

PLOT AGAINST AGRICULTURAL WORKERS!

Maritime Labor And The Government

The Scheme to Put Over the Fink Book
By Amending the Copeland Bill

Although the details of the several proposed Congressional bills on maritime labor have not yet been made public, a brief item of great significance has appeared in the daily papers. Copeland, it is reported, has prepared a new bill which will allegedly make "illegal" attempts to use his notorious fink book for blacklisting purposes.

The Administration hopes that with this well-sounded addition written into the union-smashing legislation last June the maritime workers will now meekly line up to take their hated "continuous discharge books." And if the bill will not be too openly transparent as a labor strangling device, we can expect the hidden supporters of Government control to come out with their arguments for this legislation. If we can believe the advance reports on Copeland's newest bill it will be just what they have been clamoring for—an "amendment" which will give the proper "promises" to deceive the maritime workers.

We already have intimations of what is coming. In the Western Worker of Jan. 7, 1937:

"The men do not object directly to the discharge books, in which the date of each discharge at the end of a voyage will be recorded," Curran said.

"They are opposed, however, to terms of the law which, they charge, give the ship lines an opportunity to blacklist employees for union activities or for reasons which have nothing to do with their ability, he said."

Nothing could be more confusing or false. The maritime workers who have pledged themselves to refuse the discharge books on all coasts have done so because they will not accept such an anti-union book—and they do not intend to be bamboozled into taking such a book by any or "amendments" clever politicians can invent. As long as the fink book remains maritime workers must and will resist it.

As far as the "terms of the law" are concerned, which the Western Worker is worried about, there are express provisions in the law for blacklisting seamen. Who could think that Congress would be so stupid as to only expose its real intentions? Any employment book which a worker is compelled to carry and without which he cannot obtain a job is a fink book—and it will be used to blacklist militants in any critical situation, all "amendments" in the world to the contrary.

After all, if the fink book is not for the purpose of controlling the activities of seafaring workers, why would it exist at all? The Government will readily concede an "anti-blacklist" clause, because it will still have a dog-collared clamped on the seamen. A few clauses of promises can always be sacrificed cheaply in order to keep the essence of a law.

Just let those who advocate acceptance of the fink book if it has an "anti-blacklist clause" explain this one question: Why have a government discharge book at all? Of course Copeland, government officials and laborers have their answer—that the book will "weed out incompetents," "maintain high standards of seamanship" and similar ballyhoo.

The conclusion is inevitable: the fundamental purpose of the Copeland fink book is and always will be to control the seaman hand and foot so as the better to angle all activity in any critical situation—for example a strike or war.

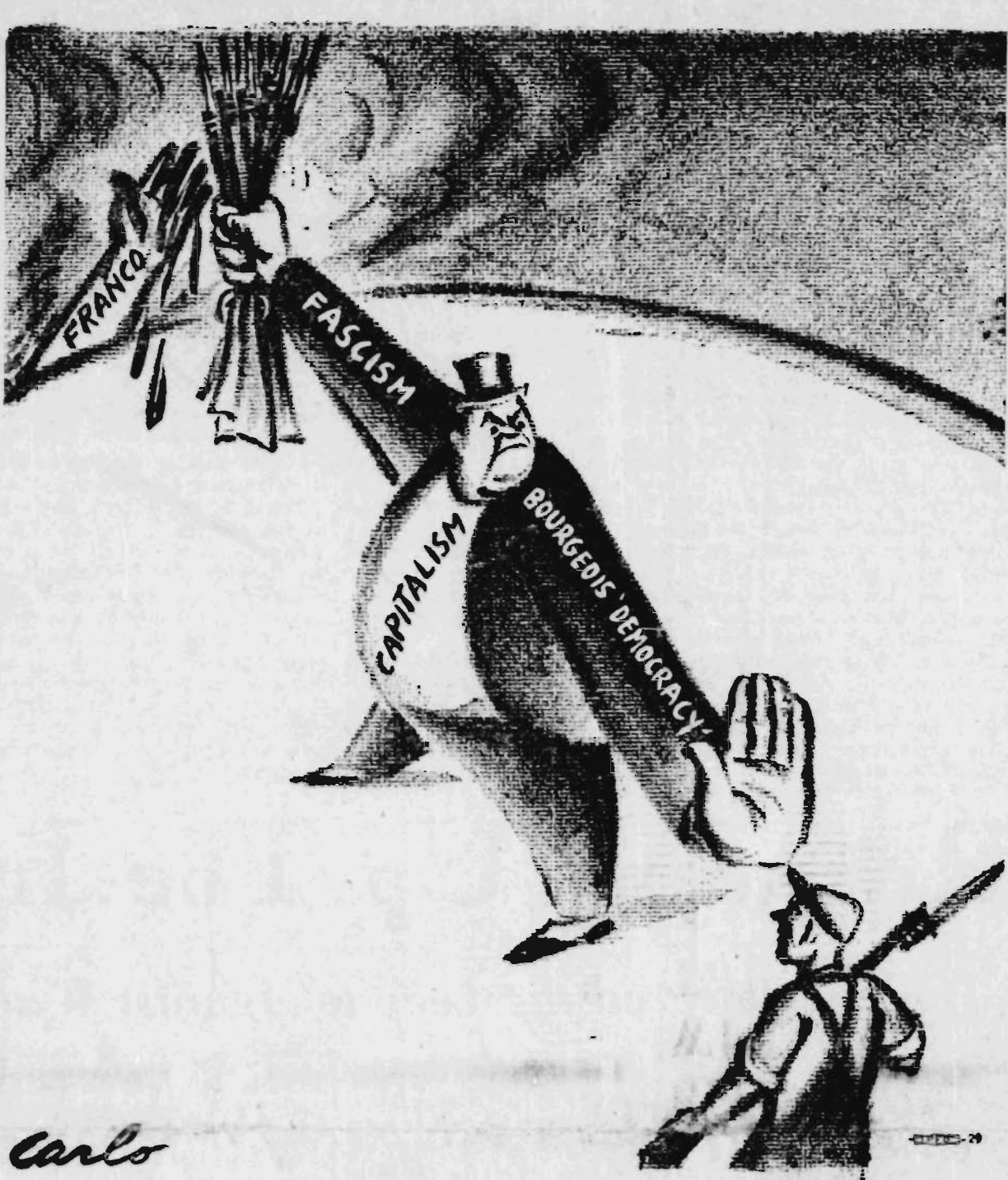
The above article in the Western Worker shows also a subtle attempt to avoid completely the most basic question: Why have a government discharge book at all? The workers are opposed, says the article, to the terms of the law which . . . give the ship lines an opportunity to blacklist employees. . . . As a matter of fact it is the shipowners which maritime workers are so worried about in this connection. The ominous threat is the intervention of the Government.

