

# Let the People Vote on War!

"Let the People Vote on War!," a new series of articles by James Burnham presenting the position of the Socialist Workers Party on the Ludlow Referendum and the fight against war will begin in the next issue of the Socialist Appeal.

Roosevelt, who is pouring billions of dollars into the war machine, pretends to be a democrat. Why then does he oppose a popular expression of opinion by those who will lose their lives when war comes? The Stalinists speak as "friends of peace." Why then do they, who support the administration's war moves, oppose a popular vote on war? Do you workers want to fight in a war for boss profits? Do you workers want an opportunity to vote on the war that U. S. imperialists are now preparing? Why shouldn't you, whose lives are at stake, have that right? Read "Let the People Vote on War!" Don't miss a single issue of the *Appeal* in which this vital series of articles will appear!

## Labor-Haters Pour Money into Growing Coughlin Movement

By JOSEPH HANSEN

That the increasing boldness of Father Coughlin's movement in attacking meetings of workers and wrecking their headquarters is bearing fruit with a large dollar sign is clearly shown by a number of significant occurrences.

Within the last month he has begun for the first time a daily radio program. He has contracted with a radio station in Detroit to appear five times daily with a program of organ music, prayer, an "inspirational" talk for "shut-ins," and a commentary on the news events of the day interpreted in the light of Father Coughlin's sixteen principles of so-called "social justice."

**Significant Expression**  
Father Coughlin himself comments in his personal magazine on the significance of this expansion. From one station he now hopes to increase his network of daily broadcasts across the entire country just as he increased his weekly "golden hour" from one station to a network of forty-eight.

The latest issue of *Social Justice* announces the winners of his \$16,000 prize contest for essays on war. The contestants are scattered over eighteen states, centering mainly around Royal Oak, Michigan, but extending as far as California.

With the announcement of the winners, Coughlin announces also that besides the prize money distributed in this contest he has already given out a total of \$27,460 in previous contests and that in the next issue of *Social Justice* he will open a new contest with prizes amounting to \$6,500 which may be doubled to \$13,000.

**Demagogic Propaganda**  
The subjects on which the contestants were permitted to (Continued on Page 2)

## Sailors Spike F.D.R. Order on Fink-Halls

Tie Up Two Ships on West Coast—Journal of Commerce Reveals Presidential Order

By C. THOMAS

The Sailors Union of the Pacific has put the finger on the Little White Father at Washington, D. C. And thereon, my friends, hangs a tale.

Two U. S. Maritime Commission ships, the *Satartia* and the *Coldbrook*, have been tied up in Seattle for a number of weeks because the Commission refused to hire crews from the union hiring hall. The Maritime Commission was appointed by Franklin D. Roosevelt and is responsible to the President.

The Chairman of the Commission, Admiral Land, was appointed over the objections of the seamen and of the organized labor movement. Recently, one of the commissioners, Truitt, a vigorous opponent of union hiring halls, was reappointed by the President, again over the strenuous objections of organized labor.

**President Ordered Finking**  
In a recent article in the

## MPLS. DRIVERS WIN GAINS IN NEW CONTRACTS

200 Employers Sign Renewals as Local 544 Pushes Drive

(Special to the Socialist Appeal)  
MINNEAPOLIS—Despite last November's election of Republican Governor Stassen and the recent re-election of Republican Mayor Leach, and working in the teeth of the vicious State Labor Law, General Drivers Union Local 544 is succeeding in its drive to renew working agreements that bring significant gains to thousands of its members. With the season for contract renewals now on, Local 544 has already secured agreements from about 200 employers, covering several thousand workers.

In almost every case gains either in wages, hours or working conditions are recorded. This is particularly significant since 544 contracts have been for several years models for teamsters locals elsewhere.

Renewals secured cover produce, printing, newspaper, drugs, coal, sausage, tent and awning sections, the big Gamble-Skogmo outfit, and others.

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3c a Copy

# W.P.A. Construction Strike Will Force Congress to Change Law!

It's a "Trick"!



## A.F.L. Raps New Deal Strike Stand

Meany Issues Sharp Attack on Threat by N. Y. Welfare Head

Within a few hours of New York City Welfare Commissioner William Hodson's threat to refuse home relief to W.P.A. strikers, organized labor gave Hodson more than he bargained for.

Hodson's threat appeared in the press Monday morning. By afternoon the A.F.L. Publicity Bureau had issued the text of a letter from George Meany, president of the New York State Federation of Labor.

"Unspeakably Contemptible" The letter was undoubtedly the sharpest attack ever issued against a New Dealer by the official labor movement. "Unspeakably contemptible"—that was the State Federation's description of the action of Mayor La Guardia's lieutenant.

The Building and Construction Trades Council of Greater New York, Long Island and vicinity, in the meeting in which they voted to stop all work on W.P.A. projects by their members, also seconded the State Federation letter to Hodson.

President Meany sardonically told Hodson that "if you had taken a little more time to consider this matter, you could have also fluently quoted to these good Americans the municipal regulations against public begging."

**Hodson Gets It**  
Then President Meany gave Hodson the works:

"Your speedy action in telling these men that they can either take the monstrous scab wages now offered to them or else take themselves and their children away to some quiet place to starve is unspeakably contemptible."

"The wage now given to labor by a breadline Congress is only one step removed from (Continued on Page 3)

## New York Set for 'Strike to Finish'

Strike Move by Building and Construction Trades Council Is Labor's Answer to the Roosevelt-Woodrum Starvation Bill

By TONY CHAPMAN

"Strike to the finish"—the words are those of Thomas Murray, President of the Building and Construction Trades Council of greater New York, Long Island and vicinity—that's the answer of organized labor to the Roosevelt-Woodrum W.P.A. Starvation Law which, enacted by Congress and signed by President Roosevelt, became a law on June 30 and began to be enforced on the W.P.A. projects Wednesday morning.

Labor's answer was speedily demonstrated. Hundreds of thousands of construction workers throughout the country refused to report for work on Wednesday morning. Few local unions in the country

had as yet acted officially—the national A.F.L. leadership hadn't even put up a fight against the bill when it was up in Congress—but the overwhelming sentiment of the labor movement was already clear when, Wednesday, the W.P.A. officials had to admit that project after project was closing down.

But Wednesday only began it. Thursday the unions began officially to move into the struggle. The major development was the strike action taken by the powerful building trades council in New York, representing some 130,000 skilled workers in 45 crafts and 135 A.F.L. locals.

After the two-hour session of the council on Thursday afternoon had authorized the strike

(See page 4 for editorial on the strike of the W.P.A. workers.)

—covering 32,000 men, most of them already out—Thomas Murray, president of the Council told the press in his office: "This will be a strike to the finish."

The official authorization of strike was particularly significant since, a few hours before the strike decision, Col. F. C. Harrington, national W.P.A. administrator, had wired to New York that all men absent five days from projects would be dropped from the rolls and William Hodson, city welfare commissioner, had declared that the strikers would be refused home relief. In the face of the action by Harrington and (Continued on Page 4)

## Circulate Petitions Against Reactionary Mass. Election Law

WORCESTER, Mass. — Approximately two months ago the Massachusetts State Legislature passed a law requiring any candidate for governor other than those of the two major parties to collect 50,000 signatures before his name will be placed on the ballot.

Petitions are now being circulated to get signatures in protest against the law. If 15,000 signatures are secured within three months of the passing of the law, the question is automatically placed on the ballot for a referendum and does not become law unless voted so on the referendum.

The petitions are being circulated by the Civil Liberties Union of Massachusetts, the Communist Party, the Socialist Party and the Socialist Workers Party. The Worcester C.I.O. Council has passed a motion endorsing the petitions which are now being circulated in the unions.

## THE STATE OF THE NATION

The Worcester, Mass., Trade School has room for 80 new students in its mechanical department for its coming fall term. 900 applications were filed.

... In New York, 6,500 men applied for city jobs as auto engine-men paying \$1,200 to \$1,500. Several hundred men spent all night outside the office of the Municipal Civil Service Commission. 58 will get appointments.

## Anti-War Convention Ends Spirited Sessions

NEW YORK—Winding up the Anti-War Convention of the Socialist Workers Party with a burst of enthusiasm, 76 delegates and 34 alternate delegates Wednesday morning headed for home in 33 different cities to put into action the many decisions of the convention.

Concluding four days of convention session, the delegates late Tuesday reached the final point on the agenda, the election of the new National Committee.

Envisaging the major task of the party as preparation for the coming war, the delegates tied up each of various issues (Continued on Page 2)

## Convention Adopts Program of Expansion In Organization Drive to Build the S. W. P.

The full text of the Program of Expansion adopted by the Socialist Workers Party convention is as follows:

A party of the Leninist type, such as we aspire to build, is distinguished from reformist organizations and propaganda sects in its organization methods as well as in its political principles.

The Leninist party is a combat organization that aims at the conquest of power. It conducts its activity on the campaign principle. It is democratic in its internal life and centralized in action. It coordinates organization work with the work of literary propaganda and agitation and implements political decisions by organizational measures. It constructs a strong apparatus, and it relies on the leadership of a staff of professional revolutionists in the center and in the field.

