

LABOR ACTION

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The New Secretary of Labor is:

THE HOSTAGE

By L. G. SMITH

The appointment of Martin P. Durkin, president of the plumbers' and pipefitters' union (AFL) to Eisenhower's cabinet as secretary of labor in no way changes the character of that body as described by Sam Adams elsewhere in this issue of LABOR ACTION. It remains as a cabinet which most directly reflects and represents the interests of big business in this country. The only difference is that now a labor hostage has been added to the fold.

In what way will Durkin's role in the cabinet differ from that of any liberal business man or professor who has been associated with the field of "labor relations?" The answer is obviously that it cannot and will not differ in any way whatever. This would be true even if it were not known that Durkin's only previous claim to fame as a public administrator was his ruling as director of the State Labor Department of Illinois that some 20,000 miners were not entitled to unemployment compensation during a strike.

The post of secretary of labor is a relatively unimportant one, at best. The National Labor Relations Board which administers the Taft-Hartley Act is not subject to his appointment or control. The Department of Labor has jurisdiction over the technical services which affect the labor movement such as the Bureau of Labor Statistics which compiles the cost of living index, supervision of the wages and hours act, and similar matters.

But would Durkin's position be any better even if he

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Ike Picks Big Business To Run the Government

By SAM ADAMS

With the exception of the posts of secretaries of Labor and Commerce which may be filled by the time this issue of LABOR ACTION appears, President-elect Eisenhower's cabinet and chief aides have been chosen.

The men appointed are weighted heavily on the side of big business (some say it is a General Motors cabinet) and they reflect the respect which the new president has for the power and ability of the men of finance and industry. He chose Chas. E. Wilson, president of GM, as Secretary of Defense because he wanted to "get business brains in a 60-billion dollar business." In this way, war production comes under the direction of the head of the largest corpora-

tion in the United States, an enterprise holding the greatest number of government war-orders.

MEDIOCRITIES

The type of men chosen by Eisenhower reveal so clearly the mediocre mind of the new president himself, because only a man whose ideals are themselves the commonplace of a business civilization could select a cabinet of mediocrities composed so overwhelmingly of big financiers and industrialists.

It is not hard to understand the thinking of this professional military man. Throughout his life, his chief contact with civilian life has been with government professionals and businessmen; his knowledge of social problems and his feelings for

the genuine interests of the people at large are almost non-existent. Where he is not wholly ignorant of the grave social problems of our time, his understanding is very shallow. That is why he could select a cabinet whose very conservatism precludes any social vision and broad understanding of the problems of the masses of the world.

Is it any wonder that the conservative New York *Herald-Tribune* wrote enthusiastically that "The administration of president-elect Eisenhower was shaping up as one in which business men would have a large share: In selecting the occupants of high posts, the general looked to men who were successful in business, whether or not they were politicians... Academicians, who were favored by President Roosevelt, will be conspicuous by their absence."

To Eisenhower, men who are successful in business are the men who have gained achievement. Making money is equated to intelligence. And the money-makers are men of stature. When he spoke of selecting a cabinet with the best brains in the had a more important post? Hardly. Just imagine a cabinet meeting which is discussing what to do about any major labor problem, such as a strike of miners, steel workers, or railroad men in the midst of the cold war. Around the cabinet table will be assembled the general, the head of General Motors flanked by two of the major automobile distributors in the country, the head of the Hanna iron and coal mining empire, a former director of the National Association of Manufacturers (Sinclair Weeks, just appointed secretary of com-

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Stalinist Rejection of India Truce Proposal Increases Danger of Full-Scale War in Asia

By GORDON HASKELL

Any prospect of an early truce in Korea based more or less on an acceptance of the United States position with regard to the prisoner of war question seems to have been effectively torpedoed by the Russians. The situation was brilliantly illustrated in a cartoon which appeared originally in the *Army Times*. While the United States and Britain engage in a heated argument over a dove labelled "India's Korea Peace Plan," Russia walks up, pulls a gun, and blasts the dove into tiny pieces.

