

# LABOR ACTION

Independent Socialist Weekly

MAY 7, 1956

FIVE CENTS

**THE DIRTY WAR IN ALGERIA**  
*Mollet Does the Dirty Work* . . . page 2  
*The Bloodhound in Algeria* . . . page 3  
*'Only Social-Democrats . . .'* . . . page 3  
*The Politics of Brainwashing* . . . page 6

## MAY DAY 1956

Nationally and internationally, the year since last May Day has been dotted with the kind of great events which point to the social transformations that lie ahead. Above all, it has been marked by the irrepressible boiling up of social struggles from below.

This is, after all, what betokens the inexorable thrust toward the socialist victory.

In the United States, there have been two historic milestones:

The welding of a united labor movement makes the American working class the strongest cohesive social force in potentia that the world has ever seen. It is still a bound giant, tied to backward politics, but a giant that is unconquered, self-confident, and demanding.

The outbreak of the courageous and epochal Negro struggle in the South, backed up uncompromisingly by Negro militancy in the North, has delivered shivering shocks to the whole fabric of bourgeois politics. Today the Negro people are in the vanguard of the struggle for emancipation, and they will force labor to catch up.

Abroad, the biggest event of the year was the anti-Stalin convulsion in the Russian bureaucratic tyranny. There has never been the slightest confirmation of the defeatist and pessimistic fear that the imposition of Stalinism means the end of the struggle for freedom. On the contrary, even the established Russian totalitarianism is visibly shaking under the impact of discontent below.

Capitalist imperialism, too, has this year seen the faces of its gravediggers . . . in North Africa, particularly in Algeria . . . in Cyprus. In Franco Spain, a new wave of general strikes has put the U.S.-supported regime at bay before its workers.

Nowhere, absolutely nowhere, are the masses of people apathetically resigning themselves to tyranny. Only individuals capitulate. The masses fight. That, in the last analysis, is what May Day is here to tell us.

"You can't have Mr. Eastland and have us at the same time."—Walter Reuther

## Can ADA Back the Negro Fight And the Democratic Party Too?

By PAT PARKS and LARRY O'CONNOR

When the several hundred delegates assemble in Washington this week for the 9th convention of Americans for Democratic Action, the primary question in everyone's mind will be whether the organization of American liberalism can effectively influence the 1956 presidential elections. While the convention agenda calls for discussion of all the usual issues like civil liberties, foreign policy, labor; etc., the background for debate must inevitably be the issue of civil rights and its impact on the relationship of ADA to the Democratic Party.

For the first time since 1948, when ADA almost split over endorsing General Eisenhower for the Democratic nomination it faces a crisis situation.

It involves the present Negro struggle against Southern reaction, the dead-end of American foreign policy, the continuation of the witchhunt, etc.

ADA convention platforms have traditionally extolled the rights of Negroes, attacked undemocratic legislation and the witchhunt in general, cried out against the colonial suppression of peoples throughout the world, and spoken for the principle of self-determination. But today—1956—ADA can no longer ignore the discrepancies between what it says in resolutions year after year, and where it places its political support.

## Warsaw Shortens the Leash

In the middle of April, *Pravda* called a halt to the idol-smashing unleashed by the 20th Congress. In an editorial denouncing "rotten elements" who took advantage of the anti-Stalin revelations to "question the correctness of the party policy," it made clear that no democratization was going to be permitted.

At that time we commented: "Whether the unleashed forces can be reined in at the same point in all other places is to be seen. In the satellites, it is clear that in Poland the Stalinist elements are straining to push it further. . . ." And indeed, at the time, the turn in Warsaw seemed deeper than even in Moscow.

Hence it took a little longer in Warsaw to rein-in the looseness set off by the Now it's the turn of the Polish Stalinist regime to follow the lead of Moscow in dogging the hatches to shut off the waters of dissent.

On Saturday Edward Ochab—the party secretary who replaced the hatchetman Bierut when the latter suffered what may have been a heart attack—de-

nounced "politically unstable" elements, "petty-bourgeois" elements, "groups" (not only individuals) who use freedom of criticism to attack the party line, etc.

This is the signal for the attempt to swing back the helm of the Stalinist ship of state, which has been tacking and veering in the winds of the anti-Stalin campaign. But even now, no doubt, it will be harder to do this successfully in Poland than in Russia.

In Russia, the press campaign against the "rotten elements" intensifies. After the general warnings comes the threat of expulsions: "How is it possible to tolerate it if persons alien to our views penetrate this union [the party]?" asks *Partinaya Zhizm*.

Stalinism without Stalin: this is the nature of the regime of Stalin's heirs. Events are not being kind, even for a short while, to the dupes and dupers who rushed so quickly to explain that the despots in the Kremlin were lifting themselves up to democracy by the straps of their iron-heeled boots.

One has to look back at ADA's emergence as the organized liberal voice in America in order to understand its serious dilemma today.

### A DRIFT

Its leadership was formed from the ranks of the Democratic Party's liberal wing in 1947, because it felt a need to organize an independent political group that would be non-partisan in approach to the issues. It insisted then, and at each successive convention has reaffirmed its belief, that ADA cannot be tied to either of the political parties and must act as the liberal "conscience" of both. (No one ever

(Turn to last page)

## There's a War On—Where Do You Stand?

There's a war on, and the United States is supporting one of the sides. Americans ought to have something to say about it.