Proceeding from this Leninist concept of organization, and aiming at an expansion of our activities by a forced march in the next period, as projected in the political resolution, the convention sets before the party the following program of expansion:

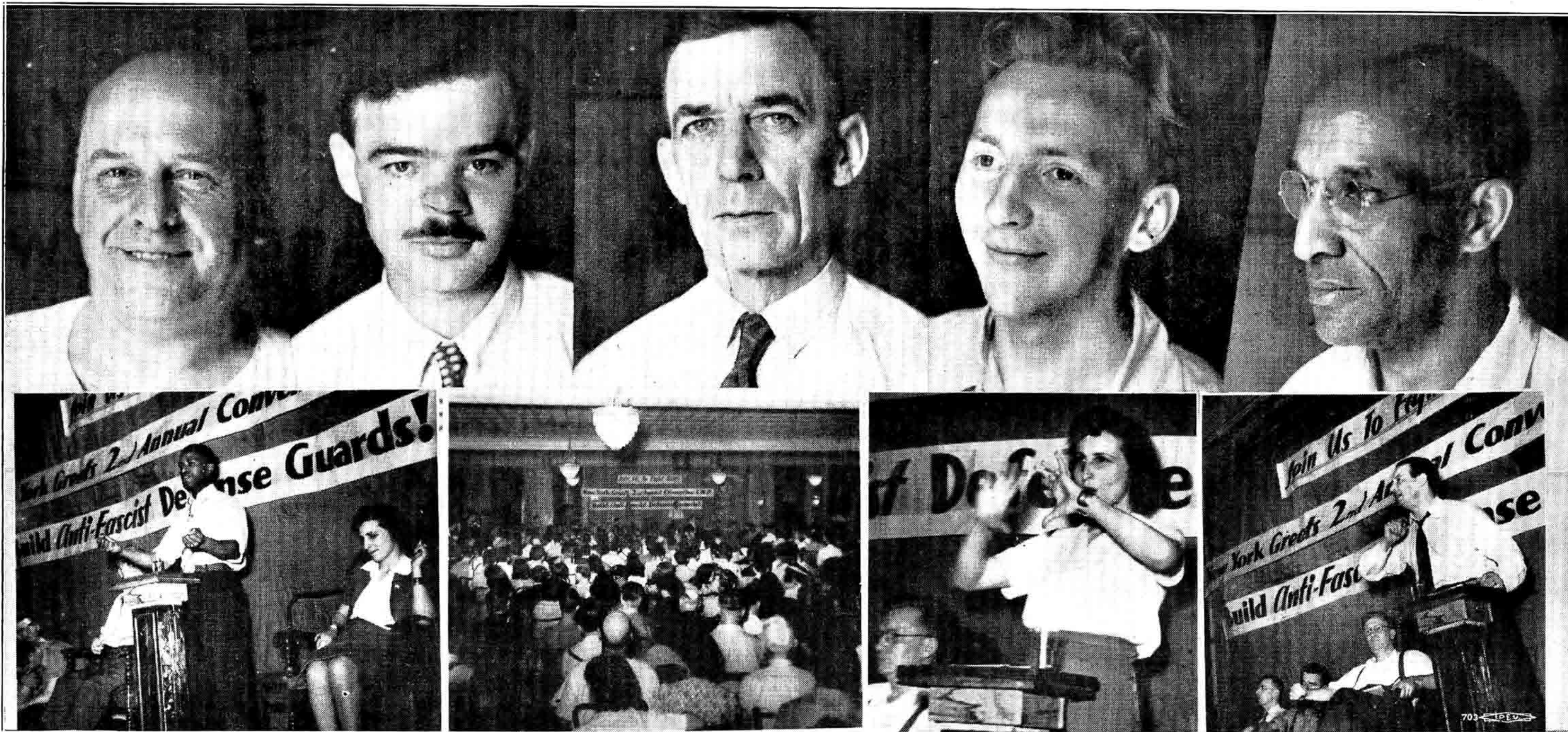
### 1. Press:

- On the proposal to publish the Socialist Appeal three times a week; authority is given to the National Committee to decide the frequency of issue.
- Pamphlets: The publication of at least six cheap, popular pamphlets on the following topics:
  - "Let the People Vote on War" (already prepared)
  - "Build Workers Defense Guards"
  - "A Job for Every Worker"

- "Thirty-thirty"
  - "Expropriate the Sixty Families"
  - "Labor and the 1940 Elections"
- (c) Periodic issuing of four-page leaflets on key slogans for mass distribution nationally.
- ### 2. Staff:
- Increase the staff by the assignment of twenty more full time organizers for field work and in the center.
  - The object of extending the departmentalization of national work, under full-time direction as the National Committee finds feasible.
  - Full-time functionary for the direction of national trade union work.
- ### 3. Conferences:
- Active workers conferences in Far West, Middle West, Ohio-Michigan, East.
- ### 4. Tours:
- National and regional tours at intervals of not more than two months.
- ### 5. Recruitment:
- A systematically organized and centrally directed recruiting campaign.
- ### 6. Finances:
- Raise an Organization-Press Fund for \$10,000 within three months to be equally divided between the organization work and the Socialist Appeal.
- One-third of the \$10,000 Fund is to be raised by the National Office. Two-thirds to be raised by quotas accepted by the Convention delegations.



# Men and Scenes at the National Anti-War Convention of the S.W.P.



## In the Labor Unions

By B. J. WIDICK

Spontaneous and, in several cases, officially called strikes of A.F.L. craftsmen on W.P.A. construction projects began this week in protest against the destruction of the union scales under the new relief appropriation measure passed by Congress.

In the New York area the strikes were so widespread that Thomas Murray, president of the Building and Construction Council of Greater New York, has called a meeting of his organization and says that official strike sanction is likely.

Murray estimated that 90 per cent of the 32,283 skilled workers on W.P.A. in New York City have stopped work.

### Resent A.F.L. Policy

Resentment against the reduction in wage rates is directed not only against the Roosevelt administration but also—and this is very important—against the A.F.L. top leadership in Washington for having allowed Congress to delete the prevailing wage clause in the relief appropriation measure.

Under the present schedule, thousands of workers have been notified that they will have to work 130 hours a month to get the same pay they have been getting, on a monthly basis.

Under the old rates paid on a union scale, craftsmen obtained from \$1 to \$2 an hour, and worked much less than 130 hours.

A comparison of the pay received before the reduction on an hourly basis with union scale of wages and the money to be earned under the new schedule shows that most skilled craftsmen will get 60 cents an hour less! And work many hours more!

### Facts and Figures

Here is what the New York craftsmen got before:

Number	Hours	Pay
on	per	per
rolls fiscal	four	four
May 31 period	weeks	weeks
Plasterer	766	\$3.00
Stone cutter	221	\$2.00
Stone setter	113	\$2.00
Electrician	1,514	\$4.00
Plumber	1,230	\$4.00
Steamfitter	627	\$4.00
Asbestos w/ker	260	\$4.00
Bricklayer	2,459	\$3.50
Stone mason	415	\$2.00
Structural iron	931	\$4.00
worker	44	\$4.70
Sheet metal	931	\$4.00
w/ker or roofer	931	\$4.00
Glazier	197	\$2.00
Rigger	172	\$2.00
Tile layer	516	\$4.00
Marble cutter	284	\$4.00
or setter	284	\$4.00
Metallic fitter	1,090	\$4.00
Duck builder	671	\$4.00
Compressor op-	182	\$4.00
erator (p/able)	182	\$4.00
Carpenter	7,981	\$4.00

## Jobless Go Without Relief, Officials Get New Cars

Rebelling Against Scabby Tactics of W.A.A., Oakland Jobless Form Fighting Union

By BILL MORGAN  
(Special to the Socialist Appeal)  
OAKLAND, Cal., July 1—Twelve thousand workers, many of them aged and blind, are being forced to go ten days without the miserable dole on which they depend for food because "there are no funds", according to Mr. George Janssen, Chairman of the Alameda County Board of Supervisors. The State Relief Administration has announced a "surplus" of \$450,000 for the current year which will be spent for new automobiles for the use of relief officials. At the same time, 4,100 W.P.A. workers received dismissal notices.

Claiming that the county has no money for relief, Mr. Janssen urged that credit be extended to relief clients "until such time as funds are forthcoming" but since debts of relief clients are not recognized by the State Relief Administration, local grocery and meat stores have refused and continue to refuse the credit asked for by Mr. Janssen.

**Plan Action**  
Alameda County has 7,834 aged, 479 blind and 2,500 needy children on its relief rolls. Other classifications raise the total to 12,000 according to official reports. If there are no funds forthcoming within the next ten days the physical condition of the workers will be a danger to the entire community.

There are indications, however, that the workers of Alameda County are not going to starve peacefully. Recent events in the Elmhurst and West Oakland sections have given rise to the formation of a new, fighting unemployed and project workers union despite the frantic efforts of the scabby Workers Alliance and its company union, Stalinist leadership.

