

Workers Age

A PAPER DEFENDING THE INTERESTS OF WORKERS AND FARMERS

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REACTIONARY PLOT BEHIND BARCELONA PROVOCATIONS

Foreign Correspondent of Workers Age Describes Widespread Attempt To Disarm Revolutionary Workers Instigated by Communist Party British, French Imperialism Involved

By LAMBDA

May 19, 1937.

I. ABOUT THE MAY STRUGGLES IN CATALONIA
WHAT was behind the fighting which took place in Barcelona and the rest of Catalonia during the first week of May, is becoming constantly clearer in the light of additional reports and the actions of the various parties and organizations involved. The most important facts may be summarized in a few paragraphs.

The fighting began on Monday, May 3, with the attempt of the PSUC¹ to occupy the telephone exchange building in Barcelona, until then under the control of the CNT.² This action was based on a far-reaching and carefully constructed plan. The telephone exchange buildings at Lerida, Gerona, Taragona, etc., were supposed to be simultaneously occupied and taken over. That all this was of the nature of provocation and conspiracy becomes perfectly obvious when it is remembered that the plan of the Catalonian government had been kept a dead secret—that is to say, Companys probably knew all about it but the plan was most assuredly kept secret from the CNT-FAI members of the government. Those who instigated the whole affair and then took action were the PSUC and the Communist Party of Spain and upon them falls the entire responsibility.

The revolutionary workers of Barcelona and the rest of Catalonia answered *spontaneously* with a general strike, erecting barricades and disarming the government troops. By Wednesday, the CNT-FAI were the unquestioned masters of the situation in Barcelona as well as the rest of Catalonia. A

1 PSUC—United Socialist Party of Catalonia, the Comintern party of that country.

2 CNT—National Confederation of Labor, the anarcho-syndicalist trade union federation.

FAI—Iberian Anarchist Federation.

change in the situation occurred, however, because the leadership of the CNT and the FAI did not dare to carry through their victory by taking power into their hands. On Wednesday, the CNT and the FAI fell in with a strategic maneuver of the PSUC and the Esquerra,³ intended as a ruse to assure the latter the upper hand. The CNT and the FAI ordered their members to cease armed struggle and bade them to return to work. Immediately thereafter, however, the well-armed formations of the PSUC renewed their attack. From Valencia, 5,000 Assault Guards as well as several warships were sent to Barcelona. With their aid, the disarming of the revolutionary workers was carried out, a feat which could never have been accomplished in an open fight. Countless arrests and assassinations of anarchists, syndicalists and POUMists⁴ were carried out at once. The editorial staff of "La Batalla," central organ of the POUM, was arrested. "La Batalla" itself was put under strictest preliminary censorship. The PSUC and the CP of Spain opened a fiendish drive to outlaw and dissolve the POUM. The Comintern press helped out very loudly.

Statements issued by Companys, President of Catalonia, reveal the fact that his appeals for assistance fell on deaf ears in Valencia until he ceded the Valencia government the right to take over all police functions as well as the high command of the Catalonian troops at the front—a piece of extortion aimed at the extinction of Catalonian autonomy. The leadership of the CNT-FAI reports that it sent a number of trustworthy persons to the CNT battalions on the Aragon front in

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3 Esquerra—a bourgeois liberal party of Catalonia.

4 POUM—Workers Party of Marxist Unity, the independent communist party of Catalonia and Spain, which, unlike the official communist party, is following a really communist policy in the Spanish civil war.

Railroads Move To Aid Steel Interests

Baltimore and Ohio Wants Martial Law To Aid Its Shipments To Scabs; Impressive Funeral Held For Steel Martyrs In Chicago.

CONNIVANCE of the powerful railroad interests with the adamant open-shoppers of "Little Steel" to break the solid strike of the steel workers of Republic and Youngstown Sheet and Tube, marked this week's developments. Especially significant is this factor because the railroads are for all practical purposes the joint property of the government and the capitalists. Thus, this may be an entering wedge by which the national administration can, in concealed fashion, throw its weight on the side of the steel magnates.

The Baltimore and Ohio RR. informed Governor Davey of Ohio that a "state of riot" existed in the steel areas, and if it were forced by pickets to cease deliveries to the plants, wide-spread layoffs would be caused. This insidious appeal is double-edged. First, it practically demands that martial law be declared and the strike broken by the armed forces of the state, and second, it attempts to undermine the pro-strike sentiment growing among the railway unions. Up to the present, crews have refused to transport materials intended for scabs beyond the steel workers' picket lines. Whether it may be possible to forestall this reactionary combine of steel, railroads and government by militant action of the Railroad Brotherhoods remains to be seen.

That the steel strike has reached a sharpened stage was evidenced by the increasing attempts for federal intervention on both sides. Tom Girdler, head of Republic, demanded that the Post Office rescind its ruling not to send food and clothing to the scabs, while the SWOC announced that it has appealed to Roosevelt to mediate the strike.

After an impressive funeral demonstration for the seven workers brutally massacred by Republic Steel's Chicago police force, the Mayor of the city asked Republic to cease housing scabs in the factory.

Ousted NY Unions Plan Joint Action

Not daring to bring the question before a delegated assembly, the executive committee of the Central Trades and Labor Council of New York simply "declared" that all unions affiliated with the CIO were "suspended." Three hundred thousand workers are affected by this bureaucratic move, made on the orders of William Green, and supported by those who fear the great organization drives of the CIO. The 45 locals suspended belong to the International Ladies' Garment Workers of America, the Transport Workers Union, the Bookkeepers and Stenographers, and the United Textile Workers.

The New York office of the CIO announced that plans were being considered for unifying the work of the CIO unions in this city.

I. C. L. L. PROTESTS JAILING OF GORKIN BY NEGRIN GOV'T.

WORKERS AGE has just received word from Spain that the official organ of the POUM, La Batalla, has been suppressed and that Gorkin, one of the leaders of the POUM, has been jailed.

The following cables were dispatched immediately to Premier Negrin in Valencia and to President Companys in Barcelona:

"We supporters of the Spanish struggle against fascism protest the arrest of Gorkin and the suppression of La Batalla. We demand the restoration of workers democracy."

The cables are signed by Jay Lovestone as secretary of the Independent Communist Labor League.

CI Calls for United Front

Almeria Bombing Brings Appeals For Aid From Spain

The Communist International, thru its spokesman George Dimitrov, has just made public an appeal to the proletariat of the world to get together in united front action on behalf of the Spanish fighters against fascism. The appeal is directed especially to socialist workers thru their Socialist and Labor International and to the International Federation of Trade Unions.

The appeal of the Comintern constitutes an answer to the Spanish working class organizations who called on all labor internationals to stop fascist intervention after the bloody Nazi attack on Almeria. In the face of this appeal and remembering also Guernica and the continued sinking of Spanish Loyalist ships by Italian submarines, the Comintern soft-pedaled its attitude of complete dependence on the "democratic" powers in the struggle against fascism and turned once again to the class that can defeat fascism—the fighting international proletariat.

A united front, the statement says, could compel the British and French government "to adopt energetic measures against the inter-

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N.Y. News Guild Votes for C.I.O.

