

WORKERS AGE

A PAPER DEFENDING THE INTERESTS OF WORKERS AND FARMERS

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WHO ARE THE FASCISTS IN AMERICA? By Will Herberg

One of the cardinal errors which the official Communist leadership shared with the Social-Democracy in the German situation was its persistent, even obstinate refusal to recognize the real nature of fascism and its habit of crying fascism at every turn of German politics. Much water has flowed under the bridge since then; successive defeats in Germany, Austria and Spain have yielded significant experiences that can be turned into invaluable lessons in the struggle against fascism. Unfortunately, however, it must be confessed that the same fatal confusion as to the nature and roots of fascism and as to the most effective means of combating it, continues to reign unchecked among the most advanced circles of the working class movement. It needs no argument to emphasize the utter danger of this situation for, ideologically disarmed, the proletariat is powerless. How, indeed, is it possible to raise effective resistance to the fascist menace unless you know what it is and whence it draws its strength?

JUST WHAT IS IT?

This state of affairs seems to be worse in the United States than elsewhere. In spite of all the talk about the menace of fascism, no one seems to know exactly what it is or to be agreed on the direction from which it is threatening. For the Old Guard "Socialists", fascism is something that has come like a plague upon Europe because of the sins of the wicked Communists; about fascism in the United States they have nothing to say except to ridicule those who do raise a voice of warning. The Militant Socialist press does indeed fight valiantly against the fascist menace abroad and at home, but with altogether insufficient clarity. As far as this country is concerned, at least, everything has been, on one occasion or another, thrown into the fascist pot: Hearst, Huey Long, Hoover, Roosevelt, the vigilantes, the strikebreakers, the lynchers, the Liberty League. Nowhere is any serious attempt at concrete analysis to be found.

The wisdom of the Trotskyites is limited strictly to the pontifical utterances of the great oracle. Not very much, therefore, can be expected from this quarter, for was it not Trotsky who successively assured us that fascism could not develop in a highly industrial country; then, on the very eve of their triumph, that the Nazis were fast exhausting their social reservoir; and, finally, in the days after January 30, 1933, that Hitler was not really in power, that he was merely the "screen" for Hugenberg? As a matter of fact, the Trotskyites seem to have discreetly avoided any discussion of the subject, contenting themselves with the solution of the easier and more

Fascism, the New Deal and the Liberty League

immediate problems of Soviet economy.

THE C. P. TELLS US

The official Communist press is full of talk about fascism; it is one of the shibboleths of the hour. But very little sense can be made out of it all because of the rapid and sudden shifts in orientation. In the "good old days" of the "third period" (1929-1932), it will be remembered, everything was either fascism or social-fascism—all violence and reaction, Hoover, Whalen, the Socialists and the A. F. of L. Then, with the ascendancy of Roosevelt, the New Deal became the clear and unequivocal expression of fascism in the United States, especially the NRA. How long ago is it since Browder was confident that: "The fascist direction in which the Roosevelt policies are carrying the United States is becoming clear to the whole world" (address at the 13th plenum of the E.C.C.I., December 1933)? How

long ago is it since the Communist Party proclaimed in solemn manifesto that: "All these domestic policies (of the Roosevelt administration) are openly recognized as identical in their content with the measures of the professed fascist governments. This rapid movement towards fascism in the United States goes hand in hand with the sharpening of international antagonisms . . ." (manifesto of the 8th convention of the C. P. U. S. A., April 1934)? It is only fair to add that this conception of the New Deal as the vehicle of fascism was once quite fashionable and was shared by many left Socialists and by practically all of the too-suddenly radicalized intellectuals filling the columns of the liberal weeklies and monthlies.

The seventh congress of the Communist International brought about a profound change in the estimation of Roosevelt, the New Deal and Fascism, as it did everywhere else. The keynote of the

new orientation was struck by George Dimitroff in his concluding remarks at the congress:

"Today there still exist remnants of schematism with regard to fascism," he warned. "Thus, for instance, when Roosevelt's New Deal is regarded as a clearer form of the development of the bourgeoisie in the direction of fascism than, for instance, the National Government in England. This prevents us from realizing that precisely those reactionary circles of the bourgeoisie which attack Roosevelt in the U.S.A. are stimulating and organizing the real fascist movement in the U.S.A."

The hint was promptly taken by the leadership of the American C.P. In his newspaper interview of September 18, 1935, Earl Browder, returning from the Seventh Congress, gave voice to his views in words that have not received the attention they deserve:

"We are not so close to fascism

in the United States but the same forces are at work towards it here as abroad. The bi-partisan coalition of the American Liberty League is headed towards fascism. All of the block being gathered against Roosevelt is headed towards fascism. One of his weaknesses is that he hasn't understood how to fight it and has surrendered to the fascist tendencies in his own organization. He is not a fascist but if he doesn't oppose it, the fascists will eat him up."

The position embodied in these estimates is just as false, altho in a different direction, and just as harmful as the old attitude, which is now generally recognized as dangerous nonsense. On the basis of such an orientation the tactics in the struggle against fascism are bound to be ultra-opportunist just as, on the basis of the old orientation, they were bound to be ultra-sectarian. In a fundamental sense, the lessons of Italy, Germany and Austria seem to have left only a slight impression on the official Communist movement.

