

Maritime Union to Hold Seventh Convention—

3-Cornered Fight Looms in NMU Around Curran Regime

By N. GADEN

NEW YORK, Sept. 7.—On Monday, September 12, the Seventh Biennial Convention of the National Maritime Union will be convened in New York City. The gavel that sounds the opening of the sessions will usher in a new stage in the struggle of organized seamen to defend and extend the tradition of militant democratic unionism on the waterfront.

The convention will represent the culmination of the attempt of Joseph Curran, president of the NMU, to solidify his bureaucratic stranglehold on the union by ramming through constitutional amendments allegedly designed to bar so-called "subversives" from membership in the union. Opposing this move are two groups: one, the new Rank-and-File Caucus, representing a wide range of militant elements; and the other, the relatively small and insignificant faction of the Stalinists.

CONVENTION BACKGROUND

The present low estate of the Stalinists in the NMU is a far cry from the days when they ran the union. From the very beginnings of the NMU until the 1947 convention, the CP hacks ruled the union with a marlinpike. Every time the pages of the Daily Worker were graced with a new line the CP machine in the NMU went into high to foist that policy on the union. In their opinion the needs of the NMU's seaman ran second to the needs of the Kremlin. Thus, the Moscow-Washington alliance of the war period and the superpatriotic line of the CP that went with it brought to the NMU a period of union-shipowner collaboration that undermined working conditions in the industry, almost emasculated the fighting qualities of the men of the waterfront, and brought the union to the brink of disaster.

The strong resentment of the ranks of the NMU against this policy reflected itself in a struggle among the pickards. Joe Curran, who up to that time had contented himself with play-

ing the game of acey-deucey with the hacks, now saw an opportunity to make himself unquestioned boss of the union. When his attempt to accomplish this end by top maneuvers failed, he found it necessary to call upon the resources of the rank and file of the union.

The rank-and-file, once in action, had their own ideas about the struggle, and developed a program of internal union democracy as well as militant struggle against the shipowners. Under this program the Rank and File Caucus broke the

Stalinist hold on the union at the 1947 convention, and six months later cleaned the hacks out of office.

SCORECARD ON CURRAN

But it must be remembered that the Rank-and-File Caucus was not a homogenous organization. Under its banner gathered not only union militants tired of Stalinist misrule and looking forward to expanding the democratic and economic base of the union, but also picard elements seeking to enhance their own posi-

(Continued on page 4)

Ready to Bargain



BEVIN

As British Negotiators Come to Washington—

U.S. Wants Solution to Dollar Crisis by Hard Squeeze on Workers

By HENRY JUDD

Negotiations among America, England and Canada over the British financial crisis were begun this week. It is clear that much more than economic difficulties involving England are at stake; yet, at the same time, it is clear that no real, long-range solution will be found.

At the best, stop-gap methods to alleviate the tension of the present situation will be undertaken. Discussions on underlying problems will actually be more important (it is difficult to imagine men like Bevin, Cripps and Acheson participating in purely technical financial discussions), even though no immediate proposals are likely to occur.

It is easy to become involved in a mesh of statistical evidence and financial complexity in describing the causes of Britain's crisis (which is hardly new), but actually it is a simple matter. One might best express it in the following way:

A vast, top-heavy and disproportionate share of this world's wealth, in terms of production, gold, resources, raw materials, markets, etc., has found its way into the hands of capitalist America. American capitalism is draining the rest of the world dry with its monopolistic grasp of trade, commerce and business. This process has gone on largely at the expense of England, former world leader, and that nation is, from an economic standpoint, on the verge of bankruptcy and collapse.

Can't Dump the British

But other American interests, basically political and strategic in nature, make it impossible for American imperialism to permit such a collapse whose consequences would be far more serious than the price of further loans and donations. This is why the vulgar and disgraceful kind of reactionary, anti-British talk which has filled the American press for weeks (a typical expression of vicious arrogance and chauvinism which earns the increasingly unpopular reputation held by America throughout the world) cannot be taken too seriously, insofar as its having any influence on reality is concerned.

Fascist Terrorism at Peekskill Threatens Free Speech for All!

Twice now a band of hooligans has sought to break up a concert by Paul Robeson in a picnic ground near Peekskill, N. Y. The latest attempt was on Sunday, September 4. They did not succeed in breaking up the concert, but they did succeed in overturning and stoning cars and buses, and injuring some 140 people and generally in having a gloriously Klanish day.

The issues are many, but simple: (1) Paul Robeson is a famous singer and an equally infamous Stalinist. He is one of the Kremlin's loudest public salesmen.

(2) Whether as artist or politician, he has every right to be heard (that is, by those who care to hear him).

(3) The interference mobilized by the local leadership of the American Legion, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, the Catholic War Veterans and Jewish War Veterans, and participated in by all the anti-Negro, anti-Semitic riffraff of the area, is a monstrous and intolerable act—the more

so as it was accomplished under the active inspiration of local District Attorney Fanelli and with the apparent connivance of a good many "law and order" officials.

(4) Though the Stalinists would undoubtedly like to make it so, what is NOT involved is the right of a group to picket and protest a Stalinist rally. The freedom to picket and protest includes the freedom to picket and protest Stalinist rallies.

BUT what happened twice near Peekskill was not a picket-line protest demonstration, as it is commonly understood. It was an act of fascist terror incited by local reactionary leaders.

(5) The veterans of the area and the inhabitants of the area generally are not guilty of this hoodlumism. The point is important because the manipulators of the hooligan mob wish to make it appear that they acted for veterans—just like that, veterans in general—and for the people of the area.

For the second skirmish, having threatened to mobilize ten to twenty thousand, they could not scare up more than a thousand—and they apparently dug deep into the cesspools of the area to get that many.

CP STANDS TO GAIN

That the Stalinists intend to wing every last ounce of public sympathy from the case goes without saying. What began as an obscure concert and rally near Peekskill is a cause célèbre. Again, thanks to reactionaries and their storm troop breed, the peddlers of tyranny can parade as the upholders of civil liberties. The stomach just naturally does a few flip-flops. They who, in the very words of the self-same Paul Robeson, would not defend freedom of speech for Trotskyists (or, for that matter, for anybody) now strut in the cause of civil rights.

Appeals have been made to Governor Dewey to investigate and take action. His investigation, if it is moving at all (Peekskill is in a substantially Republican area), is moving mightily slowly.

The role of the state police is especially interesting. Where, in the first attack two weeks ago, they left the area almost entirely free to the hoodlums, the several hundred cops

who showed up for the second concert were not as successful as you would expect a few hundred police to be in restraining the reactionary mob. There is already abundant evidence, and it has been reported in the papers, that the attack was planned. What is Dewey waiting for?

The situation, we repeat, is an intolerable one. Fascist or reactionary hoodlums cannot be permitted to run rampant. Today they victimize the Stalinists; tomorrow they spread their activities somewhat. The American Legion, for example, has a long and disreputable history in this respect. The massacre at Centralia, Wash., directed against Wobblies, is not so distant that it is forgotten.

The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the Americans for Democratic Action and other anti-Stalinist organizations have already demanded a thorough investigation of the affair. We would like to see every section of the labor and liberal movement respond to the protest—to serve warning on all fascist elements that their gangsterism will not be tolerated.

Rent Control Murder Case: Facts Point to the Guilty

By SUSAN GREEN

Those who think that the capitalist government of these United States can evolve into a protector of the welfare of the common people must be doing some soul-searching these days in connection with rent control.

The 1949 law, which went into effect April 1, crippled rent control with its provision allowing both the housing expeditor and local governments to decontrol areas, and all but murdered it with its concession to the landlords of "reasonable return" on investment—this latter constituting in effect a blanket rent increase.

Last week LABOR ACTION reported how the remaining life is being squeezed out of rent control by the cut in budget appropriations for this purpose. The powerful real-estate lobby, not having fully succeeded in abolishing rent control in law, completed its victory in the appropriations committees of Congress. This is how our much-tooted system of checks and balances operates—the checks operating against the people and the balances tipping in favor of the vested interests.

SLASH AFTER SLASH

Since last week it has become more evident how "streamlining control operations and affecting every possible economy"—as Housing Expediter Woods' office puts it—will affect the tenants of the country.

First it must be made clear that the newspaper reports have been giving a false picture of the extent of the cut in appropriations for rent control. Most reports were that the slash was from \$21,667,500 to \$17,500,000. This is true, but the former figure

already represented a drastic reduction.

The Bureau of the Budget had requested \$26,750,000 for Expediter Woods' office. The Senate Appropriations Committee had reduced this figure to \$24,975,000. Then the Senate itself lowered the amount to \$21,667,500. Finally the Senate and House in conference trimmed the appropriation down still further to \$17,500,000.

Could we say that the progressive decrease in appropriations marked the progressive influence of the real-estate lobby? At any rate, the "representatives of the people," voting all told a \$40,000,000,000 budget, did not vote a measly few million to keep up even the pretense of rent control.

Another aspect of the cut in appropriations that has been played down in the press is that President

(Continued on page 2)

Scientists Say Witchhunt System Kills Both Science and Democracy

Another authoritative voice has been raised in defense of civil liberties from the assault of the government purgers and witchhunters. Latest blast is from a group of undoubted importance and conservatism—guaranteed non-subversive—the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

This, the largest and most weighty group of scientists in the country, two years ago appointed a special committee to investigate civil liberties among scientists, and it has just published the conclusions reached by that committee. Some of them are:

(1) The area of secrecy on atomic work prescribed by the government is far larger than can possibly be justified by considerations of security.

(2) Harsh criticism is leveled at the government's policy of giving strict checks even to scientists who merely have contact with other scientists if the latter are engaged in secret operations.

(3) Loyalty-board procedures come in for a blast, especially the procedures whereby in many cases a sus-

pect is not allowed to discuss his case with anyone, or keep notes on his hearing, or have access to a written record.

(4) The president's loyalty order "is basically objectionable because it seeks to determine the employee's loyalty by inquiring into his supposed thoughts and attitude, which are established in large part by imputing to him the beliefs of his associates." The committee says "the present loyalty boards discharge simultaneously the functions of advocacy and adjudication," by acting both as prosecutor and judge.

(5) The result? The system acts "to discourage participation in important research activities closely linked to the nation's well-being. Scientists are increasingly reluctant to commit their personal and professional reputations to those who have brought frivolous charges against respected colleagues."

