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WALLACE CANDIDATE SWEEPS ELECTION

Mass Actions Herald Coming Crisis in Italy

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What Labor Must Fight For Now

An Editorial

The break in commodity market prices should alert American labor to the danger of depression. We cannot say with certainty that the slump in farm prices is the beginning of an economic crisis. But we would be blind not to see the warning sign: Prepare!

We CAN say with certainty, however, that the drop in commodity market prices will bring no immediate significant fall in the cost of living. All business and government sources advise that retail prices—what the consumer pays—do not reflect wholesale price declines until months later.

As a matter of fact, certain food prices are still rising. Many fresh vegetables and fruits are now selling for two and three times the prices of a year ago. Meat prices, an Agriculture Department official warns, may go to higher levels than before.

Non-agricultural commodity prices are still up. Price boosts have been announced for many products, from automobiles to men's suits. Average rents have risen 15% in eight months — and landlords hope to torpedo what's left of rent controls.

This all points to one thing: There must be no let-down in labor's drive to restore real wages to the level of the spring of 1946. NO FORESEEABLE PRICE DEVELOPMENTS WARRANT THE SLIGHTEST REDUCTION IN PRESENT UNION DEMANDS FOR BASIC WAGE INCREASES OF 25 TO 30 CENTS AN HOUR. And since there can be no assurance that prices won't rise once more, basic wages must be fortified by including in all wage contracts the sliding scale cost-of-living bonus. This will provide automatic pay increases in the event of further price rises.

Hand-in-hand with the fight for higher wages should go an immediate drive for measures to protect the workers against unemployment. Unemployment is a menace NOW in the midst of so-called "prosperity."

Reports from all parts of the country reveal what the Wall Street Journal has called "creeping unemployment." The U. S. Census Bureau figures disclose a steady rise in unemployment — 400,000 more in the month of January alone.

Several hundred thousand Detroit auto workers have suffered layoffs for weeks. Now 35,000 Ford workers face a layoff of at least three months because of model changes. In Akron, the rubber center, the Jan. 25 Beacon-Journal reports, "The trek to relief agencies has begun in earnest again — what with layoffs, increasing cost of living and winter illnesses. It's the largest trek since depression years." New York City's Welfare Commissioner has asked a 30% increase in the welfare budget because of the anticipated rise in relief cases.

An estimated 14 million workers were unemployed for some period during 1947. This year, depression or not, many more millions will suffer periods of unemployment.

RIGHT NOW THE DEMAND SHOULD BE RAISED FOR THE 30-HOUR WEEK AT 40 HOURS PAY AND FOR UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE EQUAL TO TRADE UNION WAGES

Why should the hereditary billionaire Henry Ford II be able to lay off half his River Rouge workers whenever he claims he hasn't enough work for them? Spread the available work through the shorter work week, with the same take-home pay as before.

Why should laid off workers be forced to exist on present unemployment insurance pittance? Let the jobless worker be assured a decent living standard by receiving unemployment compensation equal to his weekly union wages.

Dan Hoan Enters Mayoralty Race In Milwaukee

Boulton Denounces Turncoat Socialist

Interest in Milwaukee's mayoralty election increased with the announcement of Dan Hoan that he would bow to "popular demand" and become a candidate. Hoan had served as mayor from 1916 to 1940 as a Socialist. Since his defeat in 1940 he has abandoned the Socialist party for the Democratic party. In 1944 and 1946 Hoan was the Democratic candidate for governor of Wisconsin.

In a speech given the day after Hoan's announcement, James E. Boulton, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor, lashed at Hoan's record of betrayal of the working class. Boulton assailed Hoan's desertion to the Democratic party. "Mr. Hoan has done the greatest damage to the cause of Milwaukee Socialism by his major achievement in building a bridge to the capitalist Democratic Party for a stream of deserters from the workers' movement," asserted Boulton. This statement was prominently featured in the Milwaukee capitalist press.

The immediate loser because of Hoan's action will be Frank Zeidler, the last vote-getter left to the dying Socialist Party. Zeidler is running without SP endorsement, so as not to offend any capitalist support. He has the tacit backing of one wing of the Democratic Party and seems prepared to follow the same road that Hoan did.

Because he is the only candidate endorsed by and responsible to a party organization, Boulton's campaign is meeting with great interest from thousands of Socialist workers. Despite bitterly cold weather, Boulton's workers found no difficulty in getting almost 50% more signatures than the legal requirement.



Thomas B. McCabe, reactionary Republican Philadelphia banker and president of the Scott Paper Co. (Scott Tissue), who was appointed by Truman as chairman of the Federal Reserve Board. He replaces Eccles, the Roosevelt New Deal financier from Utah.

Unemployment in Detroit



Thousands of auto workers jammed Detroit's Unemployment Compensation Commission offices to pick up jobless pay checks after many factories closed down because of a fuel shortage that followed the recent cold spell. UAW President Reuther demanded a Congressional investigation of the Detroit gas shortage which, it is believed was artificially created by the utility trust.

Steel Union Heads Give No Lead in Wage Drive

Philip Murray has informed the steel corporations that he is ready to accept any crumbs they may offer in wage negotiations this April with the CIO Steelworkers.

That is the meaning of his demonstrative declaration on Feb. 16 that the steel union will not strike to enforce its forthcoming wage demands. His statement was made to a press conference after the opening session of the Steelworkers Executive Board meeting on the wage question.

Murray emphasized that "we do not propose to abridge, set aside or undermine our collective bargaining agreement" which contains a no-strike clause operative until April 30, 1949. Murray and the steel bosses slipped this shackle on the steel workers last spring, when in return for a skimpy wage raise that was quickly wiped out by price rises, he incorporated a two year no-strike clause into the contract.

Now Murray seems to be planning to make the same sort of deal, although it would take not less than a 30-cent an hour basic wage increase to compensate for the rise in living costs since the last contract was signed. Most of the other leading CIO unions are demanding 25 to 30 cents an hour. The Oil Workers Industrial Union joined the auto, packinghouse, rubber and other unions by adopting a 30-cent demand on Feb. 11.

Murray's Executive Board, while previously calling for a "substantial" wage increase, has not specified

the exact amount desired. Murray has refused to intimate whether any specific demand will be raised in the "wage report" to be issued by the Wage Policy Committee after it acts on the Executive Board's proposals.

What the Steelworkers demand, how they go about getting their demands and what they finally accept will have a significant bearing on the wage fight of the other CIO unions. The latter may find their demands seriously undercut if Murray accepts a lower figure. Certainly, Murray's no-strike statement serves notice to the other CIO unions that they can expect no serious support for their wage struggle from Murray.

Murray's pronouncement comes at the very time the Chrysler workers are entering negotiations for a 30-cent basic wage raise, plus five cents in welfare demands. Walter Reuther, auto union head, and other Murray henchmen undoubtedly will seize upon a steel settlement as a basis for settlements in auto and other industries. Reuther has already weakened the wage demands of the General Motors workers.

If the CIO workers are to make substantial wage gains, they will have to compel the top CIO leaders to adopt a unified strategy of militant action that will make the full power of the CIO felt in dealing with the corporations. The ranks will have to insist on a vigorous drive for their full wage programs and be especially on guard against attempts to water down the amount of wage boosts they justifiably demand.

A New Kind Of Party

Eugene Dennis, General Secretary of the Stalinist Party gives the low down on exactly what the Wallace third party is: "It is not a labor party, nor even a farmer-labor party. It is a new type of people's anti-war and anti-imperialist and democratic people's coalition which is being created within the U.S.A. and reflects in its own way the struggle between the world camps of progress and reaction."

Murray Steps Up Attacks Against Stalinists in CIO

CIO President Philip Murray for the first time has made a public attack on CIO supporters of Henry Wallace—principally the Stalinists—and opponents of the Marshall Plan.

His open declaration of warfare was made in a vitriolic address on Feb. 10 to the Cleveland convention of the Industrial Union of Marine and Shipbuilding Workers. Heretofore, Murray has been waging a form of undercover war against his former allies, the Stalinists. He has confined his personal attacks on them to the closed meetings of the CIO Executive Board.

Although, as is his custom, Murray named no names in his speech, there was no mistaking his target and intent. It is clear that Murray intends to proceed as ruthlessly as he can to suppress opponents of his political action and foreign affairs policies.

Murray harangued against any third party "at this time" and accused the pro-Wallace elements of splitting and dividing the labor movement and paving the way for the election of reactionaries this November. He did not explain how each Congress up to now has been more reactionary than the previous one.

FROPS UP DICTATORS

Murray also charged that the Marshall Plan opponents are "misrepresenting" his "purpose" in supporting the Marshall Plan. Actually, he himself is misrepresenting the Marshall Plan as "aid to the starving," when it is designed to bolster anti-labor and dictator regimes in Western Europe.

Murray's choice of the IUMSWA convention as the arena for his first open attack on third party advocates in the CIO was not accidental. The IUMSWA is under the complete control of reactionary elements, including the Association of Catholic Trade Unionists. The atmosphere for Murray's speech had been prepared in advance by red-baiting tirades and resolutions.

The IUMSWA, down to a shadow because of postwar shipyard layoffs, is being built up as a catch-all for split-off groups from Stalinist-controlled unions and new unions that Murray wants under his own thumb. The convention received into membership 25,000 members of the Progressive Metal Workers Council, a right-wing split-off from the Stalinist-dominated Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers Union. It also approved the merger of the United Railway Workers into the shipbuilders union.

Murray's speech at the Shipbuilding convention and the action of the latter in taking in a secessionist CIO grouping show how the break between the Murray-Reuther bureaucracy and the Stalinist bureaucracy is growing deeper and more bitter all the time. This last week, Murray's appointee, Martin Wagner, president of the Gas, Coke and Chemical Workers Union, summarily removed from office a Stalinist supporter, Gavin Mitchell, regional director of the Buffalo area. The previous week a split was engineered in the Greater Newark Industrial Union Council, when representatives of the auto, textile, steel and other unions decided to split the Council and set up their own competing organization, headed by William Mackey, a field representative of Murray's steel union.

Isacson Victory Shows Disgust With Old Parties

By Albert Parker

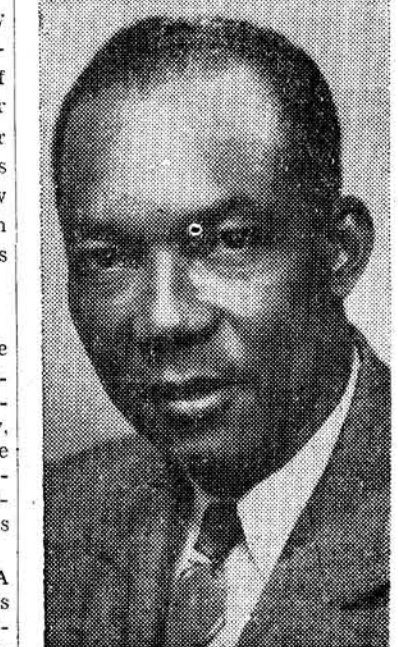
NEW YORK, Feb. 18—Clouds of gloom settled over Democratic Party national headquarters and the White House last night as their candidate for Congress from the 24th District in the Bronx went down to crushing defeat by the Wallace-endorsed candidate of the American Labor Party. This first electoral test for the Wallace movement strengthened the likelihood that Truman's goose is cooked unless he is able to work out some deal with Wallace.

