rise in prices.

of labor unity that presents itself, to delimit and reduce to a minimum every source of friction, to make the most of every possibility of cooperation on the economic and political fields. Any move in the opposite direction, any move tending to aggravate the dissension in labor's ranks, would be the greatest possible disservice to the cause of trade unionism. Let us hope that the C.I.O. will think twice before making such a costly blunder!

Whose Armaments?

Hitler Now Wields Arms for Which C.P. Voted

ONLY yesterday we were told when we condemned the Czechoslovakian Stalinites for voting the military budget: "Why don't you look at the real situation instead of harping on your dogmas? Things are very different today from what they were in 1914. These armaments for which we are voting are going to be used in a war against fascism by an ally of the Soviet Union. The more strongly the democracies are armed, the more certain will be the defeat of the fascist powers when the show-down comes. Why not vote for armaments under these circumstances?"

Well, events themselves have given the answer. The "Munich agreement" casts its dark shadow over the whole of Europe. Czechoslovakia, soon to be a German vassal-state, is "integrating" its foreign policy with that of Hitler. France is "improving its relations" with Germany and Italy. The Franco-Soviet pact, always more or less of a fiction, is now definitely dead. A four-power alignment is arising on the continent and Soviet Russia is thoroughly isolated.

What about the armaments for which the Stalinites and their right-wing socialist fellow-patriots

voted with such enthusiasm? Some are already in Hitler's hands, taken in the occupation of the Sudeten land. The rest will soon be at his beck and call, perhaps to be used against the Soviet Union when he gets good and ready. In their mad frenzy of Moscow-inspired chauvinism, the Stalinites have actually helped to build up the armed power of reaction, of which they and the Soviet Union will be among the first victims.

What is true of Czechoslovakia is, with all necessary modifications, true also of France and the rest of the "democracies." Berchtesgaden-Godesberg-Munich has exposed them in their true colors for all to see.

events have given the answer. They have shown that no present-day capitalist state, however "democratic" its domestic institutions, however fine-sounding its slogans, can be relied upon as an ally of the Soviet Union or as a champion of democracy against fascism. By their very nature, they must play a quite different role in international politics. To vote arms for such a state means to put arms in the hands of the enemy, to strengthen the power that will in the end be turned against both democracy and the Soviet Union.

The Mexican Oil Crisis

(Continued from Page 2) many of these acts. They are, of course, highly conscious of what they are doing.

"But we know that our very backwardness as a capitalist land is our strength in the present crisis, contradictory as that may appear. Our bourgeois industrial set-up has still a long way to travel. We can still continue to expand, altho in modest degree; we can still employ more workers and increase the extent of consumption of commodities in our own home market. Of this the capitalists are perfectly aware. They also know that in a new war our own petroleum would find an immediate market. But that does not prevent them from taking advantage of the present moment.

"What must be the revolutionary attitude of organized labor so poorly paid and so miserably exploited?" "First: Working-class unity. No concessions of any kind on wages and hours and decrease in personnel.

Second: The workers must maintain all economic conquests and not permit themselves to be provoked by being forced to go out on strike at this time.

Third: The workers must not permit themselves to be misled by employing-class maneuvers couched in demagogic appeals to nationalism, patriotism or loyalty to the fatherland.

Fourth: Since it is impossible to fight against the inevitable, that is against industrial concentration and the elimination of small plants, we must insist upon new plants of those left jobless by the closing down of the smaller plants.

Fifth: There must be an active, organized campaign against the rise in prices.

of labor unity that presents itself, to delimit and reduce to a minimum every source of friction, to make the most of every possibility of cooperation on the economic and political fields. Any move in the opposite direction, any move tending to aggravate the dissension in labor's ranks, would be the greatest possible disservice to the cause of trade unionism. Let us hope that the C.I.O. will think twice before making such a costly blunder!

WORLD TODAY

By Lambda

London, Sept. 30, 1938.

AS was forecast in this column some time ago, Marshal Vassily Bluecher, commander-in-chief of the Soviet Far Eastern Army, is now under arrest. No official report has yet been made but the information has reached Paris from well-authenticated Russian sources.

