

## 5 Years of New Deal

an editorial

A FEW days ago, the nation was informed that, mounting evidence to the contrary notwithstanding, the New Deal, the "old ship of state," was still what it had always been—the political vehicle of liberal reform and long-range social planning, of political democracy and social equality, of aid and assistance to labor; an administration of modern technique, devoted to the greatest good of the greatest number under the modern way of life. Superficial shifts in course—the President admitted—might appear here and there, but a New Deal for the American people has remained the guiding star of the Administration.

What, in reality, is the record of these five long years?

The New Deal came into power as the united political front of the business interests of the nation, convinced at last that the challenge of the economic crisis could no longer be met by the do-nothing policy of Hoover, and fearful lest doubts as to the wisdom of the ruling class and even of the sacred profit system itself should begin to take root among the masses of the people. The great masses of the people, on their side, desperate after years of suffering, aroused against an administration that seemed unwilling or unable to lift a finger on their behalf, eagerly welcomed the promise of a New Deal and rallied enthusiastically to the Roosevelt banner. What happened is history.

"A frank examination of the profit system in the Spring of 1933," declares Roosevelt in his own recently published comments on political developments, "showed it to be in collapse; but substantially everybody in the United States . . . was as determined as my Administration to save it." The New Deal, therefore, had one program with many aspects. Its big aim was to preserve and stabilize the capitalist system. From the very first, it strove to restore the interrupted flow of profits by gigantic loans to large corporate enterprises, such as banks, railroads and "sick" industries, thru Hoover's Reconstruction Finance Corporation. The self-same aim it also sought to accomplish by releasing funds to create work projects for the alleviation of unemployment. By means of the N.R.A., it encouraged—nay, actually directed—the "cartelization" of industry and fostered monopolistic price-control thru governmental intervention, expressing the then unanimous desire of the American capitalists for vigorous federal aid of every sort. As part of the scheme of unified governmental control of economic life, it proposed to convert the trade-union movement of this country into some form of regulated, "quasi-public" unionism, a mere cog in the Administration's vast new apparatus. Its monetary policies, called by what name you will, succeeded in artificially creating a period of consumer spending—which, however, was short-lived because prices soon soared above the meager incomes of the great majority of the people.

Even those New Deal measures that were really concessions to the workers were conceived and undertaken with the same great aim in view of stabilizing and consolidating the capitalist social order by regaining the confidence of the masses and allaying an unrest so widespread as to appear really threatening.

The New Deal set up a large number of public works and laid

(Continued on Page 2)

# Workers Age

A PAPER DEFENDING THE INTERESTS OF WORKERS AND FARMERS

Vol. 7, No. 13.

NEW YORK, N. Y., SATURDAY, MARCH 26, 1938

5c a Copy

N. I. BUKHARIN  
(1888-1938)



"... the most valuable and best theoretician of the party and legitimately considered the favorite of the party. . . ."—Lenin's Last Testament.

## Stalin Kills 18 in Purge

Eighteen of the 21 "defendants" at the fourth Moscow "trial" were condemned to death and promptly executed towards the end of last week, while three others were sentenced to long terms of imprisonment. The three are C. K. Rakovsky, Dr. D. H. Pletnev, one of the physicians accused of murder, and S. A. Bessonov, formerly in the diplomatic service. Those executed by Stalin include Nikolai Bukharin, great Marxist thinker, old Bolshevik leader and former editor of Pravda and Ivestia; Alexi Rykov, Lenin's successor as head of the Soviet state; N. N. Krestinsky, formerly Litvinov's first assistant at the Soviet Foreign Office; and other soviet leaders.

Even more than its predecessors this fourth Moscow "trial" was

## Lovestone Back From Europe

Jay Lovestone, secretary of the I.C.L.L., returned to the United States last Monday, March 21, after a trip to Europe which took him to Austria at the very time that the German Nazi hordes were invading that country. At a big meeting on April 7, at Hotel Center in New York, Lovestone will recount his experiences in Austria as well as report on other aspects of the European situation which he had occasion to examine at first hand during his visit.

Lovestone left for France some weeks ago in order to attend the international conference called by the London Bureau of Revolutionary Socialist Unity. At this conference, revolutionary-socialist groups from nineteen countries, including the British I.L.P., the Spanish P.O.U.M., the German C.P.O. and the American I.C.L.L., were represented and a program for the cooperation of these forces on a world scale worked out. The main results of the Paris conference will be discussed at the April 7 meeting.

After the conference, Lovestone left for Austria in order to take up a number of important matters with the left-wing socialist movement there. He arrived just before the German invasion and remained in Vienna during the hectic days that followed. His mission accomplished, he left for Paris after the Nazi campaign of terror had already begun.

obviously the crudest sort of frame-up, marked by fantastically impossible charges, obviously false and self-contradictory "evidence" and "confessions" that were grotesque nightmares.

Word has already gone forth from Moscow that another mass "trial" is being prepared for the near future, with Rudzutak, a member of the political bureau of the C.P.S.U., the Mezhlauk brothers, a number of high army officials and some former Mensheviks and Left S.R.s among the victims.

## Europe Tense As Nazis Drive On

Austria In German Grip, Hitler Looks Towards Prague; Lithuania Yields To Poland; "Great Democracies" Negotiate With Franco

European events last week continued to develop ominously under the shadow of Hitler's invasion and annexation of Austria. From Vienna, the German Nazis worked feverishly to tighten their grip on the new "province" and to complete the "coordination" of all Austrian life. Sweeping arrests and repressions were followed by a wave of suicides among Jews and prominent men of the old regime. A reign of terror, along German lines, was unleashed against the strong Austrian labor movement. Meanwhile, the Austrian conquest has been recognized by the United States and other big powers.

The greatest tension last week, for a time actually threatening

war, developed between Poland and Lithuania. Egged on by Nazi Germany, the former suddenly confronted the small Baltic republic with a number of demands in the form of an ultimatum, among them being the resumption of diplomatic and commercial relations and the formal surrender of Vilna, the Lithuanian capital in Polish hands since 1920. Mobilization orders were issued at Warsaw and the whole country filled with an officially inspired war fever. Driven into a corner, Lithuania had no recourse but to capitulate and accept the Polish terms, somewhat modified. The Polish government is now trying to rig up a "Baltic union" including Lithuania and the other Baltic states under the hegemony of Warsaw, which will maneuver for the best position among the European alignments but will probably lean towards Germany.

Hitler's attentions were increasingly turned towards Czechoslovakia last week. His henchmen of the Sudeten-German party made open threats in the Czech parliament. The Nazi aims, for the moment, seem to be: rupture of the Czech-Soviet alliance; autonomy, that is, German rule, of the Sudeten regions; and "economic unity" between Prague and Berlin. Leading Nazis are already speaking, however, of ultimately absorbing Czechoslovakia into the German Reich. In Prague, the government, under British and French pressure, is "in the mood for compromise," according to all observers. Administrative concessions have already been made to the Henlein party and there is growing talk of renouncing the Soviet treaty.

In Spain, the situation grew markedly worse last week. Weak-

(Continued on Page 3)

(Continued on Page 6)

## Form Anti-War Group

Los Angeles, Cal.

Anti-war forces of this city last week swung into action by forming the Los Angeles "Keep America Out of War" committee. At a well-attended meeting of leading members of peace organizations, trade unions, church groups, youth groups and working-class political organizations, an executive committee of eight was elected and preliminary plans were laid for a mass meeting on or about April 6. It is planned to induce as many organizations as possible to affiliate to this committee and to make it a permanent body to fight the ever increasing war danger. The Los Angeles committee will work closely with the New York and other

# Stalinism Menaces the World Labor Movement!

(We publish below the address of Bertram D. Wolfe, on behalf of the Independent Communist Labor League, at the meeting to protest against the recent Moscow "trials," held in New York City under the auspices of the Trotsky Defense Committee on March 9.—THE EDITOR.)

