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Bolivian Leader Defends Revolt In Interview

The following interview with Guillermo Lora, leader of the Revolutionary Workers Party of Bolivia, is reprinted from La Verite, French Trotskyist paper, and took place during his recent stay in Paris.

Lora was elected to the Bolivian Parliament in 1947 as a representative of the tin miners. In the course of the anti-working class repression instituted shortly after by the ultra-reactionary pro-imperialist dictatorship which struck down innumerable workers, Lora was arrested and spent time in all the concentration camps of his country. He finally succeeded in escaping and made his way to Europe. In addition to his intimate knowledge of the situation in Bolivia, he has been in daily contact with his country since the outbreak of the revolution.

Question: The news in the capitalist press on the Bolivian revolution is very confusing. Tell us first, what was the origin of the recent events?

Answer: The new government headed by Paz Estenssoro grew out of the coup d'etat carried out by General Seleme and Torres Ortiz, government minister and head of the general staff of the Junta which had just fallen, and which on April 8 ordered the occupation of the city of La Paz by the national and urban police. In addition they appealed to the right wing leaders of the MNR to join them in the conspiracy, insisting that this was the sole method of preventing General Sanchez, Minister of Labor, and other political elements from seizing the presidency.

Question: Before proceeding tell us about the MNR, which has been characterized by the press and not only the capitalist press as a fascist or neo-fascist party.

Answer: Yes, the neo-imperialist press has simultaneously stated that the MNR was a fascist party and that the Trotskyists supported this movement in the belief that the MNR would achieve the democratic revolution. These American lackeys are accustomed to falsifying facts and to slander. In reality, the MNR is a petty bourgeois party which bases itself on the organizations of the masses. We do not believe at all that it can fulfill the fundamental tasks of the bourgeois democratic revolution (destruction of large landed property and national liberation) and our program states that these tasks are the tasks of the proletarian revolution in the present stage. The daily struggle now allows us to forge a common

front with all the exploited of all political tendencies, among them the MNR. Our aim is to liberate the workers from their petty bourgeois leadership. We don't believe this can be done by slander and falsification.

Question: What was the nature of the Junta whose break-up became the starting point for the revolution?

Answer: The government Junta arose out of a palace maneuver of the notorious agent of imperialism and butcher of the workers, Urriolagoitia, who is now in Paris. In this way, he was able to trample on working class sentiment which defeated the reaction in the electoral struggle of last year, and he instituted a regime in the unconditional service of imperialism and the feudal bourgeoisie.

The government Junta was seriously disintegrating before April 8. Internal struggle was having fatal effects. At the same time in recent months the poverty of the people was growing worse as the result of the Yankee policy of incorporating the country into its war plans.

The interminable debate between the government and the Reconstruction Finance Corporation on the price of tin was practically bankrupting the national budget. Imperialist oppression was further aggravated by the execution of what is called the technical agreement with the UN, which gives the North Americans the political and administrative direction of the country.

Set into motion by growing discontent, the masses took the first steps of the revolutionary period, which today is an indisputable reality.

Question: What is the attitude and the role of our party in this situation?

Answer: The Revolutionary Workers Party (RWP), Bolivian section of the Fourth International, which is firmly rooted in the most important sectors of the proletariat, has in the course of recent months undertaken a broad political campaign aimed at the political polarization of broad sections of the exploited. Despite illegality, our program was publicly issued and at the same time an appeal was made to all mass parties, among them the MNR, to organize a common front in the struggle against

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Fights Purge



JAMES KUTCHER

The Status of My Fight Against the 'Loyalty' Purge

By James Kutcher

The Militant asked me if I had any comment to make about the appeal against my purge that was heard before the U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in Washington last month, and if I would care to write something about where my case stands now.

I gladly accepted the invitation for two reasons. First because I consider it an honor to be asked to write something for the best socialist paper in this country, and maybe in the world. The second reason is a little harder to explain.

NOBODY ASKED ME

Nobody asked me to say anything at the court hearing in Washington on April 10 — all the talking was confined to lawyers and judges. My case has now become a legal and constitutional issue, in which no part seems to be played by me or by the Veterans Administrator who fired me from my clerical job with the Newark VA or by the Attorney General who drew up the "subversive" blacklist that was used against me or by the President who told the Attorney General to draw up the blacklist.