THE FACE OF FASCISM

What can we learn from Italy and Germany as to the nature and sources of fascism? Fascism arises when, under the impact of a deep, all-national economic and social crisis, it has become impossible for the bourgeoisie to continue to rule society thru its customary machinery (the traditional political parties, parliamentary democracy, etc.), while at the same time the proletariat, tho a formidable social force, is unable, organizationally and politically, to seize political control. Under these circumstances, the masses of the petty bourgeoisie, headed by their intellectual vanguard, impoverished, uprooted, tormented, as a result of the crisis, bitterly disillusioned with "things as they are", with the "system", yet alienated also from the working class because of the latter's futility and political incapacity to show the way to salvation, are driven to an apparently independent social movement of an oppositional and even pseudo-radical nature. In accordance with the historical character of the petty bourgeoisie, the official Weltanschauung of this movement is a hopeless confusion of the most glaring contradictions and the most obvious quackery, all held together by an intensely reactionary mystical nationalism. In accordance also with the social position of the petty bourgeoisie, it looks for salvation to the Saviour-Leader (Hitler, der Fuehrer; Mussolini, il Duce), with his special gospel and panacea. In an act of incredible self-deception, it raises aloft the banner of private property as the firm foundation of the "Third Reich". It stands in the most uncompromising opposition to

(Continued on Page 3)

HELP US RAISE A \$5,000 FUND

An Appeal by Jay Lovestone

We are in earnest. We want \$5,000.

We want it within two months—by March 15.

Considering what we want it for, this is a small sum. We will make this sum go further than ever a dollar went—anywhere, at any time.

HELP FIGHT HITLER

One third goes to the International Communist Opposition, especially to our comrades working inside of Germany, to the comrades working inside Austria, to the heroic workers battling against terrific odds and at the cost of their lives to rebuild genuine unions, to unite and solidify the revolutionary forces who are the ones to overthrow the Nazi and Clerico-Fascist regimes—the monstrous dictatorships of Hitler and Schusnigg.

HELP IMPROVE WORKERS AGE

One third goes to the enlargement and improvement of the Workers Age—to make it a bigger and better paper for the mighty struggles now brewing in the labor movement, for the presidential election campaign, for responding promptly and properly in these hours of international ferment and crisis.

HELP BUILD THE C.P.O.

One third goes to the building up of the C.P.O. organization as a vigorous, constructive force in the trade union and political movements of the working class, in sections of the country where great potential labor militancy awaits organization and inspiration.

We are not firing blank shots. We are sure that we are

aiming well at our target. We will go over the top—if the comrades, the workers, our many sympathisers, will recognize the seriousness of the situation, the urgency of our common tasks, the worthiness of our common cause.

The enthusiastic, heartening and solid support offered by our membership and sympathisers to the opening appeal shows what can be done and how it's to be done. Close to three thousand dollars have been pledged. Over \$600 has already been turned in. With the drive officially beginning only on January 15, it is surely a fine start for a successful finish. But more, many more, very many more comrades, workers, and sympathisers must respond adequately and quickly.

S—O—S

Remember, this is not a charity racket. This is not begging for maudlin sentimentalism. This is not a time-worn appeal for "sacrifices." It is an urgent call to action, a heartfelt plea for working class solidarity with our comrades and brothers braving bestial torture and death. It is a cry for help in behalf of men of iron determination and unbreakable spirit under fire; for work that must be done and done well and speedily in this country, in Germany, Austria, France, in England, in Czechoslovakia, in India—wherever we have enemies to fight, blows to strike, rights to defend, conditions to improve and a fighting victorious labor movement to build.

If you are a communist, a socialist, a trade unionist, a friend of labor in need and deed—you will answer and answer instantly and generously.

SEND ON SOMETHING TODAY.

REVIEW OF THE WEEK

PROPOSE U. S. BE REORGANIZED INTO 12 FEDERAL AREAS; BIG SALARIES REMAIN INTACT AS ERB TRIES TO FIRE 2000 FOR ECONOMY; LAVAL SQUEEZES THRU

GOV'T BOARD SUGGESTS U. S. BE REDIVIDED

THE NATIONAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE, has unanimously proposed to President Roosevelt the establishment of 12 federal regions with "sub-capitals" for the purpose of co-ordinating the numerous and frequently conflicting and confusing governmental agencies now in operation.

This proposal must not be taken lightly. The signatures attached to the report indicate a significance transcending the mere surface value of the proposal. The report was signed by five members of President Roosevelt's cabinet among

Lovestone Meeting Draws 1500 in N. Y.

NEW YORK, N. Y.—1500 workers jammed Irving Plaza last Friday night to hear Jay Lovestone report on the present situation in Europe. From 8:30 when the meeting got under way under the chairmanship of Chas. S. Zimmerman, Manager of Local 22 of the I.L. G.W.U., to 12:45 when the last question was answered by Lovestone, this large crowd of workers showed its keen interest and appreciation.

The huge throng was spellbound as Lovestone depicted the difficulties of revolutionary work in Germany and Austria and the horrible cost in torture and death that the proletariat is paying for this struggle.

Dealing with the Seventh Congress of the Communist International, Lovestone hailed the decisions destroying the sectarian course of the past but warned, on the basis of what he had himself seen in France, against the new decisions which in practice are nothing but the rankest opportunism. He warned that the prolet-

arian Ickes, Dern, Wallace, Roper and Perkins. In addition the report bore the signature of Harry L. Hopkins, Fred-eric A. Delano, Charles E. Merriam and Wesley C. Mitchell.

The committee denies most emphatically that it is its intention to limit, restrict or interfere with the rights of the states. The real purpose, it says, is "the careful co-ordination of its own agencies dealing with any problem of concern to several governments (state governments) in any area, so that the federal powers can more effectively mesh in with those of the other governments in the area." But already the cry of states' rights has been raised by the Liberty League and, it must be said, with some justification.

With the beginning of the world war there developed a rapidly expanding federal bureaucracy which rivaled anything that this country had ever seen. The end of the war did not see the end of this phenomenon, on the contrary, the power of the federal government constantly increased. The crisis and the ensuing relief and other legislation helped this process along. The present proposal recognizes that this growth of federal control in so many matters must be systematized, regulated and given official standing—hence the proposal for 12 federal areas with 12 "sub-capitals" and

the proletariat can as easily be defeated thru opportunism as thru ultra-left sectarianism. Dealing with the question of unity Lovestone placed responsibility at the door of the Comintern for the continued division in Communist ranks. As long, he said, as Party democracy is not guaranteed and the inner regime thoroughly overhauled unity is impossible.

