

Lynch Law Is A Mortal Enemy of Labor:

SMASH JIM-CROW SYSTEM!

It Is A Crime To Be A Negro In Greenville...

By E. R. McKINNEY

There is at least one happy and self-satisfied city in the United States. This is Greenville, S. C. Greenville is a small textile manufacturing community where the wages are low, where Northern textile companies can find cheap water power, favorable real estate situations and an abundance of "cheap white labor." The IQ of Greenville, as of all South Carolina, isn't very high because of the traditional habits of the country: the absence of good schools, low wages and poverty, rickets, hook worm and the constant longing for the good old days when some white men could sit on their verandas and drink mint juleps while other white men, with no mint juleps, were happy in the thought that they were superior to the black slaves in the cotton fields.

Despite all this, Greenville is happy and satisfied, for 12 white men, "good and true," have refused to listen to the advice and instructions of a judge who told them very painstakingly what murder and conspiracy are and what their duty was in a case where a Negro had been slashed, mutilated and shot to death by 28 white men. Despite the fact that the 28 white men had confessed and that no one denied that these 28 white men had murdered a Negro, Willie Earle, the 12 white men of the jury said that the 28 were not guilty. That is, they were not guilty of murder; although Willie Earle was dead and the 28 admitted they had taken him from the "jailhouse" and killed him; they were not guilty of conspiracy although they had conspired together to take Earle from jail and kill him; they were not accessories before or after the fact although they had planned the killing and had carried it out according to the plan and had protected each other after the killing had taken place.

And so Greenville is happy, the 28 are happy and feel themselves to be men of great importance. They have been and are being honored by their fellow townsmen as leading citizens who have done their city and the state of South Carolina some service. It is not often that such humble citizens as taxi drivers are so signally honored.

CRIME IN THE SOUTH

I said that Greenville is happy and satisfied but that statement is not really precise. There are some human beings in Greenville who are not happy: the Negroes.

They are not happy because they are not free and because they know that any day any one of them may be dragged off to the woods by fellow human beings, clubbed, mutilated and shot to death. They know

that such may be their fate, irrespective of whether they have committed any crime. While they are aware that everyone is by law entitled to be considered innocent until he or she is proved guilty, they know that this is not the procedure applied to Negroes. All some man, woman or child need do is to call out that a Negro has done something to have a mob rise and perpetrate a lynching. The white mob is not interested in guilt or guiltlessness. They only need to know that something has happened to a white man or woman and that it was done by a Negro or was REPORTED to have been done by a Negro.

The crime, if there be one, is not rape or murder or assault, but being a Negro. Being a Negro, that is crime to the white South. Being a Negro who attacks a white man is only a compounding of the crime. Above all, to be a Negro who is "uppity," that is being a Negro who strives to live like a human being and be treated as one. In the white South this is the Negro who ought to be dead. That is what the white mob is for: to do to death or to intimidate all Negroes who are not "good Negroes."

He may be a very obscure Negro who defends himself; it may be some Negro who demands "his rights," who insists on decent schools for his children, who fights for a decent job or a decent house, or for the right to vote, or to join a union. These are all "uppity" Negroes in the eyes of the white South.

And so, the Negroes of Greenville (Continued on page 2)

It's Legal, Now!



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Rent Control Law Expires June 30; Congress Bills Provide for Increase

Once more, rent control is in danger and there is the prospect of a general rent increase of 15 per cent. There is even the danger that rent control might be abolished altogether.

After months of campaigning by the real estate lobbies—the National Association of Real Estate Boards and the Home and Property Owners Foundation—during which they already gained a great number of concessions from the OPA, they are now trying to pull a last quickie rabbit punch on the American people. Here is the situation:

There are at present before the Senate two bills on the rent matter. One of them is the Wolcott Bill, already passed by the House, which would mean a 15 per cent increase for most tenants. The other is the

Buck Bill, reported out by the Senate Banking and Currency Committee, which would extend rent control without an increase but only until next February. These are the two major bills on rents.

(There is also the Murray-Wagner Bill, the best of the lot, which would extend rent control for a year without permitting any increase, but it has little chance to pass.)

At the moment the Wolcott Bill seems to have the inner track; it is favored by the Republican leadership. This bill allows for a 15 per cent increase in those instances where tenants and landlords agree on the increase, to be incorporated in leases extending through the end of 1948. Tenants therefore would face the doubtful choice of agreeing to a

15 per cent increase or facing eviction if rent control lapses.

The Wolcott Bill would thus maintain a legal pretext of rent control while granting landlords a large bonanza. The Buck Bill does not grant such a bonanza at the moment, but by extending rent control only through next February it opens up the truly delightful perspective—for the landlords—of no rent control at all.

At the moment, the real estate lobby is working feverishly to get across its objective. This objective is described in The Property Owner, organ of the real estate group which calls itself the National Home and Property Owners Foundation, in the following terms:

"The best we can hope for at this

time is a flat increase of 15 per cent.

By plugging for a 15 per cent increase in rent ceilings, we might be able to kill off rent control entirely. Here is how. Congress won't finish any rent control bill until late May or early June. If it provides for higher rent ceilings, President Truman will probably veto it. There are not enough votes in Congress to override his veto. Before Congress can get around to passing a new bill, rent control will have expired on June 30. And if there is no wave of unreasonable rent hikes and evictions, Congress might just let rent control stay dead."

That the real estate interests are not just talking through their hats is indicated by the fact that the rent (Continued on page 2)

Lynch law rules not only in the South, but in the nation's capital as well. Almost simultaneously with the acquittal of the self-confessed murderers in the Greenville, S. C., courthouse, the U. S. Court of Appeals in Washington, D. C., solemnly and with hypocritical dignity, ruled that landlords may refuse to sell property to Negroes or to whites who might upset the Jim Crow ghetto system.

The dissenting opinion of Justice Henry W. Edgerton, Jr., highlighted the real significance of the majority decision when he said: "It has been argued that enforcement of covenants which exclude a race from a neighborhood does not involve discrimination because it permits reciprocity. This amounts to saying that if Negroes are excluded from decent housing they may retaliate by excluding whites from slums."

Press Stages Gutter Orgy Against Relief

To advance the political ambitions of a presidential aspirant—

To lay the basis for an economy drive on relief rolls—

To make a political football of relief appropriations—

233,000 people in the city of New York, the richest city in the world, have been subjected to the scandal-mongering of scare headlines and persecution by prying ferrets.

Begun first in the World-Telegram, but extending thereafter from the unctuous New York Times ("All the News That's Fit to Print") to the foulest of the gutter press, the New York press has indulged in an orgy of such disgraceful proportions as has rarely been exceeded. Only two New York papers, the Post and PM, did not join the pack; and they are hardly the most widely read papers.

The Journal - American (Hearst) screamed in type as large as the composing room could find: "Relief Clients Provided with Free Laundry."

Other headlines shrieked about \$500-a-month relief allotments, about city employees receiving relief, about relief clients in hotels.

Even the New York Sun, the paper of middle-class suburbia and normally restrained to the point of mummification, let itself go with abandon in behalf of Republican ambitions and in order to titillate the appetites of tired business men on their way home to dinner.

If a reader followed a story down to the last line, it was possible to break through the fog of revolting headlines to the truth of the story. But the reading public was supposed to have choked with outrage long before the last line.

What were the facts? We'll cite a few simple cases:

• 37 relief clients living in hotels. This was the juiciest tid-bit. "Reliefers" in hotels!

Relief clients who had been evicted (Continued on page 8)

And now the FBI has obtained a confession from one of the seven men reported to have seized Bush. The FBI promises to try these lynchmen, if and when they are apprehended, on the federal anti-kidnaping law!

Close on the heels of these events came another announcement that Willie Pittman, a Negro taxi driver of Rocky Mount, N. C., was found mutilated on a country road. His head was bashed in, legs and arms severed and his body cut open. As usual, a mystery surrounds his case. But it is a mystery that is not hard to solve. He like others of his race was a victim of Southern lynch law.

These events have brought forward again the demand for a federal anti-lynching law. While we have favored such a law, it is clearly only a stop-gap measure and will not stop the lynching of Negroes any more than the federal anti-kidnaping law has halted kidnapping.

ONE ESCAPES LYNCHING

No sooner had the trial of the taxicab lynchmen ended, when another lynch mob in Jackson, N. C., seized Godwin Bush, a 24-year-old Negro suspected of accosting or talking to a white woman.

Buddy Bush, certain of the fate which awaited him at the hands of a cowardly gang of murderers, broke from their clutches and fled in the darkness, bravely saving himself from the lynch gang. He surrendered to the FBI for safe-keeping, quite willing to stand trial on a framed-up charge. Bush claims (and we'll take his word against any lyncher) that he was waiting for his sweetheart when a white woman saw him and screamed.

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TIMIDITY WILL NOT DEFEAT THE ANTI-LABOR DRIVE!

For A 24-Hour Protest Strike and A March on Washington!

House and Senate conferees are rapidly reaching agreement on an omnibus anti-labor bill.

The conferees, who are meeting in a spirit of "give and take," are running into few difficulties in shaping a final measure. This is to be expected, for the two committees are inspired by the same objective: to go as far as they can in straight-jacketing the labor movement.

Thus, the House committee, headed by Representative Hartley, yielded on the sweeping provisions in this Hartley Bill for compulsory injunctions in strikes affecting the "public interest"—that is, virtually all strikes. And the Senate yielded to the House on its original proposal that injunctions be invoked only where an entire industry was affected.

Result: the joint committee is going to report out a bill which authorizes the President to direct the Attorney General to issue an injunction for a period of 80 days where "public health or safety" are in his opinion menaced—that is, a slightly watered version of the "public interest" provision.

Similarly the conferees compromised their differences on their union shop. Where in the House plan employer consent would have been necessary, the Senate plan provided a union shop where a majority of the employees request. After what must have been a gory battle lasting all of a few smokes, the House members yielded by getting the Senate members to agree that Federal legislation on the union shops was not to affect in any way state laws, already enacted or yet to be enacted, outlawing the union shop.

The week of conference has produced a variety of such "compromises" all of which are duly reported as concessions to the "mildness" of the Senate Taft bill. Labor already knows how "mild" the Taft bill is.

In fact, everyone has known from the start that the extreme Hartley bill, which is "extremely" different from the Taft bill in a few casual details, and most certainly not in purpose, would be modified in accordance with Senate wishes. And everyone has known that the Taft Bill would be hardened in deference to the wishes of the House. The object: to dazzle the people, with a scintillating squeeze play, deftly and demagogically executed.

The differences that remain to be ironed out are minor. They were never anything more than that, except insofar as it was a question of seeking the best way to perpetrate the outrage without forcing even the most timid labor leader out into the streets.

A joint bill within the next few days is therefore a certainty. The joint bill will be a little stronger than the iniquitous Taft Bill and a little weaker than the iniquitous Hartley Bill.

Senate and House will quickly pass the joint bill, and it will then go to President Truman for signature. According to present indications, Truman will veto the bill, though in the past few days a note of doubt has crept into the paper!

The labor leaders, the responsible heads of the CIO and AFL and their affiliated bodies, are relying on Truman to veto the bill, and further counting on the inability of the Congress to re-pass the bill over a veto.

This is a disastrous policy. The strategists of the Democratic

Party evidently are of the opinion that a veto will put them in the strongest position in 1948, just as the Republican big-wigs are of the opinion that a vigorous anti-labor campaign offers them the best prospects.

If Truman does veto the bill, it will not be because of his sympathies for the labor movement. Truman is the man who acted the strike breaker in every major strike over the past year, reinstating government by injunction, and initiating the call for anti-labor legislation! We would do well on our union floors to remind our union leaders, who are now hanging on to Truman's coat-tails, of their denunciation of Truman as a strike-breaker.

To rely on Truman is: (1) to pave the way at the very best for the "milder" legislation asked by Truman in preparation for severer measures; (2) to play the game of the capitalistic politicians when the lot of them should be rejected bag and baggage by the labor movement; (3) to risk Truman's signing of the bill, if his strategists fell him at the last moment that such is the wisest course; (4) to risk passage of the bill over a veto; and (5) to severely condemn labor to being an appendage of the boss political machines.

No, something far different is required: the demonstrative action of the labor movement itself. The Congress dares proceed against labor because they think it is apathetic, paralyzed by the rotten philosophy of the trade union leadership, disoriented by the absence of effective leadership for political as well as economic labor action.

Various unions all over the country have endorsed the call for

a 24-hour protest strike. This is not yet enough. The call must issue from so many unions, with so many millions of working men backing the call with indignant impatience, that the top labor officialdom will not be able to repress the movement.

Time is short, but there is still time to act, if we act with speed dictated by the urgency of the situation. We are convinced that union men and women throughout the country would respond immediately to a summons to strike action.

Nor are there insurmountable difficulties in the way of the MARCH ON WASHINGTON that we have proposed to back up a nation-wide protest stoppage. It would take only a few days to assemble a huge mass of union men in Washington. A million dollars spent on bringing union men to the Capitol would do infinitely more good than any number of radio soap operas. While the congressmen debate passage of the joint bill, let Congress be invaded by thousands of workers. We think it will make an impression!

The capitalists and their servants in Congress are cocky. As LABOR ACTION has reported in stories from Detroit and elsewhere, the bosses feel confident that labor will not act, and therefore offer labor what they choose on a take it or leave it basis. The way to change this is to demonstrate that labor is ready to act at the drop of an anti-labor proposition.

Talk it up in your union! The urgency is great! The time is short! We must yet swing our unions into motion behind a call for a mass labor MARCH ON WASHINGTON, behind a 24-HOUR WORK STOPPAGE!

NEWS AND VIEWS FROM THE LABOR FRONT

Split Threatens in New York Food Union

NEW YORK—Some 60,000 New York City food workers in the AFL are faced with a split in the Hotel, Restaurant & Bartenders International Union because of an amendment passed at the recent convention barring "Communists" from holding office in any local union or joint board or as delegate to the national convention.

This resolution was introduced by Miguel Garriga, second vice-president of the international, when he and his clique were faced with the possible loss of power among the food workers in New York City who are mainly controlled by the Stalinists. Following the convention, General President Hugo Ernst came to New York and called a meeting of the local joint board, comprising all the food locals in the city, which was attended by the New York Stalinist leadership and the right wing bureaucrats, who had previously lost control to the CP. He stated that in view of the convention decision and instructions from the General Executive Board, he would have to reor-

ganize the joint board, that is to say, remove the Stalinists from office and put the right wing in their place.

The Stalinists, without hesitation, have gone to the capitalist courts and obtained a temporary injunction restraining the international from reorganizing the joint board. At the

same time they set in motion their well organized machine and put out a lengthy and hypocritical leaflet appealing to the democratic sentiments of the workers for support in this fight.

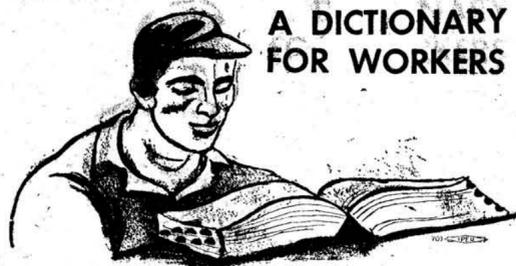
While we absolutely condemn and oppose the resolution passed at the

convention and would never support any move designed to prevent any member of a union from exercising his democratic rights to run for office, we are also opposed to any member or group in the union going to the capitalist courts to decide inner union matters, and we condemn any threats of splitting the union in a purely power fight for control of the union apparatus.

The proper solution to the entire problem is in the hands of the rank and file militants, who should oppose both the bureaucratic resolution passed by the convention and fight for its revocation and the rule-or-ruin policies of the Stalinist clique which would divide the workers and nullify our hard-won gains. These militants in the union should immediately begin organizing by putting forward a progressive program in opposition to both the right wing group and the Stalinists.

This program would begin with a fight against the open shop conditions existing in too many organized shops, and for democratic locals run and controlled by the membership. Further, there must begin a struggle to standardize the pay of all categories of workers in the union in order to eliminate existing inequalities and to enforce strict union hiring and make more secure the jobs of the membership.

There must also be a struggle for the amalgamation of all the food locals in New York to increase the strength of the workers in the coming struggles for improved working conditions.



Compiled by JACK RANGER

Conservatism, the political trait of seeking to "conserve" things as they are, rather than to accept changes in the situation. Those who occupy a privileged position in society are always those who wish to conserve that society. They translate their desire—that things remain unchanged—into all sorts of "theories" such as, that human nature doesn't change; that there will always be a privileged class; that there will always be masters and slaves, etc.

Cooperative, an organization of producers and consumers based on the principle of mutual cooperation and seeking to operate outside the established channels of industry or trade. A producers' cooperative is an organization of producers formed to market the products produced by members and to compete with private industry in the field. A consumers' cooperative is an organization of consumers formed to purchase commodities for members. The latter form of cooperative is usually more liberal than the former. The cooperative way is often referred to as the "Middle Way," as offering a middle ground between capitalism and socialism to a better society. In the United States, producers' cooperatives are indistinguishable in their anti-labor policies from private industry. The efficiency of the big chain stores has left little ground for consumers' cooperatives to develop.

Coup d'état, a sudden seizure of power by a small group which has no connection with the masses and which results in no important social changes.

