

# CP Convention Dodges Key Issues but Foster's Purge Drive Is Given Setback

By H. W. BENSON

The long-awaited convention of the Communist Party ended four days of sessions in New York on February 12.

Three hundred delegates from 25 states claimed to represent a membership of 25,000. Actually they represent a probable 6-7000; the party has gone into rapid decline; members are leaving en masse.

In the last period the party has faced a crisis of decline and disintegration; political shocks have wracked the party from top to bottom: the Khrushchev revelations on Stalin; Poland; Hungary. For five months it has been plunged into a deep-going discussion of virtually everything, its first genuine discussion in decades. The debates have centered around a 62-page Draft Resolution prepared by the National Committee. At least three distinctive and opposing groups took shape among the leaders.

At the convention, in committees and at the sessions, they argued, debated, voted, and fought. But when they had finished, everything was essentially the same as before they convened, with one qualification which we will note.

**For the convention resolved nothing politically. All the issues remain; the direction of the party is not set; new disputes are inevitable.**

## EVADED A STAND

One thing alone was settled: Foster's demand that the Gates group be cut to pieces was repudiated. The convention mandated the incoming National Committee to prepare a new party program; that alone guarantees new conflicts.

All debates could be summed up in one sentence: nothing, but nothing, came out clearly. Every question was wrapped in

the vague doubletalk and empty generalities so characteristic of Dennis and his slightly washed Stalinism.

How did the convention vote on Hungary? It did not! The only man who called for a clear statement was Foster, who of course demanded an unequivocal endorsement of Russian intervention.

But the convention did not vote to uphold the Kremlin's crushing of Hungarian democracy; it did not criticize it. It did not support the *Daily Worker*; it did not oppose it. It simply did not act in any way.

Not one responsible party leader, not one official reporter, took a stand one way or the other. Incredible? But there it was.

On Poland? Nothing. Greetings came from virtually every Communist Party in the world. But none from the Polish CP headed by Gomulka. And the convention had little to say about Poland. It did not support Gomulka's drive toward independence from Russia; but neither did it oppose it. In brief, nothing.

**With this as a background, the nature of all resolutions becomes clear. They were abstractions, devoid of concrete content and divorced from the real struggles of our times.**

**But they accomplished one thing: Foster's demand for a statement of unquestioning subservience to the Kremlin line**

as of old was rejected. But in its place there was little.

Two convention actions were touted as its declaration of "independence." But only the first feeble steps were taken.

One debate centered on the party's attitude toward Marxism-Leninism. The resolutions committee split. The majority insisted that the party "interprets" the principles of Marxism-Leninism. A minority insisted that the party "applied" the principles.

Thus the issue was joined in a disputation over "interpret" versus "apply." Did the party merely apply principles that were supplied by others, e.g., the Russian CP, or was it free and independent in deciding what the principles implied?

The committee voted 14-12 to remain "interpreters." The convention voted 2-1 to support the majority position. There was no minority report. Gates and Dennis voted for the majority. Foster's vote is unknown.

## DENNIS' "NEW LOOK"

Another "highlight" came with the report on relation to other "Marxist" parties. The convention adopted the view that the party would respect the opinions of Communists in other countries but would determine its own policy itself.

In committee, a motion was made to reject the National Committee's November 4 resolution which repudiated Russian intervention in Hungary, but it was voted down and not brought to the floor. The convention was virtually unanimous. Gates, who was for the November 4 resolution, went along. Dennis, who opposed the November 4 resolution, voted along with him.

Everything was on the plane of abstraction. The party asserted its right to independence. But it did not exercise this independence on any important issue of world politics. It asserted its right to criticize. But it criticized nothing. It insisted that it had the right to "interpret" but it interpreted nothing that would be resented in the Kremlin.

**Thus the Dennis policy was carried throughout, at every point. The party tried to get a "new look" but so far without success.**

The prevailing mood was a desire for unity and harmony. "Independence, Unity CP Party Keynote" was the first *Daily Worker* headline. It was right.