The New York Newspaper Guild, at a special membership meeting held June 2nd, voted to instruct its delegates to the forthcoming national convention of the ANG to support affiliation to the CIO. The International's Executive Board has already made public a report urging such a move in the interests of the labor movement as a whole and in the interests of new campaigns contemplated by the Guild.

Broadening of jurisdiction to include "business, circulation, advertising and all other departments not eligible for membership in other unions," was approved. It was pointed out that the AFL would not permit such a drive.

A motion to affiliate with the American Labor Party was postponed but delegates were instructed to reaffirm the Guild's stand for a national labor party.

The convention will be held in St. Louis, June 7 to 12.

CPO Convention Reflects New Stages of American Labor

By WILL HERBERG

THE sixth convention of the Communist Party (Opposition), held recently in New York City, cannot be evaluated or even described in terms of any other convention of similar character. In its political approach, in its composition, in its very mode of procedure, it represented something essentially new; there was in it that living organic fusion of uncompromising revolutionary theory and flexible, realistic practise that has come to characterize so strikingly the organization whose highest will it expressed. In the convention were mirrored, in the most vivid form, the power and vitality, as well as the historical mission, of the C.P.O.

Mirror Of Our Group

There was a political logic in the very composition of the convention. Of the 101 delegates, regular, alternate and fraternal, who constituted the gathering, 86 were members of trade unions and 59 held some official position in their

organization, from local committee to the general executive board. Every important union, especially those in the C.I.O., every important scene of industrial struggle, contributed some outstanding fighters. Thirty five of the delegates had taken part in the foundation of the C.P.O. nearly eight years before; over 50, on the other hand, had joined in the last four years. Forty-four had been members of the official Communist Party, 22 of the Socialist Party, while 35 had never belonged to any workers political group before. Here we have a picture of a living, thriving organization, winning to itself the best elements among the class-conscious workers, indissolubly fused with the whole labor movement of which it forms so organic a part.

Spain—And the C.I.O.

There was the same political logic in the order of business of the convention. On Saturday—the international situation and the Spanish revolution; on Sunday—

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WORKERS AGE

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THE CHICAGO MASSACRE

REPUBLIC STEEL of South Chicago celebrated Memorial Day by unleashing the yellow curs of Chicago's police force upon a peaceful picket line of one thousand steel workers. That Bloody Sunday's celebration by Tom Girder's boys numbers its casualties at seven dead, scores injured.

"None of the strikers seized was found to possess firearms," blandly admits the Chicago Police Department, AFTER the calmly premeditated murders. It was, indubitably, knowledge of this fact, before the assault, that inspired Chicago's finest—Mayor Kelly's New Deal police force, Cardinal Mundelein's bull-necked degenerates—to fire, club, kick, with true clerico-fascist "Social Justice" into the bodies of one thousand men and women workers of steel. Here is Catholic Action in action for the economic royalists. Two days after the massacre a policeman on guard at the Republic plant revealed in a flash how thoroughly drilled his pack had been in murder—wearing a belt containing fifty .45 caliber bullets," he "took a box of cartridges from his pocket and said to this correspondent (Daniell, New York Times): 'We're ready for them, and, boy, am I eager.'" Unwittingly this dull-witted hyena revealed all we need to know about the collusion between the Chicago Police and the Republic Steel in the preparation for their murder reign.

Stinking carloads of red herrings are frantically being strewn over the landscape to obliterate the trails leading from Republic Steel to the Democratic, Catholic, New Deal administration of the city of Chicago. With the best defensive deemed to be the offensive, charges of conspiracy to commit an illegal act have been filed against sixty-five of the steel workers. Convictions may mean a maximum punishment of five years in prison and a \$2,000 fine.

We don't give a damn about the Wagner Act, declared, in effect, one of the Republic's mouthpieces after the murders, voicing Steel's knowledge that their government will never dare bring it to justice. The "temporary truce" in Steel is momentarily but a truce on the United States Steel Corporation front while it sends flanking movements of the independent companies to the assault upon the Steel Workers Organizing Committee. The profit-drunk captains of steel hope to halt in its tracks the onward march of unionism by streams of hot lead, so to terrorize the awakening slaves of steel that even in the event of a vote under the Wagner Act they shall be too fear-stricken to defy them.

Steel's hot lead murders have dyed with scarlet in letters too bold, too brilliant in hue, too imperative to ignore, the message to all American labor—"Organize Labor In An Independent Party!" What the New Deal administration of Chicago has done, other New Deal local, state and federal agencies are preparing and eager to do. Labor dare not ignore, in this, its struggle for life on American soil, the fact so sorrowfully and dramatically revealed to it in the Chicago Massacre—the enemy controls all the political instruments of power. It is from such occurrences in the life of American Labor that the movement for a Labor Party can be generated, if the advanced section of labor sear the lesson indelibly into the minds of the heroic warriors of human freedom throughout all industries.

And so, while seven coffins are lowered into their last resting place, and another "good neighbor" smile gets set to break on the hypocritical Roosevelt panorama, and Cardinal Mundelein counts new pennies for another million-dollar mansion to Mammon, labor must pledge itself to carry on in the spirit of the departed warriors of steel. With clenched fists, determination in its heart, labor must pour all its strength, moral and financial, into the drive to bring the Steel Kings to defeat, for that will be the justice, the revenge, hoped for by the seven who were murdered as they lay dying on a Chicago prairie with Steel's New Deal bullets in them.

And to honest, militant trade unionists everywhere: The guns that ripped hot lead into seven steel workers are aimed at your hearts, your unions too. Defeat the steel czars or you too will face annihilation. The steel workers organization drive is of, by and for all American labor.

Wipe out the Chicago Massacre! On to victory with the CIO—undaunted, invincible, the champion of all American workers!

NEW SPLITS IN SWEDISH LABOR

By S. S.

The centrist Socialist Party of Sweden, better known as the Kilbom Party, formerly an independent Communist Party after its expulsion from the Communist International, has now split wide open. It comes as a result of the struggle of the tendency led by Flyg and the more reformist tendency led by Kilbom. The former seems to have got the upper hand (at least at the top), since Flyg's majority on the Central Executive Committee suddenly expelled Kilbom and Emil Anderson on the charge that they sought to lead the party back to Social Democracy.

Since then (May 7) events have moved swiftly. Flyg appears to have produced minutes from a Kilbom caucus at which the latter tried to show that paid functionaries would suffer no material losses if they followed him into the Social Democratic movement. Those for whom there may be no jobs he promised to provide with some small business. It sounds fantastic but it would not be surprising to find an element of truth in it.

The expelled Kilbom opened an office and circularized the party with letters calling on them to continue their dues payments to E. Anderson.

The first expression of the struggle within the party came last January when Flyg removed Kilbom as editor of the Folkets Dagbladet, the central organ. The next step was the present expulsion. The dust has not yet settled and the mud slinging campaign is still going strong. To believe both sides would mean to believe that the functionaries of the party have been the most sinister figures in the country.

Many of the trade union func-

tionaries have demanded a special convention of the party to discuss the differences. But this the Central Executive Committee has refused to do. It voted 21 to 4 to endorse the expulsion of Kilbom and Anderson and then 22 to 4 against calling a special convention. It is still difficult to tell what the final outcome will be as far as the ranks are concerned. At the moment it seems that the party is about evenly divided, with Flyg holding the edge because of his control of the press and the leadership.