Craft union, a union which embraces workers on the basis of their trade or skill, regardless of the industry in which they are employed. Criminal syndicalism laws, anti-labor laws passed in many states immediately after the First World War. They were supposedly designed for use against the Industrial Workers of the World, a syndicalist group, but have been used against all types of labor organizations.

Crisis, economic, a decline or stagnation of industry as a result of over-production and, with that, the absence of a market for a part or a majority of the commodities produced. During economic crises, the warehouses and markets are full of commodities but they lie stagnant, for there is no buyer, although the masses are suffering severely for lack of these commodities. Economic crises are brought on by the accumulated result of the workers not receiving back in wages the value of what they have produced. The first economic crisis of capitalism occurred in 1825-26 and others have occurred periodically since then. A deep world crisis of capitalism occurred in 1929 and brought forth widespread unemployment on a worldwide scale, an intensification of the struggle for markets, and finally the conversion of the economic and diplomatic struggle into a military struggle, the recent Second World War. Without the war, all of the efforts of the capitalists to overcome the crisis failed. Thanks to the stimulation given to production by the war, unemployment dwindled. But following the war, the very same factors which culminated in the 1929 crisis again came into play. It is absolutely certain that they will produce a still more severe crisis. The crises of capitalism have a tendency to become increasingly severe.

Local 856 Strikers Authorize Fight to Finish Against Goodyear

By SYDNEY CARTER

AKRON — Officials of Local 856, UAW-CIO Goodyear Aircraft, were given the unanimous support of the membership to continue their twenty-day-old strike to a finish.

The union hall was filled to capacity and part of the crowd had to stand outside of the hall. Even when it began raining the members would not leave but sat in their cars. There were some 1,200 members present.

Before the meeting started the former president, R. Murphy, of the Murphy-Beck-Fowler caucus, attempted unsuccessfully to whip up sentiment toward ending the strike. But Murphy, faced with the overwhelming sentiment of the membership to continue the strike to the finish, didn't even attempt to put his position on the floor. This is the type of leadership offered by the Murphy-Beck-Fowler caucus, who make up the main opponents of the present leadership.

The union scaled down its original demand of 23½ cents an hour to 18½ cents and has been offered 11½

cents by the company. The company rejected the six paid holidays, which is one of the points in dispute. Some of the other vital points still in dispute are seniority, arbitration, union time, vacation pay, and the sick and injury clause.

The strike of Local 856 against Goodyear Aircraft is important not only in deciding the future wages and working conditions of Aircraft's workers. This is one of the few strikes found necessary in the UAW and represents not only 856 against Goodyear Aircraft but the fight of all auto workers against the corporations. The name of Goodyear has always had the reputation of being one of the worst opponents of the labor movement, and today is one of the few corporations holding out against giving the average concessions won by labor in the recent wage negotiations. The feeling is that the strike MUST be fought to a victorious finish both in the interest of Goodyear workers and in the name of labor as a whole against the current anti-labor drive both on the economic front and in Congress.

Kroll was introduced "not as a politician who deals in theories, but rather as one who worked in shops as you and I." Kroll then took the floor. He stated that the CIO's whole history has been one of crisis. That the union had been fought by management every step of the way since its inception. He mentioned that there were "greedy people" in America, and proceeded to quote some impressive statistics of industrial profits covering the past few years to prove his point.

He said that since capital could not lick the CIO on the economic front, it carried the struggle to the political arena. And that this present line of attack has resulted in the Taft and Hartley bills, plus other anti-labor legislation. He claimed, in quoting Phillip Murray, that if the above bills become law, "it will be the first step toward fascism in the United States."

He predicted that in 1947 the CIO would develop a political arm as strong as its economic arm, and in order to attain this end it would be the bounden duty of every live CIO member to give of his energy, time and money to build the PAC.

Another point Kroll made was that the monopolists in America are reaching out for political control! And that in order to gain this control, they are telling the people (through the boss-controlled press, etc.) that the Taft and Hartley bills are designed to free workers from the tyranny of the labor boss.

Following Kroll's talk, a motion was made and seconded to set up a PAC committee in Louisville. The motion was carried.

The workers of America have, as Bro. Kroll pointed out, a very grave political problem confronting them. Ultimately, as LABOR ACTION has said time and again, that problem will be solved only by pressure exerted from the ranks of labor. There can be no other way. The labor officialdom, because of its close ties with capitalism, cannot lead the workers out of the political morass. History has taught us that much.

TAPPING THE WALL STREET WIRE

By JACK RANGER

THE COLLEGE TAX RACKET

Big Business, which controls the schools and colleges of this nation, uses that control in many ways, to defend its own interests. In recent years it has perfected a new gimmick—the use of its educational institutions in order to avoid payment of taxes.

Non-profit colleges pay no federal income taxes, file no returns. Many of them have substantial funds to invest. Big Business is always looking for ways to evade taxation. Here is how it is using the colleges for that purpose:

Spiegel, Inc., a Chicago mail order house, recently sold an eight-story brick building and warehouse in Kansas City to Yale University for \$1 million. The mail order firm immediately leased back the properties from Yale for a 100-year period. Thus Spiegel will pay no taxes. Neither will Yale. Clever?

The University of Pennsylvania a year ago bought the block-square store building and land owned by Lit Bros., Philadelphia department store. Lit then leased the property from the University for 23 years.

Ramsey Accessories Corporation, St. Louis manufacturing company, early in 1946 sold all its assets to the Ramsey Corporation of New York for about \$3 million. The New York corporation is a tax-exempt organization whose profits go to the medical and law schools affiliated with New York University.

Union College, Schenectady, bought practically all of the real estate and buildings owned by Allied Stores Corporation, department store chain, for about \$16 million.

Washington University in St. Louis owns 51 business buildings in St. Louis, others in Kansas City. It even owns a railroad freight station and a switching yard. All its property is leased back to businessmen. St. Louis city officials estimate the city's annual tax loss on university-owned property is about \$220,000.

Back in 1944 Gimble Bros., Philadelphia, sold its block-square property to the Fidelity-Philadelphia Trust Co. as trustee for a group of schools and colleges, then leased back the store building. (We are indebted to the Wall Street Journal for these examples.) It's a nice racket for Big Business. Other ways in which the wealthy use the colleges: To perform research work for private industry; to order the professors to speak out on all political questions, taking the Big Business viewpoint; to control the thinking of the youth.

THE \$5,000-A-YEAR MAN

How does the family with an income of five grand a year—well above the average—get by in these days of high prices and high taxes. For some weeks I've been carrying around a clipping of an article by Bernard Possner which appeared in the New Republic. Possner has a wife and baby and gets \$416.67 every month at the pay window—less, of course, \$48.67 for withholding taxes. Rent takes \$65, food about \$95. He says it costs him \$25 to operate an old car, and that he pays \$22 monthly for laundry, cleaning and diaper service. Clothes call for \$20. He spends \$25 on recreation and charity; \$5 for newspapers and other reading matter; \$20 for lunches; \$30 for furniture, house-cleaning equipment, bathroom needs. The guy apparently has faith in the government, because he buys a monthly savings bond, which, with his insurance payments and telephone bills, comes to around \$40.

Possner says at the end of the month he has nothing left. He can't buy a new car, or a radio-phonograph, or modern kitchen equipment, or fine clothes. What about

those with substantially lesser incomes? The good things of life, materially, are still further from reach.

Possner's income looks adequate to most of us, and it seems he could get by easily, but he says no. Only four out of each 100 war veterans make as much as \$80 a week, which is less than Possner makes. The average weekly income of married vets is \$48.

THE SALE OF WAR PLANTS

Up to March 31, the War Assets Administration sold, leased or transferred 968 industrial properties. These plants cost the government \$3,203,706,000. The government received \$988,802,475. Big Business thus picked up these properties for a little under 30 per cent of their cost.

Of the 968 properties, 731 were sold outright, 211 leased, and the balance transferred for so-called "public benefits." Most of the plants disposed of, 599, were in the less-than-\$1,000,000 class. Some 247 plants cost between \$1,000,000 and \$5,000,000; five plants cost more than \$50 millions; 53 cost between \$5,000,000 and \$10,000,000, etc.

As of March 31, WAA had 363 surplus industrial properties on hand for disposition. Big Business had gobbled up all the rest, those most desirable and most strategically located. Only the cats and dogs and the white elephants are left. Rather than pick these up, even at bargain prices, business has chosen to build its own new plants and to purchase new equipment.

Private business expenditures amounted to \$13.5 billion in 1946. In 1947 total business expenditures for plants and equipment are expected to reach \$15 billion, an all-time record for a non-war year, according to the N. Y. Journal of Commerce. The Securities & Exchange Commission and the Department of Commerce set the figures slightly lower—\$13.9 billion estimated for 1947, \$12 billion in 1946. Taking the lower estimate, industry will still spend for new plants and equipment in 1947 70 per cent more than in 1941, and more than 50 per cent higher than in 1929, the two highest pre-war years.

ECONOMIC NOTES

The merchants in Newburyport, Mass., have wound up their brief experiment for 10 per cent price cuts. After the 10-day period ended, all the stores quietly dropped out one by one. One food store said it lost an even \$100 in the experiment, and a clothing store said the same. Retailers said they were unable to obtain a single price reduction from their suppliers. . . . Non-housing real estate holdings by the big life insurance companies of the U. S. reached \$87 millions in April. In January alone, such holdings exceeded \$10 millions. Insurance firms have turned to this type of investment just in the past year. Now they are acquiring department stores, chain stores or office or loft space for established firms, leasing the properties on a long-term basis. . . . The amount of turkeys in cold storage is the highest in history—about 130,000,000 pounds as of January, almost double two years ago. . . . Department store inventories of major household appliances in the New York area are 416 per cent above a year ago. Men's clothing stocks are up 168 per cent; carpets, up 194 per cent; drygoods, up 158 per cent. . . . 36 states and 35 cities now impose taxes on cigarettes. . . . in 1946 an average of \$89 for each person above the age of 18 years went for the purchase of liquor in the U. S., for a record national liquor bill of \$8.7 billion. Forty per cent of the 1946 total, or about \$3.5 billion, went to federal, state and local government, with the federal government taking the biggest bite—\$2.7 billion.

Crime in Greenville, S. C. --

(Continued from page 1) cannot be happy; it is only the white folk who can celebrate.

One hundred Negroes attended the trial in Greenville, sitting in the Jim Crow gallery. They were not fit to be in the same place with the white lynchers. While the jury was deliberating, their number dwindled to 13. These 13 were guarded, for safety reasons, by four deputy sheriffs. The state perhaps feared that if the jury came in with any sort of conviction, there might be a lynching in the courthouse balcony.

I suppose that all but the 13 left because they too feared harm should there be a conviction. One might say that the 13 who remained were the more courageous. They may have been courageous but that is not necessarily why they stayed on. It is more probable that they were the wiser or at least the skeptical. It is probable that these 13 Negroes were fully convinced that there would be an acquittal. They know their state and its white people. They heard the awful and bestial appeals of the lawyers for the defense. These Negroes know the white South. Perhaps they are untutored and illiterate. I don't know. But I do know that education and literacy are necessary in order to understand human meanness, to understand brutish ignorance and downright savagery. That is what these Negroes live in the midst of and they know this thoroughly. They have felt the hurt on their own bodies, it has been burned into their consciousness, their lives have been scarred by this inhumanity.

The Negroes in that South Carolina courtroom must have listened to the attack of the prosecuting attorney and the way the judge conducted the trial, including his charge to the jury, with mixed feelings of doubt and hope. Doubt that the jury was listening and hope that somehow just a little light would penetrate their dull, prejudiced and warped minds. They were disappointed or not disappointed according to their point of view.

I am convinced of one thing: they were not surprised at the orgy conducted by the lynchers nor at the oratorical orgy of the defense lawyers. They have heard it before and will hear it again: "White man," "nigger," "Northern meddling," "our fair Southland," "God," "states rights" and all the rest.

Greenville is happy. The 28 "not guilty" murderers are happy. One of them is so happy and satisfied that

he has announced he will "run for sheriff" at the next election. I ask: is this a man or some lower animal which has learned to talk? Are these people human beings or merely things which somehow have acquired the power of speech?

Following the triumph of "white supremacy" in Greenville, a Negro in North Carolina accused (not indicted) of rape was taken from jail by a white mob. He escaped and hid away in the home of a friend. Later he surrendered to the FBI and is now in jail. The majesty of the law, such as it is in North Carolina, will be invoked. No matter what happens to him, the basic pattern will be the same as at Greenville. The speeches will be the same, the procedure the same and after the trial, no matter what the outcome, North Carolina will go on as before, with its Jim Crow, its poverty, ignorance and mob violence.

The Southern and Northern liberals, too, the "right thinking" white people, will go on as before with

their inane jubilation that "a start has been made," that "law and order" are making their way. All decent people, of course, will welcome any improvement, no matter how small. We have to do this in the case of the South, which for decades has shown no tendency toward any real improvement in the direction of becoming at least semi-civilized.

But what lies at the bottom of the bestiality of the South cannot be wiped out by fine words or by the babblings of the liberals. The South must be plowed under, ripped apart, reconstructed and made over. The lead will have to be taken by Southerners—black and white Southern toilers working together against the mob. That's what black and white working together in the South means: fighting together against the mob. Fighting together for food, clothing, a home to live in; for wages, freedom, education. All of this fighting will be against the mob, because the lynch mob is the symbol of the South, its insignia, its coat of arms.

Rent Control --

(Continued from page 1) control bill has been delayed for weeks in Congressional red tape.

In the meantime the situation is becoming increasingly critical. The housing program, feeble figment of a publicity agent's imagination that it was, has now completely collapsed. The rate of housing construction is lower now than it has been at any time since the beginning of the war. In New York City, one of the worst spots for housing, 25,000 construction workers have lost their jobs in recent weeks. That means that there is no reasonable prospect of a relief in the housing shortage in the coming months. And so long as the housing shortage remains, the landlords are

in a position to try to victimize tenants.

In many areas tenant committees have been formed at various times and have performed various tasks for their members. It is imperative that such committees be maintained, revived or, where they do not exist, organized. Where they do exist, they must be alerted to the coming crisis.

Remember: whatever legislation is passed in Congress, the tenants can still fight back. They can still organize; they can still mass their joint strength against the avaricious landlords. But this means preparation now against the attempt of the landlords to make a big killing at our expense.

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U. S. and Britain Aid Dutch to Suppress Indonesian Freedom

A SEVERE crisis, generally unknown to the public, is developing with regard to Indonesia. The Dutch are eager to launch a full-scale punitive war against Indonesia despite the fact that only a few weeks back they signed the Cheribon Agreement which presumably guarantees a certain measure of autonomy to the Indonesians.

The only restraining factor at present is the pressure which England and America are bringing to bear on the Dutch to prevent such an all-out attack. Behind this restraint there is of course no suddenly developed sympathy for the Indonesians, but rather a belief on the part of the English and Americans that in the present tense international situation a full scale war of aggressive suppression of a colonial people would have an incalculable effect—and one which might endanger the positions of the major imperialist powers.

These disclosures have been made available to LABOR ACTION by a usually reliable foreign source. They tend to confirm the analysis which appeared in the column "World Politics" of last week's LABOR ACTION, in which the present tension between the Dutch and Indonesians was analyzed and the prediction made that an open struggle might break out.

Were it not for the pressure from London and Washington, the attack planned by the Dutch would have already been launched. Unobtrusively, they have transferred the Second Division of their army to Java in preparation for such an attack. The Indonesian leaders are aware of the Dutch schemes, but the false position into which they have put themselves by negotiating the warty Cheribon Agreement with the Dutch rather than fighting for full independence, makes it difficult for them at present to rally the necessary resistance among the Indonesian people.

RESIST DUTCH ECONOMIC CONTROL

As was reported in last week's "World Politics," the Indonesian peasants are resisting the attempts of the former Dutch owners of the plantations in the interior to reestablish their control. This is after all the nub of the problem. So long as the Dutch retain economic domination of Indonesian life, the formal political rights which they grant to the Indonesians mean very little. Much the same thing holds, for instance, for the Philippines where U. S. imperialism has formally withdrawn but where it maintains tight control of the country by virtue of its predominant position in its economy.

The Dutch have been pressing their English and American senior partners very hard. Their arguments have, within the limits of their narrow imperialist interests, a certain plausibility. They say to the English and Americans: "there are three things we

can do; we can get out of Indonesia completely, which of course you agree is out of the question; we can try to rule by means of sheer economic weight, something which only a larger and richer imperialist power like the U. S. can do; and we can try to smash the national resistance movement of Indonesia by force and reestablish our sovereignty." To this argument of the Dutch imperialists, Washington and London counter with considerations of world strategy: the possible effects on the rest of the Asiatic world of such an attack on Indonesia. The Dutch, concerned, however, with their profits in Indonesia, do not seem to appreciate this point very much.

ROLE OF BRITISH AND AMERICANS

It seems likely that the British and Americans, by virtue of their superior positions on the world economic-political scene, will succeed in holding in the Dutch. Yet they will not prevent them, or desire to prevent them, from gradually pushing the limits of their power in Indonesia.

