

# Workers Age

A PAPER DEFENDING THE INTERESTS OF WORKERS AND FARMERS

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## 325,000 in Steel Union

### SWOC Announces Pacts With 90 Firms; May Strike For More

PITTSBURGH (UNS) — A majority of the nation's 540,000 steel workers are now organized, Philip Murray, chairman of the Steel Workers Organizing Committee has announced.

Now enrolled in some 600 lodges are 325,000 steel workers; and S. W. O. C. contracts have been signed with 90 companies, including all of the subsidiaries of the giant U. S. Steel Corporation, and such important independent concerns as Wheeling Steel Corporation, Timken Roller Bearing, Caterpillar Tractor and McKeesport Tin Plate.

This sensational showing in an industry of which it was once said that it "can never be unionized" was also marked by the gradual wiping out of the last remnants of company unionism—a particular object of attack by the S. W. O. C. throughout the campaign.

#### Company Unions Wiped Out

So completely have company unions been killed in U. S. Steel mills that management has withdrawn recognition from elected representatives; has refused to give them a meeting place; refused to pay any more money for their support; refused to have anything to do with elections scheduled for June.

The "death notice" to U. S. Steel company unions came in a stipulation filed with the National Labor Relations Board in the case filed by S. W. O. C. against Carnegie-Illinois Steel Corporation, chief of Big Steel's subsidiaries. The stipulation virtually ends the case.

A letter from B. F. Fairless, president of the corporation, was read to all employe representatives announcing that effective at once the company would:

1. Discontinue any financial contribution to the plans.
2. Furnish no facilities for the election or other activities of the employes or employe representatives under the plans.
3. Furnish no stenographic or other office service or facilities for the activities of the employes or representatives under the plans.

#### Other Companies Followed

Other steel companies which followed the lead of Big Steel in killing company unions were Jones & Laughlin, Youngstown Sheet & Tube and a score of smaller concerns where the "plans" had ceased to function because of S. W. O. C. strength.

Weirton Steel Company also announced it was withdrawing financial support, but the general impression is that E. T. Weir will see to it that money is slipped to the proposed new "independent" company union.

To complete the slaughter of the company union racket, the S. W. O. C. filed charges with the Labor Board against Bethlehem Steel Corporation and will take similar action against Republic Steel.

Meanwhile negotiations were under way for contracts with scores of companies. Both Jones & Laughlin and Youngstown Sheet & Tube—two of the so-called Big Five Independents—have contracts before them and are expected to sign within a few weeks.

POWERS HAPGOOD



Chief of the New England CIO Council now jailed for his militant leadership of the shoe workers' strike.

## Shoe Strike Still Strong

The strike of the Maine shoe-workers in the Lewiston-Auburn area continues strong despite the efforts of the employers and their courts to break thru declaring the strike "illegal" and jailing the CIO leaders heading the strike. Powers Hapgood, W. Mackesy, John Nolan and 3 others were sentenced to six months for defying the injunction. The case will be fought.

Constantly surrounded by bayonets and machine guns of the state troops, the strikers have faced the threat of Judge Mauser to close their food commissary if they held a mass meeting. They held the meeting, and so large was the turnout that the judge was forced to change his mind.

May 19th is the date scheduled for a "consent" election in which the workers will vote as to whether they want to be represented by the CIO. What the employers yielded on this point is considered an indication of their willingness to admit that they will have to recognize the CIO when it wins the elections, a most probable outcome.

## Blum Demands Class Peace In Name of "Democracy"

GETTING his cue from the arch-Tory Stanley Baldwin, the socialist premier of people's front France, Leon Blum, called for class peace—in the name of democracy and national unity. Altho the appeals made to the workers by Blum are apparently for the duration of the International Exhibit soon to open in Paris, when coupled with the rest of the labor-curbing policy of the people's front, they clearly become the expression of the latest stage of the people's front in France.

## Rubber Union Wins Chicago Election

A sweeping victory of the Rubber Workers Union, affiliated to the CIO, in the largest rubber factory in Chicago, opens the way to complete unionization of the rubber industry in that area in a short space of time.

The Dryden factory was the testing ground for the first election under the NLRB locally. The results were 1042 for the CIO and 500 for the company union, which pretended to be independent.

The bosses made every effort to win this election. While the union tried to have the elections after work, the employers forced it thru on company time, creating the illusion for some workers who were not clear as to the issues involved, that they were indebted to the management, and therefore these probably voted for the company. Eleven thousand dollars remains in the company union treasury (also used as an employer argument). The CIO is demanding that since this represents the workers' dues, it be refunded to them.

It is expected that with this important victory other smaller firms will fall into line.

## Debate on CIO Opens At ILGW Convention

### Cloakmakers Strike Looms In Fight For Thirty-Hour Week; Pro CIO Forces Battle For Position Of Unconditional Support

The International Ladies' Garment Workers Union entered its second and final convention week to deal with the CIO question and industrial and organizational problems. John L. Lewis will speak for the CIO in a report to the assembled garment workers.

Forces within the International are attempting to cover up a basically anti-CIO position by raising the abstract question of unity with

the American Federation of Labor, without first considering the question of Program or of rescinding the suspensions. Fighting for an out and out position of unconditional support of the Committee for Industrial organization are Luigi Antonini, Julius Hochman, and Charles S. Zimmerman.

Matthew Woll, who had been invited to speak as head of the Union Labor Insurance Company, spoke, of course, on the CIO-AFL situation. In answering him, President Dubinsky referred to the expulsion of the CIO unions and the methods of the Executive Council, saying: "We (ILGWU) have the power to expel unions, without convention vote, and we do not use it. You do not have this power, but you used it."

The Cloakmakers Joint Board has made its fight for a 30 hour week a prime demand in its negotiations with the manufacturers here. A strike of thirty-five thousand workers is threatened for June 1st if this demand is not complied with.

## Sea and Transport Workers Join CIO

### Seamen Win United Fruit Contract; Strike May Halt Subway Lines

Two groups of workers, the seamen and the transport workers, who have been struggling in one way or another against the craft bureaucracy of the A. F. of L., have announced their intention of affiliating to the CIO. The seamen, who conducted the East Coast maritime strike this winter against the bosses and the extremely reactionary leadership of the ISU, have re-formed themselves into the National Maritime Union. They immediately won a contract with the United Fruit Lines, the first time this big shipping company has signed with the union.

The New York Transport Workers, who have been getting the merry run-around from the city-owned and independent subway and elevated lines, and their former parent organization, the International Association of Machinists, voted in two huge mass meetings to affiliate with the CIO and to call strikes if an immediate vote is not forthcoming to determine their right to represent the workers.

Conferences between John L. Lewis and the Transport Workers begin this week in Washington. The question of chartering it as an international union will be taken up among other things.