By BERTRAM D. WOLFE

I WANT to begin by thanking the Trotsky Defense Committee for inviting me to participate in this meeting. I regret that it is not being held under much broader auspices. I believe that all labor organizations have been derelict in their duty in not arranging the broadest mass protest meeting under the broadest possible auspices, to show that the entire labor movement protests against this infamous and murderous farce. So far, we have had only a meeting under the auspices of the Trotskyists and this one, with invitation to spokesmen of other organizations, but under the Trotsky Defense Committee. This is unfortunate, in my

opinion, because it gives the impression that the issue is Trotsky versus Stalin, or that our protest is primarily for the defense of Leon Trotsky. Nor is that sufficiently offset by the fact that my own organization is holding a meeting of its own on the issues involved in this same hall next Wednesday night. I want to pledge my organization to work for the calling of a meeting adequate to the issues involved, under the joint auspices of every organization that is interested in the question. The Socialist Party has pledged itself to the same end and leading figures in the Social-Democratic Federation and the Socialist Workers Party and Anarchists have given similar assurances. To my mind, the issues are broader than the con-

troversy between Trotsky and Stalin, or Bukharin and Stalin, broader than the defense of Leon Trotsky, or of all the defendants now on trial, or the thousands and hundreds of thousands crowding the jails of the Soviet Union, broader than the redemption of the good name of those who have already met death without trial at Stalin's hands or at the hands of his henchmen such as Yezhov.

The Best Blood Of Our Generation

The Russian purge and the methods it employs, concern the very life of the labor movement, in the Soviet Union, and by extension, in all the lands of the earth. Any one who fails to raise his voice unequivocally on this question, makes himself a guilty accomplice by his

silence. He who is indifferent we must brand for his indifference; he who excuses this accuses himself of being willing to introduce the same methods into our own labor movement; he who justifies it has bathed his hands, as did the conspirators in Shakespeare's play, in the blood of the innocent victims. And that blood is the best blood of our generation, the blood of the men who led in opposing the world war, of the men who led in the making of the Russian Revolution, of the men who led in the building of the Communist International, of the men who risked their lives in the Czarist underground, who exhausted themselves in the civil war and the famine, who performed miracles of socialist reconstruction, who led the Soviet Union in all of its achievements.

If one word of these charges is credited as true, then the Russian Revolution must have been made by traitors, bandits, imperialist spies, provocators, murderers and counter-revolutionaries. If Trotsky

(Continued on Page 4)

Bertram D.  
WOLFE  
Friday, March 25

"War and Labor"  
NEW WORKERS SCHOOL  
131 W. 33rd St.



# Viewed from the Left

By Politicus  
**White Elephants**

**P**ITY the poor Republicans! They recently gathered in conclave under the tutelage of Dr. Glenn Frank, formerly of Wisconsin, to find some reason for existence. Sharp differentiation was made between this Chicago conference of "laymen" and a regular confab of politicians discussing the jobs of the future and their job-dispensing powers of the past. This, Dr. Frank told a world, which, save for a few political columnists, was largely uninterested, was a meeting of minds to do some real research and invent a platform for the Republican party.

Along what general lines is the research to take place? Well, Dr. Frank pointed out ten "drifts" of national policy which, he implied, were machinations of the New Deal: centralization of power in the hands of the Executive; an expanding bureaucracy; increasing federal expenditure; governmental domination of business; an "economy of scarcity" thru legislation; limitation of industrial expansion; increase of federal powers at the expense of the states; growing political activity of the labor movement; government control of agriculture; class policies and legislation.

All these, we are assured, are tendencies making for the "revolutionization" of the American way of life—and all of them stem from the New Deal. Within these ten points are two oppositional trends; first, hostility to the increasing importance and class-political independence of labor and to the social legislation and unemployment relief which the New Deal found necessary in order to stabilize capitalism in its days of extreme crisis; and second, demagogic objection to the great impetus given to state-capitalism by the New Deal.

The purposes of this column will be just as well served if we do not enter into theoretical controversies with Dr. Frank over the right of the labor movement to political articulateness or over the relief needs of the disemployed workers and the expropriated farmers, tenants and croppers. That right and those needs find their best arguments, not in dissertations with Republicans. Those features of the veterinary's program which we do want to discuss are its attack on those very features of American capitalism and American government which are either the result of the economic development of the profit system or are traditionally associated with the twelve long years of Republican rule.

Who set up the Reconstruction Finance Corporation—the point of departure of government intervention in industry, since it controls the purse strings? None other than the Great Engineer himself! What is the history of post-war government under Republican rule? The gradual extension of Executive power! What party ruled during the post-war agricultural crisis, tinkering to no avail with all sorts of tariff panaceas and topping off their blunders by burning fields of wheat? The Grand Old Party! Differences there are between the New Deal and "traditional" American government but the government still seeks the solution of problems thru the maintenance of the profit system—only the camouflage is different.

The Republican party's frantic efforts, in view of its traditional support of bureaucracy and centralization and large-scale pump-priming for big business, to wage a successful campaign against the New Deal becomes even more pitiable when we take even a quick glance at the political realities of today. Everybody is, of course, against a vast bureaucracy in the abstract—but the capitalist system functioning under the name of "democracy" needs a bureaucracy to carry on the functions of government behind the back of the masses. It rules from the top against the masses, not

# Folly of "Isolationism"

(In our last issue, we published Dr. Charles A. Beard's brilliant statement on the Administration's rearmament program recently presented to the House Naval Committee. Below we publish some critical comments on Dr. Beard's own "isolationist" attitude.—THE EDITOR.)

**T**HERE can be no doubt that Dr. Beard is thoroly correct in his basic point that an armaments program is in itself a foreign policy, and that the Administration naval-construction measure distinctly implies a war in the Far Pacific or the Far Atlantic. Nor could anything be more cogent than Dr. Beard's line of argument proving war to be the logical consequence of the President's "collective-security" ("quarantine") policy. But when he proceeds to state his own alternative program the weaknesses and inconsistencies of his position become clear. Let us quote from Dr. Beard:

"The other foreign policy for the United States is that of abstaining from the quarrels of Europe and Asia, avoiding all gratuitous advice and insults to foreign governments, and defending the continental home of the United States and adjacent waters. All good and well! But what are the forces operating to drag us into the "quarrels of Europe and Asia," thus endangering the peace of the country?"

Does Dr. Beard really mean to tell us that the United States is in

danger of being engulfed in war because we give "gratuitous advice" to Hitler or fling "insults" at Japan? Of course not! Dr. Beard has said and written plenty in his day that may be interpreted as "advice" or "insults" to the fascist powers and we would hardly call him a war-monger. The obvious fact is that the real ties binding this country to the "war spots" of the world are economic and financial, not ideological or sentimental. Why is American peace imperilled by what goes on in China? Because of the American "stake" in the Far East, because of the capital investments, commercial privileges and opportunities, in a word, the profit-making interests of American big-business groups in that quarter of the globe. It is these big-business interests that make for imperialism and it is imperialism that drives the big powers to war today. Because the Chinese masses object to being exploited for the benefit of American capitalists, as happened a dozen years ago, or because the Japanese capitalists try to cut in on the profits or prospects of their American competitors, as is happening today, the people of this country are brought face to face with another world slaughter. Under modern conditions, war results when the efforts of governments to defend and extend the imperialistic interests of the dominant business groups of their respective countries produce a clash either with the masses out of whom the foreign profits are being squeezed or with some rival group of imperialistic exploiters. The tentacles of Wall Street reach into every corner of the globe and that is why American peace is endangered by whatever happens anywhere.

## 5 YEARS OF NEW DEAL

(Continued from Page 1)

out plans for even more extensive projects; but soon it began to suppress the reports and to curtail existing activities. It spoke of a nation "one-third ill-fed, ill-housed, ill-clothed" and hinted vaguely at the vast housing program it was always about to undertake; but it all turned out to mean subsidies to private construction and abandonment of slum-clearance and public housing. Dressed in the mailed armor of the Champion of the People, it prepared to break lance with the private utilities, whose fleeing of the consumers had become so notorious; but the fight for cheap power has already been virtually shelved. Looking at the vast fields of unsealable wheat, it found the "solution" for the agricultural crisis, America's heritage from the last war, in paying farmers not to grow grain and to burn a part of what was about to be harvested; but tenancy has increased and the big farmers have grabbed up everything. It made a grand gesture of abandoning Dollar Diplomacy and inaugurating the New Deal of Good Neighborliness towards Latin America, held in the grip of American economic imperialism; but bloody tyrants, such as Batista in Cuba, Vargas in Brazil and Trujillo in Santo Domingo, continue to hold sway only by the grace of the State Department at Washington.

