

Fate Of Spain Depends On International Workers' Action

Workers Of
The World
Unite!

LABOR ACTION

Official Organ of the Socialist Party of California

Voice Of
Socialism In
The West

Price 5 Cents

SATURDAY, DEC. 5, 1936

VOL. 1, NO. 2

Noted Publicists Form Committee To Defend Trotsky

Norman Thomas and Nation Editors On
Body to Fight for Right of Asylum
For Famous Revolutionist

NEW YORK.—The American Committee for the Defense of Leon Trotsky has been organized to help obtain for Trotsky his rights of asylum and to aid in the formation of an International Commission of Inquiry to examine all the available evidence in connection with the Moscow trials.

The following statement has been issued by the Committee of which Norman Thomas, John Dewey, Freda Kirchwey, Suzanne La Follette, Devere Allen, Edmund Wilson, Louis Adamic, Prof. E. A. Ross of Wisconsin University, Joseph Wood Krutch, H. M. Kallen, James T. Farrell, Prof. Wm. H. Kilpatrick of Columbia U., Max Eastman, Sidney Hook, Inez Haynes Irwin, James Rorty, Prof. Paul F. Brissenden, Vincent R. Dunne, John Chamberlain, Benjamin Stolberg, Louis Hacker, are among the members.

A Prisoner in Norway

"The Norwegian Government has forbidden Leon Trotsky to prosecute his libel suit against the Norwegian Communist and Fascist papers. This action is only the severest of the many repressive measures against him. For the past two months Trotsky has been a virtual prisoner of the Norwegian police. Police guard him night and day; his mail is censored; he is deprived of all secretarial assistance. This latest order not only deprives him of the last remnants of his democratic rights of asylum but closes his last means of answering the grave accusations made against him in connection with the Moscow trial.

"This move climaxes a long series of persecutions against Trotsky in recent months from diverse quarters. On August 5th a band of fascists invaded Trotsky's home at Honefoss on the pretext of discovering incriminating evidence of illegal activities. Soon after came the Kamenetz-Zinoviev trial at Moscow and the charges that Trotsky, in collusion with Hitler's Gestapo, had plotted the assassination of leading Soviet officials.

Strange United Front

"Trotsky declared these charges to be completely false and contradicted by all the ideas and actions of his forty years in the revolutionary movement. He stated his readiness to appear before an independent commission and present his reputation of the charges.

"Submitting to the pressure of a note from the Soviet Foreign Office on one hand and the campaign of the Norwegian Fascist press on the other—both demanding Trotsky's expulsion from the country—the Norwegian Government replied by internment Trotsky and placing him under his present prison regime.

"Trotsky filed a suit for libel against his accusers of the Communist and Fascist press as the one means left open to him of presenting his case to the world. He has retained M. Puntervold, one of the most eminent of Norwegian advocates as counsel.

Demands Right of Asylum

"The American Committee for the Defense of Trotsky protests against this outrageous violation of democratic rights by the Norwegian Government and demands that the full rights of asylum be restored to Trotsky. The most elementary notions of justice dictate that this world-famous revolutionist should be given the fullest and freest opportunity to state his case."

The Committee is preparing a pamphlet for publication—a compilation of world liberal and labor opinion on the trial entitled, "Voices on the Moscow Trial."

It will hold a mass meeting on Friday evening, December 18, the date on which Trotsky's term of asylum expires, at Center Hotel (formerly Hotel Delano) 108 W. 43 St. Suzanne La Follette will be chairman and Norman Thomas one of the principal speakers.

Contributions for the work of the committee can be sent to its office at Room 921, 22 E. 17th St., N. Y. C.

Frame Striker In Texas

HOUSTON, Texas.—Lester C. L. Lord, militant leader of striking seamen in Texas ports has been framed on a charge of "robbery by assault" in this city.

Select Jury In Frameup Trial of King

Anti-Labor Prejudice
And Press Hysteria
Shown In Case

A jury of six men and six women has been selected for the trial of Earl King, E. G. Ramsay, Frank J. Conner, and George Wallace, framed on a charge of murdering the chief engineer of the Point Lobos.

The anti-labor prejudice of the Judge and the press hysteria in these parts indicate that the ultra reactionaries would like to make of this case another Mooney railroad.

Earl King is secretary and the other three defendants are members of the Maritime Commission. The State Federation of Labor and almost every labor body in the State has condemned the charges as a false and vicious effort to discredit and attack the militant maritime organizations.

Labor Hater "Advisor" To Maritime Commission

WASHINGTON, D. C.—General order number four of the Maritime Commission appoints James Craig Peacock as advisor to Commissioner Landick in charge of ocean mail contracts and subsidies.

Peacock was the director of the notorious Shipping Board Bureau under Secretary of Commerce Roper. He was constantly under fire for the graft and racketeering in mail contracts. His appointment indicates that the new commission will follow the same policies which made the old Bureau one of the worst in Washington. It seems that Roper's Department of Commerce will have plenty to say in the policies of the "independent" Maritime Commission.

Settlement Ends Strike Of Seattle Newspaper Guild

The strike of the Seattle Newspaper Guild against the Post-Intelligencer has been settled and Hearst has announced the appointment of John Boettlinger, son-in-law of President Roosevelt, as the future publisher of the Seattle P-I.

The P-I's resuming publication is the culmination of a long and hard-fought battle between the Newspaper Guild of Seattle and the Hearst interests. In many circles it is considered a victory for the Guild despite the official claim from San Simeon that "this in no way involves the recognition of the Guild as a collective bargaining power for the major part of the employees." Never the less minimum wage standards have been established for the editorial staff and reporters—also for the photographers.

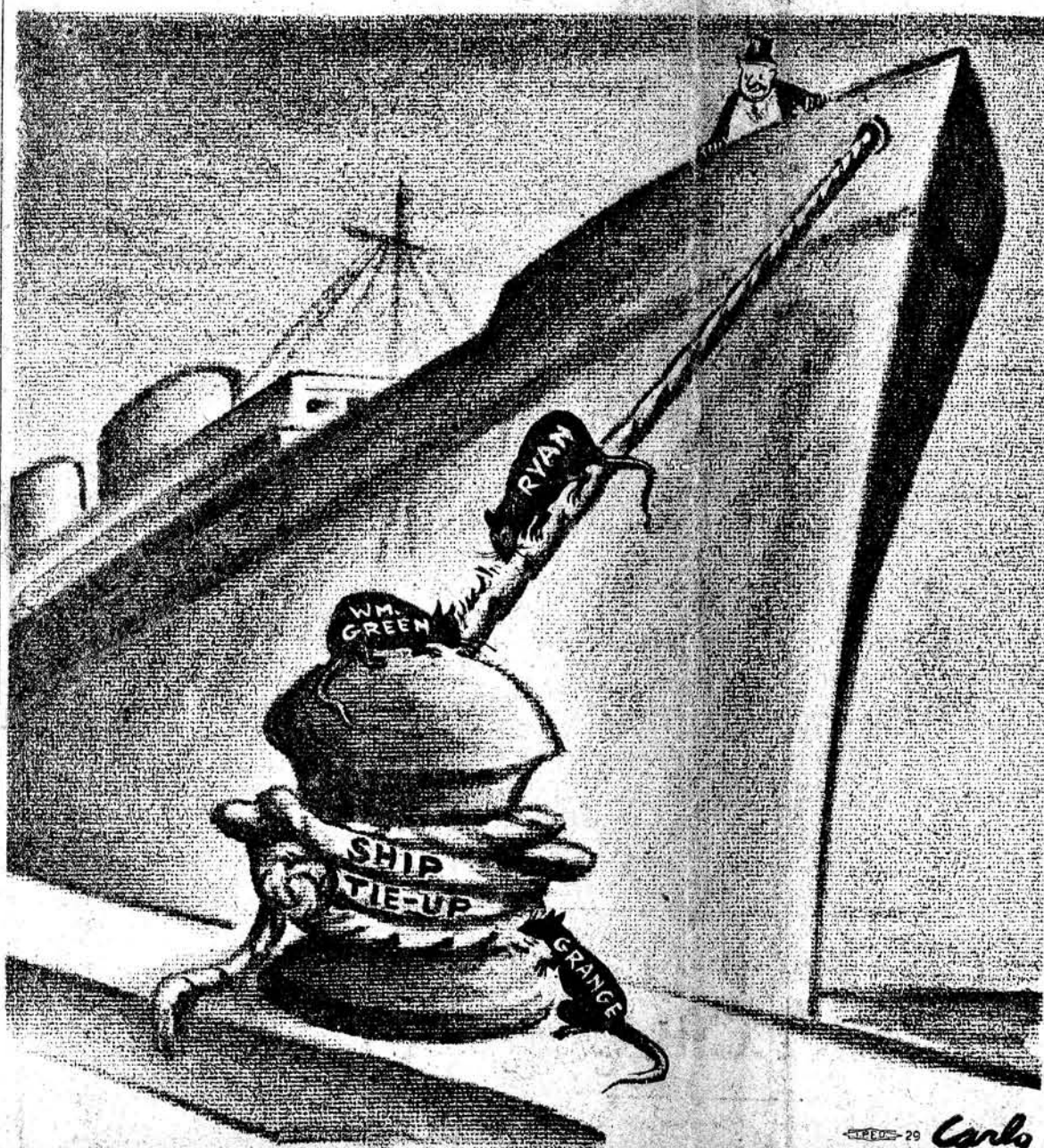
DISCHARGED WORKERS VICTIMIZED

The entire staff is returning to work, with the exception of the two members of the Guild whose dismissal for "incompetency and insubordination" precipitated the strike. Their cases are still resting with the Labor Relations Board. Past experience with this Board indicates the prospect that the cases will continue to remain there.

Members of the Guild struck the P-I several weeks ago as a result of the dismissal of two members, both competent employees of long standing. The dismissal was obviously intended as a terroristic attack on the Guild. Several threats were made previously to the effect that membership in the Guild would automatically cause dismissal.

LABOR SOLIDARITY
It is to the eternal credit of the longshoremen, loggers, teamsters, and others that their Unions

Harf Rats - - - By Carlo



Spain's Proletarian Armies Hold Madrid In Fourth Week Of Siege; French Labor Aids

ing in mail contracts. His appointment indicates that the new commission will follow the same policies which made the old Bureau one of the worst in Washington. It seems that Roper's Department of Commerce will have plenty to say in the policies of the "independent" Maritime Commission.

Situation Remains Precarious As German And Italian Recognition of Fascists Makes Issue International

Spain's proletarian armies more than held their own as the siege of Madrid drew to the close of its fourth week. The lines around Madrid held the fascists at bay, while flank and rear attacks on fascist lines forced Franco to divert to endangered points more and more of the troops previously facing Madrid. After months of unexplained passivity on the Biscay sector, since San Sebastian was surrendered intact to the fascists, a large-scale offensive has finally opened against the fascist forces in this area. This offensive and renewal of the campaign on the Aragon front, forestalled Franco attempts to bring up additional troops against Madrid.

SITUATION STILL PRECARIOUS

But Madrid remains situated precariously. For four weeks its only connection with Valencia and Barcelona has been a single motor highway over which all supplies must come. Hunger stalks through Madrid's tenements, and evacuation of women and children is proceeding at a snail's pace because the single highway must be used mainly for military purposes. On the few occasions in the last two weeks when weather permitted planes to go aloft, it was seen that the fascists still hold superiority in aircraft.

The real fate of Madrid and all Spain, however, will be settled on the international arena. All serious observers concur in the conviction that Hitler and Mussolini's recognition of Franco's regime has committed them irrevocably to a fascist victory in Spain. Fascist Italy and Germany are moving with caution at the moment, first testing the relation of forces in Europe to determine how speedily they can come to Franco's aid, but their shipments to Franco continue. Confidential sources confirm reports that Germany is shipping not only arms but hundreds of artillerymen and pilots. The military pact between Germany and Japan, with Italy as silent partner, is a decisive step in preparing for open intervention in Spain.

