

**INDEPENDENT SOCIALIST LEAGUE
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LABOR ACTION

MAY 30, 1949

A PAPER IN THE INTEREST OF SOCIALISM

FIVE CENTS

Union Busting by Assassination?

As we go to press, word has been received of the vicious attempt on the life of Victor Reuther, national education director of the UAW. This is the second attempt in a year to assassinate a leading figure in the UAW.

The few details available indicate a deadly parallel to the earlier try at Walter Reuther—the same use of a shotgun in the evening hours at the home of the victim. Walter Reuther was severely wounded in his arm. It is feared Victor Reuther may lose use of his right eye.

In New York several weeks ago, another attempted assassination was successful. William Lurye, militant organizer for the ILGWU, was stabbed in cold blood in the New York garment district.

In not one of these three instances of gangster terror have the police found the murderous assassins. In the case of Walter Reuther, the union had warned that if the terrorists were not caught other attempts would be made. The Detroit police failed to provide even a modicum of protection.

After all, Victor Reuther is not an obscure UAW figure! The police seem completely incapable of solving these crimes or of providing the necessary protection.

The only ones who have anything to gain by these murders are the employers or fascist hoodlums, as both the UAW and the ILGWU have warned. The police should know where to look!

Labor will not stand by while its leaders and militants are murdered by hired thugs in the service of labor-haters!

New Strategy at Ford Announced by Reuther

By WALTER JASON

DETROIT, May 22.—"They had Reuther over a barrel, but now he's got them over the barrel."

This pithy comment of a Ford worker, after hearing Walter Reuther's speech outlining the new program and strategy of the UAW in the Ford strike, summarizes accurately the great change in the character of the strike now that the Reuther leadership has made a drastic turn in policy.

For what Reuther did was to combine the strike against the speedup with the struggle for the UAW 1949 economic objectives, including the pension plan. He has "shot the works" and the UAW is now engaged in the first great strike struggle of the labor movement in 1949.

How did the rank and file react to this militant program? In spite of a heavy rain and windstorm, between 15,000 to 20,000 Ford strikers came to a mass meeting of Ford Locals 600 and 900 to hear the Reuther speech. They came in a belligerent, bitter mood. They left inspired and determined to win.

How did the Ford officials react? John Bugas, ex-FBI agent and boss of Ford negotiators, not only lost his smooth and urbane manner in negotiations, he also lost his temper.

For Bugas recognized that he is no longer up against reasonable "labor statesmen," controlling a subdued rank and file. Ford is up against the kind of UAW ranks and leadership

that built this union through great strike struggles.

RECOVERING THEIR STRIDE

Credit for the turn in UAW policy belongs primarily to Reuther, Emil Mazey and Leonard Woodcock, the regional director from Muskegon, who is high in Reuther circles as one of the few progressive leaders. The rest of the Reuther leadership kept floundering around until the new line was worked out and presented.

What was required was a cold-blooded analysis of the trap into which the Ford Motor Company had led the UAW unless it transformed the strike over the immediate issue—speedup—into an all-out struggle for everything, including a new contract and the pensions. It required a recognition of the futile character of the previous strategy in the Ford strike. It required some willingness to take the kind of chance Reuther took in the 1945-46 General Motors strike. Any retreat would be disastrous, any status-quo policy would be fatal to future plans—so the choice was full speed ahead.

Besides most of the other Reuther leaders, the anti-Reuther forces were stumbling around in the narrow conservative approach, typically "trade union," which precluded them from having any program capable of meeting the necessities of the situation. Rather interesting that the "socialists" and ex-socialists of the Reuther lead-

(Continued on page 2)

An Interview in Paris With—

Richard Wright: On U. S. Politics

Richard Wright, author of Native Son, Black Boy and many short stories, probably the best-known Negro writer in the United States, attended the "International Day Against War and Dictatorship" on April 30 in Paris, organized by the RDR (Rassemblement Démocratique Révolutionnaire—Revolutionary Democratic Assembly). As was reported in LABOR ACTION last week, Wright took a forthright stand at this conference (together with Jean-Paul Sartre and Merleau-Ponty) against both American imperialism and Russian imperialism, distinguishing himself sharply from the pro-Washington flag-waving of Sidney Hook and James T. Farrell, the American delegates.

The following interview with Wright was transmitted to LABOR ACTION from Paris by Michel Salomon and we publish it for our readers' interest. It is translated from the French.—Ed.

By MICHEL SALOMON

"I agreed to participate personally in the RDR meeting," Wright told me, "in order to make clear my disagreement with the American left."

He smiled at me and carefully tapped the ash off his cigarette. Sitting there sunk down in his armchair, looking massive and slender at the same time, the author of Native Son is the prototype of those writers for whom social problems are not merely cold abstractions but questions of "human destiny."

I asked him if there was any truth to the rumors of a coming split in the RDR between supporters and opponents of the Atlantic Pact. Wright immediately reassured me,

There are no split-differences, properly so called, in the French political movement known as the RDR—at least not to my knowledge. One likewise finds a rather substantial unity of viewpoint everywhere in Europe among the parties and movements which, like the RDR, are based on revolutionary socialism. It is, rather, a question of a fundamental difference between the European Left and what may be called the American Left.

(Continued on page 3)

Truman Dumping T-H Repeal

Key Democrat on House Labor Committee, Vote Crucial, Sent Abroad

By SUSAN GREEN

In public President Truman beats his chest and reaffirms his support of Taft-Hartley repeal. In private he acts in such a way as to make repeal impossible or more difficult at this session of Congress, even if the administration Democrats could muster enough votes.

Quite a furor developed in Washington, among both Democrats and Republicans, when it became known this week that the president had quietly appointed Representative Augustine B. Kelley, Pennsylvania Democrat, for a five-week foreign assignment. Mr. Kelley is to go as United States delegate to the International Labor Organization conference in Geneva, to return in mid-July.

The point is that Kelley is the administration's "strong man" on the

Berliners Back Strikers in Mass Violence Against Russian Police

By V. JENSEN

Mass fighting against the Russian police, open strikebreaking by the Stalinist "unions" and organizations—these events in Berlin mean that the power of Stalinism in the domain of the Iron Heel has run up against its greatest upheaval-from-below since the end of the war.

Where the Tito split a year ago cracked the top hierarchies of the new Russian empire, the Berlin railway workers' strike—coming on the heels of the low pro-Stalinist vote in the East German election—shows the hatred and enmity of the people pouring into the cracks in open struggle against the Kremlin tyranny.

As we go to press, the Berlin railway workers' strike against the Russian sector railway administration is entering into its fourth bloody day, marked by an unprecedented outbreak of mass violence in the occupied capital. It's clear that this struggle has far transcended a mere wage struggle and has become a massive political demonstration against the occupation.

The strike began on Friday, May 20, as some 16,000 members of the non-Stalinist Railway Workers Union, residents of the Western sectors of Berlin, left their jobs on the demand that they be paid their wages in West marks. Berlin railways, including the inner city elevated system, are controlled by the Russian zone authorities as part of the zone's railway network and workers have been paid in East marks whether they lived in the Russian sectors of the city or in the Western sectors.

STARTED WITH WAGE FIGHT

The hardship involved becomes clear when it is remembered that since March 20, the West mark has been the only legal tender in the Western zone; railway workers who live in that zone have had to ex-

(Continued on page 3)

More on Germany—

Turn to the World Politics Column on page 3 for a discussion on the unification of Germany.

More Light on Anti-Semitism in Stalinland—

How Rumania Cracks Down on Jews

By EUGENE VAUGHN

Further evidence is accumulating with regard to anti-Semitism and anti-Jewish practices in Stalinland, in addition to what was recently presented in the April 11 issue of LABOR ACTION.

The latest boulder in a mountain of evidence is to be found in a survey called "Jews Behind the Iron Curtain" by Dr. Emanuel Patt, a Jewish Bundist leader, issued by the Jewish Labor Committee. This survey is enlightening on the current attitude of the Stalinist bureaucracy within the Russian satellite countries toward Jewish national and cultural life.

Dr. Patt reviews the facts that before World War II there were five million Jews to be found within the borders of Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Rumania and the Balkan states. When the war was over, there remained but one million in all these lands. A considerable proportion of the Jews decided to leave the countries where the very soil was soaked through with their blood.

But another part of the surviving Jews could not or would not leave their homes; They adopted the heroic

decision of reconstructing their lives on the very ruins of their former existence. And before long these Jews came under the rule of precisely those who had been responsible for the destruction of the once-flourishing Jewish community life in Soviet Russia, the Stalinist bureaucracy.

RUMANIA AN EXAMPLE

The Jews in all the satellite countries are being forcibly denationalized. Rumania is an excellent example of what is happening to Jewish life within the borders of the Russian satellites.

In Rumania, the Jewish community as an organized cultural or national entity is on the verge of extinction. During 1948, Jewish organizations underwent a systematic "purge." Jewish schools were forcibly liquidated. Even in schools where Yiddish could still be taught for a few hours (schools where the Jewish children exceeded 20 per cent of the school population were granted this privilege), Jewish history as a special subject was NOT admitted.

