

LABOR ACTION

Independent Socialist Weekly

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APRIL 1, 1957

FIVE CENTS

ADA Convention: Is It Really 'Practical Politics'?

By PAT PARKS

As delegates assemble in Washington to convene the 10th Anniversary convention of Americans for Democratic Action, they face the fact that ADA has not even lived up to its own standards of what the content of liberalism should be. Instead the voice of liberalism has become a paler and more wraithlike thing, as ADA accommodates itself to the rightward drift of the Democratic Party.

In this connection civil rights and foreign policy are outstanding examples of ADA's continued frustration. Until a short time ago ADA conventions seriously discussed the possibility of a political realignment vis-à-vis the conservative and racist elements of the Democratic Party, and the meaningful part which ADA and sections of organized labor could play in such a change. While the groups favoring a clear-cut program of realignment dwindled at each successive convention, the real possibility of initiating a liberal break with the Democratic Party was at least seriously considered.

One political fact has been crystallized, however, since its last convention. The leadership of ADA and many in its ranks are firmly convinced that "practical politics" on the American scene means passing militant-sounding resolutions and ignoring their content when election time arrives or when an opportunity arises to apply beliefs to concrete progressive action. So ADA supported Stevenson and the Democratic Party without an apparent tremor despite the fact that any meaningful support of the Negro struggle in the South could not excuse such political endorsement.

The Democratic Party, under the leadership not of ADA but of Lyndon Johnson, has refused to do anything about civil rights, and any communication by ADA to Johnson that he change his attitude has been most assuredly ignored.

(Continued on page 4)

Puzzle

A leading West German paper, the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, reveals interesting facts arrived at in a study, made by the West German government, of the political character of industrial workers fleeing East Germany.

Both the paper and the government were mainly disconcerted to discover that 61% of these workers are "still convinced Marxists or sympathizers."

Of the remaining 39%, the press report of this survey does not say how many are pro-socialist and anti-capitalist, even if not "Marxist."

Yet everyone knows that the overwhelming mass of the East German population, including the industrial workers, are bitter enemies of the Communist regime. The *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* thinks this is all very confusing.

"Court of Appeals" for Workers' Rights in the Labor Movement?

By GORDON HASKELL

While the headlines are filled with exposures of the Teamsters' unsavory methods, the United Automobile Workers' forthcoming convention will be presented with a novel proposal for a change in the union's internal trial procedure. The UAW's Executive Board will propose that in addition to the present trial procedure a "public review board" made up of "approximately seven outstanding public citizens" be set up, to which members of the union may appeal decisions from local trial committees, or from the International Executive Board itself.

In making this proposal, UAW President Walter Reuther states that "more and more the leadership of the labor movement must be prepared to have their stewardship and conduct of affairs of the union under their leadership subject to public review."

This announcement is in striking contrast to the attitude which has prevailed in much of the labor movement over the

years. There can be little doubt that one of the things the UAW leadership had in mind in drawing up this proposal was to set an example to the rest of the labor movement which, if followed in time, could offset the clamor which is bound to arise for government regulation of the internal affairs of the unions.

In the UAW's proposal, the public review board should have a function addi-

(Turn to last page)

Rank-and-File Teamsters in Angry Protest

By JACK WILSON

Detroit, March 24

A series of powerful if long overdue blasts from within the labor movement shook the Beck-Brewster-Hoffa regime of the Teamsters union, following a continuation of the exposé by the Senate committee on racketeering within the labor movement.

General Truck Drivers Local 938 of Toronto turned down Dave Beck's plea for financial aid, with William Mills, its president, saying, "We're in the labor movement, not the racket squad." An Illinois local called for the resignation of Brewster, Beck and Hoffa. These and other incidents are significant because they show signs of a real rank-and-file revolt in the Teamsters Union, whose ultimate accomplishment must be the overthrow of the corrupt regime which has blackened the eye of the entire labor movement by its scandalous misconduct of union affairs and funds.

The rebellion in the Teamsters found a strong ally in Walter P. Reuther, president of the United Auto Workers, who blasted Beck, Hoffa and Brewster in a press conference yesterday; he indicated that he'll have some proposals for the next meeting of the AFL-CIO Council meeting in May on these issues.

Reuther's statement on racketeers in the labor movement and his bitter criticism of the misconduct of Teamsters officials was the strongest blow given these parasites in recent times. It may well save the labor movement from the onus attached to it by these disreputable figures.

EXPEL THEM?

That the entire top leadership of the Teamsters is involved in the scandals was indicated by the conference held this past week by the policy committee of the Teamsters union, which supported the Beck-Brewster-Hoffa claims of innocence and attacked the Senate investigation.

Of course, the top figures of the Teamsters Union are sticking together under the theory that "either we stick together or we hang separately," but this seems more a wish than a probability. All that other officials did by their support of Beck, Brewster and Hoffa was implicate themselves as defenders or apologists for corruption and racketeering in the union movement.

Incidentally, it is somewhat surprising (Turn to last page)

Bermuda Conference Agenda: WHO'S THE BOSS?

By SAM TAYLOR

The British-U. S. conference at Bermuda during the week of March 17 was the first gathering of the heads of state and their foreign secretaries since the Suez crisis of last fall precipitated by the British-French-Israel aggression against Egypt.

A great deal has occurred since then: open rift between the two main powers in the Western alliance; a near-crisis in the European economy; and the first U. S.-caused resignation of a British prime minister.

After the humiliation of being forced to withdraw from Egypt without the fruits of victory, and having the U. S. vote with the Asian-African and Russian bloc for their withdrawal, the British were anxious for but cautious about this conference. There was further cause for estrangement in the form of the Eisenhower Doctrine, which clearly meant to dissociate the U. S. from the dirty wash of British imperialism in that part of the world.

The conference was necessary to re-state and redefine the new relationship in face of the debacle which has befallen Western imperialism in the Middle East. The visit of French Premier Guy Mollet to the U. S. last month was the first round of these discussions preceding the April NATO meeting, where the events of the past six months will get a thorough going-over.

The British government has stated that the main purpose of the conference was to re-establish, if possible, the old wartime partnership and cooperation which formerly existed between the two allies. By that they meant that they wanted to clearly delineate the areas of agreement as well as disagreement, and the area of freedom for unilateral British action within the alliance.

The British had formerly assumed that there was an unlimited partnership. The old wartime relationship so longingly looked back on was one where each partner had responsibility for certain spheres of influence.

For example, the British assume that since they accepted U. S. policy in the Far East—going along with it even when disagreeing, as in the Formosa madness and the China issue in the UN—the U. S. in turn would buy and large accept British policy in the Middle East. The Suez fiasco knocked this assumption into a cocked hat.

With Suez and the Eisenhower Doctrine the U. S. said, in effect, that it was stepping in to take over policy decisions for the Middle East too. While the new prime minister, Harold Macmillan, must have known that the old partnership could not be restored, he was eager for the conference to find out what the new pattern would be. Would Great Britain be allowed freedom of unilateral action anywhere in the world if it ran into serious conflict with U. S. policy?

The answer to this is no. In this sense (Continued on page 2)

Behind the Reshuffle Of Franco's Cabinet

Wilebaldo Solano is the secretary-general of the Spanish POUM, the left socialist party, in charge of its headquarters-in-exile in Paris. In this article, he discusses the significance of Franco's recent cabinet reshuffling.

By WILEBALDO SOLANO

According to the press, after he had dismissed all his ministers, Franco stated: "A new chapter in Spain's history has opened." Many of those who read this believed that the Caudillo was about to dissolve the Falange and to clear the path for a restoration of the Bourbon monarchy.

This, however, was not to be the case. Franco has not been trained in the school of Monk or Martinez Campos, but of Hitler and Horthy.

The real "new chapter in the history of Spain" was opened in February 1956, when the students of Madrid openly expressed their hatred of the totalitarian tyranny over the young generation and over the people in general. The strikers of San Sebastian and of Bilbao in April and May 1956 and, more recently, the students of Seville and the people of Barcelona and Madrid have added glorious pages to this chapter.

Their actions anticipate, for the coming months, battles of decisive importance for the Spanish and the international working class.

Formally, Franco's switching of ministers is more important than similar changes a few years ago. Its political significance, however, is secondary. The Caudillo has performed one of his classical maneuvers: he has eliminated a few of the more unpopular public figures, who were most likely to endanger his plans, and has attempted to establish a new balance among the various forces which support his rule.

TO AVOID CRISIS

As is known, the preceding government had been in a crisis for several weeks. The Falangist minister Arrese had tried to impose a number of "fundamental laws," calculated to establish the political supremacy of the Falange. He was not able to carry through his plan because of the decided opposition of the army leadership, of the church hierarchy, and of capitalist and semi-feudal groups which see their only salvation in the restoration of the monarchy.

On the other hand, this crisis in the top levels of government coincided with an aggravation of the economic crisis (general increase in prices, inflation, growing deficit in the balance of foreign trade) and with the popular demonstrations in Barcelona and in Madrid.

Under these circumstances, only one course of action remained open to Franco: an urgent intervention to prevent the crisis of the government from becoming a crisis of the regime. This he did in his usual manner: neither liquidating the Falange, nor breaking with the forces which advocate a monarchical restoration, but strengthening the position of the army and of the church, while at the same time appealing to the "syndicalist" wing of the Falange—above all, consolidating his own personal position.

The withdrawal of Arrese should have been inevitable after the rejection of the "fundamental laws"; however, he continues to participate in the new minis-

terial combination along with Arias Salgado, one of the most intransigent representatives of the Falange, who remains in control of the press and of the radio.

The demagogue Giron finally gives up the Ministry of Labor, as the monarchists demanded; but he was replaced with Sanz Orrio, another demagogue of the same kind, ex-leader of the Falangist "unions." The Falangist Rubio remains at the head of the Ministry of Education, and Solis, until now head of the "unions," takes Arrese's place as minister and party secretary.

The Falange thus maintains its positions. Also, the entry into the government of Sanz Orrio and of Solis announces a new period of purely verbal demagoguery directed at the working class.

The army occupies more important positions in the new government combination. The Caudillo managed to remove Muñoz Grande (the man who said in February 1956 that if the Falangists had gone into the streets, the army would not have hesitated to move against them).

This concession to the Falange has been compensated by the elimination of Blas Pérez from the Ministry of the Interior, one of the men the monarchists and Catholic Action hated most. The new minister of the Interior is Alonso Vega, the former general of the Civil Guard, who has close ties with industrial circles and has consistently been on Franco's gravy train.

