

# THE EUROPEAN MARXIST LEFT AND THE SOCIAL-DEMOCRACY:

A DISSENT BY GERMAN MARXISTS AND A REJOINDER BY MAX SHACHTMAN

Behind the Israeli Seamen's Strike . . . page 3

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# **Unemployed Auto Workers** Scramble for Snow Jobs: **UAW Heads Alibi Inaction**

DETROIT, Dec. 22-During the past week the top brass of the United Auto Workers (CIO) got a good look at the kind of union leadership they have been developing since taking power five years ago, and what they saw was not very pleasant to look at.

As a preliminary to the Washington conference on unemployment, the UAW top leaders called an emergency Detroit area conference to which they invited 180 local union presidents for last Wednesday night.

This, in a city with over 125,000 unemployed, mainly

Of course, the attendance at the Washington conference itself will be full enough, with only seven absent. Who's going to miss a trip to Washington-with expenses, salary, etc., paid for—unless one is sick in bed, or something else like

But to devote their own time, one evening, to discuss the acute .the local union, presidents aren't crisis in Detroit—surely that is asking too much of these local union presidents, the overwhelming bulk of whom are part of the doubt by what happened here last

Can anyone in the UAW imagine such a disgraceful lack of attendance five years ago?

## FOR A CHANCE TO WORK

The tragic part of this situation is that the top leadership completely misses the point on the reasons for the lack of atendance. To them, it only shows that the crisis isn't bad yet-not enough heat on the local union presidents to make them act. Furthermore, they can rationalize their own deficiencies: What can we do, when interested? So the alibi runs.

How terrible the situation in Detroit actually is, was shown beyond Thursday, in a story that made

page one of every Detroit newspaper, and for good reason.

... page 4

In near-zero weather, 5,000 unemployed, mainly auto workers. jammed and stormed the temporary hiring offices of the city clean-up department to get jobs shoveling snow.

What a scene! From 4:30 p.m. until 11:30 p.m. men struggled and fought to get and keep a place in the hiring line. Fist fights, pushing, shoving, grumbling, and bitter comments were on the order of the day. Detroit's riot squad was there, almost full force, to keep a free-for-all from breaking out.

What were the men fighting for? A chance to work all night at wages of 50 cents an hour less than assembly rates in the auto plants. Detroit's newspapers carried big photos showing this massed humanity, kept in line by policemen's clubs.

And if a man was hired that night, he still had to rehire again the next night. This is the system, something like the longshoremen's shape-up.

Newspapermen described the whole thing as strongly reminiscent of the depression days. And it surely is!

(Continued on page 6)

# TIE-UP WITH FAIR DEAL MACHINE EXPLAINS WHY -But due to an oversight in the law, these men cannot be fired just because their loyalty has been questioned. In their case dislayalty has to be

though the leadership of the steel union had decided definitely for a tions: strike, even if only a brief, demonstrative action to put pressure on the steel monopolies and the

But after the Murray-Truman talk, the union announced that it would reconvene its wage-policy committee on December 27, four days before the strike deadline presumably to withdraw its previout decision and to accept Truman's request that the strike be postponed indefinitely while the issues are taken before the Wage

If the union leadership does in fact call off its strike after all its less on the following considera-

(1) Truman announced publicly that he would use every law on the statute book to prevent a steel strike, even one of short duration. He was ready to stop the strike by

tion. The union supports Truman; it tries not to embarrass him: it doesn't want to "force" him to apply for an injunction.

(2) The leadership of the union is perfectly aware of the fact that, (Continued on page 7)

		(In millions)		
		Pe	Per Cent Net Earnings on	
	Earnings	Net E		
	Before Taxes	Worth	Net Worth	
1947	\$1,070	\$5,410	19.8	
1948 .		5,810	29.3	
1949		6,512	17.1	
1950 .		7,029	28.3	
1951	(1st quarter) 652	7,396	35.3	
1951	(2nd quarter)	7,607	36.2	
Avera	age 1947-8-9 1,200	5,913	20.3	

**Readers of Labor Action: A Happy New Year to You All** 

#### Page Two

# AN EDITORIAL **Death in the Mines:** It Was Murder!

## By L. G. SMITH

One hundred and nineteen men were killed last week by the greed of the owners of Orient No. 2 mine at West Frankfort. Ill.

The owners did not set out deliberately to kill these men whose work creates their wealth. But this disaster, this tragedy, was prepared by them as surely as if they tried with deliberate intent to commit murder. And it was prepared not on the week or the day of the disaster but has been worked at patiently and consistently by the owners of this mine together with the other mine owners of the country for years.

The explosion which killed the miners is attributed to the presence of methane gas in the mine. The St. Louis Post Dispatch has revealed that the mine owners ignored a report by two federal inspectors last July recommending measures to control the gas by sealing the abandoned workings and cutting these tunnels off from the ventilating system. The mine owners claim that they complied with the safety measures imposed on them by the state of Illinois only, for there is no law which gives the federal Bureau of Mines the power to enforce safety measures recommended by their inspectors.

The lack of a federal mine-safety law with enforcement powers is no accident. The United Mine Workers have been fighting for such a law for decades. But the mine owners have had enough congressmen under their control to prevent passage of such a law, and this was as true during the height of the New Deal as it is today.

They and their congressmen and the other congressmen who made deals with them which prevented the passage of such a law are the murderers. The mine owners pursue their profit interests, the congressmen follow their political interests, and the men who dig the coal work in constant danger and every now and then tens or hundreds of them are crushed, burned or gassed to death, or come through accidents with broken bodies. And the labor leaders keep on urging their membership to support the profit system and to vote for the congressmen who refuse to pass a law for the elementary safety of the miners.

#### That They May Not Die ----

Even a sturdy capitalist newspaper like the New York Times is compelled to recognize the connection between the tragedy of Orient No. 2 and the social relations which are responsible for it, even if indirectly. "Our coal mines have a shameful record," says a Times editorial on December 24, "when compared, for instance, with those of Britain; if the British mine less coal per man-hour than we do, they also shed less blood per ton than we do."

This should be a day of national mourning for the 119 men, and for the loved ones they have left behind. We bow our heads before their loss. But neither their grief nor sympathy should obscure our duty, and that of the whole labor the committee deplored the "deep movement, to the thousands of miners who are now alive, but who are doomed to be killed in the years to come as surely as if a death sentence had been passed on them by a court of law.

A federal mine-safety law with teeth in it must be passed at once! The mine owners must be forced to protect the workers, regardless of the cost. And the labor movement must stop supporting their political hirelings and those who make deals with them, regardless of their political affiliations.

## **Important Notice To LABOR ACTION Readers**

We regret to announce that Professor George S. Counts has informed us that he will not be able to participate in the symposium we have scheduled on "How to Fight Stalinism," to be held Thursday, January 10.

Professor Counts writes that he is compelled to cancel the engagement because he is "in process of putting a large book through the press" and that he is canceling all engagements outside of Columbia University.

We will make every effort to get a substitute. speaker.

New York ISL

# THE FIGHT FOR DEMOCRACY on the HOME

discrimination.

unity.