On November 5, 1948, a decree was issued ordering the nationalization of

19 Jewish hospitals belonging to the Jewish community. Similarly, the Jewish community was deprived of its right to administer social-security institutions; the Jewish sports clubs such as the Maccabees and Hakoah were dissolved; the Union of Rumanian Jews was dissolved after forty years of activity. On April 21, another 247 Jewish welfare institutions were nationalized, depriving even the Stalinist Jewish "democratic committee" of any real function.

For some time after the war the Rumanian government had made gestures favoring Zionism, as had Stalinist Russia itself. It even authorized the organization of mass emigration to Palestine. However, after Ilya Ehrenberg's condemnation of Zionism and the Literary Gazette's characterization of Zionism as a "bacterial weapon in the West's war against the Soviet Union and People's Democracies," the Rumanian government immediately changed its line and its treatment of Zionism.

From a major port of embarkation to Palestine for Jews of East Europe, Rumania became a jail for all those Zionist Jews who wished to leave. By the end of October, 1948, the police raided the offices of the Jewish National Fund, Keren Hayesod and Keren Kayemet, and the leading Zionists were arrested.

CALL ZIONISM "FASCIST"

The Political Bureau of the Rumanian Communist Party at that time adopted a resolution on national problems which stated that "Zionism is a politically nationalistic, reactionary movement of the Jewish bourgeoisie which aims to divert the Jews from the common struggle, side by side with its progressive forces, against capitalism and their own bourgeoisie." The Jewish Democratic Committee—the Communist agency of the Jewish front organizations—organized a mass meeting in which the Zionists were compared with fascists.

Threats of personal retaliation were directed against Jews who had declared their intention of going to Palestine. (260,000 of 350,000 Jews had registered for emigration.) On De-

(Continued on page 3)

The Terminiello Case and the Supreme Court

The Supreme Court decision on the Terminiello case has produced a divided reaction in liberal ranks. And the problem it highlighted is indeed calculated to cause soul-searching among those who pass for liberals in the United States today, for reasons it will be interesting to examine.

But for ourselves, we believe that the labor and socialist movements—as well as real liberals—have reason to welcome this decision as a rare bright spot in the civil-liberties field in recent times in this country.

As in so many other cases, the particular instance upon which the decision was rendered is not the important aspect, but it is the crux of the dilemma which is faced by those who view the court opinion with alarm. Terminiello was arrested in Chicago in 1946 for making a violently anti-Semitic speech from a platform with Gerald L. K. Smith, the self-nominated aspirant for American Fuehrer. Like his political associate, he is of the very scum of the earth. But—

THE ISSUE

upon which the Supreme Court passed was not Terminiello or anti-Semitism. The heart of the majority opinion rendered by Justice Douglas was the view that

"a function of free speech under our system of government is to invite dispute. It may indeed best serve its high purpose when it induces a condition of unrest, creates dissatisfaction with conditions as they are, or even stirs people to anger. . . ."

"Freedom of speech, though not absolute, is nevertheless protected against censorship or punishment, unless shown likely to produce a clear and present danger of a substantive evil that rises far above public inconvenience, annoyance or unrest. There is no room under our Constitution for a more restrictive view."

And we say that the reiteration of this view by the Supreme Court especially at this time is far more important than the fact that a rat was let loose.

Especially at this time. . . . Those liberals who found the decision ungratifying have made—

AN ANALOGY

—with the court treatment of the Nazi movement in Germany before it came to power. They say in effect: "At the beginning of the '30s Nazis were let loose by the Weimar Republic's courts by the droves after being arrested—and look what happened. . . ."

There are two things wrong with this analogy, and they're plenty.

(Continued in Editorial Column on page 3)

closely divided House Labor Committee, from which further action must come. So close is the division in this committee that the Lesinski bill was originally reported out by a margin of one, 13-12. Plainly, Kelley's presence is crucial for the administration Democrats, especially since there is real danger of the obnoxious Wood bill being voted out to the floor of the House once more.

"RESPONSIBILITY IS FIXED"

When the news of Kelley's appointment leaked out, it is reported that both Speaker Rayburn and House Democratic Leader McCormack were both embarrassed and angry; they had not been taken into Mr. Truman's confidence.

House Republican Leader Martin was smart enough to say, for publi-

(Continued on page 4)

UAW Drive on FE Flops; Relied on Red-Baiting Line

By KEN HILLYER

CHICAGO, May 22.—The drive of the UAW-CIO to take over the CIO Farm Equipment union (FE) came to an end this week when the executive board of the CIO voted to recommend to the national CIO convention the lifting of the FE's charter.

The action of the executive board at its Portland meeting ordering the FE into the UAW was turned down by the former. The setting up of a special CIO committee of Rieve, Curran and Potofsky was boycotted by Grant Oakes, president of FE. The UAW's effort to take FE over by the use of the NLRB elections has failed.

What happened? The election results are in. The UAW won one plant from FE, the big Allis-Chalmers plant in Springfield, Ill. They lost the huge McCormick Works election by 400 votes, but took the tool room. They lost Oliver Plow in South Bend by 80 votes out of 1650 cast, but were swamped by FE at John Deere, East Moline, Ill., and Oliver in Charles City, Iowa, both in the plant and in the office.

Yet to come up are the McCormick office workers and the Louisville works of Harvester, both very tough for UAW to take. At the Stockton, Calif., works of Harvester, the FE raided the International Association of Machinists but the UAW intervened and won over both unions.

Why did UAW with its militant record, its larger organization and better facilities lose the elections?

RED-BAITING DOESN'T WORK

One of the lessons learned is that the UAW does not have the magic name with workers that many think.

(Continued on page 4)

Two City Machines Cracked By Voters: Hague, Tammany

By WYATT LEE

Two recent elections have pointed up the fact that American voters, particularly those sections in or closely aligned with the working class, are far from quiescent or passive in their approach to the ballot box. In both cases, the municipal election in Jersey City and a special congressional election in Manhattan's 20th District, machine politics sustained a crushing blow.

In Great Britain, by-elections are watched closely as a clue to the current political standing of the two national parties, Labor and Conservative. Local U. S. polls too can give an inkling of the political temper of the nation.

Within this frame, the Manhattan and Jersey elections show the American mass in the same state of mind that resulted in the election of Truman: confused, lacking a clear-cut idea of what it wants, but demanding a change and belligerently opposed to a return to "normal" politics.

The situation fairly cries out for leadership of a kind that can clarify this confusion and offer a program that goes beyond the narrow limitations imposed on organizations that presume to speak for both business and labor. In short, the temper of the voters is right for the launching of a labor party.

JUNIOR DOES IT

Doubters and scoffers should take a close look at the campaign which resulted in the election of Franklin D.

Roosevelt Jr. to fill the congressional seat of the late Sol Bloom. With little more than his name and his father's flashing smile, young Roosevelt defied Tammany Hall when he was nominated the regular Democratic Party nomination and rolled up a vote that left three other candidates reeling in the dust.

Roosevelt's own tool in the election was the Four Freedoms Party, a group of dissident Democrats at odds with Tammany. The name of the group sums up his program—quotes from his father's speeches. If the novice politician had to depend on the Four Freedoms alone, he would have ended up with about 10,000 votes, just ahead of the trailing American Labor Party candidate.

He owes his victory to the Liberal Party, which has the happy faculty of seeing its own image in any candidate it chooses to support. The Liberal Party, which taps the same strata that would rally to the standard of a genuine labor party, led the field by far. Roosevelt would have been elected by its votes alone.

The mechanics of the Liberal victory followed much the same pattern that a labor party would follow. The leaders were comparative amateurs but indefatigable; the block workers were youthful but enthusiastic; the poll-watchers numerous and vigilant. Above all, the unions allied to the Liberal Party were able to supply the shock troops needed to inspire a turnout of voters that broke all New York records for special elections.

Against this tide of vigor and enthusiasm the wardheelers of Tammany were helpless. The pitiful showing of the party regulars may lead to a complete reorganization of the New York Democratic Party.

DRIVE WEDGE INTO MACHINE

Across the river in Jersey City the creaking machine of Frank Hague, once the peer of political-bosses, blew up with a loud, resounding noise as Hague's nephew and heir failed to be re-elected mayor. This defeat administered to the boss who had ruled Hudson County like a feudal despot for 36 years was celebrated by a shouting, cheering throng which acted as if the people were freed from slavery.

The factors in Hague's defeat are difficult to assay from a labor point of view. John V. Kenny, who led the victorious ticket, admits to be nothing more than a disgruntled Hague man kicked out of office a year ago. Evidently the boss had made a lot of enemies, for Kenny recruited much

(Continued on page 4)

SEVEN MONTHS
of the T-H Repeal Fight:
What have the labor leaders been saying? Turn to the feature article by Jack Ranger on page 4.



New Strategy at Ford --

(Continued from page 1)
er'ship had the imagination and courage to work out a new strategy.

Reuther ridiculed the latest Ford demand that all workers except those in the B building go back to work. He urged the rank and file to vote against the strikebreaking proposal.