The dictator further maintained Iturmendi, the representative of the Carlist monarchists; Professor Ullastre, of the *Opus Dei* (a movement representing the extreme right wing of monarchism and clericalism), also received a ministerial post. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has been given to Castiella, who has been, up to now, the Spanish ambassador to the Vatican, and who has good relations with the church and with American capitalist circles.

The elements who are above all loyal to Franco, which had already been represented by Carrero Blanco and by Planell, have been strengthened by the nomination of Gen. Barroso as minister of the Army, the same Barroso who was a close collaborator of the Nazis in Pétain's Vichy. Finally, it is worth noting that the Caudillo has put in charge of economic coordination one of the most representative personalities of the Catalan bourgeoisie, Gual Villalbi, who was a member of the "League of Cambó" already during the Republic.

BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE

Will this reshuffle enable Franco to establish the checks and balances on which his regime is founded? There is every indication that his new attempt—a "purely technical" one, according to the peculiar definition of *Le Monde's* new correspondent in Madrid—will fail spectacularly. At the most, it will enable the totalitarian dictatorship to survive a few months longer.

As we pointed out earlier, Spanish history is now made by the mass of the people, and particularly by the new generation which has overcome the inevitable state of prostration which followed the defeat of 1939 and the fierce repression of 1940-44. The regeneration of the physical and moral strength of the working class has taken time, but finally begins to show obvious effects.

Certain reactionary circles are well aware of this; in some of their semi-clandestine sheets they write that "the Spanish problem must be resolved by the ruling class in order to avoid an explosion such as occurred in Hungary." For these people the main problem is to eliminate Franco "before it is too late" and to replace him with a monarchy of liberal appearance based on the traditional forces of reaction.

In the leading circles of the regime, as well as among the monarchist opposition, every move is now determined by the fear of the intervention of the working class in the political process. According to all evidence, however, this intervention is stronger every day and will soon become decisive.

Who's the Boss? — —

(Continued from page 1)

the events of the past six months are irreversible insofar as the relationship of forces inside the alliance is concerned. But for Macmillan to return to London with this fact standing out in stark nakedness would have been a disaster for the NATO alliance itself, and perhaps for Macmillan too.

Therefore the British prime minister and the NATO setup had to be buttered up with all sorts of concessions, partial backtracking and "reaffirmation of principles" by Eisenhower and Dulles on a host of issues.

U.S. TREND

The trend of U. S. policy in the Middle East under the Eisenhower administration has been to dissociate itself from open and close ties with the despised British and French imperialisms, and, given the decline in power of these two allies, to gradually assume responsibility for the "power vacuum." The French are already out of the area and British influences are only the vestigial remnants and memories of past glories. If the Middle East is to remain inside the not too "free world," as defined by Washington and London, then it has to become an American sphere of influence.

That the Middle Eastern nations do not consider themselves to be a "power vacuum," and that they have not asked the U. S. to step in and try to dictate policy in their part of the world, is dismissed as "xenophobia" and "virulent, destructive nationalism," if not the machinations of Communist-oriented or -inspired forces.

This tendency on the part of the U. S., which was typified in its refusal to formally join the Baghdad Pact after initiating its formation, reached its clearest manifestation at the time of the Suez crisis and was formulated into policy by the Eisenhower doctrine.

But this tendency could proceed in a straight line only if Washington's allies were pure and simple satellites who could be dictated to by fiat. However, since Britain and France do not fit into this category, certain concessions have to be made as the tendency winds its way toward culmination.

The Bermuda conference seemed to produce a wide area of agreement highlighted by the stated intention of the U. S. to participate in the Military Committee of the Baghdad Pact although still not formally joining, and to provide guided missiles to British forces.

Macmillan hailed the meeting as "a great success" and the majority of the British press concurred. It was further stated by Macmillan that there are no "unresolved" issues of principle between the two countries in their attitude toward the Middle East.

THE OLD TINGE

However, despite the reports of good cheer, frankness is the expression of opinion, agreement in principle on all important issues and plans to re-establish joint intelligence and planning systems reminiscent of the wartime relationship, the British insisted that all important conference agreements and directives by written, read and signed by the principals at the conference. Apparently the British, who are old hands at the game of doubletalk and diplomatic double-dealing, did not exactly trust Eisenhower and Dulles. This little episode is probably more indicative of the real atmosphere at the conference than all the rosy press releases.

The most important development announced in the official communiqué was that the U. S. would join the Military Committee of the Baghdad Pact, although it was reported in the *N. Y. Times* that there are more than 25 agreements, directives and reports which were not included in the communiqué and which undoubtedly constitute the real operating decisions reached.

Secretary of State Dulles at his news conference on March 26 flatly denied that there was any signed agreement on a common policy for dealing with a recalcitrant Egypt. He even denied the existence of the 25 reports and agreements whose existence had been leaked to the press by the British Foreign Ministry. All he would say was that "the exchanges of view that took place were useful, I think, in making it likely that

there will be a common policy." Dulles' point seems to be merely that he did not sign the written agreements.

The fact that the U. S. joined the Military Committee is the major concession to the conservative and imperial interests in Britain. The U. S. is already a member of the economic and counter-subversive committee of the pact and provides most, if not all, of the military strength to the pact nations—Britain, Pakistan, Iran, Iraq and Turkey. This final step, while still short of formally signing up and taking the full political onus it also carries in the Middle East, is the *de facto* tie-up of the Baghdad Pact and the Eisenhower Doctrine.

In Lebanon, which is usually considered "pro-Western," the reaction to this step was hostile. The *N. Y. Times* of March 25 reports that "the press here, which normally is not anti-Western, took the line that the Middle Eastern nations had been tricked by the U. S."

The same dispatch quotes the "anti-Communist" newspaper *Le Jour* as saying:

"America has picked up on her own account the Arab policy of England and the confusion that has always characterized it. The adhesion of the U. S. to the Military Committee of the Baghdad Pact will bring no answer to the questions considered as of first order by the Near Eastern States."

Even U. S. diplomats were reported dismayed at the way the decision was announced. They would have preferred some Arab contact to make the announcement rather than have it come from the Bermuda conference. "The circumstances of the announcement were said to have tended to give back to the Baghdad Pact the tinge of colonialism that has always been its principal handicap." (Ibid.)

HEAT ON NASSER?

The other aspect of the Middle East situation which was extensively discussed was Suez and the formulation of an attitude and future policy toward the Nasser regime. Although the official communiqué was vague on this point, the dispatches in the *N. Y. Times* gave an indication of the discussions that went on.

Drew Middleton reported March 25 that "the two delegations spent some time discussing economic pressures that could be brought to bear on Egypt." The previous day he reported that "the attitude of the two governments has hardened on the proposal for a pipeline that will carry oil from Iraq and Iran across Turkey to the Mediterranean," thus bypassing the Suez Canal if "President Nasser of Egypt rejects the United Nations proposal for an interim arrangement on traffic through the canal."

It is well known that the British government is unreconciled to any arrangement which would leave the Suez Canal under the exclusive control of any independent Egyptian regime. They are determined to take the canal away from Egyptian control and they are already convinced that part of this process is the overthrow of Nasser. This was the motive behind the Suez invasion.

From the British Foreign Office's point of view, only Washington stands between it and the removal of Nasser. At Bermuda, Middleton reported that Dulles and British Foreign Minister Lloyd discussed the possible contingencies which might arise. Although his dispatch of March 23 is vaguely worded, it is apparent that what is being discussed goes beyond proposals to bypass the Suez Canal.

"Despite their past differences with the Secretary of State, the British now believe that, if President Nasser rejects the United Nations proposals on Suez Canal tolls, they can count upon early and effective U. S. action. U. S. officials say that such action has always been contemplated." (Italics added.)

The next few months will show whether the threats implied in such statements will be carried out. If Macmillan did get such an agreement from the Eisenhower administration, then he is right in considering the conference "a great success." But it was a success for the most reactionary of alternatives.

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TOWARD JEWISH-ARAB CONCILIATION

A Socialist View of the Middle East Conflict

By HAL DRAPER

We publish on this page a statement, written over two months ago by Norman Thomas to present a résumé of his views on the Israel-Arab controversy, which so far has not achieved full publication anywhere. Written as a communication to the *Jewish Daily Forward*, it was refused publication.

The statement is of great political interest in its own right, apart from its background.

Norman Thomas happens to be one of the few prominent men in American public life of any liberal persuasion who has dared to speak out consistently and over a period of time in criticism of Israeli government policy, of Zionist ideas, and of Jewish chauvinism, from a progressive viewpoint. This has required considerable courage, and willingness to expose himself to the slings and arrows of one of the best-organized engines of journalistic retribution in the country, the Zionist and pro-Zionist press. There is no press anywhere in which so many leading representatives react to political opposition or criticism of its sacred cows with as automatic a reflex of scurrilous abuse, name-calling and character-assassination.

For some time this observer has been wondering when the full resources of this machine's capacity for personal calumny were going to be dumped on Thomas' head. A long record of pro-Jewish activity was not able to save Dorothy Thompson from charges of personal "anti-Semitism" in this press when she turned to a line in foreign policy which favored the Arabs' case rather than Israel's; nor did intellectual eminence preserve Arnold Toynbee from the same defamation; there is a long list of victims.

The epithet "anti-Semite" is as freely flung out by this press as "fascist wrecker" by the Stalinists in their heyday; it is a system. The system is that of preventive intimidation; for any man in public life realizes that as soon as he starts explaining he is not really an anti-Semite, nine-tenths of the damage has already been done. Is it worth while allowing oneself the luxury of telling the truth, or expressing one's real views, at this risk? Better to say nothing that will enrage these shoot-from-the-hip vilifiers. Besides it is genuinely difficult, in the atmosphere of intellectual terrorization which is thus deliberately created, to separate the interests of the Jews as a people from those of the Israeli regime and its Zionist ideology, though this separation is vital.

Against the Current of Chauvinism

Up to recently Thomas' special position in American life seemed to give him a charmed life in this rock-strewn sea. But the Israeli aggression on Egypt unleashed in many circles an outburst of virulent Jewish chauvinism unmatched in the last few years—in a sort of over-justification of the Ben-Gurion regime's criminal act.

