

At First Glance

By Jay Lovestone

There is lots of loose talk about liberalism and about pure democracy these days. There is also lots of nonsense in all this talk. But, if it were only that, it would not be so dangerous. Long before this, people have been known to worship even less than shadows. What is most disturbing here is that, befuddled and lulled by these sweet words, the working people are likely to overlook many unflinching signs of acutest danger.

There are two menacing trends not given sufficient notice by labor. Convinced that we still have time to rout these monstrous forces, we urge labor and all its true friends to mobilize maximum resources and energy against them. These trends are: (1) towards the restriction of the right to strike, picket and organize; (2) towards setting up machinery to crush labor militancy in the name of patriotism and war preparations.

In California, Oregon, and Washington, there is a widespread movement to restrict the right to strike and picket. Using the methods of "purest democracy," these "progressive" western states have resorted to initiative proposals on their ballots next November to throttle labor's vital activities. Here California leads the reactionary bands by seeking to limit rigidly legal picketing, the boycott and the carrying of picket signs as well as to outlaw the sitdown strike and destroy freedom of labor action on the highways, wharves, docks and other public places during strikes. In Oregon and Washington, the forces of boss "law and order" are concentrating on "limiting" the number of strikes. Fortunately, evidence is mounting that this onslaught is evoking united defensive action by the A. F. of L., the C.I.O., and Labor's Non-Partisan League.

Then, there is a bloody joker, a choking rider, attached to all the proposals to centralize counter-espionage activities. Under the guise of ferreting out spies of foreign governments, there is proposed legislation providing for the stationing of army and navy snipers at every plant "to check not only on the quality of the work but also on the patriotism of the workers." A more sinister device for crippling labor, for binding it hand and foot to the Wall Street war chariot, none could devise.

Let no one think that there is loads of time in which to defeat these dark forces. Besides, in such life-and-death situations it's far better to be on guard weeks and months too soon than to be even half a minute too late or off-guard.

DANGER ON THE WORLD FRONT

AND, while striking the alarm on the home front, we hasten to emphasize with all the vigor at our command a warning against a superficially comforting, but nevertheless suicidal, error in estimating the present world situation.

Class-conscious workers, effective militant labor organizations, must today fight the danger of imperialist ravages on two fronts. These fronts are: (1) the putrid compromises of the "democratic" imperialist brigands with the fascist imperialist hijackers, the capitulations of the "democratic powers" (at the expense of labor and weaker nations and colonial peoples, of course) before the fascist plunderers; and (2) the danger of the "democratic" imperialist governments going to war (im-

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Workers Age

A PAPER DEFENDING THE INTERESTS OF WORKERS AND FARMERS

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POUM Frame-Up Bared

Caballero Refutes Stalinist Slanders

The whole vicious frame-up concocted by the Stalinists against the Spanish Workers Party of Marxist Unity (P.O.U.M.) and spread throught the world by the Stalinist and near-Stalinist press, collapsed last week under the weight of the testimony given at the trial of seven members of the P.O.U.M. Executive at Barcelona.

The P.O.U.M.ists were charged with "instigation" of the so-called "May uprising" in Catalonia, with "connivance" with the fascist enemy and with a number of other fantastic crimes. But no evidence whatever, aside from the wild calumnies of the Stalinites, could be brought forward to substantiate these charges. The defense, however, was able to make a profound impression. Francisco Largo Caballero, who was Premier of Spain during the May events, appeared as a friendly witness for the defendants. He was followed by Luis Araquistain, who was ambassador in Paris at the time, and by Angel Galarza, Home Secretary in charge of public order in the Largo Caballero cabinet.

Largo Caballero and Galarza



ANDRES NIN

gave evidence, based on authoritative and official knowledge, that the P.O.U.M. did not "instigate" the "May uprising" and that the party Executive was "entirely and sincerely anti-fascist."

As far as their bitter political attacks on the government were concerned, Largo Caballero said,

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Tense Situation in Plants Leads to New Auto Strikes

Problem Of The 32-Hour Week Faces The U.A.W.

By JOHN STOUT

DETROIT, Mich. ACCORDING to the employing-class press that bad child of the C.I.O., the United Automobile Workers has been on the rampage again with a series of unnecessary strikes. The real and deep causes of some of the most recent of these

outbreaks are, of course, ignored. The very complicated problem of the so-called 32-hour week, which is tremendously aggravated by the very real fear of the unemployed workers of losing their seniority, the large-scale engineering changes resulting in huge reductions in man-power; the simplification of many complicated production operations; plain ordinary speed-up—all have caused an extremely tense situation in the shops.