"What happened during the in-

terim?" asked a statement issued

by the Natonal Association for the

"The conclusion in this case."

adds the NAACP, "certainly con-

tributes nothing to the spirit of

unity, which the committee was

established to foster. Indeed, this

report is a contribution to dis-

Impellitteri's unusual haste in

releasing the whitewash report, it

is suspected, has something to do

with the coincidence that it reach-

ed the newspapers just as the news

broke that Josephine Baker had

filed a \$400,000 libel suit against

Walter Winchell, Winchell, man-

ning the guns for the Stork Club,

has been using his column to smear

Miss Baker while refusing to say a

An appeal to uphold the validity

of anti-discrimination laws in .the

nation's capital is being weighed

by the United States Court of Ap-

peals for the District of Columbia.

The American Civil Liberties Un-

ion joined with 21 other organiza-

"friends of the court" to attain a

judgment that the District's "Equal

Service Acts," passed in 1872 and

1873, were still in force. The brief

was filed in the District's suit

against the John R. Thompson Co.,

Inc., a restaurant chain, for denv-

ing service to Negroes in one of

firm was dismissed before trial in

the Municipal Court. And although

the dismissal was later reversed in

the Municipal Court of Appeals.

the appeal now pending in the fed-

eral court was made to erase any

doubt that the anti-discrimination

ordinances, while passed many

years ago, were "clearly not obso-

The prosecution of the restaurant

s establishments

lete today."

ions in filing a single brief as

word against his pal Billingsley.

CAPITAL STUFF

Advancement of Colored People.

# Truman's Own Revision of Order **Boomerangs in the Service Case**

The decision of the Loyalty Re- refused to state a policy of nonview Board on diplomat John Service-finding a "reasonable doubt" of his loyalty and thereby reversing previous clearances by the State Department's own lovalty boards-has been embarrassing to the Truman administration and particularly to the State Department's head, Dean Acheson. Joe McCarthy, whose prestige had been slipping, was able to chortle: "Good !good! good!" But it is well to remember that here again the administration has brought its emrrassment upon itself.

The review board's decision, as it carefully noted, was not that it believed Service disloyal but merely that it felt there was a "reasonable doubt." The significance of these two words is that it was only earlier this year that, by Truman's own order, the boards were instructed that "reasonable grounds" for dismissal were not necessary but only a "reasonable doubt."

As LABOR ACTION wrote at the time: "It might seem that this is quibbling over words. But a closer study of the two phrases shows that, bad as the first criterion is from the point of view of assuring a person some protection against arbitrary persecution, the second one is much worse." (Apr. 30.)

The review board's decision on Service drives right through the bigger ambiguity created by Truman's change. If many supporters of the administration, particularly liberals, consider the Service decision a travesty on justice, they should be aware whom they have to thank for it.

With the action on Service, it was also announced that a large number of other officials, whose cases had been under scrutiny before, would be on the carpet again. In their case, the fires of the witchhunt which had somewhat died down are to be revived once more. Thus the witchhunt snowballs.

#### WHITEWASH

New York City's Mayor Impellitteri is whitewashing the Stork Club in the Josephine Baker case.

He had begun by passing the buck to the Mayor's Committee on Unity, which was to look into the affair. This committee handed him a report on November 23 which he never made public (calling it a "preliminary" report). At this time. it was disclosed by the N.Y. Post. and sinister implications" of the case. Impellitteri sat on the report. On December 20, the committee came out with another report which changed its tune. This the mayor issued to the press with unprecedented speed.

In the second report, the committee suddenly found "nothing to substantiate a charge of racial discrimination." It quotes his two replies to its query on his discriminatory policy, questions their "adequacy," and then asks the mayor to consider the question closed. Billingsley, the Stork Club's Jim Crow owner, had consistently

Marxism in the United States **By LEON TROTSKY** 35 Cents . . . . . Order from Independent Socialist Press 114 West 14 Street New York 11, N. Y.



LABOR ACTION

trict of Columbia as a municipal government to exercise its delegated powers in providing laws against racial bias, the brief declared: "If municipal government can prevent cruelty to animals it can prevent cruelty to humans. If municipal government can prevent the spread of physical contagious diseases by requiring inoculation it can help to prevent the spread of the mental and far more contagious disease and consequences of race prejudice."

Local governments may be given almost all powers to enable their inhabitants to lead healthy, safe, peaceful, moral, comfortable and happy lives. the brief continued. and an equal service law "is a means toward that end and is therefore a proper enactment for a municipal legislative body." It cited many instances of local Jim hibiting Negroes and white persons from working together to being buried in the same grounds and said that while these are invalid when tested by the Federal Constitution, such ordinances have been upheld "squarely on the issue whether the relationship between the two races is within the bounds of municipal power."

CHILD PRODIGIES

In Indiana the state Superintendent of Public Instruction. who is a Methodist and a Mason. has asked 19 Catholic priests to help him screen textbooks "for traces of communism or subversive influences." Catholics, says Superintendent Wilbur Young, are "considerably versed in being able to spot Communist or subversive influences."

The Hoosier "educator's" genuflexion before the Index Expurgatorius raised a question about the 1.Q. of Indiana school children. They must be awfully smart to be able to be subverted by "traces" of influences which cannot even be detected by the unaided eye of non-Catholics.

any disturbance was caused by the

insult to the intelligence of uni-

versity students provoked by the

haranguing tactics of pro-oath de-

bater Michael A. Musmanno, jus-

tice of the Pennsylvania Supreme

Crow ordinances ranging from pro

port.

The seamen on the Israeli shin Negba struck in the port of Marseilles while the ship was in port for repairs. Their demand was for 50 per cent of their pay to be paid in foreign currency rather than the 27 per cent already allotted. When the ship finally returned to Haifa, the strikers were brought up on charges in the Haifa Labor Council by the union delegates assigned by the labor council to handle the affairs of the seamen's union. This action led to a struggle for

shipping industry of Israel.

The Israeli shipping fleet consists of 24 ships and 800 seamen. Among the leaders of these men are many ex-Palmach members who manned the first "illegal" ships which brought the first immigrants to Israel in the early difficult days. They feel that they helped create the merchant fleet and that they, not Histadrut [the Israel labor federation], should control it. These men are predominantly Mapam adherents. The biggest shipping company is Shoham Ltd., a corporation owned by Histadrut which has all of the ships except for a few which are owned by Diezengoff Ltd.

HISTADRUT'S GRIP

men's union.

Quo Vadis

USHER 1952 IN PERSONALLY!

**NEW YEAR'S** EVE Celebration and

Dance at the

WOMEN'S TRADE UNION LEAGUE 247 Lexington Ave. (aear 34th Street)



# Penna. Adopts Pechan Bill, State Loyalty-Purge Law By MARTY MARTEL PHILADELPHIA, Dec. 22 - The

Pennsylvania House of Representatives has passed a not-seriously amended Pechan "loyalty oath' bill December 18, by a vote of 167-18. The bill retains the features of a loyalty oath for all state employees and teachers in public schools and all candidates for public office, as well as the requirement of a report from state-aided institutions (including colleges) certifying that no "subversives" are on the payroll.

Twelve of the 18 anti-oath votes came from Philadelphia representatives, denoting this city as the center of opposition to the bill. NAACP, ACLU, teachers groups and the National Student Association, as well as both CIO and AFL bodies, came out in opposition to the bill. The American Legion was in the fore of the battle on behalf of the Pechan Bill.

The bill as first proposed was opposed by perhaps half of the house, mainly from the Democratic Party side. After amendments had taken some of the more obvious crudities out of the legislation Democratic leaders came around and favored the amended version-"liberals," cf course, of the first

#### AT TEMPLE

Meanwhile Temple University's investigation of a Pechan Bill debate, demanded by the Veterans of ful. Fear of getting one's fingers Foreign Wars, came out strongly burned will keep many mouths against the VFW and agreed that shut.

