

# SOCIALIST REVIEW •

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HERBERT ZAM: Editor

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## LUIS ARAQUISTAIN

### LAST DAYS IN SPAIN

1 1 1

#### **The New Deal and Labor**

*What have the workers gained?*

**HARRY W. LAIDLER**

#### **Labor's New Battle Front**

*Can the new attack be met?*

**FRANK N. TRAGER**

#### **Auto Workers Face New Tasks**

*After the two Conventions.*

**BEN FISCHER**

#### **War and Peace on the Campus**

*Whither the Student Movement?*

**ROBIN MEYERS**

#### **Fascist Tactics In Latin America**

*A Discussion by the Assistant Secretary of  
the APRA Party of Peru.*

**FERNANDO LEON DE  
VIVERO**

#### **The Fascist Organization Of Society**

*Labor and Industry under Fascism*

**OTTO BAUER**

#### **Seldes, Lord of the Gutter**

*About the Gentle Art of Plagiarism.*

**OBSERVER**

#### **Too Late For Lernerism**

*A review of "It is Later Than You Think."*

**ROBERT DELSON**

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# SOCIALIST REVIEW

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HERBERT ZAM, Editor

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## Last Days In Spain

by Luis Araquistain

Monsieur Diego Martinez Barrio,  
President of the Republican Cortes of Spain.

Dear Friend,

At the meeting of the Standing Committee of the Cortes, held April 1, 1939, decisions were adopted of such gravity and inopportune character that I am compelled to tender my resignation as representative of the Socialist minority of this body. And as I am unable to explain and justify this decision either before the parliamentary minority to which I belong or before the party to which I am affiliated, and since I could not do so before the Standing Committee itself because of the precipitance with which this meeting had to end, I address myself to you, in so much as you are president of our phantasmagoric republican Cortes, so that there may remain at least written and motivated evidence of my resignation.

The first grave decision was to take another vote on a decision adopted at an earlier meeting, which had accorded the corpse of the Negrin government the natural and necessary burial by proclaiming that it had ceased to exist from the moment when the just and common indignation of the republican army and people compelled it to hurriedly leave our country by airplane; pursued this time, not by the hired assassins of Franco, but by the exasperated fury of the Spanish republicans, Socialists, and Syndicalists, disgusted at last,—alas too late—with the government, the most incompetent, the most despotic and the most unscrupulous that Spain has endured even in the worst periods of the Austrian and Bourbon dynasties.

In his ponderous and drawn out report before the Standing Committee, to justify certain of his unjustifiable last minute appointments—appointments that in fact placed all the army commands in the hands of the Communist Party, which provoked the avenging revolt of the people and the army in Madrid and the rest of Republican Spain—ex-president Negrin said that he had

always placed national interest above sentiments of friendship. That is not true and we will prove it some day; but for the sake of argument I grant that such was his intention, and to Negrin I say that this standard of conduct has likewise always been and will always be mine and that guided by it, I must assert at the sacrifice of the bonds of friendship and affection that bound me to him, that Juan Negrin is the most calamitous statesman and the most devoid of all sense of responsibility, that Spain has known for a number of centuries.

During the two years—or thereabouts—in which he held power, we lost the whole of northern Spain, a part of the Mediterranean coast, and finally we lost all of Catalonia. At another time and place I will expose all the causes of this disaster that is without precedent in Spanish Wars. It suffices here and now to point out the inner force and the reason behind this tremendous defeat: *it is the stupid and brutal communist dictatorship, which conducted our unfortunate war and led us to this tragic catastrophe.* Juan Negrin and his aide, the former Minister of Foreign Affairs (del Vayo), were the docile and unconditional agents of this dictatorship, dictators under the dictation of the Communist Party.

Formerly, those responsible for such great catastrophes and so much ruin and bloodshed were shot for much less; at least they were justly condemned to prison, unless they prudently escaped abroad to die there in shame, oblivion or poverty, while history pronounced its harsh sentence on them. But it appears that times have changed radically. Now those who flee the justice of their own people arrive abroad with the cool assumption of continuing to bear the title of government of the homeland that they lost, without any doubt by their incapacity, perhaps by their treachery, as there are very strong reasons to suspect; in any case by giving up all defense of Catalonia while there was still time to save it. They think of continuing to administer without any control what remains of the wealth entrusted to them by the sacrificed and perhaps betrayed people, and of



maintaining themselves in a form to take power again when the vicissitudes of our country or an international conflict, bring them, as they hope, a favorable opportunity. Such boldness is conceivable only by people who have lost or never had the least sense of any sort of responsibility, by people that alienists would declare mentally irresponsible.

Because of their conduct in Spain, it is no surprise to me that such are their pretensions. For nothing in the world were they willing to relinquish power and they were ready for anything to preserve it without interruption, in case of either victory or defeat. It was several months ago that the Minister of Foreign Affairs—whose political genius is not precisely that of a Talleyrand, but who resembles him in his almost unhealthy love of political exhibitionism—announced that all Spain could be lost but that they, Negrin and his crew of statesmen of genius, would continue to govern from France. And now they want to carry out this oracle. This almost pathological hypnotic fascination for power alone explains how at one point in 1938 when Azana was considering a change in policy and consequently in government, Negrin—with his attitudes of an overgrown child, essentially weak, and without character, but who tries to appear as a terrible and audacious man—told him point blank: "You will not remove me, and if you attempt it I shall fight back and place myself at the head of a popular and military movement. The army and the people are with me." You yourself, Mr. Barrio, told me this lamentable anecdote that you say you heard from the mouth of Mr. Azana himself, who it seems, tolerated this threat that was a veritable coup d'etat without arresting or removing him on the spot, when it was the moment to do so. The fact that these people, who have failed completely and whom the Spanish people themselves hurled from power, want to preserve even in exile the luxury of governmental functions, is understandable if one thinks of it as an obvious political and psychological aberration. Perhaps their relentless masters, the Communists would not allow them, even now, to act otherwise. But that the Standing Committee should follow them in this bold game is an historical lack of conscience and astonishes me profoundly. What could have made them contradict themselves. It could not have been Negrin's report, which was further proof of the incapacity of his war policy, as an objective reading of the stenographic report will show. There was one deputy, the socialist Zugazagoitia, who on the day of the uprising, before a group of socialist deputies said that had he been in the Spanish capital, he too would have joined the uprising. Which did not prevent him from voting afterwards that the Negrin "government" could continue to keep this title until the end of its days, because no one can dismiss it—it seems that what occurred in Madrid was not of the slightest importance—and because there is no one it

can resign to.

This is a heavy responsibility—they say—but they cannot honorably shift it from their shoulders. If they do not resign themselves to stop calling themselves ministers, it is for patriotic reasons. I suppose that it is also for reasons of patriotism that the deputies of the republican left and Catalan left—who before the ignominious meeting of March 31st and April 1st, wanted to throw out Juan Negrin if he did not give a frank accounting at least of his shady financial administration—suddenly changed their opinion and decided to continue to accord him their cooperation in a Commission of the Cortes,—that was another grave and inopportune decision—a Commission which under the pretext of controlling him, will simply serve to give an air of legitimacy to this farce of a government and to cover the chaotic wreck of its administration, past, present and future.

Against this Commission of complicity and suppression, proposed by the artful Lamonedá, former secretary of the Spanish Socialist Party, also rejected with his former executive committee, by the angry socialist masses of Spain—too late alas—I offered this amendment: "*That any collaboration between the Standing Committee and the Negrin 'government' be preceded by an investigation by a committee elected for this purpose, in order that the said government give a report of its administration.*"

This proposal coincided with another formulated in a letter addressed to you as President of the Cortes by our ambassador in Washington, Fernando de los Rios; he called on you to set up an investigating committee before which all those who had administered funds of the Spanish republic should report, commencing with himself, who offered to appear as soon as the investigating committee was functioning. At the end of the meeting it was decided that the de los Rios proposal be referred to the proper committee, a farcical procedure of burying it. My proposal did not fare any better, except for the singular fact that two deputies voted in favor of it, whose names I am pleased to record against the day, when history will judge all of us; they are Alvaro de Albornoz and Gonzalez Lopez, of the republican left.

I insist there have been enormous administrative irregularities by agents of the government abroad. I also assert that high personalities of the Republican regime, have important sums of money, difficult to justify, deposited in their names in English banks and in some in the United States. But all possibility of investigation being destroyed—which my proposal attempted to prevent—republican Spain will never know which of its agents and representatives acted with integrity, and which conducted themselves otherwise: all will be plunged into an atmosphere of suspicion. Nor will they know many things that an investigating committee of the Standing Committee, the sole survivor up to April



1st of the Republican Cortes of 1936, might have revealed with sufficient authority to be believed. Republican Spain will not know what happened to the Spanish treasury of 500 odd tons of gold that were deposited outside of Spain, nor how this gold was spent, how much remains, nor the whereabouts or names under which these deposits were made, a fact of the greatest importance, and which perhaps will also explain, why some may be, in an incomprehensible fashion, obstinately clinging to power in spite of defeats and hostile public opinion, a hostility which reached its height with the very justified uprising of March. Nor will it know what has become of the rest of the wealth requisitioned by the Republic. Nor how, where and in what amounts the balance will or will not be invested.

The Republic is dead, starved and bled to death by the acts of a government which for two years gave proof of the greatest incompetence in the conduct of the war, in the maintenance of the civilian population and in the direction of international policy, to the extent that Spain in the course of its long and unhappy history was never in clumsier or more incompetent hands; but the superstructure has disappeared in a murky and mephitic cloud. When will the Spanish people be able to recover their faith in the integrity and capacity of their representatives, of their parties and organizations, and their hope in democracy? This is the most tragic side of this enormous tragedy.

But I still hope that the light of repentance will enlighten the conscience of those responsible for such great misfortunes, and that they will voluntarily give up representing a people that violently and unequivocally

repudiated them. In truth we lack a group of men that would represent revolutionary Spain, that Spain which stayed behind, on the other side of the Pyrenees, under the lash of totalitarian tyranny, and also that Spain that is suffering in the concentration camps in France with only the hope of being able to scatter themselves all over the world. They represent Spain and not those whose defeat was complete. And those who least of all can claim to do so, are the Communists and their accomplices, a party which the whole of Europe, except Stalinist Russia, will soon sweep off its political map, as a foreign and unassimilable body, in the service of a foreign state, as it did formerly with the Society of Jesus.

I had hoped that the Standing Committee would produce the first nucleus of representatives of Revolutionary Spain. I was wrong. The Standing Committee preferred to commit suicide by tying itself to the corpse of a former government that ceased to exist when the constitutional bases of the Presidency of the Republic and of the Cortes themselves disappeared, and above all when it was kicked and driven from power by the Republican army and people. Let it rest in peace! As for myself, I refuse to continue to participate in this mortuary assembly. I also waive every right and favor that might come to me in the future as deputy to the defunct Republican Cortes.

Accept the greetings of a Socialist, more revolutionary today than ever, after the sad counter-revolutionary experience of our Republic and of our war.

LUIS ARAQUISTAIN.

Paris, April 4, 1939.

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## The New Deal and Labor

by Harry W. Laidler

**D**URING the last thirty odd years when the American people have been confronted with a social problem, they have, in general sought not a fundamental solution to that problem, but some "political Messiah" possessed of a silvery tongue or a catchy shibboleth, to lead them out of the economic wilderness into the promised land.