As a result of a ruling of the U.A.W. International Board, made on October 7, the Plymouth workers kept the plant closed the next day by placing pickets around the gates, thus enforcing the 32-hour week. This act immediately proved that the matter was not so simple, since the Briggs plant, which is a feeder, was forced to close, with large numbers of the workers getting only 20 and 24 hours of work. The resulting mood in the local was bad. Because of the pick-up in production, it is very likely that the settlement made of this trouble will work out in a satisfactory manner, since a full crew will be employed, possibly at 40 hours a week. The Chrysler contract provides for seniority to be lapsed if the worker is out of the plant more than a year. This was the vital issue in the case of Plymouth, many of the men having been laid off last November.

The Chrysler plant in Windsor, Ontario, pulled an old stunt well known to auto workers, especially at the beginning of the season. Since the union prohibits production changes in mid-season, the management makes every effort to get production standards very high at the beginning of the season. When protests began, Chrysler

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A Good Lesson

DETROIT, Mich.

SOME time ago, we reported how the Detroit District Council, under Stalinist influence, adopted a resolution to make the Midwest Daily Record, a Communist Party publication, their official paper. Evidently the reaction against this piece of outrageous political factionalism must have made itself felt, for last week Nat Ganley, Stalinist spokesman, made a motion in the executive committee of the Council, to rescind the Council's action, with a statement, however, that the Daily Record's policies are "correct" and "progressive" but that the motion to rescind was being made merely to "avoid misunderstandings." The progressives immediately took up the fight, moving that the section dealing with the Record be considered under new business. This was carried by a vote of 74-73. Under new business, the motion to rescind carried unanimously—and the progressive motion to delete Ganley's statement praising the Record passed by a vote of 65 to 34.

The progressives are certainly doing fine work in protecting their union against Stalinist political intrigue!

Union Pushes A.L.P. Drive

Dressmakers Make Plans To Gain Wide Support For Labor Ticket

The Dressmakers Joint Board Locals 22 and 89 of the I.L.G.W.U. are making a special drive to elect five of their members running for State Assembly on the American Labor Party ticket.

The locals are appointing committees to marshal all I.L.G.W.U. members in the five districts for active participation in the closing weeks of the campaign.

Hundreds of workers have already volunteered and are currently engaged in canvassing, literature distribution and other campaign tasks.

The five candidates are:

Nathaniel M. Minkoff, executive secretary of Local 22, candidate for reelection in the 5th A.D., Bronx.

Salvatore De Matteo, Local 89 member, candidate for reelection in the 16th A.D., Kings.

Salvatore Bonanno, Joint Board staff member, candidate in the 2nd A. D., Manhattan.

Peter Bonanno, Williamsburg district staff, candidate in the 19th A.D. Kings.

Anthony Calace, head of the I.L.G.W.U. Accessory Council, candidate in the 8th A.D., Kings.

The Minkoff and De Matteo campaigns are considered of primary importance by the American Labor Party because both men are standing for reelection and their victories will be an indication of the staying power of the party.

In addition, both men have had a year's experience in the State Legislature and consequently are expected to be even more effective in the next legislative session than they were last year when, as newcomers, they startled old party wheelhorses by their grasp of legislative problems and intelligently aggressive support of progressive

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Prague Bans Czech Communist Party

Following hard upon the move of the autonomous Slovakian government, the government of Czechoslovakia last week outlawed the Communist Party, prohibited its meetings, banned its press and prepared to cancel the mandates of its parliamentary deputies. Two days later, the Czech pact with the Soviet Union was officially denounced. These actions were taken under pressure from Berlin, for Czechoslovakia today is virtually a German vassal-state, both in its domestic and foreign policy.

The regime that outlawed the Communist Party was the very regime that this party had slavishly supported for years and that it still continued to support until the last moment. For the sake of adapting itself to Czechoslovakian "democracy" in line with the Popular Front policy, the C.P. abandoned the class struggle, turned its back upon socialism, did its best to sabotage the economic and political struggles of labor, indulged in the most indecent exhibitions of jingoism, and hushed every voice of criticism of the powers-that-be. Now it is reaping its reward!

