

MARCH OF EVENTS

By JACK WEBER

Italy's Colonial Drive

With French and British acquiescence, Mussolini has found a "safe" outlet for the war spirit...

Japan and the Chinese Consortium

The negotiations between Tokyo and Nanking, in which Japan practically renewed her infamous twenty-one demands on China...

Roosevelt and "Prevailing Wage"

How serious is the struggle between Roosevelt and the Senate over the prevailing wage clause added to the work relief measure?

Bankers Hear Plan For Aged

When big bankers get together they tell the truth—to one another. Through some great error this truth appeared in the Herald-Tribune...

At a dinner of the American Bankers Association held in the Waldorf-Astoria, Lawrence G. Hammer, manager of the pension department of Johnson & Higgins, San Francisco, told what he really thought about the President's sham-liberal "security" bill for old age pensions.

"As for the rest—bah. There is no room for them, even in Utopia. Let the future hold for such as they are no more than the poor-house or the prison, and with the passing of years, their number will diminish."

Mr. Hammer is to be congratulated upon his honesty. Capitalism, he has truly stated, has no use for the faithful outworn slaves whom it has wrecked—let them go to the poor-house or prison, so that they will die quickly.

ly interested in protecting the wage scales of employed workers. The Senate had been warned in advance that a measure containing this provision would be vetoed by the President. Hence it cost it nothing at all to avoid the loss of labor votes in the coming elections by making the gesture that would satisfy Green and the A. F. of L. One of the motives back of the entire maneuver was undoubtedly dissatisfaction with the high-handed manner in which Roosevelt has handled the vast funds placed at his disposal. The Senators would like to have more to say concerning where and how this money is to be spent. They miss their former control of the pork barrel. This was shown clearly by the representatives despite the fact that the measure was passed by them without demur. But they were opposed to having the money administered by Secretary Ickes who failed to satisfy the politicians in his dishing out of spoils. Hence even the House refused to pass the measure until after a conference at the White House at which the leaders were reassured as to control and uses of the "mystery" fund of nearly five billions of dollars. One can safely predict that a "compromise" will be reached, that sacrifices entirely the interests of the workers under the proper phraseology, giving Roosevelt precisely what he wants. This will be accomplished by the simple Roosevelt expedient of buying Senate votes by satisfying the proper politicians with their share of the booty. The question remains as to what Roosevelt will actually do with the funds appropriated. How much of it will actually go to workers, how much to subsidize the construction industries? Under the demagogic guise of work relief a large portion of the fund will go to workers for wages, but to capitalist corporations to provide the materials for the work. Roosevelt has no intention of spending five billions to provide work alone. Rather he will pump profits into the coffers of the financiers.

Why Join the Workers Party

By A. J. MUSTE

Fellow Worker:

You have asked me some interesting questions. Why should I join the Workers Party? What is the program of the W. P.? Why was "another" party necessary? Can we not remove the evils from which workers now suffer without revolution?

Workers have every right to ask these questions of us. No worker, indeed, should join the W. P. without carefully considering and understanding our answer to these questions.

I am going to give our answers to them in a straightforward and simple manner as possible. I hope you will discuss these letters with the other workers in the shop and in your neighborhood about whom you wrote me. We ask nothing except a careful consideration of our program by honest, class-conscious workers. We believe the result will be that they join the Workers Party ranks.

HOW W. P. BEGAN

First of all I am going to tell you briefly how the W. P. came into existence; for that in itself tells something very important about what kind of a party the W. P. is. The W. P. was launched on December 1, 1928. Thus by the calendar the W. P. is, so to speak, a baby. But this is the case only if you judge by the calendar. In organization, in tradition, in personnel, in program, the W. P. begins its life as a mature party.

For the W. P. did not suddenly descend from the clouds or spring out of the sea. It is not the result of a "bright idea" in the brain of some individual. The W. P. came into existence as the result of the merger of two previously existing organizations, each of which had an honorable history of some years in the labor movement, both nationally and internationally. One of these organizations was the American Workers Party, the other the Communist League of America, popularly known as Trotskyists.

The C.L.A. was composed of revolutionists who were expelled from the Communist Party and the Communist International. They differed with the line taken by the C. P.