Vassily Bluecher became active in the Russian revolutionary movement in 1905. He joined the Bolsheviks in 1917 and played a distinguished part in the civil wars. Somewhat later, he was sent to China where, as General Galen, he served as military adviser to Sun Yat-sen and the Chinese Nationalist government. After Chiang Kai-shek's break with Russia, he returned and was later made head of the Far Eastern Army. He has a world-wide reputation as a brilliant strategist and was the idol of the Stalinist press in the Soviet Union and all over the world.

Bluecher's arrest is part of Stalin's purge of the Red Army and Navy that reached a sensational climax in the execution of the group of high Soviet commanders headed by Marshal Tukhachevsky last year. It is also possible that Bluecher will be made the scapegoat for certain deficiencies of the Red Army, themselves largely the result of the "purge," that became obvious in the recent clashes with Japan.

LETTER FROM AUSTRIA

FROM a letter just received from Austria, we take the following significant paragraphs:

"The war situation loosened the tongues of the workers. In the metal plant where I have been employed for the last seven weeks, the following happened. The manager and the Nazi representative in the plant fined a worker five marks for some 'offense.' When the other workers heard about this, they held a special meeting to discuss the case and decided that charges should be brought in against the firm. They also sent a delegation to the manager, reprimanding him for his action, and told the Nazis in plain language that it was none of their business to impose fines on any man in the shop.

"The firm was compelled to rescind its order and the worker, who had in the meantime left the plant, returned to his job when the government employment office told him he had to go back.

"About a week after this incident, representatives of the Labor Front, some of them elegantly clad in the uniform of Storm-Troopers, appeared in the factory. Accompanied by the general manager and the technical director, they walked up to the workers and jovially asked how they felt and whether they liked their work. Only a few rather timid ones replied evasively. The majority were not afraid to speak up. Every one of the visitors was soon surrounded by a group of wildly gesticulating men who angrily shouted that the government had fooled and double-crossed them: 'Have we gotten the better wages promised us?' 'Prices are rising and the mark doesn't buy any more than a shilling bought before?'

"Can you deny the fact that the government cheats the workers of one-third of what is due to them when they exchange shillings for marks?' 'You say that the government has given us work. What can a job mean to a man who knows that he'll be soon called away and made to serve in the army?' 'The government is getting ready for war. It's only the bosses who profit by war. The poor people are victims of it.' 'Only a fool will not desert when he gets a chance to do it. The Nazis can go and . . . ' One man jeered: 'How is it that you don't think of freeing our brethren in South Tyrol from the yoke of the oppressor?'

"The gentlemen of the Labor Front stayed from nine-thirty to two in the plant, trying to talk themselves into the good graces of the men. But their efforts proved to be in vain. It deserves attention, however, that none of the men who expressed their discontent with and opposition to the regime, were arrested."

"The process of collectivization was checked, the local committees were got rid of, the workers patrols were abolished, and the pre-war police forces, largely reinforced and very heavily armed, were restored, and various key industries, which had been under the control of the trade unions were taken over by the government. (The seizure of the Barcelona Telephone Exchange, which led to the May fighting, was one incident in this process.) Finally, most important of all, the workers militias, based on the trade unions, were gradually broken up and redistributed among the new popular army, a non-political army on semi-bourgeois lines, with a differential

ELECTIONS IN SWEDEN

THE Socialist Party of Sweden, affiliated with the International Bureau for Revolutionary Socialist Unity, is facing a hard battle at the polls. Next week elections are to be held all over Sweden for the provincial assemblies and the town and rural councils. The S.P. now has over 500 seats in these bodies. It is defending these seats and making a bid for more.

BOOKS

HOMAGE TO CATALONIA, by George Orwell, Secker and Warburg, London, 1938.

THIS book represents the reaction to the Spanish events of an intelligent observer on the scene, of a writer who fought as a soldier. It is an excellent piece of work, fine and sensitive in its literary reportage, altogether sound in its political analysis and estimates. The scrupulous honesty of the man, his intense regard for fact and truth, shine clearly through its pages. What makes the book especially valuable is the fact that, under the impact of his experiences and observations, the author's own political belief shifted completely during the course of events. From an uninformed and rather naive supporter of "Save Civilization from Fascism" (which made him a natural prey to People's Front slogans), the author was transformed into an understanding and convinced supporter of the revolutionary socialist position and all that it implies.

