

# LABOR ACTION

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**SPOT-LIGHT**

**Danger Signals Are Flying—What Program for the Unions?**

## In the Midst of War Boom, Unemployed Workers Are Thrown on the Scrap Heap

### Adlai-Talmadge Affair

On the GOP side, the two heads of the Republican elephant (as Adlai Stevenson reminds us he called it) have turned to glare at each other. Joe McCarthy used his free TV time more to attack the Eisenhower administration than to rebut Truman, and now Secretary of State Dulles has denounced him as gunning for the heart of the government's foreign policy, for proposing a cut in aid to Britain and other states which refuse to end trade with China.

But at the same time the two heads of the Democratic donkey are cuddling up. The most important feature of Stevenson's speech of last week in Georgia was not his rather perfunctory attack on McCarthyism in the White case, but rather his love affair with the outstanding representatives of White Supremacy and reaction in his party, led by Governor Hummin' Talmadge.

When Stevenson arrived in Atlanta, he announced that he had brought his golf clubs and added: "I hope you don't construe that as an announcement for the presidency." No, we won't. Stevenson's announcement that he had his eye on 1956 was made in another manner.

Speaking in front of the state capitol where Talmadge was leading a campaign for Jim Crow segregation, Stevenson made it clear that he was bidding for the

(Continued on page 7)



By GORDON HASKELL

For the first time since 1949 the American economy is showing a sustained slackening of activity.

So far, there has been a serious crisis in only a few industries, notably the farm-equipment industry. But in a series of other industries the danger signals are now flying, and over-all the mood is one of caution and nervousness.

In the months ahead, millions of workers will be faced with a drastic reduction of their incomes, and other millions with the desperation of unemployment.

Ever since 1950, the economy has been sustained at boom levels by the expansion of military production. This has led to a vast expansion in most other sectors of the economy. But during the past few months actual military production has hit its peak, and has begun to decline.

Even more important, however, is the fact that the expansion in the non-military sector has also started on a downward trend. This has been accompanied by a serious drop of income to the farmers, and by overproduction in a number of lines of durable consumer goods, notably automobiles and household appliances, led by television sets.

The decline in the expansion of industry is now reflected in machine-tool production, the basic means-of-production industry. Although shipments in this vital industry are running only three per cent below a year ago, production has been dropping for the past five months.

Although output in October was higher than during the same month of last year, it was the lowest for any month since February. During October cancellation of orders amounted to 20 per cent of new business, and the order backlog now stands at 6.6 months of production, from a high of 23.5 months in September, 1951.

Although no single figure can serve as a key to what is happening in the economy, the trend in the machine-tool industry is as important as any.

### Down-Trend

A drop in orders in this industry reflects the plans of capitalists for the future, their calculations on possible expansion. And as a high level of activity in a capitalist economy cannot be maintained without a constant expansion of industry, a drop in machine-tool orders reflects the over-expansion of this sector.

The same trend is shown by the lower rate at which capitalists are now borrowing money. This can be due to a cutting down of inventory, as well as to a slowing down of expansion plans. Both have been taking place since the summer.

New securities offered for cash

(Turn to last page)

## Socialists and Pacifists Plan Cooperation At Third Camp Conference in New York

The Third Camp Conference against war, sponsored by socialist and pacifist groups, was successfully held over the weekend of November 27-29 in New York City. To the general satisfaction of the sponsoring organizations present, its main objective was fulfilled—namely, the limited one of laying the basis for friendly cooperation and collaboration between Marxist socialist advocates of a Third Camp struggle against the war danger and revolutionary-pacifist groups and militants of the same orientation.

The sponsors were: the Independent Socialist League, the Libertarian Socialist Committee, the Peacemakers, the Socialist Youth League, the West Coast YPSL (SP), and the Young Peoples Socialist League. With A. J. Muste of the Peacemakers as chairman, the Planning Committee also included leading pacifists David Dellinger, Bayard Rustin, Arlo Tatum and Charles Walker, in addition to the socialist representatives.

The conference opened Friday afternoon with an address by A. J. Muste in which he set forth the preparation and aims of the conference. A draft statement on the war question prepared by the Planning Committee, was then read and distributed in mimeographed form; and the rest of this afternoon session was devoted to preliminary questions on and clarification of the statement.

The evening session began with the presentation, by representatives of the sponsoring groups, of their approach and comments on the draft statement and the tasks of the conference—Max Shachtman speaking for the ISL and SYL; Muste and David Dellinger for the Peacemakers; Dick Frederickson for the Libertarian Socialist Committee; and Bogdan Denitch for the YPSL. (The West Coast YPSL group was unable to send delegates because of the distance and expense.) General

discussion from the floor on the draft statement was then the business of the evening.

On Saturday morning, after a short general session during which the chairman read a heartening assemblage of greetings to the conference from both this country and abroad, the people divided into three discussion panels: (1) on anti-imperialist and anti-war activity; (2) on civil liberties; and (3) on racial discrimination. The purpose of these panels was to concentrate on discussing proposals and ideas for joint work and activity.

### SPECIAL REPORT IN NEXT ISSUE

In the afternoon, the panel reporters summarized their work to the general body, followed by discussion from the floor. In the evening, an open-house social, at which the delegates and visitors could meet less formally, took place at Labor Action Hall.

The conference closed with the Sunday morning session which considered the Planning Committee's report on the setting up of a Third Camp Contact Committee, and summarized the work of the conference.

A full report and evaluation of the conference, whose work has only been outlined above, will appear in next week's LABOR ACTION in the following form. The Third Camp committee has requested, and LABOR ACTION has agreed, that a four-page section of our next issue be put at the disposal of the committee, under the latter's editorship and responsibility, as a journal of the proceedings, documents, decisions and main speeches of the conference. This section will be the product of the conference as a whole.

In addition, of course, the same issue will carry our own comments on the valuable work done over the weekend.

# Beck Wants to Be 'Respectable' but . . .

By M. J. HARDWICK

DETROIT, Nov. 29—Life being what it is, and since a man can't have everything, millionaire Dave Beck has run into a slight snag in his striving for respectability by assisting the AFL clean-up drive on the New York waterfront.

It seems that the No. 2 man in the Teamsters Union, James Hoffa, close friend of Beck's, was beginning to have quite a time of it lately, what with ten associates under indictment, and the spotlight of a congressional investigation on him.

Fortunately, a businessman's administration in Washington understands a businessman's troubles, and Hoffa was able by this weekend to recover some ground—perhaps even to come out on top of the whole messy business.

After three days of prying into the fantastic manipulations and dealings of the Teamsters Union and various truckers associations—with many embarrassing items popping up all the time—a congressional subcommittee headed by Representative Smith of Kansas pulled stakes, openly admitting that pressure from high officials in Washington forced the move.

## PROBE BLOCKED

The chief counsel of the committee also quit, once he found he didn't dare ask certain questions, and learned what kind of influential persons opposed the investigations.

It is hard to believe but it is a fact, even in this day when congressional committees are riding high, wide, and handsome on everything, that this one has quit and complained openly to the press: "Find out about the Midwestern senator who today is putting the pressure on a powerful congressman from his state to block this investigation."

"Find out what Eastern governor effectively blocked this committee from coming into his state."

"Find out why the committee so far has been blocked from one of the Far Western states."

For the benefit of the casual reader who doesn't follow day-to-day events, this "corruption, scandal, and mess" is taking place in the year 1953, exactly one year after the great crusade triumphed in Washington.

All this is reported openly by a Republican committee, speaking as part of a Republican administration, and printed in three major Republican newspapers in Detroit.

Is it a wonder that at the end of the week Hoffa was still smiling blandly, even after he admitted all union records up to August had been destroyed, and a federal prosecutor had hinted that this might be a violation of the law?

## POINTED QUERIES

But Hoffa and his guardian Beck may not be out of the rough yet. For other insurance companies still have their eye on the fabulous business involved in the Teamsters' welfare funds, and might put counter-pressure on for some changes.

During the week enough questions were asked, however, to startle many persons in Detroit, including CIO unionists who got a firsthand picture of what passes for unionism in part of the AFL, the respectable part at that.

Is it true that the Teamsters Union negotiators insisted that the highest bidder get the insurance business, and that the truckers' association represented by a lawyer who is also in business with Hoffa acceded to this demand? It cost an extra \$500,000 in commissions, and no one knows what happened to a certain \$100,000—but then business is business. Surely the fact that the company that got the deal happens to be owned by the wife and son of an AFL official who is a close personal friend of Hoffa's had nothing to do with it. . . . You wouldn't want a businessman to give business to an enemy, would you?

Is it true that a trucking company was run out of business, that its drivers who

were union men were blacklisted, and that a new company was set up controlled by Hoffa through his wife and other associates? After all, maybe the old company didn't know how to make money.

Of course, no one asked Hoffa what he knew about the juke-box racket fight, for which five of his associates are now under indictment. Ditto on the bribery and extortion charges against five other Teamsters' officials now awaiting trial. An investigation can't go too far afield; besides, time is up and the next train to Washington leaves in an hour.

Also: imagine the nerve of any Republican committee raising a question like this about a sound business move: Is it true that Hoffa used \$250,000 of Teamsters Union funds to buy control of the insurance company involved? Actually that's "smart business"—buy out the company you are doing business with—run it yourself—it's done all the time.

## UP TO BECK AND MEANY

At one point or another, a hearing like this was bound to touch on the union operation itself, and two issues were raised that still need clarifying, even though the committee did leave town.

Did Hoffa reinstate as business agents with full pay the two top officers of Pontiac Local 614 who were indicted on extortion charges and were suspended by Dave Beck as a result?

Did Hoffa invoke reprisals, including permanent blackballing in the United States and Canada, against the trustees of Local 614 who had the audacity to seek a new election of officers by petition?

Fortunately for the rank and file, there has been a bitter feud going on between Frank X. Martel, president of the Wayne County Federation of Labor and Hoffa. Hoffa almost won; he had most of the AFL unions withdraw from the council here until Martel was removed.

This removal was supposed to take place at the recent AFL convention, and George Meany was supposed to come to Detroit to get all AFL unions working together. Old-timer Martel, meanwhile, has been rallying forces around him and demanding that the AFL clean out the "few racketeers and gangsters in our midst who are destroying our good name."