Increasing unemployment. Cement mason 1,786 49 85.75 Ornament iron worker 840 49 85.75 Paver (block & granite) 180 52 86.27 Bluestone and granite cutter 123 52 85.80 Blacksmith 153 52 84.50 Waterproofer & tar roofer 604 53 84.80 Marble polisher 145 56 84.73 Painter 2,583 56 84.00 Turner 108 56 78.40 Welder 91 60 84.00 Timberman 1,784 68 81.60 Pipe fitter 163 72 82.50 Mechanic (auto) 190 80 80.00

constant slashing of W.P.A. rolls and sharp reductions in relief funds plus the ever deepening reaction in California has been accepted by the Stalinists who see in the misery of the workers a golden opportunity to cram their phoney line down the throat of an unsuspecting working class. Using the once powerful Workers Alliance as a political football the Stalinists have wrecked all semblance of militant organization and maintain the Alliance as a post-card writing agency.

**Face Workers' Wrath**  
Now these Stalinists are facing the wrath of an aroused and indignant working class composed of Negro and white workers, of Mexican and Italian workers, of men, women and youth of all sections of the county.

Within the Alliance there is turmoil at every meeting. At every local meeting there are expulsions and "trials". Many workers are voting with their feet and the Alliance grows smaller week by week. And on top of everything, the Youth local of the Alliance recently drew up and unanimously adopted a militant anti-war program which demands jobs for youth at trade union wages and that all war funds be used for the unemployed. The bureaucrats are now "investigating" the Youth.

**Name-Calling Futile**  
The use of intimidation and name-calling is the Stalinists' only defense. The youth who want to fight against boss war are called agents of Trotsky and, as one member of the Youth Local remarked when this charge was made at a meeting, "If Trotsky and the Fourth International agree with us why should we remain here with these pie-card artists!"

The workers who want to conduct a struggle for their right to live, to eat, to have decent homes and to get jobs at decent wages and who dare to expose the reactionary line of the Stalinists in the Alliance are called agents of the Chamber of Commerce and the Associated Farmers by the finks in the Alliance who hope to confuse and confound the workers of Oakland. But the name-calling campaign is not producing the desired results because now the workers are asking themselves, "Just who are the agents of the Chamber of Commerce and the Associated Farmers—those who want to fight for jobs and homes or those who are trying to keep us quiet?"

## COUGHLINITES GROW, ARE WELL FINANCED

(Continued from Page 1)

write in the \$16,000 contest which has just ended reveal very clearly the demagogic character of Father Coughlin's propaganda. Although many quotations from Father Coughlin's speeches and writings can be given to show that he favors the building of a mighty capitalist navy and army in the United States, the subjects for the contest were as follows: "How to Keep America Out of War," (adult section) "Foreign Entanglements Lead to War," (Twelfth Grade) "The Cost of War," (Eleventh Grade), "Offensive Wars Settle Nothing," (Tenth Grade), "Offensive War Will Hurt America," (Ninth Grade), "I Don't Want War," (Eighth Grade), "Mothers Don't Want War," (Seventh Grade), "Daddies Shouldn't Have to Go to War," (Fifth and Sixth Grades).

Through these slogans Coughlin hopes to capitalize on the widespread and completely justified anti-war sentiment of the American people. But previous statements by Coughlin in favor of the war machine, the fact that he was one of the key men in putting Roosevelt's War Deal into power shows that he will be among the first when war breaks to pound the drums of patriotism which will drag millions of Americans into the coming slaughter.

**Milks the Poor**  
While the main sources of Coughlin's huge income have never been revealed—America's colossally rich Sixty Families stand like a sinister shadow in the background—Father Coughlin overlooks no possibility to milk the poor. On page 19 of the July 3 issue of Social Justice he projects a lurid picture of America in 1945.

"Six bishops, three Catholics and three Protestants, were executed yesterday morning in the basement of Tombs prison. Thousands of priests, ministers and nuns are in concentration camps... orders have been issued at Comintern headquarters that persons displaying pictures of George Washington or otherwise paying homage to this bourgeois individual will be shot without trial."

This, says Father Coughlin, is a picture of America under Communism, and if his readers would "save" America from this Red peril they must immediately send in their contributions of \$1, \$2, \$3, \$5, or anything higher.

**Anti-Jewish Campaign**  
Father Coughlin's campaign against the Jews continues undiminished. "If the Jewish boy-

## Anti-War Convention Ends With Spirited Action Program

Organization Discussion and Election of National Committee Brings Sessions to Close

(Continued from Page 1)

under discussion with the war problem. Realizing that the tempo of work must be increased, critical of the party's failure to grow as fast as it should have grown, the convention decided to convert the party into a campaign party which pushing boldly and vigorously ahead on the various problems of the labor movement will build the party into a movement of truly mass proportions.

**Items Discussed**  
As reported in the last issue of the Appeal, the first items taken up and decided by the convention were the main political resolution on the Per-spectives of United States Imperialism and the prospects of the party, the preparation of the party for the coming war, the growth of fascism, the fight against it, and the Workers Defense Guard, and the Negro question (see page 3 for the resolution on Negro work).

Following the disposition of the above points, the conven-

cott succeeds," he claims, "Germans will be forced to go to war to prevent their economic annihilation... meanwhile the boycott continues its disastrous effect in the United States. Watch millions of bales of cotton rot in Southern warehouses. American farmers have to plow under or destroy their food surpluses" (page 5). With this argument Coughlin blames the terrible want which exists in the midst of plenty in America not on the capitalist system, the system of turning over the wealth of the nation to a miserable handful of stockholders—the Sixty Families—but on the Jews. Despite the fact that he alleges he is not anti-Semitic and that he attacks only non-religious Jews, Coughlin does not make even this distinction in his Jew-baiting.

On the same page which carries his Jew-baiting, Coughlin lashes viciously against the labor movement, attacking the C.I.O. and its right to strike. In Coughlin's plan to establish fascism in America—by any name, even "Social Justice"—the Jews will be only the first to dangle from his noose. The next on the list will be whoever belongs to a trade union.

Coughlin's movement is growing, and growing dangerously. If it is to be stopped it must be stopped NOW. And the only way to stop it is by organizing labor defense guards in every union local in the country.

tion discussed the situation of the unemployed, the party press, the program of action (printed on page 1) and the tasks of the coming period. Several items were unfortunately not taken up by the convention because of the amount of time given to the other points on the agenda, notably the program of action. These were referred to the new National Committee for the elaboration of specific programs on each point.

### Organization Work

In the discussion of the program of action the desire of the members to make of the party a campaign party which will draw the masses into the orbit of its work was especially manifested. Eight hours of solid discussion were devoted to the organization resolution—the first time in its history the party has devoted so much time to what is essentially the key to the party's success. In the course of the discussion, the party's weaknesses came in for considerable criticism.

In the credentials report which will be printed in the coming issue in tabulated form, it was pointed out that the party is a young party. The average age of the delegates was 28 years. Yet the greater part of the delegates had years and years of experience in the trade union and political movement behind them. And most significant, the greater part of the delegates were experienced trade unionists.

These delegates who lent the youth and vigor of their ideas to the convention problems are now on their way back to California, Detroit, Minneapolis, etc., to put their vitality, spirit, enthusiasm, and energy to the execution of the convention decisions.

They carry the message of revolutionary socialism. In the battle for the emancipation of mankind they wield the might of Marxism. In the day to day struggles of the masses they carry with them the intelligence of revolutionary politics. An invincible army of proletarian revolution they march forward.

Long live the Socialist Workers Party! Long live the Fourth International! Forward to Socialist Victory!

At Your Service  
THE APPEAL  
POSTER SHOP

## APPEAL ARMY

### PRESS REPORT AT PARTY CONVENTION:

One of the most constructive aspects of our Convention was the Press Report given by comrade Abern and the discussion that followed.

Practically every delegate who was in any way connected with distribution and handling of our literature spoke on the various problems he faces. Many valuable experiences and hints as to the best methods of selling the Appeal and New International were given.

In the next few months it is the intention of our National Office—after carrying through certain centralization and reorganization steps—to devote a major portion of its time to the problem of organizing a broader distribution on a more dynamic basis. Old, careless methods must give way to the streamlined methods of our Campaign Party!

We also want to thank those delegates who, as branch literature agents, came up to the Appeal business office for a report and a talk on their problems. All in all, it was highly worth while.

### OAKLAND BRANCH GETS DOWN TO WORK!

"Enclosed find a payment of \$5.51 on our account. We expect to be completely paid up by July 15 and on July 21 we are having a mass meeting at

which a special speaker will take up a collection for the paper.

"The branch now sells the Appeal at union meetings and does house-to-house canvassing. It will be only a matter of time before we will be in a position to double our present bundle. Systematic work shows great improvement and we now sell all our papers. When the 3-a-week Appeal comes through you can count on Oakland doing its share—and then some!"

—Bill Morgan, Oakland organizer.

The subscription list slowed up slightly this past week because of Convention activity. But New York emerged out of its temporary slump and heads the list. Here's the new subs obtained this past week:

NEW YORK CITY	11
Chicago	8
Massachusetts	7
Minneapolis	4
Los Angeles	2
Newark	1
Washington, D. C.	1
Detroit	1
Rochester	1
St. Louis	1
Pennsylvania	1

Total 38  
Washington, D. C. has increased its bundle order by 4 per issue and has an additional literature agent in Comrade N.