The political wise-acs had marked down a victory for the Democrats as a sure thing in this district that has been controlled by Boss Flynn for decades. They even went in for speculation that anything less than 30% for the ALP candidate, Leo Isacson, would represent a moral setback for Wallace.

But Isacson got 56% of the 40,000 votes cast yesterday, against 31% for the Democrats, 9% for the Liberal Party, and 4% for the Republicans. The results in the previous election, in 1946, were 44% for the Democrats, 27% for the ALP, 19% for the Republicans and 10% for the Liberals.

Thus the ALP rolled up more votes than the other three parties combined, surprising even its own leaders. And while the results have given the Democratic machine the jitters, the Republicans are far from happy over them. For, by dropping from 19% to 4% of the votes, the GOP has been reduced to the status of "fourth party" in this district.

Of course, the Bronx election results, while providing a test of sena-



FERDINAND C. SMITH

timant, cannot be accepted as a completely accurate reflection of the national political picture. There happened to be a number of exceptional local factors in this case, most of them favorable to the Wallace movement.

EXCEPTIONAL CONDITIONS For one thing, the vote was only about half the size of the one cast in 1946, and the proportion of Wallace votes would probably go down in a regular election. Another exceptional factor was the heavy proportion of Jewish voters in this district, something like 50%, and this had an important effect because most Jewish voters are today highly incensed at the transparently two-faced role of the Truman administration on the Palestine issue. Furthermore, this district was the second biggest stronghold of the ALP in the state.

It has also been noted that New York City is the major stronghold of the Communist Party, which is the chief representative of the Wallace movement in the trade unions. The CP forces were able by concentrating their city-wide strength in this district to achieve an effect that would be impossible in a regular election.

All in all, however, the election results are definite proof that dissatisfaction with the two-party system is spreading; that Wallace's break with the Democrats has enhanced his popularity; and that his candidacy can cut heavily into the normally Democratic and Republican vote.

DESPERATE SITUATION

The Democrats are now in a desperate situation, and sentiment is sure to grow among them for a deal to regain Wallace's support. Such a deal entails enormous difficulties, however.

One of the Bronx campaign's high points was Mayor O'Dwyer's public appeal on Feb. 12 to "liberals like Henry Wallace" to reconsider the "serious blunder" of leaving the Democratic fold and "return and carry on their fight within the Democratic Party, side by side with us."

It was notable in Wallace's reply three days later that he did not explicitly reject this appeal, even though he continued his attacks on the Democratic Party. An estimate of future trends must take into account Wallace's refusal to definitely commit himself against a return to the Democratic machine, because the future of the movement he leads

(Continued on Page 4)

Witch Hunters Arrest NMU Secretary Smith

FBI agents, acting on direct orders of Attorney General Tom Clark, perpetrated their most brazen act to date in the current witch hunt drive, when they arrested for deportation Ferdinand C. Smith, National Secretary of the CIO National Maritime Union and CIO Executive Board member.

Smith, a well-known Negro trade union leader, is charged with being a member of the Communist (Stalinist) Party and for that reason is marked by the government for deportation to the British West Indies. As in the cases of Gerhardt Eisler and John Williamson, Stalinist labor secretary, bail has been denied, and the accused is being held prisoner on Ellis Island.

The FBI action against Smith is especially dangerous, because Smith is a leader of the Stalinist faction inside the NMU, which is conducting at present a sharp factional struggle against NMU President Curran and his faction. The deportation arrest thus smacks of direct FBI interference with internal union affairs.

An appeal for bail was denied Smith by Judge Medina. The judge accepted an application for a habeas corpus hearing, but this means little since the judge remarked beforehand that such a

hearing was only to determine if there had been "any irregularities" in the arrest and that he felt there hadn't been any. At the same time Judge Medina gave his verdict on habeas corpus hearings for Eisler and Williamson. He ruled against them and consequently they will remain imprisoned at Ellis Island until final appeals up to the Supreme Court have been heard. This may very likely be several years.

The arrest of Smith—the 23rd arrest in the current deportation hysteria—must serve as a warning signal to the entire labor movement.

The whole labor movement must now rally, not only to defend Smith, from FBI persecution, but to smash the foul FBI conspiracy to deport alien unionists and terrorize the whole working class. All true militants must realize that Stalinism cannot be fought with the aid of, or in alliance with the FBI. Because Hoover's G-men are persecuting the Stalinists as but the first installment of the carefully planned red-baiting attack on the entire labor movement—an attack which aims at nothing less than resurrecting the notorious Palmer raids of 1920 and hacking the labor movement to shreds.

The deportation drive must be stopped!

State Department Interferes in CIO Affairs

Direct evidence has come to light that the U.S. State Department is intervening in affairs of the American labor movement and is actively influencing internal policies of the Murray leadership in the CIO.

This evidence is contained in a Washington dispatch by Louis Stark, veteran labor news correspondent, in the Feb. 11 N. Y. Times. His article deals with Philip Murray's threat to purge national CIO appointees and elected local and state CIO officials who back Wallace or refuse to "go along" with the Marshall Plan.

The State Department, Stark disclosed, recently demanded from top CIO officials an "explanation" for the action of Paul Schnurr, secretary of the San Francisco CIO Council, because he wrote officials of French and Italian labor unions that the Taft-Hartley Act is "the domestic program of American imperialism which now attacks free trade unions in the European countries as well."

When top CIO leaders found out about Schnurr's letter, "they began an inquiry," Stark writes, "in the midst of which they were asked

by the State Department for an explanation of the 'incident.'" This high-handed intervention by the State Department should have been sternly repudiated by the CIO leaders. Instead they bowed and scraped, and hastened to assure their State Department bosses that they had already dealt with the offending member.

They told the State Department, reports Stark, that they "had rebuked Mr. Schnurr and had advised him that any communications addressed to members of the world labor federation must channel through the national CIO offices." This would amount to complete censorship under the inspiration of the State Department, of free interchange of opinion between CIO members and unionists in other lands.

The CIO top leadership's "State Department unionism" has become a crying international scandal, particularly in connection with their support of American imperialism's aid to the bloody monarchial dictatorship in Greece.

After halting Truman's military backing of the Greek dictatorship as "aid to democracy," the CIO leaders were considerably embar-

rassed when the Greek government on Dec. 8, 1947 passed its own version of the Taft-Hartley Act WHICH INCLUDED THE DEATH PENALTY FOR STRIKERS.

But for nearly two months the CIO leaders kept silent about the fascistic anti-labor decrees in Greece. Finally, after they were subjected to much pressure, the CIO Executive Board on Jan. 22 voted to request the U. S. State Department to lodge a protest against the Greek death-to-strikers law. Philip Murray wrote a letter to Secretary of State Marshall, published in the Feb. 2 CIO News.

Murray's chief concern, his letter makes plain, is lest such a flagrant demonstration of the anti-labor character of the Greek government "diminish the support among American industrial workers" for the Marshall Plan.

The Feb. 9 CIO News carries Marshall's reply, under the misleading headline, "Greeks to Kill Anti-Strike Law." What Marshall wrote was simply that the Greek prime minister says he will "propose" repeal of the anti-labor laws to the Greek Parliament "as soon as the democratically-elected National Labor Congress, which will meet in

March, has chosen a responsible National Executive for the Greek Labor movement."

This means that when the Greek despotism has murdered enough leaders of the Greek workers and fully reorganized the Greek Confederation of Labor under control of its own stooges, then the government might repeal the death-to-strikers law.

The CIO leaders are now trying to apply a new coat of whitewash to the Greek dictatorship. Clinton Golden, Murray's representative on Truman's "American Mission to Aid Greece," on Feb. 13 told the N. Y. Times correspondent in Athens that the "elections" of Greek government hirelings in Greek unions are "under conditions permitting free balloting, thus rendering remarkable demonstration of democratic procedure."

Actually, when the Stalinist and anti-monarchist labor leaders won the union elections in 1946, the Greek government promptly "invalidated" the elections. Thousands of labor opponents of the regime have since been imprisoned or murdered. A "caretaker" authority, set up by the monarcho-capitalist tyranny, now

rules the "free" Greek unions.

Clinton Golden reached the heights of cynicism in his answer to a protest sent by a CIO Tobacco Workers official to the arrest of Antonios Amatielos, head of the Greek Confederation of Maritime Workers, who faces a death sentence. Golden said: "Those trade unionists and others who desire to cast their lot with the Communists must assume whatever risk goes along with such actions."

The right-wing CIO leaders—and the top AFL leaders are no different—are acting as agents of American imperialism. They are slavishly following the guidance of the U. S. State Department.

They assail government direction of unions in Russia, but are themselves stooges of the Truman regime, attempting to tie the CIO to Wall Street's foreign policy. They are conducting a bureaucratic purge of CIO members and officials who are under the "outside influence" of the Communist Party. But they themselves are a transmission belt for the outside influence of labor's deadliest enemy—Big Business—exercised through its government and State Department.

Washington and Lincoln—Part of the American Revolutionary Tradition

By George Breitman

Nothing embarrasses the American capitalists so much as the truth about their own revolutionary past. That is illustrated in their current eulogies of George Washington and Abraham Lincoln, on the occasion of their birthday celebrations. How the present rulers hate to be reminded that the United States was born and grew great as the result of two revolutions conducted and won by "force and violence"!

The reasons for such behavior are not hard to find. When American Big Business is reaching out for imperialist domination of the world and using all its resources to preserve an outworn and oppressive social system, it is naturally not interested in extolling American revolutions and civil wars for independence and the establishment of new social systems.

But every man should have his due, and those of us who are the most consistent fighters against the tyranny of Big Business willingly give credit to the revolutionary forerunners of the present ruling class for the struggles they led against tyranny in the past. For us, unlike the apostles of Big Business, the truth about the revolutionary past, and such figures as Washington and Lincoln, is not a source of embarrassment but of enlightenment and inspiration, providing many rich lessons still applicable in the current struggles against oppression.

Why They Are Remembered

Washington and Lincoln are remembered with affection by the American people above all because they were leaders of revolutionary struggles. True; they were not the most consistent or most far-sighted leaders of these struggles and there was much that they left undone, but that does not detract from the honor due them for what they were and for what they did achieve.

The fight for independence from Britain and for democracy in the American colonies did not begin when Washington took command of the Continental army. That struggle had been going on for many years before 1776, with the most energetic role being played by the radical elements among the working population. It assumed organized form with the demonstrations by the Sons of Liberty against the oppressive Stamp Act in 1765, and then ebbed and flowed for over ten years before it erupted in civil war to overthrow the British crown.

The revolution was made by an alliance between several classes—the planters of the South, the radical merchants of the North, the farmers, and the artisans and mechanics in the cities. The merchants and planters were sometimes at odds with the democratic and popular elements; they were often shocked by the militant methods of the masses, and they showed a greater readiness to conciliate with the British. But compromise was not in the cards, and in the end the planters and merchants provided most of the top leaders for the revolution.

lators. He himself was the richest planter in the colonies. Like the others of his class he deeply resented British restrictions and taxes which held down the native proprietary interests in favor of their British counterparts.

He became part of a syndicate that laid claim to hundreds of thousands of acres on the western frontier. As a youth he made a trip to this territory to survey it. Later he joined Braddock's troops to smash the French attempt to seize this territory. But the Quebec Act of 1765 took away the colonists' right to claim these lands and reserved them for the British crown. Measures of this kind were the source of Washington's radicalism.