Even voices that hinted they were appalled by the invasion—like the *N. Y. Post*—sought to whitewash it in the bulk of words. A species of war hysteria washed over these chauvinistic circles like a wave—not only the Zionists but also many of the fellow-traveling types that call themselves "non-Zionist." Among the latter is, with inconsistencies, the *Jewish Daily Forward*.

Norman Thomas forthrightly condemned the invasion. Moreover, in a letter to the *N. Y. Times* and other writings, he cogently re-raised the question of justice to the Arab refugees and other steps to help solve the tension in the Middle East.

To be sure, his voice is not less loud against the offenses committed by the Arab leaders against Israel and their own Jews, as in Egypt, but no one should be so naive as to believe that this has much weight in the eyes of his traducers.

Even so the name of Norman Thomas might have been enough to give pause to the campaign of mud-slinging that habit demanded. But all this coincided with another matter that boiled it over.

Lynching-Bee in the 'Forward'

This was the entirely unrelated question of unity between the Socialist Party and Social Democratic Federation. How this got wound in is itself typical of our present subject.

The SDF, though extreme right-wing social-democratic, itself had a right wing which was bitterly opposed to unity with the SP—partly for purely reminiscent reasons that had no visible resemblance to political motivation. This anti-unity right wing was based on the leadership of the Jewish Socialist Verband, affiliated to but autonomous in the SDF, yet making up the largest section of its membership. The personnel, ideas and general character of the Verband overlaps with the *Jewish Daily Forward*. The *Forward*, then, was the main spokesman of the anti-unity social-democrats.

As a stick with which to beat the projected unity—since they really didn't have much that made sense—the Verband-Forward people seized on Thomas' "anti-Israeli" views, and swung it with the abandon characteristic of the pro-Zionist factional jungle.

At the Verband convention in December where its forces were mobilized to stop unity, right-wing leaders made speeches on the Israel issue and against Thomas in little less than an intellectual lynch spirit.

The *Forward* opened its columns to the most immoderate assaults on the Socialist Party in general and the proposed unity in particular. In this situation the floodgates of scurrility against Thomas were also flung open.

In an editorial and article Thomas was wildly reviled as purveying the stock-in-trade of anti-Semites and Arab propagandists; the editors stopped short of charging him with personal anti-Semitism but not much short; and even this distinction was not observed in the slew of letters printed in the correspondence columns, which let fly with everything. It was the Treatment.

The 'Pro-Arab' Smear at Work

Thomas drew up his letter to the *Forward* as a moderate, dignified and educational reply to this storm of abuse, and submitted it. Although that paper had printed reams of the most slanderous stuff as long as it was heaped on Thomas' head, it refused to print a word of his reply.

Editor Rogoff's letter of rejection to Thomas has been published in the *Jewish Newsletter*; it is a document of intolerant chauvinism. It begins:

"Dear Comrade Thomas: The *Forward* is a Jewish newspaper and cannot be used as a platform for anti-Israel and pro-Arab propaganda, such as the manuscript you have submitted for publication. Your article is a résumé of all the prejudices and false accusations and insinuations made by the enemies of Israel and by the Arab leaders who seek its annihilation. . . ."

It goes on to charge that Thomas is "repeating and endorsing" the same charges made "repeatedly on the radio and television delivered by Arab hate-mongers."

This was the Treatment too.

Thomas had his letter mimeographed and has circulated copies of it widely in this form. Sections of it were published a few weeks ago in the *Jewish Newsletter*. We publish it here as a whole, as a significant presentation of a stand, without necessarily endorsing all views in it, such as Thomas' opinions on the role of the UN and U. S. in the Middle East. Paragraphing, boldface emphasis and subheads have been editorially added to the original.

Unpublished Letter by Norman Thomas To the 'Jewish Daily Forward'

Editor, *The Forward*.

Dear Sir:

Since I have been the object of much discussion and sharp attack in recent weeks in your columns, I am sure that as a matter of journalistic, not to say socialist, fairness, you will permit me to lay before you and your readers a statement of my position on peace in the Middle East and American policy toward it.

Let me preface that statement by expressing my rather shocked surprise that the *Daily Forward* and the leaders of the Jewish Socialist Verband saw fit to lay their opposition to the now happily consummated union of the Socialist Party and the Social Democratic Federation to my position, or alleged position, on Israel.

That opposition existed before I had spoken or written on the current Middle Eastern crisis. It was carefully explained to me just before I addressed the Verband's Philadelphia Convention, at which time I was asked not to speak on unity or give my reasons for favoring it—a curious request to make of an invited Socialist speaker.

It is in any case very weak socialism that would make unconditional acceptance of Israeli policy a condition of unity. By that requirement the Socialist International would fall apart. It is an even weaker sort of socialism that would make the opinions of one man, myself, the basis for accepting or rejecting unity.

This is especially true since I had taken great pains to make it clear that, much as I favored unity, I would not be active in the governing committee of the united party, and certainly would not accept a nomination for chairman of it. I wanted Frank Zeidler, mayor of Milwaukee, who was unanimously elected.

In short, this attack on me (and on Hugh Gaitskell and the British Labor Party) was a rationalization of the desire of the *Forward* and the Verband to have their own cozy, undemanding socialists circle of members who could warm their hearts by the fires of old memories, and sometimes, less admirably, by blowing into temporary flames the embers of old controversies.

BEHIND THE ABUSE

Now, let me set forth my position on Israel, the Middle East and American policy. Times without number in speech and writing—most recently in the current *Socialist Call*—in discussing policy I have explicitly said or assumed that Israel is in the Middle East to stay. I have wanted nothing more than that her own prosperity and permanent security should be guaranteed by a peace making possible reconciliation with her Arab neighbors. There is a great contribution that enlightened and efficient Israeli democracy may offer to the progress of the Middle East and the peace of the world when hate, however caused, will subside.

What has aroused discussion is that I do not consider that in every instance and on every issue, the Arabs have always been wrong, and that the Israelis have always been right. I do not believe that America can play a helpful role in the Middle East if the president must accept as his first commandment, "Thou shalt always support Ben Gurion, his raids and his wars."

It is because I care so deeply about my own country that I have so often criticized her and her policies. It is because I so greatly desire Israel's true success that I have occasionally criticized actions which, if anything, I should more sharply have attacked if they had been the work of my own countrymen.

For what I have said or written—or for distortion of it—I have received not

only earnest rebuttal and friendly criticism, which are completely in order, but more abuse than on any subject since I criticized the Moscow purge trials in the thirties, and later the evacuation of Japanese-Americans on our West Coast in World War II. I have become caught in enough controversies to become hardened. But I do not think that such frequent resort to abuse and misrepresentation argues well for Israel's cause in the American—or—world community.

My present attitude, and the policy I should want my country and the UN to follow, will be better understood if I go back to my original position on Zionism.

HOPED FOR A BRIDGE

Like a great many other Socialists, including Jewish Socialists, I did not think Zionism the political cure for anti-Semitism or a desirable religious equivalent to Judaism. I was skeptical of Britain's Balfour Declaration in World War I; of the mixed motives behind it; of its vagueness; and of its assertion of British power to dispose of lands peopled for long centuries by Arabs.

Nevertheless, I hoped for the best, and in time became much impressed by the achievement of the Jewish immigrants in their new homes in Palestine. Increasingly I came to admire my friend Judah Magnes' spiritual Zionism, and to share his hope that if Jews and Arabs in Palestine would agree to a binational state it might be a bridge to understanding between East and West, and a source of great blessing not only to the Middle East but to mankind.

Under Hitler the horrors of Nazism gave an urgent validity to the desire for a place of refuge for Jews somewhere in this world in which since ancient times they had suffered greatly, most of all not at the hands of Moslems, but of Christians. The world war was ended, Germany was completely defeated, but Arabs and Jews could not or would not make common cause in Palestine. Dr. Magnes died brokenhearted. (I shall not forget my last talk with him.) Britain laid down her mandate. The Jews were admirably organized to take over; the Arabs were not. The UN was young. Its solution of the critical problem was partition of the little country.

The USSR and the U. S. A. both agreed; some European nations were dubious; the Asians in opposition. In the part assigned to Israel there was a small majority of Jews who lived on land scrupulously purchased from former owners. But the Arabs still owned far the larger part of the arable lands. (Claims vary; the best study I have seen—and I have quantities of propaganda literature from both sides—is the exhaustive and objective doctoral thesis by Don Peretz, an acknowledged specialist in Middle East affairs.)

NO PEACE

The Arab states sorely hurt themselves and the world by making war against the dedicated, well-organized Israelis, who defeated them. The war brought waves of panic flight of Palestinian Arabs. Arab misleaders had preached a return in triumph, but the great cause of flight was not hope for the future but fear of the present. Israeli leaders promised safety to those who would stay. But before any war was begun Jewish extremists, none of them ever punished and some of them prominent in

(Continued on page 4)

Jewish-Arab Conciliation — —

(Continued from page 3)

Israel today, gave point to panic by the massacre of Deir Yassin. Later that fear was maintained and strengthened by the unpunished assassination of the UN's mediator, Count Bernadotte, and by the experiences of many Arabs who had remained in the new state of Israel.

The UN, through Ralph Bunche, brought about an armistice which corresponded to military lines rather than to a rational partition—if any partition can be rational. This partition divided villages from their farm lands. From that day in 1949 to this, neither UN nor American pressure nor Arab and Jewish common sense has turned the armistice into a peace. Here the chief blame, it seems to me, falls on the Arab states.

And from that day to this the government of a nation established as a homeland for homeless Jews has never said to the mass of Arabs, homeless almost literally in sight of their old farms and homes, "You have a RIGHT to repatriation; you can come home and live in peace if you will take and keep an oath of allegiance to our new state." The Jewish immigration from many lands, encouraged and assisted by Zionist agencies, needed the property the Arabs had left in their flight.

POLITICS WITH MISERY

Extensive repatriation for Arabs confined in miserable camps badly maintained by the UN became increasingly impossible, or at least impracticable. Under UN pressure and probably some pressure of conscience, the Israeli government during the years made various offers of token repatriation—later withdrawn—and of a general settlement with the refugees (presumably by compensation) and if and when there was a final peace. The government finally agreed to free the blocked bank accounts of these refugees but only after six long years. In every way, obvious justice to individual Arabs, not only in the camps but in Israel, was subordinated to Israeli desire for lands and security.