After five years, it is clear that many millions of the unemployed are no temporary manifestation but the permanently disemployed victims of a declining capitalism. To these millions have now been added three or four millions more, thrown out of jobs by a cyclical downturn. And, once again, we behold an Administration in Washington doing nothing. Organized labor calls for three billions for relief and the President answers with a quarter of a billion, wrung from him only as a result of the very greatest pressure. Beginning as a "friend" of labor, with attempts to cajole it into giving up its independence, the Administration, now that there exists a strong and effective labor movement rooted in the basic industries, flouts its needs. Always, when it

comes to a showdown, the New Deal is sure to leave labor in the lurch and line up with the employers—witness, for example, the infamous auto code of 1934, the breaking of the general textile strike the same year, the hostile attitude of New Deal Governor Davey and some federal government agencies in the "little-steel" strike of 1937.

And now the Administration is driving for war and planning the enslavement of labor and the curtailment of all democratic rights as part of its war preparations. It is sponsoring the infamous "industrial-mobilization" and so-called "war-profits" bills, all seeking to establish an outright military dictatorship in war time. Roosevelt himself felt bound to intervene against this effort to achieve a slim measure of democracy on an issue so close to the lives of the entire people. The Administration is already diverting funds from essential public works to the building of battleships in order to be in a better position to wage a reactionary war to defend the vested interests of the American bankers and industrialists in the Far East. Everything the least bit liberal in its program is being sacrificed on the altar of war and war preparations.

Five years ago, we pointed out the dual character of the New Deal—how, on the one hand, it bore within itself the germs of reactionary state-capitalism and "quasi-public unionism," while, on the other, it was compelled thru its very nature to inaugurate certain liberal reforms and make certain concessions to the masses. True, these reforms and concessions were such as European liberalism had sponsored a generation or so before but, for this country, they were new and important. We urged the labor movement to take advantage of the unusually favorable combination of circumstances and to strike out militantly and boldly while the chance was there. The phenomenal revival of the trade-union movement and the emergence of the C.I.O. are evidence

enough of the fact that labor has, to some degree, at least, managed to rise to the height of its historic opportunity. The achievements of the last few years have opened a new chapter in the history of the American people.

Today, the New Deal is definitely on the conservative road to reaction, dropping as rapidly as possible its original liberalism as so much excess baggage in its mad race towards rearmament and war.

On every important issue, the needs of the people, especially of labor, come into conflict with the New Deal at its present stage of development. Against this newest development, the New Deal of war-mongering abroad and increasing reaction at home, the masses of the people, led by the labor movement, must organize their opposition!

# A Lesson From Days of 1917

**T**HUS the War Industries Board, already supreme in materials, facilities, finance and transportation, wheresoever involved in the industrial prosecution of the war, now became the allocator of men, not only between industries but between civil and military life. It was become the virtual general staff of the civil life of the country as applied to war ends. All America in all its material and human resources was subject to its command. It was an industrial dictatorship without parallel. —T. B. Clarkson: Industrial America in the World War.

war, then the government may be forced to hesitate, to think twice and, perhaps, even to turn aside. There is every reason to believe that the nation-wide hostility to the Administration's foreign policy, expressed in the cold reception given to the President's Chicago address, in the widespread support of the war-referendum idea and in the failure of all attempts to arouse a war fever over the Panay incident, has already forced a definite slowing down in its war plans. And, if we fight hard enough, and do not lose a moment's time, we may yet escape the disaster that stares us in the face today.

But, even if we escape it today, it will arise again tomorrow; perhaps in an even more aggravated form. In the long run, there is no escape short of socialism!

## "Continental Defense"

As for Dr. Beard's reservation on the "defense" of the "continental home of the United States," it will hardly hold water. Is it not clear that today such "defense" can arise only as part and parcel of an imperialistic war? Under present conditions, a foreign invasion of this country is hardly conceivable politically, or possible from a military standpoint. Dr. Beard himself ridicules the super-jingoistic nightmare of "Germany, Italy or Japan sending a fleet of battleships conveying 500,000 soldiers in majestic array." What meaning, then, can "continental defense" as distinct from imperialistic war, have in realistic political terms? Were it merely a question of ambiguity and vagueness of reference, it would be bad enough. But what is far worse is that the war-mongers are apparently beginning to resort to the cry of "continental defense" as a camouflage for their efforts to work up a war spirit, now that the "quarantine" ("collective-security") appeal seems to have fallen flat. Confusion on this question is only too likely to provide the jingoes with the entering wedge they need in order to break down the widespread popular resistance to the war-making policies of the Administration.

The whole trouble with Dr. Beard's position is its failure to recognize that, no matter how fortunate our geographical position may be, there can be no security against war as long as capitalism prevails, as long as the interests of big business continue to determine national policy, as they do, of course, in a fundamental sense, even under the most liberal of bourgeois regimes, the New Deal not excluded. "Minding our own business" is all very well but, under the present economic and political setup, it is precisely minding "our own" (that is, American capitalism's) "business" (in the Far East) that is most likely to lead to war. Until the working class, which can have no imperialistic interests or strivings, takes the

(Continued on Page 5)

# Some More Initiative

(We present below a discussion article by James Thorpe, a member of the Philadelphia Youth Group of the I.C.L.L.—THE EDITOR.)

By JAMES THORPE

**M**Y argument herein is not the new orientation but the how and why of it. We turned our faces from Stalin and his Third International primarily because of the Soviet purges and this turn was solidified by the continued counter-revolutionary role of the Stalinists in Spain, which reached its nadir in the assassination of Nin. But, despite the fact that our new attitude was based on what was happening in the Soviet Union, we didn't realize it until after a year of bloody murder. Our reactions to the Kirov, Zinoviev and Radek trials are now history—a history not to be proud of.

For years, we blinded ourselves with the shibboleth "Trotsky versus Stalin" and "we stand with Stalin" (in reality one evil against another, and we, curiously, chose the greater). Any other way out was centrist and thus objectively counter-revolutionary (our former reaction to the I.L.P. and London Bureau). With blind faith (as blind as the dolls of the C.I.) we continued for so long to cling to the hope that the C.I. could be reformed. But, even with that, I have not a too serious quarrel—every organization makes mistakes, even herein I place my emphasis—any ideas that were contrary to the existing line of the group were treated with closed mind and almost contemptuously dismissed, not only by the leadership but by the entire group. Let me give two examples.

At the Labor Day Conference, 1936, a resolution on the national elections was proposed by the Bureau—Vote for Browder—on the basis that the C.P. implied communism to the electorate (tho today we propose dropping the very name "communist" for our own group name). A counter-proposal—Vote for Thomas—was brought up from the floor. Altho the "Vote for Thomas" resolution was not too clearly presented, I think it was essentially correct, certainly more correct than the other resolution. And yet it was not given serious consideration (an attack by Herberg) and defeated unanimously by the conference. I am sure that, if these two proposals were brought up today, they would receive different treatment (not that the Browderites have changed their spots nor have the Stalinists).

Second example: At the May 30 Convention, 1937, little consideration was given the Moscow trials for they were already considered a dead issue and purely a Stalin-Trotsky fight. A single comrade from Philadelphia, who spoke on the trials, was ignored. (I speak here especially of the membership). And yet, hardly a month went by when our entire perspective was overturned. We claimed "Stalin must go" and a little later we saw the Third International dead. But this didn't affect our membership—we changed our minds and went along.

My point, then, is this—and I hope it's clear enough by now—our comrades are not politically alert. We depend too much on the National Bureau for ideas, for our line. Our most serious turn in revolutionary orientation—our turn away from Stalinism (Stalinism was Stalinism even before we deemed it that)—was taken with very little rank-and-file discussion. In this respect, the Bureau is also guilty certainly the Bureau should have taken the lead in arranging such discussions.

Let me repeat—I have no quarrel with our new orientation. I do, with the way, or lack of way, that comrades responded. If we expect to take the lead in the revolutionary movement, we must be able to make our own responses and we must have discussions and discussions and more discussions.