On the Spanish question Kilbom deserted the position of the party and went over to the people's front position of the CP. He is now being wooed by the Communist Party as well as the Social Democrats. The CP organ Ny Dag has even succeeded in securing an interview with Kilbom and presents his side of the story with great sympathy. It is still possible however, that Kilbom may go to the Social Democrats but his working class supporters will not. The strenuous attempts of the CP to win Kilbom's followers for the CP can be seen from an editorial in Ny Dag:

"For our part we are prepared to draw a line over the struggles of the past. What these comrades were before we do not hold against them, it is what they are and what they will be, what they want to do for the cause of the revolutionary labor movement in Sweden. With each and every one who wants to struggle for the interests of the working class against capitalism and fascism we are prepared to work together honestly and without friction. Let us forget old quarrels and join hands together and sincerely create a strong and revolutionary workers party in Sweden."

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TRADE UNION NOTES

CHICAGO, scene of the great Haymarket frame-up, for which several of the leading fighters for the eight hour day in 1886 paid with their lives on the gallows, is again the scene of a most ruthless massacre. Seven have been killed and scores severely wounded as a result of police firing into a picket line in front of Republic steel.

The purpose is clear. It is an attempt to break the organization movement led by the CIO by means of a campaign of death and terror by the police and agent provocateurs, to be followed by an attempt to pin responsibility as usual on the "reds" or "outside agitators."

Labor had better prepare now to make impossible this dastardly scheme. Already the Chicago police talk of numerous indictments of workers, not police, altho not a single policeman was seriously hurt and none at all from gunfire. Labor must prepare now to smash a possible frame-up. The seven who gave their life in labor's cause must receive vindication at the hands of labor by a campaign to expose the killers and by an intensified drive to smash the resistance of Republic Steel.

It is not out of place at this time, even while the bodies of our dead lie unburied, to remember that this bloody butchery occurred in a New Deal state under the New Deal Governor Horner. Be they New Dealers, conservative Democrats, or reactionary Republicans, they have one thing in common—the defense of private property. It was in the course of defending the private property of Republic Steel that American working men were shot down in cold blood. American labor which has begun to learn of new property concepts will also have to learn that these new property concepts, to be effective, must be incorporated, into a new political party which defends and sponsors them—a labor party.

FACTS continue to pile up tending to prove that the AFL really has placed itself in the service of the employers. On a previous occasion we gave facts and information on the nature of the agreement reached between the Consolidated Edison in New York and the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, an AFL affiliate.

Additional information which recently came to light indicates that the terms of the agreement are even worse than originally believed. It has become known for instance that the pact calls for a 40 hour week at a time when between 60% and 75% of the workers now work no more than 35 hours a week.

The agreement practically gives the company carte blanche on hiring, firing, suspending or transferring workers. Is there any wonder that as these facts begin to leak out dissatisfaction grows and recruiting comes almost to a complete stop.

It was to offset this dissatisfaction that a committee of AFL recruits, with the unwilling President Tracey bringing up the rear, appeared before Mr. Carlisle of the Consolidated with a request for a 10% increase in wages. With these improvements in wages, argued the committee, the men could really be swept into the AFL. It is possible that a 5% increase for some categories may be granted.

WE quote from the "News of the Week," May 22, 1937, issued by the American Labor Party: "In every Democratic club house in the city there are hordes of malcontents who mumble in their corners, but stick around in hopes that someday the 'powerful' leader will call a recess in his career of enriching himself and give a job to the aforesaid malcontent."

"Every A.L.P. member must learn what Walker (Jimmy Walker) knows. There are not enough public payroll jobs to take care of all the workers that any political machine needs. We must learn to trade upon the slogan that the majority suffers under a patronage system, and that the greatest good for the greatest number is also the greatest good for the individual, and that the unsuccessful job aspirants had better get to work for the Labor Party instead of wasting their efforts in behalf of grasping politicians."

These ideas have nothing in common with labor politics and should have no place in a labor party. What have the New York unions to say about these proposed Tammany methods for the American Labor Party?

California Socialists Bolt; Join Communist Laborites

Convinced that there was no possibility of reforming the Socialist Party, a group of comrades in California bolted the SP, which they refer to as "a loose union of warring factions," and have joined the Communist Party (Opposition). The west coast has been especially hard hit by the fact that the Trotskyists have taken over the Socialist Party there completely. The comrades appeal to all members of the SP to stop wasting their time in the SP by joining and working for the CPO "around which can be built the revolutionary party in America."

The Statement

We, the undersigned, feel that the unhealthy situation prevailing in the Socialist Party no longer permits us to remain within it.

A year ago there seemed to us to be a possibility of its becoming the Marxist vanguard in the United States, but the exodus of the Old Guard did not, as we had hoped it would, clear the way for genuine theoretical clarity and real mass work, for unfortunately there entered at that time a new complication in the form of the Workers Party, which was "dissolved" into the SP. In the resulting confusion many of the best leftward moving elements were deflected into a bog of sectarianism, others, repelled by the unrealistic approach of the Trotskyists, drifted to the right, and still others left the party altogether. However, it would be a mistake to lay all the blame for the present situation at the door of the Trotskyists. Other groups have abandoned any search for clarity, tending more and more to sink their theoretical differences in a general anti-Trotskyist combination, (e.g. Porter) or have developed a principled opposition in consonance with Marxism.

At present the party is a loose union of warring factions, the four main ones being: the Appeal group; the Zam-Tyler group, which although showing signs of developing theoretical clarity, nevertheless, due to its center position relative to other factions, has attracted to itself an amorphous mass of centrist elements; the Altman group, with no stated position apart from general anti-Trotskyism; the Porter group, which has adopted bag and baggage the class-collaborationism of the CP.

Out of this conglomeration emerges almost nothing in the way of constructive activity. The anti-Soviet atmosphere engendered by the Trotskyists, which has by now infected much of the party, is of such a character that we do not choose to be identified with it. Toward mass work the party has an unrealistic approach: it lacks a program for the winning or neutralizing of the middle class; it displays, at least in California, a grave neglect of serious trade union work excepting in its

romantic aspects; and its centrist and equivocal position toward the Labor Party can only succeed in isolating the SP even more completely in the future from the main stream of American labor.

Despite this situation, we should still feel justified in remaining within the SP if its internal illness showed signs of being merely temporary and if there were no other group capable of becoming the American vanguard party. But the internal situation is steadily becoming worse: The Appeal group will in all probability be expelled by an unprincipled combination of other factions, including the most right-wing elements; and this in turn will lead to a new alignment of forces within the party and a new series of expulsions. As the end result of this process we see the degeneration of the party into a reformist sect.