And again: "Secrecy is damaging to both science and democracy. In both, progress and the detection of error depend upon open discussion and free interchange of ideas."

Horse's Mouth

Frank talk from the Wall Street Journal, July 29:

"Crisis" strategy will be used to get arms for Europe under the Atlantic Pact.

"The State Department plans new disclosures about Russia's war preparations. Diplomats figure another 'red scare' may make reluctant legislators okay the full \$1,450 million Truman asks to start arming Europe.

"Army chiefs back the diplomats. Their stake: Getting \$1 billion worth of aging weapons sent abroad and replaced by up-to-date equipment. The navy also hopes to transfer some mine sweepers and coastal vessels and get new ships..."

Rubber Workers Strike at Goodrich; Company Seeks to Smash Union Gains

By E. J. McLAIN

AKRON, Aug. 30.—To the shocked "surprise" of the B. F. Goodrich Company, a strike began in its Akron plants at 12:01 a.m., Saturday morning, August 27. The next day Goodrich plants in six other cities joined in.

Local 5 of the United Rubber Workers, the largest local in the chain, headed by Geo. Bass, has taken charge of the strike. About 17,000 workers from seven locals are participating in the walkout; 13,000 of these work in the Akron Goodrich plants.

The strike was called in strict observance of all the legal barriers set up by the Taft-Hartley Law. In spite of this, J. W. Keener, the chief negotiator for the company, could not really "believe" that the union would close the plants. However, for a company that did not know the strike would take place, Goodrich swung into an amazingly well prepared offensive.

This strike begins a new and explosive phase in company-union relations. For the first time since the late '30s the companies are dealing with the unions in a downward sliding economy. The huge profits that the rubber companies have become

accustomed to in the last few years are threatened by lower gross sales.

What can they do about this? The company has only one answer: Production costs must come down. And since this means more production per worker simultaneous with a lower hourly wage, it is necessary for the company to launch an attack on the principal defender of labor, the union. Goodrich, therefore, is faced with the necessity of trying to break the strike and weaken the union by stealing back as many as possible of the hard-won rights established in the past ten years.

COMPANY WANTS BLOOD

Seconds after it got over the initial "shock," one by one the company began to bring up, for renegotiation, points incorporated in the contract in past years. These are gains which the union has come to consider as fixed and accomplished facts.

For instance, the company demands:

(1) That the union agree to a no-strike pledge, reducing itself to a policing body over the workers.

(2) That the company be given the right to file grievances against the union and to take such grievances to negotiation.

(3) That overtime pay originally granted by the War Labor Board be taken away from the workers in some plants.

(4) That the company be given the right to schedule work so that some workers may get only 24-30 hours while others get 48 hours.

(5) That vacation pay be withheld from workers whom the company might discharge for cause.

(6) That workers be compelled to stay at their machines for an entire shift.

In effect, the company is saying: Back to normal now—and that means more speedup and less pay. Two weeks ago Goodrich laid off about 700 men in the Akron plants. This was intended as a slight hint that business was not looking up in the tire-sales department and that this was not a good time to strike.

America can no more afford to "dump the British"—much as our most reactionary circles would like to—than Britain's equally narrow and chauvinistic circles can afford to listen to the John Bull isolationist doctrine of a Lord Beaverbrook. These circles in both nations represent respectively the most provincial and backward strata of both nations.

In an immediate sense, the crisis of England is due to the famous "shortage of dollars." Before the war, England had an annual deficit in trade amounting to \$700 million, in dollar shortage. This deficit, however, was overcome by empire earnings which more than made up for it. A favorable trade balance between England and its numerous colonies, dominions, etc., could overcome the unfavorable balance between England and the United States. But this has vanished.

The reality now is not only that these nations remaining within the orbit of the empire (a more or less formal relationship) have their own unfavorable trade balance (i.e., dollar shortage) in relationship to America—this is particularly true of India and South Africa—but the additional fact that England herself has now an unfavorable balance with both the United States and her colonies, dominions, etc.

The whole process has been reversed and England is bleeding at both ends now. This is the heart of the crisis, in economic terms.

Harder Work, More Austerity

All efforts to close up the dollar gap have not only failed but actually made matters worse. The gap, at this moment, is widening and literally draining England of its remaining capital resources. These reserves are vanishing at the rate of \$300 million per month, and an estimated shortage of \$1½ billion is predicted for 1949. And this in face of the fact that (1) America has loaned \$6 billion since the end of the war, if we include outright loans, Marshall Plan aid, etc.; (2) English business and export trade have revived amazingly and are well above pre-war levels.

The fact is that the harder the British people have worked, the more "austerity" they have accepted, the worse off has become their situation! What is the explanation for this fantastic fact?

It does not lie in one particular source (which is the reason why there is no one drastic solution to the prob-

(Continued on page 4)

Five Cents an Hour in Dixieland Hit by Judge, Upheld by Congress

Are there workers in the United States being paid only FIVE CENTS AN HOUR?

There are. It's down in black and white in a decision handed down at the end of August by the U. S. Circuit Court of Appeals for the Fourth District.

The case was that of 2,000 "rural homeworkers" employed by two Southern bag companies, the Mill-hiser Bag Company of Richmond, Va., and the Chase Bag Company of Heidsville, N. C. These super-sweatshoppers farm out the stringing of tobacco bags to women in their homes.

The situation came to light because a Department of Labor order was issued directing these companies to raise their minimum pay in accordance with the federal wage-hour act. This act, incidentally, requires a minimum of only 40 cents an hour, but even this starvation rate was fought

by the Dixie baggers.

Judge J. J. Parker's decision said of the working women: "They are unskilled, and unorganized manual laborers performing a necessary operation in the manufacture of bags and they are paid at a rate which brings them the ridiculously low wage of from five to thirteen cents an hour or their labor."

However, before anyone cheers too loudly about the raise in the cooie wage from 5 to 40 cents, it would be pertinent to report that only a few weeks ago the House passed a crippled wage-hour bill (sponsored by the Texas Democrat Wingate Lucas)—and "rural homeworkers" are specifically exempted from the minimum wage safeguards in this bill!

The Senate may still knock this exemption out. Otherwise, "free enterprise" will maintain the "democratic right" of workers to earn five cents an hour.

See Page 2
for more news on the
Socialist Youth
League's
Summer Camp
September 11-18

Polish CP Uses 'Statified' Unions To Attack Workers' Wage Standards

By A. RUDZIENSKI

After destroying Mikolajczyk's peasant opposition, the Polish Stalinists proceeded to the complete subjugation of the Polish proletariat. The first step was the "fusion of the workers' parties," preceded by the famous trials of the independent Socialist-Democrats. The creation of the "united" Stalinist party of Poland, which represented totalitarian political chains for the old and heroic Polish workers' movement, was only the preparation for the imposition of economic chains.

At the last congress of the statified trade unions, no opposition broke the sepulchral silence after the Stalinist leaders delivered their tiresome and boastful speeches. The trade unions claim 3,330,000 members out of the 4,550,000 factory and office workers in Poland. It would seem that 1,250,000 workers and office employees are still trying to escape the control of the totalitarian unions. The principal task of this tenacious and continuing

Stalinist offensive is to intensify the economic exploitation of the workers.

WHIPPING THE SLAVES

The three-year plan of economic reconstruction calls for a rise in production in 1949 to the approximate level of 1939. (Agricultural production is to reach only 80 per cent of the year 1939.) The planned investment of 10 billion zlotys must be extracted from the Polish workers and peasants. The authors of the three-year plan counted on a loan of two billion zlotys to help cover the necessary cost of investment but now, in view of the impossibility of such a loan, they must also draw the additional sum from the proletariat.

Hence there is nothing strange in the fact that the trade-union congress serves as a whip in the hands of the ruling bureaucracy against the beasts of burden into which the Stalinists have turned the Polish people.

The annual tribute of 30 to 40 million tons of coal delivered free of charge to Russia could easily pay the

cost of the industrial investments covered by an international loan in the plan, but within the system of "popular democracy" this colonial tribute only tightens the chains of misery that bind the Polish proletariat to the chariot of despotic Stalinist imperialism.

Accordingly, the trade-union congress was subjected to one long harangue on the need to develop a Stakhanovist movement in Poland as a means of increasing the degree of exploitations. This movement has suffered grave reverses since its initiator, the miner Pestrovsky, died as a consequence of his extreme efforts. The bureaucrats strive to corrupt a stratum of the workers in order to create thereby a new workers' aristocracy. This new aristocracy will serve as a whip in the hands of the bureaucracy to compel the proletariat to work harder.

To attain this goal, the trade-union satraps are striving to eliminate all resistance to their efforts in this direction, especially on the part of the factory delegations. These delegations, created in the year 1905-06, were organs of workers' democracy.

The delegates were elected in the general assembly of the factory or mine; they represented the maximum strength of the organized and unorganized workers in their struggle against the capitalist enterprise and the czarist and bourgeois regimes. Furthermore, they represented the unity of all the workers without regard for political creed or union affiliation. It cost the Stalinists a great deal of effort to subdue or destroy the factory delegations in Poland.

GPU TAKES OVER

Now it seems that all resistance has been conquered at last. The trade-union congress recommended that there be created "union groups" in the factories, each headed by a "trustworthy person." Naturally these "trustworthy persons" will be the spies and informers of the security police.

It is only too obvious that the trade unions have lost their main function of defending the workers against exploitation and economic oppression by the capitalists and the government, and have been transformed into an economic whip in the hands of the totalitarian Stalinist bureaucracy.

In accordance with their new function, the leading cadre of the trade unions has been changed. The old general secretaries, Sikorski and Witaszewski, old Communist militants, have been changed for a Cwik, a policeman absolutely loyal to the GPU and the "Bezpieka," the "security police."

Against such measures the proletariat has no defense. Its basic wage, as in other East European countries, has practically disappeared. The "slave wage" oscillates between 10,000 and 20,000 zlotys (\$8 to \$15), not even enough to buy a good pair of shoes. With the abolition of rationing, the workers are at the mercy of "overtime," of "records" and other super-capitalist measures of exploitation.

Another announcement in the past week was to the effect that rent controls have been lifted in "fringe" areas in nine states, namely Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Michigan, North Carolina, Wyoming, Vermont and West Virginia. "Fringe" areas are presumably communities with less than 100,000 population.