This situation puts the bourgeois nationalist leaders of the Indonesians in a tough spot. They have refused to conduct an uncompromising struggle for independence from the Dutch. They have in fact jailed and suppressed those elements within the Indonesian nationalist movement which did want to conduct such a struggle. Now, a few weeks after the much-ballyhooed Cheribon Agreement, they are being sorely pressed by the Dutch.

No demonstration of the utility and ineptness of the compromise policy of the bourgeois nationalist leadership of colonial peoples could be more thorough.

These events reaffirm once more the point of view of the Marxist movement on the colonial question. Despite the new forms of imperialist rule, which may sometimes go so far as to grant formal "independence," the substance of that rule remains—and it will not be surrendered to anything less than the revolutionary insistence of the colonial peoples themselves. The deals which the imperialist powers have worked out with the colonial bourgeoisies—Britain with the Congress Party leadership; America with Roxas; the Dutch with Sjahrir—merely allow them to get a tiny share of power in the exploitation of the colonial areas. But the basic imperialist rule remains.

All the talk in "liberal circles" about the self-liquidation of the empires is so much nonsense. What has taken place is a reorganization of the forms of the empires in order to maintain their actual control in difficult times. True national liberation for the colonial peoples can take place only under the leadership of their proletariats which do not compromise with the imperialists but expropriate both their political and economic rule. That idea is reaffirmed by each news dispatch from the east.

Coming Economic Crisis in U. S. No Longer Doubted By Economists

By A. KIMBAY

MORE and more space in columns of America's daily press is being devoted to the problems of the coming recession in American economy. The number of responsible economists willing to stick out their well-paid necks in predicting a period of continued prosperity is growing ever smaller, while more and more of the analyses of things to come foretell a period of mass unemployment, falling production, the piling up of inventories and a consequent fall in prices, and—to put matters bluntly—another of the inevitable crises of capitalist production.

The bourgeois economists are by no means in complete agreement regarding the duration of the recession, its extent, or the result it will have on American economy and the world situation in general. Their analyses range all the way from an acceptance of the coming crisis as a "healthy manifestation which will tend to curb the growing militancy of American labor," to a fear that it will deepen and intensify, eventually going out of control and plunging this country and the world into a crisis as bad or worse than the depression of the '30s. The overwhelming majority of America's bourgeois economists, however, hold to the theory that crises are an inevitable and recurring phenomena, which descend upon our economy like the plagues in Egypt, linger awhile, and then depart. . . . a necessary evil, but one which will be conquered again, much as "we" have weathered all previous depressions.

A BOURGEOIS-ECONOMIST COMMENTS ON THE FUTURE

A recent article by W. Lissner which appeared in the New York Times is of interest not only because it fudicates complete acceptance of the possible "healthy manifestations" inherent in the coming recession, but also because of the hints which it contains regarding the use of anti-labor legislation to be made within the coming period.

The article concerns itself with the question of "featherbedding," a horrible practice which has grown out of the security, offered to workers as a result of closed shops and seniority by rights included in union contracts. Protected from disciplinary firings by their union seniority, Lissner argues, the worker has no incentive to "make himself indispensable," and tends instead to "featherbed" his job, to take it easy, work at a slower pace, and, horror of horrors—decrease the general intensification of labor and, consequently the

capitalists' "legitimate" profit. Normally, Lissner continues, this "unhealthy situation" is corrected during a period of crisis, in which unproductive workers are weeded out, and unproductive capitalists (who do not or cannot get rid of these unhealthy manifestations in their shops) are forced out of business. Now, however, the unions are insisting on strict seniority rights and a closed shop. Hence, the usual automatic corrective tendencies of a depression are inoperative. Something must therefore be done, concludes this spokesman of the bourgeoisie, to maintain American productivity at its present high level, if full productivity and consequently lower prices are to be realized! Our friend does not tell us just what action he has in mind, but even the dullest congressman can take the hint.

This line of reasoning is also apparent in the prediction made by Willford I. Kings, economics professor emeritus at New York University, in a recent interview given to Kenneth Stewart of the newspaper PM, which appeared in their May 25th Sunday magazine supplement. Our learned professor states: "The present round of wage increases is tending to . . . cut down the volume of employment. A decline in employment is, of course, what we mean by recession. This evidence seems to indicate that unless employees work vigorously and in that way increase production, business activity will decline in the near future. . . . If the national total of new spending power continues to decline, the biggest problem of the average individual—the employee—will be to keep his job. The best way to do this is for him to make himself indispensable to his employer." Brilliant analysis. Every worker must make himself indispensable, by working hard and long without any increase in wages, and we will then have no depression!

The economists who fear another "Thirties" depression are keeping their private opinions off the front pages of the press. Confused and uncertain as to the exact nature of crises, however, many of them are afraid that an immediate return to the conditions of the last major crisis is inevitable—barring immediate government intervention—and their voices can be heard calling upon Washington to take this or that measure to save the situation.

FACTORS WHICH POINT TO A COMING RECESSION

The Truman Administration, for obvious political reasons, wishes to avert or postpone the period of recession—at least until December 1948. Or, if this is impossible, to place all blame on the shoulders of the Republicans who now control both houses of Congress. One indication of this tendency is Truman's

appeal to selfish businessmen (obviously backed by the Republican Party) to reduce their prices. What a terrific rush there will be to grab that old "Had enough?" slogan out of the historical wastebasket.

An examination of recently released figures concerning physical production, sales and prices during the past few years certainly confirms the fears of economists who have predicted the coming of a cyclical crisis in the immediate future. These figures indicate that total output, IN DOLLARS, had reached a peak, at the end of 1946, in excess of the wartime maximum reached in February of 1945. Actual physical

production, however, had reached its wartime peak not in 1945 but in July, 1943, at which time production stood at 259 as against a January 1939 base of 100. Since then, it fell continuously to 185 at the end of the war, to 152 in February 1946, and rose back to 179 in December of that year.

In terms of costs this means that the price of a smaller quantity of commodities produced in 1946, was much higher than the price of a far larger number of goods sold in 1943. It also is an indication of the fact that labor received for its share a far smaller percentage of value produced, and that the rate of surplus

was comparatively high. During the war, a large demand had been built up for all sorts of consumer goods, and given the excellent possibilities for highly profitable production indicated above, American capital promptly set to work supplying these items in ever-increasing quantities.

The huge potential productivity of American factories is rapidly supplying the existing demands. This tendency is most apparent in the radio and textile industries, where the war shortages are being dispelled, and an ever-increasing inventory appears on the shelves of the retail and wholesale establishments. The

(Continued on page 6)

Program is Vital in UAW Contest with Ford Motors

By BEN HALL

DETROIT, May 24—The stubborn resolve of the boss class to utilize every possible political and economic weapon to press the labor movement still further! And without consultation with the union, the company has announced the end of paid lunch periods for all its workers.

The Foremen's Association of America made the following simple demands: (1) equal pay for equal work; (2) premium pay for night shifts; (3) collective bargaining of grievances, no unilateral action by the company; (4) the company must stop nominal "reclassification" of workers to remove them from the union's jurisdiction. But the company has not only challenged these simple rights, it has made clear that it is determined to smash the foremen's union. In a public statement the company says: "The idea that foremen need a union is a 'notion' that is 'basically wrong.' To sign a contract embodying the demands of the union would only perpetuate and bolster this 'fallacy.'"

By agreement with the UAW-CIO, the workers in the Ford plants will pass through the picket lines but will not take over the duties of the foremen. The strike has been in progress for two days and is slowly paralyzing operations.

FORD ASKS "CONCESSIONS"

The Ford Company is demanding "merely" the following concessions from the union: ending the check-off of union dues; abolition of the union shop; wage increase BELOW the national pattern of 15 cents; strengthening the right of the company to speed up the production line without union interference; reducing the number of committeemen and abolishing the practice of the company paying them during time when they are carrying on their duties. We must remember that the number of committeemen was reduced by the LAST contract precisely on the

ground that the company would pay the fewer committeemen for full-time service to the workers. Now they want to cut out the pay and reduce the number of committeemen still further! And without consultation with the union, the company has announced the end of paid lunch periods for all its workers.

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Every union leader in the area has denounced the Callahan bill. The provisions of the bill would make it possible for the authorities to take action against the leadership of any union which displeased them. This is literally true.

PROPOSED WORK STOPPAGE

Several local unions have gone on record for a one-day stoppage to protest the nation-wide drive against labor. Even the Michigan Herald, the

organ of the Communist Party here, has taken cognizance of this demand and has endorsed it. (The allies of the CP in the UAW, it should be remembered, resisted the calling of the massive Cadillac Square demonstration last month. LABOR ACTION will soon go into detail on this point.)

But the top leadership of the CIO and AFL are completely devoid of any program of action. Philip Murray is burying his head so far into the sand that only the soles of his shoes protrude. His answer to the problems of the day is a TWO-YEAR NO-STRIKE PLEDGE! The man doesn't even give us a chance to forget how effective a program this was during the war years. . . . for the employers!

One thing is certain, however. There won't be any no-strike pledge in the UAW. No one will even dare to propose it. But this is only a negative gain. We need a positive program and none of the high officials of the UAW has tried to offer any. What about Walter Reuther? He is silent. The reason for this loud silence is not hard to uncover. Reuther is jockeying for the support of Murray against the Addes-Thomas-CP bloc in the UAW. He shrinks back from any step which might bring him into conflict with Murray.

But the Reuther tendency in the UAW has NOT derived strength from Murray in the past. On the contrary, Murray supported R. J. Thomas. The group around Reuther rallied to him on the basis of the radical "GM strike program." If Reuther will not speak out, seeking the nod from Murray, the ranks of the "Reuther caucus" must press him forward; and the best occasion for that will be the coming state CIO convention.

A Contribution to an Important Problem:

Is There Such a Thing as "Guilt of the German Nation"?

We are printing the following article as an interesting contribution to a complex problem. Other contributions have appeared in the New Internationalist, especially two articles by Shirley Lawrence on "German National Psychology." This article is printed here as being of interest to our readers. Some of its material is not directly political in nature, and for that, as for the article as a whole, the author takes individual responsibility.

By IRVING SWANSON

THE May issue of Commentary magazine contains two articles which pose a central issue of our time: human solidarity or the abyss. Solidarity is seen not as a utopia, but as the minimum requirement for survival.

"The Last Days of the Warsaw Ghetto" was taken from stenographic notes of a speech made by Ziviah Lubetkin, one of the few Jewish survivors of the Nazi rule of Warsaw. "Is Every German Guilty?" by Paul Massing, a German anti-fascist who was in a Nazi concentration camp. We will not speak about the article on the Ghetto. Those who want to try to feel the experiences, no matter how remotely, of its terrible ordeal are advised to read the article. But the Ghetto will be always present in any discussion of the question: is every German guilty? For never before have we been faced by such a horror as gas chambers and crematoria. And the question: is every German guilty? arises when it is shown that large numbers of Germans were involved in the exterminations. The German army was

directly involved in the mass murder of civilians and war prisoners; German industrialists provided furnaces quite willingly for the crematoria; German scientists took advantage of the super-abundance of human guinea-pigs to do "research work." This seems to be more than condoning what someone else was doing, and more than being a mere bystander.

Certainly, the average person, when he tries to analyze how these human beings were capable of doing what they did, is justified in asking: how? It is precisely this inability to understand "how" that has made many people in the United States and elsewhere believe in the individual and collective responsibility of the Germans for the crimes of Nazism. And the fact is that it is much more difficult to show how each of the imperialist powers is equally guilty with Germany in the Second World War. Even the atom bomb loosed by the Americans on cities that included men, women and babies is not sufficient in the eyes of most people to equate the German and American imperialists.

The atom bomb still retains a certain "civilization" to it in the sense that its destruction is done only indirectly, whereas the crematoria and gas chambers are fed their human victims directly by human hands. So that we believe it is more in order to answer the question: is every German guilty? than that of merely saying "Germany was fascist capitalism, America and Britain democratic capitalism; they are both capitalist. And since the war was the result of capitalist rivalry, for con-

trol of the world's markets and sources of supply, then all the capitalist nations are equally guilty." The above formulation is essentially correct, but a more particular answer is required with regard to the atrocities.

COMMENTARY DISCUSSION

Paul Massing's article is a very good refutation of the idea that the German nation is guilty collectively. The charge that he tackles is that found in Victor Bernstein's recent book "Final Judgment: The Story of Nuremberg," which is based upon documents made available at the Nuremberg Trial. In this book Victor Bernstein traces the history of the Nazi regime, including a detailed record of the extermination of the various peoples carried out by the Nazis, which included six million Jews, part of which number were the more than 300,000 Jews of Warsaw. And either through accomplishing Hitler's work voluntarily, like the top leaders of the regime; or by mere participation under routine discipline, like regular army troops; or by condoning even though not participating; or even though not participating; or condoning, nevertheless doing nothing—the entire German nation is guilty. On this basis the charge of the collective German guilt is made.

To break down the all-inclusiveness of the above definition of guilt Massing takes up some concrete experiences from his own life. He relates an incident that happened when he was in a concentration camp. One of the prisoners escaped but was recaptured. The camp administration gave

the camp prisoners a choice: either discipline their fellow prisoner, or the entire camp would suffer punishment. That night a group of prisoners broke into the sleeping quarters of the escapee, in which Massing also slept, tore the unfortunate man out of his bunk and beat him ferociously. Twelve hundred men, anti-fascist prisoners, witnessed the scene. Only one man dared protest and he too was beaten into unconsciousness. And Massing says: "It was not I." We can reconstruct some of the motivations involved in this action and draw some conclusions. Evidently the punishment threatened by the camp administration was of a severity that in its mass would far outweigh the beating given to one man.

But let us agree that the prisoners still should not have done the Nazis dirty work. Obviously the prisoner who had attempted to escape would not thereby have gone scot free. His fate would have been certainly as severe as that administered by his fellow prisoners. I am trying to indicate how we have here insoluble difficulties that men are thrust into when everything is life or death and no leeway, no room given for what we call the ordinary norms of conduct. We might profitably ask ourselves what we should have done in this same set of circumstances. As Massing asks: I kept quiet while my comrade was tortured; am I too guilty?

HOW ASSESS GUILT?

After the war he received a letter from his sister in which she told how night after night when the bombers came over she nevertheless

draw hope from the thought "that the terrible destruction would help rid us of the brown plague." Nevertheless she never did anything herself to overthrow the brown plague. Was she guilty?

His mother, witnessing the arrest of the only Jewish family in their small town, could only meet their eyes with a look of futility. She did not cry out or protest in any way. Was she too guilty?

It is obvious, in our opinion, that this all-inclusiveness is far from real since it would indict all of humanity, which in similar circumstances would undoubtedly act the same way. But if we must indict all of humanity then the case breaks down since to say all are responsible is to absolve the German nation of any particular guilt. And we find ourselves adopting the circular formula: Humanity's ills are Humanity's fault, a generalization that makes understanding completely impossible.

There are motivations for the actions of different sections of the German people, especially those who did not cry out or fight against the Nazi crimes. And these motivations spring not from a German biologic or national character, but are common to all men in similar circumstances. These circumstances were the effective control of an absolute totalitarian regime that directly related life or death to submission or resistance.

Let us test this idea by breaking down the German nation into two groups: (1) Those who performed Hitler's crimes as their own, and (2) those who either participated under the discipline of a totalitarian

regime or who did not participate but yet did not fight the crimes. Let us take this second group and examine the alternatives facing these people under the Nazi regime.

1) *Suicide.* If they wanted no part of Hitler's work they could have effectively accomplished this through suicide. This suicide would have absolved that particular individual from potential guilt. It is, however, true that since this would have rendered him completely ineffective in the struggle against Hitler's crimes, we would have to call him guilty if we use the all-inclusive definition of guilt.

2) *Insanity.* A person might disintegrate in the face of the terrible choices facing him. He would thus not be used in the wiping out of the people. He would thus have escaped guilt. But he also would have been totally useless in the struggle against Hitlerism. Would he thus be guilty?

3) *Doing What You're Told or Not Speaking Out.* As an individual you might not have done what you were told or you might have spoken out. This would probably mean death. Your death as an individual has to be examined in the light of it being an effective or ineffective means of fighting against the crimes. Before the power of the Hitler machine the uselessness of individual terror becomes too apparent.

ALTERNATIVES UNDER HITLER

We can state definitely that under certain circumstances the alternative facing the individual in a fascist regime are either submission or death. And who will say that submission thereby becomes guilt?

To get even further at the root of the difficulties prevailing on the plane of individual existence under a fascist state let us take the case, not of the Germans, but of the Jews.

Was not the possession of a labor card by a Jew precious above all things? For the right to work for the Nazis meant the right to live. And one doesn't live or die only for oneself. There may be a wife, aged parents, small children. . . . Were those who rushed to get labor cards guilty of helping Hitler?

In fact this dilemma applies to the whole question of Jewish agencies appointed by the Germans to administer for them, the Jewish Council, Rehousing Office, Tax Office, etc. They administered for the Germans, even having to choose which Jews should go to the death camps. But what was the alternative of refusing this "self-administration"? To quote Massing, "Under the Nazi terror, characteristics of different social and national groups were dissolved in the merciless struggle for individual survival."