# Marxists and the Unions

by Jay Lovestone

(We present below, as discussion material, additional sections of Jay Lovestone's political report to the recent session of the National Council of the I.C.L.L. Other sections appeared in an article last week.—THE EDITOR.)

**I** CANNOT emphasize too much in an examination of our political approach or in a reevaluation of our political approach, the need for us to reverse the current and to change the direction of relationship between radicals and the labor movement as a whole. This involves a complete break with the "commissarship" psychology inherited from the Comintern, a complete break with the notion that the labor movement needs to be a "real" labor movement. We do not create the labor movement; the labor movement provides the soil and supplies the life for the roots of our movement as a radical movement within it.

I might remind you of the advice given by Marx and Engels to the old German socialists in this country, warning them against trying to create the labor movement in their own image and against imposing on the developing labor movement their own ideas, urging them not to judge the labor movement by any of their own preconceived ideas. This advice is still thoroughly sound.

I believe all of us have suffered from this "commissarship" psychology but we, in recent years, have begun to break with this approach. I propose that we should consider the relationship between us and the developing labor movement from such an angle rather than from the one of looking down, superimposing, offering ourselves as the leaders instead of seeking to grow up with it and, being equipped with a certain type of understanding, therefore being able more easily to bring clarity and supply leadership to it, to win leadership in it.

## The "Periphery" System

I think we should consider throwing completely overboard another organizational notion that we inherited in a sense from the Russian experience, and that is the practise of creating special organizations the moment some issue arises in the class struggle, instead of working with and thru existing labor organizations. I now speak of the so-called "periphery" organizations.

Or take the curse of "conferencitis." Whatever happens or doesn't happen—call a conference. And, if you can't have an organization that will send delegates, you have delegates who will call themselves organizations. And usually it means that you simply give instructions to party-controlled organizations to send a delegate, regardless of the needs of that organization.

Now I can very readily understand why it was a sound practise for the Russians, especially immediately after the overthrow of Czarism, to call conferences and, in Russia, prior to the revolution, the extent of organization among the workers was very small, the proportion of the working class of Russia, even for its size, which had experience in self-rule, in workers democracy in its most limited form, in actual organization of class institutions, was very small in com-

parison with what we have in this country or Germany had at one time or England or France. I think, given the revolution, with the Bolshevik party at the helm, it was one means of educational experience for the workers in labor organization. But I think those reasons do not hold sufficient here for us mechanically to copy and carry over those methods of organization.

Let The Trade Unions Act As a matter of fact, they hurt the movement and waste its energies. Take the trade-union movement today. Why should we not fight for workers rights, the right to organize, unemployment relief and the like thru the existing trade unions? There are about seven million workers organized, primarily for economic purposes, but laying the basis for a real movement on these issues as well. Why not try to add vitality to this movement by getting it into the actual political struggles of today?

But what happens with most "conferences" and "periphery" organizations is that they do not stimulate the activity of the unions but devitalize and replace them, making them into no more than blotters and auxiliaries. Suppose we are automobile workers who have a year or two of experience in trade unionism. We find ourselves now in a situation where we have lost our jobs. We begin to say that the union used to be all right when we were working; it helped us then but apparently it can't even help us hold our jobs today, let alone get wage increases. Why should I pay dues to the union? Now these fellows I met yesterday from the Workers Alliance, they're different. They're just for us without jobs. They invited me to the hall; they charge me practically nothing for dues and they're going to do the thing for me instead of the union.

You know the rest of the story.

Anti-War Group Is Set Up In L.A. (Continued from Page 1)

committees in order to build up a national anti-war movement. The Socialist Party and the Los Angeles branch of the Independent Communist Labor League have affiliated with this committee and both organizations are participating actively in its work. The names and affiliations of the members of the executive committee and the Labor Committee indicate the scope of the movement—Executive Committee: John Thurber, Socialist Party, chairman; Fay Bennett, district organizer, American Students Union; Paul Berg, I.L.G.W.U.; Henry Donath, church groups; Harold Hull, Los Angeles Peace Council; Earl Lane, I.C.L.L.; Ethelwyn Mills, Women's International League for Peace and Freedom; David Price, American Newspaper Guild.

Labor Committee: Earl Lane, I.C.L.L., chairman; W. Barash, Furriers Union; Paul Berg, I.L.G.W.U.; David Price, American Newspaper Guild; Emma Lane, U.O.P.W.A.; Wm. Seligman, United Shoe Workers of America; Rose Seligman, I.L.G.W.U.; John Thurber, S.P. Headquarters of the committee are at 553 South Western Avenue, Room 227. All those who wish to participate in the anti-war struggle should communicate with this office.

comrades responded. If we expect to take the lead in the revolutionary movement, we must be able to make our own responses and we must have discussions and discussions and more discussions.

**SUBSCRIBE NOW TO WORKERS AGE**

# How Strikes Become Hits

By ALBERT EDMUND

**S**TRIKES are hits when the workers stop watching and begin playing ball. In 1937, the workers piled up a good many new records. According to preliminary figures contained in the Annalist of March 4, there were more strikes in 1937 than in any other year on record. Close to two million (1,858,407) workers were involved in 4,614 strikes. But 1919 still leads in the number of strikers, with over four million. Judged by the best strike index, the year 1937, with more than 28 million man-days lost, surpassed every year since 1927 when such information was first collected. Ten times as many workers were on strike in 1937 as in 1930, when the labor movement seemed to have lost its wind. By 1937, it was back to its old form, so that, in the five years from 1933 thru 1937, more than one-and-a-half times as many workers (6,400,000) were involved in strikes as in the ten year period from 1923 thru 1932 (4,000,000)! Of these ten lean strike years, seven were fat, so-called "prosperous" years and only three were depression years. We shall discuss the relation of strikes to the business cycle at some future date.

With the 1937 figures, the strike goes West. It must have been "The Ghost Goes West" to General Motors. Before 1937, New York and (Continued on Page 6)

it will be the labor movement that will accomplish it and not we or anybody else behind the back of the labor movement, so to speak. And as an integral part of it, we have to help the labor movement recognize and measure up to its tasks. That is our outlook; that is our perspective. We have examples of such work. The Fabians were reformists but they did considerable educational work towards the formation of a socialist labor party in England. I take the next step. For years, the Independent Labor Party of Great Britain was a source of class consciousness, militancy and leadership in the British Labor Party. It is along such lines that we want to work in this country.

## Question Of Independence

The question of "independence"—I use "independence" in the political sense primarily. Many of you have not the slightest idea how really dependent we once were in the Communist Party—and of course, the situation is far worse there today—in trying to deal with the most simple problems in this country. I will never forget that, at one time, even the location of the American party headquarters had to be settled in Moscow. The type of contract to be signed in this union or that would become a subject not only for us but for intrigues in Moscow and party manipulations in China. Now, in such a situation, what sort of self-reliance and leadership can you develop in dealing with the problems of the class struggle? Political independence means the ability to work out policies on your own responsibility, in the light of your own experience, based on the conditions and needs of the class struggle at home. Only on such a foundation can a sound internationalism be built up, not the fraudulent "internationalism" of Stalinism or Trotskyism. Of course, we do not discard the experiences of the revolutionary struggles in Russia or Germany or elsewhere but we want to extract from them what is applicable and useful for our own problems and not to copy everything mechanically. And no labor movement, bringing to it socialist clarity and understanding. Whatever tasks the working class has to accomplish in this country,

Our Aim And Perspective What is our perspective and aim? What kind of movement do we want to develop with our group? We strive today to be a kernel for the crystallization and emergence of a new phase of revolutionary socialism, of a new radicalism, if I may use that term. Who else can it be in this country today?

Politically, who else can it be? Can it be the Communist Party? Why, it is part of the government machinery. It is a direct menace to this country. The Trotskyites? They suffer as much from the "Russian orientation," they are as little genuinely a part of the American labor movement, as the Stalinists. Like the Stalinists, they are an offshoot or appendage to a Russian political faction, not a part of the American labor movement. The Socialist Party? Some sound elements there are but the party as a whole, it seems to me, cannot fulfill that function.