### SHOE WORKERS OUT ON STRIKE

WORCESTER, Mass.—Eight cutters and one hundred stitchers working for the National Shoe Manufacturing Co. which employs about 300 workers, have been out on strike for a week, demanding the return of a 10% cut which they received a year ago.

There is no union at the plant. An independent union (with the reputation of being a company union), the A.F.L. and the United Shoe Workers of America (C.I.O.) have all tried to contact the workers. The C.I.O. union has made some head-way with about twenty workers signing up. The workers would have nothing to do with the other unions.

**Important Notice**  
"AMERICA'S 60 FAMILIES" by Ferdinand Lundberg now available at \$1.49  
A book that reveals who really controls America and how they keep their power. No revolutionary agitator should be without a copy.  
LABOR BOOKSHOP  
116 University Place  
New York City  
(Add 3c per book postage)

### I.L.G.W. LOCAL DISCUSSES FORMING DEFENSE GUARDS

(Continued from Page 1)

tempt to deprive any worker or workers' organization of its constitutional rights," Milton explained. "The Coughlin gangsters have already broken into a workers' headquarters—the Debs Labor School—and have succeeded in breaking up numerous meetings of labor organizations in the city. Last week they tried to break up an American Labor Party meeting where Michael Quill, president of the Transport Workers Union, was the speaker; fortunately the transport workers were prepared.

"Organized labor in New York has a membership of more than a million. Together with other workers' organizations and the anti-fascists in the general population, it would be a cinch to organize 50,000 anti-fascist labor guards, if the labor unions get behind the idea."

Subscribe to The  
New International



By Dwight Macdonald

# SPARKS IN THE NEWS

For four days I have spent most of my waking hours—and a few of the sleeping hours as well!—at Irving Plaza listening in on the second national convention of the Socialist Workers Party. Although I am not a member of the S.W.P., as a regular contributor to the *Appeal*, I was invited to sit in on the sessions. It was an enlightening, and heartening, experience.

From the convention I carried away chiefly an impression of youth—the average age of the delegates was announced as twenty-eight and a half years—and seriousness. This was no convention of middle-aged cafeteria-table Marxists, splitting fine points of dialectics over the coffee cups. In fact, the convention seemed to indicate that the S.W.P. has struck its roots far deeper into the American working class than I had supposed. These were for the most part working class leaders—in steel, in auto, in rubber, in the maritime field, among the unemployed. There were also, of course, a number of middle-class delegates as well—teachers, journalists, even an accountant or two.

But whatever their class origin, the delegates all quite clearly took with the utmost seriousness the sharpening crisis of American capitalism and the imminent threat of war. The high point of the convention, in many ways, was Cannon's brilliant speech on the war question, and the discussion from the floor that followed it.

The convention revolved around a central axis: the problem of changing the S.W.P. from a propaganda-discussion sect into a mass party, how to turn the party's face toward the masses. The level of the discussion was extremely high, and a great many excellent suggestions and illuminating bits of data came from the delegates' comments. So far as I could see, the sessions were conducted in completely democratic fashion. I was particularly interested in the discussion on the press, with its constant hammering on the point that the *Appeal* must be written in simpler language, that its articles must be shorter, more concrete, and that it must be changed from a journal of comment into what Burnham called "a campaign paper", concentrating its fire on certain definite objectives. Much the best suggestion seemed to me to be that there should be more letters and news stories from workers in the field, and less journalistic comment written in the editorial office. The responsibility for the lack of original material from the field is hard to place. The *Appeal* staff pointed out that their correspondents out of New York just didn't write in usable stuff, while, on the other hand, comrades from Chicago and from St. Paul charged that the *Appeal* had failed to print what they had sent in. Whatever the reasons, the lack of first-hand stories from the field is the glaring weakness of the *Appeal* today.

## MEN AND WOMEN OF LABOR

# OUT OF THE PAST

By EMANUEL GARRETT

### WILLIAM MORRIS\*

(March 24, 1834—October 3, 1896)

William Morris became a Socialist at the age of 49.

At this time Morris was already famous as one of the outstanding poets of England. He was also widely known as an artist who had revived a dozen different art-crafts—fine printing, tapestries, textile designing, household decoration, etc. He was wealthy and respected.

Yet, at the height of his career, Morris astonished his friends and "the public" by casting his lot with a small obscure political group and throwing his enormous energies, as well as his wealth and reputation, into their work. This group was the pioneer organization of the British Marxists, the Social Democratic Federation, led by H. M. Hyndman.

### Not a Dabbler in Socialism

Morris joined the S.D.F. in 1883. His artistic friends thought he joined as an artist dabbling in politics as a diversion. But Morris soon showed he was no mere dabbler in Socialism.

He joined the movement as a rank-and-file Jimmy Higgins. For two years—during which his literary work lapsed—he crowded his days with street-corner speaking in Hyde Park and in the proletarian quarters of London. He called it "street-preaching" and he painfully sought to develop himself as a Socialist agitator for the masses of workers. He was a frequent speaker before workers' groups, and on occasion his reputation gained him entree to middle class organizations where he lectured the white-collar audiences on the necessity of working-class socialism. He was involved in the Trafalgar Square riot of the late 1880's.

It was against his own desire that he was drafted onto the leadership of the S.D.F. and became a member of its executive committee, for he himself recognized that his bent lay in the direction of propaganda work among the masses. Moreover, he cheerfully admitted that he knew little of Socialist theory. And this indeed was one of the reasons for his split with Hyndman and the S.D.F.

Morris was second in prominence only to Hyndman in the ranks of the Federation, but he found that he could not work with Hyndman. For that matter, neither could anyone else; for Hyndman brooked no division of his uncontrolled power over the organization. This source of friction was complicated by the existence of an anarchist wing of the Federation, which in 1885 broke away to form the Socialist League.

Morris went along with the Socialist League, and became one of its leaders, in spite of the fact that he disagreed with the anarchists'—

\*This column on William Morris is contributed by Hal Draper. Readers who wish to submit columns on Men and Women of Labor are urged to do so.

### Two Dangers

The convention illustrated pretty well the two great dangers in this transformation of the S.W.P. into a mass party. On the one hand, there are still some bad hangovers from the old propaganda-sect days, not so much in the rank and file as in the top leadership. The sessions, for example, all began from forty-five minutes to almost two hours late. On Tuesday, the last day, when many extremely important items on the agenda had not yet been taken up, the session, scheduled for ten a.m., did not begin until ten minutes to twelve. As a result, the unemployment discussion was cut so short, as to be of little value, and the convention never did get around to several important items on the agenda. There was not the slightest reason, except sloppy management, that the report on unemployment could not have been presented as scheduled at ten.

I am told that at the last convention, in Chicago, meetings began promptly on time. The atmosphere of New York doesn't seem to demoralize the bourgeoisie—so far as I know, banks open promptly at nine and close promptly at three, and directors' meetings begin on the dot—but it has a terrible effect on the leaders of the S.W.P.

In the old days, punctuality was a minor virtue; it didn't make much difference whether an all-day discussion on the nature of the Soviet state began on the minute or not. But in an active mass party, punctuality is a minimum requirement. How can people make a revolution who can't even make an appointment?

The other danger comes from just the opposite quarter. If the top leadership is, understandably enough, not yet free of the attitudes of the old discussion-group days, the new rank-and-file is open to another disease. It was expressed in more than one contemptuous allusion to "petty bourgeois intellectuals". It also came out in a tendency to set the rest of the country in opposition to New York City—a false and fatal antagonism. Several speakers seemed to think of New York as a nest of sterile, isolated, long-haired and long-winded intellectuals for whom every honest worker can have nothing but contempt. This anti-intellectual, anti-New York attitude—which unhappily finds some real justification in the hangovers from the party's sectarian past I have mentioned above—seems to me to be the rankest sort of Philistinism. I see nothing immoral about brains. On the contrary, a party obviously needs all the brains, both practical and theoretical, it can command. To damn all theoretical intelligence because intellectuals have their typical weaknesses, is to throw out the baby with the bath.

It remains to be seen whether these defects will be remedied. The intelligence and seriousness of the delegates, and their closeness to the masses—all this seems to promise that they will.

ideas. It was not long, therefore, before he found himself in opposition in the Socialist League also, and in 1889 he retired to form a Socialist propaganda group, the Hammersmith Socialist Society. To the end of his days, however, he remained an ardent advocate of the Socialist ideal.

Perhaps no one who has attempted to depict the achievement of that ideal has drawn as attractive a picture of the future Socialist society as has Morris, in his "News from Nowhere." Within his limitations, of course. Knowing little of the economic end of the Socialist transformation of society, he emphasized another angle. This was that the new world would be a place where the beauty and pleasure of labor could be developed, where cultural advance and the flowering of the human personality would no longer be hampered by the shackles of capitalism, where art would no longer be something appreciated only by highbrows but where it would become an art for the masses and by the masses.

Morris's "Chants for Socialists," in which he turned his poetic powers to the service of the movement, are also still well worth reading by workers today.