The Reuther leadership is now in a position to exploit the "elbow room" it has created in the situation by making all-out demands now.

What a pity a photographer didn't get a picture of Bugas and Reuther on Friday morning when Reuther, accompanied by Mazey and others, presented the new demands of the UAW to Ford officials.

NOTE

Latest reports, following the events in Detroit described by Walter Jason, are that the UAW has proposed arbitration in the Ford strike on general problem of control of production rates.

Next came the analysis of the speedup question. Reuther was not "investigating the facts, since they were in dispute."

Besides, in this strike, as in every struggle, many inactive and inexperienced union cardholders become active union men and strike veterans.

The whole change in the strike situation emphasizes over and over again how powerful the UAW is when it sticks to the kind of progressive policies and militant actions which built and strengthened it.

Democratic Participation by Members Is Key to Labor Political Action

By GORDON HASKELL

"It is sincerely hoped that every member of the AFL will get out and vote for the candidates that have been endorsed by the great majority of your fellow brother and sister trade-unionists."

council, legislature and Congress, and that they administer right in every executive department of government — "RIGHT" for them.

The workingmen and women, on the other hand, the vast majority of the citizens of the country, cannot use the SAME method of nominating THEIR representatives and seeing to it that they faithfully represent THEIR interests once elected.

The decisions on the program on which his candidates are going to run. He has helped make the decision on who the candidates will be.

A man in office is subject to many pressures. When any matter of importance is before the city council or other body in which he serves, every interest group in the area puts on the pressure.

The experience of every political body in the world shows that in the clinches there is only one kind of pressure that can hold even "honest" politicians in line when the big money starts putting on the heat.

That is not the way the LLPE and the PAC are organized at the present time.

HERE'S A WAY

True, their officials are often the elected officers of some union or central labor body.

But how could the rank and file of labor actually participate in the democratic processes except by just casting a vote?

NOT IN THE CHORUS

But there is only one way that labor can have politicians in office who owe their position to labor and who will lose it if they stop representing the working people.

As long as the labor leaders really believe that casting a vote on election day is the "full part" which the ranks can or should play in the "democratic processes" they are going to continue to lose elections.

They are tired of playing in the chorus while their employers manage the show, direct it from the wings and have their favorites in the stellar roles.

The above two sentences appeared in one of the most progressive AFL papers we have seen on the eve of the recent nominating election for city officers in Oakland, Calif.

There were no doubt many reasons for the failure of the endorsed candidates. But among the most important was the policy of the AFL and CIO leadership so well summed up in the above quotation.

First, it is not correct to say that the LLPE candidates had "been endorsed by the great majority of your brother and sister trade-unionists."

FULL PART?

But the second sentence quoted above is at the very core of labor's political weakness in America today.

Just casting a vote is NOT the full part which the representatives of capital, the businessmen, big and not so big, play in the political setup.

After their candidates are elected, the representatives of capital, the industrialists, real-estate interests, bankers, big merchants, keep a constant vigil over THEIR officeholders and see to it that they vote right in

Let's start three months before any local election. (This plan could be applied on a national scale with slight changes.)

The program and slate are returned to the locals for discussion. AFTER thorough discussion, the locals vote on the program, plus any amendments and elect delegates to a political convention.

How has the individual unionist's participation in the democratic processes thus far been increased?

The future of Stalinism is being decided on the Ford picket lines just as much as it is in Judge Medina's courtroom.

prerequisite to the signing of the Atlantic Pact.

In the trade unions the loss of Stalinist prestige has been due more than anything else to its sellout of strikes and any other militant expression by the organized workers.

Of the Tories (or Conservatives) it can be said they have made membership gains, especially among the teenagers, due almost entirely to their ability to finance social activity among the youth, while their polling gains are the result of the "non-political" vote of the housewives.

One of the Labor Party's trump cards has been its demand that the Tories should disclose their election policy.

I am intrigued by Bill Pickett's protest. He says my analysis (LABOR ACTION, April 4) "is purely superficial and un-Marxist, as the following facts will show."

He does not contest my statement that in all by-elections since the general election of 1945, the Labor government has not lost a single seat, but he goes on to assert, without producing one jot of evidence, that "in the majority of cases seats have been retained by only the slenderest of margins."

Now, while it is obvious that Bill Pickett can read, his arithmetic is bad. What are the FACTS? I list below the figures of the last six by-elections.

Soverby (Yorkshire), March 16 Total votes cast 35,000 Labor majority 2,152

labor Party Conference at Whitsun, they will show that in 1948 the membership grew to over 5,500,000—the highest figure ever recorded.

It is true that there is a measure of disquiet among rank-and-file trade unionists. This is a healthy sign. But it is equally true that there has been less resentment against the present government than any other in Britain's history.

Yes, Labor will be judged on what it has done. It will be judged by miners, shipbuilders, steel workers, domestic workers and the rest. Their answer will be clear and unequivocal.

The people of Britain climbed out of the abyss in 1945 and they will never be thrown back into it. "Time" will certainly prove whether I or Bill Pickett is right. Let us hope that for his sake and mine, and for working people everywhere, the people of Britain will never allow the Tories to come to power again!

George STONE

As an innocent bystander at the moment, we invite our British readers in particular to get into the above melee—U. S. readers not excluded.

Check your NAME—ADDRESS—CITY—ZONE—STATE appearing on the upper left-hand corner of page one.

13-22
If this number appears at the bottom of your address, your subscription expires with this issue.

Labor Action Readers Urged to Speed Contributions

Fund Drive Needs More Steam—Now!

By YETTA BARSH

MAY 23—There are four weeks to go and we have achieved 52 per cent of our Fund Drive goal.

The situation is still well in hand and there is no danger yet of the full \$14,000 not being raised.

Fifteen of our units are above the 50 per cent mark. The fifteen below that point are responsible for the low national average and we appeal to

them especially to do their parts.

St. Louis is the first League unit to exceed its quota. It sent in \$34 this last week and thus oversubscribed its quota by 16 per cent.

Chicago increased its contributions by 10 per cent by kicking in \$145, placing in the 61 per cent category.

READERS, PITCH IN!

Los Angeles is still moving slowly, but we are encouraged by its \$79.75 contribution this week. It represents a jump of 16 per cent.

contributed \$40 during the week. San Francisco sent in another \$55.50, keeping itself ahead of the national average.

Both Youngstown and the Berkeley SYL are new starters, having sent in their first \$20 and \$8, respectively.

Our contributions from LABOR ACTION and The New International readers have slowed down. The \$5 received this week gives that unit a total of \$67.86, or 45 per cent.

We appeal to our friends and readers to help us in our efforts to speed up Fund Drive collections and to raise the press quota of \$150.

Readers of LABOR ACTION: Pitch In!

Here's my \$..... for the ISL Fund Drive.
Name.....Date.....
Address.....
City.....Zone.....State.....

Branch	Quota	Received	Per Cent
Bronx SYL	\$50	\$78	156
Chicago SYL	100	128	128
St. Louis	50	58	116
Brooklyn SYL	50	52	104
Streator	25	20	80
New York City	4000	3141	79
Philadelphia	400	288	72
Cleveland	480	284	71
Newark	300	211	70
Chicago	1500	916	61
San Francisco	800	462	58
Detroit	600	332	55
Manhattan SYL	50	26	52
Reading	100	50	50
Buffalo SYL	50	25	50
Labor Action and New Int'l	150	68	45
Akron	200	79	40
Buffalo	1000	390	39
West Virginia	125	43	34
National Office	1500	494	33
Boston	100	22	22
Los Angeles	500	107	21
Youngstown	100	20	20
Berkeley SYL	50	8	16
Baltimore	200	4	2
Connecticut	50	0	0
Indiana	100	0	0
Oregon	50	0	0
Pittsburgh	50	0	0
Seattle	300	0	0
Miscellaneous	983	0	0
TOTALS	\$14,000	\$7306	52

Readers of Labor Action Take the Floor...

In the interest of truth, I must write protesting about the inaccurate report sent to you (and published in your April 4 issue) by George Stone, under the "London Letter" heading.

As for the Labor Party going from "strength to strength," trade-union opposition has mounted considerably and only because of the ability of the top bureaucrats (allied to the Trade Union Congress) to ignore the feelings of the rank and file.

The population's reaction to the latest budget has been clearly reflected in the local council elections which followed the budget announcement.

Inside the Labor Party the membership since 1946 has shown a steady decrease both of the adult party and the youth section.

On foreign policy, where Tories and Labor government are in complete agreement, the left-wing opposition has died down considerably.

The population's reaction to the latest budget has been clearly reflected in the local council elections which followed the budget announcement.

One of the Labor Party's trump cards has been its demand that the Tories should disclose their election policy.

I am intrigued by Bill Pickett's protest. He says my analysis (LABOR ACTION, April 4) "is purely superficial and un-Marxist, as the following facts will show."

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more directly at present. None of the basic needs of life has been given any serious attention by the government; and their much-vaunted social services—though good in themselves—are not accepted as being of more importance than an adequate supply of houses and sanitary living accommodations.

