

**INDEPENDENT SOCIALIST LEAGUE
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LABOR ACTION

MAY 16, 1949

A PAPER IN THE INTEREST OF SOCIALISM

FIVE CENTS

U. S. Backs Dictators South of Border, Says Guatemalan Delegate

By A. FARRARRA

A bitter attack on Washington's reactionary policy in Latin America was delivered by Eugenio Aragon, Guatemalan workers' delegate to the International Labor Organization's regional parley now being held in Montevideo.

The ILO, an affiliate of the United Nations, is examining labor conditions in Latin America. Aragon denounced "imperialism" and charged that the current anti-Communist drive in the hemisphere is serving as a cloak for neo-fascism.

The frankness with which the labor delegate from the tiny Central American republic spoke is explained by the fact that Central America is a powder keg today. Reactionary political forces are on the offensive, and, as the experience of the last few months shows, are ready to take the road of civil war to install militarist and totalitarian regimes.

A few weeks ago Guatemala was the scene of an attempted uprising against the Arevalo regime. Prior to that, the Nicaraguan dictator, Somoza,

who has long enjoyed the support of the United States, attempted an invasion of Costa Rica.

The epidemic of counter-revolutionary uprisings in Latin America began last October with the Odrias uprising in Peru. No sooner had the militarists unseated the Bustamante government than the United States recognized the Odrias regime, and thereby gave the go-ahead signal to reactionary forces in the other Latin American countries.

A wave of conspiracies, aborted uprisings and disturbances in Chile, Bolivia and Venezuela immediately followed. Only the Venezuelan coup d'état was successful. Again the United States granted recognition to a regime that had come to power against the will of the majority.

In this struggle between "democracy" and "militarist reaction," the United States has acted and continues to act as the ally of the landlord-militarist ruling groups.

In addition, the United States has blocked several attempts made by Latin American representatives in the

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Morale High in Singer Strike As Company Remains Arrogant

By A. WINTERS

ELIZABETH, May 7—The end of the first week finds the Singer workers, over 9,000 of them, solid in their determination to win a decent contract from this international sewing-machine monopoly. The workers are members of Local 401 of the United Electrical Workers, CIO.

The Elizabeth workers were joined by the Bridgeport, Conn., Singer workers, members of UE Local 227, on May 4, who voted 12 to 1 to go on strike after contract negotiations resulted in the same arrogant attitude displayed by Singer in all of its plants.

Pledged to support the strikers are the Singer workers of Truman, Ark., and the Furniture Workers, CIO, of South Bend, Ind., and the Singer workers of St. John, Canada, members of the Steel Workers, CIO. Negotiations are being planned to get the support of the Singer plant in Scotland.

Evidence of the arrogance and union-smashing attitude of the Singer officials is shown by the following news item that appeared in the Newark Evening News of May 2 under the head: "MERRY CHRISTMAS TO STRIKERS, HIS OFFER."

"ELIZABETH—At a conference of Singer officials in the Winfield Scott Hotel last night, M. L. Lightner, vice-president of the Singer Manufacturing Co. and of its sales subsidiary, the Singer Sewing Machine Co., suggested that when checks for last week's pay are mailed this week a card reading 'Season's Greetings—Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year' be included.

"He said the strike could last until 1950 and beyond before he would consent to any modification of the work-standards system or any other of the major demands of the strikers. The company reportedly has in ware-

houses enough machines, parts and needles to take care of normal demand for at least six months."

However, the morale of the workers is high. Picket lines are well manned in all kinds of weather and the resources and ability of the workers are in evidence everywhere.

The Stalinist leaders of the strike

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Build-the-ISL Meetings Rally Support

Across the country last week, inaugural meetings to build the new Independent Socialist League were successfully held in a series of political meetings. These meetings combined the announcement with celebration of the traditional holiday of world labor, May Day. Members of the National Committee of the League brought messages and greetings.

Noteworthy in the reports from the main centers was the presence of numbers of workers from shops in major industries and unions. Lengthy discussion and question periods followed the main addresses. Keenest interest was evinced in the reasons for the launching of the new organization.

Since a fund drive is under way to provide the financial base for the ISL, readers will be glad to know that these meetings were in every instance unusually successful in this respect as well.

Eighty-five people, most of them workers from auto plants and students from Roosevelt and Chicago Universities heard Max Shachtman, ISL chairman, at the Chicago inaugural meeting forcefully reassert the necessity for socialism. Don Morgan, of the Socialist Youth League, urged

The Story Behind the News—

FORD PROVOKED STRIKE; REUTHER FACES HARD TEST

End of Berlin Blockade Launches New Stage in Battle for Germany

"The ending of the Berlin blockade," said Dr. Kurt Schumacher, head of the German Social-Democratic Party, "means the start of a new and great struggle for the whole of Germany."

It is this now obvious fact which has greatly tempered the enthusiasm of the German people and the Berlin population at the welcome news that the 10-month-old airlift is about to end. While the immediate danger and tension of war has greatly relaxed, new and even larger questions are at stake.

The rapid events of the last week have brought profound changes in the European and world situation as a whole, as well as in Germany itself. The disclosure that secret negotiations have been going on for two months to lift the blockade was followed by the actual event itself and arrangements for a new Four Power conference to be held this month in Paris. Finally, the Bonn Assembly concluded its work and announced the formation of a federal republic for Western Germany.

All these happenings have, understandably, been greeted by people everywhere with a genuine, if somewhat skeptical, enthusiasm and eagerness. To many, it seems that perhaps the cold war is coming to an end, that a peace treaty with Germany may actually be signed and a new era of good will and East-West cordial relations is about to begin. Let us see how much truth there is in such expectations.

SHIFT IN STRATEGY

That Stalin and the Kremlin rulers have decided upon a significant shift in strategy and tactics is beyond any question. It is, of course, far too soon to measure the extent and depth of this change, but we shall soon know how far Stalin is prepared to go by observing the behavior of his spokesmen at the coming conference,

as well as by keeping a sharp eye on Stalinist tactics and strategy elsewhere. Nevertheless, there is no question that by this sudden shift, Stalin has reopened once more the whole question of Germany and its future.

But despite the remarks of President Truman, the lifting of the blockade does not simply put matters back as they were a year ago when the blockade was imposed. Not only has much changed in the meantime, but the issue is no longer that of the city of Berlin. It is rather the issue of Germany's fate as a whole. The whole new tactic of Stalin was deliberately calculated to do exactly this.

There are many factors motivating this unexpected development, from the Russian viewpoint. As with every major change in strategy, the motive has both "positive" and "negative" sides. All are not yet clear, nor will they be until the Paris conference itself has begun. But certain factors are already known. In the first place, there is no question but that Russian imperialism lost its struggle to terrorize and take over Berlin, thanks not exclusively or even primarily to the astounding airlift, but above all to the determined anti-Stalinist stand of the millions of Berlin people. Stalin suffered a first-rate and catastrophic political defeat at the hands of the Germans who fought the Russian terror to a standstill.

In addition, from a narrow economic point of view, the Russian zone of Germany has been far more drastically effected by the Allied counter-blockade than vice versa. The choking off of Ruhr steel and coal supplies has hit the Russian zone, and hit it hard. Productivity has suffered and, recognizing his political defeat, Stalin is further encouraged to make this strategic withdrawal by these economic difficulties.

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By WALTER JASON

DETROIT, May 9—The United Auto Workers, CIO, face a major crisis in policy and 1949 strike strategy as a result of the strike at the giant River Rouge plant of the Ford Motor Co. Here is a strike which the Reuther leadership tried to avoid, but which the Ford Motor Company was determined to provoke, and it succeeded.

The full story of this strike, directly involving over 100,000 Ford workers, involves important revelations of the strength and weakness of the Reuther leadership, of the UAW ranks, and the stormy course that the 1949 economic struggles of the union are destined to run.

The background of the current strike is vital to an understanding of the crisis in which the UAW now finds itself—a crisis so evident in Detroit that only a sharp turn in events will change the present situation.

As most readers of LABOR ACTION know, the Reuther strategy for 1949, as reported in various stories, was to concentrate on Ford for a \$100-a-month pension plan, to be obtained by strike action in July if such tactics were necessary. Then Reuther planned to squeeze Chrysler and perhaps General Motors into a similar settlement.

This strategy was to unfold in a "favorable political climate," since the Truman-Democratic administration was pro-labor and the Taft-Hartley Law would be repealed, and a new period of New Dealism, called "the Fair Deal," would begin. At least this was the "blueprint" of Reuther's thinking.

Within the UAW, the Reuther leadership was overwhelmingly supported and these ideas accepted. Nothing was going to upset the applecart.

To be sure, there were disturbing signs of speedup attempts in many plants, but that was an old story in the UAW, and it could be handled as usual. Some pressure here, a concession there, some slowdowns here, a walkout there; all this was secondary.



WALTER REUTHER

The major concentration was Ford in July.

What this over-all campaign failed to take into account was (1) the illusory character of the "pro-labor" Washington administration, as everyone recognizes except the UAW leadership, which finds itself increasingly embarrassed by the failure of Truman to come across.

FORD'S STRATEGY

(2) The fact that the Ford Motor Company labor-relations boss, ex-FBI Agent John Bugas was not a simple-minded dope who would sit idly by while Reuther gained important concessions for the UAW ranks and won fresh glories as the up-and-coming labor leader in America. On the contrary, Bugas worked out a strategy to

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"There's no evidence of speedup on the line... I haven't seen anyone drop dead yet."
—Statement by a Ford official in the negotiation with the Auto Workers Union.

Fund Drive Hits 41 Per Cent Mark

By YETTA BARSH
Fund Drive Director

MAY 9—Another \$1,734.61 has been collected for the Build-the-ISL Fund Drive during the past week. This brings our total up to \$5749, or to 41 per cent of our goal.