But the quest for unity stemmed from

(Continued on page 2)

## ISL Launches Fund Drive For \$10,000

By ALBERT GATES  
Fund Drive Director

The annual fund drive of the Independent Socialist League for 1957 began on February 15. This marks the 17th annual campaign of the ISL for funds to meet its operations and to cover the big deficits produced largely by maintaining LABOR ACTION, America's outstanding weekly socialist paper, and the *New Internationalist* as a leading Marxist

# Communist Party Convention

(Continued from page 1)

basic agreement, not from political uniformity but from hesitancy, uncertainty and disorientation.

The delegates, still under the stunning impact of unprecedented events, were not sure where to turn. They realized that the party could not go on as before; that changes were necessary. But what changes? They were not sure.

They were ready to legitimize the idea of change but not to endorse any particular radical change. They were ready to declare as a generality that the party had to be independent but not to exercise this independence in any decisive manner on any crucial question.

They wanted to hold together until a clearer settlement could come. Meanwhile, they wanted no purges; they wanted to maintain the present balance of power in the leadership; and they endorsed a greater measure of internal democracy.

It was a unity that took for granted not the wiping out of differences but their continuation; it was a momentary harmony based upon a temporary compromise of irreconcilable views.

But CP members must finally decide between moving clearly toward democratic socialism or being pushed back to Stalinism; such a deep-seated question cannot be settled in the end by inner-party diplomacy.

## SHADOWLAND

One convention reporter, William Schneiderman, put it this way: We are striving to eliminate deep-seated dogmatism and doctrinarism but there is a current in the party that is fighting to revert to the old ways by opposing the basic content of the Draft Resolution.

As a generalization, it was true. But what exactly is dogmatism and doctrinarism and who precisely is fighting to revert to just what?

All was in a shadowland when the convention opened and nothing ever emerged into the clear light of day. Only the well-versed, highly sensitive, experienced party in-fighter could know what was really happening, but not the rank-and-file delegate.

As a political document, the Draft Resolution is ambiguous, incomplete, evasive and straddling on the key issues, above all on the key issues. It was supported by divergent tendencies for different reasons and thus slurred over real differences.

It fitted neatly into the mood of harmony and was endorsed, in basic line, by the convention majority.

In an atmosphere where everyone wanted to avoid new shocks, to prevent splits and hold together, National Secretary Eugene Dennis seemed to emerge as the prevailing single force. But was he? The delegates did not intentionally aim at endorsing his faction position.

Yet the results and actions of the convention could perhaps be fully satisfactory to him alone. It remains to be seen, in the inevitable disputes that will come tomorrow, what power he actually holds.

## 3-WAY DIVISION

To understand the significance of the convention, one must follow the three tendencies which emerged out of the party fight. For ready reference, we can use the following labels: (1) crude Stalinism; (2) concealed Stalinism; (3) anti-Stalinism.

Most observers found it difficult to follow the devious convention line-ups. What caused the confusion was this: that the anti-Stalinists (Gates) and the hidden Stalinists (Dennis) formed a common bloc against the crude Stalinists (Foster).

Foster and his close supporters, who had only a few votes on the old National Committee, are determined to turn back to the old line. They insist upon subservience to the Kremlin and want to clamp the lid back on.

Their "solution" to the party crisis is simple: root out Gates and his supporters and defenders, return to the authoritarian normality. They oppose the basic line of the Draft Resolution because it opens the door to fundamental criticism. At the convention, they centered their fire on one section of the resolution;

they too finally yielded to the spirit of harmony and permitted near-unanimous compromises to be effected without their open opposition.

But their line remains: a clear return to Stalinism. They oppose the Draft not so much for what it is as for what it can lead to.

John Gates and his group, centered around the Daily Worker and the New York State Committee, clearly look in the opposite direction. They understand not only that the party must move away from Stalinism but that radical and sweeping changes are essential. The crisis cannot be overcome, in their view, by any series of superficial changes or minor alterations in internal regime.

They propose to transfer the Communist Party into a Political Association and want a socialist regroupment in which Communists join not as the dominant element but as a contributing one. They propose not a mere change in form but a deep-going turn in basic line. While they still look upon Russia as "socialist" and sympathetic with the so-called "socialist" world camp, they want real independence and have criticized Russian policy openly and harshly.

