

Workers Of
The World
Unite!

LABOR ACTION

Official Organ of the Socialist Party of California

The Voice Of
Socialism
In The West

Price 5 Cents

SATURDAY, NOV. 28, 1936

VOL. 1 NO. 1

Heroic Spanish Workers And International Troops Hold Fascist Beasts At Bay

Fighting against terrible odds, the heroic Spanish workers' militias withstood three weeks of the most murderous siege in all modern history.

After a disastrous retreat of a hundred miles, which at times almost developed into a complete rout, the armed proletariat has dug in at the outskirts of Madrid, and is holding the fascists at bay.

The story of the matchless heroism of the Spanish workers is already inscribed forever in the pages of history. Against them is arrayed a Fascist army armed with every new weapon that Hitler and Mussolini are turning out. Entirely new forms of destruction which have never before been used in warfare—calcium-sodium bombs spreading fires that water cannot extinguish, aerial bombs with delayed percussion-caps which do not explode until the weight of the bomb has carried it through the floors of a house to the cellar, precision instruments which enable airplanes to drop bombs aimed with the accuracy of a machine gun—are used against the civilian population by Italian and German army officers. But despite all this, the Spanish worker-soldiers continue to stand fast.

MADRID IN HOURLY DANGER

Madrid remains in hourly danger. The fascist generals will go to any lengths to capture Madrid. In order to justify the official recognition of their "government" by Hitler and Mussolini. The only connection between Madrid and Valencia is by a single motor highway, for the Madrid-Valencia railway is still cut between Madrid and Aranjuez.

The decision to evacuate the women and children from Madrid indicates that the insistence of the workers' parties and unions, to fight in Madrid from street to street and house to house, if necessary, has prevailed over the proposal of President Azana and the Right Wing Socialist leader, Prieto, to retreat from Madrid. This decision should be hailed by workers everywhere, for to hold Madrid for any length of time, perhaps thereby saving Madrid altogether, is a tremendous blow to the prestige of General Franco and his Italian and German allies.

INTERNATIONAL BRIGADE
Almost in the nick of time there arrived in Madrid and immediately took over the most important sector of fighting, an International Brigade composed of revolutionary Socialist and Communist workers from abroad, mostly either World War fighters or skilled technicians in artillery and machine-gunning, many of them refugees from fascist Germany, Italy and Austria.

At the same time, there arrived thousands of seasoned Catalonian worker-soldiers, fresh from a series of victories on the Aragon front. These militiamen of the C.N.T.—the powerful anarcho-syndicalist trade union federation—were led into battle by the noted anarchist, Buenaventura Durruti, who himself was killed while successfully stemming the fascist offensive.

Every day highly-skilled technicians, artillerymen, aviators, military engineers and trained soldiers—members of proletarian parties—continued on Page 2)

Soviet Government Stops Byedny Opera

Press reports state that in Soviet Russia, the ruling bureaucracy condemned a comic opera that lampooned certain phases of Christianity in pre-revolutionary Russia. Particularly objectionable to the bureaucracy, according to press reports, was one scene depicting a baptismal scene as a drunken farce.

The play which opened with a great fanfare of publicity had been approved by the preliminary censorship, and it was not until leading members of the bureaucracy saw the first or second performance that the opera was denounced as "an insolent misrepresentation of the country's history."

The author, Demian Byedny, has been a revolutionist since 1905. His satires of the clergy, of Czarism, and of the landowners before the Bolshevik revolution had been so cleverly written that they escaped the Czarist censorship.

At one time he was in such favor with the bureaucracy that he was given an apartment in the Kremlin, but a few years ago he lost that special privilege.

CIO Group Suspended By AFL Vote

The most reactionary national convention in the entire history of the American Federation of Labor is in session at Tampa, Florida. Almost as significant as the continued suspension of ten of the most aggressive and successful unions in the Federation are the moves to abandon the fight for national 30-hour week legislation, to boycott the Amalgamated Clothing Workers' label and to break the strike of East coast and Gulf seamen.

All pretense of progressivism in the group centered around the Executive Council has been dropped at these sessions. For several years, under heavy pressure from the industrial union bloc, A. F. of L. leaders have paid lip service to such proposals as organization of the unorganized, an aggressive legislative program, and solidarity of world labor expressed through the "Labor Chest" against Fascism. Today, with nearly a half of the voting strength of the A. F. of L. under unconditional suspension, and without voice in the convention deliberations, the ultra-reactionaries feel free to revert to type.

30-Hour Bill Dropped
Most astounding and revealing instance is the dropping of the campaign for a congressional 30-hour week bill. This demand was first on the list in almost every speech or press release coming from the Green headquarters in the last few years. At Tampa without even an explanation or apology this advanced proposal is scrapped and in its place is a pious plea to American business to volunteer the thirty-hour week out of kindness of the business heart!

This approach is identical with that of the campaigns to organize the south and the auto industry begun in 1928. Organization was sought by speeches to Chambers of Commerce and Rotary Clubs and secret sessions "around the table" with the employers. The campaigns were a dismal failure. The bosses proved more class-conscious than William Green, and the workers, never having been asked, ignored the whole performance.

Down the Toboggan
Changing tactics in the campaign for a shorter work week could be written into a saga of the degeneration of the craft leadership of the A. F. of L. The Federation was born 50 years ago in the midst of a campaign for the 8-hour day by means of worker-power expressed in a call for a general strike on May 1, 1886. One of the earliest A. F. of L. actions was a similar general strike call for May 1, 1890. From reliance on economic strength the labor leadership turned to political action for a shorter work week and now, in the twilight of their outworn bureaucratic power, they are reduced to throwing themselves upon the tender mercies of the bosses. Craft unionism—there she stands!

Ignorant
Additional proof of the bankrupt leadership in the craft ranks is the handling of the request from the Spanish Ambassador that a representative of the Spanish government be given the floor at Tampa. A year ago "the boys" humored the needle trade and other progressive workers by condemning fascism and nazism. This year with Fascist-hired Moors shooting down the workers in Spain the program committee decided that "they did not know enough about the conflict in Spain to take sides!"

Wise
However they did know enough about two conflicts in the United States to take sides and in both cases they took the employers' side. While Tampa cigar makers, members of one of the oldest craft unions, were donating hun-

(Continued on Page 2)

No Help From France For Spanish People

That the French People's Front government has failed miserably in helping the Spanish Loyalists is confirmed again by a dispatch appearing in the November 16 issue of the Daily Worker, official organ of the Communist Party.

Not only has the Blum government prevented arms from going to the Loyalists, but it has failed in stopping arms from going to the Rebels. According to the dispatch, the Brussels dock workers passed a resolution to refuse to unload any arms coming from French plants and destined for the Spanish Rebels.

The open support of the Soviet bureaucracy for the Blum government which thus underhandedly supports the Spanish Rebels has drawn much cynical comment from the Fascists concerning the kind of communism practiced by the Soviet bureaucracy.

Soviet Denies Charge It Ships Spain Arms

Confirming the notorious fact that Soviet Russia has sent no arms to help the Spanish Loyalists despite Italian and German arms being sent to the Spanish Rebels, a Moscow cable to the Daily Worker for November 16, reports that the Soviet bureaucracy has been sending aid to Nazi Germany.

Ostensibly reporting that the tanker was seized by Spanish rebels, the Daily Worker dispatch vehemently denies that the ship was destined for Spain, gives the lies to Hearst's report that the bureaucracy is shipping arms to the Spanish Loyalists, and states that the ship was enroute to a Nazi port.

The Moscow cable indignantly denounces the "slandering dispatch" in the Hearst press to the effect that the Soviet tanker, seized by the Spanish fascists, contained "a large cargo of ammunition for the Spanish government."

The revolutionary workers of the whole world can only regret that, it really is a slander.

Blum Announces Big Navy Plan for France

As part of her preparation for the approaching world conflict, France's Peoples Front government under Leon Blum has announced a huge navy construction program, according to a dispatch appearing in the November 16 issue of the Daily Worker, official organ of the Communist Party.

During recent years, according to the announcement, the French have been building battleships and have neglected the smaller craft which are necessary as auxiliaries to bring a fleet to complete fighting efficiency.

This oversight on the part of previous capitalist governments will be taken care of by the Leon Blum government through the immediate construction of 51 craft totaling 40,000 tons.

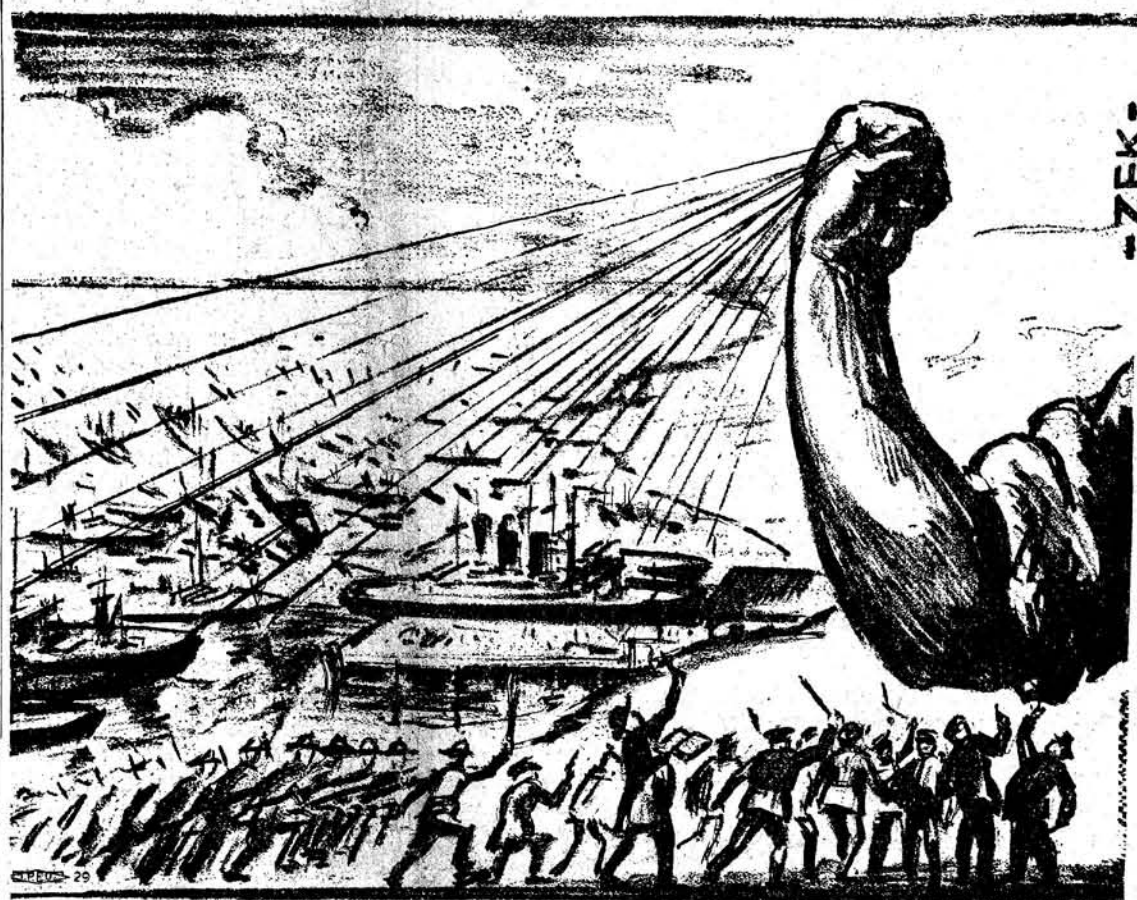
Cleric Appeals For War On Communism

Declaring that there could be no compromise in the fight between Christianity and Communism, the Reverend Dr. John O'Hara, C.S.C., president of Notre Dame University, spoke before an audience of 1,000 in New York last week and denounced both those who follow a materialistic philosophy and those who waver between that philosophy and mysticism.

"You will have to make the decision," declared Dr. O'Hara. "I have no army to force you to choose, but I am willing to stand as a minor prophet to warn you that you must choose."

The Reverend called upon his listeners to fight against the "materialistic view of life that threatens to engulf us" and denounced all who follow the premises of materialism to their logical conclusion.