Our Chicago branch was the heaviest contributor. Their contributions for last week add up to \$480, giving them a total of \$771—over one half of their substantial \$1500 quota. This

fulfills their promise for this week. We hope the branch can continue at this pace.

San Francisco, without any advance notice, sent in \$258.40 the early part of the week. They have now achieved 44 per cent of their \$800 quota. The branch Fund Drive director writes: "When the branch accepted the quota of \$800, some of us were a little dubious of whether or not we

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On Russian and Social-Democratic Policy at German Assembly—

Bonn Causes Cleavage in SD Ranks

By EUGENE KELLER

The conclusion of the deliberations of the Bonn (Western German) Parliamentary Council coincided almost to the day with the beginning of U. S.-Russian negotiations on the lifting of the Berlin blockade. These negotiations had been in progress since February; the U. S., however, obviously delayed their becoming "officially" and publicly known until it would be able, as it now is, to confront its rival with the finished Atlantic Pact and the creation of a Western German state.

Possibly, the Russians could have temporarily prevented the consummation of the Western German state, had they lifted the blockade on their own accord and proposed renewed negotiations on Germany. The purpose of the blockade had been, after all, to compel the Anglo-Americans to renege on their London agreement under which the German Constitutional Assembly was created in their zones; and to allow the Russians to participate in a general German settlement.

Whatever immediate reasons motivated the Russians in trying no serious maneuver to delay or prevent adoption of a constitution at Bonn, their passivity and the passivity of the Stalinist "People's Congress for Unity and a Just Peace" (intended nucleus for an all-German government) is a sign of the depth of their political defeat in Germany. The

terms of the coming German settlement cannot but be powerfully affected by the existence in fact of a Western German state, securely controlled by the Anglo-Americans.

RUSSIANS AGAINST REAL UNITY

This passivity has another meaning, however. Contrary to general assumption and contrary to the innumerable proclamations and demonstrations of the above-named Stalinist front organization in support of German unity (which means a centralized German government), official Russian policy has favored a "decentralized" German government, based on a two-chamber system and dependent upon the provincial diets. (A statement of policy to this effect is contained in the declaration issued at the Warsaw conference of the foreign ministers of Russia and the satellite states, June 1948.)

The Russians, like all the other reactionary forces, native or foreign, who have a stake in Germany, favor a "federal," i. e., emasculated central government. Such an arrangement, moreover, would allow the Russians to hold on to their extensive investments in the Eastern zone. Twenty per cent of all key industries there are in the hands of Russian corporations; and an unknown number of establishments are "partially" controlled by them through the device of joint-stock companies.

At the same time it would afford

the German capitalists of the Western zones the "protection" they desire against the social structure that has prevailed in Eastern Germany since 1945.

Thus, it is not the techniques of control which are at issue but rather who will exercise them and to what extent.

We must view in the light of these circumstances also touched on in last week's LABOR ACTION what the role of the German Social-Democratic Party (SDP) has been at Bonn.

SDs INCONSISTENT

The Social-Democrats adopted (though they failed to pursue consistently) a correct policy in opposing "federalism" and supporting the centralization of government to the largest possible degree obtainable in a divided Germany. Such a policy is obviously in consonance with the legitimate interests of the German people in preserving themselves as a national entity. Were they to lose the latter status permanently, their fate as a semi-colony, dependent upon American alms, and their cultural decline might be irrevocable.

Furthermore, "federalism" will weaken and eventually emasculate the German labor movement. Finally the only effective way by which the reactionary policies of the occupants can be opposed and by which a progressive democratic economic policy can be realized—thus counteracting

all the prevailing disintegrative tendencies—is by means of a centralized government.

The actual stand taken by the Social-Democratic representatives at Bonn consisted in public breast-beatings about principles on which they would never give in and weak-kneed compromises whenever their political jobs appeared threatened by the possible unilateral action of the Christian-Democrats might take with the support of the military governments.

On the issue of the extent of financial control to be exercised by a future central government, they appeared at first adamant in support of a large degree of centralization in the power of taxation—so much so that they threatened to walk out of the assembly (and that would have meant

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NEXT WEEK The RDR Conference

held in Paris on April 30—so called "International Day Against Dictatorship and War"—will be discussed in LABOR ACTION, on the basis of information and reports now coming in. Only brief accounts have appeared in the U. S. press thus far. See next week's LABOR ACTION for the fullest information and discussion.

Shachtman Debates A-Pact at U. of C. AVC Sponsors Discussion With Chicago Professor Before 170 Students

By DON HARRIS

CHICAGO, May 5—Sponsored by the University of Chicago chapter of the American Veterans Committee, Max Shachtman, national chairman of the Independent Socialist League, participated together with Professor Hans Morgenthau in a discussion of the question "Can the Atlantic Pact Prevent War?" before an audience of 170 veterans and students at the University of Chicago tonight.

Prof. Morgenthau, being an advocate of the "realist" approach to power politics, did not make the claim that the pact COULD avert war; rather he claimed that it was clearly superfluous inasmuch as it would be the United States which, in the case of any aggressive move by Russia, would take military action, whether any pact existed or not.

The countries of Western Europe, he said, would be unable to defend themselves adequately because of

what he termed "social instability," although he admitted that the arms spent under the pact would probably be used to bolster "regimes of the status quo." He stated that were he a senator, he would "vote reluctantly" in favor of the pact, although he would prefer to see "a unilateral declaration by the United States" that the U. S. would go to war in any instance of an aggressive move by Russia.

Comrade Shachtman analyzed the pact as a further step on the part of the U. S. to organize its part of the world for the war it is preparing to wage against Russia. He dissected the fallacies that lay behind the official arguments in favor of the pact, showing:

(1) That no legal, political, moral or other basis existed for differentiating between countries included in the pact and the Russian satellites, as the victims of Russian aggression; (2) that it is a purely military instru-

ment, sufficient to prevent war only so long as Russia is not prepared to wage one, and (3) that it could not begin to solve the burning social question of the difference between capitalist imperialism and Stalinist collectivism, basic to the entire conflict.

In the lively discussion which followed, sustained by questions from the floor, Professor Morgenthau expanded somewhat on his previous remarks, admitting that he did not believe that the present governments of Europe would be able to solve the problem of Stalinism by winning the masses away from the Communist Parties, but he refused to make any comment upon the substance of Comrade Shachtman's remarks. An inquiry on the meaning of the concept "Neither Washington nor Moscow" presented Shachtman with the opportunity to develop the program of independent socialist struggle against the war preparations of both imperialist camps.

Civil Rights Defense Group Forms in Phila.

PHILADELPHIA, May 4—Announcement was made here today of the reorganization of the Citizens Council on Democratic Rights in order to widen its field of activity and to increase its effectiveness. This action bids fair to be of great aid to individuals and to organizations such as labor unions and the NAACP which are frequently involved in defense of civil rights.

The formation of a broad civil rights defense agency has long been a crying need in this area since there are not local units of the American Civil Liberties Union or of the Workers Defense League.

Another proposal made at the Conference on Civil Rights would set up, on a state-wide basis, a Pennsylvania Fellowship Commission patterned after the Philadelphia commission which co-sponsored today's conference. Such a state commission is deemed necessary because of the failure of the Legislature to pass a state Fair Employment Practices Act.

Almost 200 community, religious, labor and interracial organizations were represented at the conference, including the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the CIO City Council, B'nai B'rith, American Jewish Congress, YMCA and YWCA. The main speakers were civil rights attorneys Milton R. Konvitz and Morris L. Ernst.

ATTACKS GOVERNMENT PURGE

Besides those mentioned above, proposals for future action were: a campaign to use the spirit as well as the letter of the existing Philadelphia FEPC law; a campaign against discriminatory housing and for a re-development program in the city, and for the establishment of a free city college.

Both Konvitz and Ernst spoke on the government's "loyalty program" and its relation to civil rights. Konvitz, formerly of the staff of the American Civil Liberties Union and now professor of labor relations at Cornell, condemned the "loyalty program" as it has developed in practice;

he said an atmosphere of fear has been created in which people are afraid to assert their rights of assembly, speech and organization. Ernst, on the other hand, stated his substantial agreement with the government's policy in dealing with the Communist Party.

Konvitz compared the use of FBI spies, as revealed in the New York trial of the Communist Party, to the methods of the Russian GPU and the Nazi Gestapo.

OHIO LABOR NOTES

Senate Pulls Teeth from FEPC

By JOE CLARK

The strike of Cleveland painters shows no signs of settlement so far. In all the local newspapers the employers are appealing to the public to oppose the strike because "the increases would raise building costs tremendously."

But the welfare clause seems to be the biggest objection from the employers' point of view. They don't like that at all. Picket lines have been set up, and so far, the other AFL crafts are respecting them.

EFFECTS OF FORD STRIKE

The great Ford strike has already shown reflexes in Cleveland. Auto mechanics at 15 Ford agencies walked off their jobs yesterday. They are objecting to the Ford company's proposed time-study rates, which, they claim, would cut their pay about 40 per cent.

Major Cleveland employers whose plants supply parts for Ford-built cars are anticipating layoffs and production cutbacks on a large scale as a result of the Detroit strike. Officials of the Weatherhead Company and the Cleveland Graphite Bronze Company predict shorter work weeks and lots of layoffs if the strike lasts more than a few days.

U. C. Politics Club Hears Mills, Coser on Socialism

CHICAGO—A discussion of "Perspectives of the American Labor and Socialist Movements" highlighted the University of Chicago Politics Club's May Day party, for which over one hundred students jammed the home of Instructors C. Wright Mills and Lewis Coser on April 29.

Saul Mendelson, editor of Student Partisan, led off with a general presentation of the independent socialist viewpoint. He considered the development of an independent labor party as the indispensable next step in this

country, and tied up the efforts of socialists here with the efforts of those independent socialists in Europe who oppose the policies of both Russia and our own State Department.