In 1904, anxious to slay the "malefactors of great wealth," they sent to the White House Theodore Roosevelt, with his promise of the "Square Deal." Teddy Roosevelt, once in office as a result of their suffrage, divided trusts into good trusts and bad trusts; blessed the good trusts and found it practically impossible to discover the bad trusts. The "malefactors of great wealth" continued to flourish, the inequalities of wealth and opportunities continued to exist and the country, under Roosevelt's "Square Deal," soon found itself in

the midst of the twentieth century's period of hard times.

In 1912, after four years of Roosevelt and four years of his phlegmatic successor, William Howard Taft, the American people turned to Professor Woodrow Wilson, slayer of Princeton fraternities and herald of "the New Freedom," as the "political Messiah" of his decade. They elected Professor Wilson President of the United States, but instead of attaining a new freedom, were plunged into the World War, and witnessed the lynching of the Constitution, the destruction of hundreds of workers' organizations, and the increasing concentration of industrial control into the hands of the few.

Then followed the period when the people became tired of "Messiahs"; when they sought the lowest common denominators among Presidential candidates; elected Warren Gamaliel Harding, leader of the Ohio gang, the chief Executive of the nation; were confronted



with the most corrupt national administration since the Reconstruction period after the Civil War; and, later nauseated with the "normalcy" of Harding, sought a provincial and niggardly New Englander—Calvin Coolidge—to restore some semblance of honesty and economy to the national government. Next in succession came the "great engineer" with his promise of two chickens in every pot and two automobiles in every garage.

No sooner was Engineer Hoover in office than people began to talk of two pots for every chicken and two garages for every automobile. We found ourselves plunged into the greatest depression in American history, with from 13,500,000 to more than 15,000,000 jobless throughout the land.

Then emerged the new "political Messiah," Franklin Delano Roosevelt, with his magnetic radio voice and his "New Deal." Here indeed maintained many, was a man, whose philosophy of enlightened, regulated, progressive, planned capitalism would bring to the American people security, social justice and plenty.

Roosevelt swept the country in 1932. He swept it again in 1936. We are now in the seventh year of his administration.

During the New Deal Administration, certain advances have been made. We have greatly extended federal home relief, timidly initiated in the latter days of the Hoover Administration. We have seen the development of an extensive public works program. We have witnessed the beginning of a social insurance system, though a system which every student of social security regards as utterly inadequate and faulty in the extreme. We have seen some advances in public ownership of hydroelectric energy, in regional planning, in public housing, in conservation and in collective bargaining.

Many of these measures—particularly those for the encouragement of collective bargaining—have been of much value to the masses of the people.

And yet, under the New Deal, as under the Old Deal, nothing fundamental has been done to get at the root causes of insecurity. American industry is in the hands of the few. A few hundred giant corporations under the Roosevelt regime, as under the Harding, Coolidge and Hoover administrations, control the major part of the wealth of the corporations in the United States and are constantly seeking the domination of the political and cultural, as well as the economic life of the nation.

Under the New Deal, as under the Old, industry is run for profit. The owners of industry are rewarded on the basis of the amount they own, not the amount they contribute in useful service to the industrial and cultural advance of the country. The few live in luxury; the many in want. Summarizing the results of a WPA nation-wide survey conducted under the supervision of

the United States Bureau of Home Economics and the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics in cooperation with the National Resources Committee, the Resources Committee reported that, in 1935-36, "14% of all families received less than \$500 during the year studied; 42% received less than \$1000, 65% less than 1500 and 87% less than \$2500. Above the \$2500 level, there were about 10% with incomes up to \$5000, about 2% receiving between \$5000 and \$10,000, and only 1% with incomes of \$100,000 or more." \*

Dealing with the gross *inequalities* in income distribution, the National Resources Board brought out the fact that "the 42% of families with incomes under \$1000 received less than 16% of the aggregates, while the 3% with incomes of \$5000 and over received 21% of the total. The incomes of the top 1% accounted for a little over 13% of the aggregate." There is little reason to believe that these figures are much different in the year 1939, for, while the national income increased from 1936 from 62.4 billions to 70 billion dollars, it took a dip again in 1938 to 61 billion, not far from the 1936 level.

Under the New Deal, as under the Old, unemployment continued to haunt the lives of millions of our people. Unemployment was less, it is true, than during the Spring of 1933, when Roosevelt first took hold of the reins of government. But today, despite all of the measures of the New Deal—six years after the Roosevelt administration took office—there are still from 10,000,000 to 12,000,000 outside of the pale of private enterprise.

Socialists were one hundred per cent for the additional appropriation of \$150,000,000 for the WPA demanded by the President. They opposed the unenlightened reduction of this appropriation by reactionaries in the House and the Senate. But Socialists maintain that, even if the appropriation remained at its original figure, it would leave millions upon millions without work and only a step removed from utter want.

The originators of the New Deal looked to New Deal legislation as a means of bringing about a balance between production and consumption. They looked forward to establishing under capitalism living wages and sustained employment. In the honeymoon days, in the Spring of 1933, New Deal supporters promised to put 6,000,000 jobless back to work by the Fall.

The administration's program of federal relief, of public works, of collective bargaining, etc., and of bank reform may have saved capitalism, in those jittery days of 1933, from a complete collapse. But it has utterly failed to bring about security or high living standards. At present writing the curve of business is on the downward curve again, and the future is an uncertain one.

\* National Resources Committee, *Consumer Incomes in the U. S.*, Washington, 1938. p. 2-3. In 1929, Brookings Institute declared that 42% of the families of the countries received an income of \$1,500 a year or less. During the depression, living standards shrank tremendously.



Despite the failure of the New Deal measures to grapple successfully with the industrial crisis, now in its tenth year, there seems no indication that Mr. Roosevelt's intention is to experiment along more fundamental lines. This is due partly to the President's utter unwillingness to make a frontal attack upon capitalism itself, which he has declared time and time again that he wishes to preserve. The slowing down of Roosevelt's program is likewise due in part to Republican opposition, and to the opposition within his own party, dominated as it is in many parts of the country by reactionary industrialists and corrupt machine politicians. Many of the young social idealists who joined the administration in the early days, furthermore, are now on the outside looking in, having been forced out of their jobs by the Democratic politicians, having left in disgust at the vacillating character of the administration's policies, or having grown tired of the inevitable political maneuvering which their retention of office was entailing.

From now to the end of the term, advanced New Deal legislation is likely to be put pretty much in cold storage. Roosevelt will undoubtedly become militant on certain issues such as that of restoring his \$150,000,000 WPA appropriation. He may favor some increases in housing and health appropriations, but it is not likely that he will work for legislation which will disturb the status quo.

On the other hand, he will continue to pound away on armament economics. He will urge larger and larger appropriations for airplanes, battle ships, submarines, army equipment, espionage service. Consciously or unconsciously, he will draw the nation's attention away from the unemployment, the desperately low living standards and fascist trends at home, and direct the

workers' attention to fascist dictatorships abroad. He may, if the American people are not alert, plunge America into another World War, as his predecessor, President Wilson, plunged this country, with idealistic phrases, into the hell of the World War.

In the meanwhile the masses will not be able, with their low incomes, to buy the goods that industry can produce. The country will not be able, as in the past, to arrive at new peaks of prosperity through the settlement of new parts of the country. Capitalism will continue to flounder and unemployment will continue to plague the American people. Under these conditions, it is up to the workers of hand and brain in America to work out their own philosophy of social change; to seek not another political Messiah, but to seek, through their own political and economic organizations, a new, a cooperative order of industrial society.

During the last generation or more, as we have seen, the workers have been lulled into a false sense of security by their political leaders. They have been told that they didn't need to organize. They didn't need to do their own thinking. They needed only to follow—goose step like—a leader engaged in hypnotizing them with some magical phrase—the Square Deal, the New Freedom, Normalcy, the New Deal, etc.—and all would be well. They have followed leaders into industrial collapse, into militarism, into war.

It is high time that the workers by hand and brain followed another path. It is high time that they built up their own party. It is high time that they began to uproot the causes of poverty and unemployment and war. It is high time that they began to build for Socialism—to build before it is too late.

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## Labor's New Battle Front

by Frank N. Trager

**Headline: Girdler to sue union for strike. Republic Steel demands \$75,500,000 damages. Lewis and C.I.O. defendants.**

**Headline: New England Trucksters Association sues Teamsters Union for \$900,000.**

**Headline: Federal jury awards Apex Company \$700,000 damages against C.I.O. Hosiery Workers Union.**

**Headline: Oregon, Minnesota and Wisconsin pass anti-labor legislation.**

And more of same. By the time this appears in print every reader of the newspapers and periodicals must be acutely aware of the fact that there is going on a consistent and unrelenting effort not only to wipe out the labor gains of recent years, but to break the labor movement in the United States. In this campaign it becomes

fairly obvious that industry, operating in close collaboration with big agriculture—such as the Associated Farmers of the West Coast, and receiving the venal cooperation of reactionary politicians and newly created stooge organizations such as the Wisconsin and Illinois Councils of Agriculture—is leading a determined drive to wipe out recent labor legislative gains, and especially the C.I.O.

In this drive a major share of the responsibility must be borne by the Federal and Supreme Courts because of the Apex Hosiery and Fansteel steel workers decisions. No one who is concerned with the continuation, to say nothing of the progressive growth, of the labor movement in the United States, can afford to ignore what is undoubtedly a major trend in current life. Unfortunately, even though the American Federation of



Labor Teamsters Union is the butt of the attack in New England, the A.F. of L. has not yet seen fit to plan its own counter offensive or to join with the C.I.O. in a joint defensive against these reactionary drives.

The action planned by Republic Steel, almost on the second anniversary of the Chicago Memorial Day massacre for which Tom Girdler and Mayor Kelly—recently supported by the Communist Party and the C.I.O. in the current mayoralty campaign—are largely responsible, follows closely upon similar action by the New England Truckers Association. Both look with satisfaction upon the refusal of Federal Judge William Kirkpatrick to set aside the treble damage verdict in the suit of the Apex Hosiery Company against Branch No. 1 of the American Federation of Hosiery Workers.

It may be useful in this connection to review briefly that case. Branch No. 1 led a sit-down, one among hundreds of such strikes during the organizing drive of 1937. The strike was settled, but the Company took the case to the courts, and under the questionable provisions of the Sherman Anti-Trust Act were awarded treble damages as a penalty imposed upon the Union. And so the Company, unless the decision is set aside by the Supreme Court, is to receive \$711,932.55!

Every student of labor history is aware of the setting of this case. The Sherman Anti-Trust Act was passed in the early 90's of the last century. It was directed exclusively at large scale industry which, acting in restraint of trade, created monopoly. About ten years after the passage of the act, D. E. Loewe and Company of Danbury, Connecticut, brought suit against the United Hatters of America on August 31, 1902. The case went to the Supreme Court, and finally the highest court of the land ruled that the boycott action of the union was a conspiracy in the restraint of trade and thus made it possible for the courts to find the Union guilty when the case came to trial in October, 1909. A \$74,000 verdict was brought in against the Union which, under the existing provisions of the trebling clause of the Sherman Anti-Trust Act, made the damages and court costs amount to \$232,240.