All these issues give Martel plenty of fuel for his fire, and he is pouring it on Hoffa. Maybe, as a result, some of the many questions raised by the investigation are going to be answered.

It will take quite some doing for Beck and Hoffa to achieve that respectable front now desired. It takes more than big bank accounts and shiny new Cadillacs for all officials to accomplish a new look.

The business interests involved and the Republican politicians who work with the Teamsters Union in Washington and on the West Coast did their part to help Hoffa clear himself. The question is: Will the rumblings of the rank and file and the stench of the situation force the AFL to take a second look at an important part of itself? Meany and Beck have to answer that one.

# LABOR SCOPE

## Ching Exposes the 'National Emergency' Lie

By BEN HALL

Five minutes after the declaration of every big strike, the hue and cry of "national emergency" goes up accompanied by hysterical demands for anti-strike injunctions. This national habit began during the last war and became fixed after the post-war strike wave of '45-6.

Congress took revenge against the unions for their success in these struggles by legalizing the anti-strike injunction in the Taft-Hartley Law; and two administrations, the Democratic administration of Truman and the Republican administration of Eisenhower, have found ample opportunity for exercising this anti-union power.

Most recently, Eisenhower ended the East Coast longshore strike with a T-H injunction. New York Times reporter Joseph Loftus, was impelled, by this event, to express the opinion that a genuine national emergency did not exist at any time when the T-H had been applied in the past nor during the longshore strike.

We now have testimony which fully bolsters his view in the anecdotal book *Review and Reflection* by Cyrus Ching, a prominent federal mediator under three presidents.

## REVELATION

Ching deploras class strife; he thinks labor and management should get together and iron things out; that's the American way. He regrets that "Labor's animosity to the injunction is traditional and I think exaggerated today." In fact, he sees a definite place in the scheme of things for the use of injunctions in genuine national emergencies and he endorses Truman's threat to draft rail strikers into the army to man the trains and break the strike of 1946.

In brief, he is a typical "friend of labor." Least of all is he stirred by any subterranean radical impulses.

All the more significant are his revelations of the hypocritical use of Taft-Hartley injunctions as strikebreaking weapons under the pretext of handling "national emergencies."

He says bluntly:

"Although there is a terrific amount of shouting about the 'grave' problem of 'national emergency' strikes and how to handle them, I don't think this country, as a whole, ever really suffered seriously as a result of a strike in the last 50 years. . . . A good case can be made for the statement that the nation has never really suffered seriously from a strike. I am not ignoring the impact of strikes on certain of our industries and communities but there have been few, if any, real national emergencies resulting from labor-management conflicts."

## 'MISLED'

Is that possible? Haven't we shivered in alarm many times at the vision of widows and orphans starving and/or freezing to death while the national defense effort disintegrated, a vision conjured up by editors twirling editorials and reporters unfurling news reports?

Oh yes, Mr. Ching will concede, but they were (shall we say) somewhat misleading in intent:

"It is very difficult not to be misled in prejudging the effect of a strike before it takes place or even sometimes in estimating the effect after one is on. The newspapers are subjected to a terrific barrage of propaganda. All of us are. All of the people who are affected by the shutdown of an industry including the retailers, wholesalers, stockholders and other groups bring pressure to bear on Congress, the president and the government agencies demanding action."

Ironical is what follows:

"I can say, in looking back on my own experience, pressures of that kind led me to refer matters to the president and we in the Federal Mediation Service proceeded on the basis that it was a national emergency. I confess that in regard to some of the instances there is now serious doubt in my mind as to the correctness of the label."

Thus we see the very mediator, the man who is supposed to weigh all factors with cold objectivity, swayed in fright by a "barrage of propaganda." How many times has this happened in the past?

## TAKEN IN

Ching tells the story of his mediation efforts during an East Coast longshore strike some years ago. While conferences were proceeding in a New York hotel, the mediators were besieged by a shouting, milling mob of employers in the corridors who were demanding immediate government action to ban the strike. They turned out to be banana importers.

"The bananas were spoiling in the hot holds of the strike-bound ships and they wanted action. It was rough on the banana trade but hardly a national emergency."

Take the coal strikes of 1949 and 1950. "The advance claims of the effect of the strikes were exaggerated in each instance . . . we were burning lots of coal when the national stockpile supposedly was 'exhausted.' Despite what we had been told, there was still coal on hand when the strike finally was settled."

Then there was the steel strike of 1952. "After talking with the officials who were responsible for the defense effort, many of us were convinced that the country simply couldn't take a steel strike. We were told that even a brief shutdown of the mills would have a devastating effect on the defense program. . . . This proved to be a misjudgment of the situation. The strike following the Supreme Court ruling lasted 53 days. Fortunately, although it did slow down defense production a little, the health, welfare or safety of the American people were not affected to any appreciable extent. A Senate report later said the steel strike had nothing to do with the shortage of ammunition in Korea."

Ching was taken in by the lies and propaganda of the past and on sober reflection he can see the truth pushing through—all about the past. But his ability to handle the present with calm detachment is somewhat undeveloped: ". . . obviously, in a time of high international tension such as we are in now, there could develop more situations that would fall within my concept [of national emergency] than in a time of real peace."

But all the other fake "emergencies" burst on the public in time of "tension." That, however, is in the past; and Ching is immune to the propaganda of the past. The future? That is something else.

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# To Get Around UN Supervision, Eisenhower Makes Another Hollow 'Pledge' to Puerto Rico

By HAL DRAPER

President Eisenhower played out another act in the farce-comedy entitled "Self-determination for Puerto Rico" when he let Henry Cabot Lodge announce last Friday, on his behalf, that the U. S. would grant independence to the subject island if the Puerto Rican legislative assembly asked for it.

Far from being any new step or pledge by Washington, it was a repetition in WEAKENED form of a maneuvering line adopted by his Democratic predecessor Truman in 1945.

The character and role of Puerto Rican Governor Luis Munoz Marin is adequately shown by the fact this native collaborationist pretended to hail the new words as if they were a step forward toward something: "This is a magnificent attitude which does honor to the United States and will show America and the whole world the sincerity of the present relationship of voluntary association between the United States and Puerto Rico."

## TRUMAN'S PLEDGE

In a message to Congress on October 16, 1945 Truman had declared: "It is now time, in my opinion, to ascertain from the people of Puerto Rico their wishes as to the ultimate status which they prefer. . . ." He proposed, in effect, that a plebiscite be held in which the islanders could declare themselves in favor of one of these: (1) increased autonomy under the present relationship; (2) statehood; or (3) independence.

These were words also, but words which purported to grant the Puerto Rican PEOPLE the right of self-determination. Truman never took a single

step to give the people a chance to exercise this right.

Insofar as there is a difference between Eisenhower's pledge and Truman's, it is that Eisenhower limits the promise to action on demand of Munoz's government, not the people or any direct ascertaining of the wishes of the people through a completely free plebiscite including the choice of independence.

## MANEUVER

The immediate reason for Eisenhower's repetition of the maneuver is even clearer than was the case with Truman's original promise.

In the latter case, with the ending of the war, colonial movements for independence were sweeping the world. In a situation where Britain lost its India, where the Indonesians forced Holland into compromise by armed rebellion, where the stiffnecked French imperialists invented the tinsel "French Union" as a cover for colonial domination, the U. S. had to make a gesture also. Washington—which can get along without little Puerto Rico much better than Britain without India!—could not expect to maintain business-as-usual in its island colony.

No account of what the U. S. has gotten out of Puerto Rico need pretend that the island is of any great importance to U. S. capitalism or U. S. imperialism as a whole. Therefore Truman's lip service to anti-colonialism at the moment.

In the present case, a weakened repetition of the pledge came via Lodge just before the United Nations—doing its best to make like protectors of subject colonies—had to vote on whether Puerto Rico was or was not a self-governing colony. If it decided that it was not, the U. S. would

be obligated to present reports to the UN on conditions there and generally give evidence that steps were being taken to prepare the area for self-rule.

## DUTCH SLAPPED

After Lodge's announcement, the UN obligingly voted to declare Puerto Rico self-governing, thereby permitting itself to forget about the whole problem. Only 26 votes were cast in favor of this hypocritical deception, out of 60 votes, but since 18 abstained, the bit of fakery went through.

At the same time the littler imperialism of Holland—which cannot twist the arms of many delegates—was slapped on the wrist by a decision that Dutch Guiana (Surinam) was not self-governing, and that the Dutch colonialists still had to hand in their periodical official fables in the form of reports. The Dutch thereupon informed the UN that it could go to Heligoland before they would comply. This proves how much more the Great Democracies believe in the principles of the UN as compared with the detestable totalitarians of the Stalinist empire who flout it with vetoes.

The problem of Puerto Rican independence is no simple one, to be sure. (For a fuller explanation of the economic and political problems involved, see LABOR ACTION for November 13, 1950.) Essentially, the trouble is that it is even more an economic problem than is usually the case with small colonial territories seeking freedom—the central economic problem being the result of over 50 years of U. S. exploitation and distortion of the island economy.

The facts which we summarized in the aforementioned 1950 article point to the following conclusion: The rule of American

capital in the course of its domination forced on Puerto Rico its present fatal one-crop economy, an economy dominated by sugar plantations, which in turn are largely owned and controlled by U. S. capital. While siphoning millions out of this small area, economic imperialism gave it in return an economy so distorted, shaped and hogtied to U. S. interests that insecurity, poverty and unemployment are rampant for the masses, industrialization was prevented, and backwardness was fastened like an iron collar on the people.

## ECONOMIC DILEMMA

Given this situation, the consequences of over 50 years of imperialism, independence would cast the Puerto Ricans loose in a world for which American rule has unfitted them; it would have an effect of disrupting their entire economy as it has been built up to now. It would deprive them of the present advantages they have now as a part of the U. S. (and besides tariff protection another is the kickback they get from excise taxes on exports) while they are unequipped for a go at economic independence. The greatest crime of American imperialism's operation is that it has made Puerto Rico apparently equally untenable either as a part of the U. S. or as not a part of the U. S. This is the notorious Puerto Rican "paradox" or "dilemma."

