

REVIEWING THE NEWS

Bayonets and the General Strike

"National Guard Bayonets Open Georgia Mills"—headline in capitalist press. Bayonets can't run looms, but hunger can force the weaker, less determined strikers into the mills. The failure of the A. F. of L. to support the strike with relief under such conditions is as much a part of strikebreaking as the National Guard itself.

"Preparedness"

Sales of tear gas—vomit gas and machine guns increased 5 to 10 per cent due to the textile strike. "We only sell to corporations when the local police approve."—"Would you sell to labor organizations?"—"We received no requests from labor."—testimony before the Munitions Commission. The A. F. of L. fakers favor war preparations by the United States, always with the excuse "other governments are arming. We must be prepared." That argument, even if granted, should mean that these same gentlemen should have spent some of their fat treasuries to equip strikers so that they would be able to meet the enemy on equal ground. Against machine guns and vomit gas—the workers need, machine guns and vomit gas.

Itching Palms—Police and Clergy

That a munitions salesman had the N. Y. police "in the palm of his hand" indicates that besides racketeers, bootleggers and open shop bosses, munitions makers also crossed the itching palms of New York's "finest" with gold. That's another little item made public by the munitions inquiry. Whenever and wherever any probe is made into graft, crime and wholesale murder, the whole capitalist system, its coercive and persuasive arms are shown reeking with graft. Praying to God with Indians in the evening and selling gas bombs and gas "billsies" in the morning was the double role of the Rev. Paul Young, Christian Alliance Missionary, representing God and the Munition Company. Prayers and Poison Gas Our Specialty.—Please give a few pennies to Christianize the Heathen. And such are the forces of "good government", of "law and order", the "spiritual forces of our nation" which must be saved from Communism by armed drunken Legionaire morons.

The "Red Joiner"

One of our readers has come to our rescue when we were faced with a shortage of copy and submitted the following poem:

Ichabod Blechedick Wallingford Cohen Was a Stalinist victim who was constantly going. From meeting to meeting Of this or that Org. At the end of a year He was fit for the Morgue.

He paid dues in the Party, the T.U. U.L., The Workers Theatyr and A.F. of L.

The Toothpick Designers, The Freiheit Vereiners, The 14th Street Miners— He joined them as well.

He was one of the prancers Of Harlem's Red Dancers, He just missed getting into The fighting Red Lancers, But nothing distressed, He flocked with the rest To the Bolshevik Band of the Banning of Cancers.

With Father Divine who embodied the Lord He joined in the Group for Fostering Ford,

Every day for the Worker he'd garner his sub And get credited for it at the Pelham Bay Club.

On every vacation Some new Federation He joined with a greeting, a shout and a whoop,

And despite his neuritis, Lumbago and Croup, He joined with the Haircurlers Progressive Group.

He faithfully joined with the S.M. I.U.,

The League for Defense of the Eskimos, too,

Like a good proletarian, He turned vegetarian, There was hardly an outfit he didn't go through.

At each demonstration He made his donation, And uttered the slogans he learned in the book. For the first Earl of Browder He would shout out still louder, And there wasn't a paper which he didn't took.

Mellon's Stolen Millions

Every once in a while the democratic mask behind which capitalism hides its face, slips and we see strange things.

For example, take the case of Andrew W. Mellon. Not so long ago Andrew Mellon was "America's greatest Secretary of the Treasury since Hamilton". Today, in one of those periodic reform waves that the U. S. goes through every few years or so, Andrew Mellon has a tax suit filed against him by the present administration. The facts revealed in the government's brief against Mellon will astound only those who have never looked into such doings before.

In 1931 Mellon deducted \$5,672,189.95 from his taxable income on the grounds of a business loss incurred in selling Pittsburgh Coal Co. stock to the Union Trust Co. of Pittsburgh. Now that, to the ordinary citizen sounds fair enough. After all, you can't tax a man for money he hasn't got. But there is a catch in this one. For upon investigation it turns out that the Union Trust Co. is controlled by Mellon and his brother, so that when Mellon sold Pittsburgh Coal Co. stock to the Union Trust Co., he sold it to himself and no actual stock or money transfer was involved.