He termed the Truman Doctrine, Marshall Plan and Atlantic Pact "related steps in the development of America's economic and strategic position as a world imperialist power," and placed great stress on the "necessity of helping those in Western Europe who seek to develop an Independent Western Union capable of counterbalancing the two big imperialist powers."

SHIFT TO U. S.

Lewis Coser laid great emphasis on the shift in the center of gravity for socialists from Europe to the United States.

He said that the peoples of Western Europe feel themselves to be helpless pawns, at the mercy of the two giants, and that the socialist movement cannot look to Europe for guidance or base itself mainly on the problems of Europe.

"On the contrary, it must be successful enough in the U. S. to open up a road for the rest of the world. Therefore socialists here must bend every effort to the task of breaking out of their political isolation and of giving a socialist perspective to the American labor movement."

MILLS STATES VIEWS

C. Wright Mills asserted that our country symbolized the successful application of manipulation in place of coercion as a means of maintaining the status quo.

He explained the various forms that this manipulation took, particularly the use of the newly-developed media of mass communication, and developed the idea that "socialists and the labor movement must not in turn attempt to manipulate human puppets but must develop the spirit of free inquiry and the habit of independent thought among the people."

(Reprinted from the U. C. "Maroon," May 6.)

Build-ISL Meetings - -

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the main address the audience remained for two hours to discuss. \$175 was raised.

From San Francisco comes word of the May Day meeting addressed by Gordon Haskell, local organizer. The theme of the meeting was strongly stated by Comrade Haskell: "We call upon the workers, Negro and white, to join with us in building this great movement. We call upon the students, the young people, upon the intellectuals and professional people, to join our league of struggle for socialism."

In Philadelphia, Hal Draper, editor of LABOR ACTION, made the keynote speech on the theme "What Is

Independent Socialism?" It was announced that \$213 of the branch quota had been contributed, taking Philadelphia well over its half-way mark. Joseph Arnold was chairman.

At the Baltimore meeting, Comrade Draper devoted special attention to the Maryland Ober bill.

In spite of the worst political witch-hunt and "red scare" by the press in its history, Buffalo held a meeting attended by 68 people, most of them workers from Westinghouse, Bell, Chevrolet and other large factories. Presumably because of the current scare, the SWP did not hold a May

Day meeting this year. The extremely successful ISL meeting lasted until 1:30 in the morning as those present discussed and asked questions of the speaker, Max Shachtman.

Several other cities where meetings were held have not yet reported.

... AND Rejected

"These facts [the mounting war budget, etc.] give point to our socialist demand that the government precede or, at the worst, accompany the North Atlantic Pact by a tremendous appeal for universal disarmament under proper provision for international security. At least, the North Atlantic Pact should not go into effect until such an appeal has been made and rejected."

(From Norman Thomas' column in the Socialist Call, April 22.)

That socialistic conscience of his is giving Norman SUCH trouble!

Household Hint

"There is an art to living within your income. It lies in getting the most satisfaction out of what you have to spend."—New York Post, February 9.)

A raise would help too.

Humorous Subject?

"The Soviet government—presumably because it feels anything it might say would be distorted or ridiculed anyhow—publishes no official statistics about its penal system. Publications like 'National Guardian,' which would print such statistics as straight news, cannot get them."—National Guardian, February 28, 1949 (official organ of Henry Wallace's Progressive Party).

Now, of all things, who would RIDICULE the Russian penal system?

View with Alarm

"Having just completed an extended tour from coast to coast, I have again had driven into my mind the question: is pride in work fast diminishing? There is the train conductor who no longer removes his cap when collecting tickets in or passing through the diner. There's the dining-car steward who does not get up, or even look up, when answering a woman passenger to the effect that 'lunch is not yet being served.' Frequently, there is the pullman car porter who does not shine shoes or ask, 'Brush, Mister?'"—(Lawrence A. Apley, president, American Management Association, in Management News, March.)

Chassis, Mister, that's what the world's coming to.

ISL Fund Drive - -

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what make it. But since our May Day social-forum we feel pretty good about the situation." The San Francisco contributions have been coming in steadily since the beginning of the drive.

Detroit's \$219.46 increases the total contributions from that branch to 55 per cent. Although this fell short of the goal which the branch set for itself for this week because of the recent strike development, the branch still feels confident that it will meet its quota, even if a bit more slowly than expected.

Philadelphia too has crossed the 50 per cent mark. \$129 was received from Philadelphia this past week as that branch continues its steady pace.

NEW YORK STILL UP

New York City continues to be the top ISL branch on the list. We have received another \$349.50 from the New York organization, proving that there has been no falling-off despite the huge sum contributed the previous week. The New York organizer tells us that the Industrial Branch alone has raised over \$1000 thus far and continues to lead the rest of the city's branches.

Reading entered the race this week with a contribution of \$50, representing 50 per cent of its quota. We call

that a real beginning and hope it will soon be followed by another substantial contribution.

Akron also made its first substantial contribution of \$47, lifting its total to \$59.

Cleveland and West Virginia add to the general picture with their respective \$35 and \$33 contributions.

The Socialist Youth League continues to participate actively in the drive. A total of \$43 has been received from the SYL this past week. The \$23 contribution from the Chicago SYL increases its percentage to 123 per cent and makes it the first group to go over the top. That means that we have been able to reduce our "Miscellaneous" item to \$1027, which closes the gap a bit between the quotas set and our \$14,000 goal.

A most encouraging response has been received from readers and friends of LABOR ACTION and The New Internationalist. During the week they sent in a total of \$48. We hope that the rest of our readers will follow suit and will send us their contributions without further delay as a token of their support and belief in the aims of our press.

Fill out and clip the accompanying coupon and send it in with as much money as you can raise from among your friends and other readers. Help us hit the \$14,000 mark!

Readers of Labor Action Take the Floor...

Two Criticisms—

To the Editor:

Allow me to make the following comment on Hal Draper's lead article in LABOR ACTION, April 18.

Draper's article may be summarized to the effect that the United States intends to provoke another Pearl Harbor by means of garrisoning its troops in various "sensitive" areas in Europe, so that a minor incident can speedily be converted into a major conflagration. He cites a number of statements by government spokesmen and quotes N. Y. Times editorials to bear out what he assumes to be present American policy. He concludes by stating: "Opposition to the Third World War now means: Demand the withdrawal of the armed forces of the U. S. from Europe."

It may or may not be true that Draper has correctly appraised the present intentions of the American government. We don't know, and cannot know. But it is impossible to formulate an adequate political program unless a far more cautious approach to an evaluation of the situation is made than can be said of Draper's. Such an approach would certainly have to take account of the vast complexities confronting American policy makers, complexities of which they are, by and large, aware and which make it unlikely that their plans aim at provoking another Pearl Harbor.

Undoubtedly there exist strong pressures, especially within the military sector of the government, which seek a preventive, that is, an early war, which, of course, would include a "Pearl Harbor." Their chief argument is that Russia is ill-prepared at present; and that war could be ended within one to three months; destruction would be confined, more or less, to Russia. Such and similar military considerations may well weigh heavily; but they cannot outweigh the manifold political considerations which must delay an early war. Moreover, the very concept of a "preventive" war has been rejected repeatedly by such persons as Generals Omar Bradley and Eisenhower. And this, too, for good political reasons.

The American bourgeoisie does not look with equanimity upon the approach of World War III. They are far from confident that "our way of life" can survive in the way it survived the Second World War. There is hardly an edition of a serious newspaper which does not contain expressions by various major or minor spokesmen for varied sectors of American society, foreboding the destruction of civilization unless "peace" can be secured.

Indicative of the prevalent state of mind is the pessimism and soul-searching pervading such meetings as the recent mid-century convocation

of the MIT. Indicative are statements such as that recently made by Harold Stassen, Republican presidential candidate and now head of the University of Pennsylvania, deploring the universal apprehension that all will be lost if another war comes.

It is likely that America will "win" the next war; but it will be an island in a world of utter ruin, with vast areas inaccessible due to radioactivity, chemical and biological toxic agents, etc. The European bourgeoisie will have been physically destroyed and its bases of power decimated. Capitalist economy after all needs a modicum of an economic base; such a base, however, will no longer exist anywhere but, possibly, in America.

I do not contend that the American ruling class necessarily shares this view of the world's future in case of another war; but they are clearly apprehensive over it. Nor do I contend that their apprehension can stop the war from breaking over us; for obviously they are unable either to adopt the radical international policies necessary for this nor can they overcome domestic crises without resort to war. Yet, being increasingly aware of the fact that their existence is at stake, they will not rashly open the sluice gates to pressures which become uncontrollable once released, only to engulf them in swift disaster.

The Atlantic Pact must be viewed with this factor in mind. The pact is the legal instrument for war, but it is not ONLY that; it is designed to forestall Stalinist "revolutions," such as the one in Czechoslovakia; it is supposed to prevent the forced evacuation of U. S. troops from Berlin, etc., etc. It is a political instrument to prevent the neutralization of Western Europe, to keep the latter within the economic and power orbit of the United States, to thus prevent a rapprochement of Western Europe with Russia (which is entirely feasible, especially on an economic basis), with consequences detrimental to the U. S.

It is highly improbable that the U. S. can defend the continent in case of another war; and this is obviously a major dilemma facing American planners. Yet it is a bitter fact; the next war will be intercontinental in nature. Europe will either be overrun by Russia, or it will remain "neutral," supplying Russia with whatever it can produce. The \$1.1 billion which are being considered for appropriation for military supplies under the Atlantic Pact is a paltry sum compared to America's own annual outlay of over \$15 billion, which probably does not grossly exceed the requirements of modern war preparations. If the N. Y. Times demands, as Draper quotes, "a team of army, navy and air forces strong enough to keep any aggressor in check," or when it claims that "the fundamental strategic concept is...

that we must at all costs prevent Western Europe from being overrun by a new conqueror..." then this can hardly be taken too seriously—except as a token of subjective willingness to make good one's words with deeds—in the light of: (1) modern warfare; (2) the utter unwillingness of the European peoples to fight (3) the lack of a place to station the required forces, not excluding Germany. For General Clay's "boasts," that the cold invasion had already gotten under way, notwithstanding, it will shortly become politically untenable to continue the military occupation of Germany. (What, after all, are they creating a Western German state for?)

