

**WORK FOR A WORKERS WORLD;
JOIN THE WORKERS PARTY!**

LABOR ACTION

NOVEMBER 22, 1948

A PAPER IN THE INTEREST OF SOCIALISM

FIVE CENTS

East Shipping At Standstill In ILA Strike

NEW YORK, Nov. 15—As this article is written, effective tie-up of all East Coast ports from Maine to Virginia is reported as a result of the general strike of the International Longshoremen's Association. This most extensive strike in the entire history of the ILA is an outgrowth of a revolt against the corrupt and bureaucratic administration of Joe Ryan, president of the union.

Indications were that the longshoremen were ready to hit the bricks two months ago, but were prevented from doing so by a federal injunction issued under the Taft-Hartley Act. Last week Ryan came out of negotiations with the stevedoring companies with an agreement that failed to measure up to the minimum requirements of the rank and file of the union. His attempt to ram the deal down their throats was met by the membership with an overwhelming "No" vote, and the longshoremen began to strike even before the results of the vote were in.

The settlement offer gave the longshoremen 10 cents an hour compared with a demand of 50 cents, an improved vacation clause, a guarantee of four hours' pay after being hired and retroactivity to September 15. The proposed contract was to run for two years.

The membership felt that the wage hike was insufficient to meet the cost of living increase, and that the retroactivity should proceed from August 21, the date the last contract expired. They also felt that the contract should last only one year, unless the employers agreed to discuss pension and welfare clauses when the wage clause was reopened.

When the longshoremen began to lay off work on November 10, the New York newspapers attributed the "wildcat" strike to an inter-union clash between Ryan, who is reputedly closely connected with certain sections of Tammany Hall, and Gene Sampson, supposedly aligned with another faction in Tammany Hall. While it is true that Sampson, whose locals in the Bush Terminal area and Chelsea docks contain many of the most militant elements of the ILA, was the first of the ILA officials to back the movement, the strike is far more than an internal union squabble between two officials. Rather, it is the product of a general discontent with prevailing working conditions and with the dictatorial regime of Ryan, self-appointed lifetime president of the union.

RYAN GIVES "BLESSING"
When it became obvious that the strike was gaining the overwhelming support of the membership in the voting, Ryan, who had previously denounced the movement as "communist," made haste to get on the bandwagon and gave the strike his "blessing."

At the moment the strike is completely effective, with not a single cargo or passenger vessel moving in

(Continued on page 3)

International Solidarity Month Bazaar Will Aid Europe's Needy

NEW YORK—As announced in last week's LABOR ACTION, the American Committee for European Workers Relief will hold a bazaar on December 10 and 11 at 130 West 23rd Street, its headquarters. At this bazaar it hopes to raise the major part of the funds it needs to carry on its work of aiding needy European workers during the next year.

The proceeds are intended for the purchase of foods as well as the many incidental expenses, such as disinfecting donated clothing, postage, maintenance of headquarters, etc. A large part of the committee's funds are spent on medicines which are often unavailable on the continent, or when they are, only at prices beyond the reach of the working people.

There is no more telling testimony of the committee's work than the many letters it receives from workers and their families in Europe, people who have suffered a great deal because of their active opposition to the Nazis, both in Germany and in the formerly occupied countries. Thus writes a mother:

"A few days ago I learned that my youngest daughter, despite her appearance, has contracted tuberculosis. Because of the bad food situation, it is impossible in our zone to get her into a sanitarium, nor could I send her to Switzerland because there are so many sick children. It was then, while I was trying to sat-

The AVC Convention

LABOR ACTION extends its greetings to the national convention of the American Veterans Committee.

The convention, which will meet in Cleveland from November 25 to 28, will likely decide the fate of the AVC. The AVC can emerge from the convention a stronger organization, fulfilling its original promise. Unfortunately, it is also possible that it may founder in a split which will dissipate the energies that have gone into the building of the AVC—or, at the very least, so disorient its forces as to seriously impede the development of a vital veterans' organization.

From its inception, we have viewed the AVC as the only veterans' organization deserving of support. Its aggressive assertion of a progressive program, its identification of the veterans' interests with those of the people, and what we hoped would be its increasingly close association with the labor movement seemed to us to give promise of its development as the organization representing the great mass of veterans.

Because we believe such an organization to be necessary, and because we look forward to the fulfillment of its potentialities, we have turned over the greatest part of this issue of LABOR ACTION to material relating to the AVC convention. We have rarely assigned so much space to one issue in a single LABOR ACTION. This AVC convention, however, is no ordinary convention with the problems and conflicts that can normally be expected at any convention.

What will be decided at Cleveland is whether the AVC will rout the influence of the Communist Party caucus in a way that will encourage the democratic and progressive growth of AVC, or whether,

in battling the evil of Stalinism, it will succumb to procedures and principles that can only WRECK the organization.

There are other issues scheduled to come before the convention, and it is our expectation that the delegates will legislate the best and most militant program for AVC rests essentially on the kind of program it has. At the moment, however, none is as important as the issue of whether there shall or shall not be an effective AVC, and what principles shall motivate its direction.

As we have followed the conflicts inside AVC, and the battle that has been fought against the infiltration of the Stalinist totalitarians, we have supported the Independent Progressive caucus and have every intention of continuing to do so. In AVC, as in every organization, the influence of the Stalinists has to be fought, and roundly defeated. It has been proved elsewhere (in the Auto Workers Union, for example) that it can be done, and done without borrowing the methods of the Stalinists.

We are, therefore, disquieted that the IP's leadership has chosen a course, discussed in the article by Nathan Gould, which makes an effective struggle against Stalinism impossible at the same time that it introduces procedures foreign to the progressive conceptions of AVC and destructive in their organizational consequences.

There is a report that independent elements in the IP caucus will assert themselves against the present IP course. We hope that they will succeed in redirecting the policies of IP and lay a solid basis for both the defeat of the Stalinist gang and the rapid organizational progress of AVC.

NPC Proposals Are NOT the Way to Fight Stalinism

Appeal to AVC Progressives

By NATHAN GOULD

The ultimate question before this convention is the threat of a split in the American Veterans Committee. That can no longer be ignored or denied. To do so would be to convert a critical danger into a disastrous consequence. Cleveland must face the issue—coldly, frankly and above all honestly.

The issues over which the split threat hovers are these:

a.) The proposition of the National Planning Committee to expel John Gates, an avowed member of the Communist Party, only because he is a member of the Communist Party.

b.) The proposition for the adoption of a constitutional amendment establishing that the political views of the Communist Party are inimical to AVC; that membership in the Communist Party is incompatible with membership in AVC.

c.) The proposition to reregister all present members of, and register all future applicants to, AVC on the basis of a pledge declaring non-association with the Communist or like parties or groups.

LABOR ACTION, a supporter of the Independent Progressive Caucus in AVC since the latter's inception, is opposed to all three propositions. Our rejection is predicated not only on the conviction that the very posing of the propositions engenders the threat of split, that their passage or

even their defeat by a narrow margin of votes ensures the split.

DIRECTING AN APPEAL TO THE PROGRESSIVES

Needless to say we regard a split in AVC as unjustified and unwarranted. Primarily, however, our opposition to the individual propositions is motivated by the merits of each and by the false and dangerous concept inherent in their collective whole.

LABOR ACTION and its followers in AVC have noted with grave misgivings that the Independent Progressive Caucus has given its "official" endorsement to these propositions. We feel it incumbent upon us to make clear our stand on the issues. While this appeal is directed to all members of AVC—to the delegates of all factions, as supporters of the Independent Progressive Caucus with which we have had, and (despite our present differences) still have, the greatest affinity in AVC, our appeal is directed first and foremost to the Independent Progressive Caucus, its members and its delegates.

With customary candor, we wish at the very beginning to declare our intentions in this dispute. We believe that if an impressive number of IP delegates can be persuaded to bloc with a substantial section of the genuine anti-Stalinists who are in the "center," it is possible to defeat the propositions, to save AVC from a disastrous split, and to retain the Independent Progressive Caucus' control of AVC. Our position can be summed up in one sentence: "FOR A DEMOCRATIC, INDEPENDENT, PROGRESSIVE AVC, WITHOUT EXCLUSIONS."

THE RECORD OF LABOR ACTION

Those of you who are familiar with LABOR ACTION must know that our objections to the three propositions do not derive from an over or covert sympathy with the politics, principles or practices of the Communist Party. Our struggle against Stalinism, waged from a socialist point of view for over a decade, has earned for LABOR ACTION the reputation for being the most principled and hence the most consistent and vigorous opponent of Stalinism in the labor movement.

Motivated by considerations of principle, our opposition to Stalinism has never followed the vacillating pattern characteristic of so many who have made expedient adjustments to Russia and her national agents in America from time to time. We are not Johnny-Come-Latelys to a popular vogue. Being of socialist convictions, we have repeatedly denounced the Stalinist regime in Russia as totalitarianist, its foreign policy as imperialist and its agents and agencies—the John Gateses and the Communist Parties—as malignant and reactionary forces.

In articles written prior to the 1947 Milwaukee convention we expressed the view that the defeat of the Stalinists—politically and organizationally—was THE central task of that convention. Throughout the convention followers of LABOR ACTION, including the author of this

article, threw their full weight behind the united effort to crush the Stalinist attempt to capture AVC and found it as part of the Independent Progressive Caucus to unseat the Stalinists from every position of leadership within AVC. And following the convention, fearful of a tendency toward relaxation as the concomitant of our hard-fought victory, we advocated a policy designed to secure the Milwaukee victory over the Stalinists.

A SUMMARY OF OUR OBJECTIONS

Before, during and after the convention, in AVC, in the union movement and elsewhere, we applied ourselves diligently to exposing and defeating the machinations and maneuvers of Stalinism on every front. We have repeatedly declared it to be to the greatest menace to progressive forces in the United States and throughout the world. No one is less in need of instruction on the villainies of Stalinism.

And yet, we declare that we are unalterably opposed to the expulsion of John Gates and are opposed to the "constitutionalizing" of political expulsions and exclusions from AVC.