I am not objecting to discussion of my case as a constitutional issue; in fact, that is what I want and have worked for ever since I was fired. But sometimes, when I read the cold briefs or listen to the impersonal argument of abstract law and fine constitutional points, I get the strange feeling that I am only an observer rather than a participant in this fight, and I get an impulse to cry out, "You're forgetting something — remember that there is a human being involved in this," and then tell them in plain language what I think about the whole business.

Of course I cannot do such a

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Labor Party in '52 Can Turn Tide of Reaction

Steel Union Convention Faces Gravest Crisis in Many Years

By Joseph Keller

The CIO steel workers meeting in national convention in Philadelphia on May 13 face the gravest crisis since they founded their international union in 1942. The issue before them is this: Will they preserve the independence of the union and enable it to battle freely for their conditions and rights? Or will they continue to be bound to and restrained by the government and its agencies?

For the past six months of the latest contract struggle, this issue has been decided in favor of dependence upon government agencies — with the exception of the brief three-day period, from April 30 to May 3, when the steel workers demonstrated on the picket lines an organized power that momentarily set the corporations back on their heels.

EVIL CONSEQUENCES

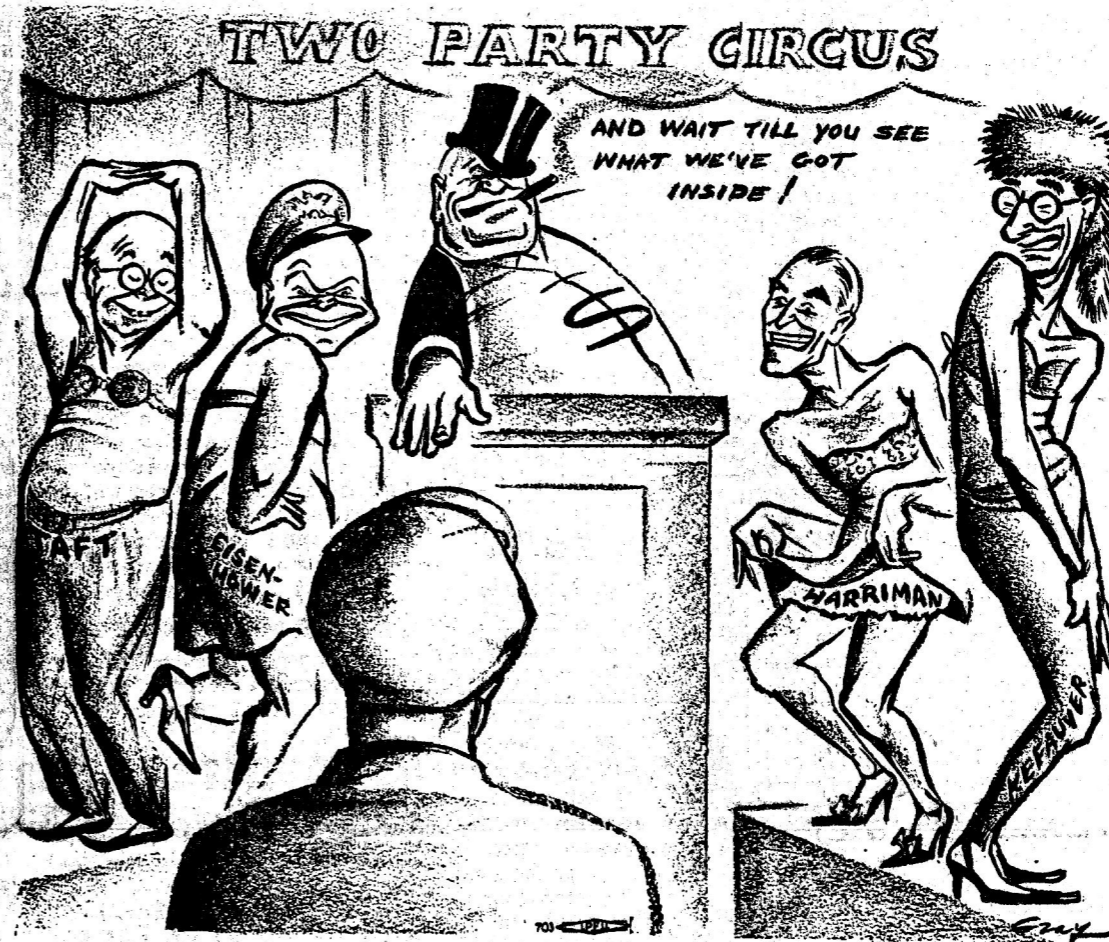
The consequences of the policy of dependence on government favors are a matter of indisputable fact: 1. the government has whittled down the steel workers' original and just demands; 2. government intervention has gained the steel workers not one cent more in wages, but has prevented them from using fully and effectively their most telling weapon, the strike; 3. the steel workers have been working without a contract for five months while the steel owners have been getting the benefit of their labor to maintain and even increase profits.