These are some of the salient factors to be considered before the slogan: "Demand the withdrawal of the armed forces of the U. S. from Europe" with which Draper concludes his article, can be taken seriously as an EFFECTIVE political guide.

Eugene KELLER

April 24, 1949

To the Editor:

Starting from the point that the Independent Socialist League proclaims its greatest propaganda task at present is to counter the war preparations with the call for the socialist anti-war camp, with the slogan "Neither Washington nor Moscow," I fail to see how the leading article in the issue of April 18 in any way furthers this task. I do not argue whether or not the policy of the United States is to "draw blood"; whether or not the Atlantic Pact means the "cold invasion" of Western Europe; whether or not the presence of American troops at the Iron Curtain means war. These points could perhaps be argued. But I do say that in making these points, comrade, you went so completely out of balance as to have written an article any fellow-traveling organ would be delighted to publish. I am absolutely sure that this was not the intention; of course not. It seems to me it was the result of writing on certain angles, without regard to the context of general events.

One of the general events to be borne in mind is that today the Stalinists are waging, all over the world, a so-called peace offensive, and of course they are the injured innocents while the United States is out to "draw blood." In the anti-war propaganda of LABOR ACTION and the Independent Socialist League we must separate ourselves from this Stalinist "peace offensive." The only way in which we can do this is by not losing sight of the fact that there is another general event, namely, that the Russian troops or Russian-con-

trolled satellite troops have been on the other side of the Iron Curtain since the end of the war, and that there the invasion has had a little more heat than to permit of the name "cold invasion." So I say there is a deplorable lack of balance in an article that starts with a dismissal of Russian aggression, ends with a call for the withdrawal of American troops, and only in passing refers to the justified hatred of the Stalinist tyranny.

It is true, to be sure, that everything cannot be said in one article but enough must be said not to create undesired impressions, enough should be said to make clear our position "Neither Washington nor Moscow." I know that every time we write against Stalinism and Moscow imperialism we do not in the same article give equal space to expose Washington imperialism, but I cannot think of one article we have written in the former category which did not also make clear that we were taking our position against Moscow on a socialist basis and therefore could not be mistaken as pro-American. On the other hand, I think the article I criticize could, today, very easily be mistaken for pro-Russian.

I believe with all my heart that if there is any chance of avoiding this Third World War it is by the masses of the people accepting the concept of "Neither Washington nor Moscow." This cannot be just an incidental idea, but must be the hammer blow in every article on the war.

Susan GREEN

April 25, 1949.

—And a Brief Reply

Unfortunately the letter by Comrade Keller is based upon so complete and thorough a misreading of the article he is criticizing, that it is not easy to see where he got it from. His letter seems to be directed toward refuting the idea that the U. S. wants a preventive war now, or at least wants a war very quickly.

But the article (1) does not have one word which intimates any such absurd notion; (2) specifically points out that the plan being plugged by Clay, Royall et al. is for a LONG-TERM preparation—this indeed being the whole point!—and the "long-termness" of their proposal was stressed by the gentlemen themselves in the quotations given; (3) in the same issue, and in an editorial likewise written by the editor, precisely the question of a "quick war" is discussed, and the view reiterated that the looming war is some distance off. Indeed, the point of the editorial is that the Atlantic Pact may well lead to a temporary easing of the cold war—this BEFORE the news of the lifting of the blockade.

The plan of Clay, Royall and Co. for a long-term occupation by U. S. troops of the Iron Curtain border (with semi-official inspiration from the State Department) was put forward in a coordinated propaganda push coincident with the signing of the pact. It is too bad that Comrade Keller thinks it cannot be taken seriously. We will see more of it.

On the basis of all this, Comrade Keller thinks that the independent socialist demand for the withdrawal of U. S. occupation troops in Europe (as well as of Russian and all others, of course) is not an "effective political guide." Why? A few more words on the connection would have been useful, especially if he is opposed to the demand—although his own attitude does not emerge from his letter.

The point of Comrade Green's letter seems to be that the article could "very easily be mistaken for pro-Russian." The reason for this, it appears, is because it attacks U. S. foreign policy and "only in passing" attacks Russian Stalinism.

We are afraid that Comrade Green's criticism is rather belated, if this is really the source of her reaction. While every issue of LABOR ACTION, generally speaking, directs its shafts against both American capitalism and Stalinist imperialism, most of its articles, taken individually, are either about one or the other—many of them without even a "passing" counter-balance (Comrade Green's own excellent analyses of the Washington merry-go-round being no exception). The balance is in the paper, not necessarily within each article. Since the offending article is not in the slightest degree unusual in THIS respect, we find Comrade Green's remarks a bit on the intemperate side. It is possible that, like Comrade Keller, she too was stirred by the question of U. S. occupation troops as raised in the article, but the actual content of her letter does not make it necessary to take up this question here, interesting as it would otherwise be.

Hal DRAPER

New York
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for
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Enclosed find \$..... as a contribution to the \$14,000 Fund Drive of the Independent Socialist League.

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Bronx SYL	50	31	61
Detroit	600	332	55
Philadelphia	400	213	53
Manhattan SYL	50	26	52
Chicago	1500	771	51
Reading	100	50	50
St. Louis	50	24	48
San Francisco	800	350	44
Streator	25	10	40
Labor Action and New Int'l	150	54	36
West Virginia	125	43	34
Akron	200	59	29
Buffalo	1000	290	29
National Office	1500	430	29
Boston	100	22	22
Los Angeles	500	27	5
Baltimore	200	4	2
Newark	300	6	2
Connecticut	50	0	0
Indiana	100	0	0
Oregon	50	0	0
Pittsburgh	50	0	0
Seattle	300	0	0
Youngstown	100	0	0
Buffalo SYL	50	0	0
Berkeley SYL	50	0	0
Miscellaneous	1027	0	0
TOTALS	\$14,000	\$5740	41

Two Tactics

OAKLAND, CALIF., LABOR BACKS 'FRIENDS OF LABOR'—AND LOSES

By GORDON HASKELL

The two candidates for City Councilmen endorsed by Labor's League for Political Education (political arm of the AFL in Alameda County) suffered a crushing defeat in the nominating election for city officers in Oakland, held April 19.

Just two years ago the nominees of the Oakland labor movement, united in the Oakland Voters League, swept the field in the nominating elections and went on to win hands down in the runoffs against the hysterical red-baiting, labor-baiting opposition of the Oakland Tribune and the business interests it represents.

From that victory to this defeat, there lies a tale which should be of interest to everyone concerned with the role of organized labor in the political life of America.

Two years ago the labor movement of Oakland had just gone through a general strike provoked by some high-handed scab-herding by the city cops. The ranks and even the labor leadership had just experienced a fresh lesson in "politics" learned the hard way. United and determined, they taught the business community here a lesson in what labor can do in politics when it decides to stop fooling around with making deals with its economic and political enemies, and strikes out on its own. The labor leaders picked their candidates, decided on their program, ran them in the teeth of the fiercest kind of opposition, and won.

THEY VOTED LABOR

True, even then the "brains" of the labor movement here were afraid to march openly under their own colors. They created the "Oakland Voters League" and tried to camouflage it as a "broad citizens' group" by getting endorsements from a number of doctors, lawyers, businessmen and others. But no one was fooled by this—except, perhaps, the labor leaders themselves.

The Tribune saw to it that every citizen who could read a headline knew that this was labor's slate. The labor movement put up the money and did the work. The Tribune was so successful in convincing everyone that this was a clear-cut fight between organized labor and business, despite the repeated denials by the labor leaders, that the workers and their families and all the "little people" turned out and voted . . . for labor.

That should have taught the leaders of the AFL and CIO something about politics, but it didn't. Instead of transforming the Oakland Voters League into a permanent political body, based on the active participation of the locals, they let it die.

Such a political organization could have exerted a continuing pressure on the councilmen it had elected. It also would have given the whole labor movement, down to the ranks, a feeling of real power in city affairs.

The trouble is, however, that a political body based on the active participation of an informed rank and file would also have made it necessary for the labor leaders to subject themselves to the will of the ranks in political matters. But that kind of democracy is dangerous. It's much more pleasant for a union chief to be in a position where he can "speak for labor" in political matters without having to bother about any democratically elected political representatives of his membership.

RETREAT IN '49

So the Oakland Voters League was not transformed into some kind of local labor party. A contributing factor to this was and is the split in the CIO between CP and Murray wings of that body. The AFL leaders had formerly worked mainly with the CP wing, as two years ago they represented the bulk of the CIO member-

ship. No similar working arrangement has been made with the Murray leaders who now claim to represent such a majority. But this was a minor factor in the defeat.

The defeat in this election for the candidates endorsed both by the AFL and the Murray CIO group was due mainly to the fact that the same workers, who two years ago felt they were voting for a slate of their own candidates in a fight against the concerted forces of big business, this time could have no such feeling. This time labor did not select its own candidates and did not run them on a clear-cut program.

This time the union movement went back to the old Gompers policy of simply endorsing some of the candidates who had decided to run on their own or had been induced to run by others. These candidates ran their own campaigns on "programs" which they decided on themselves (such as the program of Al Braga, AFL endorsed councilman for the 6th District: "New Blood—Business—Judgment—Commonsense Efficiency").

Even the Tribune couldn't work up a good sweat about the danger of labor's winning in this election. For how could labor possibly win when it confined itself to endorsing a couple of real-estate agents who have never had any connection with the labor movement? Win or lose, the Tribune and the business interests it represents would have been on top.