The Arab states also played politics with the misery of refugees, and for their own selfish reasons gave no help to the solution of a problem which grew worse year by year. Arabs in Israel on the whole gained much in educational and economic opportunity but in a state with unsettled and insecure boundaries they are second-class citizens, always subject to security regulation by the police. (I've read and heard Jewish denials of this, never without thinking how great the outcry the Jews would justly make if any of them were similarly treated in any land.)

Of course, under these circumstances there was much violence on both sides. (But some Arab infiltration was that of men desiring only to see their old homes and relatives.) I do not dwell on Kibya and other organized retaliatory raids by the Israeli, except to say that they were condemned by the UN Armistice Commission and world opinion. One of them in the Gaza strip (Feb. 28, 1956) seems to have led, or directly to have contributed, to Nasser's use of the Egyptian *fedayeen*, whose crimes Ambassador Eban was later impressively to recount in attempted justification of Ben-Gurion's punitive and preventive war against

Egypt—a war that the world had understood him to have renounced some two weeks earlier.

CONDEMNED ATTACK

I agreed with the overwhelming opinion of the world and the action of the UN and our own government in condemning this war, undertaken without a last appeal to the UN or notice to it, by a government which did not come into court with clean hands in respect to truce violations. It was, moreover, an act of folly in statesmanship only less grave than the outrageous blunder of Mollet—alas, a Socialist—and Eden in flouting the UN, ignoring the U. S., and resorting to invasion in the old imperialist style. If there was not formal alliance in this attack on Egypt there surely was mutual understanding. France seems to have been the go-between.

The Israelis managed their military campaign more successfully than the British and French. All these nations to their credit, in striking contrast to the Russians in Hungary, heeded the UN's demand to cease firing and with varying degrees of hesitation withdrew their troops. (As I write, the UN is demanding, logically, the completion of Israeli withdrawal. That should be accompanied or immediately followed by guarantees of UN protection of the boundaries on both sides; Israeli shipping must be given full rights. The UN police force must remain. In this connection, the helpful suggestion has been made of the use of a few naval units as part of a UN police force. The UN has power under the Charter to act—if it will—not only in the general service of peace but because Egypt has disregarded its order that Israeli shipping be given equality of treatment in transit through the Canal. To the basis of peace I shall return.)

FRUITS OF WAR

All wars involve civilians in unjust suffering. To some extent British and French civilians were victims in Egypt. The Jews were far worse mistreated, apparently not because of their race or religion but because they were regarded as citizens or potential citizens of Israel in accordance with some Zionist theories. In no way, however, did this justify Nasser's brutality or his deportation of Jews any more than our wartime fears

justified our evacuating Japanese-Americans on the West Coast in World War II.

The victims of the Anglo-French bombardment of Port Said were many. Large parts of the city were destroyed. In Israel itself there were Arab victims of the massacre for which Ben-Gurion publicly apologized. Henry Labouisse reported to the UN incidents in the Gaza Strip and the Sinai Peninsula of which there seem to have been a total of 452 Arab victims. In Israel itself, some 700 Arabs of a village under threat of evacuation "to the interest of the country" slipped over the border into Syria—a virtual deportation.

Americans now are in danger of forgetting that the invasion of Egypt, fortunately cut short by the invading nations at the demand of the UN, could easily have led to world war. Indeed threat of Russian and even Chinese "volunteers" contributed to obedience as did the pressure of British Commonwealth states and the United States on Anthony Eden. Even if there had been no world war, the Arabs, defeated in battle, could and would by sabotage have turned the Middle East into one vast Algeria to the enormous hurt of the West.

Moreover, as Maurice Goldbloom writes in *Midstream*, the attack on Egypt helped the Russians in Hungary. I quote:

"At first it seemed that they (the Russians) had decided to cut their losses and leave; they pulled their troops out of Budapest and agreed to negotiate with Nagy for a complete withdrawal. But at the crucial moment it seemed to them that the Anglo-French invasion of Egypt offered an escape from their dilemma. They felt that now they could do what they pleased without alienating Asia and Africa. But they did not reckon with the intensity and duration of the Hungarian resistance or with the action of the United States in taking a strong stand in both situations, and of the British and French in agreeing to withdraw from Egypt."

ONLY SINNERS

In this whole story there are no saints but only sinners (our own nation included), guilty in varying degree of sins of omission and commission. President Eisenhower's stand, whatever had been

Mr. Dulles' errors, saved the UN as our best hope of keeping the peace.

Now, as I have agreed in repeated statements (including my letter to the *New York Times*) a positive program must include acceptance of Israel as "here to stay"; final determination of boundaries; the cessation of raids across them; and the right to use the Suez Canal on equal terms with all other nations. I have made or endorsed other suggestions with regard to Egypt and the Canal and the Russian threat in my columns, over radio WEVD, and in the current issue of the *Socialist Call*.

But always I have insisted, as again I solemnly insist, that no settlement will be enduring which does not make possible reconciliation between Jews and Arabs. At best resettlement will be difficult in terms of available land, as well as political emotion. It will require not only a new attitude by Arab states to the resettlement of Arab refugees, but a recognition of the right of repatriation for Arab refugees by Israel. Since few Arabs actually can be repatriated in Israel today, large and just compensation for expropriated lands and property must be paid by Israel.

Israel probably cannot pay what should be paid. But the UN and the U. S. have had great responsibility for things done and left undone in the Middle East. We Westerners were collectively responsible for the anti-Semitism for which the Arabs now think that they are paying. Therefore, we should adequately help in resettlement and the economic upbuilding of the Middle East—a process which involves better handling of the problem of oil for the world as well as water for arid lands.

Moreover the U. S. should be willing to offer, under some circumstances, such hospitality to Arab refugees as it has in the past offered Jews and more recently Hungarians. Such an offer might contribute to genuine and enduring peace for Israel and her neighbors; it would not of itself make it. That must be made in the Middle East.

These are conclusions that have forced themselves upon me. My instinctive sympathies have been with the Jewish people whose services to human progress I have had so much reason to admire. The more then, do I covet for them the honor of doing a more perfect justice than they have done in the Middle East.

Sincerely yours,
NORMAN THOMAS

Jan. 25, 1957

ADA: 'Practical Politics'? — —

(Continued from page 1)

The Democratic Convention at which the liberal-labor bloc was pledged to make a militant fight for a civil-rights plank with "teeth" in it repudiated the ADA and its allies overwhelmingly. Furthermore no doubt was in any one's mind that the fair-haired boy of liberalism, Adlai Stevenson, was with the convention majority and gave behind-the-scenes endorsement to a weak civil-rights resolution. Although the ADA convention had sent its delegates to Chicago with the best of all possible resolutions on civil rights, its own candidate was on the other side of the fence. This hardly disturbed the ADA leadership enough to prevent endorsing Stevenson unqualifiedly at its next National Board meeting.

Since the election, prominent ADAers such as Senator Lehman, Eleanor Roosevelt, Hubert Humphrey and others have shown definite signs of uneasiness. It has "suddenly" become apparent that the liberal wing of the Democratic Party does not even have nominal control as it did or thought it did in the days of Roosevelt and Truman and in some formal ways while Stevenson was its titular head.

"BLACKOUT"

In the January "ADA World," Senator Lehman voiced the current despondency of liberals in commenting on the record of the 84th Congress under Democratic leadership: "On the two main issues of our times—civil rights and foreign policy—there was a virtual blackout. The civil-rights issue was buried alive. The foreign-policy issue was wrapped in bipartisan ribbons—form without substance—and put on the shelf."

Although Lehman only touched the surface of the basic dilemma liberals

face today, he acknowledged by implication the inability of the Democratic Party to be anything more than it is—and that is certainly not a rallying ground for progressive forces.

What Lehman cannot admit, but can't help imply in his article, is that the Democratic Party has no major difference with the Republicans except that it affects to appeal to the "common man." That there is basically no difference is the fact that the liberals, and ADA in particular, refuse to look squarely in the face. The record of the Democrats is hardly better than that of the Republicans—if not worse—on support of substantial civil-rights legislation and ac-

tion.

It is not only a matter of the disastrous 1956 campaign: Have the Democrats—including the liberal leadership, responded any more than Eisenhower to the March on Washington appeal of Martin Luther King?

The ADA leadership's reaction to the Democratic Party's inactivity on civil rights, due to the party's control by its Southern racist wing in a coalition with the Republicans, has been to hail the formation of the "National Advisory Council" of Stevensonites. But the main thing this group has shown by its existence is how thoroughly the liberals have been frozen out of effective power in the party.

Yet the ADA, in its tireless effort to hold on to the coattails of power politics regardless of its effectiveness as a progressive force, seems oriented to doing nothing more than endorse this self-appointed advisory committee of elder statesmen.

Now that the liberal-labor bloc has even lost its nominal influence in the party caucuses, will ADA still refuse to explore together with its allies the possibility of a real and meaningful realignment of forces?

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Young
Socialist

CHALLENGE

April 1, 1957

Edited and Published by the YOUNG SOCIALIST LEAGUE

FIVE CENTS

At the John Gates-Thomas-Wolfe Debate

By SAM TAYLOR

The reaction to the banning of John Gates, editor of the *Daily Worker*, from speaking at the New York City Colleges indicates the change in political atmosphere since the high-tide mark of McCarthyism.

One point of interest is that while Gates was prevented from speaking before the Marxist Discussion Club at Queens College, Stalinist or Stalinoid organizations have subsequently played little or no role in the ensuing protests.

This time instead of a few unavailing protests, there was virtually a scramble among anti-Stalinist groups at a number of different colleges to sponsor meetings with John Gates. The New York Civil Liberties Union jumped into the middle of the situation and sponsored a meeting at a New York hotel which had to be cancelled at the last minute because of the pressure of veteran and Catholic organizations in getting the hotel to cancel the reservation.

At Columbia University meetings were sponsored by SLID and the Debs Society on successive days, and about 1200 students attended. These two meetings probably constituted the largest turnout at any college meeting in recent years. The attendance at these meetings represented a tremendous rebuff to the undemocratic and arbitrary rules of the city college administrations.

Even those who are unprepared to take consistent civil-libertarian positions would not swallow the transparent justifications for the ban which were offered up. Others, no doubt, proceeded from the motivation that since the Communist Party was so weak and ineffectual, it was ridiculous to ban Gates from speaking.

PUSHING GATES

At the meetings, the questioning of Gates was sharp and sometimes hostile. A number of questions were put to him in response to his claim that Communists have changed or that he, Gates, has changed in the direction of taking more democratic positions. These questions took him up on this claim and tried to push him further—but only with varying success.