This problem, of course, is no entirely insuperable bar to independence, but its effect has been largely to undercut and weaken desires for independence which might otherwise arise among the native upper classes especially, those strata which benefit most from the immediate advantages of the U. S. tie.

Munoz and such upper circles are attempting to solve the dilemma by their "Operation Bootstrap," which amounts to an attempt to diversify the economy by luring more (and more varied) U. S. capital into the island by means of low taxes and cheap labor. Insofar as this plan succeeds, it is only out of the hides of the Puerto Rican workers; and since the new industry is typically U. S.-owned, it only ensures continued complete domination by U. S. capital and the flow of profits out of the country.

## INDEPENDENCE—PLUS!

Progressive elements in Puerto Rico, looking toward immediate independence, look (on the economic field) to the slower building up of a native industry on the basis of sovereign tariff walls, and (on the political field) to the possibility of incorporating Puerto Rico in a Caribbean federation, which as a whole would be much more economically viable.

Moreover, as socialists we must declare that what the Puerto Rican people want and deserve to get is not simply independence, but "independence plus"—plus the continuance of present U. S. forms of aid to its economy. This would be slight repayment to the people for the agony which their unwilling subject status imposed on them.

The fact is that, today, economically Puerto Rico is something of a white elephant on the hands of U. S. imperialism. There is an element of undoubted sincerity in the pro-independence pledges of both Eisenhower and Truman. This element is well brought out by the fact that bills for Puerto Rican independence were introduced in Congress not by men fired by the spirit of justice for the people but by reactionaries who deplore the expenses which Puerto Rican administration cost the U. S.—and sympathize deeply with the complaints of the Louisiana sugar-growers about Puerto Rican competition. It was such a reactionary, then Senator Tydings of Maryland, who introduced such an independence bill. Tydings' angle was mainly the economy motive.

What apparently stands most in the way of this consideration becoming the dominant one in Washington's calculations is the objections of the military, who were the ones who made the strongest fight against Tydings' proposal.

For the brass, Puerto Rico is an island air base, a military and naval base in the Caribbean, and they don't want to take any chances with a truly independent government, in spite of the manifold ways in which they could tie up Puerto Rico even if it were independent. One of these ways, but only one, was indicated in the Eisenhower-Lodge pledge by the reference to an independent Puerto Rico's adhering to the Rio pact—i.e., subordinating itself militarily as a condition for political rights.

## LONDON LETTER Three Disputes Before Churchill British Parties Line Up on Commercial TV

By DAVID ALEXANDER

LONDON, Nov. 25—The unfortunate Churchill has recently been involved in three major party disagreements.

The most serious occurred today when an all-party motion suggesting an increase in the pensions of veterans of the First World War was put by Teeling, Conservative MP for Brighton, Col. Lipton, Labor member from Brixton, and many others.

The proposers pointed out that veteran officers of the First World War had had their pensions fixed in 1935 at 9½ per cent less than 1919, as the cost of living had gone down between these two dates. Since then, there had been no increase comparable to the general rise in the cost of living. Many of them were living under conditions of extreme hardship.

Churchill replied that there was strong pressure from many different interests for increases in wages, but he could not consider their difficulties except in relation to the nation's. In fact, if he gave retired officers higher pensions, he would have to give retired civil servants of the First World War higher pensions also.

## EMBARRASSED

Shinwell, former Labor minister of war, asked how much the increases would cost the country. Another Labor MP asked if the government was trying to let these veterans die off, and thus solve the problem. A Tory MP said that Churchill was sacrificing the faith in him which ex-army officers had previously possessed.

In the Lords, the Tories were even more embarrassed. Lord Alexander, minister of defense, refused to make the government statement, and threatened to resign. Lord Salisbury had to do it instead.

Churchill, in the Commons, replied that the increases would cost the government \$560,000 per year for the officers' pensions, and a similar sum for the civil servants as well. If Labor was so keen to increase these pensions, why had not Shinwell done so when he was minister of war? He knew that his decision would be unpopular, and that is why he had made the announcement himself, instead of leaving it to the minister concerned.

Shinwell replied that the pensions of today could only purchase 75 per cent of what they could in 1946. A Tory MP drew murmurs of assent when he said that some MPs would have second thoughts about passing the Defense Es-

timates if the government did not reconsider the matter.

## REVOLT ON TV

I reported last autumn that the government had with general satisfaction shelved their proposals for commercial television. Now they have published a White Paper which has put forward a new policy in this matter. Once again a large section of the Tory party has revolted.

The government White Paper proposed:

- (1) A government loan of \$1,400,000 to a corporation to run a commercial television enterprise.
- (2) This corporation would be responsible for the quality of the programs.
- (3) Advertising would only be allowed to take place between the programs, and not during them.
- (4) The advertisers would have no direct say in the content of the programs.
- (5) All the revenue of the television stations would come from the advertisers.

These proposals caused a storm in the Conservative Party, especially in the House of Lords. In the Commons many Labor Party speakers wanted a free vote on the issue, without the party whips, but the government would not agree to this.

Such prominent personalities as the Archbishop of Canterbury, who sits in the Lords, condemned the new proposals. Lord Samuel, head of the Liberal lords, said that it could only lead to a further degradation of the standards of broadcasting.

The Conservative revolt was led by Lord Hailsham, who, as Quinten Hogg, was one of the Tories' ablest propagandists. He said that a minority of the party has basely interpolated this legislation in the Tory program after the election, and the country's opinion had not been asked about it.

Another prominent Tory supporter of Lord Hailsham was Viscount Halifax, ex-foreign minister and ambassador to the U. S. Lord Jowitt, the head of the Labor peers, also opposed commercial television.

The grounds on which it is opposed are that, as the revenue for programs will come only from advertisers, they need only advertise on programs with popular appeal. There will be the lowest stand-

ard, as the only criterion for their support will be their popularity. Thus television will become a channel for an outpouring of the most vulgar and valueless material. It will soon reach the standard of the national daily tabloids.

You will, of course, know that all broadcasting up till now has been in the hands of the British Broadcasting Corporation. This is a public body with strong rightish leanings, but nevertheless a tradition of fairness which is unrivaled in any public body under a capitalist system. The only views whose expression is never allowed are atheist ones. Especially on the serious Third Program, which unfortunately has only a small audience, all economic and political views managed to land a hearing at some time or another.

Unfortunately the BBC can, at present, afford only one channel. This broadcasts only in the afternoon and evening; the television license costs \$2.80 per year flat-rate. Most people would like to see at least a choice of two channels, but the BBC may have to raise the license to \$5.60 per year.

The supporters of commercial TV always say that it will give us more programs without greater expense, but then the advertisers must make their money somewhere, and that is clearly from the high prices which the public pay for their articles.

## SCUTTLE

The government is also floundering in the deep waters of the Suez Canal. Many Tory MPs believe that Britain's acceptance of the principle of withdrawal is a severe blow. They do not like Churchill's preparedness to discuss with Naguib how soon British evacuation of the zone should take place and how many technicians would be allowed to stay there.

This is a policy of scuttle, they say. We should not allow ourselves to be forced out of the canal, even if it means a fight. Churchill, being much more intelligent, realizes the necessity of withdrawal by 1956, and is making a virtue of it.

Footnote: One of the Hungarian football players playing in England was asked how he managed to be an MP as well as an international footballer. "That is not difficult in Hungary," he answered, "our Parliament sits only once every three months."

## James Kutcher's Book —

## 'The Case of the Legless Vet'

THE CASE OF THE LEGLESS VETERAN, by James Kutcher.—New Park Publications, Ltd. (distributed by Pioneer Pub.), 178 pages, \$1.

By SCOTT ARDEN

For the reader concerned by the state of civil liberties in America today, James Kutcher's book on his famous case will be of especial interest. The Kutcher case has been, and remains, one of the most outstanding tests of the United States government's "loyalty" program.

Kutcher was drafted into the army during the last war and was so seriously wounded by a mortar shell that both of his legs had to be amputated. After the war (or after his part of it at least) he found a routine clerical job processing forms for the Newark (N. J.) office of the Veterans Administration.

In 1948 he was suspended from his job on grounds of "disloyalty" because of his membership in the Socialist Workers Party (the "orthodox Trotskyist" group) which is on the infamous "subversive list" of the attorney general.

Although the government claimed otherwise, the fact that the SWP was on the "list," and that Kutcher admitted membership in the group, constituted the whole case for his dismissal. Rather than silent acquiescence (which is all too often the course chosen by victims of the "loyalty" purges) it was decided to fight the case for his reinstatement.

## WIDE SUPPORT

This book is a detailed account, from Kutcher's vantage point as a non-Stalinist socialist, of the resulting events. After beginning with a brief summary of his life and politics, in the course of which he makes it quite clear that his role has always been that of rank-and-file participation rather than leadership in any form, he then proceeds to the case itself, from the beginning (five years ago) to the present.

Since readers of LABOR ACTION have been made quite familiar with the case's

main facts, and as it would be next to impossible to summarize concisely the detailed story of the book (and since you should buy it in any case) we will confine ourselves to mentioning a few of its outstanding features.

One of the best points of this surprisingly well-written book is the extensive amount of quotation both from the public press and from the various "hearings" and "interviews" that took place in the course of appealing the case. Every (almost literally, every) section of the liberal, labor and radical movements supported Kutcher's defense, and the "Kutcher Civil Liberties Committees" that were formed were resultingly successful—at least in terms of popularizing the case and raising money for the necessary legal expenses.

Many prominent leaders of religious and minority groups (as well as the specifically liberal, labor and radical organizations) supported him not because they agreed with his political views but simply because they believed in his right to hold such views.

## CP'S ROLE

Opposed to Kutcher, on the other hand, was the government . . . and the Stalinists. The role of the latter is carefully detailed in the book.

Initially their line was one of maintaining absolute silence, a line which they soon abandoned in favor of a series of extremely vicious attacks in their press. This proved so unpopular, however, not only with non-Stalinists but with some of their members and sympathizers as well, that they were soon forced to drop their open attacks and again revert to silence. Several prominent "Stalinoid" figures (I. F. Stone, for example) strongly supported Kutcher from the beginning, in spite of criticism from such elements as Howard Fast, the Stalinist author.

The Case of the Legless Veteran is certainly worth the dollar it costs, and even more certainly deserves a wide audience.