Without a real political organization involving the ranks of the labor movement the leaders haven't been able to keep in line all of the councilmen elected last time. What chance would they have of exerting any real influence on these two businessmen, had they been able to convince their membership to vote for them?

SOMETHING TO LEARN

Looked at from any angle, the "policy" of the labor leaders in this election has proved the complete bankruptcy of that kind of labor politics. They will now no doubt set up a big wall about the indifference of the membership to the endorsements made by their leaders. They had better save their tears and take a good look at the kind of leadership they have given.

It is too much to expect that the lesson of their victory two years ago and their defeat now will really teach them too much. For it proves to the saying for years.

There is one way labor can really win in politics. That is to apply the same principles to politics which they have applied to their economic organization. To win economic concessions from the employer, you organize the workers into a union. You have to start with a membership which knows what it wants and is willing to fight for it. To win in politics you have to organize the workers into a party of their own which can select its candidates and decide on their program in the same way that a union chooses its officers and votes on the contract demands to be made.

That kind of a movement the workers will support, because it is theirs. If the leaders of labor in Oakland didn't understand this before the election, and if they won't understand it now, there is only one thing for intelligent workers in Oakland to do. Start electing leaders who are not only good union men, but who are capable of understanding the ABC of labor politics.

Footnote: In this election the Socialist Workers Party ran Philomena Goelman for Councilman at large. She ran eighth in a field of nine, polling 2,054 votes. The AFL-endorsed candidate ran third with 5,618 votes. Total votes cast: 60,013.

WORLD POLITICS

(Continued from page 1)

Simultaneously with these defeats in Berlin and greater Germany, Stalin has become cognizant of the fact that Western Germany has steadily grown in economic and political strength, particularly by contrast with his zone. Its attraction represents a particular danger to him, and here we can see another aspect of the new grand maneuver. The steady mounting of productivity in the Western zones has been accompanied by a steady revival of independent German political life, both in the capitalist and working-class ranks. The success of American imperialism in rebuilding Western Germany is clear enough, to this point.

Therefore, a new approach must be made in an effort to halt and then destroy this success. Thus, writing in *Izvestia*, a gentleman named Mikhailov (Stalin) tells us that the main purpose of the new Bonn "constitution" is to pave the way for the inclusion of Western Germany into the military bloc of the Atlantic Pact nations.

TO NEUTRALIZE GERMANY

We may summarize the political motivation thus: to broaden the issue from a struggle over Berlin to a struggle over Germany as a whole; to prevent the development of Western Germany and its absorption into the Marshall Plan-North Atlantic bloc. Expressed otherwise, since Stalinism has failed to conquer Germany, a gigantic maneuver has opened up for the neutralization of the whole of Germany. Let us set up a neutral buffer state between us, Stalin is telling American imperialism.

In abandoning his last year's perspective of a conquest of Germany, via Berlin, Stalin of course has not abandoned his long-range aim: the political and social conquest of the country. But he must profoundly change the way in which this task is to be fulfilled. His immediate goals are different henceforth: resumption of trade between the eastern and western halves of the country; a seat on the board of control over the Ruhr industries; a renewal of reparations from the Western zones, etc.

But the political perspective is to be pushed into the background now, even if the alleged "people's democracy" of the East must be abandoned. The German Stalinist party (SED) must reorient itself, both in the East and West. In the West, it must first find a basis for its very existence, even if this means working within the framework of the new Bonn constitution. A re-adaptation is demanded of it.

Other and more concrete points will undoubtedly be proposed by Vishinsky (Stalin) at the Paris conference. It has been suggested these will include: (1) demand for German unification under the old Weimar Constitution form; (2) withdrawal of all occupation forces within one year; (3) conclusion of a final peace treaty with Germany. The struggle at the Paris conference will take place around these points, but it is clear that the Russians are prepared to make the greater concessions necessary for arriving at an agreement.

Will this include free and open supervision of any future elections to be held throughout Germany, including the Russian zone? Will they permit other political parties, such as the Social-Democrats, to function freely in their zone? We cannot be sure yet, but in all likelihood, yes. Stalin understands the meaning of a retreat and withdrawal; a price must be paid.

The real obstacle standing in the way will be the economic assimilation of the Russian zone, where property has been nationalized and statified in various forms, with the economy of Western Germany, where capitalism and private ownership not only prevail, but receive the utmost support from America. But faced with the dominant political task of the moment, there is no reason why America and Russia cannot shelve this problem of economic forms for the moment by retaining the status quo in all zones. Since, as we shall see, even the most elaborate kind of agreement cannot be permanent, this matter too can be temporarily solved.

Secretary Johnson Wants No Questions Asked or Answered

Gag No. 1 Issued by Pentagon

By VINCENT WHEELON

In preparing the American imperialist war machine to fight World War III, Pentagon brass hats have discovered they can no longer trust editorial rooms and press services to distort military information in a way that hides the bickering between the army, navy and air force and conceals the favoritism, waste, inefficiency and ruthless politics rampant in the awarding of contracts for war material and supplies.

Even though a reporter may follow faithfully tenets of journalistic prostitution like those of the Hearst organization, he is apt to allow his zest for What, When, Where, Who, Why and How to run away with him. Then, of course, there are always such people as Drew Pearson smelling around.

It has been necessary, consequently, for Secretary of Defense Johnson to issue (Press) Directive No. 1. It clamps rigid censorship on testimony of military personnel before congressional committees "in executive session," material prepared for publication by civilian employees of the military establishment, data proposed for release by manufacturers of war equipment and publishable items based on federal military training of the National Guard.

NO EMBARRASSING QUESTIONS

The order permits Johnson's bureaucrats to shut off all public review of department policies. It rests on the principle that the armed services must be protected from embarrassing questions posed by sections of the press and inquisitive commentators who persist in laboring under the impression that policies of the Pentagon are subject to criticism and suggestion.

Maintenance of what is left of decaying capitalism demands that U. S. imperialism and its military arm step up preparations for war against Russia. Since this objective can not be maintained unless the entire economy is oriented toward a permanent war

THE STALINISTS LOOK AHEAD

And what of the Allied position at the conference? They will most certainly oppose an ending of the occupation, thus giving the Russians an excellent propaganda point. They will insist upon the Eastern zone entering a unified Germany via the new Bonn Constitution which has just been formulated under their influence. In other words, the Americans will continue to press forward with their plans for the limited revival of the German state, in a capitalist form of course, and will seek its integration within the general framework of a Europe largely influenced by American imperialism. It appears that the Russians will (because they must) go along with this approach.

But the Russians, with their long-range view, are banking on the development of other factors. A revived capitalist Germany will eventually be struck by the same failures and weaknesses which Western Europe is already experiencing after its revival of the past two years. This involves the whole problem of the Marshall Plan, which cannot be discussed at length here. Suffice to point out that the latest United Nations report on this plan lays emphasis above all on the fact that the Marshall Plan, far from tending to economically unify Europe, is driving nation after nation along the road to a new economic anarchy.

Germany, estimates Stalin, will take the same path, thus providing the German Stalinist movement with a new basis for political life after a few years. In the interim, it is quite likely that the present SED and its Stalinist leadership of Pieck, Grotewohl, etc., will be discarded. They have failed—and Stalin never forgives a failure!

Can this shift in strategy and tactics over Germany mark a still wider shift that may possibly be world-wide in scope? Is it true, as Drew Middleton wrote, "Larger questions than the settlement of the German problem are at stake"? It has been suggested that Stalinism is about to enter a new phase of collaboration with the West in Europe, while pursuing its aggressive tactics in Asia. It is, of course, too early to predict just how far this shift will be carried; yet there are sure signs that indicate some truth in all this.

The Greek Stalinist government has signified its desire to end the "civil war"; the Italian Stalinist-led unions are preparing nation-wide strike settlements; the tone and tenor of the recent Stalinist Paris "Peace" Conference had all the bluster and bragging that rearguard cover-up actions always have. But one must wait and see just how much is involved.

OPPORTUNITY FOR SOCIAL-DEMOCRATS

Finally, it must be pointed out: a new factor of vast political importance figures in this forthcoming conference—a revived German nation, and a revived politically-conscious German working class. This is not a conference of victors, gathered about the prostrate body of bombed-out Germany. A third factor has entered into the situation, mobilized in the form of the German Social-Democratic Party.

What a magnificent opportunity lies before this party! Yet, because of its timorous and reformist leadership—both top and secondary—we know that this opportunity for pressing home the viewpoint of a genuinely independent Germany will be either lost or, at best, only partly expressed. There is no question that the German Social-Democracy is the party in Germany today.

If it took a firm stand for unification, withdrawal of all armed forces, convening of an All-German Constituent Assembly to draw up a genuine new constitution, etc., it would receive a support and acclaim that would stand the Four Power negotiators on their ears and end their importance in the situation. This is too much to expect, of course. Yet the German masses will make their viewpoint known at Paris and we shall watch to see how hard this is fought by a common American-Russian front.

Henry JUDD



Why Truman Worries About Inflation

A great many people have been puzzled by the persistence with which President Truman, in the midst of growing unemployment and reported widespread price reductions, has continued to assert that inflation is a very real danger. Why does the White House continue to insist about the dangers of inflation?

It is a fact that no serious analysis of Truman's position has appeared in the public press. The daily papers (most of which are organs of the Republican Party) meet the president's repeated warnings with remarks about "regimentation." They add that the real danger lies in the opposite direction. Apparently, few reporters suspect that there is a possible connection between the end of the boom and renewed dangers of inflation.

The situation merits more serious comment than has yet been paid it. It is more than possible that Truman knows what he is talking about when he expresses concern over possible inflation. Should the business decline continue, at some point the administration will have to interfere drastically to halt and reverse the trend. American capitalism, neither at home nor abroad, can afford another deep depression. Some White House advisers, it is reported, believe that the time has already come for the government to act. The majority hold that any broad concerted action now would be premature.

