

REVIEWING THE NEWS

Tammany Hall
Tammany Hall, which has become too discredited and too expensive to be an effective tool for the ruling class of New York, has been shaken and investigated to such an extent that we can get a fair picture of the inner life of the "practical" working forces of a capitalist political party.

When John McCooey, fat and wealthy Tammany leader of Brooklyn's "democracy" died, all the leading newspaper of New York carried stories of his charity to the poor, his loyalty to his friends, his love for his wife and family and his reverence for the church.

Al Smith, Senator Copeland, Governor Lehman, Postmaster General Farley and others of their kind turned out in silk hats and long faces and posed for the press photographs at the McCooey funeral. They made an imposing "front."

President Roosevelt sent a dignified message of sorrow and condolence to the McCooey family, thus rounding out and completing the "front" behind which the McNallys and the gangsters could do "practical work."

McNally and associates robbed unfortunate inmates of the "Home for the Destitute" of at least \$86,000. Instead of a surgeon and a surgical ward, a sailor with a jack knife performed operations. Gangsters and "silk hats" cost money, so disperse with surgeons. McNally and his kind also delivered the votes.

The administration of Welfare Island Penitentiary cooperated with gangsters in selling drugs and grafting on prison food. From each according to his talents.

A. F. of L. fakers gave the endorsement of "labor" to Tammany politicians and did not lose thereby.

The gangsters manned and terrorized the polls and acted as strike breakers when needed. The gambling, alky, and red light concessions were theirs on a percentage basis. Just humble workers in a "noble" array.

New York's "finest" saw to it that squawkers were properly disposed of, clubbed "reds" who exposed the racket, etc. Uniformed members of the same gang.

Supplies to the City were paid for several times over. Concessions were handed out to "friends." Payrolls were padded. Special privileges to transit and other corporations brought in the swag.

From Roosevelt's telegraphing a message to the McCooeys down to the old sailor cutting ulcers from the legs of screaming paupers with a jack knife, each part fitted into the machine and each depended on the other. All had their price, from high positions and millions for the "high hats" down to a plug of chewing tobacco for the illiterate tar. All served—some unconsciously—but all served the pitiful, banking, real estate, and other corporations whose tools they were and are.

"Success" of British C. P.
In reporting for the C. I. to the Seventeenth Congress of the C. P. of the U.S.S.R., Manulsky said that Stalin's inflexible, iron will was leading the toilers of the world to victory. One example was in the British Party. But here it is in Manulsky's own words: "If the students of the two most aristocratic universities strike horror into the whole of the English bourgeoisie by passing a resolution that they will not defend king or country in the event of war, that is a result of many years of anti-war agitation by our party... Stalin taught the Communists of all countries to fight and conquer. He taught them... to patiently accumulate forces and at the decisive moment to inflict upon the class enemy a crushing lightning-like blow."

However, Stalin will have to contend with the Episcopal Left Wing, the Baptist Church, the War Resisters League, and every other pacifist and Ghandist in England for credit for the "aristocratic" resolution. But maybe it was a united front from below with Stalin at the head. And who are we to take credit from Stalin for such a "crushing blow to the bourgeoisie?" —BILL.

Letters to the Editor

Another Opinion on the Furriers' Situation

Ed. Note.—We print below another letter on the furriers' situation with a reply appended. The first letter was published in the Militant March 17 and an editorial reply appeared in the issue of March 24. Other contributions of reasonable length will be printed regardless of the point of view of the writers.

To the Editor of The Militant:

The controversy over the furriers is still raging in the radical press, and oceans of ink will be spilled before this question is satisfactorily settled. Everyone acquainted with the social composition of the workers who work in this trade must often wonder why it is the furriers' lot to be destined to become the "vanguard" of the proletarian revolution; the furriers where each and everyone dreams to become someday a manufacturer or at least an independent contractor. And this middle-class element is boomed daily in the Stalinist press as the cream of the revolutionary movement.