The process did not end there, however. A few months later the Union Trust Co. sold the same stock to the Coalesced Co. for much less than the stock was worth. Upon investigation, lo and behold, Mellon had again sold the stock to himself, for the Coalesced Co. was composed of only three stockholders; Mellon, his son and his daughter. Mellon, his son and his daughter, and was organized as a family holding Corporation to avoid gift and inheritance taxes. And so there it stands. The Mellon family still owns the stock and has saved itself a million dollars in taxes, the government is out a million or so, and we, that is we who are unemployed or are on relief, have that much less to feed our children with.

One has to bear in mind that during all these transactions Mellon was Secretary of the United States Treasury and that at the same time there sat on the Senate Finance Committee, Senator David A. Reed, friend and attorney for Mellon. These men were responsible for the collection of taxes, many a poor man's house or farm was taken away for non-payment of taxes. There is no evading the law for a poor man.

Yet for themselves and for their class, men like Mellon discovered plenty of lawful ways of evading the law. The investigation of the Senate Banking Committee into the National City Bank and the Morgan house certainly bears this out.

One would suppose that this "New Deal" administration could collect these back taxes of Mellon, Mitchell, Morgan, etc. and place these men where they belong, behind bars. No such thing! For though we may be living under a democracy, it is a capitalist democracy and as such, our law is capitalist law. Mellon after all did nothing unlawful, and the Grand Jury did not even indict him. And indeed, except for a few scapegoats thrown out as a sop to the public, the net result of all the banking investigations has been nothing much.

The most amusing sidelight on the Mellon case is the attitude expressed by the Post, New York's most liberal paper. After delivering a smashing editorial indictment against Mellon and the whole Harding-Hoover crew, it finally comes to the crux of the matter. "The system was not just rotten on the edges. It was rotten to the core" says the Post. This implies, of course, that the system under the New Deal is better. And, concludes the Post, after condemning the rottenness of the Republican Party, "The Grand Old Party cannot be rebuilt. It must be replaced by a conservative party freed from the curse of avarice."

There you have expressed in a nutshell the liberal's idea of the State. The State is a delicate balance between conservative and progressive forces, and since the New Deal is under the guidance of a progressive party group, what is needed in order to balance the state and keep it steady, is a new conservative party, "free from avarice" of course. A conservative party, or for that matter a liberal party, "free from avarice"! What nonsense! Here we are, living under a system where nothing is produced except for profit, where the main incentive for the functioning of society rests on avarice, and the Post solemnly suggests that a party which seeks above all to maintain that system can itself be free from avarice.

Graft and corruption are not attributes of the Republican Party. They are attributes of any party that seeks to maintain the capitalist system, whether that party be Hoover's Raw Deal Party or Roosevelt's National Run Around.

JOIN THE COMMUNIST LEAGUE

IN THE TRADE UNIONS

African Laundry Workers

National Executive Committee, Communist League of America, c/o Militant, New York City. Dear Comrades,

The Committee of this Union instructs me to send you the enclosed message. Upon being put to the vote at a fully represented meeting, it was decided, unanimously to dispatch it. The enclosed slip was signed so as to enable all the committeemen to attach their signatures.

The Union already has 344 members, and we have every expectation of increasing this number to five or six hundred in the near future. I believe our membership constitutes a record for South Africa, as far as Bantu workers, organized in a single union, are concerned. The Bantu workers, and people generally, are the most oppressed and exploited section. Unfortunately the Bantu workers are not very far removed from their pastoral-peasant origin and have no mature experience or tradition in the trade union movement. Our task is, therefore, more difficult on the organizational side. This Union collapsed twice within its very short existence, due to the incompetence and cowardice to the leadership established by the Communist Party and African Federation of Trade Unions. We shall not collapse, though we may be beaten temporarily, on one or another occasion.

We have in prospect several strikes which shall be called in the near future, although we have gained certain concessions (indirectly) without outright strikes. Naturally, the bosses will not give in so easily upon the more important issues.

Our policy is,—Against the Conciliation Act, its machinery, and conciliation in any form.