Then is there no way out? Must we all be "guilty"? Is resistance impossible? To this we can say: on an individual basis, yes. But we can also say: if it is organized mass resistance it is possible. The resistance movements in the occupied territories are ample evidence. And here we raise the question as we believe it should be asked: Can the German people be held responsible for not having organized mass resistance against the exterminations?

Firstly let us point out that the atrocities cannot be separated from (Continued on page 6)

A PAPER IN THE INTERESTS OF LABOR

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NEW FILM OF THE IRISH REVOLT

By HENRY JUDD

Episodes and phases in the Irish nationalist struggle for independence from England have provided one of the most fruitful sources of cultural expressions—in the form of art, plays, novels, poetry, movies, etc.—in our time. This source has largely dried up now, with the decline and perversion of the Irish movement, but this new British film, *Odd Man Out*, while treating the subject from a new approach, in keeping with the dampened spirit of a movement whose "heroic days" are increasingly a memory, still draws its art and inspiration from the original source. If the now classic film, *Liam O'Flaherty's The Informer*, together with such plays as *Sean O'Casey's Juno and the Paycock* and some others of his works, represented a much earlier phase of the movement, *Odd Man Out* is a more contemporary expression, both politically and in its moral expression, of the same movement today—exhausted, more isolated and shaky in its inner convictions.

Odd Man Out takes place in an unnamed city of Northern Ireland, evidently Belfast. Its nationalist heroes—and almost without exception they are of mediocre caliber as compared with, let us say, the proud fighters in *The Informer*—belong to "the organization." It is a nameless organization, but apparently is the Irish Republican Army, or rather its terrorist remnants, engaged in the struggle to win the seven "lost" counties of Northern Ireland back to unity with Eire. The ideas, hopes and beliefs of "the organization" and its members remain anonymous throughout the film. If this picture is worth seeing—and our opinion is that it most definitely is—it is not because of its content or the light it casts upon the long and complex struggle of Irish nationalism.

Its merits and its absorbing interests lie elsewhere. Not only is the technique, the photography and montage superb (a sort of grand synthesis of the direct naturalism of the Irish Abbey Theater, the special lighting techniques developed particularly by the French, and the sharpness of imagery known in the work of Hollywood's John Ford), but the atmosphere and feeling in the film are revealing in their projection of the moods of Irish nationalism in the moment of its defeat, decline and disintegration.

Johnny MacQueen, the leader of the group in his North Ireland city, is the tragic center of the story. MacQueen is of no particular importance,

he is a leader without real followers. His group rapidly fades away, through blundering, lack of conviction, triviality of understanding. Johnny is a shadow; the story is concerned with the long travail of his dying. A burst of a tommygun brings him to his inevitable end. Johnny himself has no conviction; he doubts his leader role. His attempt at bank robbery is a bungle. In hunting him down, the police are attempting only to formally close the case of a vanquished opponent. Johnny knows this. There is no defiance in him—only a somewhat abject apology for having caused "trouble," a deep guilt for having murdered a man in the name of "the organization." "I am leaving and I will not bother you again," he tells the sympathetic women who have helped him, but must turn him out.

Johnny, we feel, is going through the motions of acting out an inevitable destiny. In this sense, he is neither a dramatic nor tragic figure but only a victim. He is a man pushed about, whose end is objectively fixed by circumstances but in no way influenced by himself. This is the part played by James Mason, who, incidentally, definitely proves he knows more about acting than the technique of scowling and striking women.

More important, of course, are the people against whom Johnny brushes and glances off from as he staggers, a dying man, about the streets of the city. Pity and treachery, compassion and hypocrisy, love and fear—the subtle ambivalence of human emotions in contact with the hunted, the outcast who already belongs to death—these are revealed in an absolutely brilliant artistry. Our poor Hollywood, to whom "characters" are wooden figures ordered from an available stockpile, could never develop this conception of using "characters" to develop and create emotional characterizations. The half-mad artist who wants only to paint the dying man's eyes; the weakling associates of Johnny; the Irish loafer, a shrew-like bum, torn between his desire to sell Johnny ("a man must live") and his real understanding of what Johnny represents (a part enacted by the late F. J. MacCarthy of the Abbey Theater); the brooding sweetheart of Johnny, etc. With the possible exception of the artist, none have that awkward air of the contrived so familiar to our American pictures.

Seeking to regain contact with "the organization," seeking a place of refuge, Johnny goes about the

streets, half-delirious, half-set to welcome his finish. All who come across him confront the obvious problem of what to do. Not a one betrays him outright, yet not a one feels guiltless. All are haunted by this man, even though he denies himself and what he has done. These people know their "cause" has failed and the manhunt for Johnny reminds them of how much even its memory has dimmed in their consciousness. Their limited help to Johnny is a gesture of personal compassion, nothing more.

The makers of this film wished to record the hopelessness and last gasps of a defeated movement. They must be credited with attempting to make this point not in a crudely moralizing, propagandistic manner. Only the inevitable gray-haired priest preaches to us. But the essence of the film is that the men and women of Johnny's city can no longer be aroused by his actions, but only through the pity and sympathy his plight creates by itself. At an early point even Johnny suggests they should have gone to Parliament instead of this way.

Odd Man Out, in at least one respect, consciously or not, defeats its own aim. With profound simplicity—an effect never achieved by Hollywood—it reveals the instinctive reaction of the city's nameless people, the young and the very old particularly, not only in defense of Johnny, but against the police. When the decoy, sent by "the organization" to draw off the police from Johnny's trail, leads them a chase down a series of slum alleys, late at night, the camera awakens the inhabitants from their sleep. Up go their window shades as they watch the hunt. They know what is transpiring, and each one, we feel, by the expression on his face, would do everything possible to help the agent of "the organization." Again, there are the slum children, as natural a group of young toughies as ever was seen in the movies. At one point, they know where Johnny is hiding out. How shrewdly they size up the agent of "the organization" who is attempting to find him. It is almost as if they know from birth and their life in the slums whose side they are on and that Johnny must be protected by them.

Odd Man Out is a brilliantly executed film, a representation of the Irish nationalist struggle at a difficult and confused stage in its long history. The mixed-up emotions of those who produced it are counterbalanced by their awkward honesty.

OFF LIMITS

By James M. Fenwick

"The Best Years of Our Lives"

PART I

Spring along the Rhine in 1945 was almost like a spring of one's youth, full of tenderness and promise. The end of the war was visible only a few weeks away, and for the first time in many a month one could, without presumption, begin to dream of living, and of home.

At Bonn, where we were stationed, a friend brought me a bound volume of a Cologne magazine for 1918. There in pictures was the whole tragic last act of the First World War, alienated by time but yet so familiar. I turned to November. I stopped before a simple picture of a German soldier and his wife clasped in each other's arms. Beneath the picture was the single word: *Wiedersehen*. I read no more that day.

The theme of the film "The Best Years of Our Lives" is a moving one—the soldier's homecoming, older than the dream of "Odysseus, yearning to see but the smoke drift above his own house." If a simple picture in the following pages of a German magazine could exert such emotional tides, I often thought, what could not the movies do with such a theme. For the movie is certainly one of the great art media of our times, a synthesis of all the arts, direct, concrete, omnipresent, infinitely flexible, multisensuous, unfolding in the deeply receptive pre-natal dark of the theater.

CAVEAT EMPTOR

To a movie on a theme such as this a person would like to come in a mood of the deepest peace and the deepest surrender. One would like to do what it is almost never possible to do in life—turn oneself over completely to another person, an idea, a tide of emotion, achieving therein the rare catharsis wrought by any work of art. But one has been so often deceived. It is impossible to approach the Hollywood product without reservations.

In the case of "The Best Years of Our Lives" the suspicion, the firm grasp on the reins of our emotions, is fully justified. That a critic like James Agee, writing in the *Nation*, could say "... yet this is one of the very few American studio-made movies in years that seems to me profoundly pleasing, moving, and encouraging" is witness only to the difficulty of isolating one's self from the cultural mores of our times, the suggestive, if not quite actual, merit of several touching scenes which rise above Hollywood norms, and, I suspect, a little cowardly on Agee's part in dealing with the veteran question.

"The ruling ideas of each age," says Marx, "have ever been the ideas of its ruling class." The movies, being a medium of mass narcosis, whatever may be true of books, magazines, or papers of limited circulation such as *LABOR ACTION*, for instance, cannot bring in contravention the leading ideas of the ruling class. And thereby the film under capitalism cannot touch the real world, since to portray it truly is to expose it.

Were capitalism in the United States in extremis at the present time more concessions to truth might have to be made, more concepts brought under examination, but even so, with questionable exceptions the film, like a piece of music, would have to be harmoniously resolved on the final note.

Under capitalism the movie is only incidentally an art form. It is primarily a commodity designed for mass consumption and must therefore conform to marketable mass emotional norms. That is, it can have neither subtlety, complexity, intensity, or depth. It must, in our society, like the early Ford, be simple, easily comprehended by all.

THE BEST OF ALL POSSIBLE WORLDS

"The Best Years of Our Lives" is a product of this intellectual climate. Its thesis is that this is the best of all possible worlds, one in which everything turns out all right for the veteran.

In a thousand and one little ways, a hazy atmosphere is created which blurs the outlines of the real world. Every moment is contrived (consciously or not) to reinforce the capitalist mythos: if problems exist, then they are personal ones, not political or social, and can be solved by good will; the United States is a great frontier democracy where the wealthy and the (temporarily) poor mingle in common fraternity. And so on.

The plot can be very quickly summarized: A former banker, recently a sergeant in a rifle company, returns home. He is placed in charge of the small loan department of his bank. After a brief crisis he establishes a policy of making loans to veterans with honest faces and manners but no collateral. An air corps captain, a slum product, returns, discovers his wife is a floozy, and marries the banker's daughter. A sailor who lost his hands in the service comes back and ultimately marries the girl to whom he was engaged.

Thus divested of the Hollywood increment—the photography, the familiar settings, the big names, the titillation of sex, the real problem of the real amputee, Harold Russell, the movie's length, the familiar minutiae of daily existence—the story seems very banal indeed.

A little inspection will show just how banal this two-hour and forty-five minute fairy tale is. (To be continued)

Editorials

A New York "Relief Scandal!"

For several weeks the daily press in New York City has been sounding off about a relief scandal. It seems that the city's Department of Welfare, which handles relief cases, has been housing several large families on relief, in hotels. In some of these cases, the weekly payments went over \$100 a week, most of this sum going to pay the rent charged by the hotels. The purpose of the press was to create some kind of public hysteria which would result in a cutting down of relief funds, reduce allotments to families now supported by the Welfare Department and advance Dewey's presidential aspirations.

We don't believe there is any need to apologize for the families receiving this assistance; on the contrary, they deserve everything they get. They reflect in sharpest form the basic fault of capitalism—its inability to provide for security. More than that, the workers and their families who are on the relief rolls have contributed more than their share in their years of labor to produce wealth and provide for the upkeep of local government. They are really not getting anything for nothing, but are merely receiving some of the benefits they were deprived of during the long years of low wages and periodic unemployment.

It is easy for an over-stuffed big business newspaper owner to instruct his editorial slaves to write lurid accounts of a "relief scandal." He is more concerned with the taxes he and his class of parasites pay for the upkeep of their own government—national and local. He would like to reduce the costs of his own system. Therefore he utilizes any opportunity to scream in behalf of his own profits and income and those of the capitalist class for which he speaks. In this little New York "tempest" the press was really seeking to disguise several things by its out-

burst on the "relief scandal."

First, the fact that the real scandal in the country is the housing crisis, for which the capitalist class and its government are responsible. They have joined in a conspiracy to prevent decent and large-scale housing because profits are not large enough for that gang of bandits known as the construction industrialists and the real estate operators. The press has denounced every decent proposal for government-financed housing as socialism. It is not an accident that in writing about the relief situation in New York, the black editorials of the press said little or nothing about why a few relief cases were housed in hotels.

Second, the reaction of the press in this instance is in shining contrast to its treatment of the astronomical salaries, bonuses and pensions handed out to the so-called captains of industry who milk production constantly in their own private interests. It never has a condemnatory word to say about the chairmen of boards of directors and other officers of the big monopolistic firms who give themselves lifetime pensions running into tens of thousands of dollars. This form of "relief" for them and their kind is described as a reward for industrious, thrifty labor! The hypocrites!

And finally, the press campaign had the effect of directing attention away from the fact that unemployment in New York City is mounting daily. The latest report is that over 400,000 workers are now unemployed. When these workers have used up their few weeks' unemployment insurance, they will have nothing to turn to but relief. The capitalist class, its big monopolistic firms, politicians and newspapers are already preparing to cut down, if possible, relief payments to those victimized by their system.

The Liberalism of La Guardia

A few days ago a New York newspaper broke the story that during the war, the then Mayor La Guardia sent stoolpigeons and secret agents into a number of "left wing" organizations. In the list of groups named as having had secret agents in them are a number of genuinely labor and socialist organizations. That is to be expected. Since the world-wide socialist movement arose and since capitalism has been trying to smash it, a favorite technique has been to send stoolpigeons into the ranks of socialist organizations with the purpose of disrupting them. La Guardia, the so-called liberal, was therefore continuing the tradition begun by the Czarist secret police and the agents of the Japanese secret service.

Toward such attempts by the political agents of capitalism to disrupt or provoke the socialist movement, one can only express contempt and inform them that such tactics will no more succeed in the present and future than in the past. The socialist movement is based on more solid foundations than these political agents of capitalism believe; it is a movement arising out of the deepest needs and desires of the exploited of all countries and no mere provocation or spying can break that movement.

There is in this case, however, another highly interesting aspect. Among the organizations into which La Guardia sent his cops were a large number of Stalinist groups. At the time La Guardia sent his agents into them, the Stalinists were the most enthusiastic plumpers for the imperialist war; they denounced any and all strikes; they were the greatest enemy of working class militancy. And they were also cooing and billing with La Guardia, whom they called a great liberal. Not only were they cooing and billing with the Lit-

tle Flower, they were also supporting him for election as Mayor.

Yet at the same time this great "liberal" was sending dicks into the Stalinist organizations to spy on them and they were doing their damndest to ferret out these dicks.

Now isn't that a perfect commentary on the wartime alliance between the American capitalist parties and the Stalinists, both of them agreeing on the need to suppress working class militancy, while each didn't trust the other an inch. And with reason, for the "liberal" La Guardia was serving American imperialism while the Stalinists were serving Russian imperialism; and both knew that the uneasy alliance between their masters would some day come to an end.

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New International Features
"Stalin's Slave Laborers"

The slave labor camps of Russia are the subject of a study that appears as the feature article in the current issue of *The New Internationalist*. The article, entitled "Stalin's Slave Laborers," is from the pen of Jack Weber, well known to readers of the Fourth Internationalist press for his analyses of Russia and Stalinism. The value of Weber's contribution toward an appraisal of the scope and significance of the institution of slave labor in Russia can be seen from the following excerpts:

"The war broke down the frontiers so zealously watched by the Stalinist border guards. Masses of people were hurled across the boundaries, first one way, then the other. ... The invasion of Russia in 1941 paved the way for the agreement with the Polish government in exile headed by Sikorski to build a Polish army on Russian soil. This made it possible for those who had survived—and they were a minority—to return ultimately to Western Europe. The testimony of these people concerning the lagiers and slave labor in Russia has only begun to be poured out to the world. There are in addition many Russians, some who had been prisoners of war, some slave laborers for the Germans, others Red Army deserters, who resist all attempts to force their return to the 'Fatherland.' The experiences of these Russians under Stalinism are destined to make a deep imprint on world opinion in the coming period."

STALINISM AT 'PUREST'
Speaking of the exposé of Russian slave labor camps contained in the book, *Dark Side of the Moon*, which is based upon the experiences of the Polish prisoners in Russia, Weber writes: "Every single document of the unfortunate Poles, and they come from all walks of life, makes clear that what they endured was not something unique or special. They participated in the common experience of the millions upon millions of Russians in the same camps. The Poles could at least sustain themselves on the faintest of hopes that some day they would again return to civilization. But the Russians were sunk in complete, unrelieved despair, for so long as the Stalin régime endured there was not the slightest hope that any of them would ever again return from exile."

Writing about the GPU lists of "undesirables" used to round up all

possible enemies of the Russian régime in the newly occupied territories, Weber notes the following: "The utter cynicism of these 'purges' is summed up in that which took place in June, 1941. Up to that time the GPU had utilized local committees of Communists and sympathizers, and even workers' militias. These local Communists had often enough helped choose those to be deported to Siberia. Their own turn came last! All those who had had any kind of dealings whatsoever directly with the Red Army, all known Communists, were shipped off in the fourth series of raids. What a curious light (let us say it mildly) this throws on the policy advocated by some Trotskyists to have Polish workers in partisan militias place themselves under the direct command of the Red Army generals! That policy certainly facilitated the task of the GPU of uprooting every vestige of working class independence."

"Stalinism is shown at its 'purest' in the slave labor camps. Here is the final outcome of the GPU system. The Russian prisoners have a saying: 'Nobody leaves LAGIER behind. LAGIER is forever!' Yet occasionally a medical commission makes the rounds and releases from labor the total wrecks who have not yet died. In September and October, 1941, a medical commission from Madagan visited some of the Kolyma mining and lumber camps. A long procession of human phantoms appeared in the town and were put into ships. Those who saw them go aboard could hardly believe they were human. It

was a procession not of human beings, but of corpses and trunks. The majority had neither noses, lips nor ears; very many were armless and legless. Among these was a handful only of Poles. The rest were all Soviet citizens. The Madagan commission had recognized them as being unfit for work! In Madagan it was said that, once aboard ship, they were taken out to sea and drowned, but there is not any proof of this."