All waterfront workers know from their own experience that the shipowners could carry on their blacklisting only when the workers were unorganized. When workers were 100 per cent organized into militant unions they could throw off this yoke. This explains why shipowners have called upon the government to establish a control which they were unable to establish themselves.

It is not the shipowners who would do the blacklisting but rather the Government for the shipowners. And when the Government started to discriminate against workers it didn't like, it wouldn't be called "blacklist." It would be called "elimination of the incompetents" or "getting rid of the aliens," or something similar.

It is outright treachery to the rank and file of the maritime unions to attempt to interpret their militant struggle in exposing the vicious legislation of last June merely a struggle against a few "terms of the law." Beyond such a puny perspective, the fight of these workers has been against the vicious and reactionary employment in recent years: "the moving in" of the government to throttle the rising American labor move-

He Uses Both Hands . . . By Carlo



Select Men From 200 Volunteers For Debs Column

Socialist State Committee Calls for Wide
Campaign to Finance Heroic Project
to Aid Spanish Workers

In an inspiring demonstration of international working class solidarity, over 200 volunteers have applied to go to Spain under the banner of the Western Division of the Debs Column. Competent committees in Los Angeles and in San Francisco have been interviewing each volunteer. A careful process of selection and sifting is taking place. Only the most thoroughly experienced and trained in military technique, and only those who show the most reliable records of service and loyalty to the working class movement are being chosen to leave in the first detachment.

The men composing the Western Division of the Debs Column will undoubtedly take a prominent place in the International Brigade which is in the front ranks of the struggle against the Fascist hordes in Spain.

The volunteers have shown a courageous and determined desire to aid the workers cause in Spain even at the cost of their lives. Now new hundreds and thousands who are not as fortunate as the volunteers in being able to offer their military training, must step forward and extend support in every possible way.

THE MAIN TASK

The main task before the thousands of friends of the Debs Column, the first job for every Socialist Party member and sympathizer, is to insure a successful transportation of the Debs Column to Spain. We must begin to gather together all the pennies, nickels, quarters, and dollars that working people and

Burt Wire Puts WPA Question To Roosevelt

CHICAGO—The following telegram was sent to President Franklin D. Roosevelt by Roy E. Burt, national executive secretary of the Socialist Party:

"Workers' Alliance demands for WPA workers and unemployed must be granted to avoid mass starvation and hardship. Divert funds from the military budget to WPA. Congress must seek additional funds through higher income and inheritance taxes and capital levy. Create union scale jobs on low cost housing and other public works."

honest liberals will give.

The State Executive Committee of the Socialist Party has issued an appeal to every branch, member, and sympathizer to immediately begin to raise money for this tremendous project. Mass meetings, dances, house parties, appeals to the trades-unions, tag days, must be organized as methods to raise funds.

The Socialist Party summons you to tireless work to complete this project successfully. We know the workers of California will not fail to answer the call.

Walter Cowan Exposes Deal Between Public Officials and Employers

Give Damning Facts On Farm Labor At Federal Hearing

Show Landless Laborer Takes the Rap In
California; Socialist Program Presented by State Secretary

The Socialist program for California and Southwestern agriculture was presented at a packed Federal hearing on agricultural problems in San Francisco Tuesday, December 12th. The hearing was called by a Special Committee of the United States Department of Agriculture which is to draft a bill designed to aid farm tenants.

The issue of farm tenantry, particularly the vicious exploitation and brutal feudal system which prevails in southern "Democratic" states, has been pressed for many years by the Socialist Party. The work of Socialists and leaders of the Southern Tenant Farmer's Union has made "sharecropping" a household word in America and has forced the same administration which ignored all past demands to face the problem as a national issue.

LANDLESS LABORERS

Three previous Federal hearings in southern and midwestern states have served to bring out the seriousness of the tenantry problem. The San Francisco hearing, attended by representatives of all significant farmer and agricultural labor groups, emphasized a very different situation in the southwest.

The average "tenant farmer" in California has a farm valued at \$14,136 dollars and covering 208.1 acres. He is a relatively prosperous pillar of the community, a hirer of scores, often hundreds of farm workers. The agricultural group in this section which competes with the Arkansas sharecropper for the "honor" of the lowest living standard in the nation is the landless farm laborer. Based on 1935 surveys his average family income is \$262 a year if he does no other work, and \$388 if he can pick up industrial work in the off season.

This group is not only the most poorly paid, but the chief target of employer violence and terror. Imperial Valley, Orange County and Salinas are by-words for official lawlessness and vigilantism throughout America.

LABOR SPEAKERS GIVE FACTS

These facts were emphasized by Walter Cowan, vice president of the State Federation of Labor and chairman of the Federation Committee on Agricultural Labor. Glen Trimble, State Secretary of the Socialist Party, Julius Nathan, Secretary of the Conference of the California Agricultural Workers and by speakers from many local agricultural unions.

Labor and Socialist spokesmen declared that the problem of the landless, largely migratory, farm laborers of the southwest was as serious and as nationally important as that of the tenant farmers. They insisted that our problem is, above all, a labor problem and must be dealt with in that light.

Speaking for the Socialist Party, Glen Trimble presented a concrete program for federal action after pointing out that 60 per cent of all persons engaged in California agriculture are farm workers. This program included a complete survey of wage, hour and working conditions of farm labor in the southwest, four immediate federal hearings on this problem to be held in different farm centers in the area and, on this basis, the following specific federal action:

SOCIALIST PROGRAM

1. A minimum wage set at a standard of health and decency for labor on all farms where federal subsidy or aid, direct or indirect is given.
2. Extension of the program (Continued on Page 3)

Stresses Necessity Of Union Organization Campaign

Walter Cowan, vice-president of the California Federation of Labor, in a speech before the Socialist Forum in San Francisco last Sunday night, proved collusion between law enforcement agencies and the growers and shippers in California agricultural fields by documentary evidence. He also stressed the great need for industrial unionism in the agricultural industry and decried the lack of activity on this score by the leadership of the California Federation of Labor.

Letters written by John Miller, sheriff of Contra Costa County, purporting to show how labor organization is effectively stopped by the sheriff's office, and printed forms for "registering" migratory agricultural workers for a blacklist system were displayed by Brother Cowan as evidence that Miller was working actively as the agent of the large agricultural interests in the state.

