

Workers Age

A PAPER DEFENDING THE INTERESTS OF WORKERS AND FARMERS

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Hold May Day Conference

Trade Unions, Political Groups Prepare For United Parade

Four hundred and fifty delegates, representing, for the most part, New York trade unions, gathered in Webster Hall on April 3rd for the first meeting of the United May Day Conference of 1937. As in 1936, collaboration between the Socialist Party, Communist Party, and the Communist Party Opposition, was a driving force in activating trade unions.

The chairman of the conference is A. Phillip Randolph of the Sleeping Car Porters. The executive committee includes Charles S. Zimmerman of Local 22, Weinstock, of the District Painters Council number 9, Amter of the CP, Altman of the SP and D. Benjamin, representing the CPO.

Presenting the greetings of the Communist Party Opposition to this united May Day Conference, D. Benjamin hailed the latest military victories in Spain and expressed the hope that "the Spanish workers and peasants will march on to further victory, to the creation of a Socialist Soviet Spain!" Much applause greeted this statement.

Preparations for a special Monee contingent and float are being made for the parade and demonstration.

Greetings were sent to class war prisoners in America, and to the embattled proletarians of Spain.

Madrid Routs Italians

Decisive routs administered on all fronts to the rebels marked the week's military events in Spain. Its tremendous importance for Spain itself is equalled by its international significance—for the defeat was suffered by Italian troops. This collapse of Franco's foreign fascist aid accelerated discontent in the ranks of the rebels. Large scale disaffection is reported in Morocco, base of the fascist counter-revolution.

In the face of the Italian collapse, the Anglo-French entente for the diplomatic murder of the Spanish workers and peasants, was no whit abashed. Representatives of the mother of parliament and the land of the people's front met immediately after the rout and agreed on the following. 1) There had been no violation of the non-intervention agreement and the banning of volunteers today; 2) Should there ever be such violation, both would act to end it; 3) Now was the time to work for a truce.

Thus the brazen audacity of the "democratic" imperialisms affords face-saving protection for Mussolini, and, further, prepares to intervene actively to mitigate the effect of the victories of the anti-fascist forces by calling for a so-called truce whose only purpose will be aid to the wearied troops of Spanish fascism!

TO ANTI-FASCIST HEROES OF CATALONIA



Catalonia erects its monumental memorial to the members of the workers' militia fallen in the armed struggle against Fascism

COURT PLAYS "LIBERAL" GAME TO BLOCK REFORM

THE Supreme Court, whose members live in the abstract halls of justice unblemished by contact with the crudities of life in the raw, handed down three decisions of minor significance which have been publicized into major events. Apparently by mere coincidence, for the justices certainly are far above the filth of mere politics, the drive to reform the Supreme Court, because of its reactionary attitude towards social and labor legislation, just precedes the decision upholding semi-progressive legislation.

The Washington minimum wage law for women was declared constitutional. In June of last year, the New York Law, exactly the same in all known respects, was found unconstitutional. The Frazier-Lemke Mortgage Moratorium Act, found unconstitutional because it provided a five-year period of grace, was declared constitutional because the term was changed to three years. The Railway Labor Act, dealing with collective bargaining, was also upheld.

As regards the minimum wage decision, it must be stressed that this still does not give the federal government power to pass wage and hour legislation. It simply corrects the glaringly stupid position of the Court which had invalidated Federal laws of that type on the ground that this field was reserved to the states, and then proceeded to deny that right to the states. The Frazier-Lemke Bill, while of some, tho not much, practical value, is merely a legal recognition of a tragic fact of the agrarian crisis. The American farmer simply cannot pay his mortgages, and banks are too full of foreclosed mortgages, and incapable of running farms, to permit the situation to go on. Then, too, the act legalizes the semi-peonage of the once "independent" farmer, in that he is permitted to rent a portion of his land, said rent being used to pay off his mortgage, taxes and court

charges. Justice Brandeis, writing the unanimous opinion, also pointed out that the bestowal of such privileges were discretionary with the local officials and would probably not be too widespread.

These actions, carefully planned to take the wind out of the reform sails, are upon analysis no serious argument against judicial reform. Labor still must be assured that its right to legislation cannot be interfered with by the courts, nor be made dependent upon the whim of one man—as in the case of the minimum wage law, upheld as it had been previously defeated by a 5-4 vote, because Justice Roberts "changed his mind."

JAY LOVESTONE

will deal with the "Social and Economic Implications of the Sit-Down Strike" in two articles. The first of these will appear in the next issue of the Workers Age.

DON'T FAIL TO GET YOUR COPY!

Miners Win Pay Rise; Chrysler in Parley

First CIO Ford Strike Settled; Drive In Oil Fields Begins This Week; Texas Governor Threatens Against Sit-Down Strikes

THE United Mine Workers of America, after weeks of negotiations in New York, reached an agreement for the soft-coal industry, with the mining operators. The signed contract effects a wage increase of approximately fifty cents per day, totalling to eighty-five millions of dollars for four hundred thousand coal miners. The operators were balky and consistently refused to meet the union's demands. The union finally forced an agreement by calling an industry-wide stoppage for one day.

Fight Splits In Councils

Green's Letter Passed In Chicago; Blocked In Wilkes-Barre

The Chicago Federation of Labor, meeting on March 21st, voted to concur in Green's demand to split the labor movement by declaring the CIO unions to be dual to the A. F. of L. After Green's letter was read, a motion to accept and concur was made and seconded. Representatives of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers and the ILGWU took the floor but the discussion was cut short. A vote was taken and the motion was passed by 201 to 112.

Asked whether this means expulsion, Fitzpatrick stated that "... in my opinion it is an invitation to them (the CIO unions) to withdraw if they won't subscribe to these declared principles (of the A. F. of L.)"

The Wilkes-Barre Central Labor Union held the largest meeting in its history last week to consider Green's letter demanding the expulsion of the CIO unions. The fight against carrying out the splitting activities of the Executive Council of the A. F. of L. was led by L. Markowitz of the AWU. He made a motion to table the letter until a convention of the A. F. of L. would meet and by a two-thirds vote decide the question. A representative of the Building Trades Council fought to uphold Green's demands.