DIPLOMATIC MANEUVERS

French and British diplomatic reactions to Hitler and Mussolini's recognition of Franco and to the Japanese pact have demonstrated to the hilt the contentions of revolutionary Socialists that the

(Continued on page 2)

A.F.L. Evades Real Issue At Tampa

Ultra - Conservative
Stand Showed Craft
Union Impotence

The fifty-sixth annual convention of the American Federation of Labor closed at Tampa without decisive action on any important issue. Problems of organization were almost completely ignored although thirty times the number of workers actually represented at the convention remain unorganized. Last day resolutions dealt with petty legislative reforms which are the Executive Council's substitute for militant labor action.

Ultra-Conservative

Even on legislative matters the tone of the convention was ultra-conservative. Proposals for constitutional amendment or congressional action to curb the Supreme Court was turned down and the whole matter buried by referring it to the Executive Council. The thirty-hour week campaign was damned with faint praise and is likely to be completely shelved in line with the do-nothing policy of present leaders.

In spite of unanimous condemnation of the King-Conner-Ramsay frame-up by the California State Federation of Labor the A. F. of L. ducked out of a definite stand by referring the case to the Executive Council for "further inquiry."

C. I. O.

The C. I. O. emerges from the convention stronger than ever. Announcement of a weekly newspaper, increased organization work and early prospect of affiliation of the powerful typographical union were chief C. I. O. developments of the week.

As on all other issues, the Tampa convention dared not take a definite stand by either expelling or reinstating the C. I. O. unions. The reason in this case is that either action means an end to the sinecures of Green, Wolf and hundreds of "the boys" in the craft union soft spots. The welfare and future of American labor played no part in the decision. As a matter of fact the last dim hope of "the boys" is that the steel organization drive will fail and that, out of the defeat of thousands of workers, Lewis can be brought in line and the good old days of craft union defeatism restored.

"Split Strike" Is New Maneuver Of Shipowners

Scheme for Partial Settlement Is Scheme
To Undermine Morale and Cut Down
Mass Strength of Picket Lines

The fifth week of the Maritime strike has been marked by continued efforts of reactionary officials of the I.L.A. and I.S.U. to break the strike on the east coast and by new maneuvers of the ship-owners in San Francisco to undermine the solidarity of the strikers by partial agreements to bring about a "split strike" with one part of the and I.E.U. to break the strike on the east coast and by

CHIEF STRIKEBREAKER

Joseph P. Ryan, president of the I.L.A., continued to act as strike breaker-in-chief for the shipowners, but help came to the east coast strikers from a new source when French dock workers refused to unload American ships which had been loaded on Ryan's orders after the strike began.

The main strategy of the west coast bosses from the beginning has been to smash the unions piece-meal according to the motto: "Divide and Conquer." First they offered a separate settlement to the Longshoremen, hoping thereby to isolate and crush the seafaring unions and then deal with the I.L.A. later. The solidarity action of the longshoremen balked this strategem.

"SPLIT STRIKE" STRATEM

Now it appears clear, that while the newspapers, especially the "liberal" news, weep and wall about the strike and beat the drums for a settlement, an effort will be made to lure some of the seafaring unions into a separate settlement with the steam-schooner owners which would put part of the seamen back on the ships while others walk the picket line. The purpose of this maneuver is obvious: to undermine the morale of the strikers and pave the way for an onslaught in 1937 style to smash the strike.

From all indications the strikers are aware of the danger of these moves and are strong for the idea of sticking together and standing put until a general settlement is made and all go back to work together.

DANGER OF "SPLIT STRIKE"

A "split strike" which would give the outward appearance of a partial victory would in the present situation be calculated to represent the opposite in actuality. The strength of the workers on strike is in their numbers, their solidarity and mass strength. As long as the strikers hold solid and united on the picket line, and no ships move, the strike is effective and the morale of the strikers unimpaired.

The bosses are counting on a partial settlement, putting some of the strikers back to work, to create the effect of a break in the ranks. The stand of all the unions which have been conducting negotiations with the Steam Schooner owners to submit all proposals for ratification to the general strike committee of the Federation indicates that the "split strike" strategem will not work.

Tobacco Pays More Dividends Than Wages

The rapid mechanization of the tobacco industry during the present century has been accomplished by an increase of over 100 per cent in the proportion of unskilled workers and an influx of women workers. Most of the time since 1899 real wages have remained below the level for that year.

The American Federation of Labor's attitude toward the unionization of unskilled workers as well as the powerful opposition of the tobacco trust has contributed to the failure of an effective organization.

In this mechanized industry mere subsistence wages are being paid while the productivity of labor has been many times multiplied. More than \$1,500 per work or over the average earnings of \$600 has been paid in dividends during the worst part of the depression.

Idaho Sales Tax Beaten

BOISE, Idaho.—The state sales tax went down to overwhelming defeat in a referendum vote of Idaho citizens. Taxing the poor is popular with legislators but the general vote indicates that not all Americans are suckers.

Socialists To Organize Aid To Spain

MINNEAPOLIS. — Minneapolis Socialists have proposed to the National Executive committee of the Socialist Party the setting up of an organization which will furnish aid to the Spanish workers.

This organization, tentatively called the Friends of the Spanish Workers, would aid their Spanish brothers by shipments of arms, money and other necessities, by agitating for mass working class support of the Spanish working class, by presenting the issues of this war to American workers who are woefully hazy on this subject and by rendering to the Spanish workers any other aid possible.

GROUND WORK LAID

Pending the setting up of this organization nationally, Minneapolis Socialists have laid the ground work for setting up a local branch. It is expected that the Minneapolis branch will serve as a model for future organizations. It will be a broad membership organization, patterned closely on the Friends of Soviet Russia which gave such splendid service in the early period of the Russian crisis, raising in this area alone over \$38,000.

While Socialists hail the formation of any organization set up to aid the Spanish Loyalists, considering any aid better than none, we hold that organizations which primarily are of a petty bourgeois character, whose prime concern is the defense of Spanish (capitalist) democracy, are not sufficient to enable the Spanish workers to conquer their enemies.

Choosing The "Lesser Evil" Of The Capitalist Dailies

By CRARY TRIMBLE

Choosing "lesser evils" seems to be a characteristic capitalist pastime. Selecting that capitalist rag which will give the least poisonous misinterpretation of the day's news is one of those occasions when the "least worst" is the only choice.

A newcomer to San Francisco, this victim chose the News, because it was reported to be a "liberal" paper and because it carried the beacon light of the Scripps-Howard chain which was once reputed to represent a fair degree of honesty in presenting the news.

Defining the "Liberal"

Numerous vain attempts have been made to define the "liberal." One of the best efforts so far describes him as "one who sits on the fence and spits on both sides, but in a crisis is nowhere to be found." Change this only a little, and we have the prostitute press which "in a crisis goes to bed with the advertisers."

Witness the News—a liberal paper which sings a daily hymn for "peace on the waterfront." Their "peace" propaganda expresses more concern for the pocketbooks of the Christmas-trade vultures than for the welfare of the workers.

Nowhere does the News mention—let alone emphasize—the fact that union representatives have offered various peace proposals, some of them actually yielding concessions to the ship-owners who have repeatedly refused them.

At no time does the "liberal" News attempt to counteract the flagrant propaganda of the other papers that the 40,000 workers are stubbornly forcing the innocent "public" to a Christmas without cheer. The News instead takes up the cry of the "Gloomy Yule" and sheds crocodile tears over the

"Killing of Santa Claus."

Pious Like Anything

Lacking the honesty to come out flat-footed for the ship-owners and unwilling to side with the workers, the liberal press is forced to take the middle course which in a crisis inevitably amounts to hypocrisy.

Not satisfied with piosity, and perhaps a little afraid the public may not get the point, the liberal News goes in for jingoism in the best Hearst manner. The bugaboo that rarely fails is dangled before the reader: "The foreign lines are scooping the cream of the passenger trade." (And our advertisers, dear reader, don't like skimmed milk.)

Poisoned Ink

To unload columns of propaganda that can do nothing but poison the minds of the public against the demands of the maritime workers is expected of the Hearst press. Such propaganda is the more dangerous when it drips off the pen of a snivelingly self-righteous servant of the "peepul"—the liberal press.

Deliberate hypocrisy has a consistency which is its own betrayal. A paper with a liberal reputation is accepted as gospel by the faithful followers of liberalism... confusion and betrayal alike are swallowed with holy reverence. Where Hearst enrages intelligent people and causes them to examine the issues for themselves; where the Los Angeles Times furnishes comic relief with its apologetic hysteria on all labor issues, the News—with its sweetness and light formula—dishes out opiates, and acts as the medium through which the advertisers distribute their anti-labor propaganda.—And all in the name of Christmas!

There is an uninvited guest at this 1936 festival of merchants—the ghost of a fear that "there ain't gonna be no Santa Claus."

L. A. Socialists Build In Action

LOS ANGELES.—Over seven months have passed since that memorable day in April of this year when three thousand agricultural workers struck in Los Angeles County against the miserable wage of 20 cents an hour. That splendid struggle victorious in the gaining of union recognition and wage increases all along the line, set off a wave of agricultural strikes that occurred first in Orange County and then swept north to Salinas.

Brute terror was unleashed against the agricultural workers in all of these strikes. At the Battle of Dominguez Hill, vigilantes and the scab-hounding Red Squad fired at unarmed workers' wives and children. In Orange County the California Highway Patrol joined with vigilantes to tear-gas and terrorize striking workers' camps. In Salinas the forces of "Law" mobilized a vigilante citizen army whose purpose it was to coerce and intimidate the lettuce strikers. But on all fronts splendid courage and militancy were shown on the part of the workers as they fought against almost unbelievable odds—terror, vigilante and police, and hunger.

L. A. STRIKE SUCCESSFUL

In only one instance, however, in Los Angeles was the strike waged successfully. Only there were union men recognized and wages increased. And only there was working-class militancy coupled with correct leadership which spells success and failure. The Los Angeles strike of CUCOM (Union of Mexican Agricultural Workers), led by hard-hitting and intelligent union progressives, can serve in many respects as a model of strike technique. In the first place real support was obtained from the official trade union movement. Committees of these independent striking unions (who are applying for AFL affiliation) obtained substantial financial support. Many unions in addition aided by exerting mass pressure and otherwise showed their solid-

arity with the strikers. For example in Harbor City close to San Pedro members of the IILA and the Shipyard workers union joined on the picket line. Secondly an active defense organization, the Non-Partisan Labor Defense, which at no time attempted to dictate strike policy, secured capable legal defense for arrested workers and raised such mass support that in Los Angeles County over two hundred workers were freed. The NPLD supplied the bulk of relief during the weeks of the strike: food stuffs, clothing and cash that helped to preserve the excellent morale of the union men and their families.

CLASS STRUGGLE STRATEGY

The strike strategy was built around a sound class struggle basis which above everything else contributed to the success of the strike in L. A. County. The "flying picket squads," made famous in the drivers' strike and the textile general strike, were used to great advantage here. The scabs were swept off the fields, and the bosses compelled to come to terms. As a result of this strike the powerful Japanese growers association was cracked wide open. One of the most significant factors in the strike was the emergence of the Socialist Party and the Young People's Socialist League as a militant organization engaged in mass work. From the first days, young Socialists appeared on the picket lines, raised cash and food relief, obtained publicity by means of a strike bulletin, slept, fought and went to jail with the strikers and devised strike strategy by suggestions and guidance out of the accumulated experience that the Socialist Party represents.

By working side by side the workers in their struggle, the Socialist Party gained immeasurably in the esteem and confidence of the unions. A number of the most militant members have joined the ranks of a party which has proven itself in the test of the class struggle.

Negroes Held In Peonage In Florida

Report to A.F.L. Convention Shows Virtual Slavery

A state of peonage and terrible exploitation of the Negro turpentine workers in Florida were revealed in a graphic report to the American Federation of Labor convention at Tampa by Frank McCallister, socialist organizer in Florida.

McCallister and Dr. C. F. Duncan, head of the Jacksonville section of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, visited a camp at MacClenny, thirty miles west of Jacksonville, November 15.