On the other hand we find that there is in existence a group that upholds the banner of Marxism—the Communist Party (Opposition). This group takes a clear-cut Marxist-Leninist stand in its opposition to imperialist war and the popular front. In regard to the Soviet Union it takes the only realistic position possible: that it is essentially a workers' state; that the degeneration of the Communist parties in capitalist countries flows not from degeneration of the Soviet Union and the C.P.S.U., but from the discrepancy between the tasks of building socialism after a victorious revolution and those of overthrowing capitalism in the rest of the world; and that any attempt to undermine the Soviet regime from within means playing into the hands of fascist counter-revolution. The CPO avoids the tendency of both Stalinists and Trotskyists to place disproportionate emphasis on events in the Soviet Union. It has a correct and realistic attitude toward mass work. Its attitude toward the Labor Party is, in contradistinction to that of the SP, one of unequivocal support, since it knows that only the timely participation of revolutionists within it can prevent its becoming a vague third party cutting across class lines or an adjunct to CP populism.

We want to impress upon our comrades in the S.P. that the time they and we have to work under the comparatively favorable conditions of capitalist democracy is growing short, and to urge them not to dissipate their energies any longer in factional disputes which grow ever more bitter and futile but to join the Communist Party (Opposition), the rallying point around which can be built the revolutionary party of America.

ROXANNA BRIMSON EARL LANE EMMMA LANE GARDNER S. WELLS

May 26, 1937.

BERTRAM D. WOLFE

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REACTIONARY PLOT BEHIND BARCELONA PROVOCATIONS

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to persuade the soldiers not to leave the front for the purpose of intervening in the fighting at Barcelona. These emissaries prevailed and the soldiers remained at the front.

On Wednesday and Thursday, May 5 and 6, a number of French and English warships appeared in the port of Barcelona in support of the counter-revolutionary provocation; evidently they had been summoned by Companys and Valencia. With this, the international connections of the counter-revolutionary coup became clearly established.

II. THE MANIFESTO ISSUED BY THE CNT, THE FAI AND THE LIBERTARIAN YOUTH OF CATALONIA

During the May events, there became clearly apparent for the first time the split between the masses of the anarcho-syndicalist workers who, weapon in hand, were defending their revolutionary gains, and certain leaders of the CNT and FAI, above all, the CNT cabinet ministers in the Valencia government and the Generalidad. These individuals proved themselves partly corrupt with opportunism and partly lacking in clarity of aim and determination.

After the compromise maneuver had brought defeat to the revolutionary workers, there followed a violent reaction among the anarcho-syndicalist workers. This reaction is reflected in the manifesto of the leadership of the CNT, the FAI and the Libertarian Youth of Catalonia, published in the May 12 issue of the "Solidaridad Obrera."

This manifesto openly describes the provocation during the first days in May as "a conspiracy." This conspiracy—that is, the attack upon the telephone exchange building—produced a spontaneous protest on the part of workers. The attack upon the telephone exchange building was personally led by the PSUC official, Salas, who was under written orders from Aiguade, orders of which the Council of the Generalidad had no knowledge whatsoever. This coup was to be the starting point of a "far-reaching plan of action with unqualified aims."

The proclamation points out that this action had been prepared carefully over a long period of time and that part of these preparations had been to demoralize the hinterland and to undermine confidence in the committees and the leadership of the CNT. The proclamation goes on to point out the numerous assassinations of CNT members by the PSUC and the police troops—12 in San Andres, 15 in Taragona, the assassination of the Italian anarchist Berneri, etc. Another aim of the provocation was to bring about foreign intervention, "the advance-troops of which were represented by the six French and English war vessels that appeared on Wednesday and Thursday of the past week in the port of Barcelona." The proclamation declares that, in view of the numerous arrests and individual assassinations perpetrated by their enemies, the CNT and the FAI would find a way for proper retribution, should such practices not cease at once.

The proclamation appeals to the members of the UGT's in the following words:

"Remember that your place is on the side of your class comrades and not in alliance with the bourgeoisie, either big or little, which is defending its own interests and is fighting with every means and weapon available to throttle the Spanish revolution. . . . Stand fast against all provocations and against all those perpetrating such provocations! Work together with us in our common task of exposing the guilty ones in this, the biggest crime in history. Let us unite against the common enemy, the enemy within and without, the enemy at the front and at home, the enemy who is plotting against us in every hole and corner of Spanish politics and in every dark corridor of the government offices of Europe. . . . Long live the revolutionary alliance of the proletariat! Down with the counter-revolution! Long live the unity of the CNT and the UGT, the only

safeguard for victory in the war and in the revolution!"

The slogan of the revolutionary alliance of the proletariat is equivalent to the slogan issued by the POUM for a revolutionary workers front. The proclamation of the CNT reveals that the anarcho-syndicalist workers have begun to learn the lesson of the recent events and that they are determined to continue the fight for the revolution.

III. THE POSITION OF THE POUM ON THE MAY BATTLES

The attitude of the POUM on the May battles is formulated in the resolution adopted by the Enlarged Central Committee of the party after the May events, published on May 13 in "La Batalla."

"1. The unceasing provocations of the counter-revolution, embodied in the reformist parties of the PSUC and the petty bourgeoisie—provocations aimed at liquidating in the spheres of economy, war and the public order, the revolutionary gains won by the workers, weapon in hand, on July 19, provocations which reached their climax on May 3 with the attempt to storm the telephone exchange building—these provocations produced the armed protest of the proletariat.

"2. The political position of the POUM could be none other than active solidarity with the workers who spontaneously declared a general strike, erected barricades in the streets of Barcelona and took it upon themselves to defend with exemplary heroism the endangered conquests of the revolution.

"3. Since the workers fighting in the streets lacked concrete aims as well as responsible leadership, the POUM had no other alternative but to organize a strategic retreat by convincing the working class to avoid all desperate action that might have resulted in a putsch, inevitably leading to the complete extermination of the most advanced sections of the proletariat.

"4. The experience of the May struggles has clearly shown that the only solution lies in the seizure of power by the working class and that it is therefore absolutely necessary for the revolutionary activity of the working masses to be coordinated thru the formation of a revolutionary workers front uniting all organizations ready to fight for the complete annihilation of fascism. This can be accomplished only thru military victory at the front and the victory of the revolution at home.

"The Central Committee of the POUM is of the opinion that the policy pursued by the party has been completely justified; it fully endorses the line of the Executive Committee, convinced that the party has defended the interests of the revolution and of the broad working masses."

IV. THE REORGANIZATION OF THE VALENCIA GOVERNMENT

The reorganization of the Valencia government was instigated by the official Communist Party, whose ministers resigned with the demand that the measures against the revolutionary workers of Catalonia be intensified and carried thru to the end, as well as by the French and English governments which made their voice heard in the very cabinet thru the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Alvarez del Vayo.

The main objectives of this move were the elimination of Caballero and thus of the left socialists from the Cabinet, the exclusion of the CNT-FAI, the strengthening of bourgeois republican influence, the emancipation of the government from the control of working class organizations, the centralization of military power in a single hand, and the liquidation of the revolutionary achievements of the July days in Catalonia and the rest of Spain. The real nature of this move is best illustrated by a number of facts.

In its issue of May 11, the paper "Adelante," (Continued on Page 6)

5 UGT—General Union of Workers, the trade union federation in which socialists and communists are active.

BOOKS of the AGE

OF MICE AND MEN. By John Steinbeck. Covici-Friede, New York. \$2.