"It is quite impossible," Orwell correctly says at the beginning, "to write about the Spanish war from a purely military angle. It was above all things a political war. No event in it . . . is intelligible unless one has some grasp of the intra-party struggle that was going on behind the government lines."

These intra-party struggles, the opposed political and social programs, the leading protagonists of each, are made crystal-clear in the author's analysis. It was the independent class action of the workers that halted Franco at the very outset. Having done that, the workers proceeded to the task of social transformation, of achieving working-class control. Collectivization and socialization of agriculture were begun; workers control of the factories was instituted; the class character of the army was changed; and so on. It was, in other words, the beginning of a social revolution, the only way to swing mass support behind the struggle against Franco, and the only possible guarantee against the restoration of capitalist reaction:

"The thing that happened in Spain was in fact, not merely a civil war but the beginning of a revolution. It is this fact that the anti-fascist press outside Spain has made its special business to obscure. The issue has been narrowed down to 'Fascism against Democracy,' and the revolutionary aspect concealed as much as possible."

The drive for revolutionary workers control characterized the first year of the struggle. Then the forces of reaction, previously driven into their rat holes, got to work. Because of the Peoples Front line of the Communist Party and the false foreign policy of the Soviet Union, and further aided and abetted by the "great democracies," capitalist reaction was helped back into the saddle again. The tempo of the revolutionary drive was halted; the achievements already gained were slowly but surely whittled down from under:

"The process of collectivization was checked, the local committees were got rid of, the workers patrols were abolished, and the pre-war police forces, largely reinforced and very heavily armed, were restored, and various key industries, which had been under the control of the trade unions were taken over by the government. (The seizure of the Barcelona Telephone Exchange, which led to the May fighting, was one incident in this process.) Finally, most important of all, the workers militias, based on the trade unions, were gradually broken up and redistributed among the new popular army, a non-political army on semi-bourgeois lines, with a differential

French Labor Is Menaced

Daladier Regime Drives Toward Fascist Control

(Continued from Page 3)

government constitute a further attempt to destroy trade-union freedom and the labor legislation of 1936. The dockers in Marseilles, who had refused to work overtime as long as their demands for a wage increase were not considered, were mobilized on a war-time basis and compelled to work under the surveillance of the army and police. And Daladier, taking advantage of the panic created by the weakness of the franc and the war tension in Central Europe, delivered a violent speech denouncing the 40-hour working week as a danger to national defense and the main obstacle to trade recovery. The speech was welcomed with frantic joy by right-wing and Radical press, and the financial sheets of the City of London showed signs of intense satisfaction. But such was the reaction among workers that the Popular Front leaders were compelled to protest vehemently. They pointed out that employers had deliberately limited production in order to maintain high prices, that the export of capital and speculation had prevented investments in the home industries, that it was absurd to work longer hours while there were 350,000 unemployed and in many industries workers were not occupied more than 30 to 35 hours a week. The trade unions emphasized that for quite a long time they had advocated modernization of plants as a means of increasing the output and the reeducation of the un-

employed as a remedy for the shortage of skilled labor. But Daladier refused to consider such proposals. War production had to be increased now, not in six months time.

Consequently a decree has been issued which empowers the government to enforce an unlimited increase of working hours in all industries connected with national defence. (This means, besides war factories, practically all the key industries.) As for the other industries, they are granted 175 hours a year overtime. Overtime bonuses will be reduced to an average of 10%.

The obvious aim of the government and the employers is to maintain a large reserve army of unemployed in order to keep the wages down. In most of the German war factories, they work ten hours a day and more, and Daladier thinks that is fine. His ambition is to bring working-class conditions in the "democratic" countries to the level of the fascist states, where all limitations to the exploitation of labor have been removed.

The General Confederation of Labor (G.C.T.) pledged itself to support the workers who would resist the decree and called on its organizations to prepare themselves for common action. But the only appropriate answer should have been a general strike. Many

Negrin and his capitalist government. After all, Negrin is not exactly broken-hearted over the destruction of the revolutionary drive of the first year in Loyalist Spain, or over the persecution of revolutionary elements. After all, this was done largely under his leadership. He has been merely a bit more clever, and a bit less blatant about it than the Stalinites, meanwhile using them for the dirty work. But he has proclaimed his hatred of the revolution, his support of the capitalist republic, his willingness to trail after the "great democracies," time without number. The same tough-mindedness which he shows elsewhere would have been very much in order here for Orwell in regard to Negrin and his government.