An intensive drive is being planned to organize the bus drivers of the Fifth Avenue Coach Company. On the BMT a "referendum" has been spoken of vaguely for about July 1. Whether the union will wait that long remains to be seen.

## UAWA Sole Agency In Packard

Following hard on the heels of its sweeping election victory of four to one, the United Automobile Workers achieved recognition as sole bargaining agency in the Packard plant in Detroit. The signed agreement was approved by the local and provides for: vacations with pay, the shop steward system, and a wage increase of 3 cents an hour for all hourly wage employes, to begin May 16th. Minimum hourly wage rates of 65 cents for women and 75 cents for men employed for more than 6 months, and an increase of 5 cents an hour for night workers, was also achieved. Time and a half pay for time over an eight hour day, a forty-hour week and seniority rights were agreed upon.

This is the first case in which the union has won rights as sole bargaining agency, undoubtedly due to the tremendous strength it showed among Packard's 14,000 workers.

### NEXT WEEK

Workers Age will carry the following important articles which should interest all our readers:

Jay Lovestone writes on further problems of CIO expansion and consolidation.

George F. Miles deals with the "Lefts" in the Auto Industry.

Saul Held begins a series on "Labor and the Law."

Don't Fail to Get Your Copy!

## U. S. RULING ON SPANISH AID MENACES RELIEF WORK

Registration of all organizations soliciting relief funds, clothing, and medical supplies for Spain was declared mandatory by Secretary of State, Cordell Hull, acting under the provisions of the recently passed Neutrality Act. A monthly accounting of funds and immediate registration with the State department is required. Failure to comply with these regulations is punishable by a \$50,000 fine or five years' imprisonment or both. Existing organizations must re-

ceive this license before continuing their work (especially important for the American Trade Union Committee Red Cross for Spain, and the North American Committee). This license may be revoked by the State Department. These regulations are such as to endanger the relief work for the Spanish workers and peasants, especially in view of the previous record of hostility to the anti-fascist forces of Spain shown by the administration.



# May Day-We and They

THE May Day parade in New York was huge and impressive, an especially good showing being made by the trade unions in the forefront of which was Local 22 of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union.

Two phenomena, however, tended to mar the militant proletarian character of which May Day is the very expression. First was the depressing sight of the Communist Party contingents, bountifully draped in American flags, marching listlessly, without slogans, without banners. Even the capitalist press was forced to comment on the "sobriety" of the Communist Party lines and the absence of the usual revolutionary working class banners and slogans. The only cry that could be heard above the noise of the numerous bands blaring the Star Spangled Banner was the chant of the Daily Worker brigade—"Read the Daily Worker, Don't Read Hearst!"

The second factor that marred the May Day demonstration was the colossal arrogance of the Communist Party leaders who made factional use of their chairmanship at the demonstration in order to repudiate the platform and censure a speaker representing a participating organization.

The speaker in question was Edward Welsh representing the Communist Party (Opposition). His speech (reprinted in full in this issue of Workers Age) is a splendid example of working class militancy and proletarian internationalism, and the Communist Party (Opposition) hereby endorses the speech made by its representative.

Under instructions from Browder and Foster, Paul White of the arrangements committee arose after Welsh was thru, to state that "Welsh had broken his proletarian word by making the speech in violation of agreement made with the committee by all participating organizations." And even this announcement, vague as it was, was made without a meeting of the executive of the conference and without consulting a single non-C.P. member of the executive of the conference. The Socialist Party informs us that no representative of theirs was consulted before this scandalous action. It was a decision arrived at by the Communist Party leaders only.

What was our "crime"? From the Freiheit, Jewish organ of the Communist Party, we learn that the Communist Party objected to our line of agitation in Spain and on bourgeois democracy. That our slogan for a Soviet Spain is in opposition to the policies of the May Day committee we deny. On the contrary, we were careful from the very beginning to insist that the official manifesto of the conference exclude the entire people's front line, and that it does can be seen by a rereading now. The Communist Party must indeed have degenerated fast to interpret slogans opposed to bourgeois democracy and favoring proletarian rule, as opposed to the spirit of May Day. The party secretariat "repudiated" us because the speech of Edward Welsh cut thru the maze of people's front verbiage and presented a clear revolutionary class approach to the problems of the day.

If there were any breaches in the united front they were perpetrated by the Communist Party. Witness the petty, pin-prick politics of the C.P. manager of the conference, in repeatedly omitting the name of the C.P.O. from all publicity and constantly pleading "an oversight"; the numerous people's front speeches made from the platform; its action as a faction on the speakers platform; and above all its distribution of leaflets to the May Day demonstrators which in content were anti-labor. We refer to the leaflet in which they quote "His Holiness Pope Leo XIII" with as much reverence as they would Joseph Stalin. In the face of the recent defeat of the Child Labor Amendment in New York State by Catholic opposition, the leaflet has the temerity to state that "Unemployment relief, old age insurance, protection of home and family, WOMEN AND YOUTH, can be fought for and

## Welsh's Speech

The following is the full text of the speech which aroused the ire of Communist Party spokesmen. It was delivered in Union Square on May 1st, 1937 to the assembled tens of thousands of workers by Edward Welsh, representing the Communist Party (Opposition).—Editor.

COMRADES and fellow-workers! The contingent now passing the reviewing stand is the Communist Party (Opposition) in whose behalf I have the honor of speaking. In the name of the Communist Party (Opposition) I greet the tens of thousands of working men and women participating in this great May Day demonstration as well as in other demonstrations throughout the country and thruout the world.

May Day for us is a day of reckoning, a day when the working-class must take an inventory and review the events of the past year of class struggles and to gird itself for the struggles that are to come.

May Day for us is also important because it presents us with a living example of what we mean when we strive to bring about a class front—a united front of labor on a common program upon which we can all agree, against a common enemy with whom we all disagree—the employing class, the exploiters of those who toil! The spirit of May Day if kept alive and encouraged beyond May First could unleash the only force with a program for social progress existing in present day society—the organized working-class. It could fashion that powerful weapon against reaction, fascism and war that we are all so eager to develop.

Greetings to Soviets We extend our greetings to the workers of the Soviet Union who, in spite of great obstacles and shortcomings, are marching forward building a workers fatherland, a socialist state over one sixth of the world's surface. The Soviet Union stands as a bulwark for peace, a mighty fortress for the world proletariat. Hail The Soviet Union! Defend the Soviet Union! Long live the struggle for world Socialism!

In Nazi Germany, Hitler is attempting to make a sham and a mockery of the significance of this great international day of labor. But if we could put our ears close to the hearts of the German workers we would hear the vibrant strains of the "International" rising above and drowning out the songs that are being forced from their lips. And as we demonstrate here today, let us think of those brave sons of the workingclass who are at this very moment imprisoned in the Fascist dungeons and concentration camps. Let us raise our voices in solidarity with these workers and with the workers in the German underground movement who are holding aloft the banner of working class struggle, valiantly continuing the struggle that will finally lead to the destruction of the barbarous Hitler regime and will create in its stead a Soviet Germany.