Freedom from British rule therefore had a very definite content for men like Washington. It meant the chance to end British taxation, the opportunity to repudiate debts that were crushing many planters and merchants, it meant free trade and free access to the land. It meant freedom for capitalist relations here to expand without hindrance by the British. To the poor farmers and working people it also meant many of these things—and much more besides: A chance for greater equality, democracy, opportunity. Thus they were able to unite in the struggle against the common foe.

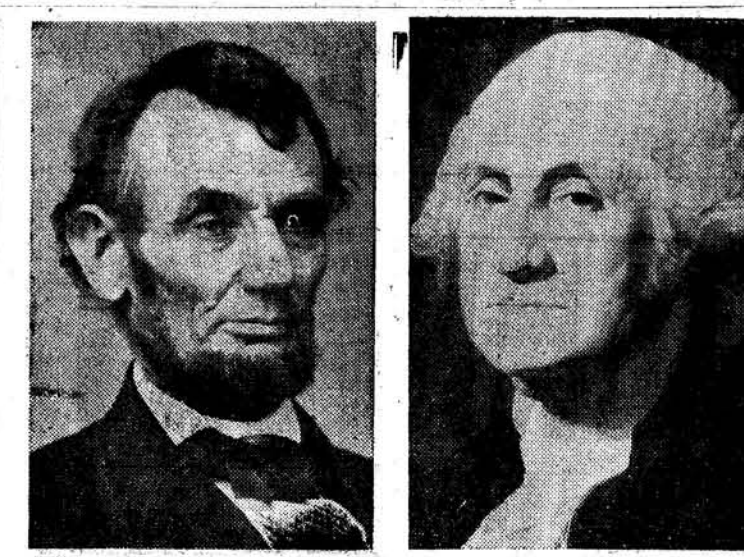
"Seditious And Subversive"

That struggle was labeled seditious, disloyal and subversive by the forces of "law and order"—and so it was from the viewpoint of the British crown and its Tory supporters in America. But that's how American democracy came into power—by defying oppressive edicts and laws and by overthrowing oppressive institutions and governments. American history would have taken a different and less dynamic course if the revolutionists of the 1770's had capitulated to the powers that be in the way that the labor bureaucrats today have capitulated to the Taft-Hartley Slave Labor Act.

Washington was neither the founder, the theoretician nor the political leader of the revolution. His selection as commander-in-chief was due primarily to the desire of the Massachusetts merchants to cement their alliance with the Virginia planters. But he grew steadily in stature as a leader.

Those were the times that tried men's souls; the revolutionary war was conducted under extremely discouraging conditions and lasted for seven long years. But Washington never faltered. He "pledged his life, his fortune and his sacred honor" to the rebel cause, and in the end he led it to victory. That alone was enough to establish his claim to lasting fame and gratitude in the hearts of his countrymen.

But although the first successful revolution laid the foundation for a free and united nation and for the development of the productive forces,



its results were not equally satisfactory to all the classes participating and it did not by any means achieve all the democratic changes sought by the masses. The merchants and planters, taking over the reins of government, made considerable gains, but they retained slavery, limitations on the right to vote and many other anti-democratic restrictions. The manufacturers and slaveholders who came to the fore as the new ruling classes were on the whole content, but the working people found it necessary to continue the struggle for freedom and security.

The next major phase of this struggle was conditioned by the rise of a new obstacle to progress—the growing power and domination of the slaveholders, whose interests clashed more and more with those of the other classes. The slaveholders demanded the extension of the slave system westward as the country expanded, domestic and foreign policies favoring the slave system, further restrictions on the democratic rights of the enemies of slavery, etc. And since they controlled all branches of the federal government, they got much of what they wanted.

Again it was the masses who launched the fight against reaction. The radical farmers and workers, who wanted access to the western lands coveted by the slaveholders, pressed for vigorous action against the slaveholding oligarchy, and where necessary fought them, arms in hand, long before the outbreak of the Civil War. The slaves, who wanted freedom, staged rebellions, ran away, organized underground railways and engaged

in other forms of active and passive resistance. The petty bourgeois abolitionist movement carried on militant propaganda and agitation for emancipation. And they were joined later by the Northern capitalists, who could expand production and intensify the exploitation of the national resources only on the basis of wage labor and the overthrow of the slaveholders' power.

Like Washington, Abraham Lincoln represented the conservative rather than the more radical elements in the revolutionary coalition of his time. Unlike Washington, he was born poor and had to educate himself and make his own way in society. A product of the small-farming system on the frontier seething with democratic ideas, the slave system had no attraction for him. Like many a talented youth in that period, he placed himself at the service of the rising capitalist class, becoming a lawyer for the Illinois Central Railroad.

He entered politics and proved to be a skillful speaker. His humble origins and frontier background enhanced his popularity among the masses; his carefully expressed political views won him a following among the capitalist politicians. He shone most brightly in the task of mediator and arbitrator between the right and left wings of the Republican Party which was formed in 1854 to bring together most of the opponents of the slaveholders.

The Crucial Emancipation Issue

While Lincoln opposed the extension of slavery to the western territories and worked on behalf of the capitalists to take the power out of the hands of the slaveholders' representatives in Washington, his stand on slavery was conciliatory to say the least. For one thing, he favored enforcing the fugitive slave law; for another, he preached the sanctity of the U. S. Constitution which permitted slavery. Even after his election to the presidency and the outbreak of the slaveholders' insurrection, he refused for two years to accede to the demand of the abolitionists that he emancipate the slaves.

His first concern was to maintain (and then regain) the unity of the country and safeguard the newly acquired political power of the capitalist class. He said again and again that he would do this any way he could—by preserving slavery if necessary—or by abolishing it. The long protracted and hard-fought Civil War convinced him that he had no alternative, and from Jan. 1, 1863 he was compelled to take the road of the abolitionists.

That is a tribute to the far-sightedness of the most radical elements in the fight against the slave system. Lincoln's hesitancy and reluctance to take the step which won him the love and admiration of succeeding generations strike an ironic note today. But they do not and cannot take away from him the credit for carrying through this great revolutionary act that dealt the death blow to the slave system, nor for his stubborn prosecution of the war that smashed the counter-revolution.

This second revolution cleared the way for the rapid development of capitalism and the growth of our modern industrial civilization with its potentiality for universal abundance. But again most of the benefits were drained off by the ruling class. Establishing themselves as a dictatorship of Big Business, the capitalists began in the interests of private profit to erect their own roadblocks in the path to freedom and security for those who had done the hardest fighting in the second American revolution—the workers, poor farmers and Negroes. And so the masses today are driven by the very conditions of their existence in the direction of a third American revolution.

Nature of The Coming Revolution

This time the goal is on a higher plane than in the past. It is nothing less than the abolition of capitalism and the establishment of a Workers and Farmers Government preparing the way for a classless society. This will climax and complete the progressive tasks begun in the earlier American revolutions. At the same time it will open a new chapter in world history, for the other nations will not be far behind once the American colossus shows the way.

This coming revolution cannot be prevented by red scares and witch hunts any more than its predecessors were. Indeed, the working people are being steered and mobilized to take their places in this revolution just as the revolutionists were in the past—by the compulsion to fight against oppressive legislation like the Taft-Hartley Act, the proposed peace time conscription program, the drive to institute thought control through "subversive" blacklists, the ruling class's refusal to grant equality to the Negro people, the preparations for war, militarization and fascism.

Of course the next revolution will differ in important respects from those of the past. Previous revolutions, while they made possible certain advances for humanity, also resulted in the establishment of the rule of a new minority. The coming revolution will for the first time bring power to the representatives of the overwhelming majority of the population.

A New Science

Furthermore, while the revolutionists of the past had to improvise and grope their way forward because they were exploring new terrain, the 20th century revolutionists have the advantage of their predecessors' experience. They have also the benefit of a new science—socialism—which provides them with a guide to action in the present and for the future.

The faults and shortcomings of Washington and Lincoln were due in great part to the fact that they represented classes forming a minority of the population, with interests antagonistic to those of the majority. Instead of them, therefore, the great models of the next revolution will be the Sons of Liberty and John Brown and Negro rebels like Douglass, Gabriel, Denmark Vesey, Nat Turner and Harriet Tubman. But Washington and Lincoln too, will have their place in the hall of fame of the future socialist society. Associated with the father of his country and the great emancipator will be precisely those truths that capitalist propagandists try to gloss over today.

That the upholders of outworn and decaying social systems never voluntarily give up power, but must be driven from the scene by mass action. That revolutionary struggle requires no justification other than the needs of oppressed classes and the requirements of establishing a higher form of society. And that capitalism, which came to power by revolution, can, like other outworn systems, only be replaced by the same process.

Labor and 3rd Parties In U. S. After Civil War

By George Lavan

The Civil War produced an unprecedented industrial expansion and the northern capitalist class grew tremendously rich and powerful. The young Republican Party soon came under the complete sway of the industrialists. As this party became converted to the foot of the business community, the workers and small farmers started looking around for a new political movement to represent their interests.

Trade unionism developed strongly after the Civil War. The movement was identified particularly with William H. Sylvius, an iron moulder from Pennsylvania, a man of great ability and integrity. Under his guidance the Moulders National Union became one of the strongest labor organizations in America. After the Civil War, Sylvius took leadership in founding a national federation of trade unions known as the National Labor Union.

LABOR REFORM PARTY

At the 1868 convention of the National Labor Union, his motion for the formation of an independent political party based on the NLU was adopted. The new party was called the Labor Reform Party. It is interesting to note that Sylvius also advocated affiliation with the First International, founded by Marx.

One of the leaflets of the Labor Reform Party reads in part: "The working people of our nation, white and black, male and female, are sinking into a condition of serfdom. Even now a slavery exists in our land worse than ever existed under the old slave system."

The promising Labor Reform Party suffered a great blow in the untimely death of Sylvius in 1869. Sylvius might have been able to guide the young Labor Reform Party through the difficulties it now confronted. As soon as the labor party showed strength and promise, politicians and opportunists from the old parties began to flock into it. They entangled the party in alliances with the old parties and watered down its program. As the labor party began losing strength because of this, the leaders attempted to get support outside the ranks of labor by watering down the program still more. The results were fatal.

At the same time the National

Labor Union lost a series of strikes which sealed the organization's doom.

The financial crisis of 1873 ruined existing unions and bankrupted small farmers wholesale. At the same time it increased trustification. The whole country was in the grip of monopolies—especially the powerful railroads.

THE GREENBACK PARTY

A call was sent out for a convention in Indianapolis in 1874 to form "a new political organization of the people, by the people and for the people, to restrain the aggressions of combined capital upon rights and interests of the masses, to reduce taxation, correct abuses, and to purify all departments of government." The Greenback Party was born.

At first this party had little labor support. It was composed mainly of heavily-mortgaged farmers and monetary reformers who hoped to break the power of the bankers by government issue of "cheap" money or "greenbacks" not based on gold (as during the Civil War). In 1876 the new party nominated for president Peter Cooper, the philanthropist and labor reformer. He received over 85,000 votes.

The next year, 1877, the great railroad strikes were brutally smashed and the angry workers started "streaming" into the party whose name was changed at the next convention to the Greenback Labor Party.

HIGH WATER MARK

In the 1878 congressional elections, the party polled a million votes and elected 15 representatives to Congress. Six were from the East, six from the Middle West and three from the South. This was the high water mark of the Greenback movement. Soon afterwards rapid decline set in.