Letters to a Worker Correspondent

workers, only if the vanguard elements among the workers had a correct outlook and philosophy, and this meant being organized in a revolutionary working class party. When they looked about for such a party they thought they could belong and bring the workers, they did not find it in the C. P. or S. P. of any other existing party or group. Thus in the fall of 1933 they also came to the conclusion that there must be a new party and a new international, and set up the Provisional Organizing Committee of the American Workers Party.

Thus there were two groups, which had come from very different directions to the same conclusion. Soon the C.L.A. and the A. W. P. entered into discussions. We said, "If we really mean the same thing, why we talk about a new party, we should be building it together." We were deliberate about the thing, however. We decided that we must not fuse politically, unless we were really in agreement on the fundamentals of a program. Lacking such agreement, we could still work together on concrete issues but political merger must be on the basis of principle. Thus for eleven months discussion went on. At the end of that time a joint committee of the two organizations wrote a Declaration of Principles and a constitution which were adopted at their conventions and which constituted the basis of the merger and of the formal launching of the Workers Party of the United States.

NOT A HASTY DECISION

It is clear, then, that here was no hasty, irresponsible decision to go and launch "another party". The workers in the C.L.A. and A. W. P. acted in the most careful and responsible manner in dealing with the problem before them, as revolutionists should.

The W. P. does not, however, trace its history back merely to the former A.W.P. and C.L.A. The members of these organizations has been active in labor and revolutionary work here and abroad, long before the organizations themselves came into being. So it came about that in the founding convention of the W. P. here were present not a few of the founders of the C. P. and C. I., workers who had been active in the Socialist Party in the days when that was a progressive force, workers who had participated in the Russian revolution, workers who had stood firm in the trying days of the Great War, who had taken a leading part in the labor struggles in the U. S. for the past thirty years and more. The Workers Party is rich in tradition and experience.

OUR CREDENTIALS

A party needs more than traditions, however. You and your fellow-workers have a right to ask whether we have credentials from the working class today, what role we are playing in the surging movement and the vast struggles of the present. Our answer is that we do have such credentials. We point to the fact that in the founding convention of the W. P. the leaders of the National Unemployed League, the strongest and most stable of the unemployed organizations which have come out of the depression, the leaders of the great Toledo strike, the leaders of the great series of strikes in Minneapolis, active workers in steel, automobiles, textile, rubber, transportation, the public utilities took part. We are an integral part in all sections of the country of the working class movement and the struggles of the masses.

Let me go back for a moment and emphasize again that the W. P. is the result of a merger. For ten years and more we have seen splits and disintegration in the revolutionary movement. Sometimes it seemed as if every week produced a new party, group or grouplet. No wonder that you and many other workers felt discouraged and even sometimes disgusted. Here at last we have a case not of "another party", not of two groups where there was one before, but of one organization where before there were two. Here is an example of revolutionary unity. This, we submit, means more than just adding one and one to make two. The establishment of a unifying center marks an historic turning point in the revolutionary movement. This example of unity will be as contagious, we believe, as was the example of splits in an earlier period. The fact that the former C.L.A. and A.W.P. were able to begin this process of unification is proof that they represented healthy, vigorous and responsible elements. That they may work with these elements to further the crucial job of unifying the revolutionary forces is one big argument for workers joining the W. P.

UNITY—ON WHAT BASIS?

When we speak of unity today we have to understand clearly what we mean. Unity—on what basis? Merely repeating the word "unity" or "united front" will not accomplish anything. Political unity, for one thing, is not the same as united front. United front means united action for specific purposes, against wage cuts or evictions, for the defense of labor prisoners etc., by organiza-

tions which have grave political differences. Membership in a political party of the working class is not on the same basis as membership in a union. A union is a mass organization to which all workers in a given trade or industry belong—Republicans, Democrats, Single Taxers, Workers Party, C. P., S. P., Baptists, Presbyterians, Prohibitionists, etc. It does not prohibit that you can put the same Republicans, Democrats, Single Taxers, Prohibitionists, Baptists, etc. in a political party, and have a labor party, much less a revolutionary party.