"Amity" With Nazis Urged

Kennedy Makes Appeal For "Democratic" Block With Fascism

A plea for "cooperation" between the "great democracies" and the fascist dictatorships for the sake of their "common good," was made last week by James P. Kennedy, American ambassador to Great Britain, in an address before the Navy League at London. This appeal, elaborated at some length by Mr. Kennedy, was immediately interpreted as signifying sympathy with Prime Minister Chamberlain's policy of "appeasement" of the fascist dictators by granting them whatever "concessions" they may demand. In particular, it was taken as implied approval of the British course in the recent Czechoslovakian crisis that led to the so-called "Munich agreement."

Mr. Kennedy's address was of special significance not only because the high diplomatic position of the ambassador to Great Britain makes him virtually an official spokesman of the American government, but also because Mr. Kennedy is understood to be one of the outstanding possibilities as New Deal-supported Democratic presidential candidate in 1940.

* * *

Along a wide front, preparations were under way last week looking to the involvement of the United States in a foreign war, particularly as the ally and associate of British imperialism.

An almost unlimited armaments program, by far the greatest in the nation's history, was announced by President Roosevelt at a special press conference. So costly is it likely to prove that the President has been forced to hold his budget estimates for the next fiscal year in abeyance for the time being. The armaments program is understood to embrace extensive industrial measures along the lines of the semi-fascist Industrial Mobilization Plan, prepared by the War and Navy Departments two years ago.

At the same time, another attempt to whip up public sentiment into a frenzy of fear and jingoism is being made in the spy trials staged by the federal government. A similar attempt some months ago, particularly in connection with the Panay incident, fell flat, but now the war-mongers are trying again along a new line with hopes of greater success.

Part of the "moral" preparations for war is the campaign to popularize British imperialism in the eyes of the American people, whose traditional distrust of and hostility to "perfidious Albion" has been greatly strengthened by Britain's treacherous role in the recent Czechoslovakian crisis. This is obviously the chief purpose of the visit of the King and Queen of England to this country, said to be planned for the near future. This visit, the first of its kind in history, is generally recognized as being of even greater political significance than the recent trip of the royal couple to France. A more undisguised appeal for Anglo-American cooperation for war was made by Winston Churchill in a radio address to America on October 16. Mr. Churchill, who in England plays at be-

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"THE STORY OF THE C.I.O." . . . a book review

By WILL HERBERG

THE STORY OF THE C.I.O., by Benjamin Stolberg. The Viking Press, New York, 1938. \$2.00.

THIS book, as the author himself points out in the preface, is "partly history and theory and . . . partly journalism"; in all three, it is an outstanding, masterly performance.

Naturally, it is the "history and theory" that forms the most impressive section of the book. The opening chapter, "Why the C.I.O.?", studies the emergence of the new labor movement against the background of American industrial development and trade-union history. In a few vivid paragraphs, the author describes the essential nature of the Knights of Labor (a "crazy mixture of labor populism and lower-middle-class bigotry") and shows how the "pure-and-simple" trade unionism of the early A. F. of L., with its craft consciousness and voluntaristic dogma, came as a necessary and progressive departure in labor development. But times changed and the A. F. of L. did not, so that it soon "became ever more archaic in a society of expanding technology and contracting finance control." It refused to reconstruct itself in line with the reconstruction of modern industry; it grew more and more impotent and more and more determined to protect and perpetuate its impotence, even during the upsurge of labor ushered in by the N.R.A.

If the American labor movement was to survive, the millions in the great mass-production industries had to be organized and organized they could be only along industrial lines. This was the mission of the C.I.O., fully as necessary and progressive a departure as the formation of the A. F. of L. had been in its day. How the C.I.O. emerged and how it won its first positions and suffered its first defeats, Mr. Stolberg tells in a swiftly moving narrative. Even the journalism here

is more than journalism. The birth of the C.I.O., "its struggles on the industrial front and behind the lines," its present status and organizational strength, are depicted with a critical insight that is bound to give the account a certain permanent value. Mr. Stolberg knows more than he reads in the newspapers and he takes nothing for granted; he searches to the bottom of things, triply checks his facts and figures to the degree that they are subject to verification, and presents his conclusions to the reader as a result of a genuinely mature and independent analysis.

I cannot pass by this part of the book without at least a word of reference to the penetrating study of the "new vigilantism," not merely as it more narrowly affects the trade-union movement but in its broader aspects, as an embryo American fascism. Nor can I leave without mentioning Mr. Stolberg's positively brilliant thumbnail sketches of American labor leaders, their outlook and methods; there is more to be learned from these sketches as to the realities of the labor movement than from many a weighty tome on "labor problems."