## Reading from Left to Right

## How Burma Defeated the Stalinists

HOW BURMA STOPPED COMMUNISM, by Sidney Lens.—The Progressive, November.

This is an important article, with an important message. We are aware that there are moot questions about the policy carried on by the socialist government of Burma, and indeed these questions have also been disputed in the columns of LABOR ACTION; but the main point made by Lens is a powerful one regardless of this.

His thesis is given in his first paragraph:

"Most people who talk about the 'war against Communism' seldom think of little Burma. They may think of Korea, of Indo-China, of Malaya, but not of the classical land of the 'golden earth.' In Burma, you see, they're fighting Communism without American, British, French, or any other Western arms. What's more, their main weapon doesn't seem to be military at all, so that with our current mania for military power we can't seem to believe that this is a real war against Communism. Yet the Burmese started off with a greater handicap than the French in Indo-China; they have spent far less in money and men; and they have succeeded infinitely better in isolating and defeating the enemy. They have been fighting Communism with revolution, and therein lies a tale of immense significance."

## BURMA'S SITUATION

Lens (author of *The Counterfeit Revolution and Right, Left and Center*, who has just returned from a year-long swing around the world) details the fact that the results in Burma have been attained in spite of greater obstacles than existed in Indo-China, not because of some more favorable situation. To begin with, both have China on the north border; have about the same population; the same heritage of hatred of imperialism; "and what is not well known—both had Communists leading their anti-imperialist movement." Also:

"Actually the Burmese seemed to have been under greater Soviet influence than the Red rebels of Indo-China. . . . In Burma . . . the government has an army not more than 50,000 strong—one fifth the size of the French—and spends only a tiny proportion of what the Great Powers are spending. . . .

"... the Burmese Communists not only seemed to have a complete monopoly of mass support at the outbreak of the civil war, as well as a confused and unorganized adversary, but a situation of economic chaos most favorable to their machinations.

"When the war ended Burma was badly ravaged. A distinguished economist claims that in no country was there more destruction. . . .

## 'HERE LIES THE SECRET'

"Here, certainly, was a fertile field for Stalinism. What's more, the Communists were ready. The general secretary of the only important political group—the Anti-Fascist Peoples Freedom League—was a Communist named Than Tun. The trade unions, the large peasant organization, the youth, and a big chunk of the military forces were in Communist hands. On the eve of civil war in 1948 the Communists were able to mobilize three quarters of a million peasants to a vast conference under their control. In addition, almost all of the Socialists, now the core of the government, were less anti-Communist than non-Communist. As Kyaw Nyein, current general secretary of the AFPFL, puts it: 'We all looked to Moscow as our main friend. We had been brought up on Com-

unist literature, and though we had some reservations about their totalitarian methods we were far from hostile.'"

But in spite of all this: the two big differences between Burma and Indo-China were: (1) there was a strong Burmese socialist movement around which the progressive elements could rally, and (2) with the retirement of British imperialism in 1948, the Stalinists' main appeal was undercut. In Indo-China the choice seemed to be: stooging for French imperialism or supporting the Stalinists, however, reluctantly. The result: a war which has already been a victory for Stalinism no matter how it ends. In Burma the choice was made: a socialist government versus the Stalinists. The result: a resounding defeat for the latter.

Lens discusses in some detail how the Burmese socialists drew up and carried through their social program in the interests of the peasants and workers, as opposed to the bureaucratic Stalinist peasant program; this is in line with his argument that the Stalinists were defeated, at bottom, not by superior military force, necessary as that was to hold the gates, but by demonstrating the superiority of the socialists' social and political program and thereby winning over the people, to the point where today the Stalinists are ineffectual and isolated.

"Here lies the secret of the Burmese Socialists' success," he writes. "They have wrested the people from the Communists, and having won the people they have reduced the Communist military effort—which began so auspiciously—to pathetic impotence. They have been able to prove to the Burmese people that the Communists were not revolutionaries but counter-revolutionaries."

## NO WITCHHUNT

Moreover Burmese democracy was not gutted in this fight against the Stalinists, in the midst of even civil war (as compared with the U. S. situation!), in a country with less of a democratic tradition than the U. S., in a poorer country.

"Burmese unions, although controlled by the same Socialists who dominate the government, nevertheless strike against the same government. Marine and dock workers struck recently. Such strikes don't usually last long because there is a friendly ear in the halls of power, but the mere fact that workers can—and do say their piece is impressive.

"Even the fifth columns of the Stalinists and Karens continue to function legally, to publish newspapers, and organize dual unions. The Workers and Peasants Party—commonly known as the 'above-ground Communists'—has an office in the center of Rangoon on Phayre Street. A few blocks away is the Stalinist trade-union center, the Trade Union Congress of Burma. The Karen insurgents also have their Karen Congress which similarly functions in the open. The Socialists are so confident of their own strength with the masses that they are not afraid of fifth-columnists."

Lens indicates that there are more seamy sides or at least more difficult problems; his opinion seems to be that these are being energetically tackled by the government. Moreover, he lays stress on the vicious role played by the Chiang Kai-shek troops in Burma. Yet, whatever criticisms might be made by others, Lens' conclusions might well stand:

## LESSON

"But Burma has already made a lasting contribution to the history of our times: this is the only country where democratic socialism has defeated Communism both militarily and ideologically. It has demonstrated a lesson the professional anti-Communists might sometime learn—that in the final analysis only a democratic revolution aimed at providing political freedom and economic opportunity can triumph over the appeal of Communism among the underprivileged millions."

Of course it is doubtful whether Sidney Lens really expects the reactionary "professional anti-Communists" to learn this lesson, for a truly democratic revolution of this sort (i.e., a social revolution) is not within the framework of their thinking. The lesson is for the American people, and especially American labor, to learn.

As a matter of fact the same lesson was in part put before them by the case of Britain, where the British CP is reduced to impotence as against a Labor Party which has a great many things wrong with it (perhaps even more than the Burmese Socialist Party) but which was fortunately able to provide a progressive pole of attraction for the masses who hate capitalism.

## Readers of Labor Action Take the Floor

## "A Step Forward"

To the Editor:

After a careful reading of my letter and your reply in the Nov. 16 issue of LABOR ACTION, in our rather sharp exchange over the preface you ran to the Third Camp statement of Peacemakers, I realize I owe you an apology.

I was certainly happy to see LABOR ACTION print the statement and I deeply regret that I didn't make that clear. All pacifists should realize what a real step forward this was for LABOR ACTION. After all, it was just three years ago that members of the ISL-SYL protested against my being seated at a joint YPSL-SYL conference on the grounds that since I was a pacifist I obviously couldn't be a socialist!

Far from being sectarian as my letter (and your reply) might have indicated, I have often worked closely and in harmony with members of the ISL-SYL, sometimes over the protest of my pacifist comrades. I hasten to apologize if my letter in any way implied I questioned the sincerity or the democratic inten-

tions of LABOR ACTION and the ISL-SYL.

However, I am continually dismayed by what seems to me to be an almost automatic rejection of non-violence on the part of the ISL-SYL. Agreeing with the editors that a constructive discussion is of more value than our previous ill-tempered exchange, I have taken up your offer and am enclosing some comments on the nature of violence and democracy which will, I hope, do more justice to the pacifist position.

Fraternally

David McREYNOLDS

The article which Comrade McReynolds encloses ("Is Violence Undemocratic?"), together with an expression of our own views on the subject, will be run as a discussion exchange in the first available issue of LABOR ACTION. In view of the space that will be taken in our next issue by the report on the Third Camp conference, we expect that this will be in the issue following the next one.—Ed.



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by ALBERT GATES

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# MARXISM for TODAY

## Marx on Freedom of the Press

On October 17-19 the Socialist International held its third International Socialist Press Conference, with representatives from socialist parties in various countries. In his speech at this affair, the secretary of the International, Julius Braunthal included an interesting section dealing with Marx's early writings on freedom of the press, which we publish below.

For socialists, the denial of freedom of speech is the blackest treason against the tradition of socialism; the enslavement of the free world is a fundamental mark of the counter-revolutionary nature of Russia's political system—a system which justifies itself by an appeal to Marxism.

This travesty of Marx's philosophical and social thought requires no further refutation today. My aim here is merely to show what Marx thought of the problem of free press, to which today's meeting is dedicated. He analyzed it thoroughly in two long essays, which are to be found in the first volume of the collected edition of his works.

For Marx "the right to think and speak the truth" was an elementary, human right and freedom of the press—as he said — merely "human freedom in practice." Marx recognized that human freedom is made up of a complex of interdependent freedoms.

"Each form of freedom," he said, "postulates the other in the same way as one limb of the body postulates another. Whenever one particular freedom is threatened, freedom itself is threatened. . . . Freedom is always freedom, whether it is expressed in printers' ink or in terms of land and possessions, in terms of conscience or in a political meeting."

### 'INDISPENSABLE PREMISE'

Without freedom of speech a nation is subject to an authoritarian regime—the slave not only of economic and social tyranny but of a tyranny of the spirit.

Marx regarded freedom of the press as an indispensable premise for the people's collaboration in shaping its own fate, as an essential instrument for deciding its own destiny. With a passion such as is extremely rare in his works he described the free press as "the watchful eye of the people, the living expression of the people's trust in itself, the vocal link which unites the individual with the

State and the world, the incorporation of culture which, by a process of refinement, makes material struggles intellectual and gives ideal expression to their coarse, crude strength." Without freedom of the press, he wrote, he could not fulfill himself.

Discussing the debate on freedom of the press in the Rhenish Landtag he deplored the cool attitude of those Liberal deputies for whom freedom of the press is "only an affair of the head in which the heart plays no part." He recalled Goethe's saying that a painter succeeds only with those types of feminine beauty which he has at least loved in some living person.

"Freedom of the press, too, is a kind of beauty," Marx stated, "which one must have loved to able to defend. It is something which I love truly, whose existence I feel to be essential, to be necessary to me so that without it I cannot live at peace, or live a full life."

And he closed his essay on the conditions of the press in Prussia, which were idyllic compared with conditions under the Russians, with the words: "Those periods in which one can think as one wishes and say what one thinks enjoy great good fortune."