## THE DENNIS-GATES BLOC

Eugene Dennis and his supporters seem to be a "center" group. But actually, as a conscious tendency, this one is almost identical with Foster in a basic defense of a fundamentally Stalinist political line.

But unlike Foster, who is anxious to avoid any loosening of the iron hoops that once bound the party together, Dennis realizes that a "new look" is essential if the party is to survive. He is ready to accept superficial changes in policy and in internal regime which leave the basic line intact.

While Gates looks upon the Draft Resolution only as one step forward, Dennis sees it as the final product. It is a chance to devise tactical shifts and invent maneuvers to save the party. For Gates, a new fundamental line is necessary.

What impelled Gates and Dennis together at this convention was a common need to fend off Foster. Dennis does not want to chop off the Gates group and welcomes the Draft Resolution. Both are necessary to his "new look."

If the Foster group could be magically whisked away, the fight would inevitably erupt between Gates and Dennis, but under the pounding of Foster they are momentarily driven together. No one can say how long this alliance can last. World events can shatter their alliance. Or tendencies toward socialist regroupment outside the CP can have an impact upon them.

But at this stage Dennis can rally to his side not only those who are his clear and conscious political followers but a large section of the party who support him as a middle-of-the-roader who seems to stand for compromise. Not until the issues are clearly posed inside the CP—democratic socialism versus Stalinism—will his real role emerge in clear-cut fashion.

## FOSTER'S TIRADE

Foster had no intention of hiding his views. Reporting as party chairman he launched a long tirade against Gates.

The Twentieth Congress? the Khrushchev revelations? the struggle in Poland? the revolution in Hungary? They have made no impression upon him. The main danger in the party, to him, is the Gates tendency; the way out of the party crisis, as he sees it, is to smash it and to reaffirm in every essential the old line which meant submission to Stalinism.

"One of the keys to the party's present difficulties," reported Foster, "and particularly to its leadership crisis, is the fact that during recent difficult months the party has been led especially in the National Board by a working combination of the Right and some comrades who, while not themselves Rights, nevertheless run a sort of political interference for the Right. The Right has its main strength in the New York State Committee and in the staff of the Daily Worker. It also acquires much help from the above described conciliationism. This is the main reason why in the Board the Right, although a minority in the party, has been able to write so much of its

line into policy and convention documents of the party. To eliminate such conciliation practices is one of the important changes needed by the party."

No conciliation! Break the power of Gates! (In Foster's peculiar terminology, the anti-Stalinist wing is the "right.") He demands that the national leadership be revised, calls for the introduction of more "mass workers" and the reduction of "our excessive numbers of full-timers," although it is necessary to "maintain a strong core of 'professional revolutionaries.'"

## TYPICAL TACTIC

Translating this gobbledygook in the name of "proletarianization" and in the guise of a drive against "bureaucracy," Foster proposes to take the first steps toward crushing the trend toward party independence and democracy. It is the method typical of Stalinism: to stifle a working-class trend in the name of "proletarianization" and to wipe out democracy in the name of anti-bureaucracy.

In the same way, Foster accuses the Gatesites of bringing the party to the verge of a split! "The advocates of the Association which is the heart of the Right program have passed it upon the party with such vigor that the very life of the party became threatened with a factional split." In other words, you threaten a split because I may be forced to throw you out!

To sum up Foster's speech: He calls for an end of conciliating Gates and for rooting out its power in the party apparatus. He demands the "reaffirmation" of Marxism-Leninism, by which he means the Stalinist perversion of it. On Hungary: "We must revamp the National Committee position on Hungary recognizing that under the existing dangerous circumstances the military and political actions taken by the Soviet Union in helping to defend Hungarian Socialism against the acute threat of fascism and war was imperative."

## DUCLOS RIDES AGAIN

The National Committee, we remind our readers, at first repudiated the Russian attack on Hungary and then retreated into the straddling position, neither criticizing nor supporting it. But this is not good enough for Foster who demands unwavering subservience to the Kremlin. Naturally, he demands an end to "pro-Titoism" in the name of "proletarian internationalism," a pseudonym for capitulation to the Kremlin.