It appears now as though the Truman administration will have to intervene drastically in the economy in an effort to stave off a depression.

I believe that the president is thinking ahead to this situation when he continues to warn of the dangers of inflation.

The indicated way in which the administration will act is along the lines of preparations for the Third World War, for the tremendous task of wrenching American industry from a peacetime to a wartime basis. The system cannot give both peace and prosperity. But it can give war and perhaps a renewal of the hopped-up economy of the early '40s.

Such vast government spending is implied in this program as to make very real indeed the threat of great inflation. For one thing, it would mean a return to deficit spending, to the period when the government cash outlay would again exceed the tax harvest.

Even now the burden of servicing the national debt of \$251 billion exceeds the total cost of government prior to 1934. A switch to production for war would involve a tapering-off of the production of consumers' goods. The brief decline in prices would halt and would again turn upwards. The currency printing presses in the Treasury Department would begin working overtime. Money would be cheapened. Inflationary forces would be at work everywhere.

This, in all probability, is what Truman and some of his advisers fear, and this is why the president continues to sound the warning.

Cost of Living Rises Again in March

Despite the reported drop in the prices of a number of commodities, it is remarkable that living costs in March actually went up, rising half a point above the February level.

Though prices of basic farm commodities have fallen, retail food prices went up a full one per cent in March. Prices of fruits and vegetables, as well as of rents, contributed to the over-all rise in the cost-of-living index. Retail prices for moderate income families rose 3 per cent above February levels, and were 1.6 per cent above March 1948 levels, and 72 per cent above the level of August 1939, according to the Labor Department's consumers' price index.

This rise in living costs is being felt with unusual severity by millions of families which now have one or more breadwinners out of work.

Even where family wage-earners are still working, their wages have in some cases dropped suddenly because of the end of overtime work and work on night shifts, usually paid for at higher hourly rates. In the opinion of some economists, this drop in overtime pay and night differentials is having a more serious effect on the economy than the growth in unemployment.

Relief Cases Up Considerably

In 15 major U. S. cities, the number of public relief cases increased 9 per cent between January 1 and March 1, according to a survey by the American Public Welfare Association. This is considerable more than seasonal, and more than last year, when the increase in the same months was only 5.6 per cent. In Chicago, relief cases in February 1949 were 20 per cent more than in the same month last year.

As the relief load grows, some cities are starting up the whole business that so many of us recall from the dreary 1930s. Dayton, Ohio, for instance, has reinstated its depression work relief program, and at the beginning of March had 412 men at work.

The Chicago Journal of Commerce recently demanded editorially that relief clients be put to work "on street 'maintenance'—meaning street-cleaning for the most part."

American capitalism has never been able to assure employment for all those able to work, at jobs for which they are fitted and trained. So long as unemployment doesn't go beyond a few million, however, it can still offer street-cleaning jobs to jobless tool-and-die workers, machinists, building tradesmen, etc.

And it can "spread the misery." Recently the president of a large company urged that every employer "assure those of his people who have been with him two years or more that they should have at least three days' work a week, no matter what happened."

A number of plants are said to have adopted this principle. Instead of laying off workers, they are reducing the work week. This is supposed to be a very handsome gesture on the part of the "free enterprise" system, and to signify to the workers that management is thinking of them every minute. From the viewpoint of management, this step is being taken in the belief it will stem fear, and prevent depression turning into a panic.

Singer Strike - - Books for Germany

(Continued from page 1)

at first permitted the rank and file to participate, especially in the period of mobilizing for the strike vote. But as soon as some militants outside of their control began to assert themselves, they consciously attempted to keep only their own people in the limelight as leaders of the strike. The rank and file opposition, which they have continually smeared as company stooges, has given the lie to these slanderous charges by its militant conduct during this strike. They too have been given no key positions nor are allowed top leadership.

From many parts of Western Germany we have received requests for Marxist literature IN ENGLISH. Books and pamphlets by Trotsky, Lenin, Marx, etc., are in urgent demand, but any Marxist works are needed. Almost none of this literature is available at present. All books and pamphlets contributed will be widely circulated.

Help rebuild Germany's socialist movement! Send us your unused or duplicate copies of any and all Marxist literature, or any you can spare. They will be forwarded immediately to those who will make good use of them.

Send them to: LABOR ACTION (Attention: H. Judd), 4 Court Square, Long Island City 1, N. Y.

Books Received

Received from the New American Library, publishers of Signet and Mentor pocket books, May 23: THE BUTTERFLY, by James M. Cain, 144 pages, 25 cents. Novel, "a modern version of the Oedipus myth." LIFE ON OTHER WORLDS, by H. Spencer Jones, 160 pages, 35 cents. An eminent British astronomer summarizes and discusses the evidence for the existence of life on other planets.

Debate **New York**
IS WORLD GOVERNMENT POSSIBLE
TODAY?
"Yes!" "No!"
Abe Bargman **Hal Draper**
for World Federalists United for Independent Socialist League
National Student Projects Dir. Editor of Labor Action
FRIDAY, MAY 20 **114 West 14 St., N. Y. C.**
8:15 p.m. **Sponsored by Socialist Youth League**

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. 20 May 16, 1949

Editor: Hal Draper
Editorial Board: Hal Draper, Albert Gates,
Emanuel Garrett, Geltman
Business Manager: Joseph Roan

Subscription Rate: \$1.00 a Year; 50c for Six Months (\$1.25 and 65c for Canada and Foreign)

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Discussion Meetings
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DWIGHT MACDONALD
Editor of "Politics"
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At 8:30
Admission 75c

Concluding ISL Convention Resolution on U. S.

Why Workers Party Formed the ISL

(Continued from last week)

(6) A propaganda group is neither an educational society nor a discussion club.

It goes without saying that one of the most important tasks of not only a propaganda group but of a genuine party is the education of its own members and sympathizers. In an educational circle, the function of a propaganda group is—propaganda, that is, outside activity. The members of an educational group need do nothing except become educated; members in a propaganda group, most especially in a Marxist propaganda group, join in order to help carry the ideas of socialism to others. The maintenance of an acceptable standard of activity is therefore a condition for membership.

While it has never proved possible in practice in any organization to define with any exactness the precise limits of tolerance allowable, it is perfectly clear that comrades who consistently contribute nothing or next to nothing to the activities of the organization (no matter how firm their political agreement) or who

even contribute to demoralization and discouraging such activity, cannot be permitted to remain as members.

(7) It also goes without saying that internal discussion—completely democratic, completely free and unhampered on all differences, etc.—is as vital to a healthy propaganda group as is education. But, similarly, there is a sharp difference between a propaganda group and a mere discussion group. As in the previous case the dividing line was activity, in this case the dividing line is program.

A mere discussion group, by definition, either has no group program, line or policy on the questions it discusses, or—if a vote is taken—considers the majority view merely an advisory or recorded expression of opinion, in any case involving no discipline or obligation to act. In any case also, it feels no obligation to adopt any view on the important questions before it, nor to integrate whatever views it expresses. A propaganda group is based on a program—namely, the program for which its members are obligated to propagandize actively.

propaganda and possible recruits, to many or most of whom the title "party" means a mass organization of action. The most difficult recruits to retain are those who join under such false impressions.

The fact that we call ourselves the Workers Party arouses and lends color to such illusions. In addition, in preparing ourselves for the role we must play in helping to develop and build the coming party of labor,

a great deal of clarity would be gained by the public acknowledgment that we consider ourselves to be what we really are: a Marxist socialist propaganda group which aims to be an integral part of the broad working-class movement.

For these reasons, we must relinquish the name "Workers Party" and adopt one that more clearly corresponds to the character and the role we propose to play.

Political Activity for Labor Party Slogan

(14) Our perspective also indicates the orientation in the coming period of our press, of our political activity and of the center of work of our membership. Our theoretical press must devote itself much more to the advocacy and defense of our theories and program as directly related to the American labor movement and the tendencies in its ranks, to political problems in the U. S. Our popular press must devote itself more to the propagandistic presentation of our program and less to agitational material.

Our general political activity must be centered more firmly than ever around the popularization of our labor-party slogans and our program for a labor party. Our membership must be more systematically educated in the fundamental programmatic position of the movement so that it can most ably defend itself against all others and against all critics in the ranks of the labor movement as a whole.

(15) These proposals for change in the orientation and face of the movement are not presented in the belief that they are the "solution" for the present weakness of the socialist movement or of our movement specifically, nor in the expectation that their adoption is calculated to lead to spectacular growth. At the present stage such illusions would be among the most harmful. The coming period, especially up to the definitive formation of labor's political party, will in all likelihood see the socialist movement and all its cadres tested for resistance to all of the disintegrative and degenerative influences of modern decaying capitalism.

But if the situation in which we function does not allow for immediate growth on a vast scale, it certainly does not exclude serious and significant recruitment. Our organization has a specific program which distinguishes it from all other groups. As no other does or can do, our program fully meets the need of a democratic,

internationalist and socialist alternative to all forms of capitalist and Stalinist barbarism. In consequence, it has a special appeal to those seeking a way out of the futility and chaos posed by the dilemma capitalism-Stalinism.

It is the emphasis on this appeal that must permeate every word and action of our movement. It is primarily on the basis of this appeal also that we must recruit. In respect, as far as party-building is concerned, while labor party propaganda, etc., is our most important spearhead for propaganda in the labor movement, we can expect workers to join and stick with us mainly insofar as we imbue them with a clear understanding of the socialist ideas and goal and our specific political ideas in particular. The justification and need for our movement lies primarily in this political character which is its mark of distinction.