Against Governmental Arbitration under the Wage Act of 1925.

For militant strike struggle against the bosses—as the only way to gain some of our rights, and to keep them once they are gained.

For unequivocal union recognition.

For intransigent struggle for the right to strike of the Bantu workers.

For abolition of the Pass Laws, Riotous Assemblies Act, Masters and Servants Acts, and all other legislation which oppresses the workers generally, or prevents them from withholding their labor and restricts their liberty in any way.

With fraternal greetings, MURRAY G. PURDY General Secretary

Button Workers Strike

To the Comrades of the Communist League of America: The African Laundry Workers Union hereby pledges its support to the Fourth International. We believe that only by militant struggle against the oppressors can the workers achieve success. The Third International and the Communist Party of South Africa has failed us twice. We start again under the leadership of the Bolshevik-Leninist League. The workers of South Africa will never again allow themselves to be led to disaster by the Communist Party and its Federation, A.F.T.U. Our struggle is very great; our union has no legal basis; our workers have no legal right to strike; nevertheless, we shall fight on until the victorious workers' dictatorship is established.

With Fraternal Greetings, THE COMMITTEE Mishaak Sanyane (Chairman), Emil Mosito, Johannes Mashigo, Malekha Segale, Alton Moshodi, Alfred Dhlamini, Henry Mathibedi, Asine Maunane, James Thongwane, Jorene Poo, Michael Huma, Fanuel Mashishi, Joas Mogotsi, Josiah Masilo, Mishaak Sikobe (Assistant Treasurer), Murry Purdy (Secretary), Renben Mgade (Organizer).

Pocketbook Strike Bulletin

The latest developments of the pocketbook workers' strike are as follows: Over 5,000 workers are on strike. The New Jersey local called its members on strike this week. Fifty non-union shops were closed, adding another 500 workers to the strike. Fifteen employers settled with the union and granted the union demands—36 hours and a ten per cent increase in wages.

The Regional Labor Board intervened and called the union and the employers together. Two conferences were held but without success. The bosses are stubborn and refuse to grant the just demands of the workers.

The strike committee must now concentrate on the rest of the non-union shops such as Goldberg Bros., the M. White shop in Bridgeport, and Chicks in Bethlehem. The strike committee must organize mass picketing for next Monday and see to it that not a single shop operates in the city of New York and vicinity.

—POCKETBOOK WORKER.

BROWNSVILLE LECTURE Second, Third or Fourth International? Speaker: TOM STAMM Friday, October 5, 8:30 P.M. 1776 Pitkin Avenue

Button Workers Strike

At a general mass meeting on September 25, the covered button makers, local 132 I.L.G.W., decided unanimously to strike the following morning. A new agreement, differing in no way from the old one, was read. In other words: all the administration wanted was the renewal of the old agreement.

The main demands, therefore, remain as before: 37½ hour work week and \$36 a week for skilled workers (those who can produce the required amount of buttons per hour). The women workers are entirely excluded from this category. Moreover, the scale of production is so steep that very few enjoy this wage level.

Many employers have already signed pledges to renew their contracts with the union. Many other hesitant bosses rushed to the union office to sign the new contract when they heard of the general membership meeting. There is nothing astonishing in this since no wage increases or hour reductions were demanded by the union. Besides the officials promised to send those workers back to work in the shops where the employers had signed the pledge the very next morning. Result: Only a handful remained on strike. And with these few workers the administration hopes to unionize the open shops.

This scheme was foisted on the union by high powered salesmanship. Henry Jaeger, Socialist Party member and intimate friend of the local manager, used his talent to convince the workers that they should not ask for more money but be contented with the little they have. The administration, he argued, knew what was best for the members. The manager of the local joined the chorus with a plea to cooperate with the decent bosses. The steam roller finished the job.

The objective conditions were favorable or a successful strike. In many shops, the errand boys, very important in this trade, were on the verge of being organized by the Shipping Clerks Union. The unity of these two unions in a common fight against the bosses would stop the shipping or receiving buttons in the shops. This would be a great weapon in the hands of the workers. The strike would assume a militant character and the demands of the button workers and errand boys would be won.