EXPEDITING DECONTROL

It was explained by the expediter's office that this decontrol has nothing to do with the cutback now in progress, but is the result of checkups showing that rental housing demand "has been reasonably met." Expediter Woods is still "studying," or will study when he comes from his vacation, where the further cutbacks need, essitated by the limited appropriations are to be made.

However, the principle has already been established that communities of less than 100,000 will be decontrolled. Whether this will also apply to the many suburbs of New York City is not yet clear.

Expediter Woods, against whom protests have been made by tenants and for whose removal the CIO has asked, has been acting as if the cut in appropriations is the one opportunity he was awaiting to decontrol more housing. He immediately called for decontrol of one third of the areas then under control. His legal staff had to remind him of the formality of complying with the law, which permits decontrol only when "supply and demand for housing seem to be in balance." From now on Woods is going to see an awful lot of balance between supply and demand.

POOREST ARE HIT

Woods has aroused the anger of the CIO and other organizations for the extent of decontrol he has ordered since April 1 when the new law went into effect. According to the CIO News, since that date 1,231,740 rental units have been decontrolled, leaving the tenants without any protection.

The CIO News writes: "Most of them were hit by action of Federal Housing Expediter Tighe Woods, acting on his own initiative. Second largest number were effected by decontrol voted by city councils acting under the rent laws' (local option) section."

As pointed out by the CIO News, the poorest families are the hardest hit. For instance, when an unemployed laborer gets a rent boost from \$15 to \$20, that \$5 a month is a stupendous increase. And when a poor mother supporting two children gets a rent raise from \$12 to \$15, those \$3 mean food out of children's mouths and clothes off their backs.

The CIO has been active locally in helping tenants. In Nebraska, for instance, the CIO, veteran's groups and others are busy gathering signatures to a petition protesting a state decontrol act. If sufficient names are obtained, the law will be nullified and the question submitted to referendum.

In Chicago the CIO, again with other organizations, is combating a move by landlords to obtain a general 45 per cent rent increase. The request, first refused by the local board, is now before the Court of Appeals. In Los Angeles also, the Greater L. A. CIO Council is conducting a survey to aid in its anti-decontrol struggle there. Thus far it has revealed illegal rent boosts as high as \$40 a month.

These efforts of the CIO on behalf of tenants are good and should be widely supported. However, on a national scale, neither the CIO nor the AFL has sponsored or called for any action either against the anti-tenant rent law of 1949 or against the scandalous congressional appropriations.

Nor has organized labor pushed its own rent-control program, to be fought for in opposition to the current decontrol program. Is the leadership of organized labor paralyzed by its own support of Truman and the Democratic Party?

Rent Control —

(Continued from page 1)

Truman signed the bill containing this shameful cut in the rent-control budget. The excuse given by and for the president is that the bill also contained appropriations for other departments, so he could not veto the bill. This is a shabby excuse.

GOOD RIDDANCE?

In his campaign President Truman pledged himself to protect the tenants of the country with an adequate rent-control system. He could have easily put the case of the slash in appropriations before the country, showing that the action of Congress amounts to a breach of the law, so that he had to refer the bill back to Congress for reconsideration of the rent-control appropriation. At the same time he could insist on a separate bill, making the appropriations for the other departments, for his signature.

It is true that the Dixiecrat-Republican coalition works against the president, but everything cannot be blamed on that. It would seem that the White House also considers rent control more of a nuisance than anything else, well gotten rid of by blaming the Dixiecrat-Republican coalition.

Senator Paul Douglas, administration Democrat from Illinois, did make a motion to reconsider the appropriation, but then agreed to withdraw the motion and to bring the matter up again in January. He covered his retreat with fine fighting words: "If in January or later I find that because of my trusting nature I have been seduced in this matter, I shall naturally feel it my duty to try to tear my seducers from stem to stern." He was referring to Senators who said they would favor voting additional appropriations NEXT YEAR if the need for continued rent-control enforcements still exists at that time.

HE WASN'T RAPED

Senator Douglas, it seems, was not too unwilling to be seduced. It is obvious that there won't be too much difference in the housing situation in a few months time, but once the rent-control office is pared down to fit the present reduced appropriation, very few Congressmen are going to see the need to raise the funds next year. The "need for continued rent-control enforcement" is quite naturally going to disappear—in Congress.

Fitting the rent-control machinery into the reduced appropriations allowed by Congress, Expediter Woods' office issued thirty-day dismissal notices to nearly 1000 employees of seven regional offices. This will reduce to a non-functioning basis the regional offices in Boston, New York, Cleveland, Atlanta, Dallas, Chicago and San Francisco—all heavily populated areas. Rent-control office employees will be cut from 5600 to around 3000.

In the New York regional office 270 workers have been discharged. This office has had supervisory jurisdiction over all the local offices in New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware and Maryland—a wide and populous area—handling appeals for the whole area.

Along with the dismissal of the employees, some 200 appeals by both landlords and tenants have been thrown out of this office. If the appellants have the means to do so, they are permitted to transfer their cases to Washington.

Concentrating all appeals in Washington is a device for technically preserving the right of appeal, while actually it will be impossible for the central office to handle all local appeals within anyone's lifetime. Among the cases thrown out of the New York regional office was one in which the landlords, having asked for \$15,000 additional annual rent on a "hardship" claim, received from the housing expediter \$26,000, and the tenants were appealing rent boosts of from \$20 to \$40 monthly.

Last Call for Customers: SYL's Summer Camp Starts on the 11th

The Socialist Youth League summer camp, under the direction of the Chicago unit, will open in Genoa City, Wis., on Sunday afternoon, September 11. The camp will last for one week, ending on the afternoon of September 18.

The Chicago SYL has made detailed provisions for the educational and social facilities at the camp. In the way of education life, a number of classes, round-table discussions and lectures will be held.

Max Shachtman, national chairman of the Independent Socialist League, will give a six-session class on "Marxism and War." Each session will be held in the morning and will include lectures and discussions on Marxism and the national wars of the nineteenth century; theory of modern imperialism and Stalinist imperialism.

In addition to leading this class, Comrade Shachtman will deliver a "Report on Europe" and lecture on "Lessons of the Russian Revolution." Comrade Hal Draper, editor of LABOR ACTION, will also be at the camp for the entire week and will lead a number of discussions and participate in the lecture series.

Some of the other educational features of the camp will be a lecture by Jerzy Glikman, author of "Tell the West," who will give an account of his experiences in a Russian slave-labor camp; a symposium on the "Political Perspectives of the American Labor Movement" which will include talks by B. J. Widick, co-author of the recent book, "The UAW and Wal-

cratic Alliance, and better still, to come to an agreement with a Polish secessionist "Tito" movement. There is much criticism of the American State Department in the Polish rightist press, and many warnings against American illusions regarding the political possibilities of Tito in Yugoslavia and Mao in China.

REALIGNMENT FORMING

The democratic opposition of the PPS and Mikolajczyk's Populists attracts to its Alliance not only the Christian-Socialists of Popiel, but is also negotiating with Bielecki in order to arrive at an understanding with the four principal Polish parties, leaving the government-in-exile completely out of the picture. Mikolajczyk's organ in Paris has come out clearly for the creation of a national committee which would completely displace the moribund exile government in London.

Until recently, the PPS, the main force of the Democratic Alliance, refused to take such a step, but the recent congress of the party in Britain approved a resolution which states the necessity of giving new political representation to all the main political tendencies in the national life. If this should happen, the present government-in-exile would lose its already dwindling importance.

Naturally the recognition by America and England of a new Polish political representation depends on the international situation, especially with regard to the U. S. attitude toward Russia.

ter Reuther," and Sid Lens, author of the book on labor, "Left, Right and Center."

FULL WEEK AHEAD

Aside from the educational program, there are all the usual athletic and social facilities of a summer camp. There will be dancing for the terpsichoreans and the Rathskeller for those who prefer their evening brew. For our athletically inclined friends there will be a baseball diamond, bowling alleys, football, etc.

On the more or less cultural side there will be movies, good (and bad) music, singing, and the inimitable Chicago SYL Theater Group. For the gourmet there will be the best German-style cooking.

All this and more too for the very reasonable price of \$25. The camp is not being run as a profit-making affair—that should be obvious. On the contrary, the camp is designed to provide a cheap but full week for all members and friends of the SYL and ISL.

For those who can make the camp

for only a day or two there will be a special daily rate. The camp will be climaxed by a weekend jamboree—from Friday, September 16, to Sunday, September 18. During their period there will be a happy concentration of planned social and educational activities.

During this weekend Comrade Shachtman will hold the last session of his class and deliver his "Report on Europe"; there will be an Olympian sports festival and a GRUDGE baseball game between the ISL and SYL; the symposium on "Political Perspectives of the American Labor Movement" will be held; and not to be left out will be a presentation by the SYL Little Theater Group.

The cost per person for the week-end fits the worker's pocket, as is the case for the entire week at camp. The price per adult for Friday evening through Sunday afternoon is \$7.50. There are specially reduced rates for children.

For important details about the camp, read the box below carefully.

Here's Info for SYL Summer Camp

What do I do when I reach Chicago?

EVERYONE SHOULD CALL BARRY WHEN HE ARRIVES IN CHICAGO (DO. 3-4644) for information or a possible ride to the camp. If you intend to reach Chicago before Sunday, Sept. 11, let us know in advance and we will arrange sleeping quarters for you. If you arrive after Sunday, call Karl at Dickens 2-0726.

How do I get to the camp?

The name of the camp is THE RECREATION CAMP, Genoa City, Wisconsin. It is fifty miles from Chicago, and two miles over the Illinois state border. There are several ways to get there:

- You can hitch-hike. Pick up highway 12 (U. S.) and take it directly to the camp. U. S. 12 is the Outer Drive and Milwaukee Ave. in the city; you may, if you wish, take a trolley to the end of Milwaukee Ave. One half-mile beyond (N. W.), Genoa City, Wisconsin, on route 12, there is a neon sign that reads RECREATION CAMP. This is it!
- You can go by bus (\$3.45 round trip). The Greyhound leaves Chicago at 1:10, 5:30 and 8:00 P. M. Call the RECREATION CAMP when you reach Genoa City, and we will pick you up.
- If you are a lucky dog and arrive in Chicago early on Sunday there is a possibility of getting a ride straight there.



By JOE ROAN

This week I would like to quote in full a letter recently received from our old friend J. H. in Seattle. He writes as follows:

"Dear Comrade:
"Here are two more subscriptions to LABOR ACTION.