For Soviet Spain We greet the heroic struggles of the Spain masses. In Spain the class war has reached its highest pitch. Against the Spanish toilers are arrayed the combined forces of capitalist reaction, the hordes of Spanish, Italian and German fascists plus the indirect support given by the so-called great democracies—England, France, and these United States.

Comrades! Workers and Peasants of Spain! The earth is yours—you have arms in your hands—take it! Out of a bourgeois democratic republic the monster fascism raised its ugly head. Destroy the fascist monstrosity and along with it its diseased parent—bourgeois democracy. Forward to a Workers and Peasants government! Forward to a Soviet Spain!

We extend our greetings of solidarity to our own class war prisoners, to the workers who are languishing in the prison cells and dungeons in this our "great American democracy." We greet Tom Mooney and Warren K. Billings, the Scottsboro boys and other victims of capitalist reaction, as



EDWARD WELSH

living symbols of the class war at home, indicating in the most glaring manner the tasks which lie ahead for the American working class.

Thru CIO to Victory In the course of the past year, there has emerged a new champion, a new spokesman of labor in this country. A movement deserving the unflinching and unstinting support of every working man and woman. A movement whose flaming bright banners bearing the letters CIO gleam across the industrial skies of America and whose message brings a new hope for a better life for hundreds of thousands of toilers in the mines, mills and factories of this great land. The CIO and industrial unionism will organize the workers in the mass production industries.

The working class must learn not to rely upon capitalist politicians whether they appear as spokesmen for the Republican-Liberty League clique or hide behind a pious grin in an effort to conceal their class treachery, to conceal the brutal rule of Wall Street and the rule of the Democratic lynch-ridden South. Labor must take the road of independent political action. Build a Labor Party!

We must carry on the fight until the working class of America takes America for the working class, putting an end to exploitation, misery, and poverty, and upon the ruins of the old build a new world, a workers' world, a socialist society.

Long Live Working Class Unity! Defeat Fascism! For a Soviet America!

# YCL's Revolt Against Opportunism; Join CPO

The Communist Party Opposition welcomes into its ranks these comrades whose signatures appear below. Their experiences with the "democratic" pre-convention discussions held in the Communist Party and the League in attempting to revive traditional Leninist policy should convince many of the need to join the CPO now.

Our experience of the past months in the Communist Party and Young Communist League has conclusively demonstrated to us that both organizations are thoroughly undemocratic and politically unhealthy. To screen the true issue of democracy and the right of disagreement with the line in a pre-convention period, trumped-up charges of "disruption" and "factionalism" are raised, and slandering and wholesale expulsions are resorted to. The Party and League leadership are forced to use these unsavory methods of suppression in order to ensure that no voice of disagreement shall be heard. This system of handing down the line from above has its inevitable reflection in the low theoretical level of both these organizations and the indifference of the membership to the most vital political questions.

Not only are these two organizations undemocratic, but their carrying out of the opportunist line handed down by the Seventh World Congress has led to a break with the basic communist principles upon which the Third International was founded. From ultra-leftism the Comintern has swung over to the class-collaborationism of the People's Front. Its defense of bourgeois-democracy against fascism has led to such crassly unprincipled acts as: in France, voting war credits, supporting devaluation, voting for the ban on volunteers to Spain, restraining the June strikes in China, offering to dissolve the Soviets; and, in the United States, virtual support of Roosevelt in the election campaign. The automatic application of the line to all countries has led, in Spain, to abandonment of the traditional communist slogan of Soviet Power, which proved so inspiring

in the Asturian revolt of 1934; and to terrorization of the POUM, the sole party that is advocating a Bolshevik line there. Realizing that if we were to effectively fight for a correct revolutionary position, we could not long remain unaffiliated, we had before us the alternative of joining one of the two working class organizations outside of the Communist Party, either the Socialist Party, or the Communist Party Opposition. After due consideration we eliminated the S.P. In examining this latter organization, there was no one single position in evidence, but rather the views of the heterogeneous caucuses which today, in their internal wrangling, comprise the Socialist Party. Especially repugnant to us was the anti-Soviet phobia, fostered by the Trotskyites, which has so perverted the perspective of the S.P. that it centers the major part of its attention, not on such basic questions as the struggle in Spain and the recent developments in the American labor movement, but on the Moscow trials. The unhistorical position of the S.P. on the labor party question, which is either that of outright hostility or, at best, passive sectarianism, was an added factor in our rejection of membership in the Socialist Party.

In bold contrast to the S. P. we have found the revolutionary realism of the Communist Party Opposition, an organization which is based on and carries out Marxist-Leninist principles. In particular its keen evaluation of the forces operating in the American scene, its analysis of the C.I.O., and its clear approach to, and affirmation of the independent class political action of the labor party, have all made it inevitable that, in seeking a truly communist group, we join the C.P.O. Especially appealing to us, after our bitter experiences to the contrary in the C.P. and Y.C.L., has been the use by the C.P.O. of polemics of a strictly political character, rather than personal slander and vilification. The democracy of the C.P.O. has manifested itself to us, for one thing, in the pre-convention discussion taking place in the Workers' Age, where articles of disagreement have been published.

We, therefore, with a deep sense of revolutionary duty, have decided to join the only truly communist organization in America today, the Communist Party Opposition. It is with great fervor that we take our place in the ranks of those who are carrying forward the inspiring traditions of Marx and Lenin. In this period when reformism is paralyzing the whole radical labor movement, it is the duty and obligation of every loyal adherent to the path of revolutionary struggle to make himself heard in defense of the principles upon which the Comintern was founded. The defeat of fascism, and of its nurturer, capitalism depends upon such a course. By joining the Communist Party Opposition and following its class struggle program, every class-conscious worker is best defending the Soviet Union and helping to achieve that goal to which we have pledged ourselves—Socialism!

WILLIAM BUTLER  
DORIS NACK  
LILLIAN ROSEN  
ED CARTER  
JOE MOORE  
JERRY GRANT  
NAT ADAMS  
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NAT SCHRAGE  
WILLIAM BAUM

# Negro Workers and Industrial Unionism

This article contains the major portion of a paper that appeared in the December 1936 issue of Social Forces. Mr. Robert Francis is on the staff of Southern University. Since the late months of 1936 events in the trade union world have provided a complete vindication of Mr. Francis's analysis. It is wholly in consonance with our viewpoint.—Editor.