Reviewed by D. Swift

American proletarian literature now has a second novel of real size to its credit. The present book is not as large in its emotions as Fielding's Burke's excellent "A Stone Came Rolling," nor is it quite so tender or profound in its sympathies, but in artistic integrity and competence it can stand very well beside it. The story proper is a very simple one. Lennie and George, the first a huge and stupid man, the second a strong and kindly friend, are roving laborers, picking up a job here and there for the sake of finding another job further on. A beautiful dream gradually possesses them: to save up enough money with which to buy a farm with rabbits on it. In the last job they hold down together, Curley, the boss's son, develops a hatred for Lennie because of his size. But this situation could be handled if it weren't for Curley's wife, a hard, dissatisfied woman, eager for an hour of joy with almost any man. When she meets Lennie in the barn, she decides to have him ease her yearning, but unfortunately she doesn't know about the power of his hands, hands which cannot caress a rabbit or a mouse without eventually breaking its neck. Lennie simply must crush whatever is soft to his touch. So that when Curley's wife induces him to stroke her hair and neck, he soon does what is inevitable with him: he crushes her neck. George has stood for a lot from Lennie, but he will not tolerate murder. So as a last act of friendship, he decides to shoot him himself, instead of having the farm hands or the authorities do it.

A simple enough tale, as I have said, but it is put on paper with great skill and with high feeling for the timeless loneliness of this earth laden and sore beset of this earth. In addition to being a delicate study of the relationship between two men, the book throws into high relief the complex of emotional antagonisms between those who have and those who haven't, and also between dispossessed mankind and bountiful nature. The very same yearnings and terrors that grip the slum dwellers of New York and the tenant farmers of Tennessee, grip the homeless Lennie and George. For the desire of securing themselves, especially powerful among those who can never hope to achieve either.

Mr. Steinbeck, in other words, is writing about the class struggle, but not as a staff philosopher for the Daily Worker. He knows the difference between offering a judgment on economic events, and presenting the emotional turmoil which these economic events arouse. That is, he knows the difference between bad propaganda and good art, and he also seems to know that the best propaganda is the best art and vice versa. This is precisely why "Of Mice and Men" is so much better a proletarian novel than his previous "In Dubious Battle." Both are proletarian in content and intent, but the characters in the latter are speeches and opinions, while the characters in "Of Mice and Men" are living human beings, who cry in the grass because a system of society does not permit them to dream beautiful dreams on a pillow.

"Of Mice and Men" is not the world masterpiece that some excited critics have claimed. In places it is a bit facile, almost Saturday Evening Post. Curley's wife is pretty much a stock character. The book also touches upon more problems than it illuminates. And there are other faults, all due perhaps to the fact that Mr. Stein-

(Continued on Page 8)

REACTIONARY PLOT BEHIND BARCELONA PROVOCATIONS

(Continued from Page 5)

the organ of the UGT and of Largo Caballero personally, describes the demands raised by the CP of Spain and the Comintern in the following terms:

"If the Caballero government were to apply the measures of suppression to which the Spanish section of the Communist International is trying to incite it, then it would come close to a government of Gil Robles or Lerroux; it would destroy the unity of the working class and expose us to the danger of losing the war and shipwrecking the revolution. . . . A government composed in its majority of people from the labor movement cannot make use of methods that are reserved for reactionary and fascist-like governments."

The article expressly rejects responsibility for the events in Catalonia and throws the responsibility upon those who provoked the situation.

The role that the French and English governments played in the Catalanian events and the aims pursued by these governments in the situation and in the reorganization of the Valencia government, are exposed with welcome clarity in a semi-official editorial in the "Temps" of May 17. This article was written after the governmental crisis in Barcelona had broken out into the open but before it had been solved; it was, therefore, written with a view to influencing the solution of the crisis in the direction desired by the People's Front government of France. The editorial goes on to say:

"The struggle therefore proceeds in Valencia, as it went on in Barcelona, between the communist influence, allied with the socialists and republicans, and the anarcho-syndicalists, whom it is a question of destroying and removing from the government. . . . Either Mr. Largo Caballero will simply rebuild his cabinet on the same foundations, that is, from the representatives of all of the People's Front parties and the socialist and anarcho-syndicalist labor organizations or he will attempt to free the republican government from the control of the extremists by building up a combination basing itself entirely on the political parties of the People's Front. If this latter formula is applied, it will signify an important development; in fact, it will constitute a decisive reaction against the so-called proletarian socialist revolution. The anarchists and the syndicalists have never hidden the fact that the defense of the republican regime and the democratic order is their least concern and that what they are above all trying to accomplish on the basis of the present civil war is the complete social revolution for the sole benefit of the proletariat. The republican government of Valencia has reached the point where it must decide. It can no longer remain in the state of ambiguity in which it has hitherto lived. It must choose between democracy and proletarian dictatorship, between order and anarchy."

Corresponding to these directives of the French and English bourgeoisie, directives supported by the Spanish section of the Communist International, the republican parties and the right wing of the Social-Democracy, a reorganization in the Valencia government has taken place. Caballero has been ousted. In the government the right wing only of Social-Democracy is represented through Premier Negrin, the new War Minister Prieto and the Minister of the Interior. The Foreign Ministry was handed over to the left republican, Giral, the chairman of the left republican party, the man who was premier until the fall of Irujo and who was removed from the government precisely because of the fall of Irujo. Now this political corpse has been resurrected. . . .

The CNT and the FAI have had their representatives ousted from the government, after they were offered half of their previous representation. The government now consists of three socialists, two official communists and four of the bourgeois parties. In reality, this government is dominated by bourgeois republican influence since the right wing

socialists, such as Prieto, must be regarded as bourgeois republicans. The UGT is officially not represented in the new government.

The new government was promptly hailed with great joy by the official press of England and France. From these quarters its tasks were openly prescribed for it. Thus the "Temps" writes in its editorial of May 18:

"But it is noteworthy that he (Azana) yesterday assembled for the purposes of joint consultation the president of the Cortes, Mr. Martinez Barrio; the head of the Republican Union, the former premier Giral; the leader of the republican lefts; the leader of the moderate socialists, Indalecio Prieto; Mr. Ramon Lamonedá, the representative of the leadership of the SP; and Mr. Jose Diaz, the general secretary of the CP. It would be too early to conclude that the orientation in Valencia is toward a more moderate government determined to free itself finally from the control of anarcho-syndicalists. But this is an attempt which, in the end, will have to be made, no matter what the resistance of the extremists may be, if the collapse of the republican state power sooner or later is to be avoided."

From these words, the essence and aims of the new Valencia government emerge clearly. It is supposed to clean up the forces fighting for proletarian revolution, to disarm them, to destroy and annihilate them. It is supposed to create a firm basis, from a military and police standpoint, for a bourgeois restoration. These are the objectives but, in reality, the perspectives of such a government go far beyond what these people themselves understand or desire today. If this government continues to pursue its aims consistently, it must in the end undermine the foundations of its own existence, particularly, of the socialist and communist parties. For, in order to destroy the revolutionary elements of the working class in Catalonia and the rest of Spain, it will have to base itself more and more upon the powers of reaction and to apply constantly more reactionary measures—as is clearly pointed out in the declaration of Caballero's paper cited above. It is enough to refer to the example of German Social-Democracy, to Ebert-Scheidemann-Noske, who, in order to smash the Spartacus League, had to rely on the military and White Guardist organizations. It is clear, furthermore, that were this government to succeed in realizing its objectives, the prerequisites for a compromise with the military-fascist insurgents would be created—something towards which the English and French governments have been working quite openly. This is a road that can end only in the collapse of the bourgeois-democratic republic—in the defeat of the struggle against the military-fascists at the front.