He had help.

"This time," said William Z. Foster in December, "there will be no Duclos letter to bail us out of our folly." But he was wrong. A new Duclos letter arrived on January 21. It was the same Duclos whose notorious letter had put an end to the Browder regime, led to the latter's expulsion from the party, and lifted Foster into the saddle.

The fact that the Kremlin has the audacity to intervene now with a "letter" signed by the very same Duclos is a sign of the utter and complete capitulation that it is demanding in the American Communist Party. Duclos, as can be expected, denounced "revisionism" in an oblique attack on the Gates tendency and endorsed Foster's uncompromising defense of a Stalinist line.

Foster failed. And his failure is a sign that no one can get along successfully, even inside the CP, without at least a verbal call for independence from the USSR. The main positive achievement of this convention was the defeat of Foster.

## DENNIS AVOIDS SPLIT

In his keynote address, Dennis repudiated Foster's split perspective and called for party harmony. But, while defending Gates against Foster, he was careful to issue a subtle threat to the Gates wing. He wanted them to realize that their position rested upon his tolerance.

He wasted no time on the critically important questions—Hungary, Poland, the Khrushchev revelations. Except to say: "when the facts of the Khrushchev speech on Stalin became known in this country, and again after the tragic events in Hungary, important sections of the party at all levels were temporarily disoriented and demobilized. Some tried to start a stampede. . . . Temporarily thrown off balance, the party began to

become enmeshed in a bitter and divisive internal struggle and was in danger of being torn apart."

"Temporarily"? Everything has been settled nicely for Dennis. He imagines, because the party now lives with itself without splits and without breaking from the Kremlin on decisive issues, that it has learned to live with the world of labor and liberal public opinion. But he is doomed to disappointment.

He does not want a split. Obviously if the Gates group were forced out now, it would be impossible for the party to convince anyone that it was making a turn. In a veiled thrust at Foster, he attributed the danger of a split to "some of the NC members who, at least until recently, clung to inflexible politics and pursued extreme political objectives. . . ."

He explained the role of his supporters on the Committee: "As distinct from the conciliators of either the 'Right' or the 'Left,' they began to intervene forcefully. The combined a resolute struggle to save the party, defend its Marxist-Leninist principles and make the necessary changes, with an all out effort to preserve its unity."

## HE HASN'T CHANGED

Dennis is determined to defend "Marxism-Leninism." He means, of course, his own Stalinistic interpretation of it. But against whom will he defend it? The warning to Gates is clear enough.

In all the resolution, too, and in all the discussions, it was made clear by Dennis supporters that they were ready to fight against "right opportunism" when necessary. In their perverted Stalinistic terminology, "right opportunism" refers to all trends that would break more clearly away from the Kremlin.

Dennis was careful to suggest that the party must remain "independent," and in this connection uttered a mild rebuke to Duclos. But he saw little to repudiate in the past:

"We American Communists . . . have always constituted an independent American political party, have been unaffiliated with and organizationally independent of other Marxist parties for nearly 20 years."

Despite his new independent attitude, he saw nothing to criticize in Russia's role in Poland and Hungary, stressing his opposition to "hostility to the socialist countries and their Marxist parties."

Nothing in what Dennis said or did at the convention can change the analysis of his role that was so clearly formulated by two members of the Daily Worker staff in pre-convention discussion. Joe Clark, for example, wrote:

"Dennis evidently does not object to the Daily Worker criticizing anything said or done by Soviet Communists but only after the Soviet Communists have themselves made such criticism."

Max Gordon succinctly summarized the method characteristic of Dennis as a "process of blind apologetics," which "starts with the assumption that all Soviet action must be championed and then erects its own structure of 'fact' to accomplish that aim." Nothing has changed here.

## "ASSOCIATION" DISPUTE

The balance of forces at the convention and the factional mechanics that were to dominate it were foreshadowed on the very first point on the agenda, the question of "name and form."

In the pre-convention period, Gates had proposed a change to a "Political Association." The National Committee had recommended that the party form continue but that the question be left open for continuing discussion.