### THE 'VICE OF VICES'

And now let me quote what Marx thought of the press in authoritarian states—the kind of press which we know so well from Russia and the East Zone of Germany.

"Hypocrisy, that vice of vices, is inseparable from it," he wrote. "From this basic vice all its other sins derive. . . . The government hears nothing but its own voice. It knows that it hears nothing but its own voice and yet persists in the illusion that it is hearing the voice of the people and demands that the people should submit to the same illusion. The people therefore fall either into political superstition, or political skepticism, or else they take no further part in the life of the State and become a disorderly mass of individuals. Meanwhile — although it was only on the sixth day that God himself said of his creation: 'And behold it was good'—the press makes a daily boast of what the government has willed into existence; but since, of necessity, one day contradicts the next, the press lies continuously and must deny all knowledge of the lie and stifle its shame."

## A SONG OF SHERWOOD

AFTER ALFRED NOYES

"No record of Communists in Robin Hood's band."—Telegram from Sheriff of Nottingham to the State Education Board, Indiana.

Sherwood in the red dawn, was Robin Hood a Red? Far away in the U. S. A. the story has been spread, Teachers tell the parents, their children parents tell, Robin was a Communist, and Friar Tuck as well.

Capitalist Englishmen could never sleep secure, Sherwood Forest bandits would rob them for the poor; Ballads, histories, legends to bonfires they consign— Robin's dialectics took the Marxist-Lenin line.

Sniffing round the Greenwood in the Sherwood glen, Senator McCarthy hunts with all his smeary men! Robin shared among the poor the booty of the rich, Congress and Committee-men are hunting down the witch.

Sherwood and the Sheriff waged a never-ending feud— Now his ancient enemy takes sides with Robin Hood; Cotton Mather's followers receive a telegram "Robin Hood no Communist—Signed, Shrieve of Nottingham."

Anti-Red Americans may seek the Greenwood shade, Robin and his robber band attract the Tourist Trade, Archives show no evidence of Hood's subversive plots (As the Bard to Stratford, so Robin is to Notts).

Shadows of the shadowy band in Sherwood may be seen— Who has ever heard of Reds attired in Lincoln Green? Rising from his leafy bed, he winds his ghostly horn— Robin led his merry men before Karl Marx was born.

Through the crimson dawning the robber band goes by, Robin draws the long bow, the Sheriff's arrows fly; Merry thieves and aldermen the bloodhounds keep at bay Nottingham and Sherwood answer "Nuts" to U. S. A.

SAGITTARIUS

(From *The New Statesman & Nation*, Nov. 21)

## BOOKS and Ideas Bellow: Augie March

### A Novel Mirrors the Alienation Of the Intellectual in Society

By G. K. H.

THE ADVENTURES OF AUGIE MARCH, by Saul Bellow.—The Viking Press, New York, 1953, \$4.50.

Saul Bellow's big novel has been hailed by the critics as a major literary achievement. As literature, it is quite impressive. It is, in large part, a social novel. Robert Gorham Davis wrote for the *New York Times Book Review* that "not since Dos Passos' *USA* has there been in a novel such an enormous range of discriminating reporting as in this one."

It is true that *The Adventures of Augie March* brings the reader into contact with many strata of American life. It takes him from the twenties through the depression and the war and the early post-war years. He brushes against the underworld, the radical movement, the great CIO organizing drive, the bohemia which collects on the fringes of every university, the great mass of the unemployed of the '30s, the world of merchant seamen and of the American colony in Mexico and later in post-war Europe.

But there is only one group in American society about which Augie, and the reader with him, really gets to know and feel something. That is the commercial middle class, and those who are frantically trying to climb into its ranks.

With regard to this last group, the book is vivid, penetrating and devastating. Bellow's book is in no way a social satire. He writes with a kind of detached and tolerant sympathy about all the groups and individuals with whom Augie comes in contact.

### SOCIAL TYPE

But despite the hero's inability to accept them and identify himself with them, it is only the rich and the people who are trying to get rich whose psychology, culture and motivations get real illumination cast upon them. Even when people from other groups are made to live (and the book is full of fascinating characters), they remain isolated individuals whose personal relationships to the hero have meaning. But the rich are examined in their habitat; they are given a real social treatment.

Aside from this, the book is interesting, from a social viewpoint (and that is all we are discussing here), more for what it tells us of the author and his social type than for what it tells us about American society. It is not likely that the alienation of the intellectual from society has been more strikingly portrayed in recent literature.

Augie March is the character who really counts in this book. He philosophizes at length. He can find no place for himself in any group. He never knows what he wants to do with himself, and thus gets dragged around by one strong person after another, of both sexes. But they can only drag him so far, because he can never identify himself or his own interests with anyone or anything or any idea, cause, endeavor or way of life. Everywhere and in everything he is an observer and commentator rather than a real participant.

### ANTHILL VIEW

And he observes and comments from no stable or fixed or developing point of view, at least until the very end of the book. And even then, he seems to have reached some kind of personalist philosophy to which, however, he is so little committed that long after he has been really "illuminated" by the idea that what is "right" for him is to run a farm for children who are as dislocated as he is, we find him instead dealing in the post-war black market in Europe as the agent of a rich friend.

Augie comes in contact with the Stalinist and Trotskyist movements of the '30s, but neither their ideas nor their organizational life mean anything to him. He is moved by the figure of Trotsky in exile in Mexico, but that is because he is a Great Man, and not because his ideas have any social significance.

For a brief period Augie becomes a CIO organizer during the great drive, but he never feels anything much about it. He sees the millions of workers who were flocking to the unions as being driven by some blind urge, like ants in a disrupted ant-hill. He has a distant sympathy for them, but their efforts are basically futile, because they are bound to be betrayed in the end. The world is too big and empty and complicated and confusing a place for millions of people to be able to do anything with it or about it. He organizes them with the same de-

tachment with which he earlier participated in a burglary.

Of course, it must be borne in mind that the book was written not while the CIO drive was going on, but during the past few years. The feelings Augie has about that great social movement are not a product of its impact on the author at the time, but the product of his reflections and feelings about it now, when the early idealism and drive have been largely replaced by inertia and bureaucratic dullness.

### DRIFTER WITH THE TIDE

As inertia and dullness (and worse) permeate the social and political atmosphere of America today, it is inevitable that many sensitive artists should reflect them in their description of society. In Bellow's case, this has not taken the form of a murky, other-worldish, personal symbolism (Mailer's *Barbary Shore*), but rather of detachment, non-involvement, alienation. And if the artist is steeped in such a feeling, it is also perhaps inevitable that he should read it back into history, and hence that nothing which ever happened should seem to him to have been more worthwhile than anything that he can imagine happening now or in the future.

There is another possibility for the artist. This is that he draw from history an understanding of the potential society has for its own regeneration. In the darkest times sensitive men have found from such sources the inspiration for their work. Rather than reading the mood of their times back into history, and thus reinforcing it, they have translated the surge of history into works of art which have helped to transform the mood of their times.

One such work comes readily to mind: Victor Serge's *The Case of Comrade Tulayev*. But to write such a social novel in a period of reaction, perhaps the artist must have a deep attachment to a great social movement in which he has actually lived and worked. He must have felt the impact of great ideas, and of the men in all stations of life who can be moved by them. Lacking this, the artist with a social orientation, who above all must be true to himself, to his own experience, is likely to become cynical, detached or demoralized (or all three) in a time of social decay. Bellow, like so many others, illustrates this social trend.

### COURT REFUSES C. O. STATUS TO DAVIDSON

LOS ANGELES, Nov. 30—Vern Davidson, a conscientious objector, former national secretary of the Young Peoples Socialist League, was convicted of draft evasion Monday in a Los Angeles federal court. Sentence was postponed until the following Monday, but Judge Harry Westover has announced that he will sentence Davidson to three years.

Davidson's defense rested mainly upon denial of a hearing by the Justice Department on his co status, after his board had scheduled such a hearing; and he questioned the constitutionality of the provision of the draft law which denies objector status except on the basis of religious belief.

Judge Westover, in convicting Davidson, rejected the first plea on the ground that the defendant had no right to a hearing as a conscientious objector, because his objection to war was of a political and personal nature and not religious. He had previously refused to consider the constitutional question. Attorney J. B. Tietz immediately moved for a retrial.

Davidson is the first prominent socialist convicted of resistance to the draft in many years. His defense has been supported by the Los Angeles section of the Socialist Party and by the Fellowship of Reconciliation.

The Davidson Defense Committee (David McReynolds, secretary) has been active in supporting the case and has announced that an appeal will be made to a higher court, if necessary.

### WEEK by WEEK . . .

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# Eisenhower's Pact with Spanish Fascism Hasn't Solved Dictator Franco's Worries

By PHILIP COBEN

On November 30 Franco's Cortes (parliament) was given the privilege of being allowed to ratify the Eisenhower-Franco pact. The Caudillo himself did not bother to come around to tell the boys about it, but he did graciously send a message. In addition—big excitement for the trained dogs—the minister of foreign affairs, Alberto Martin Artajo, dropped in to give them a pep talk about the pact before they voted for it.

The vote in the Cortes was unanimous. But the enthusiasm of even ruling circles for the pact is not unanimous.

Though it has often been conjectured in the American press that the long-drawn-out negotiations and the coyness of the Franco regime in coming to a deal with the U. S. were purely a matter of blackmail pressure for a better cut, there is evidence that another element was genuine resentment on the part of pro-Franco elements against the drawing-in of Spain into the military framework of the American-led cold war.

Naturally the politics behind this are

as reactionary as you might expect, and quite different from the anti-war and anti-imperialist motives behind the opposition of the socialist and democratic forces.

On the part of the reluctant dragons of the pro-Franco camp, the question was whether Spain could make a better deal of it all around by staying out of the whole mess and doing business independently. But such considerations had to give way before the paramount objective of utilizing U. S. dollars, arms and prestige to prop up the foundations of the regime itself.

## NO BARGAIN

This motive won out, but it does not necessarily lead to wild enthusiasm over the terms of the deal.

The U. S. may have sold the democratic honor it pretends to have, but the Falangist buyers don't think they got a bargain.