But of course the myopic administration did not think it necessary to ask for raises nor to strengthen the ranks of these newly organized workers. Fearing a fight, the administration would sooner "cooperate" with the bosses.

The Discipline of Failure

What is wrong in the ranks of the Stalinists?

Michael Quin thinks the Party needs a "Chitska" (cleansing). He would have the rank and filers perform the operation upon themselves since, possibly, it is a little too early for the American Party to strike so strenuously as did the U.S.S.R., according to Quin; "Kicking out only 90,000 members." We should be satisfied, maybe, with a loss of about 9 of the so-called riff raff so as not to overshoot our income too far, What?

Nerves raw, and minds in a chaotic turmoil from an endless round of futile and impotent gestures made by a self-imposed and shoddy leadership, the rank and file of the C. P. are so jittery that the leaders think it is time to thrash them, openly, as Quin proceeds in the usual contradictory manner, to do.

In a typical grandiose flourish of his pen, Quin succeeds, graphically in exposing the rapid growth of moral disintegration in the ranks. As usual, the Comrades are blamed for all, while the bureaucracy, by the process, pushes itself still further up and away from its foundation, into oblivious isolation.

Quin's Western Worker column, "Seeing Red" contains, in a recent issue, some rich highlights on the state of affairs to which bureaucracy and trips into blind alleys have reduced the Party. After warning the Comrades of the "Chitska" recently enacted in the U.S.S.R., he calls upon the rank and file to perform the same operation, each for himself, lest he go completely berserk.

"There are," he says, "lots of little minor contagious diseases rampant among us."

"Perhaps the most distressing and dangerous disease of all is DISGUSTITUS," he warns the Comrades, and goes on to say of them, "they never miss the slightest opportunity to sneer, ridicule, slander, beef, whine, complain or register DISGUST. The only thing they regard as humorous is the opportunity to laugh at some Comrade who has made a mistake somewhere or according to their lights, made a fool of himself."

Does Comrade Quin know his dialectic materialism? Does man reflect his environment or is he the god of the idea a priori? In fact,

has there ever been a time when the average member of the C. P. has been free of that terrible illness, DISGUSTITUS? And who can hold these thoroughly abused Comrades responsible for "blowing up at the slightest opportunity and sneering, ridiculing, slandering, beefing, whining, complaining, and registering DISGUST?" There are literally thousands of good militant workers in America who got this illness, and for the identical reasons, and finally left the impossible environment of EAR-MUFFS, MUZZLES, AND BLINKERS: the old C. P. Michael Quin has been kind enough to name the only other alternative for them. That is to laugh at the mistakes made, and at the COMRADE LEADERS who make fools of themselves. Michael Quin should realize that in such a mad-house, men and women must have some kind of a vent or explode. We who have been there, well recall the necessity to right-about-face and LAUGH at mistakes. Regarding the rank and file comrades making fools of themselves, they never have been given that opportunity. The bureaucracy beat them to it. And now it is crying because the comrades show signs, even, of recognizing what has happened to them.

"There are," says Quin, "any number of hair-spring tempers among our comrades which need tightening up. Whether these are caused by lack of proper diet (mental), or lack of self-discipline is hard to say. The slightest slip-up dislodges from them a torrent of vocal violence which if expressed in action would demolish a city block."

Well, Comrade Quin, what would you have? A torrent of vocal violence, of course! Regarding these torrents occurring at the least slip up, we have a sneaking idea that the slip ups are improperly described. We feel sure that the recent slip-up in the San Francisco strike; the slip-up of setting up a paper dual union against the huge rank and file of the I.L.A. only to have it thoroughly repudiated by the general rank and file workers, is much more than a "least slip-up"; we think that was a MONSTROUS CRIME. It's a mighty wonder to us that the "vocal violence" has not already been expressed in "ACTION", and demolished the city block where lies the C. P. bureaucracy! We predict this action among the C. P. rank and filers, yet.

Hair-spring tempers! says Michael Quin. Logical reaction, say we. "It is necessary," says Quin, "for comrades to be militant on the picket lines and in demonstrations, but not when asking another comrade for a match."