Foster seized upon it to howl and denounce. He would not move an inch. He called for a clear-cut repudiation of the "association," an end to the discussion, and for a drive against Gates.

But a compromise was devised, a four-point resolution finally supported by all groups and virtually unanimously adopted by the delegates.

(1) It reaffirms the continuation of the CP and makes "our chief task to strengthen, rebuild and consolidate" it and "overcome its isolation."

(2) It rejects the political-association proposal.

(3) It opposes "endless debate" but al-

# Dodges, Foster Is Set Back — —

lows the National Committee to reopen the question if it sees fit.

(4) It concedes that "revisionist" ideas have been advanced but rejects the notion that all proposals for change are "revisionist" per se.

## PRIZES FOR ALL

For everyone there seemed to be some small consolation, and each group can perhaps claim a partial victory; but:

(1) To win this compromise, Gates has voted against his own point of view. However, in the meager five minutes he was allowed on the floor, he explained that he was supporting the resolution only in the name of unity and that he did not abandon his views.

(2) A previous recommendation of the National Committee would have automatically kept the discussion opened. Now, the committee may (but may not) reopen the question.

(3) Yesterday, by official decision of the NC, the Gates association plan was not—definitely not—"revisionist." But now it is cast in doubt. Foster can say yes; Gates can say no. But Dennis can decide when convenient.

The convention elected by secret ballot 20 members at large to the National Committee, which will total 60 after the remaining seats are filled by the state organizations. The top candidate, a young woman, unknown, got 210 votes. Dennis was sixth with 174; Foster seventh with 172; Gates sixteenth with 129 votes. George Charney, chairman of the New York State party (Gates stronghold), was lowest on the list with 115 votes.

## WHAT'S THE LINE-UP?

Since no hardened and organized faction lines were drawn, and elections were by secret ballot, the delegates were free to express their uninhibited feelings. As a result, apparently, the majority of those elected at large are indeterminate or uncommitted in a strict faction sense.

**The real line-up will not be clear until the full 60 seats are filled in by the state organizations in the coming months. A hint of Foster's strength among the delegates came when he made a procedural motion to add another member to the National Committee. It lost 140-80.**

To avoid opening up the faction sores, the convention by-passed the election of national officers. The party will be ruled by a secretariat of eleven until a permanent committee is chosen when the final composition of the National Committee is decided.

At another juncture, the convention voted to transfer party headquarters to Chicago, an innocent-appearing decision. But Foster, in the name of "democracy," had demanded that more "workers" be added to the National Committee in order to free it from the influence of the "opportunists." The move to Chicago is aimed at removing the party from the influence of its strongest pro-Gates section, New York. But, ironically, George Charney, New York chairman and a leading Gatesite, seconded and supported the motion. All were for harmony.

**So the secretariat replaces the party officers; Foster becomes a secretariat member along with Dennis and Gates; but he is eased out as chairman. The party has declared for independence. Illusions mount; perhaps the party crisis has been overcome. But disappointment must come.**

## "SOCIAL-DEMOCRACY"

The vain hopes instilled in the party by Dennis are best illustrated by the resolution on "Social-Democracy" adopted without opposition.

The CP now seeks a rapprochement with "Social-Democracy," and Dennis is ready to vote for words, words, words. For the first time, to this writer's recollection, the theory of "social-fascism," in fashion during the thirties, is specifically and officially rejected as incorrect. It calls for cooperation with "social-democracy" despite ideological differences and emphasizes that the party really, truly and honestly does want to cooperate. "We should look upon the Social-Democratic organizations, including their leaders, as workers' organizations. We must deal with these organizations, fraternally, and not as enemies. We strive for their cooperation, not liquidation."

There is no mass social-democratic movement in the U. S., in the strict sense of the term. The resolution makes clear that it intends to apply to the labor, liberal, reformist, Negro movements which it broadly lumps together under the heading "social-democratic." It refers, then, to the unions, the ADA, the Liberal Party, the NAACP.

For Dennis, this is the tactic *par excellence*, and its success or failure will be life-and-death for the party. What, after all, is the aim of declaring one's independence and promising that a few days has dawned in the life of the CP? What if not to gain access to the mass progressive movements and win acceptance and respectability?