Our objections to the collective propositions before the convention are predicated upon four major considerations:

a.) They are in flagrant contradiction with, not to say a violation of, the character of AVC as a nonpartisan, mass, veterans' organization.
b.) They are in violation of democratic principles and of the democratic traditions, policies and practices of AVC.
c.) They are a most ineffectual means of meeting the obnoxious problem of the Stalinists; and
d.) The consequences for AVC will be, if not disastrous, certainly far-reaching and very severe.

THE ORGANIZATIONAL CHARACTER OF AVC

The American Veterans Committee is not an athletic society, nor a trade union, nor is it a political party. It is what its name denotes—an organization of and for VETERANS. Its very name suggests its character, which in its turn "automatically" defines the arena for its work, denotes the scope and the limits of its activities and provides the decisive prerequisites for membership qualifications. As a veterans' organization it seeks to embrace in its fold all those classified as veterans of World War II. Since it is not an athletic society it has no right to make the dimension of the biceps a condition for membership. As it is not a union, it cannot exclude capitalists, nor can it, despite AVC's favorable disposition toward labor unions, exclude a VETERAN because he is against unions or because his union dues are in bad standing.

And unless AVC wishes to become a POLITICAL PARTY OF VETERANS, in which case it ceases to be a broad, free, nonpartisan organization of veterans, it cannot make subscription to a political platform, or what is the same thing, the rejection of CERTAIN political platforms a constitutional precondition for membership.

UN PLAN SLOWS SETTLEMENT OF PALESTINE WAR

Workers Show Confident Mood in Chrysler Tie-Up

By WALTER JASON

DETROIT—The walkout at Chrysler involving nearly 14,000 workers last week was especially significant because it marks a beginning of a return to a mood of confident aggressiveness on the part of the ranks, due, of course, to their interpretation of

the results of the national elections.

Many speed-up issues have been pressing workers at Chrysler and other plants, but the confusion, demoralization and feeling of isolation that oppressed the union movement prevented any direct action. Gripping and bitterness have been very marked, but there was no evidence of any serious self-confidence and militancy.

However, an explosion was inevitable after the election, for the results were taken as a shift back to the "good old days." No matter what explanations or rationalizations are offered by the daily press, the men in the shops feel strongly that they, and they alone, were responsible for Truman's victory. The despair and confusion among editorial writers and radio commentators simply added to the workers' feeling of confidence.

Last spring, when it was necessary to call a strike at Chrysler for wage demands, the ranks had to be dragged into the struggle. It took a lot of hard work to convince the workers they should strike.

Last week, when the chief stewards went around informing the men that a special union meeting was going to be held at 9:00 a.m. and everybody should walk out to attend, the response was excellent. Spirit at the union meetings was high. Determination to win was expressed by everyone. The Local 7 Union leadership took a firm position in support of the walkout, in spite of the inevitable pressure for an immediate return to work. Everyone was convinced a demonstration against speed-up was necessary, no matter what the immediate result. For the Chrysler Corporation would think twice before it tried something again, if it saw how quickly the ranks would respond to a call for direct action.

Only among some Negro workers was there a hesitancy to walk out and that was based understandably on their reaction to a rumor that the walkout in the Kercheval plant of Chrysler was in protest of a Negro being broken in on the assembly line, since one of the men whom the assemblers would not break in was a Negro. But the fact is that the union always insisted that utility and relief men, who are paid higher rates to break in new men, should do the job. On the day shift no Negroes were involved. What happened, of course, was that the usual set of petty politicians figured they might get a few Negro votes by spreading a whispering campaign against the walkout, even though it meant play-

(Continued on page 4)

By AL FINDLEY

While the fate of Palestine is being decided by the realities of military struggle, the UN deals in plans, resolutions and orders that have neither the virtue of justice nor the justification of practicability.

The victory of the Israeli armies in the Negev fighting was much more decisive than was apparent at first sight. Israel, although not occupying, now dominates militarily the entire Negev and can expel the Egyptians from Palestine at will. This changed military setup has had profound political consequences. For one, it has destroyed the Egyptian-backed Mufli government at Gaza.

As a result, the Russians have dropped entirely their plans to recognize this government. As is well known, the Russians supported the Mufli in his pogroms of 1929, 1936 and 1939. They shifted to support of partition solely as a means of getting Britain out of Palestine. The prospect of a settlement in Palestine (under U. S. inspiration), giving Britain's puppet Abdullah the southern portion of the Negev, alarmed the Russians. They let it be known that they were actively considering recognizing the Mufli government. The change in military position has destroyed these plans.

The second major consequence is that it has caused the first PUBLIC statement by Israeli officials that Israel is no longer satisfied with the original partition plan. All Israeli parties, with the possible exception of the Mapam, now demand a revision of the previous borders to include almost all of Israeli occupied territory. The Mapam, which originally called for annexation of Jerusalem and Galilee, seems to have reversed its position. Dr. Sneh, one of the leaders of the Mapam, at a mass meeting in New York, denounced ALL attempts at revision of the boundaries and declared for implementing the LETTER of the original boundaries, without Jerusalem, a corridor, and without Western Galilee. It is probable, however, that as a result of the unpopularity of such a position the Mapam will shift again. A shift in Russian attitude would also speed a reversal by Dr. Sneh.

BUNCHE PLAN

Above all, the Negev victory has almost destroyed the hopes of Anglo-American military leaders for bases in the Negev. As reported in LABOR ACTION, United States officials favored a modified Bernadotte Plan

(Continued on page 4)

Santa Cruz Labor Council Asks AFL Initiative on Labor Party

We go to press too early to comment on the deliberations of the national convention of the AFL, which is now in session. However, an interesting document has come to our desk concerning this convention. It is a statement adopted by the Santa Cruz (California) Labor Council. Noting the statement made several weeks ago by President William Green in which he said that the AFL convention would consider a resolution designed to initiate a national labor political party, the Santa Cruz Central Labor Council, "in view of the need for proper political action . . . has reaffirmed Resolution No. 160 which it submitted to the AFL convention of 1947."

Resolution No. 160, after a clear statement of the need, resolves: "That this convention goes on record to amend Article 3, Section 9, of the [AFL] constitution to read as follows:

"The American Federation of Labor nationally and locally shall enter into the building of a political party by and for labor, based upon a program of labor's needs and interests."

It further resolves: "That all unions and councils be instructed to call state conferences immediately for the drafting of a state and national program, and that the Executive Council shall call a national conference, inviting all organized labor to participate in drafting a national program of political action immediately."

We strongly hope that the delegates from Santa Cruz will get an opportunity to speak for their resolution at the AFL convention and have it put to a vote. With sufficient support, they may make it impossible for Bill Green to backtrack, as there is every indication he intends to, from his statement on a political party.

A political party aspires to direct
(Continued on page 2)

A Discussion of the NPC Propositions An Appeal to AVC Progressives on a Critical Issue

(Continued from page 1)

all the affairs of government in accordance with a given social, economic and political philosophy. Its character, its role, its objectives are political. It is distinguished from all nonpartisan organizations, and from every other political organization, by a body of political concepts, principles and goals which are, in one form or another, peculiar to it alone. Its constitution on the one hand reflects its political character and on the other hand serves as the instrument to maintain and protect its political integrity. Not age, nor religion, nor common experiences in a war, but politics is the decisive determinant for membership. Hence it is entirely consistent with its character to establish that membership qualification is contingent upon acceptance of its POLITICAL doctrine.

But AVC is neither a caucus nor a political party. It is a broad, non-partisan VETERANS organization. Its membership is composed of individuals of various races, colors, creeds, ages and political philosophies. All these, however, have one thing in common: a mutual experience. As soldiers, sailors, marines or merchant marines they each participated in the Second World War. Despite their many diversities, a mutual experience in the war fostered a tradition which they share in common, and has distinguished them as a segment of present American society with more or less common post-war problems. Almost everything else from their nationalities to their politics is extraneous.

THE DEMOCRATIC CHARACTER OF AVC

Our second major objection to the proposed expulsion of Gates, to the constitutional amendment and to the "anti-communist affidavit loyalty oath" is based upon the contention that these are in flagrant violation of the democratic traditions and character of AVC. Its premise lies in the definition of the character of the organization which we have sought to establish above; for democracy, far from being an abstraction, has laws of its own which, however, operate within a concrete framework.

DEMOCRACY LINKED WITH CHARACTER

Thus, for example, we have asserted in effect that the Republican Party is within its DEMOCRATIC rights to expel from its organization any member subscribing to a political philosophy of "socialization of wealth"; but that it would be a bureaucratic VIOLATION OF DEMOCRACY for a union to expel or to exclude a Republican because he believes in "rugged individualism." So that, in our present examination the question of democracy in AVC is inextricably

THE CHARACTER OF ORGANIZATIONS

We hope that no one will find contradictory our assertion on the one hand that AVC is not a political party and, on the other hand, our designation of the Stalinists and the American Legion as reactionary. Admittedly, in this context, the term "reactionary" is a political characterization. We have so intended it. There is no contradiction. The assumption that a broad veterans' organization cannot, by its nature, make political philosophy a qualification for membership, does not mean that the organization must refrain from expressing itself on political questions. Given the nature of our society, an organization concerned with economic, social and cultural affairs of that large segment of society called "Veterans of World War II," cannot elude political questions and live. AVC is of course duty-bound to express itself, and even intervene in political issues of the day. In and of itself the adoption of political attitudes DEMOCRATICALLY arrived at, does not alter the CHARACTER OF AVC as a nonpartisan veterans' organization, provided these attitudes are not made constitutional conditions for membership. Such attitudes reflect the political COMPLEXION of the organization without impinging upon its basic character.

For example, AVC has declared itself against the Taft-Hartley Act; and the Milwaukee convention went so far as to propose action (telegrams to the President urging his veto) on it. The expression of this important political attitude was now, however, accompanied by a constitutional amendment expelling all those who disagreed with the adopted attitude. Its adoption may have proved quieting to some in AVC who might have considered the Taft-Hartley Act desirable. Some of these may even have resigned on that account. But if they did, one thing is certain; their departure from the organization was of their own volition and not by constitutional act of exclusion.