From the numerous questions it became clear that the audience was representative of the entire labor movement. Large numbers of trade unionists, Militant Socialists, Communists were in attendance.

perhaps even 12 Governor Generals.

There is still another side to this proposal which cannot be overlooked. It constitutes the first step in the economic preparation of the country for war purposes. The presence of the Secretary of War on the committee may not be decisive but what is significant is that some proposal of this sort has been the fond dream of the war department for many years past. Its realization will mean more intensive war preparations and the greater imminence of war.

ERB TO FIRE 2000 UNDER EXCUSE OF ECONOMY

THE EMERGENCY RELIEF BUREAU has just made known the plan to drop 2,000 employees under the excuse that the case load has declined to a point where these 2,000 are no longer needed. This it is claimed will cause a saving of 233,000.

There is not an employee of the ERB who will protest against any legitimate proposal for economy provided it is based on facts and proposes to economize in the proper places. The claim that the case load has declined to a point where 2,000 can now be fired is countered by the claim that the ERB workers have never before worked under such a heavy case load. Very many of the workers must spend the whole day Sunday in the preparation of case reports which they have not the time to draw up during usual working hours.

All agree that economy is necessary but it should begin at the top. Very many of the high-priced and low-pressure job holders on the top could be very easily dispensed with. Service would likely even be improved were many of these red-tape artists to be sent home. Also the saving would be considerable. The only ones to be harmed thereby would be the local politicians who helped

place these people in their lucrative positions.

The answer to this false cry of economy should be to demand a thoro investigation into the whole relief-administering apparatus. It will be found that much more than \$233,000 per month can be saved if an honest investigating committee were given full authority to probe into the ERB. Pending this investigation the ERB workers, now overburdened, must not be permitted to be fired.

LAVAL WINS OUT WITH MAJORITY MUCH CUT

THE HOARE-LAVAL PACT which downed Sir Samuel Hoare and threatened to sink the Baldwin government struck a snag in France when after a most heated debate, during which astute political observers pronounced Laval as defeated, he pulled thru to victory with his majority cut down to mere corporal's guard. He won out by a vote of 296 to 276.

Altho in the course of the speech it became evident to all that the previous charges that Laval had made commitments to Italy before the Ethiopian war began, was correct, a sufficient number of Radical Socialist deputies (members of the Peoples Front)—among them five members of the Cabinet—found it possible to support and thus save the Government of Laval.

Thus we find the anomalous situation in which Leon Blum and Marcel Cachin make violent speeches and vote against Laval while their Peoples Front compatriots unite with the extreme right and vote for Laval. And yet, we are constantly assured that this by no means should lead to a break in the Peoples Front. Such an attitude assumes some slight semblance of common sense if both

the C.P. and the S.P. are playing the dubious game of talking and even voting against Laval, after having been careful to assure a majority for him. That the Radical Socialist Party has maintained this attitude is a secret to no one—the frequent pronouncements of Herriot have made this sufficiently clear.

AMSTERDAM NEWS EMPLOYEES won their demands after a strike lasting eleven weeks. The strike having bankrupted the owners of the Amsterdam News, the settlement was made with the receivers. The agreement calls for union recognition, 10% wage increase, a five day forty hour week, and discharge of strike breakers.

Stillson Defense Being Organized

BROOKLYN, N. Y.—J. V. Stillson, a well known Lithuanian journalist, writing under the name of Butkus, was arrested here on December 21, by the federal authorities and taken to the Federal Detention Pen in New York where he is now being held.

According to federal authorities they had been looking for Stillson since 1918 when he was arrested, tried and convicted to serve three years in the federal penitentiary at Atlanta, Ga. on charges arising out of his opposition to war. Stillson was prominent at that time as the Secretary of the Lithuanian Socialist Federation.

His arrest has aroused great interest among the Lithuanian population here and in other cities. In Brooklyn there has been arranged a big mass meeting for the purpose of raising funds to help Stillson. A committee is also being set up in Brooklyn, from among his friends and co-workers, to extend every possible legal assistance.

At First GLANCE

By JAY LOVESTONE

TO THE UNDISCOVERING, the political map will, for the coming six months or so, be a hopelessly muddled one. With Hearst's handymen Red-baiter "Ham" Fish becoming organizer of Borah Clubs in the New York Republican ranks and Al Smith cheering up the Liberty League (Hooverian "innocent" Club) against the Democrats, one is justified in asking: What is happening to staid notions as to party lines, men and issues?

With Congress about to open its talk-show, the situation is well on the way towards further confusion and complication. Very hectic, if not stormy, sessions are ahead. Some sort of bonus must be paid by Roosevelt before the November elections. Piling up huge government deficits and taxes are problems next in order for the Congressional session to orate, rave, and whisper about. Questions involving American "neutrality" and foreign policy will draw considerable attention in the House and Senate.

"Townsendism" will take up lots of times on Capitol Hill. It is not merely old age pensions as such that will be debated, but the entire issue of social legislation which will be examined more thoroughly than in any other session. The recent Congressional election in Michigan, resulting in a Townsendite-Republican sweeping the field, is an index of the mood of the many, of the lower ranks following the G.O.P. banner. The dominant Republican leadership rants feverishly against "government codding," as it calls social legislation. Yet, the Republican mass votes for it—without any room for dissent or hesitation.

In this light the above Congressional election may become a signal for the G.O.P. head-hunters to exercise far greater care in the expression of their anti-popular aims.

It is a safe bet to say that the reciprocal trade agreement recently consummated between Canada and the United States will be a prominent issue in the coming election campaign. More than that, there is every reason to believe that England, which staked so much on the Ottawa agreement views the arrangement arrived at by Premier King and President Roosevelt with virulent suspicion.

We are prepared to grant that here and there some American interests may be affected unfavorably by the trade pact. In this light it is especially interesting to note the flood of protests let loose by the American automobile branch factories established in Canada against the provisions of the trade treaty for lower Canadian tariff on automobiles produced in the United States.

