

WORKERS AGE

A PAPER DEFENDING THE INTERESTS OF WORKERS AND FARMERS

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At First GLANCE

By JAY LOVESTONE

GENERAL Secretary Browder has just returned from Moscow a newly tailored person in a political sense. Confused as his language may be, yet its newness and difference from the old must be recognized. We must confess that we were rather surprised at the following statement made in the interview given to the press by Browder.

"We are not so close to fascism in the United States, but the same forces are at work toward it here as abroad. The bi-partisan coalition of the American Liberty League is headed toward fascism. All of the bloc being gathered against Roosevelt is headed towards fascism. One of his weaknesses is that he hasn't understood how to fight it and has surrendered to fascist tendencies in his own organization. He is not a fascist, but if he doesn't oppose it, the fascists will eat him up."

In the Daily Worker of September 19, Comrade Browder submits his new ideas, somewhat more carefully, as follows: "The Roosevelt administration has not been an effective fighter for American Liberties. . . ."

WELL, well. Happy days are here again! This is rather stunning. We have before us a book entitled *Communism In The United States* by the same General Secretary Browder. In this book, which is offered to us as an authoritative, official expression of Communism in the U. S., we read a poetry of a different kind. In this book which A. Bittelman characterizes as offering "the key to an understanding of Communism in the United States", we find the same General Secretary Browder saying the following about fascism and Roosevelt. The aim of the New Deal, Browder tells us, "is to establish fascism at home." (Page 14) We are further told that Roosevelt's "domestic policies are openly recognized as identical with the measures of professed fascist governments." (Page 14) "The Socialist Party", continues Browder, supports the A. F. of L. leaders and endorses their activities supporting every bad policy of the New Deal—inflation, NRA, AAA, PWA, CWA, CCC, Wagner Bill, etc. hailing these fascist and war measures as 'steps towards socialism.'" (Page 15).

The outstanding leader of official American Communism goes on to be even more explicit and wrong when he says: "The New Deal is not developed fascism but in political aim and direction it is the same as Hitler's program." (Page 31) "In Kentucky they already have an open fascist dictatorship which differs from capitalist 'democracy' in Chicago, Detroit, and New York only by its discarding of all pretenses and bragging about what others try to conceal." (Page 96) "It is clear that fascism finds much of its work done in America and more of it being done by Roosevelt." (Page 116).

OF course even the General Secretary of the Communist Party has a right to change his mind. This right becomes a duty when he is ordered to change his mind. But, when a political party changes its position, it should state why. It should tell the working-class frankly that it is dropping a mistaken policy. Perhaps the Seventh World Congress has instructed Comrade Browder to come to the conclusion that the Roosevelt Administration has moved left since July 4. We are in full disagreement with such an instruction. In our opinion the Roosevelt Administration is definitely swinging to the right and is today more openly anti-labor than in the honeymoon days of the NRA when the C.P. branded it as a fascist regime.

Another question that certainly should disturb every C.P. member is the following: How can the C.P. leadership distribute at one and the same time Browder's book which brands the Roosevelt Administration as a fascist regime and Browder's latest statement? The latter rather bemoans the fact that Roosevelt is not fighting hard enough for liberalism and against fascism and tends to make Roosevelt the spearhead of resistance against the development and encroachment of fascism in the United States.

We hope that every party member will put on his or her thinking cap and really make an honest effort to try to answer for themselves, if not for us, the questions we have posed here.

Build the Weekly
"Workers Age"

The Liquidation of the "Left" Groups

(AN EDITORIAL)

IN the last few weeks Communist Party spokesmen in a number of unions have made public declarations of intention to dissolve the so-called Left Groups in these organizations. This move can only be welcomed for, if properly carried out, it will constitute a definite step towards a break with the destructive policy and practise of the C.P. in the trade union movement. In fact, the abandonment of these "Left Groups," originally created as an expression of the dual unionist course and now thoroughly identified with every sort of irresponsible disruption, must be regarded as a necessary and first prerequisite for anything the C.P. can do to rehabilitate its followers in the unions and to undo the accumulated damage which years of dual unionist sectarianism have brought to the labor movement in general and to the Communist movement in particular.