The response to and at these meetings was in a sense a response to the fight of the Gates faction in the CP. No matter what point of view many hold on what is happening in the CP, in practice there is the recognition that there is a difference between the Gates and Foster groups. Few have any illusion that Gates

or his faction has suddenly blossomed out as democrats, but there is the awareness on the part of almost all those who have any real understanding of the situation in the CP that this group has taken the first steps in this direction.

If the speaker were William Z. Foster or some other old-line Stalinist there is considerable doubt whether the protests would have been so widespread.

Gates' faction has tried to use these meetings to prove that his approach—a more independent and democratic posture—is the way for the CP to break out of its present isolation. At one time or another during these two days almost every staff member of the *Daily Worker* was up at Columbia. They even did the Jimmy Higgins work of selling the paper. In the past there would have been LYLers for this.

Gates repeatedly argued at the meetings that Communists have a legitimate place in America's political life as one of the progressive and democratic groups. And in the CP he will undoubtedly argue that his way is the way to do it.

But the tone and type of most of the questioning added an important proviso: *You have to break with your support and defense of that totalitarian system, Stalinism, which you defend as "socialist"; we don't believe your protestations that you will preserve democratic rights if you come to power in the future as long as you defend a system which denies all democratic rights in the present.*

FIREWORKS AT COLUMBIA

The meeting sponsored by the John Dewey Society (SLID) of Columbia drew about 750 in a debate on the Communist Party. Speaking with John Gates were Norman Thomas, Socialist Party leader, who has loudly protested the action of the city college administrations, and Bertram Wolfe, author of *Three Who Made A Revolution* and political advisor to the State Department, who failed to make a single reference to the academic-freedom issue.

Norman Thomas made the initial presentation. Before proceeding to a series of questions to Gates, Thomas criticized the banning of Gates, stated that he was an opponent of the Smith Act, under which Gates was sent to jail, and that he recognized that there is progress in the CP, or rather in the Gates faction, toward democracy.

The following are Thomas' questions and Gates' answers given in rebuttal or in response to prodding from students.

quite good. Last year the YSL drive scored an outstanding success, oversubscribing the national quota by 18 per cent. In view of the new stirring in the socialist movement and the new possibilities which are opening up for it, there is good reason to believe that we can do as well, and perhaps even better, this year.

Along with the new possibilities for the socialist movement go new needs, or rather more intense forms of old ones. And primary among these is the need for increased financial support from all of our members and sympathizers. The quotas of the various branches are based on realistic estimates of what it is possible to achieve, and therefore we have every hope that our goal shall be reached.

Readers of *Challenge* can also do their bit. Make your checks or money orders payable to Max Martin and send them to 114 West 14 Street, New York City.

Thomas: "Has the CP Manual of 1935, written by J. Peters, been dropped or drastically revised? If so, when and how?"

GATES: J. Peter's Manual was dropped in 1936. The recent convention changed concepts toward democratizing the CP. For example, the right of dissent is now guaranteed. "This may not seem revolutionary to others, but in the CP it is."

THOMAS: "Does any faction of the CP still insist that the Soviet Union is the only fatherland of workers all over the world?"

GATES: The CP says that American workers have no allegiance to any other country. However, this does not negate "internationalism."

Q. AND A.

THOMAS: The American Veterans Committee and the Workers Defense League are preparing a petition calling for the withdrawal of Russian troops from Hungary. Would Gates sign it?

GATES: I will sign any petition for mutual and simultaneous withdrawal of all troops all over the world. I was opposed to Russian intervention and it should not have been done. The solution should have been left up to the Hungarian people. However, there were forces in the West who tried to push the situation too far—toward violence and terror.

THOMAS: "Do you accept Moscow's latest claim that now and always it has stood for all European economic cooperation?"

GATES: The Soviet Union always stood for mutual trade. However, in the 1920s the Soviet Union did not have a clear position; but it is for it now. In respect to the Marshall Plan, the Soviet Union refused on the grounds of political strings, and the U. S. was really glad that it did not participate. But the Soviet Union should have been more flexible.

THOMAS: "Is your faction of the party unreservedly committed to (a) rejection of any sort of dictatorship; (b) a multi-party system and (c) support of the Bill of Rights, if you should achieve power?"

GATES: After quoting from the recent CP convention about preservation of freedom once CP comes to power: a multi-party system, however, is the result of political development. In U. S. you have this development, in Russia you do not. I do not believe that the best way to get advances in the Soviet Union is through a multi-party system. Differences of opinion in the Soviet Union should be expressed, and I hope that various means will be found for their expression.

THOMAS: Have all factions of your party repudiated the Black Belt theory for Negro self-determination? I ask this question because I have been attacked in the CP press as a supporter of lynch law because I rejected this theory.

GATES: (No answer.)

THOMAS: "Are your proposals for united fronts or joint action still based on your 1935 assertion that 'if Socialists agree to act with us so much the better, even though we may be sure that at some stage of the action they will betray the workers?'" (Peter's Manual.)

GATES: (No answer.)

Thomas' speech was interesting because he constantly made a distinction between the Gates faction and the CP as a whole, stated that he believes people can change for all kinds of reasons and that these changes have significance. But at the same time, he finds it difficult to believe in the conversion since it came only after Stalin died and after the Khrushchev revelations.

On this point of what is happening in the CP, Thomas openly took issue with Bertram Wolfe, who spoke as if nothing has happened and charged that the recent CP convention acted on orders from Duclos just as it had back in 1945 when Browder was ousted.

Thomas ended his speech with an affirmation of the relationship of socialism and democracy: there is no "imperfect" or "harsh" socialism in Russia, but state capitalism. Socialism is not another name for collectivization. Without democracy there can be, under collectivization, the most ruthless dictatorship.

Gates' speech was an outline of how the CP has changed: more democratic, less monolithic, and independent in making its own decisions. "We are changing," he said, "and America should change its attitude toward us."

With one eye on the fight inside the CP, he presented a defense of the CP and the "U. S. road to socialism"; the CP has a future because it stands for "socialism"—which he then defined as merely "public ownership of property under the leadership of the workers." In all it was essentially a restatement of the convention resolution.

ISSUES DRAWN

Bertram Wolfe's speech was a standard version of the "nothing has changed" school. The recent CP convention got its orders on the proper amount of freedom from the Soviet Union and on how to get closer to the American people. Once again, Duclos, the French CP leader, was the relay station for these orders. And then he read off a Tass dispatch to show that Moscow approved of the way the convention went. Wolfe could well have written the statement that J. Edgar Hoover issued on the convention.

In rebuttal Norman Thomas pointedly remarked that he disagreed with Wolfe on the possibility of Communists changing, although he stated that he does not intend to be fooled by their zigs and zags. Wolfe, on the spot, stated that he hopes that "Gates will be a free man again and I know where Mr. Gates tends."

Another point of significance, at which Thomas and Wolfe parted company, arose in respect to the withdrawal of troops from Hungary, and to Gates' counterposing of withdrawal of all troops from Europe. Wolfe replied that he was opposed to the withdrawal of NATO troops (that is, U. S. troops) because all of Western Europe would be at the mercy of Russia.

Once again Thomas took issue. The events in Poland and Hungary demonstrate that the satellites are a weight around Russia's neck rather than a help; if Russia decided to attack, her troops would have to move through the hostile territory of East Europe. Therefore, he stated, withdrawal of NATO troops can't be ruled out, although there have to be safeguards in the withdrawal plans.

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YSL FUND DRIVE

YSL Launches Fund Drive

By MAX MARTIN

The Young Socialist League's 1957 Fund Drive opens on April 1, with the League aiming this year to raise \$1650 during the three-month drive period ending on July 1. The separate quotas for YSL units and groups are as follows:

At Large and National Office	\$ 125
Berkeley	100
Chicago	300
Dayton Area	50
Los Angeles	200
New York	750
Pittsburgh	125
TOTAL	\$1650

Although a few contributions have already been received in advance of the opening of the drive, it is too early to report them. The first results of this year's YSL financial drive will appear in an early issue of *Challenge*.

The prospects for this Fund Drive are

The Story of the Anti-Stalinist Revolution in the Factories

WORKERS COUNCILS in the POLISH REVOLUTION

By HAL DRAPER

Everyone knows the great role played by the Workers Councils in the Hungarian Revolution, but there has been virtually no attention paid by newspaper correspondents to the important, though different, role being played by the Workers Councils movement in the Polish Revolution. But its news value may increase shortly; the Workers Councils are approaching a crossroads, like the revolution as a whole, under the Gomulka regime.

Up to a point, the story of the Polish Workers Councils—that is, the October revolution in the factories—parallels what has happened in Poland on the general political field: upsurge in October, leveling off on a plateau of hope and promises in November-December, succeeded by a feeling of impasse and frustration, rumblings of a reverse in January, and a cold breath of foreboding in February.

But there has been an important and predictable difference in degree between Gomulka's bridling of the revolution on the political field and his more cautious handling of the Workers Councils. (Even Kadar in Hungary took his time about getting ready for a head-on collision with the Workers Councils, even after the massacre by Russian troops.) In general, "the Gomulka Way" of stemming the revolution seeks to avoid any decisive flare-up of crisis.

As this is written, then, the future of the Workers Councils in the Polish Revolution is in the balance. Here is their story up to now insofar as we can reconstruct it from available accounts.

The basic source, which we shall quote from at length, is a study made by Edgar Morin, French left socialist who is the managing editor of the new magazine *Arguments* recently established in Paris. Morin went to Poland toward the beginning of this year along with a group of colleagues, and devoted particular attention to finding out about the rise and operation of the Workers Council movement, interviewing scores of people on the subject, including Workers Council members in big plants (like the WFM motorcycle plant in Warsaw) and worker-militants in the factories (like Zeran, the big auto plant of the capital).

Morin's account, which is due to be part of a brochure, was printed in *La Vérité*, from which we translate the sections given here. He left Poland at the beginning of February; the important subsequent developments are given here from other sources.

1

The Wheelbarrow

As we shall see, the Workers Council movement was a conscious drive to give a real socialist content to the demagogic-Stalinist slogan that the factories belong to the workers. The first and elemental expression of this aspiration came in the factories with the spontaneous ouster of the regime's old whip-wielders, in the course of the stormy events of October when masses were demonstrating in the streets of the big cities.