And now, having given you an almost entirely opposite picture to that of George Stone, I am content to let Time—that great historical disprover of theory—be the judge of which of us is right.

Comradely greetings
Bill PICKETT
Birmingham, Eng., April 20.

To the Editor:
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Editorials

Terminiello Case - -

(Continued from page 1)

In the first place, the scandalous behavior of the "democratic" courts of Weimar Germany did not primarily involve the question of free speech. The scandal there was that Nazi thugs who were caught red-handed in murder, assault and battery, the breaking-up of workers' meetings with organized storm troops, individual beatings of radicals and Jews, etc., were let off either lightly or scot-free by courts nominally loyal to the republic but actually staffed by reactionary judges whose sympathies were on the side of the Hitlerite gangsters. There was usually no doubt that the actions charged were crimes.

In the second place, the political and social context in which this scandal flourished, and in which it was a token of the rottenness of Weimar "democracy," was the growth of the Nazi movement as a perfectly "clear and present danger." Even long before the crucial '30s, the "beer-hall putsch" of the Hitlerites raised no question of free speech; it was a revolt against the government and frankly so. The tender treatment of the putschists was not—even formally—based upon democratic considerations but upon more or less concealed sympathy with the anti-democratic aims of the reaction.

The Supreme Court decision on the fascist rat Terminiello takes place today, not in—

THE CONTEXT

—of a danger from a growing fascist mass movement but in a context where the U. S. government itself is taking the lead in depriving liberals, radicals and labor of democratic liberties under the cover of an anti-Communist drive and of "anti-subversive" drives and "loyalty purges" whose sharp edge is directed against every species of progressive thought.

Anyone who lets the picture of Terminiello ranting on his platform get in the way of understanding this is missing the point.

The Supreme Court minority which opposed the decision did not miss the point. They too (led by Justice Robert Jackson) had their eyes fixed not on Terminiello but on the real issue—the existing "danger" they were judging. The heart of the Jackson dissent (skipping the legalisms) is:

"Invocation of constitutional liberties as part of the strategy for overthrowing them presents a dilemma to a free people which may not be soluble by constitutional logic alone. . . . There is danger that, if the court does not temper its doctrinaire logic with a little practical wisdom it will convert the constitutional Bill of Rights into a suicide pact."

Jackson (it need hardly be added) was not thinking of—

THE "DANGER"

—from Terminiello and his fellow scum. He was thinking of the meaning of the majority view for the anti-subversive drives being carried on by the executive branch of government and the monstrous anti-subversive bills being passed by state legislatures and pending before Congress, none of which are directed primarily against the Smiths.

For example, Maryland, which has recently passed the very worst bill of all in the shape of the infamous Ober Law, has cause to think twice now about the constitutionality of its reprehensible assault on civil liberties.

Jackson has his eye on the ball. That's why, with our eye on the same ball, we welcome the decision. If we would make any reservation at all, it is the side comment that it is too bad that this support to civil liberties has to come through the process of "government by judiciary" which by and large has played an anti-progressive role in politics.

Since all this is perfectly clear, why the divided minds among some liberals? The—

LIBERALS' DILEMMA

—arises because they think the way to fight the anti-Semites and fascists and race-baiters is to pass legal ordinances depriving them of platforms.

We haven't the slightest confidence in these measures. On the contrary, all experience has shown that any such laws (including similar laws in pre-Hitler Germany, if they are added) are used for more against labor and radicals than against right-wing reaction. Because such legal swords have two edges, and the state power that wields the sword in the longer or shorter run is far more anxious to whet the cutting edge against the left and against labor.

It was the Workers Party (now the Independent Socialist League) which in 1945 initiated mass picket lines and demonstration against Gerald L. K. Smith's nation-wide speaking tour, and it was our movement which organized the great demonstration outside Madison Square Garden in 1939 against the Coughlinite-Bundist united front. We are proud of that and will do it again.

But we never asked for any kind of general law to be passed by the GOVERNMENT which would automatically deprive such gentry of their platform. WE HAVE UNBOUNDED FAITH IN THE DESIRE AND ABILITY OF THE PEOPLE IN ACTION TO STOP THE FASCISTS, BUT WE HAVE NO FAITH AT ALL IN THE GOVERNMENTAL POWER OF STATE TO USE SUCH LAWS IN THE INTERESTS OF THE PEOPLE.

The liberals' dilemma arises from their illusions about the "impartiality" of the state power, about the disinterestedness of Justice Jackson's modicum of "practical wisdom."

We're for the court majority's "doctrinaire logic." The doctrine's a good one. LET THE COURT NOW APPLY IT TO THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT, AND TO THE STATE OF MARYLAND, AMONG OTHERS.

Rumania - -

(Continued from page 1)

December 23, 1948, it was announced that the General Zionist organization "had voluntarily decided to discontinue its activities." All Zionist parties were liquidated with the temporary exception of Mapam, the pro-Stalinist Zionist group. In 1949 the Mapam was also declared illegal.

No more Jewish schools, no more Jewish culture, no more Jewish organizations, no more Jewish communities. The Jews of Rumania have been subjected to the despotic rule of a small but powerful Stalinist clique. The Iron Curtain has fallen. So much for the Stalinist claim of being the great dispenser of cultural and national autonomy.

ANTI-SEMITISM

Even the government personnel remains imbued with anti-Semitic prejudices. The government has been lax in punishing anti-Semitism. It has been exceptionally lenient toward those responsible for the extermination of Jews during the war. Anti-Semites like Foreign Minister Titulescu were included in the early post-war governments under the benevolent eyes of the Stalinists. Those brought up on trial for complicity in the murder of Jews during the war were let off with light sentences. Of those who took part in the Yassi pogrom in 1941 (which caused the death of 14,000 Jews), 150 have been identified and as yet no sentences have been pronounced.

An interesting sidelight on the lot of Rumanian Jewry is the running debate which has been going on in the American Yiddish press. The CP's Freiheit and B. Z. Goldberg of the Jewish Day have been insisting for a long time that Jewish national life in Rumania has been flourishing as never before. The non-Stalinist press reported the contrary. Finally, in March, the Freiheit published the announcement of the Rumanian government that six schools where Yiddish would be taught were to be reopened! It did not indicate any realization that this news item gave the lie to its previous insistence that Jewish cultural life had been flourishing right along.

change their East mark wages at an unfavorable currency rate.

By the end of the first day of the strike, every elevated train in West Berlin was halted. Almost all freight and passenger traffic between Berlin and Western Germany ground to a stop. Even trains to the Russian Zone, which never stopped rolling during the blockade, were affected.

By the end of the first day also the political nature of the demonstration fanned off by the strike was clear. The Russian strikebreaking machine went into action as soon as the strike was called. Russian machine-gunners were placed on the roofs of elevated cars. Some 5000 Young Communists and members of the Stalinist-controlled so-called "Free German Workers Union" (FDGB) were recruited as strikebreakers, principally into the ranks of the Eastern Zone railway police.

Pitched battles were fought at El Stions in the Western Zone, which were policed by the Russian railway cops. Strikers joined by large crowds of sympathetic anti-Stalinist Berliners strove to expel the Russian railway police from the stations they were protecting. Against the Russian police dogs, carbines and pistols, the crowds fought with fists, clubs, stones and steel spikes. By Tuesday morning, 1000 casualties and one death were reported.

STALINIST STRIKEBREAKING

Anti-Russian feeling running high from the beginning, sharpened as new reports of deaths at the guns of the railway police circulated the city. Russian officers who showed their faces in the Western sector were jeered, cursed, spat on, and even stoned.

The loss of prestige suffered by the

WORLD POLITICS

The Issue of German Unity: U. S. and Russia Versus the German People

The Paris Conference of the Big Four Powers has already begun, but it is not there that Germany's real future will be decided.

This latest of a series of conferences between the foreign ministers of Russia, America, France and England will probably arrive at many decisions concerning Germany and its people, but between these decisions and their applications stand the 65 million Germans themselves who are experiencing a great revival of nationalist sentiment and a desire for unification of their country which has erupted as an independent and perhaps decisive force in the whole situation.

The question of Germany's unification will certainly occupy a leading spot on the Paris conference agenda, but they will not be talking about the same thing that the people of Germany mean by unification. In discussing unification at Paris, the foreign ministers are guided by two principles: (1) Their desire for a unification which will still subject the Germans to over-all control by Allied governmental and military forces; (2) the tug-of-war over the kind of unification which will best serve one or another bloc in the continuing "cold war" between Russia and America.

Thus the Americans and their supporters will press for unification under the new Bonn Constitution which creates a loosely federated Germany, without a strongly organized central government and with its authority severely curbed by the Allies and subject to constant supervision. It seems likely that the Americans will oppose any effort to end the occupation immediately.

For their part, the Russians may propose a more centralized German government, also subject to over-all supervision, but with the hope on their part that the German Stalinist movement could more easily infiltrate and seize eventual control over such a centralized government.