It is a habit with many people who criticize the general policy of the T.U.U.L. to find excuses for the policy of the Stalinists in the fur-trade, because they claim to have the majority of the furriers behind them. Very similar reasons are brought forward daily by the apologists of Fascism because the Mussolinis and Hitlers too claim that they have the backing of the large majority of their people behind them, but how do they really know that this is the case, when the press, radio, and all the weapons of suppression are in the hands of the Fascist state. The fur workers are being faced daily with the same situation.

Terroristic Methods

The Stalinist Needle Trades Workers Industrial Union was able through the use of terroristic methods to intimidate the workers and monopolize the fur market, and members of the Right union have been met with riots staged by Stalinist cronies whenever they tried to bring their message to the workers, with the consequence that workers have been beaten and insulted.

992 New Subs!

Almost over the top! Seventy three new Club Plan subs came in last week, raising the total to 992 and bringing us within eight of the goal of 1,000.

Table listing branches and their contributions to the total of 992 new subscribers.

TOTAL 73

The complete record up to date follows:

Table listing branches and their cumulative contributions to the total of 992 new subscribers.

TOTAL 992
Next week's report will close the drive. Let's see how far over the top we can go.

The writer does not consider the A. F. of L. as a fetish, but no one will deny that the vast majority of the workers who are employed in the needle industries, are members of the A. F. of L. labor unions. Even if it were true that the N.T.W.I.U. has the majority of the furriers—and to my opinion a very disputable contention—is it the best policy for them to be isolated and detached from the general organization of workers and to resort to dual organization when they could do better work and gain more power in the general organization of workers even though the latter is conservative in some respect?

Democracy in International

With all the just criticism any one may have against the Right-wing union, no one can deny that every member can express freely his differences with the policy and leadership of the union without running the risk of being ostracized or abused by the zealots of the "United Front." Is it possible for a member of the Left Opposition to stand up in a Stalinist controlled organization and question policies of the organization without running into danger of being sneered at or have a howling mob set against you. Many Trotskyites received this medicine one time or another.

I surely hold no brief for the Lovestonettes, because in my opinion they possess all the bad qualities of the Stalinists and none of their good ones, being that they always try to sneak, even through the back door, into the Communist International. They always try to justify the adventurous policy of the Stalinist International. Their policy in the trade unions is always designed to maneuver with one group or another, as long as this will help them to achieve their purpose, to gain power in order to convince Stalin that they, and not the official Stalinist party, have the leadership of the American masses. And still I maintain that in the furriers situation they did the most plausible thing. Every avenue of activity in the Industrial Union was closed to them, and being a political group with a desire to function in a trade union, what else could they do but to join the A. F. of L. union, where no one is asked if he is in agreement with the latest thesis of Manulsky?

—LEON KOENIG.

Editor's Reply

We are glad to publish the above dissenting opinion on the complicated problem of the furriers, and other contributions to the discussion will be welcomed. Our remarks on the question are put forth as a point of view, not as an ultimatum or a law. Generally speaking, the only way to arrive at an intelligent collective judgment of trade union problems—or any other problems of the class struggle for that matter—is by free discussion, exchange of opinion and comparison of experiences. When this is prohibited or prevented we get not collective judgment but ultimatums and instructions—and disastrous blunders every time. The furriers will not get out of the blind alley into which Stalinist as well as reactionary compulsion and terrorism has driven them until they conquer their problems freely.

Unconvincing Arguments

The argument of comrade Koenig appears to us to be unconvincing despite a number of indisputable facts which he advances. In the trade union question it is necessary to follow a principle line in order to arrive at the right conclusion in regard to tactics. If one departs from this method it leads to guess-work and contradictions in policy at every step. From this point of view it appears to us that comrade Koenig errs in his conclusions on the main points he raises.

1. The Stalinist bureaucrats resort to terrorism.

This is true, as every furrier knows and, as is always the case with such methods in the end, the terroristic tactics are employed against members of the union as well as against the rival organization. But the Stalinists are not the originators of these degenerate, anti-working class practices. As a matter of fact they are only slavishly imitating the methods of the reactionaries who ruled the International for years by methods of violence and terror.