"May I make a suggestion in regard to passing on copies that I have finished reading? I never waste a single copy; when I am done reading it I put a blue pencil mark in the form of a half circle over the top of what I consider the most attractive article; then I put it in my pocket when I ride to work in the morning. When I

get off the bus I leave it on my seat. During the day some other passenger is almost certain to pick it up and start reading, thinking it is part of one of the capitalist dailies. Or the bus cleaners at night will have to pick it up. Before they lay it down again it may shed a few rays of light in this capitalist darkness. Why not pass the idea along so that others may go and do likewise?"

"Yours for socialism,"

"J. H."

The idea is recommended to all LABOR ACTION readers. And send in your own ideas.

Readers of Labor Action Take the Floor...

Israeli Policy

To the Editor:

In his August 15 article in LABOR ACTION, Al Findley criticizes the Israeli government for resorting to diplomatic maneuvers in its search for peace instead of "appealing to the Arab masses for an immediate alliance," and also for failing to follow a policy which would "awaken the Near East by a proposal for a People's Federation of the Near East." I wish to make the following comment on this criticism:

Viewed abstractly, propaganda for the unity of various nations is always in order. But, at any particular point in history, to convert this into the central content of a political program may be several hundred miles off the beam. Whether unity between nations is possible or not depends, upon whether each is willing to accord the status of equality to the others (this does NOT mean majority rule; it means above all the right of the weaker nation to set up its own state in complete disregard of the wishes of the stronger nation). Without this there may be unity by conquest or oppression, but under no circumstances is voluntary unity even conceivable.

Essentially this was our guiding concept during the war, and the one that we still follow. After the initial German successes, we relegated the slogan of a United States of Europe to the background for we recognized that before unity was possible the various peoples of Europe first had the task of attaining their independence and equality with their German masters. During this period, therefore, in spite of the people's desire for peace, only those slogans caught

fire that revolved around the movements of national resistance.

It might be pointed out that even at this time, had there been a powerful underground movement in Germany, the slogan of a United States of Europe would have retained all its immediate validity in that nation, for Germany not only had its own independence but could offer equality to other nations as a basis for unity.

For the same reason, after the war it became possible to pose the question of a united Western Europe in the former Allied states; but in Germany only those slogans had vitality that were aimed at the regaining of independence. The initiative for uniting Western Europe must come from the victorious states; it cannot possibly come from Germany, which must first of all re-establish its independence.

SEES ATTACK COMING

Israel was born last year in the midst of a war. But the independence of this state is still far from secure; the Arabs have not yet admitted the Jews, the pariahs of the Western world, to equality with themselves. All of them, with Egypt in the lead, are undertaking armaments programs which, for the Near East, are tremendous. Britain has resumed shipping arms into the region; in Egypt a radio regularly calls for a new war to push the Jews into the sea; and perhaps most ominous of all are the persistent reports that Arabs of all classes live in fear of "Jewish expansionism."

Since there is not an iota of evidence to indicate such expansionism, or even a tendency toward it, this "fear" can be interpreted only as being of the same nature as that exhib-

ited by Russia toward Finland, or by Mussolini toward Ethiopia—i.e., it is a justification for a new attack upon Israel when the time is ripe for it.

Under these circumstances it is a mistake to believe that the Jews could initiate a movement for the federation of the Near East on the basis of equality, since equality is precisely what the Arabs wish to deny to them.

All slogans in Israel must still revolve around the safeguarding of independence. The policy of unity is, of course, excellent, but the lead for it must of necessity come from the Arabs, who are stronger and whose independence is not threatened. (Of course, the analogy with Germany breaks down in that an independent Israel constitutes no threat to the minorities within its borders, or to its neighbors.)

But there are even more fundamental reasons why Comrade Findley's course is not feasible in Israel. Lenin pointed out that theoretically, even after the victory of socialism, there would remain some small and backward nations that would refuse to join the others, but would insist upon an independent national existence. One reason for this is that historically these peoples' weakness had been exploited by their more powerful neighbors, and it would take a long period of patience, understanding and help before they could be persuaded voluntarily to give up their own states.

The second, and more profound, reason is that these people, who had been deprived of the right to creative-ness in politics, who had not had experience in building their own state, now wish to experiment with their new-found freedom, to create new

and diverse forms of democracy; they do not wish simply to repeat the forms already invented for them by the "superior" peoples.

Both these considerations apply a hundred times over for the Jews today. They are not a backward people, but their experiences for the past 2,000 years, and especially in this century, have hardly been such as to inspire them with confidence in the benevolence of more powerful nations. It should not be forgotten that it is hardly a year since the most powerful voice in Arab Palestine, that of the Mufti, was calling for the extermination of all Jews.

But even more significant are the universal reports from Israel about the inordinate pride of the people in their state, and their happiness simply because of its existence, regardless of the difficult conditions in the country. The meaning of this state of mind lies, of course, in the fact that after 2,000 years this pariah and reviled nation has at last fought its way to an uncertain equality with its superiors, and the people have taken to experimentation in new and unique forms of democracy as though wishing to feel their new freedom with their own hands. Today there is a greater flourishing of democratic forms in Israel than in any other spot in the world.

It is probably no exaggeration to say that, if by some miracle socialism were established throughout the world overnight, the Jews would be among the last, rather than among the first, to give up their state.

BASIS FOR POLICY

Only a few sentences are required to consider the counterposing of an appeal for peace to the Arab people

as against a course based on the attitudes of the present governments. Such a policy would be analogous to advising Finland or Norway to ignore the attitude of the Russian government and instead to appeal to the peaceful desires of the Russian masses. No doubt the sentiments of the Russians toward the Finns are friendly and peaceful enough; but when the tanks start rolling they will be manned, not by the Russian "people" but by soldiers in the army of the Russian government.

Similarly, although we cannot know, it seems rather unlikely that the shipments of British arms are going to the Arab masses; it is more probable that they are going to the governments. Of course the present regimes may be overthrown, but the timing and direction of such an upheaval will be determined by local Arab conditions, influenced by worldwide forces, in which the actions of the Jews will play anything, but a controlling role. For the Israeli government to base its policy today upon such a future upheaval means for it to base its existence, simply and purely, upon chance.

As for the proposed treaty with France, it is not clear whether Findley's criticism is meant to be principled or only tactical in nature. Principled, however, the government of any small nation has a perfect right to enter into a pact with the U. S., Russia, Tibet, the municipality of Hamtramck, or the Brooklyn Dodgers, if it believes that doing so will help in some measure to secure its independence. Criticism on this score is legitimate only if it is based on a purely practical, tactical level.

L. SHIELDS

Three Lines on Tito: Footnotes on Politics

By HAL DRAPER

With no new developments of importance in the Yugoslav-Russian tug of war this week, we take time out to observe some fringe effects of the Tito-Stalin struggle as reflected in radical politics in this country. Served up for observation will be one Stalinist, one Social Democrat and a couple of Martians.

Among the three we will see three lines—or rather, two lines and a corkscrew. In the Stalinist line we will observe a slight wiggle; in the Social-Democratic line, we will note a U-turn that would be illegal in almost any heavy traffic zone; and as for the Martian corkscrew—only a hopped-up hyperatomic encephalograph could follow its convolutions adequately.

The general Stalinist line on Tito and Titoism requires no exposition at this late date, not at least by us. What is news of a sort is that we are in a position to put the finger on an American deviationist in the highest circles of the Daily Worker—its foreign editor, no less.

Starobin Slips a Cog

On September 2, the N. Y. Daily Compass carried a debate on Tito vs. Stalin between Joseph Starobin, the aforesaid foreign editor, and the Yugoslav minister of information, each contributing an article for his side. Starobin's apologia does not add any more light on the subject than he is paid to do, but it contains an interesting Freudian slip straight out of the clinic. He begins his article by saying that the Tito-Stalin fight "is ceasing to be a family affair."

This may not strike the casual reader as an offense against the Workers' Fatherland, but it happens to be both a deviation from the Cominform line and an interesting revelation of the state of mind within the Stalinist movement on Tito. As far as the Cominform is concerned, Titoism ceased to be a "family affair" over a year ago.

That term "family affair" has been widely used to refer to the struggle, but not by the Stalinists. For what it meant was that Tito vs. Stalin was a struggle within the Stalinist family—that is, a struggle between Stalinists, a struggle within the world of the "popular democracies." But almost from the start of the break, the fulminations from the Cominform press and radio in the East Europe satellites read Tito out of the family, expelled him from their "socialist world," called him a "Trotskyite" and—soon after—an agent of imperialism.

All the imprecations of their controlled papers and airwaves, however, could not eradicate the underlying sympathy for Tito held among even bureaucratic circles in the other satellites—who only wish that they were in a position to follow his example. In spite of all, in spite of the Cominform's excommunication with bell, book and candle, Tito has been regarded even behind the Iron Curtain precisely as a member of the family who has strayed or gone too far, but they have not believed the charge that he has gone over to Western imperialism.

That charge has been dinned by the Cominformers for over a year, but Starobin, foreign editor of the Daily Worker, writes: "ceasing to be a family affair" only now.

Yugoslavs Rejoin "Civilization"

Our Social Democratic subject is William E. Bohn, editor of the New Leader, whose column of September 3 in that organ of social-ecogenierianism marks a turn that was as inevitable as anything is in this world of uncertainty. Yesterday Tito was a totalitarian dictator who obeyed Stalin's orders. Today Tito is a totalitarian dictator who does not obey Stalin's orders. The Social Democrat hauls out his bucket of gilt paint and sets to work.

To support Tito as against Moscow's drive to crush Yugoslav national independence is one thing. To whitewash him is another. Independent Socialists were quite willing to give military support even to a hangman like Chiang Kai-shek as against Japan's pre-World-War-II assault on China's national independence. But we are not prepared to gild totalitarian dictators merely because of a new lineup in the imperialist world's cold war.

Bohn has just discovered that the Yugoslavs are a "civilized people." He found it out listening to a Yugoslav delegate at a UN talkfest on conservation of resources. The state of Yugoslav civilization was demonstrated to him by two facts: (1) "I have often heard Yugoslav delegates make their speeches. Heretofore they have always followed the Russian lead." Now, you see, they don't. (2) The Russians boycotted this particular UN group. The Yugoslavs didn't. They sent a delegate who, Bohn admiringly points out, was handsome and spoke excellent French. "And, after all, he was there. He was saying to the Western world—and incidentally, to the Russian: We Yugoslavs are civilized people and we belong here with the civilized men of the West."