The downfall of the Greenback movement can be ascribed, in large measure, to its almost exclusive emphasis on money reform. When gold payments on greenbacks were resumed in 1879, without the drop in prices the Greenbackers were predicting, many farmers lost faith in the greenback panacea. As grain and cotton prices went up the rural support of the movement began melting away. Moreover, the labor supporters of the movement found themselves at odds with the right wing. These labor men were coming to think more and more in terms of the class struggle. After

Yellow Gold



The drop in the commodity market didn't help this Chicago housewife who still had to pay more than a dollar a pound for butter. To protect her precious purchase, she asked the police officer to escort her home.

Federated Pictures

the dissolution of the Greenback Party the labor forces gravitated towards the socialist movement.

TOWARDS UNREST

The 1890's were a period of great unrest. Monopoly continued to grow and controlled both federal and state governments. Workers' struggles for shorter hours and better conditions were ruthlessly suppressed. In 1886 the Haymarket frame-up took place. Books on labor and land reform, like Bellamy's Looking Backward and Henry George's Progress and Poverty, were read by millions.

Third party movements were started in many places. Many won local victories. The farmers continued to play a leading role in attempting to build a new party to end the rule of Wall Street's Democratic-Republican combine. The farmers found that despite periods of so-called good times, they never could win the game against the money power. A financial panic, a drop on the grain or cotton market would ruin them or throw them back into debt. The railroad trusts fantastically overcharged the farmers, and discriminated against small producers in favor of the big. In addition the banks gouged them with a mortgage and credit system that kept them continually in debt. The farmer did not deal directly with the buyer and was squeezed by a commission merchants, grain elevator trusts, speculators, and a host of other parasites. What particularly angered the farmer was that if he borrowed money one year that was the equivalent of 100 bushels of wheat, a drop in prices the next year meant that he had to repay the debt by paying 200 bushels. Out of this situation arose the cry for money that would not change in value to the farmers' detriment. It was this condition that gave rise to the money reformers who demanded that silver as well as gold become the basis of currency. The program for the free coinage of silver and the regulation of monopolies became the main slogans of the new and growing Populist movement, as it came to be called.

The Big Business Campaign Against the Co-op Movement

By A. Gilbert

In September, 1943, a closed meeting of big grain, oil, lumber and coal interests was held at the Morrison Hotel in Chicago. They set up an association at this meeting to stop the farmers and workers from engaging in "free enterprise"—through democratic co-operatives organized to give the farmer a better deal in the sale of his products, and to give the city worker a better deal in the purchase of his food, fuel and other necessities.

Not too surprisingly, they first named their organization the "League for Protection of Private Enterprise." They now call it the "National Tax Equality Association." Its leading figure, and until recently its president, is Ben McCabe, a big grain operator in the Minneapolis market. The organization pretends to be composed of small businessmen fighting for survival against the competition of the co-operatives. It makes exaggerated claims to over a million members. Actually, the "small businessmen" are only fronts and stooges for the big operators.

Although their real purpose is to wipe out the small business man, they pose as being friendly to "legitimate co-ops." Just as the bosses are friendly to "legitimate unions"—unions that never ask for higher wages or strike. The NTEA uses propaganda methods that are no different from those of totalitarianism anywhere. The strategy is to tell a "whopping big lie—repeat it until it is worn out—then move on to another. No matter how often the lie is refuted and disproved by the co-ops, the NTEA counts on a certain percentage of the population remaining infected. This tactic is reflected in the succession of names which this outfit has used. Its present name is its third, and coincides with the lie about taxes which they currently are publicizing.

The current drive against the co-operative movement represents an

about-face in the attitude of Big Business, and its government representatives. Up to 1943, it was generally customary to support farm co-ops as long as they did not get too big. It paid off in dollars and cents, as a happy and satisfied farmer could be exploited more profitably than an angry and impoverished farmer. But the co-op movement got out of hand. It spread from farmers to city workers. Credit unions and the government-sponsored farm credit structure started to compete with the loan sharks and banks. Co-ops became Big Business themselves and now compete with other business.

MINOR DIFFERENCE

Co-ops are taxed identically, with two other types of business,—individual ownerships and partnerships. The difference in taxation between co-ops and corporations is that co-ops do not pay income taxes on patronage rebates; but corporations generally do not make patronage rebates. Patronage rebates are merely the savings which are returned to the customer in proportion to his sales or purchases made through the co-op. They represent over-charges which the co-op contracts to return at the end of the year. If corporations would make the same kind of rebates to their customers, instead of keeping all the profit for their non-productive stockholders and chair-warmers, they could avoid paying income taxes on this money just as the co-ops do. The law treats both the co-ops and corporations alike in this matter.

Co-op competition has not eliminated private business, as only a small percentage of all business in this country is done co-operatively. The issue of taxes is not the real issue. It is only a smoke screen to confuse the real issue—total elimination of all co-ops, whether composed of farmers, auto workers or office clerks. This was proved when NTEA officials refused to accept an offer by the co-ops to settle the tax question.

The current drive against the co-operative movement represents an

EXPLAINS THE ABOUT-FACE That explains the causes for the switch in attitude toward the co-ops. As late as Oct. 1946, the ultra-reactionary National Association of Manufacturers characterized co-ops as "legitimate forms of private enterprise." Today they see the necessity for "re-evaluating" their previous position, and have officially adopted the NTEA line. Representative Elmer A. Peterson of Minnesota, who is now busy with tax reductions for the rich, is one of the congressional figures spear-heading the anti-co-operative drive.

As the issue of "tax-dodging" is becoming somewhat threadbare, though by no means worn out, a new issue is being built up. This will be the issue of the "Americanism" of private profits as opposed to the "Communism" of the co-operatives. Red-baiting is the order of the day. It is being used to whittle down both ends of the workers' real wage. The Taft-Hartley Law uses it to destroy labor unions and keep wages low. The National Tax Equality Association uses it to destroy co-ops and keep living costs high.

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THE MILITANT ARMY

New Subscriptions Boost Sub Week Total

"During the recent Militant Sub Week," writes M. Ellis of San Francisco, "I ran across an interesting reaction from a new subscriber. When I had finished my introductory talk, he immediately asked me, 'Is this a communist newspaper?' I replied that it certainly could be entirely different from the official Communist Party. He then explained that he had asked because I would be more ready to subscribe to a newspaper if it was communist than if it was not. That clinched the sub and he immediately sat down to read the sample copy I gave him.

"We can certainly expect an increasing number of similar reactions in the coming period, as more and more workers learn the real meaning of the anti-red drive." Fifty-eight more subs bring the total returns of Militant Sub Week to 619. Connecticut held Sub Week Feb. 1 to 8 and sent in 51 subscriptions. San Francisco rounded up its last three from the one-week campaign to reach a total of 33. Seattle's last four completed the goal of 23 that the Seattle Branch had set for itself, and Marianne reported sev-

eral later subs are on the way. Toledo, New York and other branches will have Militant Sub Weeks later on.

James W. Connelly, 75-year-old sub-plunger of Kewanee, Ill., began his own Sub Week Feb. 7 and turned in 6 new one-year subscriptions. Connelly was over over to our paper by reading about the Minneapolis Case, where 18 Socialist Workers Party and Twin City trade union leaders, went to jail for 12 to 16 months for opposition to World War II. Their frame-up trial took place late in 1941 and after the United States Supreme Court had refused to review the case they went to jail Jan. 1, 1944.

"This happened when I was blind with cataracts in both eyes," writes Connelly, "and could not read for four years, 1940-44. In September, 1944, I was operated on and got some glasses so I can now read." He read through twice "The Case for Socialism" and immediately started passing it around among his friends. "The comrades all proved real Socialists. I was glad to get it." The severe cold and a "Christmas" that robbed them of everything" made Connelly's sub-getting impossible for a few weeks, "but last Saturday night I went uptown and gave them hell."

NAACP Election Hits New Low

The annual elections of the Los Angeles NAACP, held here last Sunday, established a new low in bureaucratic repression of opposition candidates. A "nominating commission," appointed by the outgoing executive board, kept off the ballot many opponents. An entire group of active Negro unionists, both from the CIO and AFL, were thus kept off the ballot.

Election procedure legally requires three members of the NAACP to nominate candidates in writing prior to the meeting. The nominating commission, which is established by the constitution, instead "reviewed" all candidacies, rejecting those who did not meet with their approval—instead of coming in with a list of recommendations. By confronting the several hundred (out of 11,000) members present with a printed ballot and explaining that the meeting cost hundreds of dollars, they stamped the meeting into acceptance of this highly irregular procedure.

A two minute period was allotted the membership for additional nominations (which would then require a write-in vote), but one speaker critical of the administration who attempted to gain the floor was called out of order, with no appeal from the chairman's decision

allowed. Some opposition candidates did make the ballot in spite of the bureaucratic procedure and received good votes. The president, Griffith, although he was re-elected for the 14th straight time, was opposed for the first time by two candidates, one of whom received sizable support.

The set-up of the Los Angeles NAACP is one that lends itself to the maintenance of a conservative leadership. No opportunity for proposals of action from the membership or for criticism. And there is no attempt to get into the neighborhoods where the masses are. Then at the annual meeting a great bewailing over the low membership in proportion to the size of the Negro community of 150,000. Los Angeles, Calif. Al Lynn.

Monopoly Inevitable Under Capitalism

Your "Reader, Portland, Ore." who thinks that the rich rule, and so on; he should be given a true statement of facts. He says, "I advocate capitalism, but not as practiced in America; but with the monopoly element destroyed." The fact is, capitalist economy inevitably produces monopolies. They are the flower that tops the dunghill. He says, "If the nationalization of industry should occur, our heri-

tage of freedom would go," and that he was born a free man able to enter what business he chooses and aims to keep his freedom. The facts are; that without industry and agriculture being organized and controlled on a world (not merely a national) scale, general prosperity is impossible; with world control, prosperity is certain; and that his "freedom" is merely freedom to exploit his neighbors, to profit from their necessities, to suck their blood. Apart from that, is America's heritage of slums, depressions, and millionaire exploiters worth keeping? I say, No!

Thirdly, he objects to your attacks on the church: Now the church, whatever its professions, is the bulwark of reaction, and preaches false doctrines of humility, patience, and tolerance. The whole fabric of the Christian religion is full of these falsehoods; humility and poverty in this life, rewarded by prosperity in the afterlife; patience with, and tolerance of, social evils, reserving all their anger for the anti-Christian.

Let him read Marx and Engels, learn what dialectical materialism really is; let him read Jung, Freud and Frazer and recognize religion and mythology for what they are—projections of man's subconscious mind, relics of prehistory. Then might he realize that churches and creeds are worthless. Reader, England.

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Monday, February 23, 1948



TROTSKY



LENIN

"Bolshevism brought an invaluable contribution to Marxism in its analysis of the imperialist epoch as an epoch of wars and revolutions; of bourgeois democracy in the era of decaying capitalism; of the correlation between the general strike and the insurrection; of the role of party, soviets and trade unions in the period of proletarian revolution; in its theory of the soviet state, of the economy of transition, of fascism and Bonapartism in the epoch of capitalist decline; finally in its analysis of the degeneration of the Bolshevik party itself and of the soviet state."

—Leon Trotsky, Stalinism and Bolshevism, 1937.

For A National PAC Convention!