Wars

Court.

Further, the suspension of one "The Gavel" columns in the Temple News, a feature of political news and gossip run regularly, was printed one issue later. It had to do with criticism and implied threats made against an ROTC student by the Veterans of Foreign

The ROTC student was cleared by his commanding officer and the university investigating committee of being "subversive" by stating in public that his loyalty was to "God and people" rather than to "government." It is rumored here that the column was hurriedly restored after the editors of the NEWS threatened to resign. The affair was labeled a "misunderstanding" by the university.

Why the university cleared both the ROTC youth and the debate meeting of "subversive" charges is still unclear. Evidently local professors, long active in the fight against loyalty oaths, do not intend to go down without a murmur. Whether that murmur will grow into a roar of protest when the time comes for the university to certify that there are no "subversives" on the staff is rather doubt-

water!

#### December 31, 1951

# Israeli Seamen Striking For Union Independence

#### By EUGENE VAUGHN

The Israeli seamen's strike, which broke out early in November and is still continuing at this time of writing, had been brewing for a long time; it finally started as a result of a minor labor dispute among Israeli seamen in a foreign

power within the seamen's union which threatens to cripple the

Seamen's affairs had for a long time been managed by an appointed secretariat. Sailors are regularly hired through the General Labor Exchange which is operated by Histadrut and subsidized by the government. It is further the practice between Histadrut-affiliated employees and employers that disputes over wages and working conditions are turned over to the Histadrut Executive for decision. The seamen's affairs were actually run by the Haifa Labor Council to which the seamen were officially amiliated. The seamen set out to break this grip of Histadrut and set up their own independent sea-

It was the action against the Negba seamen that brought this struggle to a head. A convention was called by a temporary committee which had been elected

**On New Year's Eve??** at the New York ISL's

earlier in April for the purpose of strikers and the Haifa Labor Councommittee had not acted then but did decide to act now. This convention elected a new secretariat of 5 people in place of the two who had been appointed by the Histadrut Labor Council. The composition of this committee was CP 2, Mapam 1, Heruth 1, Mapai 1.

Y. Meshel, Mapai member of the Histadrut Trade Union section accused the seamen's convention of being a rump convention, and asserted that it had no authority to elect a secretariat, that a secretariat could only be elected by a vote of all sailors. It seems, however, to this writer that regardless of the question of legality the majority of regular Israeli seamen are in favor of the strike leaders.

## SEAMEN'S DEMANDS

The Seamen's Convention demanded:

(1) Free election of their own secretariat. (2) Right to run their hiring hall

directed by their own elected secretariat. (3) Right to strike abroad under

certain conditions (4) The hiring of foreign seamen

only through foreign unions. (5) The recognition of their own

charter and statutes giving them autonomy within Histadrut. The fact that this struggle is exclusively a struggle for control is underscored by the fact that wages and hours are not listed among the main demands of the strikers.

While economic questions are not an immediate issue they probably are a part of the background. The seamen face the situation where the Histadrut is both their employer, their representative in negotiations and the ruling party in the government. The overwhelming support of the sailors to the strike committee can only in part be explained by the traditionnon-conformism of sailors, or of the political menauvers by the CP and Mapam. Whatever the motives of the politicos who have taken the leadership of the strike for the rank-and-file seamen, it is a struggle for an independent union that the sailors believe will truly represent their interests.

#### MAPAI USES THE CLUB

Histadrut, through the Haifa Labor Council, refused to recognize the new secretariat of the seamen. The labor council further insisted that their negotiations with Shoham Ltd. be handled by the two seamen which it had previously appointed to the Seamen's secretariat. The council further insisted that all hiring must continue to be done through the General Labor Exchange. On November 11, 350 men on 10 Israeli merchant ships gave notice and resigned their jobs en masse. The Histadrut still refused to recognize the seamen's convention

The seamen struck Shoham ships in port, and as other ships came into Haifa the seamen joined the strike. The Mapai majority of the Histadrut Executive Committee refused to mediate between the

A Labor Party!

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calling such a convention. This cil. The Mapai-dominated government drafted 200 of the striking seamen, including several of the newly elected secretariat of the strikers. The Histadrut Executive passed a resolution calling for volunteers to man the ships of Shoham. When striking seamen refused to leave their ships, police were called in to drive these men from their berths.

The position of the Histadrut in this matter is that no section of the labor federation enjoys complete autonomy. It is always limited by the over-all control of the Histadrut Executive. To permit such a development among the seamen would leave the door open for similar demands among other sections of Histadrut, some of which may likewise be dominated by Mapam.

#### **READY TO COMPROMISE**

Histadrut claims that by foreign unions, the strike leaders mean only the Stalinist-controlled seamen's organizations. The Mapai bureaucrats center a great deal of their criticism of seamen on their demand of right to strike in foreign points.

On November 30, the Histadrut Executive voted to establish a new seamen's union directly responsible to itself and not to the Haifa Labor Council.

In the first few weeks of the strike, Shoham managed to operate its ships with "volunteers," foreign seamen, and some Israeli seamen who had gone back to work against the strikers. By December 7, the leaders of the strike were quite ready for a compromise. Many of their followers had been drafted into the army; others had returned to work. They were willing to give up all their demands for control over hiring, for the recognition of the right to strike in foreign ports, and several other minor demands. However, they still wanted a Natonal Seaman's Union instead of a union organized in the Haifa port and responsible to the Haifa Labor Council, and above all they still insisted that the Histadrut recognize their elected executives.

#### **ISRAEL LOSES**

The Histadrut Executive referred these demands back to the new seamen's union, which in turn refused to deal with the striking seamen's secretariat until they called off the strike. At time of this writing the strike has not been settled and the main Israeli shipping line is finding it increasingly difficult to sail its ships.

Whatever the outcome of this strike. Israel has already lost very much as a result of this struggle. Israel has been forced to hire voland foreign se higher wage rates, many of whom it has to pay in foreign currency. This increases Israel's unfavorable balance of trade. Some Israeli shipping has been transferred to foreign shipping companies, which further unbalances Israel's balance of trade.

The seaman's strike highlights also the constantly increasing struggle which is going on between the adherents of Mapai and Mapam, the two main sections of Israel's labor movement. This struggle, which threatens to split the Histadrut if it is allowed to play itself out to its logical conclusion has already cost Israel many pounds and much productivity.

In another disputed situation, the case of Ein Harod, a long-established kibbutz which was one of the most productive in the country, was forced to split up as a result of the growing bitterness between its Mapai and Mapam members. Unless this breach is healed or resolved by the political ascendency of one of the groups, and it seems unlikely, Israel and particularly the labor movement will suffer as a consequence.



## A-BOMB DEFENSE AND GARDEN CITIES

#### By CARL DARTON

The major home-defense dilemma facing the American political leaders and bureaucracy stems from the fact that the only effective protection against atomic bombing is space-that is, dispersal of targets. whether military, industrial or civilian. When dispersal was first considered several years ago, it was visualized as a wholesale uprooting of people and industry and their relocation in the prairies and mountains of the West.

Obviously this would mean an immediate revolutionary change in industry with bankruptcy for many privileged realty and industrial interests along both coasts. No one really expected such a movement to take place on a large scale; and, except for an extremely small relocation of some aircraft factories, little happened. Such as did occur merely served to arouse civic ire in such sections as New England to resist further movement. Instead of the obviously impossible dislocation, it is the hope of the more intelligent bureaucracy that a limited decentralization is practical. This is known as the "garden city" principle.