The revolutionary party does not deal merely or primarily with immediate issues of wages, hours and conditions of work. It deals with the problem of the economic-political system as a whole, how it must and can be changed or abolished, etc. A revolutionary party must, therefore, have a philosophy, a theory, a program. If it has the wrong one, then at the critical moment it will fail and betray the masses.

Take the example of Austria. There we had a great working class party, the Social Democratic Party. It had no rivals. It had in it practically all the best elements in the Austrian working class. There was likewise a powerful trade union movement, closely linked with the political party, great cooperative, cultural, sports organizations. Yet this mighty and united movement collapsed before Fascism. Why? Because it was based upon a false, Social Democratic, philosophy and program. To the consideration of that philosophy and program, I shall turn in another letter. Suffice it now to point the obvious moral: the working class does not want the kind of "unity" that leads to Fascist concentration camps, any more than it wants the divisions that lead to defeat at the hands of Fascism. An army moving unitedly in the wrong direction cannot get to the right place!

What, then, is the philosophy and program of the W.P.? It is not something brand-new, which we patented yesterday. Our Declaration of Principles says: "The W. P. of the U. S. is founded on the great principles of revolutionary theory and practice stated by Marx and Lenin and tested by the experience of the class struggle on an international scale, above all in the Russian Revolution of 1917 (the 'October Revolution')." (The W. P. carries on, in other words, the great revolutionary tradition of the modern working class. To it belong Marx, and Lenin, and Trotsky, who are not out of the revolution who have read him out of the revolutionary movement. To it belongs the Russian revolution, through which the one workers' state, beacon light of inspiration to the workers of the entire world, was brought into being.)

As the revolutionary party of the American working class our primary task, as the Declaration of Principles states, "is the overthrow of the enemy at home—the overthrow of the capitalist government of the United States." Thus, proceeding from the basic principles of Marx and Lenin, we "will use the revolutionary potentialities of American tradition and history", adapt our tactics to the concrete situation and the line-up of the class forces in the U. S., in order to inspire and lead the American working class and its allies in the other exploited sections of the population, to the overthrow of capitalism and the building of a society in which natural resources and the machinery of production will be used for the benefit of the workers and not for the profit of a few.

(Comrade Muste's second letter will appear in the next issue.)

International Notes

Communist League of China Hails WP

From the Standing Committee of the Communist League of China at Shanghai the National Secretary of the Workers Party U. S. has received a letter hailing the founding of the W. P. and stating that the "Workers Party of the United States will prove a source of inspiration to revolutionaries the world over who are striving to restore revolutionary principle, reassemble the shattered and demoralized proletarian ranks, hurl back the tide of reaction and bring socialist victory to a tortured world. It will be a powerful lever for the creation of the Fourth International."

The C. L. of China is dedicated to the task of establishing a new revolutionary party in that country. "The heavy heritage of ideological corruption and confusion left us by Stalinism, the backwardness of Chinese culture in general," meager material resources, the white terror—all combine to make the task both difficult and dangerous. But they are preparing themselves "for the next high tide of the revolution while doing all that is possible by our conscious work among the masses to stimulate the revival of the Chinese labor movement."

Commenting upon the message of greeting from the Chinese revolutionists, National Secretary A. J. Muste said: "We are establishing close fraternal relations with the Chinese comrades. This is another evidence of the international character of our movement. The Chinese comrades need our support. We must build the W. P. so that this support may be real and strong."

Workers Party Organized in Panama

Another step in the international revolutionary movement has been taken with the formation of the Workers Party of Panama. The provisional national committee of the new party has issued a manifesto and is preparing the first national convention of the party.

While probably destined to remain one of the smaller revolutionary parties (the whole country has a half million inhabitants), the Panama party deserves, in view of the key position of the country, the fullest support of the world proletariat and above all of the proletariat of the United States, whose ruling class practically owns the little republic.

The manifesto of the Workers Party of Panama, after reviewing the world situation and the complete dependence of the economic and political situation in Panama upon that of American imperialism, and after criticizing the reformist policy of the Socialist Party and the failure of the Communist Party to create a revolutionary vanguard of the proletariat, sets forth its own program.