"Negroes Held in Slavery"

Workers there "stated categorically that all the Negro people in this community were held in slavery. None is allowed to leave the place. The owner has two stool pigeons who . . . even slip under the shacks at night and listen in on the conversation."

"Any desire on the part of the inmates to escape is effectively thwarted. Men may suffer beatings, their lives may be threatened if they attempt to leave. By a system of camps which surround the community they are able to head off any fleeing slave."

"The turpentine workers are forced to toil from daylight until they can no longer see at night. They receive 50 cents to \$1. A very few receive as much as \$1.25 a day."

Commissary Racket

"They are forced to purchase their supplies at the commissary owned by Knabb. Prices at this commissary are almost double regular retail prices. For example, white bacon, which can be bought in Tampa stores for 15 cents per pound, costs 25 cents a pound in Knabb's commissary."

"Six pounds of plain flour cost 40 cents in the commissary and the same grade can be bought for 24 cents at the retail stores. When the wages of the turpentine workers are translated into purchasing power it is easy to see that many of them are working for 25 cents a day."

"One man spent \$2 outside of the commissary a little while back, and he was told that his pay would be held up until he purchased all his goods at the commissary."

An informant reported the investigators' presence to the commissary clerk, whereupon, since they "could see a small cluster of white men gathering," they left.

headquarters be located in Cleveland.

Sunday was devoted to a detailed discussion of practical field work, with emphasis upon our trade union and unemployed activities. Comrade Meagley of Toledo gave reports on the Unemployed activities and our work in the Workers Alliance and Comrade Widick of Akron gave the trade union report.

The conference adjourned with the feeling that Ohio had in a sense inaugurated the pre-convention discussion period—a period which should result in the necessary clarification to build to Socialist Party into the revolutionary vanguard of the American workers.

Resolution On Farmer-Labor Party

The resolution of the conference on the Farmer-Labor Party follows:

WHEREAS, only a revolutionary Socialist Party can successfully lead and organize the working class for the successful resistance to the onslaughts of fascism and reaction and

WHEREAS, only a revolutionary Socialist Party can mobilize and lead the working class towards the establishment of a workers state, and

WHEREAS, a Labor Party or Farmer-Labor Party can by its nature and every practical consideration of American politics be nothing more than a reformist party and is therefore incapable of solving the fundamental problems facing the working class today;

Therefore be it resolved that the Socialist Party, as a party cannot take the responsibility of launching a Labor or Farmer-Labor party and further

Be it Resolved that whether the Socialist Party, as a party, is to join the Labor Party once it is formed or not to join such a party is purely a practical consideration which can only be decided when the Labor Party is actually formed.

The main energy must be shifted towards the building of a strong revolutionary party which, working within the structure of a Labor Party or outside of it, will retain its independence, its program and fight unyieldingly and unceasingly for its revolutionary ideas and program.

Passed by Ohio Active Workers Conference Nov. 14th, 1936, by a vote of 35 to 3, Cleveland, Ohio.

Spanish Workers Still Hold Madrid

(Continued from Page 1)

"democratic" countries will not aid anti-fascist Spain. Premier Caballero's attempts to bring before the League of Nations further proof of Hitler and Mussolini's armed intervention are being throttled by both France and Britain. Thus it is clear that Germany and Italy have a free hand in Spain, so far as Britain and France are concerned.

The big question mark in all calculations is the attitude of Soviet Russia which undoubtedly has changed its policy in the last few weeks to the extent of beginning to send some effective material aid to Spain. Will such aid continue and will it grow to proportions sufficient to make victory possible, is the question.

MISDIRECTED APPEALS

The French Government is bringing pressure to prevent this. Foreign Minister Delbos having declared to the Soviet Ambassador that Soviet shipments made to the U.S.S.R. responsible if a general conflict arose over Spain. Thus two years of nursing the Franco-Soviet pact, including the subordination of the French Communist Party to a policy of national defense, proves to be worthless at the first crisis. Nevertheless, the Communist press everywhere continues to make impassioned appeals to "democratic" countries for aid against fascism.

Instead of recognizing that only the international working class is available, as a real ally for the Soviet and Spanish workers. International working class aid to Spain is growing steadily. The international brigade, formed by revolutionary workers from other countries, continued this week to be the mainstay of Madrid's defenses, with new contingents of highly technically-trained revolutionists pouring across the borders.

FRENCH WORKERS SHIP ARMS

The most extraordinary development of international aid in the last weeks is the mounting importance of arms smuggled into Spain from France despite the Blum Government's prohibitions. Government agents in Marseilles seized six trucks carrying not only ammunition and machine guns but also light field pieces. French military planes have disappeared from military airports. Thus it appears that the revolutionary French workers, who are in the majority in the arsenals and munitions plants, are making wholesale raids which the Government dare not publicize for fear that the arming of Spain will develop into an irrepressible mass movement.

COURSE OF SPANISH C.P.

An alarming indication of the unprincipled lengths to which the Spanish Communist Party is prepared to go in its fight against other proletarian parties is the cable from Barcelona published in the November 26th issue of the American Daily Worker. Enraged at the slogan of an All-Workers Government propagated by the P.O.U.M. (Workers Party of Marxist Unification), and at that party's defense of Leon Trotsky and those executed in the recent Moscow trial, the Communist organ in Barcelona, "Trebail," is actually calling for the suppression of the P.O.U.M. press. At the same time both Communist and P.O.U.M. ministers sit in the Catalanian government.

WPA Orders Farm Relief Cut Dec. 15th

MINNEAPOLIS.—Farmers who voted for Roosevelt on the implication—not the promise—that he was their "friend," and that relief would NOT be cut are receiving the same rude awakening from their blissful trust that the American unemployed workers are experiencing.

On December 15 an executive WPA order goes into effect smashing at over 100,000 farmers in seven northwestern states. Farmers on WPA farm relief projects, now receiving \$40-\$50 a month, will be placed on the Resettlement Administration projects where their pay will be cut to \$20 per month. Because this latter administration has much less funds to operate with, it is expected that not over 60,000 for the "neediest" can be cared for, as compared with the peak WPA relief load of 324,295 in this area.

The states involved are Minnesota, Iowa, North and South Dakota, Wisconsin, Michigan and Nebraska, with possibly even new states involved. Local unemployed organizations are waging a vigorous protest against this unconscionable order, which will particularly affect the poorest farmers and the farm laborers. The Federal Section of Local 544, composed of WPA workers in the Twin Cities and the state, the

Socialist warnings during the campaign as to the danger of farmers and workers trusting Roosevelt are thus being proved prophetic. Roosevelt is the executive officer of the capitalist state and the expectation that he would act in the interest of those who own no share in the state—such as the workers and farmers in general—is soon disappointed.

SEATTLE.—Union labor won the fifth of five major strikes during the last six months this week. The victory which made the score one hundred to nothing was won by the Cracker and Confectionary Workers' Union over the American Cracker Company, after a twenty-three day strike.

Labor Dictators Too Raw For Enlightened Merchants

So disgusting has become the brazen type of sell-out practiced by certain officials of the International Seamen's Union, that "enlightened" capitalists (commercial pirates who hold that unless the American worker can be bamboozled through new and more skillful ways there is danger of revolution) are themselves crying out for a purge from the unions of the old time sell-out artist and his replacement by the type that can talk in the terms of "workers government" even while a betrayal is perpetrated.

"Merchant's View"

In his column in the New York Times, entitled, "The Merchant's Point of View," C. F. Hughes discloses the awareness of "enlightened" capitalists to the social unrest of the country. "With the prospect that labor organization will be accelerated in this country upon social policies which obtained striking expression in the last election, developments at the American Federation of Labor sessions last week at Tampa gave little cause for rejoicing in either union or business quarters. The convention went on record as opposed to political dictatorship even as its own dictators took summary and ill-advised action."

"Not a few industrialists are in

entire sympathy with the major objectives since they have come to see that their markets depend upon suitable working standards," says Hughes using the old "liberal" argument that in order to preserve capitalism it is necessary to keep the workers satisfied. "They are recognizing also that a wage and working hour 'floor' should prevail for costs if they are to eliminate the 'chiselers' whose prices are low, so low that their workers are scarcely consumers in the accepted sense."

A Word for Democracy

"To this body of enlightened executives, therefore, the present strike of labor regimes is discouraging. They feel that the unions should exercise some of the democracy which they are always so ready to praise. And the feeling grows that the government must in the end have something to say about assuring proper representation for rank and file union members."

"In the shipping strike here it has been declared without contradiction that the seamen's organization voted six to one against a contract that their officials signed, even though better terms had been offered by the shipowners. This, and other examples make it plain that union organization is in some need of a 'housecleaning.'"

L. A. Clothing Strike Still Holds Firm

Campaign of Persecution Fails to Break Workers Ranks

LOS ANGELES.—When the workers of Rosenberg, Inc., struck last August against the arbitrary discharge of two clothing cutters for holding membership in the Amalgamated Clothing Workers' Union, no one believed the strike would last longer than one week. All the skilled workers had left the shop. Production had stopped completely. An immediate settlement was expected.

But outside unexpected influences upset the unions' justified hopes. On the day Rosenberg, Inc., contacted the strike committee, proposing an election and promising no opposition if a majority will decide in favor of the union, the labor-hating outfit, known as the Merchants' and Manufacturers' Association, stepped into the breach. The firms' vaunted promise was immediately withdrawn. Thereafter the strike against Rosenberg, Inc., assumed a much broader character. The issues became much more extensive. The strike moved out of its original, limited confines. Small as this strike is, in point of numbers, it is a symbol of the long and painful struggle between organized labor and the open shoppers of Los Angeles.

"BREAK EVERY STRIKE"

"Our efforts must be directed towards the breaking of every strike, large or small," a prominent official of the M. & M. Association stated recently. On another occasion the same official said: "We do not want to destroy organized labor entirely. We want to keep it on its knees continually engaged in struggle." Both aims are being pursued in the Rosenberg strike.

The blame for the undue prolongation of this strike must be placed at the doors of the Merchants' and Manufacturers' Association. Left alone, Rosenberg, Inc., would long ago have settled with the union. Its financial resources do not permit a long drawn-out conflict. An abrupt curtailment of production should have proved fatal to its business. The firm is engaged in the production of clothing on immediate delivery basis. The merchant must have delivery within a few days after placing the order—a condition peculiar to all fill-in markets, such as Los Angeles. With 85 per cent of the working staff out on strike prospects for union recognition were, indeed, very good.

PERSECUTION OF STRIKERS

But the opportunity to drive an open-shop wedge into the men's clothing industry looked too alluring to the champions of "industrial autocracy," the M. & M. Association. The political influence and financial power of the association was immediately placed at the disposal of Rosenberg, Inc. Buyers of Rosenberg garments were "seen" and persuaded not to press for immediate delivery. The financial moguls received a hint to be lenient. The legal department of the M. & M.—24 legal stooges—offered its services gratis. "Impartial" judges issued "temporary" restraining orders. Ordinary strike activity was made a violation of a city ordinance, thus shifting the burden of prosecution onto the shoulders of the taxpayers.

Talking to scabs in a peaceful manner was prohibited and made a misdemeanor. A conviction on a city ordinance carried with it the charge of contempt; thus union members were tried twice for the same offense. Police made arrest after arrest on the mere hint of the bosses. Strikers were framed by employed provocateurs. Armed "gorillas" were placed at the service of the firm. Paid ads were inserted in the local and out of town press offering abnormally high wages to skilled tailors. Professional scabs were imported from nearby cities and also from other states. The daily press, particularly the Los Angeles Times, printed lying stories about violence on the part of the strikers. Everything possible was done to whip up a vigilante spirit against the Amalgamated Clothing Workers' Union.

A number of union members have already served prison sentences of five days each. Others have paid fines of 50 dollars. A number more are coming up for trial within a few days. The manager of the union, Jack Blumberg, has been cited for "contempt" due to a radio broadcast on the strike situation.