According to Donald and Asrid Monson in the September 1951 issue of the BULLETIN OF THE ATOMIC SCIENTISTS, the "garden-city principle is based upon the gradual breaking-up of the central mass of a large city by first building a number of self-contained smaller satellite towns to be located in the open countryside at some distance from the city, each satellite separated from adjacent ones and from the parent city by wide, permanent belts of open land or greenbelts; after sufficient population has been drawn off into these new towns; the remaining central city is separated into a number of communities analogous to the satellites and also divided from one another by newly cleared green-belts within the old city area. With each satellite and community connected to the rest of the metropolitan complex by expressways and railways, and with wide open spaces separating each from the other, the metropolis would be not only pleasant to live in but far less vulnerable to atomic attack.'

#### THREE "IFS" FROM THE CAPITALIST VIEW

Such a system has long been advocated by city planners as a means of eliminating the slums and congestion of our large cities. The failure of such plans thus far is the direct result of the opposition of vested real-estate interests which are the dominant factors in the political life of American cities. These interests will fight for their privileges to the last square foot despite the danger of atomic attack.

It is apparent to socialists that the degree of planning required for effective decentralization is impossible of fulfillment except in a garrison state, or in a democratically controlled workers' society. Under a garrison state the people would be herded and dispersed in a manner that would disregard the "garden city" principle, allegedly in the interest of "efficiency" of dispersal and production. In a workers' society the threat of atomic bombing would no longer exist and decentralization could be carried through in a progressive manner whereby the cultural advantages of the city would be maintained while building a community for healthy living.

The heavy hand of "things as they are" is indicated by an article in the same magazine by R. E. Merrian, Chicago alderman, "Cities Are Here to Stay." He states the issue clearly from the dominant class point of view: "IF we want to expend all our energies over the next five or ten years in dispersing our cities at the expense of all our other commitments, national and international, and IF we are willing to enact laws forcing people to move in a fashion similar to the Japanese-American evacuation from the West Coast during World War II, and IF industry will submit to detailed planning regulations, THEN we can talk about meeting the threat of the atomic bomb by spreading out our cities."

#### INDUSTRY FILLS IN THE TARGET AREAS

The obvious viewpoint of the practical politician is that any effective plan of dispersal would bankrupt the national economy, let alone interfere with the means of arming for offensive warfare. According to Amos Hawley in the October 1951 issue of BAS, the cost of population redistribution in the 16 largest metropolitan areas would be in excess of 200 billion dollars and would take 10 to 20 years. When it is the question not only of "guns or butter" but the blood of our people the answer is still "guns."

Between the two extremes of the capitalist bureaucracy's thinking on this subject-that is, planned decentralization on a large scale or a continuation of things as they are-some intermediate course appears probable. Such is the "Seattle Plan" whereby new industries are located five, ten and fifteen miles from downtown Seattle. This is, however, pretty much the normal course of American industry in the past several decades. Many have considered the location of the new U.S. Steel plant half way between Trenton and Philadelphia as a complete disregard of decentralization; actually it is in accordance with the new dispersal policy.

What will likely happen, however, is that despite the effort of the government to control new buildings, there will be a filling-in of the areas between the industries so that one continuous atomic target is presented.

No one knows when the bombs will start to fall but it is obvious that the population trend toward larger cities has reached its peak and . some reversal toward decentralization will continue to occur. It is doubtful if such decentralization will be of significant degree relative effective defense from atomic attack or to material change in the "American way of life" under capitalism.



Page Four



Movement."

The articles on this page are

follow-up on the article by

Max Shachtman in LABOR AC-

cial - Democracy: Some Prob-

lems of the European Marxist

The article by Hermann

Möhring is a reply to Comrade

Shachtman's proposal by the

editor of PRO UND CONTRA.

German Marxist discussion

magazine. It is translated from

the October issue of PRO UND

CONTRA, which carried both

Shachtman's article and Com-

Social - Democratic Party, Hans

Hedtoft, referred in an article in

Socialist-International Information

Bulletin for October 13, 1951, to

the program of the Socialist Inter-

national adopted at its Frankfurt

"Is it true that this program de-

mands only a 'controlled' capital-

ism and represents a breach with

our earlier socialist conceptions?

It is true, in certain respects, that

this program is vital and new and

it abandons a number of things

which we have heretofore consid-

ered as Marxist dogma. . ... In my

opinion we Danish Social-Demo-

crats have every reason to be

thankful for this program, inas-

much as it is a demonstration of

It is, however, also evidence for

giving up all thought of social

revolution through the social-de-

mocracy in Europe. This "realism"

means politics confined to the im-

mediately practical (which ends

with the soup-pot). German Social-

Democracy is its most avid repre-

Shachtman believes that he can

change the direction, and replace

the leadership which travels it, by

the entry of the heretofore iso-

lated left. He is remarkably opti-

mistic because he does not know

THE POWER OF THE PARTY

BUREAUCRACY in the SPD. In

Germany today even a Bevan

At the Hamburg conference,

when an opposition appeared

against Shumacher — the seven

from Berlin — they were not

against the party leader because

he had put forward too reformist

a policy but because he was not

reformist enough for them. A left

opposition would be suppressed

with all of the power at the dis-

posal of the apparatus. Its spokes-

man would hardly be permitted

[the SPD party bureaucrats-Tr.]

would hardly shrink, if their in-

fluence were strong enough, from

depriving the representatives of

such an opposition of employment

and consigning them to hunger.

For example, the party bureau-

crats in Munich succeeded in de-

priving of his job an honest Marx-

ist because he distributed Marxist

literature. In Berlin, an exponent

of Marxism lost his teaching posi-

tion in a high school on account

of his politics. The instigators of

this measure were not bourgeois

examples could be adduced con-

cerning the behavior of the bu-

reaucracy toward Social-Demo-

' cratic returnees from the Soviet

zone. The narrowness of viewpoint and the lack of tolerance inside

the SPD can hardly be overesti-

mated. And it is here that an op-

position is supposed to be able to

build itself up with the far-reach-

ing aims proposed by Shachtman.

Whoever attempted that would

find himself outside of the party,

(Continued in

last column to right

to make a report. Indeed, they

would not be possible.

THE BUREAUCRACY

Conference:

realism.

sentative.

rade Möhring's reply.-Ed.



TION of September 10, entitled "The Socialist Left and the So-

Comrade Möhring has not advanced us very far. That quitting the Social-Democratic Party to join a small revolutionary sect Europe is composed of many and variegated countries, each which was recruiting outside of it. with its national peculiarities and its own political prob-In the second place, it did not consider itself a party for some time lems, is now widely known even in New York. Even the after its foundation, and when it did, in 1919, it was already the representative in Germany of a movement a thousand times more powerful existence of different languages in Europe is now admitted and influential than all the isolated German Marxists of today. here. We were under the impression that a number of politi-What is more important, it was looked upon as the "official" reprecal characteristics which are common to a series of European countries, sentative of the Bolshevik Revolution and the Bolshevik Party which despite all their differences, were just as widely known and admitted in Berlin

led it. Even with this most extraordinary advantage, it did not really ome a party until later, when it fused with the several hundred What these common characteristics are and in what countries of thousand members of the Left Independents (USPD) into one organiza-Europe they are found, was set forth in the LABOR ACTION article tion (VKPD). The example of the Spartacus League speaks against which Comrade Möhring answers. Comrade Möhring, and loudly.