The letter was finally tabled, without the reference to the power of the convention to decide. It is expected that the fight will be reopened at the next meeting when action will be taken on the credentials of the district of the United Mine Workers.

C.I.O. Battle Rages In Seattle Labor Council

SEATTLE (UNS)—The fight of reactionary forces of the A. F. of L. to break up organizing plans of the C.I.O. broke out violently in the Seattle Central Labor Council when a communication from William Green asking for unqualified support for the A. F. of L. against the C.I.O., came up on the floor.

A delegate who asked if it meant unseating members of locals favoring the C.I.O., on being told that it did replied: "The time will come if we do this when William Green will be the only man left in the

Parleys between the United Automobile Workers of America and the Chrysler Corporation are still in session as we go to press. According to announcements from Governor Murphy's office an agreement will probably be reached shortly. The settlement of additional strikes in Reo and Hudson is expected to follow such an agreement. One factor, rumored to be holding up the agreement, are the Michigan elections, scheduled for Monday. The auto magnates, pursuing the same course as in the November presidential campaign, hope to cut in considerably on the New Deal vote by delaying a satisfactory settlement.

Extension of the organizing activities of the United Automobile Workers to Ford plants was recorded this week when six hundred workers struck in a Ford factory in Kansas City. The strike began as a sit-down, but changed to a walk-out as soon as negotiations began. A victory for the union resulted, and a huge mass meeting celebrated. This first blow at Ford in the CIO campaign is not considered the prelude to an immediate wide drive in Ford. For the present the union is attempting to consolidate its forces.

Sit-down strikes, occurring in GM plants in Flint, were quickly settled when Homer Martin personally intervened. While GM raised the cry of refusal to live up to contract, the union announced that it was taking steps to make more effective its control of the membership.

The opening of the drive of the Committee for Industrial Organization to organize the oil fields began this week with a conference in Texas. Governor Alfred of that state spoke his piece for Standard Oil by announcing that sit-down strikes would not be tolerated. State Rangers have been shifted to Dallas within easy reach of the East Texas oil fields, but, of course, the organizational drive is not being so easily blocked. Alfred also announced that he is prepared to use troops to enforce any court orders.

Harvey C. Fremming, president of the International Association of Oil Field, Gas Well and Refinery Workers, is in charge of the drive. Threats from the American Federation of Labor to conduct a competing organizational drive, under the leadership of John P. Frey, were being talked of. Fremming discounted these as being "the least of our troubles."

A. F. of L."

It was considered a victory for the C.I.O. when the Council voted to postpone action until April 14, and allow local unions time to instruct their delegates.

PROBLEMS OF THE NEW SOUTH

By GEORGE STREATOR

(George Streator was born in Jim-Crow Tennessee; a printer's devil at the age of 12; employed in the optical trade and worked as a benchman in New York City, Jersey City and Chicago; leader of the greatest student uprising in the history of Southern Negro colleges; a school teacher in Tennessee, North Carolina and Virginia; an organizer for the unemployed at the outset of the depression; a lecturer for the SP and the LID in past years; an organizer for the Amalgamated Clothing Workers Union.—Editor.)



George Streator

HERE are many ways to approach the South and its social and economic problems. But there is a necessary choice, and in this sentimental age, a bitter choice, to be made between romanticism and realism. Particularly is this true of the challenging work that must be done in this important period of the great awakening in the ranks of labor. The important necessary choice finds the leadership of labor only half prepared; for the South can not be left half-free and half-slave. Either we will unite black and white or we will doom ourselves to stand at the biers of the two.

The Old South is rapidly dying. The New South arises on the ashes of an outmoded agricultural economy. But where the Old South emerged from its filthy beginning in chattel slavery, the New South blossoms forth in a rash of equally filthy run-a-way shops. The old regime rapidly gives way to the new, but the slavery of all labor, white and black, is increasingly oppressive, increasingly brutal, and increasingly threatening to the splendid beginnings in the advanced sections of the nation.

There is little or no choice between starvation in a wasted land ruined by stupid and constant replanting of burning, destructive crops of tobacco and cotton, and the new starvation in the sweat shops. The South is more and more becoming to the nation's organized workers what depressed Poland is to the peace of Europe, or exploited, oppressed Moroccans to the lives of Spanish workers. The hunger of the South has given birth to the flood-tide of sweatshops in textiles, pants, shirts, and light industry. If one-half of the nation is to be drained to advance capital gain in the other, our money-grabbing investors will soon find themselves wading knee-deep in blood in search of their greedy dollars.

Challenge of the South
But the South plants a challenge to labor organization in its present drive to awaken slumbering Southern workers. If we cannot organize black and white alike, we will live to see the continuation of the use of one to slaughter the other. It is being done in Spain. In India it is being done to British workers who continue to cheer the kings and puppets, rather than extend their hand of friendship to the exploited workers in Africa and the Orient. But it is not empty pledges but active organization that we need in America. If all the innocent societies who knit their fingers away while pledging support to various "heathens," and all the sentimental sections of the radical and reform movements who think their task is done when they rise to cheer a dramatic appeal, but end their labor with a cocktail party and a singing of pretty songs,—if all the loose ends of protest were driven to a clear vision of the challenge of the South, the stimulation would be twice as effective as our sobs and cries over the important, but remote. Not only must we sympathize with the world, we must strive to save ourselves; or we

will be too wounded to aid the world. This criticism is directed towards those who evade doing anything by pledging themselves to the remote.

The necessity of organizing white and colored workers together in America is more apparent today than ever before. However, there are two major barriers to peace. They do not arise from the ranks of the workers primarily; but from those who have been entrusted with the task of carrying on the organization. Ancient "Bill" Green is noted for his pledges of equality, but he sits now as he always sat down in the past: fat, comfortable, and cowardly when confronted with the race problem. The Committee for Industrial Organization must proceed now to build where Green destroyed. If American workers are split by Jim-Crow for another decade, Poor Whites and Negroes from the deep South will be marched in the armies of reaction. Today we plan either our futures or our funerals. Big Money is betting on the latter. Where do we cast our lot?