Trade Unionism And Radicalism

The section on "Factionalism" is certainly the most original, perhaps the most valuable part of the book. It is not a mere exposure of the sinister activities of the Stalinites in the C.I.O., welcome and necessary as that is. It is a thoughtful study of the relation between political radicalism and the trade-union movement and of the role that the former can play, in its healthy, constructive form as well as in its pathological destructive form (Stalinism). Many of us will find some of our old dogmas and cherished beliefs challenged by the author in this part of his work—which is all to the good!

This review is already sounding like one long eulogy, so I had better hasten to some points of



BENJAMIN STOLBERG

adverse criticism—and there are a number of them, some more, some less important. I find, for example, a certain amount of confusion on the question of labor as a commodity. Mr. Stolberg believes that "this view of labor, not as a creative function, but as a commodity" is somehow responsible for the narrow "business unionism" of the A. F. of L. But it is hard to see how he makes that out. Obviously, labor (or rather: labor-power) remains a commodity as long as the wage system persists; this is a fact, not a theory or a doctrine. But labor is, at least potentially, more than that, even under capitalism—not a "creative function," which it can never really be in a large-scale private-property economy, but a social force, an historical movement, transcending the narrow bounds of the social order out of which it grows. It is ignoring this latter aspect that makes for "business unionism" in the bad sense of the term. But to deny the fact that labor is actually a commodity in

present-day society is not realism; it is sentimentalizing of the type of which Samuel Gompers was so fond.

It seems to me, too, that there is not quite the proper appreciation of the full significance of two issues that are agitating the labor movement, particularly the C.I.O., at the present moment: the issue of unity and the issue of democracy and autonomy. The latter question, already coming to the fore and bound to become central at the C.I.O. convention in November, the author barely mentions. The former question, unity, is indeed discussed to some extent, and soundly too, but the treatment is hardly adequate. Of course, there may be a real difference of opinion involved here or merely a difference of judgment as to emphasis. In any case, these shortcomings but little affect the general character of the work.

Prospects Of The C.I.O.

Mr. Stolberg's concluding chapter ("What's Ahead?") is devoted to forecast. Naturally he asks first: "What if there is war?" And he answers: "If the C.I.O. goes in for war, it will suffer the fate of the A. F. of L. after the last war. It is an axiom that labor has nothing to gain and everything to lose in every international war." This is, if anything, putting it mildly; there is every likelihood, in view of the totalitarian character of modern war, that the consequences will be even more disastrous for the C.I.O. than they were for the A. F. of L., should the former follow in the footsteps of the latter when war comes.

Excluding war and any cataclysmic change in the economic situation in the near future, Mr. Stolberg examines the prospects of the C.I.O. from four angles: first, organizational growth; second, independent political action; third, factional struggles; and fourth, peace between C.I.O. and A. F. of

L. The conclusions he comes to after a brief but penetrating analysis, may be given in his own words; in a sense, they are the fundamental conclusions of the entire work:

"If we escape war, the C.I.O. will succeed to the degree in which it follows, thru the maze of its innumerable problems, certain basic policies.

"First, it must permit radical and revolutionary criticism. But it must stamp out artificial and Jesuitical factionalism. . . . It [must] tolerate every kind of radical dissent except political disruption. The C.I.O. must not exclude any worker for his political beliefs, no matter what they are. But it must rid itself of Stalinist officials, staff members and organizers. . . .

"Second, the C.I.O. must go into political action under the banner of a labor party. . . .

"Third, it is a major tragedy for American labor that its two dominant movements should be at war. And, even the fusion seems for the present impossible, cooperation in various fields should be perfectly feasible. . . . Tho the A. F. of L. hierarchy is hopelessly reactionary, it still has a mass following. The theory of capturing masses of workers 'from below', thru abuse of their leaders, has never worked. The working class, like every other historically rising class, can be gained only thru education. . . . The C.I.O. can get the masses of American labor by its services to labor. . . . [The C.I.O. must] play a shrewd game of peace as against an indiscriminate game of war against the A. F. of L. . . .

"And, finally, the C.I.O. must continue to organize without let-up; and it must concentrate its energies in the great mass-production, distribution and public-service fields. . . .

"[If all these things are done]—then It Can't Happen Here. Otherwise—anything may happen."

NLRB Bids Rehire Strikers

In a decision of vast significance, the National Labor Relations Board last week ordered the Republic Steel Corporation to offer reinstatement to about 5,000 employees who went on strike in six Ohio plants in May 1937.