SHERIFF'S LETTERS

One of Miller's letters outlined a plan for stopping labor struggles by setting up a committee of farmers long in advance of the season to meet regularly in order to be able to check immediately any form of labor organization. This committee is to be appointed largely by the sheriff's office.

Another section of the plan consists of registering every worker in the district in good old Hitler style, and excluding all "undesirable" elements. This plan also includes the blacklisting of all workers who show a desire to organize. The sheriff's letters also out-

Truce Broken By Double Cross Of General Motors

Sit-down Strikers Hold Plants At Flint As
Knudsen Walks Out On Schedule
Conference With Union

The bigger the corporation—the bigger the double cross. That is the major lesson of the current news of the auto strike.

On last Monday, January 18th, William S. Knudsen, executive vice-president of General Motors threw down a flat refusal of collective bargaining and walked out of a conference with Homer Martin, United Automobile Workers' head. The refusal was a direct contradiction of previous company promises.

Meanwhile the sit-down strikers at Flint Fisher Body plants 1 and 2 "held the fort" and prepared for a long winter. Court injunctions, bullets, tear gas and phoney promises have not moved them. So long as they remain, the many million dollar General Motors' industry is bottled up—tied tighter than a drum. Both union and company officials know this.

TOO GREEDY

The union almost forgot it, though. Corporation officials promised big things—provided the men left the plants—and union officers agreed. However greedy GMC couldn't hold its double-cross until the deadline and the union caught on in time.

Hardly had the promise been made to negotiate on eight union demands, including recognition of the UAW as the sole bargaining agent in all plants, when vice-president Knudsen gave the show away by publication of two telegraph messages.

The first was from George Boyson, "founder" and president of the "Flint Alliance," a company in-

spired vigilante group which is attempting to provoke violence against the union workers. The telegram asked for a "collective bargaining" conference. Knudsen, only too glad of a conference in which company representatives would sit on both sides of the table, wired back that "we stand ready always to discuss with your group or any group of our employees any questions without prejudice to anyone. We shall notify you as soon as possible as to time and place for a meeting."

IT ALL DEPENDS

This from the man who thirty hours later refused to "discuss any question" with the UAW.

The double-cross was so obvious that the strike strategy committee promptly canceled its orders for removing sit-down strikers. Men in the key Fisher Body plants promptly sat down again and the biggest tie-up in auto history swung into another week.

Already all actual auto work is stopped. A few days will see empty dealer's showrooms throughout the country.

The great showdown between the

An Open Letter to the Communist Party

Jan. 18, 1937.

To the California State Executive Committee and members of the Communist Party.

Dear Comrades:

On January 6th the Socialist Party of San Francisco voted unanimously to invite the Communist Party to united action in organizing and financing the transportation of a western column of the Debs' Brigade of trained aviators, military and technical experts, so that these working class fighters may join their Spanish brothers in the heroic fight against fascism and for the workers' cause.

This invitation has not been answered. A similar action by the Los Angeles Central Branch has received no more considerate treatment. Now we are informed that

your party has decided this week to support a competing project for sending technical workers to Spain. The Debs' Brigade was launched by the Socialist Party of New York, December 26th. In the face of our 12-day old invitation to united action and of the many scores of qualified men who have already volunteered for the Debs' Brigade from every working class party and group, including many from your own party, your action can only be regarded as narrowly partisan, dividing the working class at a time when unity of action is a vital necessity.

Today the workers of Spain are engaged in life and death struggle. Thousands of our comrades have died in the fight to crush fascism and

win victory for the workers of Spain. The issue is a world one in which aid for the Spanish workers depends on the united and overwhelming action of the organized workers and their friends throughout the world; and on that alone. This is no time for partisanship.

The California State Executive Committee urgently appeals to the State Executive Committee of the Communist Party to send representatives to meet with our special committee already appointed for this purpose immediately so that full plans for a united, effective campaign can be agreed upon. We are prepared to meet at an hour's notice.

Comrades! Not only Spain, but the world fight against fascism and the world advance

toward workers' power are at stake! We cannot allow any minor differences, any false pride or lame excuse to obstruct our unity in acting to meet the most important crisis since 1917.

Hours are lives! All too many of both have been wasted. It lies in the power of the State Executive Committee of the Communist Party to make a long stride toward ending that waste today. Unite with us to send hundreds, yes thousands, for unity will make thousands possible, of trained working class fighters to Spain!

Yours for International Socialism,
GLEN TRIMBLE,
State Executive Secretary,
Socialist Party of Calif.

United Action And The Debs Column

By CRARY TRIMBLE

Advocates of "harmony at all costs" become disturbed when one working-class organization brings to light the mistakes, failings, and outright betrayals of other working-class organizations. Their argument is that capitalism is the enemy.

The Socialist Party carries on the campaign against capitalism in propaganda and action. Our efforts in all mass organization work are directed toward awakening the workers to the fact that their enemy is capitalism and whoever defends any phase of it, and that their only hope of security, peace, and freedom lies in organized working-class action to wipe out capitalism and set up in its place a workers' society on Socialist principles.

FOR UNITY OF ACTION

Consequently, we stand for unity of action among working-class groups for the purpose of strengthening the working-class in its struggle against capitalism or against any of its various methods of exploitation. It is on that basis that the Socialist Party has supported and will continue to support and initiate united action of various working-class organizations on specific working-class issues. But it cannot remain true to the principles laid down by Marx, Engels, and the Great American Socialist, Eugene V. Debs, if as an organization it is willing to sacrifice the effectiveness of working-class action to a merely superficial "front" of unity.

In spite of the many recent evidences that the Communist Party is no longer interested in militant working-class action in the face of capitalist oppression and organized opposition, the Socialist Party acted in good faith when it asked the Communist Party leadership for co-operation in support of the Debs Column. Trained military men are only one of the many needs of the Spanish workers in their struggle against fascism, but successfully filling that need will mean both practical aid in the workers' fight against capitalist-fascism and a strengthening of their courage to carry on.

The invitation was issued to an organization which claims to be a working-class political party

pledged to Marxian principles. United action would aid the Spanish workers. Only with the co-operation of all working-class organizations can the project be thoroughly successful. The co-operation of the Communist Party would make possible a more rapid mobilization before it is all too late.

SABOTAGE OF C. P.

The answer of the Communist Party leadership to this sincere appeal by the Socialist Party was an editorial in the Daily Worker calling the Debs Column a "provocation" (because it was immediately opposed by a capitalist government), and a hasty marshaling of C. P. forces to confuse the whole issue and thereby sabotage the campaign for the Debs Column.