By ROBERT C. FRANCIS  
Southern University

THE American Negro is watching with vital interest the long awaited shake-up that is now taking place within the American Federation of Labor. Negroes have a right to show more than a passing interest in this upheaval because the organization which has been the mouthpiece for the working class within this country since the 1880's, but which actually represents only a minority of the gainfully employed, has never done anything to aid directly the black workman. Many

Union. Many Negroes in the I.L.G.W.U. hold positions of responsibility. When the movement for industrial unionism began to attract nationwide interest there appeared a small group of more conservative leaders within the darker race, who want to persevere in the attempt to influence the intricate thinking process of President William Green of the A.F. of L. and his cohorts, in the hope that the necessity for cooperation of the black and white worker for the salvation of the working class of this country might sink into their minds. By and large, however, the majority feels that the babbling of the present coterie of old-line leaders is beyond redemption; that their philosophy belongs to a past century; that this is no flurry and if the Negro is to become an integral part of the organized labor movement, now is the time to act. These persons, who constitute this "majority," likewise feel that it is better for the Negro to align himself with the group that is attempting to develop something that will fit his needs and thereby gain some of the credit for bringing about a new era, than to attempt to force a begrudged recognition from a debilitated aristocracy of labor. Negroes know that the American Federation is possessed of the ideology of a former period; they realize that it has not attempted to keep pace with our rapidly changing industrial technique, but has continued to drive its old jaded team of craft unionism.

Increase of Unskilled Since the realization has grown upon those more skeptical persons that Lewis has the temerity to carry his plan through to its ultimate developments many of them have begun to place hope in a new unionism, one that will recognize neither race, color, nor creed; one that has for its motto the advancement of the entire working class. In addition, interest has been intensified by the suspension from the A.F. of L. of the ten unions represented in the Committee for Industrial Organization. Since its organization in 1896 this is the first distinct cleavage that occurred in the American Federation of Labor. If Negro labor leaders accurately read its shadow that has been cast, this dual movement means the end of the A.F. of L. On the one hand we have unions composed of all workers in an industry regardless of skill or occupation; on the other, those based on distinct craft lines. Now that the split has become definite, Negro leaders point to the fact that with increased mechanization and improved technique, all workers are being pushed down to the level of the Negro; therefore, the industrial union is the only type that will fit into our future scheme of things.

Altho it is true that active, though veiled, discrimination on the part of the Federation, even its very composition, i. e., autonomous unions of trades, automa-

tically barred the black man because, as stated, the overwhelming proportion of Negroes is in the less skilled occupations and because local unions have vigorously fought the admission of black craftsmen into their ranks, there may be some instances where an industrial organization might not work to their absolute advantage as in the case of the Pullman Porters. (Last year, the Brotherhood of Railway Conductors expressed a desire to take the Porters' Union under its protective wing, indicating at the time that the latter union really should be an auxiliary of the Brotherhood. It was perfectly evident that the conductors were not motivated by a fine, altruistic spirit, for the Pullman Company had discharged a number of conductors and simultaneously given their duties over to the porter in charge and it was this action which prompted the union to make such an offer to the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters. Needless to say, the latter organization did not fall for the ruse.) All of which indicates that there is no such thing as a panacea. Colored labor leaders are willing to take some risks with the possibility of the infinitely greater gain of being admitted to the labor movement.

The big question under industrial unionism is, will the Negro fit into the scheme of things? The answer is rather simple, for the greater percentage of black men, in all industries, do the most menial tasks. In an organization devoid of that aristocratic differentiation along craft lines, the problems of all workers are considered. Here the Negro members of the personnel of an industry would have more opportunity to express themselves and to educate the white workers as to the nature of and necessity for cooperation. In some sections of the country this would work out; in others, we would still have intense race problems, but a great gain for the Negro would result where the industrial unions would reach down and take in workers doing the rough type of work. In localities where black people are not permitted to mingle with white, the former must get jobs in any way possible and that is generally breaking strikes. In other words, there is no formula by which the Negro can get a square deal in industry. An important factor is the time-place element. Circumstances have forced the Negro to suit his actions to the exigencies of the particular situation. What will work in his advantage in Baltimore or New Orleans will not help in the least in a strong union town such as San Francisco.

Negro leaders see that a new move toward industrial unionism is starting from above and the men behind the movement have the strength and backing to make it felt thruout the country. They think that these men will give the black laborer an opportunity to become a unionman. Thus thousands of Negro workers will obtain economic emancipation. Superimposed upon the above-mentioned reasons for the Negroes' turn to the banner of industrial unionism is the fact that the masses have not obtained anything like adequate aid under the recovery program. Statistics show that the Negro is dependent on public relief to a greater degree than any other of the many racial groups known as the people of the United States. The effects of the recovery program are beyond the scope of this paper; however, it may be said that the two groups hit hardest by the depression, i. e., agricultural and domestic workers, are those in which the greatest number of gainfully employed Negroes are to be found.

At the time of its institution, the NRA was hailed as the step that would mean a "New Deal" for the Negro. After a few months, during which the industrial plight became intensified, the idea was

# TRADE UNION NOTES

by George F. Miles

GOVERNOR Murphy of Michigan is sponsoring a Labor Relations Bill which has aroused the ire of union labor. It provides for the establishment of a State mediation board and prohibits strikes or walkouts until that board has exhausted all possibilities of mediation. Altho it does not provide for that fondest of all employer hopes—compulsory arbitration—President Martin of the United Auto Workers has termed it "a vicious piece of legislation highly inimical to the interests of the working people in the State." The chief reason for opposing the measure is because it is "aimed at the right to strike. The right to strike without restriction or modification, is a fundamental right of American workers and the slightest restraint upon it marks a long stride in the direction of fascism in this country."

We agree fully with the opinion of Governor Murphy. The proposal of Governor Murphy is but one small step from compulsory arbitration. Even without it, it would constantly hog-tie the unions and hinder effective trade union action. Below we give an example of a really "vicious piece of legislation," to use the words of President Martin, and its strike provisions: "Article 1. In industry and commerce all disputes between employers and employees collectively must be submitted to conciliation and arbitration before any strike or lockout."

"Article 2. . . . The decisions of arbitrators, whether provisional or final, are not subject to appeal. "Article 5. The procedure to be followed in conciliation and compulsory arbitration will be in accordance with existing law. "Article 6. ARBITRAL AWARDS ARE BINDING AND WITHOUT APPEAL. THEY ARE OBLIGATORY."

In practice such a law constitutes industrial slavery. How happy would be the National Manufacturers Association and the Cham-

ber of Commerce if they could secure of law of this kind. Yet this is the law of a land—and what a land! It is the law of that great democracy—people's front France, lorded over by the socialist Blum and sponsored and supported by the socialists and communists. Of course the workers did not want it. It was forced upon them by the parties of the people's front, because the bourgeois radicals, the party of the employers, insisted on it as the price of their support of the people's front and its government.