Passing the Buck
The first barrier is the weakness of leaders who are weak enough to think that they can pass the problem over to the next generation. The firm stand against segregation against their fellow American workers must be taken by the leaders with the safe vigor and courage that John L. Lewis spoke out against Hitlerism. It takes courage to speak out in New York against Hitler and Mussolini. There are Italians here, by the thousands, to whom Il Duce is a god second only to the sacred memory of Garibaldi. That the young workers have swallowed Mussolini whole is not evidence that they can digest him. But neither can Labor in America digest the Southern lynchers. Green's stooge, John P. Frey, waved the bloody shirt against Negroes, Jews, and "foreigners" down at filthy Tampa (where Negroes are shoved into the street and native white men who protest the starvation of the masses are beaten to death by public servants). But intelligent leaders must act against oppression; not postpone action until the birth of another generation.

Rationalizations for Race Bias
There are many rationalizations for race prejudice. In Germany a drop of Jewish blood (something which most Germans probably have) makes a man inferior. In America whether one is as white as the Supreme Court or as black as Jack Johnson, if he is a 'Negro,' there are rationalizations for oppressing him. Prejudice is always profitable to somebody. Consider industry.

The nasty sweat-shops of the South hire Northern whites for management, Southern whites for

the upper wage levels, and Negroes for the lower. Northern whites are likely to hold convictions of their own superiority over Southern whites. That alone will serve to throw a damper on the Southern whites. The Southern whites have been herded in from the mountains, ragged and as hungry as the characters in "Tobacco Road"; but in their minds they are superior to the "Niggers." The Southern blacks have left God to worship, and an occasional foreign-born colored person to hate. In this dirty, criminal atmosphere, in this starvation area, mankind has slipped to a depressed level. And his regeneration is the thing for which labor must strive.

European-conscious Northern workers have little or no knowledge of the Southern situation. Most of their timidity reminds one of a passage in Claude McKay's recent book, "A Long Way From Home." In Russia, McKay encountered Radek, then at the height of his pent-house logic in approaching the race problem in America. McKay was stunned by the baby that Radek loved and had a right to love—it was his own child. McKay was sensitive. He was black and had been insulted in a thousand different ways by this mechanically advanced but emotionally retarded civilization. That Radek's baby refused to move towards McKay might come from a thousand causes. It might have had fear of things other than the color of the man's face and the texture of his hair.

Inculcating Jim Crow

But Radek reasoned that even babies were afraid of strange-colored human beings. McKay reminded him that Southern children have colored nurses, who, in this day and time, pay the needed attention to the children of bourgeois aristocrats while mamma plays bridge and papa plays golf. McKay is right. Negro children play and fight with white children until the latter "discover" through the tutelage of white adults, their "superiority." From then on, the children who in their youth were nursed by colored women, taught their alphabet by colored women, taught games by colored playmates—are taken over by Jim-Crow-minded adults in church and school, and eventually turned out first-class white ladies and gentlemen. Is this in any way different from the situation of the Poor White of England? Why all this cheap "theorizing" on the "Negro Question"?

With labor leaders it is hardly different. The white officials of Southern craft unions did not object to taking in Negro workers when the jobs were poorly paid. When the pay was low, no white man wanted to be a fireman on a locomotive. The smoke and grime were considered dangerous to white skin. If the Pullman company is forced to pay the porters a decent salary, white men will be found eager to prove that white men make the best porters. Moreover, the work will be assigned some fancy term, say, "concocter." On the railroads in the North, porters are white and are called "trainmen."

But today we are out to organize industrial unions. What are we prepared to do about the Jim-Crow that penetrates every crevice of the structure? Are labor leaders responsible for the deplorable situation? Are we our brothers' keepers? The answer is, "Yes." We are our brothers' keepers. White labor will not be emancipated while black labor is enslaved.

The newspaper workers are beginning to organize. Out in Long Island, a colored foreman of a newspaper plant took his future

QUEBEC PASSES DRASTIC ANTI-COMMUNIST LAW

Now that the Duplessis "Act Respecting Communistic Propaganda" has passed its third reading without any opposition, the mind of the French Canadian worker was opened to new ideas by the crisis and to the necessity of organization. Some became active in unemployed organizations, some joined their unions and some even became members of the Communist Party. Were the C.P. not imbued with its suicidal people's front ideology, it could have entrenched itself solidly amongst the French workers. As it is, it has gained considerably in membership from this source.

Section 3 of the Act says the following: "It shall be illegal for any person, who possesses or occupies a house within the Province, to use or allow any person to make use of it to propagate Communism or Bolshevism by any means whatsoever."

The words "communism" and "Bolshevism" are purposely left undefined so as to give the Government a free hand to stamp out any trade of radicalism or militancy whatsoever. It is evident that henceforth a radical or progressive meeting or lecture may be prohibited on the grounds that it is communistic; and the strain and difficulties connected with underground activity will once more be experienced by Quebec is militant workers.

Not only does the Act prohibit radical meetings, but it also deals a death-blow to any written or printed expression of Communism. Section 12 of the Act states that, "It shall be unlawful to print, to publish in any manner whatsoever or to distribute in the Province any newspaper, periodical, pamphlet, circular, document or writing whatsoever propagating or tending to propagate communism or bolshevism." Furthermore, the Act gives the power to any constable to shut down halls and houses and confiscate literature, and the Attorney General, i.e., Duplessis, is the only person to whom one can appeal.

While it is true that Quebec has always been the darkest spot in the British Empire, and the most reactionary one, there are certain immediate causes for the hurry in which this Act was introduced and passed.

First and foremost is the misery of the French Canadian masses. That they lived in poverty even in the hey-day of prosperity, all knew, but that the long years of depression would drive even the staunchest supporters of Catholic

in brave hands and joined the strike of white reporters and printers. Was the Typographical union ready to receive him? Yes and no. The excuse offered is an old one. "The union is willing, but the employers do not want colored labor." This is not an excuse worthy of an emancipated leader. This is pure cowardice. If the trade union, organized with the faithful assistance of colored workers, is not willing to fight for their employment on jobs side by side with white workers, the job is only half done.

Possession of a union card while tricky employees slam doors in the face of colored workers is not only a defeat of the colored worker, it is the defeat of the working class. Some day the colored worker who fights side by side with white labor only to be shoved out by white employers, with no support given by his union, will desert to the hand that feeds him, if only for a moment.