However, to us there is something far more significant to the King-Roosevelt arrangement than protest here or there in America which, and will tend to develop more and more as an economic unit. In this light the following editorial comment in the Vancouver Sun of November 12 is timely: "If Canada and the United States are to be united, it is because the North American Continent is a functional organic unit. You can not separate the parts of the body and you can not separate the parts of the North American Continent. Adhering to this conception in this editorial further emphasizes that: 'The great good accomplished by this treaty is recognition of the principle that the economics of Canada and the United States are one and indivisible.'

Should this attitude be translated into concrete policies on the part of both governments over a period of years there will eventually flow from it certain political repercussions. In substance, Canadian politics as well as economies will be much more subject to the dominant forces in the United States. Unquestionably this trend will not remain uninterrupted. It will not be long before Lombard Street will take steps to not only defend its position in the economic position in Canada, but also to check any attempts to loosen the bonds of the so-called British Commonwealth of the nations.

REGARDLESS OF the latest intensification of the Ethiopian crisis, multiplying events establish ever-more definitely that major war dangers and scenes are shifting to the Far Eastern theatre. Japanese imperialism is engaged in forced marches of ravaging the Chinese people—as if in a hurry to finish a certain phase of its far-flung operations before a specific date or expected event occurs. Hence, defeating the menace of an attack on the U.S.S.R. on this sector is now just one of the questions of business for the international labor movement.

Soviet military prowess will astound the world should the conflagration break out because of the arrogant Japanese provocations in Outer Mongolia.

"Protecting the Republic" in France

By August Thalheimer

The dramatic events which occurred in the French Chamber of Deputies when the law for the dissolution of armaments organizations, for stronger measures against the foundations of democracy was enacted, are well-known. The representative of the Croix de Feu, Ibarogay, staged an effective comedy of national reconciliation which completely fooled the parties comprising the Peoples Front. This comedy had evidently been prepared by Laval in agreement with the Croix de Feu. Leon Blum, Socialist leader, afterwards assured the public through the columns of "Populaire" that he had had no negotiations with the Croix de Feu prior to the session of the Chamber.

MEANING OF DECREES

What is the upshot of this comedy? 1. The Laval government has once more been saved by the majority of the Radical Socialist Party—by the Peoples Front. 2. The Chamber adopted a bill which for the dissolution of all armed leagues by December 31st. The Communist and Social Democratic Parties voted for this law. They boasted of it as a grand victory—an achievement of the Peoples Front.

Let us examine this victory. The law empowers the Minister of the Interior upon consultation with the Conseil d'Etat to dissolve military leagues by decree. The definition of military leagues is formulated in such a way that the C.P. and its affiliated organizations would come under it. One of the conditions, which the law designates as being sufficient for dissolution, is the belief in the destruction of the integrity of the national domain or belief in the violent overthrow of the Republic.

It is obvious that since the execution of this law rests with the bourgeois state apparatus, the CP demand for self-determination, i.e. the right of colonial peoples to declare their independence from France, can at any time be designated as an organization undermining the integrity of the national domain. (For example, Algiers comes under direct jurisdiction of France and sends deputies into the French Chamber.) On the other hand, bourgeois authorities will have no difficulty in branding the C.P., which is for the establishment of a Soviet state, as an organization standing for the violent overthrow of the republic.

Anyone acquainted with the decline and collapse of the Weimar Republic can easily see that this law will be applied in the execution of it—against the left, against the working class—just as was the former law for the protection of the German republic.

The representatives of the C.P. demanded that these fascist organizations be dissolved be enumerated by name. This was rejected by a large majority including the left wing of the Radical Socialists. This rejection sheds considerable light on the left wing of the Radical Socialists.

The bill introduced by the government provided that the dissolution of the leagues rest in the hands of the judiciary. The majority of the Chamber however voted that the executive arm of the government, the Ministry of the Interior, should have this function since the courts would function much too slowly. From the viewpoint of the working class there is no essential difference between the judicial and executive arm of the bourgeois state or the bourgeois justice law, however, which grants the executive the right to dissolve organizations by decree is a most dangerous strengthening of the executive.

U.S.S.R. will do more than its share of the defense of the socialist fatherland—the base of the world labor movement. But this is far from enough. The workers of every country must prepare to pitch in to aid the Russians defend our common international fortress—the first sector torn by the proletariat out of the hands of the exploiters and oppressors. Of course, we cannot say too often and too firmly that the aid in the defense of the U.S.S.R. is best expressed in militant class conflict against the capitalist warmakers in every country. Partnership with our class enemies, the plunderers, is home can give no circumstances bolster up our line of defense abroad.

PHILADELPHIA
JAY LOVESTONE
—speaks on—
"EUROPE IN FERMENT"
Sunday Jan. 12, 8 p. m.
329 Pine Street
Phila., Pa.

of the bourgeois government in its relation to the working class; it is a stage on the road to the open dictatorship of the capitalist class—to fascism. Here, too, the German events serve as a clear warning. Germany while on the road to fascism gave Brüning the right to issue emergency decrees and the government of the President of the Republic—Hindenburg.

"DISARMAMENT"
3. In the Chamber Leon Blum and Thorez declared their readiness to dissolve the defense organizations provided the fascists dissolve theirs. The fascist leagues have already rescinded the promise made thru the spokesman of the Croix de Feu (this is true of the Croix de Feu, the other fascist leagues never made any such promises).

These declarations of the working class representatives in the Chamber, however, are a serious blow to the incipient, spontaneous movement of the workers for the formation of defense organizations against the fascists. The entire bourgeois state apparatus, its agencies and "public opinion" will be turned against as the disrupters of the national "reconciliation" should the working class find it necessary to organize defense organizations.

The Croix de Feu is being protected by the bourgeoisie and the state. Its military organization is being maintained and permitted to develop into a political party. The retreat effected in the Chamber will be their starting point for winning the broader mass basis for the formation of a political party. The Croix de Feu is already announcing that it will put up 500 candidates in the elections for Parliament next spring.