Last week The Militant pointed out editorially that 33 top bureaucrats of the CIO Executive Board are trying to dictate to the six million CIO members what their political policy is to be in 1948. The CIO members have never been asked, and have never had the chance to say who they want to support for President next November, and whether the CIO should break with the two corrupt old parties and help launch a new party.

Now we have Jack Kroll, national director of PAC, the CIO's political arm, saying that anybody in PAC who doesn't follow the Murray machine's pro-Truman policy or who supports Wallace, had better turn in his resignation.

Kroll said in Cleveland on Feb. 10 that "I made it clear in a letter to all PAC representatives that our group was bound to follow the rejection of Wallace's candidacy by the CIO Executive Board and suggested that those who desired to support the third party had best divorce themselves from the PAC."

By what right does Kroll presume to say what political policy the PAC members are to follow? Kroll isn't even an elected official of PAC. He was APPOINTED by Murray, after the death of Sidney Hillman. If anything, Kroll's pronouncement is even more brazen, arrogant and presumptuous than the CIO Executive Board's. Kroll can speak for no one but himself. Certainly no PAC member ever had a chance to vote on the

policy he expounds or, for that matter, to vote for Kroll as PAC director.

We hold no brief for the Stalinists, who are using the most undemocratic methods in lining up unions under their control behind Wallace. Up until recently they were loyal henchmen of Murray and helped him keep the CIO members politically-gagged and tied to Wall Street's two-party system. Now they are committing certain CIO unions to Wallace's campaign without a by-your-leave to the membership.

The fact remains, that so far as the PAC membership is concerned, it has not voted for any specific political policy. And it's about time that the CIO-PAC members have the chance to say something about PAC policy. Before Kroll goes shooting off his mouth any more about what PAC policy is or isn't, and making threats against anyone who doesn't go along with the two-party system, let's hear what the PAC members think about political action in 1948.

Do the PAC members want Truman or Wallace or as The Militant advocates—a party of their own, a Labor Party running its own independent candidate? THAT CAN BE DETERMINED ONLY BY A NATIONAL PAC CONVENTION WITH RANK AND FILE REPRESENTATION FROM ALL THE LOCAL BODIES. Until such a convention is held and the question of PAC policy is democratically decided by the membership, nobody—Murray or Kroll or anyone else—has the right to speak of any political policy in the name of PAC.

The Kremlin's Counter-Blast

The Kremlin has replied in kind to the U. S. State Department's publication of captured Nazi documents revealing the inside details of the Stalin-Hitler Pact, including the secret deal to jointly carve up Eastern Europe.

Now the Soviet Information Bureau charges that American economy helped build up Hitler's war industry; that Britain and France appeased Hitler, agreed to his seizure of Czechoslovakia and so made war inevitable; that the Allied imperialists tried to turn Hitler against Russia before the Stalin-Hitler Pact; and that the British imperialists tried to negotiate a treacherous separate peace with Hitler behind the back of their Russian ally. To back its charges, the Kremlin has quoted from certain documents and promises to publish them.

We have no reason to doubt the Kremlin's charges against its wartime allies, just as we cannot deny the authenticity of the charges made by Washington. In both cases, we are merely receiving confirmation of historic facts whose general outline has long been known. Now that the thieves have fallen out, more of the truth is coming out.

This "war of documents" serves a useful purpose not intended by the Kremlin or the U. S. State Department. It sheds new light on the cynical lies they each told on behalf

of the other when they were in their wartime embrace.

For years, the U. S. government assiduously spread the propaganda that Stalin and Molotov made their alliance with Hitler merely to gain time for the "defense of democracy." Who does not remember the lying, State Department-inspired film, "Mission to Moscow"? In return, the Kremlin bureaucrats obligingly lauded the "anti-fascist, peace-loving democracies" of England, France and the United States.

Now they besmirch each other for the same purpose as they once praised each other—to whitewash their own crimes and gain credence for the lies they tell about themselves today and new ones they will tell tomorrow. Consider the wretched and stupid denial of the Stalinist charges issued by the British Foreign Office. Attlee, Cripps, Morrison, Bevin are trying to repudiate the very charges they themselves made unceasingly against the Chamberlain government of appeasing Hitler and inciting him to attack the Soviet Union.

By all means, let us have the documents—ALL the documents. And not after the war, betrayals, crimes and mass murders. Let us have them now—so that the peoples of the whole world can see how the imperialist connivers and double-dealers are preparing a new war.

Seizures of Factories and Land Herald New Explosions in Italy

By Marcel Rogier

Since November Italy has been experiencing extraordinary times. The whole country seems suddenly seized with a collective fever. Observers compare the rising tension here with the cooler temperature in France on the other side of the Alps, and they explain this difference by the "southern temperament." The leading sections of the Italian Communist party attribute the difference between the French and Italian situations to the existence of the unity pact which still ties the CP with the SP in Italy.

But in reality it is something much more complex. One need only attend a workers' meeting, see a demonstration, or participate in a strike meeting, to become conscious of the essential difference in the atmosphere prevailing in the two countries.

The French working class has been dominated by the CP since the period before the "liberation." It has permitted this bureaucratic leadership to impose a systematic policy of passivity and capitulation which lasted until 1947. On a few occasions, during the first half of 1947, it broke away from that grip. But the Stalinists, resting on their trusted worker cadres, which have been rooted in the working class for two decades, succeeded in regaining control of the mass movement.

OPPOSITION TENDENCIES

It is quite different in Italy. The Italian working class, once freed from the fascist dictatorship, has shown an admirable fighting spirit ever since 1943. Although the masses followed the CP in large numbers, this party never exercised over them the absolute control which it did in France. The Stalinist Party itself, suddenly springing up after two decades of illegality, never possessed a fanatically "obedient" apparatus. The rightist line which Togliatti followed for three years continually clashed with opposition tendencies of the rank and file. In Naples ("Communist and Socialist Movement of the Left," 1944-45), in Rome ("Communist Movement of Italy"), in Milan ("International Communist Party," with a Bordighist leaning). One opposition movement after the other appeared, often numbering thousands of members, and playing a leading role in events, as did the "Communist Movement of Italy." The spontaneous pressure of the masses has been rising slowly but surely since 1945.

At present, the CP is executing a left turn like its French sister party, and attempting to regain more direct control over the masses. Nevertheless the masses have been developing and maturing for three years. The working class is now more experienced, has had more opportunities for reviving its old revolutionary tradition, more possibilities for developing its sense of initiative and its critical spirit. All its admirable qualities are expressing themselves today in action. The Italian workers are fighting today in the vanguard of the European working class.

OCCUPATION OF FACTORIES

Several weeks ago the conservative newspapers in France, Switzerland and England were singing the praises of the "liberal" Italian finance minister, Signor Einaudi. By imposing rigorous restrictions on the allotment of credit to industry—no matter what financial straits they were in—and at the same time importing food products in great quantities, Einaudi hoped to check inflation and bring about a substantial drop in the cost of living.

He succeeded in causing a rather sudden drop in wholesale prices of

Another Mine Tragedy



Gathered about the blanket-shrouded body of one of the workers killed in a mine explosion at Greenwood, Ark., grim-faced relatives and friends seek to identify the victim. The blast ripped through the gas-filled main shaft of the Sunshine coal mine, killing eight miners. Federated Pictures

certain black market products (olive oil, macaroni, etc.). But scarcely two months after these successes, the disastrous effects of this policy made themselves felt.

While the workers' cost of living scarcely dropped at all, industry suddenly began to suffocate. Factories closed down as the capitalists refused to operate at a loss. Great trusts were suddenly unable to pay their workers. Coming at a moment when Italy was undergoing a grave export crisis, the inflationary crisis threatened to bring about a huge increase in unemployment.

But the working class refused to submit any longer to the consequences of decaying capitalism. The workers of a metallurgical plant in Milan set the example by occupying the factory in the latter part of November, after three days of futile negotiations with the owners who wanted to shut down. While the leaders of the Italian CGT had been engaged for weeks in interminable arguments over the question of the owners' demand for ending the restrictions on dismissals, the workers were following the example of the Milanese workers in one city after another.

WORKERS' CONTROL

The Pilotecnica Salmoiraghi was occupied just recently by 2,500 workers. Then the same thing happened at Sesto Calende, a large aviation plant, SIAI. Not only have the workers forbidden the owners and management to enter the buildings, but they have even resumed production on their own initiative. Here, as at Perugia, Cremona and other cities where factories have been occupied, the slogan of workers' control of hiring, firing and production heads the workers' demands. The men in the city of Brescia went further. While a great demonstration of workers who had been laid off was taking place throughout the city, a mass of workers who had not received their wages for two weeks joined the procession. The police tried to disperse the demonstration with tear bombs. The workers immediately tossed their back. Sirens started blowing and a general strike paralyzed the city. Barriering themselves behind overturned trolley cars, the workers succeeded in occupying the entire center of the city under the direction of their "committee of agitation." Life quickly became normal.

Flying squadrons were organized to direct traffic.

Only after a Stalinist deputy intervened and promises of payment were made by another deputy, did the strike end after a tremendous mass meeting. While their leaders find themselves overwhelmed by the magnitude of events, this working class is truly ready for the struggle for power.

SOLDIERS AND PEASANTS

Nothing is so indicative of a ripening revolutionary situation as a powerful movement involving progressively all the layers of the population. These last few weeks have successively witnessed powerful movements of soldiers and peasants, as well as beginnings of unrest among the women and the youth, clearly showing how discontent has penetrated even to the layers which are traditionally the most inactive.

The lengthening of the period of military service burst like a bombshell among the recruits of the class of '45. The majority of these men have already been under arms for more than a year. Protests broke out spontaneously. At Milan almost the entire garrison suddenly left the barracks, surrounded the prefecture and demanded their immediate release. It was not by accident that the government did not dare to send troops against the demonstrators!

As for the peasants' movement, it is concentrated, after the overwhelming victory of the general strike of the agricultural workers last September, in the regions of Venice, Apulia and Emilia. Committees of agricultural workers were set up in many places. In the province of Modena, these committees seized important sections of land, expelled the owners and operated it collectively.

These struggles which have flared up in every part of the country are harbingers of new explosions to come.

Detroit Presents Sat. Open Forums

Beginning this coming Saturday, Feb. 28, the Detroit Branch of the Socialist Workers Party will present an open forum each Saturday afternoon at 2:30. The discussions will be centered around the topic "Highlights of the American Labor Movement." The Detroit Branch address is 6108 Linwood Ave., telephone Tyler 7-6267.

Events on the International Scene

By Paul G. Stevens

CAMPAIGN AGAINST TROTSKYISM IN EASTERN GERMANY

The weekly Weltwoche of Zurich, Switzerland reports on Jan. 23 that one of the main topics dealt with at the Institute of the Soviet Military Administration located in Koenigs-wustrehouse near Berlin is—Trotskyism. Hundreds of Stalinist functionaries, trade union officials and returned prisoners of war from Russia are trained at this institute for high office in Soviet-occupied Eastern Germany. "Against America and Trotsky," an article signed Thomas Vandenbergh says, "a much fiercer struggle is waged than against the remnants of Fascism or militarism." Although Trotskyism has been declared "dead" for years by the

AWAKENING LABOR MOVEMENT IN INDIA

Evidence that an independent labor movement is arising to challenge the capitalist government of newly created independent India fills the pages of New Spark, English language paper of the Bolshevik-Leninist Party of India (BLPI) section of the Fourth International. In its last issue to be received here, the paper reviews the months since "freedom" was achieved in August. It is a record of extraordinarily violent struggle between the workers and their capitalist masters. Here are some of the highlights:

August: Miners' strike in Loybad, 25 killed, 125 injured. Police fire on crowd at Melapalayam (Madras), 3 killed, 7 injured. Police fire on procession of workers in Shahabad, 12 injured. Constituent Assembly confers powers of "preventive arrest" on government.