The political COMPLEXION of AVC will make the organization more or less attractive to sections of the veteran population, as in fact it

AVC does not claim to speak for the Catholic war veterans or the Jewish war veterans or the Republican war veterans. It claims to represent ALL the war veterans, to deal with the problems peculiar to them as veterans and to intervene in behalf of their peculiar needs. AVC cannot, without violating its character as an organization of veterans, expel or exclude from its ranks veterans whose political views happen to be at variance with those of the majority of the membership or leadership. For the character, purpose and aims of AVC places the politics and social philosophy of its members outside the province of AVC membership requirements.

To say that political parties are politically homogeneous is redundant. If we employ this redundancy it is only to point up the political heterogeneity of a veterans' organization. Political criteria for membership are in order in a political party, but cannot by any stretch of the democratic imagination be justified in a union or in a veterans' or any other mass organization.

And, if these false criteria must be rejected as a violation of the character of ANY veterans' organization, how much more repugnant must such a travesty upon democratic principles be to AVC whose uniqueness has been underlined by its devotion to democratic principles. As a veterans' organization, displacing as this may be to some, AVC must open its doors to all veterans notwithstanding their political views, their social outlook, or their opinions on the ethics of fox-hunting.

bound up with the specific character of the organization.

We contend that the proposed expulsion of Gates is in violation of the democratic character of AVC; that the proposed constitutional amendment is a bureaucratic expedient of desperation; and that the "anti-communist affidavit loyalty oath" is a reprehensible echo of the reactionary political climate fostered by the Eighteenth Congress. We further declare that the adoption of these propositions entails a concept and methods which in their essence are not dissimilar from the "heresy hunting" engaged in by the Russian and world Stalinists, the red-baiting of the American Legion and the Army-and-Navy-inspired firings of workers arbitrarily designated as "subversive."

It will be argued that the disparity between the exclusion of an American veteran from AVC and the exclusion of an American worker from his means of livelihood—in both cases because of his political ideas—is very wide. However, the disparity is only one of degree and not in logical projection.

has. We have, for example, without resort to constitutional acts, but simply through political attitudes democratically expressed, eliminated the problem of the "totalitarians of the right." We have excluded them without organizational acts of exclusions. They have not been rejected, but REPELLED.

BEST WEAPONS AGAINST STALINISM

The argument that the Stalinists cannot be repelled, that extraordinary measures are required, because the Stalinists are masters of infiltration, is sheer sophistry. For, if they are masters of infiltration, if infiltration is their stock in trade, and if they cling tenaciously to any organization in which they are determined to remain, then obviously constitutional acts will not block their efforts. That is what masters of infiltration means. Hence, in the final analysis, the same problem will exist except in a different form. There will be new figureheads, new names for new caucuses, new techniques and tactics of operations, but the problem of the Stalinists will remain.

On the other hand, the democratic process which meets the Stalinists in the open, which encounters their ideas and counters them publicly, which educates instead of exercises, this process and this process alone inflicts the telling wounds and is capable of reducing the Stalinists. We need only examine the roster of those who are today calling for the expulsion of the Stalinists. Not all of these were outside the Stalinist camp at Des Moines and at Milwaukee. By the democratic process heretofore employed, it is the Stalinists and not their foes who have suffered severe losses. By bureaucratic, anti-democratic acts AVC will only reinforce the Stalinist ranks, will undo all the great progress against them which has been made since Des Moines.

Because of justified irritations with the Stalinists, AVC will have unwittingly established a pattern which can very easily end in its own destruction. Assurances have been offered by the advocates of the propositions for expulsion and exclusion

that the amendments are to be confined exclusively to the Stalinists. But, on what logic is such a claim based? We believe sincerely all those who make this qualification. Unfortunately it is gratuitous. For, once political censorship is invoked for one philosophy of government, the principle of political censorship becomes generally applicable. If we establish the right TODAY to expel or exclude Stalinists from AVC only because they are Stalinists, have we not already assumed the right of political censorship?

By what logic can we TOMORROW prevent the expulsion, let us say, of all those who are opposed to the system of "free enterprise"? What precludes the arbitrary classification

IS STALINIST THREAT GREATER TODAY?

The proponents of political exclusions have been working feverishly to rally sentiment of the AVC membership for their anti-democratic propositions. Their line of argument is specious and, we regret to say, hypocritical. As always, when argument is insupportable by logic or facts, emotional play upon prejudices supplants rational consideration as the dominant element. Bureaucratic organizational measures are invoked to compensate for the inadequacy of argument.

This, in fact, has been the experience with the originators of the "clever scheme" to bypass the democratic process for meeting the Stalinist problem. Beginning with involved rationalizations of their proposed violence to the principles of civil liberties, they ended by exploiting prejudices under the label of "PUBLIC RELATIONS." Beginning with the proposal to expel John Gates, they ended with a proposal to subject the membership of AVC to the revolting indignity of signing a "loyalty oath." Beginning with the bureaucratic proposition for a constitutional amendment excluding all communists from AVC they ended with an attempt to gerrymander the convention by efforts to lift the charters of so-called doubtful chapters.

But—to the arguments which presume to support and justify these extraordinary propositions. Examination of all the documents and speeches of the protagonists for expulsion place their arguments broadly into three categories:

- a.) The threat of the Stalinists to AVC is greater than ever before; they are wrecking AVC.
- b.) The presence of the Stalinists in AVC is injurious to its "public relations"; and
- c.) AVC is a voluntary organization.

To speak of a "Stalinist threat" at least in this context, presupposes that the Stalinists are an evil. In terms of the philosophy which they represent, LABOR ACTION regards this evil as a constant. That is, they were an evil yesterday, are an evil today, and we have no expectations of their radical reform tomorrow.

A "threat" is, however, relative. It is equated in terms of the relationship of the contending forces, the degree of consciousness of these forces, the specific arena of operation, issues, and a host of other factors of like relation. Threat implies not "position," but "juxtaposition." It is not an absolute but a relative term. Last February the Stalinists consummated their threat in Czechoslovakia. Today they are in the PROCESS of consummating their threat in China. The threat of Stalinism is greater in France than in Holland, and their threat to England is hardly worth mentioning.

To say that the Stalinists are a threat to AVC provides no enlightenment. Extraordinary measures are being advocated because presumably the threat is imminent, as compared with the past it has grown and matured. But this is an absurdity which is evident to anyone familiar with the facts. No such proposals as these presented for Cleveland, tarnished the conventions in Des Moines (1946) or Milwaukee (1947). Presumably then the Stalinists constituted less of a threat to these conventions than they do today. But this is equally absurd.

In 1946 the American Stalinists were at the apex of their organizational strength and political popularity. Soaring on the favorable winds of the Russian-American war alliance, the American Stalinist glider received

tomorrow of Socialists, Trotskyists, left-Zionists, Social Democrats, all opposed to the system of free enterprise, as members inimical to AVC. We can protest that these organizations are democratic, anti-totalitarian, good, fine, etc. But that represents only a personal view, which, once the principle of freedom of opinion in AVC is infringed upon, can be altered and given new direction, new classifications, tomorrow.

And the "loyalty oath" is the first danger sign of this new trend. The best intentions in the world cannot remove the logical implication pointing to new and further political proscriptions, which this precedent provides and codifies.

the welcoming beacons from almost every liberal landing field—and not only the liberal. Great as their popularity, was their arrogance. Hymns to the Russian exploits at Stalingrad, Sevastopol and Berlin yielded unctuous sighs from liberals everywhere. On the radio the "Song of the Plains" consumed as much time as the commercials. With high-spirited confidence the Stalinists rode into the Des Moines convention, and although their little-concealed maneuver to elect their own vice-president was frustrated, they did manage with ease to elect a not inconsiderable number of their caucus candidates to the NATIONAL PLANNING COMMITTEE.

STALINIST BID AT MILWAUKEE

By the time of Milwaukee, although Russian-American relations were already being put to a severe test, the American Stalinists, still carried by the momentum of the war-time alliance, and by the hope of a reconciliation of Russia and the United States through the UN, were riding high. They made a bid for control of AVC but a vigilant and aggressive convention rallied behind the INDEPENDENT PROGRESSIVE CAUCUS and sent the pretenders to power sprawling and dizzy with the impact of defeated. When the votes for NPC were counted, one lone Stalinist remained on the leading committee of AVC. The combined slates of the "Unity" (Stalinist) and "Build AVC" (center) were defeated. Pottish alone was elected, and he barely squeezed through.

There is hardly a record of comparable defeat inflicted upon the Stalinists in a mass organization in which they participated in force. That defeat at Milwaukee was not the product of some bureaucratic technique engineered from on top; it was not manipulated; it was not effected by decrees of questionable origin and authority. That defeat was inflicted through a scrupulously democratic process, democratically inspired and executed, by a membership guarding with a ferocious intensity its democratic traditions and heritage against those who would despoil them.

PROPOSITIONS AID STALINIST FORCES

The partial defeat of the Stalinists at Des Moines developed into a veritable rout at Milwaukee. Far from

Jersey Judge Holds Swimming Pools Out of Civil Rights Law

ENGLEWOOD, N. J. (WDL) — On grounds that New Jersey's civil rights law does not refer expressly to "swimming pools," District Judge John Lynn dismissed a suit brought by Charles Storey against Palisades Amusement Park. Storey was refused admittance to the park's swimming pool on May 29 because he is a Negro.

An early appeal is planned by Hiram Eifenberg, Workers Defense League attorney, who handled the case. Already on appeal is a similar discrimination case which took place a year previous at the pool. Both cases are connected with the campaign of the Committee of Racial Equality to end Jim Crow at the pool.

In Storey's trial, Judge Lynn discharged the jury after five hours, basing his decision on the point of law that while the New Jersey statute mentions "bathhouses," it does not mention "swimming pools." He held that Palisades Pool could not be considered a "bathhouse" even though it has showers and facilities for dressing and undressing.