It's a peculiar partnership that ties labor's hands at the behest of the employers and in the name of fighting fascism, takes "a long stride in the direction of fascism." Within the last couple of weeks a number of corporations have seen fit to scrap their company unions. Among these are to be found such firms as Carnegie-Illinois Steel, International Harvester, Tennessee Coal, Iron & Railroad, American Steel & Wire and Goodyear, Goodrich and Firestone—three of the largest rubber producing firms.

Two reasons are being advanced for this development. Successful organization drives of the CIO and the validation of the Wagner Labor Relations Act. As to the first there appears to be no reason to doubt its efficacy as a destroyer of the company-union germ but the second reason still has to be bolstered by facts before it can be accepted unchallenged. The fact of the matter is that the provisions of the Wagner Act do not in themselves make impossible the existence of company unions; they do make difficult the financing and almost direct control of the company unions as constituted heretofore.

The appearance of such organizations as the American Labor League, may be an expression of the attempt on the part of the company unions to adjust themselves to the new conditions under the Wagner Act. Strange this business of jurisdictional disputes. Against the CIO all craft international unions were united solidly—were they not to be affected adversely if the auto or steel industries were to be organized along industrial lines? But among themselves they are not at all averse to cutting off a slice from the other fellow's pie when he isn't looking. In New York, Joseph P. Ryan of the International Longshoremen's Association invades the jurisdiction of the Brotherhood of Railway Clerks; The International Association of Machinists is caught red-handed poaching in the preserves of the Amalgamated Association of Street, Electric Railway & Motor Coach Employees, by admitting an industrially organized group of 12,000 subway workers. In turn the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers turns a deaf ear to the protests of the International Association of Machinists when the former takes in everybody it possibly can from Westinghouse Electric plants and Consolidated Edison.

This goes on and on. Yet all of them are united behind Green blocking the progress of American labor because the paper jurisdiction granted these organizations in some pre-historic period must be religiously observed by the CIO even tho that mean the devitalizing and impotence of the entire labor movement.



WORKERS AGE

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Vol. 6, No. 20. Saturday, May 15, 1937

EVENTS IN BARCELONA

At this writing we do not yet have sufficient information about the recent events in Barcelona. However, certain phases of the Spanish revolution are clear enough to warrant appropriate repetition and underscoring on this occasion of the conflict between the Catalanian anarchists and the Generality.

One may doubt the wisdom of engaging in armed conflict at this particular moment. Nevertheless, it is certain that the attempt of the Rightward headed bourgeoisie dominating the People's Front government to disarm the workers is a criminal attack on the very forces that have borne the brunt of the Fascist attacks and have made possible the checking of Franco's black legions. The best, really sole, guarantee against Franco's victory and against the emergence of another Franco out of the ranks of bourgeois democracy is a strong armed proletariat. When the official Communists and their friends seek to disarm the Spanish workers—ostensibly because of the need for a unified command—they are merely distorting the issue and playing into the hands of the enemies of the working class. It is tragic indeed that the official communists, who should be in the front ranks of those fighting for the proletariat being armed in the factories as well as at the front, are now doing just the opposite. It is rather unfortunate that this field has been left—except for the POUM—to the anarchists. The latter, despite their fine revolutionary fervor, are still very much confused politically.

Our rancorous contemporary, the DAILY WORKER, has seen fit to give a special POUM "angle" to the whole Barcelona struggle. We have important differences with the POUM. But on the question of rejecting the disarming of the proletariat we are in full accord with it. In this connection, it would not be out of place to cite the position of the POUM on the question of "A Revolutionary Army." We are correctly told:

"These revolutionary organizations, that is to say, the POUM, the FAI and the CNT, while they accept the principle of the creation of a powerful army to vanquish the fascists, are not prepared to agree that this army be given the character of a SO-CALLED NEUTRAL ARMY, which will eventually be in reality THE STRONGEST POSSIBLE WEAPON IN THE HANDS OF THE CAPITALISTS AND THE REACTIONARY FORCES AGAINST THE WORKERS. . . .

"The POUM states that the present army cannot be a politically neutral army, but must be based on the revolutionary class struggle and in the service of the working and exploited population, an army which must be the guarantee of victory now and the defender tomorrow of the revolutionary conquests of the new revolutionary society. . . .

"The POUM is not opposed to the UNITED COMMAND. It insists, however, upon its being controlled by the workers organizations. . . . The working classes have given sufficient proof during the last seven months of their spirit of initiative, and it is from their ranks that the officer class of the new revolutionary army should and can be formed. . . .

"A regular army, but at the same time a revolutionary army. The war in Spain is not a war for national independence but a class war. . . ." (The Spanish Revolution, Vol. II, No. 5.)

We are confident that regardless of the slander campaigns of the Peoples Front Communists and their partners, regardless of the mistakes the revolutionary forces may now and then be making in Spain, regardless of the time it may take for the Spanish working class to realize it, the general soundness of the above approach will soon be recognized by the proletariat and peasantry of Spain. We hope that the settling of this issue, that the arrival at a sound position on this important question will be attained without campaigns of vilification and without force and violence being resorted to within the ranks of the working class. The recent events in Catalonia should help in this direction.

ENGLAND AND THE PEOPLES FRONT

By JIM CORK

AS I indicated in a previous article, the united campaign of the C.P., Socialist League, and I.L.P. was launched against the background of growing dissatisfaction amongst the rank and file with the class collaboration policies of the leaders of the Labor Party. Here was offered an opportunity for the leaders of the left to transform healthy but often confused moods of the workers, into clearly reasoned attitudes, to generalize the experiences of the workers to a higher political, i.e. revolutionary level. Of course this highly desirable end could be achieved only to the extent that the three organizations could accept and propagate in common a political line which was revolutionary.

This, however, was manifestly impossible from the very beginning, in view of the differences on fundamental political questions existing between the three organizations. The political line of the C.P. is dominated by the reformism of the Peoples Front line while, strictly speaking, the Socialist League has had no definite political line at all, exhibiting a hodge podge of red-hot "class-struggle" phrases (of the most general and abstract kind) on the one hand, with typical old line reformism on the other. Official pronouncements in the name of the united front as a whole, inevitably therefore, limit themselves, for the most part, to general agitation for unity, against the National Government, and for immediate working class demands. An examination of the speeches of Cripps, Maxton, Pollitt, when they speak from the same platform in the name of the united front bears this out completely.

There is, therefore, for the reasons indicated above, no official political organ of the united front as a whole. This leaves unfulfilled the basic need mentioned above, namely the drawing of revolutionary political lessons for the workers. If this were the end of the story things would be only half bad. (At least nothing positively bad would be offered for consumption.) Unfortunately, this is not the case.

If there is no official political organ, there is a paper called the "Tribune", which, to all intents and purposes has practically usurped that position. It was born just before the united campaign was officially launched. Its stated purpose was to stimulate that campaign. It speaks in the name of the united front. It is the only paper that appears every week, which is devoted almost exclusively to united front matters. Its editor is Mellor, a leading member of the Socialist League. It reflects the political attitudes of the Socialist League and the C.P. in the main; in other words of those elements in the united front who represent the reformist political tendencies and its unofficial status has not prevented its being accepted by most rank and file workers as the organ of the united front.