Thus, Foreign Minister Artajo directed his speech before his K-9 corps in the parliament toward justifying the pact in the eyes of skeptical fascists. He argued

that the pact in no way limited the sovereign independence of Spain and that its freedom of action would in no way suffer. This was in answer to popular slogans and feelings that Franco had sold himself into "Yankee" receivership. (The socialist POUM's *La Batalla* features the gibe: "The latest slogan of the Falange: Gibraltar for Spain and Spain for the Yankees!")

Artajo carefully laid the blame for all anti-Franco action in the UN up to now on France and England, absolving the U. S. (meaning Truman in this case) from any initiatory responsibility for the long boycott of Spain by the major powers. He argued that this attitude of France and England, which kept Spain out of NATO, turned out to be beneficial because it led to bilateral relations with the U. S.

## OBJECTIONS

In this way Artajo's speech illustrates how the Franco regime is trying to make maximum use of the fact of friendly relations with the U. S. It is not presenting the pact to the people purely as a prac-

tical arrangement, as Eisenhower tried to do. The Americans are our friends now, it is saying, not like those British and French. And by flaunting this powerful friendship it hopes to dismay and dishearten the people who hate it.

This is the line which reconciles the disgruntled pro-Franco elements to the pact, but the specifically bourgeois circles of the regime have their fingers crossed.

Powerful economic organs and spokesmen of the bourgeoisie—*El Economista*, *Fomento de la Producción*, *Economía Mundial*—have let it be known that the economic provisions of the pact are far from satisfactory.

Their objections are twofold: (1) the amount of economic aid is too small to make much difference; and (2) the opportunities which are provided for the penetration of American capital are too great.

## FRANCO-McCARRAN

*El Economista* on October 3 came out with warning words about the possible repercussions of the pact's provisions on the equilibrium of the economy, and took to task a correspondent who wrote about it with too-unqualified cheerfulness. They are worried, worried about where they will come in after the Yankee missions get through.

All this is in addition to the fears which have been openly expressed by the Catholic hierarchy about the consequences of letting American heretics loose on the country in capacities other than tourists.

Worry, worry, worry—it appears that the pact is not going to be any miraculous savior of the Franco regime. Madrid is worried about Yankee Free-masons swarming around too.

To the reported consternation and indignation of U. S. Ambassador Dunn, the Franco regime decided that it was going to apply its own "McCarran Act" to Americans coming in. The foreign undesirables would include (besides Communists, of course) Free-masons. According to a Paris weekly, Washington has indignantly protested several times but Artajo and Franco remain intransigent on the point. And they don't have to argue much: they point to the McCarran Act in the U. S.

## The Franco Cult Meets with an 'Insolent Provocation' — The 'ABC' Affair in Madrid

By a Correspondent  
Of *La Batalla*

MADRID, Oct. 1953—Contrary to the predictions of the professional pessimists, the conclusion of the Washington-Madrid alliance did not have the effect of weakening the divergences which separate the various pro-Franco sectors of opinion. Indeed, the contrary is true.

The best proof of this statement is to be found in the following facts, which nowadays form all the small talk among political circles.

On October 1, the 17th anniversary of the "exaltation" of General Franco to the leadership of the state was celebrated with great pomp and circumstance in Madrid. On this occasion the authorities organized a demonstration of homage to the Caudillo. As is known, this demonstration—in spite of the mobilization decreed by the "trade unions"—was a flop.

Thus it was that, nauseated at hearing shouts of "Gibraltar for Spain!" ground out on order by the boys of the Youth Front at the same time that Spain was becoming a Yankee colony, the people of Madrid spontaneously and resolutely refused to lend themselves to the project of dressing up this farce.

The following day, the whole press, obedient to the instructions it received, talked unanimously about the "great crowd packed into the Plaza de Oriente to pay homage to Franco."

So wrote the whole press—including the paper *ABC*. But this organ of Luca

de Tena not only published the news supplied to it by the propaganda bureau but also—an editorial entitled "The Crisis of Flattery."

## AESOPIAN REFERENCES

This editorial, which circulated throughout Madrid in an astonishing number of copies, devoted itself to the subject of . . . "the progressive abolition of the Stalin cult in the USSR."

The editorial said things like the following:

"This fact [the progressive abolition of the Stalin cult] will have no importance whatsoever if it is a matter of a simple substitution; that is, if the name of Malenkov now mechanically takes the place formerly occupied by the name of Stalin. But the end of the dictator does not yet coincide with the birth of a new leader. The eclipse of personalism has been total. Malenkov is not yet the permanent object of flattery, like his predecessor in the leadership of the Soviet state. The name and figure of the new superman is not yet lavishly thrown about as was the case with Stalin. Malenkov has gone into a kind of discreet shadow, something like the status of a modest president of the Swiss confederation.

"The fact that this has happened in the USSR means neither more nor less than that personal political forms are primitive ones, crude ones. In proportion as the society develops, law replaces individual will, and institutions replace persons. It is men who fill the gaps in the state; they do not constitute the state itself. In point of fact, this phenomenon of depersonalization is only a step from the transient to the permanent; from the theatrical to the doctrinal; from the contingent to the necessary; from the unknowable to the known."

## BOMBSHELL

The people of Madrid did not fail to understand, and they saw in the above passages a series of direct and precise allusions to the absurd Franco cult which the Falangists are at present intensifying.

According to the information we have received, the *ABC* editorial exploded like a bombshell in El Pardo, in the ministries and in all the Falangist circles. Some ministers called it "insolent provocation."

The government's reaction was immediate. It promulgated an order dismissing the director of *ABC* and filing charges against him. But since the latter (Torcuato Luca de Tena) had been dismissed some days before over the publication of the fantastic news about the "arrival of Beria in Spain," the punishment fell on the sub-director, an unfortunate penpusher of the Luca de Tena family.

Naturally, these measures were not communicated to the press. The government, which was not able to avoid a scandal in Madrid, tried at least to pre-

vent the echoes from going beyond the confines of the capital.

The anti-Franco opposition circles do not assign excessive importance to what has been called the Franco-ABC affair. But, in any case, it has been interpreted as another proof that Washington's dollars and arms will not serve to hold together the Franco conglomeration.

And the good people of Madrid enjoyed loud peals of laughter for several days. Just as they had the last laugh at the dictatorship of Primo de Rivera, when a press less enslaved than the present one played some trick or other on the dictator. And that is why, say what you will, Franco has still not won the day.

*La Batalla*, October 29

## DECLARATION BY THE POUM

After long and laborious negotiations—negotiations which dragged out over more than two years and which were carried on in accordance with the strictest rules of secret diplomacy—the governments of the United States and Franco Spain have put their signatures to an immoral alliance which corresponds neither to the wishes nor aspirations of the U. S. and Spanish people.

The U. S.-Falangist alliance is a victory for the reactionary and warlike tendencies in the world and, in the first place, for Yankee imperialism. But it is also a defeat for the international working-class movement and all the democratic forces.

The Eisenhower-Franco pact, above all, is an instrument of war and oppression.

Its basic meaning is clear. By virtue of the provisions of the agreements signed in Madrid, the ex-ally of Hitler and Mussolini has granted the Washington government what no other European government has been asked to concede: naval bases for the Sixth Mediterranean Fleet of the U. S., and air bases for Yankee strategic (atomic) air power.

Thus, thanks to Franco, the United States is on the road to becoming a Mediterranean and European power. Spain will be an immense Yankee Gibraltar, an aircraft carrier, a colony of U. S. imperialism.

In return for these decisive concessions, the Washington leaders have agreed to hand out a ridiculous amount of economic aid—aid which will be used to equip the country strategically for war, and which in no way will serve either to restore the bankrupt Spanish economy or to lessen the deep poverty of the popular masses.

The Washington-Madrid pact is the most complete and ignominious capitulation in the history of Spain. More than that: it is the historic abdication of the reactionary classes and castes of Spanish society. Yesterday, in collusion with international fascism, these reactionaries lighted the fire of the civil war in order to block the triumph of socialism; and today they alienate everyone in order to preserve their privileges and their tottering rule.

But Franco—plus his army, the church, the bourgeoisie and the landholders—is one thing, and the Spanish people are another.

Nor will the Spanish people—who have never capitulated before Francoism—accept a pact which serves to prop up their enslavement and lead them into a third imperialist world war.

The POUM, certain that we are interpreting the feelings of the working class and the whole Spanish people, declare that we have entered into a period when the struggle against the Franco tyranny is absolutely linked with the struggle for the independence of Spain.

Our Party, aware of the dangers and possibilities of the time, firmly convinced that the development of the great struggles which are going on in the world tend and will tend to open up the perspective of socialist liberation, renews its will to fight, stands solidly against any spirit of retreat, condemns every symptom of defeatist moods, affirms its faith in the destiny of the Spanish people; and once more invites all anti-Franco organizations to build a common front for the liberty and independence of Spain.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE POUM

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## SPOTLIGHT

Continued from page 1

# THE MAN WITH THE BUCKET

## An Orthodox-Hansenite Throws Up a Mud-Screen

By JONAH WILLIAMS

The reader may not know who Joseph Hansen is, so we will tell him.

The Hansen we mean is a writer for the *Militant* and a spokesman for the Socialist Workers Party. When there is some ordinary criticism or other to make of us, there is mild and fun-loving strife at the meeting of the second stratum of SWP leaders (the first stratum meets only with himself, because he is The Founder) about who shall write it. But if there is some especially dirty, unscrupulous, lying, villainous job to be done on us, the eyes of all of them turn in silent spontaneity—some with admiration, some with relief—to the one in their midst whose bucket is never empty and hands are never dry. That's Joseph Hansen.

**So, with patience and firmly-pinched nostrils, let us proceed to the Man With the Bucket.**

The followers of the Founder have just had a split in their organization. Although it is no novelty with them, it seems to have produced a bad case of shock. That does not require much explanation because it is not really hard to understand.

For years, we have been trying to explain to them that their theory that Stalinist Russia is still a "workers' state" has nothing in common with reality, with socialism or with Marxian theory, and that, if persisted in, it can only drive them further toward capitulation to Stalinism. Now they find themselves obliged to announce that a whole group of their leadership, followed by a good third of their membership, are "traitors," "ex-Trotskyists," "capitulators to Stalinism," "Stalinoids," or just plain "Stalinists" (with their traditional sense of refined accuracy, they use all these terms interchangeably).