What are we aiming at? We are not aiming at establishing a rival labor movement, either economic or political. We do not look at things from outside in. We are striving to become an energizing, leveling, guiding force within the labor movement, bringing to it socialist clarity and understanding. Whatever tasks the working class has to accomplish in this country, light of our present discussion.



WORKERS AGE

Organ of the National Council, Independent Communist Labor League. 131 West 33rd St., New York City. Published every Saturday by the Workers Age Publishers. Subscription Rates: \$1.00 per year; \$6.00 for six months; 5c a copy. Foreign Rates: \$2.00; Canada \$1.50 per year.

Entered as second class matter Nov. 5, 1934, at the Post Office New York, N. Y. under the act of March 3, 1879. Phone: BRyant 9-0127

Vol. 7. March 26, 1938 No. 13

MR. HULL'S ADDRESS

SECRETARY of State Hull's speech at the National Press Club was really a restatement, in a characteristically verbose and platitudinous manner, of the essential thesis of the President's Chicago address and naval-expansion message. Other Administration spokesmen may be tempted to try a little "isolationist" demagoguery in view of the present temper of public opinion, but not Secretary Hull. He remains faithful to the gospel of "quarantine" and "parallel action."

"We do not intend to abandon our nationals and our interests in China"—this may be taken as the keynote. And what are our "interests" there? Mr. Hull himself explains: "Our trade and investment relations, . . . the existence of extraterritoriality and the maintenance of some armed forces" in China—in a word, the business interests and prospects of American capitalist groups in the Far East. Of course, Mr. Hull swathes these sordid considerations in an endless confusion of threadbare platitudes but the ugly truth sticks out at all corners nevertheless.

Mr. Hull's basic principle is "joint" (or "parallel") action with "other peace-seeking nations." For what? For "international law and order" and the "scrupulous performance" of treaties, we are told. The United States, which violated its own long-standing treaty with Spain by clamping down an embargo on the recognized government of that country, is to join with Great Britain and France, which have committed the same crime and, in addition, the abandonment of Ethiopia in spite of their obligations under the League Covenant, to uphold the sanctity of treaties! We all know what Mr. Hull really means: an Anglo-American alliance, disguised as joint or parallel action, for the protection of the imperialistic interests of the two countries in the Far East against Japanese aggression. Even Mr. Hull cannot make that sound noble and unselfish!

Of course, Mr. Hull is against the war-referendum idea as a deviation in the direction of "pure democracy" which our Constitutional Fathers never intended and, what is more important, as an "embarrassment" to the Administration's foreign policy. For exactly these reasons, on the other hand, do we and the great masses of the American people support the LaFollette-Ludlow Amendment.

How quickly the "peace-seeking" Mr. Hull turns into a high-powered salesman of rearmament! He is not above adding his bit to the jingo campaign to stampede the American people into a state of unreasoning terror at the utterly fantastic prospect of an invasion of our shores. Naturally, he gives his blessing to the naval-construction and army-expansion programs, for what good is "joint action" if it is not backed with "adequate" military power?

Mr. Hull reaches the low point in demagoguery when he tries to make out that the only alternative to "collective security" is complete seclusion, autarchy and even the abandonment of all foreign trade! The horrendous picture he paints of our "self-contained existence" with its "lower living standards, regimentation and economic distress, should we turn our back upon his schemes of imperialistic "joint action," is so absurd as to deserve no comment. It is only another variant of the long-discredited favorite theme of the American war-mongers that "peace is too expensive for us to keep."

Secretary Hull's address has met with an enthusiastic reception in the pro-war press, notably in the Stalinist Daily Worker. And why not? It is a veritable call to arms in the Great Crusade for Democracy, in the Holy War of the "peace-loving democracies against the treaty-breaking fascist powers." But we know the grim and bloody reality behind these glib, fine-sounding phrases. For the anti-war movement that is rapidly gathering strength among the masses of the American people, Mr. Hull's speech will serve as a warning and as a spur to vigilance and action!

The Trotskyites and the Anti-War Movement

THE last few issues of the Socialist Appeal have been full of hectic denunciations of the anti-war movement in general and of the "Keep America Out Of War" Committee and its activities in particular. We have not replied to these attacks, in the first place, because they did not seem very important and, in the second, because they were so incoherent in their presumably revolutionary passion that we simply could not get what they were driving at. In the March issue of the Trotskyist paper, however, there is something that fairly cries out for comment.

In Minneapolis, it seems, the Third Congressional District of the Minnesota Farmer-Labor Party adopted, apparently under Trotskyist influence, a resolution against war which the Appeal features as a "militant anti-war stand." What does this revolutionary resolution, so satisfactory to the super-revolutionary Trotskyites, say? Believe it or not, these are its only points:

- 1. A "whereas" about the "growing danger of the outbreak of another world war . . . clearly revealed by the actions of the Administration in launching a gigantic program of naval and military expansion. . . ."
2. Another "whereas" on the Sheppard-May bill and other Administration plans for a war-time dictatorship.
3. A third "whereas" warning that "what is in store for opponents of war was even more clearly revealed by the boldness with which the Administration organized a lynch spirit against the Farmer-Labor congressmen and others who supported the Ludlow Amendment. . . ."
4. A "resolve" against "the war

preparations and the specific bills in which these bills are embodied. Can you beat it! This mild, milk-and-water resolution is a "militant anti-war stand" but the six-point program of the "Keep America Out Of War" movement is "confused," "pacifistic," even an "obstacle" to a real anti-war struggle! Wherein lies the superiority of the former over the latter? And where in the Minneapolis resolution are to be found the following important points, all contained in the "Keep America Out Of War" program: for the withdrawal of ships of war and Marines from the Far East; against the "collective-security" swindle and other such diplomatic preparations for war; for a large-scale public-housing program as against rearmament? Aren't these things necessary for a "militant anti-war stand"?

Or take the war-referendum amendment. In the columns of the Trotskyist press, the idea is regularly denounced as "breeding illusions" and its supporters as "pacifists" and what-not. But, in the resolution, the Ludlow Amendment is given back-handed support by acknowledging it to be the particular object of attack of the Administration and all pro-war forces rallying behind it. And, in the accompanying news story, the fact that the "Farmer-Labor delegation voted in Congress for the Ludlow Amendment" is offered as an achievement wrought by "pressure from the left." Figure it out for yourself!

Apparently, the "revolutionary intransigence" of the Trotskyites is but little more than an ingrained factional bias which justifies and validates everything they themselves do while roundly denouncing everything done by anybody else!

Stalinism Menaces Labor

(Continued from Page 1) was a spy since 1921, then he was conspiring to overthrow himself while he was the leader of the Red Army. If Bukharin was guilty of conspiring to kill Lenin in 1918, then Lenin was a dupe and a moron to have praised him before his death as the "favorite of the party," and the program of the Communist International is the program of a traitor. The rewriting of history has gone so far that Trotsky's heroic efforts to build up a Red Army, drive out foreign intervention and crush counter-revolution, were all expended, and successfully mind you, at the orders of a Germany that was not yet fascist, a Japan that was not yet thru with its twenty-one points, an England that bribed these men to build up a mighty Soviet power so that they might later have more work and more fun trying to crush it. These mad charges have at last gone so far that Lenin himself is on trial in Moscow. How else shall we interpret the charge that his closest associates were the agents of foreign governments? It not the charge of German spy leviathan against the then Commissar of War but a revival of a charge levied in those days against all the Bolsheviks, and first of all against Lenin? Was it not Lenin who passed thru Germany in a sealed train? Lenin who was most insistent of all on a separate peace with Germany? Lenin who insisted on the signing of the Brest-Litovsk peace while the accused Bukharin and the accused in absentia, Trotsky, were still hesitant?

Broader Issues

This trial and this purge involve issues, it seems to me, that are even broader than the labor movement and the issue of honesty

By Lambda

WORLD TODAY

Special Correspondent Describes Situation in Australian L.P.

(We publish below an article on the Australian Labor Party by Jack Ryan, our special Australian correspondent.—THE EDITOR.)

Sydney, Australia, January 27, 1938.

ON Saturday and Sunday, January 22 and 23, a conference of 400 delegates, claiming to represent 79 unions and 60 branches of the Australian Labor Party, adopted a series of resolutions directed against the ruling faction, headed by J. T. Lang, of the New South Wales branch of the Australian Labor Party.