The net result of all the government actions — wage board hearings and delays, presidential seizures and court injunctions to halt wage boosts — has been to delay and deny wage gains to the steel workers for six months. It cannot be said this is a wholly unforeseeable outcome. CIO Steelworkers President Philip Murray certainly has not been in total ignorance of the likely results.

Testifying before the Senate Labor and Public Welfare Committee, April 23, in Washington, Murray reminded the senators that his union has had some painful experiences with government agencies. "We did not want to go to Washington in December, 1951," he said. "This union has had enough of panels and boards and tribunals. The process of going to a Board has, in the experience of this union, been a method of forcing the union to accept a compromise of its position before a strike has even begun. We did not want to go through that process again."

Murray added: "On each of the previous occasions when we went

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RIEVE PURGES BALDANZI OPPOSITION AT TEXTILE WORKERS CONVENTION

By Jean Simon

CLEVELAND, Ohio, May 3 — The CIO Textile Workers Union yesterday concluded its seventh biennial convention, ending five days of the bitterest struggle for union control since the national CIO convention, also held here, purged a number of international unions several years ago.

The sole achievement at the convention was the re-election of Emil Rieve as president of the 400,000-member union, and the elimination of the George Baldanzi opposition from all top posts in the organization.

DELEGATES DISAPPOINTED

Rank and file delegates who came to Cleveland hoping to discuss proposals for dealing with life and death problems facing the union returned home completely disappointed. While resolutions were passed noting that "more than 150,000 textile workers are unemployed and hundreds of thousands more are working on curtailed schedules" and that "the depression in the

industry has caused widespread suffering in textile communities throughout the country," the chief preoccupation of the union leadership was with its factional fight for power.

Issues in the fight were limited to organizational questions, with the Rieve administration defending its record and policies as responsible for the "gains" of the union, and the Baldanzi opposition attacking the administration as "dictatorial," bureaucratic and politically corrupt.

Rank and file delegates attending meetings of the Rieve caucus heard testimony of members from various locals as to the "arrogance," "demagoguery" and gossquad methods of Baldanzi. The opposition caucus heard similar charges about Rieve.

While the Baldanzi caucus benefited from a genuine discontent with the ineffectiveness of the policies of the union leadership in coping with the problems of unemployment and competition with unorganized southern

real upsurge in the ranks capable of ousting the administration were dissipated by Baldanzi's failure to raise any fundamental differences with Rieve.

BANKRUPT POLICIES

Rieve's keynote address was as classic a confession of bankruptcy as one could hear from the official labor leadership today, but neither Baldanzi nor any of the host of other Social Democrats-turned-Democrats had a word of criticism of his policies.

Rieve recognized that he has been going through a "cockeyed economy" — that the military expenditures have stimulated heavy goods industries and resulted in a slump in consumers goods industries, such as textiles. But instead of placing the blame where it belongs, on the capitalist war economy, he arrived at this dilemma:

"As long as there is no realistic attempt to curb the price inflation caused by defense expenditures, I see very little hope of

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New Laws Are Threat Against Labor

By Joseph Hansen

In response to the clamor of the steel barons, Congress now threatens to pass new anti-labor laws aimed at breaking the backbone of unionism in America. The threat gives fresh urgency to the question, long at the top of the agenda in the mind of every politically-conscious union man, what can the labor movement do about the 1952 elections?