## IF THEY'RE SERIOUS . . .

But it is all in vain. For no one will believe it. And rightly so.

Dennis and his friends have yet to learn that it is not "left sectarianism" or "right opportunism" or any tactic or maneuver singly or in combination that has ruined the reputation of the party. What stands in its way is the realization, not by backward workers but by experienced and educated union militants and progressives everywhere, that every tactical line has been dominated not by the interests of the working class but by the needs of Russian policy. Duclos, in his letter, admits it frankly. Dennis would deny it. Now consider the resolution on Social Democracy.

The CP in the United States with its 7000 members solemnly pledges that it does not propose to liquidate (say) Walter Reuther's 1,250,000 followers in the United Auto Workers. But it hardly has much choice!

The party wants to cooperate with Social-Democracy and not destroy it. But where? In the United States the party is a tiny minority. The fact that it proposes to cooperate with the mighty mass movement of the workers and of the Negroes is not exactly spectacular news!

But no one can take it seriously. Where does the CP of the United States stand on cooperation with Social-Democracy where Communists are in power? Everyone knows that it is not simply a question of "cooperation" there.

Is the CP for the freeing of all Social-Democrats and other democrats from prison where they have been jailed by Communists in Russia, in China, in Eastern Europe? Are they or are they not for the right of Social-Democrats to free and political existence, to the right to organize, where Communists are in power? That is the test.

Who will believe that you are for real cooperation in the United States, where you are under fire, if you do not raise your voice for their rights where your comrades are in power?

## PRESSURE ON GATES

The resolution, then, is a typical product of the Dennis school.

Whatever the motives of the Gatesites in going along with it, they know that more than verbal trickery is necessary. That was why, before an audience of socialists and liberals at Community Church on Dec. 3, Gates himself, asked if he was in favor of democratic rights to all parties in countries under Communist control, felt compelled to reply "Yes."

Not only was nothing settled at the convention; in fact, the key issues were never even posed. The Gates group did not fight for their views on any question but were content to go along with Dennis' generalities. The penalty they pay will become evident soon.

They did not make their position clear and they did not begin to rally their own supporters and potential supporters for what they realize is so vital: a radical change in policy. They did not press their position on Hungary; they did not propose to endorse the line of the *Daily Worker*; they did not even suggest support to Gomulka; they did not fight for the Political Association. If you did not know that the Gates tendency existed before the convention, you would not have realized it at the convention.

If the decision to abstain from a fight cannot be endorsed, it can be understood. The Gatesites were under great pressures. Foster was calling for their heads. A new Duclos letter arrived to bolster the fight against Gates. From the state

organizations came resolutions rejecting the Gates position on the Political Association. The Gates group felt impelled to stall for time, to retreat and wait, to wait for more favorable circumstances.

## SPLIT—WHERE?

But this time it will not be enough to put the lid back on. Say what one will about the actions of the conventions: disappointing as the tactics of the Gates group may have been, the fact remains that the Foster line was defeated and that his efforts to wipe out the Gates wing proved utterly futile. It was shown that the CP cannot be simply purged and ordered back into line; an atmosphere was established for the right to discuss tomorrow, and this is an important achievement for the CP that it never had before.

Until the party can give such a clear reply to such a simple question, all its resolutions for "united front" and for collaboration with all progressives will be in vain. If the membership hasn't learned that yet, it will have to go through another period of bitter disillusionment.

There are some who may insist that the Gatesites should have been ready without hesitation to split from this party which finds it impossible to break cleanly from Stalinism. But split to what? That is undoubtedly the question that arises in their minds.

They look toward a broad mass socialist movement for tomorrow. But are they to end up as a sect today? They dread to end their fight as a mere sect and such fears are understandable.

In the face of an organized working class of 18 million, of a Negro movement which involves hundreds of thousands, it

is necessary not to found a new sect but to find a way out of sectarian existence. If current trends are permanent, the days of the sects are coming to an end.