September: Arrests of trade unionists at Assam; of dock-workers' leaders (after a strike) in Bombay, followed by new strike for their release; Bombay police break up textile workers' conference, arrest and detain strike committee.

October: Police fire on striking Shri Durga Cotton Mill workers in Bengal, several injured, 100 arrested; mass protests bring release of political and class war prisoners by Bombay High Court on grounds of illegal detention.

November: Madras government creates Special Armed Units to assist police in maintaining "law and order"; Bombay government uses troops to break dock strike; West Bengal government uses tear gas to disperse students' demonstration; arrest and detention of Saunyen-dranath Tagore and 29 other members of the Revolutionary Communist Party in Bombay, West Bengal and Assam; Communist (Stalinist)

organized huge demonstrations on three successive days before the West Bengal Assembly in Calcutta to obtain the revocation of a particularly vicious "Special Powers Ordinance." The Socialist Party, in the past affiliated to the Indian National Congress, had called a one-day token strike against the arbitration machinery set up by the Congress leaders in the Bombay government.

Comrade Ajit Roy, recently returned from a long stay in England, continued his successful tour with a mass meeting attended by 15,000 in Madras, at which a Stalinist attempt to break up the meeting failed miserably with the workers driving off the CP hooligans.

STRIKE WAVE HITS "PROSPEROUS" BELGIUM

Last week a strike wave hit "prosperous" little Belgium. Several hundred thousand miners, textile workers, postmen and gas and electrical workers walked out successively demanding a cost-of-living bonus and wage increases. The government threatened to call out troops and ordered a "civil mobilization" or labor draft for strikers.

Belgium has been played up as the pet of the "free enterprise" system in Europe by Wall Street spokesmen. It was supposed to be an oasis of prosperity on the continent. Its capitalists have been especially favored with American loans since the end of the war. The Belgian strike wave is thus a preview of Europe after the Marshall Plan.

Activities of 'Militant' Readers and the Socialist Workers Party

- AKRON—4 So. Howard St., 2nd fl. Mon. through Fri., 7 to 9 p. m.; Branch meeting Sun. 8 p. m.; Socialist Youth Club meeting Sun. 8 p. m.
BOSTON—30 Stuart St., Sat., 1-5 p. m., Tues., 7:30-9:30 p. m.
BUFFALO—Militant Forum, 629 Main St., 2nd fl., Phone Madison 3960. Every afternoon except Sun.
CHICAGO—77 W. Adams (corner Halsted), Phone DEArborn 4767. Daily, Mon. 11 a.m.-5 p. m. Library, bookstore, 8:30-9 p. m.
CLEVELAND—Militant Forum, Sun., 8:30-9 p. m., Peck's Hall, 1446 E. 82nd St. (off Wade Park Ave.).
DETROIT—6108 Linwood Ave. Phone TY 7-6267, Mon. through Sat., 12-5 p. m.
FLINT—215 E. Ninth St. Daily 7-9 p. m. Open house, Sat. eve. Forum, Sun. eve.
LOS ANGELES—Militant Publ. Assn., 3121 W. Pico Blvd., Phone Richmond 4644. Daily, 12-5 p. m.
SAN PEDRO—Militant, 1008 S. Pacific Room 214.
WASTE—Militant, 1720 E. 97th St.
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Key Role of Trotskyists in the Indo-Chinese Uprising

By Lucien

The heads of the capitalist and feudal parties in Indo-China—Caodaists, Hoahaists and Nationalists—were terror-stricken by the revolutionary wave that erupted throughout the country after the Japanese defeat was announced on Aug. 16, 1945. Three days later, in an effort to stave off the revolution, these political nonentities evoked their general assembly and decided to form a "united national front." The following day this capitalist-feudal bloc issued a joint manifesto inviting the people to demonstrate, under their leadership, in celebration of national independence on Aug. 21.

What is the nature of these three parties? The Cao-Dai Party is a semi-religious association founded on an amalgam of mystical formulas, whose main aim was to help the French government massacre the revolutionary peasants who followed the communist movement in Cochinchina during 1939-41. When French imperialism capitulated to Japanese militarism in 1941, the Cao-Dai Party made an about-face and as-

sumed the role of political and police agent of the Japanese general staff. The situation within this party changed after the Japanese concluded the Mar. 9, 1945 coup that unseated the French colonial government. While its leaders took an oath of loyalty to the Japanese emperor, its followers revolted.

The Hoa-Hao Party, another religious sect, containing over a million poor and middle class peasants, played an equally important role in support of the Japanese army. Hoahaism was distinguished from Cao-daiism in that it managed to secure an alliance between the urban workers and the agricultural proletariat, but on condition that the class struggle be completely rejected. Both these parties are instruments in the service of foreign imperialism and are savagely opposed to all social revolution.

The National Independence Party, avowed agent of the native capitalists, composed mainly of middle class intellectuals (teachers, engineers, journalists, lawyers and former functionaries of the French government), is completely barren of any theoretical and political principles. It is a group of rotten careerists and professional opportunists.

From 1939 to 1944 no revolutionary voice could be heard among the masses. Hundreds of militants from the two parties who fought under the banner of the Fourth International (the LaLutte group and the International Communist League) were deported, exiled, imprisoned and a good many disappeared in the prisons and concentration camps.

But toward the end of 1944, the Fourth International movement renewed its activity. The ICL, reconstituted at Saigon in August 1944, at the beginning contained only about a score of members, five of whom were founding members of the Trotskyist movement with at least 12 years experience in revolutionary struggle. To these were added a number of experienced comrades sent by the section in the northern region (Bao-Vo).

Immediately after the Japanese coup of Mar. 9, 1945, the ICL issued a manifesto calling on the revolutionary masses of Saigon to prepare themselves for a fast-approaching revolution.

"The future defeat of Japanese imperialism will launch the Indo-Chinese people on the road to national liberation," stated the manifesto.

"Workers and peasants! Assemble your ranks under the banner of the party of the Fourth International!"

GIGANTIC DEMONSTRATION

On Aug. 21, at six in the morning, over 300,000 people of both sexes, assembled in columns on the Boulevard Norodom in Saigon. Streamers and placards flew over

this human ocean. The Cao-daiist and Hoahaist peasants formed a column of 100,000 with the monarchist flag at its head.

The ICL boldly unfurled the enormous banner of the Fourth International. The flag, proudly borne by an old Trotskyist worker, drew the attention of hundreds of thousands.

Revolutionary slogans were inscribed in giant letters on a series of placards and streamers which floated over our heads: "Down with imperialism! Long live the world revolution! Long live the Workers and Peasants Front! People's Committees everywhere! For the People's Assembly! Arm the People! Land to the peasants! Nationalize the factories under workers' control! For a Workers and Peasants Government!"

Thousands of workers, dispersed and demoralized during the war years, had never lost the memory of the revolutionary movement. From the first moment that the Fourth Internationalist banner and slogans appeared, they recovered their political consciousness, felt their revolutionary faith revived. Men embraced joyously in the

middle of the crowd, they argued for the right to carry this or that placard. Workers came in waves, greeting each other with clenched fist, all declaring themselves ready to fight with their vanguard party.

The capitalists were frightened by the spirit of the revolutionary masses; but not knowing what to do, they had to leave the field free to Trotskyist activity. The masses marched from one street to another while ICL members tirelessly expounded their program in open-air speeches.

Even the peasants grouped separately under the supervision of reactionary leaders lent an attentive ear to our speeches on the national and peasant questions. No longer respecting the political discipline of their parties, they vehemently applauded every time the banner of the Fourth International passed by. (This is the second part of an eye-witness account on the outbreak of the revolution in Indo-China. The third will be printed in next week's Militant.)

Political Savvy—Who's Got It?

By John F. Petrone

Credit for the sturviest hack job of the week goes to Allan L. Swim, editor of the CIO News, for an article on Henry Wallace in that paper's Feb. 16 issue, entitled "Hank May Have Meant Well But—He Caused Trouble."

Swim is one of those bureaucrats who can hardly conceal their low opinion of the union members' intelligence. Discussing Wallace's record in three high government jobs, he says:

"In none of these posts did he distinguish himself as a champion of the things for which labor was fighting. . . he didn't roll up his sleeves and get into the fray when the chips were down and the going was tough. CIO officials who called on him for aid learned to regard him as a 'preaching liberal'—not as a 'practicing liberal.'"

Now, that happens to be the truth. But it will certainly come as news to those CIO members whose estimate of Wallace was formed on the basis of what they read about him in the CIO News in the past, and of what they were told in a thousand speeches by Philip Murray and all the little Murrys.

Do Swim and Murray think that the members of the CIO have forgotten what happened at the Democratic Party convention in 1944, when Murray, Hillman and the other PAC leaders almost busted a girl pleading for the renomination of that "preaching liberal"—Henry Wallace? Do they think the workers are going to follow the CIO leadership's political counsel today when they see what shameless lies they were told yesterday?

Continuing his attack on Wallace, Swim then makes another very damaging admission:

"It should have been obvious to anybody with political savvy that a successful third party would have to stem from the labor movement. There simply is no other group in the country large enough to smash the two-party tradition."

That is a completely valid criticism of Wallace and the Stalinists who, instead of trying to build a party based on the unions, are trying to build one that may have the support of union members but will remain under their own control. But doesn't this criticism apply to the labor leaders too?

For years they have been telling the workers that the unions are "too weak" to form their own Labor Party. Now, just in passing, they blandly admit that labor is "large enough" to smash the two-party swindle. Thanks to the labor leaders, it wasn't done and the two-party system gave birth to such children as the Taft-Hartley Act.

And today, when that system is hatching even worse anti-labor monsters, these labor bureaucrats, instead of hiding their heads in shame, have the gall to chatter about "political savvy" and to give lectures about not splitting the so-called "progressive" vote (which, in line with their directives, wasn't split in 1946 and produced the most reactionary Congress in American history).

If a policy cowardly and stupid as that can be palmed off as political savvy, then I'll take Mortimer Snerd in preference to 95% of the self-styled labor statesmen any day in the week. Mortimer may not be very bright, but at least his backbone isn't made of jelly and his tongue is used for other purposes than licking the boots of his enemies.

The Negro Struggle

A Glorious Page of U.S. History

By F. Forrest

Many pages of the Negro's history in America still remain unwritten. Not only has the capitalist historian kept the Negro's contribution to the development of America out of the school textbooks, but even "adult" books specifically devoted to the Negro problem, including the 1,483 pages of the pretentious *An American Dilemma*, have seen fit not to do serious research to fill those blank pages. The most glaring gap is that of the Negro's role in the Populist movement in the 1880's and 90's, and it is to that period that we wish to turn our readers' attention.