Or, take a look at the filthy racial prejudice preached through the headlines of the capitalist press. Take New York crime. The demented Major Green was headlined as "Negro" over every page in New York. Headlines brought terror to Negro workers. But justice comes in peculiar ways. Negro porters and house girls who were thrown in the street by filthy-minded employes, may not have jobs, but if they read the papers they will learn that in the

faith to militancy, of this the short-sighted, pig-headed, graft-besmirched bureaucrats of the Liberal Party had no idea. The mind of the French Canadian worker was opened to new ideas by the crisis and to the necessity of organization. Some became active in unemployed organizations, some joined their unions and some even became members of the Communist Party. Were the C.P. not imbued with its suicidal people's front ideology, it could have entrenched itself solidly amongst the French workers. As it is, it has gained considerably in membership from this source.

With such a fertile field for an Opposition Party to grow and develop in, Duplessis and his Union Nationale outfit lost no time and spared no man. He immediately announced himself as the Leader, and issued a veritable deluge of promises and demagoguery. He played on the feelings of the unemployed; he harped on strings of the starvation wages of the workers; and sold his program to the impoverished middle-class for a song. While with one hand he hammered away at the trusts and promised a hydro commission, with the other he filled his campaign chest with thousands of dollars from the Montreal Light Heat and Power Co.

Now he is Premier and has to make at least some of his promises good—and cannot. It was all right for him to denounce the Liberal Party when he was running for office. Now he must show that his program differs from that of the Liberals or he stands to forfeit mass support for his government. And the Liberals played right into his hands. One of the planks of the Liberal Party in the last Federal elections—aiming to rally working-class sympathy—was the abolition of Section 98 of the Criminal Code. This had been used by the Bennett Government to imprison Communists, suppress meetings, and free speech and workers' press. Section 98 has been repealed, and though replaced by an equally rigorous new section, the Duplessis regime in Quebec uses the repeal to "show up" the Liberal Party, and also to defend its own position.

Far West, a boy child was murdered by a white moron. In New York, not one, but a dozen headline crimes have been committed by white men of all varieties. The newspapers have not pointed out white criminals, Italian criminals, English criminals, German criminals, etc. Only "Negro" or "colored" criminals get such murderous publicity.

Now who writes these headlines? Are they members of the Newspaper Guild? Who operates the linotype machines? Who casts the "mats"? Who operates the presses which turn out racial prejudice by the millions of copies? If organized workers are beginning to protest the shipment of armaments to the enemies of the international working class, they can protest the newspaper headlines and stories that stir up lynchings of colored Americans.

In Washington, D. C., the members of the Newspaper Guild who "covered" a strike in which colored workers participated, did their story in a way that made the colored workers appear as "also in the strike." In reality, they led it. There is a big job in the South for a Heywood Brown. What he writes on Ethiopia is valuable, but what he will write in the future on the lot of colored workers will be far more to the point!

"What a Labor Organizer Faces in the South," will follow this article.

On the Daily Worker's "Redefinition" of Our Political Line

1. Inconsistency of Principle or Revolutionary Marxism?

by WILL HERBERG

THE article by Milton Howard, "Toward What Is Lovestonism Heading," in the Daily Worker of March 23 and 24, marks a new departure in Communist Party polemic—and a very welcome one, too! After the regrettable excesses of the "third period" (1929-1934) and the prudent silence of the last two years, the first effort at serious discussion on the part of the C.P. leadership is surely to be greeted. We have always emphasized that full and free discussion is the very life of the movement and we have not regarded as altogether wholesome our sudden "immunity" in recent times; we would have preferred, I am sure, the most severe polemic within the limits of constructive criticism. And that is why, altho we certainly cannot agree with Comrade Howard's arguments or follow him in his implications, we welcome his article and the opportunity it affords for a comradely discussion of the issues involved.

Comrade Howard is apparently motivated by a very worthy purpose: to "redefine" the "political status" of Lovestonism in the light of the Moscow trials, to "determine" the "change" that recent events in world politics have worked in the "content of Lovestonism." Somehow or other, however, his analysis soon turns into an indictment of the C.P.O. on three major counts: (1) our "sheer lack of consistency of principle"; (2) our support of the P.O.U.M. in Spain; and (3) our attitude to the Moscow trials. Let us examine these charges in a spirit at least as objective as that in which they are made—and with, perhaps, a little more logic and clarity.

On what ground are we accused of "sheer lack of consistency of principle"? Comrade Howard points his reproach as follows:

"We need only mention, as an example, that many of the tactics adopted at the seventh world congress were hailed by Lovestone as a welcome sign that the Communist International, at long last, was beginning to adopt his own wisdom. Today, one finds in the Lovestone paper vehement attacks on the tactics so fervently greeted last year."

THE SEVENTH CONGRESS AND THE SCRAPPING OF ULTRA-LEFTISM

We did, indeed, welcome many of the decisions made at the seventh world congress of the C.I. in the summer of 1935—for example, the liquidation of dual unionism in practice and in theory, the virtual renunciation of the suicidal policy of "social-fascism" and the readoption of the tactics of the united front. And we had good reason to express our satisfaction at the change of Comintern line, for had not the ultra-left madness ravaged the world communist movement like a dreadful plague for five years, and had we not fought against it under almost insuperable difficulties? Naturally we were a little gratified to see our views on these questions taken over by the Comintern, even though not always in complete or clear form; and we were gratified not merely for our own sake but for the sake of the whole communist movement. We regarded it as a welcome development then and we still continue to regard it as such today; the best evidence of this is the cooperation that has grown up between the C.P. and the C.P.O. in many fields of mass work.