The order directed the company to stop interfering with the formation of any labor organization, discouraging membership in the Amalgamated Association of Iron, Steel and Tin Workers or the Steel Workers Organizing Committee or in any way interfering with the rights of self-organization of employees.

In a 100,000-word decision, the

Dress Union Pushes A.L.P. Election Drive

(Continued from Page 1) measures. Minkoff last year was leader of the A.L.P. delegation.

In both 5th A.D., Bronx and 16th A.D., Kings, where Minkoff and De Matteo are candidates, the Tammany machine is working diligently to mobilize its scattered forces and achieve victory where last year they met with overwhelming defeat.

The Flynn organization in the Bronx and the Sutherland-Morrasco combine in Kings have started active campaigning weeks in advance of the customary time in their efforts to defeat the two A.L.P. assemblymen.

At a recent executive board meeting, Local 22 appointed a special committee of business agents and board members to lead the campaign activities of Local 22 members in the 5th A.D. Special

board held that unfair labor practices by the corporation caused its employees to join the "little steel" walk-out.

The thousands who went out on strike will not, however, get back-pay for the time elapsed since the strike, board spokesmen explained.

The decision specifically instructed the corporation to do these things:

1. Pay remedial wages to any striker who is not given a job, or placed upon a preferential rehiring list, within five days after he applies for reemployment.
2. Reinstate twelve employees with back-pay and award back

headquarters will be opened in the district, leaflets will be printed and distributed and every dressmaker in the district will be canvassed. Local 22 will run a huge election rally for its members during the last week of October in a downtown hall, probably the Hippodrome.

John Gelo, assistant-manager of Local 89, is campaign manager for De Matteo. Local 89 officers and members are also taking leading parts and bearing the brunt of work in the campaigns of Peter Bonanno, Salvatore Bonanno and Anthony Calace. All Joint Board candidates have been participants in the labor movement for many years and without exception they have served with distinction.

SUBSCRIBE TO THE WORKERS AGE

wages to fourteen others.

3. Pay employees for earnings lost as a result of lockouts at the Canton Tin Plate Mill and Massillon Works.

4. Disestablish as collective-bargaining agencies the company unions in the plants at Massillon, Canton, Youngstown, Warren and Cleveland.

Domestic Workers Seek Reform

By ERNEST CALLOWAY

Chicago, Ill. GREATLY dissatisfied with the present structure of social and labor legislation, the organized domestic workers of Chicago are seeking ways and means to amend existing legislation with the hope of abolishing the "domestic-employment" exclusion clauses found in New Deal labor legislation.

The recent formation of the Committee on Legislation for Household Employment by the Chicago Domestic Workers Association is considered the final step in the direction of bringing this situation to the attention of the legislative bodies of the state. The legislative committee is now making a study in the field and a report is being planned for a city-wide conference some time this fall.

The committee announced recently that a conference had been held with officials of the Women's and Children's Department of the Illinois Department of Labor and cooperation had been extended by this agency in the collection of data for a proposed bill before the Illinois State Legislature.

CERTAIN Southern lumber mills are shutting down in order to escape of wage-hour law. . . . In Arkansas they say can't pay \$11 for a 44-hour week. . . . They pay some men \$9 a week for 60 hours of work . . . or 15 cents an hour. . . . 1,401 Western Union boys in N. Y. C. average 8½ cents an hour.

Union to Discuss Policies of A.L.P.

A forum on the "Present Policies of the American Labor Party" will be held Thursday, October 27, at 6 P. M., by the Knitgoods Workers Union. The speakers are H. Rogoff, associate editor of the Jewish Daily Forward; D. Benjamin, of the editorial board of the Workers Age; and A. Levenstein, former editor of the Socialist Call. The symposium will be held at the headquarters of the union, 765 Broadway, Brooklyn.

In addition to forums, the other educational activities of the union are in full swing. Classes are being offered to union members in public speaking, principles of unionism, war and fascism, parliamentary procedure, I.L.G.W.U. structure and functioning, English for beginners, and current events.

The Educational Department of the union has also organized mandolin groups, basketball and gym activities and shop theatre parties

Stay In Washburn Case

Lansing, Mich. Attorneys for Lester E. Washburn, executive board member and regional director of the United Automobile Workers of America, obtained a stay of proceedings from the State Supreme Court with intention of appealing Washburn's conviction for illegal picketing to the United States Supreme Court.

Washburn was leader of Lansing's famed "labor holiday" in March 1937. He was convicted under an old statute for "interfering" with the right of workmen to go to their jobs. The State Supreme Court upheld the conviction.