If you keep right on sending the trusting boy after left handed monkey-wrenches, pigeon's milk, strap oil, and money stretchers; if you keep the rank and filers going in an endless whirly-gig chain of profitless futility, would you then develop wings and twitter like angels? However, if the thing has reached the point where comrades want to fight with the friend from whom they ask a match, we also advise a Chitska, but we advise beginning at the top, like good Bolsheviks!

And with a last weak thrust of his erstwhile lashing pen, he proves our case against the bureaucracy for us by admitting that these same comrades who are today blowing up at the "least slip-up", "ARE THE STRONGEST LINKS IN OUR CHAIN." And he verifies this by naming their militant conduct during the dock strike in San Francisco.

Certainly they are the strongest links in your chain, Michael Quin, and the weakest links in your chain are those sleek skinned bureaucrats who disappeared when the terror was let loose and are still among the missing. That you are today predicting the "second coming" of Darcy gives little consolation to those trusting comrades who have, in spite of facts, retained their faith in him. If the setting of our movement was in Germany, we would look for Sam in the cafes of Paris. That is, we would direct those who crave his presence to do so. As it is, we do not hear any working class demand in San Francisco for his return. On the contrary, out of your own mouth we hear echos of explosion within the ranks, which to us is ominous of the final, complete isolation of the bureaucracy. —E. B.

JOIN THE COMMUNIST LEAGUE ORDER A BUNDLE OF MILITANTS—ONE CENT PER COPY.

"Reward Your Friends"

With the faith that moves mountains, but never the Democratic or Republican Party, the labor fakers who head the American Federation of Labor are sending out again this year their timeworn questionnaires to political candidates, seeking their views on legislation backed by organized labor.

"The questionnaire," says the N. Y. Times, with no attempt at irony, "is in line with the traditional policy of the A. F. of L., which has been seeking to elect candidates favorable to its policies for many years."

Since 1908, to be exact, when the A. F. of L. adopted the policy of favoring no political party, of setting up no labor candidates, but in general "rewarding our friends and punishing our enemies".

The policy has worked each election period with uniform results—there were never any friends to reward.

Candidates of both major parties have refused somehow or other to take orders from the A. F. of L., and instead have maintained allegiance to the political bosses who were responsible for their nomination.

Some have made promises to labor and have broken these promises. The rest have never even bothered to promise. Political parties have been deaf alike to the pleadings and "threats" of the A. F. of L.

Occasionally some smiling demagogue, like President Roosevelt, accepts the proffered hand of friendship, slaps Bill Green warmly on the back, and presents a paper program full of warmth and sympathy for organized labor. This program he will not, he dare not, keep.

Thus labor is granted Section 7a of the National Recovery Act, and, in the same breath, capital is granted the privilege of violating it with complete impunity.

Rights and Rights

Labor is given the right to organize, and capital the right to crush such organization, with the full support of government forces, with Federal tear gas and bullets.

Even as every citizen has the right to freedom of speech and assembly. Exercise it if you dare! Nevertheless, Bill Green and his cohorts do not despair. They return each year to their shameful betrayal as "a dog returns to his vomit".

Again this year, therefore, the political candidates will receive in their mail the usual questionnaires, seeking their views on such questions as old-age pensions, unemployment insurance, labor injunctions and yellow dog contracts. They will answer as they have answered before, and Bill Green will pretend to be satisfied or unhappy over their replies.

A "Dark Horse" for Green

But a new element has entered the game of questions and answers this year: an element that causes Bill Green many a sleepless night. The masses of labor, the rank-and-file workers have grown tired of the game. The issues are being fought not in the ballot box.

The workers in the textile industry, the victorious strikers in Minneapolis, the betrayed longshoremen of the West Coast, do not need to ask where the leading candidates stand on labor. They know!

They know that a Governor Olson and President Roosevelt will grant only what they are forced to grant. That the strikers will win recognition of their union by fighting for it on the strike battlefield; that company unions will be outlawed when the workers outlaw them; that injunctions against labor will cease when the workers learn to disregard them.