There are signs which indicate that some resistance to developing in the ranks of the C.P. against this policy towards armed organizations of the proletariat.

The source of the trouble is the People's Front policy which is compelling the C.P. to develop in the steps of the Radicals, to follow blindly the maneuvers of the Social Democracy, to rejoice at so-called parliamentary victories and to give up the only type of activity which can deliver a decisive blow at fascism—namely

TRADE UNION NOTES

By GEORGE F. MILES

The result of a survey on company unionism made by the Bureau of Labor Statistics in April 1935 and released in October of that year had come to my hand and it occurred to me that it would be interesting to compare these figures with the findings of the American Federation of Labor. I consulted the proceedings of the Atlantic City Convention and discovered, to my amazement, that the A. F. of L. had said nothing at all on the question! No independent surveys were made nor were other studies made. The problem of company unionism was not even touched on in the report of the Executive Council. Some reference there was to company unionism—it was the remarks of Dan Tobin, towards the end of the convention, referring to the very survey which had caused my perusal of A. F. of L. proceedings.

This in itself speaks volumes on the incompetency of the Green leadership in failing to come to grips directly with such burning problems of the day.

THE SURVEY

Apologists of capitalism frequently are chagrined at the claims of radicals and communists that in a moribund stage capitalism throttles the sciences. But here is a case in point and a modest one at that. The mere process of fact finding and collecting was found to be most unwelcome to the industrialists, since the results tended to show the direction of development in as far as legitimate and company unionism were concerned. Thus the *Journal of Commerce* of October 15, welcomed the government report, mentioned above, with the following remarks:

"Although resentment in industrial circles against the recent study on Company Unions prepared by the Bureau of Labor Statistics continues high, it now seems doubtful that an organized boycott of the Bureau will result."
Mind you, no charge of favoritism or deliberate distortion was made by the manufacturers, merely their dislike of the facts was sufficient for the *Journal of Commerce* to talk of a boycott. What finally induced the industrialists to discard the idea is not known.

SCOPE OF FINDINGS

The survey included 14,725 establishments and 1,935,556 workers, and can therefore be considered as a fairly accurate cross section of industry as a whole. Of this number 594 establishments were found to have company unions and these involved 530,338 workers. An analysis of the time of organization of these company unions turned out to be most enlightening, especially in view of the great claims made for Section 7a of NIRA, which was to outlaw company unions. It turned out that in terms of company unions organized there were two high points reached: The first came between 1917-19 and resulted in the organization of 37 company unions with 129,866 workers. By 1932 company unionism had declined in favor—a mere 29 organizations having been set up during that year including 10,453 workers. The second came between 1932 and 1935 there were set up 377 company unions with a membership of 306,134. No wonder the industrialists were incensed at the survey. Even while the government was waging oratorical war on the rights of labor these industrialists must hardly have had time to sneaker for being so busy organizing to thwart labor thru company unionism.

This we find that while the American Federation of Labor increased its membership by 918,000 during the same period (1932-35) with the whole working class to draw from the workers in company unions grew by 306,134—and this in a general group restricted to slightly less than two millions. Even on the basis of these restricted figures it becomes clear that during this period company unionism grew twice as fast as legitimate unionism in terms of workers recruited—the A. F. of L. growing by slightly over 30% while the survey shows a growth of company union membership by over 60%.

A DEEP MYSTERY
Peculiarly enough it was Dan Tobin, a rock-ribbed craft unionist who cited with alarm the growth of company unionism, at the A. F. of L. convention, but in his speech on "Fascism" is not altogether clear and that his own understanding of fascism is rather vague!
When Browder, following Dimitroff, fixes on the Liberty League as the center of fascism, what does he mean? Does he mean to imply that the Liberty League is the American fascist organization, the American fascist party, in its germinal stages? Absurd—if only the character of fascism as an oppositional petty bourgeois mass movement is kept in mind! Or does he want to suggest that the Liberty League is not altogether clear and that the right wing of the Liberty League is the center of fascism? At the same time the right wing of the Liberty League—

The Social-Democratic unions in the "Joint Center of Czechoslovakian Trade Unions" in Prague and the "Central Trade Union Committee" of the Czech Trade Union League in Reichenberg embrace about 47 Czechoslovakian and 17 German craft unions with a membership of 429,000 and 213,000 respectively, totaling 642,000 trade unionists. The National Socialist unions have 307,000, the Communist 173,000. Fifty-five per cent of the 2,100,000 gainfully employed are in the Socialist and Communist unions. The remaining 800,000 trade unionists are distributed as follows: "Czechoslovakian Agrarians" 144,000; "Czechoslovakian Peoples Party" (Clerical) 75,000; "German Christian Socialists" 38,000; "National Union" (fascist) 37,000; "Slovakian Peoples Party" 31,000 members.

It is the duty of the C.P. to mobilize the masses for trade union unity on the basis of a minimum fighting program for the trade unions and not merely the top functionaries in order to build a more powerful trade union movement which will stimulate the social struggles of the

WORKERS AGE

By GEORGE F. MILES

socialist collectivism and to the parties championing it in one form or another. To socialism it counterposes its own brand of "National-Socialism" and "private property"! It savagely combats the labor movement as a whole, which it blames for the chaos in society. Disillusioned with parliamentary democracy and liberalism in decay, it demands the absolute totalitarian state and the monopoly of political power by the "party of national resurgence," called by Heaven and History to its great mission. It shows a demonstrative contempt for conventional bourgeois legality; it organizes its forces outside of the law and uses unbridled violence in destroying the labor movement and in achieving its own ends. But, above all, does it claim to be an "independent" movement, independent alike from "selfish" capitalism and "destructive" anti-national communism. Such is the face of fascism!