But the exact meaning of this step must be clearly understood. It would be a gross opportunist error to conceive of it as making for the liquidation of trade union groups as such. The "Left Groups" must be dissolved not because groups as such are in any way illegitimate or harmful but because of their own hopeless record of disruptive, anti-union activity. It would be monstrous to consider the dissolution of the "Left Groups" as a ground for the liquidation of the progressive movement in the unions. Even the slightest step in this direction would be disastrous, would play right into the hands of the conservative officialdom and seriously undermine effective union democracy. The condition in which trade unionism finds itself today, the many grave and difficult problems facing labor as a whole, the unbroken gravity of the economic crisis, the growing menace of war and Fascism, all imperatively demand a virile, fighting labor movement as the only salvation for the working class—and this means, in the first place, the strengthening of the existing trade unions and their transformation into powerful, militant, industrial organizations. But this can be accomplished only if the progressive and class conscious workers unite their forces in an organized movement, striving in a responsible and constructive manner to advance the cause of progressive unionism. Indeed, it may be laid down as a fundamental truth in the present situation that the future of unionism in this country is organically bound up with the strength and development of the organized progressive movement within its ranks.

Insofar, therefore, as it will help clear away from the scene

a hopelessly discredited but still damaging remnant of the old sectarianism, the liquidation of the "Left Groups" is to be welcomed. But liquidation is not enough. What is to come after? To all intents and purposes, the "Left Groups" have been conducting themselves as closed C.P. organizations, as mere party fractions. We hope that the new decision will mark the end of the attempt of the C.P. to apply inner-party methods and procedure for the solution of the problems confronting the workers in the mass organizations. Unfortunately, however, it is now necessary to raise a sharp voice of warning against a serious danger already manifesting itself—the danger that the liquidation of the "Left Groups" will be followed either by unprincipled collaboration with the most reactionary elements in the unions against the progressives or else by a new series of disruptive maneuvers in the form of unofficial "organization committees" or "active members groups," organized outside of and in opposition to regular union channels—a new and degenerate version of the policy of "independent leadership." It is plainly up to the members and followers of the "Left Groups" to do everything in their power to head off this danger and to assure a healthy and constructive outcome of the liquidation of the "Left Groups." In the final analysis, it should be remembered, the real significance of this as of any other move on the part of the C.P. will be determined by the character of its practical activity in the unions, especially in regard to the progressive movement. When this process is completed, the workers, formerly in the ranks of these groups or following them, will surely take the straight road leading them, as responsible and constructive trade unionists, into the ranks of the progressive movement. If they really want to be of service to the cause of labor they have only to make a clean break with the old methods and the old prejudices and to find their place in the ranks of those who are fighting constructively for a better and more effective trade union movement!

The events of the last few years are eloquent in their appeal to all militant and class conscious workers in the unions to band themselves together in a broad, non-partisan movement on the platform of progressive unionism, to organize progressive groups where they do not exist, to join hands with forces already thus organized, so as to speed the building up of a mighty, aggressive and effectively organized trade union movement dedicated to resolute class struggle on behalf of the interests of labor.

Ethiopia Disturbs Europe's Balance

By AUGUST THALHEIMER

The League of Nations is starting its negotiations today* on Ethiopia. It is useless to speculate about the possible outcome of these negotiations since by the time this writing reaches America the results will already be known. Instead, I shall point out the effects of the Ethiopian affair on European relations of powers which are already discernable.