I have before me the first thirteen issues of the "Tribune". I have gone thru them very carefully and find the following to be the general characteristics of the paper:

Peoples Front Line

The peoples front ideology absolutely dominates. Some illustrations:

"On the International front it means real collective security. We must give the republican government of Spain its legal right to arm. We must tell the Fascist powers that the limit of their aggression has been reached. We must join with France and the

Soviet Union to resist their piecemeal threat to the remaining democracies of the world. . . ." (What We Stand For—leading article by the editor—issue No. 1, p. 8).

"But as long as de la Rocque, who in reality is merely the tool of the French capitalists, is confronted by a united working class, as long as the Front Populaire can count on the wholehearted support of the Communists, as long as that government continues to combat the crisis by means of social reforms, so long, as Blum put it, will Fascism be 'settled'. But only so long." ("Deladier & De La Rocque"—issue No. 2, p. 6).

Issue No. 3, p. 6, an interview with Gabriel Peri, calls for defense of French imperialist interests against the attempted penetration of Germany into Moroccan territory.

Issue No. 4, p. 6 an article on "Mexico's Awakening" contains the following: ". . . Socialist Workers and Peasants Government of Gen. Lazaro Cardenas . . . a nation of primeval antiquity awakes to a new life, a life of socialist fulfillment. . . ."

" . . . That united front which has saved France and is saving Spain . . ." (Harold Laski—issue No. 6, p. 10).

It is obvious from these illustrations that the peoples front outlook dominates.

Unity In The Abstract

A second, and closely connected characteristic is the mythical fetishism of unity in the abstract. Stress is laid on the arithmetical aspect, rather than on the necessary political content and basis. The illusions which are aroused thereby can be seen from the following representative quotation: "The victory of socialism in western civilization depends upon the unity of the working class. That is the history of the post war world. Whether it be Italy or Germany or Austria or Spain, the evidence is clear that without such unity capitalism takes the offensive." (Harold Laski—same article mentioned above).

How many lessons unlearned! How many warnings disregarded! Did "unity" in Spain prevent capitalism from taking the offensive? In Austria, you had unity if you ever had it anywhere. Did it prevent Fascism from conquering? What was lacking in Austria was not organizational unity, but correct principles, revolutionary principles. In Russia, the victory was made possible by heaving to a revolutionary line, even tho' it meant at one time going thru an organizational split. Unity, yes—but on a correct political revolutionary basis.

Or take the following, where the attitude is, perhaps, even more crassly illustrated. Discussing the reasons for the cleavage between the 2nd and 3rd Internationals, the leading editorial "Close the Ranks" (Issue No. 10, p. 8) says:

" . . . If during the war the International came to grief because of nationalism, in the post-war period it broke over the academic (!) (my emphasis—J.C.) problem of democracy or workers' dictatorship as the road to travel. . . . How different the situation of the world would be had this disunity been avoided. . . ."

The chief point at issue between reformist and revolutionary Marxism, re: the road to power, is a mere academic question! Further comment is unnecessary. Such a fetishistic attitude towards unity can hardly raise the revolutionary clarity of the English working class.

The paper, thirdly, allows posi-

(Continued on Page 6)

A POUM Editorial

The Crisis in Catalonia

The following is reprinted from La Batalla, organ of the Spanish Workers Party of Marxist Unity (POUM). It was written on the eve of the formation of a new Catalan cabinet in March, so closely related to the present Anarchist uprising as to furnish a splendid background for understanding the events of the past few days in Catalonia. Lambda's authoritative comments on European affairs, usually found in this space, were unfortunately received too late for publication. His column will, however, be resumed next week.—Editor.

WE do not know whether the Generalidad has yet found a formula for the solution of its problems. Whatever formula they hit upon can only be one which will postpone the great problem planted at the moment of the formation of the government. Their problem is to curb, each day more and more the revolutionary action of the working class.

It is to be greatly lamented that this vital question of the future of the proletariat of our country is debated so secretly that it doesn't reach the ears of the workers—so that they might decide who is with them and who is against them. The workers must be alert! Reformism, altho it often seems asleep, continues its devastating work, creating with its sabotage of revolutionary conquests, a psychosis of discontent—which favors the return of that regime which died on the 19th of July.

Many concessions have already been made to Reformism in the name of "necessities of war."

When the POUM abandoned the government of the Generalidad we pointed that out. It was the beginning of the struggle against the revolution. Our elimination was a sine qua non for the reformists. The comrades of the CNT.—(and here we must admit that they fought a desperate battle against our exclusion from the government) understood very clearly the significance of that step. Nevertheless, they thought that their presence in the government would be able to prevent counter-revolutionary maneuvers. They did not understand that soon these same enemies would turn the guns against them too—and so it came to pass. Reformism in the service of the bourgeois-democracy stops at nothing.

Will it win? This depends more than anything else on the vigilance exercised by the workers on the streets and on the battle front. The separation of the CNT (forced by reformism) from the government would be a defeat for the revolution—and we do not say this because we think that the actual collaboration of the CNT with the government of the Generalidad is the best road. Power in Catalonia as in all other parts of Spain must pass into the hands of the working class. The proletariat must come to power, thru reconquering its last positions and thru the conquest of new ones. For that there is no better way than to proceed at once to the formation of the working class organs with democratic expression—based on representations from factories, peasantry and soldiers.

If we proceed to the immediate formation of such instruments of working class power, neither reformism nor counter-revolution can switch the victory from us. They will be powerless to stem the overwhelming tide of the victory of the proletariat.

March 25, 1937.

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In the CPO Pre-Convention Discussion

REFORMISM IN THE CI AND OUR GAP THEORY

By B. H.