MARITIME STRIKE DEADLOCK



The Maritime Strike (EDITORIAL)

The maritime strike of the Pacific Coast, now four weeks old, is still stalemated and is clearly becoming a test of strength and endurance. A good deal is said about strike "strategy"—and that has its uses within certain clearly defined limits—but when you get down to cases, this strike, like every other strike, is simply a built-in struggle between two forces whose interests are in constant and irreconcilable conflict. The partnership of capital and labor is a lie. The immediate issue in every case is decided by the relative strength of the opposing forces at the moment. The only strike strategy worth a tinker's damn is the strategy that begins with this conception.

The problem of the strikers consists in estimating what their strength is, and then mobilizing it in full force and pressing against the enemy until something cracks and a settlement is achieved in consonance with the relation of forces between the unions and the organizations of the bosses. That's all there is to strike strategy. You cannot maneuver over the head of the class struggle.

We pass over here entirely the question of who is "right" in the maritime strike, for we believe with Ben Hanford that the working class is always right. From our point of view the workers have a perfect right to the full control of industry and all the fruits thereof. The employers on the other hand—not merely the shipowners; all bosses are alike—would like a situation where the workers are deprived of all organization and all say about their work and are paid only enough to keep body and soul together and raise a new generation of slaves to take their places when they drop in their tracks.

Any settlement in between these two extremes is only a temporary truce and the nature of such a settlement is decided by power; "justice" has nothing to do with it. The workers will not have justice until they take over the world. The demands of the workers in a strike are to be judged solely by their timeliness and the way they fit realistically into the actual relation of forces at the time.

The demands of the maritime workers in the present strike are perfectly reasonable from this standpoint. In standing pat for the union hiring hall they are only asserting their determination to safeguard the organizations which they have already won in struggle and maintained in struggle. The fight for the hiring hall is in essence the old familiar fight for union recognition; when the unions supply workers from the union hall they have union recognition in its best form. The demand of the bosses for the re-establishment of the practice of hiring and firing whom they please is a proposal to substitute individual bargaining and the black list system for collective bargaining and a reasonable protection to the worker against discrimination.

This issue is perfectly clear to every unionist. The maritime workers are strong enough—as they have demonstrated in the past and in the present strike—to assert

this demand and to refuse to "arbitrate" it, that is, to let some supposedly "neutral" body decide the question whether they should have unions or not. The other demands of the unions, such as the demand for the 8-hour day for cooks and stewards, are surely modest and realistic enough in this age when even a section of the most far-sighted capitalists are advocating the universal 6-hour day.

The resources of the workers in the present struggle are far superior to those with which they entered the historic strike of 1934. They have strong organizations forged in the battle of two years ago and continually tested in the running fight with the ship owners ever since. In the meantime they have bound the various craft organizations together into a federation pledged to the common action of all crafts on the old principle of the Knights of Labor that an injury to one is the concern of all. The Maritime Federation of the Pacific is a new and most formidable weapon in the hands of the strikers, even if it falls far short of the effectiveness and power of one industrial union in the industry, the most modern instrument of struggle. The increased self confidence that has come with the experiences of the past two years, and the habit of co-operation in the federation all spell the same thing—greater strength and greater solidarity in the labor camp and better chances for success.

The strikers have other resources also. The organized labor movement in the west is on the upgrade. This is due in no small degree to the influence of the maritime example. The upsurge of militancy on the waterfront, and the tangible proofs that this policy pays big dividends in the form of strengthened organization and better conditions, have inspired unorganized workers to organize and fight and older unions to grow and to gain. Throughout the labor movement there is a feeling of deep gratitude to the maritime workers and a warm sympathy for them in their present fight. This is a real asset which might easily be the deciding factor to tip the scale in favor of the strikers on the final showdown.

In addition, the maritime federation has in the "Voice of the Federation" an admirable organ of publicity and propaganda—one of the very best trade union papers in the entire labor movement in fact—which can, and in our opinion should, be converted into a Daily for the duration of the strike. The art of strike publicity consists primarily in getting the facts and the union side of the story daily to the strikers and to the working class public.

The experience of the Minneapolis truck drivers with their strike Daily in 1934 shows that strikers who are onto their business don't have to worry much about what the daily capitalist press prints—they can't control or influence that anyway. If they publish their own daily paper the workers will read it and believe it and hold a solid wall of sympathy and support around the strike. For publicity that counts, that is,

(Continued on Page 2)

Workers Dig In For Hard Fight In Defense of Unions

The end of the fourth week of the maritime strike on the Pacific Coast finds all shipping completely tied up and the situation still frozen in a deadlock. No definite signs of an early settlement are in sight. The ship owners have made no moves toward settlement, and the workers are not moving any ships. So great, in fact, is the solidarity of the workers, welded together in the Maritime Federation, that the shipowners have not even attempted, as yet, to move a single ship.

Bomb Homes Of Workers In Tire City

Terror Campaign Fails to Stop Growth Of Rubber Union

By B. J. WIDICK

AKRON, Ohio.—Terrorism of the Black Legion variety is the latest weapon being employed by the rubber barons in a futile attempt to curb the growth and power of the militant United Rubber Workers of America.

Homes of two rank-and-file members of the General Local, U.R.W.A., were bombed this week by company agents, endangering the lives of 20 people. Another bomb failed to shatter the home of a third union man because it was "misplaced."

Organized Labor seethed in anger over the outrages and forced the police department to make arrests of the bombers despite the opposition of the company and the pressure it exerted on city officials.

The rubber barons have tried every other method of union-busting but, failed dismally because of the attracting power of the program of the U.R.W.A.

GREEN'S STRANGLE-HOLD BROKEN

It was only a year ago that progressive rubber workers broke the stranglehold of the A. F. of L. bureaucracy and established an International Union after a terrific battle against William Green at the rubber workers' convention. The International Union was founded on a program of class struggle as the only way possible to combat the giant rubber companies successfully and build strong industrial unions.

Gradually the once large rubber workers' union began to rebuild themselves after the International was formed.

Then the rubber companies retaliated by arrogantly refusing any workers' demands and announcing a policy of wage cuts and lay-offs.

Resentment of the workers led to sit-downs during which union strength grew everywhere. Over 25,000 rubber workers here participated.

The sit-downs at Goodyear culminated into the five-week strike that built the Local from a scant few hundred members into a solidly entrenched organization, having the majority of the 15,000 Goodyear workers.

DALRYMPLE MOBBED

Mobbing of President S. H. Dalrymple of the U.R.W.A. and eight organizers in Gadsden, Ala., was Goodyear's answer to an attempt to organize outside plants.

A 24-hour protest sit-down that shut down Goodyear's three Akron plants effectively stopped further mobbing.

Since wages, hours and working conditions have been vastly improved in the Akron area by the U.R.W.A. workers everywhere are willing to join as the new Locals testify.

Unless the solid back-bone of the Akron rubber workers can be broken, the rubber companies will face a nation-wide union organization.

That is why the spy-systems, the mobbing, the bombings have been employed. But the effect has always been the opposite desired by the companies. Each attack of the companies solidifies the workers more strongly. It keeps them alert and makes them realize that the class struggle is a constant and never-ending battle.

The constant warfare of the shipowners against the workers who maintain the nation's maritime industry broke spectacularly into the open when at midnight, October 29, after two months of exhausting effort to negotiate agreements with ship barons intent upon smashing every vestige of unionism, the meeting of Joint Negotiating Committees exercised the power invested by a referendum vote, and called for strike action.

Strike Hits All Ports
Within a few minutes of that decision picket lines were forming upon the docks of every major port in the nation, on the West Coast in order to wring from rapacious shipowners the elementary rights of unionism, on the East and Gulf Coasts because the strike action gave every progressive unionist an opportunity to express his solidarity and present their own demands.

As the back to work the shipowners' intention to throttle the maritime unions became apparent. They hailed with satisfaction the signing of the vicious maritime law known as H. R. 8597, H. R. 8585, and H. R. 8599 by President Roosevelt. These laws, intended to semi-militarize the American merchant marine, established a Maritime Commission that has full authority to regulate wages, hours, and working conditions as well as to administer the \$100,000,000 annually poured into the treasuries of the shipowners by the government.

That a lock-out was intended by the shipowners was shown in addition by the significant speeding up of all waterborne shipments, the storing of huge supplies in strategic industries—even newspapers putting in enormous reserves of paper, and there were persistent rumors of the organization of a huge spy system and the recruiting of scabs which was finally brought into light with the exposure of Tanker Smith's activities in the Northwest.

Owners Demand "Arbitration"
At first announcing their intention to revise the award and agreements which resulted from the 1934 strike, the shipowners specified that they had definite proposals but that before they submitted these proposals the maritime unions must consent in advance to arbitrate all issues (Continued on Page 2)

British War Program Hidden From Voters

That he had not disclosed before election his plans for completely converting Great Britain into a war camp over night, was admitted by Premier Stanley Baldwin in upholding his war program before the House of Commons last week. As his reason for hiding his plans for war, he gave the fact that the nation at that time was overwhelmingly opposed to war and that the disclosure of his plans might have entailed the defeat of the government at the elections.

Revealing that he had compiled a secret "war-book" containing full details for transforming Great Britain into one of the world's most efficient war machines, Baldwin stated, "There can be no peace in Europe unless every country knows we are ready for war."

When he was attacked by over-anxious members of the House of Commons for delaying the war preparations unnecessarily, Baldwin responded with arguments defending his policy for maintaining secrecy and for keeping the public, which was voting for a government of peace, ignorant of his design to send them to the battlefields of the next war.

Dock Strike Stalemate In 2nd Month

(Continued from Page 1)

upon which there could be no agreement. To this arrogant proposition, the unions replied that they could not arbitrate their right to organize nor their right to maintain a union, and that they considered their union hiring halls with a rotation system of employment, their minimum wage schedule, their maximum hours agreement, issues which could no more be arbitrated than could the shipowners' possession of the ships and docks of the maritime industry or their receipt of \$100,000,000 a year in direct subsidies from the United States treasury.

To this definition of what could and could not be arbitrated the shipowners screamed, "The unions refuse to arbitrate!" The shipowners refused to discuss, much less to "arbitrate" their huge profits for the last two years or their ability to grant immeasurably better conditions because of the subsidy which alone covers all operating expenses and maintenance besides the entire pay roll of the industry they exploit.

Aim to Smash Unions
Negotiations commenced over the shipowner proposals to revise the award under which the Pacific District of the International Longshoremen's Association had been working. As negotiations proceeded it became increasingly clear that the shipowners had no intention of arriving at an amicable settlement, that their whole design was to force a lockout, and that their strategy in dealing with the maritime unions was based on no other premise than smashing them through a lockout.

Despite working conditions which were characterized by a report submitted to the Department of Commerce by the International Judicial Association and corroborated by an official government investigating committee as unbelievably miserable and a blot upon American industry which must be remedied, the shipowners proposed even viler conditions. To the Sailors, whose wages range from \$40 a month to \$62.50 with work available only during approximately eight months of the year, they proposed doing away with all overtime pay (which is now given by the shipowners at the rate of 24 cents an hour, as the shipowners choose either "cash or in "time-off"). They proposed doing away with the Saturday afternoon which the Sailors have been allowed off while ships are in port. They proposed that the shipowners exercise the privilege of hiring or firing whom they pleased, where they pleased, when they pleased.

Propose "Efficiency" Speed-Up
To the Longshoremen they proposed doing away with all overtime pay after 3 p. m., a condition which has not existed since before 1908, even during the blackest days of American merchant marine wage-slavery. They demanded an 8-hour day for Longshoremen in place of the present six hour day through specifying that the Longshoremen must have sufficient men enrolled to replace every gang without running more than 6 hours or at a maximum 8 hours a gang. This provision alone would require adding thousands of men to the union where there is no more than sufficient work at present to employ each man for more than 120 hours a month. On top of this they demanded that the wages of the Longshoremen be geared to an "efficiency" system based upon the tonnage movement of cargo on a time schedule.

All appeals of the Marine Cooks and Stewards, who are paid only \$45 a month and who work a seven day week with a daily stretch of 15 hours, during which 10 hours exploitation is wrung from them, were turned down arbitrarily. Other unions involved such as the Marine Firemen, whose pay is based on 27 cents an hour for skilled labor exploited 56 hours a week in heat at times reaching 150 degrees were turned down flat in the same manner. The Firemen had the temerity to ask for a wage increase of 7 cents an hour.