Polish, Czech, Rumanian and Bulgarian delegates, presumably, can be neither handsome, polylingual nor civilized, or if they are, it certainly is not worth mentioning. It takes a break with Stalin to bring out the gilt objectives.

We expect to see Tito described as the George Washington of Yugoslavia in any number of publications from the New Leader to the Saturday Evening Post.

Amazing Story

Anyone not aware that the Martians are organized in the United States has been understandably neglectful of a weekly called The Militant, which speaks for the Socialist Workers Party, a front organization for the Martian underground. Any oversophisticated reader who tends to be skeptical about interplanetary connections is simply ignorant of this group's "line" (excuse the expression) on the Tito question. There is no doubt at all that it is out of this world.

The savants of this tribe, viewing the Tito-Stalin fight from their own canals, have issued accounts which we here transliterate as closely as our knowledge of their language permits.

It must first be firmly fixed in mind that in their view Russia is a workers' state—degenerated, to be sure, under Stalin's counter-revolutionary rule, but still a workers' state in essence because it is still based on nationalized economy. In this workers' state, the workers themselves are in chains and have no rights—it is, in fact, a prison for the working class—but in spite of all, this enslaved working class is the ruling class of the prison state, ruling over their wardens because the cell blocks are collective property.

Yugoslavia, on the other hand, they have conclusively proved from telescopic photographs to be a capitalist state. Not an old-fashioned kind of capitalist state, naturally! Yugoslavia is a capitalist state in which the overwhelming percentage of industry is nationalized. Doesn't this make it a workers' state like Russia? No, because there are two slivovich-bottling plants in Belgrade which are still not nationalized; so all we can say is that it is an excellent example of bureaucratic state capitalism, by no means to be confused with the genuine degenerated article.

All this is clear enough to anyone heavily influenced by the abovementioned slivovich, Russia, as a workers' state, is to be defended in war. Our Martians in 1939 were for her defense against Finland and also for her defense against the rapacious assault launched against her by Poland as a result of the Stalin-Hitler pact. It was a matter of defending a workers' state against a capitalist state, and who could boggle, let alone palter?

Now this workers' state is in a tug-of-war with Tito's undegenerated capitalist state, and Martian ahkoon M. Bartell (according to The Militant for September 5) declares that "we are not neutral in this fight." Naturally. They support . . . Tito.

They support Tito, totalitarian head of the bureaucratic capitalist state, against the country where the working class is still the ruling class "at bottom." Reason? George Clarke in the same issue explains Moscow is seeking "the subjection and plundering of small nations." Russia is a BIG workers' state; Yugoslavia is a SMALL capitalist state (obviously much smaller than Finland); anyone can see the necessary conclusion.

The same Clarke says that the Yugoslav crisis reveals Stalin's "terror, purges and mass murder against its opponents on the left, against opposition in the workers' movement . . ." (Our emphasis.) The Yugoslav "capitalist" leaders are to the left of the Russian workers' state. . . . Tito is a Stalinist too, and Clarke is for the defense of Russia, but not for the defense of Russia against capitalist states led by Stalinists. . . . Clarke's tribe has called for unity between the Fourth International and Tito's CP, but is against unity with Stalin's CP, even though Tito's CP has not yet nationalized those slivovich plants. . . . Tito is addressed as "comrade" while Stalin is a "butcher."

Ho, my space ship! Blast off, Buck!

Get it EVERY week!

A sub to LABOR ACTION

is only \$1 for 1 year

Tom Clark Gets Bipartisan Promotion for Witchhunting

By EUGENE MARTEL

The virtually unanimous and bipartisan confirmation in the Senate of Tom Clark's advancement from attorney general to the Supreme Court, on Truman's nomination, effectively demonstrates the bipartisan contempt these parties have for the democratic rights of the American people and the affinity they feel for the most obnoxious symbol of the witchhunt in America today.

The least that can be said about the Clark appointment is that an incompetent crony of Truman's has been given the highest post open to the holder of a law degree—Clark's sole known qualification for sitting on the top bench of the nation. But one need only recall his damning four-year record as attorney general to get the full significance of the appointment.

(1) **Strikebreaker:** It was during Clark's regime that the Department of Justice reinstated "government by injunction" in its successful attempt to break three great strikes, two against the United Mine Workers, one against the railroad workers. Clark here acted as Truman's faithful right hand.

STARTED BLACKLIST SYSTEM

(2) **Witchhunter:** Again it was Clark who, via the Department of Justice, initiated the infamous "loyalty purges" with its oaths and vast army of FBI agents who, using the threat of defamation and firing, are in the process of terrorizing over two million government employees. It is Clark who also bears full responsibility for the hysterical spy trials and the vast FBI network of spies and informers within the labor and political movements which the trials have revealed.

(3) **Totalitarian:** It was Clark who, as attorney general, published his "subversive" list—an outrageous political blacklist which links, without distinguishing between them, genuinely socialist organizations with fascist and Stalinist fronts. Clark further denied these organizations information concerning what charges were brought against them, who conferred the charges, what evidence supporting the charges exists or any chance to refute the charges and thereby get off the list. Furthermore, membership in these so-called "subversive" organizations has been used as a pretext for firing workers from government and other jobs.

(4) **Bigot:** Clark has also been responsible for the persecution and deportation of the foreign-born. By supporting the reactionary concept that aliens are an inferior lot and should be denied rights enjoyed by citizens, Clark shows that he is no different from his Southern cronies who make similar false distinctions based on color and religion.

All this is in contrast to his policy of doing nothing when it comes to seriously prosecuting the trusts or putting an arrogant KKK in its place,

In addition to these, his widely known and openly defended activities, are a number of lesser known deals which have scraped the slimy bottom of the barrel of corruption.

For example, there is the Case of the Missing Report. In 1934, Tom Clark's law associate, William McGraw, was elected attorney general of Texas. In three years' time Clark's income from his law firm rose from \$12,000 to \$70,000 a year.

BIPARTISAN WHITEWASH

A committee of the Texas Senate investigated this. However, no one seems to know the whereabouts of the report. During a subsequent investigation, the investigator was told that the only copy of the report must have been "lost, stolen or destroyed." Clark did everything he could to impede the committee's investigation. When the missing report was mentioned before the Senate Judiciary Committee, Senator Langer cut the inquiry short, stating that the committee had investigated Clark before 1945 when Clark was named attorney general, and that Clark had submitted financial statistics contradicting and therefore by invalidating the Texas charges.

The facts are, however, that there was no public hearing concerning Clark in 1945, that Clark was the only witness (heard in executive session), that there is no transcript of his testimony and that the Texas charges were not transcribed in the committee's report to the Senate.

This has all the earmarks of a bipartisan whitewash to cover up not only some of Clark's dirt but also some that the Republicans might have left lying around. There are indications that Senator Langer is covering up a previous deal between himself and Clark made during the wartime sedition trial of American Nazis. This deal between Langer and Clark, who at that time was responsible for the conduct of the trial after the death of the trial judge, Chief Justice Eicher, resulted in a discontinuation of the trial.

It is significant that James J. Loughlin, the Nazis' defense counsel in 1945, endorsed Clark of the Supreme Court at the hearings.

All the facts indicate that Clark

made a defensible deal with Langer so as not to continue the prosecution of the Nazis. Langer is now covering up for Clark.

MISSOURI SCANDAL

And finally there is the Axtell affair:

Enos A. Axtell, favored Truman-Pendergast candidate, won the Democratic nomination to Congress in 1948 for the Fifth Congressional District of Missouri against a candidate whom Truman had sworn to purge. Subsequent investigations of the election indicated extensive fraud and voting violations. This forced an inquiry by a Senate judiciary subcommittee which found indications of gross election irregularities. It was up to Clark to investigate.

Instead, as a result of several maneuvers, he succeeded in whitewashing the whole affair. However, local pressure forced a Jackson County, Mo., grand jury to investigate. On May 27 the grand jury indicted 71 persons, at the same time finding "miscounts of shocking proportions" and requested that the Department of Justice and the FBI enter the investigation.

Clark did nothing that day. That night, the vaults at the election commission office were blown open and all voting records of the election stolen. The next day, a day too late, Clark ordered a thorough investigation. Everything here points to Clark's covering up of his boss Truman and Truman's pal, Pendergast.

That the Republicans have not jumped on this for political propaganda is indicative of the extent to which they themselves are involved in their own corruption. The two boss parties are mutually afraid of exposing themselves before the American people.

Organized labor was the only force capable or powerful enough to have fought Clark; yet with the exception of the United Mine Workers, the top leadership of the AFL and CIO actively supported Clark. The reformist labor leadership, in their preoccupation with playing tag with the "progressive" capitalist politicians, find themselves supporting the strike-breaking Tom Clark for the Supreme Court. Only the labor movement can suffer from this.

Clark's Heir for Thought-Control

Tom Clark's successor as chief witchhunter may not be any improvement—if anyone still expects much from any Truman appointee to the office of attorney general.

It was J. Howard McGrath, new attorney general and then a senator, who recently inserted in the Congressional Record, with a laudatory comment, a speech by Father Guthrie, president of Georgetown University, which more or less called for "opinion control" by the government.

Asserting that a bureau to control opinion may be necessary, Father Guthrie had said that "the state's thinking in this matter [opinion control] is much sounder than that of the resentful individual whose opinion is controlled."

The Japanese had a word for it too—"thought control"—and opinion control is right up the alley of the Catholic hierarchy, but up to now it's been officially un-American. Truman's new purge specialist seems to like the idea.

Cop Dons the Hood—No Change

KKK Gets New Race-Hate Merchant

By BILL HICKMAN

The Ku Klux Klan has a new chief. Dr. Samuel Green, for years head of the Klan, a man who spewed forth his race-hate filth as "imperial wizard" of the "Georgia association of klans" since the war, is dead, we are happy to report. Not that this means anything in the way of a change in this band of fascist thugs. Green has been succeeded by a man well qualified for the job.

He is Sam W. Roper, a former chief of police and formerly head of the Georgia Bureau of Investigation. For

those who have spent time around Southern towns, that recommendation is eloquent. The local police and deputies are always the ones who have merited the admiration of the white floism by having the most Negro beatings to their credit.