How the Left Wing Took Shape

In the struggle against the gangster regime of Kaufman & Co. the left wing originally took shape and gained the allegiance and support of the great majority of the furriers. Didn't this experience prove quite conclusively that terrorism cannot

bind the workers to a trade union machine when they are offered a better program and a better leadership?

This, in our opinion, is the nub of the question. The rank and file of furriers, hating and despising the violence of worker against worker, do not leave the Stalinist Union because they have no confidence in the treacherous leaders of the International and their Lovestonette camp-followers. They have a good memory. They do not trust the saccharine promises of "democracy" made now so glibly and freely by the isolated fakers and their "radical" agents.

Terrorism is an abominable evil in the labor movement. Every class conscious militant worthy of the name will fight against it. Comrade Koenig is wrong when he says the furriers cling to the Stalinist Union only out of fear. If they really wanted to go over to the International, a single mass demonstration would suffice to accomplish the transformation. In the absence of such a demonstration, or even of a serious group of militants to propose it, there is no ground for the assumption that the mass of furriers want to join the International. The indications are all to the contrary. We must govern ourselves accordingly and respect the attitude of the majority in the choice of unions.

The Criterion of the Mass

Nobody will accuse the Militant of partiality for Stalinist organizations. But we do not determine our attitude toward labor organizations by like and dislikes for the leadership and its methods. We choose a party by its program, its methods of work and the quality of its leadership, regardless of whether it has a majority or minority of the politically organized workers. For a trade union, on the other hand, an entirely different criterion is necessary. Here the mass character of the organization, not the program and leadership, is decisive.

If the masses elect to belong to a conservative union in preference to a radical one we are obliged to go with them, support their chosen organization and work within it for our ideas. By the same token, when the majority decide in favor even of a Stalinist union—and the case of the furriers is a rare example of such a choice—we are obliged to support the Stalinist organization without relenting for one moment in our irreconcilable hostility to Stalinist ideas and methods.

Consistent Principle

The revolutionary left wing can be reconstituted in the labor movement only on the foundation of principle, and its consistent application. If one is to leave the dominant organization among the furriers because it employs violence and terrorism, and go over to a smaller organization because it is presumably more civilized and democratic, what is to be done in the building trades, the United Mine Workers and many other similar cases? The left wing is up against gangsterism, more or less, in a great many conservative mass organizations. If that is taken as a ground for splitting, the new left wing would soon find itself isolated from the trade union movement. Such a precedent should not be set in the furriers' situation.

The Furriers and the A. F. of L.

2. The vast majority of workers employed in the needle trades as a whole are members of A. F. of L. unions; the furriers should not be isolated from them.

As a general formula, both the facts cited and the conclusion are unassailable. But it hardly covers the concrete case. The fact that practically all the other organized workers in the needle trades are in the A. F. of L. is a powerful argument for the furriers' union, as a union, to apply also for admission into the A. F. of L., with the same autonomy and rights as those enjoyed by the other unions. But we cannot see the wisdom of splitting the furriers for the sake of what amounts to a platonic unity of the needle trades as a whole.

Connection with the other needle unions in the A. F. of L. will have a much greater meaning when a movement is set on foot to amalgamate them all into a single organization. The Furriers' Industrial Union ought to apply for an A. F. of L. charter. It ought to signify its readiness to merge with the International into a single union of the trade affiliated to the A. F. of L. But under the present conditions and relation of forces, individual militants should not jump over to the International. On the contrary, they should put forward the program of unity and fight for it inside the Stalinist union.

The idea is unassailable and the workers will respond to it. It corresponds to their vital interests and shows them a way out of the present chaos. In reacting against the perverted functionaries of Stalinism it should not be forgotten that their followers are workers—badly de-

Shachtman on Tour

NEW CASTLE

New Castle.—On Wednesday evening, March 14th, comrade Max Shachtman spoke to a group of thirty advanced New Castle workers on the need for a new revolutionary party and a new international. In the course of his address he showed very clearly how the policies of the official Communist party leadership and the Social-Democratic leadership had paved the way for the victory of Fascism in Germany. In Austria, where the official Communist Party is almost non-existent, the entire responsibility for the Fascist victory must be placed on the leaders of the Austrian Social-Democracy. Since these two parties have shown their political bankruptcy in these events, it becomes necessary to take steps toward the formation of a new international and new parties throughout the world, which will adhere to the tested principles of Marxism in the class struggle. At the conclusion of the address, the speaker answered various questions from the audience. Following the question period the meeting was adjourned.