For the dominant bourgeoisie the crisis brings, on the other hand, the breakdown of the customary machinery of its political rule. Parliamentarism is in decay and discredit, and parliamentarism is the various "recovery plans" so frequently discussed by manufacturers associations and chambers of commerce in the days following the crash of 1929. The New Deal was first advanced in 1932 and 1933, it was strongly supported by dominant sections of big capital. The only way left of meeting the grave emergency of the economic crisis, indeed, investigation has shown that most of the characteristic features of the New Deal were foreshadowed in the various "recovery plans" so frequently discussed by manufacturers associations and chambers of commerce in the days following the crash of 1929. The beginning of 1935, the very acute emergency, was beginning to pass—urgency. Furthermore, the New Deal did show utterly unexpected consequences.

In line with the many dynamic changes occurring within the American labor movement, as the recent split in the Local New York organization of the socialist party. The separation into two organizations marks an irrevocable and irreparable breach between the Thomas group and the Old Guard. Events themselves, and the aggressive fight of the Old Guard have been major factors at work. The formation of the new S.P. Local, with Norman Thomas as the recognized leader, can be characterized as an unwilling but necessary act of the Militants. Nevertheless, there can be no doubt of the objective significance of this decisive step forward. For the development of the revolutionary movement in America, the split must be accepted as a progressive move to be welcomed by all those who are working in the direction of revolutionary socialism. Whether it is to be a temporary or permanent step forward remains to be seen and is a subject for further analysis.

At the same time, it must be kept clearly in mind that those S.P. members who have broken with the Old Guard have constituted a heterogeneous assemblage of Socialists varying from extreme forms of Social Democratic reformism to a small minority that is veering in the general direction of Communism. There is no doubt that the present situation in the S.P. is not the result of a conscious split between revolutionaries and right wing reformists. Rather, the split marks a definite and open repudiation of the vicious old guard type of socialism. This "ingenious paradox" will in all probability, continue until the time of the national convention. For the present, it remains a fierce struggle between the two groups for the hegemony of the membership, as well as an intensification of hostilities in the trade union front—a precipitating factor in the original straining of relations.

The old guard continues its rip-roaring, communist-bogey attack, combined with a continuation of its divisive "divide and conquer" policy. The old guard continues to make the fight one of principle differences. They shriek their jargon about "amed insurrection" and a staged and incessant attempt to plaster everything that the Militants do with the label of "communism." It is becoming very evident that the propaganda of their opponents, the Militants have moved heaven and earth to prove the reverse. Norman Thomas' refrain about "not giving over the Party to Communism but saving it for Socialism" has become the battle-cry of the new organization. This has led, with some logic, to a rejection of a discussion of political issues and the submergence of the differences existing within the ambitious group. The Socialist Callaries out: "Party dissection is a thing of the past!" The fear of the Communist label influences the entire strategy and perspective of the Militants. 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I. C. O. SENDS LETTER TO LITHUANIAN OPPOSITION

The Lithuanian Communist Opposition arose as a split in a fraternal organization controlled by the Communist Party and includes in its ranks a majority which never did belong to the Communist Party. It is for this reason that the Lithuanian Opposition voted fraternal affiliation to the International Communist Opposition.

After the 7th Congress the Communist Party began underhand manipulations involving one of the editors of the paper—Pruseika—for the capitulation of this organization to the C.P. A discussion is now going on with Pruseika supporting the position for a return to the C.P. organizations. From present indications a vast majority of the organization stands by the C.P.O. and the International Communist Opposition.

The letter below is addressed to the Lithuanian comrades as part of this general discussion.—Editor.

LETTER FROM I. C. O.

To the Executive Committee and the Membership of the Lithuanian Communist Opposition.

Dear Comrades:

Our comrades of the Communist Party (Opposition) U.S.A. inform us that some of your leading members are preparing to discontinue your fraternal affiliation with the CPO and the ICO and to enter the Lithuanian organization affiliated to the Party as individuals. From the reports we gather that these comrades are well aware of the fact that since the Seventh World Congress the line of the official Party has been dangerously opportunist and that these very comrades who are ready for fraternal affiliation to the Party have been given no guarantees whatsoever to express their criticism.

We strongly urge these comrades to consider the consequences of such a step. What will these consequences be? Should these comrades insist on discussion and their right of criticism, which right they themselves recognize, they stay with the Party will be short. We point as an example to the expulsion of an Austrian comrade who formerly belonged to the CPO. He was recognized by the Party leadership as a valuable force and was asked to join the Central Committee, he was expelled as soon as he opposed the position of the CP of Austria on war. As was proven later, his criticism corresponded with certain critical remarks raised by Comrade Ercoli himself at the Seventh World Congress against deviations and confusion manifesting themselves in various Communist parties of Western Europe on the war question.

The only other alternative these comrades, who want to enter as individuals, have or as a separate group is to swallow all opportunist turns and thus bear the responsibility for the results which will be fully as disastrous as were those of the ultra-left course with the exception that they will become evident very much sooner.

One of the comrades who is in favor of unconditional affiliation to the CP Lithuanian organization justifies his position by saying that it is impossible to attack the Party from the left after having opposed it from the right for ultra-left deviations. This is false because the CPO and the ICO do not specialize in waging a struggle against the ultra-left. We consider it is our duty to fight ultra-right deviations with the same sharpness and the same consistency as we fought against ultra-leftism. The very fact that the ICO and the American CPO conduct such a fight disproves the accusations of the Party which branded us as right wingers or opportunist.

It goes without saying that we would prefer to conduct our struggle for correct Communist tactics within the CP—which is perfectly permissible according to the organizational principles of Communist organizations. The CI sections, however, have everywhere rejected this demand. We cite the case of the CP of Czechoslovakia which categorically rejected our proposal for unity on the basis of party democracy. On the other hand, the fact that the official Party in Germany, as well as in America, attempts to disrupt our organizations instead of having open negotiations with our sections proves beyond the shadow of a doubt that they are not ready to grant even this one demand of the CPO—namely, inner-Party democracy. This demand of ours is an absolutely essential pre-requisite for unity, not merely from the viewpoint of our group but for the sound development of the world Communist movement as a whole. If this demand is not granted, then, it will be impossible for the Communist sections to make a serious dent in the ranks of the Social Democracy. Moreover, it will be impossible for the various CI sections to attain sufficient political maturity to enable them to work out tactics for the struggle in their respective countries. Therefore, they thus fail to fulfill the conditions for the reform of the CI set forth in the resolutions of the 7th Congress and turn these provisions into empty paper promises.