Below Minimum

You have to work 2,000 hours a year (40 hours, 50 weeks) at \$1.55 an hour to earn enough to provide the minimum needs of a family of four. The average wage in manufacturing industries is \$1.18. Most white collar workers receive less on an average and most industrial workers also fall substantially below this minimum. (From CIO Economic Outlook.)

being strengthened, the Stalinists were rendered weaker. The insistent threat from the Stalinists was measurably reduced. The NPC elected at Milwaukee was a clear-cut INDEPENDENT PROGRESSIVE NPC with only token representation from the Stalinist wing (Pottish). That leadership assumed its responsibilities with a clear mandate from the convention to secure the victory by the same democratic process which inspired its creation. And if we are to accept at face value the current cries of "wolf" issuing from the NPC, then it is not a reflection upon the democratic process but rather upon the inadequacies of the elected leadership.

The facts are incontestable. The democratic process conquered the Stalinists at Milwaukee. Before abandoning democracy for the corrosive solvents of bureaucratic amendments and extraordinary measures, let the IP leadership, in whom the convention invested the authority to carry out its mandate, give an account of its stewardship with particular reference to this mandate.

November, 1948, finds the American Stalinists at a low point of strength

THE STALINISTS ARE WRECKING AVC

Corollary to the argument about the "greater threat" is the charge that the Stalinists are responsible for the decline of AVC. When we say that Stalinism is an evil, we are also saying that its role, its purpose, its effect are objectively evil. We know too that the objective consequences of its capturing an organization are to distort its character in order to serve its own purposes, and thereby to wreck it. For that reason we have fought, with mounting success, to defeat every Stalinist project for control. But only the gullible will believe that the individual Stalinist or his caucus is dedicated to the conscious and deliberate task of wrecking AVC. They don't want to wreck AVC, they want to control it.

And as for their being responsible for the staggering decline of AVC from 100,000 to 28,000 in the last year and a half, not even the disseminators of this story can whip themselves into a sufficient state of self-delusion to believe that. The fact is, much as we disprove of the use to which it is put, that the individual Stalinists are most often counted among the best builders of AVC. "Their" chapters have by and large survived the lean year just passed, as well, and on the average better than most. I hope that no one will assert that it is they who have wrecked all the chapters that have been disbanded. We all know of chapters which were absolutely free of Stalinists and which perished nevertheless during this last year. Even where the Stalinists as an objective element in AVC constituted a discouraging factor to growth, it was negligible in the overall picture. The main factors contrib-

THE ARGUMENT OF "PUBLIC RELATIONS"

Although inevitable in the circumstances, it is hardly complimentary to the perpetrators of the expulsion drive that they should have to resort to the pitiable (and also the most revealing) argument: "Public Relations." With this they plunder the idealism of liberalism and reduce its principles to the level of commercialism. The principles upon which liberalism stand — democracy, civil rights, freedom of speech and of opinion — are not conceived as a malleable piece of clay to be molded and remolded by the hands of "Public Relations."

If the propositions for political expulsion were consistent with liberal doctrine, why were they not advocated and fought for at Des Moines and before? Why did the organizers of AVC fail to stipulate the political exclusion concept from the very beginning? Was it an oversight? Or was it something else? One begins to wonder whether the newly inspired awareness of the "evils of Stalinism" is not so much a change of mind as it is a change of heart; and whether this change of heart was not induced by the persistent "pedagogy" of the Thomas Committee, the Taft-Hartley Act and by the FBI-inspired witch hunts against "unorthodox" thoughts?

What other conclusion can one

and popularity — pursued and lacerated everywhere. In AVC there is a greater consciousness of the evils of Stalinism, a greater vigilance, a growth of the anti-Stalinist forces. Are we to accept an argument that these factors represent an intensification of the threat from the Stalinists? Are we to believe that the Stalinist threat is greater today than at Milwaukee, greater than at Des Moines?

Is it not clear to everyone that it is precisely the proposed amendments which have given the Stalinists a new lease on life, yield them the advantages of an aggrieved party, drive departing followers back to the fold, arm them with an esprit de corps, and split the anti-Stalinist front in AVC by driving fair-minded members of the center, who should and would be in the IP, right smack into the cesspool of the Stalinist caucus?

These are the fruits of the "clever scheme" to bypass the democratic process. (Reflect well on them! Chortle over your pyrrhic victory.) We may have the votes, but the Stalinists, tragically, will win the real victory if the anti-Stalinist fight is pursued along this line.

uting to AVC decline are these:

- a.) The failure of the leadership in AVC to implement and to intervene aggressively in behalf of the progressive program adopted at Milwaukee.
 - b.) The defeats of New Deal legislation to which AVC had hitched its wagon. The climate of the 80th Congress was not conducive to the growth of a progressive organization such as AVC, especially as our leadership, far from combatting the acts of this Congress with vigor and audacity, showed signs of timidity and of yielding by default.
 - c.) The failure of the NPC to capitalize upon opportunities to build AVC with and through friendly unions. And,
 - d.) Probably as the greatest single factor, the "apathy" among veterans; the trend away from all veteran organizations. The fact is that there is not a single veteran organization whose membership has not suffered a marked decline since the first post-war flurry of "signing up." So far as AVC is concerned, this apathy might have been reduced to a minimum had we countered the issues inducing it, by a militant and aggressive intervention on behalf of progressive veterans' issues.
- If, instead of producing scapegoats, our leadership were to spend some time explaining these phenomena, perhaps our members could conquer their discouragement and appreciate that the period immediately ahead will be very FAVORABLE FOR GROWTH, provided we reject the scapegoat theory and its concomitants.

THE REAL QUESTION IS CIVIL RIGHTS

But is it not equally a breach of civil rights to deny a veteran the right to join a mass nonpartisan organization, whose expressly defined program he ACCEPTS, because he holds philosophic views in a realm which a broad veterans' organization such as AVC cannot presume to encompass? The distinction between a voluntary and a compulsory organization is fascinating indeed. But it cannot evade the real question. The real question is CIVIL RIGHTS. That's why our hair-splitting experts on the distinctions between compulsory and voluntary organizations have sought to mesmerize us with this distracting piece of handiwork. The issue is one of CIVIL RIGHTS, and no magician's stunt is going to distract us from it. Not CIVIL RIGHTS in the abstract, not CIVIL RIGHTS on paper, not CIVIL RIGHTS in the American Legion, but CIVIL RIGHTS AS THEY APPLY TO AVC: CIVIL RIGHTS where it counts because WE and WE ALONE have the right to DETERMINE them.

No one will say that AVC is a union. Yet, in many respects, it is an economic-social organization. AVC purports to be the organized expression of the veteran; it is dedicated to labor in behalf of the veteran and his peculiar needs as a citizen. Examine the record of AVC's fight in the last three years. What were the issues? Housing; the fight of the returning veteran to his job; cumulative seniority; GI pension, school, vocational and on-the-job training benefits; increase of GI benefits as required by increases in living costs; medical and dental care; FEPC; CIVIL RIGHTS; etc. Almost all of these issues are economic and social in character.

The political issues listed are of the broadest, non-sectarian nature, and even these are treated mainly for their economic and social implications. These issues reflect the progressive aims and the BROAD, MASS character of AVC. Any veteran of World War II who elects to fight for these broad aims has the right to fight for them as part of AVC. It is his

icy and policy upon who controls the AVC. That, however, is an argument against Stalinist control and not for Stalinist exclusion. It is also an argument for the anti-Stalinists to expand their efforts to build the AVC, for there is an uncanny relation between constructive effort and extent of influence.

Granting the argument, really exaggerated to ludicrous proportions, that preoccupation with the Stalinist threat interferes with constructive effort, it does not follow that expulsion and exclusions are indicated. That in fact is the rationale of every authoritarian mind.

AVC A VOLUNTARY ORGANIZATION

Whenever an opponent of Stalinism, who also opposes the political exclusion amendments directs attention to the union movement and asks: "Would you also advocate the expulsion of Communists from unions simply because they hold Stalinist views?", proponents of expulsion in AVC reply with an emphatic "NO!" "But," they hasten to add, "whereas the union is a COMPULSORY organization, AVC is VOLUNTARY." Presumably, this incisive distinction enables them to oppose political expulsions from a union while advocating it for AVC, without pain of contradiction. So now we have it: a union is a compulsory, while AVC is a voluntary organization. No one, however, has taken the trouble to explain exactly what relevancy this has to the issue before us.

As the proponents of expulsion are strong on threats but a bit too coy on explanation, permit us to offer a definition. A COMPULSORY organization (to the extent to which it has any relation to our present considerations), is one which compels adherence by virtue of law; or, whose purpose and function has a necessarily DIRECT bearing upon one's means of livelihood. Having established a definition of a compulsory organization, where exactly are we? What has been illumined in the question before us? And what bearing does it have upon the case for expulsion?

What do the protagonists of political expulsions in AVC infer when they declare the analogy in this particular context between AVC and a union to be invalid. They infer that in their view it is prohibited for a union to expel or exclude members because of their political views. We must assume that opposition to such exclusions from a union is predicated upon the laudable consideration that it represents a flagrant breach of the principles of civil rights. And indeed it does, for if we tell a worker that he is free to think politically as he wishes provided he relinquishes the right to eat, we should very evidently be infringing upon his genuine right to freedom of opinion.

WHAT DETERMINES "PUBLIC RELATIONS"?

We are for maintaining "public relations," not for prostituting ourselves to it. Is it not a fact that AVC attained its greatest strength under conditions of adverse "public relations"? Is it not true that, basing themselves upon the record of the AVC, the leadership of the largest unions, with the greatest potential membership for AVC, have endorsed AVC and regard it more favorably than any other veterans' organization in the country? What then is this "public relations"? A myth. A fraud. A subterfuge. An obsequious groveling for half-hearted approval and little favors from disreputable "causes."

"Public relations" with veterans will be determined by how well AVC represents and fights for them, not the reverse. The veteran will join AVC on its record of performance, not on a cross-section report of its political composition. To be sure, performance depends upon poi-

(Continued on page 4)

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Discussing the Elements of a Progressive Platform

Some Programmatic Issues Before AVC

By S. BERG

One of the ways in which AVC differs from all the old-line conservative veterans' organizations is in its emphasis on platform. Anyone who was at the last AVC convention at Milwaukee knows how hundreds of delegates stayed up through the entire night discussing the entire platform point by point in the three platform committees—domestic affairs, veterans' affairs and foreign affairs. They know how the plenary session of the whole convention set an example (unlike those organization whose members return to childhood at convention time) of serious attention and discussion of the committee reports.