After Vishinsky's performance, the position of the United States on the plan became a more or less academic matter. The American delegation got most of the changes it wanted incorporated into the plan, and then obtained a vote of about 53 nations in favor and five against in the Assembly. Actually, all the governments involved now felt that they were just going through the motions. They consoled themselves with the thought that the Indian motion had mustered a larger majority than almost any other major issue in the history of the Assembly, and had included the nations of all blocs outside the Stalinist sphere.

The brutal Russian rejection of India's plan now greatly increases the danger of an expansion of the

war in the Far East. Although the heavy vote received by Eisenhower is widely accepted as a symbol of the war-weariness of the American people, it is obvious that what is involved is not a weariness which stems from great sacrifices and tragedies so much as one which stems from a feeling of futility and purposelessness. The greatest political danger to the Eisenhower administration would be a continuation of the futile hill fighting indefinitely. Yet that is just what the Stalinists seem to prefer to a truce on terms which would force them to publicly acknowledge that thousands of their own people do not want to return to Stalinland.

The Stalinist rejection of India's proposal was not an isolated event. It was accompanied by a powerful thrust of the Vietminh army against the French in Indo-China. This army seems to have been re-equipped and reorganized on a much larger scale than ever before. Despite some rather bold strategy attempted by the French command, they have been forced to make one withdrawal after another. Although the full extent of Vietminh military power is not yet clear, it is quite evident that the Chinese and the Russians have made it strong enough to present at the very least a diversionary threat of major proportions.

A removal of major troop contingents from Korea to shore up Indo-China would hardly seem feasible. Although the bloody fighting there has involved only a relatively small fraction of the forces available, this is probably true not only of the Americans, but of the North Koreans and Chinese also. A withdrawal of American reserves could well bring on a major Stalinist offensive in that area.

Of course, there is much that the United States could do in Indo-China short of a major commitment of ground troops. It could probably send carriers with sufficient aircraft to make a major change in the relation of forces. But even this would mean the direct participation of American armed forces to keep a European colonial power in Asia. Although everyone knows that the French could not have maintained themselves till now in that area without the constant aid in military equipment and finances from the United States, the dramatic effect of open American participation in the war could hardly fail to have serious political repercussions in Asia.

But even if the situation in Indo-China is stabilized by the French for the time being, the problem of Korea remains. To continue the stalemated war seems less possible

politically as time goes by. There is the further consideration put forth by some military analysts that the North Korean and Chinese potential have been growing more rapidly than that of the Americans in the past few months, and that eventually the time will be reached when it is so evidently preponderant that a final Stalinist offensive would have every chance of success.

Such arguments may be based on facts or on fancy. But in any event it is clear that they are propounded toward one end: to convince the American people of the feasibility and desirability of an American offensive in the near future to put an end to the stalemate in Korea. This notion has been preached far and wide by the military commanders in the field, and there can be no doubt that they will urge it on Eisenhower when he gets there.

BIGGER STAKES?

It is quite possible that this is exactly what the Russians were

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The national convention of the CIO is in progress as LABOR ACTION goes to press. Next week we will feature a full report on the convention by members of our staff who are in Atlantic City.

Ike's Business Cabinet--

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country, he had in mind the kind of people who now compose the cabinet. It makes no difference that the men making up the president-elect's official family are not generally talented men, that they are tory-minded, believing firmly in the destiny of monopoly wealth. They are the successful ones.

ALL FOR BUSINESS

We have never had anything but a bourgeois government in this country. The various administrations have varied from types of conservatism to the reformist New Deal and Fair Deal governments. In all of these there have been wealthy men, businessmen, and conservatives. Republican administrations have had a larger share of them than the Democratic, at least in this century. But we do not recall a previous cabinet, even the Harding, Coolidge or Hoover administrations (which we checked) and which functioned during the prosperity period, that was weighted so flagrantly in behalf of the business interests, or one that reflected the power of a single corporation, as the one selected by Eisenhower. It contains the president of General Motors, its largest distributor of Chevrolets and Cadillacs in the Northwest and perhaps its largest Chevrolet distributor in the Middle West, if not in the whole country. Through General Motors, the DuPont Corporation is also represented in the administration; the "Mellon" interests are not neglected since the new secretary of the treasury is George M. Humphrey of Ohio.

Here is a list of the cabinet members who have been selected up to now, and those in near-cabinet posts of important standing.