The shipowners demanded that the unions sign contracts and bond themselves for fulfillment of these impossible conditions. So utterly beyond reason were the demands placed upon the unions by the shipowners that the committee representing the shipowners itself expected nothing but refusal, sometimes scarcely waiting for union spokesmen to refuse a demand before proceeding to the next. In the negotiating meetings, the shipowners maintained an attitude of utmost contempt for the union spokesmen, jibing at the situation, and laughing at the demands they made upon the unions.

Unions' Minimum Demands
The unions finally laid down a minimum basis beyond which they had no choice but to resort to economic action. These demands are, "Union control of hiring hall and six hour day for Longshoremen; hiring hall and cash overtime for sailors and firemen;

Brave Fight Of Workers For Madrid

(Continued from Page 1)

ties from all the countries of Europe and America—arrive to bolster the deficient technical services of the workers' WORKERS SEND ARMS TO SPAIN

Arms in considerable quantities have been arriving, sent by workers from capitalist countries. Much of these arms, especially machine-guns and ammunition, are coming from France, where the strongly organized workers in the munitions factories, arsenals, ports and railways, are the most revolutionary sections of the French proletariat. Even from far-off America arms are beginning to arrive.

After nearly four months of vacillation, after its terrible step in entering the "non-intervention committee" and doing nothing while Germany and Italy brazenly armed their Spanish fascist allies, the Soviet Union has finally begun to send material aid instead of food. Whether this is a mere "token payment" under the pressure of the Spanish working-class organizations and the international working-class, or whether the Soviet leaders have actually executed a reversal of policy, remains to be seen.

AN INTERNATIONAL ISSUE
One thing is absolutely clear now. By their official recognition of General Franco's "government," Italian and German capitalism have irrevocably bound up their fate with that of Franco. They will, they must or back down completely as no capitalist government has ever done after such a move, go to any lengths to secure a fascist victory in Spain. They have thus thrown into the international arena the issue of victory or defeat of the Spanish workers. Without effective international aid, the Spanish workers cannot win.

This can only mean aid from the working-class of the world including the Soviet Union. It is absolutely preposterous for the Communist parties to continue "demanding" that the capitalist governments of France and England come to anti-fascist Spain's aid because, forsooth, France and England are "democratic" countries. These are capitalist governments and four months of civil war should have convinced even the Daily Worker that it is balderdash to expect them to "aid the workers' side in Spain. It is conceivable, if France and England were ready for war and if they thought Germany and Italy were the enemy, that they might use Spain as the equivalent of "little Belgium" in the World War. But they are not ready to go to war, they continue to woo Mussolini to their side, and Britain has made no bones about its hope that General Franco will win.

ENGLAND SUPPORTS FASCISTS
The "unofficial" but thoroughly authoritative spokesman for the British Foreign Office, "Aneurin" Bevan, stated in the New York Times of November 21: "If anywhere, the sympathies of official London are with the Italians. Anthony Eden, Foreign Secretary, started the House of Commons yesterday by his declaration that Italy and Germany were less guilty of intervention than other powers. The Foreign Secretary had in mind Soviet Russia."

And without Britain, of course, it is settled policy for France not to move. That means that the Spanish masses will get arms from the independent actions of the international working-class, or will get no arms at all. The issue is thus put up squarely to the Soviet leadership and the other working-class organizations of the world.

Meanwhile another danger for the Spanish workers lurks inside anti-fascist Spain itself. As everybody knows, the "democratic" bourgeois politicians—President Azana, President Companys of Catalonia, etc.—were only prevented from coming to a compromise with the fascist generals by the independent action of the workers in seizing control of the chief cities in the first days of civil war. Only then did the "democratic bourgeoisie" reluctantly agree to continuing the war. These gentlemen have been on their good behavior thanks only to the fact that they are surrounded by armed workers. Unfortunately the Spanish workers' leaders have taken this good behavior as a sign of complete conversion to the workers' cause and for the sake of these bourgeois "allies" have limited the struggle to purely bourgeois-democratic slogans.

REVOLUTIONARY SLOGANS
This has meant the relinquishing of the whole arsenal of revolutionary weapons available for winning the most heart-felt support of, not only the peasants in the anti-fascist regions, but of the peasantry in the fascist regions and the peasants' sons who comprise the mass of Franco's army. Confiscation of all the land not tilled by the owner himself, empowering peasant committees to divide the land, and guaranteeing occupation of it to the peasants without any compensation. Confiscation of all big establishments

THE MARITIME STRIKE

(Continued from Page 1)

keeps the strikers themselves and their sympathizers informed from day to day, the daily strike paper is the thing. A publicity program in a modern strike that does not include a daily paper is like a knife without a blade.

The maritime workers are fighting against a powerful enemy and their victory is by no means assured. The strikers can quite easily defeat themselves if they make a miscalculation as to the strength and resources of the enemy, and particularly if they rely on the support of factors which are in reality lined up on the other side. Here we refer directly to the government and the reactionary labor leaders of the type of Ryan, Hunter and Green. The first duty of militant leadership is to tell the strikers the truth in this respect so that they will not entertain dangerous illusions and be taken by surprise at a critical moment.

The bosses are powerful, in the first place, because they own the ships and the docks and the workers have not yet challenged their fraudulent claim to such ownership. And because they own the ships the bosses own the government. And the same holds true in regard to such labor leaders as those mentioned above. The slightest misunderstanding on these two points can easily prove fatal.

The strikers have to battle the ship owners plus the government plus the labor lieutenants of the capitalist class. That's the score. Ryan and Hunter have already

shown their hands on the east coast. Green & Co., backed them up by denouncing the east coast strike as "outlaw." And it ought to be painfully apparent to all that the administration at Washington, which was sold to the workers as a "friend of labor" in one of the biggest skin games ever put over, hasn't made a move to help the strikers get their extremely modest demands. "Expectations" in this regard have been cruelly disappointed. And the worst is yet to come.

But in spite of all these powerful forces arrayed against them the embattled maritime workers have better than a fighting chance to win. As a matter of fact, once the actual lineup is clearly understood and this understanding is consciously incorporated into the strike policy of the unions, the victory is two-thirds won. For that will mean that the strikers see the real issue clearly, rely solely on themselves and the support of their fellow workers in other trades and dig in for a bitter-end struggle.

A victory in the maritime strike under the banner of the federation will affect profoundly the lives of all the workers involved for the better. It will prove in life the superiority of common action through federation over the old craft isolation and stimulate the movement for thorough-going industrial unionism, the next step. And it will encourage the whole labor movement of the west to press forward.

These are big stakes. They are worth fighting for. Every worker in the west has a vital interest in the success of the fight.

lance at the top between the bourgeois politicians and the labor leaders, there is wide-spread resistance in the ranks to any move to abolish the workers' committees and the elected workers' officers who control the workers' armies. Decrees militarizing the militia and calling all men to the colors are being interpreted by the workers in such a manner that the regular army officers are being limited to technical functions. It is under the direct leadership of their own proletarian officers and committees that the workers, with their backs to the walls of their Madrid tenements, are beating back the fascist armies.

Fortunately, in spite of the al-

A.F.L. Convention

(Continued from Page 1)

lance of dollars to the heroic fight of the seamen on the Gulf and East Coast against some of the most powerful capitalists and most corrupt union officials in America, the craft leadership condemned the strike. A motion by Ivan (scab-hunter) Hunter of the I.S.U. was railroaded through by President Green without debate and without a roll call.

At a later session, following the logic of blind spite, the A. F. of L. decided that henceforth all "loyal" union men must wear either clothes made by scab labor or overalls. Union-made men's

ACTION ARMY

The resolute rank and file socialists who put Labor Action over the top here, started something. The Jimmy Higginses who turned their own pockets inside out and hounded their friends for subs and contributions, compose the vanguard of the ACTION ARMY.

What is this strange army which wears no uniforms? How do they fight and what do they win? What cause do they serve and to what do they give such devotion?

The Action Army is that band of comrades who embarked on the uncharted course of establishing Labor Action as The Voice of Socialism in the west. Their ammunition is the conviction that the cause of socialism will triumph. Their victories are expressed in terms of new adherents and supporters in the struggle. They serve the working class and their devotion is to the emancipation of that class from capitalism and exploitation.

In the short time since the Socialist Party of California decided to establish Labor Action and set the minimum requirement for publication at \$1,000 the soldiers of the Action Army went over the top to the tune of \$1,200 and are still going strong. The captains and lieutenants all over the west marshalled their forces and poured hundreds of subscriptions into the office in San Francisco.

First among money raisers is Local Los Angeles of the Socialist Party. Their contribution so far is \$403, with another \$115 pledged. The rank and file of the Party and the Young People's Socialist League in Los Angeles don't boast a single millionaire. Most of the members are workers who earn very modest salaries. But they were determined to put Labor Action on the map. So they put themselves in lock for every cent they could raise. They borrowed money against their future salaries. They didn't buy that new suit they had their eye on and they put the Ford in storage for a while. They denied themselves the ordinary pleasures of movies and dances—AND THEY GAVE THE MONEY TO THE LABOR ACTION FUND.

Second among the money raisers comes San Francisco with \$268.25. Here truly heroic sacrifices were made. A great many members of the local are maritime workers who are on strike and have no income. In what mysterious manner these comrades contrived to raise the money is beyond us. Certainly extraordinary sacrifices were made by the members who laid their donations on the line for Labor Action.

Third come the Berkeley Yipels with \$81 already paid and another \$84 pledged. And then fourth comes Palo Alto with two comrades, both students, raising \$59 in cash with more promised.

The life-blood of the paper is subscriptions. And even before the paper has made its appearance we find that subs have poured in from coast to coast from a total of 21 states. And in this record San Francisco stands first, with the members of the Socialist Party and the Young People's Socialist League out night after night knocking on doors of registered Socialists, dunning their union brothers and shaking down their friends. For second place we must travel to Minneapolis where the comrades got to work as soon as they heard of Labor Action and with every mail sent a flock of subscriptions. And still up among the stars are those two comrades in Palo Alto, Bill Mills and Grace Stahlkecker, who make weekly trips to our office with subs and still more subs. Their idea of a pleasant afternoon is to make the rounds and they convince people that what they need is a subscription to Labor Action.

With this issue in the hands of thousands of workers in the west, we expect the subs to come in steadily. BUT THEY WILL NOT COME IN UNLESS YOU ENROLL IN THE ACTION ARMY. Unless you see to it that a drive is started in your community for subscriptions and contributions, unless you see to it that your branch or local takes a bundle order, Labor Action cannot succeed.

JOIN THE ACTION ARMY. BECOME A SUB-HUSTLER FOR LABOR ACTION.

Fill out the coupon at the bottom of this column and send it in immediately. Have your branch elect an Action Army captain and notify us of your choice. Western Socialism is marching on and Labor Action is its banner.

ACTION ARMY.

Room 334, 628 Montgomery St., San Francisco, Calif.

Enroll me as a member of the ACTION ARMY. I am ready to build the Socialist Party by building LABOR ACTION. Send me material immediately so that I can get to work.

Name

Address

City and State

The Writers' Congress Comes To Town

People's Front Spreads Out All Over the Place; Progress cores Again; Pulp Writers On a Rampage; "Peace, Brothers, Peace"

Back in those dizzy transitional days of early 1935, before the new line in politics and art had been fully clarified by Comrade Dimitroff and fully digested by the New Masses, the first Writers' Congress was held in New York. The "united front" had not yet been broadened into the "people's front" and no effort was made to camouflage the real sponsorship of the Congress. Earl Browder and Clarence Hathaway were the featured speakers. The fiction of a "proletarian culture" was still accepted as gospel, the left-wing literature and artists were still courting madness with an attempt to create "dialectically" and that all-time low in the proletarian novel—"Marching Marching!" was yet to receive the New Masses Book Union prize.

But the word had gone forth to broaden the Cultural Front and broadened it was. After the lists had been sufficiently weighted with the politically orthodox, to assure Party domination, invitations were extended to numerous borderline cases along the radical-liberal fringe. Naturally, no "Opposition" radical was wanted, regardless of his literary standing or his contribution to the labor movement. This ruled out such men as Max Eastman, James Rorty, V. F. Calverton and Sidney Hook. Also conspicuous by their absence were such recent critics of the Party Line as Edmund Wilson, John Dos Passos, Clifton Fadiman and other former white-haired boys of the cultural front. Conspicuous by their presence were the Communists, Waldo Frank and Kenneth Burke and the whole New Republic contingent.