One of the big demands of the revolutionary workers, from the first, was the demand for the cleansing out of the bureaucracy of its compromised and hated Stalinist elements. Gomulka very early set himself against the sweep of this demand (see *LA*, Dec. 17) but while the regime fought against any thorough political cleansing, the workers down in the ranks took matters into their own hands on the factory level.

The symbol of this process became the wheelbarrow: hated factory directors or disciplinarians were not lynched, but literally dumped—trundled out of the factory in a wheelbarrow and dumped outside.

Regime spokesmen railed against this over the radio but it went on for over a month at least. We find this out from the speeches made denouncing it, as for example Sokorski's (quoted in *LA* Dec. 17), which demanded "putting an end to the... besmirching of workers' and party activists [i.e., Stalinist functionaries], to the public overthrow of local people's authorities, to the carting of directors in wheelbarrows out of factories, and to the dismissal at mass meetings of legally appointed representatives of the people's authorities. The hunting down of party activists, of democratic [i.e., Stalinist] leaders, of socialists and Communists, in accordance with party directives must be brought to an end." (Nov. 28.)

On December 3 Gomulka himself gave his testimonial-by-denunciation to what was going on. In a speech at a Miners Day meeting in Katowice he inveighed against deviations from labor discipline:

"During the last few days a number of persons from among the supervisory staff have been removed from the mines under various charges, sometimes real, but often fabricated. Shameful cases of taking men out in wheelbarrows do occur, as in the Czeladz and Klimontow mines—old engineers and technicians, foremen and senior miners, who raised to a higher level the struggle in mines for coal for the country [i.e., cracked the whip to speed up production] are being ill-treated and offended. There are also cases of well-deserved beatings. A state of affairs has been created in which the supervisory staff are afraid to go underground, where they would be beaten up."

The dumping of old factory bosses, of course, automatically raised the question of who would run the plants. There was no difficulty as far as the general answer went. Everybody knew that "the factories belong to the workers," because that was official. It was only a question of organizing, for the first time, to make this meaningless platitude a reality. Nobody had to think of the idea of Workers Councils; it was there.

2

The Common Enemy

But the dumping of the old bosses and their stooges was only one side of the upheaval in the factories. Morin emphasizes an opposite side: those cases where the conditions in a factory were "favorable to the constitution of a common front among workers, party militants, technicians and factory directors against the bureaucratic enemy outside: the Ministry, the State."

For like every genuine mass revolution, the Polish revolution had a shattering effect on the cadres of the bureaucracy itself, especially on its lower echelons. Under capitalism one of the defining conditions of a revolutionary crisis is precisely the ability of the revolutionary wave to win over middle-class elements, fence-sitters, petty-bourgeois hesitators, all kinds of hangers-on of the old regime whose basic interests really lie with the revolution. The revolution under Stalinism is analogous.

Morin points to the basic social drive behind this tendency toward a "common front" inside the factories, on the plant level:

"The common enemy of all of them is the Plan which is abstractly imposed from above and which is as inimical to profitability as it is to maximum productivity in the plant."

The thought is basic to an understanding of Stalinism. The basic contradiction of this system lies between its need to plan the economy and all society, on the one hand, and on the other, the impossibility of planning modern economy and society by bureaucratic fiat from above, under conditions of totalitarianism which make impossible any initiative, check or control from below. There can be no planned economy without democracy; hence only democratic socialism can plan. Stalinism is one of the most unplanned economies in the world; hence it is not only the enemy of the exploited worker but, at bottom, an anchor on the technical personnel, on the interests of technical productivity.

The technicians on the bottom of the hierarchical pyramid bear the burden of making it work on the shop level. It can become clear to them, or to a section of them, that it is the system which breaks down under this contradiction, even though a mass of production can perhaps be maintained by raising the degree of exploitation to intensities not even know under capitalism or by masses of slave labor.

The Polish revolution, by the way, has made available a mass of information on how the Stalinist economy worked, or didn't work, to illustrate all this. The raw material for a basic inquiry into the Stalinist system is there in abundance. One of the most startling single facts is the figure on productivity for the Zeran plant, the big auto plant in Warsaw; it is a world's record in reverse. Over a whole year, less than two cars per worker came off the lines! This world's record was due to the breakdown of the "planned" economy, particularly the flow of raw materials, and not to the laboring force.

WEDGE IN THE TECHNOCRACY

Under such conditions one can see why technical personnel at Zeran were as desirous as the workers for a

new "economic system" that would sweep away the old mess. And Zeran was indeed an outstanding example of a place where the Workers Council movement swept up everybody and not only the workers.

Morin adds the following about the "common front" as far as the factory directors were concerned, but of course this is to be expected too:

"The factory directors are the least sure elements in this common front. Appointed by the ministries, it happens that they get to feel more closely tied up with the fate of the ruling bureaucracy than with the fate of their plant. Hence we see directors opposing councils of workers' control. But we also see directors calling for and favoring the setting up of these councils, as at Zeran and WFM, because in them they see the best way of liberating the productive forces from the bureaucratic straitjacket."

One might add that the ability of a particular factory director to see things this way was no doubt considerably enhanced by the extent to which the revolutionary upheaval shook his particular plant.

At any rate, here—on one of the lower levels of the bureaucratic pyramid—the revolution inserted a wedge and split one section from another, self-selected.

Various currents of the revolution flowed together: the struggle against Stalinism, against the state bureaucracy, against Russian domination and its drain on the economy, against cultural sterility, against the whip of exploitation.

3

The Wage Movement

"Already after the death of Stalin and the liquidation of Beria," relates Morin, "the police pressure on the factory had notably lightened. Already by the end of 1955 and beginning of 1956, workers could no longer be dismissed arbitrarily but only after decision by mixed (union and management) arbitration committees. In fact, from spring 1956 on, the pressure of the workers was felt on the following fields: (1) abolishing the disciplinary conditions of the job; (2) guaranteeing the wage; (3) sharing in the management and revenues of the enterprise."

"At the height of the October wave that carried him into power, Gomulka solemnly recognized the right to strike. A little later came the abolition of the hated law on 'socialist labor discipline,' i.e., the semi-concentratory type of law which leveled fines and jail sentences against any infraction of forced labor."

The wage issue was raised sharply from the start. Morin reports:

"At the same time the workers' vanguard took steps to guarantee, stabilize and even increase wages. A large number of production bonuses (which sometimes amounted to as much as 100-200 per cent of the base wage) were incorporated into the wage. The wages that were set were, moreover, guaranteed independently of the norms of production [work quotas]. A part of the profits—17 per cent—was allotted to the personnel of the enterprises."

The regime viewed these moves with great alarm and opposed them, but was not yet in a position to crack down. For example, as late as in a Jan. 9 speech at the Kasprzak radio works—this being before the heating up of the election campaign—Gomulka spoke out strongly against this "violation of wage discipline" but made no open threats.

He deplored "the great and unplanned increase in the sums paid out as wages during 1956," i.e., the wage gains made despite the regime. He revealed that "the increase during the second half of the year [i.e., after Poznan] was particularly rapid, especially during November 1956" (i.e., right after the October revolution).

"The unplanned increase in wages," said Gomulka, "results from the violation of financial discipline by hundreds and thousands of different enterprises." We must firmly do away with this, he added, and announced: "With this in mind the government finds itself forced to restore the bank control of the wage fund, with a view to the rigorous observance of wage discipline in enterprises."

As this is written, Gomulka has now introduced a bill in parliament "canceling claims against the state for payments due because of violations of work agreements in recent years," and wiping out claims already filed for 9 billion zlotys (*N. Y. Times*, March 23).¹ This would have been impossible in the post-October period, whose climate was altogether different.

4

Councils and Soviets

In that climate it was not only wages in the air.

"The idea of workers' control," recounts Morin, "was in the air since the spring of 1956. It came spontaneously, because it corresponded to the official ideology which claimed that the workers were the owners of their factories. An important catalytic role was played by the influence of the ideas from Yugoslavia, which used

1. The same dispatch also reported the interesting news that "several thousand workers went on strike in railways car repair plants in Poznan and Bydgoszcz this week, demanding wage increases of 40 per cent. The strike was settled by granting 15 per cent increases yesterday only a short while before M. Gomulka spoke" (to a meeting of CP deputies, in a speech trumpeted through the country, denouncing wage demands as leading to "economic ruin").

The Revolutionary Opposition Pushes for a 'New Economic System'...

to be taboo but were now permissible.² These ideas boiled up from the 7th Plenum [February] to the 8th Plenum [October]. Plans were discussed in the vanguard factories and sometimes put into practice, for example in North Warsaw, it seems."

At this point Morin says there is uncertainty among his informants about whether Workers Councils sprang up in this period, or whether these are confused in retrospect with the different organisms which appeared in the October revolution: the Revolutionary Workers Committees. "Re-reading my notes," he observes, "many points seem obscure to me; statements by different Polish comrades seem contradictory, not because of any fault of theirs but because we ourselves at the time persisted in thinking of the Councils in terms of the soviets of the 1905-1917 type [in Russia], i.e., as political powers and not only economic powers in the factory."

What is certain is that in the October upheaval itself, the active organs that sprang up out of the factories were the Revolutionary Committees ("soviets" proper) as political instruments of revolt, with the Zeran workers at their head. These did not continue to exist after the heat of the October days had passed; the regime which they had helped to set up intervened with them to persuade them to dissolve,³ in the classic move designed to bridle the revolutionary threat; and Gomulka's credit with the workers was great enough to put this through.

In compensation, the Gomulka regime offered, in place of the political powers and role of the Revolutionary Committees, to set up legally a Workers Council system in the factories that would have only economic powers; or rather, the regime seized on the idea of such economically-limited Councils, which were in the air anyway as one of the sides of the revolutionary committees, to console the workers for their deprivation of political powers.

OLD PATTERN

The general pattern that was acted out here, by the way, can be usefully studied also in a different historical situation: Germany after the First World War.

There too revolutionary soviets (the *räte*) sprang up spontaneously in the November 1918 revolution. The Social-Democratic government of Ebert and Scheidemann was catapulted into power on the basis of the upheaval and then set about patiently to tame and rein the revolution. To this end the congress of the *räte* was persuaded to yield all political power to the government, but in compensation the Weimar Constitution had written into it a "Workers Council" system in the factories which was touted as retaining the "best features of the soviet system" alongside the maintenance of parliamentarism.