Their action can have no result other than confusing the supporters of the Spanish workers, weakening the support to be gained for sending the Debs Column to join the International Workers' Brigade, and sabotaging international working-class support to the Spanish Loyalist workers. Any organization that is willing to do that—is capable of doing that—must be exposed.

STILL URGE CO-OPERATION

United action for specific aid in crises of the class struggle does not require that the organizations see eye-to-eye on any other principle than the need for united working-class support of the given issue. We still urge the support of the Communist Party in this project and will work together in the most co-operative manner possible to give any and all kinds of effective aid to the Spanish workers. If the Communist Party continues its direct sabotage of the Debs Column of fighting workers for Spain, the Socialist Party will nevertheless continue its campaign to send as many men as can be financed by the support it can muster from other working-class and friendly organizations.

If the answer of the Communist Party to a united front proposal for much needed aid to Spain is only a knife-thrust to international working-class solidarity, on them rests the responsibility for the black name they have earned by their actions.

Tells Story Of Horrors In Germany

Refugee Speaks in Bay Area on Fascist Barbarities

Erich Rix, a member of the German Transport Workers' Union and at one time editor of a trade union paper in Germany, is traveling in the United States in behalf of the victims of German Fascism. He spent two years in a concentration camp. Brother Rix is remaining several weeks in the Bay Area where he is helping to organize an effective nationwide German Anti-Nazi League to counteract some of the work of the paid Nazi agents in this country.

Brother Rix gave a speech under the auspices of the Socialist Party of East Bay at a public meeting in Carpenters' Hall, 763 12th St., Oakland, Sunday evening, January 17 at 8 p. m. on "Terror in Nazi Prison."

The following week he will speak in San Francisco at the Socialist Party Forum at International Hall, 236 Van Ness Avenue, at 8 p. m. on "Fascism: How It Comes; How It Acts; How It Looks From the Outside."

The labor movement is one of the first things that must be destroyed in a Fascist state, and Brother Rix speaks from his own experience as an active trade unionist condemned to two years in a concentration camp prison.

"The prison to which I was assigned," he said in an interview, "was an ancient prison built to hold from 800 to 1000 prisoners. Because of the 'over-crowding' brought about by the wholesale Nazi arrests, this prison now houses from 3000 to 5000 prisoners regularly. On celebration days when a 'big shot' is due in town, two or three thousand more are added to the prisoners in this one camp alone, and similar conditions prevail all over Germany."

CONCENTRATION CAMPS

A concentration camp is merely a detention place for "suspects." Once charged, and the charges are usually some form of treason, the penalty is carried out in some other form. In other words, the prisoners in concentration camps are innocent victims of the terroristic spy system which forbids even "negative criticism."

CRITICISM IS TREASON

Brother Rix explained that one was guilty of negative criticism if he merely mentioned facts. "If anyone should simply state that the price of potatoes before Hitler came into power was 2½ marks and was now 7 marks, he would immediately be arrested and imprisoned for six months. If he were heard using those facts to propagate sentiment against Hitler or in favor of the old regime, he would be guilty of high treason and dealt with accordingly."

Nazi officials admitted that in the first nine months of the existence of the concentration camp to which Brother Rix was committed, there were 38 suicides. Brother Rix himself, not of a heavy build by any means, lost forty pounds during his imprisonment. He spent eight months in solitary confinement and at no time was properly fed. He was actually grateful for a chance to "peel potatoes" when finally released from the deadly monotony of idleness and solitude.

Nazi "justice" is such that if a person suspected of treason is not to be found, his relatives—even distant ones—will be held guilty and given punishment accordingly. Even neighbors of the suspect (if no family can be found) can be taken to answer for his crime.

A VICTIM'S FUNERAL

One harbor worker was executed for treason. Under present German law, anyone who expresses sympathy with such a victim by going to his funeral is himself guilty of treason. It is a tribute to the courage of the German workers that in this particular case, 4000 workers turned out to the burial. Each one of them was guilty in the eyes of the law, but since there were only 400 police available at the moment, only 400 were caught and given the penalty.

Asked if the promise of "bread to the people" had been fulfilled by the Fascist regime, Brother Rix gave an illustration of one German worker with a wife and three children whose wages were so poor that the only time that family had meat was Saturday night when they could go to the store and buy one-half pound of the dry end of sausage.

Erich Rix will give more details and facts regarding the operation of Fascism, as it affects the working class, in the meetings which have been announced for Oakland and San Francisco.

NEW ADDRESS

New address for State Office, Labor Action, Young People's Socialist League, and San Francisco Local of the Socialist Party after January first will be 236 VAN NESS AVENUE, San Francisco.

CHICAGO SOCIALIST NOTES

General Membership Meeting

The Cook County (Chicago) Executive Committee has summoned a strictly red card membership meeting to discuss questions of Socialist policy and interpretation on the Civil War in Spain to be held Sunday, January 24th, at 2:30 p. m. in the Yugoslav Federation Labor Home at 2301 South Lawndale Avenue (Take Douglas Park 'L' to Lawndale stop). The speakers will be Ernest Erber, National Chairman of the Y.P.S.L. and John Mill, one of the founders of the Polish Bund.

Socialist Party members and YPSL members in Cook County who are prepared to do volunteer work in aid of the organization drives in steel, rubber and auto industries are to report to Bernard Kirby, newly designated director at the County Office, 35 S. Dearborn St.

Thomas to Speak

The Chicago reception for Comrades Roy Burt and Frank Trager, new national Party secretaries, has been postponed from January 23rd to February 10th. Norman Thomas will be the featured speaker. The Reception will take place at a banquet at the Workers' Lyceum on Hirsch Boulevard and the Italian Comrades who made the Chicago receptions for Medigliani and Angelica Balabanoff memorable affairs promise to outdo themselves on the menu which they are in complete charge of.

Comrade Thomas will speak three times in Chicago under Party auspices during the week of February 7th to 14th. On Tuesday, February the 9th, he will be featured at a meeting in support of the Eugene Debs Column to Spain on Chicago's south side, probably at Shotwell Hall. The

banquet at Hirsch Center for Burt and Trager is set for the 10th. On Sunday afternoon, February the 14th, at the Capitol Building Comrade Thomas will address a mass meeting on the question of political asylum for Trotsky and the question of international labor investigation of the past and future Moscow trials.