"It is necessary to re-group the working-class on an international scale outside of the influence of the two existing internationals," the manifesto declares. "The final goal of all our activities is the proletarian conquest of power by the proletariat, the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat, and the construction of the classless socialist society as the intermediate stage towards communism." The manifesto ends with an appeal for the "Defense of the Soviet Union through revolutionary action" and the "creation of the Fourth International".

The immediate program of the party, while presented in outline in the manifesto, is to be elaborated by the national convention.

Recognizing the importance of the revolutionary party to the small Caribbean nations in their struggles against imperialism, the Workers Party of the U. S. sends its greeting to the Workers Party of Panama, and promises it full political and organizational support.

The proletariat of the largest and of the smallest countries in the American Empire have only one enemy. Their struggle must likewise be one. Jointly for the overthrow of American imperialism! Jointly for the victory of the world revolution!

FACTS ABOUT AMERICA

- 1. A sixth of the entire population of the U.S. is on relief.
2. A fifth of all formerly employed workers are out of a job.
3. A third of all our aged are dependents.
4. Two fifths of those on relief are children.
5. Nearly half of all Americans do not get proper medical care.
6. Millions of Americans live in homes little better than hovels.
7. Even in 1929 the workers' average annual income was only \$1,475.
8. In 1929 the annual earnings of 18,000,000 workers were under \$1,000 apiece.
9. In 1929 the annual earnings of 28,000,000 workers were under \$1,500 apiece.—From Relief Administrator Harry L. Hopkins' Chicago talk, March 1, 1935.

S.P. Militants Forced to Cover Up Right Wing Labor Defense Maneuver

New light is shed on the labor defense policy of the Socialist Party and especially on the role of the leading Militants in the S. P. by correspondence just released for publication by the Provisional Committee for Non-Partisan Labor Defense. Last week's New Militant reported and analyzed the violation by the Socialist Party of its agreement to cooperate with the Provisional Committee, the Communist Party (Opposition), the Workers Party and the Il Martello Group (Italian anti-Fascists led by Carlo Tresca) in organizing a conference to launch a permanent, non-partisan labor defense organization. The New Leader of Jan. 26 announced for the first time that the Socialist Party was building its own defense machinery. Until that issue of the New Leader appeared there was no indication that the Socialist Party had changed its labor defense policy.

Morrow's Letter to Baron

In an effort to determine the full significance of the New Leader announcement for the relation of the S. P. to the agreement to build a non-partisan labor defense organization, Felix Morrow, Secretary of the Provisional Committee sent the following letter to Murray Baron of the Socialist Party on the 29th of January.

"Dear Comrade Baron, "This is addressed to you as the representative of the National Labor Committee delegated by it to cooperate with us in carrying out the 'Plan for a New Labor Defense Organization' which the National Executive Committee of the Socialist Party at its September meeting agreed to carry out together with the other organizations accepting the Plan. . . ."

"Our Executive Committee was astonished to discover that the Socialist Party of New York has formed its own Socialist Committee for Promotion of Labor Defense. Also August Claessens, Secretary of the New York Labor Committee, writes in the January 26 New Leader that 'good progress is being made in the organization of a Labor and Socialist National Defense Committee' 'with local committees in every large city to begin with'. We do not of course know whether August Claessens is authorized or not to speak for the national organization though the tenor of his article would seem to indicate that he is so authorized. As for the New York committee formed we note that it includes in its membership the representatives of the National Labor Committee delegated to carry out the Plan for a new defense organization."

"Our Executive Committee, therefore, requests that you write to us, informing us of the relation of the local Socialist committee already organized and the

national committee referred to by August Claessens, to the 'Plan for a New Labor Defense Organization' which the Socialist Party of America is pledged to carry out in conjunction with the other organizations mentioned above.

"We would appreciate a communication from you. "Fraternally yours, (signed) "Felix Morrow. "Secretary"

Baron's Reply

The letter speaks for itself. Three days later on February 1, Baron replied:

"Dear Comrade Felix, "If reply to your inquiry regarding the recently created Socialist Committee for Promotion of Labor Defense, I wish to state the following:

"The Socialist Party of the United States has not by any pact, agreement or understanding precluded itself from creating, improving and extending its Labor Defense and relief machinery. Under the direction of its National Labor Committee it has been engaged for some time in such activities. State and local labor committees are now functioning throughout the country. Their proper functioning is intended to effect more durable and satisfactory relations with the organized labor movement. Already a great measure of success is being attained in that direction.