STRIKERS' RANKS SOLID

But in spite of all the difficulties the Rosenberg strike will and must be won. The strikers' ranks are solid. Peaceful picketing goes on daily. The membership of the union is giving wholehearted support to this struggle. The labor movement of Los Angeles has come to realize the issue involved in this strike. The struggle against the anti-union forces, embodied in the Merchants' and Manufacturers' Association, must receive the support of every trade union man and woman of Los Angeles.

The Action Army

By FRANK STERN

The recruits to the action army gave us the bums' rush this week and we're still wading in subs up to the ears and wondering why we ever thought up such a brilliant scheme. But the editorial board thinks it's a good idea so I guess we'll just have to grin and bear it.

The lot of the business manager is not a happy one except when he sees the shekels rolling in from all points

of the compass—so, comrades of the ACTION ARMY, please keep the money and subs rolling in to the great advantage of the movement and to the great joy of the business manager.

The prize recruit this week is Carl C. Neilsen of Mill Valley who sent in six subs and sent the following to the recipients of his bounty: "I'm sending you Labor Action for one year. If you like it you'll owe me a dollar. If you don't like it, give it to some one who does and you owe me nothing." And he further informs us that whatever comes back will be invested in new subscriptions until the money is used up. Our advice is go thou and do likewise.

Chester K. Johnson of Minneapolis kept the steady flow coming in from the newest addition to the Western Federation of the Socialist Party with the promise that "we ain't started nothin' yet." You are hereby appointed first lieutenant in the Minnesota division of the Action Army, Ches. Your new job besides getting subs is recruiting privates.

And from the ranks of the strikers on the west coast we discover new recruits in Seattle and San Pedro, points hitherto unheard from. These buck privates ordered juicy bundles with promises of more to come in both bundles and subs.

Morrill Goddard rings in from far distant Miami, Florida with a brace of subs and a bundle order. Look out Morrill—it's against the Florida Chamber of Commerce rules to import California products.

To come back nearer to home we have to pat local San Francisco on the back for a swell job so far in getting subs and taking the biggest bundle order—and hand a scallion to Los Angeles for their poor showing in building a division of ACTION ARMY sub chasers. (But they sure got the money in for the Foundation Fund.)

We could go on and on but we think you get the idea anyway now. What we need and what we want in order to put Labor Action across and make it a powerful instrument in the hands of the Socialist Party is RECRUITS TO THE ACTION ARMY. Jimmy Higginson who will get subs and literature agents who will take bundle orders, rank and filers who will sell the paper and workers who will give to its sustaining fund.

Are you a comrade who wants

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

San Francisco, Nov. 28, 1936. Comrades:

Labor Action came in this morning's mail. Have just finished the Editorial section and the report on the "Writers' Congress Comes to Town" . . . and hastily turn to my typewriter to say somebody has opened a window and let in some much needed fresh air. And, oh! How refreshing! I glance out of the window and note, also, that the fog has cleared very considerably!

I'm that "crazy" fellow you met on that park bench. More power to your pen!

Comradely,
GEORGE ELLIS.

to build the movement? If so your place is in the ranks of the ACTION ARMY. Your first job is to see that every member of your branch is a subscriber. Your second to see that YOUR BRANCH TAKES A BUNDLE ORDER EVERY WEEK.

This applies especially to branches and locals west of the Mississippi. The rate for bundles are as follows—Bundles under 100 copies 3 cents per copy. Bundles from 100 to 500, 2 cents per copy. All orders must be in no later than Tuesday morning of each week.

We also urge, request, and implore our readers and correspondents to send in all announcements, stories, articles, etc., no later than Saturday. Important news stories which break over the week-end will be accepted no later than the first mail Monday morning.

Comrades—Now is the time for action. The Socialist Party in the west is growing as a revolutionary force. Labor Action is needed NOW to help you reach the workers in your community—to help you build your branch.

Join the ACTION ARMY. GET A BUNDLE ORDER FOR YOUR BRANCH AND A SUB FROM YOUR FELLOW WORKER IN THE SHOP, OR YOUR CLASSMATES IN SCHOOL.

Let's do this job right and build Labor Action into the powerful force that it must and should be in the Labor Movement. ACT NOW.

Wells Calls For Italy Hurries 'Culture Bible' Plans for War

Advocating the assembling of a vast "bible of world culture," which he claimed would be the "mental background of every intelligent man in the world," H. G. Wells last week told the Royal Institution at London that such a book would have saved President Roosevelt a great deal of "experimenting" in the last four years.

Wells, an ex-school teacher who first became well-known through his mass production of fantastic tales based on the machine age, described to his distinguished audience the details of his latest intellectual adventure. All mental muddles of the past could be ended through such a book, he said. Considering his age, he continued, he did not consider himself as being able to do the job himself.

Roosevelt, he claimed, is one of the most interesting figures of history. "He did not pretend to be a divinity. He was a politician of exceptional good will. He was none of your dictator gods."

When Roosevelt came to office, according to Wells, America was "ready to be told and shown." But the "bible of world culture" was not prepared. "This higher brain, this gray matter of America, was so entirely uncoordinated that it had nothing really comprehensive, searching, thought out and trustworthy for him to go upon. The President had to experiment and attempt this and that."

Meeting in the dead of night, after it had contemptuously slapped the Soviet Government in the face by recognizing the Fascist rebels in Spain, the Italian Fascist grand council last week voted more guns, more airplanes, more warships, and more men for the army.

The Italian council openly announced its intention to whip up the war machine to its highest fighting pitch, especially the air and sea forces.

The Soviet Government has been at pains to prove that it has not sent any guns or ammunition to the Loyalists, maintaining that it has given only bandages, a few cans of food, and articles of clothing, a service for which not even a capitalist nation would be censured. The Italians have openly supported the Rebels with guns and ammunition; but the Soviet bureaucracy has so far done nothing beyond speaking strenuously about the situation.

Although many French munitions plants, according to the Daily Worker of November 16, are sending war equipment to the Spanish Fascist Insurgents, the Italian Council, nevertheless, is placing as much pressure upon the Blum government as possible to prevent a formal word of encouragement to the Spanish Loyalist government now forming at Barcelona. The Blum government has so far joined in preventing arms from reaching the Spanish Loyalists.

"LABOR ACTION"

Official Weekly of the Socialist Party of California
ROOM 334, 628 MONTGOMERY STREET
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIF.

Enclosed herewith find \$.....to be applied as follows:
\$.....for subscription.

\$.....As a contribution to the sustaining fund.

Name

Address

City

Subscription Rates: \$1.50 for One Year; \$1.00 for Seven Months; \$1.00 for One Year in Clubs of 4.

Ohio Active Socialists Meet In Conference at Cleveland

CLEVELAND.—About fifty-five of the key Socialist members of Ohio gathered in Cleveland on Saturday, Nov. 14 at the Slovenian Auditorium for the Ohio Active Workers Conference. Among the delegates present were such well-known field workers as Meagley and Selander of the Toledo Workers Alliance, Thurber and Dulleau of Cleveland, Pollok and Preis of the American Federation of Teachers, Raymond of the Cincinnati Central Labor Union, Cochran, General Organizer of the M.E.S.A., Widick, editor of the United Rubber Worker, Salume of the State Executive Committee of the Workers Alliance and many other comrades active in the various phases of the class struggle.

The conference took on particular significance, as it was held shortly after the Ohio state organization failed to get on the ballot in the recent elections and was, in a sense, an expression on the part of all leading Ohio Socialists that some fundamental changes in program, in ideas and in organization were necessary if the Socialist Party is to develop and advance.

The conference in every way has great significance for the Socialist Party nationally, if only for the fact that it was held just prior to the New York meeting of the N.E.C., which will inaugurate the pre-convention discussion period of the special convention.

Report On Farmer-Labor Party

The conference was opened by a report from Bert Cochran of Cleveland on Socialism and the Farmer-Labor Party. In his address, he pointed out that all the experiences of the post-war European period as well as all of the teachings of the Marxist classics point conclusively to the fact that only a revolutionary party can mobilize and lead the working class to the defeat of reaction and towards the establishment of a workers state; that a Labor or Farmer-Labor Party established in America, can by all practical considerations of American politics be nothing more than a national extension of the American Labor Party of New York and with essentially the same program and personnel; that such a party could not solve any of the basic needs of the working class and was

bound to betray them when vital issues were at stake. The speaker stated that it was therefore impossible and absolutely unthinkable for the Socialist Party to take the lead in the launching of a Labor Party or a Farmer-Labor Party. "If such a party is actually established," Cochran stated, "we can then decide as a practical question whether to affiliate with it or not, based upon considerations of how we can best advance the interests of the workers and extend the Socialist influence in their ranks."

A very spirited discussion followed the report, with delegates from almost every part of the state participating. Several delegates related experiences from the field where local Farmer-Labor Parties had been formed prior to the national elections and how all of them had wound up their careers by joining the Non-Partisan Labor League and corraling the Labor vote for Roosevelt. Several delegates attacked the report on the grounds that it was sectarian, purist and De Leonist, but this point of view had little support from the bulk of the delegates as it so clearly clashed with all their recent experiences in their various localities.

In the evening, a resolution on the Farmer-Labor Party was adopted by the conference by a vote of 35 to 3. This resolution is now being submitted to the N.E.C. by Comrade Thurber, Cuyahoga County Secretary, as a recommendation for the position of the Socialist Party on this vital issue.

Report On Organization

John Newton Thurber gave the report to the conference at the second session on proposed organizational changes to make our party more effective. Comrade Thurber dealt at length upon the necessity of building trade union and unemployed committees of all comrades belonging to these organizations which will work under a common discipline. He also emphasized the necessity in the Socialist Party of building up full time functionaries, people who would devote all their time to party work. He maintained we would thus be enabled to build a firmer structure, greater cohesion and discipline and great devotion and sacrifice towards the achievement of our ideas.

A lengthy discussion followed dealing with the many technical and organizational problems of Ohio state and the Socialist Party as a whole. Motions were adopted recommending to the State Executive Committee the obligation to establish disciplined trade union committees, and have directed trade union and unemployed work. A motion was also adopted that a full time state secretary be elected at the January State Convention and that the

THE MODERN BOOK SHOP

116½ West Ninth St.
Los Angeles, Calif.

A representative collection of liberal and marxist periodicals and books. Classic and Contemporary.

Visit our Circulating Library. All Orders Promptly Filled. Open Daily from 9 'til 9.

The Notebook of an Agitator

Deeper Into the Unions—The Party Must Go to the Masses—Building the Party in Action

Not the least of the reasons for the renewed vitality and firm, healthy growth of the Socialist movement in California is the newly developed activity of many of its members in trade unions and the increased attention the party as a whole is devoting to this field.

The turn toward trade union work means the turn toward new life for the Socialist party in the west. It means reconstructing the organization on a proletarian foundation. And that is what is needed first of all if we are to be a real force in the class struggle and not a mere club of well meaning people which never offends anybody and which nobody ever thinks of taking seriously.

It takes a fighting organization to make a revolution, and the place to build it is inside, not outside, the broad labor movement. That means, primarily, the trade unions. We still have a long way to go to complete this necessary transformation of the party. What has been done so far—and it is all to the good—is, after all, merely dabbling. We will not really get down to business until we devote nine-tenths of our time and attention to trade union work.

The Basic Organizations

The trade unions are the elementary and basic organizations of the workers and the main medium through which the socialist idea can penetrate the masses and thus become a real force. The masses do not come to the party; the party must go to the masses. The militant activist who carries the banner into the mass organization and takes his place on the firing line in their struggle is the true representative of resurgent socialism.

And it is not enough by any means to have a few "specialists" attending to this function while the others occupy the cheering section in the grand stand. Nothing is more absurd and futile than such a party. Auxiliary organizations can and should be formed to enlist the support of sympathizers and fellow-travelers. But the party of the proletariat, to my notion, should be conceived as an organization of activists with the bulk of its members—everyone eligible, in fact—rooted in the trade unions and other mass organizations of the workers.