It is clear that the CPO has not yet fulfilled its historic mission. The task facing us today is no less difficult and urgent than our tasks of the past. We have no doubt but that we will fulfill this—our present task—in a shorter time than it took to help liquidate the ultra-left course.

Comrades: This is not only a Lithuanian question. It is a question which vitally concerns the world communist movement. We urgently call upon those comrades who now propose to give up the historic task of the CPO to reconsider their wrong position and to weigh their dangerous decision which can only bring very serious harm not only for the Communist movement but for the labor movement as a whole.

With Communist Greetings,
For the Bureau of the ICO
HEINRICH BRANDLER

LOSING THEIR CHAINS... by James Sand

The First American Marxist: Friedrich Adolph Sorge

TO MOST OF THOSE WHO are familiar with the name of Sorge, it symbolizes little more than the man who acted as Marx's rubber-stamp in America, to whom Marx and Engels wrote extensive letters on the labor movement here. To a select few it symbolizes the man who laid the First International to rest in Philadelphia in 1876. To be sure, the letters of Marx and Engels to him are known to be of great importance, as is Sorge's clerical work in the International; but the man himself is not generally thought to have been a thinker or organizer in his own right. Yet it was he who first gave international organizational perspective to American workers, it was he who issued the stirring appeal to the international proletariat calling them to victory even in retreat after the Philadelphia burial, it was he who can without reservation be looked upon as the first great historian of American labor. In fact, many an academic reputation in labor history today rests upon wholesale translation or rephrasing of Sorge's articles in the Neue Zeit during the nineties. He gave Marxism an American stamp and recognized the exceptional situation of American capitalism even in its early days. Next to Marx and Engels he was the foremost "American exceptionalist" in the early days of American labor. He foresaw with true genius the backwardness of the American worker, the reasons for it, and with Marxist foresight he laid down tactics for revolutionizing him as part of the historical task laid upon the vanguard of the American proletariat.

Sorge was born in Saxony in 1827, and was reared in a revolutionary environment, his father's house being a station on the underground railway for Polish revolutionaries. At the age of twenty-two he was in the Baden revolution of 1849, but escaped the sentence of death by departing, Switzerland expelled him, and refuge in Belgium was short-lived. Europe was thus closed to him. He found repugnant the idea of coming to live in America because it was a slave-owning country, but there was no other place for him to go, and he came here in 1852.

Sorge was not a worker in the sense of an artisan. He was a son of the bourgeoisie, but like Marx and Engels, and later Lenin, he transvaluated bourgeois ideals and became a class conscious proletarian. In America he made his living as a music-teacher, and for this he was often called to task by the workers who could not understand the place of intellectuals in the labor movement. Marx himself faced this same fight against the Bakuninists and successfully won out. So did Sorge in America.

Weitling's conception of strategy, tactics, and principles Sorge quickly disowned and he would have none of him or his ideas. Sorge was a leading member of the Communist Club of New York which was formed in 1857, and after the Civil War he was an organizer of a League for German Freedom and Unity among the radical German expatriates here. He was a leader in the formation of the North American Workingmen's Association which he succeeded in having affiliated with the First International. This he also urged and had succeed in the National Labour Union. At the Hague Congress of the International in 1872 when the anarchists were expelled, Sorge was made corresponding secretary and later when the General Council was moved to New York he became general secretary.

At the Hague Congress he joined with Marx against the anarchists particularly in the fight against their opposition to democratic centralism. In the discussion he said: "The partisans of autonomy say that our Association does not need any head; we think, on the contrary, that the Association is very much in need of a head, and one with plenty of brains inside it."

Stekloff in his History of the First International has latterly given currency to the mistaken notion that Sorge was merely a tail to the Marxist kite. He says, rather patronizingly, "Marx and Engels had implicit faith in Sorge, and their confidence was well served, for Sorge was of a thoroughly trustworthy disposition and was wholeheartedly devoted to socialism." But Sorge's copy-book of correspondence with the General Council which he kept as secretary of the American branch even before the Hague Congress shows him to be an original mind. In August 1871 he gives three reasons why the class-consciousness of the American worker has not kept pace with the development of capitalist production:

"(1) The great majority of workingmen in the Northern States are immigrants, having left their native countries for the purpose of seeking here that wealth which they could not obtain at home. This delusion transforms itself into a sort of creed, and employers and capitalists . . . take great care in preserving this self-deception among their employees; (2) The Reform Parties. . . . These parties assert that the emancipation of labor or rather the welfare of mankind can be obtained peacefully and easily by universal suffrage, glittering educational measures, benevolent and homestead societies, universal language and other schemes nicely put up in their innumerable meetings and carried out by nobody. The leading men of said parties, mostly men of science and philanthropists, perceive the rottenness of the governing classes as far as relating to their own ideas of morality, but they see only the surface of the question of labor and accordingly all their humanitarian advices do not touch but the exterior of it. Such a reform movement well advocated and intelligibly presented to the workingmen is often gladly accepted, because the laborer wants to ameliorate his position and does not perceive the hollowness of that gilded nut shining before his eyes; (3) The third obstacle is and has been the wrong guidance of the labor movement itself. A number of the so-called leaders have been actuated by ambition or other selfish motives, whilst another number was honest and true but failed to

take the right steps and began to reform, all reforms finally taking their abode in one of the political parties of the ruling class, the bourgeois."

Finally in 1876, after a lingering existence of four years the First International was put to rest, Sorge closing its books and storing its documents away. Before giving the International Working-Men's Association to history, however, an appeal was written to the international proletariat. This document is obscure, but should be one of the cherished documents of the proletariat tradition.