The Chicago Party is in the process of an organization drive to mobilize its strength in the labor movement for a forward drive of the Party. Socialist Leagues of Office Workers, Radio and Electric Workers and Pocket-book Workers have been formed and other groups are on their way. The Illinois State Office has just loaned its Red Special sound truck and state organizer, Ed Adams, to the Detroit Socialists and auto strikers.

Fifty dollars was raised at the Chicago Erber meeting for the Debs Column.

Lenin-Liebknecht Meeting

On January 23 the Chicago District of the Young People's Socialist League and the Socialist Party are holding an anti-war meeting commemorating Lenin, Liebknecht and Luxemburg. Nathan Gould, Executive Secretary of the YPSL, and Albert Glotzer, representing the Socialist Party are the two speakers.

The meeting will be held at Roosevelt Hall, 3437 Roosevelt at 8:00 p. m.

In view of the imminence of war, the recent Anglo-French proposal for intervention in Spain, and the increased war preparations of the United States' government this meeting will be particularly significant.

The Socialist Party is carrying on the traditions of Lenin, Liebknecht and Luxemburg. All workers in Chicago should rally to this meeting, building a mighty defense against Imperialist war.

Legislation Is Put Up To F. L. Solons

By JULES GELLER

ST. PAUL.—Farmer Labor governor-elect Elmer A. Benson responded to the mandate of an overwhelming labor vote with many sweeping proposals for labor legislation in his inaugural address, January 5, before the newly convened F. L. legislature in St. Paul. It remains to be seen what the legislature will do with the proposals.

Of immediate interest are Benson's proposals to abolish the criminal syndicalist law, and to outlaw the use of thugs and strikebreakers in labor struggles.

GOVERNOR'S PROPOSALS

The legislative program outlined by the incoming governor proposed further:

1. An amendment to authorize the fixing of maximum hours and minimum wages.
2. Extension of the mortgage moratorium.
3. Exemption of homestead tax under \$4,000.
4. Increase of iron ore tax about 200 per cent.
5. Placement of net income tax on mining corporations.

The governor's address also urged the passage of the AYA, the Frazier-Lundeen social security bill, government control and ownership of federal reserve banks and many other demands on Congress.

It is estimated that Benson's suggested legislation would boost the state tax load to the tune of \$10,000,000 a year. Heavy taxing of iron ore and chain store interests would cover this additional financing.

The Action Army

We have evolved a plan to get 1,000 new subscribers and at the same time assure a steady medium of income to support Labor Action in the coming weeks.

It is simply this. We are making a special offer of a three month trial subscription. The subscriptions are printed on stamped post-cards and sell at 4 for \$1.00.

Rix to Speak at Sunday Night Open Forum

Every Sunday evening, at 8 p. m. Local San Francisco of the Socialist Party conducts an Open Forum at International Hall, 236 Van Ness Avenue.

Last week's forum with Walter Cowan proved extremely interesting, educational and instructive. The question and discussion period was lively and manifested a deep interest in the subject of Cowan's address—the plight of the agricultural workers and how to help organize in this field.

Next Open Forum will take place on Sunday evening, January 24th. Eric Rix, for twenty years a German Trade unionist, spent two years in a Hitler Concentration Camp. He will tell of his experiences and give a general view of what life under a fascist dictatorship means to a radical worker. Rix will speak in English. All party and YPSL members are urged to attend this important forum. Also bring your friends.

WANTED

100 LABOR ACTION BUILDERS. For information read the ACTION ARMY column.

We can give no credit on cards. If you want to enroll yourself in the Action Army send one dollar or more and we will send you prepaid sub cards cover the amount. This will be repeated every week.

All you do is put five more into a revolving fund then keep the ball rolling gathering in the quarters.

We realize that it is difficult to sell a subscription for a dollar or a dollar and a half but a simple thing to dispose of a subscription for a quarter. Just a bit of application and we can dispose of a bunch of sub cards a week.

Send in your order now! Starters. And make it your business to sell the cards and order more each and every week. In this way we can get a steadily wider circulation of Labor Action—and in this way we can raise enough money to cover our operating expenses. Join the Action Army. Put this campaign over your bang.

One hundred pluggers who go over the top with eight cards, two dollars, each will guarantee long life to Labor Action. This hundred will insure the advance guard of the Action Army. Enlist today!

SUSTAINING FUND

It will take some time to get our new plan completely effective. Meanwhile we need money to keep going on a keel. Though our appeal for sustaining fund members has gone unheeded, it has not been the necessary result.

For two months Labor Action has been appearing and has received a warm reception all the country. Labor Action filled a long felt need of the socialist and labor movement west.

Our appeals for support are not gone unheeded. Comrades made sacrifices and gave us the money that Labor Action needs. We must guard its continuance.

The cost of putting out Labor Action is approximately \$200 per week. This must come from three sources: subscriptions, orders and contributions. We do not count much on advertising income because we feel that business men do not like the radical press as a medium for expression.

This week, as every other, we need \$200. Send in your contribution now. And put it down for a fixed contribution each month.

PRIZE WINNER
As predicted in last week's column, this week the prize most sub goes to Bill Miller, Stanford U. Bill also started a mere 26 cards as a starter. And Herman Banks of Delphi came through with a contribution. Thanks, Bank!

Erber Comes To California In February

Ernest Erber, National Chairman of the Young People's Socialist League of America, who returned from Spain and is touring throughout the entire country, will be in California from January 12th to the 25th. His stay in California is marked with large mass meetings and down the coast with League members are planning quiet, symposiums, debates for his tour. He is scheduled to fill several speaking engagements at the various schools and throughout the state.

Labor Action is the only newspaper which will carry his detailed speaking dates for the entire tour.

Guild Curbs Hearst

NEW YORK.—The American Newspaper Guild has been successful in curbing Hearst's ups and downs. Hearst's negotiations on hours and working conditions are being ducted, and many underpaid employees have already won heavy salary increases. On news of Hearst's plan to dismiss heavily graded employees bonuses have gone up as high as \$100 a month. The complete details of the plan have been decided by the length of the dismissed employee has on the paper.

Automobile Truce Broken; Strikers Holding Plants

(Continued from Page 1)

CIO and the mass production industries, long expected in steel, is now being fought out in autos.

The lineup of UAWA-CIO forces has substantial backing. The Socialist and other working class and progressive forces are supporting the strike with direct aid and through the Conference for Civil Rights (meeting this week-end in Flint). The Flint Federation of Labor has endorsed the strike and is ready for a general strike if and when necessary. F. X. Martel and the Detroit Central Labor Council repudiated the strike-breaking an-

nouncement of Frey and the A. F. of L. Metal Trades Council and are supporting the strike. The Cleveland Federation of Labor endorsed the strike.