However, during the past year, this correspondent has noted an increasing tendency on the part of the national officers of AVC to ignore those aspects of the convention platform that they themselves oppose, or that they feel would embarrass them in their search for good "public relations." Paterson, the national chairman, especially, has lobbied exclusively on those issues which were "respectable," and has, on occasion, even taken a stand contrary to the wishes of the organization, in connection with conscription legislation, for example.

As socialists we are concerned to try to prevent any drift on the part of AVC into a role of apologist for American imperialism. Flowing from our basic analysis of the present world situation as a power conflict between two imperialist colossi, the U. S. and Russia, support of either of which would be fatal in the end for the labor and socialist movement throughout the world, we seek to make clear our basic opposition to Russian totalitarianism without at all relenting in our exposure of the imperialist appetites, aims and action of the U. S. capitalists.

FOR AN ANTI-IMPERIALIST APPROACH

Understandably enough, therefore, we were happy to see the last AVC convention come out clearly against conscription and the Truman Doctrine, but not so happy to see a chapter referendum later endorse the Marshall Plan, the sugar-coating of American imperialist policy. But our major grievance is that throughout the year the AVC national leadership did nothing to carry on a campaign against the then pending conscription legislation, and did nothing to campaign against the Truman Doctrine. Furthermore, the Marshall Plan resolution was hedged around with all sorts of criticisms and demands for broadening of aid to Europe. But there again, little was heard later of the criticisms, and all the emphasis was put on lobbying for the plan.

We hope that the largest possible numbers of delegates will see their way clear to a consistently anti-imperialist approach to foreign affairs, based on socialist premises. But at the very least we hope that they will reaffirm their positions on conscription and the Truman Doctrine and give their leadership an overwhelming mandate to really carry out the positions taken during their term of office.

In the field of domestic affairs, we are still faced in AVC with the bugaboo of non-partisanship. This AVC policy is becoming more and more anachronistic, especially when you consider that the present administration proposes an intolerable EXCESS of partisanship in the anti-communist amendment to make membership in that particular political party incompatible with AVC membership. Our stand on the CP and the move to expel its supporters is discussed elsewhere in this issue. Our objection to political expulsions in no way contradicts our view that the AVC must end its self-defeating "non-partisan" position on political activity. Trade unions are not political institutions, yet we hold that the labor movement must organize a party of its own.

AVC AND POLITICAL ACTION

In the long run we feel that AVC has a future only insofar as it is hooked up with the development of independent political action by the labor movement and its allies. Socialists have always believed that the crying need in the development of the socialist consciousness of the American working class was first and foremost their organization into a political party independent of the old capitalist parties, no matter how inadequate the new party's program might be at first. Only when the workers are organized on their own behalf can their political experiences lead them to recognize the need for a socialist reorganization of society.

In the long run, if AVCers want to build "a more democratic America in a more prosperous and stable world," they will have to make AVC an arm in such a movement of independent political action. However, it seems clear that the recent election results will temporarily reinforce those labor leaders who hope to reform the Democratic Party. To us the results proved more than ever labor's strength and the wastefulness of using that strength merely to prop up the Democratic Party. If the labor movement could put out such a vast effort at the last moment and carry to power even the decrepit Democratic machine and its candidates, "Injunction Harry," then what miracles could it perform if it called up the enthusiasm and energy of its membership for activity directly in their own behalf!

We believe that the disillusionment will not be long in coming, for the new Congress will not make any serious dent in the problems confronting us. But we are anxious to put forward the maximum effort to get concessions from this Congress. Just as the Democratic platform was really a response to the threat from Wallace and the apathy of labor, so the legislation passed by the new Congress will be a measure of the extent to which the labor movement refuses to adopt a supine attitude.

Only insofar as the labor movement demonstrates its independence and the fact that it is not sold to the Democratic politicians will its pressure on those politicians be effective. Here AVC has an important part to play. In the fight for complete repeal of Taft-Hartley, for adequate public housing, for federal aid to education and health, for the full civil rights platform, AVC should fight side by side with the labor movement, in the closest possible alliance.

Wherever, during the course of the next session of Congress, the labor movement mobilizes its strength to press its demands, AVC should cooperate. Indeed AVCers should take the initiative in proposing militant campaigns for progressive legislation. In this way AVC's alliance with the labor movement can be more closely knit and the way will have been paved for the future.

Planks for a Program —

We have excerpted below a series of planks from a lengthy programmatic statement issued by the Labor Veterans Group in the AVC and received by us in the Labor Vets Bulletin. It is not intended as a full program but is evidently meant to supplement present AVC program, or substitute for present program where there is disagreement. On the whole we find the Labor Vet program an admirable statement of principles and we hope that the Labor Vets Group will find it possible to distribute its full statement, of which what appears below is only a fragment, to all the delegates at the AVC convention in Cleveland. We should like to recommend to our readers that this platform be read in conjunction with an article on programmatic matters by S. Berg which appears on this page.—Ed.

DOMESTIC AFFAIRS

1. CONSCRIPTION. . . . "AVC should reaffirm its previous position on conscription by undertaking a vigorous campaign for repeal of the Selective Service Act. It should seek cooperation on this issue with the AFL and CIO, whose last conventions opposed such legislation."

2. LABOR'S RIGHTS. . . . "AVC must take a decisive stand for the repeal of the Taft-Hartley Act and must oppose any new labor law that contains shackling provisions. We must oppose any interference with labor's right to strike or to bargain collectively."

3. CIVIL LIBERTIES. . . . "(a) The Subversive List. . . . AVC should oppose the whole procedure of the Attorney-General on the question of the subversive list and should press for open hearings for organizations that wish to protest their listing. . . . "The NPC has already protested Kutcher's discharge. (James Kutcher, legless vet fired from a clerk's job in Newark VA office for being an SWP member.—Ed.) However, it is necessary that the convention go on record clearly against the whole procedure of the loyalty boards."

"(b) The Smith Act. . . . the American Civil Liberties Union three times sought a review of the Smith Act's constitutionality from the Supreme Court, and three times they were refused. AVC must support the demand for review of the act's constitutionality."

4. HOUSING. . . . "AVC should instruct its leadership to press for enactment of an omnibus housing bill that really tackles the problem effectively on a big scale. AVC should resolve to sponsor another national housing conference of much greater size than last year's. AVC should resolve that the business of such a conference should consist not of listening to politicians' speeches, but of making our members' wishes known to every legislator in the capital."

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

1. OCCUPIED GERMANY. . . .

"(1) Immediate cancellation of all dismantling and reparations programs.

"(2) Complete freedom of organization for all anti-fascist political parties.

"(3) No discrimination against the German people in aid to Europe.

"(4) Withdrawal of all occupation forces."

2. PALESTINE. . . .

"(1) Full de jure recognition by the United States of the state of Israel.

"(2) Lifting of the arms embargo.

"(3) Full restoration of homes and property to all non-belligerent Arab refugees.

"(4) Lifting of all bars in Europe to free immigration of Jews desirous of settling in Israel."

VETERANS' AFFAIRS

"We favor the bonus now as we did last year. Adjusted compensation for the time spent away from civilian life and the opportunities missed is a legitimate veterans' demand. It is not discriminatory grab legislation any more than the GI Bill of Rights was and it is far more equitable since it applies to ALL veterans, not only those interested in education, starting a business or financing home ownership."

The Labor Veteran and the AVC

By WALTER JASON

An important if not decisive aspect of the problem of any veterans' organization has been and remains its attitude toward, and its relations with, the labor movement.

Not the least of the reasons why the ambitious plans of the Brass Hats of the American Legion to recruit millions of World War II vets failed was the bitter opposition of the labor movement to the reactionary policies and role of the American Legion in American society.

Any organization which is stained with a reputation of "strike-breaking" is hardly likely to find much support in a social atmosphere where 15,000,000 union members work and live.

It was the persistent and really devastating criticism of the American Legion by the labor movement that did a job on the Legion. It remains a parasitic pressure agency, controlled by vested interests whose limitations as a social force fortunately are understood by millions.

The Veterans of Foreign Wars apparently understood this lesson, for early in the war the powers that be of this organization made a friendly "working agreement" with organized labor and on some issues found itself united with labor on social legislation issues (housing, for example).

Among the newly born veterans' organizations of World War II, the American Veterans Committee certainly got off on the right foot, insofar as the question of relations with the labor movement was concerned. It at least understood the need for a "sympathetic" attitude toward organized labor.

The impact of events has taught the necessity of some revision in the "sympathetic" attitude. As a matter of fact, it is not being too blunt to say that now the AVC has a future only insofar as it allies itself closely with the vast movement representing the millions of workers in America today.

For the millions of workers who returned to work, by and large, have become union men. The chief organizational instrument they utilize to take up their problems is the union of which they are a member, and properly so.

UAW VETERANS WORK

Let us take the outstanding example of this tendency, the work of the UAW-CIO veterans department. Since World War II, the UAW-CIO has serviced the 250,000 veterans who are in the auto shops in a manner similar to that of veterans organizations.

There were national policy conferences, persistent lobbying for veterans' legislation, court cases on seniority questions, a successful series of drives for bonuses. Under the direction of Emil Mazey, the veterans department of the UAW-CIO has out-serviced the older veterans' organizations. It has sought to convince other CIO unions to follow a similar course.

But the fact remains that sufficient special problems remain which the union movement feels it cannot handle, unless it were to set up its own veterans organizations, rather than veterans committees in local unions, and a department in the international union.

It was inevitable that the union leaders would

turn in the direction of the AVC as the organization to handle those problems in this period. The CIO and the AVC saw eye to eye on so many public questions as to dictate alliance.