John Foster Dulles, Secretary of State. A conservative corporation lawyer, senior partner in the largest law firm in New York, specializing in corporation law, and a director of 15 corporations. Maker of Republican foreign policy and active in the Roosevelt and Truman administrations in foreign affairs as representative of Republican bi-partisan policy.

Charles E. Wilson, Secretary of Defense. President of General Motors. The corporation and its officers were active in the GOP convention to bring about Eisenhower's nomination. Salary and bonuses in 1951, before taxes, were \$566,200.

George M. Humphrey, Secretary of the Treasury. Head of the M. A. Hanna Co., named after the old GOP leader in Ohio, Mark Hanna. Recommended by Gen. Lucius Clay, present chairman of Continental Can Co. Hanna interests embrace banking, steel, iron,

coal, oil, natural gas, copper, rayon, plastics and shipping. Interests in Pittsburgh Consolidation Coal Co, the world's largest producer of soft coal.

A GM STALWART

Donald McKay, Secretary of the Interior. Governor of Oregon. Owns Chevrolet and Cadillac agency. Chevrolet agency reputed to be one of the largest in Oregon. Opposes federal development of hydro-electric power and more TVA's, defending interests of private utilities. Selected for the post precisely because he is a conservative in the matter of public power and public lands. With his political weather-eye always open, he is a joiner of organizations. These include the American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Shriners, Knights Templar, Elks, Eagles, Kiwanis, the Capital Card Club, etc.

Ezra T. Benson, of Utah, Secretary of Agriculture. One of the twelve apostles of the Mormon Church. Well-to-do farm marketing specialist, and former head of National Council of Farmer Cooperatives. Conservative who is against "leaning on government aid instead of your own initiative."

Herbert Brownell, Attorney General. Leading figure in the Dewey, wing of the Republican Party, a member of one of New York's most conservative law firms, Lord, Day & Lord. Career largely in GOP politics, being former chairman of the party and manager of Dewey's campaigns.

Sherman Adams, Assistant to the President. Governor of New Hampshire, and successful businessman. Reputed to be man closest to the new president and will take charge of coordinating the chief agencies of the ad-

ministration and act as liaison for Eisenhower.

ANOTHER GM BOY

Arthur E. Summerfield, Postmaster General. Present chairman of the GOP, and head of giant GM Chevrolet agency with headquarters in Flint, Michigan. Arch-conservative in politics and a General Motors representative.

Harold E. Stassen, Mutual Security Administrator. Not a cabinet member, but holding this high office in repayment for vigorous campaigning in behalf of Eisenhower. The former governor of Minnesota, once regarded as a "liberal," now revealed as an overambitious politician having no principles.

Then come lame duck Senator Henry Cabot Lodge, head of the U. S. mission to the United Nations; Joseph M. Dodge, President of the Detroit Bank, a director in

the Chrysler Corporation, appointed Budget Observer; Mrs. Ovetta Culp Hobby, former head of the WACs, appointed Federal Security Administrator, and Mrs. Ivy B. Priest, Assistant Chairman of the GOP, appointed as Treasurer of the United States.

The Republican candidate promised a conservative administration and he has kept his word. The main posts of his cabinet will be held by locked-ribbed conservatives from the big business world. The new "team" reflects the character of the president himself and emphasizes what is meant when it is said that the new administration will represent a right turn in American politics. For, as one columnist put it, "the cabinet choices reveal a belief in the divinity of the corporation, the crusading spirit of the investment trust and the progressivism of the NAM."

Labor Secretary: A Hostage — —

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merce), a couple of top corporation lawyers . . . and the president of the plumbers' and pipefitters' union. Just to describe the cast is to indicate the course of the drama. Even if one were to assume that Durkin would take a strong stand in defense of the interests of the workers, he would be wasting his breath.

The really interesting thing about Durkin's appointment is not that it was offered, nor that it was accepted. The thing that makes one gag is that the AFL leadership requested that Eisenhower appoint a labor leader to this post, and that the new president of the AFL has hailed the appointment as a good choice for the country and for labor.