Labor was alarmed as a result of this verdict and for years carried on a campaign designed to set aside the application of the Sherman Act to labor activities. Finally, in 1914, labor succeeded in having passed the Clayton Anti-Trust Act which declared that the labor of human beings is not a commodity and that therefore union organization can not be construed as a conspiracy in restraint of trade under the terms of the Sherman Act. Labor hailed the Clayton Act as its Magna Charta. It has a habit of hailing certain acts with this illustrious historical title, but such fullsome praise did not prevent courts in subsequent cases from whittling away at the Clayton Act until we find, as we do today, that Judge Kirkpatrick completely ignores the Magna Charta of 1914 in awarding damages to the Apex Hosiery Com-

pany, basing his verdict on the Sherman Act.

The headlines which began this article are the patent results. Hardly had the nation's press carried the story of the Philadelphia decision when similar suits were instituted. It is of course possible that the Supreme Court will not close its eyes to the fact that the Clayton Act expressly exempts labor from the provisions of the Sherman Act and therefore it must set aside the verdict of the lower court. But until and if it does this the hosiery workers, teamsters, steel workers and many others will find their unions involved in costly and expensive litigation which eats up the possibility of spending money on organization, and at the same time endangers the free life of the union movement as a whole.

To this dangerous threat to the labor movement must be added two other major efforts clearly etched on the national scene.

The first comes from the recent action of the Supreme Court in the *Fansteel* 5 to 2 decision. I have examined that case from many angles and have written about it at some length in order to arouse a deep concern in the labor movement for the meaning of the *Fansteel* case. It may be useful to review it for the readers of the *Socialist Review*:

After repeated but unsuccessful attempts to secure union recognition eighty workers staged a sit-down strike in Plants 3 and 5 of the *Fansteel Metallurgical Company* during the third week of February, 1937. During the days that followed they repulsed a gas attack by the county police of Lake County, Illinois. On Thursday, February 25, their representatives were meeting with Governor Horner . . . trying to bring about what the law of the land called "collective bargaining" under the National Labor Relations Act. On Friday morning, 5:15 o'clock, the Lake County police brought to the gates of the plants a weird, tower-like contraption on wheels. From this, for ninety minutes they fired on the sleeping sit-downers round after round of nausea, tear, and knock-out gas. Finally they routed the strikers, who were then smartly scolded by Governor Horner, Mayor Kelley of Chicago and the usual reactionary press of Chicago.

The case went to the N.L.R.B., which after considerable investigation judged the employers guilty of violating the Act and ordered the workers reinstated. The company went to the courts, and now the Supreme Court by a 5 to 2 decision has reversed the stand of the N.R.L.B. Interestingly enough the Court majority could not set aside the findings of the N.R.L.B.: the company had engaged in "unfair labor practices" such as hiring labor spies, fostering a company union, issuing anti-union statements. But despite these findings it refused to allow the reinstatement of the sit-downers on the ground that these men had violated the law of seizure. Such alleged encroachment on the property rights of the own-



ers—an act admittedly following upon the illegal labor practices of the owners—nevertheless deprived these workers of their rights under the N.L.R. Act.

In effect John Boss cruelly and brutally attacks Joe Worker, but because the latter defends himself with what is defined by the courts as "illegal" methods he cannot recover damages, nor be restored to his initial status. The sit-down method of strike strategy was not directly before the Supreme Court, yet it made this the issue to disallow reinstatement. As Justices Reed and Black indicated in dissenting. "every punishment which compelled obedience to law still remains in the hands of the peace officers." By the majority decision, "Friction easily engendered (by John Boss during) . . . labor strife may readily give rise to conduct from nose-thumb-ing to sabotage, which will give occasion for discharge on grounds other than those prohibited by the Labor Act."

Thus the Court although previously declaring the N.L.R. Act constitutional has delimited its sphere of action, has once again served notice that the judiciary, one of three coordinate branches of our government, is determined to curtail the functions of administration agencies created by the other two branches of government.

Incidentally, the press of the country, the National Association of Manufacturers, and the U. S. Chamber of Commerce hailed this setback for the N.L.R.B. Curiously few of this chorus took the trouble to point out that among the forty-one cases brought before the Supreme Court in connection with the N.L.R. Act, only five defeats were suffered by the Board; one partial setback and thirty-five victories!

The second factor comes from a determined campaign on the part of reactionary industrial leadership working successfully through state legislatures. During these past five months, 44 of the 48 state legislatures have been in session. In more than 20 of them—and this picture may change very rapidly before the end of the current legislative season—bills have been introduced designed to repeal favorable state labor laws such as the State Wagner Labor acts, and to replace them with legal restrictions on union organization, on the right to strike, picket and boycott. Thus far three states, which in many ways have been barometers for a successful and progressive labor movement, have receded so far down the path of reaction that today they lead the pack in successfully passing restrictive anti-labor legislation. Oregon, by referendum vote in November, and Minnesota and Wisconsin during the current sitting of the state legislature have already passed such bills. With minor differences among them laws have been passed in each of these three states which place almost insuperable difficulties in the path of the labor strike, picket, boycott, closed shop and check-off. These laws give the right to newly created state boards of

punitive action against labor for alleged unfair labor practices and curtail existing anti-injunction laws in the interest of employers.

It is not yet certain whether similar bills will be passed in other states, but as an example of the cohesion among the forces operating in behalf of these bills, Illinois might be cited. As in Wisconsin a spurious Council on Agriculture was created which succeeded in introducing a bill in that state identical even in wording with the Wisconsin bill. Introduced in the State Senate, this bill which is to govern labor relations, was referred to the Senate Agricultural Committee and reported favorably by that Committee!

At this writing such bills have already been defeated by an aroused and alarmed labor movement in some twelve states, but this is hardly a signal for excessive joy, as the dangers already all too evident have every chance of becoming realities if not in 1939, then in 1940.

This picture would hardly be complete without a brief reference to the current battle in Washington over the National Labor Relations Board. For here we find not only the Chambers of Commerce and the National Association of Manufacturers eagerly attempting to carry on in the national scene what their state-wide associates have done locally, but also a divided labor movement pressing for conflicting action from the Democratic majority of both Houses.

Through Senator Walsh, the A.F. of L. has introduced a bill amending the National Labor Relations Act in nine ways and calling for the dissolution of the present board and the creation of a new one with curtailed powers. These amendments would inevitably combine to subject every order of the Board to endless litigation; give the courts by writs of mandamus, virtually initial jurisdiction; provide employers the right of investigation into the private files of the Board; create endless postponement by means of "charges of bias" against each examiner who in no instance makes any decision anyway; open the floodgates of employer propaganda without the possibility of determining when such propaganda constitutes an "unfair labor practice," and give the employers the right to call for a vote.

It seems inconceivable that the A.F. of L. would lend itself to these proposals for the questionable and uncertain advantage of being selected as the bargaining agency on a craft basis. Faction and internal strife lead to strange end products, and the Walsh N.L.R.B. Amendments are indeed strange.

Thus we see that internal dissension in the labor movement makes it possible for industry and large scale agriculture working through the courts and state legislatures to bring about a situation in which many of the gains registered since 1933 are being slowly wiped out. It is difficult to say at this moment what will be the final product of this internal and external conflict, but this much is true: that a fascist movement



in the United States will be created not by little crackpot organizations nor even in the final analysis by such dangerous demagogues as Coughlin, Pelley, Van Horn Moseley and their ilk, but rather if it comes it will come through the breakdown in current economic life, having for its base the setting here described.

Fascism won't be called fascism, but the Fansteel Supreme Court decision is a fascist decision. The Apex Hosiery workers decision is a fascist decision. The state laws in Oregon, Minnesota and Wisconsin, analogous, if not identical, with the fascist labor front are capable of wiping out a free labor movement as it has already done in Germany and Italy.

There is yet another aspect of this picture which is worth while noting and noting with alarm. The labor movement in the United States, especially during the post war period, has looked toward legislative action to assist it in its own problems. It has accepted favors from its alleged friends, believing it could defeat its recognizable enemies. As a result various Congresses have passed a series of acts, Maritime, Railway Labor, perhaps now an amended Labor Relations Act, a Guffey Coal Act and similar bills which in their present garb may in one respect or another appear to assist labor, but which under slightly altered political conditions can become the easy framework for a national compulsory

labor code that overnight forms the fabric of a fascist society. These acts are not fascism. By no means is this the case. But these acts and their implications, under conditions which we see now already arising in various states, can well become the means for an ultimate betrayal of a free democratic labor movement in the United States.

It is customary in such articles as these to end with a peroration as to what labor can do. This has been said and written many times by friends of the labor movement and by progressive labor leaders themselves. Suffice it to say that a simple program for labor to follow at this juncture in its critical history would include speedy unification, an aggressive counter campaign to the reaction from which it is now suffering, a creation of a political arm responsive only to labor, that is, a labor party or a farm-labor party, and finally the recognition that only by having a thoroughly organized labor movement democratic and politically aware of its responsibilities as well as of its privileges is there any hope for the future. Apart, however, from such a peroration the above facts speak for themselves and all who read not only may learn but hardly can fail to come to such a critical awareness of the problems involved as to make evident the need for early solutions in the coming period.

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## Auto Workers Face New Tasks

by Ben Fischer

THE United Automobile Workers of America is not just another C.I.O. affiliate. It offers the basis for a new trend in the American labor movement. The C.I.O. has three basic sections—the Amalgamated Clothing Workers extending into textiles, the United Mine Workers extending into steel, and now the United Auto Workers extending into aircraft, farm implements, electrical refrigeration and allied industries.

Of these the U.A.W.A. is the only one which is not set in its leadership. Machine control has not been established in the auto union. Further the auto union is economically the most powerful of these three basic C.I.O. sections in view of the present weakness of steel. Not only is the U.A.W. important economically; it is strategic from a military and political point of view. The auto industry can be turned into the base of the munitions industry overnight. Politically the auto union is a potentially decisive power in Michigan, Ohio, Indiana and Wisconsin; it also has potential membership that runs into the tens of thousands in a host of other states, including New York, California, Pennsylvania and New Jersey. Finally, the U.A.W. is made up of a membership so vigorous and so rich with labor talent

that it is certain to be a new and articulate factor in the whole development of American labor.

It is no wonder, then, that the auto union has been a factional battle ground! Every group with any axe to grind has turned some of its attention to the U.A.W.A. This includes every radical group, the Catholic Church, Coughlin's forces, and a whole series of isolated groups from ultra-radical study clubs to the Black Legion.

The importance and the possibilities of the U.A.W. accounts for this. But also the nature of the men in the auto centers must be considered; many of them come from farms, having left their communities to seek out the great fields of "opportunity" such as Ford, the great G.M. plants, etc. This element is the ambitious group, pioneering, unafraid of new ideas, resolved to achieve a better life.

In the light of these factors, it is no wonder that the special convention of the U.A.W. recently held in Cleveland was a culmination of two years of intense factional strife. The Cleveland convention was called by the General Executive Board strictly according to constitutional provisions. Homer Martin's rump convention was called later, after he had summarily sus-



pendent 15 executive board members (while a Board meeting was in progress) and was called in a fashion entirely contrary to constitutional requirements.

Martin's meeting was run entirely from the top. It was made up of many "rank and file" delegations with only a few delegations actually elected to represent organized local unions. The actions of the convention were reactionary, legalizing dictatorial bureaucracy and banning all "communist" groups—a ban which sooner or later will be enforced against the Lovestoneites and others. The officers include Martin as president, of course; Irvin Carey of California who was elected vice-president primarily because he refused to go along with the C.I.O. peace proposal made last fall and accepted by every other board member; and Jerry Aldred, the new secretary-treasurer, who is the brains of the Black Legion forces in Flint and is rated one of the most vicious reactionaries in the auto workers' ranks.