But there is by no means any guarantee that the new government and the forces behind it will succeed in realizing their objectives. The counter-current in the Spanish working class has already begun; this can be seen from the appeals of the CNT-FAI as well as from the attitude of the UGT leadership. To assure the victory of the forces of proletarian revolution it is absolutely necessary to create a firm alliance of all forces working in this direction and to develop a really communist leadership supported by the majority of the Spanish working class. For such a leadership we must turn in the first place to the POUM but also to certain elements among the anarcho-syndicalists and the SP lefts.

It is of the greatest significance that the five thousand men of the Assault Guards sent by Valencia to Barcelona to "restore order," have fallen under the influence of the revolutionary sentiment of the Catalanian workers, that the POUM is gaining in popularity among the workers and that the virtual abolition of Catalanian autonomy has created bad blood even amongst certain petty bourgeois elements. As a whole, however, it must be said that the development of a revolutionary front fighting in the direction of proletarian power will be a long and difficult process. But it is the only road!

STFU Hit By Boss Terror

News of the violent breaking up of two meetings of locals of the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union in Mississippi County, Arkansas gave fresh confirmation to the charges of Union officials that Arkansas planters were launching a new campaign of terror against the Union.

An orderly meeting of the Armorial local at the home of Earl Thompson, union member, was disrupted when a group of about forty planters and riding bosses, broke into Thompson's home, forcing 75 union members to leave the house at the point of guns. The planters searched the house, destroying furniture and threatening members of the union. After dispersing the meeting they seized the Charter of the local.

On the same night W. B. Moore, organizer for the Union, was forced off the plantation of C. M. & J. R. Whittle, twenty miles west of Blytheville on Little River. Moore had been asked by some 50 tenants on the plantation to come and take their application for membership in the organization. Shortly after arriving at the home of one of the tenants, he was forced to leave by the Whittle-brothers and a group of their riding bosses. All of the men were armed.

Officials of the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union in telegrams to Governor Bailey of Arkansas and to the United States Senate Civil Liberties Committee demanded that an investigation be made into these attacks on union rights.

N.Y. Teachers Hit Council's Split

The Teachers Union has sent the following telegram to the Central Trades & Labor Council which has received orders from President Green to expel the C.I.O. unions from local Central Trades:

"We of the Teachers Union, Local 5, wish to express opposition to the expulsion of the C.I.O. unions from the Central Trades. Division into separate and antagonistic organizations creates serious obstacles to our organizing the teachers into the ranks of labor. We think there is no unresolvable conflict between craft unions in their field and industrial unions in the field of mass production industries."

(Signed) C. J. HENDLEY, President.

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The Illinois Labor Party

THE present Labor Party movement began in Chicago in the spring of 1935. A small group of trade unionists decided that the time was ripe to start a labor party if an informal call rallied a sufficient number of union delegates. Among this group were former proletarian party members, socialists, communists, communist laborites (CPO) and others who while not radicals had participated in the Labor Party movement of the early twenties.

The Labor Party was started by people who for one reason or another had been convinced of the need of a Labor Party for many years and who thought this a good time to set it in motion. There was no special local issue but rather the general situation which caused it to arise at this time. One common policy united the individual trade unionists who participated in founding and building the Labor Party—the belief that the Party should be built and controlled by organized labor.

The Labor Party arose in Chicago prior to any general progressive movement of an organized character in the unions or the central labor body of the city. There are about 300,000 workers in Chicago who are organized in some 600 trade unions. The chief industries are steel in North and South Chicago and outlying districts, railroads, meat, machinery companies such as International Harvester. Apart from these industries, Chicago is second to New York in the printing trade, is a department store center and a city of diversified industry and service trades. The garment trades probably boast no more than 25,000 workers. The Chicago Federation of Labor is dominated by the building trades and the teamsters. Great numbers of the railroad shop crafts are not affiliated with the Chicago Federation of Labor. Steel was practically unorganized in 1935 and in the meat industry only 800 out of the 40,000 workers were in unions.

In this generally unorganized, unawakened state of the Chicago labor movement, the Labor Party of Chicago and Cook County was organized on August 25th, 1935, at a Labor Party Conference held at Lathers' Hall in Chicago. 139 official delegates from 60 locals affiliated with the American Federation of Labor and Railroad Brotherhoods took part. The policy declared by this Conference was to get the support of union labor before organizing a broader Labor Party. With this aim the membership was restricted to union members only. At a later conference held in November of 1935 an organization committee of 39 was set up to secure the affiliation of local unions.

The A. F. of L. Convention in 1935 put about one fifth of the delegates on record for a Labor Party and showed that the sentiment was general throughout the organized labor movement of the United States.

Winning Chicago Unions For some time the aim of the Labor Party in Chicago was to secure the affiliation of the Chicago Federation of Labor through winning enough unions to secure the necessary vote. For a time it seemed as if the Federation would once more take the lead in independent political action. Victor A. Olander, Secretary of the State Federation of Labor, and John Fitzpatrick, President of the CFL, issued a denunciation of the old party politicians in the State legislature and resigned from the Labor Advisory Council.

This step on the part of the Chicago Federation remained the only one taken toward independent political action. The Federation soon began to be affected by the policies

of Labor's Non-Partisan League and by the impending split between the A.F.L. and the C.I.O., shortly after the Convention of 1935. The CIO did not, however, affect the situation very much until late in 1936 and early in 1937 because the steel activity lay outside the city and hence outside the city Federation, while the CIO as a general movement came late to Chicago.

Francis Gorman addressed a Chicago mass meeting on the first of March, 1936 in Carmen's Hall. There were about 3000 people present. The composition was still largely radical.

In July of the same year a State Convention was held in Springfield, prepared for by a Conference held in Peoria in April. At the State Convention the Illinois Labor Party was organized. Besides the Chicago delegates there were delegates from the Aurora Central Trades and Labor Assembly in the Fox Valley area, from Rockford, from the Springfield Federation of Labor, from the Lake County Central Body of Granite City in the south part of the State, from the Centralia central body, and from a few local unions. Of the 100 Counties in Illinois five outside of Cook County had some labor representation at the July Convention.

At this Convention the membership was thrown open to non-union members. The control was retained in the unions by a constitutional provision that only unions and Labor Party Clubs could be represented at conventions and that the total voting strength of all clubs at any conference should not be greater than one-third of the voting strength of the affiliated unions.

Attitude Towards L.N.P.L.

There are about 400,000 union members in downstate Illinois. The most significant group is, of course, the mine workers who are divided into United Mine Workers with their center in Springfield, and Progressive Miners. One half a dozen of the Progressive Miners are affiliated with the Labor Party. The union representation from downstate also represents radical influence in addition to progressive.