But these leaders include the head of their trade-union work, the editor of their theoretical review, the director of their presidential-election campaign, the organizer of their most important local organization—to mention a few—and their followers include not the poorest but some of the best of the SWP's members. How did the absolutely genuine, double-checked, pre-shrunk and hand-painted Trotskyist organization, whose Orthodoxy is guaranteed under the Pure Food and Drugs Act, turn out such a large consignment of Stalinists, Stalinoids and traitors all of a sudden? Shock! Embarrassment! Incoherent splutter!

### THE LONG WAY 'ROUND

But not from Hansen. He dips into his bucket and drops the following explanation into the latest issue of the *Militant* as to why the "Cochranites are rushing toward Stalinism":

"This is only the first form of their capitulation to the pressures emanating from American imperialism in its drive toward war."

**You can see that for yourself, if you only prod some gray matter. The way to capitulate to American imperialism is to rush toward Stalinism. That's doing it the hard way and loses you a lot of time. But, as we used to say in Kansas, it figures; and out that way, for all we know, maybe it still does.**

But that isn't the whole of the trouble. There is the Fourth International itself. We learn from several recent issues of the *Militant* that Pablo is an "ex-Trotskyist" and even a "Stalinist" who must be driven out of his post. And who is Pablo? Well—hem—haw—uh—ah—hmmm. In other words, he is the head of the Fourth International, whose work is directed, whose policies are carried out, whose pronouncements are written, whose reorganizations are reorganized, by a secretariat which is thoroughly and firmly in accord with Pablo.

In plain English (if we are to believe the *Militant*), the leadership of the Fourth International is now in the hands of Stalinists! This was the official announcement with which the Socialist Workers Party's Political Committee accompanied the celebration of the 25th anniversary of Trotskyism in this country, without seeming to be at all conscious of the utterly devastating statement it was thereby proclaiming about itself and all that it had succeeded in accomplishing after a quarter of a century of activity. It is hard to believe; that is, it is true.

**Shock! Embarrassment! The SWP leaders cannot easily look their members in the eye, for doesn't everyone know how LABOR ACTION has been showing, for years now, the ideological capitulation to Stalinism that saturated the line of the Fourth International, particularly as developed by Pablo?**

Solution: turn to Hansen. He has the problem licked with the article already referred to, entitled (the man is the manner) "A Stalinophile Warms Up to a—Stalinophobe."

### LESSON IN EPISTOLARY ETIQUETTE

First he explains to his readers that "the disloyal leaders of the Cochranite faction" (elsewhere called "the acolytes of Pablo," that is, of the head of the Fourth International) were kicked out of the party because they boycotted the SWP's 25th anniversary meeting. But isn't that just a tiny bit on the side of severity? No sir, not at all!

"Our anniversary was in effect an SWP picket line. It was a demonstration against the capitalist warmakers of today and the Stalinist traitors who expelled the founding group of Trotskyists from the Communist Party in 1928. By their boycott, the Cochranites crossed this picket line."

**That's good enough for us. A man who will stay away from a meeting because it is a picket line, and thereby cross the picket line he stays away from, and therewith go over to the side not only of the capitalist warmakers but also of the Stalinist traitors, is worse than a strikebreaker—he is a triple-jointed flying saucer.**

There is no room for him in the Orthodox Trotskyist party, any more than there is for the millions of other people in the city who refused or failed to come down to the picket line to hear the picket captain celebrate the 25th anniversary of the strike.

Second, he explains that after LABOR ACTION had published the news about the SWP expulsions, Cochran sent our editor a letter correcting some inaccuracies and using the occasion to set forth his own views on the split and his criticism of the actions of the Cannonites toward him and his friends. We published the letter, as anyone familiar with our policy in such

matters would expect us to do. This seems to displease Hansen.

**It is regrettable. But given Hansen's standards, what else could he expect? According to these standards, Hansen has a right to make whatever statements about Cochran and his friends he finds appropriate for the pages of the *Militant*, whereas Cochran has no right to make any commenting statements in the *Militant* or anywhere else, least of all in LABOR ACTION, where he had the "evident expectation of a sympathetic response." This would seem to leave Cochran rather circumscribed living space.**

Cochran violated Hansen's rigorous standards by writing his letter to LABOR ACTION with "a politeness that undoubtedly pleased and flattered the editor of LABOR ACTION," and violated them even more flagrantly when he "likewise refrained from pointing out that LABOR ACTION is part of the social-democratic press whose chief function is to assist the State Department in preparing a military assault on the Soviet bloc."

### SO IT SEEMS WE'RE 'ANTI-SOVIET'

Whereupon Hansen gives Cochran some lessons—including, we trust, some completely forgotten and abjured lessons—in how *not* to be polite and how *not* to refrain from pointing out. He hurls away his dipper as too small and too slow, turns his bucket bottom up and pours out the full flow of his spiritual talents to show Cochran and the rest of the interested world the difference between the Orthodox Hansenite and an honest man:

(1) Our "chief function is to assist the State Department in preparing a military assault on the Soviet bloc." Naturally! That's clear to anybody who has eyes in his head, and covers one of them and shoves a needle through the other.

(2) We are Stalinophobes, and that is defined by the bucketeer as "an opposition to Stalinism so unreasoning that it refuses to defend what is progressive in the Soviet Union and will not stop at supporting the war-mongering foreign policy of Big Business in order to get at the Kremlin bureaucracy." Now the reader of the *Militant*, which is edited by the only moral people who have the only shining banner because they love truth and hate frame-ups, know where LABOR ACTION stands. (To the editor of the *Daily Worker*: "Forsake base envy and salute a worthy peer!")

(3) LABOR ACTION is "anti-Soviet." Enough. We don't have to watch and smell the outpourings till the very bottom is reached, if his bucket has a bottom. It is enough and more than enough to read, in the paper of "Orthodox Trotskyism," that we are "anti-Soviet" because we are anti-Stalinist, even though everyone knows or ought to know that Stalinism wiped out soviets and sovietism without a trace, years ago, cruelly, savagely, bloodily, with more victims than were ever suffered by any proletarian movement in any country under any regime in history.

So, the reader will see, it is not there that Hansen confuses us. We know him for what he is and we have known him for a long time. Like many of his present colleagues, we were never able to grasp fully why he does not write and speak for the movement which so perfectly corresponds to his characteristics instead of for the movement which corresponds to them only imperfectly.

What did confuse us was this: We thought for a wildly audacious moment that since Hansen started aiming his bucket at Cochran, he might, in the course of the attack, answer the political arguments that Cochran had made, some of which were referred to by him in his letter to our editor. He didn't. It is safe to say—only one who knows his Hansen knows fully how completely safe it is to say—that he won't, either.

### QUESTIONS FOR THE BUCKETEERS

**Cochran's line represents a capitulation to Stalinism, sure enough, and we were not the last to point that out. But imagine how much confusion would be cleared up if the Man with the Bucket (or the cynics who know his capacity for vileness and tolerate him because he seems to be a sturdy hack) were to answer these questions:**

• How do you account, politically speaking, for the fact that the Fourth International's leadership has fallen into the hands of "ex-Trotskyists" and "Stalinists," as you call them now?

• What were you doing, politically speaking, to prevent the leadership of that International from falling out of the hands of the Orthodox Trotskyists, who must have headed it some time ago in the past, and into the hands of the present Stalinists?

• What basic political course did these Stalinist "usurpers," as you call them now, put forward in the Fourth International that enabled you to see their Stalinism so plainly?

• Did they put forward that tell-tale basic course, basic line, basic analysis, basic theory—call it what you will—only a few weeks ago, or did they put forward exactly the same policies and conceptions that they now have as early as the 3rd Congress of the Fourth International—in open documents, articles, resolutions, theses, speeches, etc.? And if they put their present views forward years ago, as Cochran insists (and so rightly!) what did you counterpose to these views? When? Where?

• Is it true, as Cochran insists (and we're ready to bet he's right on this score), that the entire official leadership of the SWP actually endorsed the Pablo line which you now assail (and so rightly!) as a capitulation to Stalinism? Wouldn't an explanation of that be more interesting to your members than the good news that LABOR ACTION is assisting the State Department in preparing a military assault on the "Soviet" bloc?

There are a good dozen other questions we would like to see answered, some time or other in the next historical period—the questions that Cochran and his friends have put to you without any answer more shattering than the charge, "strikebreaker!" Hansen has confused us by creating the impression that the only answer the SWP has is his bucket. We would not like to believe that the SWP leadership wants everybody to have the same impression.

united support of the Southern troglodytes. In the capitol, Talmadge was threatening to abolish public education in the state rather than yield to any Supreme Court decision (not yet made) which would require the abolition of educational Jim Crow. Outside, Stevenson manfully restrained himself from mentioning anything that might offend these defenders of lily-white civilization.

**That in itself would be merely standard stuff for politicians (though not for the misty-eyed image of Stevenson which used to be held by Fair Deal liberals in the far-off days of last year). But the old quipmaster went a good deal further than mere etiquette or discretion required even for politicians, let alone for statesmen.**

His reference to Republican policy in Reconstruction days after the Civil War may have been none-too-clear for Northern readers scanning the dispatches from Atlanta, but it could not be lost on the Talmadges. What Stevenson did was to tie up the current waving of the "Red shirt" by the Brownells with the waving of "the bloody shirt" by the Northerners who tried to press the defeated slaveholders to the wall. The fact that the tie-up is unhistorical and absurd is the least of it, for this scholar and thinker from Illinois.

### Bisymmetry

Better late than never: we'd like to catch up on an item we missed a few weeks ago. It concerns the reaction to the stand taken by Dulles and the administration on Israel and the Kibya affair.

We expressed our views at the time on the shameful role of the Israelis in this affair, and on the provocative role of the Arab leaders which had preceded it. But quite apart from the rights and wrongs of the question as between these two elements, there could be least doubt of all about the hypocritical role of the State Department in taking the occasion for highly moral indignation against Israel, considering that this is the government which (for example) is financing Franco.

**That reminder is a prelude to saying a word about the stand in the situation taken by the American Council for Judaism.**

This was the only Jewish organization which came out with statements of virtually unqualified support for Dulles and the State Department's line. A prominent supporter of this group, Dr. Elmer Berger, said for example: "Mr. Dulles demonstrated that it is possible for a secretary of state to design foreign policy in the best interests of all the American people."