Martin's overtures towards the A.F. of L., now exposed as a serious intention to drag the C.I.O.-A.F. of L. fight into the auto industry, is the highlight of his convention and its aftermath. Martin's forces still include some honest union elements repelled either by certain phases of the U.A.W. fight or else brought into Martin's camp by special local circumstances. It is not likely that these elements will go along with the proposal to go into the A.F. of L. Whatever their quarrels with the C.I.O., these elements see in the C.I.O. a fighting force capable of defending workers' interests against employers. To these workers, the A.F. of L. on the basis of its past record in auto, stands for betrayal, dictatorship and a refusal to fight for workers against employers.

The convention in Cleveland reflected a very different picture from Martin's meeting. At this convention, recognized by the C.I.O. as the legal U.A.W. convention, there were some 170,000 votes represented, computed on an 18-month per capita average. In virtually every case the figures were genuinely representative of actual membership.

The delegates did not go to the Cleveland convention to deal with what they consider "distant" questions like war or political action. Interest in the resolutions on these questions was not very great. The delegates feared such issues because they felt that they would divide their union; the U.A.W. membership does not want further division. The demand is overwhelmingly for solidarity. If the U.A.W. again becomes solidified; if it again feels strong and cocky; then war and politics will become real questions for *action*. Meanwhile all eyes were turned on three things:

1. Democracy must be safeguarded and dictatorship prevented.
2. Factionalism must be abolished and its revival prevented.
3. The U.A.W. must be returned to the aggressive policies which built the union.

MAY-JUNE, 1939

From the first day to the last, the delegates did not forget these objectives.

Democracy was served! The new constitution is a model for every progressive unionist. It provides checks on the officers and the board. It provides a representative jury trial for officers under charges. It is designed to prevent dictatorship and to guarantee rank and file participation in negotiations, stressing councils for various groups of workers, and democracy in controlling strikes and contracts. The constitution assumes that leadership cannot be trusted and should not be trusted; it assumes that the union belongs to the dues-paying membership.

Factionalism is on the run in the U.A.W.A.! Factionalism cannot be outlawed. But it can be denounced so severely that anyone must hesitate before resorting to factional activities. The elimination of the vice-presidents is the most important concrete step taken against factionalism and more specifically against the intrigues of the Communist Party forces in auto.

This center of power politics and organizational waste was swept away by the convention. A clear majority of the delegates was ready to fight for this sweep. But the officialdom of the C.I.O. did not want to see a sharp division and a bitter fight on the convention floor. Therefore, the C.I.O. backed by a clear convention majority on this issue, pressured forces aligned with the vice presidents into supporting the elimination of these posts, resulting in a unanimous demonstration for the measure when it was brought before the convention.

A certain blow to factionalism was the vigorous line of Phil Murray and Sidney Hillman, who were at the convention with the full authority of the C.I.O. behind them. They both made clear their determination to fight with every resource at their command against political control of the auto union. Their declarations not only herald a sharp defeat for C.P. union practices but also serve a vital need of the U.A.W.

Vigorous protection of the U.A.W. against C.P. control is necessary in the fight against the Martin union. Martin's failing strength is based almost entirely on his anti-Communist tirades. Originally, he attracted the bulk of those who opposed the Communists. Now he is left only with the reactionary opponents of all radicalism and progressivism. Those more progressive elements who could not stomach C.P. unionism have broken with Martin in virtually every case. However, their allegiance to the U.A.W. and C.I.O. would be strained if not destroyed if the C.P. controlled the auto union. Murray and Hillman know this and know it well.

C.P. spokesmen make much of the point that the C.I.O. is against Socialist domination as well as against Communist domination. This is true but irrelevant since Socialists are also against Socialist domination. Socialists seek genuinely representative leadership, not



political domination.

Factionalism in the U.A.W. is not *dead*. The Communist party lives and therefore factionalism lives. The C.P. does not control the U.A.W.; its countless maneuvers and deals brought it into contact with many people but most of these people learned plenty.

The final results make it appear that the C.P. controls the union. The board is made of a majority of C.P.-*supported* candidates, not C.P.-*supporters*. A description of each board member and the circumstances of his election is not possible. But it is certain that the actual C.P. bloc will be a minority bloc. It is also certain that the bloc headed by Thomas and Reuther will be a minority bloc. The third group—those supported by the C.P. (as Thomas himself was) but not tied to them—will be the decisive factor on the board. These people in most cases worked with the C.P. against Martin while some worked with the C.P. for Addes. With the complex three-way division in the U.A.W. now ended, with Martin's elimination, new alignments are probable.

Every element will seek to be cooperative and non-factional; even the C.P. may attempt this tactic. Breaking harmony is politically dangerous. The C.I.O. will probably try to cement a strong bloc of non-C.P. elements as a means of giving stability to the board and through the board to the union.

At the convention in Cleveland, a valuable lesson was taught, taught to many of the delegates for the first time. The C.P. uses people until they are no longer useful for the factional interests of the C.P.; then they are dropped. The C.P. will deal with anyone—for its own advantage. In other unions this is taken for granted; in the U.A.W. it is just becoming clear to the membership. Awareness of C.P. tactics will make C.P. operations more difficult in the future. The great hope is that the C.P. will have no chance to play power politics on a large scale. This would be the best guarantee against factionalism. If the non-C.P. forces are progressive, stable, strong and deeply rooted in the shops, C.P. power politics will be made difficult indeed.

The possibility of reactionary elements fomenting factionalism is remote. Only if the present leadership fails to build the union, check the C.P. and bring general order in the U.A.W.A. house can there be another fight with reactionaries and Communists the main contestants.

The U.A.W. convention dealt not only with internal problems; it gave much of its attention to returning the union to the aggressive militant basis which built the union and defeated G.M. and Chrysler in the early days of 1937. A realistic Ford drive was outlined; a more democratic setup for General Motors was instituted; a responsible fighting attitude toward union relations with employers was clearly expressed throughout the convention.

The base of the auto industry is General Motors. It was the G.M. strike which put the union on the map. Martin's machine politics and his back door dealings with G.M. officials weakened the union in the G.M. plants. The decline of the organization does not date from the split between the C.I.O. and Martin; it dates back to the beginning of Martin's machine caucus in the summer of 1937. The most urgent task of the union is reorganization of the G.M. locals. This job requires an aggressive policy cut to suit the requirements and the potentialities of the present situation. A mechanical repetition of the early days of 1937 would be suicidal. But that same determination and fighting spirit existent then must be harnessed to a strategy suitable to present production levels and to current working class and public attitudes. Undoubtedly the G.M. problem is the central problem. But there are other questions. A new Chrysler contract is about to be negotiated. This will raise questions growing out of the company's desire to take advantage of the confusion resulting from the Martin split.

With the union based on G.M. and Chrysler organization, still other problems present themselves. It is absurd to expect two standards to exist in the industry—one for organized shops and another for unorganized shops. Eventually, the unorganized shops must be brought under the banner of unionism and the general standards of the industry must be raised to the levels of the organized centers. Either this happens or the general standard will tend to fall to the level of the unorganized shops. A continued discrepancy will impel the manufacturers toward a more aggressive fight against unionism since unionism will place manufacturers under a severe competitive disadvantage.

Even reorganization of G.M. and success in Chrysler negotiations cannot bring lasting strength to the auto workers. If the U.A.W. is to maintain a fighting policy and push consistently ahead for better conditions for its membership, it must solve the competitive shop problem. Otherwise demands such as the 30-hour week with 40 hours pay will be empty shouts for Utopia. The solution of the competitive shop situation is simple to describe and very difficult to accomplish—*organization* is needed.

The question of organizing Ford must be considered in the same setting. G.M. and Chrysler organization cannot go on and on without organization of Ford. Ford can be organized if the union is strong in G.M. and Chrysler, and if the competitive shop problem is being handled successfully thereby giving more impetus to the fighting spirit of the membership.

A successful Ford drive needs a replenished union treasury, a renewed willingness on the part of members and sympathizers to make great sacrifices, a general satisfaction among organized auto workers with their union, and real solidarity within the U.A.W.A. These



# War and Peace on the Campus

by Robin Meyers

THIS APRIL, for the sixth time, American students left their classes by thousands and by hundreds of thousands in a strike against war. Yet, despite the intensity of world crisis and the proximity of new world war, these were smaller numbers than previous years had seen. On many campuses there were parallel actions by pro-war demonstrators, and the Student Union which once led the strike denounced the term. But the very fact of strikes on two hundred campuses, with a quarter of a million students bucking tremendous opposition from the ranks of youth as well as from larger war forces, holds deep significance. Many times the validity of the strike as a technique for such demonstrative action has been questioned. But never has it received so clear-cut justification as this spring, when a counter-strike movement banned that title, reasoning "Now is the time, not for opposing governmental militarism and belligerent foreign policy, but for support and encouragement to it."

Through six years of a swiftly changing student movement and world perspective, the strike has grown against opposition. This year it could keep pace, with growing awareness of imminent war, and contribute new effective techniques—used on campuses far apart, and without consultation. Challenging and thought-provoking, Cornell in Iowa and Manchester in Indiana

conditions, added to a strategy adapted to Ford production schedules and Ford sales problems, can lead to victory.

Needless to say, victory over Ford, combined with reorganized forces in G.M., a good Chrysler contract, and real progress in the competitive shop drive, would produce a labor organization that would set the pace for every progressive movement as the center not only for the vital work of defending workers' interests in the shops but for the more far-reaching tasks of defeating reaction and winning the world for the workers.

Among genuine progressives acquainted with our present labor movement there is a feeling of despair. Surely the A.F. of L. offers no great hope for a revitalized labor struggle. And coming to the more militant C.I.O., neither the Amalgamated Clothing Workers nor the mine workers show signs of genuinely social and political vitality. The other C.I.O. unions are either dominated by corrupt C.P. leadership allowing no expansion or development, or are as yet too weak and too limited in their jurisdiction and their potentialities to provide leadership for a new force in the labor world.

The U.A.W. does offer hope. Its economic position, its background, the forces within the organization combine to give hope for the future.

were the scene of M-Days so realistically staged as to give participants the impression that the United States had actually declared war.

This year, again, the character of the strike was indicative of a deeply rooted repugnance to war in the American people. Spirit was high and demonstrations were colorful. They were outdoor meetings, accompanied by parades. Campuses were planted with crosses "Reserved for Joe College" or tableaux were staged in celebration of Hitler's birthday. Strikes were anti-fascist as well as anti-war; they were pro-labor in speakers, in slogans, in composition at times, and in prospectus. And these were not strikes of the top colleges, with thousands of people assembling to hear nationally prominent figures. They were the small colleges of a thousand or two; they were scattered high schools; they were wide-spread throughout the country; they included campuses which had never before seen a strike, and campuses which had had no strike since the first enthusiastic years.

Six years ago, when for the first time students undertook strike action as a protest against war, progressive forces were pretty well united in their stand. Everyone knew the economic character of the last war, fought though it was to end Junkerism or Tsarism, according to one's point of view. The peace movement, despite diversified philosophy, was strong and active in the United States, though fascism marched over Europe and new imperialist spurts in Asia and Africa brought war in their wake. Opposition to the strike was easily found, and easily labelled.