The war is being fought between France and Algeria. One is an imperialist state seeking to maintain its domination of a conquered country. The other is a nation fighting for its freedom.

The United States is supporting the imperialist.

Inside this issue, on pages 2 and 3, you can read about the extraordinary "united front"—of reactionary capitalists, Stalinists, and imperialist social-democrats—lined up in support of Premier Guy Mollet's dirty war against the Algerian people.

To this united front, add the Washington government, which has shown its stand by its votes in the UN, by its sale of helicopters and other weapons to the French government, by the statements of its ambassador.

Where does the American labor movement stand? Where do American liberals stand? What are they doing about this war? Which side are they on?

In this struggle there are not even any Stalinist complications to confuse them. No one seriously claims that the Stalinists have any influence on the Algerian liberation fighters.

The Algerians are fighting for simple things like elementary self-determination, recognition as an independent nation, re-establishment of civil liberties. Any one who even hesitates about supporting these demands is no democrat.

Only last week the news removed the last possible doubt about the representative character of the Algerian revolt. Ferhat Abbas—"considered one of the most moderate [—least anti-French] politicians in Algeria"—announced that he was dissolving his right-wing nationalist movement UDMA in order to make clear to world public opinion that all forces from right to left were united for Algerian emancipa-

tion from the French, in support of the National Liberation Front.

Even in the face of this development, which deprives the French even of the possibility of finding quislings, the N. Y. *Times* editorializes:

"... it would be tragic if France lost this struggle by going down to the sort of defeat she met in Indochina. . . ."

"It may be that outsiders are unduly pessimistic and impatient. The French military campaign is only really getting under way now . . . he [Robert Lacoste, Paris gauleiter in Algeria] is one of the ablest and most intelligent public officers in France. Since he believes that this is the right strategy it is prudent to trust to his judgment and wait to see what happens."

Whether to crush in blood the freedom of a whole and united nation is, for the *Times*, simply a question of "the right strategy." What is it for American labor leaders?

What is it, for example, for Walter Reuther, who has just made a trip through India telling the people how he detests colonialism. How loudly will Reuther speak up for the demand to—

Stop all U.S. military aid to the French government!

Certainly, the very first thing our labor leaders can do is make sure that the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions gives full support, financial and political, to the new Algerian trade-union movement, the Union des Syndicats des Travailleurs Algériens.

Is it simply a question of "strategy" for other liberals, who, as everyone knows, are all against colonialism and imperialism but become very discreet about denouncing what their own government is doing? Are they willing to put up a real fight to demand:

Support the Algerian cause in the UN, against France!











# May Day Greetings to Labor Action and the Challenge

## Solidarity Forever with the Negro People's Fight for Democracy

Independent Socialist League of New York

### MAY DAY GREETINGS

## For the Third Camp, For a World of Socialist Democracy

Chicago Branch of the ISL

## MAY DAY GREETINGS

SOCIALIST PARTY  
of ILLINOIS

## Build the ISL in the Industrial Midwest

CLEVELAND ISL

Greetings to Labor Action on Its 16th Birthday

READING ISL

### MAY DAY GREETINGS

"... If our generation happens to be too weak to establish socialism over the earth, we will hand the spotless banner down to our children. The struggle which is in the offing transcends by far the importance of individuals, factions and parties. It is the struggle for the future of all mankind. It will be severe, it will be lengthy. Whoever seeks physical comfort and spiritual calm, let him step aside. In times of reaction it is more convenient to lean on the bureaucracy than on the truth. But all those for whom the word *socialism* is not a hollow sound but the content of their moral life—forward! Neither threats nor persecutions nor violations can stop us! Be it even over our bleaching bones, the truth will triumph! We will blaze a trail for it. It will conquer! Under all the severe blows of fate, I shall be happy as in the best days of my youth! Because, my friends, the highest human happiness is not the exploitation of the present but the preparation of the future..."

—From "I Stake My Life" by LEON TROTSKY

NEW YORK YOUNG SOCIALIST LEAGUE

We salute the magnificent courage  
of the Montgomery bus boycotters . . .

DETROIT ISL

## THE FUTURE BELONGS TO THE YOUTH

Chicago Young Socialist League

### In Memory of Martin Abern

Monopoly capitalism endeavors to uproot the world for investment and expansion, convulsing the world with blood in its need to expand in order to live; and breeding state capitalism, which is at one and the same time the fullest and final expression of capitalism's economic-political development and its death agony.

But state capitalism offers to the workers only a continuation, in even worse form and content of exploitation, misery and destruction. Dread of the masses—the fear and knowledge that the latter are seeking a permanent and better solution to the dilemma, are uppermost in the minds of the bourgeoisie.

Today the vanguard of the bourgeoisie looks to state capitalism to preserve the capitalist order—while the vanguard of the proletariat looks to socialism. Only socialism, which rests its base on the highest techniques of production, and is unhindered by the profit motive, would permit the free development of the means of production and distribution with the object of use.

—from *Tomorrow in America* by Martin Abern,  
*New International*, August 1942

FOR SOCIALIST  
DEMOCRACY  
PHILADELPHIA ISL

## May Day Greetings to All Fighters for Socialist Freedom

YOUNG SOCIALIST LEAGUE  
National Action Committee

## May Day Greetings in memory of SHELLEY

Chicago Comrades and Friends of Shelley Abrams