## THE IMPASSE

The dilemma of Gates and his friends is not easy to resolve. If they remain in the party without opening up a prospect of winning drastic changes, their own supporters will crumble away, leave the party, and probably end their political careers. If they had split from the party, they ran the risk of ending as another sect still without influence on the mass movement and consequently unable to give their own supporters what they want: a way to bring socialism to the people.

It can be argued that the Gates group might have pressed their point of view nonetheless and done their best to educate and arouse the party membership even if they were defeated in the end. But they feared a split. Above all they did not want to end up outside the party now.

Gates' dilemma is not his own. It is a problem for all socialists and it is one which must be solved by all. If he is impelled toward compromise and quiescence, the socialist movement shares responsibility.

There is no easy road, no quick answer. Yet it is the duty of all the existing socialist groups, tendencies, publications and committees to find a way to create a new rallying center for democratic socialists of all shades. Above all, there is the lack of a powerful, crusading, militant Socialist Party to offer a practical alternative to Stalinism.

The impasse at the Communist Party convention should drive that home to all.

## DISPATCH FROM DUBLIN

# Notes on Labor Politics in Ireland

By M. M.

Dublin, Jan. 24

One of the significant events of 1956 in this country was the public demonstration of solidarity of the Dublin workers with the embattled workers of Budapest during the last phase of the heroic general strike there. Sponsored by the Dublin councils of the two trade-union centers, the parade and mass meeting was a gratifying experience of united working-class action to defend the basic principle of working-class freedom.

Freeney, the president of the Dublin Trades Council, proposing the resolution of sympathy, said that "while Stalin the tyrant had been superseded, tyranny nevertheless remained the weapon of the frightened men in the Kremlin."

Needless to remark, the Hungarian events bewildered the local Stalinists, and this writer had the unique experience of witnessing Stalinist delegates supporting a "Third Camp" amendment to a sectarian Catholic resolution at the November meeting of the Dublin Trades Council, though they did subsequently boycott the demonstration on Hungary.

On the heels of the October days in Hungary came the pre-Christmas guerrilla raids by the so-called Irish Resistance movement (IRA) on cross-border police, military and strategic civil installations—BBC transmitters, power plants, etc. The precise and well-planned character of the raids threw the Belfast authorities into panic.

All but a few cross-border roads have been blocked, mined and demolished, to prevent attacks and withdrawals from and to the Republican area. Further units of British army and air-force personnel have been drafted into North Ireland.

Acting no doubt under pressure from London and under the threat of an incipient coup d'état from the well-armed and militant direct-actionists, the Dublin government launched a police-military action, first to head off proposed further cross-border assaults, and secondly, to take police action under the repressive Offences Against the State Act to disperse and harass the leadership of the illegal force within the Republic.

A wave of public sympathy for the direct-actionists was sparked off by the

death of two young fighters in a battle with North Ireland police; and to stop growing mass subversion of the authority of the Republic's government, Premier Costello was forced to broadcast appeals and threats to the sympathetic elements and to the direct-actionists themselves, to cease their activities.

The active leadership of the direct-actionist movement is essentially petty-bourgeois, non-socialist and reactionary in social and political outlook. Some elements are frankly fascist in their utterances and attitudes. Their conception of democracy and minority rights in a united Ireland would approximate the "freedom" and "unity" offered to the Saar by Hitler.

Mounting unemployment (90,000 persons registered at the moment and the figure growing daily) is rocking the government-coalition boat. Trade-union leaders are demanding government action or else the withdrawal of the Labor ministers from the coalition. The United Trade Union Organization convened special conferences at the year's end to deal with the problem.

A document "Planning for Full Employment" was submitted to the Dublin conference in December. The conclusions drawn were substantially a mishmash of social-democratic, Keynesian and "enlightened capitalist" solutions to the problem of a decadent and abortive attempt to organize an impoverished country along classical capitalist lines.

The unemployed are demonstrating once again, and a mass protest meeting is scheduled for next Sunday in Dublin's leading thoroughfare. Socialists are apprehensive that if the Unemployed Association becomes an embarrassing element to the government its leaders may be intimidated by the operation of the special police powers under the Offences Against the State Act which is at present being applied against the leadership of the direct-actionists. This Act was used against the pre-war unemployed leaders.

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