Now the broad progressive group is not so easily categorized as anti-war. But it still furnishes the large mass of students who will answer a militant call to action against war when one is given. These are students who understand that, in a world of capitalist-nationalist states, any war the United States enters will be imperialist in nature; they know that militarism is a threat to civil liberties and to social security, that war will not destroy fascism, but democracy. Thus they take the Oxford Pledge: "We refuse to support the government of the United States in any war it may undertake," and they support the strike which translates into action that pledge.

Organized support for the student strike has come likewise from pacifist groups which, understanding the suicidal nature of modern war and the brutalizing effects of militarism, will have no part in any war or preparations for it. Subscribing to the pledge not to support the government, and endorsing the strike as the kind of action they would take should war come, their con-



tribution is valid and consistent.

This year all of the national pacifist youth organizations signed the strike call.

From its inception, the student strike has held as its goal extension of the strike to non-student groups, chiefly the organizations of farmers and workers. Recognition that students are ready to play whatever role they can in hindering and halting the war machine has come from these groups. At times, still too few, genuine cooperation in the demonstrations has been given; but the student strike may have had value as a stimulus of such action in the future.

More than anything else, the student strike has been a demonstration of power. It worked two ways. Students discovered that, organized, they themselves could make an impression. They discovered they had powerful allies. They could blaze their way across page one of the New York Times, and cause ROTC conferences in Washington. If their action was dramatic and effective, the war-makers and the war-mongers would sit up and take notice. This with only students, and with only a rehearsal!

Similarly, not only did students discover their power, but the personalized objects of their attack discovered it. From the war department through the trustees and on down, they knew that a strike was something different from an ordinary peace meeting, and the feel of cannon-fodder turning was not a pleasant one.

Nearest at home were the college administrations, representing the trustees. A few were sympathetic, but most were doubly excited by a student strike against war. Peace agitation was bad enough, but *action* was carrying things a bit too far! The unity of thousands of students around a really militant anti-war program contained a latent power that boded ill for the campus system of trustee domination. A break in the normal routine of classes heightened the effect. This was no bunch of kids getting out of hand; this was an organized opposition and propaganda which hit very hard, and very near home. The fact that boards of trustees are in so many cases directly tied up with munitions interests made it more potent. But pressure, expulsions, action in every form the administrators could devise (including police brutality) could not stop the strike permanently, or even in any considerable area. From year to year, it grew.

Most logical opponents were the militarists, topped by the war department. It is now no secret that immediately following the first student strike a hurried call went out from Washington, summoning all important ROTC officials throughout the country to discuss what could be done to combat anti-war organization among students. On the other hand, militarism on the campus was of course the focal point of attack for the strike. Recognizing that the prime value of ROTC was not physical but psychological, anti-war forces had to devise

their counter-propaganda, part of which included the strike.

All the resources of the war department were thrown behind projects to inculcate loyalty to army and status quo ideals among students. When ordinary inducements, uniforms and pay, to join ROTC failed, when compulsory courses gave way to voluntary under pressure from anti-war groups, even such devices as mounted corps that could be polo teams on the side, were tried. And just this year a new attraction has appeared—an air corps, which sounds civilian but isn't; but which undeniably is exciting beyond any ground-duty. Youth furnishes not merely the man-power, but the enthusiasm and the idealism that makes war on a large scale possible. The strike and the student organization behind it were breaking this down—and they had to be stopped! But neither a rabidly hostile press (at times) nor doubled ROTC funds nor men-with-wings could prevent the spread of the strike idea to hundreds of thousands more students, and scores of colleges, each year.

Dangerous, beyond the first two, the major opponents of the strike, were student forces that rally against it. Products of the ROTC tradition, many campuses have embryonic fascists in action against the strike. (This year such action was attempted through a Peace-Through Preparedness Committee in Louisville, Kentucky, with local American Legion backing, but the plan fizzled.) From disruption of strike meetings to brutal attacks on radical students, they have stopped at nothing. Sometimes with the support of administration and trustees, or local reactionaries, sometimes on their own—apt pupils of a war system—the student group furnishes its own scabs, its strike-breakers, its future officers for the future war.

The opposition of all these groups has been consistent throughout the years. It is logical and easily interpreted. Those who have everything at stake in the economic and political status quo, and would defend it by war or any other necessary means, must of course support—and direct—the war preparations and the wars of capitalism. And they must relentlessly oppose forces which would organize masses of people to refuse war service, and bring the whole elaborate structure toppling down upon them.

But a new opposition force has entered, from the student movement itself, for a counter-strike on a pro-war basis. The most consciously political of the group, it understands the road ahead as the road to war. For the student world reflects larger currents. A change in the policy of the Communist International from reliance upon the world working class for defense of the Soviet Union to power politics among the capitalist states had its effect within every country and upon every movement where Communists are active. It took three years to make the change in the American student movement—one for opposition to the Oxford Pledge; two for col-



lective security, economic sanctions against aggressor nations; three for military strength to back it up, masquerading as national defense—but the change was made.

Controlled by Stalinist-Communists, the American Student Union made the indicated shifts in policy. Under its influence the strike lost color, militancy, and numbers. The necessity of uniting all campus elements (the sacred national unity of war-time on a smaller scale) behind the Roosevelt war policy resulted in startling alignments. In New York City this year President Butler of Columbia and President Colligan of Hunter, student-strike breakers of the first order, were invited speakers for the "peace and democracy" meetings. Sponsored by the Stalinists, introduced by the Star-Spangled Banner, they felt quite at home.

"ROTC members, as part of our national defense system, pledged to the support of our democratic government" (ASU leaflet, City College of New York) were urged to attend the meetings. The new war force to oppose the strike from within the ranks of the anti-war movement brought with it a new idealism of the fight against fascism, for justification, but turned to semi-fascists for support.

The existence of a strike against war is a triumph this year. And that itself is due to the day-to-day organizational battle of a Youth Committee Against War, which united and mobilized all anti-war forces on a minimum program for immediate action; war referendum, no war alliances, jobs and homes, not armaments. It was the call of this Youth Committee which hundreds of thousands of students answered in April when they left their classes in strike; when again they declared that this strike was avowedly not the real thing, but more important, their dress rehearsal—rehearsal for action should war come. As members of the Youth Committee Against War, young Socialists continued the support they have given the strike throughout its history by support for the Youth Committee program, and support for the Youth Committee strike actions.

But the strike holds greater meaning, greater reason for support to its Socialist participants than to the

many often larger and sometimes organized and principled groups which join it. They agree with the attack on war and militarism, with immediate demands for a popular referendum before war, with denunciation of the collective security of imperialist powers. They salute with understanding the Oxford Pledge, with its recognition that the government, the state itself, is committed to war for the protection of capitalism. They agree that the fight against fascism cannot be waged by international war. They sympathize with and try to extend the principle that students alone cannot stop war, but that they find their allies in the progressive force of the working class.

More than this, however, Socialists look upon anti-war action as an important part of anti-capitalist action. So they find in the strike not only a challenge to the war-makers, but a weapon in the struggle for socialism.

War is rooted in the economic system of capitalism, and any realistic fight against war must be one against the war system also. Any demands of the working class, for higher living standards, for democracy, for peace, hit hard against capitalist interests. All are essential, and the student who finds himself allied with the workers on one front, against war, must to insure success ally himself also with the workers in their daily struggles. Primarily, these take place within each country; the international character lies in the identity of the struggles in all countries.

Thus the significance of the student strike is primarily in its relation to the full picture. In that it warns capitalist governments not to expect youth to fill their armies, it helps retard the war machine, and is of value. In that it points to the necessity of uniting students with workers in a common struggle for peace and freedom, it is important. In that it mobilizes masses of young people and teaches them direct action regardless of opposition (which, taking many forms, is basically capitalist), it gives Socialists the opportunity of relating the struggle against war to that against capitalism, and of bringing those who fight militantly against war into the larger fight, for socialism in our time.

## Fascist Tactics in Latin America

by Fernando Leon de Vivero

FASCISM, the cold-blooded stage of imperialist exploitation, fixes its gaze and stretches out its tentacles towards our sources of wealth and raw materials. In fact, it feverishly appropriates the entire economy of each one of the countries which extend from Mexico to Patagonia. A minute analysis of the national economy of the countries of Indo-America reveals even to the least astute that the Italian, German,

and Japanese penetration is not an isolated and sporadic thing but that it is, on the contrary, a well thought out and systematic plan of conquest and domination.

The fascist tactic of penetration is easy to recognize for it follows a fixed pattern. First, the sale of military planes, as in the cases of Peru, Bolivia, Brazil, Guatemala, Salvador; then, the invitation of national cultural missions to Italy, Germany, and Japan, as was



done with Peru, Bolivia, Venezuela, and the central American countries, followed by the sending of technical missions, chiefly of a military nature to the Indo-American countries, such as in the case of Peru, Bolivia, Guatemala, etc., etc. The last stage is one of absorption and forceful control of the agriculture, the commerce, the industry, and the general economy of the country.

In this fascist imperialist advance in Indo-America, two countries, of course, are far in the lead, namely, Germany and Japan. The two sometimes coincide in their field of penetration; at other times, they each work in a particular American nation or state. Germany has the advantage over Italy and Japan in having devised a system of exchange which seems, on the surface, to serve the interests of the colonial and semi-colonial nations of Indo-America. The Aski mark involves the sale of German goods in exchange for raw materials. Germany is thus able to sell its merchandise at a discount of 21.4 percent and acquires in turn in each of our countries large quantities of raw materials which she returns in finished products.

In a short time, Germany has succeeded to second place in the trade of Indo-America and she is almost certain, in view of the development of her political economy directed as it is today more than ever before towards a challenge to North American trade of displacing it in some of the countries in Indo-America. The rising curve of Germany's exports and imports is plain enough. Thus, while in 1913, Germany supplied only 12 per cent of all the foreign goods in Brazil; in 1937 the percentage was 24. In Chile the German share during the same period jumped from 11.4 to 26 per cent. With Peru trade increased from 10.3 to 19.17 per cent. The dependence of certain countries for their exports to and imports from Germany has increased markedly since 1933. At the same time, the exports of the United States have decreased. From January to August 1937, the United States exported to Indo-America \$404,000,000 whereas in the same period during 1938, the total reached only \$377,000,000.

Through commercial treaties and pacts of all types with the dictators and through a new system of loans to them if necessary, Yankee ingenuity is certain that it can beat Germany on the commercial and political field. The dictators, always ready with promises and always willing to grant concessions and hateful monopolies and accustomed as they are to falsify events and facts when it serves their personal interests, assure Washington through their accredited representatives that they will accept each one of the proposals of the State Department. The dictators, however, will not fulfill at all the orders or suggestions of Washington. In reality, before each new "suggestion" they will shrug their shoulders and will continue under the control of the fascists. The dictators, as in the time of Leguía in

Peru and Siles in Bolivia will invest the loans so easily obtained in the United States not in productive public works but in the erection of a few buildings in superficial, frivolous and unsubstantial ornamentation of the capital cities of their respective states and particularly in the maintenance of their political regimes of a fascist complexion, and in the payment of political brigades, pretorian guards, the purchase of newspapers, corruption of the consciences, etc. The United States is again forgetting its sad experiences of the past, since the peoples or the governments which will succeed those dictators or tyrants will not pay a single penny of these loans, as they have not paid the previous loans.