This is, however, a minor flaw in a work which on the whole is quite consistent in its general excellence. It is a "must" book for all who are interested in understanding the Spanish civil war.

JIM CORK

The outlook at present is decidedly for the latter, for, thanks to the C.P., the chance for a working-class dictatorship has passed. The Peoples Front line has practically completed its deadly work. The "great democracies" having settled the fate of Czechoslovakia to Hitler's satisfaction, are about to step into Spain for similar purposes. The Negrin government, true to its capitalist loyalties, is already preparing the beginning of the end. It is already dicker with its masters. It is quite surprising, therefore, after so sound an analysis as indicated above, to find Orwell becoming touchingly "fair-minded" to the Negrin government:

"I may say that I now think much more highly of the Negrin government than I did when it came into office. It has kept up the difficult fight with splendid courage and it has shown more political tolerance than anyone expected."

This is a naive underestimation of the class nature and purpose of

Who Next?

FROM a Paris dispatch in the Daily Worker of October 6:

"A particularly striking article refuting the demagogic and dangerous 'peace' claims of Daladier comes from the pen of Henri de Kerillis, nationalist deputy, who voted with the communists against Daladier in the Chamber of Deputies yesterday."

It is only necessary to add that de Kerillis is the recognized spokesman of French fascism! Only yesterday, Blum was the hero of French Stalinism; then, Daladier; now, Henri de Kerillis!

thousands of workers are out on strike throuth France. But such movements, occurring in one industry after another, are likely to be defeated unless the C.G.T. decides on concerted action.

As for the socialist and communists, they will not attempt anything to defeat the government. The communists, conscious of losing their influence on the masses, are asking more loudly than ever for the application of the Popular Front social program. But the words of the communist leaders are never followed by deeds.

A Militant Policy In the present crisis, the new Socialist Workers and Peasant Party stands alone for the defense of the gains of June 1936. "Our bourgeoisie," says its recent manifesto, "is utilizing the international situation created by its statesmen, from Poincare to Daladier, to deprive the French workers of their conquests. . . . French workers! Demonstrate everywhere, resist the war panic! Defend your liberty, your bread and peace, by asking your trade unions to call a 24-hour general strike as a warning to the government. The main enemy is at home: the trusts, military headquarters and Franco-British finance. Before everything, free yourself of their domination."

"Against the imperialist war, for the security of your class! For the fraternization of the exploited against the exploiters! Workers, arise for a powerful mobilization of the proletariat!"

The Popular Front leaders still retain a considerable amount of influence but this appeal expresses the real feelings of an increasing number of workers. May it be heard in France and in other countries, before it is too late.

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Farm Union Makes Gain

After receiving reports from all sections of the South affected by the cotton-pickers strike inaugurated by the Southern Tenant Farmers Union that gains of from 25 cents to 50 cents per hundred have been obtained in all of the strongly organized sections and that some gains have resulted even in territory where the union is not organized, the officials of the union last week issued a statement from the national headquarters at Memphis, Tennessee, declaring the strike at an end and announcing that the results were "gratifying."

"This is done in a spirit of compromise and with a desire to show that the union is ready at all times to work smoothly when the employers agree to even a minimum living wage," President Butler said in explanation.

The strike-committee man in the north-east section of Arkansas reports that wages for picking have advanced generally to 85 cents with transportation and \$1.00 without. South-east Missouri reports raised up to \$1.25 per hundred, Mississippi and Tennessee advances have been less because of less organization in those states. Oklahoma went to \$1.00 per hundred upon demand and strike action was unnecessary, according to the report from the committee in that state.

According to officials of the union, at least 20,000 pickers in Arkansas, Oklahoma and Missouri have benefited or will benefit by the increased wages that have been won. This means a gain of as much as \$150,000 more money to the pickers for the rest of the season.

Altho the local strike committees in some communities have agreed to accept less than the \$1.00 per hundred originally demanded, even here there is a decided increase in wages.