Against the workers in solid capitalist array there are: The General Motors billion and a half corporation; the vicious Flint "Journal" which for weeks conducted a virtual lynch campaign against Roy Reuther and the bus driver strikers and is now transferring its GMC controlled venomous pages to the auto workers; the local Flint radio station which refused workers' cash for radio time; the Flint Alliance, and the general editorial columns of the Detroit and Chicago press.

Catholic Bishop Gallagher of Detroit last Sunday virtually condemned the strikers by accusing the sit-downers in Fisher Body of being on the road to communism because they violated the property rights of GMC. This, however, does not reflect the general Catholic workers' reaction.

WISER MEN

Auto workers of 1937 are much wiser than they were in March, 1934. They have not forgotten the great Roosevelt deception of that month. They want no more Wolman Auto Labor boards, no arbitration and no phony agreements unacceptable to a majority of the members of the UAWA locals.

They are wary of Governor Murphy and general meddler, Ed. Mc Grady. In the words of one of the chief union leaders, "Rather honorable defeat if it comes to pass (and it won't) than another 1934 betrayal."

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The Only Road

The project of the Socialist Party to aid volunteers who want to go to Spain with the Debs' Column of the International Brigade continues to stand as the central issue in the radical labor movement. And rightly so. Nothing for many years has made such a strong appeal to the genuine militants. And no issue has made such a sharp, clear and unerringly just division between the genuine and the spurious advocates of international labor solidarity. The Debs' Column presents the acid test of internationalism and the struggle of the workers against fascism.

Is the civil war in Spain of any real concern to us in America? In our opinion it is of the most vital concern. A victory of fascism in Spain would depress the whole labor movement of Europe and of the whole world. It would increase the isolation of the Soviet Union and tremendously accelerate the movement for a united attack of world capitalism against it.

A victory of the Spanish workers on the other hand, would inspire the French workers to smash French fascism and carry their revolution through to victory. The revolutionary struggle in France would lift the German and Italian workers to their feet and start a counter-offensive against fascism in its centers of power. The labor movement in the United States, stimulated by the world resurgence, would move forward with giant strides. Yes, we have a vital interest in the outcome of the civil war in Spain.

Would the sending of 500 men to Spain in the Debs' Column exert any influence on the Spanish struggle? Or, would it merely be a theatrical gesture, of no military significance? On this question we will give the floor to a correspondent on the ground in Spain.

Louis Fisher, in the Nation of January 9, writes as follows from Alicante: "The International Column was thrown into the breach to save Madrid. It saved Madrid."

Yet the numerical strength of the International troops was not great. Says Fisher: "The first International Brigade reached the front in the early days of November with a full complement of 1,900 men. The second brigade got to the front on November 14. Its strength then was 1,550. Today these are the only foreign units which have borne arms in the cause of Spanish democracy—3,450 soldiers. Yet they have appreciably influenced the military situation."

According to all reports the International troops fought bravely and effectively.

Hitler Commands
American Citizens

By E. RIX

The government officials of the Third Reich and the Nazi organizations in the United States stress again and again that National Socialism is merely a philosophy for home consumption in Germany.

The organization of Nazi character in the foreign countries, they say, are independent organizations which simply admire the greatness of the new Germany.

At the party convention of the NSDAP in Hildesheim, Germany, on June 14, 1936, the Reich propaganda minister, Dr. Goebbels, exclaimed:

"National Socialism to us is not for export but, on the contrary, a patent article which is used only within Germany."

This declaration can have only one meaning: National Socialism is limited to Germany. However, the fact is that the present rulers of Germany export carloads of national socialist propaganda literature to foreign countries; also, organizations of American citizens are founded in the USA at the order of the German government.

"The Germany Of the Future"

That the American Nazi organizations are influenced officially by the representative of the Hitler government, two examples may suffice. On June 19, 1936, at the Lincoln Turner Hall, Chicago, a "Sprechabend" (evening for discussion) of the "Amerikadeutscher Volksbund" was held. The speaker was Dr. Tannenber, the German consul. He closed his address saying:

"You are the Germany of the future, and therefore we want you to be like this Germany will be and must be."

"America Needs a Hitler"

Indeed, the convention of an organization of American citizens regards as their main task "the creation of the conditions under which Nazi Germany is able to act powerfully in the world."

On April 22, 1936, in the Lincoln Turner Hall in Chicago, Dr. Anderson of the "American Vigilant Association" spoke about:

"Will Hitler Influence America?"

The report of the "Deutscher Weckruf" of May 2, 1936, says:

"Finally the speaker explained

But it is obvious, from the small numbers involved, that their influence was primarily moral. Their presence on the fighting lines inspired the Spanish workers with the assurance that they were not alone, that the international proletariat was on its side, not in words only but in deeds.

Who can doubt that the arrival of 500 fighters from America, under the banner of Debs, would inspire the Spanish workers with new hope and courage? And, besides that, the careful sifting of applicants, from a military and political standpoint, insures the selection of volunteers who can shoot straight—and in the right direction. The Debs' Column will undoubtedly play a good part in the fateful struggle in Spain.

The campaign of the Socialist Party to finance the Debs' Column is meeting with furious and many-sided resistance. We must analyze this resistance and learn from it. But we must not yield to it.

The Roosevelt administration is against the daring enterprise of the Socialist Party. Why? Because American capitalism, which the Roosevelt administration represents, is a thousand times more afraid of a socialist Spain—the only possible outcome of a real workers' victory there—than a fascist Spain.

The Old Guard Socialists, and all others of this stripe, are against the Debs' Column. But that is because they have no idea whatever of a real struggle against capitalism, against the fascists, or, in fact, against anybody but revolutionary socialists. Their opposition is a tribute to the wisdom of the New York organization of the Socialist Party in initiating the plan for the Debs' Column. It shows that the split with the Old Guard was a good split—simply the throwing off of excess baggage.

The Communist workers are deeply stirred by the Debs' Column and, from many indications, are warmly sympathetic to it. This is testified to by the fact that quite a few Communist Party members, in California and New York, have applied to go to Spain with the Column.

But the leadership of the party, it appears, is against it. Why? Is it because they are afraid the Socialists, who were nothing but "social fascists" yesterday, will join Franco's troops to fight for fascism in Spain? Or, is it because they fear that the American Socialists, led astray by the slogan of "Socialism versus Capitalism," will fight for a Socialist Spain? Is it because the Communist Party thinks there are already too many workers in Spain infected with this "sectarian" idea. Or, is the Communist Party opposed to the Debs' Column because it has given up the idea of really opposing a government of democratic capitalism on any question?