More than police anywhere else, the Southern deputy and marshal is selected for his excess of beef, his sadistic aggressiveness and his general lack of intellect. Candidates who possess all the above qualifications are in sufficient abundance to cause only those who are of surpassingly brutal ignorance to be chosen. Sam

W. Roper was chief of police in a Southern town.

But more than that, this man was formerly head of the Georgia Bureau of Investigation. This is the same Georgia Bureau of Investigation that was supposed to make it unnecessary for federal authorities to interfere in any prosecution of Ku Klux Klan activities. Remember?

When it was suggested that the FBI investigate some of the fascist maraudings and killings of the Klan in Georgia, the Southern senators began to snort that the Georgia Bureau of Investigation would handle it. Now the chief of this bureau becomes chief of the Klan. If that is a kind of ironic joke, one may rest assured it is no joke for the Southern Negro who is forced to live under the club and gun of this type of vermin.

"ANTI-SUBVERSIVE" TOO

Roper began his term as the exalted head barbarian by declaring that the KKK would "cooperate" with law enforcement agencies in "suppressing subversive activities." That means anyone who is opposed to lynching and Klan terrorism. Just by way of reassuring anyone who might doubt his qualifications, he went on to say: "My 29 years as a law-enforcement officer has given me wide experience in that field." You may take it as good coin that Roper knows whereof he speaks in relation to that point.

At the same time comes news of the formation of a "new Ku Klux Klan organization in Montgomery, Ala." The Imperial Wizard of this newly formed social abscess is a fanatical illiterate by the name of Lycurgus Spinks. Lycurgus was a candidate for governor of Mississippi in the last election there but lost out to a "better" man.

So—if you can't be governor of Mississippi or chief of police, there's always the Ku Klux Klan. Our finest Southern gentlemen hold all such posts interchangeably.

UAW and Reuther

NEW BOOK BY HOWE AND WIDICK ON AUTO UNION HAILED BY CRITICS

For all who are interested in the American labor movement, one of the most important books of recent years was published last week. It is *The UAW and Walter Reuther*, issued by Random House. The 310-page book, written jointly by Irving Howe and B. J. Widick, sells for \$3.00. It is thoroughly documented and contains first-hand material found nowhere else.

Initial reviews of the book have been very laudatory. In the September issue of the Atlantic Monthly, Harvey Breit writes:

"The book itself has an excellent logic: its authors begin with a brief, compact sociological history of Detroit, which amounts to a setting of the stage; the drama is then produced and the reader witnesses a series of significant actions—the struggles against Chrysler and Ford, and internecine war, the role . . . of the UAW during the war; there then follows a portrait of Reuther that I think will strike the reader as scrupulous and discerning. The accumulation of all this carries the authors into considering the problems that confront the union and its leadership . . . they achieve a remarkable objectivity (it is visible in their style, which is direct and lucid) . . .

"The authors do not give up their critical independence in order to gild their lily. They criticize Reuther, they point out his shortcomings (in a deft, brush-stroke comparison between the auto union leader and Gene Debs) . . . This is a unique book. As the authors conceived it and wrote it, the UAW is transformed into a momentous microcosm, in which nothing less than democracy is at stake. . . . The book itself is relevant not only to pro-trade-unionists and anti-trade-unionists, but to all of us who are concerned with the state of the union."

In the August 28 Sunday New York Times Book Review, Foster Rhea Dulles writes of *The UAW and Walter Reuther*:

"The full story of the UAW's growth and development, set against the background of a vivid description of life in the automobile city of Detroit, is told in this book from an inside point of view. . . . Here also are engrossing discussions of the major problems that the UAW faces. . . . Notwithstanding the obvious sympathy with which they describe the union, however, the authors write with knowledgeable understanding, critical acumen and forthright candor. . . . This is particularly true in their discussion of the danger of a bureaucratic concentration of power within the union. . . . Their portrait of Walter Reuther, which concludes with the interesting observation that he is an unfinished personality" torn by an inner conflict between power and vision, is admirably balanced."

As further reviews appear in the general and labor press, they will be reported in these columns, since LABOR ACTION believes that its readers will be interested in knowing of the reception given this important study of the American labor movement and its future.

Tale of 3 Countries

BRITISH MINE UNION EXPOSES STALINIST MANEUVER WITH FACTS

From England comes a piquant example of Stalinist demagoguery and double bookkeeping, exposing at one blow the fake "leftism" of the CP and the condition of workers in the Russian satellites (specifically Poland).

When the Stalinist-run (and ruined) mine workers' strike started in France last October, the British Stalinists thought they could make hay on the issue among the mineworkers in England. The French miners were fighting a legitimate grievance, and their own CP leadership merely utilized their conditions and need to make them a battering ram against French economy. Yet even John L. Lewis in the U. S. came out for support to the men's struggle, as was proper, and in England Secretary A. L. Horner of the National Union of Mine Workers thought to make capital on the issue.

Horner is the Stalinist secretary of the union, but does not control the National Executive Committee. The South Wales area council sent the NEC a resolution "protesting against the export of coal to France [from Britain] while the French miners are on strike." Horner vigorously supported this resolution in the NEC, which appointed a subcommittee to look into it.

Horner had argued that the British miners were interested in helping the French raise their standards because low standards across the Channel affected standards in England through the play of competition. The union subcommittee replied by pointing to Poland:

"We share Mr. Horner's concern in this matter, but submit that, if he is genuinely concerned on this issue, he should also give some attention to the position in Poland. As the miners of Scotland and the Northeast especially will know from bitter experience, Poland has for many years been one of our chief competitors in the export market; and even today Poland is supplying coal in the Scandinavian and South American markets at prices which are below those being quoted in respect of our own coals.

"How is this possible? It is possible because of the very low working standards in the mining industry in that country as compared with our own. In Poland underground workers are employed for 45 hours per week (six shifts of 7½ hours) for an average wage of approximately three pounds per week, and thousands of German prisoners of war are employed for eight or nine hours each day WITHOUT PAY, their only consolation being that they receive full army rations, which are considerably higher than the rations of Polish civilians.

"Surely, when account is taken of the fact that the competition of French coal in the export market is infinitesimal as compared with the competition of Polish coal, the conditions in Poland are far more likely to affect our British standards."

Scab Coal from Stalinland

The subcommittee's second point dealt with the question of the proposed boycott on coal exports to France during the strike with the same kind of "You're another" argument which effectively pilloried the Stalinists without justifying the NEC's own policy. But it made the CPers wriggle in the pillory.

They pointed out that while Stalinist Horner was demagogically demanding that the British workers should stop the flow of coal to France, the "people's democracy" of Poland, a Russian satrapy where Horner's friends ruled, coal exports to France had actually INCREASED during the strike!

This is where they turned the statistical tables. The CP'er who heads the Scottish Miners Union, Abe Moffat, was compelled to admit that the facts given were correct (he made the reservation that he disagreed with the political conclusions drawn from the facts, however!).

The subcommittee cited the figures: "Of the total solid-fuel imports into France during the period January-June 1948, 4½ per cent came from the United Kingdom, whilst 11 per cent came from Poland. During the period July-September, only 2 per cent was imported from this country, but imports from Poland remained at between 10 per cent and 11 per cent. During the period of the strike, however, Poland actually increased its exports to France to a level which was higher than at any time during the present year. During the first month of the strike, i. e., October, the imports of coal and briquettes into France from Poland represented more than 15 per cent of the total; the imports from the United Kingdom, however, were only 4.4 per cent of the total. That is, imports from the United Kingdom remained at the same level as during the first six months of the year, whilst imports from Poland in relation to total imports increased by some 45 per cent."

The episode forcefully reminds one of the notorious policy of Russia in selling oil to Mussolini during the Italian aggression on Ethiopia, at the same time that its stalwarts everywhere were yelling for an embargo on Italy.

LABOR ACTION

A Paper in the Interest of Socialism

Published Weekly by the Labor Action Publishing Co.

114 West 14th Street, New York City 11, N. Y.

GENERAL OFFICES: 4 Court Square, Long Island City 1, N. Y.

Tel.: IRonsides 6-5117

Vol. 13, No. 37

September 12, 1949

Editor: Hal Draper

Editorial Board: Hal Draper,

Albert Gates, Emanuel Garrett

Business Manager: Joseph Ross



Subscription Rate: \$1.00 a Year; 60¢ for Six Months (\$1.25 and 65¢ for Canada and Foreign)

Re-entered at Second-Class Matter, May 24, 1940, at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 3, 1874.

New York Public Meeting

Europe Between Two Imperialisms

First-hand report by

MAX SHACHTMAN

just returned from a tour of England, France, Germany, Denmark, Holland

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 30 — 8:00 P. M.

CORNISH ARMS HOTEL

311 West 23rd Street, near 8th Ave.

Adm. 50 cents

Students 25 cents

U.S. Occupation Puts Hitler's Business Tycoons Back in Power in Germany

The Western powers in Germany as occupation authorities are busy denouncing "revived German nationalism," and they dismantle factories necessary for the economy, when it suits the interests of their home capitalists. At the same time German industry has been put back into the hands of the men who ran it for Hitler, whose interests made the rise of Nazism possible, and whose social system found a champion in fascist totalitarianism.

The election victory of the Christian Democratic Union was hailed in the West. This party, together with its Free Democratic Party ally, are for the maintenance of this social system.

In the July 29 issue of U. S. News & World Report, names are named and the men who have come back into economic power are spotlighted. Stinnes, Thyssen, Krupp's men, Schacht's underlings—their continued power is the price of the maintenance of capitalism.

The following detailed fingerprinting is from the above-mentioned issue of U. S. News & World Report, a conservative businessmen's weekly.—Ed.

Control of the Ruhr now rests in the hands of a few hundred men, as it did during and before the war. Most of the Ruhr's present bosses are men who reached their peak of power during the Hitler period. Of the top industrialists who emerged between 1919 and 1933, only a few are still around in person, and their future roles are not yet clear.

Hugo Stinnes, 52, one of Germany's most powerful steel, coal and shipping magnates in the period between the two world wars, is regaining part of his industrial stature. He has reclaimed his shipping and textile companies from the Allies. Stinnes is free to resume his business activities and is trying to line up capital to regain his prewar position as the Ruhr's most energetic organizer of industry.