But the dual power implicit in the very existence of the *räte* could not be frozen into permanence by a law; the Workers Councils and their solemnly blueprinted economic "powers" became meaningless and powerless ghosts, gutted of any possible role as against the trade unions and political structure, as soon as the revolutionary heat had died down in Germany. They eventually faded away.

No doubt Gomulka also hopes that the Workers Councils in Poland, properly emasculated of course, can similarly be persuaded to fade away, without any head-on collision.

SECOND FRONT

But this gets ahead of our story. In November, when the regime introduced its bill to give legal status to a Workers Council system, it was officially represented as an "experiment," following the abolition of the political powers of the October Revolutionary Committees.

In his Nov. 19 speech at the Sejm introducing this bill, Jaroszewicz, deputy chairman of the Council of Ministers, talked out of both sides of his mouth on the crucial question of what powers and role were to be ascribed to the Workers Councils set up by the law. He admitted that the law was drafted in "very general terms," pretending that this was to avoid "superfluous zeal in imposing Councils where there is no desire for them or in the form of ready-made prescriptions for their work."

On the one hand, Jaroszewicz presented the Workers Council idea as making for "greater, cheaper and better production," thereby implying that its functions would be technical. At another point, however, he made the definite statement that "the Workers Council is the highest authority within the enterprise" and the management is its "executive organ." This concedes the workers' demand. A few minutes later, he was insisting that "setting up the Workers Council must mean

the restriction of any unjustified interference in the administration of the enterprise. This will enhance the prestige of management, based on the collective help and reasoning of the Workers Council." This, and more like it, makes the Councils advisory.

What actually happened was that in any given factory the workers got just as much as they could fight for and win. *The Workers Councils became one of the fronts in the struggle to preserve and extend the gains of the October Revolution against re-Stalinization.* This fight took place molecularly on the factory level.

5

The Councils in Operation

For the details of how the Workers Councils actually began to operate in the more advanced plants, we have to turn to Morin. The Council at WFM was set up at the end of November, and the one at Zeran at the beginning of December.⁴ Morin writes:

"What was involved? Above all, control of the factory by a council elected by the whole personnel. There was no single pattern, but rather several, ranging from an almost advisory council to an organ of control with full power over the whole operation of the factory.

"Thus, at Zeran and WFM the council sets forth its opinion on the draft plan and corrects it, votes the annual plan of production, establishes the monthly installments of the annual plan, and sets up the table of organization of the factory as well as the main lines of technical development and productivity. At Zeran the council, which was finally elected Dec. 4, 1956 has since then re-made the factory table of organization, restructured the wage scales through incorporation of the bonuses, and through a redistribution of the total mass of wages, controls the relationship between norms and wages. It meets regularly in order to take care of its normal work of management in the future. After the intense activity devoted to getting under way, the council is to meet regularly once a month.

"At Zeran the council constitutes a real self-government of the factory, for it confirms the appointment of the factory director nominated by the minister, and the appointment of the departmental directors nominated by the factory director; for example, it refused to confirm a proposed commercial director. Some factories in the provinces, which have set up similar regulations, have even started competitions for the post of factory director, via the press. Other councils, like the one at WFM, do not control the appointment of the factory director.

"Thus, depending on conditions and the given discussions that go on, the regulations of the factory councils are adopted, and it seems there is no standard set of regulations.

"The essential point is that the council is elected by the whole personnel, each department choosing its representative or representatives, in accordance with an electoral system determined by a full membership meeting of all the workers together. The candidates (at Zeran, about three candidates per post) are nominated by raised hands, and the vote takes place by secret ballot. The candidates do not present their political labels (but it should be noted that 50 per cent of the Zeran council consists of party members).

"Another feature: 50 per cent of the members of the Zeran council come from the technical personnel. That seems to confirm the idea that in this factory there is an alliance between the technical staff and the workers, an alliance which showed itself since before October.

"It seems that pretty much everywhere a large number of technicians are elected to the councils; this could mean either that there is a feeling of timidity on the part of the workers with respect to the tasks of management, or that they want to prove that the system of workers control does not run contrary to the needs of technical competence.

"At the beginning of February, to what extent were the councils distributed? It seems that 70 per cent of heavy industry was already converted to the new system of management; the electrical field was covered completely; and the movement was rapidly spreading in some provinces. But also, obstacles of all sorts were arising."

6

Expand or Die

The "obstacles" had to do with nothing less than the question whether the Councils would live and grow, or die.

"The factory councils," points out Morin, "tend to develop vertically and horizontally. Vertically the coun-

4. Writing in late November from Warsaw, Leo Huberman (*Monthly Review*, Jan.) quotes Gozdik, the leader of the Zeran workers, on his hopes that the Workers Councils will really mean self-government in the factories. Quite properly, this is put in the future tense, for the Zeran Council had not been formed at this time. (The quotes from Gozdik, by the way, accurately reflect the aspirations of the Workers Council activists.) But in contrast I cannot refrain from pointing to the article by Claude Bourdet in the Dec. 1 *Nation*. Writing at the same time from Warsaw, Bourdet reports absolutely categorically that the Workers Council movement "has done away with the old bureaucratic planning and management system," etc., etc., and no reader would even suspect that in most places, including even Zeran itself, a workers council had not yet even come into operating existence at the time Bourdet's typewriter was burbling away in this fashion! Old ways, new heroes.

cils are led to federate into corporative bodies which would replace the Central Offices of the Ministries, i.e., the bureaucratic organs of the state set up at the summit of each branch of industry. Horizontally, the councils would tend to federate on all levels till they would eventually constitute an assembly of producers, a second chamber complementary to the political parliament."

Morin is talking about a tendency here, inherent in the expansion of the Council system, which if carried to the end would set up "a new economic model."

"The bitterest enemies of the Councils are obviously in the state bureaucracy, the Central Offices of the Ministries, the still-Stalinist apparatus of the party. On the other hand, the Councils are defended and exalted by a part of the intellectual left of the party, notably in *Po Prostu*, and also by some technical people and factory directors; but how many of the latter I could not say, unfortunately."

What of Gomulka? As is his general role, on this too—or this especially perhaps—Gomulka gives no support to the left, but has tried to keep in balance on the fence. "The position of Gomulka himself and his closest friends seemed a reserved one in January, and an uncertain one at the time of our departure [from Poland] at the beginning of February." It probably still is "reserved" on this question, even though since the beginning of February Gomulka has made a clear turn toward reconciliation with the Stalinists.

Morin cites five arguments against Workers Councils which make "leading circles skeptical about the immediate effectiveness of the proposed system."

(1) "In the present conditions of economic chaos, they think, the problems are above all technical ones, and it is technicians who are above all in a position to solve them most effectively."—This is a to-be-expected hallmark of the bureaucratic mentality, which has no conception of the immense reservoirs of creativity that can be unleashed by free mass participation from below.

(2) "Do the Councils have the necessary maturity and authority to carry through such changes?"—In part no doubt this means: Will they go further than we want them to go?

(3) "Can the individual factories raise themselves to the plane of the general interest...?"

(4) "Or doesn't one rather run the risk of increasing disorder and anarchy, and thereby favoring the Nationalists...?"—This is a variant of the standard Gomulkaist argument that anything which they oppose helps the Stalinists, by definition. This argument is running out, however, as Gomulka more and more clearly effects a reconciliation with the same Stalinists.

(5) "Doesn't it provoke a new and useless cause of friction with the USSR...?"—Friction yes, but not new or useless, for it is Poland's October revolution which causes "friction" with Moscow, and will continue to do so until it is liquidated by cold means or hot.

EXPERIMENT?

Morin argues: "In point of fact, we were told at WFM, profitability increased after the installation of the system. At Zeran and WFM, the existence of the Council did not at all interfere with the need to cut down the personnel." Technical work and cooperation with the technical staff has been excellent. "In brief, in these pilot plants no danger of stagnation or retrogression has shown up."

Morin concludes:

"The question is henceforth posed on the political plane. The Nationalists and the state bureaucracy do not come out openly against the Councils but pretend to support the experimentalist position which seemed up to now to be Gomulka's. On the other hand, the activists in the Councils are unanimously of the view that the Councils will die through asphyxiation if they remain isolated and compartmentalized in the experimental stage. They can be effective only if they are called on to reconstruct the economic pattern of the country. A cartoon in a leftist journal shows all the people walking on their heads, with the exception of two individuals who are on their feet holding up a sign reading, 'Experimental Section.'"

The Councils are not allowed to set up provisions for linking their work together. "There is no federating mechanism, not even a liaison bulletin or a joint secretariat. It seems indeed that there was a veto by the party on this essential point."

But this does not prevent constant "spontaneous contacts, visits, delegations, etc." Every day Zeran, which is the leading center, gets visited by a delegation from some factory in Poland which has just formed its Council and wants to find out how it's done.

Within a branch of industry, where the Councils are allowed to maintain links, they "come into collision with the Central Offices of the Ministries." In one industry (electrical), it seems, the bureaucracy has accepted the situation. "In others, the resistance is bitter. In any case, administrative persecution is intense..."

In another article Morin has concluded:

"Right now, the future of the Councils, even in the eyes of their most determined supporters, is a question-mark. And in the present strategic and political context, it is hard to imagine where a real upsurge of the Councils would lead. But it is certain that the Communist vanguard elements base their hopes on the success of the councils. It is not less certain that the workers at WFM, for example, consider themselves not as the objects of an experiment, but as the pioneers of a movement for workers' control... One thing is sure:

(Turn to last page)

2. Titoist propaganda has puffed up its "Workers Councils system" as meaning real "economic democracy," especially for foreign consumption. The fact that it isn't true did not, of course, keep it from having an impact on Polish workers who heard of it. There is ironic evidence for this. The Yugoslav leaders themselves have complained that the Poles have illusions about the Titoist system. In the English-language propaganda magazine published in Belgrade, *Review of International Affairs* (Jan. 15), Vukmanovic-Tempo, one of the top leaders of the regime, reports on the visit by a Yugoslav delegation to Warsaw: "However, our delegation was able to note that the Polish comrades have a considerably distorted picture of our system of management by the workers in enterprises. Thus for instance the Polish comrades believed that we are opposed to all central planning and that we favor the spontaneous rather than the planned development of economy. Of course we explained to the Polish comrades... etc., but 'it cannot be said that the discussions held by our party delegation in Poland have clarified and elucidated all problems of workers' management...'"

3. This information is given in another article by Morin (in collaboration with his colleagues who went with him to Poland) in *France-Observateur*, Feb. 28.