Other sections of the article deal with rations, living quarters, hunger strikes, death rate and other salient aspects of Russian slave labor. The same issue of the magazine contains an article by A. Rudzienski on "The Structural Changes in Eastern Europe," dealing with the social and economic policy of the Russians in the occupied countries. It replies to the views expressed by E. R. Frank in a study of these developments that appeared in the Fourth Internationalist. The issue also contains the first part of an article by Ernest Erber on the situation in Poland, written in reply to E. Germain's article on the same subject which appeared in several journals of the Fourth Internationalist movement.

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THE QUALITY OF MERCY

"ARMONK VILLAGE, N. Y., March 1.—Three airplanes manned by volunteer pilots are scheduled to take off from Westchester airport here at 9 a. m. tomorrow to scatter from the air a quarter-ton of mixed feed for the benefit of game and song birds in northern and central Westchester."
New York Times, March 2, 1947.

"BERLIN, May 15 (A. P.)—... Many German official and private organizations were reported sponsoring excursions of city people to the country to search for wild herbs and roots with nutritional value. ..."
New York Times, May 16, 1947

Report on Recent Elections in Oakland, Calif.

The Results and Lessons of an Experiment in Labor Politics

By WILLIAM BARTON

THE victory of four out of the five candidates sponsored by the united labor movement of Oakland in the municipal council elections on May 15, as reported in last week's LABOR ACTION, is of great national importance. This was no ordinary overthrow of a solidly entrenched political machine, no mere selection of a slate of "good men." Actually little is as yet known about the political complexion of the victorious candidates, radio producer Scott Weakley, railroad engineer Ray Pease, lawyer Joseph Smith and chemist Vernon Lantz. The significant thing is that labor put into office men that it had chosen—men who were, despite their attempted protestations and those of some of their supporters, essentially and basically candidates of labor. Labor put them in. All other support in the population was helpful but secondary. Coming after a series of political defeats in Washington and Sacramento the Oakland labor movement has pointed the way to the necessary counter-offensive under the banner of "independent labor politics."

The City of Oakland is the industrial center of Northern California. San Francisco is the financial, cultural and shipping center of the Bay area; Oakland and the neighboring "Eastbay" area is the workshop. The past twenty-five years have seen a steady rise in industrialization, about as marked as any similar region in the country. Nationwide industrial empires like General Motors and Westinghouse have built and expanded several plants. Native tycoons like Henry Kaiser have set up their rival factories. The mammoth Bank of America of A. P. Giannini has had its fingers in all pots.

However, the industrial and financial giants, in control of the political life of the country, have usually displayed only incidental and occasional concern about municipal politics anywhere. They have left that to the specifically local interests who are more immediately involved. In Oakland, these have been principally the large department stores, the branch banks of the Bank of America, the Key Transportation System, and the city's two daily papers, Hearst's "Post-Enquirer" and the locally-owned "Tribune."

For twenty-five years, the overseer of this domain has been Joseph Knowland, publisher of the "Tribune." He had apparently reached the apex of his power in the last national and state election. His son, William, had just been elected U. S. Senator for a full term. His leading

political protege, Earl Warren, had won both the Republican and Democratic nominations for Governor and was a very definite possibility for the White House. But Oakland labor has cut the Knowland machine down at the apparent top of its strength. With the development of Oakland industry has also come the growth of its vital enemy—the industrial workers. The workers of this city have already exercised part of their historical mission; they have made a beginning in striking blows at the political power of the owners of the business enterprises that created them.

GROWTH OF LABOR

As is to be expected in such a heavily industrialized town, the labor movement has been strong for some time. AFL, CIO, Railroad Brotherhoods, and independents together number about 100,000 members out of a total population of about 450,000. Organization was about the same as in most places, difficult in some spots, easier in others. There have been entrenched conservative elements, large numbers of militants, and one of the most powerful Stalinist machines in the country in control of most of the CIO. East Bay labor was generally considered a clear second best behind the movement in San Francisco, with its colorful history. But suddenly last Fall Oakland took the lead away from all organized labor in the U. S.

An organizational drive in the large department stores had produced a strike for recognition at one of the largest stores, Kahns, and a smaller one, Hastings. When the city administration utilized a good proportion of the police force to help a strike-breaking outfit from Los Angeles bring shipments to the struck stores, the AFL called its general strike, followed by many independents, and with the full sympathy of the CIO. Oakland and neighboring Berkeley and Alameda were completely tied up. Thousands came through the rain, despite lack of public transportation, to an overflow mass meeting at the Civic Auditorium, prepared for fight. They really shook the roof when Sailors Union of the Pacific leader Harry Lundberg set the keynote by attacking the "super-finks" in the City Hall. The walkout continued for three days. The CIO was all set to join. The strike was then stopped by orders from above. Charles Real, local

teamster chief and president of the State Federation of Labor, returned to town and ordered his men back. Supporting him were Pacific vice-president Dave Beck and International president Dan Tobin. The newly appointed City Manager, Jack Hassler, thought he could satisfy

everybody by declaring he would uphold the "law of the land." But no more strike-breakers were imported.

The General Strike and the open conflict between labor and the municipal administration served to solidify the Oakland labor movement in advance of just about every other spot in the country. Despite an intense previous hostility, the AFL and CIO, plus some independents and representatives from some Railroad Brotherhoods combined to form a Joint Committee to Combat Anti-Labor Legislation. Strangely enough only the Teamsters, who had been most directly involved by the strike-breaking attempt of Mayor Beach's cops, remained outside the Committee and later withdrew from the Central Labor Council rather than unite with the CIO on anything. The Committee was designed to oppose the anti-labor drive in Congress, the state legislature, and the courts. The next obvious step was action in the coming municipal elections.

NATURE OF ELECTION

Five out of nine council seats were to be decided, and the Joint Committee decided to endorse five specific candidates it regarded as pro-labor. An organization called the Oakland Voters League was set-up to organize the campaign. At the outset, it is necessary to point out that neither the unions nor their joint committee formally proposed or selected these candidates. Each got into the campaign in its own fashion. But that is not important. They were merely ordinary candidates who more or less promised to end the scab role of the administration. Since this was a "non-partisan" election and none of the five had any publicized previous political tieup, there was little clear political identification. Though three were union members and one had been one until recently, they were not "union candidates." They were merely union backed. And their statements on labor problems were, from the start, very vague. They continually referred to a desirable "impartial" or "fair statesmanship" in "management-labor disputes."

It was, nevertheless, a labor campaign. The Oakland Voters League was completely dominated by the unions. Precinct workers were almost entirely union militants. The workers of the city regarded the election as a struggle between organized labor and the "downtown interests" led by the Tribune. The official non-partisan nature of the nominations made development of this attitude much easier.

In the April 15 primaries, the labor-supported slate ran first to a man, though none received a majority. The next step was the run-off on May 13 against the second choice, in every case an incumbent. The campaign really got going after the primaries. Neighborhood meetings, leaflets, radio speeches, torchlight parades such as the town had not seen since war back when. The unions became more openly the power behind their candidates. The local branches of the Workers Party and the Socialist Workers Party, working in close collaboration throughout, then came out in critical support of the Oakland Voters League slate. Despite rumors of negotiations with Democratic Chairman Hannigan, despite the uncertain background of the candidates, despite the unsatisfactory nature of their selection, despite the evasive program, both parties considered the role of the unions in this election a healthy step in the direction of independent political action. Both parties put all available people into election activity in the unions, in the neighborhoods, and in the Oakland Voters League office. The climax was an election rally sponsored by the Workers Party on Sunday, May 11, at which the Bay Area organizer of the Socialist Workers Party also spoke. About fifty people attended this meeting, a sizeable proportion of them active unionists. As it progressed, the campaign further revealed the confused think-

ing and shady politics of those actually operating the apparatus of the Oakland Voters League. Forgetting their support came from, failing to appreciate where they could and should make their greatest inroads, they toned down the labor issue in most of their propaganda. They made much of the tax discrimination against small home owners and in favor of the large business interests. They demanded to know why money approved for city improvements by popular referendum had not been spent. They attacked the administration for its failure to plan any housing program, though they had little to offer specifically on their own. These were all important items that were quite properly considered. But Oakland labor was behind the candidates because they regarded them as their own in opposition to the strike-breaking administration—and with typical liberal consistency, they sought to keep as quiet as possible about this.

They attempted the old technique of being all things to all men. A leaflet distributed to the entire city repeated the old line about "impartiality in labor-management disputes," while one directed exclusively to unionists clearly came out against "strike-breaking." Literature put out by a Negro Labor Committee, set-up to support the candidates, was strongly against discrimination in municipal jobs and housing and violently condemned police brutality. Speeches by the candidates to Negro audiences emphasized these crimes of the administration (though they offered little of a specific program of their own on this question, too). But this important problem was entirely ignored in official propaganda directed to the city at large. The wide support from individual professionals and small business men was played up, the labor support played down.

This evasive campaign, ignoring what everybody felt were the basic issues, might have produced extreme apathy among the workers if it had not been for the campaign of the opponents. The Knowland machine is not like the usual city political apparatus that one finds in New York, Philadelphia, or Kansas City. There are few genuine ward heeleders, precinct workers, political clubs, personal favors for the district captain's friends, packages for the kids in the neighborhood on Christmas. In fact, it more closely approximates the much publicized "reform" type of municipal administration. There is no noticeable graft, no misappropriation of funds, no "open vice." It is essentially a clique of dominant business men running affairs exclusively for their own interests. It is characterized by economy, narrow business efficiency, few municipal improvements, opposition to the needs of the people, violent opposition to organ-

ized labor. Councilmen openly wait for instructions from the Chamber of Commerce and the Tribune before voting on measures. A Tammany underling at least attempts to please the average constituent; a Knowland underling has no objective but to please his chief and the department store owners.

What the Oakland administration has had was a tremendous wad of dough, the police force and other departments in their hip-pocket, complete control of the city's two papers, and lack of serious opposition. This time the labor movement provided the worthy opponent. But they still had the money and the papers and the cops. Their propaganda approach was unbelievably vicious. Red-baiting, sly remarks about the opponents' marital life and army record, phony juggling of figures in answer to charges of unfair tax assessments. These were spread in thousands of well printed leaflets, large billboards, extensive radio time, both the news and editorial columns of the Tribune and Post-Enquirer. The police were utilized in a dual fashion. Before the elections, arrests for traffic and parking violations went conspicuously down. On election day, Oakland Voters League precinct workers were regularly pulled in on flimsy charges and held for as much as an hour, particularly in the Negro neighborhoods. Above

all, they concentrated on the labor backing of their opposition. Jack Reynolds of the Building Trades Council was called the "political boss" of the slate; that only further emphasized the labor identification. Rumors spread that the Knowland had made slurring remarks about their primary defeat having been the result of "the mistake of giving Negroes the vote." By these means the overwhelming support of labor and Negroes for the Oakland Voters League candidates was assured.

THE FUTURE ROAD

The results have already been covered in LABOR ACTION. The four victorious labor-backed candidates won decisively. The defeated nominee, Ben Goldfarb, was beaten by incumbent Frank Shattuck by 1,000 votes through the technicality of his being on the same line on the ballot as the ousted incumbents. The victory was based entirely on the large majorities in the working class and Negro neighborhoods. It was purely a class vote, as the Tribune partially conceded in its post-election editorial, which also, for the first time, admitted that the general strike had something to do with the result.

With four holdovers and one victory in the election, the Knowland machine still has a majority on the

city council. One of the old-timers, James D'Arcy, has just resigned because his residence has been changed to Long Beach, but the council has selected a probable Knowland supporter as his successor. Overtures have already been made by the Tribune and its crew to the Oakland Voters League victors to come over and be good boys. What role they will actually play is uncertain. They undoubtedly feel their obligation to organized labor, but so has many another office holder whose record turned out to be unsavory. As a minority, they have the added advantage of disclaiming responsibility.

The labor movement has a weapon to keep its own candidates on the ball, assure itself that they will really be its men. The election machinery must be maintained and extended as a means of checking on the men in office, of removing those that do not fill the bill, of planning for future campaigns. Several locals have already passed resolutions to this effect. The organized working class is the necessary basis of labor's permanent political arm and it must be in full control of this arm. If Oakland moves ahead, it can continue to show the way; the entire country is watching.

Oakland, California
May 22, 1947

Thomas Mann Punishes Hitler; Avoids Germany on His Tour

By IRVING HOWE

The famous German novelist, Thomas Mann, has recently left the United States for a trip to Europe. He has not entered the land of his birth, Germany, he has merely toured the countries surrounding it and made statements about the Germans.

It is difficult to write with restraint about this man. Thomas Mann has long claimed to be the spokesman for what is best in European culture; he has spoken of himself as a humanist. By none too subtle implications he has even laid claim to the mantle of Goethe, though as one writer remarked, Mann is distinctly a pocket-size edition of the master if there is any relation at all.

When the Nazis came to power, Mann did not extend himself in his opposition to their regime. At first he even refused to sign a statement drafted by other intellectuals which contained criticism of the Nazis. It was only when the Nazis launched an offensive against him that Mann spoke out against them.

We do not mention these facts to suggest that Mann was or is a Nazi. We mention them in order to show that Mann did not ally himself at the beginning with the anti-Nazi cause, as any decent human being should have done; that on the contrary for a time he tried to play the role of being "above the battle."

In recent years Mann has become a professional anti-German, togeth-

er with that other great thinker, Emil Ludwig. Mann has denounced the German people as a group; he has read them moral precepts from the safe retreat of California while the true anti-Nazis were tortured and murdered in Buchenwald. Mann competed with characters like Rex Stout and Clifton Fadiman in spewing forth hatred of the German people; in his case the spectacle of chauvinist racism was even more disgusting because it was directed against his own people.

And now Mann has attacked the Germans for demonstrating for food. In his eyes the fact that the German workers want to have a bite of food shows that they have not purged themselves, that they still suffer from pride and lack the proper humility. And then the most contemptible statement of all; Mann informs the world that he has no desire to return to Germany because he does not want to view the physical and spiritual wreckage of that country.

Such delicacy on the part of the man who condemned the entire German people, who held the entire German people responsible for the rise of Hitler, is a little difficult to understand. If Mann is appalled at the spiritual and physical wreckage, let him urge his ideological masters—Anglo-American imperialism—to lessen the burden of their disastrous occupation and thereby permit the Germans to eat. In that way, there'll be less physical and spiritual wreckage.

Mann correctly states that if he returned to Germany he would need a police guard. We venture to say that it wouldn't be the Nazis or former Nazis who would be most belligerent against him. It would probably be the masses of Germans who hated Hitler but were helpless under his rule, and leading anti-Nazi elements who managed to survive the concentration camps while Mann was lumping them into the same category with the Nazis. While these people were being crucified in Buchenwald, Mann was babbling about the "war-like German spirit." Little wonder that they would hate him if he returned to Germany.

That Thomas Mann is a novelist of the first order we do not doubt. But his pronouncements on politics show him also to be a wretched philistine full of empty rhetoric and poisonous malice. Only a man peculiarly insensitive to human suffering; only a man who can babble about human dignity while the infant death rate mounts steadily in Germany could have indulged in the performance by which Thomas Mann besmirched himself before the entire world.

Let the starving children of Hamburg, the hungry mothers of Dueseldorf, the collapsing miners of the Ruhr know that Thomas Mann insists that they show the proper humility and purge their spirits before he is willing for them to have a piece of bread with which to fill their stomachs!

Program of the Workers Party

I. For Price Control by Labor and the Consumers

Wipe out profiteering and high prices by action. Only the workers can control prices. Labor must have the decisive voice in determining the prices of consumer commodities. For wage increases without price increases. For popular price control committees.

II. For a Living Wage

1. For an immediate wage increase to meet the rising cost of living.
2. For an escalator clause in every union contract to provide for automatic wage increases to cover any additional price rises.
3. For job and wage security through a guaranteed annual wage, providing for a \$5,000 annual minimum per family.

III. Clear the Slums! Build Homes!

1. For a 250 billion dollar five-year program to provide decent housing at low rental for all and an extensive public works plan to provide schools, hospitals and other needed community facilities.
2. For a national plan to begin work immediately on the erection of 25 million permanent low-cost housing units.

IV. Tax the Profiteers

For a 100 per cent tax on all profits above five per cent on invested capital. For a \$25,000 ceiling on all annual incomes.

V. Nationalize Big Business

For the nationalization of the big monopolies: the industrial establishments, transportation and communication systems and the banks. To be owned by the nation and operated under workers' control.

VI. End Discrimination Against the Negro People

For full social, political and economic equality for Negroes.

VII. Open the Doors to the Jews

1. For full and unrestricted immigration into the United States by the persecuted and homeless Jews of Europe.
2. For the right of the Jewish people to unrestricted immigration to Palestine or any country of their choice.