As usual, the UAW took the lead in bringing home to union members the value and need for an AVC. The international union executive board, the policy making body between national conventions, this last spring urged all local unions to help build labor chapters of the AVC. The national CIO has assisted, and other unions like the International Ladies Garment Workers' Union, also have done much to help AVC.

CONVENTION RESULTS

This is the beginning of the possibility of success for AVC. A concerted post-convention organization drive, using all the techniques, some organizers, finances, and other assistance from the union movement offers a real hope of success in building the AVC as a progressive social organization, welding the veterans and unionists into a firmer and more effective social force in America.

Of course, this idea depends on another: the results of the AVC convention. Certainly the union movement hasn't the slightest interest in building or helping any organization which is just another "transmission belt" for the rule or rule clique of the Communist Party. But neither can it be aided by an organization which so fails to meet the Stalinist challenge on an effective political and democratic level, that it reduces itself to impotence and succumbs to dangerous concepts in the process.

Smashing the influence of Stalinism is a MUST for the AVC convention if it is to have any serious future. This, however, must be done properly, and not by indefensible expulsionist means. It's a safe guess that the delegates from many labor chapters of AVC will not be in the background of this fight, for the union movement needs a powerful, non-Stalinist AVC, and the AVC needs the labor movement.

Where Their Money Goes

... pressure lobbies had spent more than \$12,000,000 in Washington this year. Nearly \$250,000 was thrown around Washington to defeat a national health insurance program. The Committee for Constitution Government spent \$244,000 in pressuring for such items as the Taft-Hartley law, while the big dairy interests laid out more than \$100,000 to kill repeal of the oleomargarine tax. Nearly \$300,000 was dispersed to fight federal housing legislation." (From District 50 UMW newspaper.)

Kind of Quick, Isn't It?

President Truman has announced that: "I'm through giving them hell. Now we'll all work together." It is a bit difficult to recall, now that the sound and the fury are over, but wasn't Truman elected in order to "give them hell"? Isn't it a bit indecent so soon to renounce the source of one's election victory?

Review of AVC History Illustrates Its Problems and Its Possibilities

By WILLIAM BARTON

During the war, many an anxious serviceman fearfully awaited what his buddies might do upon resumption of civilian status. He knew the story of the blatantly "patriotic" veterans' organizations, led by reactionary politicians, that had flourished after other wars. The memory of the anti-labor terrorism of the newly-formed American Legion after World War I was in the minds of many. All branches of service had been fed a deluge of propaganda slanted against trade unions. Anti-minority sentiment was too common among servicemen for comfort.

Even before demobilization had seriously begun, the word of a new type of veterans' organization in the planning stage reached the bases and installations all over the world. Gil Harrison had extended his correspondence and Charles Bolte had initiated the actual machinery for this new outfit—one that would be based upon the realization that veterans were not separate from the rest of society, that only solution of the nation's over-all problems would provide veterans with a worthwhile post-war life, that the task of veterans was to extend, not limit, the democratic features of the American scene.

Thousands joined the nascent AVC while still in uniform. It immediately caught the attention of the world by its sponsorship of the demobilization demonstration in the Philippines, which inspired similar demonstrations elsewhere. As more men and women were mustered out, the membership ranks increased rapidly. It was the obvious spot for progressive, politically-conscious veterans.

FIRST CONVENTION

By the time of the first convention in June, 1946, AVC had shown itself ready to realize its promise. Beer brawls and stag parties were not the means of appeal; veterans came to AVC because of its vigorous campaigns for housing and price control, its clear stand on Jim Crow, its declared solidarity with the labor movement, its opposition to American remilitarization. Even ambitious politicians like Harold Stassen decided early in the game that it was something to be near. The convention itself received fulsome praise on the floor of Congress and in publications as varied as the traditional "liberal" press and the open Republican spokesman, the New York Herald Tribune.

However, some of the deficiencies and difficulties which later became so marked were already noticeable. The Stalinists had acquired local bases and made their first bid for national leadership at the first convention in Des Moines. The national leadership was able to appreciate the seriousness of this threat at the last minute and the Stalinists were organizationally defeated, although they almost elected their vice-president and received one-third of the National Planning Committee.

Another apparent defect was that, although the organization was rapidly growing, it was not attracting the average vet. The recruits were coming overwhelmingly from the ranks of those with pronounced political interests—an excellent nucleus but hardly enough for a mass movement. Another early defect was the over-zealous desire of the leadership to distinguish AVC from old-line veterans' groups as summarized in the slogan—"Citizens First, Veterans Second," which was defined as meaning a diminution of work on a specifically veterans level. The national leadership also demonstrated an early concern with "respectability," as revealed by the inclusion of a plank for a "system of private enterprise" in the preamble to the constitution.

In the year after the first convention, the organization continued its growth and some of its vigor, but it was obvious to all that the original hopes had not been fulfilled and that serious dangers lay ahead. The Stalinists became more menacing. The national leadership answered by a resolution specifically condemning the CP, by organizing a counter-caucus (the Independent Progressives), by striving to annihilate them in the elections to the new NPC at the coming convention. All these were carried out with apparent success.

The campaign against the Stalinists was refreshingly devoid of red-baiting. On the other hand, it rarely included a clear-cut, candid grappling with the political issues involved. Most important of all, the best atmosphere for the political destruction of the Stalinists was missing—a militant, thriving, booming organization. By the 1947 Milwaukee convention, the membership had increased to about 100,000. The activity, while not as hot and heavy as in the first days, remained generally energetic and productive. Still, the air at Milwaukee was appropriately filled with doubt. The slowing down of pace might become more pronounced. There was little assurance of membership renewal. There was much hope, but little sure-fire optimism.

Some non-political vets had come around and joined. Specific "veterans" work had begun, as illustrated by the plans for setting up AVC service officers in Veterans Administration offices throughout the country. But the "citizens first" attitude continued to be exaggerated. Bonuses were opposed as "pork barrel legislation."

Clubhouses were set up and social activities initiated on a larger scale—a necessary feature of such an organization but hardly the primary means by which vets would be led to AVC instead of other outfits. Contact with the labor movement, the number one source of potential strength, was sporadic. This period between the first two conventions, a crucial time for AVC to establish itself as an obviously going concern, was only very mildly successful. The failure to continue the vigorous crescendo of the early days means that it was only holding its own.

STALINIST QUESTION

The Stalinist question was symptom rather than cause. They were convincingly beaten in an organizational sense at Milwaukee; only two of their cohorts were elected to the new NPC. The would-be "middle of the road" group, Build AVC Caucus, was even weaker in numbers of the convention. But, although the leadership of the IP caucus got the votes, it did not come out with flying colors. Its increased zeal for respectability gave the Stalinists the opening to pose as militants. It pussy-footed on the Stalinist issue in open discussions. It not only appeared as conservative, but the Stalinists actually were able to maneuver it into appearing as non-democratic on many occasions. Still the hope was that their decisive electoral victory would settle the Stalinist question for the time being.

And it might have, if the organization had prospered. But, in the period since the second convention, it definitely has not. Operating in a general situation where all veterans groups were losing their World War II vets, AVC likewise declined. Membership and activity both seriously fell off. The one big drive was for the national housing conference. Here too the desire for respectability, plus the fear of antagonizing the other participating groups, prevented the type of militancy that would have galvanized the country on this ma-

ior problem. The Stalinists were given another lead to harp on.

By now, all agree that AVC is straggling. Membership is down to about 30,000. The Stalinists did not lie down and die. AVC's failings provided them with another golden opportunity to move in and take over. In desperation, the national leadership responded with the Gates expulsion, the proposed constitutional amendment against "Communists," the lifting of charters in New York. The coming convention is approached with the psychology of a goal-line stand.

GREAT OPPORTUNITIES

In its short history, AVC has proved its right to existence. Its core is composed not only of the best elements among World War II vets, but as good a collection of politically-minded young people as can anywhere be found. They are mostly serious, interested and valiantly striving to do things. Mossbacked deadheads are not too conspicuous among them.

Several tendencies in the right direction have been noted. A recent close liaison with the labor movement is very hopeful. Attempted approaches to veterans as such are increasing. Many are becoming more and more politically sophisticated, especially as regards the Stalinists.

The convention delegates and all AVC members must insist that AVC return to the type of militant eye-catching work with which it started. Its general program is still necessary for and popular with the American people. Fighting for that program is the way to build AVC—not organizationally expelling a few leading Stalinists, which will solve nothing and create a dangerous precedent. The delegates have a great opportunity to steer the organization back to the right course. The early promise can be realized.

ILA Strike —

(Continued from page 1)

New York Harbor, and its complete effectiveness seems to guarantee its successful conclusion.

The strike has the complete support and active cooperation of both the Seafarers International Union, AFL, and the National Maritime Union. Policy meetings have been held in the past few days between the leaders of the striking ILA locals and the two maritime unions which have resulted in the strengthening of solidarity between all the waterfront unions. This contrasts favorably with the situation in the West Coast Longshoremen's union, where the Stalinist-dominated strike committee failed even to offer to meet with the representatives of non-striking maritime unions to arrange for cooperation.

A special bulletin issued by the national officers of the NMU said that: "The National Office, in consideration of the fact that the ILA has officially declared a strike effective in all Atlantic ports, has extended, through the NMU membership, the solid support of the National Maritime Union of America."

The statement went on to give specific methods by which seamen should cooperate with the strikers and in its fourth point said: "Sabotage communist groups are putting out leaflets on the various waterfronts in an attempt to stampede the NMU crews and, in effect, wreck this official ILA strike." This statement was made necessary by the Stalinist effort to use the strike as a means of disrupting the NMU union apparatus. However, as of this writing, that movement seems to have been effectively squelched.

However, it should be pointed out that the most serious demand of the rank and file longshoremen has not been expressed by any of the officialdom of the ILA. The membership of this union still suffers from the miseries of the shape-up system, which means that discrimination, kickback and favoritism are part of their daily lives. This, of course, has bred corruption and racketeering all along the waterfront. The remedy for these ills, the hiring hall, which has long since been gained by all the other maritime unions, has met the constant opposition of the ILA leadership, who realize that its introduction would mean their downfall.