At the Convention in Springfield there was a lively discussion on the Declaration of Policy to be adopted, especially about Roosevelt and the attitude toward Labor's Non-Partisan League. The following was adopted: "We hope that the organizers of Labor's Non-Partisan League will join with us in quickly moving on to the more advanced stage of definite independent labor political action through a Party based upon the organized labor movement and responsive at all times to its interest and demands. We record with pleasure the fact that prominent spokesmen of Labor's Non-Partisan League have pledged themselves to this course for the future."

"We for our part will not in this election endorse or aid any national ticket, as we feel that labor will benefit more by solidifying the national forces of organized labor for state and local elections and for the building of a national Labor Party after the November election. We believe that the early course will facilitate the early uniting of all progressive labor forces for independent political action."

In the fall Labor's Non-Partisan League of Illinois was organized with Ray Edmundson of the United Mine Workers as President and Ed Nockels, Secretary of the Chicago Federation of Labor, as Secretary. Labor's Non-Partisan League swept the field of organized labor in Illinois, rolling up a substantial majority for Roosevelt in the State. The officials of the League, particu-

CPO Convention Reflects New Stages of American Labor

(Continued from Page 1)

larly Brother Edmundson, were on friendly terms with the Labor Party officials. There was no conflict between the two organizations. The activities of the League, however, slowed Labor Party work and caused the unions to empty their political treasuries for the League and to be slower to affiliate with the Labor Party.

Two of the most active Labor Party organizers, Sarainne Loeve and Meyer Adelman, became active in the CIO and their energies were temporarily lost to the Labor Party. The new unions are still rather new to organization to press them for affiliation to the Labor Party. The A. F. of L. unions are more definitely divided into progressive and conservative by the CIO issue and the effect is felt in Labor Party work notwithstanding that the Labor Party welcomes both types of unions. The result is that the Illinois Labor Party is progressing slowly now, winning but a few new affiliations and individual members.

Preparing for National Party

No candidates have been run as yet. Owing to a change in the Chicago election laws in 1935 aldermanic elections are held every 4 years rather than every 2 as formerly. Senatorial elections will be the first to come up. The Labor Party is attempting to organize the wards in three Congressional districts, preparatory to running candidates in 1938.

The Illinois Party has stood for the formation of a national Labor Party and has a standing Committee with Wisconsin and Minnesota to carry on the work for a Mid-Western Conference preparatory to a national conference. Illinois by its predominantly industrial character belongs much more with the industrial-northeast than with the Farmer-Mid West. It resembles New York State with its division into Democratic big city and Republican farm population. The farmer progressivism of Wisconsin, Minnesota and the Dakotas is conspicuous by its absence in Illinois which ranks next to New York in the strength of the Farm Bureau (the farmers' Company Union). For this reason a Mid-Western conference prior to a national conference might seem to throw the emphasis on forms of organization less suitable for Illinois. However, if such a Conference were to result, thru an exchange of experiences, in placing emphasis on the affiliation of economic organizations to the Labor Party rather than on a purely membership Party, much would be accomplished.

Those in the Illinois Labor Party who in general follow the CPO directives in Labor Party work should strive, thru the Illinois Party's connection with the Parties of Minnesota and Wisconsin to work with more progressive sections of the Trade Union movement of those states to bring them into a more influential position in their respective Labor Parties. The recent union drives are changing the balance of organized power between farmers and labor in those states, especially in Wisconsin.

Effect of CIO Drive

Labor's Non-Partisan League has been inactive since the election in November. There is a possibility that it may soon unite with the Labor Party to form an American Labor Party similar to that in New York state. If this development takes place it may be possible to salvage some of the good groundwork of the Labor Party in the direction of really independent political action, a good constitution providing for control of officials, and the inclusion of radicals. In the Chicago Labor Party Communists, Socialist and progressives, largely because of the consistent policy of those working under CPO ideas have gone some distance toward learning to work together. A progressive group in the C F of L has been formed partly out of the grouping in the Labor Party. The Labor Party, while its accom-

plishments have not been at all spectacular and while its individual membership and, to a much less extent its union composition, is largely radical, is by no means a paper organization. It includes most of the progressive unions in Chicago and is in an excellent position to begin drawing the newly organized unions in rubber, auto, steel into the labor party. The brutality of the police in all recent

(Continued on Page 8)

their part in the great sit-down strike. Out of it all there emerged the picture of a living, active movement, making itself felt as a vital force on so many of the battle fronts of the American class struggle!

To The C.I.O. Belongs The Future!

Pooling their experiences, so varied and yet so fundamentally uniform, the delegates unanimously approved the resolution on the situation in the labor movement adopted by the 1936 conference together with a supplementary statement on recent developments. Life itself had shown how thoroughly sound was our analysis of the crisis in the labor movement, how realistic our forecast as to the tendencies of development and how fruitful our policies based upon this analysis and forecast. There was enthusiastic and unanimous endorsement of our fundamental conception of the C.I.O. as the new and revitalized labor movement destined to replace the A. F. of L. as the A. F. of L. had once replaced the Knights of Labor.

Reorganizing The Leadership

In view of the vast changes that had taken place in the composition and activities of the C.P.O. in the last two years, it was felt necessary to reorganize the leadership both in structure and personnel. The National Council was greatly broadened to include 53 of the leading elements in the various parts of the country; this council is to meet several times a year as a whole, and more frequently in two sections, in the East and Midwest. In addition, a small Executive Committee of eleven was chosen to direct the everyday work of the organization.

The Fundamental Significance Of The Convention

Elsewhere in this issue many of the particular decisions of the convention are reported and its main documents reproduced. But, taken as a whole, what did the convention show as to the fundamental political character of our group, as to its role and mission in the labor movement? It showed that here was developing a new type of organization of class-conscious workers, a group to which the empty phrases and the pompous pretences of the socialist and communist movements are utterly alien, a group grounded in the tested principles and tactics of revolutionary Marxism and determining its critical attitude to other political tendencies on that basis, a group that is of the very flesh and blood of the labor movement, a group truly on the road to becoming the organized expression of the most advanced, the most devoted and the most militant elements in every labor organization and on every field of the class struggle, a group whose very being is the embodiment of the guiding idea of Engels that:

"It is possible to participate in the general movement of the working class at every one of its stages of development without surrendering or concealing our own distinct position or even our organization. . . ."

It is this independent, communist and labor character of ours that the convention felt required a new and more appropriate name for our group—and this name it found in INDEPENDENT COMMUNIST LABOR LEAGUE.

The convention adjourned in a spirit of renewed power and self-confidence that bodes well for the future. Let us now carry this spirit of the convention, its decisions and directives, into the hard, unremitting, everyday work upon which the success of our movement must, in the long run, depend!

IS COURT REFORM BEING MENACED?

By M. S. MAUTNER

WITH the resignation of Justice Van Devanter from the Supreme Court, effective this week, the campaign against the slightest tampering with the High Tor of capitalist class-consciousness, has reached its strategical peak. The successive decisions of the Supreme Court validating the Washington State Minimum Wage Law, the Wagner Act, and the Social Security Act have served as important replenishments of the fast-dwindling ammunition of the Borahs, Nyes, and Wheelers, and the class they represent.