### "Art for the Masses!"

Why is the name of William Morris, which figures so prominently in the history of English literature, also remembered by the Socialists?

Today, when the "cultural front" and the "intellectual periphery" of the revolutionary movement are terms that are bandied about, it is important to point out that William Morris was, if not the first, one of the first artists to join the Socialist movement BECAUSE he was an artist, not IN SPITE OF that fact.

Morris's social and political consciousness was first awakened by his realization that capitalism was not only harmful to the masses who lived in poverty, but also to the development of art and the beauty of life. How could art be healthy when the great mass of human beings had to spend every waking moment thinking of bread and butter, and when only the social parasites could afford to indulge in "patronizing" art? The result was a parasitic art, which was bound to reflect the degeneration of boss-class society.

"Art for the masses!" was the slogan of William Morris. He serves to remind us that the ultimate aim of socialism is not merely to assure bread and security to the worker—that is only the first step—but to make the world a more beautiful place to live in.

After all, is it not a most crushing condemnation of capitalism to realize that after all the ages, the most important problem that still faces mankind is the same as that which faces the lowest animal—how to get the daily mouthful of food . . . ?

# A. F. L. Head Raps New Deal Ruling On W. P. A. Strikers

(Continued from Page 1)

the system which obtains in Nazi Germany and which even you, Mr. Hodson, regardless of what you evidently privately think about the Nazi set-up, dare not publicly and openly approve.

"I would remind you, honorable Commissioner, that the only difference between the Nazi system and the system that we now face through a combination of Congressional action and your vile ruling is that the Nazis have concentration camps for those who refuse to lower their standards to an indecent level, with the compensating factor, however, that even in the concentration camps food is not generally denied to the poor victims held there.

"I would also remind you that in our nation, as in others, it is not and has not been for centuries the practice to refuse food even to the worst of criminals.

### Unemployment a Crime?

"Under your interpretation of your duty, as you see it, decent American citizens whose only crime seems to be the inability to find non-existent employment in private industry are to be placed in a category below that of murderers, thieves and other felons of the worst sort.

"Mr. Hodson, your action is absolutely without a scintilla of justification. Your edict is a challenge to all those who sincerely believe in decent American standards of living.

"In taking this action you have earned, as you so richly deserve, the contempt of every right-thinking American in the City of New York."

Hodson's threat was reported in the press as follows:

"Welfare Commissioner Hodson lost no time in announcing that persons who refused to accept the 'scab' wages fixed by Congress would not get home relief."

# WORKERS' FORUM

### NEW OFFICERS DON'T GO OVER WITH LOCAL 117

Dear Comrade:

The spirit of revolt among the cloak-makers which led to the sweeping of the entrenched administration out of office manifested itself at the installation rally of the new officers recently. For the first time in years the president of the International was interrupted, heckled, jeered and finally forced to stop his speech.

It was a strange meeting in many respects. The flower-bedeked platform contrasted strangely with the tense mood of the audience. The officials of the union parading on it felt themselves at the mercy of the rank and file. One after another the ousted officials of Local 117 ran the gauntlet of irony and derision. The apologetic speech of ex-manager Levy did not save him. The defeated chairman of the Local, Zuckerman, who started out innocently, "The past eight years in which I held office were the happiest years in my life," was interrupted by general laughter and the question "How much did you get a week?"

The biggest "reception" was saved for president David Dubinsky when he tried to explain away the plight of the cloak-makers by government statistics. Some of these figures were very instructive, e.g. that there are 7,000 cloak makers in Brooklyn and 5,000 in the adjoining area working for the New York jobbers at half the wages that the New York worker gets. This explains why the seasons last only a couple of weeks, that is, the jobbers need the New York shops during the rush period only when the out-of-town shops cannot take care of the orders.

The uproar started when he quoted the Labor-Board that the cloak makers have the highest hourly earnings in the country. "What about annual earnings?" was the general cry. The unemployed cloak makers and the semi-unemployed were in no mood to listen to the apologetics of union leaders whom they hold responsible for their plight.

Dubinsky, rattled and disconcerted, stopped in the middle of a sentence, packed his papers and asked the secretary to call the roll of the elected officers. He returned after a couple of minutes this time without his papers to give some free advice to the new officials.

The extent of the revolt was revealed by Dubinsky when he said the figures of the elections show that a shift of a few hundred votes could have brought an entirely new administration. As it stands now, part of the administration slate was elected. Also some disgruntled union officials and of bureaucrats who saw in which direction the wind was blowing and joined the opposition. The rank and file elements who were the driving force behind the opposition movement were nosed out by a few score votes. President Dubinsky congratulated himself on that fact.

The meeting ended with the speech of the newly elected manager Kaplan. He was not received over-enthusiastically but the workers are willing to give him a chance to see what he can do while they keep a

watchful eye on him all the time.

Member of I.L.G.W.U.

### THE CASE OF A JOBLESS WORKER

Dear Comrades:

I have just returned from a trip as a member of a grievance committee from what my worker friends tell me was Germany, and my well-to-do friends tell me was Doylestown Bucks County, one of the wealthiest counties in the United States. Bristol, which is its largest town, is the home of patriotic Joe Grundy, former U. S. Senator, President of the Pennsylvania Manufacturers' Association and owner of the largest mill in the county. Grundy always has the welfare of his workers at heart and keeps watch over them for fear that they will earn too much and then go out and eat so much that their stomachs are liable to swell to such proportions that Uncle Joe would be compelled to shell out a few pennies to increase the size of his factories so as to house these expanded constitutions. Very benevolent fellow, this Uncle Joe. He just recently donated \$5,000 to his staunch Republican friends for the good work that they are doing in the county and the state of Pennsylvania.

The place we visited is called an assistance office, where we took up the case of Mr. Pfaff, a farmer, cigarmaker, and concert violinist, who graduated from Pennsylvania State College with special mention of his proficiency in Tile Drainage, Beekeeping, Silo's, Commercial Fruit and Potato growing and Poultry keeping.

### Evicted from Farm

This man, a Republican, started to work in a cigar factory at the age of thirteen and worked at the trade for seventeen years, saved his money and bought a farm. In 1925 he planted 973 fruit trees. In 1932 he sold 3528 baskets of peaches.

In 1934 a Democratic politician appeared and represented himself as a Secret Service Agent trying to find out why the farmers are losing their farms. He got all the information he wanted, and then left.

About six weeks later he appeared again and ordered Mr. Pfaff off his farm because he said that he had bought the farm. Mr. Pfaff refused to leave. The next day this man appeared again with a 325-pound bully and gave Mr. Pfaff a clubbing, then went and had Mr. Pfaff arrested and thrown in jail for seven days without the benefit of counsel or bail. Mr. Pfaff was then told by the authorities that he had to go to the poorhouse or else they would send him to the Insane Asylum. He preferred the poorhouse from which he escaped several days later. While in jail they tried to sell him dope and liquor.

### Denied Relief

Mr. Pfaff has tried to get relief since 1936. But the only answer he got was that he should live off somebody else, and that because a lunacy commission had examined him, he could not get relief. He tried to get an appointment to see the Head Director without an appointment, with several pretty girls trying to bar his way by hanging on to his coat-tails. He talked to the Director, but

# "SWP and Negro Work"

Resolution Adopted by the National Convention

The American Negroes, for centuries the most oppressed section of American society and the most discriminated against, are potentially the most revolutionary element of the population. They are designated by their whole historical past to be, under adequate leadership, the very vanguard of the proletarian revolution. The neglect of Negro work, and of the Negro question by the party is, therefore, a very disquieting sign. The S.W.P. must recognize that its attitude to the Negro question is crucial for its future development. Hitherto the party has been based mainly on privileged workers and groups of isolated intellectuals. Unless it can find its way to the great masses of the underprivileged, of whom the Negroes constitute so important a section, the broad perspectives of the permanent revolution will remain only a fiction and the party is bound to degenerate.

The S.W.P. proposes therefore to constitute a National Negro Department which will initiate and coordinate a plan of work among the Negroes and calls upon its members to co-operate strenuously in the difficult task of approaching this work in the most suitable manner. Our obvious tasks for the coming period are (a) the education of the party, (b) winning the more advanced Negroes for the Fourth International, and (c) through them and the work of the party in wider fields influencing the Negro masses to recognize in the S.W.P. the only party which is genuinely working for their complete emancipation from the heavy burdens they have borne so long. The winning of Negroes to our movement on a revolutionary basis is, however, no easy task. The Negroes, suffering acutely from the general difficulties of all workers under capitalism, and in addition, from special problems of their own, are naturally hesitant to take the step of allying themselves with a small and heavily persecuted party. But Negro work is complicated by other more profound causes. For reasons which can be easily understood, the American Negro is profoundly suspicious of all whites, and recent events have deepened that suspicion.

### Negroes Often Deceived

In the past, the Negro masses have had disastrous experiences with the Republican and Democratic parties. The boasted benefits that the Negro as a whole are supposed to have received from the New Deal and the Democratic Party can easily be seen for the fraud that they are when it is recognized that it is the Democratic Party of Franklin Roosevelt which by force and trickery prevents the Negroes from exercising their votes over large areas in the South.