One Virtue
For all the falseness of its pretenses as a genuine united front in the literary field and the flub-dub of "proletarian literature" on which it was based, the first Congress had at least one virtue. It had a point of view. All the writers and near-writers who participated, regardless of their political, tactical and aesthetic differences, were supposed to be lined up, intellectually, on one side of the barricades—the working class side. Or to use more high-toned verbiage, they were supposed to have a "leftist orientation."

Succeeding Congresses, with Earl Browder as star performer, were held later in Chicago and Denver, but as the cultural front moved westward, it also grew broader, in imitation of the Party Line. By the time the Western Congress was in process of organization, it had become a literary

Front American and was broad enough to include everybody who was—in the words of Mike Gold—"well, you know—opposed to Hearst and Fascism and all that sort of thing and in favor of Progress." And aren't we all? Thus it happened that among its sponsors it included Mr. Gold and his friends who supported Browder, Mr. John Barry and his friends who supported Roosevelt and Mr. Stewart Edward White and his friends who supported London. You can't get much broader than that.

No one after two Socialist writers had resigned in protest against its original program—had the had taste to mention the class struggle or to suggest that there might be some relation between capitalism and fascism. Somewhere between New York and San Francisco, the cultural front had lost not only its single virtue—point of view—but any meaning whatsoever.

Too Broad for Safety
Nevertheless, for all the loving care and wire-pulling expended upon its organization for nearly six months by the Communist Party faction, the Congress did not go off entirely as originally scheduled. There is such a thing as getting too broad for safety and even a liberal can recognize certain phenomena—after they are pointed out to him. Hereby hangs a tale more illuminating than the actual Congress itself.

Months before anyone among the broader literary masses had been let in on the secret that there was to be a Writers' Congress, the preliminary set-up had been worked out by two diligent party members—Harry Carlyle and Louise Todd—with the cooperation of the usual intellectual officers between the Party and the liberals. The connotations were strictly political. The Congress was to act as a literary springboard for the Party's projected "Farmer-Labor Party" on the Pacific Coast, and to line up the tolling intelligentsia behind its prospective candidates. With this program decided upon and the Party faction, enlarged to include certain sympathizers who had never written anything but a letter to the Pulse of the Public, the official Sponsoring Committee, composed mostly of liberal innocents, was picked. It was one of the liberals who insisted that the two socialist writers, Lillian Symes and Travers Clement be added to the Committee and they were duly invited.

Music by Gershwin
Only George Kaufman and Morrie Ryskind (with incidental music by Gershwin) could do justice

to the dinner session of the Sponsoring Committee which made the final arrangements for the Congress. The Program Committee reported on its choice of speakers for the opening session—a meeting that was to set the keynote of the Congress. The first nomination—Thomas Mann, the great German novelist in exile—was unanimously approved; and then—plunging from the sublime to the ridiculous—there was offered in rapid succession the following names—Smedley Butler, Mayor Dore of Seattle and George Kidwell of the Bakery Wagon Drivers Union. Two weeks before, at a meeting of the League Against War and Fascism, Butler had denounced his sponsors for collecting money for the Spanish loyalists, but he was still the League's star performer. Mayor Dore of Seattle is a Democratic politician with a spotty record who happens at present to be playing for the labor vote, and who is being groomed as a "Farmer-Labor" candidate. George Kidwell of San Francisco is being similarly groomed.

And here was a chance to tie up these prospective candidates with a group that is supposed to have a hand in molding public opinion. The few liberal innocents who were present took this preposterous program lying down. Only the three or four dissident radicals protested and they were voted down. The following day the two Socialist writers resigned from the committee in protest, and their letter of resignation, sent to John Barry, the chairman, upset the apple-cart. Seeing a great light—for a moment—several of the more prominent liberals—insisted on a change of program. Upton Sinclair, Sara Bard Field and Erskin Scott Wood, all writers, were substituted for Butler, Dore and Kidwell. The comrades had broadened the Sponsoring Committee just a little too far.

Trotsky?—Horror!
But to continue with the Committee meeting. After choosing the star performer, the small group of sponsors present at the dinner passed on to the task of inviting famous writers to send greetings to the Western Congress. Among the dozens of Americans suggested was Herbert Hoover and the only spoken objection was voiced by Mr. Barry who thought he was a bore. After ranging over England and most of France, Leon Blum was nominated. Blum was a legitimate suggestion because he is a literary as well as a political figure. But there are other political figures who are also writers, including the author of a masterpiece called Literature and Revolution. The nomination of Blum probably recalled this fact to everyone present. Lillian Symes nominated Leon Trotsky. The silence that followed was positively deafening and Mike Gold nearly

tell off his chair. A diplomat at one end of the table ended the impasse by suggesting that Trotsky would be acceptable if Stalin were also invited. A verbal vote on an invitation to both resulted in a resounding roar of "noes" from the comrades. But when Ernest Sutherland Bates called for a show of hands on the subject, the vote stood six to seven against the motion. It was an embarrassing moment for the liberals and most of them refrained from voting.

When the Congress finally convened in San Francisco—with a large delegation from Hollywood which knew nothing about these preliminary maneuvers and very little of what it was all about anyway it had grown so broad that some of the party plans got lost in the shuffle. That well-known proletarian novelist, Mr. Harry Carlyle, is to continue as organizer but the plan to endorse the Pacific Weekly as official organ proved too unpopular to be pressed. This doesn't matter much because—unless something slips up or the rank and file catches on—the New Masses is destined to become a national organ. In anticipation of this honor it has been recently fumigated of subversive elements and now presents an editorial board almost as "broad" as the Congress itself.

Pulp Writers Front
Just how the "Pulp Writers Seminar" solved their problem has not yet been revealed. It is always possible of course to make the villain a stooge for Hearst and the hero a stout-hearted Farmer-Laborite. (In case the reader doesn't know it, a "pulp writer" is one of those ladies and gentlemen who produce the contents of Adventure, Wild Western, Mystery Tales, Gang Stories, Snappy Stories, etc., which abound by the hundred in every drug and news-store of the land.) It is known that the screen writers formed a united front on the proposition that the movies are lousy, but it broke up almost immediately on the issue of who was to blame for it. An attempt to lay the blame on the shoulders of the scenarists was countered with the charge that the Hearst papers are lousy too but that members of the Newspaper Guild and even some comrades in good standing write for them.

At the conclusion of one of the sessions, Mike Gold spoke eloquently in the cause of peace. The Congress, he said, had been peaceful. No counter-revolutionary Trotskyite had raised a head (though one had tried). No ghost of executed Bolsheviks had stalked the love-feast. In the words of Father Divine: "Peace, Brothers, Peace, Sisters, Peace, God."

The next super-colossal production to be pulled out of the Party hat in San Francisco, will be an Artists Congress. Preliminary arrangements are under way.

The Notebook of an Agitator

California Socialists In Action; Spirit and Technique of the Pioneers; the Heritage of Modern Socialist Youth; a Poor Man's Movement; the Road Ahead

At the Thomas meeting in Los Angeles during the campaign William Velarde, leader of the agricultural workers' union in Southern California, out on bail furnished by the Non Partisan Labor Defense, made a speech in which he frankly stated, "The Socialist Party and the Young People's Socialist League were the backbone of our strike." In San Francisco, two months before the waterfront tie-up, the Socialist Local held a public mass meeting under its own auspices, with prominent leaders of the maritime unions on the platform, to popularize the labor side of the controversy with the ship owners and state the position of the party, and newly recruited young Socialist militants are on the waterfront picket lines today. Socialist activists were in the forefront of the Salinas battle and won a secure place for themselves and their party in the hearts of the militants there.

Throughout this period the party in California found time to conduct a fairly active general agitation—the writer alone spoke at nineteen meetings throughout the state; Glen Trimble and other party leaders were on the firing line—and the YPSL conducted a successful summer school at which the weighty problems of revolutionary theory and practice were elucidated by young Marxists who knew what they are talking about. On top of this the Workers Defense League has been firmly established as a bonafide non-partisan defense organization mainly through the initiative and participation of Socialists.

These variegated activities, this combination of energetic agitation, theoretical inquiry and resolute, courageous participation in the mass struggles of the workers was organized and conducted under the general head of what the revitalized party in California understands as an election campaign. Net results: It didn't succeed in stemming the Roosevelt landslide when it came to votes—the Socialist campaign lacked the forces and resources and the Roosevelt movement was too strong and too deep for such a result—but the party, and the YPSL increased their membership, strengthened and tempered their organizations and telescoped the closing of the election campaign into a drive to launch a weekly socialist paper.

And that's what counts. Short-sighted people, snivellers and vote-catchers can talk all they want to about socialist "defeat and disintegration" in the elections. We haven't noticed it here. We don't know yet how matters stand in other parts of the country, but here in California the party is not groggy, but up on its toes and fighting. Our election campaign was only a training school of all-round socialist activity and a prelude to deeper and broader struggles. That's primarily what election campaigns are for anyway.

I've been around and seen a lot since I first joined the I. W. W. in 1911 and, soon afterward, became one of the "voluntary organizers" who, got their training in Vincent St. John's school of learning by doing, but it seems to me that the California socialists, especially the YPSL, have as much of the militant crusading spirit of the old movement as any group I have worked with throughout that fairly long stretch of years.

The "Saint," of affectionate memory, was a wonderful man to learn from. He was short on paver and had some gaps in his theory, but he was long on action and he was firmly convinced that a man can learn to swim. His way of testing, and also of developing, the young militants who grew up under his tutelage was to give them responsibility and shove them into action and see what happened. Those who acquired self-confidence and the capacity to make decisions under fire on the spot, which are about 90 per cent of the distinctive quality of leaders and organizers, eventually received credentials as voluntary organizers and thereafter enjoyed a semi-official status in the strikes and other actions which marked the career of the I. W. W. in its glorious hey-day. The shock troops of the movement were the foot-loose militants who moved around the country as the scene of action shifted.

As is more or less chronically the case in revolutionary organizations, which are historically fated to be poor until they win the final victory and have no need of money, there was very little cash in the treasury in those days. That's why the organizers' credentials as a rule were marked "voluntary"—so that they would not get ridiculous ideas into their heads about the responsibility of the organization for their food and shelter from wind and rain. True, St. John's first thought was

always for the man in the field and he had a marvelous and un-failing ability to dig up a couple of dollars in a pinch. But for the most part, the voluntary organizers foraged, producing activity wherever they went and finding sustenance one way or another, preaching the gospel in the manner of the early Christians and, like them, living by the gospel. By and large this was the story also of the pioneer Socialist agitators of the time.

I think to this day that the spirit, method and technique of the pre-war socialist and I. W. W. movements belong naturally and of necessity to a genuine proletarian movement growing indigenously in the soil of America. This tradition is a rich heritage which the new generation of revolutionary militants must make their own.

It is imperative, of course, that our youth deeply ponder the great lessons to be derived from the world experience of the working class since 1914. Then they will be able to see clearer and work with a better sense of direction than the pioneers of an earlier day upon whose shoulders they stand. But the makers of the new movement, if they really want to make it move, must be fired with the spirit of the pioneers, with the courage, self-sacrifice and purposeful activism for which the names of Bill Haywood and Gene Debs and Ben Hanford and Vincent St. John are unforgettable and inspiring symbols.

The Socialist movement, if it is really socialist, is a poor man's movement, which operates every day in defiance of the rules of book-keeping and the bankruptcy laws and cannot hire high-priced experts to bring about the socialist society. Those who have gone before us have shown how to make out in spite of all that. Debs campaigned for the presidency for the party wage of three dollars a day, and in 1917 they had to take up a collection in New York to send Trotsky to Russia to organize a revolution. We have no subsidy to draw on, and that is very probably a good thing. Subsidy is all too easily converted into a corrupting influence, as the sorry degeneration of Stalin's jumping-jack parties so eloquently testifies. Better for the movement to stand on its own feet and pay its own way as best it can. Better to draw on the hidden and financially intangible resources of enthusiasm, conviction and self-sacrifice of party militants who dare to "storm the heavens."