EFFECTS OF WAR IN ETHIOPIA

Let us start with France. Apparently, she has to choose between Italy and England. In reality, her choice has already been made by the nature of things. The rapprochement between France and Italy was designed to prevent Italy from allying herself with Nazi Germany and to have Italian forces attack Germany in case of war. Should there be an Ethiopian war, however, Italy will be stumped as a serious military force in Europe. Recent maneuvers in Upper Italy which were to prove that Italy could simultaneously carry on a colonial war in Africa and remain a full-fledged military force in Europe did not prove anything of the sort. To carry on maneuvers for a few days is one thing, to wage a war is quite another. The Ethiopian war will tax the military, economic and financial resources of Italy, as time goes on, to such an extent that she will be greatly weakened if not paralyzed in Europe. Thus the value of Italy as an ally against Nazi Germany is lost for France. Then the danger arises that Italy will again turn towards Hitler Germany. But Italy and Hitler Germany have no common aims in this case.

CAN THE NAZIS WORK WITH ITALY

The Austrian question remains unsolved. If Italy gave up Austria voluntarily to Germany this would be such a heavy blow to Italy as a European power that all possible gains in Africa could not make up for the loss in prestige. This is out of the question. But perhaps there is a common interest that Italy and Hitler Germany share in colonies in Africa or elsewhere? As is well-known Hitler Germany has already publicly drawn the conclusion from the remarks of the English Foreign Minister which established the right of Italy for colonial expansion, namely, that it is the right of Germany for colonial expansion. But the fact that both powers have colonial claims does not mean that they will work together in this particular case. In addition, Hitler Germany values the friendship of England much more than that of Italy, England being the country which must be taken into consideration first as far as colonial expansion is con-

cerned. It is much more advantageous and more favorable for Hitler Germany to win colonies with the aid of England than against the latter's wishes. Italy's value as an ally against Germany is diminished for France and there is no serious threat that Italy will become an ally of Germany.

FRANCE NEEDS ENGLAND'S AID

On the other hand, the value of England as a European pillar of support for France remains. Moreover, France will surely attempt to exact further pledges from England as compensation for the loss of Italy as an ally. Such attempts judging from the French press are already being made. The French government, so the press relates, has asked England whether she would be willing to participate in sanctions in case of a European conflict as she did in the case of the Ethiopian war. On the other hand, France must seriously reckon with the possibility of a rapprochement between England and Germany.

All of which proves that the choice of France as between Italy and England was predetermined from the very start in favor of England. This situation is already reflected in the composition of the French delegation to the League of Nations. The delegation consists of Foreign Minister Laval, Herriot and Paul Boncour. Herriot and Paul Boncour are

known for their anti-Italian policies, and for their insistence upon the strengthening of the League of Nations. These two were also active forces in bringing about the rapprochement between France and the Soviet Union.

ROLE OF THE SOVIET UNION

The last-mentioned factor is not accidental. If on the one hand Italy is being eliminated as a military force, England, not being a great power on land, is not very useful for the specific military aims of France. It therefore, follows that the Soviet Union, the strongest European land power will increasingly attract France. This is true in even stronger measure of the Little Entente. The latter is demanding the speedy conclusion of the Eastern pact (and the Danube pact). The situation created by the Ethiopian war will therefore be very favorable to Russian foreign policy. The relative increase in power of Hitler Germany thru the Ethiopian war is forcing France and the Little Entente into closer relations with the Soviet Union than has previously been the case. France until now hesitated to start concrete military negotiations with the Soviet Union. It is obvious that these matters are now being speeded up.

All these turns will not proceed along perfectly straight lines; the basic line of

(Continued on Page 4)

In the Next Issue:

JAY LOVESTONE writes on "The Comintern And The Question Of War."

WILL HERBERG ends his article on "The Rise And Fall Of Dual Unionism."

ECONOMIST discusses the strengthening of the elements of state capitalism in an article entitled—"The Meaning Of The Banking Bill."

JEAN LE GAULOIS, a newcomer to Workers Age, presents the first of a number of short articles dealing with the veterans' movements. The first one dealing with the myth of the unknown soldier is entitled "Dead Men Are So Damned Funny."