VIII. For Full Economic and Educational Opportunities for Veterans

1. Readjustment allowance, on-the-job training subsidy provided by the GI Bill of Rights, to be based on a wage of \$40 a week for single veterans and \$55 for married veterans, plus \$5 a week for each additional dependent.
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2. For the withdrawal of all armies of occupation. Bring the American troops home. For an end to conscription.

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A Contribution to Discussion on the Workers' Control Theory

By SUSAN GREEN

Without clinching with any of the points raised by Ernest Erber and Stanley Grey in the discussion on workers' control, I wish to contribute a few thoughts on the subject.

My concept of the function of workers' control under a workers' government is far more inclusive than merely control of working conditions, etc. My idea is that to prevent bureaucratic degeneration and for the working class really to develop into the ruling class, the workers will have to control management. Workers' control would be ineffective unless the workers control management.

To be sure under a workers' state the workers control management through their government. But actually this control is too far removed from the man and woman in the factory. The factory worker and the farmer are represented by their own chosen representatives on the local council, or Soviet, and this representation is carried through to the

central government of the whole nation, where economic planning is done. But then the plan is handed down from above, and every factory, mine, mill and farm is allocated its place in the general scheme. The function of management is to carry out the plan, industry by industry, and the worker is at the receiving end—receiving orders, unless workers' control is a reality.

Would it not be essential, first of all, to have more direct mass participation in the formulation of policies and plans? This involves nothing less than the question of how a workers' state should function. The workers' state is concerned with national production and its decisions revolve more and more around the administration of things, things affecting every life. As the Soviet Government developed in the early years, it was apparent that the differences within the government and the Communist Party were of vital concern to the masses. Why should these differences not have been sub-

mitted to the Soviet electorate in the form of different platforms advocated by the several groups? Here we have the question of whether socialist parties with their various programs for industrial development, etc., should not be permitted in a workers' state.

By having to choose their own plans and policies through elections, when well-defined platforms on vital economic and nationwide problems are presented, the economic knowledge and self-reliance of the masses would develop. Such election campaigns would, by their nature, have to be on a high level, with wide dissemination of all kinds of information. With the election over and the choice having been made, the man and woman in the factory would know what they voted on, and what plan and policies management must serve. The wide base for workers' control would thus be there.

However, is not more concrete and specialized industrial knowledge also needed to effectuate real workers'

control? Unless there is a high level of economic enlightenment, so that workers do not feel helpless before complicated industrial problems, they will allow those who do understand to take over. How can workers make management responsible to them if they haven't the knowledge to have intelligent opinions of what the industry, the nation, the socialist ideal require? Is not industrial knowledge the very heart of workers' control? As long as the workers' knowledge is limited to their little jobs in the complicated economic structure, they are not equipped to exercise intelligent control.

Lenin spoke and wrote of the need of every worker to understand the books and accounts of his factory. That implies of course knowledge of all the facets of the industrial processes in which the worker takes part. Lenin also posed the aim of interchangeability of jobs, thus removing from socialized industry the gradations of "more important" and "less important." Objections arise as to the practicability of these ideas. We know the indispensability of experience, of skill coming from long experience, of expert and specialized knowledge based on long study. If this mechanical and technical schema is to continue, expertness that necessarily cannot be shared by every worker, will continue to be necessary. However, the essence of Lenin's idea remains, namely, that deep and wide industrial knowledge must become the property of every worker regardless of the job he performs.

What would such deep and wide knowledge cover? The worker would lift his nose from his particular grindstone. He would learn the ins and outs first of his whole department, then the place of his plant in the whole industry. To grasp the relation between his industry and the national economy, the worker would learn something about the sources of the raw materials worked in his plant and something about the outlets for the finished

product. He would be conversant with the problems of the industry, the status of technical development, the prospects of new inventions and methods to save labor and increase productivity. The worker and statistics would be on most friendly terms. The tasks of management would be generally understood by the workers. Otherwise, how could the workers in a plant exercise control of production and of management?

THE RUSSIAN EXPERIENCE

The above enumeration is suggested by one of Trotsky's articles in the collection "The Problems of Life." Facing the great lack of industrial skill and knowledge among the Russian workers, he advocated the issuance of trade manuals to increase the skill and the economic understanding of the workers. The manuals were to have been written for each industry, in collaboration, by a skilled worker to contribute specific technical information, an industrial expert to add more expert understanding of the whole industry, and a tried Communist to give the whole its place in the economic plan and in the building of Socialism.

Trotsky tackled this problem after the revolution. However, is it not essential to have at least a core of industrially educated workers in order to turn the socialist revolution irreversibly onto the road of socialism, as it is essential to have a revolutionary party to accomplish the revolution? Can such industrial education be postponed till after the revolution? The period after the revolution is necessarily chaotic. It becomes of paramount importance to reestablish industrial processes so that the nation can be fed and clothed and sheltered. Necessarily there is great reliance upon engineers, technicians, experts, managers to get things going again. In this transition period, stark economic necessity relegates to second place the education of the rank and file workers for the job of intelligent control of industry.

Lenin in his "Program Address" delivered in the spring of 1918 (published in this country as the pamphlet "The Soviets at Work") showed that while the necessity for workers control was always spoken about, it was actually pushed to the background by the overwhelming difficulties just to get production going. He said, for instance: "The revolution has just broken the oldest, the strongest and the heaviest chains to which the masses were compelled to submit. So it was yesterday. And today the same revolution—and indeed in the interest of Socialism—demands the absolute submission of the masses to the single will of those who direct the labor process." While demanding that the workers submit to the managers without question, Lenin at the same time sounded the alarm against the growth of bureaucracy: "The more firmly we now have to advocate a merciless and firm rule and dictatorship of individuals for definite processes of work during certain periods of purely executive functions, the more diverse should be the forms and means of mass control in order to paralyze every possibility of distorting the Soviet rule, in order to repeatedly and tirelessly remove the wild grass of bureaucracy."

It is history that "the forms and means of mass control" did not develop quickly enough, and that "the wild grass of bureaucracy" overran the whole garden and smothered the revolutionary seedlings. In submitting to those who directed the labor process instead of controlling them, the workers lost their chance to become a ruling instead of a ruled class. It is not necessary again to go over the reasons for this degeneration, and for the counter-revolution. Somehow we have assumed that in an advanced country, or if the revolution occurs in several complementary countries, the workers would not have to submit to those who direct the labor process but will be able to exert effective workers' control from the beginning. But why do we assume this?

It is true that in a highly advanced industrial country, the new workers' state would not have the task of teaching the workers elementary skills, workmanlike ways, reliability, etc., as was the case in backward, peasant Russia. But, certainly if we judge by the highly skilled American workers, specific skills do not branch out into general knowledge. Workers must be guided into this world of information

SAFEGUARDING DEMOCRACY

Furthermore, we must not assume that post-revolutionary ruin was a peculiar Russian phenomenon. A different turn of the wheel of history and the social revolution might have occurred in devastated Germany after World War II. In the future, the revolution may conceivably occur in completely ruined countries, countries ruined by modern warfare. Civil war in the revolutionary period would, at its mildest, mean great dislocation of normal functioning. As in Russia after the revolution, the immediate tasks of reconstruction could well transcend all else. There would, as in Russia, have to be reliance on engineers, technicians, experts, managers to get things going. The stark economic necessities would again relegate to second place the education of the rank and file for the job of intelligent control of industry. This is the crucial point. "The forms and means of mass control" cannot be relegated for attention to the end of the working day spent by the workers in unquestioning submission to those who direct the labor process. Workers' control should become a reality without delay and should act as an indispensable curb on the bigwigs just when their indispensability to reconstruction is at its height. Here is where industrially educated workers can shape the outcome of the revolution.

The revolution will of course not wait till the workers have the required industrial knowledge to effectuate intelligent control of industry. Neither is it the province of the Workers Party to undertake this kind of industrial education. But if industrial education is the heart of workers' control, why could not the party agitate for both? Why not help create among rank and file workers the desire for more knowledge and know-how?

There resides within the labor unions a wealth of industrial knowledge. The Goldens and the Reuthers of the labor movement know about their industries, and about industry, as much as, if not more than, management. Every union has its competent and clever experts and statisticians and its files of information. It would be well if union members became interested in this store of knowledge, if they demanded it in the form of manuals, pamphlets, educational lectures, forms. Could our party help create such a demand? The labor bureaucrats would not like rank and file intrusion on their "business." But if such knowledge seeps into the rank and file, workers' control of production and management will be effective, when history gives the workers the chance to build Socialism.

Examining A Dread Disease: Virus of Rigiditis Digititis

By GERALD McDERMOTT

The dread disease Rigiditis Digititis is fast-making inroads on the American labor movement. Rigiditis Digititis, also known as Writer's Cramp, is rapidly taking on epidemic form in union after union.

The latest symptoms of this malady can be found in many local unions, as well as international unions. For the benefit of LABOR ACTION readers, we reproduce a typical symptom below. Look for it in leaflets, local union papers, and speeches by union bigwigs. (The symptom below is reproduced life-size and is not magnified.)

"BIG BUSINESS IS TRYING TO STRANGLE YOUR UNION!"

"The greedy monopolists in control of the present super-reactionary congress are hell-bent on wrecking the union movement! The Taft and Hartley hate-labor bills now before Congress will rip the guts out of labor! It will destroy collective bargaining! It will wipe out the Wagner Act! It will allow the power-hungry giant corporations to throw us back to the old sweat-shop, speed-up conditions, or worse! It is the first step toward fascism! WHAT YOU CAN DO! Write your congressman today!"

The above clinical specimen is not the first signs of an epidemic of writer's cramp in the labor movement. The disease gained a foothold during the war, waged steadily ahead during the OPA crisis, thrives on the housing and rent questions, and is threatening to get out of hand over the Hartley and Taft Bills. The give-away is not in the recitation of the facts, which are true enough, but in the tail on the creature, which always reads, "Write your congressman today."

In this complex modern world, the average lathe-hand, assembler, or press operator needs to know more about this disease. The environment most favorable to the affliction is one of a drive against labor in

preparation for imperialist adventures and world wars. Like typhoid, Rigiditis Digititis is spread by carriers. One of these is a type of parasite noted for its plump posterior which is known by the popular terms of labor faker, pork-chopper, or pie card artist. The other carrier is a cancerous growth known to science as Stalinitis. Since most union locals are infected with one or both of these carriers, unwary workers may contract the disease.

CONGRESS REACTS

It should be pointed out that congressmen, being extremely well-fed, well-clothed, and well-housed, are immune to the illness. They do not even suffer eye-strain. They glance at letters to make sure that no important communications from the Chamber of Commerce or Ku Klux Klan back home are missed, and ignore the rest. Many thrifty congressmen heated their homes last winter with bales of letters from union members, while a small number of letters are used to make spitballs for use against opponents on the rare occasions when the Republicans and Democrats are not united in attacking labor.

With workers, however, the effects can be quite severe. The real damage is not in the writer's cramp itself. Most workers still have no trouble in signing their pay checks. The damage takes other forms. Short-sighted workers, those infected with the disease, are hypnotized by continuous writing. More far-sighted workers who do not catch the disease themselves are attacked with nausea and vomiting when repeatedly confronted with the symptoms.

Rigiditis Digititis must not be taken lightly. Severe epidemics have been allowed to run their course in recent years in Germany, Italy, and Japan. In the advanced stages, paralysis of the entire labor movement sets in, and many fatalities occur among militant workers.

Two highly successful remedies

can be prescribed for this ailment. In writer's cramp, it is best to exercise the fingers to the greatest possible extent. This can be done by employing *Snoutabus Flourishosis* and *Lapetae Grabae*, two sure-fire cures. *Snoutabus Flourishosis*, or Thumbing the Nose, is accomplished by placing the thumb directly above the nostrils and waving the fingers violently. This should be done in the direction of capitalist politicians whenever they ask for labor's votes. It should also be used against so-called labor leaders who urge support of either capitalist party.

This treatment is successful, however, only when used in conjunction with the second finger exercise, *Lapetae Grabae*, or button-holing. The idea is to buttonhole every fellow worker within a wide radius, tell him labor needs an independent party of its own, and then get him to fight for such an independent labor party in the union with you. In the interests of the nation's health, every copy of LABOR ACTION contains more complete prescriptions for the above two remedies.

The most effective way to prevent a recurrence is suggested in the methods of two famous European specialists of the last generation, Lenin and Trotsky. These two great scientists, with their assistants, correctly reasoned that the roots rather than the symptoms of the disease must be destroyed. Consequently, they sterilized Russia with a strong antiseptic solution of D.W.G., or Democratic Workers Government. The cancerous growth of Stalinitis has now infected Russia, due to the fact that the rest of Europe was not sterilized, but Stalinitis too is expected to be wiped out with another dose of DWG sooner or later. This treatment has a very harsh effect upon certain useless parts of the social body, but the patient as a whole achieves a state of health hardly seemed possible only a few years ago.

Prospects of U. S. Economy - -

(Continued from page 3)

"disproportion of production in its various branches," outlined by Marx in connection with his general theory of crises is here in the process of development.

The relative overproduction of these goods, and the consequent inability of the part of certain manufacturers to convert their stock into money, has already resulted in the failure, during the six month period ending March 31, 1947, of 19 manufacturers of radio equipment with liabilities in excess of \$5 1/2 million, and 20 textile manufacturers, with liabilities of approximately \$1 1/2 millions. It is interesting to compare these figures with the number of failures in these industries during the 1st nine months of 1946, in which period only six radio manufacturers with liabilities of approximately \$1,800,000 and not one manufacturer of textiles went bankrupt. Retail outlets have not as yet felt the pinch to any great extent, but this, too, is in line with Marx's analysis of crises, which "do not show themselves nor break forth first in the retail business . . . but in the sphere of wholesale business and banking."

THE RECESSION WILL PRESAGE A NEW DEEP CRISIS

The prices of most commodities are still high, but as production catches up with shortages, normal competitive tendencies will force prices down to a point more in line with actual values. Such a fall in prices, however, will tend to decrease the rate of profit. Furthermore, Marx indicated that ". . . general fall in prices checks and disturbs the process of reproduction. This interference and stagnation paralyzes the function of money as a medium of payment, which is conditioned on the development of capital and the resulting price relations. The chain of payments due at certain times is broken in a hundred places, and the disaster is intensified by the collapse of the credit system. Thus, violent and acute crises are brought about, sudden and forcible depreciations, an actual stagnation and collapse of the process of reproduction, and finally a real falling off in reproduction."

The above complications, described by Marx in connection with his portrayal of a cyclical crisis, are an inevitable and recurrent result of the capitalist method of production. All indications point to the fact that the coming recession in America will take this form. The necessary fall in the prices of commodities, now being maintained at an artificial level due to prevailing shortages; the growing accumulation of consumer's goods inventories on wholesaler's shelves; the growth in the army of unemployed (recent figures appearing in New York's newspapers indicate that 400,000 workers, one in six, are now looking for work); the tendency toward general inventory reductions on the part of manufacturers, the laying off of substantial numbers of their workers, and a general steady decline in the value of their stock on the market, all these facts point to the emer-

gence of a cyclical crisis in the very near future.

The problem, then, is to determine the length and extent of the coming depression. All indications point to the fact that it will be of relatively short duration, that it will not resolve itself into a long-term depression, and that within a year or 18 months American economy will again enter a period of relative (though temporary) prosperity.

First of all, the recent war has completely eradicated the possibility of any country being in a position to compete against America on the world market in the near future. An overwhelmingly large proportion of Europe's needs, not only for capital goods, but even for the simplest type of manufactured produce will have to be filled by this country.

State interference in the interests of American industry, as well as important political and military considerations, will make it necessary for the government of the United States to extend long-term credits to most European countries (which they are only now beginning to extend on a large scale) with the probable provision that these loans must be used,

to a major extent, in the purchase of American goods.

The export of commodities and of agricultural produce to Europe will then be speeded up and extended. Large quantities of capital goods will be shipped to rebuild European productivity, badly damaged by war, and part payment for these capital goods will in all probability take the form of American control of many important industries in Europe.

For several years, therefore, it will be possible for American capitalism to swing back into a period of relative prosperity. With the rebuilding of Europe's production facilities, however, the sharpening of competition, the increase in the organic composition of American capital and the eventual breakdown of the credit system, a new long range crisis must inevitably arise, deeper and sharper than the depression of the Thirties, and having as its only solution the creation of a socialist state.

The attempt on the part of American capitalism to resolve this crisis in terms of imperialism and war will pose in a sharp form the question which the working class must answer: Socialism or Barbarism!

'Guilt' of Germans - -

(Continued from page 3)

the question of Nazism in general. Anti-Semitism was an integral part of German fascism. The Jew became the incarnation of everything and anything that was hurting Germany. The Jew is the unifying force of Nazi "philosophy" in all its labyrinth of contradiction, inconsistency, and falsehood. It was therefore quite logical for Hitler to use the extermination of the Jew to be all to his fate by making every German an accomplice in his crimes so that no group or individual might hope for exoneration after his downfall," as Paul Massing writes. So we cannot separate the atrocities from Nazism in general. And likewise we cannot separate the question why did not the Germans organize mass resistance from the question why did not the Germans organize mass resistance to Nazism in general.

WHY NO REVOLT?