The Communist Party of the U.S.A. from 1928 to 1935 did win a number of Negroes to membership and awakened a sympathetic interest among the more advanced Negro workers and intellectuals. But the bureaucratic creation of Negro "leaders", their subservience to the twists and turns of the party line, their slavish dependence on the manipulations and combinations of the C.P. leadership, were seen by interested Negroes not as a transference of the methods and practices of the Kremlin bureaucracy in Moscow to America, but merely as another example of the use of Negroes by whites for political purposes unconnected with Negro struggles. With the latest turn beginning in 1935, the C.P. has become openly a party of American bourgeois democracy. Not only to expand, but merely to exist in this new milieu demanded that it imitate and practise the contradictory discriminations inherent in that society. The Negroes, very sensitive to all such practices, have quickly recognized the new face of the C.P. beneath the mask of demagoguery with which it seeks to disguise the predicament in which it finds itself, and the result has been a mass exodus from the party (80 per cent of the New York State Negro membership) and a bitter hostility to the C.P. which reached a climax when well-known former members of the C.P. testified against it before the Dies

made no progress.

Mr. Pfaff stated that he did not mind having girls hanging on his coat-tails when he was young, but resented it when he was hungry.

In March, Mr. Pfaff got in touch with our unemployed union and they took up his case and got relief to him from March 10 until June 2 this year. Several days later he received notice that he was dropped from the relief rolls.

### Fake Story

Then the union took up his case with the head investigator who is a Mrs. LaSpino. She told us that she was well acquainted with the case and that this party refused to work at all. The writer asked her, whom, for instance, did he refuse to work for? And she replied that he often said in her office that he refuses to work for everybody, that he wants relief, and that she needed help because her husband was sick and she needed somebody to take care of her orchards.

The committee did not believe this story and went to see Mr. Pfaff who said this was false and that he would take the job. The writer and Mr. Pfaff went to Mrs. LaSpino's farm and asked for the job. She replied that she had no money to pay anybody to do the work. The bosses and their stooges do a lot of talking about jobs, but just try to get one.

Well, that is all that has happened up to this time. The union is going to continue to fight the case, and I'll write to you about the latest developments.

Fraternally,

Howard Stump

Committee. Once more the Third International has struck a deadly blow at the American working class, this time by destroying the confidence that was being slowly forged between the politically advanced sections of the black and white workers.

### Negro Nationalist Tendencies

Furthermore, the awakening political consciousness of the Negro not unnaturally takes the form of a desire for independent action uncontrolled by whites. The Negroes have long felt and more than ever feel today the urge to create their own organizations under their own leaders and thus assert, not only in theory but in action, their claim to complete equality with other American citizens. Such a desire is legitimate and even when it takes the form of a rather aggressive chauvinism is to be welcomed. Black chauvinism in America today is merely the natural excess of the desire for equality while white American chauvinism, the expression of racial domination, is essentially reactionary. Under any circumstances, it would have been a task of profound difficulty, perhaps impossible, for a revolutionary party composed mainly of whites to win the confidence of the American Negro masses, except in the actual crises of revolutionary struggles. Such possibilities as existed, however, have been practically destroyed by the C.P. Today the politically minded Negroes are turning away from the C.P., and Negro organizations devoted to struggle for Negro rights are springing up all over the North and East, particularly in Harlem. The nationalist tendencies of the Negroes have been fortified, and in addition to the poisoning of racial relations by capitalism, the S.W.P. has now to contend with the heritage left by the C.P. and the pernicious course it is still actively pursuing.

### For a Negro Organization

The S.W.P. therefore proposes that its Negro members, aided and supported by the party, take the initiative and collaborate with other militant Negroes in the formation of a Negro mass organization devoted to the struggle for Negro rights. This organization will NOT be either openly or secretly a periphery organization of the Fourth International. It will be an organization in which the masses of Negroes will be invited to participate on a working class program corresponding to the day to day struggles of the masses of Negro workers and farmers. Its program will be elaborated by the Negro organization, in which Negro members of the Fourth International will participate with neither greater nor lesser rights than other members. But the S.W.P. is confident that the position of the Negroes in American society, the logic of the class struggle in the present period, the superior grasp of politics and the morale of members of the Fourth International, must inevitably result in its members exercising a powerful influence in such an organization. The critical support of such an organization by the S.W.P. does not in any way limit the party's drive among Negroes for membership, neither does it invalidate the necessary struggle for the unity of both black and white workers. But that road is not likely to be a broad highway. Such an organization as is proposed is the most likely means of bringing the masses of Negroes into political action, which though programatically devoted to their own interests, must inevitably merge with the broader struggles of the American working class movement taken as a whole. The S.W.P. therefore, while recognizing the limitations and pitfalls of a mass organization without a clearly defined political program, and while retaining its full liberty of action and criticism, welcomes and supports any attempt by Negroes themselves to organize for militant action against our common oppressors, instructs its Negro members to work actively towards the formation and activity of such an organization, and recommends to the party members to follow closely all such manifestations of Negro militancy.

# Sailors Spike Presidential Order to Hire Fink Crews

(Continued from Page 1)

eration of the Pacific, the convention went on record to support the third term for Roosevelt movement. The National Maritime Union, now meeting in convention, will undoubtedly do likewise.

### Roosevelt Called to Act

Very good! If it is true that Roosevelt is our friend, we the seamen will appeal directly to him to speak out in our behalf against the Tories. Could anything be fairer than that? Since he appears to be reluctant to speak, we will make that request. If he is really our friend, he will presumably grasp the opportunity of at least saying something in our behalf.

In a statement issued by Harry Lundeberg, Secretary of the Sailors Union of the Pacific, he makes this request on behalf of the seamen of the west coast and says: "As the situation now stands (in Seattle) there is only one out to settle this entire matter and that is that the President of the United States is the only man who can change the attitude of the Maritime Commission and it is entirely up to him . . . we will see in the next day or two whether Roosevelt thinks more of the Maritime Commission or whether he has any feeling at all for the demands of the thousands of seamen of the Pacific Coast."

"On behalf of the member-

ship of the Sailors Union of the Pacific, we told the Maritime Commission that the crumby tubs could stay tied up alongside of the dock until such time that the Maritime Commission was willing to use the same methods of employment as practiced by private shipowners on the Pacific Coast."

### A.F.L. Acts

The Houston convention of the American Federation of Labor went on record to support the position taken by the Sailors Union of the Pacific in this hiring hall dispute. In accord with the mandate of that convention and in reply to a request by Lundeberg, President Green wired the sailors that:

"I regret unyielding position which Maritime Commission has assumed regarding hiring seamen for government ships Pacific Coast. I have repeatedly appealed to Chairman Land to hire unlicensed personnel through union hiring halls. I will call on Secretary of Commerce Hopkins and at my earliest opportunity upon the President and urge action at earliest possible moment as you suggest."

Franklin "I love labor" Roosevelt now has the opportunity of proving his devotion. Those drum beaters for the third term for Roosevelt, "our friend", should rejoice that this opportunity has been provided.



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### FIGHT WITH THE SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY FOR:

1. A job and a decent living for every worker.
2. Open the idle factories—operate them under workers' control.
3. A Twenty-Billion dollar Federal public works and housing program.
4. Thirty-thirty! \$30-weekly minimum wage—30-hour weekly maximum for all workers on all jobs.
5. Thirty dollar weekly old-age and disability pension.
6. Expropriate the Sixty Families.
7. All war funds to the unemployed.
8. A people's referendum on any and all wars.
9. No secret diplomacy.
10. An Independent Labor Party.
11. Workers' Defense Guards against vigilante and Fascist attacks.

## A Political Strike

The nation-wide strike of building and construction workers on W.P.A. against the coolie wage rates established on July 1 by the Roosevelt-Woodrum Starvation Law can and must be successful. Congress is in session and will be forced to amend the law, establishing payment of prevailing hourly-wage rates, if the labor movement puts sufficient pressure to bear.

This is a political strike. It differs from the usual economic strike and therefore requires a different strategy to win. The usual economic strike is directed against a private employer. If successful it cuts off his doing business and making profit during the strike, and he is impelled to settle the strike by the drain on his pocket-book. In the well-organized building trades unions, a few banners and pickets are enough to turn the trick in the usual strike.

But in this strike the boss is—

## Not a Private Employer

He is not being hurt in his pocketbook. There is no drain on his profits. He is Congress and President Roosevelt.

This difference between an economic and a political strike—what difference in strategy does it demand if the strike is to be won?

First of all, it requires as many banners and pickets as possible. In the ordinary building trades strike, a single bannerman may be enough; he is there primarily to make it clear to prospective workmen that a strike is in progress there; the sight of him is enough usually to keep the job tied up.

But in this strike, the banners and pickets have a twofold task: not only to keep the job tied up, but equally important, to publicize to the entire public the fact that the job is tied up, and why it is tied up. That requires not only tens of thousands of pickets and banners, but a kind of banner that is not ordinarily used by the building trades unions: big signs explaining to the public just what the union demands are and why they are justified.