Let the opponents of the Debs' Column have their own reasons for trying to stop or sabotage the enterprise, whatever they may be. But for the socialists, and for the labor militants who have been aroused by the call for the Debs' Column, there is only one road: straight ahead. The project must be carried through. The necessary funds must be raised. The volunteers must be sent. American Socialism must fulfill its obligations of international solidarity to the embattled workers of Spain!

that our American institutions are different from the German institution and that the former, which in the past have proved to be valuable, for the time being, must not be disturbed. But the time will come when also in America a Hitler will have to appear . . ."

The view of the speaker that the institutions of America for the time being must not be disturbed and that a Hitler will have to come to America was applauded vigorously and the local group leader, Sautter, thanked the speaker especially for his words.

The "Amerikadeutscher Volksbund" which has been founded at Hitler's command as a presumably American organization, as we have seen, is influenced in the spirit of Hitler's propaganda by official German government representatives in close cooperation with native American fascists.

U. S. Citizenship Taken Lightly

We also see that influencing the "Amerikadeutscher Volksbund" in the spirit of National Socialism is not limited to an intellectual preparation for fascism over here. Moreover, the Nazi government sends official representatives of Germany to American mass meetings that the members of the "Amerikadeutscher Volksbund" are national socialist Germans in spite of their American citizenship.

The "Deutscher Weckruf" of June 27, 1936, writes about the German day of Hudson County as follows:

"But what distinguished this German day from its predecessors was the will stressed in the speeches and addresses of the leaders to awaken the slumbering forces of 'Germanism' and to attract them to state political activity and to work for the Ger-

"Mass Party" Or
Vanguard Party?

By GLEN TRIMBLE

Note: This is the second of a series of articles on issues confronting the March Convention of the Socialist Party. They are intended as a basis for local and branch discussion. We are sure that non-party readers will also find them interesting and educational. Labor Action will welcome articles submitted by party members on all subjects to be considered at the Socialist National Convention.—Editor.

Last week's article outlined the problems and opportunities confronting the Socialist Party in 1937. Most of these deal with party relations to other groups and reorganization of party machinery.

It is impossible to approach any of these particular problems intelligently without a clear-cut, unmistakable answer to a previous question: "What is the Socialist Party?" This answer should include a realistic estimate of what the party has been, is at present, and should be. We cannot judge either our own needs or our relations to other groups without such a perspective and yet we must begin by recognizing that at present there is no general agreement among party members or leaders on this fundamental point.

Pre-War Socialist "Mass Party"

Let us begin by a review of Socialist history in this country. In the seventeen years prior to American entry into the world war, the Socialist Party grew rapidly and fairly steadily. It aimed at, and confidently expected to become the party of the entire American working class. It was an "all-inclusive party" welcoming almost all applicants from direct-action syndicalists to "pure" vote-catchers and mild liberals. Eugene Debs, Victor Berger, Bill Haywood, John Spargo and Upton Sinclair upheld their widely different and often conflicting types of radicalism within the boundaries of a single party. Socialists of all varieties were aggressively proud of the party. In hobo jungles, union halls and "pink tea" parlors there were Socialists expounding the doctrine as they saw it and inviting anybody and everybody to join the "reds."

Throughout the world mass Socialist Parties were the rule. Their very size steam-rolled doubt as to their reliability in crisis. The date of the establishment of socialism in each country depended only on the mathematical problem of figuring the rate of past increase in Socialist vote and setting the early future date when 51 per cent would be Socialist.

The World War And After

Then came the war. The great European parties turned themselves overnight into recruiting man people . . .

Karl Goetz, alderman of the City of Stuttgart and member of the board of the German Auslandsinstitut in that city, explained what this "state political activity and work for the German people" should be:

"Today, in the period of nationalistic thinking, the nation comes first. The membership in the great German blood community is the decisive factor. The great leader of all Germans has gloriously placed the conception of the co-nationals (Volksgenossen, racial comrade) above that of the citizen."

In the next paragraph of the editorial the same opinion is expressed again. Evidently the Nazis in the United States deem it very important when an official representative of the Nazi government declares that the American citizenship paper is of minor importance. This paragraph of the editorial states:

"For our German native country in its relations to the Germans in the foreign countries, thanks to the change in the conception of nationalism brought about by national socialism, no longer citizenship is the decisive factor, but blood and nation is. Indeed, the greatness of Adolf Hitler's work lies in the conception, formed by him, of the national community and the community of fate of all Germans: A community to which also we Germans in America belong."

Founded at Hitler's command, trained by Hitler's official representatives in the USA, urged by emissaries of the Third Reich to consider the citizenship papers as a matter of minor importance and to respect Adolf Hitler and his ideas more than anything else—this is the "Amerikadeutscher Volksbund," a National Socialist branch in the U.S. under Hitler's command.

machinery for their governments. Illusions came tumbling about the ears of the "mass party" enthusiasts, and handfuls of Marxian revolutionaries began the slow, painful process of rebuilding on firmer foundations.

In the United States the Socialist Party lost many of its "stars" but held to its opposition to the war and actually increased its membership. What the war could not accomplish, the 1919 split and subsequent splintering of the radical movement plus post-war prosperity and consequent labor conservatism did.

The Socialist Party lost almost all of its militants in the split; the remainder were aging, discouraged, robbed of the pre-war confidence. A national party did not actually exist in the '20s—it was no wonder that Socialists supported the La Follette campaign in 1924—they had not the numbers or the morale to do anything else. They ceased to think of the Socialist Party as THE party of the working class, endorsed the alternative of a mass Farmer-Labor Party and prayed that labor leaders would take the initiative in launching it soon.

Recent developments—the depression revival of working-class radicalism, the growth of the Socialist Party, the clash of the defeatist old guard and the new, instinctively militant, young recruits, the sharp right turn of the Communist Party, the ferment and development of the organized labor movement—are sufficiently recent to be common knowledge.

What is less generally recognized is that in the course of these recent events no clear, and definite attempt to restate and define the purpose and function of the Socialist Party has been made.

We have been so engaged with detail that we have failed to tackle the essential problem and have, consequently, made conflicting decisions because our whole basis for action was unclear.