THERE are two important attempts to explain the crisis in the Communist movement: the Trotskyist theory of Thermidorean reaction in the Soviet Union, and the "gap" theory of the Communist Opposition. The official Communist Parties make no attempt to explain the crisis, they simply deny it. The Trotskyist concept that Socialism cannot be built in one country, the USSR, and the idea that the CPSU led by Stalin represents class forces above and hostile to the proletariat have been smashed by the very development of the Soviet Union. The real course of development in the Soviet Union has been, not "flux between socialism and capitalism," not back to Kerensky, but a rapid advance toward socialism, the socialization of industry and agriculture and the wiping out of the capitalist elements. This development is unquestionable, notwithstanding the fact that the bureaucrats in Moscow occasionally ride in a "luxurious" subway. If a Thermidorean regime in the Soviet Union is not the source of the crisis, what then is the cause of the split in the Communist movement and the wave of ultra-leftism and union splitting followed by the worship of bourgeois democracy, pacifism, and bourgeois

In the CPO Pre-Convention Discussion

Some Problems and Tasks Of Our Organization

By EVELYN LEONARDS

Having become convinced of the correctness of the CPO position, I joined in November 1936, full of high hopes, prepared to set to work with a group of equally enthusiastic comrades to convince others of the logic of our stand, build our organization, and eventually achieve the working class unity which is our aim. But what did I find? First, out of a membership of about 30 in my unit (Bronx), week after week no more than ten turned up at meetings. I expressed surprise, but the comrades assured me that I had come in at a particularly bad time; attendance was sure to pick up after a while. However, as time went on, and no such thing happened, I began to understand why this was so. Meetings are dreadfully dull. Comrades straggle in late, and the meeting rarely gets under way before 9:15. After that the only point of interest is the reading of the district communication. Meetings last for no more than an hour or an hour and a half because there is nothing to keep us

together any longer. During that time, the comrades display little interest in the proceedings. One reads, two have a private little meeting, and the chairman struggles to preserve order. At my suggestion, the Executive Committee drew up a plan whereby each member was to be made responsible for leading a discussion on some phase of activity with which he is familiar. However, this plan died a quick death when the first person scheduled to lead such a discussion failed to show up. Since November there have been exactly three discussions, one of which was held jointly with the Down Town Unit.

No effort was made to involve me, a new member, in any activity, despite the fact that I volunteered for several tasks, sold literature, etc., no effort was made to find out how much of a background I had, or to set me upon the proper educational path.

In general, activity in our unit is conspicuous by its absence. Few people in the Bronx even know of our existence. Our Forum reached a new low when sixteen people, including the speaker, turned out to hear Jim Cork on the Supreme Court issue.

As for the organization as a whole, there is a smugness on the part of the old comrades that is most irritating to a newcomer, and must be more so to a non-CPO'er. Secure in the knowledge that our position is correct, we come around to general membership meetings, listen to reports, pat ourselves on the back for having such brainy leaders, and go comfortably home. Talk about sectarianism! The group seems to have become a cult of the politically righteous, a veritable mutual admiration society.

The Reform of the Comintern

For the very reason that the CPSU, which is a Communist Party building socialism, completely dominates the Comintern, it would be wrong to deny the possibility of restoring the Communist International to revolutionary principles, and doubly wrong, therefore, to compare the possibility of reforming the Comintern to that of the Socialist International. The policies of the Comintern on war, and defence of bourgeois democracy, have been mistakenly adopted with the intent of "defending the Soviet Union." The reformists have no such source, but originate in the social patriotic viewpoint of the social democratic bureaucracy and in their ties with the national bourgeoisie of the various countries. The Soviet Union cannot be defended by forsaking the class struggle in the capitalist world, and by relying on the bourgeois democratic powers as allies. This is becoming more and more apparent. The Spanish events have exposed the democratic powers, those "bulwarks against fascism," as working over-time for the victory of fascism in Spain. The necessity of an effective defence of socialism in the Soviet Union must compel an eventual return to revolutionary, class struggle policies. To the extent that the Communist Opposition can mobilize the workers inside and outside the Communist Party for a struggle to return the Comintern to Marxist principles, to the degree that the revolutionary proletariat in Spain and other capitalist countries are able to throw off the yoke of capitalist exploitation and establish new Soviet regimes, to that extent will we hasten the reunification of the world revolutionary movement on sound revolutionary lines, and will be successful in bridging the gap between the victorious proletariat in the Soviet Union and the revolutionary working class in the rest of the world.

Furthermore, how about some publicity for the CPO? Why does no mention of us appear in the press? How about debates and symposia with other organizations? And now with the summer months coming on, open-air neighborhood meetings would be in order. Our position is a good one; (Continued on Page 6)

The Stalin Regime & the Moscow Trials

The essential correctness of the line of the leadership of the CPSU in building socialism in the Soviet Union has never blinded us to the bureaucratic methods employed by that leadership. After the partial, and on the whole unsatisfactory, self-criticism of Stalin at the last Plenum of the CPSU concerning bureaucracy and the absence of the most elementary democratic rights and procedure in the Russian Par-

Individual May Day Greetings

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Revolutionary Greetings WORKERS AGE from Breziner Arbeiter Verein for its militancy in the American Labor Movement



## The Problems Facing the Fur Workers' Convention

By B. BARAZ

The 12th Biennial Convention of the International Fur Workers Union will start its sessions in Chicago on May 17th of this year.

This convention takes place at a time of epoch making events in the labor movement. The organization of the unorganized in the mass production industries such as Auto, Steel, Rubber, etc. goes on with a rapidity surprising even to the greatest optimists. Yet it is a fact that hundreds of thousands of workers have been organized by the CIO and still other thousands are ready and clamoring to be organized.

The AF of L in spite of its many decisions at conventions did not make a single move in that direction. Not only was there no attempt made by the A. F. of L. to carry out these important decisions but it even suspended and threatens formal expulsion of those unions affiliated to the CIO which have successfully led or assisted the organization drives in the basic industries.

The new strike methods, organization along industrial union lines and the honest and sincere efforts of John L. Lewis and his associates have in the main contributed towards the great accomplishments. It is therefore no wonder that every progressive union in the United States lined up in support of the CIO. The Fur Workers International Union, was always in the forefront as a militant and progressive force in the labor movement. Disregarding the years of inner division, the period of dual unionism, our union stood for industrial unionism and for the organization of the unorganized. The fur workers resisted with great vigor the expulsion policy of some reactionary leaders in our International Union. Yet to our regret it must be painfully recorded that at the last convention our delegates in concert with all reactionaries voted for suspension of the CIO unions at the last AF of L convention. It is true that these delegates voted on their own responsibility, but the impression left on the labor movement was and still is that the furriers became the new allies of reaction in the labor movement.

To do away with this impression our delegates to the coming convention will have to make clear their standpoint and once for all blot out the shameful act of our delegates. Our convention will have to decide in unmistakable terms to give full support to the drives of the CIO, to help in the organization of the unorganized along industrial union lines. Our delegates will have to realize that the only way to unity in the labor movement is not through conferences, orders of suspensions or

expulsions, but thru strengthening the CIO by affiliating to it.

### Immediate Tasks

We are nearing the expiration of the agreement at the beginning of 1938. In our trade we also face the problem of the discharge of workers at the pleasure of the bosses. Each Friday, for a period of 6 months, the fur worker is in constant fear of losing his job. The convention will have to decide on measures for securing the worker's job. Our next agreement must include a "no discharge" clause thereby limiting the liberty of the boss to discharge workers at his will. The problem of occupational diseases as well as the acute problem of unemployment and closely connected with it, the speed-up system in our trade, are problems calling for solution.