Secondly, these pickets and banners must be backed up by—

## Loads of Publicity

Massed, organized public opinion will win this strike; the first step to organize that opinion is to tie up the projects; the next step is to explain, explain, explain. To depend upon the daily capitalist press to provide the public with information about the strike and the issues involved would be fatal to the outcome of the strike. It is unfortunate that the labor press is so small, without daily papers, etc. In moments like this, one realizes how organized labor penalizes itself by failing to build a real daily press. For the emergency, this lack must be made up for.

It can be made up for by issuing millions of leaflets and distributing them to the general public, by special editions of local labor papers, by buying radio time for union broadcasts, by strikers' speeches on every possible street corner, by cruising sound trucks, by house-to-house distribution of posters and stickers to be displayed in windows facing the streets indicating that that family is sympathetic to the strike—in a word, by all the avenues of publicity already well-tested by the progressive sections of the labor movement.

These are ways to assure the success of the

W.P.A. strikers.

There are other ways, too. There is notably the question of connecting up the demands of the building trades workers on W.P.A. with the desires and needs of the—

## Unskilled Workers

The unskilled workers, on the same projects, are today largely unorganized. Top pay for the unskilled is about \$55 a month, not enough to live on by a long shot. These laborers are hungry for organization, and the building trades unions have a responsibility toward them. Their support is needed, not so much to tie up the projects perhaps, but certainly in order to win the widespread sympathy without which the strike cannot win. If Congress can be forced to amend the W.P.A. laws so as to provide the prevailing wage rate, it can also be forced to amend the laws so as to provide better wages for the unskilled workers.

If the building trades unions understand the strategical needs of a political strike, we are sure that they will come to understand the pressing need of linking their demands with those of the unskilled workers.

Meanwhile, more power to the strike!

## Aping Their Brothers

This past week the British government in India adopted, by decree, a series of laws strictly regulating the activities of any foreigner who comes to India.

Visitors must register with the police as they move about from place to place; they must convince the British that they come only as tourists or on business; they can stay only for a maximum of 3 months.

And these are the same Britishers who talk about fighting for democracy! If a visitor as much as shakes hands with an Indian nationalist who is fighting for the freedom of his country from British rule he can be kicked out as an undesirable element.

Doesn't all of this have a familiar air about it? Isn't this business of passing laws by decree, preventing people from moving about except under the eyes of the police, etc., quite familiar to all of us?

When we condemn the German and Italian brutal dictatorships let's not forget the dirty work of these British imperialists in their colonies. They are doing their best to ape and outstrip the fascists when it comes to the denial of elementary rights.

But all the King's horses and all the King's men cannot prevent the 400,000,000 people of the Indian Empire from carrying on their battle for independence and freedom from the British imperialists.

## Labor Looks Through The Press

By Arthur Hopkins

**Page the Relief Administration**—Under the headline, "Here's something college youths have overlooked," a U.P. dispatch tells how a 51-year-old Lincoln, Nebraska, world war veteran has solved not only the grasshopper but the problem of human existence. He carries a butterfly net and is thus able to catch 250 grasshoppers daily which he eats raw. His theory is that they are not only edible but delicious.

**France plans to construct** a submarine to replace the Phenix, which sank recently with a loss of 61 lives. Gad! What magnificent spirit those French bosses display—with the lives of other persons.

**A committee of the United Blind Workers of Minnesota** will meet with the executive board of the Minneapolis Central Labor Union to plan a campaign to alleviate the living conditions of blind workers of the city and state. Some Minneapolis workers may be blind, but they're not dumb.

**Bull-etin**—"Business is fundamentally and necessarily moral as a condition of its own existence," says Henry Ford's own mouthpiece, W. J. Cameron. He assailed "crack-brained" leaders "who preach to gullible people that business is naturally evil and necessarily predatory."

**Judge W. Calvin Chesnut**, New York Federal District judge, declares that the case of Judge Martin T. Manton, found guilty of accepting bribes and sentenced to two years in prison, is unprecedented in the 150-year history of American jurisprudence. You bet it's unprecedented. He was not only caught, but actually sentenced to prison!

Several thousand bankers attending a convention of the Minnesota Bankers Association at St. Paul met the secret service in the person of John D. Voss, agent in charge of the Wisconsin district. The U. S. Secret Service is composed of quiet, efficient fellows whose duty it is to protect the president, to make life miserable for counterfeiters, and who investigate and stifle all kinds of attempts to defraud the government. Well, John, what are you waiting for?

**Look who's talking!**—John C. Gail, counsel for the National Association of Manufacturers, charges that the National Labor Relations Board "has been hostile to employers. . . have violated many elementary principles of fair play, and that they have not only not contributed to a reduction of the volume of labor disputes, but have in fact sown the seeds of future discord."

**Horror item:** U. S. Attorney General Frank Murphy believes the LaFollettes of Wisconsin are "the best political stock in the nation."

# In the Disease Ridden Slums We See an Indictment of Boss Rule

The Facts Collected by the Housing Authority, Though Only Partial, Present a Damning Picture of Vermin Infested Slums in Which "One-Third-of-a-Nation" Lives

By RUTH JEFFREY

Couched though they are in conservative figures and conservative phrases, the facts which the United States Housing Authority has picked up in its surface-scratching "slum-clearance" campaign (and which it will mail free to anyone) present a shocking picture.

If we could see the entire country from coast to coast in bird's eye view, nearly one-half of its populated surface—or as the President would have it, "one-third"—would look like a hideous running sore, where the population, pale, underfed, diseased, fights a losing battle against a plague of cockroaches, bed-bugs and lice, and lives in daily embittered intimacy with armies of rats.

In these blighted areas live the American masses—the "free American people." Here flourishes the American Home in (almost) all the touching beauty of a woman's magazine editorial. Here are conceived the underprivileged youth who fill our schools, streets, factories and employment agencies.

**NO WONDER EPIDEMICS START IN THE SLUMS**

Note an incidental footnote in a government bulletin on health conditions in slum areas:

"The newspapers recently reported a particularly dramatic example of the fact that old frame buildings are often infested with vermin, beyond hope or possibility of extermination. The Syracuse Housing Authority is in process of demolishing several blocks of slums preparatory to putting up a large housing project with U.S.H.A. assistance. Demolition has actually been delayed by the pressing problem of what to do about the rats. It is estimated there are half a million rats in the area as a whole (200 per former occupant) and that it will cost \$500 a block to get rid of them and thus prevent neighboring areas from becoming doubly infested. No wonder epidemics start in the slums!"

Bad conditions are admitted to be of nation-wide prevalence and not at all confined to large cities. In a national health survey, "Overcrowding and Sanitation", the following conclu-

sion was recorded, as of 1936: "Overcrowding was not confined to cities of any particular size. It prevailed in small cities, as well as in those with a population of 500,000 or more. In the Central region overcrowding among families in small cities was almost as great as in the large cities, while in the West cities with a population of less than 25,000 averaged a slightly greater degree of overcrowding than the larger cities in this area. In the South overcrowding was the greatest in the smaller cities. . . . Regardless of the size and location of the city, relief and low income families frequently shared a hallway toilet or an outside privy."

**FACTS ARE AN INDICTMENT**

A government summary of this survey indicates that serious overcrowding and inadequate toilet facilities were not the only failings investigators observed in these slum-dwellings, despite their preoccupation with those two factors. The summary ends:

"The housing information collected in the Health Survey of the U. S. Public Health Service was confined exclusively to the problem of overcrowding and to the adequacy of toilet facilities. It did not take into account the many other aspects of deficient housing, such as the use of one room as a combined kitchen, dining room, living room and bathroom. Congestion in the halls and on the streets, lack of adequate ventilation, absence of sunlight, insufficient natural or artificial illumination, dilapidation of buildings, and fire and other hazards were not recorded. The Public Health Service indicated, however, the close relationship of these factors to accidents, infectious diseases and normal growth of children. . . . Maybe it is not an accident that these new national reports confine themselves to one or two factors at a time. All factors, surveyed in one paper, might produce a more damning document than any capitalist government would dare issue to its citizens."

Going a little more deeply into the depths of the slums, one becomes aware of a carefully

softpedaled fact. The very worst slums are more than proportionately filled with Negroes and assistance is far less than proportionately meted out to them. Where assistance does reach them facts such as these are uncovered:

"In one tenement house just demolished on the Bedford Dwellings Site of the Housing Authority of the City of Pittsburgh, the notorious Wesley Row tenement, twenty-four Negro families were living. There were no bathing or sanitary facilities whatever; there were three disgraceful outdoor toilets for all twenty-four families; the sixty-four children scrambled over rank weeds and heaps of rubbish; and one 9-member family occupied a single room. Unfortunately, Wesley Row is not the only rotten slum dwelling occupied by Negroes—or whites either, for that matter. Forty percent of Pittsburgh's dwellings are substandard in the sense that they need some form of major repair."

**CONDEMNED NEGROES TO DISEASE, DEATH**

Unless special public measures are extended and radical health measures are applied, it does not seem likely that the Negro group in Pittsburgh will grow appreciably by natural increase. The birth rate is not sufficient to offset the high death rate. In 1933 Negroes, being 8.2 percent of the total population in this city, suffered 14 percent of all the deaths, 15 percent of infant deaths, 24 percent of the deaths from pneumonia, and no less than 35 percent of the deaths from tuberculosis."