First: The article speaks only of those European countries where a more or less free working-class movement exists, which immediately excludes the totalitarian countries of Europe, regardless of their lan-

Still lounder speaks the case of the Independents to whom he refers, guage or other national distinctions. They were not at all a tiny revolutionary grouping outside the SPD calling upon its members to join it and build it to the point where it Second: The article speaks only of the politically organized workers who have broken with capitalism, created their own class organizations was the largest political organization in Europe at the time, with some and attained a relatively high degree of socialist consciousness, in a one million members. Nothing of the kind! They constituted themselves word, the million-headed vanguard of European labor, more than enough an independent party only after a long, bitter and public struggle between the left and right wings of the German Social-Democracy. And IN NUMBERS to decide the fate of the continent. when the Independents themselves split at their Halle Congress, it was Third: The article states that this working class, this vanguard, is as a result of the victory which the Third-Internationalist left wing divided in membership or allegiance between the social-democratic won inside the party over the right wing which withdrew from it.

and Stalinist parties, even though many may be discontented with the policy or leadership of their party.

So far, at least, not only an American observer but also a European should be able to see that all this holds true for Germany where German is spoken, for France where French is spoken, for Italy where Italian is spoken, as well as for Switzerland where all three tongues are spoken. A Marxist, be he here or there, should also be able to see that unless the Marxists succeed in restoring an inseparable contact with the working-class vanguard, in imbuing this vanguard with revolutionary principles, and in reorganizing the political ranks of this vanguard into a revolutionary socialist party, the Marxists are doomed-and, what is

more important, so is the prospect of socialism. With this, Comrade Möhring undoubtedly agrees. Hence his appeal

embraced the vanguard of the working class and was supported in to the German left-wingers: "Support the attempt at founding a revopolitical life by the decisive sections of the working class as a whole. lutionary socialist party." But, the way it is put by Comrade Möhring. the slogan is a meaningless phrase; in terms of political practise, it is The same is substantially true today. There are today, it is true, an escape from the realities of the problem. some complicating and conflicting factors at play, but, we repeat, substantially the Social-Democracy today has the active (or passive), the In our LABOR ACTION article and elsewhere, we have "said to our European comrades and friends: "The road to the reconstruction of strong (or reluctant), the unquestioning (or critical) support of the the revolutionary socialist party lies through your entrance and patient, vanguard of the German working class, of the ones in whose ranks and systematic work in the social-democratic parties of the indicated counstruggles the German Marxists must find themselves. tries." Comrade Möhring's rejection of this proposal, especially as ap-TO ATTRACT THE YOUTH ... plied to Germany, affords us another occasion for defending our views. We reiterate a central point which Comrade Möhring has failed (2) The age-composition of the SPD is bad. True enough. True also entirely to grasp.

Workers who belong to (or who support, without belong to) a politiarticle, for we would have to go back through the years of Nazi rule to trace them to their origins. But what has that to do with the question of the political arena in which the Marxists must function-or wither away completely? One thing is certain: the masses of the youth will not be recruited to any of the small, bloodless and powerless grouplets. It is POSSIBLE, however, to win large numbers of them to a party which shows the signs of life, of vigor and of revolutionary potentialities which a rising left wing can display inside the Social-Democracy. And what holds true of the youth, which is today so suspicious of To this rule, we cannot think of a single exception in the century-- the old parties and passive toward them, would, in our view, also hold for masses of workers who today hold themselves aloof from the of any country. Revolutionary Social-Democracy. That lesson is taught us invariably in every instance of a struggle between the left and right wings in the mass movementwith one exception we can think of, namely, when the workers feel (1) Either the first small socialist groups, by their agitation and that they have already been crushingly defeated and all is therefore lost. Who will contend that that is the situation in Germany today? (3) The German Social-Democracy has abandoned all ideas of social

cal mass organization of their own (i.e., a workers' party) do not abandon it, no matter how strong their discontentment with its policy or leadership, in order to join a tiny revolutionary group, no matter how strong their agreement with its policy and leadership. INDIVIDUAL workers, or even little groups of workers, have broken with their mass movement in the past and joined small revolutionary organizations; and they may do so again. But never have they broken with the one and joined with the other in such numbers as to transform the small grouping into a mass organization, i.e., into an authentic political party. working-class parties-as distinguished from revolutionary sects which have no influence among the masses and therefore cannot play an important role in political life-have been built up in one of two ways: activity, gradually won to themselves, in the absence of any mass working-class political movement, the support of growing numbers of

revolution; and what is more, an iron-handed bureaucracy rules the workers who broke with bourgeois politics; Or (2) an already existing working-class political movement was party so that a left wing is inconceivable. Yet, the same ideas and the transformed into a revolutionary party after a more-or-less protracted same type of bureaucracy undoubtedly prevail, by and large, in the public struggle within the movement between its right and left wings, German trade unions today. This does not eause Comrade Möhring to resulting in the left wing gaining decisive support of the membership give up the idea of working within the unions to win the workers to and the sympathizers. (Where splits ensued, the right wing was respona revolutionary program and leadership. Indeed, Möhring insists that sible for them in nine cases out of ten.) Marxists should be in these unions.

a hair's breadth.

But in the first place, it was formed as an independent organization as can be carried on in a real working-class arena in which real political

in Brief

The Independent Socialist League stands for socialist democracy and against the two systems of exploitation which now divide the world: capitalism and Stalinism.

Capitalism cannot be reformed or liberalized, by any Fair Deal or other deal, so as to give the people freedom, abundance, security or peace. It must be abolished and replaced by a new social system, in which the people own and control the basic sectors of the economy, democratically controlling their own economic and political destinies.

Stalinism, in Russia and wherever it holds power, is a brutal totalitarianism—a new form of exploitation. Its agents in every country, the Communist Parties, are unrelenting enemies of socialism and have nothing in common with socialism—which cannot exist without effective democratic control by the people.

These two camps of capitalism and Stalinism are today at each other's throats in a world-wide imperialist rivalry for domination. This struggle can only lead to the most frightful war in history so long as the people leave the capitalist and Stalinist rulers in power. Independent Socialism stands for building and strengthening the Third Camp of the people against both war blocs.

The ISL, as a Marxist movement, looks to the working class and its everpresent struggle as the basic progressive force in society. The ISL is organized to spread the ideas of socialism in the labor movement and among all other sections of the people.

At the same time, Independent Socialists participate actively in every struggle to better the people's lot now -such as the fight for higher living standards, against Jim Crow and anti-Semitism, in defense of civil liberties and the trade-union movement. We seek to join together with all other militants in the labor movement as a left force working for the formation as a consequence arrives at an unof an independent labor party and other progressive policies.

The fight for democracy and the fight for socialism are inseparable. There can be no lasting and genuine democracy without socialism, and there can be no socialism without democracy. To enroll under this banner, join the Independent Socialist League! stagnation. It is certainly public

# **INTERESTED?** Get acquainted with the Independent Socialist League— 114 W. 14th Street New York 11, N.Y. T I want more information about the ideas of Independent Socialism and the ISL. I want to join the ISL. Name Address Zone

applicable premises, thus speaks about "a European Marxist movement," about European Stalinist and social-democratic parties, and differentiated recommendation for the entire European Left which is outside of the traditional workers' parties. This is wrong. Shachtman recommends that all coups and individuals in the Marxist Left enter the existing

parties of the social-democratic type, in order thus to finally emerge from their isolation and knowledge inside the socialist movement that in the past decades sectarianism has spread and preserved itself, and that many good and valuable socialists have been man does not mention it. living the life of political hermits. Nothing is more unfruitful than into the Social-Democratic party

By HERMANN MOHRING

cannot lightly dismiss the

comradely words from

abroad but must deal with it

Shachtman sees Europe,

as does the observer of a

physical map, without na-

tional boundaries, without the

motley coloring of national dis-

tinctions, without even the differ-

ent colors of a plain political map.