Theory and Practice

At this point we always come to the old moth-eaten and utterly ridiculous contrast of theory and practice. There is neither sense nor profit in such a debate, for the theory of Marxism, as Engels explained many times, is a guide

Purposeful Activism

The purposeful activism of the educated socialist must be directed primarily into the trade unions precisely because they are the immediate connecting link with a broader circle of workers and therefore the most fruitful field of activity.

When the socialist idea is carried into the workers' mass organizations by the militant activists, and takes root there, a profound influence is exerted upon these organizations. They become more aware of their class interest, and their historic mission, and grow in militancy and solidarity and effectiveness in their struggles against the exploiters.

At the same time the party gains strength from the live mass contact, finds a constant corrective for tactical errors under the impact of the class struggle and steadily draws new proletarian recruits into its ranks. In the trade union struggle the party tests and corrects itself in action. It hardens and grows up to the level of its historic task as the workers' vanguard in the coming revolution.

The trail-blazing work of the socialist activists in the California unions has opened a path for the party as a whole. There can be no doubt that the near future holds great successes for the party if it follows that path.—J. P. C.

The Election Campaign And the "Liberal Press"

If socialists ever had any illusions about that section of the capitalist press which calls itself "liberal," the recent presidential campaign should shatter them for all time. The boycott of Socialist news and announcements in the papers supporting the President, and particularly in the Scripps-Howard chain throughout the country, was so obvious as to elicit comment even among non-radicals. The boycott was made all the more striking by the space given the activities of the Communist Party, and the lengthy and respectful quotations from the speeches of Mr. Browder.

Such discrimination was, of course, completely logical from the viewpoint of "liberal" journalism. The Socialist candidates were conducting a straight-forward fight against both Republican and Democratic parties. The Communist Party not only based its campaign on the slogan—"Keep Landon out of the White House at All Costs," but actually encouraged its best-known trade-union leaders and its "fellow-travelers"—like Heywood Brown, Mary Van Kleeck and others—to whom it up for Roosevelt, its services to the Democratic ticket were rewarded by the Democratic press.

In San Francisco, the Daily News could not very well ignore the campaign visit of Norman Thomas, though it accorded it less space than it gave to the candidates of the moth-eaten Socialist Labor Party which was not even on the ballot in California. But the radio speeches of the Socialist candidates were completely ignored in its daily features of political broadcasts. On the Saturday before election, the News carried a first-page box listing all the political broadcasts for the following day—including those of the Communists, Father Coughlin, Dr. Townsend and Lemke. There was, no mention of the national broadcasts by Norman Thomas, George Nelson and Daniel Hoan—although the radio editor received these announcements both from KGO and from the Socialist Party, just as he had received and ignored similar broadcast notices throughout the campaign.

During the past four months it has become practically impossible

to get the announcement of any Socialist event in the News—though the Chronicle frequently prints such notices. On the other hand, the News gives space almost weekly, to the meetings of the little Socialist Labor Party, the almost extinct Proletarian Party and other minor radical groups of a purely academic nature. We do not complain against such announcements. We merely chronicle the fact as an indication that the paper's policy in such matters is determined not by "news sense" but by political considerations. The same is true of the Hearst press, but the Hearst press makes no pretence to liberalism.

As the Socialist Party becomes the only party of revolutionary opposition, it may expect an ever-growing resentment among the liberals, the communo-liberals and their press. The answer is obvious—a militant Socialist and Labor press. We begin with LABOR ACTION in California.

Permanent Armies Bigger Than 1914

Without including such semi-military organizations as the various armed youth organizations of Europe or the National Guard and R. O. T. C. in the United States or the territorial forces of Great Britain, military experts of the League of Nations recently released tabulations showing that permanent armies of the world are larger than in 1914 immediately before the World War broke out. The standing armies of the world now number 7,600,000 as compared to 5,900,000 before the last slaughter broke out.

To the armed forces upon land, the experts add enough men in the military navies of the world to bring the total to 8,200,000. Such youth organizations as those existing in Italy where children as young as eight years are given military training and bear arms are not considered by the League's experts as "permanent" and so are not included in their estimate of the world's cannon fodder.

They note briefly in the tabulation that such organizations serve as "valuable adjuncts."

SAN FRANCISCO - THE STORM CENTER

Militant Traditions Survive In Insurgent Labor Movement

Since the waterfront strike of 1934, the eyes of militant labor throughout the nation have turned toward California and toward San Francisco in particular. For San Francisco is the center of the organized labor movement in a state which for years—because of its criminal syndicalism laws, its vigilantes, its hounding of agricultural labor and its continued prosecution of Mooney and Billings—has been considered a symbol of reaction and injustice. Since 1934 that city has emerged as the scene of an aggressive labor struggle that has rocked the entire country. Many who are not acquainted with San Francisco's labor history and others who ignore that history or try to falsify it to serve their own ends, attempt to explain this situation as a miracle accomplished by a single leader or by some single group with a particular social and political philosophy.

The heroic battle of the San Francisco Maritime and other workers since 1934 for a decent standard of life and work is not rendered less heroic because it has its roots in a long tradition of militant struggle. Wave after wave of labor militancy, sometimes beaten down, sometimes diverted into "safe" channels by reactionary leadership, sometimes sweeping on and resulting in definite gains for the workers, have swept through the San Francisco labor movement throughout its history. As early as 1850, during the days of the gold rush, the seamen went on strike in San Francisco. In 1877 occurred the famous San-Lot Riots in which the workers, incensed by the use of Chinese coolie labor during a period of unemployment and mass misery, were led—or rather misled—into taking out their resentment on the exploited Chinese rather than on the bosses. The '80s and '90s were packed with labor struggles. A large contingent of San Francisco unemployed joined Coxe's Army in the march on Washington during the 1932-33 depression. But it was not until the early 1900's that organized labor became a powerful factor in the city's industrial life.

Teamsters' Strike Of 1905

In the year 1905 came the great Teamster's Strike, portrayed by Jack London in *The Valley of the Moon*. During this strike, Phelan, the "reform mayor" placed city policemen on the trucks to protect scab drivers. Daily battles took place between union men, scabs and police throughout the city. The actions of the city authorities turned the attention of the workers to political action. Upon this resentment and its manipulation by a few crooked demagogues, there was built up the "Union Labor Party"—a political machine run by the labor leaders, in collusion with public utility interests, racketeers and gamblers, over which labor had no control whatever and which held the city in its grip for the next five years.

In the years immediately following the earthquake and fire of 1906, organized labor built up its economic strength in San Francisco to a point never equaled before or since in the history of trade unions. Among the organized trades, San Francisco was 100 per cent closed shop and in the building trades particularly, wages soared. The Union Labor Party had to render some service to the organized workers during this period, though when the rush of immediate reconstruction work was over, it was to sell out even the building trades workers again and again. The hard-boiled labor politicians who dominated both the Building Trades Council (whose president became mayor of the city) and the Labor Council as well as the Union Labor Party—built up fortunes during their days in office by developing the sell-out game into a fine art.

In Reactionary Group

As labor leaders they made no attempt to organize the unorganized with the utility interests from which they accepted huge bribes, the utility employees in particular, were left strictly alone in their repeated attempts to organize themselves. Finally, Fremont Older, who later fought for the freedom of Mooney and Billings, instituted the famous graft prosecutions which ended the political careers of some of the labor czars. Unfortunately many of them still kept a stranglehold on their unions. Much of the energy of the labor militants in the next few years had to be expended in fighting, not only the encroachments of the bosses but these enemies of the working class within. By 1920, the strength and solidarity of the trade union movement in San Francisco was only a memory.

Beginning around 1909, the I.W.W. fought their labor battles up and down the Pacific Coast, making great organizational inroads, not only in the Northwest lumber camps and the California agricultural fields, but also among the maritime workers, particularly in San Francisco. In those years, the Socialist Party was also growing rapidly among the militant, class conscious workers. Even the anarchists gained a foothold in the San Francisco labor movement and strangely enough, some of their most active labor men—instinctive radicals without any genuine labor philosophy—were

"playing ball" with the corrupt building trades leaders. The McNamara confession, engineered by Lincoln Steffens, ended a definite phase of labor militancy, not only on the Pacific Coast, but throughout the nation. For the next five or six years, labor was intent on regaining its respectability and Los Angeles was expanding as the great open shop center of the West.

Tom Mooney Framed

Just before America entered the World War, San Francisco's "civic peace" was shattered by the longshoremen. It was during the strike that followed that the late Captain Dollar made the famous remark that "the only way to end a strike is to send ambulance loads of pickets to the hospital." While the longshoremen were out, the culinary unions and the musicians also struck. Mooney tried to organize the street-railway employees and was framed, together with Billings, on the charge of bombing the Preparedness Day parade. The strikes were lost and Mooney was convicted. The million dollar fund, raised by the Chamber of Commerce to break the waterfront strike and to finance the Mooney "investigations," marked the beginning of complete employer solidarity on the Pacific Coast.

In the wave of strikes and lockouts that marked the close of the war period, the maritime workers struck again, but in the absence of any solidarity among the waterfront unions, they were completely crushed. By 1920, even the powerful Building Trades Council had become an impotent shadow. The labor "progressives" of 1910 and 1912, became the labor conservatives of the 1920's, running the Labor Council, with an iron hand—although militant opposition was practically non-existent—lunching with representatives of the Chamber of Commerce, resurrecting the "Union Labor Party" label every two years for the purpose of endorsing their candidacies for office. In name, at least, San Francisco was still "a strong labor town." In actuality, the closed shop was a myth. The unions existed on sufferance because they were no longer a menace to the employers. The labor militants either bided their time or dropped by the wayside, discouraged.

New Generation Of Militants

The wave of organization and hope which followed the N.R.A. aroused both the old and a new generation of militants to action. It was on the water-front where the militant tradition had been strongest, that the first successful battle against the old leadership was staged. The maritime strike of 1934, regalvanized the labor movement of the entire

west. San Francisco labor had come back! On July 16th, it startled the nation by a General Strike.

This is merely the barest outline of San Francisco's labor past. Thousands of clean-fighting workers have contributed to that record—men and women of every conceivable shade of working-class political and social opinion. There is a tendency today among many who are ignorant of that record to believe that "labor militancy" was born in San Francisco two years ago. The Communist Party, for example, and many of its newly converted "fellow-travelers" who know only what they are told, would have us believe that it was actually born in Party headquarters, with Sam Darcy acting as mid-wife. As a result, they greet every manifestation of militancy on the waterfront that does not accord with the Party line with a sneering reference to "Wobblies tactics," or dub every labor militant who disagrees with that line a "Wobblie."

Those who have assimilated the great lessons of the World War and the Russian revolution can understand the incompleteness and falsity of some of the basic theories of the I.W.W., which account for its downfall. But at the same time the young generation of labor militants must be taught to respect the tradition of the old I.W.W. It included in its ranks some of the most fearless and honest fighters the labor movement in this country has known, and many of its principles and tactics have contributed immeasurably to the modern struggles of American labor.

Honor Great Tradition Every militant worker in the United States owes to the Wobblies a debt of gratitude for the fearless struggles they conducted in the textile centers of the East, the lumber and harvest and mining regions of the West, and along the waterfront of the entire nation. The Wobblie tradition, like that of the trade union militants, is part of labor's priceless heritage.

It will never be the policy of Labor Action, nor of revolutionary Socialists generally, to sneer at those who conducted the struggles of the past—in San Francisco or elsewhere—no matter what their social philosophy; nor to heap slander on those honest and aggressive working-class leaders who do not see eye to eye with us on every question.

The resurgence of San Francisco labor in the past two years is built upon the best militant traditions of the past. Labor Action honors all groups and individuals who contributed to those traditions, it is determined to build upon them; not to ignore them nor tear them down.

act of treason to the working-class youth of Germany, to the anti-Fascist martyrs, and to all those being tortured, to this day in the concentration camps. And this is being said by people who accuse the collaborators of Lenin of working with the Gestapo, and who murder them en masse.