At the time of the seventh congress, we welcomed also certain pledges of new methods that were to be inaugurated in the Comintern. We were told, for example, that serious self-criticism would now be encouraged in the ranks of the C.I. But was there any self-criticism, serious

or otherwise, exercised in the sharp turn away from ultra-leftism undertaken at that very congress? Hardly—the turn was carried thru mechanically and without discussion; everything was justified, the old policies of yesterday as well as the diametrically opposed policies of today, on the rather flimsy ground of "changed conditions." And then, again, we were assured, in the resolution on the activity report of the E.C.C.I., that the Comintern would henceforth "avoid the mechanical transference of experience from one country to another and the replacement of concrete Marxist analysis by schematism and general formulas." But what happened? The moment the People's Front policy was inaugurated in France—for good or for ill, we will not now discuss—it began to sweep the world like wildfire. Within a few months, there were People's Fronts of one sort or another everywhere, in every corner of the habitable globe, in China (as a block with Chiang Kai-shek), in America (as a labor party), in democratic England, in fascist Italy and Germany, in Canada and in Latin America, in Australia and in Denmark! We certainly rejoiced at the decision of the Comintern to do away with "schematism and general formulas." Are we expected to rejoice also at the fact that this decision has been allowed to lie a dead letter for two years?

THE SEVENTH CONGRESS AND THE NEW OPPORTUNISM

The seventh congress of the Comintern, Comrade Howard should know, did not exhaust its labors in scrapping the old ultra-left sectarianism and in outlining certain improved methods for the future; it also launched a new course of a most thoroughly opportunistic character. On war, on bourgeois democracy, on coalition government (People's Front) and on related questions, the congress adopted a position that we criticized at the time in the severest terms. Never for a moment, then or at any period since, did we "welcome" this aspect of the new course of the Comintern; why, then, should Comrade Howard be so astonished that we do not welcome it today? Apparently he is under the impression that, because we applauded the abandonment of ultra-leftism, we are therefore duty bound to applaud with the same vehemence the adoption of outright opportunism; otherwise we manifest "sheer lack of consistency of principle." May I suggest that opportunism is not the only alternative to ultra-leftism—that there is such a thing as revolutionary Marxism, in the light of which neither the one nor the other deserves any special applause?

If we found certain decisions of the seventh congress unacceptable because of their opportunism, what shall we say, then, of the words and deeds of the official communist movement in the last two years? At the congress, Comrade Dimitroff laid down as one of the conditions of revolutionary unity "complete independence from the bourgeoisie and the complete rupture of the block of social-democracy with the bourgeoisie." Within a few months, the French Communist Party had sacrificed its own independence and had joined in a block with the bourgeoisie (with the Radical party) in the People's Front! At the congress, it was decided (section 41 of the resolution on the report of Comrade Ercoli) that: "The communist parties of all capitalist countries must fight against military expenditures (war budgets)." How long after that did the French C.P. vote for military expenditures, for the war budget, and with the blessings of Comrade Dimitroff, too? Or perhaps the France of the People's Front is no longer a capitalist country?

At the congress, it was decided (report of Comrade Dimitroff) that it is necessary to "link up the army with the anti-fascist movement by creating in its ranks committees for the defense of the republic and the constitution, directed against those who want to utilize the army for an anti-constitutional coup d'etat." Just about a year later the French communist paper, *Le Conscriit*, advised the soldiers in these words (August 29, 1936):

"The fascist officers sow division in the army. However, they are your superiors. You must obey them. Be disciplined, even under their orders."

Which, Comrade Howard, are we to "welcome"—the directives of the seventh congress or the words and actions of the French and other communist parties in the last two years? And, if we cannot "welcome" both simultaneously or, for that matter, either the one or the other, are we therefore to be convicted of "sheer lack of consistency of principle"?

Let me make it perfectly clear that I am not going into all this in order to prove that we have always been right or in order to pick a new quarrel. Comrade Howard has levelled the charge of inconsistency of principle against us; what I am trying to do is merely to show that his charge is wholly unjustified.

"INCONSISTENCY" OR REVOLUTIONARY MARXISM?

I cannot conclude this section of my remarks without suggesting that perhaps Comrade Howard ought to look elsewhere for inconsistency of principle. With some effort, perhaps, he could detect just the slightest trace of inconsistency in the curious course of official Comintern policy in the last nine years. From the "broad" policy of 1926-1927 to the ultra-left madness of 1929-1934 to the unbridled opportunism of 1935-?, and all without serious explanation or justification: is there not some lack of "consistency of principle" here? I am not particularly concerned with pressing this point any further but Comrade Howard might give it some thought.

As for us, the C.P.O., our position is clear and unequivocal. We take our stand on the tested principles and tactics of revolutionary Marxism, communism—and these principles and tactics we have defended with all the power at our command in the eight years of our existence. When, as in the "third period," the very idea of sound Marxist tactics was thrown to the wind, we did not hesitate to speak out in protest. When, as at the seventh congress, the whole system of ultra-leftism was scrapped, we were not lacking in expressions of approval. When, as today, some of the most fundamental strategic policies and even principles of Marxism are being ignored or repudiated, we cannot keep silent. This is not "sheer lack of consistency of principle"; it is the plainest form of revolutionary consistency.

Comrade Howard is surely in error when he charges us with trying to be an "opposition at all times and on all questions." It is not our desire or purpose to fabricate issues nor are we interested in exaggerating any differences that may actually exist. On the contrary, we have always consistently striven to reduce to the very minimum the scope of our differences and to extend to the very maximum the field of our agreement and cooperation. It is not our alleged "oppositonism" that Comrade Howard and the C.P. leadership find so irritating; it is our inflexible adherence to revolutionary Marxism!

* * *
(In the next issue of the Workers Age, Comrade Herberg will discuss the question of the P.O.U.M. as raised in Comrade Howard's article.—Editor.)

WORDS OF WISDOM

The People's Champion of Liberty, Progress, Peace, and Prosperity, (Daily Worker—remember?) is all agog about pornography in the capitalist press. In connection with Gedeon murders, it seems, the newspapers have been publishing a good many pictures of the murdered model in various undress poses.

Now it's quite true that the capitalist press shovels out pornography by the truckload for a definite and obvious class purpose.

CPO Pre-Convention Discussion

THE CPO pre-convention discussion will begin in the next issue of the Workers Age. Members and sympathizers of our organization, Socialist and Communist workers, and progressive trade unionists are invited to contribute. Due to space limitations, articles cannot exceed a thousand words, and should be less if possible.