The proposed laws include a ban on industry-wide bargaining, compulsory Taft-Hartley Act injunctions, and even a "plan" pushed by Representative Howard Smith of Virginia, a Democrat, to put both company and union in the "receivership" of a federal court in case of strike, the costs to be imposed "equally" on company and union.

ANTI-LABOR OFFENSIVE

These anti-labor legislative proposals are not aberrations that can be expected to be forgotten a few weeks after settlement of issues in the steel dispute. They are a logical continuation of the whole drive against democratic rights mounted by Big Business since the end of World War II, a drive that has chalked up such successes for the capitalist class as passage of the Taft-Hartley Act, Truman's "loyalty" purge, and the nationwide witch hunt. The final objective of this drive, as The Militant has pointed out repeatedly, is the crushing of organized labor as a potential source of resistance to the plans for another world war.

Any way you look at it, the 1952 legislative brew looks poisonous for labor. But there are even more ominous political developments. General Eisenhower stands a strong chance of hanging his brass hat on the capitol dome. As an alternative, Senator Taft, the main author of the Taft-Hartley Act, threatens to take over the executive arm of government. And the Democrats? In the final analysis, what they have to offer does not differ in any essential respect from the Republican choice of evils. That was why Truman did his best to induce General Eisenhower to run under the label of the donkey instead of the elephant.

All the candidates of both major parties are committed to preparations for another war. That means the heavy burden of a guns-not-butter program, redoubled pressure on the unions, the militarization and regimentation of America, the development of a police state, possibly other enterprises like Korea, eventually the nightmare perspective of a plunge into the full-scale war of atomic destruction.

ROUGH YEAR AHEAD

Thus the facts would seem to bear out the pessimistic conclusion of one of Philip Murray's fair-haired boys, Joseph Curran, President of the National Maritime Union. In the May 1 Pilot, he begins his column: "This year promises to be a rough political year."

Rough indeed. Just where can labor turn in this crucial year? What can be done to safeguard labor's vital interests?

Curran's answers to these questions merit attention since they indicate prevailing opinion among the top leaders of the CIO. First, he considers the Republicans. "No worker with any common sense can support the present potential candidates of the Republican party," he declares. So far so good.

DEMOCRATS NO BETTER

Now what about the Democrats? Curran dismisses Senator Kefauver as "weak on the question of civil rights, and many other domestic questions of great importance." He doubts the

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Michigan Police-State Law Faces Federal Court Tests

DETROIT, May 5 — Michigan state officials, acting through Attorney General Millard, are still trying to utilize the Trucks Act to get a grand jury witch hunt under way, despite a federal judge's order restraining enforcement of the police-state measure.

Millard appeared before circuit court judges last week and tried to convince them that Judge Arthur F. Lederle's restraining order does not prevent state police from presenting evidence to get a grand jury investigation of alleged "subversives" started. The circuit court judges, fearing legal difficulties arising out of the restraining order, again delayed decision on Millard's petition for a one-man grand jury investigation to prepare indictments against "violators" of the Trucks Act. The judges told Millard that he would have to present more facts.

OFFICIALS RESTRAINED

Judge Lederle restrained state officials from enforcing the new law until May 20, when three federal judges will begin hearings on a suit brought by the Communist Party which seeks to invalidate the law.

This means that in all probability the courts will hear the CP suit before taking action on the court fight prepared by lawyers for the Socialist Workers Party. The SWP is seeking a declaratory judgment holding the Trucks Act unconstitutional under the 14th Amendment, an injunction restraining officials from arresting or prosecuting anyone for failure to register

under the Trucks Act, and an order directing the Secretary of State to certify the SWP for the Michigan ballot.

Meanwhile, the Rev. A. J. Muste national secretary of the Fellowship of Reconciliation, sent a letter to FOR group leaders in Michigan urging them to protest the new law and help protect those who come within the scope of its provisions.

"A number of the provisions of the Act, such as that 'Communists' or 'subversive' parties can be kept off or thrown off the ballot by the simple say-so of the attorney general; the requirement of wholesale registration by means of a questionnaire which requires people to give information about persons who have attended classes with them in the past, etc., are, as I am sure you agree, shocking," Muste wrote.