Suppress Revolutionaries

As the Congress had to be a model of the League of Nations, the delegates did not represent their organizations. They were not Socialists, Communists or liberals, but Frenchmen, Englishmen or Americans. Each national delegation had to work as a unit and adopt its decisions in delegation meetings, and insofar as possible, express before the Congress solely the opinion of the majority. In other words, the minorities could not express their position, except inside their own delegations, could not make their voice heard in the Congress. The president of the Congress was appointed by the League of Nations Society, just as were the presidents of the commissions. The highest body of the Congress, the discussion round-table, was composed of representatives of the national delegations. What perfect parliamentary fortification so that the voice of the revolutionary minority could not be heard!

It was said at the Congress that the old generation could not solve the problem of international relations and that it was up to the youth to do it. Despite that, a large part of the Congress was filled with speeches by representatives of the old generation who gave the youth the fruits of their long years of experience. The worst of it was that what they expounded to the youth made up a conglomeration of so much confusion and stupidity that almost all those attending left the Congress with more confused ideas than when they came.

"Shocked" By Erber

I had to wait through four sessions before they granted me the floor. Finally, they solemnly gave me three minutes to state the revolutionary position, after a mixture of bourgeois, pacifist, Stalinist betrayal and religious piety had taken up four sections of the commission. I used the three minutes to denounce the organization of the Congress in its entirety especially in regard to silencing the minority viewpoints. This shocked them into granting me another five minutes to finish my turn.

I then pointed out as best I could in the short time at my disposal, that collective security is nothing but a pious phrase employed by the imperialist powers satiated in the last war, to defend their booty. I declared that faith in the League of Nations and in collective security harnessed the peoples to the war chariots of their respective governments. I finished by making an appeal for the independent action of all peoples wanting peace, and above all for the independent action of the working class of the world.

The Congress approved the whole political line of the League of Nations Society and the Young Communist International. It declared itself ready to support the majority of the administrators of the League of Nations in a war against any nation which intended to disturb the "status quo" established by the treaty of Versailles. In this way was a Congress for peace converted into a Congress for war.

Youth was fooled into supporting the last war because they believe the pious phrases of the statesmen of 1914. Woodrow Wilson made the American youth believe that the United States was fighting a "war to end war"—a "war to make the world safe for democracy."

The Communists take part in the preparations for new mass imperialist slaughter with full recognition of the consequences of their actions. Their deliberate preparations for betrayal are a crime a thousand times worse than the betrayals of the social patriots of 1914.

greetings to Comrade Senior for this farewell Reception. More important, however, we urge all locals to find ways and means of raising a sum of money to be sent for the purse which is to be presented to Comrade Senior on December 12.

Comrade Senior has literally given his health to the Socialist Party. He has faithfully served the locals and state organizations throughout the country for eight years. He has cheerfully borne the brunt of financial worry and has served much of the time without any financial security for himself. He has kept the organization together through some of its most trying years. The purse will be presented to him so that he may go to some dry climate for a long rest to regain his health. Locals, please take action immediately. California has benefited a great deal by the co-operation of Comrade Senior who has assisted us immeasurably to re-vitalize our state organization.

And, just between ourselves, the State Office has extended to Comrade Senior an invitation to spend his vacation in Southern California. Any comrade in the southern area who would like to have the honor of furnishing hospitality to Comrade Senior and his wife and baby please communicate immediately with the State Office. Comrade Senior has not given us a definite answer as yet, but we hope that if we can assure him of a place to stay we can persuade him to visit us. How about it?

Because of the valuable results of Socialist activity in the past few months, the State Executive Committee found it advisable to move its offices to San Francisco. In addition Labor Action is a direct outgrowth of the accomplishments of San Francisco Local.

Partly because of its revolutionary principles and the application of those principles in trade union activity, the Socialist Party of San Francisco during its political campaign gained tremendously, not in the number of votes, but in its newly acquired labor base.

Honor National Secretary

On December 12 in Chicago, the Socialist Party is holding a Farewell Dinner and Reception for Clarence Senior, who is retiring from the office of National Secretary because of ill health.

All locals are urged to send

LOCALS IN THE WEST ATTENTION: We want to build up a real column of western news.

Please appoint someone in your local to be responsible for sending news to the Federation Secretary, Cray Trimble, Room 334, 628 Montgomery Street, San Francisco, so that we will have weekly reports on local Socialist activity throughout the west.

Special news of labor struggles, organization drives, unemployed and agricultural labor organization work should be sent as special articles.

Make Labor Action "the Voice of Socialism in the West." Deadline for material is Saturday of each week, but especially important news will be used if it arrives in the first mail Monday morning.

"Red Special" Starts Tour

GOOD NEWS! The Red Special sound truck is due to start on its tour of the states in the Western Federation. Starting with a meeting in Saint Louis, Sunday, December 13, Comrade Douglas Anderson and his wife will spend about ten days (according to tentative plan) in Joplin and the area covered by southeastern Kansas and northeastern Oklahoma, after which it will be routed through the states of the southwest on its way to the coast.

A later issue of Labor Action will give more complete details. Recruits for Footloose Rebels should start sending their names RIGHT AWAY so they may be prepared for follow-up work on the tour.

Comrade Anderson has been a labor organizer both in the mining and garment industries. He has been an active Socialist, member of the State Executive Committee of Illinois, and is now a national organizer for the Socialist Party.

Greetings From Utah

Comrade Locke of Salt Lake City writes: "Ever since I received your report of the conference held in Colorado last September I have intended to write and tell you how pleased I am with what was accomplished and with the splendid agenda outlined. I feel that we, here in the Rocky Mountain region, now have the nucleus of a real and militant Socialist movement and one that can and should receive the enthusiastic support of every member of the Socialist Party who is deeply concerned as to its future. To me it seems that here, in

The Party At Work

San Francisco Moves Forward

Having reached the lowest depths during the period 1934—spring 1936, the Socialist Party of San Francisco was beginning to stir, with a few grumblings at first, and then with the bang of a small fire-cracker.

When reincarnation was just at its beginning, before it could be determined what new role the Socialist Party was to play, the campaign came with all its complications. Despite the overwhelming Roosevelt sentiment the Socialist Party forged ahead during the campaign.

In the two month period preceding the elections the Socialist Party held six large meetings dealing with labor, international and political questions. During that same period over 80,000 pieces of literature were distributed, 4000 people composed audiences for Socialist speeches, 4000 additional individuals were contacted with Socialist literature through mail and Socialists spoke to a great many organizations ranging from Labor unions to the W.C.T.U.

The Socialist Party of San Francisco was responsible for printing the Western Socialist, the State Campaign paper; and distributing more than 15,000 copies in San Francisco alone.

Because of the valuable results of Socialist activity in the past few months, the State Executive Committee found it advisable to move its offices to San Francisco. In addition Labor Action is a direct outgrowth of the accomplishments of San Francisco Local.

Honor National Secretary

On December 12 in Chicago, the Socialist Party is holding a Farewell Dinner and Reception for Clarence Senior, who is retiring from the office of National Secretary because of ill health.

All locals are urged to send

LOCALS IN THE WEST ATTENTION: We want to build up a real column of western news.

Please appoint someone in your local to be responsible for sending news to the Federation Secretary, Cray Trimble, Room 334, 628 Montgomery Street, San Francisco, so that we will have weekly reports on local Socialist activity throughout the west.

Special news of labor struggles, organization drives, unemployed and agricultural labor organization work should be sent as special articles.

Make Labor Action "the Voice of Socialism in the West." Deadline for material is Saturday of each week, but especially important news will be used if it arrives in the first mail Monday morning.

"Red Special" Starts Tour

GOOD NEWS! The Red Special sound truck is due to start on its tour of the states in the Western Federation. Starting with a meeting in Saint Louis, Sunday, December 13, Comrade Douglas Anderson and his wife will spend about ten days (according to tentative plan) in Joplin and the area covered by southeastern Kansas and northeastern Oklahoma, after which it will be routed through the states of the southwest on its way to the coast.

A later issue of Labor Action will give more complete details. Recruits for Footloose Rebels should start sending their names RIGHT AWAY so they may be prepared for follow-up work on the tour.

Comrade Anderson has been a labor organizer both in the mining and garment industries. He has been an active Socialist, member of the State Executive Committee of Illinois, and is now a national organizer for the Socialist Party.

Greetings From Utah

Comrade Locke of Salt Lake City writes: "Ever since I received your report of the conference held in Colorado last September I have intended to write and tell you how pleased I am with what was accomplished and with the splendid agenda outlined. I feel that we, here in the Rocky Mountain region, now have the nucleus of a real and militant Socialist movement and one that can and should receive the enthusiastic support of every member of the Socialist Party who is deeply concerned as to its future. To me it seems that here, in

greetings to Comrade Senior for this farewell Reception. More important, however, we urge all locals to find ways and means of raising a sum of money to be sent for the purse which is to be presented to Comrade Senior on December 12.

Comrade Senior has literally given his health to the Socialist Party. He has faithfully served the locals and state organizations throughout the country for eight years. He has cheerfully borne the brunt of financial worry and has served much of the time without any financial security for himself. He has kept the organization together through some of its most trying years. The purse will be presented to him so that he may go to some dry climate for a long rest to regain his health. Locals, please take action immediately. California has benefited a great deal by the co-operation of Comrade Senior who has assisted us immeasurably to re-vitalize our state organization.

And, just between ourselves, the State Office has extended to Comrade Senior an invitation to spend his vacation in Southern California. Any comrade in the southern area who would like to have the honor of furnishing hospitality to Comrade Senior and his wife and baby please communicate immediately with the State Office. Comrade Senior has not given us a definite answer as yet, but we hope that if we can assure him of a place to stay we can persuade him to visit us. How about it?

East Bay:

Comrades in East Bay are looking for a new headquarters, and they hope to find a suitable location by the first of the new year. The State Convention of the Socialist Party will be held in Berkeley, February 20-22.

San Diego:

Comrade Dick Fraser is actively assisting the Federation of Agricultural Workers' Union in their efforts to organize the workers and win union conditions in the tomato crops, particularly in the area south of San Diego. Comrade Fraser is assisting with defense and educational work, in preparation for the strike which may be called very soon if negotiations fail. Union demands are 90 per cent closed shop; 40 cents per hour minimum; 8-hour day; time-and-a-half for overtime.

Western States Federation Of the Socialist Party

the west, lies the future of the party, and that the kind of a party we should have will largely depend on the courage and convictions of its membership and its vision. . . . May I say in conclusion that I am greatly encouraged with the spirit that is being manifested by the comrades in California. The result of the election seemingly has not blunted their courage, and their determination should be an incentive to all the rest of us to do likewise."

"Security"

From Lincoln, Nebraska, we receive news of local activity in spite of "Hoover-Rooseveltian Depressive Prosperity." Unemployed workers who are "old enough" receive "State Aid Assistance," affectionately termed by some as an "Old Age Pension." They are supposed to receive the magnificent sum of \$30 per month, but if a friend or relative has been so unwise as to give three or four dollars to tide them over, that amount is considered "income" by the ever-so-wise dispenser of "State Aid," and is deducted from the \$30 monthly ration. One comrade made a scientific budget and cutting as close to the line as possible on all expenses the amount left to "eat on" was SEVENTEEN CENTS A DAY. There is still work to be done, in spite of the Roosevelt landslide for "security."

Death of Carl Peterson

The Socialist Party of Minnesota reports with deep sorrow the death of Carl Peterson of Willmar, who died Sunday, November 20, from double pneumonia.

Besides being a member of the Socialist Party State Executive Committee, Comrade Peterson took a leading role in labor struggles, in workers' education and in the militant Farm-Holiday movement in the western section of the state. He was one of the promising revolutionary leaders of the younger generation.

During his confinement at a tuberculosis sanatorium, Carl Peterson was devoting himself to an intensive study of Lenin's and Trotsky's works, to better fit himself to play a part in the struggles of toilers. Up to the very end, he followed with passionate interest the development of the Spanish civil war and the progress of local strike struggles.

The workers and farmers of Minnesota have suffered a real loss in the death of Comrade Peterson. He was thirty-two years old. He is survived by his parents, three brothers and two sisters.