This is a particularly glorious page which explodes many of the stereotyped conceptions of the Negro. It is alleged, for instance, that it is impossible to organize the Negro into a cohesive movement, yet the Colored Farmers Alliance in that period numbered no less than one and one-quarter million members. Another myth blown to bits is that the Negro has followed the Republican Party from the days after the Civil War until 1932 when he changed to the "New Deal" Democratic Party. Actually, the Colored Farmers Alliance was a part of the Populist movement. Not only that, it was its left arm and in the forefront of the struggle for a third anti-capitalist, anti-landlord party, which then took the shape of the Peoples Party.

This party was later swallowed by capitalism, becoming a part of the Democratic Party, but in its time it was a revolutionary movement that united with the labor forces—the Knights of Labor was part of this movement—and threatened the power of the capitalists. It was strong enough then to elect governors and

congressmen. The infamous union of Northern capital with the Southern slavocracy dates precisely from this threat to capitalist rule. To conquer the threat of Negro and white unity, the plantocracy united with the railroad interests and raised race discrimination to a principle. The Southern Bourbons to this day live on this.

There are some "liberals" who wish us to think that in the South, in any case, it is impossible to unite white and black. That myth too is branded as a lie by this page of American history. For the Populist movement that united black and white swept the prejudice-ridden South immediately after the notorious doctrine of "white supremacy" had just won its first counter-revolutionary battle against Reconstruction. Yet the economic plight of the cotton picker, share cropper and tenant farmer had welded them together as one, irrespective of color, against both the Southern oligarchy and Northern capital.

In Tom Watson, Agrarian Rebel, C. Van Woodward reports the following:

"For the first time in his political history, the Negro was not regarded as an incompetent ward of white supremacy, nor as a ward of military intervention, but as an integral part of Southern society, with a place in its economy. . . Never before or since have the two races come so close together as they did during the Populist struggles."

What the CIO has since done in the economic field, an independent Labor Party could accomplish in the political field. In the forging of that instrument the Negro will play a part that will bring his role in the Populist movement of the 90's to twentieth century dimensions.

Notes from the News

FRIENDSHIP CARAVAN—A caravan of 700 cars and trucks converged on Bakersfield, Calif., last week with food and clothing for the 1,100 striking members of the AFL National Farm Labor Union who are continuing their 4-month strike against the Di Giorgi Farms Corporation. H. L. Mitchell, president of the Farm Union, said: "The 'Friendship Caravan' will be the most significant demonstration of the unity of organized industrial workers with agricultural labor ever to occur in the United States."

REACTIONARY MUSIC—The Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party charged Russia's three leading musicians, Shostakovich, Khachaturian and Prokofiev, with composing musical works that "smell strongly of the spirit of modern bourgeois music."

EAST-GERMAN GOVERNMENT—In reply to the action of Britain and the U. S. in western Germany, the Russian overlords set up their own ersatz German government in the Eastern Zone.

TRUE TO FORM—The U. S. Supreme Court, still upholding Jim Crow in education, last week for the second time rejected Ada Sipuel Fisher's request for admission to the lily-white Oklahoma Law School.

The Effects of the Commodity Price Slump

By John G. Wright

The February price break in the commodity markets signalled, in our opinion, the incipient crisis of American agriculture. It is still far too early to gauge the rate at which this crisis will unfold. . . But the prospect for the next few months is that, barring crop failures, agriculture will be compelled to absorb sharp cuts in its price structure.

Can such an "adjustment" in agricultural prices take place without affecting the existing price structure as a whole?

The present precarious balance of American industry is much more dependent upon agriculture than was ever the case in the past. Thus during the boom of the Twenties the equilibrium between industry and agriculture—worked out over a long number of years—rested on a ratio of 1 to 16. In other words, out of every 17 dollars of national income, the farmer received one dollar. The agricultural boom of recent years has sharply increased the farmer's share of the national income. According to Federal Reserve Board figures, he received in 1946 one dollar out of every ten. And last year, even more.

A NEW BALANCE

Industry has been operating on the basis of this new proportion, and any sudden shift immediately poses the problem of establishing a new balance. This cannot be done painlessly or in a brief space of time. Because farmers now dispose of a bigger share of the national income, every blow to farm income becomes more quickly translated into blows to other sectors of the home market, in the first instance, retail trade.

To illustrate. Gross farm income last year is estimated at 30 billion dollars. A reduction of 10% in crop prices would lop off at once several

hundred million dollars. A 20% slash would amount to more than the first year's projected "European Aid" program. Slashes of one-third and more would approximate last year's total foreign trade.

Thus, sizable declines in farm income imply not only profound repercussions in other sectors but drastic readjustments for industry and for the domestic market as a whole.

Weeks before the commodity price break, soft spots began to show up in retail trade reports. This "spottiness" has recently become more marked, especially in rural areas.

PHONY ARGUMENTS

The argument that retail trade should profit from lower farm prices is obviously phony. Retail food prices, which have scarcely dropped at all, will tend to lag far behind any present or future declines in the commodity markets. As for the prices of manufactured goods, they never fall as fast or as much as do farm prices.

The argument that farmers will be "well off" anyway, even with much lower prices for their crops also has little bearing here. Traditionally a free spender when his income is on the up-grade, the farmer is no less habituated to "do without" when the specter of lean days stares him in the face.

That is why bankers and industrialists are now keeping one eye cocked on weather reports while the other eye is glued on retail trade reports, especially from rural areas.

In the face of declining retail trade such an argument as the heavy backlog of orders in heavy industry is of little weight. During all booms, especially inflationary booms, imposing backlogs accumulate. But they tend to dissipate rather suddenly, as happened in 1929.

Perhaps the situation might not be so precarious if agriculture alone was involved. The whole

trouble is that industry, despite its outward signs of strength, has been fed too long by inflationary fires. This appears most strikingly if we view the economy from the standpoint of the physical volume of production during the last two years. Last year was supposed to be a peak year. But the truth is that over-all production last year was not much bigger than in the previous year, 1946.

Where we do find a whopping increase is in the dollar figures, in particular profits. This is admitted by such conservative bankers as the Guarantee Trust Company, who say in their Jan. 28 monthly letter:

"The year as a whole, however, witnessed no great increase in the physical volume of output. The rather striking gains that were reported in gross national products, income, expenditures and other dollar indices were due for the most part to the advances in prices."

In other words, virtually the same amount of goods which the country absorbed in 1946 on the basis of a gross national output of 204 billion dollars was dumped on the home market last year with a mark up to 235 billion dollars. The people were forced to buy the same goods as in 1946 while paying out 31 billion dollars more. This orgy of inflation placed an unbearable strain on the purchasing power of the masses.

LARGE SURPLUS

The resulting grave discrepancy between mass consumption and the inflated "gross national output" has been, of course, carried over into this year. The home market must absorb in 1947 at least as much as it did in 1946, if the economy is to continue operating at the same levels as before.

But the greater the reduction in farm income, all the lower will be the farmers' purchasing power. This will leave large quantities of

ALP Candidate Sweeps Election For Congress

(Continued from Page 1) depends largely on what he decides to do about this.

Drew Pearson reported on Feb. 13: "Henry Wallace has told friends that he would yank his third party out of the running if the Democrats nominate Eisenhower, Douglas, Judge Thurman Arnold or any other Roosevelt Democrat."

Whatever happens in this respect—and the undemocratic nature of the Wallace movement deprives its members of the right to make the final decision—the ALP landslide in the Bronx has given a black eye not only to the two old parties but also to the Trumanite union bureaucrats who have been vying with each other in denunciations of Wallace.

In New York State they went so far as to split the ALP over this issue. But their attempts to prop up the crumbling two-party system appear to be backfiring on them, rather than on Wallace. If the Bronx election is any indication, the bureaucrats' repudiation of Wallace may be transformed into a political repudiation of them by the union members.

DANGER TO UNIONS

The union leaders are treading on thin ice and may very well be sucked down into the icy waters of defeat along with Truman. That would be poetic justice, but unfortunately it also represents a terrible danger for the union movement as a whole.

That is why the union members must not permit their leaders to carry through the criminal policy of spending millions of the workers' hard-earned dollars in campaigning for Truman. That is why they must do everything in their power to force the holding of a national United Labor Conference, representing AFL, CIO, Railroad and Independent unions, to work out a new political policy for the working class and to launch an independent Labor Party.

The Bronx elections results are proof that the situation is ripe for a Labor Party. If a party supported by only a part of the unions can beat the two old parties, no limits at all can be placed on the prospects of a national Labor Party based on the whole union movement!

Newark Forum Will Discuss Wallace Role

Arthur Burch will speak on "Wallace and the Third Party" at a forum and social to be held by the Newark Socialist Workers Party at its hall, 423 Springfield Ave., Friday evening, Feb. 27, 8:30 P. M. Dancing and refreshments will follow the discussion.

unsold goods overhanging the market. As for the workers, their wages have lagged so far behind steeply rising prices that they are no longer able to buy what they did last year.

But the workers and farmers constitute the overwhelming majority of the population. If they are unable to buy, where then is an outlet to be found in a peacetime economy for the huge surplus of high priced goods?

Storing more and more unsold goods in warehouses, as was done last year, is obviously risky because inventories already amount to more than 42 billion dollars.

The sole visible outlet is foreign trade, which has been steadily declining since its peak last May.

MUST SAFEGUARD PROFITS

There is a practical solution. It is: to raise the living standards of both the workers and the farmers.

There then would be no limits to how much industry and agriculture can produce, or how much the home market can absorb. But this solution is excluded for a capitalist government, whose primary concern is to safeguard the profits of the monopolies.

Whatever immediate measures Washington applies—and from all indications the biggest hopes right now are being pinned on the 5 billion dollar program projected under the Marshall Plan—they are powerless to long sustain an agriculture whose production has risen one and a half times since prewar and an industry whose productive capacity is twice as big as it ever was.

The Marshall Plan and similar measures can serve to temporarily cushion the shocks to the country's economy. They cannot avert the downward plunge first of the retail trade and next of industry, which is approaching ever closer.

THE MILITANT

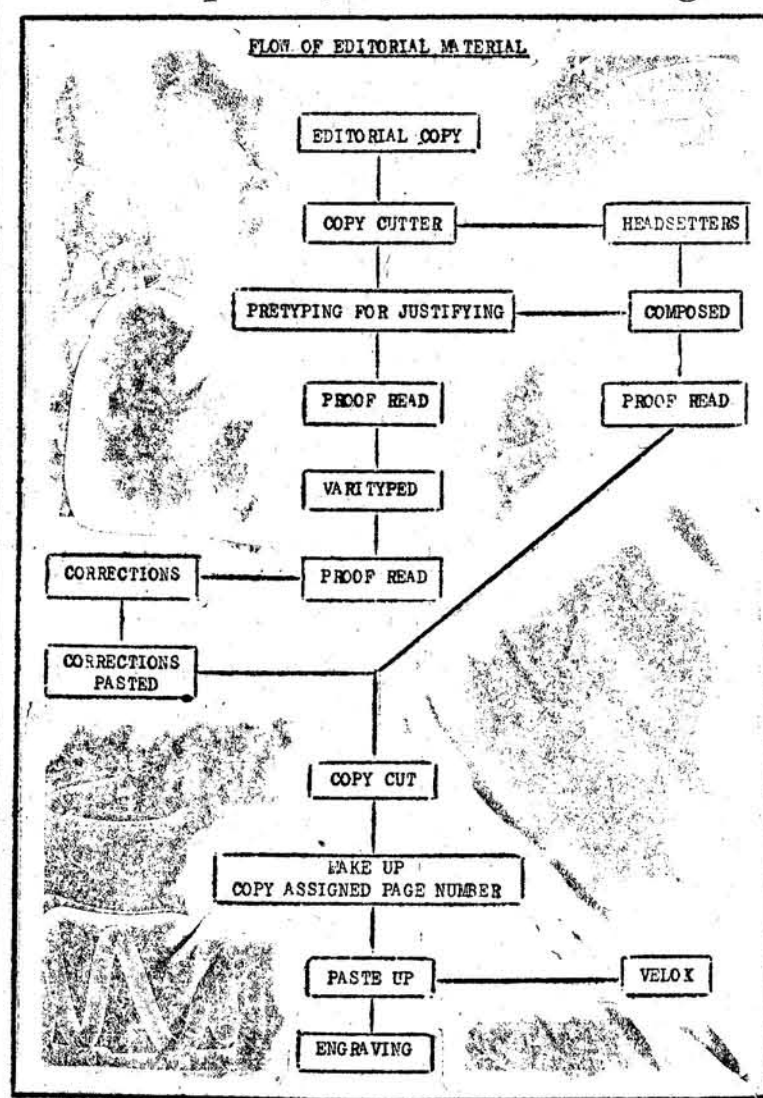
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NEW YORK, N. Y.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 1948

Reuther Attacks Wage Program Of Five Flint Union Presidents

Blueprint for Strikebreaking



This chart showing the flow of editorial material under the varitype process is from a 26-page plan prepared by New York publishers to fight the AFL International Typographical Union, when the printers' contracts expire March 31. Almost all major papers in New York City have bought varitype machines in preparation for the coming fight. The blueprint is based on experiences of Chicago publishers who have fought the ITU since Nov. 24.