This conference, following two similar conferences held some time previously, indicates that the rule of the Lang faction in A.L.P. politics is about to be overturned. Nineteen prominent trade-union leaders and five members of parliament were expelled from the party for participating in previous rebel conferences. They were reinstated under pressure from the federal executive of the A.L.P. The continued participation of all of them in the rebel movement shows clearly that they have mass support.

Ten or twelve years ago, J. T. Lang, despite a career as a moderate up to that time, blossomed forth as a labor leader who really endeavored to fulfill his election promises—a most unusual type. In the first few months of office, his government reduced hours of labor by proclamation from 48 to 44 per week, instituted widows pensions of £1 per week and 10/—for each dependent child, broadened the Workers Compensation Act to include the journey to and from the job and liberalized the benefits of the Act considerably. Among other things, his government promoted all railway workers who had been regressed as a result of the 1917 strike. This unique Labor government would have done even more than the foregoing if many of its measures had not been drastically amended by the Legislative Council, or "Upper House," the stronghold of wealth and privilege in New South Wales.

Naturally, Lang became the target of every capitalist paper and politician thruout Australia. Every sort of vile abuse was heaped upon him and every scheme known to capitalist wire-pullers was pressed into service to wreck his government. At length, enough of his supporters in Parliament were won or bought over to cause Lang's government to crash. At the subsequent election, the Labor Party was narrowly defeated.

After three years in opposition, Lang was returned to office with an unprecedented majority. Ostensibly to guard against possible treachery, Lang caused the party conference to grant him powers over the party and his Parliamentary colleagues that no other Labor leader ever possessed. The result was that no criticism could be levelled at the leader by anybody who desired to remain in the party.

Lang's second government had to deal, not with a prosperous period as previously, but with the very worst years of depression, when the basis of reformism was cut away. Whatever his intentions, Lang proceeded actively to attack working-class standards. He taxed all incomes above the rate of £2 per week one shilling in the pound, ostensibly to support the unemployed but the money was paid into general revenue and utilized in various ways. The dole (unemployment relief) was disgracefully low (5/10 per week for a single man) and the permissible-income regulations (means test) so ridiculous that nearly everybody receiving the dole was doing so illegally and felt obliged not to become prominent in agitation, etc. Police were provided in large numbers to evict unemployed workers from their homes.

Ordinarily, trade union leaders would have bitterly protested against these things but, as they are practically all members of the A.L.P. and Lang had been made dictator, most of them kept quiet.

In a demagogic effort to bulldoze the workers, Lang made a virtue of necessity and, besides not paying interest on money loaned by British concerns to previous governments, agitated for a moratorium until the depression had passed. For this mild attack on British interests he was violently assailed by all organs of publicity which regard the Empire as

(Continued on Page 5)

Labor Notes and Facts

THE United States Circuit Court of Appeals last week upheld an order of the National Labor Relations Board invalidating the agreement between the Consolidated Edison Company and its affiliates and the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, affiliated with the A. F. of L.

The court also ordered the enforcement of the board's recent decision requiring the company to reinstate six employees discharged for unionization activities as members of the United Electrical and Radio Workers of America, a C.I.O. affiliate, and to "cease and desist" from interfering with the organization activities of its 40,000 employees.

At the same time the court, in ruling that the labor relations board had jurisdiction over the case, contrary to the contention of the companies, widened the concept of interstate commerce in such a way as to extend the authority of the board and the application of the Wagner Act under which it functions. The Consolidated Edison, the ruling stated, must be regarded as in interstate commerce because some of its customers, notably the railroads, engage in business that crosses state lines. The court made it clear, however, that its decision in this respect did not apply to all utility companies.

In invalidating the existing agreement between the brotherhood and Consolidated Edison, the court declared that these parties were free, however, to proceed with a new agreement based upon the provisions of the existing contract, provided such agreement was concluded in the manner prescribed by the National Labor Relations Act and for the members of the brotherhood only.

It was the court's finding that the brotherhood had no majority of the employees when the existing agreement was concluded and was not entitled to speak for the employees. The court also upheld the findings of the Labor Board that Consolidated Edison had illegally backed the A. F. of L. union against the C.I.O.'s United Electrical and Radio Workers. It was on complaint of the latter organization, and following hearings in the case, that the board had issued the order. William Ransom, attorney for the company and its affiliates in the proceedings, announced that the case would be carried to the United States Supreme Court.

THE "OVER 45" PROBLEM The average maximum age at which new workers are hired by employers in New York is 35, according to results of a survey announced here recently by the State League of Economics. In only three branches out of twenty-five listed in the survey was the maximum age as high as 45, the League stated. All the rest were lower, with two listed as low as 20. Helen Smith, secretary of the League, said that the figures were based on interviews with 403 employers in New York City, Yonkers, Albany, Schenectady, Troy, Utica, Syracuse, Rochester, Buffalo, Jamestown, Elmira and Binghamton.

The highest maximum age for New Yorkers, 45 years, was found in industry for skilled organized workers, in building trades and in road construction, Miss Smith said. The lowest, 20 years, was found by "some large New York City banks" and for department store waitresses.

The survey revealed that 35 years was the maximum age for new employees in the "white-collar" division, under the subdivision of experienced male office and field workers.

Consideration of some of the employment problems of self-supporting men and women over 45 was undertaken recently by a committee representative of the public, of possible; but thru parallel machinery of their own making, using the Trades and Labor Council as a rallying center. It seems that nothing can prevent a split in the near future and perhaps two sets of Labor candidates will contest the polls in the coming elections. This is regrettable but not without precedent. After a period of such disunity, a conference is usually convened and unity achieved once more on the basis of give-and-take.

As the years rolled by, the number of those falling foul of the Lang machine has steadily increased until the time arrived when they constituted a force large enough to challenge Lang's dictatorship. Not thru the party machinery—that has been rendered im-

Stalinism Must Go!

(Continued from Page 4)

the admiralty, the G.P.U.—all the apparatus of defense, internal and external; the premiers and presidents of every autonomous soviet republic and region, except only three; the party secretaries of every district but two, ninety three of the editors of party papers—all the apparatus of political leadership of the country; already more than a third of the central committee and two members of the Politburo have been included; two vice-commissioners of foreign affairs and all ambassadors but two—virtually the entire apparatus of diplomacy; the authors of the Five Year Plans, heads of ten planning departments and a score of state trusts—all the apparatus of leadership of industry and agriculture; even doctors, inventors, poets, dramatists, composers, sociologists—all the apparatus of cultural life—all is wrecked by Stalin, the arch-wrecker.

The Honor Of The Revolution

He has made infinitely harder the task of those of us who love the Soviet Union and would make the world understand its wonders of achievement, of those who would defend it against attack from the ruling class of all lands. He has murdered his comrades-in-arms, spewed such filth upon their names and on the fair name of the Russian Revolution that all of us feel unclean to think of this villainess and to have to discuss it. Today, we can only help the Soviet Union if we succeed in making clear that Stalinism is the very opposite of what we are aiming at and defending. Only by exposing Stalinism, only by wiping out its foul influences, can we redeem the honor of the Russian Revolution and of our class, whose greatest effort in history it so far represents.

Time will not permit me to attempt tonight to give a positive exposition of the causes of this frightful phenomenon or the perspectives of overcoming it. Our organization is more convinced than ever that we were right in making, as we did—in retrospect we can say we should have done it earlier

possible; but thru parallel machinery of their own making, using the Trades and Labor Council as a rallying center. It seems that nothing can prevent a split in the near future and perhaps two sets of Labor candidates will contest the polls in the coming elections. This is regrettable but not without precedent. After a period of such disunity, a conference is usually convened and unity achieved once more on the basis of give-and-take.

As the years rolled by, the number of those falling foul of the Lang machine has steadily increased until the time arrived when they constituted a force large enough to challenge Lang's dictatorship. Not thru the party machinery—that has been rendered im-

possible; but thru parallel machinery of their own making, using the Trades and Labor Council as a rallying center. It seems that nothing can prevent a split in the near future and perhaps two sets of Labor candidates will contest the polls in the coming elections. This is regrettable but not without precedent. After a period of such disunity, a conference is usually convened and unity achieved once more on the basis of give-and-take.