He simply overlooks the differ-

ences which are still effective to-

day in the separate countries. Per-

haps it is natural for an American

to think this way. In Europe,

French is spoken in Paris, Spanish

in Madrid, Italian in Rome, Ger-

man in Berlin, and English only

in London-in contrast to America,

where it is spoken in New York.

Los Angeles Miami Seattle even

in Fairbanks and on the other side

of the northern border in Ottawa.

Shachtman, a socialist in the Trot-

skyist tradition (he did, to be sure,

break with Trotsky some years

ago) offers a world-encompassing

strategy for the class struggle, a

strategy which, while correct in

principle, often, however, bears

within itself the danger of over-

estimating the general as against

the particular, and thereby arriv-

ing at conclusions that are not al-

ways applicable. Europe today is

not nearly so much an entity as it

appears when looked at from over-

Shachtman, proceeding from in-

WE CANNOT FOLLOW

with equal seriousness.

work inside the parties of the Social-Democracy. He declares that his recommendation is more urgent and more indispensable than heretofore. It has often been expressed and repeated by him. Given such earnest persuasion, we isolation from the masses. It leads to intellectual inbreeding and im-

A Reply to Shachtman's Proposal:

'It Does Not Apply to German Case'

We have given Comrade Shachtman the floor because

his appeal is directed toward all those of us who do not

potence in relation to the actual transformation of society. But doesn't the core of all socialist effectiveness consist precisely in revolutionary practice? The task still lies before the working class of placing on society its own imprint. All our forces are needed for this task, especially today when genuine socialists must fight a battle on two fronts. Nothing, therefore, can be more important to every socialist than to collect all our forces and to activize the latent ones. That is what Shachtman wishes to achieve by his appeal to us. Only, we cannot follow him down the path he points out to us.

#### THE GERMAN SDP

Is the march with the masses possible only in the social-democratic organizations? Disregarding the Stalinists, the majority of the remaining section of the working class is not organized in the socialdemocracy in every country. The Labor Party in England, it is true, comprises the largest part of the English working class but only by virtue of its peculiar party structure which rests on the collective membership of the trade unions. The Saragat socialists in Italy and the SPD [ Social-Democratic Party of Germany] do not constitute such a majority. The Social-Democratic Party of the German confederation has about 700,000 members out of approximately 14 million who are not self-employed in the same area. If we assume that all of these belong to the working class, then out of a hundred only 5 are organized in the Social-Democracy. Ninety-five remain outside the ranks of the SPD.

Without having to mention numbers, it is obvious that a far larger part of the European working classes are organized in trade unions. If we want to fight with the masses and surmount our isolation, then the first appeal directed to all sectarians and other quaint individuals should be: Organize in the trade unions-these are the primary arena for your social and political work. We wish to emphasize this challenge because

Shachtman demands the entry

not so that the entrant shall sunport the opportunist practices and accept the reformist justifications. he proposes to him guite definite tasks inside the organization. Militantly and aggressively he is to seek to create a tendency by collecting others around him who are dissatisfied with the party's policies, with the goal of changing these and replacing the leadership. "That has happened dozens of times, in dozens of countries, and it has proved successful in numerous and decisive cases. It can happen again." [Quoted from Shachtman's original article-Tr.]

#### NOT LIKE BRITAIN

This optimism about the success of such palace revolutions is perhaps justified for England, perhaps also for other countries. In England a Bevan could form a group in opposition to the policies of his own party's leadership. He could present his dissenting views by voice and pen to the membership of the party and to the public. A strong left-wing group, in its majority Trotskyist, can be found inside the Labor Party around the magazine SOCIALIST OUTLOOK. The broad tolerance in the English Labor Party offers a certain justification for Shachtman's proposal. From Stockholm we have received word from a political friend about the conduct of the Swedish Social-Democracy toward persons who come to it from left-wing groups. immediately directs them into practical work and gives them the possibility of influencing the party internally. The experiences with this practice are supposed to have turned out well. Whether it is possible to approve of the experiment of entry into the social-democratic parties in other European countries requires facts which are not available here. But one thing is certain: it is not possible to propose this to the German Left.

#### SPD STAGNATES

What is the situation in the German Social-Democracy today? In June of this year the party administration undertook an internal census and classification of the regular members. From their own report, this is the way things looked:

(1) Among its present membership, the SPD can rely on a large number of trustworthy members and functionaries. It exercises, however, absolutely no attractive power among the young and middle-aged levels of the population.

members more than half are over fifty years of age. The middleaged groups are only meagerly represented, and the young in even

standstill and is understood to be practically at the point of stagna-

the future.

The former Danish prime min-

(2) Of the regular registered

smaller measure.

(3) Recruitment has come to a

(4) Party work is still conducted only according to the traditional clichés. Party routine dominates all transactions. There is too much concern with techniques and experience and too little with élan- but Social-Demorcats. Many other and the courage to recognize abuses within the party.

The party authorities themselves conceed that the top-heavy age composition of the membership is a consequence of their own inability to attract new forces. The middle-aged and youth are not touched by the present policies of the party. and this is even truer of the working-class groups, because the SPD lacks any perspective whatever for

ister and chairman of the Danish

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# ISL Program The European Marxist Left and the Social-Democracy

# A Rejoinder: In Germany Too, the Road to The Masses Lies Thru the Social-Democracy

#### By MAX SHACHTMAN

Fourth: The article states that in all these countries there are Marxist groups or individuals who, in the name of revolutionary socialism, reject both reformism and Stalinism, but remain without any support influence in the working class, from which they are isolated.

#### HOLD TRUE FOR GERMANY

#### NO EXCEPTION TO THE EXPERIENCE

Every revolutionary socialist movement that deserved the name of a party was built up in one of these ways or the other. We repeat: We know of no exception anywhere.

#### THE CASE OF THE SPARTACUS LEAGUE

Nowhere in the history of the socialist movement do we know of a single case in which a revolutionary PARTY was built by the method prescribed by Comrade Möhring. To be sure, simply because "it never happened before" is no absolute proof that it cannot ever happen. But after one hundred years of unequivocal experience, in dozens of countries, under the widest variety of circumstances, the least we must say is: "The burden of proof is entirely on your shoulders, Comrade Möhring." And what Möhring offers us does not cause the scales to waver by

He is most emphatic in rejecting our proposal for Germany. But his evidence does not speak for him.

a result of an open and long fight inside the German Social-Democracy between the left and right wings and not at all as a result of masses

## THE CASE OF THE INDEPENDENTS

It is true that formally the left-wing Independents then fused with the much smaller Communist Party. But only formally, in appearance. In actuality, the Independents joined that huge and powerful mass organization which was then the Communist International. If there is any similarity whatever between that development and the one envisaged by Comrade Möhring, it is utterly invisible to us.