His partner, Fritz Thyssen, is generally considered to be too old to make much of a comeback. He is 75. Thyssen, one of the original organizers of the giant Thyssen-Stinnes

United Steel cartel, is living in Belgium, managing what remains of his widespread interests from there.

SAME MEN BACK

The Krupp family is out of business. But some Krupp executives are running sections of the Krupp works under Allied trusteeship. A Krupp-trained executive, for example, is managing Germany's largest tank plant in Essen, now converted to a repair plant for locomotives.

The steel mills and coal mines of the Ruhr have been separated from the wartime trusts by order of occupation officials. Ownership is held by the Allies while the plants are being reorganized into competitive companies. The plants, meanwhile, are being run by German trustees and directors.

In many cases the present executives are the same men who operated the plants during the war. The old owners, meanwhile, have reclaimed their ventures that were not tied directly to the steel or coal industries, and they are back in business.

The Ruhr's business combines, such as the Thyssen-Stinnes United Steel cartel and the Mannesmann and Kloeckner trusts, still control big holdings in such fields as chemistry, machinery, metal working, shipping and other industries that tend to compete directly with the British. Inside the Ruhr, the old combines operate gas and water works. They are deeply involved in banking and commerce, and even own textile plants, theaters and hotels. The pre-war owners are confident that eventually, as the build-up of Western Germany takes hold, they will be able to get back their steel and coal interests.

BRITISH-APPOINTED

Steel industry is under the direction of Heinrich Dinkelbach, 58, who was a director of United Steel from 1929 through the war. Dinkelbach, for many years a top executive of the Thyssen-Stinnes trust, is head of the Steel Trustees Association that runs the Ruhr steel industry.

He was appointed to that job by the British, who decided that his financial aid to the Nazi Party was small when compared with the extent of his industrial holdings in Germany.

Allies Dismantle German Industry On Fake Plea of Ending War Power

One of the main focal points of opposition to the Western occupation powers in Germany, loudly expressed by all the parties in the recent election there, is the question of dismantling of German factories and plants.

The fair-seeming reason for this plan is, presumably, the removal of Germany's industrial war potential. The opposition to it among the German people is represented here as indicative of their secret desires for rebuilding a war machine.

Under this cover a policy is being pursued which strikes most immediately at the people's livelihood in the stricken country and less directly at the prospects for European recovery. But the policy is not being pursued for these reasons: American, British and French industrial powers are out to see, not that Germany never becomes a warring power, but that it will not compete with them on the world market.

Red-white-and-blue editorialists in this country may be able to convince the American people that the dismantling program is necessary for peace, but the German people see what is happening before their eyes. Two cases in point are provided by the plants in the Ruhr district which bounced into world news shortly before the election when riots and armed struggles took place around them.

WAR PLANT?

One of these was the Gelsenberg Benzol A.G., a huge synthetic gas and oil refinery plant at Gelsenkirchen. That part of the works which used to produce gas from coal is at a complete standstill. Only the refinery is working, using crude oil imported from abroad under American contracts. With the permission of the British Military Government, 23 million Deutschmarks were invested in this plant in order to increase its output of refined fuel oil. This is now being dismantled—for "peace."

The approximately 12,000 people in the area, whose livelihood is provided by the 3,000 workers employed in the plant, know that a similar refinery at Wessling, which gets its crude oil from the British Shell Company, has not been scheduled for dismantling. They openly ask whether they are to be robbed of their livelihood because of a battle between two groups of foreign capitalists? . . .

There is very little chance for these workers to find any alternative employment. Many of them are miners, no longer able to work in the

plants and people, otherwise disabled, who would become a charge upon the community.

But they cannot be accused of being "selfish" or "short-sighted" in their reaction. Neither the military government nor the economists can tell them why the plant has to be taken apart. There is no question but that its refining capacity is needed; if this were not so, there would have been no reason for the investment extending its capacity.

If Gelsenberg is dismantled, its products will have to be imported and be paid for in hard currencies. In a few years' time new refineries will have to be built, at a cost to which one must also add the cost of dismantling itself.

FIRST IT IS REBUILT

The second plant, Bergkamen, was the scene of the recent action in which the people set up barricades to prevent dismantling and in which the British used Belgian troops with machine guns to disperse them. Even more than at Gelsenberg, the people of Bergkamen (which is much smaller) depend for their livelihood upon the chemical plant or on the mines. Eighty per cent of the houses of Bergkamen, were destroyed during the war; three years ago a mining disaster brought the already heavy death toll up to 1,300 (the total population has never been more than 6,000).

Under the supervision of the British military government, the chemical works, which had been completely destroyed during the war, were reconstructed through an investment of 12 million DM. Its reconstruction was almost completed when the order came for its dismantling.

The British use of troops here made its way into the U. S. press, but lesser known episodes in the struggle did not. The troops at first refused to permit the works laboratories to continue operation (it is an integral part of the safety measures of the local mines). Only after a Social-Democratic Landtag member intervened was the ban rescinded by the commander.

The latter's original intention to arrest all the workers was later somewhat revised, but the chairman of the works council was not allowed into the plant. Four days later he found his office completely wrecked by the troops.

All this is only one segment of the whole picture which explains why the German people voted last month to tell their foreign conquerors: GET OUT OF GERMANY!

Dinkelbach is one of the few Ruhr industrialists who worked his way up from humble beginnings as the son of a laborer.

Many of the men he has appointed to operate steel plants are the men who ran them before and during the war. United Steel, which controlled 47 per cent of Germany's prewar production, has directors in 10 of the industry's 25 plants. Directors of the Mannesmann combine are running three plants. Men from the Kloeckner trust run three other plants and share in the management of a fourth.

SCHACHT'S MAN IN

The chairman of the board of United Steel operates two Ruhr steel plants and has extensive interests in coal and other industries. He is Herman Wenzel, a wartime executive who was director of 21 firms, and chairman or deputy chairman of eight of them during the Hitler days.

A former Mannesmann executive, Karl Bugerth, is running two steel plants at Düsseldorf and Duisberg. Gerhard Bruns, a former steel-plant manager and a director of 15 other firms, is the commercial director of the Ruhr's second largest steel plant. During the war he directed arms production in most of Eastern Germany.

Coal production, although officially separated from the steel industry, is being handled by German industrialists who are equally at home in coal, steel and a host of other industries that dominated much of industrial Europe before the war.

Head of the coal industry, for example, is Hans Joachim von Loebell, who has charge of coal distribution for all of Western Germany. He was hired in 1934 by Hjalmar Schacht, then Hitler's financial wizard, to boss the Nazi take-over of the Saar coal mines. He now holds directorships in a num-

(Continued from page 1)

ber of important coal, shipping and synthetic-oil industries. Working with him is Heinrich Kost, a general director of one of Germany's biggest coal companies and also connected with chemical, gas and oil firms. Kost was appointed by the Allies to head the German Coal Mine Management board.

Helping him are Herman Reusch, chief representative of one of the biggest old-line steel cartels, and Wilhelm Roelen, for years a Thyssen executive. Roelen is now director of one of the Thyssen sequestered steel plants.

In finance, men who were powers of German banking and investment operations before and during the war are back in positions of influence. Herman J. Abs, a Berlin banker who was highly regarded by Hjalmar Schacht during the Nazi rise, often is called "the most powerful man in Germany" now.

As head of the Deutsche Bank, Abs was Germany's biggest financier under Hitler. Before the war, he held as many as 75 corporation directorships and was a financial backer of the giant Mannesmann steel combine. Now he is the head of a German corporation set up to finance the growth of industry. In his new job he dominates industrial investment in reviving Germany.

German recovery, under U. S. guidance, is to be in the hands of such men. Top power is being taken over directly and indirectly by the same men who held it during the war. These men with the know-how will be on hand as Germans go back into the markets of the world to try to regain a big share of the business done by the German industrialists in the years between the wars.

What has happened, in a word, is that Curran has sought to replace the old-time shipboard militancy of the ranks, led and organized by the union, with over-the-table and by-way-of-the-telephone negotiations. The long experience of waterfront workers proves how costly this type of dealing with the shipowners can be. Gains made on the picket line are sacrificed on the negotiating table where the membership has but little control.

This type of "business unionism" is cheap for the bureaucrats but expensive for the workers, and ultimately must lead to the end of the greatest strength of the NMU: the ability to struggle of its rank-and-file. Bureaucrats go in for this type of operation because it creates a docile membership and guarantees the security of their own jobs.

Thus for the two years between conventions, Curran has had effective control of the union apparatus. What has he done with his stewardship of the NMU?

It must be reported with regret that the scorecard does him no credit. The ranks of the NMU are rife with complaints of the poor service by the picarders. Beefs remain long unsettled; shipboard militants find themselves under pressure not only from the companies, which is understandable, but from Curran himself; those union patrolmen who are still willing to fight a beef find themselves buffeted from the very top of the union; the old membership-welfare department of the union, which Curran cleaned out because it was loaded with hacks, has not been restored, and members find themselves without representation when they have to face the relief boards, Coast Guard, and the multitude of other governmental agencies that make the life of the seafaring man a misery.

The traditional give-and-take relationship between the membership and the picarders of the seafaring unions has been replaced by the cold hand of bureaucracy and Curran has become almost as inaccessible to the

Dismantling by Bayonet

Dismantling of industry in Germany still proceeds with more machine-guns on the job than workers. An AP dispatch from Oberhausen, Germany, reports: "British troops in battle dress and mobile machinegunners took up ready positions today to enforce the dismantling of the Ruhr-Chemie synthetic gasoline plant."

"Eighty German wreckers tore into the dismantling job, with 700 to 800 soldiers on guard. Then twenty workmen quit at midday saying they could not work under military escort."

"At the same plant August 30 a British official's car was turned over and German wreckers were driven off by plant workers protesting over the loss of their jobs."

"About 500 of 3,000 employees will be thrown out of work by the dismantling of the plant that turned coal into gasoline and industrial products for Hitler's war machine." (N. Y. Times, September 6.)

Ten British soldiers for every worker doesn't seem to be able to speed the work.

Note the "angling" in the last sentence of the dispatch. The implication appears to be that the plant "deserves" dismantling because it served "Hitler's war machine" (like every other industrial plant in Germany, of course). How a perfectly peaceful Germany could get along without gasoline production is not explained by the dismantling program officials—unless the idea is that the Germans will have to buy it from British Shell Company.