As the years rolled by, the number of those falling foul of the Lang machine has steadily increased until the time arrived when they constituted a force large enough to challenge Lang's dictatorship. Not thru the party machinery—that has been rendered im-

JACK RYAN

BOOKS

LEON BLUM: MAN AND STATESMAN. By Geoffrey Fraser and Thadde Natanson. J. B. Lippincott and Co., Philadelphia, 1938.

The subject of a biography is often a victim to the moral or artistic prejudices of strangers; but here the victim chose as executor his own friends to write the definitive, authorized story of Leon Blum. As to the qualities of his biographers, which won the eminent man's approval, eloquent testimony abounds in the book. This bit will do, as an introduction:

"There is a spiritual kinship between these Jewish traits and the qualities of character and mind of the French. Contact between them tends to fructify both. On the other hand, the essential qualities of the Jew and the German are so divergent that to blend them is almost impossible. The result is a conflict—often violent, sometimes offensive. Contact between the Jew and German provokes in both an inferiority complex. Contact between the Jew and Frenchman is a smoother process. (The "smooth process" of the Dreyfus case—M.C.S.) In some cases, it produces a very sympathy; of such is the case of Leon Blum."

—a clean break with the growing system of corruption in the Communist International. We are more convinced than ever that we were right in denouncing and breaking with the system that made a world party a tail to a faction in the Russian party. Even the best of the Russians after Lenin's death, men like Trotsky, Zinoviev and Bukharin, failed to understand that. Our organization is more convinced than ever that today the Soviet Union can go forward only if the Russian communists and the Russian working class throw off the nightmare, monster yoke of Stalinism, that the labor movement elsewhere can flourish only if it repudiates as vile and obscene the gangster methods and the traitorous policies of Stalinism.

If I am asked: Can Stalinism be overthrown?, I answer: How can Stalinism possibly continue in power? Has it not taken a path which leads from arrest to arrest, from forgery to forgery, from murder to murder? Is not the Soviet Union for the first time in a decade without a five-year plan? Is not Stalin forced by his policies to destroy his own tools? Has he not been obliged to purge a second layer which replaced the first, and a third replacing the second? Is he not destroying his very base for existence?

Our task is to make clear what is happening, to redeem the Russian Revolution from its destroyer, to defend and spread what was positive and heroic and progressive, and still is so, in the Russian Revolution, to clean out the overflow of filth that has seeped in and threatens to infect our own labor movement, and to deal with scrupulous cleanliness, clarity, decency and honesty, and maximum working-class democracy, with the problems of our own working class.

The Futility Of "Isolationism"

(Continued from Page 2)

destiny of the country into its own hands, the "isolationist" prescription of "minding our own business" as the road to peace is bound to turn out a forlorn hope, a dangerously deceptive utopia. And, when the working class does take power, "minding our own business" will necessarily assume an entirely new aspect, in line with the international hopes and aspirations of labor.

Blum's great contribution, as everyone knows is the People's Front in France. A little flowery, perhaps, is the way in which the authors estimate the People's Front while recalling the youth of Jaures, like Moses of old, died before entering the Promised Land and that it was not given to him to know that it would be the young man whom he had loved and trained, who was to have that honor."

May all such statesmen have such biographers! M.C.S.

SUBSCRIBE NOW TO WORKERS AGE



## Trade Union Notes

By Observer

THE March 15 issue of Justice, official paper of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union, carries a very interesting interchange of letters between the C.I.O. United Hotel and Restaurant Workers Union Local 243 of Los Angeles and the Los Angeles Joint Board of the I.L.G.W.U.

The Los Angeles Joint Board, it seems, had arranged some sort of social affair and had hired bartenders from the A. F. of L. culinary-workers union. Thereupon, the secretary of the C.I.O. restaurant-workers union sent it an extraordinary epistle, concluding as follows:

"We feel that, if this is true, you owe us an explanation for such activities."

The reply of the I.L.G.W.U. was sharp and unequivocal:

"It was, and still is, our understanding that the intent and purpose of the C.I.O. is to organize the unorganized workers and not to set up opposition unions to existing bona-fide A. F. of L. unions in the same craft. . . . We proclaim as emphatically as we can that we are not at war with the rank-and-file of the A. F. of L. . . ."

Comment is hardly necessary. To attempt to establish a boycott against members of A. F. of L. unions as workers on the job, to the point where they cannot even be hired in the way of business—and to try to make this boycott a point of C.I.O. discipline—is a piece of outrageous presumption that cannot but prove damaging to the C.I.O. itself in the long run. It indicates an attitude so thoroughly wrong-headed and perverse that it would be almost unbelievable did we not have the letter before us black on white. Do the arrogant petty officials of Local 243 know that John L. Lewis actually dared to hire A. F. of L. craftsmen to work on the new U.M.W. headquarters in Washington. Why don't they denounce him for this bit of "treason"?

The answer of the Los Angeles Joint Board, later endorsed by President Dubinsky, is quite in place. Mutual "raiding" and "grabbing" are bad enough but a boycott against workers on the job because of the affiliation of the union to which they belong, is an idea worthy of a Hutcheson, of bureaucrats without a glimmering of labor solidarity and decency!

Fortunately, Local 243 is not representative of the C.I.O. The responsible leadership of the C.I.O. and of its important affiliated unions would not, of course, tolerate any such procedure. But it does indicate that a rancorous dual unionism is beginning to raise its head in C.I.O. ranks which must be eliminated by prompt action in the interests of the movement as a whole.

\* \* \*

### THE BRIGHTON "TRIAL"

While we're at it, there's another interesting bit of correspondence to which we want to call the attention of our readers. It has its amusing as well as its serious side.

New York Cloak Operators Local 117 of the I.L.G.W.U. arranged, as part of its educational program, a number of lectures on current subjects to be delivered by competent people from all sections of the labor movement. One of the halls hired by the union for these lectures was the Brighton Community Center, under Stalinist control. Suddenly, one fine day, the educational department of Local 117 received a letter from the manager of this hall objecting to two of the speakers scheduled by the union and demanding—demanding, mind you!—that they be replaced by others "who will be more acceptable to the sponsors of the Center and their membership"! Who are the "undesirables" and what are the "objections" to them? Rudolph Rocker, the anarchist writer and lecturer, and Will Herberg, editor of the Workers Age. The reason: "These individuals . . . , it is felt,

will discredit the purpose for which this Center is maintained, namely, to forward the cause of the honest and progressive masses of the working class."

Indignation would be wasted on a matter such as this. The brazen gall of a hall manager trying to censor the educational program of a union that hires his rooms is, indeed, worthy of Stalinism. Even for Stalinism, it may be regarded as setting a new high in its own field of political shamelessness and factional arrogance.

We wish we had the space to reprint in full the stinging answer of Local 117 to the insulting communication from the Brighton Community Center. It is a masterpiece of dignity and self-possession but with no word left unsaid. A few extracts will show its character:

"Under no circumstances will we tolerate dictation from any outside organization as to our educational work. As a progressive union, we believe in the most complete freedom of expression for all political tendencies in the working-class movement. . . . When you demand of us . . . to substitute other lecturers for Rudolph Rocker and Will Herberg, merely because you do not agree with their viewpoints, we can but interpret your act as an assumption of the right to dictate to us and censor our educational activities. Against such an act, we emphatically protest. We wish to call your attention also to the fact that Rudolph Rocker and Will Herberg . . . have considerable following among our membership and represent tendencies friendly to our union. Your demand that we shall not send Rocker and Herberg to your Center would mean that we shall not permit the viewpoint of a section of our membership to be heard. This we cannot tolerate. . . . As to the individuals involved, the role they play and the prominent place they occupy in the labor movement—all this is known to everyone. . . . To say that he (Rudolph Rocker) will discredit a working class organization is simply irresponsible and criminal. . . . To state that he (Will Herberg) will discredit your organization is slander. . . ."

The letter concludes, of course, with a declaration on the part of the union of its intention to "trans-

## Auto Workers Back Union Leadership on G.M. Pact

By GEORGE F. MILES

Detroit, Mich.