IMPERIALIST UNITY

Whatever differences may develop at Paris, it is clear that all the powers involved in this conference will stand united solidly against the idea of German unification which is now sweeping over the country itself. This, of course, is the real question today: what kind of unification shall there be, and by whom shall it be done?

There is no question but that the reactionary splitup of the country imposed at the end of the war is about to be ended. Unification is coming because such powerful political and economic forces have been created as to make it impossible for the present division to last any longer.

But shall this be a formal unification imposed upon Germany from without by the imperialists in session at Paris, shall it be a unification which denies the essence of national freedom by its refusal to permit the German people themselves to decide its exact form and nature—or shall it be a genuine and progressive unification brought about by the actions and struggles of the Germans themselves? This is the real issue of Germany's future.

The Americans are, of course, opposed to a unified Germany either under Russian influence or dominated by the German Communist Party—a "Stalinist" Germany. The Russians, in turn, are bitterly opposed to a unified Germany under American influence in any form or shape. Yet it is clear that today, since the Russians are in retreat for the time being, they may well have to accept the American style of "unification" (represented by the loose federation of the Bonn Constitution) if they wish to get in exchange for this such vitally necessary things as a resumption of East-West trade, a look-see in management of the Ruhr industries, etc. This may well be the essential bargain made at Paris—an all-German Bonn Constitution in exchange for renewal of trade and commerce.

But there is one issue on which both Acheson and Vyshinsky will stand firmly united. We have already mentioned this: opposition to a genuine free and unified Germany, to be achieved in the only possible way—by the masses of German people themselves who, acting without restraint, create a new German Republic expressing their own democratic hopes and ambitions. For us, therefore, the only possible answer to the fake German "unification" conference at Paris should be the demand of the German people themselves for a freely elected, all-German Constituent Assembly—a sovereign

body of the German people—empowered to draft and put into effect the constitution for a new German Republic.

Such a demand, of course, will be bitterly opposed by the occupying powers—Russians and Americans alike—who already indicate their disdain and contempt for the German people by failing to allow them representatives at Paris. If the Russians succeed in having some of their Stalinist supporters in Germany come to Paris, it will only be a propaganda game to back up Russian proposals.

Two events of the past week have clearly indicated precisely how the German masses themselves feel. The violent strike of the Berlin railwayworkers is a militant demonstration against the hated Russian occupiers and their Stalinist quisling supporters. It caps the whole successful struggle for the saving of Berlin from Stalinism. More significant is the result of the elections to the Stalinist "People's Congress" in Eastern Germany. On each ballot appeared the statement: "I am for the unity of Germany and a just peace treaty. Therefore [X] I vote for the following [Stalinist] list of candidates."

By their own admission (this, in itself, is an astounding fact), the Russians admitted that over 4 million voted No—meaning that they did not accept this Stalinist "therefore." At least 4 million said that precisely because they wish unity and peace, they could not vote for the Stalinists. Just how many more than 4 million actually voted No is unknown, but it certainly approximated 50 per cent of the total vote of 12 million. This was a stunning defeat for the Stalinists, and indicated just what is the status of Russia and its Stalinist forces in the Eastern Zone.

PEOPLE VS. THE PARTIES

Within Germany itself, the key political party in the situation is undoubtedly the German Social-Democratic Party, headed by Kurt Schumacher. Almost in spite of itself, and against the will of many of its weak, timid leaders, this party is being forced to assume leadership in the struggle for a genuine German unification. Its leader, Schumacher, recognizing the true sentiments of the German workers, speaks out for unity even against the top circles of his own party.

It is important to recognize that the various conservative and reactionary parties, such as the Christian-Democrats, Liberal-Democrats, etc., are extremely cautious and even hostile to unification. Why? Because they fear the Stalinists would get the upper hand? Not at all; they know that Stalinism has reached an incredibly low ebb in Germany.

It is rather because they know that a democratic unification would probably sweep the Social-Democratic Party into power throughout Germany, and that the Social-Democrats would be forced to embark on a social program contrary to the interests of these pro-capitalist parties. Reconstruction, nationalization of heavy industries—housing and re-building programs; modification of the educational system, etc. A popular unification, in other words, would be accompanied by a radical outburst on the part of the German people, who would demand a program of sharp reforms and changes within the country itself.

Thus, we see that Russia and America (as well as all the occupying powers), plus the German Stalinist party and the conservative pro-American parties, are all united as one against such a unification program. Yet the overwhelming mass of the people are for it—unification and an end to the occupation. This marks a turning point in the post-war history of Germany. The lowest depths of the defeat, Nazi terror and military occupation, have been successfully passed. The German people are standing on their feet once more, and participating in political and social action again.

This is perhaps the best news to come from Europe since 1939, when the war began. Will the Social-Democratic Party take advantage of its historic and unprecedented opportunity? Will it openly assume leadership and press for its program? That depends upon circumstances we cannot yet foretell: it depends upon what happens at Paris, to some extent, and primarily upon the ability of the German people themselves to increase and redouble their pressure and drive forward to taking the whole situation out of the hands of the Paris negotiators and placing it where it properly belongs—in the hands of Germany's 65 million people.

Henry JUDD

Richard Wright - -

(Continued from page 1)

"When the American delegates arrived in Paris, they expected that, like themselves, I would take a position resolutely in favor of the Marshall Plan and the Atlantic Pact. I immediately told them that my position on these questions—and on many others—was not the same as theirs.

"In fact, I maintain that the American Left, to a certain extent, is not completely free from anti-Semitism, from a discriminatory policy against Negroes, and from active collaboration with capitalism in many fields. The American trade unions are very different from the European unions. As far as social policy is concerned, they are at least a half century behind. The Europeans and the Americans may use the same words, but these words rarely have the same meaning here and there.

"The American Left is very little concerned with the class struggle. Its social demands are never political but simply aim, within the framework of the capitalist state, to ensure the well-being of the unionists through a compromise with the capitalist state.

"Moreover, the American Left is above all doctrinaire, wearing itself out in sterile ideological discussions, without understanding the deep-lying interests of the working masses. Thus it is that Sartre, for example, who is not a Marxist, is politically and concretely much more to the left than Sidney Hook, who proclaims to high heaven that he is an orthodox Marxist. . . ."

WORKED WITH SARTRE

"Is that the only reason why you did not take the floor at the meeting?"

"Yes! I spoke to Sartre and Merleau-Ponty, and they decided to abstain together with me, to support me. Sartre, who was recently in America, is also acquainted with this curious Left in that country. Since, however, we wanted to present our point of view to the conference, we sent a joint message."

I tried to recall how this message read. It had followed the pro-Atlantic Pact declarations of James T. Farrell and De Kadt; the latter was a Dutch delegate and one of the rare Europeans who took the side of the American wing:

"We condemn, for the same reasons, both the more or less disguised annexations in Eastern and Central Europe by the USSR, and the Atlantic Pact. It is by no means certain that this pact will slow up the coming of war. It may on the contrary hasten it. What is certain, on the other hand, is that, a little sooner or a little later, it will contribute to make it inevitable."

"Your declaration sounded a bit like the one which Paul Robeson made to the Communist Peace Partisans' Conference. . . ."

Wright vehemently shook his head in denial.

ABOUT PAUL ROBESON

"Robeson claimed that if a war broke out between America and the Soviet Union, no American Negro would fight against the Soviets. Such assertions are not only dangerous but totally false. The American Negroes will fight for their country under any circumstances. That is my deep conviction, but I do not want to do what Robeson did—talk in the name of 13 million American Negroes when he was actually representing only the little circle around Wallace."

Wright's voice grew softer.

"I like Robeson very much—as a singer. He is a wonderful artist; he knows how to convey the humiliation and burning hope of the American Negro in his songs. There is also a kernel of truth in what he says.

"In the United States the Negroes represent a terrible reservoir of despair and bitterness. They have been disillusioned time and again; and Truman's promises—which, personally, have never convinced me—will, like those of the other politicians before him, go into the cemetery of lost illusions. But the American Negroes will fight for the conquest of their civil rights within the traditional framework of the American parties and by their own means."

CP AND THE NEGROES

"But don't the Communist Party and Wallace's crypto-Communists have a certain amount of attractive appeal for the Negroes?"

"You saw proof to the contrary in the last election. The American Negroes do not have a short memory. They know the Communists, their methods and their promises—in which no more reliance can be placed than on those of the bourgeois parties.

"During the war the American Communists did not oppose racial discrimination in the armed forces. They told the Negroes to tolerate everything, to have patience till the war ends. Meanwhile the Negroes were supposed to bend the neck before the stupidest of stupid Jim Crow practices. The Red Cross itself kept the blood of Negroes separate from the blood of whites.

"There were better aspects. The war drew a large number of Negroes into the industrial occupations. The Federal Employment War Service was created with the stipulation that there was to be no racial discrimination against any worker. Negroes began to participate actively in the trade-union life of the AFL and CIO, and did so in spite of the Communists, who prefer to see them disorganized

and therefore more easily subject to CP control. In many of these cases, for example, when the Negroes got ready to make demands or go on strike, it was the Communists who denounced them to the FBI."