Why did not the German people overthrow the Nazi dictatorship? Once again we can turn to the Jews. Why did literally millions of Jews go to their death meekly? They had nothing to lose. They were going to the death camps and they knew it. Why did they not in just utter desperation resist, and if they had to die, die fighting. The Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, the real example of Jewish resistance has an explanation for those who think. The uprising was organized by *politicals*, by people who had an ideology, who had understanding of the events and who knew how to organize. In short, there were leaders and parties, the levers of mass resistance. This then was essentially lacking the German

people: Leaders and parties. Their total destruction had been wreaked by Hitler, not a potential enemy escaping. It was therefore necessary in the crucible of events to forge a new anti-fascist leadership. Under the best of circumstances this takes time. For a disoriented, atomized German people, faced by an enemy that threatened the destruction of a defeated Germany, the German people were not capable of creating that leadership to organize a mass resistance. These are the facts but not a judgment, a warning not a verdict.

But what of those who committed Hitler's crimes because they were their own? How did anti-Semitism become gas chambers and crematoria? For these our explanation must be a general one since the individual psychology of each cannot be examined. They are the pre-barbarisms. They are the image of men in the abyss. They represent in human terms the culture of capitalism in its death agony. That this is not the madness of individuals but much more is borne out by the high-universal apathy shown toward the fate of the victims of the gas chambers and crematoriums. The image of the pre-barbarism casts his pale reflection.

And so? Where are we when we have come to the conclusion that the guilt of the German is the guilt in each of us, actual or potential? Do we now throw up our hands and await the great mutual destruction? This much at least we can say follows: A stop has got to be made somewhere. The charge of German individual and collective guilt helps only to further engender hatred between the peoples.

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CHELSEA BRANCH: Meets every Thursday, 8:15 p.m. at the Workers Party City Center, 114 West 14th St., third floor.

Industrial Branch meets Thursday at 8:30 p.m., at City Center, 114 W. 14th St.

Brooklyn Downtown Branch meets every Thursday at 8:15 p.m. at 276 Fulton Street, second floor.

BROOKLYN-BROWNSVILLE, EAST NEW YORK BRANCH: Meets every Wednesday at 8:15 p.m. at De Luxe Palace, 558 Howard Ave. (near Pitkin Ave.).

SOCIALIST YOUTH LEAGUE: Meets every Friday at 8:15 p.m. at the Workers Party Headquarters, 276 Fulton St., second floor.

READING
For information regarding the activities and affairs of the Reading Branch of the Workers Party address: P. O. Box 1671.

PHILADELPHIA
HEADQUARTERS: 1139 West Gerard Avenue (3rd floor).
Workers Party Branch meets Wednesdays at 8 p.m.

Coming events at Labor Action Hall, 1139 West Girard Avenue:
Sunday, June 14—Workers Party picnic.

ST. LOUIS
Write Douglas Bridge, 6517 Corbett Avenue, University City 14.

SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA
For information on the activities of the Workers Party in the San Francisco Bay area write: LABOR ACTION, 460 Tenth St., Room 206, Oakland 7, Calif.

SEATTLE
Write to P. O. Box 29, University Post Office, for information.

For information of Workers Party addresses and activities in cities not listed above, write to Workers Party, 4 Court Square, Long Island City 1, N. Y.

50 Cents Buys Six Month Sub to LABOR ACTION

After a Look at This Capitalist Society:

The Feeling Is Growing: Something Is Wrong!

By J. R. JOHNSON

Several weeks ago a national publication sold in millions of copies all over the world, carried the following as an authentic incident. A reporter went up to a stranger and remarked that spring had come. "Yes," said the stranger, "spring is here, but something is wrong." The reporter was astonished but interested. "What is wrong?" he asked. "I don't know," was the reply, "but something is wrong."

The political situation and social consciousness of the country are, as far as can be gathered, at a peculiar stage. The reporter, as a good reporter always does, recognized in the phrase "Something is wrong" just that particular characterization which expresses the prevailing mood.

During the great strikes there was conflict. Something was wrong, but people at any rate thought that out of the great struggle would come some decision, some definitive stage toward a solution.

CAPITAL-LABOR STRUGGLE
Nothing has been decided. Labor is as powerful as ever. Another series of strikes can start tomorrow if the workers or the capitalists, or both, so decide. Something is seriously wrong when these mighty social forces are lying in wait, so to speak, and no one knows what the next step will be.

The Republicans won a great victory and the country as a whole looked to see if they would bring some order out of chaos. They took over Congress with a great flourish of trumpets. The capital-labor relation has them as baffled as the former Democratic majority. Some of them thunder and threaten labor. Doubtless they are plotting and scheming and feeling their way. But what they can do and how they will attempt it, that they do not fully know themselves.

LABOR IS POWERFUL
It seemed that the Truman administration had dealt labor a knock-out blow with the legal decisions against John L. Lewis. But it is obvious that despite the present pressure against him, Lewis can retreat, and once the mines are handed over to the coal operators be as free to strike as before.

Where is all this going to end? That is the problem. It isn't only that something is wrong. It is that the something wrong seems to be

wrong with the whole system of society. There is no diagnosis and therefore (for the average man) there is no cure in sight.

Prices were due to go down. Instead they have continued to go up higher and higher. The public has lost faith in the lowering effect on prices of competition. How long will prices remain where they are? Will they go higher and higher? Nobody knows, but people expect the worst.

Over all hangs the terrible fear, the nightmare of the coming depression. The froth and frolic columns of the press note that the night clubs are no longer doing business. The workers will not cry about that.

FEAR OF INSECURITY
People hoard their money. They do not buy the new clothes. They watch and wait. In the factories the workers are nervous. The capitalist class calls for more and more production. Workers have an uneasy feeling that despite all the statistics of the great employment, jobs that pay a decent wage are now harder to get. Many workers cannot get more than two or three days work per week. Workers report that there is a growing all-round tension in the factories. "Something is wrong."

The workers are not exceptional in their fears. The capitalist economists vie with one another in predicting the exact date of the coming depression. Fall of 1947. Not later than the spring of 1948. Some bold spirits laugh the whole thing off and declare that the economy is safe until 1950. The most optimistic claim that "it" will not be, or need not be a depression on a grand scale. "It" will only be a recession, after which the economy will once more stabilize itself, perhaps at a slightly lower level.

DANGER OF WAR
This much is certain, that all of them are uncertain. And this much is certain also, that the average worker will never accept a depression as in the nature of things. But how to ward it off, what he can do to lift this pall which threatens the vital sources of his life, that he does not know. But something is wrong, terribly wrong.

To crown it all comes the news of the imperialist intervention by the U. S. in Greece and in Turkey, Toehran, Yalta, Potsdam and then "peace." But since this peace the U. S. is caught up in a constant series of conferences and negotiations, all

of which amount to the fact that the country is up to the eyes in the most desperate and dangerous scramble for pelf and power that any living man can remember. There is no end to it.

Wherever there is conflict, China, Korea, Germany, the Argentine, there the U. S. is embroiled and God knows what commitments, undertakings, promises, are being made in the name and sealed with the blood and wealth of the American people as a guarantee. And now almost like a bolt from the blue, the people are informed that they must save Greece and Turkey from Russia. Is this democracy?

True, we voted freely (except for some few million Negroes) and elected congressmen. But what kind of government is this democracy when a step affecting, perhaps in the not so distant future, the life and death of scores of millions of people, is taken in this dictatorial manner. Why Turkey? Shall we have to guarantee Korea from Russia too? And Manchuria? What is wrong and what can we do?

IN ANSWER
LABOR ACTION and the Workers Party have stated what is wrong, and what to do in every conceivable fashion and shall continue to do so. That is why we exist.
The whole social system, economy and politics, has outlived itself. It is

rotting from inside. That is why everything is wrong and there is no solution in obvious sight. What else could cause this deep demoralization in ruling class and workers alike? But even honest men fear to look too deeply into so pervasive an evil lest they are appalled at what they see. Fortunately for this society, workers, the organized labor movement, can and will have no peace as long as capital exists.

They struggle because they must and in the course of that struggle they learn that the root of all social evil is a system which has no other use for the great majority of men than to grind profit out of them. That system the workers will break to pieces, sweep it away, and reconstruct society on a new foundation. That is not done in a day or in a year. But by the spirit of resistance at all times and under all circumstances to capitalist politics, capitalist economies and capitalist adventures abroad, whether labelled war or peace.

All those who wonder what is wrong and cannot tell what can learn from attention to the manifold ramifications of the struggle between capital and labor on a world scale. Workers' power. That is the answer. And he who doubts should grapple with our literature, our press, and attend our meetings until he has thoroughly analyzed our answer to the almost universal conviction "Something is wrong."

Wanted! Marxist Literature In the German Language!

We have an urgent request from German socialists and workers for Marxist literature in the German language. We are therefore appealing to any of our readers who may have any of the writings of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Trotsky, Luxemburg, Liebknecht, etc.—be they books or pamphlets—to please contribute these works for a worthwhile purpose. Send them to

LABOR ACTION
4 Court Square, Long Island City 1, N. Y.
and we shall forward them to the proper hands.

Copies are still available of the March and April NEW INTERNATIONAL which contain

"Nature of the Stalinist Parties" and "Nature of the Russian State" By MAX SHACHTMAN

Order From: THE NEW INTERNATIONAL
4 Court Square .25¢ Per Copy Long Island City 1, N. Y.



CHICAGO BRANCH CONTINUES LABOR ACTION SALES:

The Chicago members of the Workers Party, under the driving leadership of Comrade Shirley Waller, are continuing to lead the way in public sales of LABOR ACTION—and very successfully, too! At the Henry Wallace meeting, a total of 366 LABOR ACTIONS were sold. As Shirley writes, "The Chicago LABOR ACTION salesmen hit the jackpot again! We had 14 comrades covering all of the many entrances of the stadium. We sold a total of \$18.30, or 366 papers at the meeting. This morning, two of us sold \$3.50 worth of LABOR ACTIONS at the Revere UAW local—making a total of \$21.80 in sales for this week."

The Chicago branch has also decided that every member must sell two or three copies of the paper to their friends, union workers, neighbors, etc. Chicago members carry LABOR ACTION around with them all the time, wherever they go, and are always eager and anxious to sell a copy. The results are the best sales of the paper of any branch of the Workers Party in the country.

STREET SALES OF LABOR ACTION:

Chicago is active in selling the paper in the streets, too. Shirley describes the Chicago technique as follows: "We took with us 95 LABOR ACTIONS and sold all of them in short order. One of our sales people shouted the slogan, 'Get your LABOR ACTION here,' making enough noise to attract attention. The others asked people a question, based upon the headline in the paper—'Are you against the high prices of today?' Everyone naturally answered in the affirmative. As soon as they said yes, we put a LABOR ACTION in their hands saying, 'Then you must certainly get your copy of LABOR ACTION.' They sold like hot cakes."

Here's a sales technique we recommend to others. Instead of just standing around with the paper, Shirley has devised the scheme of actively and militantly hawking LABOR ACTION—with amazing results. Use of posters produced by the LABOR ACTION Silk Screen Shop; use of newsboys' aprons and, above all, use of the human voice! Anybody interested in selling techniques is welcome to write Shirley, c/o the Chicago Workers Party Branch. She'll be more than willing to make suggestions.

The following subscriptions came in during the week, with Ned Brant's supporters in Akron, Ohio, doing the best job. Subscriptions have, in general declined—a seasonal decline in part—but we hope to see a speed-up before long.

AKRON	8
Cleveland	2
Chicago	2
New York	2
Seattle	1
Streator, Ill.	1
Miscellaneous	1
TOTAL	17

INTRODUCTORY OFFER TO LABOR ACTION
4 Court Square, Long Island City 1, N. Y.

Please enter my subscription to LABOR ACTION as follows:

6 month subscription (26 issues) for 50¢.
 1 year subscription (52 issues), together with pamphlet "Plenty For All," to be mailed to me, for \$1.00.

Name (Please print)
Address
City Zone State

Readers of Labor Action Take the Floor...

Will Yellow Dog Contracts Return?

I enclose a copy of a yellow dog contract, vintage 1931, in Massachusetts:

"THIS agreement made and entered in this _____ day of _____ 1931, by law and having an usual place of business in Lynn in the County of Essex, Commonwealth of Massachusetts, hereinafter called the employer, and _____ hereinafter called the

employee
WITNESSETH
"(1) The employer hereby employs the employee as shoe cutter in its factory, and in consideration thereof, the employee hereby accepts the employment under the terms and conditions hereinafter set forth.
"(2) The employee agrees that he will perform all work assigned to him in a good, workmanlike manner and to the best of his ability, and he will comply with such rules as may be put in effect for the conduct of the business of the employer. The employer is to have the sole right to

arrange working hours and conditions and apportion and distribute the work in its factory in such manner as it may see fit.
"(3) The employee agrees that he will not take part in any strike or in any concerted cessation of work or in any effort or plan to hinder the conduct of the factory of the employer or as an "open shop" or as a "non-union" shop and will do nothing, directly or indirectly tending in any way to impair the conduct of the factory of the firm name _____ as an "open shop" or as a "non-union" shop.
"(4) The said employment may be terminated by the employer or by the employee by either verbal or written notice at any time. In the event of a termination of the employment the employee hereby agrees that he will not for ONE YEAR after such termination in any way annoy, molest or interfere, directly or indirectly, with the customer, property, business or employees of the employer. The employee hereby certifies that he has carefully read the foregoing and that the terms herein contained include all of the terms of his employment with the employer.
"Name of firm _____
"Employee's sign _____
P.S.—From what I saw, if the employee read the yellow dog contract he would not be hired. They would not want such an employee. He would want to know too much.
Now, in 1947, question mark! Are we going back to 1931 conditions?
Food Worker, Lynn, Mass.

Where You Can Buy Labor Action and New International

- AKRON**
Kallas Cigar Store, 1 W. Market St. News Exchange, 51 S. Main St. National News Co., 333 S. Main St. La Salle Confectionery, 620 S. Main St.
- BALTIMORE**
Fayette and Calvert Streets
- CLEVELAND**
Wheatman's Store, 719 Prospect Ave.
- DETROIT**
Carl's Bookstore, 9109 Woodward, near Clairmont.
Cas a Warren Drugstore, opposite Wayne University.
Family Newsstand, downtown, in front of Family Theater.
Highland Park Newsstand, 13501 Woodward, near Davison.
- LOUISVILLE**
Eilers Bookshop, betw. Liberty and Jefferson on 3rd.
- NEWARK**
91 Barkley Street.
168 Belmont Ave.
Northeast corner, Market and Mulberry.
- NEW YORK**
For Your NY:
Ask your newsdealer in Manhattan and Brooklyn. Carried on all main newsstands.
For Your LA:
On all newsstands on 14th and 42nd Streets.
- READING**
Southwest corner, Fifth and Penn Sts LABOR ACTION only.
- PHILADELPHIA**
LABOR ACTION:
N.E. corner 11th and Walnut.
N.W. corner 13th and Market.
N.E. corner Broad and Arch.
N.E. corner 15th and Market.
Near N.E. corner Broad St. and Girard Ave.
- NEW INTERNATIONAL**
N.E. corner 11th and Walnut.
N.W. corner 13th and Market.
N.E. corner Broad and Arch.
N.E. corner 15th and Market.
West side of Broad between Columbia and Montgomery.
- SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA**
San Francisco:
2059 Fillmore St.
Golden Gate News Agency, 81 3rd Street.
McDonald's Bookstore, 867 Mission St.
Paul Elder's Bookstore, 239 Post St. (N1 only).
Berkeley:
Whelens, Bancroft and Telegraph.
- SEATTLE**
102 Washington Street.

Aid European Hungry Workers

Will you undertake to help us send food and clothing regularly to a European working class family?

Will you support the AMERICAN COMMITTEE FOR EUROPEAN WORKERS RELIEF in its campaign to bring help in the form of food and clothing to families of European socialists, anti-Nazi and labor fighters?

If you can give us this support, please send all contributions (in the form of food, clothing and money donations) to us at the address given below. We will take care of seeing to it that these contributions of yours reach those who need them most of all.

AMERICAN COMMITTEE FOR EUROPEAN WORKERS RELIEF
197 Second Avenue
New York 3, N. Y.

Remember! \$10 will enable us to send a 21-pound CARE Food Package to a European Working Class Family.

ACEWR
197 Second Avenue
New York 3, N. Y.

I am ready to help a European family during the coming months. I am sending the following contribution: \$ _____

_____ food packages _____ clothing packages

Name
Address
City Zone State

Sees Unity Need In Telephone Tieup

Dear Editor:
We now are really in a mess here in Blue Island, Ill.; believe half will go in before the week's up. I don't blame them. Such damn fool ideas of fooling around to give an excuse to break our strike.

There is never a dull moment here in Chicago or Blue Island.

The vote was to be such a privilege to and for the strikers to decide as to the chance of returning to work on the old contract plus \$4.00 increase or remaining steadfast on our nine points. The fact remains the poll was to open at six a.m. on Sunday, May 4, but stewards took the votes Saturday night and sent the returns in before midnight, which means the majority of girls were unaware of this. Well naturally the favorite was "No," as for example, Blue Island has 150 girls out and

Fly Down to Brooklyn!

LATIN AMERICAN FIESTA

Experts from Cuba will show you how to:

- Rumba - - Lamba
- Conga - - Tango

Sing songs Latin and American with El Hanko

SATURDAY, JUNE 7, 9 P. M.