Beginning with Monday, September 30
WORKERS AGE, NEW WORKERS SCHOOL,
COMMUNIST PARTY (OPPOSITION)
RIVERA MURALS
will be located in much larger and more convenient
quarters at
17 WEST 17TH STREET
The old mail address (Box 68, Station "O") is still good.

BERT WOLFE on the Seventh Comintern Congress
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 3, IRVING PLAZA
16th Street and Irving Place

* This was written on September, 4, 1935.

General Strike Hits Coal Mines

Conference Breaks Up Over Rates For Piece Workers; Roosevelt To Intervene

Four hundred thousand soft coal miners are involved in a general strike in the industry because the union leaders and coal operators could not agree on a compromise of the 3c difference per hour as an increase in the rate of the piece workers.

So bitter was the resistance of the operators to any improvements for the miners that despite the concessions by the union on almost all of the original demands put forward no agreement could be reached on the rate for the piece workers. The union had agreed that the agreement was to expire on April 1, 1937 instead of September 16, 1936 as proposed. As against the demands of 50c per day increase for men paid on day rate basis the union was ready to accept 40c. The union had also accepted an increase of 10 per cent for dead work and an increase of 6c on the ton in the cutting and loading rate.

For the piece workers however, the operators proposed an increase of 6.9c per ton as against 10c demanded by the union. On this the union would not compromise and the conferences were again deadlocked. This time however no further extensions were granted and the miners began to pour out of the mines at midnight of September 22.

However, it would not surprise us in the least to see the U.M.W. officialdom cook up some reason on which to send the miners back to work pending further negotiations.

Teachers Score Union Splitters

NEW YORK, N. Y.—Under the signature of Louis J. Rosenthal, the United Committee to Save The Union has issued a detailed news release to the press in which the charges of the Lefkowitz-Linville faction in the New York Teachers Union are taken up and thoroughly demolished.

Strongly condemning the splitting tactics of Lefkowitz and his supporters the statement goes on to say: "To organize a dual union movement against any section of the A. F. of L. is treachery to organized labor and no past record of liberalism on the part of sponsors of this dual union movement can change the character of such anti-labor activity."

The statement then goes on to answer in detail the following charges levied against the united committee; that the A.F.T. is controlled by an unprincipled machine; that 60% of the membership has repudiated the convention decision and that "political left wingers" control Local 5 in New York and the A.F.T. as a whole.

The statement considers the main charge to be that of control by "political left wingers" and proceeds to deal with this matter:

"In answer to the major charge that the A. F. of T. and the New York local is controlled by 'political left wingers', we assert that the union is and will continue to be a non-political trade union, affiliated with and loyal to the best traditions of the American Federation of Labor. The teachers union movement contains and seeks to include all teachers irrespective of race, creed, color or political opinion. Furthermore, the present opposition groups have arisen on the basis of differences on trade union policies affecting the immediate interests of the teachers and the public school system. The 'reds' issue has always been raised by the enemies of free public education in order to intimidate teachers defending their interests and to prevent their organization into the A. F. of T. Because Dr. Lefkowitz and his associates have been increasingly losing the support of the union membership, they too, have taken to calling those who refuse to support them, 'radicals' and 'reds.'"

The statement ends with an appeal to the teachers and to the general public to continue their support of the teachers union and the American Federation of Teachers.

Mr. Lefkowitz received a severe blow from an unexpected source in the course of the last few days when he appeared at the New York Central Trades and Labor Council to bid his adieu. He was severely criticized by delegate Shapiro, an appointee of the Lefkowitz administration, for his resignation from the union. What is more significant, Mr. Mulholland, vice-president of the Central Trades and Labor Council, made it known that it was his opinion that no man was bigger than the labor movement, and that no matter what the cause, registration and splitting of A. F. of L. locals were impermissible.