TRUMAN'S PROMISES

"What are the political perspectives before the American Negroes today, after Truman's re-election?"

"If Truman does not repudiate his pre-election promises tomorrow or the day after, that is only because of the cold war now raging. If there is a settlement, if everything is arranged in Berlin and elsewhere, Truman will forget all about his statements.

"That does not mean that he will no longer be able to count on the loyalty of the Negro population, who do not expect American politicians to be consistent in fighting for their rights. The Negroes in the United States stand alone. They certainly do not reject alliances, and from all sides allies—and disinterested ones—are coming forward. They are beginning a long and hard struggle under the guidance of their political leaders and their intellectual elite. The Communists have ridiculed, for example, an organization as timid as the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, but this organization has done more for the colored people than all the virulent and flamboyant maneuvers of the Communists."

"Let's talk about you for a moment. All French progressives are happy to have you among us, and we are happy to see that you are at the side of Sartre and his friends in the struggle which counterposes freedom through socialism to various forms of concealed fascism. Have you any definite plans?"

AGREES WITH RDR

"I am a foreigner here and my collaboration with Sartre is limited to certain special fields. I cannot be a member of the RDR since it is not fitting for me to take part in questions of internal French politics. But I am in complete agreement with the RDR as far as its views on international questions are concerned.

"I am especially happy to be able to live in France, in a climate of liberty and tolerance where I can carry on my work. The question of liberty is posed much more in the United States than in Europe. To be sure, the individual has fewer obligations to the state; he is apparently freer; but a permanent pressure of coercion is brought to bear on him.

"Over there men are at the mercy of a public opinion which is manufactured by second-rate publicists, speakers on the radio, and leagues of righteousness. The influence of the intellectuals, which is so important here, is almost nil in the United States; there a wall of complete silence is erected around works which do not correspond with the American way of life.

"America demands the abdication of the personality in favor of its conventions. Besides, all the political parties stand for a discipline which also sacrifices the man to ideological coercion. I agree with Sartre, who thinks that the individual can do something by himself.

THERE IS A SOLUTION

"I have no ready-made solution, but unless we are persuaded that there is one, we will never find any. I am against the pessimists; I have confidence in man. We need an ideology which proposes a new definition of the values which have made man what he is, and these values imply in the first place the idea of liberty.

"I have heard politicians, churchmen and party leaders say: 'Follow me—I have a plan to solve your problems, but it will not give you liberty right away. Have patience, you must struggle, you must be organized, you must be disciplined; later you will also have liberty, but the struggle will be long and hard.'

"In my opinion, liberty is indivisible; it is acquired gradually, like something which one buys on the installment plan. At each stage, one enjoys a little more liberty, and this permits you to carry the struggle on more effectively. But it is not with methods which abolish liberty that we will struggle for liberty."

Berlin Strikers - -

(Continued from page 1)

Stalinists in Berlin has been tremendous. Their open strikebreaking role cannot be covered by any camouflage or rationalization. The Stalinist "Free German Workers Union" issued a statement 24 hours after the strike began, saying that it would try to prevail upon the Russian authorities to pay in West marks. Since then it has maintained a deadly silence while its members were recruited into the strikebreakers' ranks. Small wonder that the fury of the crowds has been greatest against the German Stalinists!

The pitched battles reached their height on Monday at the Zoo Station of the El where the railway police fired six shots into an onrushing crowd—killing two, one a sixteen-year-old boy, and injuring two. As the angry crowd got out of hand, the British public-safety officer ordered the Eastern sector police to leave the station. But the police could not restrain the crowd from pursuing the retreating strikebreakers as they raced to safety along the railroad tracks with a barrage of missiles and stones flying after them. The people shouted: "Go back to your Russian masters!"

Newspaper reports commented on the changing nature of the crowd supporting the strikers. On the first day the crowd was made up largely of young boys and some hoodlum elements. As the fight continued, however, the crowd became increasingly made up of older political fighters, many of them in their late teens or early twenties, all furious enough to charge carbines and machine pistols with rocks and bludgeons.

Naturally, the Western powers were not at all ill-pleased by the embarrassment this strike has caused their Russian opposite numbers. At first they adopted a hands-

off policy, ignoring a request by the Russian transport chief that they "keep the peace" through military steps to curb the mass violence, while issuing pious statements that the demands of the railway workers were entirely legitimate.

It was only after the crowds showed that they were capable of taking over the railway stations themselves that the Western sector military commands took any action to force out the Russian railway police.

At one of the Berlin stations, the Westkreuz, the crowd threatened to storm the station successfully. There the crowd had to be dispersed by British sector police after the British arranged a "compromise" whereby they would police the station jointly with the East sector police. The crowd booed the decision and was dispersed only by British threats of force.

POINTS WAY

As the strike continues, the Western Allies are beginning to order the withdrawal of the East Zone police; this the latter are doing evidently with great relief. Chances are that the scabbing railway police will be completely withdrawn from Western Berlin stations within the next day or so.

The outcome of the strike is not yet clear, but it is clear that the Berlin masses have issued a resounding rebuke to the Russian occupiers and their German Stalinist stooges and that they alone, by mass force and struggle, have pushed Russian military forces out of the Western sectors of Berlin.

By this action the Berlin workers have shown that they command the strength to begin to solve their own problems, through their own action.

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"There were better aspects. The war drew a large number of Negroes into the industrial occupations. The Federal Employment War Service was created with the stipulation that there was to be no racial discrimination against any worker. Negroes began to participate actively in the trade-union life of the AFL and CIO, and did so in spite of the Communists, who prefer to see them disorganized

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Books for Germany

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.

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A Refresher Course on Seven Months of the Truman Administration—



Case Study: Labor Leaders and T-H Repeal

By JACK RANGER

Seven months have passed since the Democratic Party, with the support of the AFL, CIO and Railroad Brotherhoods, won a landslide victory in the national election, and put Harry S. Truman back in the White House.

What cries of triumph issued from the lips of union leaders the day after November 2! And how sorry is the cold reality!

We are here going to pass through this experience again, in memory, through the eyes of one union and of one labor leader. But it is a case study. It might just as well be YOUR union and YOUR union president, in all probability.

Raise the curtain on 1948!

In July 1948 the Democratic Party held its national convention in Philadelphia. Words never cost a politician anything, and the Democrats adopted a high-sounding platform, which was accepted at face value by A. F. Whitney, president of the Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen. The leading story in the July 17, 1948 issue of the Trainmen News, front page, is headed:

"Liberalism Is Backbone of Dem Platform"

Blames Republicans

"In one of the convention's major addresses," it is modestly reported, "the BRT chief blasted the record of the Republican-controlled 80th Congress and called for an all-out drive by labor and liberals to return a progressive administration backed by a progressive Congress in the November elections."

"The Republican Congress . . . stultified themselves by the enactment of the Taft-Hartley Slave Labor Law, which runs counter to the fundamental principles of our democratic system. . . . It is a Republican law. A majority of Democratic Congressmen voted in favor of the Taft-Hartley measure.—J. R. J. The Republicans who engineered this law through Congress never fought a fair fight. . . . Labor demands the repeal of every law that interferes with the rights of labor and the people."

The leading front-page story in the September 11 issue read: "BRT LEGISLATIVE MEN INDORSE TRUMAN AND BARKLEY TICKET"

"UNANIMOUS VOTE GIVEN DURING SPECIAL SESSION IN CLEVELAND"

"Labor's mounting support for the Democratic Truman-Barkley ticket was bolstered further this week as the Brotherhoods state legislative representatives handed it an enthusiastic endorsement. . . . The vigorous liberal Democratic platform and the pro-labor record of the 16 years of Democratic stewardship were cited by the legislative men as the basis for their support of the Truman-Barkley team."

The October 16 issue carried a front-page editorial supporting Paul A. Douglas, the Democratic candidate for Senator in Illinois, and Stevenson, the Democratic candidate for Illinois governor.

"A Democratic victory is in prospect in Illinois and the Brotherhood is proud to give its backing to men like Douglas and Stevenson who are 'undominated' except by a lofty aim to serve all the people and protect the little people," declared the editorial.

Backs Democrats

In the front-page story for October 23, President Whitney declared: "In this election we cannot overlook the fact that the Democratic Party during the past 16 years has been the one which has had the people's interest at heart. . . . We would be unmitigated ingrates were we not to support the party that has done the most for labor and the people generally. We are not, however, merely following a political label. We are backing a group that, on the record, has been back of us."

(Two years earlier, in the railroad strike of 1946, President Truman used the injunction weapon to break the strike of the trainmen and the engineers. At that time Whitney publicly declared he would spend "millions" from the union treasury to defeat Truman.)

A front-page editorial in the same issue is entitled "Progress Versus Republicanism" and reads in part: "The Democrats have promised repeal of the Taft-Hartley act, to raise minimum wages, expand public power facilities, provide national health legislation, extend social security, promote adequate housing and proper development of the country's natural resources. They have spelled out in specific bills the benefits they intend to bring the people. Their record of the past 15 years is one that recommends their return to power. Certainly it is one which the worker can point to and say that it was written in his behalf."