ASKS SWP SUPPORT

His letter also noted that the first victim of the law was the Socialist Workers Party, which was barred from the state ballot after filing 12,000 signatures on a petition to get a place on the November ballot for its candidates, Farrell Dobbs for President and Grace Carlson for Vice President.

"We hope, therefore, that, in spite of disagreements with the Socialist Workers Party, everything possible will be done to help them in defending their civil liberties in the present situation," Muste declared.

Besides barring "subversives" from the ballot and requiring them to register with the state police, the Trucks Act includes a catch-all "sabotage" clause which is obviously designed to cripple legitimate union and strike activity.

Millions Demonstrate in Japan on May Day

By Art Preis

"Never in history will people have regained their sovereignty with so little show of joy as is to be noted in Japan now," said the Tokyo Nippon Times about Japan's return to "independence" on April 28. The chief Far Eastern correspondent of the Christian Science Monitor, Henry S. Hayward, reported from Tokyo that "the Japanese man in the street was apathetic." Hayward added a note of uneasiness:

"Somehow there was an almost ominous under current of silence, and lack of gaiety. Perhaps he suggested, the Japanese masses were 'saving their rejoicing for happier days' such as Emperor Hirohito's birthday on April 29 'for more boisterous days such as May Day when 700,000 demonstrators are expected to march.'"

WORKERS DEMONSTRATE

Japan has seen few quieter days in the past two decades than

the occasion of the Emperor's fifty-first natal day. But 48 hours later — May Day — the Japanese workers demonstrated that they were far from apathetic toward the treaty of so-called "peace" and "sovereignty" imposed on Japan while under the domination of U.S. arms.

And "boisterous" is hardly an appropriate word for the gigantic militant and bitter demonstrations that swept the country in protest against continued American occupation of Japan under the guise of a "security" treaty against "Communism." Throughout the country some three million people turned out for more than 400 May Day rallies, reported Oland D. Russell, Scripps-Howard staff writer in Tokyo.

The climax of these demonstrations took place in the capital city Tokyo, seat of the Emperor and headquarters city for the American military command in the Far East. There, according to Japanese press and police

estimates cited by Russell, between 250,000 and 350,000 demonstrators, many of them armed with clubs, stones and pointed bamboo spears, marched for hours, shouting "Go home Damn Yankee!" whenever they saw an American, in uniform or civilian dress.

The demonstrators divided their attention between the Emperor, symbol of their hated native ruling class of monopoly capitalists, landlords and warlords, and the U.S. military, who have been strutting it over the Japanese workers and peasants for seven years and who have kept the old Japanese rulers in power.

DEMAND YANKS LEAVE

One column of thousands marched on Prime Minister Shigeru Yoshida's residence, "where it milled about shouting 'puppet' and demanding that U.S. troops be sent home," reported Russell. This column continued on to the Imperial Palace of the

"sacred" Emperor. They three times charged a cordon of three thousand police, according to George Barrett, N. Y. Times correspondent in Tokyo, and almost broke through to the inner palace. In this battle, the Scripps-Howard report said, the demonstrators "clubbed 213 officers to the ground, injuring 51 seriously."

The real sentiments of the Japanese masses towards the United States occupation forces and the new "independence" was shown by the fact that the marchers drove American soldiers and civilians off the streets. According to one report, 10 uniformed Americans reported for treatment of minor injuries. "Most Americans had to duck inside buildings," reported Barrett, while American personnel were kept long after closing hours behind the huge bronze doors of the Dai Ichi Building where the Far East Command headquarters are maintained. Some 50 U.S.

cars were reported burned or damaged near Gen. Ridgway's downtown headquarters.

While "many occupation cars were stoned," reported Russell of Scripps-Howard, an American girl actually "drew a few cheers as she made her way unmolested in an open car through one threatening group." She was "wearing a red sweater."

The angry demonstration resulted in possibly seven deaths, and the injury of 1,800, including 1,028 police, according to the May 2 N. Y. World-Telegram. It started as a labor rally of nearly 400,000 at Meiji Shrine Park, where two Americans, Socialist Party leader Norman Thomas and A. Philip Randolph, president of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, were to speak. Both were forced to flee the platform. The Japanese workers are in no mood for apologies for U.S. imperialism even when it is dish-

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Ceylon Election

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May Day in Bolivia

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