The Marxists are aware of the fact that their coming task will be neither smooth nor devoid of difficulties and even sharp struggles. Nevertheless, they face the coming entry of the American working class into the political field as an independent force with the greatest enthusiasm, zeal and confidence that the ideas of socialism, wedded to the working class, will constitute that power whose triumph will vindicate all the pioneers of socialism and usher freedom, peace and abundance into a brotherly world.

SDs at Bonn --

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the latter's end) unless their stand was adopted.

RIFT IN THE PARTY

They were correct in this, of course, since such power constitutes the backbone of any government. But a "compromise" was reached, the extent of which was not specified in the dispatches; another "compromise" was reached on the extent of the legislative authority of the central government, however; on the contrary, they are in reality temporary concessions made by the Christian-Democrats and the military governments which back them and who have consistently worked for the concentration of governmental authority in the provinces.

The behavior of the Social-Democratic representatives at Bonn clearly expresses their interest in maintaining their bureaucracy in their jobs and sinecures. They constitute a faction which is essentially opposed to Kurt Schumacher, leader of the SDP and the younger elements around him.

In his statements, Schumacher has never deviated from his principled stands and it was he who wanted his party's delegation to quit the assembly. He remains the formal head of the SDP; in actuality, however, there exists a deepening rift in the party, with Schumacher apparently heading the more radical elements.

BUREAUCRACY vs. THE RANKS

So far as can be judged by his statements and writings, Schumacher is a clever opportunist, constantly attempting to reconcile the various opposing elements in his party. He leads, after all, a party whose base and source of strength is the German labor movement, which has been traditionally and still is today the ma-

ajor democratic force in Germany to which rally or will rally the great masses who have been politically, economically and culturally disfranchised.

These masses cannot possibly be reconciled either to military governments lording it over Germany or to the short-sighted and narrow-minded provincialism of the Christian-Democrats, neither of whom offer them any sort of future. They are a potent base of power to which the Social-Democratic machine caters for the election returns but which it essentially fears, except in words.

We have repeatedly stated our belief that the SDP is effectually today the resistance movement in Germany. As such it faces tremendous difficulties which neither its present policy of accommodation to the rightist parties and the military governments nor its superannated leadership can overcome.

Thus it is chiefly the task of the German youth to make the SDP a fighting instrument, and of the independent German socialists to contribute to this struggle within the SDP.

U. S. Backs Dictators --

(Continued from page 1)

UN to bring up the subject of the illegal and reactionary nature of the present Venezuelan regime, to expose its suppression of civil liberties, its suppression of the trade unions, and its wholesale imprisonment of political opponents. The reasons given to the UN delegates from Guatemala and Uruguay are that to do so would "tend to jeopardize inter-American unity."

To Latin Americans, Washington's support of an inquiry into Russian slave labor camps in the name of "freedom" and "democracy" while it suppresses a similar investigation into the reactionary Peruvian and Venezuelan regimes smacks of hypocrisy.

Aragon's speech is important in another respect. It will force the American labor delegation, headed by Serafino Romualdi of the AFL, to take an open stand on the question of America's policy in South America. The American labor group has been lashing at the Peruvian and Venezuelan government for suppressing the trade-union movements, but has remained silent on the role of its own government. Should Romualdi remain silent on this question, the CIT-former under AFL auspices to counter-balance the Stalinist-controlled continental trade-union federation (CTAL) will be branded as a mere tool of American imperialism.

The Peron delegation, which has been obliquely defending Peru and Venezuela, is counting on precisely this development. With Stalinism in temporary eclipse, Peron's ambition is to win control of the working-class organizations throughout Latin America. His representatives and allies at the ILO conference are demagogically carrying on their familiar attack on "Yankee imperialism" as well as against its Latin American "colonies" such as Cuba and Chile. In these countries, the government has used the excuse of suppressing the Stalinists as a cloak for attacking the working class and its standards in general.

What happens at the ILO conference will indicate what the immediate future holds for the working class in the Latin American countries—whether it will fall under the domination of either American imperialism or its junior competitor, Argentina, or whether it will find an independent road of struggle.

been running their local for a long time.)

If the speedup strike alone remains the issue and is prolonged, hardly anyone thinks the UAW can call another strike in July. If the union exhausts itself in a purely defensive struggle, it signifies giving up the economic objectives of 1949. Small wonder that Reuther is on the spot!

Even some kind of face-saving compromise now, rather than a real victory, simply postpones the showdown and the crisis confronting the UAW. For if the Ford Motor Company is this "tough" now, and the whole Washington administration and all the "friends of labor" are exerting conservative pressure on Reuther now, think how much greater that pressure will be in July! (And meanwhile, it is a safe guess that the Taft-Hartley Law will remain on the books until after the 1949 wage negotiations, including steel, coal and auto, are over.)

It is going to take a bold, dramatic and courageous all-out fight on the part of the UAW to win anything in 1949. The real test of the Reuther leadership has just begun. The future course of the Ford strike will decide its fate.

Once again the UAW concentrates in itself the problems and struggles of the whole labor movement.

Read
LABOR ACTION
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Internal Democracy and the Propaganda Group

(8) The ideals and practices of internal democracy are in no way affected in relation to this question. The demonstration made in practice and the concepts of party democracy developed during the eight years of existence of the Workers Party continue to be our standard in every respect.

The combination of complete freedom of discussion with political intransigence on the basic questions of socialism and Marxism has been demonstrated in life in the WP to a greater extent than in any other socialist movement, not only by reviving the best democratic traditions of the revolutionary Marxist movement but by sloughing off all the hangovers from Stalinism and Zinovievism which have trailed the Trotskyist movement, and by developing these traditions in a way that was not possible for an illegal movement like the pre-1917 Bolsheviks.

No organizational reprisals against any political points of view within the group—and no political concessions to any politically disintegrative tendencies: these are our guiding concepts.

(9) A propaganda group is not an "all-inclusive revolutionary party" in the sense explained in the 1946 convention resolution on the tasks of the party—the latter being a concept obviously meaningful only to a movement which is either a party already

or striving to become one in an immediate sense.

The emphasis on "all-inclusiveness" for such a party is dictated by the desire to make clear that different and even irreconcilable political tendencies can and should live together, on the basis of the free play of democracy, under the single roof of a party which has, or is striving to adopt as its main reason for being, agitation or action in the class struggle. In the case of a propaganda group whose IDEAS are its main stock in trade and binding force, and not its agitation and action in the class struggle, it is clearly impossible to maintain that a political tendency whose IDEAS are admittedly irreconcilable with that of the group is yet morally obligated to remain in it. (Vide: our insistence with respect to the Johnson tendency.)

Once this has been made clear, it is necessary to emphasize once more that the determination at any time by a majority that the ideas of a minority are "politically irreconcilable" cannot in our group be made the basis for organizational measures. In the case of a real political irreconcilability between two tendencies in a propaganda group, it is rather to be expected that, regrettable as it may be, voluntary separation will be the inevitable outcome, the determination being made not by ukase but by the logic of politics.

No "Campaign Party" Concepts Held

(10) Likewise the concept of the party cadre as developed in the aforementioned 1946 resolution being predicated on the assumption of the more or less permanent coexistence of different tendencies within a single all-inclusive revolutionary party.

What remains applicable is simply the role in almost any organization of the core of most responsible, most active, best educated and politically capable comrades on whom the practical work of the organization tends to depend for its stimulus and guidance. This latter type of cadre in the organization is still a prime necessity for our group.

(11) It is both impossible and unnecessary, outside a plan of action for a specific period, to detail the activities that a propaganda group engages in.

In general, a propaganda group seeks to spread its ideas and to recruit primarily through the following mediums: work in the trade unions and labor movement, above all; work in mass organizations; circulation and sales of its press and publications; public meetings and classes; individual contacting. It is to be seen

that this does not differ substantially from what have been our main forms of activity, for some time.

The main difference, perhaps, revolves around our attitude toward types of activity like agitational campaigns, election campaigns, demonstrations, etc. By no means must it be understood that these are excluded; in particular, a demonstration may at times be a useful propaganda medium, and an election campaign under favorable circumstances can be carried on as an intensive period of propaganda. Nor is there anything in the nature of a group which is primarily a propaganda group which prohibits it from even carrying through strictly agitational activities, again especially under favorable circumstances.

What, however, is clearly incompatible is such a concept and general perspective as is implied in the term "campaign party," or any feeling of obligation to carry on periodic or regular campaigns lest we fail to "do our duty" in the class struggle. These latter are the considerations of a party.

Why Workers Party Changed Name

(12) The most important thing to emphasize and re-emphasize, not merely in this resolution but—what is more decisive—in the conduct and organization of our work in the next period, is the necessity of rooting the group in the labor movement, in the trade unions.

Insofar as this is not done in practice, or at least progress made in this direction, the character of a propaganda group inevitably tends to be reduced in the direction of being merely an internal discussion and educational society. It need hardly be added that if the work and influence of our movement in the Labor Party field are to have anything but a literary significance the membership must from the very beginning be in a position from which this work can be conducted and this influence exerted—in the labor movement.

Especially since the end of the war, in many sections of the country, there has been very marked retrogression in the party in this vital respect—to some extent due to layoffs in certain industries, but to a greater extent due to the fact that many comrades who went into industry during the war never did become integrated into the working class and reverted to

other occupations as soon as the wartime pressures were released. During this period also, guidance and drive from the center on this field of work fell to a low point, thus reducing to a minimum any counteracting influence which the center might have been able to supply.

For an effective Marxist propaganda group, this trend must be sharply reversed; and the incoming National Committee is instructed to give top priority to the question of re-establishing a functioning trade-union work center and stimulating the work of the branches along these lines. In any case, insofar as this can be done in a resolution, it must be stressed that our conception of a propaganda group requires more emphasis on trade-union work, not less; a stronger orientation toward the labor movement as our main field of work, not a weakened one.