Pages 4 and 5 of the October 23 issue list the congressional candidates endorsed by the Brotherhood. "Election of these men on Novem-

TIME TO LEARN A LESSON!

"Next—A Labor Party!" (written before the election) was correct when it warned that the tactic of the union leaders in tailing the old parties in the 1948 election would "only lead to new disappointments, to more cries of 'betrayal' as the politicians whom they now label 'liberal' and 'friends of labor' obey their real masters after elections. "Given the tactic being followed by Murray, Green, Hutcheson, Whitney & Co.," we wrote, "it is inevitable that reaction will continue to grow after the 1948 elections."

The reason, the pamphlet seeks to explain, is that capitalism is going downhill fast, and that big business in the United States cannot permanently afford the luxury of strong unions and union wage scales, union working rules, the luxury of civil liberties.

A review of the past seven months should be instructive to those unionists who still believe that the Democratic Party can be transformed into a "party of the people," or that labor can defend and advance its political interests without building a new party of its own, a labor party.

The events of the past few months are recalled on this page as they have been reflected in one of the representative union papers of today, the Trainmen News, official weekly publication of the Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen. Almost exactly the same quotations may be found in the columns of the AFL and CIO press.

ber 2 will insure the future of our democratic way of life and promote the interests of all Americans," said the Trainmen News.

(In the vote on repeal of the Taft-Hartley Law in 1949, dozens of the Congressmen endorsed by the Brotherhood voted AGAINST repealing or changing the law. No less than 11 even ratted on the Wood bill.)

On November 2 the Democratic Party won a landslide victory throughout the nation. Let the November 6 Trainmen News describe it:

"Labor's Vote Does It! "Workers Pull Dems Thru Great Victory "Union Chiefs See Triumph People's Gain"

"The landslide Democratic victory throughout the nation in Tuesday's election was hailed by labor chiefs from all fronts as a smashing win for organized working men and women. . . ."

Truman Victory Hailed

"AFL President William Green declared the election results were an overwhelming repudiation by the American people 'of the miserable record of the 80th Congress. By their votes,' Green said, 'the American people have given the next administration and the 81st Congress a mandate for progressive action—action to wipe out the anti-labor program of the past Congress, action to halt rising prices, action to build millions of new homes at a cost within the reach of the average family, action to broaden and increase social security benefits, action to lift minimum wages. . . ."

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(Continued from page 1)

so-called friend of labor in the White House says and what he does! Would AFL President William Green still say, as he did in Cleveland on May 17: "The president has not let us down in any way?"

WHAT WILL THEY TAKE?

There has been rumor a-plenty that labor leaders too are willing to delay labor legislation, make it an election issue for 1950, and hope for a more pro-labor Congress then. However, these rumors are not borne out by the statements of CIO and AFL leaders. Not only do labor leaders seem to seek positive action on labor legislation, but since the Wood bill was referred back to committee some three weeks ago, they have indicated the extent to which they are willing to yield on their original position.

In a letter by CIO General Counsel Goldberg to the congressional labor committees, he reaffirms the determination of the CIO to obtain repeal of T-H and to get the administration Thomas-Lesinski bill passed. However, the determination weakens in the course of the letter, as evidenced in the following paragraph:

"In stating our position on the Thomas-Lesinski bill, which we continue to support, the CIO is not maintaining an unrealistic attitude of utopian perfectionism. We are mindful that in the legislative process there is room for alteration in any

City Machines --

(Continued from page 1)

of his support from within the machine itself.

But to say that the record-smashing turnout of 91 per cent of the eligible voters was inspired solely by the conflicting aspirations of two political bosses is to misread every political sign of the times. The people want and expect more than the substitution of one corrupt machine for another.

Blighted with the traditional American respect for "practical" politics, Jersey City voters had refused to

"President Whitney . . . hailed the election results with this statement which was widely quoted in the nation's press:

"The action of the people in electing Truman and Barkley and electing a substantial majority in the Senate and House is an outstanding victory for labor and the masses. . . ."

The same issue also reported that the AFL had decided not to sponsor a new political party. It said that a number of papers had recently quoted AFL President Green as saying that the pending AFL convention would "definitely do something about starting a third major U. S. political party," but added that, following Truman's election, Green had reversed himself and announced that it "would be a mistake for the AFL to isolate itself by forming a new party."

"LABOR READY FOR RIGHTFUL ROLE IN U. S." read the leading story in the November 13, 1948 issue, continuing:

"As smoke from the great political battle of 1948 cleared, one dominant fact loomed above all other considerations—that U. S. labor had come of age politically and was ready to play its deserved role in shaping the economic and social policies upon which America's destiny rests. That role will be typically American, with labor influencing government within the framework of the existing and traditional two-party system."

"Labor, more than any other group or segment of the population, carried the campaign issues to the people. . . . President Truman, who had the almost unanimous support of organized labor

bill—particularly one dealing with so complex a problem as labor relations. But we stand solidly against any changes which impinge on basic principles, such as the use of injunctions to break strikes."

Throughout the letter emphasis is placed on opposition to any legislative provision for anti-labor injunctions. However, nothing specific is said about what alteration the CIO will stand for.

STRIKEBREAKING GREEN LIGHT

The AFL, on the other hand, has been more outspoken and probably also voices the extent of the compromise that CIO leaders are willing to make. AFL President Green, interviewed in Cleveland, where top AFL leaders and the administrative committee of Labor's League for Political Action have recently been in conference, openly stated that the AFL leaders would go along with the proposal to permit government seizure of struck plants.

Green would agree "to authorize the government to cope with national emergency walkouts by taking possession of strikebound plants for a thirty-day period"—so A. H. Raskin reports in the New York Times of May 18. But the AFL, like the CIO, is opposed to injunction provisions in labor legislation.

Here, then, is the major compromise labor leaders are willing to make—indeed so major a compromise that it

is hard to believe—even the traditionally compromising AFL leadership is willing to make it. For when has it happened that the seizure of struck plants has not been a strike-breaking device? It has been and will be a ruse to get strikers back to work on the old conditions, ostensibly for the government, which proceeds to make profits for the plant owners—all of course, in an absolutely unbiased way.

Does the rank and file of organized labor know that its leadership is willing to approve such a strikebreaking provision, and what does the rank and file have to say about it?

The UAW tried to defend the fact that there is not an elected Negro in the national office, but did not even mention the fact that a Negro brother is a trustee elected at the last convention and that there are more Negro representatives negotiating for UAW plants than there are officers, representatives and office girls in the entire FE.

The red-baiting boomeranged on the UAW in Charles City. Here was a small town in Iowa and the mere charge of "Communists" served to make these people more loyal to FE. Of course the goon squad that got Oliver workers aroused to drive the UAW organizers out of town was organized by the FE hatchetman, John Watkins, but it could never have succeeded had the UAW not participated in such a stupid red-baiting campaign.

The campaign of FE in all these elections was also on a low level. They lied about the GM escalator

from the beginning of his campaign, was the first to acknowledge the vital role of the workers in his victory. 'Labor did it,' he told newsmen. The President's statement was backed up by Senator McGrath, who as chairman of the Democratic national committee, had supervised the campaign, declared: 'This is a victory for American labor.'

The November 27 issue of the Trainmen News, page 3, carries a story headed: "Dem Party Is Labor Vehicle, Tobin Asserts," and quotes Secretary of Labor Maurice Tobin as declaring, at a press conference following his address to the AFL convention, that "I don't believe in a labor party, but I would like to see an alignment of a conservative party versus a liberal party."

"I feel the Democratic Party is now the liberal party and should serve as labor's vehicle. Also, the best interests of our country will be served by the two-party system."

"If the President campaigned on any one issue, it certainly was that the Taft-Hartley act must be repealed. He will go to Congress with a mandate for repeal. THERE'S NO DOUBT IN MY MIND THAT THE ACT WILL BE REPEALED BY MARCH 1." (My emphasis—J. R.)

Dem Doubletalk Begins

Two weeks later, the secretary of labor was already renegeing on the administration's pledge for outright repeal of the Taft-Hartley Act.

"Whitney Hits Hints of T-H Compromise" is the heading on the front-page story, December 11.

"President Whitney this week blasted newspaper propaganda out of Washington intimating that administration leaders are willing to accept something less than full repeal of the Taft-Hartley act and that a compromise might be in order."

"In a telegram to Secretary of Labor Maurice Tobin, the Brotherhood leader charged that the 'reactionary press is attempting to create the impression that you are supervising a compromise on repeal of the Taft-Hartley Act.'

"Secretary Tobin was reminded of the Democratic platform which states: 'We advocate repeal of the Taft-Hartley Act.'

"Any compromise of that specific proposal," President Whitney said, "will be a great disappointment to the people who gave the Democrats victory November 2. No effort should be made to compromise the Taft-Hartley law. The Democratic pledge should be explicitly carried out and the Wagner Act re-enacted."