TALKS FOR MOONEY

Assemblyman Paul Richie, of the California State Legislature, taking a leading part in the drive to free Tom Mooney, spoke over the radio in behalf of labor's martyr, March 22nd. Mr. Richie summarized the salient facts of the frameup, adding the collected evidence of perjury to show that Mooney is innocent and must be pardoned. He quoted Judge Griffin, who had presided at Mooney's trial, as follows:

"In the face of this demonstrated perjury, in light of its wilful presentation to the jury trying Mooney, and in view of the wilful suppression at the time, of all evidence favorable to him, no fair-minded person who will familiarize himself with the details of the frameup, adding the collected evidence of perjury to show that Mooney is innocent and must be pardoned."

Support of the concurrent resolution memorializing the Governor to pardon Mooney was urged by Assemblyman Ritchie.

WORKERS AGE

Organ of the National Committee, Communist Party U. S. A. (Opposition). 131 West 33rd St., New York City.

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SIGNIFICANT STRAWS

THE report of Joseph Stalin to the central committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union on March 3 is obviously of unusual political significance.

The point of departure of Comrade Stalin's address—and its most weighty part—is the section dealing with the mutual relations between the Soviet Union and the capitalist states surrounding it.

Back to Weimar In the year 1933, an article by Trotsky appeared in the Trotskyite press (July, 1933) under the caption "Fascism and Democratic Slogans."

Capitalist encirclement—that is no empty phrase, that is a very real and unpleasant feature. Capitalist encirclement means that here is one country, the Soviet Union, which has established the socialist order on its own territory and besides this there are many countries, bourgeois countries, which continue to carry on a capitalist mode of life and which surround the Soviet Union, waiting for an opportunity to attack it, break it, or at any rate to undermine its power and weaken it.

Our comrades forgot this fundamental fact. But it is that precisely which determines the basis of relations between the capitalist encirclement and the Soviet Union. . . .

The question must be put: Why should the bourgeois countries be gentler and more neighborly to the Soviet socialist government than they are to bourgeois states of their own type? . . .

It should be explained to our party comrades that no economic successes whatsoever, no matter how great they are, can annul the fact of capitalist encirclement and the result arising therefrom.

What is this but a blunt repudiation of the vulgar theory of the common front between the Soviet Union and the "great democracies"—a theory that has been carried in some quarters to the point even of denying any essential distinction between the land of the Soviets and the land of the People's Front? Of course, contradictions among the imperialist powers are ever-present in one form or another, and may be turned to great advantage by Soviet diplomacy in its maneuvers.

How far will the implications of Stalin's speech reach? We cannot tell. Changes in Soviet foreign policy seem already to be foreshadowed. A few weeks ago, Walter Duranty, who certainly speaks with semi-official authority, plainly hinted at a shift in orientation of the kind implied in Stalin's address.

The fact that the great body of the functionaries of the C.P.S.U. could have "forgotten" truths so elementary in character, is a measure of the confusion that the opportunistic course has created

TROTSKY AND THE PEOPLE'S FRONT

THE Trotskyites in the capitalist countries are setting themselves up as the champions of Marxian principles against the people's front policy of the communist parties.

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including all representatives previously banned, might unite the workers with the masses of the lower middle class at a critical moment. If the crisis occurs later, when the memory of the Reichstag has faded, the slogan for new elections might obtain greater popularity. . . .

Finally Trotsky turned on the CPO of Germany because it demanded the fight for democratic rights for the workers but rejected the bourgeois demand of equal political rights for all classes.

About two years after this article by Trotsky had appeared, the CP almost literally adopted this program for Germany. It came out for the restoration of the Weimar Republic, for the demand of equal rights for all classes, and for a people's front to achieve these aims.

People's Front Government But not only the "credit" for being the first to have asked a people's front policy for a fascist country goes to Trotsky. He is also the father of the people's front policy for bourgeois democratic countries.

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Lambda EUROPE TODAY

Blum's "Recess" Is Surrender CPSU's Inner-Party Democracy

London, March 10, 1937

THE "RECESS" (as it demands from workers, wage-earners and the lower middle class) recently announced by the Blum Government, quickly revealed its true meaning.

The "recess" has become veritable capitulation before big business and finance, and surrender of the most important points in the People's Front program. The government has turned over full control of its fiscal and monetary policy to a committee which is nothing but a board of supervision concerned with the interests of big capital.

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MACHINISTS UNION AND THE C. I. O.

By OBSERVER

THE metal trades department of the A. F. of L. is playing a very conspicuous role in the present controversy between the C.I.O. and the Executive Committee of the A. F. of L.

The United Automobile Workers of America is charged with "invading" territory not assigned to it by the San Francisco Convention. The entire character of the article proves that Wharton is not trying to meet squarely, the problem of the organization of hundreds of thousands of unorganized workers in the machine and metal industries, but rather to find an excuse for the strike-breaking acts of the metal trades department of the A. F. of L.

Who Will Organize the Machine and Metal Industries?

The 1927 Convention of the A. F. of L., held in Detroit, adopted a resolution to organize the automobile industry. Nothing was done until the auto workers themselves, unable any longer to bear the exploitation and the miserable conditions in the industry, began to move.

It was therefore not an accident that an independent organization (Mechanics Educational Society of America) was organized, having at one time over 20,000 members in its organization. The Machinists Union not only stayed out of the spontaneous strike movement in Detroit and Flint in 1933, but also did very little to help the strikes that took place in the ship-building industry in Brooklyn, Staten Island, Hoboken, etc.

However, it is quite clear that by this present move Wharton hopes to stop the inroads of the C.I.O. How else could one explain the fact that though the Milwaukee Convention, held in early October, decided to initiate an organizational drive in the big machine-building centers, nothing was really done until the C.I.O. began its gigantic strides in organizing the auto, steel and allied industries?

Where some organizational work is being done, it is carried on primarily by the local lodges themselves. The Grand Lodge provides neither funds nor organizers, and places the entire burden on the local lodges which are not equipped financially or organizationally to carry on such a fight, since two-thirds of their income is turned over to the Grand Lodge and district lodges in per capita taxes.

The greatest obstacle to organization by the Machinists Union is the fact that, though its leaders will for the sake of expediency modify somewhat the craft union position, the difficulties of old line craft unionism still remain: jurisdictional disputes, non-uniform initiation fees, high dues, and the expectation that workers will come to the unions, and pay them tribute, before attempts are made towards improving their actual working conditions.