276 Fulton Street
(IRT-IND to Boro Hall)
Brooklyn-Downtown Br.
Workers Party
50 CENTAVOS

India Factions in Showdown As Britain Announces Plan

By HENRY JUDD

With the nation swept by a growing wave of communal and fratricidal rioting (the deaths within the past six months are approaching, according to official figures, the 50,000 mark), India is rapidly approaching one of the crucial show-downs in its long history. On June 2, the Viceroy of India, Viscount Mountbatten, is to announce the latest British proposal for the transfer of political power to an Indian government (or governments), followed by the withdrawal of the British one year hence. But the general situation is clearly passing beyond the scope and control of such formalities as concern the British.

As the critical moment approaches when the British will publicly announce their proposals, a mounting tension grips the various political parties and extends into the ranks of the nation's many communal, national and religious groups. Each feels that its future course and development is at stake. Clashes are reported all over the country, from Calcutta to Bombay, from southern India to the remote North West Frontier province. Armed gangs of the Moslem League parade through the city streets; Hindu mobs charge into Moslem city quarters; hungry peasants and unemployed in the industrial cities riot for wheat and bread.

"Day-to-day administration in the country has deteriorated to the extent that authorities have expressed concern. The virus of fear and suspicion has insinuated itself into everyday life until the common practice of sleeping out-of-doors in hot weather has been curtailed because of dread of the assassin's dagger." (New York Times, May 24.) In many parts of the country, the situation has become so acute that thousands of families belonging to minority communities are reported fleeing for safety.

BRITAIN'S PLAN

Where do India's political movements stand in this situation? But first, since it is important to understand their aims in relation to what the British will probably propose, let us summarize what has been reported to be the British plan.

The British, more than any other of the forces involved in India, are now anxious to arrive at a settlement. Within the framework of their disintegrating world empire, it is most essential to settle the Indian question, to prevent a falling-apart if possible. The British must execute a partial withdrawal and a partial transfer of power with respect to India, but they also must have some stable force to whom they can turn over power. A breaking apart of India into a group of mutually warring communal divisions would be disastrous for them.

The British will therefore make one more attempt to bring the Congress Party—the essentially Hindu political movement—together with the Moslem League. But it is taken for granted that this effort will fail, and a unified India, ruled by joint Moslem-Hindu agreement is out of the question.

It must therefore be taken for granted that the British will propose some sort of a division of India, accepting the principle of Pakistan (a separate Moslem-dominated state). Regardless of what happens, it seems certain that India will be divided. In this situation, the British will unquestionably attempt to play a demagogic role as arbitrator between the warring communal factions. They may well propose a democratic plebiscite among the Moslems over the issue of self-determination (thus cleverly putting to shame the Congress Party and Moslem League, both of which refused to raise this elementary demand for an expression of opinion by vote), together with a plebiscite in the provinces containing communal mi-

His Policy Fosters Fratricidal War



GANDHI

norities (Punjab, Bengal, Assam, etc.). Because of the absolutely reactionary politics conducted by both Hindu and Moslem organizations, not to mention other minority parties, the British are now in a position where they can appear, in demagogic fashion it is true, as the saviors in the situation, the democrats interested in minority rights and the principle of self-determination.

DIVIDED INDIA

The Moslem League of Jinnah is extremely active in the situation, making it clear that its threats to precipitate violence and internal turmoil were no empty words. Jinnah remains absolutely unshakable, at the moment, in his Pakistan demand. He opposes any plebiscite in those provinces of his Pakistan (such as Punjab and Bengal), where almost half the population are Hindus. In other words, his conception of a Moslem state (almost 45 per cent of which would be non-Moslem people!) is every bit as reactionary and oppressive as the contrary conception of the Congress Party.

In essence, Jinnah wants to carve out of India a state that will have the economic and industrial capacity to extend its sway, within a reasonable time, over the balance of India. His Pakistan is reactionary and imperialistic to the core. On top of this, he has proposed a corridor extending through northern India to link together the two separate parts of his Pakistan! This thousand-mile corridor would pass through Hindu territory, and is probably the most fantastic conception ever dreamed up.

The Congress leadership is seriously divided over the issues. Gandhi, still the principle leader of the Party, continues to hold out against any division. He demands a united,

Congress-ruled India, with the Moslem masses depending upon Congress "good-will" for the safe-guarding of their rights. This, obviously, is but another way of guaranteeing a continuation of the fratricidal war, since the Moslem people will never accept this. Others among the Congress leaders are preparing to accept a division as inevitable, but will fight to the end against the sort of division, including a corridor, that Jinnah proposes. In the end, the problem of how and where to make such a division will prove to be the most controversial point. There is little likelihood that the British can make a proposal satisfactory to both political organizations.

A DEMOCRATIC SOLUTION

The actual British announcement next week will bring all conflicting views to a head and open up a new and perhaps decisive period in India's history. Will a settlement be made? Will it be workable in practice? Or will the two large communities tend to fall further and further apart, increasing the division within the land?

Such questions cannot be answered at the moment. In this tense situation, it is increasingly clear that only the Indian working class, under revolutionary leadership, both Hindu and Moslem workers, can save the situation and organize an India that will be unified, but unified by popular will and agreement. This means guaranteeing the right of self-determination, including the right of separation from a Federal India. This means a democratic solution to the many and complex minority problems, through a free expression of opinion.

The various provinces and regional groupings within India (that is, the various nationalities such as the people of the Punjab, Bengal, etc.) must have the right of self-determination within a Federated India, and together with this, the various religious and communal groups (such as the Moslems, Sikhs, etc.) must also have the same rights offered to them and guaranteed in practice to them. None of the three main political forces at work—British imperialism, Congress Hindu-capitalism, and Moslem League landlord-feudalism can offer this democratic revolutionary solution.

AN EDITORIAL ON A SOUTH CAROLINA LABOR LAWYER

Portrait of A Lynch Liberal

"Willie Earle is dead and I wish more like him were dead." This statement, according to the New York Times, is out of the mouth of John Bolt Culbertson, one of the defense attorneys in the Greenville lynching case. Culbertson is a Southerner and a resident of Greenville. This might explain his viciousness, his disregard of very ordinary human rights, his lack of the most elemental decency and the closing of his eyes completely to the fact that the weight of the evidence was entirely against the 28 lynchers. We expect this of a Southern "defense" lawyer.

But this does not end the matter in connection with Culbertson. In the South this man is called a liberal. But he has posed as more than this; he has posed as a special kind of liberal. He is a labor lawyer and has made a reputation for himself as a defender of workers. He is the lawyer for the CIO textile unions in the vicinity of Greenville.

This "labor" lawyer, this defender of workers, this fighter for the rights of the underdog, did not stop his tirade even after he was warned by Judge Martin, the judge sitting in a South Carolina capitalist court. He continued: "You might shoot a mad dog and be prosecuted, but if a mad dog were loose in my community I'd shoot the dog and let them prosecute me." Willie Earle, a Negro, you see, had stabbed and killed a white taxi driver. That made him a "mad dog" to this white Southern CIO lawyer, this "labor lawyer."

"IDEOLOGIES GO OUT THE WINDOW"

Culbertson is reported to have explained his defense of lynchers and his anti-Negro savagery by saying that "When I go into a court room all ideolo-

gies go out the window." While Culbertson may be called a liar, a scoundrel and an ignoramus, this is not enough, despite the fact that he is all of these things. Culbertson is more: he is now definitely on the side of mob rule, lynching, Jim Crow, segregation and the whole pattern of Southern hate, degradation and insult. Culbertson's defense of the lynchers and the manner in which he conducted the defense mean this and nothing less. "Ideologies" did not "go out the window." The judge and the prosecutor in their conduct of the case did make an effort to keep certain "ideologies" out of that court room. They formally attempted to keep out the ideology of the South that it makes no difference if a Negro is lynched by white men, that a Negro should not have his day fairly in a Southern court, that Negroes in the South have no rights. It was Culbertson, the defender of labor, and his associates who dragged in this "ideology." Culbertson acted no differently from other bloodhounds of the defense and the jury who took the position that they wished that more like Willie Earle were dead.

Culbertson is reported to have made another explanation for his offense against decency, against the Negro and against all of labor. What was that? The same old story, used over and over by those who jumped forward to defend the mob.

He is against lynching, and at first he refused the case. Then the leader of the Greenville textile union came to his office and told him that he too was against lynching, but "blood is thicker than water. I have two daughters with husbands in that crowd." Culbertson, the defender of labor, took the case. Labor, to him, is all white. Labor to

Culbertson, is only the white husbands of the white daughters of a white textile organizer in South Carolina.

And Willie Earle, who too was a part of labor, was only a mad dog who ought to be dead. If he is done to death with knives and guns by a mob, that is all right to Culbertson. He doesn't count, his wife or daughter don't count, the oppressed Negroes of Greenville and the whole South don't count; only the 28 lynchers.

AN INJURY TO WHITE WORKERS

We do not say these things merely to castigate Culbertson, despite the fact that he certainly deserves the severest castigation. We say them primarily to demonstrate what we have said more than once before. That is to say what the South is and what faces the labor movement, particularly the CIO, in that section of Jim Crow America. There are a thousand Culbertsons in the South: men to whom "blood is thicker than water," men who are too cowardly even to refuse to defend lynchers, men who believe that the esteem of a very backward community is worth more than the defense of elementary human rights where human rights are the democratic rights of Negroes.

The Culbertsons can do something about the South. But they will have to make a complete about-face. The white workers can do something but they will have to make a complete about-face also. The Culbertsons will have to realize that they do the white working class no service by the Greenville performance. The white workers on that jury will learn some day that their verdict was not only a blow at the Negroes, but, just as important, it was a tightening of the noose around their own necks.

New York Press Whips Up Gutter Scandal --

Anything to Get to the White House



GOVERNOR DEWEY

(Continued from page 1) ed or could not find a place to live were put up in hotels. True, hotel rent was high—what hotel owner would pass up an opportunity like that?

One man with nine children, working but receiving supplementary relief, was put into a hotel. The other choice was to break up the family in various shelters. It is supposed to be state welfare policy not to break up families. (We did not, in this connection, note any editorials in the press on the sanctity of the family!)

● City employees on relief rolls. Oh, what an item!

Some 70 city employees receive supplementary relief. As in the case cited above, relief standards are higher than the pay received by these people, for the most part large families of nine, ten or eleven people who cannot subsist on the \$30 or less a week they earn.

● \$130 a Month for Housekeeper! Enough to make a taxpayer gnash his gnashers!

The Welfare Department paid a housekeeper to take care of SEVEN children for a man who did not earn enough to provide for his children. Boarded out, the cost of caring for the children would have been greater. (And let's not forget the Sunday sermon about keeping the family together!) \$130 a month to care for seven children! Positively disgraceful, isn't it?

● Free Laundry. Imagine that! In the case of old or handicapped

people who are incapable of doing their own laundry, the Welfare Department added a dollar or two for laundry.

There was much more to the headlines. The Journal-American, for example, somehow dragged in the "Communists," who are tossing the people's money away. But enough of that. Let's run over a few facts first.

● There are 126,000 cases on relief in New York. Some 233,000 people are involved.

● Relief payments total \$1.31 per person per day. This \$1.31 is broken down as follows:

- 65 cents for food.
- 21 cents for clothing.
- 22 cents for shelter.
- 23 cents for electricity, gas, cleaning supplies and everything else.

● The press made it appear as though the hotel accommodations were swank Waldorf-Astoria suites. Actually, they were anything but that.

One woman, who lived in a hotel with her three children, described her "hotel accommodations" as an airless, tiny, tiny room in a top corner of the hotel, reached by stairs and accompanied by the disdain of the hotel management, who so discouraged the family from being seen by other guests that for days on end the family did not leave the room.

(For a few days there was much made of others living in hotels. Investigation disclosed that these were American citizens repatriated from other countries, whose expenses were paid until settled somewhere else by the federal government. The Sun refused to be embarrassed and commented, in ending that part of the story, that, well, what if they are paid for by the federal government, we pay taxes, don't we?)

● The state Department of Welfare (Dewey's department) knew every detail of the extra allotments! Eighty per cent of the cost is paid by the state, and a monthly report on every case is filed with the state Department of Welfare.

Now, what was done, and what is behind the whole disgraceful mess? The story originally broke in the World-Telegram by way of a judge in the Children's Court who did not feel it necessary to obey the rule that cases in the Children's Court are not to be given to the papers.

(One of the canons of journalistic ethics has been violated throughout this filthy business. It is standard practice in most newspaper offices never to name names where children are involved, for their school-mates and friends will taunt them as paupers. We see nothing at all disgraceful in being on relief. It is, in our view, the right of people to demand relief from the state when they are unable to work or unable to get a job adequate to their needs. However, the conventions of our society are such as to make public exposure humiliating. It is a convention carefully protected by the captains of wealth and their press as a discouragement to people in need.)

TIMES DISPATCH CONFIRMS STORY IN LABOR ACTION

Striking confirmation of the statements contained in the article on page 3 of this issue on current events in Indonesia, is contained in a dispatch from The Hague, Holland, to the New York Times, dated May 25. The dispatch contains the following sentence which gives credence to the assertions made in this issue of LABOR ACTION. The sentence reads:

"... there is an influential body of conservative-minded people to be found in the camp of the political parties that are quietly and consistently urging strong action. This would amount to a colonial war designed to crush the turbulent Indonesian elements and force 'realism' on the rest."

Governor Dewey, who on most important issues prefers to maintain a discreet silence until his board of council on political ambitions tells him which course is most advantageous, jumped into the fray at once by ordering a "Seabury probe" of New York City Welfare Commissioner Rhatigan's office. Riding the people on relief is a pretty slimy business, but anything goes if it helps advance an unscrupulous politician to the White House.

Mayor O'Dwyer and New York City Commissioner of Welfare Rhatigan rushed to the defense of the Democratic Party, which was presumably under attack. (The way we saw it, the ones who were really getting it in the neck were the people on relief.) They took up the challenge and proceeded to tell Dewey off. Their stories told the facts on relief. But by the time these stories appeared in the press, including such generally pro-Democratic papers as the Times, they were slanted to make the relief of clients the butt.

First attention was given to ending the "scandal" of hotel accommodations.

Some—women and children, as in the case of the woman mentioned above—were sent to flop houses! We said flop houses, flop houses maintained by the city in flop-house style for derelicts.

● Some were moved into boarded-up, condemned tenements, waiting to be torn down. In at least two cases so far, the health commissioner has declared the houses a health hazard and the people have been moved back to hotels.

A furious investigation of relief rolls is now in progress. Rhatigan is out to defend his régime—not relief payments, so much as his régime! Workers at home relief bureaus, who are far fewer than adequate operation requires, are putting in extra time (and it is alleged that they have been warned against complaining about extra hours.)

ULTIMATE AIM

Like racket-busting, which first brought Dewey prominence, though many discordant details have been published about his activities in that connection, the relief situation promises to be a Dewey ace in the hole in building his presidential campaign. The Democrats, through O'Dwyer, who, it is said, aspires to the governorship as a step up, are going to retaliate by making the best possible case for the city department.

Where do the people on relief figure in all this? Ferrets, directed by Rhatigan and state probers, will dig into cases, looking for every excuse to cut the allowance or cut relief payments entirely.

It is expected that relief rolls will go up with mounting unemployment.

The current campaign is thus largely designed to put the squeeze on present and future relief applicants IN ADVANCE by subjecting them to the torture of public and repeated private investigations. Hence, the reason for participation in this campaign by such a paper as the Times, which is not supposed to be sympathetic to Dewey.

What we have said is only a small part of the story. We cannot possibly repeat the endless details which add to the general, disgusting picture.

We must, however, pay attention to this campaign in order to crush any effort to reduce relief appropriations and in order to prevent the need of the people from being callously converted into a political tool of the capitalist parties.

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OIL, STRATEGIC BASES, POWER POLITICS OR HUMAN LIVES?
What Is the Socialist Solution FOR THE JEWS WHO ROT IN EUROPE'S DP CAMPS? FOR PALESTINE?
COME AND HEAR:
MAX SHACHTMAN
National Chairman, Workers Party
EDWARD FINDLEY
Writer for Labor Action on Jewish Problems
IRVING HOWE
Editorial Board, Labor Action
Time: FRIDAY, JUNE 6, 8:15 P. M.
Place: WEBSTER HALL
119 East 11th Street, New York City (Between 3rd and 4th Avenues)
Admission: 25 Cents
Auspices: Workers Party, Local New York 114 West 14th Street, CHelsea 2-9681

Jim-Crow System--

(Continued from page 1)

In the case of the Negroes, it is the system of Jim Crow which exists all over the country, and nowhere so strongly as in Washington, D. C., that gives strength to the Southern lynchers.

The struggle against lynch terror is not merely the fight of the Negro people; it is the struggle of the whole population and, in the first place, the great and powerful American labor movement.

American labor must take the lead, as it did during the years of its great organizing drives, to smash race discrimination, Jim Crow and the lynch system. In face of this new wave of terror, the Negroes, together with their white working class comrades, should set up defense guards to protect themselves against the lynchers and to defend their political, economic and social rights.

Beat Back the Lynchers!