Workers Councils in Poland — —

(Continued from page 7)

it is impossible for the Councils to remain isolated experiments in Poland. They must inevitably either spread generally or else disappear."

7

The Flare-Up in February

That was the unresolved question at the beginning of February, when Morin left Poland, and this is as far as he goes. In the period between January 20 (election day) and February 26 (when Premier Cyrankiewicz presented the new government program to the Sejm), a number of significant things happened.

In anticipation of the opening of the new parliament, and in order to bring their own pressure to bear on the regime, the revolutionary left openly organized to raise the issue of the fate of the Workers Council.

As often, one of the first voices raised was that of *Po Prostu*, the independent student organ, in its issue dated Election Day. An article by Stanilaw Chesstowski and Wlodzimierz Godek said, "The Workers Councils are the symbol of the changes that took place in October"; they make the workers the real owners of production; but the factory directors look on the Councils only as advisers and not owners. The bureaucracy fights the Councils by every means, even "falsification." The law accords certain rights to the Councils in theory, but the directors still hold on to these rights and act as executors for the Central Offices, not for the Council. The Councils ought to go ahead and take care of buying raw materials, determining the plan of production, etc. but in point of fact they always see these rights contested. . . . Thus *Po Prostu* sought to bring the fight out into the open.

MOBILIZATION IN WARSAW

In February, in the two weeks before the opening of the Sejm, a series of workers' conferences took place in industrial centers to demand full powers to the Workers Councils in the factories.

The first was apparently in Warsaw; the radio reported it on Feb. 11 as a conference of "party economic activists" which is to "clear up a number of important problems encountered by Warsaw Workers Councils in their work. The main problems are those of further development and the liquidation of bureaucratic obstacles put in the way of Workers Councils by Central Administrations and ministries. Wladislaw Matwin, secretary of the PZPR Central Committee [and *Trybuna Ludu* editor], and Stefan Staszewski, first secretary of

the Warsaw Committee [of the party] are attending the conference."

(A couple of weeks later both Matwin and Staszewski were ousted from their posts by Gomulka in a big blow against the democratic left.)

Next day the radio report said this conference had decided "to call a Warsaw conference. . . . A coordinating committee attached to the Warsaw Committee of the PZPR was set up. The committee includes representatives of nearly 20 big Warsaw factories. The purpose of the committee is to exchange experience and give help to the Warsaw workers' conference." No resolution was reported out of the conference.

CRACOW AND WROCLAW SPEAK

In Cracow the next day the radio reported a similar regional conference, comprising "activists in Workers Councils and representatives of industrial plants" in the area.

A hard-hitting resolution was read out. It said that the idea of Workers Councils "has met with the strong opposition of all anti-October forces, acting in an organized manner in defense of the old political and economic system" but the Councils ought to be "the true masters of factories." The organs of the regime were directly accused: the Councils' work "has been frustrated by instructions and directives from above by central administrations and ministries" and these are "attempts to compromise the idea of Workers Councils."

The resolution further laid down two lines of action: (1) apply the law that exists now, as far as it goes, and besides (2) extend the authority of the Councils over the whole factory. "Central administrations and higher organs should be done away with in view of the fact that they are obsolete." The party organization's role in the factory should be only "supervisory" through its members' participation—i.e., no imposition of line.

Finally the Cracow conference openly "associated itself" with the Warsaw conference and endorsed the Warsaw call for what it described as "a national conference of workers' representatives."

The Workers Councils' activists and the democratic left were agitating and organizing for the initiation from below and against the proclaimed resistance of the regime of a national framework of the Workers Councils!

Then a few days later, Feb. 18, the party committee of Wroclaw Province published a startling document which the radio report described with some evident astonishment as "the first declaration of this kind made by a party authority working in an important, industrialized region of the country," and also as being possibly "an epoch-making event."

In this, a letter to party units, the party committee

of this region which had been a hotbed of ferment in October came out foursquare in support of the Workers Councils in the context of the current fight. In every respect this Wroclaw statement reiterated the ideas and demands of the Cracow resolution. The radio report dwelt particularly on "the statement made in the letter saying that in controversial matters between the party organization and the Workers Councils, an appeal can be made to the workers of the enterprise, to whom the supreme power in the enterprise belongs. . . ."

(Less than a month later, Central Committee secretary Gierek was imposed on the Silesian party organization as the new party boss.)

As late as February 24, two days before Cyrankiewicz read his program to the Sejm, the issue broke out in the open at the Third Congress of Polish Engineers and Technicians, convening in Warsaw.

It was to come up in the section of the congress on Planning, Management and Organization. Nearly one-third of all the delegates, reported the radio, chose to attend this particular section. "The papers prepared for reading in that section . . . resolutely support and develop the granting of independence to industrial enterprises and local industry enterprises. In this connection a thesis was advanced to the effect that the Workers Councils should become the chief authority at an enterprise, with the management, as its executive organ. . . . The main attack is directed against central administrations. . . ."

THE REGIME SAYS NO

But in the premier's programmatic speech to the Sejm on Feb. 26—the same in which he announced the retention of the Stalinist Nowak as deputy premier—the regime made clear that it was rejecting all these demands for Workers Councils.

Cyrankiewicz did this by discussing the Councils as if they were simply advisory appendages to management, with no concessions in language to the democratic left, and by specifically rejecting and condemning proposals directed "against central planning" (which, to be sure, is not what the Workers Councils were demanding). The "main interest" of the Councils, said Cyrankiewicz for the government, should be to fight waste and such things. The content and tone of these passages left little room for illusions about Gomulka's intentions.

So, as is also true on the political arena in the fight for democracy, the issue is posed before the revolutionary democrats, both the intellectuals and the workers: How resist this process of the reversal of the October Revolution? And can Gomulka really succeed in getting the genie of revolution back into the bottle?

Labor 'Court of Appeals'? — —

(Continued from page 1)

tional to that of serving as a final court of appeals in union trials. It would also be empowered to investigate and report on any violations of ethical standards and practices in the union which might be brought to its attention.

The UAW Executive Board's proposal for a court of appeals, completely separate from and relatively independent of the union administration itself, is of greatest interest from the point of view of union democracy, quite aside from the current concern with racketeering, profiteering, and high-handed bureaucratic dictatorship in the labor movement. It is an approach to solving a problem of the rights of an individual member, or group of members, vis-à-vis the powerful administrations of the gigantic unions which have grown up as the only effective representatives of the workers' eco-

conomic interests as against the gigantic corporations and groups of corporations which control the bulk of American production.

Even in the least bureaucratized unions, or in those in which the bureaucracy is most responsive to the membership, the individual member who is charged with the violation of union rules or decisions has a hard row to hoe.

In the UAW, as in many unions, he can appeal from an adverse local trial decision to the International Executive Board, and from there to the union convention. If the violation with which he is charged relates to some activity directed against the leadership of the union, his chances of a really fair trial either by the IEB or the convention are pretty poor.

After all, both bodies are likely to be dominated by the group whose stewardship he has attacked or endangered. They

are trying a case in which their own interests are involved. The more important the concrete issues involved, the harder it is for them to disentangle self-interest from fairness or justice.

In many unions the procedure itself stacks the cards against a rank-and-file member. In some, a member appealing a decision to the executive board must travel to the national headquarters at his own expense. In others, if his appeal is denied, he must personally bear the whole expense of the proceedings.

A biannual or quadrennial convention, at which the delegates have important union business to transact, often reacts with impatience to the appeal of a union member who takes up their time and attention. In any event, at most conventions he appears not before a body of rank-and-file unionists but before the secondary and tertiary leadership of the union, many of whom are looking for advancement and favors from the established leadership against whom he is appealing.

LABOR'S PROBLEM

These are not problems peculiar to the labor movement. They are problems which confront every democratic organization or society which has grown beyond the size of the local assembly in which all members can meet face to face.

They are not present in the business world, because the owner-employee relationship or the structure of the great corporation are not democratic either in theory or practice. These are authoritarian structures, frankly ruled from the top down, in which promotion, demotion, advancement or firing are decided at the top and handed down without recourse or appeal of any kind. Employer-worker trial procedures exist in industry only where strong unions are able to force them on

the bosses as a protection for their members.

The procedure proposed by the UAW leadership is a frank recognition of the actual state of affairs with regard to internal union justice, and an attempt to solve it along lines suggested by the independent judiciary in the American governmental set-up.

No one can say, in advance, just how well it will work out. The "outstanding public citizens" who may be willing to serve on such a public review board may find a god deal of difficulty in orienting themselves to the best standards and traditions of union democracy.

After all, the labor movement is not a municipality or a state. It is a special kind of association, formed for a specific purpose. In the very nature of things, this trial board is going to start making law for the union, as all appeals courts do. Whether or not such law will be entirely suitable for an organization which is primarily formed for struggle on behalf of its members, only time will tell.

The UAW leaders, and the delegates to their convention which starts on April 7, are no doubt aware of the problems which may arise. The union will retain final control over the board, in the sense that if the set-up fails to work in the interest of union democracy, it can be abolished at any convention. It is certainly a measure worth trying.

We Need Your \$\$\$

The facts of life for LABOR ACTION readers are: The maintenance of LA depends entirely on your contributions to the Fund Drive. We have no angel. Make out checks to Albert Gates and send them in.

Rank-and-File Teamsters — —

(Continued from page 1)

that some enterprising reporter for the press hasn't sought to interview some of the top political and business figures who supported the Hoffa dinner as a token of their high esteem of him, and see how they account for their actions. John Bugas, vice president of the Ford Motor Company, would be a good subject, for example. So would high AFL-CIO officials who bought tickets in tribute to Hoffa for the dinner.

Among the important union questions raised by the exposés is what course of action the AFL-CIO should follow in dealing with the Teamsters Union. The easiest one, of course, might be simply to expel them from the united labor movement. Certainly, the resignation of Dave Beck from the AFL-CIO Council

is mandatory; also the resignation of all top Teamster officials from any important post in the labor movement.

But it could be a serious mistake to expel this union, for the primary effect might be to leave the truck drivers at the mercy of this gang who are going to use all possible tactics to save their skins, and their faces, in this critical situation. Far better might be for the AFL-CIO ethical-practices committee to conduct a whole series of hearings on events in the Teamsters Union, and help the rank and file clean out the scum, hold real elections, and transform this vast organization into a decent, democratic union instead of a private happy hunting-ground for racketeers, fast-buck boys, and other parasitic types who live off this organization.