### 30-hour Week

There is no doubt in anybody's mind that the 35-hour week has greatly reduced unemployment in our trade. To further the solution of the unemployed problem, we must achieve the 30-hour week. Our convention must prepare a plan for making the 30-hour week a reality. The furriers have proven in the past to be among the first ones to secure a 40-hour week and they will surely not be backward in the struggle for the 30-hour week.

There still exists a craft union tendency amongst certain locals of our International, especially the dressers. The fact that such a tendency exists prevents our International union from organizing a few thousand dressers still outside the ranks of our International union. This convention must definitely conclude that there is no room for craft unionism in our International, thereby making possible the organization of the unorganized dressers.

### Hollander & Son

A special problem for our convention still is the unorganized workers in the dressing and dying plants of Hollander & Son. This firm was and still is the outstanding open shop fighting the union. During the last 16 years the hired gangsters of Hollander killed four union people, among them Morris Langer, the organizer of the union.

Our union was never as powerful and as united as it is today. There is no reason why the workers in the Hollander plant today should not be organized. There is no reason why Hollander should stay

## Troopers Called Out Against Maine Shoe Strikers



## COLONIAL OPPRESSION CONTINUED BY BLUM

EARLY in January, 1937, the French Ministry of Colonies announced the promulgation of decrees constituting a labor code for Indo-China. Nominally, the working population has won some concessions: 9-hour day (previously 10), night work for women and work for children under 12 prohibited, one day's rest a week, and the right to paid vacations. But

as a threat to the conditions of the rest of the workers of the dressing and dying trade. Surely our convention will seriously consider organization in the Hollander plants. In this campaign it will have the full support of the entire membership.

The question of the future leadership will play an important part in the convention. Our future leadership will have to be imbued with the tasks of our own union as well as the labor movement as a whole. To the extent that the new leadership will express the views and ideas of the new current in the labor movement, as a part of the CIO, to that extent we will render it our full support.

## British Labor and the People's Front

(Continued from Page 4) tive anti-working class attitudes to creep in—pacifism, Christian socialism, etc.—chiefly via Lansbury. For a paper that considers itself the organ of the left wing of the English working class to allow the following stuff to creep in is incredibly scandalous:

"... We who profess to be socialists, because we are Christians ... Only love is the permanent cement of human friendship. Love is stronger than hate. ..." (Issue No. 1).

"We ought to be tolerant both of the millionaire who has secured his goal and the worker who is striving might and main to declass (!) himself..." (Issue No. 6).

Worst of all along this line is the leading article of issue number 13 (p. 8) entitled "What of the Churches," which praises Easter as the greatest international upon earth ... calls the church the "potential of the greatest international upon earth ...", talks of the "... power of the Risen and Living Christ for World-Salvation ...", attacks Karl Marx, and concludes with a

this glorious dispensation, we find, is questionable in intent and misleading in practice, if we judge it in the light of the belated millennium promised by the prophets of the People's Front.

Since the nineties of the last century, and under the tutelage of Sarraut and Varenne after the war, the French government has pursued a merciless campaign toward exploiting the resources, and stabilizing the labor market of Indo-China. The versatile scope of its methods has embraced, among others, such variable devices as: military pacification, direct expropriation, forced migration, "contracts" with workers mandatory for at least one year (violation subject to fine and imprisonment), compulsory workers' savings accounts until the expiration of contracts, and compulsory identification cards to prevent desertion (defined as 48 hours absence). In 1930 the whole set-up was solidified with the introduction of compulsory arbitration.

What has the Blum government done to break this slave-owners' stranglehold?

The January decrees? But those decrees are written in blood! The People's Front had to wait until, late in 1936, 450 striking workers in Indo-China were shot, before it stirred itself sufficiently to scatter a few interest-bearing crumbs. We must point out that capitalists have been much more magnanimous with their crumbs, so long as those crumbs made a trail right back to the chains of exploitation and oppression. Where is the Blum trail leading?

Where can it lead, if the People's Front refuses even to mitigate the fundamental basis of capitalist power? Indo-China is completely and unequivocally under the fist of French imperialism thru the government of the People's Front. The recent decrees do not in any way propose, consider, hint or suggest that workers have a right to organize and act independently. And this from the People's Front—supported by Socialists and Communists.

In effect, then, the recent decrees are simply the normal defense measures undertaken by all capitalists to divert the growing militancy of the working-class for the moment, until it can be more safely and effectively crushed by direct suppression. The thread of

## May Day in Pittsburgh

The working class celebrated another May Day in Pittsburgh and, as is usual in this city, no real workingclass unity was achieved—even in this year of 1937. The Socialist Party held its May Day meeting in a hall on April 30th, at which there were about 100 present. (Here in Pittsburgh we have the Old Guard still running things pretty much to suit themselves, and their meeting was utterly devoid of any speeches or demonstrations for the workingclass.)

What concerns us most is the meeting sponsored under the leadership of the Communist Party, which was held in West Park, on the North Side of Pittsburgh, and attended by about 350 workers. This was heralded as a "united front" meeting, but one who has had many experiences with the Communist Party in Pittsburgh knows that District 5 of the Party still adheres to the very narrow type of united front.

The United Front apparently was formed with the IWO, the Workers' Alliance, Labor Non-Partisan League, in all of which organizations the CP has a decisive and controlling voice in Pittsburgh. Lest I forget—the League Against War and Fascism was there also. But the unions—AF of L or CIO, where, the CP boasted at this meeting, they are leading in organization work, were conspicuous by their absence.

The CIO was half-heartedly eulogized (except for credit given CP members who are employed as organizers), the AF of L. was not even mentioned, and according to the speakers all credit for organizing the steel workers goes to the Party.

### Tasks Of Organization

(Continued from Page 5)

let's stop keeping it a secret among ourselves.

Talking about secrets, all around me I hear whispered rumors to the effect that this or that very prominent person is in, or close to, our group. If this is so, why don't these comrades come out openly as CPO members? It doesn't do us any good to have them merely acknowledge that we are correct; we know that. But it might help us in attracting new members to have these people identify themselves publicly with us.

One more word: up until now our recruiting, and as far as I can see, there has been no emphasis on this phase at all, has come mostly from those already connected with the radical movement in some way. It seems to me that now, when conditions are especially favorable for recruiting, we need a restatement of our political position, couched in such terms as to rally around us people who as yet have had no contact with the labor movement. I do not doubt that many of our own comrades would find such clarification helpful as well. Here again a pamphlet would be the thing.

These issues should be raised at our pre-convention discussions, I think, and raised sharply. Precisely to the extent that we can correct these shortcomings in our work, to that extent will we grow and become a greater force in the labor and revolutionary movement.

bourgeois colonial policy from Sarraut and Varenne to Blum is clearly visible; its continuity is unbroken, its integrity unimpeachable. If the workers in Indo-China benefit by the recent decrees, they need not thank Blum.

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