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. I, NO. 2 SATURDAY, DEC. 5, 1936

Hands Across the Sea

The ocean is wide, but the outstretched hands of international labor solidarity made a bridge across it last week. The French Dockworkers' Union refused to unload cargo from American ships that were loaded through picket lines on the orders of Joseph P. Ryan, head of the I.L.A. and arch-scam and traitor to the cause of labor.

Press reports state leaders of the French Dockworkers' Union told United States embassy officials they were participating in an international demonstration against American shipping. At Havre, Bordeaux and Marseille stevedores refused to unload American ships that sailed from the United States after the Maritime strike began. The United States liner Washington, held up three days at Havre, was forced to sail for Hamburg with 600 tons of cargo which was to have been discharged at Havre.

In this one gesture of the French workers there is dramatically expressed the leading and most powerful idea in the whole arsenal of labor's weapons, the idea of internationalism. The great leaders and teachers of the proletariat, Marx and Engels, wound up their manifesto of 1848 and compressed their doctrine into the mighty slogan: Workers of the World, Unite! Lenin and Trotsky, the heirs and successors of the founders, proclaimed the doctrine of internationalism during the black night of the world war and led the Russian revolution under that banner.

Always and everywhere the mark of the true representative of the interests of the workers is the unyielding stand for international co-operation and international organization. Nationalism spells defeat and death for the labor movement. Internationalism is the slogan of liberation.

Honor and gratitude to the French workers! Let us not forget their brave gesture as their own struggle for life and freedom rushes to its approaching revolutionary climax!

The "Socialism" of Blum

No man can serve two masters. You cannot serve the interests of the working class—which are irreconcilably opposed to capitalism—and at the same time act as the executive officer of the capitalist state which, as Engels explained long ago, is nothing but the executive committee of the capitalist class. This historic truth, expounded theoretically by the great socialist teachers and confirmed in practice by the "socialist" betrayers in Russia, Germany and elsewhere, is once again brought to the fore by the conduct of Leon Blum, socialist premier of the government of French imperialism.

Blum's latest performance, reported by press dispatches, was to obtain consent of his cabinet "for a compulsory arbitration bill to combat a critical break between capital and labor." That means, in other words, a scheme to paralyze the workers' movement while the exploiters have free play to grind them down.

Blum went into office with the declaration that he would make no effort to execute a socialist program. He played a shabby role during the strike wave that coincided with his entry into office. Then he initiated the infamous "neutrality pact" which deprives the Spanish workers of

arms while the fascist beasts are freely supplied. Now he is coming out with a bill to outlaw strikes and strangle the French workers in the noose of compulsory arbitration.

Every worker has a right to ask what this procedure has to do with socialism as we understand and advocate it. Blum is acting like an ordinary bourgeois democrat in office. The name "socialist" is only a deceptive label to make it look different.

All In the Family

We have heard and read about great social wars and upheavals which have blasted long-standing friendships and rent families asunder, setting father against son and brother against brother. But it took the great championship battle of progress vs. reaction in the 1936 election to produce an opposite and kinder result and show that civilization and good will, as well as progress, are marching on and exerting their beneficent, humanizing influences over the hearts of men even when they stand (in a manner of speaking) at daggers drawn.

We refer, of course, to the happy culmination of the electoral battle of the century in the almost simultaneous announcements of the engagement of the president's son, Franklin D. Roosevelt, Jr., to Miss Ethel Dupont and the engagement of the president's son-in-law, John Boettlinger, as publisher of Hearst's Seattle Post-Intelligencer.

By these two mixed marriages, which are announced right on the heels of the election campaign, there is to be read a dramatically-timed rebuke to those overzealous partisans who, lacking the gentlemanly poise and social graces of their masters, took the slogan "Defeat the Hearst-Landon-Dupont Combination at all Costs" too literally and too seriously and even wanted to keep on shouting it after the order had gone out: Cease firing! We have met the enemy and they are ours (or we are theirs)!

Certainly the president, who comes up smiling as the father-in-law of a Dupont and the son-in-law of Hearst, has shown an aloof superiority to those mad fanatics of history who allowed political disputes to split individual families in twain. Instead of that he binds the warring families together. Instead of narrowing down he broadens out. What a heaven-sent leader for the American People's Front!

Only one small point troubles us. If Roosevelt stands for Democracy and Peace and Dupont stands for War and Hearst stands for Fascism, what does the family combination of the three stand for? Maybe the League Against War and Fascism can take up this question at its next symposium on "Reaction Has been Defeated—What Next?"

People's Front, Fascist Version

Is there no limit to the lengths to which the Communist International will go, in its false and reactionary search for "allies" outside the camp of the workers and the toiling masses?

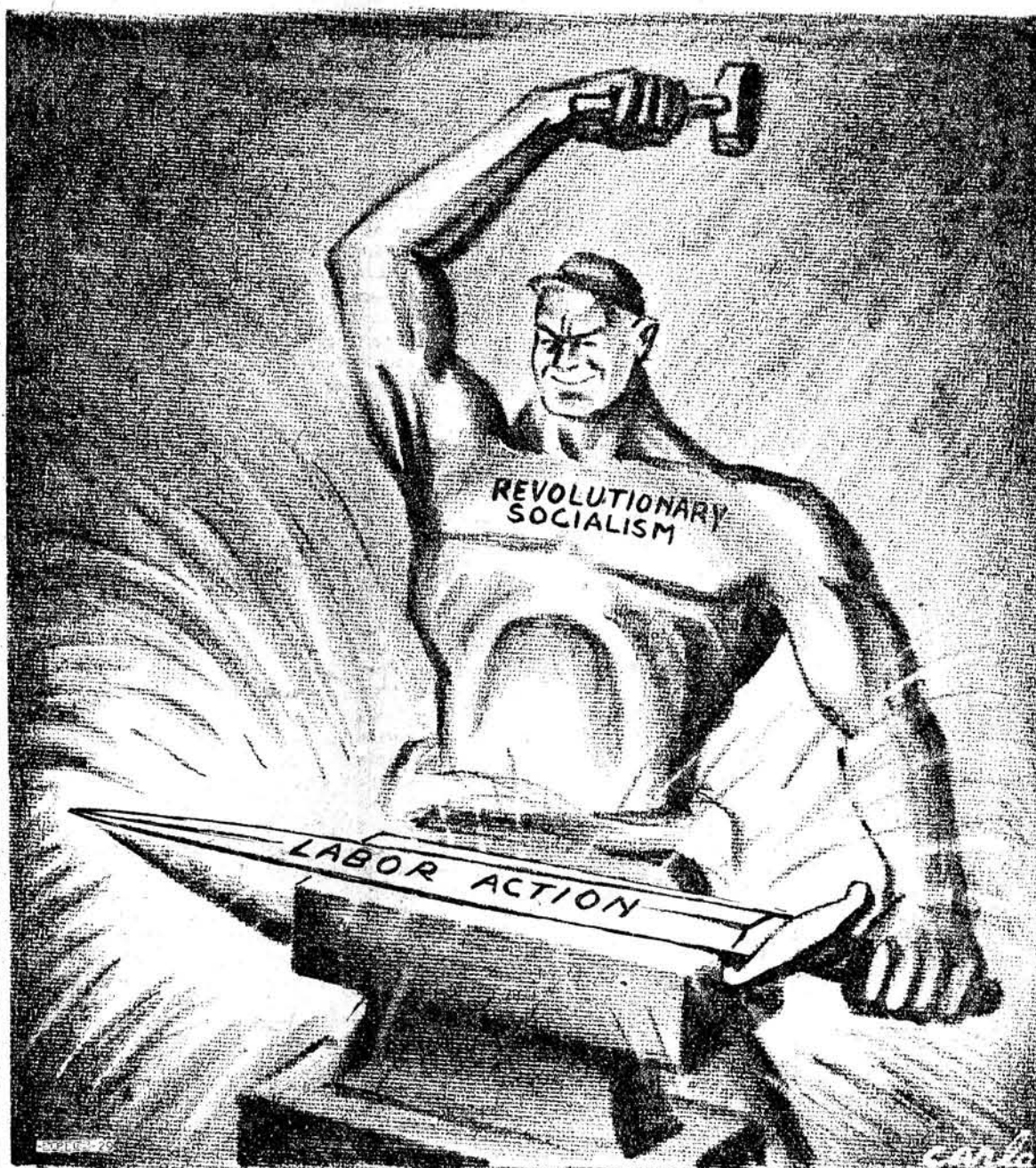
The Communist parties have made a "People's Front" with Roosevelt through the American Labor Party. They have joined with the "democratic" capitalist party of France to maintain "order." And so on. But now comes an almost unbelievable move: a "People's Front" with fascists on the basis of a fascist programme!

"In order to facilitate the fraternization of all Italians, in order to unite all the efforts for freedom in the country, the Communist Party of Italy declares that it adopts as its own the fascist programme of 1919, which is a programme of freedom, and is determined to fight for it."

This paragraph is from a Resolution of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Italy, published in the International Press Correspondence, No. 48, October 24, 1936.

Communist workers! How long are you going to put up with such a false, reactionary policy?

Forging A New Weapon - - - By Carlo

An Appeal To Communists
For Revolutionary Unity

Associate Editor Addresses An Open Letter
To the Central Committee and
Rank and File Members

By GLEN TRIMBLE

The Western Worker, of November 26th prints a Statement of Central Committee, Communist Party, U. S. A., to the Socialist Party. Very generously the Stalinists tell us what the issues of the day are and then spend about one thousand words warning us against the "Trotskyite gangrene that is eating up our vitals," "undermining our trade union work," and generally sending us to pot. The statement winds up with an invitation for united action (after we have washed ourselves clean) on certain fundamentals such as the "building up of an American people's peace movement." Its mighty nice of the Communist Party to take time off from Smedley Butler and Franklin D. Roosevelt to worry about plain folks like us. As a member of the Socialist Party since way back when all Socialists, not just "Trotskyites" were gangrene and social fascist betrayers of the working class, I think it only fair to return the favor by a little friendly advice to the Central Committee and all the poor rank-and-file members who have to sit up nights trying to catch up to the "party line."

Dear Comrades:

As a result of the combined efforts of Old Guard Socialists, misguided labor leaders and plain labor fakery, the Bank of America, Jim Farley and Earl Browder, most of the American working class has once more been kidded into thinking that a victory for the Democratic Party of capitalism was a "blow against reaction."

In spite of the heroic single-handed efforts of the Socialist Party, the united front support of this illusion has set back the day of genuine, independent, revolutionary action by American workers.

The Great Task

The great task of the moment is to help labor, not only in America but throughout the world, to realize that it is the ONLY class force which can end exploitation, stop war, and crush Fascism by fighting for and winning a Socialist world. We must help labor to understand that it must win its friends from farmers, students and the middle-class on the basis of labor's own program for a world ruled by those who do its useful work. Capitalism is outworn, rotting, dying; any concession to it or its middle-class supporters pledges the workers to curing the incurable, chains them to a sinking ship.

This brings us forcefully to the question of the united front between all workers and parties dedicated to the overthrow of capitalism and an end to wage-slavery.

For Unity of Action

Unity of action is called for everywhere, in every nation, among all workers for the final international onslaught on capitalism, the breeder of war and Fascism.

It is called for most urgently in mobilizing the support of the American workers for the Spanish workers in their glorious struggle for a Socialist Spain. May we unite in lending aid to that rapidly growing army of Spanish workers and peasants who seek to transform what is now only a defensive fight against Fascism into a triumphant offensive for a victorious workers' Spain!

Large number of Communists, members of your party, favor such united revolutionary action. These comrades see in the rapid march of the Socialist Party toward an uncompromising socialist position the best means of strengthening the forces of labor and of revolutionizing its consciousness and struggles.

Unfortunately the invasion of counter-revolutionary Stalinism into the Communist International and its branch offices in the various sections of the world has done serious damage to the cause of the workers inside and outside the Soviet Union.