The hiring hall and its maintenance was the main issue in the West Coast longshore strike which is now in the process of successful settlement. In spite of the many faults which Bridges and his Stalinist allies brought into the conduct of the West Coast beef, on this question they remained firm, and correctly so. As a result of the intransigence of the rank and file of the ILWU on this question, they have preserved what is still a longed-for goal for the stevedores of the East Coast.

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Culled from the Communist Party Record

Lesson on Stalinism for AVCers

By WILLIAM BARTON

The American Veterans Committee has so far successfully parried the Stalinists "rule or ruin" machine. The fight has very often had insufficient political clarity, and ineffective methods too frequently utilized.

The sober appraisal of Stalinists by so many AVCers is partly due to the experience of large numbers have previously had with Stalinist misuse and decapitation of other mass-organizations.

THEY COME AND GO

Whatever the personal motivation of members and fellow-travelers, the Communist Party is the direct instrument of a totalitarian reactionary state.

The American League Against War and Fascism was a Stalinist-organized-and-manipulated body that got many adherents because of the purposes symbolized in its name.

The latest addition was the Progressive Party, supposedly led by Harry Wal-

lace. Each experience picked up new innocents to be used and abused until no longer needed or agreeable.

Another interesting story was that of the American Students Union. Formed as a merger of the National Student League, which was under Stalinist domination, and the Student League for Industrial Democracy in 1935, it spread itself quickly to large numbers of politically unaffiliated students opposed to war and the forces that made the depression world.

Chrysler —

(Continued from page 1)

ing the corporation's game of dividing the workers on racial lines.

Fortunately, the bulk of active white and Negro unionists attacked this rumor and put things on a sound union basis where it belonged. Of course, there remains widespread discrimination against Negroes in the shop. The UAW knows this as well as the next man, and it has tried to show why it is basically the corporation's fault.

But this walkout was not over that problem. The issue was the speed-up in the machine shop and in the trim division.

Most of the union activists understood that Chrysler wouldn't settle the issue completely while the men were out, for that would set a precedent that would give the union a real incentive to call a series of "quickies." So the inevitable compromise was worked out, and it remains to be seen what happened in the shop.

This walkout is not the end of the problem. It is just a sign of the days ahead. For the changeover to 1949 model will bring the usual company maneuvers to speed up all work. The big fights are still ahead.

were branded "disrupters," even by many honest anti-Stalinists. The Stalinists soon became all-powerful, aided by the facility with which their clamor for People's Fronts and Collective Security found support among many liberals. Came the Stalin-Hitler Pact, and the ASU made the expected turn about. The former allies, led by leading frontman National Secretary, Joe Lash, were casually pushed aside.

IN THE UNION

These tales can be repeated ad nauseum. Even in the trade unions, the direct linkage between Russian line and Stalinist activity had been crystal clear. The record for Stalinist controlled unions has been something like this: all out for Roosevelt in the late thirties, picketing the White House in early '41, sabotaging the CIO's strike against Montgomery Ward with super-patriotic denunciations and calling for post-war no-strike pledges, verbal militancy in recent times.

The very alert members of AVC can be similarly victorious. They have known and defeated the Stalinists. That defeat must be made even greater, and a progressive, active, thriving, democratic veterans organization built, in which they will be nothing but a slightly annoying impotent minority.

Price Rises Cancel Increase in Wages

The very latest statistics on wages and prices were published in a new survey last week by the Bureau of Labor Statistics. "Total weekly pay (a more accurate measure than hourly earnings) has risen an average of only 30 per cent above the V-J Day level. . . . Rising prices have more than offset the increase in gross weekly and hourly earnings and have largely canceled out the advance in wage rates since the war."

WP Offers Sub to Bulletin

The Workers Party Bulletin, containing discussion articles and other interesting material, can now be bought on a subscription basis. Though the Bulletin was always available to those who wished to buy copies, it has sometimes been difficult for people who lacked direct contact with WP branches to get a copy.

Because of the high cost of producing the Bulletin, it is impossible to offer a reduced rate per copy in the subscription. However, there will be no additional cost for mailing. A sub for 10 issues will therefore cost \$1.50 and can be ordered from the Workers Party, 4 Court Square, Long Island City 1, N. Y.

Coming issues of the Bulletin will be especially interesting inasmuch as they will contain the pre-convention discussion articles. Subscribers who wish can start their sub with any already published issue, to the extent that copies of these are still available.

Palestine War —

(Continued from page 1)

partitioning the Negev at the 31st parallel, while Britain was trying for all of the Negev but was willing (under duress) to settle for part. The Foreign Office, which had shifted its anti-Jewish struggle from the military level to the diplomatic one, really became alarmed. The UN Security Council lived up to its INTENDED function—an instrument of "big power" domination.

It is this kind of action that characterizes the liberals' proclaimed "hope for peace." The UN orders Israel out of territory which it, the UN, has assigned to Israel, but at the same time has neither the power nor the will to enforce its ukase.

The British are not completely defeated. They still have the Bunche armistice plan. The general principles of the plan are for a negotiated armistice between Israel and the Arab states, providing for fixed lines and demilitarized areas between the lines. In practice, this will force Israel to leave the Negev, and while not permitting the Egyptians to move in, will leave a vacuum in the Negev, thus giving England a POSSIBILITY of disposing of it to the best interests of British imperialism.

This latest armistice plan can be and will be no more effective than

the previous six or eight cease-fire orders of the Council. At best it can only achieve a few weeks of a "finger-on-the-trigger" peace.

BULLETIN: Latest reports are that both Israel and the Arabs will reject the armistice.

The last stages of the war in Palestine are nearing. The multitude of peace rumors are one indication. There are only two armies left in Palestine—Israel's and Transjordan's. The defeat of Egypt and the annihilation of the Lebanese and Syrian units in Palestine have left the road wide open to Abdullah, King of Transjordan by grace of His Majesty's government. His troops have moved into Hebron and other areas evacuated by the Egyptians.

FINAL PHASE NEARS

Having failed to get the Negev by diplomatic means the British will use drastic means unless stopped. The author of this article believes the reports that the British WILL give the Arab Legion heavy arms in substantial amounts to get the Negev for Abdullah and to prove to the Arab states that they can get nowhere except as the vassals of Britain.

The Workers Party, in keeping with its revolutionary socialist principles: of supporting the struggle of all peoples for national determination, supports the war of Israel for independence. The recent victories of Israel are not a cause for sitting back. The final phases of the war are nearing and the American labor movement will play the decisive role in determining whether there is a just peace in Palestine or a British imperialist solution imposed on that country's two peoples.

The American labor movement and the American people must put up an IMMEDIATE struggle for:

- Lifting the embargo on Israel to give Israel arms to meet the British-armed Abdullah.
• Remove all State Department restrictions on emigration from U. S. displaced persons camps.
• No shift in boundaries without consent of Jews and Arabs.
• Guarantees of democratic rights for the Arabs in Arabian Palestine.
• For an economic union of Jewish and Arab Palestine that will enable the two peoples to work together toward a union of the Near Eastern peoples.

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YOUTH and Student CORNER

By JULIUS FALK and JACK MAXWELL

One of the more encouraging aspects of the recent national elections was the growth of Student-For-Thomas chapters on campuses throughout the country. The pre-election period acted as a catalytic agent for many left-wing students who rallied around the Thomas candidacy as a protest against the bankrupt capitalist parties and in the hope that a large socialist vote would, in turn, help to wear the labor leadership from the Democratic Party.

The support given to Thomas by a large section of these students was not based on Thomas' and his party's specific program, but on the fact that these were the only known forces of socialism in the minds of the American people. We of the Workers Party and the Socialist Youth League cannot find much ground for quarreling with this election approach.

The elections are now past. But, independent socialist students who were galvanized into action by the elections and wish to remain politically alive are now faced with a problem: to which organized socialist force should they declare their allegiance. It is no longer a question of fighting for socialist symbols or organizing protest votes: it is now a problem of party program and structure. While, to these students, support of Thomas for president did not hinge on the Socialist Party's program, continued support to, or membership in that party must be weighed, primarily, on ideological scales.

It is with this mind that we review in this and next week's columns an important speech outlining foreign policy made by Norman Thomas recently and quoted in full in Socialist Party publication, The Call.

DEVOID OF SOCIALISM

In spite of the fact that in the eyes of most people, Norman Thomas is the personification of American socialism, it is no less true that his campaign on foreign policy was a cacophonous medley of platitudes, confusion and chauvinism. At best there was only a barely audible hint in Thomas' campaign that he is a socialist at all.

At practically no point in the Thomas campaign could one get the feeling that either the party or its candidate considered themselves political spokesmen for a class of American workmen as against the conflicting interests of a class of American capitalists. Thomas' point of departure was "what we Americans need," not "what we workers and socialists must fight for."

Let us look at some parts of Thomas' all important Cleveland speech on foreign policy:

I. On "The best we can do today . . ." for Peace.
"The best that we can do today, or ought to do, is (1) to persuade even dictators that it is to the universal interest to transfer conflict out of the realm of preparation for making the earth a universal graveyard; and (2) to reach through to the mind and conscience of people everywhere so that they may constrain even their tyrants from the wars of the atomic age. Thus, we may win time for further constructive efforts." (Emphasis ours.)

There is a striking parallel between Thomas' point (1) and the Wallace appeasement program. How can this persuasion of dictators be accomplished except in the Wallace way: Give the Kremlin its half of the world, we take ours thereby satisfying "universal interests."

Thomas' proposed mission to persuade Stalin that war will have harmful consequences for all concerned, is, we think, genuinely meant, which makes it all the more genuinely absurd. Stalin knows at least as well as Thomas that a world which is a "universal graveyard" is not one in which the Russian bureaucracy can find much of a future. And even if dictator Stalin has just learned this—credit to Thomas—the preparations for the war would still go on. For the conflict is not between dictators and democratic imperialist statesmen, but between social systems whose needs cannot be confined to and satisfied within present boundaries and social organization.

But how serious is Thomas about this panacea that smacks of appeasement? In point 2 of the above quote he proposes to appeal to the people "to constrain even their dictators" and further in this speech Thomas

states that he is in favor of an intensified anti-Kremlin campaign directed to the Russian people through such American agencies as the "Voice of America."