"Local New York, under the direction of the National Labor Committee, has set up a temporary committee of party members in harmony with these plans. The jurisdiction of this committee is confined to New York City. It is presently occupying itself with the raising of funds on behalf of Ward H. Rogers and Stanley Glass.

"This work is not in contradiction to the 'Plan for a New Labor Defense Organization' which has been accepted by our N.E.C. and N.L.C. (National Labor Committee) of the S.P. Instead it is designed to promote the eventual emergence of such an organization upon a basis much broader and more powerful than might otherwise be possible.

"Fraternally, (signed) "Murray Baron, "National Labor Committee "Socialist Party of U.S."

The crux of the matter is clear: The Provisional Committee inquired what the New Leader announced of January 26 signified with relation to the attempt to build a labor defense organization together with itself and other working class organizations; Baron, writing for the National Labor Committee of the S.P. replied (1) the organization outlined in the New Leader was internal party machinery to improve the S. P.'s relation

to the labor movement, and (2) it did not contravene the agreement the S.P. had with other organizations to organize a conference and launch a permanent defense organization, but was even designed to facilitate that agreement.

One day after Baron wrote his reply to Morrow's inquiry the New Leader, February 2 issue, announced that a conference would be held on March 15 to launch a new labor defense organization and that delegates from hundreds of trade unions and fraternal organizations were expected. As it turns out not one of the organizations with which the S.P. had an agreement was consulted about this conference or has even been invited to it.

At the time that Baron wrote his reply the policy of the S. P. had been decided on: a break with its agreement entered into in good faith by other working class organizations. The New Leader indicating this break was already on the press. Why did Baron, replying to the Provisional Committee in the name of the National Labor Committee of the S.P. were designed to carry out the original agreement?

Could Baron have been unaware of this change of policy? That is to say, were there two policies, one by the National Labor Committee and another by one of the New York committees? Baron is a member of the National Labor Committee. He is secretary of the New York Committee for Promotion of Labor Defense. It does not matter where the policy announced in the New Leader originated—in the National Labor Committee, the Socialist Party of New York City, the Socialist Committee for Promotion of Labor Defense. The responsibility of Baron is fully involved.

What has happened is that when the Militants were riding high in the Socialist Party they committed the party to an agreement which contained the fundamental principled basis for a genuine non-partisan labor defense organization. The subsequent advance of the right wing and capitulation of the Militants gave the right wing the opportunity to reverse the labor defense policy. The Militants capitulated.

To all appearances there is no difference now between their policy on labor defense and that of the right wing. But to the Militants was assigned the job of getting out of the jam as best they could.

In the story of the changes in the S. P. policy on labor defense organization are profound lessons for those socialist workers who really want to come to grips with the paralyzing control of the right wing and strike out in a revolutionary direction.

ORDER W. P. PAMPHLETS NOW.

Finds C.I. Like Roman Church

The C. I. today bears marked resemblance to Roman Catholicism. The latter teaches that only through the Catholic hierarchy can truth be revealed to the layman, and rejection of this is tantamount to heresy. Similarly, to remain within the Comintern, one must not question the authority of Almighty Stalin.

As organizer of my C.P.-Y.C.L.C. Celluloid Industrial Unit, I expressed doubts as to the correctness of the C. I. line during the last decade.

No attempt was made to answer me. I was accused of expressing counter-revolutionary views. I was summarily removed as unit organizer and threatened with expulsion if I did not recant my opinions. I refused and was expelled.

I ask all other C.P. and Y.C.L.C. members to get at the implications behind this. Party democracy no longer exists within the C. P. The bureaucracy which usurped power over the C.P.S.U. and extended its control over the C.I. has adopted the posture of infallibility in order to perpetuate its rule. And foster no illusions! As the mistakes of the bureaucracy increase, so will its repressive measures.

There is but one thing for all clear thinking C. P. and Y.C.L.C. members to do: Build the Workers Party; build the new, Fourth International.—BERNARD ROSS