Only Two Alternatives

There are, broadly speaking, two alternatives for the Socialist Party. We can aim at becoming a mass, all-inclusive, party of the working class in the near future or at creating a trained and disciplined revolutionary vanguard of the working class which will become a mass revolutionary party as the revolutionary crisis de-

velops. At the Cleveland convention, the party Declaration of Principles implies the first alternative while a section of the Labor Party resolution definitely states the second! The fact that both passed proves the confusion which prevails.

Some comrades justify the confusion by pointing out that we are not now large enough to be either a mass party or a revolutionary vanguard. Therefore, they say, let us build the party and decide the issue later on.

This pleasant evasion is impossible. Every decision, large or small, local or national, depends on a prior answer to the basic question, "What is the Socialist Party?"

If we are building a mass party we recruit, educate and act in relation to all other groups in an entirely different way than if we are building a revolutionary vanguard. The conception of a mass party under present conditions can only be the conception of a reformist party. Work for a mass party, in present circumstances, must begin with compromise, leniency toward a wide difference of opinion, a minimum of discipline or obligation on the part of party members—otherwise the mass of non-party workers who understand neither the urgency of present world issues, or the necessity of a disciplined, trained group to meet the problems ahead will simply refuse to join.

Vanguard Party Only Choice

If, on the other hand, we recognize the lesson from the failures of the reformist mass workers' parties in every other advanced country in the world—that a "mass party" of this type is too unwieldy, too loosely hung together, too undecided itself, to act decisively and correctly in revolutionary crisis—then we must choose the alternative of building a party trained and prepared for just such an emergency. That decision, and, in this writer's opinion, it is the only realistic one for the Socialist Party, requires, first, clear and unmistakable statement at the Chicago Convention and, second, direct application to every lesser problem confronting the delegates.

Succeeding articles will deal with the application of the vanguard principle to these problems.

Extracts from Letters Of
Debs Column Volunteers

The following are a few excerpts from the many letters which came in as a result of the call for volunteers to give a practical expression of International Working Class Solidarity.

"I have been watching the papers hoping to hear that nurses would be recruited. I am very much in sympathy with the Loyalty Cause . . . have been doing public health nursing for several years."

"I pledge my life to the Socialists of Spain. I was a second Lieutenant in the Cadets, Rifle and Machine Gun, 25th Division and Gunner in the 10th Artillery."

"I have always been interested in the problems of the working class and have ten years of aeronautical engineering training and experience that I want to put at their disposal."

"I am very glad to see that you are sending men to Spain because my working class is fighting for its life there. I want to get back to Spain, which I left a month before the revolution started . . ."

"Your organization deserves the salute of all class conscious workers for mobilizing aid for Spain against the Finks of Fascism."

"In case I am disqualified by age limit for active service I sincerely hope that I may fill the requirements for other service, general or special."

"I am glad to recommend Mr. . . . as a volunteer for the Debs' Brigade. I know that he is determined to do all he can in the fight for the liberation of the workers of the world and especially those in Spain."

"A newspaper article . . . recently stated that former volunteers with necessary knowledge will be taken. I am a trained nurse and would like to offer my services to the Spanish Loyalists."

"I want to be in the Brigade to fight for the Spanish Working Class."

"I hope you can send me to Spain to help the Workers' Class there defeat the Fascists."

"I saw your article in 'Labor Action' about volunteers for Spain . . . I am anxious to go help my Spanish Brothers in their struggle."

" . . . Being in sympathy with the Spanish Workers having military experience, a friend and I want very much to go to Spain. We are members of the Teamsters Union. . . ."

Army Officers Want
More Cannon Fodder

CHICAGO.—A sharp increase in the development of good citizens by the use of military training camps was advocated by the governing committee of Military Training Camps Association in their annual meeting held here recently. Attending the meeting were several army officers, including Lieut. Col. Victor V. Taylor of the Adjutant General's office in Washington.

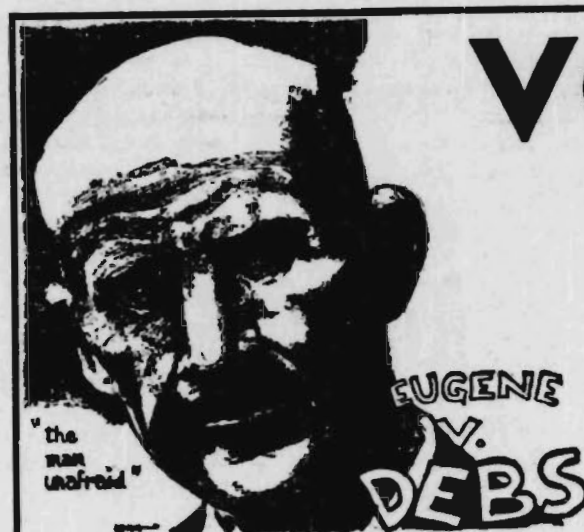
The meeting laid plans to enroll 38,000 men in the CMTA this summer, an increase of 7,000 over the enrollment of last summer.

Charles Burrell Pike, chief civilian aide to the Secretary of War, pointed out that the camps were primarily to teach young men to become better citizens, although the training is given on a military basis.

GAS MASKS FOR
CHRISTMAS

The Manchester Weekly Guardian for December 18, 1936, tried the following item of on earth and good gas masks: "Gas masks instead of Christmas bonus are being this year to municipal employees of Kapovar in Southern Hungary. The Burgomaster has informed officials that owing to a shortage of cash the town not be able to pay out the Christmas bonus."

"Instead the town council decided to distribute among employees and their relatives masks, which will be put on easy terms from a firm. 'The gas masks,' say the town councillors, 'may in the future prove a more useful gift than money could ever be.'"



"I refuse to obey any command to fight for the ruling class, but I will not wait to be commanded to fight for the working class."—Eugene V. Debs.

CRUSH SPANISH FASCISM

Thousands of requests have been received to enroll in the fight against fascism. Of these, 500 men and women, America's finest—with military, aviation and technical experience—will go across the seas to join in this great struggle—to represent America in the International Volunteer Brigade in its stand against the plunder of the Spanish people by the mercenaries of Franco, Hitler and Mussolini. They will form the

EUGENE VICTOR DEBS COLUMN

You can't go to Spain—but you can do your share in this campaign to stop fascism. \$50,000 is necessary to transport the column across the Atlantic. No extended appeal for funds can be made—if you know of the horror of the fascist octopus which, recognizing no national boundaries in its lust, spreads its greedy tentacles over the working class, you must and will help these 500 reach Spain. The first contingent must leave this month. Send in your contribution today!

The Friends of the Debs Column have been organized to raise money for the transport of American volunteers to Spain.