Local areas may continue to be affected with individual strikes, as is the case every fall, unless the producers are willing to continue to pay decent wages, but it is not thought that another general strike will be necessary this year.

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Jobless Body Set Up in N. Y.

Delegates from eleven locals formerly affiliated with the Workers Alliance and from four independent groups of W.P.A. workers and home-relief recipients met last week in New York and formed a new city-wide organization.

Henry V. Rourke, formerly a paid organizer for the Alliance, said the participating units had a combined membership of 2,500, of whom 90% previously had been in the Workers Alliance. He renewed his charge that "holding a membership card in the Alliance is the same as holding a card in the Communist Party."

Rhoda Pearson, chairman of Local 4 of the Workers Alliance, who joined the secession movement at the conference last week, added that neither the Alliance nor the Communist Party would "fight for the interests of the unemployed if this meant fighting against President Roosevelt or Mayor La Guardia."

"We will not make any deals with politicians," Miss Pearson said of the new organization. Neil Harrison, chairman of Local 15 of the Alliance, and Judah Altman, chairman of Local 19, who had been arbitrarily barred from the Cleveland convention of the Workers Alliance the previous week, were also present at the meeting.

Mr. Rourke and Miss Pearson declared that the new group would be free of any political ties and that its program would be determined solely by the interests of the jobless.

The Labor Book Of The Year THE STORY OF THE C. I. O. by Benjamin Stolberg An independent and critical study of the new industrial-union movement by one of America's foremost journalists. Regular price — \$2.00 OUR PRICE - \$1.75 (add 10c for mailing).

WORKERS AGE BOOKSHOP Headquarters for Labor Literature 131 West 33 Street New York City

Stalinists Attempt to Gag Progressives in UOPWA

Anne Gould On Trial For Speaking Out The Truth

By O. W.

New York City.

THREE hearings were enough to convince the Communist Party leadership of Local 16, United Office and Professional Workers of America, that the progressives could back up every statement that had been made in the Progressive Office Worker distributed at the U.O.P.W.A. convention recently. As a result, one of the charges for which Anne Gould, progressive leader, was being tried—publishing “untrue and slanderous statements”—has been withdrawn.

Gag Law

The Stalinists, of course, did not have the decency to acquit her of this charge but merely withdrew it for the sake of “expediency” so that they might proceed with the first charge of publishing views differing with those of the administration, which they evidently consider an enormous crime!

Acting on the advice of many progressives who considered the case important to the labor movement in general, Miss Gould arranged to have Joseph G. Glass, former attorney for the union, act as her counsel. The administration was represented by Sidney Elliott Cohen, of Louis Boudin's office.

Glass set out to prove that the statements in the paper of the United Progressive League, of mismanagement, lost strikes, incompetency, exaggerated membership figures, the story of the conspiracy to smash progressive Local 34 in San Francisco, the general failure of organization and the lost opportunity in the insurance field, were all true and therefore not slanderous. At the third session, when a Howard Clothes employee came forward to testify regarding the miserable fiasco of the strike against this firm, the prosecution raised a

technicality and would not allow her to testify. The defense firmly declared it would not proceed, and adjournment was then taken. Before the next session, Glass was informed that the worker would be allowed to testify, but to forestall any other testimony damaging to the Stalinist administration, the charge of slander was dropped. Clearly, the progressives have been vindicated and the Stalinists, despite their large majority on the trial board, forced to turn tail. Whether the administration will proceed much further with the trial on the other charge, which progressives believe to be of vital importance, since it involves free speech, remains to be seen. At any rate, the progressives are determined to fight for their right to criticize the administration's policies and to enlighten the membership.

Revolt Against Administration

In Local 30, the large industrial-insurance agents local, which last year alone contributed over one third of the per-capita paid by all the locals to the U.O.P.W.A., the revolt against the administration grows apace.

Some time ago, Earl Browder, boasted that a large percentage of Communist Party's recruits came from the U.O.P.W.A. Many of them were industrial-insurance agents who were “seduced by fair words,” to use an expression made famous by John L. Lewis. They have observed the C.P. line in operation in their union, however, and its blighting effect. These agents are men with families, who helped to build the union primarily for economic benefits. Just as they entered the C.P. in droves, so are they leaving in droves. It is a very hopeful sign, indeed, and proof of the soundness of the contention that the C.P. often can gain control of a union but as a rule cannot hold it.