Federated Pictures

AFL Building Trades Workers Strike for Higher Wages in L.A.

By Pat Allen

On Feb. 2 the Los Angeles Building and Construction Trades Council placed the municipally owned Los Angeles Department of Water and Power on the official unfair list and swiftly and efficiently struck seven large building projects which are a part of the 200-million-dollar building program inaugurated by the city. The strike is 100% effective, as more than 1,000 construction workers left their jobs and many of the civil service employees respected the picket lines.

The building tradesmen have 16 grievances against the Department of Water and Power. For the past six months they have attempted to negotiate their grievances. On each and every occasion, Department and city officials have given a flat no to all proposals.

After two meetings with the mayor, representatives of the Department and the union committee, the city fathers virtually told the building trades unions that the Department was going to run these jobs as they saw fit and they would not be dictated to by anyone.

The basic issues involved in the dispute are wages, the union shop, and classification of workers on civil service. All contracting companies doing work on the projects have the standard closed shop agreements with the building trades. Much of the work is done directly by the Dept. of W & P, and all Department employees are working on Civil Service.

Their pay rates, job conditions, classifications and wages are much lower than that prevailing for the building trades workers who are practically 100% organized in L.A. The city officials, including Mayor Bowron, flagrantly violate the city charter by permitting sub-standard wages and job conditions to exist in the city Civil Service. The city charter states that classification of workers, job conditions and wages will be determined by the prevailing conditions in private industry.

PLAN TO CRUSH UNIONS
Lloyd Mashburn and Leo Vie, secretaries of the L.A. Building and Construction Trades Council issued the following statement, "We have taken every step possible to avoid a strike. But when the City representatives insisted on violating the City Charter there was no other course for us but to authorize the strike in order to protect the jobs

and wages of AFL members. The situation apparently is the forerunner of a well planned campaign to crush trade-unionism."

Labor was supposed to have had some friends in the city administration, and particularly Mayor Bowron, whose candidacy was backed in the last election by the AFL. So far none of labor's so-called friends have gone to bat to protect the wages and conditions that the union men have gained here through years of warfare with the contractor's association.

The Building and Safety Commission recently got an ordinance passed by the city council, almost identical to the Police Ordinance, which provides that no city Civil Service employee can maintain his job, and at the same time hold any office, or be a member of the executive board of any union.

IMPORTANT BATTLE

The present strike is one of the most significant battles in the history of the L.A. labor movement. No union in the city is in a better position at this time to wage this fight than the building trades. They are well organized and are in a good strategic position to bring this boss-controlled city government to its knees.

It will be crystal clear to every union man in L.A. that the Merchants and Manufacturers Association run the city government without regard for already existing laws, or the welfare of workers on city payrolls; that the workers have no dependable representatives on the City Council, in the Mayor's office, or in the Civil Service Commission for any other position of importance in the city government. The inescapable lesson will be learned during the progress of this fight that city offices have to be filled with union men.

Correction

Last week's article on the Army order continuing Jim Crow segregation of Negro soldiers contained an important typographical error. In one place it said: ". . . it will take a lot more changes in constitutions or laws to achieve genuine equality." It should have read as follows: "It will take a lot more than changes in constitutions or laws to achieve genuine equality."

FLINT, Feb. 9—A specially called meeting of officers, executive board members, committeemen and stewards of locals in Flint and Lansing heard Walter Reuther deal with wages and contract demands. The announced reason for the meeting was the drive for a union shop under the Taft-Hartley Act. Half of Reuther's speech, however, dealt with the demand for the 25-cent per hour wage increase advocated by locals in Flint and Detroit, the sliding scale of wages and the demand for a single contract termination date. Repeatedly, Reuther singled out for criticism Jack Palmer, President of the Flint Chevrolet Local.

After Reuther's lengthy criticism of Palmer and the five Flint GM union presidents, Regional Director Chapman hurriedly terminated the meeting to prevent any questions or discussion.

Reuther developed his position with unusual carelessness. He attempted to insinuate that criticisms of his wage policy were inspired by the Stalinists. Demagogically he waved in the air clippings from the Daily Worker and the Stalinist People's World, which he compared with a brief statement from Palmer's radio address of two weeks ago.

Reuther repeated over and over again that it is easy for people to "criticize," "split hairs," "theorize," when they don't have the responsibility of leadership. This reflected the fact that the demands of the officers of locals representing 250,000 workers has had considerable effect on the ranks.

Squirming under the protest of a large meeting of UAW officers in Detroit the previous day, which criticized his 15-cent wage increase proposal, Reuther attempted to weasel out by putting the blame on the GM conference. Ten times over he stated that the GM conference decided the size of the proposal. He was impartial. If the conference had voted for 25 cents he would have gone along. Then he made the veiled threat that once the majority had decided the issue, everybody had to accept it or else something would have to be done about it. Reuther ignored the fact that the delegates had the democratic right to appeal this decision to the ranks.

The request for unified bargaining in the auto industry, coupled with an overall wage strategy of the steel, electrical and auto unions was demagogically twisted: Reuther's argument was that it was a good thing, we have to work toward it, but do his critics suggest that they wait an additional six months till the Ford contract expires before they get a needed wage increase for the auto workers who need it now? Or even worse, do they propose to wait until 1949 when the no-strike clause of the steel workers expires?

Reuther insisted he was for industry-wide bargaining, but at the same time he had innumerable arguments to raise against it.

Perhaps the most deceitful part of his speech was that regarding the sliding scale of wages. It seems that the UAW Research Department communicated with the educational director of the CIO Oil Workers Union to find out about their contracts containing the escalator clause.

Reuther, anticipating opposition to his compliance with the Taft-Hartley Act, went into great detail on how he was using the bill to the advantage of the union by seeking union shop elections under the law. With all of his cleverness, he will still have to get around quite a few big obstacles: The elections will be held miles from the plants and every worker not voting is considered, under the Taft-Hartley Law, as voting against the union shop. Even if the locals succeed in getting a majority vote they must still bargain the issue with the corporation. Management has indicated they will not give in without a long hard fight.

All in all, this specially called meeting and Reuther's lengthy all-bis, demonstrated that the program of the militants is making headway in the ranks and that Reuther feels his wage policy is not going over and is losing him support.

THE REPLY

The research director of the Oil Workers answered as follows: "In November of 1946 the Oil Workers

International Union and the Sinclair Oil Company entered into an agreement on wages based upon a rise in the cost of living from January of that year to Sept. 15. Both the Sinclair Company and the union expressed hope that this would be a model agreement by which workers could have their wages adjusted in part to meet the rising cost of living, and that such a basis would tend to put a brake on continuing price rises. Other companies were extremely reluctant to adopt the Escalator type of agreement and made long term settlements, sometimes nearly meeting the comparable wage being paid in the continuing rise under the Escalator Clause.

"In mid-summer of 1947 our Policy Committee was faced with the condition that the Sinclair Escalator Agreement was the only one in effect with wage increases of 3 cents above what competitive companies' agreements called for. The cost of living during the immediately preceding period had levelled off with a slight drop in wholesale prices which didn't forecast any further sharp increases.

"The bulk of our membership, especially in Sinclair, expressed the opinion they would rather have a flat base rate adjustment than to face the possibility of the Escalator Clause working to their disadvantage. Therefore, we adopted a policy of trying to consolidate all of our 'second round' wage settlements into 25-cent an hour base adjustments.

"We have found little dissatisfaction among our membership for abandoning the Escalator Classes in their agreement even though the economic conditions would have benefited the membership to the extent of about 10 cents an hour."

The facts in the case speak for themselves: Under the escalator agreement, the wages of the Sinclair Oil Workers rose 25 cents higher than the \$1.40 average of the auto workers. According to the testimony of the Oil Workers research director, had they kept the escalator clause, they would have benefited by at least an additional 10 cents per hour.

USED PRESSURE

Why the oil workers gave up the escalator clause is not completely clear. Reuther falsely claimed in his speech that they had been violating national CIO policy by incorporating this clause in their contract. Very possibly Murray, Reuther, and others brought pressure to bear on the Oil Workers to drop this beneficial clause.

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"I WAS A RACKETEER"

By Major General Smedley D. Butler, U.S.M.C., Ret. (now dead); from an article published in the Nov. 1935 Common Sense magazine:

"There isn't a trick in the racketeering bag that the military gang is blind to. It has its 'finger men' (to point out enemies); its 'muscle men' (to destroy enemies), and its 'brain guys' (to plan war preparations), and a 'Big Boss' (supernaturalistic capitalism)."

"It may seem odd for me, a military man to adopt such a comparison. Truthfulness compels me to. I spent 33 years and four months in active service as a member of our country's most agile military force—the Marine Corps. I served in all commissioned ranks from a second lieutenant to Major-General. And during that period I spent most of my time being a high-class muscle man for Big Business, for Wall Street and for the bankers. In short, I was a racketeer, a gangster for capitalism.

"I suspected I was just part of a racket at the time. Now I am sure of it. Like all members of the military profession I never had an original thought until I left the service. My mental faculties remained in suspended animation while I obeyed the orders of the higher-ups. This is typical of every one in the military service.

"Thus I helped make Mexico and especially Tampico safe for American oil interests in 1914. I helped make Haiti and Cuba a decent place for the National City Bank boys to collect revenues in. I helped in the raping of half a dozen Central American republics for the benefit of Wall Street. The record of racketeering is long. I helped purify Nicaragua for the international banking house of Brown Brothers in 1909-12. I brought light to the Dominican Republic for American sugar interests in 1916. In China in 1927 I helped see to it that Standard Oil went its way unmolested.

"During those years, I had, as the boys in the back room would say, a swell racket. I was rewarded with honors, medals, promotion. Looking back on it, I feel I might have given Al Capone a few hints. The best he could do was operate his racket in three city districts. I operated on three continents."