(13) It is necessary to underline the propaganda-group character of our movement at this time not only to avoid any illusions on the part of our comrades, and not only to provide a realistic basis for planning and functioning, but also to avoid any illusions on the part of contacts, sympathetic workers who respond to our

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get the union on the run and keep it there. And it must be stated, candidly, that at the present time the Bugas plan has succeeded so far.

What the Ford Motor Company did was to join the drive which all major companies are carrying on to speed up the workers—not just in the usual fashion, which comes with every model change-over, but rather to press real hard against the workers.

At Ford the effect of the speedup would be twofold. If it succeeded, Ford would exploit enough extra-labor from each man on the assembly line to more than make up for anything Ford had to give in the way of a pension plan in July. It would be a scheme to take the pension plan out of the sweat and toil of the Ford workers.

If the workers resisted and slowed down or refused to do extra work, Ford would provoke a series of wildcat strikes to get the union to dissipate all its strength this spring, so that when summer came the union would be too exhausted to strike for pensions.

SPEEDING ISSUE HOT

This last point was understood by the Reuther leadership, and the Ford Company knew that the Reuther leadership understood this. Thus the company knew what reaction the Reuther leadership would have to demand from the Ford workers for a strike against speedup.

Ford therefore refused to settle the debated speedup question in the B building, which is the final assembly line at this huge plant. After 40 meetings on the issue, the company still refused even to compromise. The issue itself is understood by every auto worker.

In any normal production schedule of cars, allowance is made for breakdowns, bad stock, shutting down of the lines, etc. If the line is down for a half hour, for whatever reason, the men get a "break." The Ford Company, however, wants the men to make up production. Of course it goes through the pretense of adding enough men to the line to give help, but that is never really done. So the men are speeded up.

The speedup is so universal in auto now that over 200,000 workers have been involved in disputes of various sorts with the companies on this issue. This is important to remember in view of what happened at Ford.

The heat from the ranks in the shop became so hot that Tommy Thompson, president of Ford Local 600, who only in October, 1948, denounced "demagogues and Communists" for exploiting the "speedup issue" (we can settle everything peacefully through negotiations, he declared) and his caucus which had recently won an overwhelming victory in local union elections, listened to the ranks and decided that they would support a strike against speedup.

At Ford Lincoln plant the speedup issue also became so hot that the officials demanded authorization for a strike from the international executive board.

Faced with this "hot potato," the Reuther leadership sought to put pressure on the Ford Company by authorizing the Lincoln plant strike, but withholding authorization from Ford Local 600, representing 65,000 workers.

Of course this incensed the ranks in Ford Local 600, above all the sec-

ondary leaders in B building where the speedup issue was burning every-one up.

On top of this, the Reuther leadership issued a truly incredible (not to say stupid) statement on the Ford 600 situation. "Since there was a dispute in facts" between the local union and management on the speedup question, the international union selected a committee headed by Emil Mazey to go into the plant and investigate.

LEADERS FELL FOR IT

This was a blunder. Of course its real purpose was to give the top leadership a chance to stall off a strike and to see if things could be settled by negotiations—a worthy objective, of course, but it failed to take into account the reaction of the secondary Ford union leaders and the ranks. For these people were not let in on the "higher strategy." This was something just for the "elite."

Now everyone knew there was a speedup issue at the B building. Thus the statement of the Reuther leadership was a direct insult to the shop committeemen and ranks. They blew up. When Mazey and the other international officials came into the plant they were given a rather rough reception. And the whole shop committee in this plant resigned in protest over the action of the international!

More than that, the ranks joined the secondary leaders and walked out of the plant!

What especially burned up these workers was the fact that they knew that Ford would be smart enough not to have any speedup the day the union officials were investigating. And naturally things were okay on the line until Mazey and others left. Then the same old speedup policy was renewed.

Thus Ford successfully played the international union leadership against the workers in the plants, and the Reuther leadership fell for it. In justice to Mazey it must be said that he was maneuvered into heading the committee, and both the Reuther devotees and the Thompson faction are concentrating all blame and abuse on him. (Reuther did not go into the plant that day.)

The irony of Mazey's position is emphasized by the fact that at Briggs, which he strongly dominates, the local union carries on a good campaign—including walkouts—against speedup, and it defeats the company time and again.

What is also very significant about the events in B building is that this is the Reuther stronghold in Local 600. The shop committeemen and the unit president who resigned are all pro-Reuther. Later they were talked into repudiating their action. This was a revolt of the Reuther secondary ranks against the confused, uncertain and hesitant policies of their own top leaders.

This fact has been a major disappointment to the many capitalist journalists who rushed to Detroit to uncover a "Communist" plot at Ford. It has been and remains a source of embarrassment with the Reuther leadership. It has left a deep impression on many UAW activists.

LOCAL DECIDED ON STRIKE

Of course, Tommy Thompson (who broke his recent deal with Reuther—Reuther supported Thompson for reelection over the protests of many Reutherites) wasn't going to get himself into such an uncomfortable position. Therefore, when the company

arrogantly refused to negotiate seriously with the union on the B building issue (in fact, it fired 14 committeemen but this was kept from the rank and file because everyone knew that nothing could prevent an immediate strike if that was known in the shop), Thompson and his strong majority on the general council at Local 600 set a strike deadline—last Wednesday.

How stupidly the Reuther leadership was handling this crisis, which was far deeper and more acute than is recognized, was shown by the fact that at the time of the council meeting debate on the strike motion, Joe McCusker, regional director and a Reuther man, told them: "This will be a wildcat. It won't be authorized." A very unpopular position both in the Thompson forces and among the Reuther supporters at Ford!

As a matter of fact, the Thompson forces knew that the international would have to go along with them on strike action if a decent settlement wasn't obtained quickly, for the ranks were demanding results, and anybody who stood in the way was bound to lose rank-and-file support.

Walter Reuther knew this as well as the next man, and the strike was authorized, with a postponement of one day while Reuther tried last-minute negotiations. Bugas was as arrogant as ever, the negotiations failed and the strike began!

A day later, Bugas threw more fuel on the fire by making the public announcement of the discharge of the 14 men in B building. Other workers had been disciplined in other departments for staging brief demonstrations of sympathy.

Attempts to mediate were turned down by the company. They blasted the union, ridiculed the charge of speedup and over the weekend poured more salt on the wounds.

LEGITIMATE ISSUE

In the face of these blows against the union, the Reuther leadership reeled like a man given a one-two punch. All they could see for a few days was that "Walter's strategy is ruined, and Thompson's to blame." (No doubt Thompson should have kept the ranks in a firm iron grip, according to the conservative Reutherites, and if the ranks threw him out later, that would be all right too, for wasn't he anti-Reuther?)

Much confusion has been sown among Ford workers in other plants by the fact that, for some time, the Reutherites have been stressing the point that anything which upsets the strategy is terrible and a defeat for the union.

The leaders of both factions have made irresponsible statements about the others and have permitted "leaks" to the press; and this has given the company a chance to describe the situation as "due purely to union politics." This is nonsense, for in reality what is involved is a legitimate debate over policy in which contending leaders seek to prove that they are better qualified to lead the workers. As long as the UAW has a democratic structure and maintains its tradition that the various leaders seek to win rank-and-file support by fighting for their demands, so long will the union make progress, and "freshen up" its leadership—and this crisis shows it needs to do this today.

The Detroit Free Press, as well as the Ford Motor Company, bewails the fact that the UAW is not controlled

bureaucratically like the Steel Workers Union and wishes Reuther would place an administrator over Ford 600 just as Murray does among the steel workers.

UAW'S DILEMMA

What is the real dilemma of the UAW? What should it do? Every effort to find what answer the Reuther leadership has, or what anyone else proposes, has ended up in failure. One listens to speeches at rallies, hears Reuther spokesmen at union meetings, asks questions of anybody and everybody, and it is clear that for a week Reuther had no "line"—no real policy, just anger at the company for not being as reasonable as it should be, according to Reuther's thinking, and bitter feeling against the Thompson faction for the problem that it presents to the Reuther forces.

Today George Edwards, acting Detroit mayor, sought to get Ford and Reuther together. Behind the scenes many efforts are being made. (It's really terrible how much like his grandfather Henry Ford II has become. Somewhat disappointing to many people, don't you know! The epoch of enlightened capitalism is having a retarded development in auto, we fear, in spite of Reuther's theories and hopes to the contrary.)

More easily than many of his followers, Reuther is beginning to recover his balance, and is making moves calculated to retrieve a messy situation. Surely, if the UAW wins this speedup strike quickly, the Ford strike is a good dress rehearsal for July 16 contract deadline. If it gets any satisfactory compromise the leadership can probably play up the action as a real dress rehearsal, and UAW people will be told that Reuther had it planned that way all the time.

But the adamant attitude of the corporation suggests that maybe there is no choice but "shooting the works." Negotiations on the pension plan can begin next Sunday, although Ford says he won't meet with the UAW while it is on strike now.

Certainly, the confusion and hesitation in other Ford locals would end if the UAW went all-out for the program overwhelmingly adopted at the recent Ford national conference. It means making the big strike now.

Reuther's dilemma consists in the fact that in order to do this he has to take on the whole "world," as he did in 1945-46 in the GM strike. Already all the "friends of labor" in Washington are screaming that the UAW is upsetting the whole possibility of "repealing the Taft-Hartley Law." This "fake argument," we think, is taken seriously by Reuther. (If only labor would be reasonable—submit to a speedup—take a no-strike pledge—abandon wage demands, the Taft-Hartley Law would be repealed. Of course! Why have a Taft-Hartley Law on the books if the labor movement turns itself into a company union, and its leaders into watchdogs over the rank and file?)

TEST IS BEGINNING

If either doesn't strike out boldly he loses both national and UAW prestige. After all, he has promised to deliver the goods. The UAW does have a united leadership on top. They can't blame "the Communists." They are out in the cold, even in Ford Local 600, where everyone hates them. (The men on the picket line resent the popular notion that the CP has