Few if any developments in the life of the United Automobile Workers are exempt from factional exploitation. Currently it is the supplementary agreement with General Motors dealing with grievance machinery. The union had previously operated under a supplementary agreement signed on April 12, 1937 by Vice-Presidents Wyndham Mortimer and Ed Hall. On January 12 of this year, General Motors gave notice of cancellation of the existing agreement and it was only after stubborn resistance from the union that a 60-day period for negotiating a renewal was secured. The present pact, signed by President Homer Martin, Elmer Dowell in charge of General Motors affairs, and William Munger, U.A.W. research head, follows closely the original pattern with few exceptions. In only two cases was the U.A.W. forced to make concessions—a re-appointment of committee men in the shops which might reduce the number in some cases and the reduction of paid time for grievance adjustment from four hours to two hours for each of the committee men in the shop. The current issue of the union's official publication states that the "uncertain economic situation prevailing in the automobile industry must be recognized as an obstacle in the path of obtaining all that we might wish."

Leaders of the "unity" caucus, however, refuse to consider as relevant such matters as the "uncertain economic situation," production levels or such a sordid and harsh figure as 65%—which is the percentage of unemployed auto workers. In their speeches at the meetings of the West Side local and the Detroit District Council, the agreement became the topic for faction mobilization of the "unity" caucus's greatly weakened ranks. One shining light scornfully told Homer Martin that he who says that it is more difficult to secure

fer the remaining three lectures . . . to a place where the speakers and their opinions will be tolerated and the assembled people will be secure from disorder and harm." The letter is signed by: Executive Board, Local 117, I.L.G.W.U., Reuben Zuckerman, chairman, and Louis Levy, manager-secretary; Educational Committee, Morris Feinberg, chairman, and Isidore Stenzor, secretary.

Could a better commentary on the grotesque, ludicrous intolerance of Stalinism and its narrow spirit of petty partisanship be desired?

good conditions during crises and unemployment than during periods of prosperity and booming industry, has fallen a prey to "Love-stoneite economics."

But the "unity" caucus's bark is much more serious than its bite. Their leaders are rather discouraged over the fact that the membership refuses to be stampeded by their demagoguery. In the West Side local, Walter Reuther sharply criticized the agreement and the General Executive Board, probably with an uneasy glance in the direction of the strong contingents of the Communist Party upon whom he depended for reelection. But, with the election over, Reuther found it much more convenient to sit on the bench while others carried the ball. And, in the city of Flint, the socialist, Kermit Johnson, after listening to the reaction of several hundred stewards and committee men, made a few cursory criticisms and then moved to accept the agreement. Only in Local 14 of Toledo, an old Stalinist stronghold, has the attack against the administration continued unabated, "unity" caucus leaders even threatening to resort to an illegal convocation of a conference of locals over the heads of the General Executive Board.

\* \* \*

Elections in the locals of the U.A.W. are still not completed. During the previous week, the administration forces secured a victory in Lansing where the "unity" caucus had staked its all after its defeat in Flint. The election fight was quite heated and, for some offices, rather close. For all except two offices, the progressive candidates were elected on the first ballot, having polled a majority of all votes case. For the remaining two offices, the progressive candidates were in the lead but did not secure a majority. Their election in the final ballot is practically certain.

In the West Side local in Detroit, Walter Reuther faced an opposition ticket for the first time. Reuther was reelected after an election that roused slight interest among the mass of the workers, as is indicated by the small number which turned out to vote.

Progressive victories were also recorded in Packard, Budd Wheel, and in Locals 202 and 306 and 312. The large amalgamated locals (Flint and West Side) are now busily engaged in preparing for their division elections.

## Europe Tense As Nazis Drive On

(Continued from Page 1)

ened within by the treachery and defeatism of the bourgeois partners of the People's Front and by its own reactionary economic and political course, the Loyalist government could not hold up against Franco's forces, strengthened by new reinforcements from Germany and Italy, and it therefore suffered a number of serious military defeats. A final effort to prevail upon France to lift the blockade strangling Loyalist Spain proved fruitless. Official circles in England and France made no secret of the fact that they expected Franco to win in the near future and that all their efforts were directed towards improving their relations with him. From Barcelona came reports that a faction of the Republican government was already urging an armistice and negotiations with the fascist chief.

The Chamberlain government of England continued, despite some opposition, to "woo the dictators," especially Mussolini, and the People's Front regime of France dragged on behind, as usual. The Soviet Union's futile and somewhat

## How Strikes Become Hits

(Continued from Page 3)

Pennsylvania, the most industrial and populous states, had usually led in the number of strikes and strikers involved. But already in 1936, of the 12 cities with more than 100,000 man-days lost thru strike, 8 were in the middle or far West. And little Akron was second only to gigantic New York City in the number of man-days lost (488,346 for Akron and 1,368,813 for N. Y. C.). The strike wave hadn't reached Detroit yet, which was last on the list. By February 1937, however, Michigan led all states in the number of strikes. More indicative was the fact that, in the two months of February and March alone, automobile workers lost about two million man-days thru strikes. And automobiles mean Michigan, of which Detroit is the real capital. Note that, for the whole year of 1936, New York City and Akron combined did not equal the man-days lost by the auto workers in only two months. As soon as complete and detailed information for 1937 is available, we shall make a more thoro examination of this and other trends.

Strikes are hits for the workers because they have learned how to win. In 1927, labor won, wholly or in part, about 50% of the strikes. But in 1936, they won 70% of the strikes, which involved 77% of the workers. A standing of 770 isn't bad. The class content of the strikes has risen. Strikes centering around union recognition accounted for 50% of the strikes in 1936 and 1937, about twice as high as in the past. A glance at the strike experience of the past five years will reveal how really constructive strikes can be. In 1933, the I.L.G.W.U. was reborn thru a general strike. In 1934, the general textile strike created the national basis for a powerful textile union. In 1936, the rubber union was born thru a great strike. And the culmination came in 1937, when the United Automobile Workers forged the modern weapons by means of which were established the greatest of the new C.I.O. unions and the C.I.O. itself—the sit-down strike. Moreover, once the strikes have created the unions, they tend to leave the field and let the unions do the job with the strike in reserve to be used if necessary. Thus, the miners, the clothing workers and other unions are able to renew agreements without annual or biennial strikes. For United States Steel, it is enough to see what happened to General Motors for it to sign up with the S.W.O.C. The more sweeping the original strike is, the less striking there is need to do afterwards.

The year 1937 showed that in class struggle are new weapons fashioned, new rules made and future battles won.

meaningless gesture of calling a world conference against Germany, Italy and Japan, only emphasized its tragic isolation.

WILL HERBERG

on

"People's Front

or

Workers Front"

•

SUNDAY, APRIL 3rd

11 A.M.

1955 Southern Boulevard,  
Bronx

•

Auspices: Local 117  
I.L.G.W.U.

## DRESSMAKERS DEMAND LABOR FREEDOM IN LOYALIST SPAIN

Over 500 active trade unionists, mostly dressmakers, attended a symposium on "Workers Rights in Spain" held on March 12 under the joint auspices of the dressmakers groups adhering to the Socialist Party, the Independent Communist Labor League and the anarchist organization. The speakers were Bertram D. Wolfe, for the I.C.L.L.; Abe Bluestein, for the anarchists; and Dr. J. Loeb, for the S.P.

The following resolution was unanimously adopted by the meeting in the form of an appeal to the Spanish ambassador:

Over 500 active trade unionists, assembled in a meeting called by the Socialist, Anarchist and Independent Communist Groups of Dressmakers Union Local 22, International Ladies Garment Workers Union, ask you, Ambassador Fernando De Los Rios, to convey to

your government:

That we stand unequivocally for the victory of the Spanish workers against the fascists and their allies.

That we pledge our utmost energy in support of this heroic struggle.

And, because we are desirous of seeing a victorious workers Spain, we support the activities and program of the New York Provisional Committee for Workers Rights in Spain and demand of your government full and complete democratic rights to all working-class political groups in Spain as well as the release from prison of all anti-fascists and the thousands of active trade unionists who are loyal fighters against fascism and are nevertheless incarcerated in government jails.

MURRAY GROSS, Chairman  
MINIE LURYE, Secretary