"Fellow-Working-Men:

"The international convention at Philadelphia has abolished the General Council of the International Working-Men's Association, and the external bond of the organization exists no more.

"The International is dead!" the bourgeoisie of all countries will again exclaim, and with ridicule and joy it will point to the proceedings of this convention as documentary proof of the defeat of the labor movement of the world. Let us not be influenced by the cry of our enemies! We have abandoned the organization of the International for reasons arising from the present political situation of Europe, but as a compensation for it we see the principles of the organization recognized and defended by the progressive working men of the entire civilized world. Let us give our fellow-workers in Europe a little time to strengthen their national affairs, and they will surely soon be in a position to remove the barriers between themselves and the working men of other parts of the world.

"Comrades! you have embraced the principle of the International with heart and love; you will find means to extend the circle of its adherents, even without an organization. You will win new champions who will work for the realization of the aims of our association. The comrades in America promise you that they will faithfully guard and cherish the acquisitions of the International in this country until more favorable conditions will again bring together the working-men of all countries to common struggle, and the cry will resound again louder than ever:

"Proletarians of all countries, unite!"

The next year Sorge had a hand in the formation of the Socialist Labor Party, and he kept in active touch with the labor movement all the years of his life. In New York he influenced Strasser and Laurell, the teachers of Samuel Gompers, and Gompers' own belief in trade-unionism comes directly from Sorge. To Gompers' credit let it be said that he appreciated Sorge's gifts and even acknowledges a debt to him in his autobiography.

The establishment of the Neue Zeit under the editorship of Karl Kautsky found Sorge an associate editor along with Lafargue, Bernstein, Engels, Bebel. To the periodical Sorge contributed articles on the United States, and especially noteworthy are those on the history of labor movement, already mentioned. The whole span of American history, from 1800 to 1880 is Sorge's province in them, and he puts himself in the class of Marx and Engels in his understanding of the significance of the historical development of American capitalism and the American proletariat. He shows himself an interpreter not only of the past and present of American labor, but also of its future. His estimation of the American Federation of Labor before it was even a decade old is uncanny in its accuracy of description as well as in its delineation of the line to be pursued by Marxists in relation to it. He said:

"The Federation is a bona fide, a true labor organization, an organization of wage workers, without clauses and back doors in its statutes through which middle class and wealthy capitalists, would-be reformers and politicians, might creep in. With all its faults and defects, the American Federation of Labor is the representative of the working class, of the proletariat of this country and as such, it is to be respected; but it has, also, to fulfill a great task. The federation deserves considerable merit for many a good work done for the working class of these United States. Under strong opposition the federation made an end to the nonsensical fight about high protective tariff and free trade in its own ranks; it has mightily advanced the aspirations for shorter work hours; it has favorably influenced the legislation for the protection of the working people; it has, without interruption, pushed the indispensable organization of the wage-workers; it has protected and guarded the right of labor to open, manfully-acting organization, against the secret form, in a long struggle, and has expressed the duty of the wage workers to carry on their struggle with open weapons.

"The federation has also shown economic intelligence by considering the formation of trusts, syndicates, etc., as a natural consequence of the industrial development, and by its refusal to join in the chorus of stupid howlers. . . . As a matter of fact, the federation did not permit itself to be made the end of experiments by the American mushroom reformers and sectarians of all sorts. Although its class consciousness is not yet sufficiently developed, it must be declared that the American federation has represented the class position and guarded the class character of its organization. The federation's struggle have been class struggles."

Sorge died in 1907, laden with years, nearly eighty, but not with the honors that will ultimately be his in a workers' America.

— In The Next Issue —
SAMUEL GOMPERS BEFORE 1900

Books of the Age

By Bertram D. Wolfe

RUBBER TRUNCHEON—by Wolfgang Langhof. E. P. Dutton & Co. 280 pp. \$2.50.

(Reviewed by S. S.)

It was only the other day that Hitler privately confessed to Hugh Baillie, president of the United Press, that he

had saved Europe from Bolshevism, and that the Third Reich stood as the only bulwark against it. How he "saved" Germany, an important piece of Europe, has already been described by the author of "Fatherland", Karl Billinger, by Stefan Lorant in "I was Hitler's Prisoner" and is now ably augmented by Langhof in "Rubber Truncheon." Hitler should receive every iota of credit due; the story cannot be told too often.

Every section of every class except the captains of industry and finance has suffered under the National Socialist regime and it is worth remarking that the experiences of the trade union worker, the communist, the social-democrat, and the intellectual in the concentration camps, are told in the same terms. The brutalities, the shootings, the rubber truncheons and the bestial tortures perpetrated by the S. S. guards, fell upon all alike. They began by maiming the bodies of the victims of the Brown terror—and end by wielding them into a determined and crafty opposition. Langhof, the actor, and Billinger, the communist organizer, differ not in the degree to which they react against the Nazis, but only in the degree of their strength and determination to fight and their programmatic substitutes for Fascism. Billinger knows the one way out, the communist way. Langhof is unimpassioned and starkly factual in his presentation. He becomes fiery only in his closing paragraph, when he makes a plea for devotion to Germany, his Germany, a place that cannot be identified with the present madness.

It is interesting to note the contrast in effort between such books as deal with Nazi bestiality and the so-called "crimes" of the Soviet Union. The Tchernavins, husband and wife, condemn the whole Soviet nation because its poverty and its struggle for socialism did not cease on

their account. Tchernavin calls the Russians to account for his lack of clothing and food at a time when all Russians lacked them. But Langhof and Billinger do not have to strain for effect. What bitterness and indignation, what a turmoil of anguish, is restrained in order to permit the naked story to produce its profound indictment of fascism by the facts of life in Nazi concentration camps.

The rubber truncheon, the bayonet and the machine gun of the Nazis are somehow not raising the material and cultural conditions of living in Germany. Somehow, they are not trustworthy bulwarks against Bolshevism.

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