These few quotations just scratch the surface. The story of how tens of millions of Americans really live in this land of freedom and opportunity has still largely to be told. It is obvious that the United States Housing Authority, which is at best, by its own figures, helping only 4 percent, the "aristocracy" of slum-dwellers, certainly will not solve the housing question. Only the slum-dwellers—that is, the masses themselves—when they organize the power that is theirs, only they can help themselves.

# New York WPA Building Workers Ready for "Strike to the Finish"

(Continued from Page 1)

Hodson—one Roosevelt's direct lieutenant and the other an ardent New Dealer associated with Mayor La Guardia—the strike action meant a head-on collision between the labor movement and the Roosevelt administration.

Indicating his understanding of the political nature of the strike, President Murray in his interview with the press declared: "The best way to protect is to carry through the kind of action we have just endorsed. The only people who can change this law are the people who made it"—that is, Congress and President Roosevelt, against whom the strike is logically directed.

**WON LAST W.P.A. STRIKE**

In grim answer to a question from a reporter whether he believed the strike would be successful, Murray replied: "This is our second experience with the W.P.A. on the matter of the prevailing wage. The last strike, in 1935, lasted six weeks and proved successful in maintaining the prevailing wage rate."

In a resolution adopted by the building trades council, the presidents of all international unions were called upon to adopt "ways and means" of having the Roosevelt-Woodrum Law amended, in order to "prevent such an atrocious measure from tempting private industry to follow the attempt of the Works Progress Administration, in preventing building trades workers from receiving a wage rate comparable with the American standard of living."

The resolution also set up special committees—in actuality strike committees—with in each borough under the jurisdiction of the council.

Picketing was to begin Friday.

Told by newspapermen that Col. Brehon Somervell, N. Y. local W.P.A. administrator, had

announced earlier in the day that "if the A.F.L. doesn't want to work for the government, that's its business," Murray countered: "When the W.P.A. wants competent men on its projects, it appeals to the union." All construction projects will have to shut down. "Laborers cannot work if skilled craftsmen are off the job," Murray pointed out. "There are usually four or five laborers attached to one skilled union mechanic."

Asked by the newspapermen coming from Murray's office what would happen in the event of a prolonged strike, Somervell handed them a telegram from Col. F. C. Harrington, national W.P.A. administrator, ordering dismissal of all men absent from the job for five consecutive days.

**NO RELIANCE ON CAPITALIST PRESS**

The issues in this strike are clearly defined, and if the labor movement does not depend on the capitalist press to provide the public with the necessary information, but issues leaflets in the millions to explain its stand, overwhelming public opinion will back the building trades workers in forcing Congress to amend the Roosevelt-Woodrum Law.

The crux of the matter was admitted by Administrator Somervell himself, when he stated that most of the men on strike the first day—Wednesday—would not have to be replaced because the lengthened

hours to be worked by the rest would more than fill the gap they left. In other words, if the present law remains in effect, half the building trades workers employed up to July 1 would be fired. For the present law forces the skilled worker to work twice or more hours per month than formerly for less wages. A typical example is one category, under which skilled mechanics are now to work 120 hours of work for \$65.20 as compared to the previous rate of \$84 for 42 hours. Nearly three times as many hours of work!

**DANGEROUS PRECEDENT**

That would not only mean that at least half the skilled workers would be dropped from W.P.A. but also that the remaining men would receive substantial cuts in their actual income.

But over and above these vicious effects of the new law is the dangerous precedent provided by the government for wage-cutting employers. For years it had been universally recognized and admitted by government officials that wage rates paid by government agencies, whether regular agencies or the P.W.A. or W.P.A., constitute a "floor" for wages in private industries. Wherever government agencies have for long succeeded in paying a certain rate of wages, private industry generally tends to approximate the same rate of wages.

The Roosevelt-Woodrum edict is, therefore, a terrible blow against the wage rates of skilled workers everywhere, directly, and indirectly against the wage rates of all workers. That is the tremendous significance of the fight now being waged by the building trades unions—a fight to prevent the government from opening the sluice gates to wage-cutting, hour-increasing and mass firings on W.P.A. and private industry alike.

# IN THIS CORNER

By Max Shachtman

The action of the Stalinist youth organization's representatives on the resolutions dealing with "dictatorship" at the American Youth Congress, offers a significant commentary on the development of the Communist Party line, and on politics in general.

The Stalinists began, a few years ago, to deck themselves out in "democratic" garments for a very deliberate and well-thought-out purpose. The wild-eyed adventurism of the "Third Period" had ended in disaster. The hope that friendly relations could be maintained with the Hitler regime, on the basis of Russia's (and the Comintern's) traditional hostility to the Versailles Treaty, was speedily dispelled by the Nazis' belligerent avowal of designs upon Soviet territory. With the signing of the Franco-Soviet pact, the Seventh Congress of the Comintern in 1935 decreed that henceforward Bolshevism was equivalent to support of class collaboration, a passionate attachment to "democracy" and a holy war against fascism.

## How Serious the Change

Virtually at a stroke, the workers were denied both their independent and their leading roles and assigned the part of voting and fighting cattle of the "democratic" bourgeoisie. The French Stalinists resurrected Joan of Arc and Browder rediscovered his childhood affinity for George Washington, and Thomas Jefferson and that other Great American, the Fourth of July spieler, Communism became Twentieth-Century Americanism, Roosevelt the torch-bearer of Progress, and all C.P. members—vehement Democrats.

How was this drastic change of policy carried through so easily in the C.P.? In the first place, it was not so easy. How many members quit the party in disgust will not be known for a long time, because published figures are not yet available. But it is no exaggeration to say that those members who did swallow the new line did so because it was whisperingly explained to them that it was not to be taken seriously.

Not to be taken seriously? Exactly. We don't believe in this "democracy" stuff, it goes without saying, but it ought to make us popular with a lot of people and gain us a large number of recruits and sympathizers. And, once we have won them on that basis, why, it should be a simple matter to teach them to be "real reds." At the same time, it will take the edge off bourgeois criticism and attack, and enable us to penetrate into circles that would otherwise be closed to us. Our "democratic" pretensions will be, so to say, the Trojan horse which will be innocently allowed to enter into the very heart of the masses and within which will be concealed our "revolutionary" ideas. This is not fantastic speculation; it is substantially how Dimitroff outlined the strategy of the Stalinists at the Seventh C.I. Congress; it is how it was explained for a long time, with a knowing wink, by rank and file communists.

Apart from all other considerations, the main trouble with this cunning scheme was that it was conceived in violation of the laws of nature and of politics. No matter how clever and staunch its originators may have thought themselves, no matter how sure the sincere rank and file was that he would remain, in his heart of hearts, a real revolutionist and that he would "come out with it" as soon the situation warranted throwing off the shrewd disguise—the murderous logic of the position adopted developed with full and predictable force.

Even though he still believed he was playing an astute game, still deceiving both the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, Browder let more of the cat out of the bag than he thought when he testified before the McNaboe investigating committee in New York. Quite rightly—at least in one sense—he pointed out that it is "impossible to reconcile the accusation of hidden revolutionary aims with the fact that the people recruited by the C.P. nowadays are won to its fold by the emphasis on capitalist Democracy and the need of preserving it. But he was right in only one sense; and wrong in another, namely, in that he secretly believes that if it is ever decided to make another "left turn" in policy, all those recruited by the C.P. on the "democratic" basis will string along merely because Browder's apparatus so decrees.

## The Logic of Politics

There is a logic in political lines that no person, no movement can escape. Once the Stalinists took their "democratic" course, they were confronted with such widespread skepticism that, ever since, they have had to spend most of their time going to the most radical extremes in order to prove their "sincerity." Where the ordinary bourgeois politician, for example, merely states his patriotism, the Stalinists find themselves compelled to shriek to the pitch of blatant chauvinism. Where an ordinary bourgeois democrat merely states, in a quiet and unostentatious manner, that he is not a believer in dictatorship or fascism, the Stalinists are now compelled to eat course after course of crow and even to denounce communism and dictatorship in the same breath with fascism and Nazism.

That's the meaning of the ignominious, self-humiliating posturing of the Stalinists at the American Youth Congress. To prove that they were not reds, that they were blown-in-the-bottle democrats, they were forced to vote for a resolution which, in sum and substance, places communism in the same bag with fascism. Hitler's regime, Mussolini's regime, were denounced in the same terms as Stalin's regime and, for that matter, the regime of Lenin in the early years of the revolution. For, as we understand it, in those years at least both Lenin and Stalin called the Soviet republic a dictatorship of the proletariat.

"Be it resolved that this Congress of youth record its opposition to all forms of dictatorship, regardless of whether they be communist, fascist, Nazi or any other type, or bear any other name." That's the resolution Gil Green, boss of the Young Communist League voted for. Unbelievable? Yes, yes, but literally true nonetheless. Far more unbelievable is the fact that his organization still bears the name "communist."

We have said for some time: There is nothing communist about the Communist party except its name. How long will we have to wait before it becomes possible to drop those last three words?

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