British Dollar Crisis —

(Continued from page 1)

lem) but in a multitude of complex factors all of which form a part of the reactionary system of economic and trade relationships existing in our capitalist world. It is the fettering, crushing and hampering of the free flow of trade and commerce which is primarily responsible for the British crisis.

Britain must export vast quantities of food and raw materials. These come chiefly from the United States and Canada. Britain seeks to earn the money for this import trade by its counter-balancing export trade. But no nation has dollars, except the United States. And the United States, with its vast production and its surpluses of everything (particularly at the moment, with a decline in business) will not buy from England. Exports from England to America have declined catastrophically, and are running 30 per cent below last year.

How, then, can England get dollars to lessen its dollar shortage, if American capitalism is obliged to place every conceivable hindrance in the way of trade? The same process, of course, holds true for all of Europe, but England is most vulnerable. This is the explanation of the immediate crisis. The remarks of various officials, notably Paul Hoffman, to the effect that England should increase its exports to America are shamefully hypocritical, as they well know.

What do the British propose? They have their long-range proposals, as well as proposals which one might describe as being purely nationalistic and "British." Little or nothing will come of these, because the American spokesmen are solely guided by American economic and imperial concerns.

Britain would like to see its war debts, which amount to over \$12 billion to the "sterling area" (India, South Africa, Canada, etc.) renegotiated by the United States and either liquidated or greatly reduced. This would take the steady pressure off England proper and stimulate trade with the empire area which has been steadily taken over by the United States. Britain would like the United States to raise the price of gold, an artificial measure for strengthening the value of whatever reserves still are in the hands of the British government. And Britain would like America to expand its stockpiling of raw materials (particularly rubber from Malaya), in order to stimulate general empire trading.

Close to Knife's Edge

It should be noted that the British representatives really have no long-range proposals or solutions worthy of the name. Conservative politicians that they are, to whom the broad concepts of socialist economic planning and training are utopian, dreamers, they limit their proposals to immediate stop-gap measures (a new loan), or half-way suggestions which do not go beyond the framework of world capitalist economy.

constitutional amendment barring so-called "subversives" from membership in the union, and compelling every member to sign a loyalty oath. This was carrying the politics of Taft-Hartley right into the heart of the NMU, and the rank and file revolted.

A new movement arose led by a group of officials of the union and activists of the old Rank and File Caucus. To it flocked all genuine militants of the union, representing a wide range of opinion but in thorough agreement on one point: the Curran resolution represented a brutal attack on the democratic rights of the membership and was most certainly not the correct way to fight the hacks.

They shared the common belief that to place a weapon like that into the hands of any leadership would endanger every militant unionist in the NMU. Who was to judge who the "subversives" were, they asked—the FBI (well known as a friend of seamen), the Coast Guard (AMMI branch), or Curran himself, who had already demonstrated his "objectivity" in such matters?

The struggle of the new Rank and File Caucus resulted in a victory. Curran's "Taft-Hartley" amendment was squelched when the Honest Ballot Association was compelled to throw out the whole referendum vote because of various irregularities.

RANK AND FILE GAINS

Defeated on that run, Curran then tried another tack. He would wait for the convention and there present further amendments designed to bar dissidents from membership in the NMU. The Rank and File Caucus has responded by organizing itself to resist this attempt.

Thus, at the convention, three groups will be present to contest control of the union.

First—Curran and his colleagues, resting on the most backward and bigoted section of the union and consisting to a great extent of tired picarders seeking to insure their posts.

Second—the Stalinists, still tightly knit around their waterfront section of the CP but generally discredited in the ranks of the union and weak.

Third—the Rank and File Caucus, representing the militants and progressives of the union and consisting of a wide range of divergent groups, but united to protect the NMU from Curran's bureaucracy and Stalinist wrecking.

It is impossible at this stage to predict exactly what the relative strength of the three groups will be among the delegates to the convention. But some recent events in the Port of New York may serve as an indication.

In the election of delegates from the port, thirteen out of the total of seventeen were Rank and File. Only one of Curran's men made the grade, and the hacks were limited to three despite their attempt to confuse the issue and get a free ride on the Rank and File slate by nominating seven non-Stalinists who were already named by the Rank and File.

On August 29, a special meeting was held, of all delegates already arrived in New York, for the purpose of electing a pre-convention creden-

The United States leaders, on the other hand, have an entirely reactionary approach to the problem, both in an immediate and long-range sense. To them, it is primarily a business shabby in which they have advanced money to some shaky entrepreneur who now desires still more capital as a prop.

And like any good banker, they wish to see that the business concern to which they are advancing loans is to be run according to their ideas. Careful expenditures, no waste, and above all, no competition! Britain must compete on the world market, to be sure, but not where the United States is! Production costs must be lowered by an increase in labor's productivity.

How? That is the headache of Britain's Labor government. There must be a cut in the costs of "government," which means a cut in expenditures by the new British "welfare state" with its numerous social measures, nationalized medicine, etc. Expenditures for any new nationalization of industry must be halted. A debtor must be forced to live close to the knife's edge—that is sound pawnbroker policy!

Furthermore, sterling or the pound (now valued at \$4.03 per pound) must be devalued to approximately its current black-market rate on the Swiss market, which is \$2.90 per pound. The effects of such a devaluation are obvious, and we can understand why the British resist this demand. It would instantly raise prices and costs in England itself, and put her at a still greater disadvantage in competing with America for foreign trade.

Election in the Balance

It would lead to still greater austerity and lower living standards in England, and would really be a first-rate disaster for the British masses who would find themselves in an inflationary position. For America, it would make infinitely easier its drive to break up the closed sterling area, and take away whatever trade remains there for England.

It is easy enough to see how reactionary and cynical is America's position. Faced with the general decline of its empire, a decline in its world trade, a very high price structure due to its low productivity, old-fashioned machinery, etc., the position of Britain as a nation is pathetic indeed. The Labor government is facing a bitter struggle for electoral survival, and its yielding to American demands might easily mean the difference between victory and defeat in the 1950 elections. It cannot cut wages, devalue the pound, lower imports, speed up labor, etc. (which is the American program for it), without creating immense resentment.

What, then, shall it do as it begins to negotiate with its wealthy oppressor who says, in effect: It's up to you to do the proposing! We'll listen to you, but don't suggest anything we don't want to hear!

This is the situation, and we shall see how it develops.

3-Cornered Fight Looms in NMU —

tials committee. Curran had attempted to pack the meeting by bringing his own supporters up from New Orleans at his own caucus's expense. Despite this, the nearly one hundred assembled delegates elected five members of the committee endorsed by the Rank and File Caucus.

ORGANIZATION NEEDED

But this preliminary show of strength only serves to point up one weakness of the Rank and File Caucus. While Curran can count on the apparatus of the NMU itself to cement his caucus, and while the Stalinists can depend on the discipline of their Waterfront Section to create a tightly knit group, the Rank and File Caucus has so far failed to develop a firm organizational foundation for itself. Counting on the correctness of its program alone, it has neglected the highly important organizational phase of its activities. Here is its Achilles heel.

This failure of the Rank and File makes it possible for either of the tightly knit groups to snatch victory from it. For its organizational looseness on the convention floor will permit Curran or the hacks to exercise greater control than their numbers warrant.

Furthermore, in the event that its point of view carries the convention, it will require a well organized and democratic group to see that this victory is carried into action. That is why active militants within the caucus are striving to create a more formal organization, not a mere top committee but one that will sink deep roots into every section of the union.

But in order to do this, simple anti-Curranism or anti-Stalinism is not enough. The Rank and File Caucus has as the first point on its agenda the creation of a rounded program of action around which the greatest support can be rallied in the union: a program that will guarantee that internal union democracy will flourish and that the struggle against the shipowners and all their allies will be carried on until the vital goal of the improvement of seafaring conditions is achieved.

Such a program would include the education of the ranks of the union on the nature of both Stalinism and Curranism, thus providing the membership with real weapons to combat both. Stalinism can flourish only where union men are ignorant of what it is, where hacks can wear the masks of militants and where Curran exists whose own reactionary character makes martyrs of the CPers. Curranism, for its part, will die out in the union when the membership actively participates in NMU affairs and takes the lead in the struggles for its own interests.

Any attempt to combat Stalinism through such mechanical means as loyalty oaths and the like can only represent a danger to the democratic traditions and methods of the labor movement.

TOWARD A PROGRAM

Such a program for defense of the democratic tradition of the union would be pegged unless it is also propped up by the active defense of minority groups and aliens in the

union. The hacks must not be permitted to pose as the sole defenders of these minority groups.

The past record of the CP amply proves that it uses these groups only as a means to advance its own line, and how, when the needs of the Kremlin demand it, it is prepared to sacrifice the best interest of minorities at a second's notice. It rests with the Rank and File to create a real program that will defend and advance the condition of union minorities.

Present unemployment on the waterfront has caused hundreds of seamen to turn to governmental agencies for relief. The union has failed in the past period to provide adequate representation for these men and for the many others who require union intervention in their relations with Coast Guard, companies and so forth. It rests with the Rank and File to support the creation of an active and capable union-welfare department that will fill these important needs for seamen.

Even more imperative is the creation of a program for the improvement of maritime conditions. The laying up of ships and the decline of the American merchant marine in the past few years have made the problem of unemployment a life-and-death issue for seamen, which was a necessity up to now to bring maritime working conditions up to par with shoreside industry, now becomes vital if thousands of seamen are not to live in the shadow of constant unemployment.

STEERING CLEAR

Also before the convention will be the program of how labor can best carry out its struggles on the political front.

The crimes against the working people passed as law by the 80th Congress have not been rectified by the 81st. The policy of trade-union dependence on the boss parties, which resulted in the election of the 81st Congress, has by now shown itself bankrupt. Only one road remains, the creation of a new independent labor party.

A number of ships' crews have already passed resolutions to be placed before the convention calling upon the NMU to take the lead in building the independent political organization of labor. All the advanced sections of the trade-union movement will look with interest to see what treatment the convention accords these resolutions.

The course of the militants at the convention is a clear one. They have to sail the path of independence between the hacks, who serve the interests of the Moscow bureaucracy, on one side, and of Curran, who does the work of the FBI and the State Department, on the other.

And this same course is that which steers clear of the parties of the bosses and the party of the Kremlin. Such an independent course can insure the flourishing of internal democracy in the NMU, the improvement of conditions for all at sea, and an end to Taft-Hartley Acts