It is well known in America that dictatorships do not remain in power eternally. Any day an uprising throws them out of power and even death is a good ally of the people, for thus is the life of these unjust destroyers of liberty often ended. It happened so in the case of Sánchez Cerro of Peru in 1933, when a young man harkened to public opinion and killed him in the Hippodrome Plaza at Lima. If the United States hopes to win its political and commercial struggle with fascism in Indo-America by buying off the dictators, it is mistaken. Economic help of the United States to the dictators arouses the people to rebellion, precipitates the fall of the tyrants and confirms once more the fact that the policy of the "Good Neighbor" or Pan-Americanism of the new type is nothing more than a strengthened instrument of exploitation and control. It causes fascism to adopt new tactics which are sometimes convincing. Fascism, then, pretends to extract all the benefit possible from the struggle for national liberation. The attitude of help to the American dictators forces international fascism to make use of the flag of democracy against the dictators in some of the Indo-American countries, when the latter are not favorably disposed towards it. In Bolivia and especially in Peru where the governments are fascists and obey its orders, fascism publicly proclaims them; in others, as in Brazil, where Germany lost the friendship of Vargas, fascism dreams of orienting the democratic conscience of Brazil and to help it economically in order to bring about a change in the government and with it the fall of dictator Vargas.

The Yankee mentality pictures fascism as a menace to America because it believes that the Rome-Berlin-Tokio axis will commit the stupidity of coming to these shores for the purpose of making war. It forgets that the fascist propaganda is quite clear on that point. Germany, Italy, and Japan will never commit such idiocy. Once they control the trade of the Indo-American countries, they will have no difficulty in controlling and influencing their governments. A secret fascist document made it clear recently that the tactic of propaganda ought "to confine itself exclusively to obtaining the confidence of the strongest political organizations in Indo-America, to maintain the necessity of defending



the democratic principles and civil liberties and to arouse the conscience of the Latin-American peoples against Yankee imperialism in the country where Yankee influence is strong." These recommendations show us the kind of work that is intended. Fascism seems to be adopting in Indo-America a dual and flexible tactic. In Peru where its influence is totalitarian (fascist police, aerial missions, Caproni military aviation factory, the port of Chicama ceded to Germany) and where the youth is being educated in the fascist creed, its political position is anti-democratic. In Brazil where the change of front of dictator Vargas has resulted in the loss of control and influence, fascism gives lip service to democracy. A short while ago a German newspaper brought to light the secret instructions by commenting upon the fact that "the Brazilian people urgently needed to restore democracy since its sovereignty was being trampled upon by Vargas in the service of the United States."

The presence of chosen and selected agents of fascism in Indo-America, the organization of fascist militias in the different countries, the creation of general bands of "falangistas" like those in Peru and which the police uncovered in Mexico in 1938, the official declaration of General Franco as well as those of his followers that "Spain will restore the Spanish Empire by uniting all the peoples of Latin America in the sole and great fascist faith," the parades which they have to the tune of Giovinezza and other fascist songs and where simian greetings are sent to Mussolini and Hitler mark the fascist advance upon this continent.

Only the truly nationalist parties like the Apra Party

of Peru of which Haya de la Torre is leader or the Party of the Mexican Revolution created by President Cárdenas in Mexico will fight against the fascist advance, because they were the first to denounce fascist penetration. And this struggle, which has left in Peru hundreds of dead Apristas, has not the support of the other peoples who consciously or unconsciously remain silent and do not seem to be aware of the immediate and grave danger. There is only one way to halt the fascist advance in America—the assumption of power by the parties which have the support of the masses. Only then may we be certain not to see the shameful betrayal of national sovereignty and the repetition of cases like those of Guatemala, El Salvador, or Peru in which fascist military missions direct the military organizations and control the dictators.

The policy of the "Good Neighbor" ought to be given a new meaning. Neighborliness with the peoples, as affirmed by Haya de La Torre, who was the first to denounce the fascist danger, and not neighborliness with the tyrants. It is essential that democracy exist, also, in each of the Indo-American countries and not exclusively within the geographic frontiers of the United States. That will constitute the best pact for continental defense of the Americas. Anything else lends itself to the burlesque commentary of Rome and Berlin. These miss not a single opportunity to strengthen their positions among the peoples of this hemisphere. That is clearly shown in the case of Germany who obtained a resounding triumph in the form of favorable trade treaties with Uruguay and Costa Rica even before the Lima Conference was over.

## The Fascist Organization of Society

by Otto Bauer

IN WHAT WAY is Fascist State Control distinguished from the earlier phases of capitalist development? All capitalist production is production for the sake of profit. The movement of the rate of profit has therefore hitherto regulated capitalist economy. It determined the distribution of capital funds and thereby also the distribution of labor power in the individual branches of production. Capital avoided branches of production with lower rates of profit and flowed towards the branches of production in which the rate of profit was highest. The movement of the rates of profit determined the change in the course of the markets. As the rate of profit rose, the capitalists enlarged the existing plants and created new ones; the industries manufacturing the means of production prospered at a rapid pace; from them prosperity spread itself over the entire national economy. As the rate of profit fell, stock prices tumbled; with the crash of the exchange, investment

ceased; the production goods industries became idle; the entire national economy fell into a state of depression. This controlling function of the automatic movement of the rate of profit is abolished by Fascist state control. No longer the rate of profit in the individual branches of production, but the dictate of the state decides in which branches of production new capital accumulation shall be invested. No longer the fluctuations of the general average rate of profit, but the will of the state decides on the extent of new industrial investment and therefore on the course of the market.

It was capitalism's greatest triumph that the unprecedented development of the social productive forces occurred in a society in which the domination of these forces was left exclusively to individual striving for profit. Since capital now seeks refuge in Fascist state control the capitalist profit economy can no longer be



regulated by the automatic movement of the rates of profit and can no longer be governed by the individual striving for profit, but needs social regulation administered by the state. It thus happens that the development of the productive forces of society has come into glaring conflict with the social order based on private ownership of the means of production and, for that reason, governed by individual striving for profit.

In reality the development of the Fascist states shows the superiority of the social organization of the economy over capitalist anarchy that leaves the development of production to the sway of the profit motive. The rapid elimination of unemployment in the Third Reich, the precipitate development of new branches of production under the dictate of the Fascist regime, the exceedingly rapid economic and therefore also military and political strengthening of Germany, the shifting of the balance of power to the advantage of the Fascist states proves nothing else than the superiority of planned social organization over capitalist anarchy.

But as great as the efficiency of Fascist state control proves itself to be, it places its increased efficiency, however, exclusively at the service of military and economic preparation for war. It throttles the importation of foreign foodstuffs in order to use the foreign currency for raw materials essential for war. It limits the development of the consumer goods industries by capital accumulation and investment bans and by its regulation of the import of raw materials in order to concentrate the entire social force on the development of the war industries. For that reason it plunges society into peculiar crises. The normal crises of capitalist economy are crises of superabundance; the purchasing power of the masses, having fallen behind the development of their production, does not suffice to acquire the increasing mass of the products of their own labor. Fascist state control, on the contrary, evokes crises of scarcity: even though all the workers are employed, the working class is working feverishly, and the means of production are used to their full capacity, there is a shortage of essential foodstuffs and raw materials. Though the number of employed workers and their productivity is increasing, a rapidly rising proportion of their work serves, not to produce consumer goods for their own needs, but to enlarge the war industries and produce implements of war. It thus diminishes the share of the working class in the product of its own labor. Exploitation of the workers becomes intensified. The intensified exploitation is enforced by Fascism's peculiar system of labor organization.

The bourgeois revolution abolished the older forms of exploitation of labor, such as feudal servitors through capitalist employers survives.

The free wage earner is not, like a slave, the property of a master. He is not, like a serf, compelled to perform forced labor for a feudal master. He disposes

freely of his own labor power. Yet, without possessing the means of production, he is forced to sell his labor power to an employer or starve to death. He is a serf, not of a single employer, but of a whole class of employers. It is, however, left to his own decision to which employer he will hire himself and if he will sell his labor power for the wage offered by the employer. He can dissolve the labor contract and leave his place of work, when he hopes to be able to sell his labor power more advantageously somewhere else.

A result of the legal freedom of the worker is his right to organize. If the worker is free to decide for himself at what price he is ready to sell his labor power, then the workers have also the right to agree amongst themselves that they will refuse their labor to the employers in order to prevent a lowering of or to achieve a betterment of the working conditions, and to form unions to lead these wage struggles and help workers who are engaged in them. The workers' right to strike, the development of unions and of collective agreements are the results of the legal freedom of the worker to dispose of his own labor power.

Fascism has completely demolished this whole structure of rules for labor relations of the private capitalist society.

Fascism has dissolved the unions and replaced them with its own organizations. These organizations do not serve the interests of the workers, but are instruments of the state for ruling them. Fascism has abolished the right to strike, has reorganized the relation between employers and workers on military lines, resembling the relation between the officer and his command. Fascism has replaced the shop committees, representing the interests of the workers against the employers, with its committees of trustees, representing the "shops", i.e., the employers against the workers. The freely signed agreements between employers and workers has been replaced by the official decree of wages and working conditions through the labor trustees. The worker is no longer free to decide under what conditions he will sell his labor power. He can no longer refuse his labor in order to prevent a lowering of the working conditions or to achieve a bettering of them. The state tells him at what price he must sell his labor power.

The fascist state has decreed that a large section of the working class—particularly the youth—cannot be employed in important branches of production without special official permit. It has also decreed that no worker in the metal and building industries as well as in agriculture can leave his work and seek new employment without official permit in each individual case. The worker can then no longer freely decide to which employer he will hire himself. As the feudal serf was legally compelled to render statute labor to the feudal lord to whom he was bound, so is the worker, in the



fascist state, compelled to work for the employer assigned him by the officials of the state. Being bound to this employer's shop, as the feudal serf to his native region, he is in fact his employer's serf.

The fascist state has finally made it the duty of every citizen, without any exception, to take such work as the state's labor officials may assign him. It has in this way generally and basically abolished the freedom of the worker to move, choose his own vocation and conclude labor contracts.

Since German fascism came into power, the number of employed workers in Germany has risen tremendously. The eight-hour-day was shot to pieces; the working day made longer; the methods of work rationalized and intensified. The output of work of the German working class has risen much faster than the number of employed workers. Formerly, in times of rising need for labor, wages rose because the demand for labor was greater; thus the unions could achieve better wages and working conditions. The fascist state, on the other hand, has forbidden and prevented any rise in wages during a time of the fastest rise of the need for labor power. The state's labor trustees have not allowed collective higher wages. Higher wages for the individual were prevented by forbidding workers to change their place of employment in order to obtain higher wages by utilizing the competition amongst the employers for experienced labor. Furthermore, the money wages were lowered through higher taxes, higher premiums for social insurance and through "voluntary" contributions. The real wages were to a still greater extent lowered through higher prices for the most important necessities of life. The result is, that the total income of the German working class has risen much more slowly than the amount, intensity and productivity of the labor produced by this working class.

The fascist rules for labor relations form the basis for the corporative economic structure of fascism. The fascist state can decree the imposition of the social labor contracts upon capital and labor only if fascism abolishes the freedom of labor agreements; if it does not leave the settling of wages to the free agreement between employers and workers; but through its own apparatus itself fixes the wages as well as the commodity prices. The fascist rules for labor relations presume the totalitarian political system of suppression and domination by fascism. Only under the terror of the totalitarian system of domination is the working class so intimidated, that it bears without resistance this system of exploitation which is against its own vital interests. The fascist rules for labor relations serve the aggressive imperialism of the fascist state. Only the substantially more severe exploitation of labor enables the fascist state to strengthen its armaments and develop its war industry with extreme rapidity.