But, then, if point 2 is effectuated what happens to our persuasion in point 1. Obviously the Stalinist regime will never agree that it is to the "universal interest" of which Russian interest is a part, to have the Western powers continue a propaganda barrage which might "reach through to the minds and conscience of peoples" behind the iron curtain. We are sure that the Stalinists would find it difficult to correlate this with Russia's best interests as THEY understand it.

If Thomas is serious about his first proposal he must forego his elementary political responsibility to the Russian people. Consistent with this is an abandonment of the victims of the Russian slave state and the maintenance of the status quo in the totalitarian half of the world.

Needless to say, the Socialist Youth League does not reject this utopian and implicitly reactionary solution of Thomas' in favor of a "democratic" crusade by the American imperialist bloc against Russia. Our hopes lie in the ability of the working class, opposing both imperialist camps, to prevent another war or in the event of a Third World War, to end the war in a series of liberating struggles.

POLICY ON JAPAN
Let's look at another of Thomas' specific proposals and statements on foreign policy.

2. JAPAN
"In Japan Americans have a right to be proud of the comparatively good record we have made as an occupying power. But there are signs today of an effort to turn Japan over to great capitalists, Japanese or American or both, which needs watching."

An old-fashioned bourgeois liberal might find it a little embarrassing to make such a statement. But not the "socialist" Norman Thomas. Nothing was easier for him to say.

Socialists have traditionally opposed armies of occupation, and not for the sake of habit, but because armies of occupation by their very nature, are a direct blow at the basic democratic rights of the people in the occupied country. The army of occupation in Japan, as in Germany is the instrument for the maintenance of American control of the future of the Japanese nation. It is the instrument which permits Hirohito to remain on the throne as an American puppet, it is the physical force backing up dictator MacArthur's dictum forbidding strikes by public workers. Primarily, it is an army of imperialist penetration and a preparatory force for the impending war against Russia.

The first responsibility of any socialist—including Norman Thomas—is not to chauvinistically praise the American occupation of Japan but to categorically demand the withdrawal of the American troops and to fight for the protection of Japan's right of self-determination.

Thomas' second sentence in the above quotation goes from the ridiculous to the sublime. He is becoming alarmed at the signs today of an "effort to turn Japan over to great capitalists." As far as we can see there are only four social forces in the world today that can dominate Japanese economy. One is the Stalinists, another is the Japanese working class, the third is the Japanese capitalist class and finally, there is a fourth alternative of control by the American bourgeoisie.

Now who did Thomas really think would be the beneficiaries of V-J Day? Certainly not the Stalinists. That leaves us with only three. With Thomas' permission we will strike out the working class as a possible beneficiary of a magnificent American imperialism. That leaves only two—American and Japanese capitalism. Why then, is Thomas warning us that the situation "needs watching" when any thinking individual can see that that is the only alternative open to American capitalism and its interests. To our minds this is more than confusion on Thomas' part, it is a manifestation of his blustering apology for the politics of American imperialism.

In next week's column we will examine Thomas' statements on Palestine, China, American foreign policy and discuss the relationship between Thomas and his party.

CORRECTION:
Through an oversight the quotation marks were omitted in last week's Youth and Student Corner from the statement taken from The Student Partisan.—Editor.

Careful, Henry!

Asked by a reporter what he thought of the battle over genetics which has been raging in Russia, that well known corn breeder and hors de combatant Henry Wallace replied: "I'm going to continue to inbreed hens even if it is unfair not to have a free choice of roosters." The question is, will Henry insist on his opinion inside the Progressive Party.

Critical Issue for AVC Progressives —

(Continued from page 2)

democratic prerogative to select for himself the institution through which he gives his views organized expression. It is AVC's democratic prerogative to exclude him from AVC only if his conduct in performance of AVC duty conflicts with the program and purposes of AVC. Since AVC was non-partisan in the recent elections, it is within its democratic rights to expel any member who in the name of AVC supported Wallace, or Truman, or Dewey, or Thomas for president. But it would be an act of bureaucratic usurpation to expel an AVC member because he voted for Wallace or Truman, etc. The first act would be democratic because it deals with an OVERT ACT against the organization. The second instant would be undemocratic because it is an infringement upon freedom of opinion.

AVC cannot employ restrictive political covenants without violating the mass, nonpartisan character of AVC. It cannot invoke statutes of political discrimination without violating the principles of civil rights which include the right of an individual's adherence to any organization with whose program he is in accord and whose discipline ON THIS PROGRAM he is prepared to abide by. We reiterate: the right of an individual to the selection of the organization through which he seeks to make common cause on behalf of a common goal, insofar as it goes and has a right to go, is a precept of CIVIL RIGHTS.

To tell a Stalinist that he cannot join AVC to fight for housing, for improved veterans' benefits, for FEPC, in a word for a program which he fervently endorses, because he also believes in a social system which you and I find loathsome, is an infringement of CIVIL RIGHTS. To deny that such exclusion is a violation of civil rights on the ground that AVC is a voluntary organization and hence the rejected veteran is FREE to join any other organization, is pure chicanery.

AN EXAMPLE: A UNION AND AN ARMY

Finally, let us examine the relevancy of the distinction between a voluntary and a non-voluntary organization, by way of example.

A conscript army is a compulsory organization. Its compulsory charac-

ter is as ridiculous as the policeman who, while bashing in the head of a union organizer engaged in addressing his potential union members on the street, insists that he is not violating freedom of speech because the organizer is perfectly free to go into the woods and make his speech. The policeman too stands upon the "voluntary" formula, and patiently points out that there is nothing which COMPELS an organizer to speak precisely on his beat. The fact that the organizer's only audience in the woods would be the birds is a question which impresses the policeman not at all. In fact, one would have to admit, it inwardly delights him. But, as you see, he stands on a rigid interpretation of the voluntary character of freedom of speech. He has granted the organizer the right to freedom of speech—except where the exercise of that right is pertinent.

For AVC, too, the question is not whether the Stalinist has the right to join any other organization or whether he has the right to form an organization of his own. Of course he has that right. But to his mind there is no other organization, and he finds AVC's program quite satisfactory so that he sees no need to form another organization like it. The question is, does he have a right to belong to AVC?

That's the CIVIL RIGHTS rub. We do not resolve the problem, nor mitigate its violence upon the principles of civil rights, by the simple expedient of exercising our FORMAL right to pass a constitutional amendment by majority vote. All that does is to make the act "legal." But democracy is governed not only by majority votes, but by certain given principles. The right to establish arbitrary and artificial limitations which neither conform to nor are inherent in the character of an organization, are not counted among these principles of democracy. On the contrary they represent a usurpation of democratic rights, a negation of democratic principle.

ter is determined by law. It may, and most often does, exclude women and children in its compulsory clauses. It may, and most often does, exclude the aged and the disabled. And, as an army is an instrument of politics,

it may, if it wishes, exclude otherwise qualified personnel whose political views are not to the liking of those responsible for that army.

A union too is a compulsory organization—but only when it exercises a definitive or at least a decisive authority over available jobs. It cannot (that is, in our view, should not) and most often does not exclude women. It cannot exclude the aged, and in fact one of its hardest won fights has been for seniority clauses designed to protect the aging worker. And it cannot (that is, in our view, it should not—although some unions have) exclude otherwise qualified members because their political views are not to the liking of those responsible for the union.

Here we have two organizations—both compulsory (one by law, the other by its control over jobs), both possessing the legal and/or moral right to include or exclude. Yet there is a marked discrepancy in the selection. One might say that the respective selections are almost diametrically opposed to one another. Sex, age and political philosophy enter emphatically in the exclusion of one, and not at all in the exclusion of the other. How does such a discrepancy occur? Obviously, because the aspect of its compulsory nature in itself does not determine the basis or the conditions for inclusion or exclusion.

A big industrialist may be drafted into the army; but that same indus-

CONCLUSION: TOWARD BUILDING AVC

From any and every point of view the amendments before the convention are sordid and unsavory. They are incorrect in principle, dubious in design and fraught with dangerous consequences for AVC. The propositions are based upon erroneous and deceptive argument and buttressed by insupportable organizational methods. They should be defeated.

The propositions should be defeated in such a way as will in no manner give comfort to the Stalinists, in no way accrue to their benefit. The IP caucus, despite its error on this important question, should be supported. In our view, anti-Stalinists who are opposed to the expulsion of AVC members for their political ideas should make their fight within the IP caucus and as part of it. Should

trianist cannot, however sympathetic with unionism he may be, CANNOT belong to a union. Why does his eligibility for one compulsory organization not make him eligible for any compulsory organization? Obviously, because the aspect of compulsory nature which the union and the army share in common does not and cannot determine the composition of these respective organizations.

Obviously, too, what DOES determine the selection, the composition, the eligibility and ineligibility for membership in each of these compulsory organizations is the CHARACTER and PURPOSE of these respective organizations. A union will not exclude a woman worker, because the character of the union seeks to embrace and give job security to workers—all workers, notwithstanding race, color, creed, nationality or sex. The woman's sex has nothing whatever to do with her "eligibility" as a worker, and hence as a union member.

The example of the woman when applied to a conscript army works in reverse—again, obviously because the character and purpose of the army is different from that of a union. Again and again, it is the character and purpose of an organization which defines membership composition, which determines the basis for eligibility of membership. The refined distinction between a voluntary and a compulsory organization is meaningless.

a split be averted by the timely intervention of the delegates themselves and we ardently hope it will, we urge the Milwaukee formula for treating the Stalinists. Defeat all Stalinist candidates for the NPC—return a full slate of IP candidates to the NPC. Give the IP a mandate to proceed with democratic means against the Stalinists. FOR A DEMOCRATIC, INDEPENDENT, PROGRESSIVE AVC, WITHOUT EXPULSIONS. On such a basis, the future of AVC is assured. The convention, meeting the problem before it, will pave the way for a new growth. The concept of AVC as a mass organization will be balanced by a mass organization in numbers. In this endeavor, LABOR ACTION wishes AVC every success.