The specific objections which Comrade Möhring offers to working in the German Social-Democratic Party today-he has only objections to our proposal; proposals of his own he does not offer, except by implication-are, it seems to us, of importance under a different heading, but not under the one we are discussing at the moment. We cite a few examples:

(1) Only five per cent of the total working class actually belongs to the German Social Democracy. But, before the First World War, the SPD had an even smaller percentage of the total working class in its ranks, but nobody-at least, no socialist-even dreamed of questioning the fact that it was the party of the German proletariat. Except for a handful of ultra-radical and ultra-ineffectual individuals, the party

of most other political parties in Germany today. And if we are not too badly mistaken, it is likewise true of most (if not all) of the tiny Marxist groupings. The reasons are too complex to be dealt with in this

#### THE PESSIMISM IS UNJUSTIFIED

We are perfectly well aware of the difference between a party and a union. But in the concrete case of Germany today, the difference surely does not lie in their respective political or social idas or in the quality and conduct of their respective bureaucracies.

We are not really so remote from reality that we do not understand what is involved. We know, well enough, what difficulties may be expected in working for the ideas of Marxism inside the German Social Democracy today (to say nothing of its French counterpart!). We know, too, the rights and advantages which must be set aside for a while, or modified, in order to carry out such socialist activity-rights and advantages which the little sects possess today, but which they exercise in a

In the one case, however, in spite of all the restrictions, including certain self-restraints which are not very complimentary to the demo-He refers to the Spartacus League of Liebknecht and Luxemburg. cratic pretensions of the Social-Democratic leadership, political activity

results are possible, if not certain In the other case, stagnation and even political decay are guaranteed.

When Comrade Möhring writes that the German Social-Democratic Party is so bad that not even a Bevan is possible in it, he is, we are convinced, unduly gloomy about the German working class itself. And when he writes of such political phenomena as the Bevan movement as "palace revolutions," he displays, most regrettably, a gross incomprehension of the social forces in conflict. Bevan is not much more than a product, of the political development of a large section of the British working class (and, in turn, a force influencing that development). And Bevan, or Bevanism, or Bevan's group, manifests itself the way it does in the Labor Party, not because English is spoken in London while German is spoken in Berlin, but because the main lines of the political evolution of the British working class have flowed through their class party, for all its shortcomings from the socialist standpoint.

The German Social-Democracy is likewise, taken on the whole, the class party of the German working class. To say that "a Bevan" is impossible within it, is either to be completely awe-stricken by the permanency and invulnerability of the SPD's leadership, or to exclude the likelihood of a radical political development of German workers whose aspirations will assert themselves, one way or another, within their party.

The revolutionary socialist, who is confident that the working class will succeed in overcoming the whole capitalist bureaucracy and its state, has no good reason for feeling so depressed about what it can do in the coming period in the German Social-Democracy.

# **REPLY TO** SHACHTMAN

(Continued from column 5)

and in a much shorter time than it took him to get in.

The road Shachtman advocates to activize the socialists who persist in their passivity is on all counts unreal for Germany, and they must be excused from constituting themselves as political manure for the fields of the reformist leaders of the SPD.

#### PRECEDENTS

Quite contrary to Shachtman's claim, it has once before happened in Germany "that hundreds and thousands have given up their membership in a mass organization." The split of the I Socialist Party in the First World War, the founding of the Spartacus League and the succeeding Communist Party were without doubt successful enterprises. To be sure, as against these examples the separation of the SAP from the SPD in the latter stages of the Weimar republic occurred without broad consequences. One cannot conclude from this, however, that the attempt to found a party of the Left must necessarily fail. One can only advise the German Left: Support the attempt at founding a revolutionary socialist party!

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#### Page Six

## LABOR ACTION



DIFFICULTIES REMAIN (3) The union feels that it is

remain for the union:

is one which permits a wage increase and at the same time allows steel prices to rise. In the long run or in the short run this will prove intolerable to the labor movement. Economic Stabilization Administrator Roger L. Putnam has said that the industry's profits are too high to allow any price "adjustment." The attorney for the steel union said: "We do not propose to permit the steelworkers' union to be used as a cat's-paw for the granting of unjustified price increases to the detriment of consumers and the defense program."

again.)

Democratic Party.

acres, a record high.



as during the last war, the big monopolies are growing fatter and richer and that if the enormous sacrifices demanded by the war economy are not to fall exclusively on the shoulders of the common people, the labor movement will have to fight aggressively to maintain living standards. But at the same time it supports Truman's foreign policy and his armaments program and is fearful of fighting lest it weaken his hand.

reaching that juncture, if it has not already done so, where it will be necessary to abandon the use of the strike weapon whether it takes a formal "no-strike" pledge or not. And for this reason, it demands that the Wage Stabilization Board, or some similar body, have the right to intervene in labor-management disputes and make decisions which are binding upon the employers. In this way it hopes to win from government boards what it could not win after surrendering the use of the strike. Now Truman proposes that the present dispute be referred to the Wage Stabilization Board: if the union refuses he will get an injunction. The union leadership is fearful of undermining the authority of the board by a refusal, lest it undermine its whole conception of compulsory arbitration on the style of the War

(2) Right now, the decisions of

As the railroad labor weekly Labor comments, "If this trend continues America will become more and more a country of big 'landlord' farmers and 'hired



(Continued from page 1) In this situation, the top leadership of the UAW did nothing. It judges the problem by the "heat

Here is certainly the bureaucratic mentality in its essence. · Can anyone imagine, or recall, the Emil Mazeys, Brendon Sextons, Walter Reuthers or dozens of other UAW leaders of 15 years ago permitting that kind of hiring situation at City. Hall? Can anyone imagine the UAW of ten years ago allowing the situation to deteriorate this badly, without taking effective local action at least on

put on the local union officers."

#### something solvable like this? FIRST THINGS SECOND

Militant speeches at well-attended Washington conferences (to which no unemployed will be delegates to speak for themselves) are not even a substitute for the requirements of the situation.

Detroit UAW leaders have not even called a conference of the unemployed here, as the Flint unionists did, with the governor and senators put on the spot as speakers. The reason? Can't show that the anti-Reutherites got the jump on us! Such arguments show how factionally-obsessed many Reutherites are. For prestige, power and jobs become the first concern -union program and policies secondary.

Keeping things under control becomes the main concern. Even such bodies as the Wayne County CIO Council, where dissidents like Ford Local 600 delegates and others are a minority, present a major problem. So the monthly meeting is called off.

Better to depend on the local union presidents: they are "safe." The results speak for themselves. The Washington conference, however, comes at a time which may make it very embarrassing to the UAW leaders. If a steel walkout is in progress, what can this conference do to get attention? Any shrewd reactionary in Washington can baffle the UAW delegates with the simple argument: "Steel shortage? Tell Murray to put the boys back to work!" Argument two: "Man, don't you know there's a war going on?" Argument three: "You holler about taxes? They go higher if we put war work in Detroit, where wages are high!" Argument four: "If we give auto industry more steel, we'll just take it away from some other plants and increase unemployment there!"

#### THAT MAN AGAIN

It is the inability of the Reuther leadership to answer this kind of arguments, based on 100 per cent "support of the war effort," that is the basic cause of the floundering of the UAW in this crisis. Only by an "adviser" but it is report-Aneurin Bevan did in England, on the republic will have his the question of guns versus butter, could one begin to answer the Tories of America effectively, Butter first! But this is precisely what the Reuther leadership is unwilling to say; they are committed.