MAY-JUNE, 1939

# Seldes and Plagiarism

by Observer

THE POLITICAL FANTASY which may find Stalin and Hitler bedfellows is paralleled by the literary fantasy which uncovers a sordid tale of sycophantic betrayal and obsequious retractions.

Those who knew Angelica Balabanoff or had read her autobiography, "My Life as a Rebel," could not reconcile that Angelica with the one whose name appeared as the author of "Lenin, Trotsky and Mussolini," in the May 19, 1938, issue of *Ken*. The person known to all had a deep and intimate acquaintance with the labor movements of Italy and Russia, but he who wrote the *Ken* article was an ignorant pretender and an unscrupulous falsifier.

Why had two separate, distinct, and mutually exclusive versions of similar events appeared from the same pen? It was inconceivable that a person of Angelica Balabanoff's caliber, whose firm adherence to a true socialist morality had caused her to break with the Communist movement when it was so easy to float with the tide and receive the plaudits of the millions, could engage in an adventure of such magnitude. Was it literary prostitution, for which ideals were sacrificed and principles sold for a handful of silver? Or was there an inside story—something behind the news?

On June 10, 1939, the entire story of this most shocking case of plagiarism, literary libel, and name-stealing was filed in the Federal Courts in an action entitled "Angelica Balabanoff, Plaintiff, against George Seldes and Ken, Inc., Defendants." These documents reveal the sordid details of the most heinous offense a writer is capable of—stealing and distorting the words, the soul, of another. How and why did this occur? Here is the inside story.

Back in 1931 George Seldes traveled to France to obtain material for a book on Italy and Mussolini, subsequently published as "Sawdust Caesar." Securing considerable material from Balabanoff his gratitude was of such magnitude that, offering his services in any manner he obtained several of her manuscripts for publication in America. Later he notified her that they could not be sold, and then calmly proceeded to appropriate one of them as an entire chapter in his volume stating, in a footnote, that "The episode as here related was written by Dr. Balabanoff for this book."

Arriving in New York during 1936 Angelica Balabanoff immediately denounced Seldes who "... replied that he would ask his publishers to pay me (Balabanoff, Ed.) for the contribution. I rejected the suggestion, pointing out that the publishers were innocent in the matter and, more important, that the financial question was the least of my complaints. He had misused a



manuscript entrusted to him for a totally different purpose. This was the real point."

But to the devotee of Mammon such principles are unimportant although, when necessary, loud drum and breast-beating can take place. (Seldes' attempted "inside story" of Ken published in the *Nation* for April 30, 1938.) The "real point," Seldes' deliberate and shameful stealing and plagiarism, was ignored by him and forced out of Angelica's mind until the new magazine, Ken, appeared with his article "Mussolini Versus His Past." (April 28, 1938). The grossly erroneous statements of Seldes were "no mere matter of a few mistaken dates but an arbitrary intermingling of facts and supposed facts with transposition of dates."

"It seemed to me," continues Balabanoff, "that Mr. Seldes had shown small scruples in juggling dates and facts, so that his conclusions were erroneous, and history distorted. Professor Gaetano Salvemini, the great Italian historian, now teaching in the American universities, was also indignant over the slipshod handling of important historical facts in that article."

"I wrote to Ken pointing out some of the errors, and was informed that my letter had been forwarded for reply to Mr. Seldes. It has not yet been published or answered by him. Meanwhile, I heard that Mr. Seldes had published an article in *The Nation* attacking Ken and explaining that political and moral incompatibility had led him to resign as an editor of that publication. This incompatibility implied the refusal of all radical writers to contribute to Ken."

In that article Seldes claimed that "big business," controlling the advertising or financial life-blood of a magazine, had threatened to "strike" unless Ken's policy was changed. Was it not a case of the pot calling the kettle black? Or did not Seldes recall his own literary apostasy, when he embraced the party and toed the line? For in the next few words Angelica Balabanoff charges Seldes with the unauthorized and libelous authorship of the May 19th article in Ken appearing under her name.

"In the light of his opinion of Ken, it is the more remarkable that he should have turned me into a "contributor" and pinned my name on a synthetic literary product almost entirely at variance with the attitudes of its supposed author."

"What was the nature of the changes and additions made by Mr. Seldes? That seems to me of special importance, as a clue to the possible motives behind the unauthorized fabrication. Again I go back in memory to my first meeting with Mr. Seldes in France. From that talk and from his writings at the time it was clear that he considered the Fascist and the Bolshevik regimes essentially identical in such matters as basic liberties, use of terror, etc. He had been expelled from both Italy and Russia, and at the time spoke of their respective dictatorships without drawing any distinctions. This, mind you, at a time when it was easier to draw such distinctions—that is, before Kremlin's terrorism of more recent years."

"Whether Mr. Seldes has revised his political judgments retroactively, or whether he has been captivated, like so many, by the new Stalinist 'line' and tactics, I am not qualified to judge. In any case, Mr. Seldes appears to have suddenly become converted to the current brand of Bolshevism."

"He has been contributing to communistic periodicals

and magazines, his name appears more frequently on Stalinist 'innocents' committees, and, most revealing of all, he is among the signatories of a declaration supporting and whitewashing the recent Moscow blood-purge trials."

"In the light of that apparent conversion which has brought Mr. Seldes into the periphery of the Stalinist political machine, the whole episode with which I am dealing begins to make sense. The ethical mystery, like the physical one, seems explained. Mr. Seldes' article, to which he attached my name, does not err casually. There is a clear political direction in his distortions and misstatements. They tend to bolster up his anti-Trotsky, pro-Stalin thesis. Let us sample a few of the extraordinary assertions which he has passed off as my own."

"Whoever knows me, my way of speaking and writing, knows that if the chance had been given me to see the proof-sheets, I would never have tolerated an introduction like the one that adorns this article, which I am supposed to have written. Apart from the vulgarity of the set-up, I, who have had the opportunity of observing Mr. Mussolini very closely in different phases of his intellectual and moral development, have always emphasized that his becoming a revolutionary was quite a natural result of his familiar, social surroundings. Not to have become such, in a rebellious locality like Romagna of that time, his native province, with a father whose blacksmith shop was the headquarters of the revolutionary movement, would have required of his son the inclination and ability to swim against the current. This, as I have been proving in hundreds of speeches, articles, and books, he has never had. The assertion contained in the introduction not only misleads the reader but also contradicts all my previous statements."

"As for the 'social disease' of Mr. Mussolini, which I am said to 'have had cured' he spoke of it the first evening I met him in a Socialist meeting, ascribing to that fact the impossibility of his adjusting himself to life. Since he went on complaining of it, when we worked together on *L'Avanti* I advised him to consult a good, reliable doctor."

"As for the assertion that I warned Trotsky after Lenin's death of spreading demagoguery—I left Russia in December, 1921, and did not thereafter see Trotsky or any other leading Bolshevik, except the Soviet ambassador in Vienna. The conversation referred to in the article took place in 1921, and Lenin died in 1924. This transposition of dates gives rise to the impression that I considered Trotsky's demagoguery especially pernicious after Lenin's death; whereas in that conversation of 1921 I had pointed out to Trotsky that the spirit by which the Red Army was then animated was endangered by the demagoguery of Zinoviev and other authentic Bolsheviks. (Trotsky had not always been a Bolshevik and had previously fought the typically Bolshevik methods.) In all my judgments about Trotsky and the infamous campaign of which he is a victim, I have reproached him for not having fought against these methods as long as he was powerful and indispensable to Soviet Russia. To see in him the chief responsible cog in the situation created by the use of demagoguery in Russia is wrong chronologically and psychologically, and once more places me in contradiction to what I have always maintained."

"In the article I am supposed to have said, 'I believe that if Lenin had not gotten on that train and arrived when he did arrive, the whole Russian revolution would have been lost.' Never could I have made such a statement, in contradiction to my philosophic and political views. A single individual may influence events to a certain degree, but cannot create them—especially not such an event as the revolution in Russia."



"I am made to say that 'I frequently discussed Mussolini with Lenin.' This is perfectly absurd. Mr. Mussolini was expelled in 1914 from the Italian Socialist Party for his betrayal of socialism and peace. He was treated by the labor movement of the whole world as a traitor and an adventurer. I had no reason whatsoever to discuss Mussolini with Lenin.

"The article which is ascribed to me says: 'It was before Mussolini came into power; it was in that period when, although calling himself a Fascist, he was actually the leader of a radical revolutionary movement which outbolshhevized the bolsheviks. The workmen had seized the factories and were running them. They had confiscated private property.' Here is a sample of how Mr. Seldes treats facts! There were two seizures of factories in Italy in the pre-fascist period, which were so different in point of date, of aims, of the psychology of the workers who participated, that to confuse them means not to have an idea of what the struggle in Italy was about.

"The first took place in 1919, in the immediate post-war period, when chaos was reigning everywhere and the most heterogeneous elements looked for an outlet for their disappointment over the war, for their protest against the government. A group of workers occupied a factory, and declared they would expropriate the owners. Because of its chaotic character, this action was not supported by organized labor nor by the Socialist party. Only Mr. Mussolini supported that movement with most violent speeches and articles advocating the revolutionary expropriation."

"The second seizure of the factories took place in quite a different social and political atmosphere. The sporadic movements due only to discontent had become less frequent and less turbulent. The metalworkers, the best organized category of workers belonging to the Italian Confederation of Labor, having claimed to obtain what was due them, according to previous agreements with the employers and not receiving satisfaction, made a kind of a sit-down strike, and ran the factories for themselves.

"It was of this second movement, sponsored by the trade unions and the Socialist Party that I spoke with Lenin, on which occasion he made the important comment which Mr. Seldes quotes. The first one was not worth mentioning and was forgotten when the second, the only serious one, and which had a great influence upon the events in Italy, was declared.

"In speaking of Zimmerwald, a place where the socialists who had remained adversaries of war met in September, 1915, Mr. Seldes makes me say that Mussolini "became later" editor of *Avanti*, whereas, even in his own book "Sawdust Caesar" he dealt with the expulsion of Mussolini from the staff of *Avanti* and from the party in 1914 because he had changed his attitude of an intransigent adversary of war into an advocate of war. How, then, could Mussolini 'later' become editor of *Avanti*?

"How could I be surprised at the amazement of those, who were accustomed to considering my writings and lectures as authentic and reliable sources of information, at reading such phantastical assertions in an article signed by me and published in an organ which had become so emphatically denounced by one of its former co-editors?

"These few instances will suffice to explain Mr. Seldes' 'article' and to characterize his procedure toward historic facts and myself. I leave all comments and anctions to public opinion."

"Ken" admitted its liability for the machinations of the literary parasite it had harbored and settled with

Balabanoff, leaving Seldes to defend himself if he could. Seldes' legal reply was that he had prepared the article from Balabanoff's material "without substantial or serious alteration of the material" and that he had secured the publication "in good faith and in the honest belief that such article as published constituted a fair presentation of the material. . . ."

Various legal maneuvers then took place but on May 3, 1939, Seldes settled by confessing his duplicity and retracting in the following letter to Balabanoff:

May 3rd, 1939.