The same story added that "renewed assurances by Vice-President-

elect Alben W. Barkley that the Democratic election pledges won't be switched into a siding came during a speech at Los Angeles when the Kentuckian . . . said that not one of the party planks adopted at the Philadelphia convention 'was written merely for the purpose of getting votes; the convention which adopted that platform meant every word it said.'

"On the question of repeal versus amendment of the infamous Taft-Hartley Act, Senator Barkley said: 'We are committed to repeal, and to me that doesn't mean amendment.'"

The December 25 issue, page 3, carries a story: "Dems Determined to Carry Out Promises, Sen Barkley Assures Town Hall Audience."

The story declares that "The Democratic Party will leave no stone unturned in carrying out its commitments to the American people."

"Definite assurance that the promises will be transformed into legislative realities was given by Vice-President-elect Barkley. . . . The Taft-Hartley law is definitely on the way out, Senator Barkley said. 'The Democratic platform pledged itself to its repeal because we felt, and now feel, that the law was harsh and unnecessary and that it undertook and succeeded in withdrawing essential rights of labor organizations. . . ."

"It would be unthinkable that the incoming administration would not recommend, and that the Congress would not pass an act repealing the Taft-Hartley law, and I look for that to be one of the first efforts of the new Congress to carry out its pledges to the people."

Nothing Happened

"Solons' Task: Interpreting Nov. Election" reads the lead story in the January 1, 1949 issue. "Have the congressmen caught the significance of the Nov. 2 balloting and will they take it to heart?" asks Whitney's paper. "Labor expects that they will and bases its hopes on the fact that a MAJORITY OF THE LEGISLATORS WERE ELECTED ON THE LIBERAL PLATFORM OF THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY." (My emphasis—J. R.)

Whitney himself had a signed article on the front page telling his members that "I am able now to tell of a much more hopeful future facing us. The Administration we backed has been returned. Our candidates for Congress were victorious."

The issue further quoted Whitney as stating that "Labor's first major objective is repeal of the Taft-Hartley Act and enactment of a labor law that will insure justice. . . . The

old Wagner act should be re-enacted and Congress should start from there."

So the new administration took office, including the labor-backed majority in the House and Senate. Weeks passed. Nothing happened. Scores of Congressmen elected with the fervent support of the Whitneys, the Greens, the Murrays, showed unmistakably that they had no intention of carrying out ANY of the Democratic platform pledges.

The union rank and file were becoming increasingly restless, critical of the Democrats and critical of the union leaders who had urged them to vote for Democratic politicians.

The Railroad Trainmen devoted less and less space to the Washington scene. Finally, no longer able to remain silent, Whitney's paper began to cry that labor had been tricked.

Congress Scores Zero

"Congress 'Renegades' Hit by Pres. Whitney" is the title of a front-page story in the March 26 issue, which quotes Whitney as proposing that labor map plans to "retire" in 1950 congressional "renegades to the people's cause," who are blocking enactment of President Truman's Fair Deal program.

"We'll have to give the backward boys the same treatment that many former members of the 80th Congress received who flaunted the workers," piped Whitney.

The Trainmen suddenly discovered, as reflected in another front-page story in the same issue, that "Turn-coat Dems Had Fingers in T-H Birth." (There had been not one word said during the campaign of the fact that a MAJORITY of Democratic Congressmen had voted FOR the Taft-Hartley Act.)

"Finally, in the April 9 issue, the leading front-page story summed up the sad reality of the second Truman administration, after all the grandiose boasts of the 'labor statesmen' during and immediately after the 1948 election.

"CONGRESS LABOR SCORE AFTER 3 MONTHS IS ZERO. "Not One Dem Plank Is Law Due to GOP and Dixiecrat Opposition."

The above subheading is a lie, designed to cover up the fact that a number of Northern Democrats elected with labor backing had repudiated their pledges to support legislation demanded by the union movement.

"The first three months of the 81st Congress have been a painful disappointment to those who thought they won an election last Nov 2," whined Whitney's paper.

"Not one major plank of the Democratic platform has become law and the coalition of Republicans and Dixiecrats which blocked rules reform in the Senate shows signs of staying alive to fight Taft-Hartley repeal and other liberal legislation."

The story quoted William Green as expressing the pious sentiment that "Congress is moving altogether too slowly . . . but we are still hopeful and optimistic that ultimately we will get what we are asking for."

"Asked whether the White House has brought enough pressure on Congress for the Fair Deal, Mr. Green said it has 'done all it can.'"

Despite this patent demonstration that it is hopeless for the labor movement to gain expression for its hopes and needs through the capitalist-dominated Democratic Party, Whitney still supports 'the party that, for the umpteenth time, has betrayed its labor supporters."

The April 16 issue of his sheet has a story on the recent convention of the Americans for Democratic Action, headed: "Dem Party Is Liberals' Best Bet, ADA Told."

In the same issue, Whitney changes his approach to the Democratic Congressmen who were turning their back on their campaign pledges.

"There are a number of new senators and representatives who desire to do the right thing and some appear to be confused because of the propaganda that is being spread by the Big Money interests to retain the Taft-Hartley law," Whitney is quoted as stating. He "scored" liberals who were predicting that the 81st Congress would not repeal the anti-labor law.

The April 23 issue carried a new prediction by Labor Secretary Tobin, whose batting average in the

predicting game was still exactly zero.

"Secretary Tobin Predicts Early Repeal of T-H"

"The Truman labor bill will be law before long," the story runs. (Note the reference to the Truman labor bill. Both Truman and the labor leaders had long ago given up the fight for re-enactment of the Wagner act and were now backing a watered-down bill that would retain many of the worst features of the T-H law.)

"Expressing great confidence that the measure repealing the iniquitous Taft-Hartley law and bringing back the Wagner act with a few necessary amendments would be enacted, Labor Secretary Tobin said the administration bill would be approved 'without substantial change.'

"And what is the basis for this confidence? Indication of the Truman measure's success stems from a Labor Department canvass, Mr. Tobin declared. . . . The administration bill, Mr. Tobin declared, would clear the House by May 1 after several days of debate."

May 1 passed and it was all too clear that the Democratic majority in control of the House and Senate was NOT going to pass even the administration's watered-down labor bill.

Whitney Crawls

The April 30 issue blossoms out with a front-page editorial signed by Whitney, entitled: "Congress WILL Do Its Job for Nation."

His threats and blusters had had no effect. Neither had his kind words about some new Congressmen having been "confused" by big-business propaganda.

Now Whitney was crawling. "Most members of Congress are hard-working, honest, respectable gentlemen, who have a desire to be faithful to their trust," he writes. "They wish to deal fairly with labor, with the farmer, with industry, and to vote for what they believe to be best for all people. . . ."

"The Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen prides itself in knowing something about human nature, and its representatives will not participate in a campaign of high pressure or false propaganda in an attempt to deceive or mislead any member of Congress. The membership of the Brotherhood enjoys the respect and confidence of most members of Congress, and it proposes to retain this confidence and respect by treating the members of Congress with dignity and by furnishing such information as will be helpful to them in determining matters placed before them," etc., etc.

Were there a labor party in the United States, organized by and based upon the union movement, labor-party representatives in Washington would not have to be threatened or whined to or fawned upon in order to induce them to carry out labor's program.

Instead such labor-party Congressmen would be in the thick of the vanguard of the fight, giving the green light to labor's program, arousing the people, organizing mass action all over the nation and especially in Washington itself, to see that labor's program was enacted.

How many times must labor have to repeat its experience with the two old capitalist-dominated boss parties, before it learns that NOTHING can be gained through playing ball with them?

In the summer of 1948 there was widespread demand in labor's ranks that it organize a new nation-wide labor party, independent of the two old parties. Whitney & Co. managed to sidetrack that demand in favor of Truman and his crew of blather-skites. On November 3 a lot of liberals and labor leaders thought they had been devilishly clever.

Developments of the past seven months have shown that the really clever people, and the recipients of all of labor's campaign sacrifices, were the Democratic politicians and big business, whose interests the Democrats have joined the Republicans in protecting.

Whitney & Co. are bankrupt. They have lost their right to hand down political directives to the ranks of organized labor. It is time to revive the movement for a national independent labor party.

IT WON'T SAVE FACE FOR THEM!

The CIO News for May 9 contains a letter from Jack Kroll, director of PAC, congratulating himself and PAC supporters that "of the 168 people supported by PAC and elected to the House on November 2, 1948, only five broke faith with their constituents and voted for the Wood bill. This," said Kroll, "demonstrates that, with these five exceptions, our course last November was chosen wisely and that political action, when applied, works."

But alas, the Taft-Hartley Law is still on the books, and, as Kroll modestly concludes, "we have not yet won the war for economic security with democratic freedoms."

But the vote on the Wood bill, though "right," is hardly a decisive test of the pro-labor firmness of the PAC-supported Congressmen, all of whom, presumably, were pledged to work for outright repeal of the T-H Law.

The five PAC-supported House members who voted for the Wood bill (termed by Philip Murray "more vicious than" the T-H Law) included three Democrats—Carlyle (N. C.), Gregory (Ky.), and Willis (La.), and two Republicans—Hoffman (Ill.) and Ford (Mich.).