The ALP Convention

Labor Party Completes Ticket With Democrats

By M. PETERS

New York City.

THE first State convention of the American Labor Party met in New York on October 3 and 4, and, amidst great enthusiasm, adopted a platform and completed the nomination of candidates for the state-wide offices. The candidates of the American Labor Party in the November elections are the following: Herbert H. Lehman for governor; Charles Poletti for lieutenant-governor; Robert F. Wagner for the U. S. Senate, long term; James M. Mead for U. S. Senate, short term; Langdon W. Post for controller; Joseph V. O'Leary for attorney-general; and Mrs. Caroline O'Day and Matthew J. Merritt for representatives-at-large.

Independent Candidates

All the above, except Langdon W. Post and Joseph V. O'Leary, are also candidates of the Democratic party. These two will therefore conduct a completely independent campaign against both the Democrats and Republicans. An attempt had been made by Vito Marcantonio and others to get the American Labor Party to endorse the Republican candidates for the offices of controller and attorney-general, but this attempt failed. When these Laborites were placed in nomination and indicated their acceptance, they were greeted even more enthusiastically than were Lehman, Wagner and Poletti.

At the opening session of the convention, Mayor LaGuardia welcomed the delegates both in his capacity as Mayor of the city and as a member of the A. L. P. He took occasion to warn the party against the politicians of the old parties who become “friends” of labor in October to get labor's endorsement and then promptly forget all about in after election day.

Altho declaring that he was definitely on the side of the New

Deal and could not be “neutral,” LaGuardia refused to commit himself as between Lehman and Dewey. This attitude is generally considered to be tacit support for Dewey.

There had been some speculation as to whether Governor Lehman and Senator Wagner would risk incurring the anger of the conservatives within the Democratic party by making a personal appearance at the A. L. P. convention. After having been placed in nomination by David Dubinsky and Sidney Hillman, respectively, they did appear, and in accepting the nomination, reiterated their adherence to a program for continued social legislation.

The Party Platform

A comprehensive platform was adopted, which includes demands for the preservation of the Wagner Act without emasculating amendments; the extension of social security to include health insurance; safeguards for a free educational system and opposition to “loyalty oaths”; defense of the interests of youth, farmers and consumers; and many other progressive measures. In a section on crime and law enforcement, the A. L. P. takes a position which, without mentioning his name, is an attack upon District Attorney Thomas E. Dewey, the Republican nominee for governor. “Every decent citizen,” the platform declares “is opposed to crime and in favor of effective law enforcement. Nevertheless, the issue of law enforcement must not be allowed to becloud or dim the major issues of the campaign. The elimination of crime, which is largely a product of poverty, important as it is, produces no significant improvement in the living conditions of our millions of citizens, whereas the reduction of crime is a direct result of the improvement of those living conditions.”

In evaluating the work of the State Constitutional Convention

AFTER MUNICH

THE New Deal's foreign policy slowly built up over five years, is today shattered. When Mr. Chamberlain and M. Daladier abandoned Czechoslovakia, Mr. Roosevelt's world program collapsed. The administration now gives the impression of groping for a new diplomatic plan.

Mr. Roosevelt's policy up to a few days ago—his ante-Czechoslovakia policy, so to speak—was hard to describe. Neither Mr. Roosevelt himself, nor Mr. Hull, ever put it into realistic, one-syllable words. As they told of it, however, it was cooperation with the democracies, the support of a world democratic front. This democratic front lies in fragments in the gutters of Prague.—T.R.B. in the New Republic of October 5, 1938.

and making recommendations to the voters on the nine amendments coming before them on November 8, the platform has the following to say: “The work of the Constitutional Convention this year should be censured by the voters.... The convention made no contribution to the cause of good government. Reactionary political forces were in the saddle.” For this, the platform declares, both Democrats and Republicans were responsible. The recommendations of the A.L.P. are, therefore, that Amendments 4, 6, 8, and 9, dealing with housing, labor's rights, social welfare and transit unification be ratified and the other five rejected.