YOUNGSTOWN STALINISTS FRUSTRATED

For several weeks the functionaries of the so-called "Communist Party" who have been shipped into this city have been threatening violence against individual members of the Communist League. At the second meeting of the recently organized "League Against War and Fascism," which Stalinist domination dooms to a still birth, these same functionaries did a little Trotsky baiting while condemning J. B. Matthews and demanding the expulsion of all "Trotskyites" for their common "anti-Communist" Party stand on the recent Madison Square Garden affair. At this meeting they openly announced that they did not believe in free speech for the "counter-revolutionary, social-Fascist Trotskyites."

Three days later Max Shachtman delivered his lecture on "Boss War or Workers' Revolution!" at Central Auditorium. A handful of "Communist Party" supporters came down, headed by the Y. C. L. leaders Gray and Gates. When the audience voted decisively to put an end to some filthy disruption by Gray, the latter declared: "You think you're going to hold a meeting here tomorrow night, but we'll see about that!" To everyone present this meant that an official representative of the Stalinized Communist Party threatened to break up the meeting at which Shachtman was scheduled to lecture the next night.

Stalinist Hoodlums Mobilize

On Friday the Stalinists mobilized a gang and went to the hall one-half hour ahead of time. But on arriving they found their disruption that a workers' guard was already on hand to keep them out of the hall. So the hoodlums headed by Dallet and Gray waited for reinforcements—and reinforcements came—for the workers' guard! Seeing our forces growing stronger as the minutes passed, General Dallet ordered his forces to make a sally at the door. The General took a poke at the door guard and received in

return three healthy punches from some young steel workers of the guard.

After recovering from his dizziness the General dictated a change of tactics: two female comrades were sent to the entrance to disrupt the speaker with their yells. The meeting started, and the chairman announced that adequate preparation had been made to guarantee order during the lecture, the question and discussion periods. Out-witted and out-punched, the Stalinists capitulated to our earlier offer to allow three representatives of the official "Communist Party" to enter. The delegates entered, followed by a few more Stalinists who suddenly decided they were no longer "unemployed workers" but quite able to pay.

Dealing with the Disrupters

During the meeting a minimum of weak heckling was tolerated from this bunch of hoodlums. The question period passed without anything unusual. During the discussion period the Stalinists tried to play the old game of "conceding time to the speaker" but this was not tolerated. When the six who had first asked to discuss had all either spoken or refused to take their time, Shachtman began to summarize and reply. Then one foolish C. P. supporter began to yell that he wanted his time NOW! And all the Stalinists joined the chorus with him. Quickly small groups of the workers' guard approached the disrupters. A motion was put and carried that Shachtman should conclude the lecture without further discussion. And the General and his army marched out complaining that "there ain't no justice!" because there were "paid thugs" present. To the workers, young and old, who had volunteered to defend our meeting this "paid thug" slander became the good-night joke of the evening.

In concluding we want to record that Shachtman's exposure of the bankruptcy of the Second and Third Internationals was so thorough and annihilating that no one made any serious attempt to defend the Socialist International and all the Stalinists could do was yell: "There can be only one Communist Party and that is ours!"

And finally, the Youngstown branch wants to thank all the workers, our sympathizers and friends in other organizations, who gladly helped us to protect our meeting against hoodlums and disrupters. In return we assure you that we will come to your assistance when you are threatened by similar hoodlums, regardless of whether they are of the Fascist or Stalinist variety. Stalinist hoodlumism has been checked again! The united forces of those defending workers' democracy have won another victory! For a United Front Workers' Guard! —YOUNGSTOWN BRANCH REPORTER.