These are the main resources which have sustained the party in California during the recent months and finally nerved it to undertake such a heroic enterprise as the launching of a weekly paper on the heels of the election campaign. If the party, a numerically small organization weakened by the mass exodus of Epic utopians and still further attenuated by new desertions since the Old Guard split, could develop a healthier and more rounded activity during the election campaign than ever before, and grow stronger and more cohesive in the process, then we have a right to conclude that we are on the right track and to calculate that the coming months will bring new successes and increased strength.

—J. P. C.

Japan Air Network In Mandated Islands

The development of a mighty air network over the islands mandated to Japan by the victorious nations at the end of the World War was reported last week to the Mandate Commission of the League of Nations and examined by that body.

Although it is generally admitted that the development of these air lines is part of Japan's preparation for the fast-approaching war, the Commission asked no questions and accepted the report with the reasons supplied by the Japanese government.

The air-lines will be flown by super-planes now under construction which will cover the islands lying south of Japan and will connect with the mainland at strategic points.

No Questions In previous years the Commission has asked questions about the militarization of the islands, but this year it dropped even that formality. The Japanese government in the face of persistent reports to the contrary blandly replied that it has no military or naval bases or fortifications within the territory that will be served by the air lines.

There are only 60,000 inhabitants in the huge area covered by the air lines and only nine post offices, but in relation to war upon the Asiatic mainland, the islands will serve as an important base for military operations.

Y. P. L. S.

The Young People's Socialist League of California since the first of the year has experienced a period of solid growth which is unparalleled in its history. At the beginning of 1936 the Yipsels had but 62 members divided between Los Angeles and San Francisco. At the present time the League has 150 members in Los Angeles, San Francisco, Berkeley, Stockton, Fresno, Pasadena, Dominguez Hills and groups being formed in Palo Alto, Redwood City, and San Diego.

A convention held by the California District of the Y.P.S.L. in September brought out the facts that the organization had developed politically and industrially far beyond the fields usually gone into by youth organizations. The discussions covered the range of world developments from the People's front to the C.I.O. The decisions arrived at were proof that the Y.P.S.L. had achieved political maturity.

Activity in Strikes A brief survey of the activities of the League in the past year shows a tremendous increase in industrial activity. In the early spring the Y.P.S.L. threw all its forces in the southern part of the state into the strike of agricultural workers in Los Angeles and Orange counties. For months Yipsels spent their time organizing picket lines, relief and legal defense for the strikers. Many members were arrested in the course of the strike. William Velarde, president of the C. U. C. U. M., Mexican field workers union, stated that without the work of the Socialist Party and the Young People's Socialist League the strike would have been hopelessly lost.

The Salinas strike again found members of the Young People's Socialist League active in organizing the Filipino field workers in the lettuce fields. Yipsels served on the joint strike committee and on the strike strategy committee there, and were respected by the militants in the struggle for their active work and progressive policies.

During the strike of the International Longshoremen's Association against the Woolworth stores many Yipsels, some of them students at the University of California, were arrested for violation of the Berkeley anti-picketing ordinance. A few of these were sentenced to 60 days in jail and at present their cases are being appealed by the Workers' Defense League.

At present we find members of the Young People's Socialist League among the most active rank and file militants in the maritime strike. On the picket lines and in the strike halls of the many unions involved in the strike there are fighting Yipsels carrying their share of the struggle. Almost daily there are new recruits to the ranks of the Y.P.S.L. from these workers who are making labor history.

In Schools and Colleges But the activities of the Young People's Socialist League of California are not confined only to industrial struggles. On the campus the Yipsels are fighting against compulsory military training, against scab recruiting and against the militarist propaganda being spread there by government and administration agencies. In every college and in many high schools the Yipsels are agitating for Socialism and pointing out to the students that their struggle should at all times be bound up with the struggles of the working class.

Two summer schools were held by the Young People's Socialist League this year for members and sympathizers. At these schools young comrades received training in Socialist theory and in methods of organization so that when they returned to their workday tasks in shops and schools they could more readily turn their knowledge to organization of workers and students for revolutionary working-class activity.

Speaking Tours At present the California Y. P. S. L. is touring two speakers in the state who are speaking on the Maritime Strike and acquainting the youth of the state with the issues involved. Meetings are being held in every large city and town to arouse public sympathy for the strikers and to tell the truth about the collaboration of the government and the ship-owners in the present struggle.

Besides these activities, the Y.P.S.L. regularly has classes in political questions and in Marxism and carries on a program of cultural activities covering the entire field of youth interests from sports to music and the arts. There is a place in the Young People's Socialist League for every young worker and student who is ready to enroll in the struggle for a better world. No matter what personal interests a young person may have he can find an outlet and expression in the ranks of the Y.P.S.L.

Write for Literature For information regarding the organization, for literature on the role of youth in the struggle for Socialism, for a free copy of our monthly paper "The Challenge of Youth," write to Howard Rosen, state secretary, Young People's Socialist League, Room 334, 628 Montgomery St., San Francisco, California.

International Notes

"National Front"—Stalinists Offer Unity To Fascists—Second International On the Moscow Trials—Elections In Scandinavia

The Communist International is seeking to avoid war and to maintain the status quo by supplanting the opportunist policies of the "People's Front" with the arch-reactionary policies of the "National Front." The policy of the National Front consists in the reconciliation of the entire people against a handful of large monopolists and warmakers. It is they who are the real enemies of the nation and not the entire class of capitalists; it is they who, in a conspiracy with the German Nazis, breed war. The workers must struggle not for Socialism but for "peace, freedom and prosperity"—and compel their respective nations either to conclude or to maintain "peace pacts" with the Soviet Union.

In France the Communists have been advocating for months the "reconciliation of the French people" against the "200 families," in support of the Franco-Russian pact, against the German Nazis, and, of course, for a "strong, happy and free France."

Italy

In Italy the Communists urge the reconciliation of Fascists and non-Fascists which "shows the way to the salvation of Italy and of peace through the reconciliation and the unification of the whole people—Fascists and non-Fascists—in the common fight against the real enemy of the people and of the nation: big capitalism." (Manifesto of the Italian C. P., Inprecor, August 22, 1935.) The Communists propose "reconciliation" not for the purpose of overthrowing Fascism (or for establishing Socialism) but "to make Italy strong, free and happy."

The Manifesto says: "Let us reach out our hands to each other, children of the Italian nation, Fascists and Communists, Catholics and Socialists, people of all opinions, and let us march side by side. . . . We have the same ambition—to make Italy strong, free and happy."

The basis of this Italian Front on which the Fascists and non-Fascists are to be "reconciled" is nothing else than the Fascist program of 1919. "Addressing itself to the fascists of the Old Guard, as well as to the fascist youth (the Manifesto declares): We proclaim that we are prepared to fight, together with you and the whole Italian people, for the carrying out of the fascist programme of 1919. . . ."

In short, the Stalinists pledge to be a loyal and peaceful opposition to Mussolini in return for an alliance with the Soviet Union (and its allies). "We want our country to conclude mutual assistance pacts with all our neighbors and especially with France. . . . and, further, for Italy to make a pact accordingly with the Soviet Union."

Germany The German Communist Party has issued under the date line "Berlin, October, 1935" a Manifesto which is a mere restatement of the Italian Manifesto. In Germany, too, the Stalinists advocate the "reconciliation of the German people against the 3,000 millionaires, and the war makers." Once again, the Nazis and the over-throw Hitler but to make Germany "strong, (free) and happy."

The Manifesto says, "We wish our fatherland to be strong and happy through peace and not miserable through war." "Further, 'You, National Socialist, you, Social Democrat, you, Catholic, you, Communist, you, Worker, you, Peasant, you, Artisan, and you, Intellectual—haven't we all, children of the German nation, the same ambition to live in freedom, peace and prosperity? Haven't we all the same needs today? . . . Nazi and non-Nazi toilers have heretofore fought bitterly against each other, Nazi brothers! You believed that in this way you would gain German Socialism. Four years have passed. What has been fulfilled of your program? . . . Let us reach out our hands to each other and unite!"

As may be easily gathered from the above, this unification is to be effected on the basis of Hitler's "unfulfilled program." The Stalinists are ready to be a loyal opposition to the Fuehrer. One of the slogans raised in the Manifesto reads as follows: "For Germany! This means for order and sobriety in the country!" Hitler need have no fear of being overthrown by the Stalinists provided he is ready to say with them that "We are prepared to conclude a peace pact with all other peoples." (All of the above quotations are from a reprint of the Manifesto in *Detsohe Volks-Zeitung* Oct. 18, 1935; the latter paper is the Czechoslovakian Stalinist organ.)

It is only a question of time before similar Manifestos are issued in every country. In Austria, for example, Otto Bauer reports that the Stalinists have been seeking a rapprochement with the far "left wing" of the Austrian

Fascist (Austrian Christian Socialist Party) against the German Nazis.

Spain In Spain, where it is impossible to propose a reconciliation with the Fascists with whom the workers are engaged in a life and death struggle, the Stalinists support the People's Front—but only in the struggle for "democracy." Jose Diaz, the leader of the Spanish C. P. stated the following to a correspondent of the French Socialist paper *Populaire*: "Taking into consideration the internal and international situation, we wish to struggle only for a democratic republic with the widest social content. At the present time there cannot be any talk of the dictatorship of the proletariat or of Socialism, but only of the struggle of democracy against Fascism." (*Populaire*, September 8, 1935.)

Commenting upon the latest reactionary shift of the Comintern, Otto Bauer, in *Kampf*, expresses his opinion that the recent "Moscow Trial" and the drive against "Trotskyists" internationally are intended as a cover for the policies of the Stalinists. Henceforth any criticism of the Stalinists for extending a "brotherly hand" to the Nazis in particular and Fascists in general will be refuted by a counter-charge that the critics are merely "terrorist agents of the Gestapo, etc."

The L. S. I. and the Spanish Situation:

The Joint Session of the General Council of International Federation of Trade Unions, and of Executive Committee of the Labor and Socialist International, took place in Paris on September 23. The session was called upon the request of the Spanish Trade Federation to consider the Spanish situation. The report of this joint session, which was almost solely devoted to this question, states that the representatives of practically all countries had the opportunity to express their indignation and horror over the fact that the Spanish workers in their heroic struggle were placed in difficult position due to lack of arms at a time when guns, tanks and airplanes were accumulating in the camp of the Fascist generals who are being supplied as heretofore by the Fascist states.

The situation in Spain was discussed in the light of the international situation, and there was unanimous agreement that the international working class cannot remain neutral in this struggle. A committee was appointed to draft a resolution to this effect.

The L. S. I. and the "Moscow Trial"

The Executive Committee of the L.S.I. met on September 27 and unanimously approved the telegram sent to Moscow on the occasion of the trial of Zinoviev, Kamenev and the others. This telegram had been sent on August 21 by the respective Chairman and Secretary of the L.S.I. and I.T.U., and had been subjected to an unbridled attack by the Communist International.

The October 10 issue of *Sotzialisticheski Vestnik* carries an article by F. Adler, secretary of the Second International, entitled "The Moscow Witch Trial." Adler in this article replies to the attack launched by Dimitroff and the Comintern against the Second International for its position on the Moscow Trial. From the study of previous trials, Adler states, "especially from the trial of the 'Menshevik United Bureau' in 1931, he had become absolutely convinced that 'the political prosecutors of Moscow planfully and deliberately extort false confessions from the accused' (emphasis in the original). Adler cites as an instance the testimony revolving around the 'central point' in the 1931 trial, when witnesses gave detailed testimony of the meetings and conversations in the Soviet Union with Abramovich in the summer of 1928, at a time when Abramovich was present in Brussels, as a delegate to the International Socialist Congress.

Adler then analyzes the factual content of the latest trial and concludes, that "there is no doubt whatever that this trial was constructed upon extorted and false confessions, and that the self-same methods were applied in it as in the Menshevik trial of 1931." Adler says, "We proclaim openly that so long as these methods of 'witches trials' are practiced, we will view the political justice of Stalin with the same loathing as we do the political justice of Hitler."