The platform, strangely enough, has no section on the question of war and peace—the question of American foreign policy. In the first few paragraphs, the adherence of the A.L.P. to the New Deal and specifically to the leadership of President Roosevelt, is reiterated, and there is a confusing suggestion, out of harmony with the whole labor-party position, that the A.L.P. looks forward primarily to the creation of a new “liberal” party emerging from the old-party system for which the labor party is somehow to be a ground-breaker.

Headed for Prosperity?

(Continued from Page 3)

Building construction did not fall as much as general business activity and thereby limited the scope of recession; it is now moving beyond the 1937 levels and stimulating activity in various other industries. There are reasons for this development. The great housing shortage piled up in 1930-33 was not overcome to any extent in 1934-38, while middle-class incomes, which rent or buy practically all new homes, did not suffer very much in this minor depression. Hence the demand for new residential construction.

The maintenance of middle-class incomes is also a factor in the rise of automobile output, which for the fourth quarter of this year is expected to be 750,000 to 850,000 trucks and cars, still below 1937 but 15% to 30% above the first two quarters of this year, which normally are the peak production period. While middle-class incomes held back buying new cars because of the depression, they will now buy as the economic situation improves.

All those factors, and others, indicate recovery. But there are serious weaknesses which may limit recovery and prosperity. What are those weaknesses?

While employment is increasing, it is not increasing as much as economic activity because of the prevalence of part-time work. Thus in the steel industry, in July, wages were down by one-half

while employment was down only 30% in comparison with July 1937, because working time averaged only 24 hours as against 37 hours. Hence there can be a substantial increase in steel output without much increase in employment, by merely lengthening hours. And that is true of other industries besides steel.

Rising prices and speculation may limit or destroy the recovery movement, altho as yet there are no signs of that.

Government spending itself is a weakness, because of the theory in Washington that it must be used only as “a shot in the arm.” One of the weaknesses of the recovery and prosperity of 1934-38 was the fact that it was largely based upon government spending, and, when that spending dribbled to almost nothing, the forces of economic breakdown began to develop. There must be a policy of permanent, planned government spending to insure a higher level of prosperity.

Wage-Cut Danger

And, if there are wage-cuts, which are especially being urged in steel and on the railroads, the recovery movement may bog down fatally. By preventing wage-cuts, the labor unions promote recovery and prosperity, for consumer purchasing power must be increased as production moves upward.

Another danger from the angle

of consumer purchasing power is the fall in farmers incomes because of declining prices, altho A.A.A. payments may offset that in some measure.

One of the great weaknesses is the lag in the recovery of capital-goods industries, whose expansion is absolutely necessary for any great upward movement of prosperity. This is particularly true of the railroads, whose managements are more interested in meeting interest payments than they are in making needed investments in new equipment. If interest payments were suspended or reduced, the money saved could be spent on new equipment, which would enormously stimulate recovery and prosperity.

The lag in the recovery of capital-goods industries is almost as great in building construction, which is now largely based on public works and residential construction; there is scarcely any pick-up in construction of factories and office buildings, which normally are the major factor in building construction. Moreover, altho housing this year may rise to over three billions, slightly larger than last year's output, it is doubtful whether it can go much beyond that next year. For the great majority of American families are unable, because of their low incomes and unemployment, to buy or rent new homes: private enterprise builds new homes only for the more prosperous upper third of the people. While the Federal Housing Administration helps by making building loans, it is not much help; and the Wagner-Steagall Act ap-

propriation of \$500,000,000 to stimulate low-cost housing is pitifully small. Increasing building construction is necessary to sustain recovery and prosperity; and substantial government aid is necessary to sustain building construction. If the government spent one billion to two billion dollars yearly for the next ten years on subsidized low-cost homes to rehouse the American people, it would push prosperity to new and higher levels.

The final conclusion on the prospects of prosperity is this:

By next year, prosperity may be at the levels of 1936-37. That un-

doubtedly would be a considerable improvement, meaning reemployment of from six to eight million workers. But this must be remembered: In the prosperity of 1936-37 there were from eight to ten million workers unemployed, men and women who wanted work, needed work, but who could not get work. And it is highly doubtful, probably impossible under existing conditions, that the new prosperity can go beyond the 1936-37 levels.

(This article also appeared in the September 17 issue of the United Automobile Worker, the official paper of the U.A.W.—Editor.)

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