And when that time comes to pass, as it is coming to pass, the workers will elect their own candidates; or failing that, there will be no lack of demagogues from the major parties who will offer them what they have already won—the right to fight for their rights! And sops will be thrown in for good measure; unemployment insurance and old age pensions as well.

PATERSON MASS MEETING THE TEXTILE STRIKE SETTLEMENT

What Shall the Textile Workers Do? A Program for the Silk Workers.

Speakers: JAMES P. CANNON and A. J. MUSTE

Sunday, September 30, 8 P.M. OAKLEY HALL 211 Market Street, Paterson

ADMISSION FREE

Joint Auspices: Communist League of America and American Workers Party

MARCH OF EVENTS

The Credit System

The contradictions inherent in capitalist society owing to the impossibility of reconciling the profit motive with the needs of society, are nowhere more manifest than in the banking system and its handling of credit. In modern society credit is a powerful instrument for converting into capital the savings and property of the non-capitalist classes, thereby adding the more intensified exploitation of wage-earners. Credit accelerates the development of the capitalist system of production. In normal times it makes available through the banks, the reservoirs of credits, the "dead" capital in the form of "free" funds for more effective utilization by the capitalist class. Through control of the credit system the banks aid in the elimination of the small producer for the benefit of the larger ones.

But the extensive utilization of credit by modern industry introduces the greatest uncertainty into the whole process of production. When times are booming the banks find it profitable to lend on easy terms with good prospect of payment. New capital is created at rapid tempo and the resulting expansion of the productive forces leads ultimately to a glut of the market and the inevitable crisis. The boom period is accompanied by feverish speculation; all business takes on the character of speculation. But the moment the market can no longer absorb the vast quantities of commodities made available by free use of loans and credit which become converted into capital, the credit system collapses. The banks make frantic efforts to "call" all loans, to get rid of all securities and investments that are not liquid. With all banks attempting the same thing at the same time, credit disappears and money itself becomes scarce. Since production no longer offers any profits, the banks refuse loans to business men when they are most in need of credit, the factories begin to shut down and production comes to a halt in many industries.

Attempt to Control Credit

The "immediate" effect of a crisis is to make it impossible for the debtors to pay their debts. The apologists of capitalism, who refuse to recognize that it is very much of production itself that inevitably leads to crises, blame the collapse on the speculation that accompanies the boom in production. They cry out against the creation of a debt load through the enormous expansion of bank holdings of securities, loans on securities, and loans on real estate, a load that has become an impossible burden to carry. Hence in order to bring about some sort of "balance" they want to impose strict limits on credit, but without interfering with the credit necessary for the production and exchange of current goods (as though this were not a "gamble" in capitalist production). Thus the first step taken in reforming the banks was to separate the commercial banks lending money on and for current production, from the securities floating banks which are concerned with speculation by granting loans on capital assets. Stricter supervision and regulation of the issuance of securities was intended to reduce the unbalancing effects of the creation of these long-term, non-liquid credits which, unlike commercial credits, are not soon balanced or cancelled by the sale of goods. As a matter of fact, back of this "reform" is a clear recognition that the entire system is decaying and can no longer expand as rapidly, if at all, as in the days gone by.

A Government Central Bank

In conjunction with the rest of its efforts to "force" recovery, the government bent every effort to prepare the banking structure for a new expansion of business by aiding the banks in freeing all frozen assets, the government kindly taking over these unpayable debts for government bonds and relatively liquid assets. In repayment the government tried every form of cajolery to have the banks liberalize their commercial credit policy, to start business going again. But it reckoned without the market for despite all the excess reserves of the banks, there was no sign of any great increase in real demand. The banks had no confidence that they could make profits and hence they kept their money in their vaults. Meantime the Federal Government has embarked on spending unprecedentedly enormous sums of money in order to salvage the capitalist system and to prevent revolution. The government therefore feels a double need for greater control over the credit system: first, to extend credit more rapidly to business, and secondly, to protect its own financing by manipulating its own funds and securities to keep them up in price. The whole program dictated by the competition between national forms of capitalism, would be facilitated by greater government control. Hence the agitation for a Central Bank. —JACK WEBER.