Recent Elections In Scandinavia

NORWAY.—The Norwegian Labor Party emerged victorious in the recent elections to the Norwegian Parliament, gaining more than 100,000 (872,275 against 468,693 in 1933). The Norwegian Nazis, supported directly by the German Nazis, lost more than 2,000 votes, and failed to obtain

Produce Germs As War Weapons

A new field for profit-making in the coming war will be the production of disease germs, says an article in "Contact," an aviation news weekly published at Fort Lee, New Jersey. Already a plant has been constructed at an unnamed spot in the United States for the manufacture of bombs that will be loaded with disease germs. The corporation which erected this plant six years ago, owns two similar plants in Europe.

"The airplane has been turned into the third horseman of the apocalypse, the rider of pestilence," the article in "Contact" reads. "Most planes, particularly those developed in Europe as long range reconnaissance planes, are built with an eye to the possibilities of germ warfare. Germ bombs, weighing only a few ounces, with a deadliness greater than tons of explosives, may be carried unbelievable distances by these flying gas bombs."

Fat Germs "Self-infecting powder, consisting of exploded gas and ground silicon dioxide, is impregnated with germs and a food paste, capable of keeping them alive 60 to 80 hours under the severest conditions. This is blown out behind the planes through the exhaust and makes its own minute out and infection, filtering through the clothing and breathed in with the dust."

"Crops and cattle are not immune from the germ raiders from the sky. The spores of grain and fruit diseases have been cultured in order to destroy the food supply of the enemy. Cattle diseases are introduced just as the human elements are."

"This is to be one of the functions of planes in the next war. There will be more profit in growing germs than in making most. According to the scale, most germ culture will sell for over \$300 a pound. The cost of production, including salaries and experiments, is less than \$6 a pound."

a single mandate. The Communist Party likewise made a miserable showing. The Norwegian Social Democrats (Labor Party) now hold a total of 71 seats out of 150.

DENMARK.—The Danish Socialists scored considerable gains in the partial elections to the Landsting (the upper chamber); and are now the largest single party in Denmark, having gained 2 additional mandates and now holding 31 out of a total of 76. The fascists while increasing their vote from 1,019 to 2,018 failed to obtain a mandate. The Communists failed even to run candidates.

SWEDEN.—The Swedish Social Democrats increased their vote, in the election to the Swedish Chamber of Deputies from 1,039,349 in 1932 to 1,336,554, gaining 112 mandates out of a total of 230 (4 short of an absolute majority). Together with the Independent Communists (Kilbom) and the official C. P., the parties representing the working class hold an absolute majority (the former holding 6 mandates and the latter 5).

Poland

The swing of the masses to the left that is reflected in the elections in Scandinavia is also to be noted in Poland. In the recent municipal elections held in September in Lodz, the second largest city in Poland and its biggest industrial center, the Socialist parties (Jewish and Polish and affiliated German federations) obtained an absolute majority of the total votes and mandates. The Polish Socialist Party (P.P.S.) together with affiliated labor organizations increased its vote from 22,284 in 1934 to 95,115 (increasing the mandates from 5, in 1934, to 34); The Bund and the Left Poale Zion increased their vote from 8,311 to 23,762 (now holding 6 mandates instead of the previous 3). The two Nazi parties receive no mandates. Neither did the Communists. A similar shift to the left is evidenced in the results of other municipal elections in Poland.

The Edinburgh Conference of the British Labor Party

The recent Edinburgh Conference of the British Labor Party marked a further swing to the right of the Laborites. The reactionaries dominated the Conference on every issue. The affiliation of the Communist Party was rejected by a vote of 1,728,000 to 592,000. The proposal for a united front with other working class organizations (on the very "mild" program proposed by the I.L.P.) was rejected by a vote of 1,805,000 to 435,000. The difference in the votes between the affiliation of the C. P. and the united front proposal is to be explained by the fact that the leaders of the miners were bound by a definite mandate from their own Conference to cast the block of 400,000 votes in favor of accepting the Stalinists, but they were not bound with respect to the united front proposal, and cast their support to the reactionaries.

The Party At Work

S. F. Dinner Nets Labor Action \$219

Marking the birth of the militant Socialist weekly, Labor Action, a dinner, dance and entertainment was held at the Socialist headquarters, 1057 Steiner Street, Sunday evening, November 22. The affair was a rousing success in every way and netted \$219 for the Labor Action fund.

Joan London, a member of the Socialist Party and the daughter of Jack London, gave a brief description of the aggressive spirit which guided Jack London in both his writings and his activities and said she felt sure that, were he alive today, he would greet Labor Action with enthusiasm because of the promise it gives of being a fighting organ of the working class.

Barney Mayes, Editor of the Voice of the Federation, welcomed the launching of Labor Action as a new force in the struggle for a militant labor movement. Clarence Rust, a member of the Editorial Board, Glen Trimble, State Secretary of the Socialist Party and Associate Editor of Labor Action, and James P. Cannon, Editor, all spoke with enthusiasm of the splendid work done by Socialists in California and throughout the west to make possible the establishment of this weekly Socialist paper.

Foundation Fund Raised

To an eager audience, Comrade Cannon broke the news—that the \$1,000, which was required by the State Executive Committee of the California Socialist Party as a safeguard to the first few weeks of life for Labor Action, had been topped the day before the dinner. He emphasized the fact that in less than six weeks of the campaign to raise the money, rank-and-file Socialists had made the inspiring sacrifices which produced \$1057 before the launching of the first issue.

Because of the necessary ex-

penditures for postage and printing to advertise Labor Action and give it advance promotion, which cut into this initial fund, friends at the dinner were asked to contribute in cash or pledges so as to make a clear \$1000 before the first issue came off the press, and to start the sustaining fund toward the \$2000 mark.

Response from the hundred and fifty people at the dinner produced \$104 in pledges—all payable within a short period—and \$65 in cash. About \$50 was cleared on the dinner itself, bringing the total net proceeds to \$219.

Performers Liven Affair High spot in the evening entertainment was the spontaneous Polka, danced by Louis Mazer and Millie Goldberg.

Coins began ringing to the floor to keep the dancers going. Business Manager of Labor Action, Frank Stern, was immediately on the spot, and before the "smoke cleared" four more dollars were added to the Labor Action fund in contributions of pennies, nickels, and dimes which the crowd tossed onto the floor to persuade various comrades to perform. A real "gold mine" was Jim Cannon's rendition of some old "Wobbly" songs, and the crowd joined lustily in the choruses.

Great credit is due the talents and hard work of the Italian members and friends of the Socialist Party who planned and cooked a fine Italian meal and furnished music for the merry-making after the dinner. The Young People's Socialist League of San Francisco and East Bay put a lot of hard work into the decorations and table service for the dinner. Undaunted by hard work, they livened up the course of the dinner with organized singing of Socialist songs.

Western States Federation Of The Socialist Party

The election is over, but for the Western Federation of the Socialist Party of the U.S.A. the campaign is just begun. Plans for an intensive organizational tour aboard Red Sound Truck No. 1 have met enthusiastic response throughout the western states. Labor activity and labor influence are definitely on the upgrade from reports sent to the Federation secretary, Crarry Trimble, Room 334, 628 Montgomery, San Francisco. Minnesota has been added to the list of states affiliated to the Federation which already includes California, Colorado, Kansas, New Mexico, Washington, and Wyoming.

Original plans for the Federation were laid by delegates from the western states at the Cleveland National Convention. The organization was formally launched at a September conference in Red Feather Lakes, Colorado. "Organized for the sole purpose of increasing socialist education, activity and organization in the West by cooperation among the western states," the delegates dedicated themselves to the building of a "lasting, confident, aggressive fighting party proud to speak and work for revolutionary Socialism in every field of the class struggle."

11 Out of 12 One evidence of the spirit in the West that has made the Federation possible, is the fact that of the twelve states leading in contributions to the National Fund Drive, eleven are west of the Mississippi. This same energy has been thrown into the initial enterprise of the Western Federation. Beside the Sound Truck tour plans are launched to revive a tradition of the pre-war Wob-

bles by the organization of "Foot-loose Rebels"—a band of comrades willing to sacrifice economic security and devote full time to work for socialism wherever and whenever they are needed. Just as the footloose members of the I.W.W. pulled up stakes and hit the road for any part of the West where a strike, a free speech fight, or an organization campaign was on, these modern Footloose Rebels will carry the socialist message into every spot where the class war flares.

Big Field The Federation plans to promote inter-state cooperation in dealing with the special problems of western industrial workers. These include those of the transient agricultural workers from Montana to California, the maritime workers on the West Coast and Gulf, the mine workers in the Rockies, Spanish speaking workers in the Southwest, lumber workers in the Northwest, beet workers in Colorado, share-croppers in Arkansas and the harvest hands in the prairie states. Simply listing these groups gives some idea of the tremendous responsibilities and opportunities for socialist service in the West.

Readers of Labor Action who wish copies of the monthly Federation Bulletin, or who have information or suggestions on the problems outlined are urged to write to the Federation secretary in San Francisco. States not yet affiliated are urged to do so and send in their dues (\$1.00 per month) at once. Volunteers for the Footloose Rebel army are coming in fast. JOIN NOW!

Watch Labor Action for weekly news of Western Federation activity and accomplishments.

March of the Locals

San Francisco:

Plans are being made for the opening of the new Socialist headquarters on Van Ness near Grove, December first. With local activity increasing in scope, Young People's Socialist League membership and strength growing, the old headquarters at 1057 Steiner Street have become inadequate.

Local San Francisco decided that the time was ripe for the establishment of a Socialist center which could house the local offices, the State Office, and the editorial and business offices of Labor Action, in addition to meetings, forums, dances, entertainments, and possibly a book store.

Los Angeles:

Los Angeles is planning to celebrate the birth of Labor Action with a series of dances, dinners and mass meetings, the first of which will be a whooping big banquet to be given on Friday, Dec. 4, 1936 at 7 p. m. Good speakers, good food and good company will be the order of the evening. The place: Melody Inn, 939 N. Western Ave. CALL VA. 3-0000 AND MAKE YOUR RES-

ERVATIONS NOW! A Thanksgiving Party is being planned by the Central Branch in Los Angeles, to be held at Innes Gardens, Saturday, November 28.

A class for training Socialist Party members in the methods of teaching Socialist principles, Labor History, and other subjects is being organized for the purpose of increasing the number of teachers available for evening classes during the winter and for the regular Socialist summer schools.

David Stevens, organizer for Los Angeles, has been assisting in the work of organizing the local in Harbor City. An organization meeting was held Thursday, November 12. Socialist cooperation in the maritime workers' strike was discussed at this meeting.

Note to Socialist Locals:

This column should have weekly NEWS from all locals. Reports should be sent to the Editor of Labor Action by the end of each week. Especially urgent matter will be taken if it reaches the office NOT LATER than the FIRST MAIL Monday morning.

LABOR ACTION

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF CALIFORNIA
Published Weekly by
Labor Action Publishing Association
628 Montgomery St., Room 334,
San Francisco, Calif.

JAMES P. CANNON.....Editor
GLEN TRIMBLE.....Associate Editor
FRANK STERN.....Business Manager

Subscription Rates: \$1.50 per year; Bundle Rates:
Up to 100, 3c per copy; over 100, 2 1/2c per copy.

Signed contributions do not necessarily represent the policy of the editorial board. In the line of party democracy and free speech timely articles by socialists expressing differing viewpoints may be published on the responsibility of the authors.

VOL. 1, NO. 1 SATURDAY, NOV. 28, 1936

Labor Action

The editors feel that the statement of policy drawn up by the editorial board and unanimously endorsed by the California State Executive Committee is our best possible introduction to our readers.

We want you to know what we're after and how we plan to proceed right at the start. Whether you agree or disagree with our position, we want you to know where we stand. Here is our statement of policy:

"As the official organ of the Socialist Party of California, **Labor Action** is to be conceived as an aggressive exponent of the position of revolutionary Socialism on all important questions of the day. The main emphasis of the paper is to be placed on concrete developments of the class struggle, nationally and internationally, and their interpretation from the Marxist point of view. It will be the special aim to make the paper interesting and attractive to non-party workers engaged in struggles and to present the message of Socialism to them in understandable terms.

"The paper will publicize the activities of the party and the Young People's Socialist League, as a rule in special departments, but will not give the appearance of a 'house organ.' The bulk of the space will be devoted to reports of the activities of the broad labor movement and of current political affairs which concern great masses of people. This will not be neutral reporting. The paper will approach every question from the angle of the class struggle in modern society."