"The purpose of this letter is to express my regret that anything I have done has caused you any harm in any way. I have always had the highest regard and admiration for you, as you must know, and I have stated publicly and privately my sentiments and my thanks to you for all your help in the past. I have never forgotten your kindness in coming to Bandol in 1931 to help me with my book.

"I deeply regret that my activities have caused you offense and damage. The facts are these: In the autumn of 1937 I was offered an editorial position with a company planning a new magazine, Ken, and while in their employ I sent them an article signed in your name which was based upon original manuscripts of yours. I attempted to edit it and rearrange your manuscripts in what I thought was the proper editorial manner for publication in this type of magazine. *I did change the wording, arrangement of episodes, and paragraphs, and I am sorry that in doing so I misinterpreted your approach to the different problems, events and personalities mentioned in that article and that I likewise erred insofar as the chronology of certain episodes was concerned.*

"Unfortunately I did not call you up and consult with you before submitting this edited manuscript to Ken. What I did was not meant or intended to harm you, I assure you, and you must believe that. I repeat that I deeply regret that the manner in which I edited your manuscript has harmed you.

"I want to make amends for this and first of all to apologize for sending the story out without consulting you. Please believe that whatever I have done was done in good faith, and that my regrets are also sent you in good faith."

Is not Angelica Balabanoff's claim "There is a clear political direction in his distortions and mistatements. They tend to bolster up his anti-Trotsky, pro-Stalin thesis" correct? What other interpretation can be placed upon the disgraceful conduct of this literary chameleon, this would-be Midas of the Stalin press? For besides these admitted charges there are the unanswered accusations contained in the Preface to Armando Borghi's "Mussolini, Red and Black" that "George Seldes' SAWDUST CAESAR, published in the autumn of 1935, parallels Borghi's book to the extent of having made use of Borghi's material, without however giving due credit for his sources."

Exposed to the world in his flimsy garments of literary appropriations George Seldes stands revealed by his own inside story—the pitiable tale of an infantile pen that obediently scratches the surface for gold. By his actions he shall be known, and by his deeds he has been marked—Seldes the sycophant; Seldes, the lord of the gutter!



# Too Late for Lernerism

by Robert Delson

THIS is a brilliantly written, cogently argued work.\* It is destined to exert, and, to judge from the critics' paeans of praise, perhaps has already exerted an enormous influence, and it deserves careful scrutiny. But for all its lightning flashes, it is only thunder on the right, for what Lerner presents is that stream-lined version of revisionism which its advocates call "Twentieth Century Communism." It is much the sort of book we would expect from the pen of Eduard Bernstein, if the father of revisionism were today a professor at Williamstown, writing in the shadow of fascism.

Driven to desperation by the threat of fascism, young Dr. Lerner's prescription is the old reliable quack remedy—save capitalism and gradually "transform" it into Socialism. On page 46 he says: "Paradoxical as it may seem, what alone can 'save' capitalism is a drastic measure of democratic socialization; and the stable form toward which socialization ultimately tends is socialism. . . . The democratic forces . . . may achieve a democratic planned economy even though it be within a capitalist framework."

Many years ago the great Rosa Luxemburg demolished just such a thesis from the pen of Eduard Bernstein. Yet Lerner presents this argument as though it were his own original conception and in complete disregard of Luxemburg's withering attack. Is it possible that the same Mr. Lerner, who reels off such names as Savigny, Houston Chamberlain, Max Müller, Gaetano Mosca and Stefan George, has never read Eduard Bernstein or Rosa Luxemburg? Yet her name never appears in his book, and Bernstein is mentioned only in passing.

It was Bernstein's theory that capitalism could be saved from collapse by the development of "means of adaptation" which would gradually permit capitalism to grow into socialism. The only addition by Lerner, (and this he takes from the Communist Party), is the theory of a distinct stage in the process—a transitional or popular front era between socialism and capitalism, during which the "democratic collectivist forces" will show the capitalists how to prevent the collapse of their system, at least before the democrats are ready to become socialists.

Of course, Mr. Lerner's fundamental difficulty is his utter lack of comprehension of Marxist economics. Not once does he even discuss the economics of capitalism, except to acknowledge generally the increasing difficulty of maintaining the economic structure. He does not realize that his popular front utopia will reproduce all of the antagonisms of capitalism, and in greater degree and intensity in the same way that state controls do so in a fascist state. For example, the state control of credit, by creating the possibility of almost unlimited industrial expansion, creates also the conditions for a crisis of unprecedented intensity.

His espousal of this program is all the more difficult to understand in view of his apparent recognition of some of its dangers. He charts the reefs—yet orders full steam ahead. He realizes that popular front governments in the past have failed to do any of the things which he now expects of them. He recognizes that the new patriotism which he seeks to promote may foster the war feeling. He appreciates the fact that the popular front can be built only on a very narrow area of agreement. Yet he proceeds to argue its desirability.

But Mr. Lerner fails to realize that he cannot imprison the

economic forces at work within capitalism while he builds his labor-liberal alliance to permanently cast them off. He does not see that capitalism cannot survive without adopting fascist controls, and that if he chooses to administer the system he must either do the chores of fascism (economic and political) or the reactionaries will take advantage of the collapse to create the mass base of an outright fascist state.

Having made the economic assumption that it is possible to preserve capitalism by "democratic planning," Lerner proceeds to the even more untenable political assumption that the contradictory class forces within the popular front will be able to agree on the fight for socialism. He realizes that the bourgeois forces will have bolstered capitalism only "in order to mend and preserve it." But he vaults this hurdle very cavalierly by assuming that in the process of the struggle to preserve democracy, the groups will evolve "attitudes (that) make possible an accommodation of their differences," and that the "class differences will be whittled away." This implies either that the differences between the classes are mental and not economic, or that the opposing class interests can be reconciled in a new type of *permanent* socialist-capitalist system. At least Mr. Lerner describes his popular front hybrid state, but he does not give us even a blue-print of his fantastic new state-creature for the permanent conciliation of the classes.

With these broad outlines of his program before you, it is easy to guess the rest. Of course Mr. Lerner is for collective security; of course he thinks that Marxism is guilty of six (why only six?) fundamental errors. Of course he believes that labor political action must now be cancelled in the direction of the Democratic Party. Of course he thinks that Marx believed that a non-violent transfer of power was, under all circumstances, inconceivable. Of course he believes that the state, (for example, the New Deal state) is no longer the executive committee of the bourgeoisie, but that on the contrary, it "has become, to a striking degree, the instrument of the democratic majority." This concept stems directly from latter-day Kautskyism, yet Lerner expresses regret that the German sailors and soldiers did not take things into their own hands in 1918, instead of permitting the Noskes and Eberts to take over!

While the program presented is indistinguishable from that of the Communist Party, Lerner is an ex-fellow traveller, now sharply critical of the dictatorship of the Soviet bureaucracy. He makes no serious pretense at Marxism, which is all to the good. It is much harder to get the working class to swallow this straight liberal concoction with little radical sugar coating. By now the workers should know that they could build a healthy world only when capitalism is on its death bed. When they summon a grave digger, they don't want a doctor. Popular frontism is a prescription to raise a Frankenstein out of the corpse, and drug the workers to make them easier prey to the monster. Why isn't Mr. Lerner content to be an honest grave digger instead of an unsuccessful physician?

When Bernstein wrote over forty years ago, perhaps he might reasonably have believed in the possibility of transforming capitalism gradually. But that was before capitalist development has so clearly disproved the revisionist thesis. That was before the collapse of Social Democracy. That was before the demise of popular frontism. It was before Munich, before Czechoslovakia's disappearance. It is later, Mr. Lerner, much later, than you think!

\* "It Is Later Than You Think", by Max Lerner. New York, Viking, 326 pp., \$3.50.



# MAY DAY GREETINGS

to the  
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From Its Friends Everywhere

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## TWENTY-FIFTH JUNE CONFERENCE

of the

### League for Industrial Democracy

Subject: "Reorganizing the Forces for Democracy"

THURSDAY, JUNE 15, TO SUNDAY, JUNE 18

#### UNITY HOUSE

Forest Park, Pa. (near Bushkill, Pa.) 85 miles from New York City

THURSDAY, EVENING, JUNE 15, AT 8:00

#### Dictatorship vs. Democracy

Democracy in the life of today—Is democracy worth saving?  
What are the foundation stones for political  
and industrial democracy?

ROGER BALDWIN, Director, American Civil Liberties Union.  
LEWIS COREY, Economist, Author of "Decline of American  
Capitalism," etc.; Educational Director, Loc. 22, I.L.G.W.U.  
HARRY W. LAIDLER, Ex. Dir., League for Industrial Democracy.

FRIDAY MORNING, JUNE 16, AT 9:30

#### Organizing the Consumer for Democracy

Through Consumers' Cooperation and Public Ownership

JACOB BAKER, Chairman, President's Commission on Coopera-  
tive Enterprise; President, United Federal Workers of Amer.  
WALLACE CAMPBELL, Asst. Sec'y, Coop. League of U. S. A.  
HENRY PRATT FAIRCHILD, Prof. of Sociology, N. Y. University.  
JOHN BAUER, Consultant on Public Utilities; Author of  
"Electric Power Industry"; Chairman.

FRIDAY EVENING, JUNE 16, AT 8:00

#### Reorganizing the Forces of Labor

ABRAHAM MILLER, Manager, New York Joint Board, Amalga-  
mated Clothing Workers of America.  
W. JETT LAUCK, (tentative)—Economic Adviser, Trade and  
Industrial Unions; Ex. Dir., League for Economic Freedom.  
JOEL SEIDMAN, Vice-President, Amer. Federation of Teachers;  
Field Secretary, League for Industrial Democracy.

SATURDAY MORNING, JUNE 17, AT 9:30

#### Organizing for Democracy on the Political Field

NATHANIEL MINKOFF, former leader of A. L. P. delegation,  
N. Y. Assembly.

PAUL PORTER, Editor, Kenosha Labor; Member Exec. Com.,  
Wisconsin Farmer-Labor Progressive Federation.

DARLINGTON HOOPES, City Attorney, Reading; Member  
N. E. C. Social Democratic Federation.

LEROY BOWMAN, Consultant on Community Organization,  
Chairman.

SATURDAY AFTERNOON, JUNE 17, AT 5:00

L. I. D. Skit and Songs

SATURDAY EVENING, JUNE 17, AT 8:00

#### Building for Democracy and Socialism, Not Fascism

JOHN T. FLYNN, (tentative) —writer, author, economist.

EDUARD C. LINDEMAN, Prof. of Social Philosophy, N. Y.  
School for Social Work; Director of Dept. of Community  
Organization for Leisure, W.P.A.

EDUARD HEIMANN, Member Graduate Faculty, New School  
for Social Research; former Prof. of Economics, Univ. of  
Hamburg; Author of "Communism, Fascism or Democracy?"  
Report from: NORMAN THOMAS, Chairman, Board of  
Directors, L. I. D.

ALFRED BAKER LEWIS, Chairman.

Concert provided by Inter. Ladies Garment Workers Union

SUNDAY MORNING, JUNE 18, AT 9:30

#### Means and Ends in the Fight for Democracy

BRUCE BLIVEN, Editor, New Republic.

EDUARD C. LINDEMAN, Author, Sociologist.

EDUARD HEIMANN, CLINTON S. GOLDEN, ADOLPH  
STURMTHAL and others in The discussion.

Further Information at: L.I.D., 112 E. 19 St., New York