It is quite evident from the long editorial written by Mr. Wharton in the Machinists Journal, that he feels very sharply the pressure of the membership on the question of the C.I.O. He repeats the old argument of Mr. Green and the rest of the A. F. of L. Executive Council that the controversy does not

AUTO UNION CHIEF



Homer Martin

Homer Martin Speaks

We print below several excerpts from the speech of HOMER MARTIN, president of the United Automobile Workers, delivered at the gigantic mass meeting held in Cadillac Square, Detroit, on March 23, 1937.

WE are very, very happy to be here this afternoon. We know that there are some people who are not glad to see us here, but we're here just the same. First, I want to address just a word to the former masters of this city. I want to talk to the General Motors Corporation, to the Chrysler Corporation, to the Ford Corporation, and to all the automobile manufacturers and industrialists of this city.

What we want, my friends, is what is our just due, nothing more. But we do want that and we serve to let the public know that we're going to get it. Let me insist this afternoon that those of us who have seen sit-down strikes know why employers don't like them. I'll tell you why. It's because they're effective; they're successful—that's the reason why. They are new weapons in the hands of labor and they're going to keep on being used until the employers—and until this nation recognizes and deals with the dastardly conditions under which they work and under which they live.

Organize! My friends, there is just one way for us to get what is our just due, and may I add that we can get that without hurting anybody, without tearing up anything that is good or decent or fine. We can get that, only however, by sticking together in our own labor movement. "Organize" is our word. Organize yourselves until every man in the factory is a member of your union. Organize yourselves until this time next year, instead of just 300,000, we'll have 900,000 in our International Union. Let this be your by-word and password. There are just three words. The first one is "organize." The second one is "organize." And the third one is "organize." Organize every worker in the city, get them into your union, stick together as workers: don't let the bosses break you apart. Don't let anybody scare you, because there is nobody in this city that we're particularly afraid of.

There is one other thing; this is what I want you to do. We're building a labor movement here. We're asking you to work together, strike together, walk the picket line together. Now we ask that, beginning this day, you resolve that you're not only going to strike together, but that you're also going to vote together. . . . Where are these guys that went from here up there to Lansing to make laws for the workers of the state? What are they doing? Sitting down. Yes, and a lot of them are sitting down on industrialists' cushions. Well, boys we're going to pull some of those cushions out from under you if you don't get busy. Let's have some decent laws in this state.

The Future for the Workers Out yonder before us, I see the day when human life and human rights shall be the most precious things in the world; when the life of an automobile worker is worth more than even an automobile. I see a day when the lives of little children will be worth more than buildings and banks and brokers' coupons. I see a day when the streets shall be made safe for the men and women who toil. I see a day when the sun shall rise for men to live by, not for them to be in slavery by. I see a day when all that is good and worthwhile in civilization shall be made for

Task of Progressives The real progressives must give up whatever illusions they may have had about the progressiveness of Mr. Wharton, about the possibility of converting the I.A.M. into an industrial union functioning in the interest of the workers in the mass production industries and in the large machine plants which are subsidiaries of the mass production industries.

While the progressives must continue their work and remain active in the Machinists Union in the machine building and metal manufacturing branches of the trade argument of the reactionaries against every proposal of progressives in the trade union movement, is now being used by C.P. spokesmen as a method of stopping the inroads of the C.I.O. inside the Machinists union.

Nothing that those responsible for the endorsement of Wharton may now do can white wash their endorsement published in the official Machinists Journal, (March), unless they publicly renounce

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(Continued on Page 6)

(Continued on Page 6)

Police Terror In Chicago

Extreme viciousness and brutality by Chicago police marked the second week of the strike in the Stewart Die-Casting Corporation. This strike, led by the United Automobile Workers, involves seven hundred workers, who demand union recognition, and a wage increase. The strike began as a sit-down, but a ruthless attack by police forced its conversion into a walkout.

Several strikers were hurt in an attempt to prevent strike-breakers from entering the plants. One striker was shot in the thigh by a company official who threatened to kill another striker.

Actual strikebreaking is being carried on by the police force of the city. They visit the homes of employes and ask to them to return to work. They help scabs load trucks. They block the entrance to the plant and both sides of the street, arresting union men if they happen to be at a tavern across the street from the plant. Union men are not booked when they are arrested, the result being that the lawyers cannot get them out.

Despite this reign of terror the workers are solidly behind the union. Protests against this police thuggery should be forthcoming from the trade unions of the city

STRIKE IN ALGONAC

ALGONAC, Mich.—Six hundred workmen employed by the Chris Craft Boat Corp. here, who went on strike March 20th, are still holding their picket lines about the plant while company officials refuse to bargain collectively with them.

Employed under hideous working conditions and slaving for wages of from 25 to 70 cents an hour, the men first organized on March 18th. On the following day 30 of the men who had been most active in the formation of the union were discharged.

Men, wheezing from the devastating effects of mahogany poisoning, men crippled because of the lack of safety devices in the plant, fell into the picket line and held it solidly.

The company agreed to an election to determine whether the men should return to their jobs—BUT, the company insisted that every resident of Algonac, not just the employes of the plant, should be permitted to participate in the election!

The election has not been held.

READ IT AND THINK

WE print below some excerpts from the 13th Plenum of the Communist International, held in Moscow in 1934. We call special attention to the date—one year after the advent of Hitler to power. The attitude to democracy and to the support of one's own capitalist state is of great interest in the light of present policies of the Comintern. Change the words "social fascists" to social democracy and the characterization of the policies of social democracy leave little to be desired.

The policies expressed in these excerpts on the nature of democracy and the capitalist state are in violent conflict with the basic course of the Communist International today—the people's front course. They dramatize how far afield the Comintern has gone in its flight from Leninist principles.—Editor.

* * *

"The French socialists (as well as the social democrats of Czechoslovakia, Poland, etc.) carrying out the 'sacred unity of the nation' under the slogan of 'defense of democracy' and 'defense against German fascism,' actively participate in the preparations for war against Germany."