Is Everybody Happy?

The tumult and the shouting dies and the smoke—to say nothing of the fog—of the election clears away and leaves the bright sun shining down on a free, happy and prosperous America. It was a famous victory for progress. The well-known friend of labor rolled up an imposing majority and sailed away for South America with a smile. The stock market is booming. The crest-fallen economic royalists took their beating like good sports and, by way of self-consolation, are distributing profits and extra dividends among themselves on the biggest scale since 1929. Farley's multitude of postmasters, fixers, ward heelers and bunco steers are as happy and as fat as pigs in clover, and we mean clover. Even Hearst hails the election results as a vindication of the American system of government which he prizes so highly. They say in Washington that a new "Era of Good Feeling" is upon us. In short, everything is lovely and the goose hangs high. Everybody's happy. That is, nearly everybody.

Of course, the thousands of WPA workers who got lay-off slips in their envelopes in the past two weeks are not taking a conspicuous part in the general jubilation. That, however, is hardly to be expected. The kick in the pants they have received is too much like an echo of the vote they cast in the election. Nor can the maritime workers, forced out on strike to defend their organization, be blamed if they are singing "Hold the Fort" on the picket line instead of the Democratic theme song, "Happy Days Are Here Again." And when in the coming months wages lag behind price increases while profits mount sky high again, when the million-headed standing army of the unemployed remains stationary despite increasing production, when military and naval expenditures grow ever larger in preparation for foreign war and strikers are attacked at home with clubs and guns and gas—when all this happens, as it inevitably will, a fairly sizeable mass of working people are quite apt to stop short and ask themselves: "What are we cheering for, anyway?"

That question will have point and meaning and may spell the beginning of a great awakening if it is directed to the right place—to the false advisers and misleaders in the labor ranks who told the workers that salvation lay in supporting the candidate of a capitalist political party who swore allegiance to the system of "private enterprise, private ownership and private profit." It is precisely this system that breeds poverty, unemployment and war and is inseparable from them. When this irrefutable idea begins to dawn in the minds of the masses it will be an unhappy day for the labor lieutenants of the democratic party, for Green, Lewis, Dubinsky & Co., not forgetting their poor relations, the Old Guard socialists and the Roosevelt communists. By the same token it will be a day of opportunity and revival for a workers' political party that told the truth and keeps on telling it.

To Tom Mooney

Labor Action takes the opportunity of its first issue to send fraternal proletarian greetings to Tom Mooney and through him to all the class war prisoners whom he represents and symbolizes.

Old time fighter for labor's cause, Tom Mooney has given his life to preserving and carrying on the militant spirit of Western workers. Today he stands as the great symbol of the blind, vindictive hatred of the capitalist class and the heroic never-say-die determination of the advance guard of American workers.

In greeting Tom Mooney we greet, too, Warren K. Billings and the thousands of other class war prisoners in America and throughout the world.

To them we pledge that their fight is our fight. We shall not rest until the doors of privilege, power and class injustice are battered from their hinges forever.

Too Much Unanimity

An illuminating sidelight on the Roosevelt re-election is the unanimous chorus of approval from the foreign press.

"In Paris, fiercely-wrangling rightists and leftists were momentarily united in expressions of satisfaction," says the Associated Press.

From officials in Rome, "There is general satisfaction, where the theory of continued opportunity for leaders is ingrown." People's Front Foreign Minister of France, Yvon Delbos, sees "a triumph for democratic tendencies" and feels "great joy at the tremendous backing given to Roosevelt's policy of peace."

Lord Beaverbrook, England's Hearst, thinks Roosevelt is "grand;" the Berlin Tageblatt sees "the eruption of the fuehrer idea within the democratic system."

"In Moscow, Soviet quarters frankly expressed approval, because Roosevelt showed friendship towards Russia and insured no change in Russo-American relations," while Tokio "welcomed the re-election of President Roosevelt, declaring they believed it would favorably affect Japanese-American relations."

In Europe—as in America—everybody won! Everybody, except the workers. The dispatches are smashing evidence of the class-awareness of the right from Beaverbrook to Hitler, and the pitiful muddle-headedness of the official left from Paris to Moscow.

It has long been common knowledge that both sides of an argument cannot win. If Japan is happy, the Soviet Union should find cause for grief. If French rightists are satisfied, French leftists should not find cause for rejoicing. To what end did the Russian workers sacrifice blood, privation, and suffer the birth-agony of a new social order; for what reason do French workers strike against rightists' exploitation—if there is no conflict between the two main classes? And if there are two sides in that conflict, how, politically, can both sides be "victorious" by the election of a capitalist-supported, capitalist-pledged representative of the capitalist class?

Leading parties of the Communist and Socialist Internationals have ceased to think in terms of the struggle of the workers to win the world. They launch "People's Fronts" so that the middle class may "save" the workers from fascism by soothing them into a false security, and "National Fronts" or unity with capitalist-fascists—again in the name of a false promise of safety. Obsessed with the glorious mission of preserving "peace at all costs," they think that by creating the outward semblance of a "happy family" they can bluff the fascist forces. In reality, they merely furnish the lull before the storm which gives the fascist elements an opportunity to better organize and strengthen themselves without any effective opposition. The left leadership succeeds only in taking the organized fight out of the workers—which is the sole guarantee against fascism.

What is really significant about the unanimous world "huzzahs" over the re-election of Roosevelt is that there is no longer a middle road between capitalism and Socialism. Since Moscow and Paris have forgotten the language of Marx, their only alternative is the language of Roosevelt, Stanley Baldwin and Benito Mussolini.

THE STRIKE

By COVINGTON HALL

Say what ye will, ye owls of night, The strike upholds the cause of right; The strike compels the Judge to pause, The Statesman to remold the laws.

Say what ye will, yet without ruth, The strike drives home the word of truth; The strike tears off the mask of things, To Mass and Class the issue brings.

Say what ye will, the strike is good; It clears things long misunderstood; It jolts the Social Mind awake; It forces men a stand to take.

Say what ye will, all else above, The strike is war for bread and love; For raiment, shelter, Freedom, all The human race can justice call.

Sidelines

By JONATHAN DOE

On a Park Bench

He was lying there on the park bench, stretched out on his back in the sun. He had one shoe and sock off and was striking his bare toes across the slats on the back rest as if the slats were the strings of a lyre.

"What are you doing?" I asked. "Practicing, so I can play when the town burns," he said. There was a wild glint in his eye.

"Nero fiddled," I said. "Well, I'm fiddling, too," he replied. "Only I'm fiddling with a lyre. Nero fiddled with a fiddle. What's the diff? The lyre's more difficult. I'm out to out-Nero Nero."

"Why don't you strum with your fingers?"

"This makes it even more difficult," he answered. "I don't want any questions about this out-Neroing Nero business."

"You're crazy," I told him. He didn't deny it. He sat up and made room for me to sit down. I hesitated and then thought, "Oh, what the hell!" "Well, it was a great victory," I said.

"What was?" he enquired.

"The election. The landslide."

"Oh, that. Who won?"

"For Pete's sake! The Democrats won. Roosevelt and Garner won. The capitalists as represented by Vanderbilt, Astor, Young, Giannini and some of the Morgan partners, won. The workers as represented by the American Labor Party, the Labor Non-Partisan League, the Old Guard Social Democrats and the Communists won. The American people won."

"Hurrah," said my companion. "Everybody won. Nobody lost. That was a victory."

"You're crazy," I said. "The Fascists—Landon, Hearst and the Liberty League—lost."

"That's too bad," he said. "It would have been nice if everybody had won, wouldn't it? If the Fascists had won too that would have made it unanimous."

"Nicer, my eye. Browder says—"

"Who's Browder?" he inquired.

"Why Browder was the Communist candidate. Everybody from here to Terre Haute knows that."

"And he won?"

"No," I was getting mad. "He lost."

"But you said the Communists won."

"Now listen here. I'll explain this. Browder was the Communist candidate and he lost. However, Browder and the Communist Party were out to defeat Landon at all costs and Landon and the Fascists lost. Therefore, Browder and the Communists while losing won. Their defeat would have been a smashing victory only Browder got fifty or sixty thousand votes. But these votes were not for Mr. Browder. They were for a farmer-labor party, for a People's Front, for a free, happy and prosperous America."

"Hurrah. Everybody won then," said my companion. "What do you mean?" I was getting pretty sore. "I don't see any use in talking to a bird like you. Didn't I tell you the Fascists lost?"

"Oh, I get it. The fifty or sixty thousand who voted against Fascism won. But they were Communists and the Communists, while winning lost. On the other hand, Hearst and the Liberty League who voted against Communism lost too. But they were Fascists, and as the fifty or sixty thousand who voted against Fascism lost while winning, the Fascists, while winning, lost."

"Now, look here," I said. "I've wasted about all the time on you I'm going to. Thomas—"

"Thomas? Who's he?"

"He was the Socialist candidate for president and he lost," I shouted. "And furthermore, he lost while losing and while losing he lost. But, by God he won and I'm damn proud of him!"

"You're crazy," said the man on the park bench, putting on his shoe.

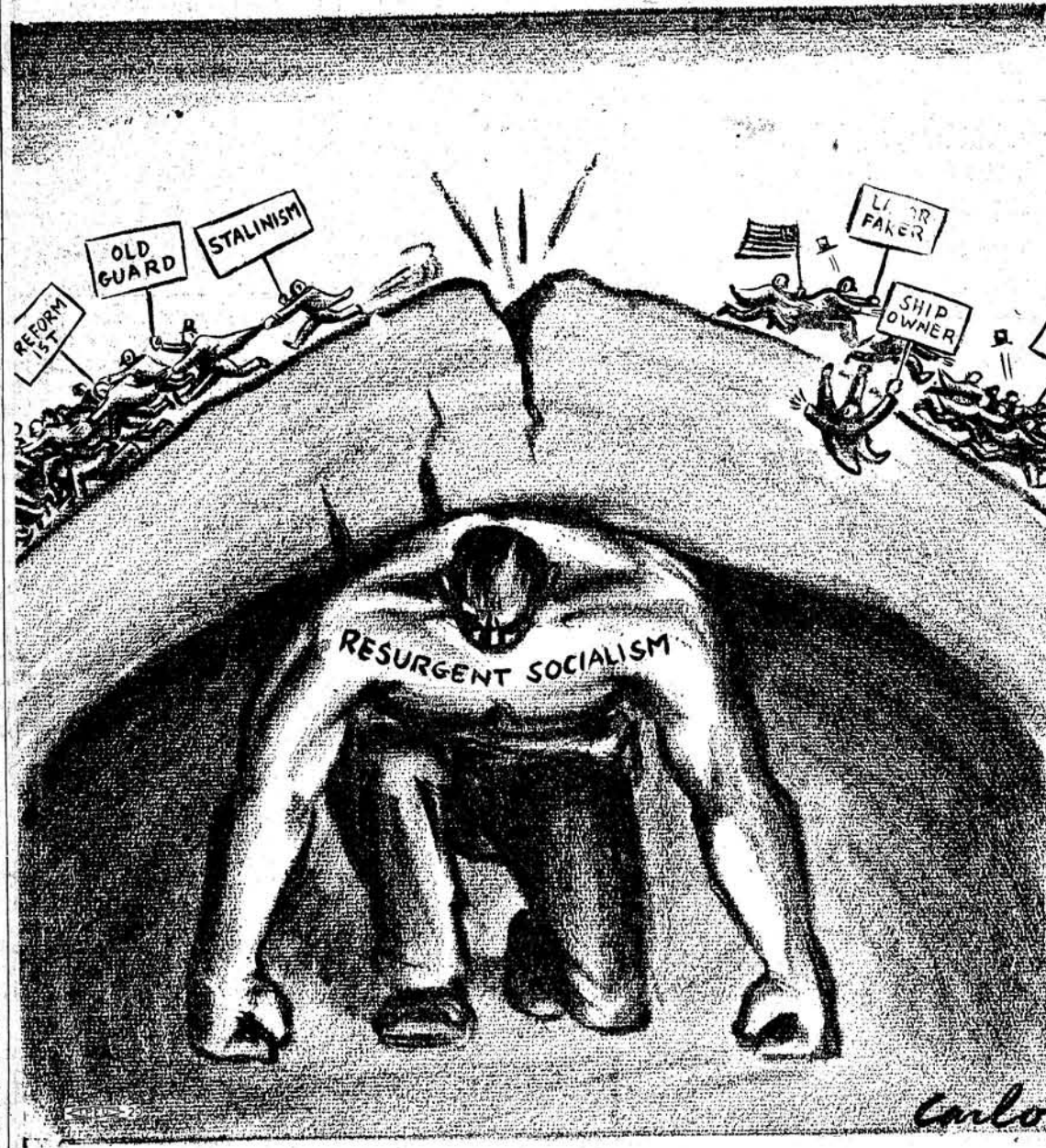
I didn't deny it. I began taking off mine.