The Stalinist Course

Everywhere that Stalinism controls it has demoralized, wrecked and destroyed the revolutionary drive of the party membership. The Stalinist bureaucracy has expelled, vilified and even murdered those who stood out for continued struggle for world revolution. It has capitulated to the League of Nations and to the whole cesspool of capitalist diplomacy which allowed Italy to plunder Ethiopia and Spanish Fascists to mow down workers deprived of arms by a treaty signed by the Soviet Union. It has given support to war appropriations and compulsory military training in France and outdone the betrayers of 1914 in pledging its parties in capitalist countries to support of their governments in war even before the slaughter is begun.

It consistently opposed a united front against Hitler in Germany and allowed the German working class to be crushed without ordering or striking a blow. Today in Spain the minions of Stalin prepare to return a nation preserved by workers arms back to the greed of capitalist exploiters just as did Noske and Scheidemann in the Germany of 1918. Today in America they seek to dissolve the militancy of the workers on the political field into Farleyized, false labor parties, and on the industrial field into support and advocacy of steadily more reactionary officials and policies. All this the Stalinist bureaucracy is now doing in the name of Communism.

I speak the mind of many members of the Communist Party, its healthier and more valuable members, who cannot speak for themselves, even read or think for themselves, because their slightest deviation from the dictate of the Comintern means immediate expulsion. In their name as well as that of all revolutionary Socialists I make this appeal.

Rid yourselves of counter-revolutionary Stalinism. Cut yourselves loose from the apron strings of the Comintern. Grow up to a revolutionary stature and a revolutionary freedom of choice. Only a world march toward Socialism in every country can be a genuine defense of the Soviet Union. We must save both the Soviet Union and the American working class from the short-sightedness of their present leaders.

Comrades, unite with us on the basis of this program for the building of a truly revolutionary party of American workers. The one great, immediate need here and everywhere is that workers learn to understand and act upon the slogans.

CAPITALISM IS THE ENEMY!
MARCH FORWARD TO SOCIALISM!

Says Britain Needs
Ships, Men for War

Declaring that it was almost impossible to find a really good British seaman today, Edmund H. Watts, chairman of Watts, Watts & Co. Ltd., managers for the British Steamship Co., Ltd., bemoaned the fact that when the new world war starts this will be a vital weakness to the British fleet.

Although unemployment reserves are huge in Great Britain, conditions are so unbelievably bad that no man can be obtained to work ships, according to Mr. Watts. He advocated a program of training men so that Great Britain will be able to fight effectively when the war breaks.

Bitter Fight

He outlined the bitterness of the present conflict between the present world merchant marines for trade and maintained that Great Britain in this fight loses every day. Consequently, according to Watts, the merchant marine is getting in such condition that it will be ineffective in war as compared with the modern ships of other nations. He quoted statistics to prove his contention.

In the last war Great Britain occupied a strategic position in naval battles through her control of coal bunkering stations. Now the development of fast oil-burning ships has removed that control.

The Japanese merchant marine, he pointed out, is uneconomical from a business viewpoint but from a military viewpoint they are faster than the ships of other nations. Most of them are oil-burners.

As a solution, Mr. Watts proposed that a new merchant marine be constructed immediately. After the war starts, he said, it is much more difficult to build ships, than it is now.

SIDELINES

By JONATHAN DOE

Fair Enough

Miami employers propose fingerprinting of their hotel and restaurant employees to protect their guests against crime. A newspaper columnist suggest that the guests should be fingerprinted too as a protection against each other. Miami being what it is—a vacation hang-out for gangsters and their molls, utility magnates, bank presidents and other crooks, why not simply matters by moving just one step farther? Merely fingerprint the guests for the protection of the waiters, busboys, maids, etc.

Your Nose Knows

The more we examine the subject, the more the ship subsidies and the refusal of shipowners to pay their sea-faring personnel a decent wage smell to high heaven. In fact, with no apologies to the two Roosevelts, we have come to think of the shipowners as the "olfactors of great wealth."

Whispering

The Communist Party whispering campaign is under way. Labor Action, we hear, is supported by Trotsky out of the royalties from the sale of his latest book, *Hearst's Examiner* and the *Western Worker* will be coming out any day now with the headline "Trotskyite Gold!" And who knows? Maybe the former commander of the Red Army will come marching up Market Street. The Comrades are all a-jitter.

Interview With a Liberal

Our ship news reporter caught Mr. Sidney Passmore Fishfield as he came down the gangplank from his round-the-world survey of war, peace, fascism and social credit. "I return with a heavy heart," he assured our reporter. "Europe is an armed camp. War is inevitable within three months unless the League can be strengthened and the armament race stopped. On one side will be the democracies—England, France, Russia. On the other the fascist nations—Germany, Italy, Japan. The issue is clear-cut."

"What about Spain?"
"Poor, tragic Spain! I could get no nearer than Biarritz because of the fighting. But I covered Germany. Of course it is impossible for a stranger to see the inside of a concentration camp. Naturally they put their best foot forward and keep such darker

aspects under cover. But one does not need to see such evidence. One feels it in one's bones, the moment one crosses the frontier. Imagine what it is to live in a nation in which there is no press but the official press, no party but the official party, no criticism of the national leadership on pain of imprisonment or death. What meaning is there to physical well-being when the soul and intellect are starved and stultified?"
"Isn't it the truth? You got into Russia?"

Mr. Fishfield beamed and his tone became slightly reverential. "Russia, indeed. Just in time for the 19th Anniversary Celebration. Two crowded weeks! Schools, hospitals, new dams, factories, railroads, power plants—I saw it all. Then as a climax, the great parade of the Red Army in the Red Square—armed men, marching by the hundred thousand, marching for hours past their beloved leader on the reviewing stand—the biggest standing army in the world, the best equipped, the best fed, the best—"

"Spain could have used a few of them."
"—the best trained. Never have I been so moved by such a spectacle. And to climax those 19 years of struggle and sacrifice, the New Constitution, guaranteeing democracy to the whole Russian people, freedom of speech, of press of assembly—"

"The Opposition Communists could have used a little of that before they got shot—"

Mr. Fishfield frowned.

Note On the Class Struggle

At an organization meeting of a new Anti-Nazi League held in Los Angeles and participated in by various "liberals" and popular frontists, the speakers took pains to assure the audience that the League was not opposed to "Fascism" as such, but merely to "Hitlerism." In other words, Mussolini, Pilsudski, de la Roquette and Franco can have the kosher label as long as they confine their attentions to labor and radicals. At the same meeting, Irving Thalberg, who had just died, was lauded as "our great progressive leader." (The New York Daily Worker eulogized him in the same vein.) It seems that Thalberg didn't like Hitler any better than he did the Screen Actor's and Screen Writers Guild. All of this must have been pretty touching to the Hollywood proletariat.

BOOKS and AUTHORS

Fremont Older

FREMONT OLDER by Evelyn Wells, D. Appleton Century Co., \$3.

Review by John Arlington

Despite all the romantic trappings with which his life is surrounded Fremont Older will go down in history for one thing and one thing alone. That is for his courageous fight against one of the most vicious frame-ups of our day, the persecution of Tom Mooney and Warren Billings. Evelyn Wells, in her biography, shows no appreciation of the fact. She tells the story of Older's role in the Mooney case, to be sure, and tells it with a good reportorial sense of its drama and color. But to her the Mooney case is but one of a series of episodes in the life of a great man, a great editor, a great fighting crusader, humanitarian, prison reformer, social philosopher, etc. etc.

This Side of Greatness
The simple truth is that Older did not approach greatness in any of these roles. As editor, crusader, philosopher, what you will, he was distinctly second-rate. What *is* it that matters that in the San Francisco graft prosecutions, he drove a bunch of crooked municipal politicians out of office? A new set simply took their place. What does it matter that he devoted a large part of his energies to prison reform and the rehabilitation of ex-convicts and prostitutes? He struck no blow at the system which produces them.

What does it matter that in the eyes of the romantically-inclined and sentimental newspaper fraternity, he was looked upon as one of the last representatives of the old school of frontier journalism, compounded of nine parts fiction to one of fact, which envisaged the editor not as a worker who had to satisfy the boss, but as an idealist fighting for Justice instead of for circulation? The high-salaried executives and advertising solicitors from the business office moved in anyway and "editorial integrity" and "freedom of the press" became so much mud to throw in the eyes of the public in the fight against organization of underpaid newsmen and the Child Labor Amendment.

Second-Rate Biography
Completely missing such obvious points, Miss Wells' book can only be classed as a second-rate biography. It is the work of a loyal protegee who shared her idol's enthusiasms and limitations. Yet Miss Wells cannot be dismissed as a mere sob-sister writing about her boss, though she often acted in this capacity under Older on

The Fight for Mooney

To point out Older's limitations, his inability to think through to any clear-cut social philosophy, to trace his feeble wanderings in the foggy realm of Tolstoyan anarchism is in no way to lessen his stature as a man who in the one acid test of his career rose to the occasion. It took honesty, courage and a tenacious fighting spirit to conduct that seemingly endless battle to free Mooney and Billings. Older had all three of these qualities despite his almost successful effort during his later years to suppress the last in favor of a sentimental, all-embracing Christian tolerance. "Almost successful" is used advisedly. Some chance remark, some reference to a current injustice or local stuffed-shirt would occasionally catch him off guard even in his final tired days of Hearst editorship. The gentle, pessimistic, turn-the-other-cheek mood would vanish. And with a fine display of forensic fireworks, Older of the old Bulletin would return to life.

Miss Wells' book, merely as a human document, is worth reading. Readers of Labor Action will be able to supply for themselves the social interpretation and perspective that it unfortunately lacks.

No Parole for Billings

SACRAMENTO.—The California State Board of Prison Terms and Paroles has decided to postpone action on the application of Warren Billings for parole from Folsom State Prison. The application which has been turned down twice is now postponed until after the Supreme Court ruling on Tom Mooney's writ of habeas corpus.

It appears that an end to the most notorious labor frameup in American history depends upon the Supreme Court's decision.

PEARLS FROM THE PRESS

By Carl O'Shea

Kalamazoo news item: Mrs. A. Deper, a farmer's wife, got tired of making payments on a \$1,000 note so she ate it. The creditor, asking Sheriff Struble what to do about it.

That's an idea. The Farm-Holiday might advise its members to chew up all mortgages.

And the unemployed could nibble the gas and grocery bills.

Let the creditors take the consequences.

General Franco sez: Bloodshed would never have come to pass had not the Socialist government committed the terrible crime of arming the people against representatives of the national will.

To capitalism and its representatives, it is always a great crime to harm the people—for then the people show just how "representative of the national will" are their oppressors.

Headline in the Catholic Worker: "Globe Strikers' Cause is Right—Strike is Wrong."

Maybe we're all wrong, boys.

Maybe there are ways to get union recognition that we don't know anything about.

Letter in The Rotarian: It must be plain to every thinking man that humanity has fallen victim to forces which it has created and is now powerless to resist. In the midst of plenty, millions starve; with millions in need, laws and tariff walls block distribution.

After that I won't be surprised to find that even the stones have tongues.

From an ad for the Page Fence Association: We don't expect trouble at our plant but we consider it good business to be prepared for emergencies. Page Fence gives us day and night protection against the violence of mob rule.

I bet they're talking about union strikers.

From Berlin: The Reich food estate has warned the public against talking about finding substitutes for food. They brand as false the rumor now going the rounds that sugar is to be made from wood.

And with shredded wheat being made from pine shavings—a guy can't help worrying about slivers.

Easy to Believe Dept.: The latest racket is to recover women's discarded hats from the ash cans, refurbish them and sell them as new.

Dr. William J. Petterson of the U. of Ill.: Genius is determined, not by the position of the planets at one's birth, but by the weather during the period of one's incubation. The more turbulent the weather, the greater the genius.

You can easily believe that your old friend, O'Shea, was given a start in the Great Wind in '97.

Whereas Coolidge and Hoover were conceived in the doldrums.

Rangoon, Burma dispatch: Baffled and irate postmasters have asked the homicidal natives to please discontinue the practice of sending human heads through the mail.

It DOES sound a bit messy. They ought to have better taste. They ought to mail the whole body.