We shall not take the space to repeat here that the strong anti-Israeli line taken by Washington had little to do with either the objective dictates of international morality or with the best interests of all the American people. What is shown here, in an extreme form, and the reason we bring the matter up again, is the way in which the bourgeois anti-Zionism of the ACJ is revealed as the chauvinist counterpart (bisymmetrically) of the pro-Zionist ideology.

**It is a pity that the Council for Judaism is perhaps the most prominent of the forces in the Jewish community which take a militant anti-Zionist stand. For the roots of the Council's anti-Zionism, and the ideology on which it is based, is the American chauvinism of "respectable" middle-class and upper-class Jews who have no use for Zionism on grounds that reflect no dishonor on the Zionists.**

We say this as socialist critics of the Zionist ideology and practices, a point of view that has been amply explained in our columns. But we can well understand that, looking at the ACJ and its brand of anti-Zionism, the Zionist can feel only reinforced and strengthened in his beliefs.

Just as (we might add) the proponents of Western atomic-bomb diplomacy feed the illusions of Stalinoids the world over—and vice versa. The kind of debate that goes on between the Zionists and the ACJ types is the kind where both sides can (and often do) confine themselves to telling the most cutting truths about each other, without suspecting that they are opposite sides of the same coin.

### YOU'RE INVITED

**to speak your mind in the letter column of Labor Action. Our policy is to publish letters of general political interest, regardless of views. Keep them to 500 words.**

# On the Scrap Heap — —

(Continued from page 1)

sale amounted to 1.6 billions during July-September, as against nearly 2.2 billions during the same period of 1952. This contraction has taken place in the face of a government policy designed to increase the amount of available credit. The money is there, but the capitalists interested in borrowing it are fewer.

**Business failures have been increasing; car-loadings are drifting downward; in short, most of the indices by which the economy can be tested are showing a definite decline from the boom highs. Yet despite this the cost-of-living index has been rising slowly but steadily for the past few months. Company after company has reported higher profits for the third quarter of the year than for a year ago.**

## MASS UNEMPLOYMENT

What has been happening to the workers during these past few months of "softening" in the economy?

In a few industries there have been heavy layoffs. In a number of others short work-weeks have been showing up. And for a much larger group, overtime pay, which had become such an accustomed thing that the workers had come to count on it as part of their regular pay, has been cut to the bone.

In a few areas, unemployment has reached mass proportions. For the country as a whole, however, this is not yet the case.

The Census Bureau figures show 1,162,000 unemployed for October, with 62,242,000 people at work. Claims for unemployment compensation have risen to 972,000 from 649,000 a year ago, and have been rising each week for the past six weeks, during a period in which unemployment usually has a seasonal decline.

The figures do not tell the true story, however.

The number of employed workers has remained about the same since last year, despite the addition of some 700,000 people to the labor market. This means that about the same number have dropped out of work.

**Where both husband and wife worked before, now there is only one paycheck to keep the family going. Young people who would be going to work if there were jobs available are staying in school. Old people who find no work take pensions or seek support from their families, and are not considered unemployed.**

So far, what has been happening to the workers is what economists call a "shake-out," or even more politely, an "adjustment." To the workers who are unemployed, who are working short weeks, or who have assumed obligations which they can maintain only on the basis of the overtime they were getting in the past, such words are no comfort at all.

They, and the millions of others who see in their plight the shadow of events to come, are looking to their unions for an answer.

And the prospects are that the demand for an answer will swell in volume in the months ahead. Unless there is another powerful spurt in military spending, the chances are that unemployment will rise steadily.

## WAR-ECONOMY CUSHION

**Just how far it will go, no one can tell exactly. But if the military budget (and all that goes with it) remains at its present figure, by next summer or fall it is likely that there will be at least five million unemployed.**

And these people will not be unemployed for "just" a few months.

There is nothing in the economy, or in any present plans which the government has prepared or proposed, which would be likely to take up the slack quickly and launch the country into another boom. Unemployment could remain fairly constant at that figure, or increase slowly as the work-force keeps increasing.

Economists and newspaper columnists are writing a lot these days about the "built-in" cushions or stabilizers in the economy. They point to unemployment compensation, bank-deposit insurance, reduction in taxes, budgetary deficits, and an accumulated backlog in public works (schools, hospitals, roads, public buildings).

**Of course, all of these play a certain role in preventing the kind of catastrophe which overtook the American economy in 1929. The big difference, however, resides not in these, but in the enormous military budget.**

No matter what happens to the rest of the economy, tens of billions of dollars will be spent on arms and on housing, clothing and feeding the men in the armed forces. As these men and the workers in the

armament industries contribute nothing (economically speaking) toward producing for consumption, their purchasing power will continue to "prime the pump" beyond anything the most radical New Dealers dreamed of in the '30s.

Although the Permanent War Economy can be counted on to hold back economic catastrophe and to keep capitalism afloat, that will not solve the problem of the workers on short weeks, and even less the problem of the unemployed.

During the post-war boom years the workers have been told that capitalism, the "American way of life," "free enterprise," is a guarantee of economic security. The older workers, to whom the depression is still a living memory, have always reserved a certain amount of skepticism about this.

**But many of the younger men and women have come to believe that those days have gone forever, if they ever really existed except in the exaggerated tales of "old timers." To these young workers, who have been the more conservative element in the labor movement, the coming period will be a real eye-opener.**

## LABOR SEEKS AN ANSWER

What will the labor movement have to offer them as an answer?

So far, the union leadership has been trying to duck the question.

They too have become accustomed to the boom years. Their reaction to the Stalinists in the unions and to the challenge of Stalinism on a world scale has been to glorify the capitalist system no less than the employers do.

But the more progressive union leaders, and those in industries which are the first to be hard-hit, are already beginning to realize that there will have to be some answers, or else the powerful movement over which they preside will be endangered.

**There are two ways in which the union movement can answer the problems.**

One is the traditional way of many of the craft unions: just cut the union lists as layoffs take place and keep the rest of the men working as much as possible. True, the dues-paying membership is thus decreased and the treasuries shrink, but the rest of the workers are kept fairly quiet. That is the way of the railroad brotherhoods, the building trades and many others.

But in the mass production industries, in the unions with a higher level of social consciousness and solidarity and militancy, that answer will not do.

**Such unions must produce a real answer to the problem, or they will abdicate the role which they have played in the past of leading the workers and defending their social and economic interests.**

When unemployment begins to rise drastically in auto and steel, coal and rubber, oil and lumber, and the rest, what will the unions tell their members?

In the economic field, there is only one real answer: a reduced work-week without a reduction in pay.

No other program can compare with this when it comes to lifting from the working class the full burden which the capitalist system will seek to throw on them for its own failure to maintain full employment.

But it is evident that if unemployment begins to reach the proportions indicated, even an aggressive and militant campaign for the shorter work-week without reduction in pay will not meet the emergency fully, and above all, quickly enough to prevent widespread distress in the working class.

Even if the strongest and most militant unions in the richest industries are able to win such demands, there will inevitably be workers in other industries where the unions are less militant, or where the industries themselves are more vulnerable, where such demands will not be won.

**In addition to the fight for the shorter work-week, the unions must demand a stretch-out in unemployment compensation and an increase in the payments at least to the level of a living wage. That is a political demand which can be made effective only by the mobilization of political strength.**

## THE TASK IS POLITICAL ACTION

And it is in this field that the labor movement will find itself least prepared to make the fight. The union leaders know very well that the Republican administration is even less likely to grant such demands than were the Democrats, who never granted them during all the years they were in power.

There can be no doubt that the Democrats will seek to make political capital of any economic slump. They will make all kinds of demagogic speeches, and may even press for legislation to "relieve" the plight of the unemployed.

But the workers who remember the depression, and even more those who don't, will not be satisfied with "relief," even on the Roosevelt model. They will demand swift action to maintain the standard of living to which they have become accustomed, and to which they believe they are entitled.

**And their demands will have to be given leadership in the political field as well as on the strictly economic level. Unless the labor movement does this, the field will be wide open to the Stalinists, and perhaps even more so to the fascist demagogue.**

The labor movement is facing a crisis. The long years of minor adjustments in the context of full employment are coming to a close.

The struggles which lie ahead will be of a different kind from those to which the union leaders have become accustomed.

Those leaders who cannot adjust themselves to the new situation, who cannot devise an economic and political program to meet the needs of the workers, will learn in the days ahead that the rank and file of their unions are men with minds of their own, and not just dues-payers.

The militants in the labor movement face a new challenge and a new opportunity.

## The ISL Program in Brief

**The Independent Socialist League stands for socialist democracy and against the two systems of exploitation which now divide the world: capitalism and Stalinism.**

**Capitalism cannot be reformed or liberalized, by any Fair Deal or other deal, so as to give the people freedom, abundance, security or peace. It must be abolished and replaced by a new social system, in which the people own and control the basic sectors of the economy, democratically controlling their own economic and political destinies.**

**Stalinism, in Russia and wherever it holds power, is a brutal totalitarianism—a new form of exploitation. Its agents in every country, the Communist Parties, are unrelenting enemies of socialism and have nothing in common with socialism—which cannot exist without effective democratic control by the people.**

**These two camps of capitalism and Stalinism are today at each other's throats in a worldwide imperialist rivalry for domination. This struggle can only lead to the most frightful war in history so long as the people leave the capitalist and Stalinist rulers in power. Independent Socialism stands for building and strengthening the Third Camp of the people against both war blocs.**

**The ISL, as a Marxist movement, looks to the working class and its ever-present struggle as the basic progressive force in society. The ISL is organized to spread the ideas of socialism in the labor movement and among all other sections of the people.**

**At the same time, Independent Socialists participate actively in every struggle to better the people's lot now—such as the fight for higher living standards, against Jim Crow and anti-Semitism, in defense of civil liberties and the trade-union movement. We seek to join together with all other militants in the labor movement as a left force working for the formation of an independent labor party and other progressive policies.**

**The fight for democracy and the fight for socialism are inseparable. There can be no lasting and genuine democracy without socialism, and there can be no socialism without democracy. To enroll under this banner, join the Independent Socialist League!**

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