Bananas

With ship loads of bananas lying in Pacific Coast harbors, a striking maritime worker was asked to speak from a Los Angeles broadcasting station on the perishable cargo issue. The radio announcer said that his talk would be prefaced by music and asked him to name a selection. He did, and the orchestra played it. It was "Yes, We Have No Bananas."

Social Note On the United Front

It is rumored that the Communist Party, which believes in keeping the Liberty League out of the White House at all costs, is preparing a tremendous nationwide mass-pressure campaign to protest the engagement of Franklin D. Roosevelt, Jr., to Miss Ethel Dupont, niece of Irene Dupont, Liberty League founder. The slogan will be: "Cupid is a Stoolie for Hearst."



Another San Francisco Earthquake

Election Results and Lessons

By GLEN TRIMBLE

The sham battle of the presidential election is over. Already Republicans and Democrats, business men and politicians, are exchanging compliments like the old friends that they have always been. The great issues which were to make or wreck "our American form of government" are put back on the shelf until the next election. Politicians are back at the trough and business men are watching stock profits soar. The people, the workers of America—what does the election mean to them?

One thing is certain, they thought that it meant a great deal. For the great mass of Americans the election was a choice between "progress and reaction," between a new deal for the working man and the threatened return of another Hoover. The greatest vote in the nation's history went overwhelmingly for Roosevelt as against Landon. In the tidal wave not only Republicans but Socialists and Communists found a large part of their fair weather backing swept away.

The Communists

There was a significant difference, however, between the campaigns of the two working class parties. The Communists went with the tide; even did their futile best to help it along. They accepted the Farley-made slogan of "progress or reaction," urged the defeat of Landon at all costs and paid the costs by promising salvation to workers, farmers and youth from poverty, exploitation, war and fascism "under the present capitalist system." The entire logic of their program and campaign was a vote for the Rooseveltian brand of capitalism. The fifty thousand-odd votes they received came in spite of all their efforts to the contrary. One result of the election is certain. The Communist Party of the United States has committed suicide as a revolutionary socialist opposition in America. Its hands are soiled for all time.

The Socialists

The Socialist Party, alone among the significant working class parties, stood on firm ground in regard to the main issue. In spite of the many million-dollar propaganda which recruited Walter Chrysler and Louis Waldman, Governor (Hoosier) Hitler) McNutt and Earl Browder, A. P. (Bank of America) Giannini and Harry Bridges, Alfred (General Motors) Sloan and David Dubinsky, the Socialist Party stood firmly in a position which the whole world must face. "The issue is capitalism or Socialism!" Socialists, and Socialists alone talked sense in a campaign of unparalleled nonsense.

As a consequence the Socialist Party emerges from the campaign as the only clear-cut anti-capitalist party with a revolutionary future in the United States. It has shorn off the dead and rotten "Social Democracy" which pulled down the Red Flag and flew a faintly yellow one on the Roosevelt wagon. Clearly and unmistakably, the one to two hundred thousand votes (it will be months before we know the exact total) given to the Socialist standard bearers are votes for socialism.

The Socialist Party won far more than votes in this campaign. In California and in many other sections of the country Socialists increased their militant activity

for clean, fighting, progressive trade unionism. Membership and organization were increased, tested under fire, shorn of the opportunists and the weak-kneed liberals, tempered for the class struggle of labor against capital which goes on in and out of election years.

Socialists face the future with a clean record, a growing organization, solid rank and file labor strength, and a world to win!

What Happened?

Every analysis of the actual returns bears out one point. By averages the choice between Roosevelt and Landon was for most Americans a class choice. This is the real secret of the spectacular failure of the Literary Digest poll. The Digest questionnaires go to telephone and car owners. That, in this land with its well-known high standards of living, means that they went to members of the middle and upper class. These classes were overwhelmingly for Landon as the Digest testified. The actual result was equally clear in its testimony that the industrial workers, the lower middle class and the small farmer were overwhelmingly for Roosevelt and that they were by far the larger section of the population. These facts are a tribute to both the good instincts and the bad political education of the American working class.

Bad political education because both candidates took great pains to deny any class significance to their rivalry. If anything, President Roosevelt outdid Governor Landon in his protestations of allegiance to the profit system and the class enslavement that it depends upon. It was Roosevelt who declared with justice that "No administration in the history of our country has done more for the system of private business, private property and private profit." Yet hundreds of thousands of workers voted for him in the hope that he was lying!

Difference

The difference between the candidates consisted in a Rooseveltian desire to "do for" private business while Landon proved himself as out of date as the dodo in his declaration that he did not believe in "economic planning by the government." In fact, the entire Republican machine gave a convincing demonstration of its obsolescence. Even the aid of two previous Democratic also-rans could not put life in the dead. National Republican revival in the near future is a very long odds bet. It is probably too stodgy and too discredited for further use to its capitalist financial backers.

Morning After

The Administration itself will get the bulk of financial favors on the traditional basis of full value for money received. The polls were hardly closed when both business and Administration dropped their masks of mutual hostility and turned on labor. The Los Angeles Times of the "morning after" carried these significant headlines: "WPA Here Drops 2000 Women From Rolls," "Ship Officers Get Warning—Government Says Men May Lose Licenses for Deserting Posts," and "Stocks Soar in Buying Rush." Business pressure will be all the more effective at Washington because the bulk of labor turned in its opposition guns when it went into the Roosevelt parlor to hand over a big blank check. Labor did not ask or receive a single definite promise when the Ad-

ministration needed its votes, it is not likely to get any action (though it will get plenty of promises) now that votes won't be needed for four long years.

Politicians pay off on future deliveries; never on gratitude for past favors. Labor is due for the biggest "morning after" headache of all.

Labor Party?

What is more both the proportions of the landslide and the unqualified labor support for the Democratic ticket from Roosevelt to McAdoo and Robinson make the chances of independent political action through most present labor leadership very slim. The "American Labor Party" in New York and the Minnesota "Farmer-Labor Party" acted as stooges for Farley and absolutely nothing more. The New York outfit did not even offer a single candidate or a single platform plank aside from the Democratic ticket and "platform."

If the Democratic Party is a la Roosevelt is one hundred per cent satisfactory to the labor bureaucracy, Communists and liberals can get blue in the face talking about a Farmer-Labor Party but the only kind they will get is one stamped and sealed with the Farley O. K. While that may make them happy and look good in reports to the Comintern, it will be only one more means for corraling worker votes for capitalist exploitation.

Certainly, the election brings one question out clearly. Is there any room between Roosevelt's liberal capitalism and clear cut socialism for a Farmer-Labor or Labor Party that is not simply a tail to the Democratic kite?

Future opposition to the Democratic Party must be sharply from the right or from the left. The right is more likely to follow in the footsteps of the Lemke outfit than in the outmoded "back to the impossible" of the Republicans. The Lemke menagerie of ill-sorted spell binders has collapsed. But out of its ashes a much more definitely and consistently fascist movement will rise. Remember that they laughed at Hitler for years. America, like Germany, must choose between Fascism and Revolutionary Socialism, and Roosevelt represents neither of the possible alternatives.

Roosevelt cannot save capitalism nor prevent the ravages of poverty and war that it guarantees. Roosevelt, capitalist by birth, by training, by purchase, will cling to democratic capitalism while he can. But Roosevelt and all his kind, forced in time to a choice between the open, armed rule of capitalism and the threat of a workers state, will choose the fascist movement. This is not a guess; it is as certain as is the record of history.

The Left

The course of the right is clear but what is to happen on the left? Is it to follow the Stalinist social-democratic-liberal line of choosing greater and greater "lesser evils," of sacrificing the offensive against capitalism for a world wide defensive retreat from fascism? Is this defeatist policy to be the left's only offering when popular disillusion follows Roosevelt's failure to revive a dead system? Is hopeless retreat to be set against the unlimited promises and color of rising fascism? If so the choice will be fascism. But the Socialist Party must give another answer. We are at last advancing on solid ground.

BOOKS

Off the Mainland

Reviewed by JAMES T. FARRELL

Mr. Gilbert Seldes was once editor of the Dial in the days when it was flourishing as an organ of aesthetics. Later, he was a contributor to The Saturday Evening Post. Now he is a columnist on Hearst's New York Evening Journal. He writes a rather self-illuminating column. For instance, picking it up today I observe that he complains because of a slogan which is being used in connection with the amusement section of the World's Fair being planned for New York in 1939. The slogan is: "A Mile of Mirth." Says Mr. Seldes, none of us will walk a mile, and mirth isn't an American word. I cite this as a suggestion of the intellectual makeup of Seldes. He has just written a book, Mainland, which is one of the howls of the year.

In Mainland Gilbert Seldes is arguing for a definite class government in America. He is making himself the spokesman for the American middle class. He calls his book a defense of American Democracy, and also poses himself as a defender of "the common man," and of the middle and the far west against the east. He presents the Saturday Evening Post view of Americanism as the true brand, and complains because, while the "intellectuals" have been criticizing America, no book describing the "nobility of the businessman" has been written. He argues that America and Americanism have been betrayed by the "intellectuals" and the finance capitalists. He declares that because of this betrayal, America now lies exposed to alien European ideas, and we are finding ourselves menaced by Communism and Fascism.

Wants Middle Class Rule

The alternative of these two systems is, according to Seldes, middle class rule. He writes, "Any one who, at the age of twenty, read the more romantic works of Friedrich Nietzsche is theoretically capable of viewing the misery or destruction of millions of human beings without a quiver. I am one of them. If the waters rise and destroy half a million Chinese citizens, I am, I fear, more struck by the spectacle than moved by humane feelings. I am not aware of a sense of brotherhood with every other human being. It is, in fact, because all men are not (Italics Seldes' own) brothers, that I would prefer to live in a society which treated them honorably and decently." He would like, in other words, to see the worker treated decently because of a sense of dignity on the part of a superior class.

Seldes also defends the economics of Henry Ford. He makes a distinction between an industrialist like Ford, and a finance capitalist. This distinction is, in his eyes, one of kind. He believes that the Henry Fords can save America—Seldes' America. He views such men as typical Americans. Seldes further arrives at the interesting conclusion that the proletariat in American consists merely of the unskilled worker. He argues that the proletariat is disappearing. Therefore he asks, how can the proletariat be the dominant class in society when it is disappearing?

Seldes is the man who used to discuss the philosophical implications of the funny papers. He is now carrying the equipment necessary for such weighty thinking into the whole range of the social and economic problems of the present. And he gets results such as those I have cited. He is a highbrow trying his damndest to be a low brow, and just never making the grade. He is a Hearst columnist attempting to solve social and economic problems. He is a shallow aesthetic trying to be a social philosopher.

Shabby Apologist

He ends up as a shabby apologist for an absolutized conception of America and Americans which he must have gotten out of story books.

In defending such a conception he even goes to the extent of arguing that Horatio Alger, as a writer, is truer to American life than Theodore Dreiser. To repeat, his book is one of the howls of the year. Its thinking is flabby and its tone is garrulous. And he sets himself up as the defender of "the common man." I think that there are plenty of workers who can tell Mr. Seldes that they have their own sense of dignity, and that they are not interested in his pleas that our Fords give them good wages in order that men like himself can prate about their own honor and dignity.

We have lost the Dubinskys and Hillmans but we are winning real socialists from the ranks of labor. We have lost the "protest" voters but we have gained revolutionary votes, membership and activity. We have lost "municipal socialists" but we have won the vanguard of a working class army to fight in every battle of labor's war. Ours must be an army of uncompromising advance not of stodgy contentment or of vacillating retreat. We have lost the past; we can make the future!