MARCH OF EVENTS

The A. F. of L. Bureaucracy

The new wave of strikes sweeping the country alarms not only the capitalists but the A. F. of L. bureaucracy as well. For in the present situation militant action of the workers may spread like wildfire and get "out of hand," thereby becoming a threat to the labor lieutenants of capital just as much as to the bosses. Let the proletariat once signal their determination to pay off their oppressors for the agonies they have endured, and the battle will take on undreamed of proportions. The bosses are fearful that a strike, starting in the automotive industry, will quickly spread to the steel plants and to the railroads. And how much would it take to bring the miners to their feet?

The class struggle is irrepressible but the A. F. of L. with its treacherous, reactionary leadership and its obsolete craft structural basis, acts at this juncture as a serious obstacle to militant action. By its policy of delay and fake "progress" with the aid of the NRA machinery, the bureaucracy plans to harness the proletariat; substitute for the real battle on and hold it in check. The intent to the industrial field the sham battles in Washington.

The Role of Roosevelt

Roosevelt becomes the "impartial" arbiter in this game played at the expense of the workers. Roosevelt, who was hailed last November by the boss magazine "Automotive Industry" for his aid against the tool and die makers in their struggle that formed the proude to the present one: "Without doubt President Roosevelt's recent communication to General Johnson, interpreting the NRA labor clause in line with automobile producers' views, had a consoling psychological effect in breaking the backbone of the strike." Roosevelt, who is hamstringing the railroad workers by announcing in advance of their negotiations that he favors the reiteration of 10% wage "deduction." Roosevelt, who mobilizes the nation's resources to bolster up finance capitalism and to raise profits for the bosses while beating down the living standards of the working class. To expose Roosevelt means to expose the entire fraud of class collaboration practiced on the workers.

The Philippines

Roosevelt has just signed the bill granting complete independence to the Philippines—ten years from now. It is strange that we leave our rejoicing till then? Meantime we prefer to watch how the United States will most likely not dismantle its naval bases and fortifications in these islands of the militarized Pacific. The Philippines are merely a stepping stone to more distant shores for American imperialist hopes to solve its internal impasse, its desperate need for expanded markets, by challenging Japan for domination in China. The Philippines are the most trifling pawns in the bigger game of imperialism. The United States, in the maneuvering for "position," appears to retreat for the moment the better to attack later.

The New York Post and Civic Virtue

The Post has been conducting an investigation to determine the state of knowledge of the masses regarding the names of "their" elected representatives in the city, state and federal governments. And the estimable Post editors have been scandalized to learn that the average run of person is abysmally ignorant of capitalist politics and politicians. In itself this shows quite clearly that the capitalist government is not "theirs"; i. e. that of the masses. We refer the Post to Engels' remarks on this subject: "There is no country in which 'politicians' form a more powerful and distinct section of the nation than in North America. There each of the two great parties which alternately succeed each other in power is itself in turn controlled by people who make a business of politics, who speculate on seats in the legislative assemblies of the Union as well as of the separate states, or who make a living by carrying on agitation for their party and on its victory are rewarded with positions. It is common knowledge that the Americans have been striving for years to shake off this yoke which has become intolerable, and that in spite of all they can do they continue to sink ever deeper in this quicksand of corruption. — And nevertheless we find here two great groups of political speculators, who alternately take possession of the state machine and exploit it by the most corrupt means and for the most corrupt ends—and the nation is powerless against these two great cartels of politicians who are ostensibly its servants, but in reality exploit and plunder it."

GRAMMERCY 5-9524

This is the phone number of the Militant, The Communist League and the International Workers' School.

Gala Spring Festival
PROGRAM: Chief Littlehouse in a recital of his American Indian native dances
A Duncan dancer—Lifshitz
Fortune teller
Other special feature
Buffet
Private Table
Saturday, March 31st
IRVING PLAZA
15th St. and Irving Place
Get your tickets now, only 35c in advance at the International Workers School, 126 E. 16th St.