* * *

"Born in the womb of bourgeois democracy, fascism in the eyes of the capitalists is a means of saving capitalism from collapse. It is only for the purpose of deceiving and disarming the workers that social democracy denies the fascistization of bourgeois democracy and makes a contrast between the democratic countries and the countries of the fascist dictatorships in principle."

Thesis 13th Plenum
Communist International
(March 1934)

* * *

"The nationalist poisoning of the masses by the Social Democratic Parties and reformist trade union bureaucrats must be popularly and persistently exposed as service to the capitalist class. To everyone who imbues the proletarians with

About 25 per cent of the men employed in the corporation, which was founded by Chris Smith, one-time business partner of Gar Wood, are either crippled or suffering from mahogany poisoning, according to a survey made by Gilbert Clark, organizer for the United Automobile Workers of America.

the idea of national duty, to everyone who calls upon them to make sacrifices for the sake of national interests, we must reply: the first, the only and real duty of the proletarians in every capitalist country is to fight against their own bourgeoisie right up to its complete overthrow and abolition as a class. This is the only road to emancipation of the toilers from all exploitation and all oppression."

* * *

"There is no other road to power for the toilers except the road of proletarian revolution. We must explain that all the 'roads to power' recommended by the social fascists have for their goal the preservation of the shaken rule of the bourgeoisie. We must smash and not perfect the bourgeois state, which with its military bureaucratic apparatus, even in the most democratic republics, cannot be anything else than a machine for the class oppression and suppression of the toilers. THE SLOGAN 'THRU DEMOCRACY TO SOCIALISM' IS THE SLOGAN OF POLICE 'SOCIALISM' AND OF POLICE 'DEMOCRACY.' There is no road back from fascism to democracy."

Report of Kuusinen, 13th Plenum
Communist International.
(March 1934)

TROTSKY AND PEOPLE'S FRONT

(Continued from Page 4)

demand that you wage the fight for democracy not merely with words but with deeds. Everyone realizes—each in his fashion—that under present conditions a "strong administration" is necessary. Therefore you must force your party to open a serious struggle for a strong democratic state. Towards this end, all remains of the feudal state must first of all be wiped out. All men and women, including soldiers, must have the right to vote. Absolute concentration of the legislative and executive powers in the hands of a unicameral body of representatives must be achieved. Let your party start a militant campaign for these slogans; let it rally millions of workers and, supported by the masses, take over power. That, in any event, would be an honest attempt to fight fascism and war. We Bolsheviks would reserve for ourselves the right to point out to the workers the shortcomings of the democratic slogans; we could not take political responsibility for a social-democratic government but we would sincerely support you in a struggle for such a government. . . . Furthermore we would pledge ourselves not to incite any revolutionary actions overstepping the bounds of democracy, (of "true" democracy), so long as the majority of the workers are not consciously for a revolutionary dictatorship."

With the very same arguments the CP inaugurated the people's front policy. The endorsement of a "strong democratic administration"—what else is that but the current policy of the CI and especially the CP of France? The pledge not to incite any revolutionary actions overstepping the bounds of democracy, as volunteered by Trotsky—how does it differ from the current official CI formulation that a proletarian revolution is at present not a burning issue and that the working class today must choose between fascism and bourgeois democracy?

Unprincipled Opposition

If today Trotsky indignantly flays the people's front policy it simply proves, once again, that he possesses a remarkably bad memory for his own political utterances. The conception which Trotsky advanced in 1933 shows

EUROPE TODAY

(Continued from Page 4)

"THE FRENCH border is closed but the Portuguese border remains open."—thus states Peri in "Humanite" (6/3). The transport of German and especially Italian troops and war materials into Spain continues uninterrupted. The fraud is so blatant that even the CP of France cannot overlook it—although it does not allow this to interfere with its support of the Anglo-French policy in Spain. Even its philanthropic drives in behalf of Spain have become a thing of the past.

In England the ruling classes have now dropped their reticence about making it known that they are counting on a victory of Franco. Delegations of the Board of Trade already negotiate officially with Franco. . . .

But the Spanish working class, with a bold stroke, may yet upset the accounts of the French and English capitalists.

THE SOVIET press has published a resolution of the plenum of the central committee concerning the report of Comrade Shdanov (Feb. 27) on preparations in the party for the coming soviet elections, provided for by the new Soviet Constitution.

The main point of this resolution is the demand for establishing de-

mocracy within the CPSU. All officers, excepting only those on the central committee, are to be newly elected, by secret ballot, as individual candidates instead of on a straight party ticket. Criticism and self-criticism within the party is invited.

This resolution corroborates our criticism of the internal regime of the CPSU in connection with the Radek-Piatkov trial. This regime had become untenable. Apparently the reaction to the trial among the members of the party has borne this out. Windows had to be opened.

The resolution does not at all mean that—after years of a regime stifling the internal life of the party—democracy within the party will become a reality tomorrow. This will require a considerable period of time during which the rank and file of the party members will have to speak their piece.

But the fact that such a resolution has been formulated now signifies, in any event, that the need for democracy within the party has become urgent. It stands to reason that, no matter how, this need will finally assert itself.

It is evident that such a resolution and its eventual realization must have a decisive effect on the life of the Soviet Union and, in the long run, on the Communist International as well.

We shall content ourselves here with pointing this out.

Incidentally, the resolution also refutes the allegations of Trotskyites and Mensheviks that the Communist Party of the Soviet Union is "dead." Such a resolution as this implies very lively reactions among the rank and file of the party towards events of the past few years and the past few months.

MARTIN'S SPEECH

(Continued from Page 5)

humanity. I see a day when every worker shall have a good home, every worker's family shall have decent food and decent clothing. I see a day when every little kid that walks the streets of Detroit shall be well-clothed and fed, comfortable and happy with their heads up, looking the world in the face. I see a day coming when those on relief shall no longer be on relief, but will have jobs to work and earn an honest living, and they too shall have homes. I see that day, but my friends, I also know and I also see that this will never be possible, that this will never come to pass until the workers organize into one great labor movement.

to communist principles. What has been said here also proves that it is ridiculous slander if the leadership of the CI and its sections tries to brand as "Trotskyites" all communists levelling criticism at the People's Front policy. The truth of the matter is that the people's front policy is something the CI borrowed from Trotskyism.

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