This whole performance casts additional light on the type of thinking to which the AFL leadership (and many of the CIO leaders, though in a less abysmal form) is addicted. During the election campaign they stumped the country to tell the workers that if the Republicans get hold of the government there will be a devastating depression, a drive to destroy the labor movement, an attack on all the social reforms of the past twenty years. The moment the Republicans actually get hold of the government, these same labor leaders shower Eisenhower with telegrams of good wishes, and practically trample each other in the effort to be the first to offer the Republican president their cooperation. Just about every major AFL leader (and several of the CIO), have rushed into print proclaiming that they will support the general as long as he does the right thing,

and will only oppose him if he does the wrong thing. The fact that they predicted for the past six months that he was bound to do every wrong thing in the book if elected does not seem to deter them a bit.

POLITICAL CHILDREN

Of course, this is just part of the good old American tradition of rallying behind the president, and respecting his high office, regardless of how low a man may inhabit it. It is a mark of the dangerous degree of political immaturity which still prevails in the labor movement that this Polyanna view of the presidency is still given lip-service by the labor leaders long after it has been completely and openly abandoned by the class-conscious ideologists of the right wing. (Remember the furious and

vicious personal as well as political attacks levelled against Truman, and Roosevelt before him, by the leading columnists of the Hearst, Scripps-Howard and McCormack press?). It is part of the continuing ardent desire of the labor leadership to be considered as part of "the team" even when the most obtuse of them can see that the team is being organized against them.

Martin P. Durkin, the captive of big business, is a fitting, though perhaps extreme representative of their way of thought. Contacted at his union office Durkin, the captive of big business, is a fitting, though perhaps extreme representative of their way of thought. Contacted at his union office right after his appointment to the cabinet had been an-

nounced, Durkin stated that he believed the new president will treat labor fairly and with "full and complete consideration."

The United Press reports that Durkin noted that he had voted for Governor Stevenson in the last election, and then added that "he may find it necessary" to change his political affiliation "now that I'm in the cabinet." To this we can only say: "Why bother, Brother Durkin. No one will be able to tell the difference anyway."

WEEK by WEEK . . .

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War Danger in Asia — —

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counting on when they sank India's frail barque at the UN. On the face of it, Vishinsky's performance was sheer stupidity at a moment when the United States and Britain seemed to be having one of their most bitter disagreements in years. Yet it was evident that even though a disagreement over such a question might cause a good deal of friction and hard feeling, it could not actually break the American bloc into pieces. For that much more vital differences are needed.

But is it not possible that an extension of the war in Korea by a major offensive to the Yalu with all the risk which this involves of a full-scale war with China and perhaps Russia is exactly the kind of vital difference which could break up the American bloc, or at least chip away some of its weaker parts?

But what if the Americans should launch an offensive, and win it? Would that mean that the Chinese government would have to enter the war formally, and on a full-scale basis to "save face"? Not

necessarily. It is the Americans who have proclaimed a policy of military containment, not the Chinese. The latter could well claim that their volunteers did the best they could, but finally were unable to stand up to the concerted might of American imperialism. For them, Korea could be almost as useful as a martyr to the struggle against imperialism as it is as a battleground.

Of course, there is no guarantee that the Chinese and Russians would react that way. The freedom of choice is theirs as to whether it is now time for all-out war in Asia, or whether they can hope to gain more in the long run by the "little" politico-military wars now going on. Their reaction might very well depend on whether such a rash move by the Americans would strike a major blow at its Asiatic and even European alliances.

But would not a quick American victory be considered a major success by the allies, whatever misgivings they might have while the battles were in progress? Wouldn't it prove that the Ameri-

cans know best, and that their aggressive methods are exactly what is needed to call Stalin's bluff?

ABHOR WAR

That the success of an American offensive would have a less damaging effect on the U. S. bloc than a failure is beyond question. But that is just a matter of degree. The peoples of Europe and Asia are not primarily worried about a defeat in another world war. They abhor the thought of the war itself. What infuriates them most about American leadership in the anti-Stalinist bloc is the thought that the U. S. is willing to risk it.

For Eisenhower and for the American government in general the choices are very difficult ones. Whichever way they may turn, much is to be lost, and very little to be gained. But then, such is the fate for those who choose the "easy" and "practical" military way of solving the problems of the world. Unfortunately, the fate of all of us is closely bound up with theirs.