Naturally, one union leader in America is doing his best to take full advantage of this crisis. He is John L. Lewis. More than passing significance is attached in Detroit to Lewis' acceptance of an invitation to speak at the Flint celebration on February 17 of the historic General Motors strike of 1937.

Lewis has already come out for backing the steel workers. His speech at Flint will come at a time when the UAW unemployment situation will be hitting even harder. It will come just before coal negotiations.

How much difficulty this can cause the Reuther leadership is shown by the fact that Reuther has changed his mind about ignoring John L. Lewis, This time Reuther is not snubbing an invitation to speak on the same platform as Lewis, as he did when Lewis spoke in Detroit last summer at the Ford Local 600 celebration. Reuther has government. introduced a special announced that he will be in Flint . exchange policy with relation to also, to speak at the victory meet- dollar imports, so that food importing.

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# UN Commission to Supervise Bolivian Gov't Will Squeeze Country for Lowered Tin Prices

## By JUAN REY

SANTIAGO, Dec. 14 - The Bolivian government has signed an agreement to empower a special UN control commission to oversee its national economic and administrative policies and to "advise" the government and all of its organs. This is perhaps the first time that a nation will have surrendered itself to foreign control.

Not only will every ministry and every minister have own. Thus this small semicolonial country will be officially under the guardianship of a United Nations commission and the government will be "advised" by this foreign commission at the cost of its political and national sovereignty. .

The control commission will arrive in Bolivia to begin its work in January.

#### WARDSHIP

The basis for this ward-status is the "Keenleyside plan," which provides for an analysis and criticism of Bolivia's policies in the field of economics, administration, taxes and imposts.

As we have previously reported. the whole of Bolivia's budget and its national economic policy is based on the exportation of minerals, especially tin. The export of tin is the source of 80 to 95 per cent of the national income and the government budget. To protect the value of these exports and its balance with imports of necessities, in the last 15 years the Bolivian ed into the country was cheaper

than in the neighboring countries livery of as much as 50-60 per cent and also cheaper than if produced of the export dollars to the govin Bolivia. In this way the government defended the country's economy against the cynical exploitation of imperialism. For, if tin was cheap, so also was the official dollar and so were food and other imported articles.

#### UN HELPS RIGHT WING

Through its system of foreign drafts obtained by the Central Bank of Bolivia and obligatorily delivered by the mine owners-between 50 and 60 per cent of all exports - the government financed new industry in the country and provided foods and other consumers' necessities for the people, estaking the kind of tack that ed that even the president of pecially for the miners and industrial workers. This policy to a certain extent protected the national economy against cynical robbery and exploitation from outside. O course, the policy of allotting foreign drafts to commerce and industry provided a big field for corruption: for the official dollar was pegged at 60 balivianos and the "free dollar" at 100 bolivianos. (Now the official dollar is at 60 for milk, sugar and meal, and 100 for other articles, and the "free dollar" oscillates around 200.)

> policy which it called "socialist," fixed taxes and income taxes, inbecause it controlled production cluding taxes on individual inand export and compelled the de- comes.

ernment, But the middle class and the working class, and also the Nationalist Party, supported the policy as a political instrument to win mass support. Now the Bolivian Right has received powerful support from the camp of imperialism and the UN, which is interested in cutting the prices and, of course, the value of the Bolivian currency and of the standards of the Bolivian workers.

The "Keenleyside plan" is based on this opposition to the "socialist" policy of the Bolivian regime and recommends a "liberal economic policy" of "free exchange" and the abolition of all government controls over tin export.

#### **BLOW AT WORKERS**

tacks the social rights and security through years of bloody fights with the bourgeoisie, as a "superfluous and excessive burden on production." It also recommends the reduction of administrative expenses. reduction of the bureaucracy and the reform of the tax system. The tin exports will be "liberated" from the "excessive taxes," and The Right always fought this the burden will be transferred to

en the production of tin and other strategic minerals through a drop in the value of Bolivian currency, of the living standards of the Bolivian workers and middle class. and by raising the prices of American export articles. By means of the "free" exchange policy which is recommended by Keenleyside, the price of meal, milk, sugar and bread bids fair to be increased by 350 per cent-that is, from the dollar at 60 units of the national currency to the dollar at 205-210 units.

The aim of the plan is to cheap-

In this way, this poor country will bear the burden of U.S. war policy and will have to sell its minerals at the lower price. The aim of this Keenleyside plan is to reduce the Bolivian workers to slavelike standards of living, to compel them to work for the American monopolies at hunger-level wages, to harness the poor and hungry Bolivian people to the triumphal chariot of U.S. imperialism.

The American workers have to fight this plan as a danger to the international working class.

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This reactionary plan also atmeasures, which the workers won

# **Murray – INDEX TO LABOR ACTION FOR 1951**

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Labor Board of World War II. But even if the union does decide to postpone its strike and, we would add, even if this dispute is somehow compromised without a strike, every irksome difficulty will (1) The most likely compromise

the Wage Stabilization Board are simply advisory and have no binding power. If the steel companies do not like its decisions they can simply laugh them off. (If it had mandatory powers, all the problems that the labor movement faced with the old War Labor Board would simply be before it

(3) However obligingly the union leadership might allow Truman to avoid the distasteful resort to the old injunction in this instance, it must and does understand that it deals with a man and an administration whose first impulse in any crisis is toward wielding the club of governmental coercion. Not only is this knowledge humiliating and irritating, not only does it rankle, but it becomes a permanent and ever-present source of irrita-

tion between labor and the socalled "Fair Deal" wing of the

## Concentration

The U.S. Census Bureau reports a rapid trend toward fewer and bigger farms. From 1940 to 1950 the number of farms fell from 6,097,000 to 5,384,000, a decrease of nearly 12 per cent. The size of the average farm rose from 174 to 210

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## ABBREVIATIONS

E-Editorial.

L-Letter to the editor. **R**—The column "Reading from Left to Right" (notes on current magazine articles).

## Gentleman's Agreement

How newspaper publishers in a community cover up for each

other: The editor of the Boston Herald, John H. Crider, recently resigned from that newspaper after the publisher had suppressed his critical review of Senator Taft's new book on foreign policy. Papers all over

the country carried the item. "No newspaper in Boston, however, printed the news of Crider's resignation," the St. Louis Post-Dispatch points out. "By what possible reasoning did the Boston newspapers themselves fail to print

The answer, of course, is well known. It's the same as the reason why newspapers don't print news about libel suits against other newspapers-especially when the case is won by the plaintiff. The big-press monopolists have a gentlemen's agreement not to embarrass each other.

#### Catholic Politics

A Catholic prelate in Britain last month put his foot in it when he came out with a statement which clearly indicated the church hierarchy's interest in swinging its weight in non-spiritual politics.

Dr. Downey, the archbishop of Liverpool, spoke about the "pretty equal" division of the country be tween the Tories and Labor and stated that this situation is likely to continue. "I hope it will," he added, "because the longer it goes on, the stronger will be our influence as a Catholic body, and I think we may get the privilege of holding the balance o power."

Comments the London Tribune: "Here is a plain statement that Catholics should vote as a separate party or at least as a separate influence, that the predominant consideration in their minds when they go to the polls should be their Catholic allegiance, and that they should seek to sway the result of British elections for Catholic purposes. If this were to happen, it would be a development of deadly seriousness. It would provoke an 🙀 inevitable reaction and one result would be the threat to our principles of religious toleration."

#### You're Invited

to speak your mind in the letter column of LA. Our policy is to publish letters of general political interest, regardless of views. Keep them to 500 words.