The social-significance of these rulings have been dealt with and exposed in previous issues of the *Workers Age*. That their validation means not so much a triumph for social and labor legislation as it signifies the grudging but increasing acceptance of the New Deal as an effective political system for hamstringing the labor movement, we have consistently emphasized. Especially is it important to recognize that these decisions followed immediately upon the great triumphs of labor in steel and auto. Undoubtedly the so-called "judicial sit-down strike" was prompted by a hope of defeat of labor in these industries as a basis of invalidation of these meager and dangerous laws (Wagner Act).

Danger of Defeat

For the purpose of this article it is more relevant to examine the crisis the proposals for court reform have been thrown into, and especially to consider the possibility of defeat.

From Roosevelt to the Communist Party the liberal bloc counterposed the plan to enlarge the number of justices without touching the fundamental social issues, to the proposals for any amendment to the Constitution affecting the Court. This viewpoint was expressed by a K. N. Llewellyn, in *The Nation* of March 13, as follows:

"But the issue has been drawn. It has been inescapably drawn. Lose the President's proposal (or some substantial analogue) and all chance for any amendment will be lost." (emphasis in original)

Today the danger is growing that, if labor loses this chance to make a widespread fight for an amendment, to conduct a campaign against the Court towards which Roosevelt's plan can be considered a first, practical, step, even that will be lost.

Roosevelt's proposal was not merely that of a "practical politician" who wishes to brush aside passive theorizing and get to work. The Administration is very careful to so handle its labor support as to keep labor's demands functioning within the framework of the New Deal, forestalling as long as possible the inevitable break. Thus, the fundamental issue of curbing the powers of the Supreme Court as such is deliberately glossed over by speaking glibly of "infusing new blood." No blood transfusion but a major operation on the court is labor's need.

Fight For Amendment

Just so long as labor's justified hatred for the legal bulwark of capitalist oppression is kept within the bounds of personnel changes, it is possible to undermine that rising opposition. And that fact determined the strategy of the anti-administration forces in deciding on Van Devanter's resignation. Now the president can appoint a "liberal." The probable fact that this will be Joseph Robinson, loyal party man and loyal voice of the night-riding Arkansas planters, is

but a further illustration of the untrustworthiness of individuals—even those who lead the self-professed pro-labor administration.

With this situation, the Administration is more or less assured that now its measures will receive a 6-3 affirmation. And since the proposed changes were based only on getting enough votes to pass New Deal legislation, is it not conceivable that there will be far less enthusiasm to be found for the plan? This is the danger and a great danger because, first, New Deal legislation is not automatically synonymous with labor legislation, and secondly, the 6-3 majority is still a question of individuals and not the guarantees of a constitutional amendment backed by a powerful clear-seeing labor movement.

"Even if our whole American population should forget what it was we tried to embody in the Constitution, the Supreme Court is required to remember and act accordingly," wrote William Franklin Sands in *The Commonwealth*, (April 16th). This is the power of the Supreme Court, as indicated by the founding fathers and as gathered unto itself thru years of service it has rendered to the ruling class and its most reactionary philosophies of the moment. It was a weapon against Jeffersonian and Jacksonian agrarian democracy, it was the refuge of the slave-holding aristocracy, and today, it is the bulwark of employer-interests against labor.

Labor supports, correctly, Roosevelt's Plan because an amendment involves a deal of time and some action is necessary now. Today it must support the court reforms as part of its general struggle against the employers. But precisely because it is necessary to get this immediate and superficial reform thru now, is it of really vital importance that labor set afoot an aggressive campaign for its constitutional amendment. Otherwise this rising movement may disintegrate under the impact of the carefully planned strategy of the die-hard section of American employers, and the equally careful pussyfooting of Roosevelt.

Faction Rule in Office Union

At a special membership meeting of the B.S. & A.U. (now United Office and Professional Workers Union affiliated with CIO) called to hear a report of delegates to the National Convention of the union recently held in Philadelphia, the slightest difference of opinion voiced with the official CP leadership was branded as disruptionist. Mervin Rathborne of the Radio Telegraphers' Union who was a guest speaker at the meeting launched a bitter attack against the minority elements in the B.S. & A.U. as professional oppositions, disrupters, and agents of the bosses and the company unions, who must be driven out of the labor movement.

This statement aroused large sections of the membership who jumped from their seats in protest demanding that the speaker withdraw his provocative remarks and apologize to the membership. Lewis Merrill was finally forced by the indignation of large numbers, to apologize for the speaker.

It is not yet too late for the CP to put a halt to such program tactics and lynch spirit.

CHICAGO POLICE "DEFEND" REPUBLIC'S PROPERTY BY SLAYING SEVEN UNARMED STEEL WORKERS



Lewis Denounces Republic's Massacre of Steel Strikers

The most outrageous massacre of the striking steel workers of Republic Steel in South Chicago was vigorously denounced by John L. Lewis, chairman of the C.I.O., in the following statement:

* * *

The brutal massacre of the Chicago steel workers is a blot on the national conscience. They were unarmed. The killing took place on the open prairie, six blocks from the gate of the sacred property of the Republic Steel Company. Six men were killed, a hundred others were shot, gassed and clubbed. Not a single policeman was shot. Those who were injured suffered from the naked hands of men who were fighting for their lives against armed killers.

The nation knows the Chicago police force is corrupt. It is the same force that for years has pro-

TECTED the hoodlum and the thug. It now aids the Republic Steel Company. This company and the police force are guilty of planned murder.

Somewhere in this nation should be a force strong enough to bring these uniformed killers and their co-conspirators to justice. Somewhere in this nation should be a force greater than a steel company. Somewhere in this nation should be enough earnest and honest citizens to compel action by the federal and state authorities.

Can it be true that striking workmen may be shot at will by the very agents of the law? Is the blood of our American workers less valuable than that in Spain for which we weep? Is labor to be protected or is it to be butchered? The answer is important—both to labor and America.

The Illinois Labor Party

(Continued from Page 7)

organization drives and strikes causes these newer unions to more readily realize the need of political action. The close connection between State's Attorney Courtney and the Teamsters Union makes CIO unions more willing than ever to remove him from office.

Differences between the Labor Party and the old Parties' organizational forms are already apparent in the Illinois Labor Party. The most significant difference is that the guiding bodies are made up of delegates from economic organizations rather than from the Party membership. The change from the old Progressive movement in Wisconsin also took this form. If a national convention follows the same line and calls together unions, unemployed, farm and other petty bourgeois economic organizations, the loose amorphous and dangerous third party movements will be excluded and the population will be truly represented along class lines with labor predominating.

The People's Front policy was encountered before the Springfield Convention in July, 1936. The CP wanted other organizations to affiliate on an equal basis with unions. The device of Labor Party Clubs with the limitation quoted above was adopted to oppose this tendency of the CP. In the Declaration of Policy adopted at the same Convention the CP wished to make a distinction between Landon and Roosevelt but in the Convention a majority of the delegates voted to place the emphasis on distinguishing labor from both capitalist parties rather than on distinctions between them.

The hostility of the Trotskyites and the confusion of other SPers resulted in a few influential individuals working for the Labor Party but very little general activity of the SP membership in the organization.

BOOKS of the AGE

(Continued from Page 6)

beck has really written a longish short story rather than a novel. But its virtues are so numerous that it deserves to be read by every American liberal and radical who wants to see how a novel can be proletarian and very good art at the same time.

Just Out!

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By LAMBDA

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