

Roosevelt Gives A.F.ofL. Cold Shoulder on Auto Board, Codes, Relief

C.P. Leadership Can't Be Trusted

Write Former Members to Comrade Who Asks Them to Come Back to Party

We print below a letter of invitation to rejoin the Communist Party received by Comrades Taylor and Terry of New York together with their reply to the invitation. The reply should prove of particular interest in a discussion on important problems of trade union policy.—Ed. Note.

Dear Fred: Won't you please read this over (Daily Worker clipping) and see whether it doesn't fit your own case? The C.P. is taking real new action along the lines which you and I have always thought necessary and desirable—a great many old sectarian notions are being dropped and it seems a shame you and Jack too—can't get in now when the work is beginning to show results. When am I going to see you? —TED.

Theodore Weeks, New York City

Dear Ted: Jack and I have read your letter with great interest and here is our reply:

You write "The C.P. is taking real new action along the lines which you and I always thought was necessary. . . ." Is the party really taking "new action", i.e., change of trade union policy and tactics? If so, when has the party leadership publicly proclaimed this change of policy and tactics? . . . Have the worker-communists in the lower ranks of the party discussed this "new action" and has the party leadership changed its trade-union policy in accordance with the experiences of the worker-communists who are in the trade unions?

In the 1929 Draft-Outline of the T.U.U.L.—pp. 22-23-24—we read: "The so-called Muste opposition . . . aims at reestablishing the prestige and organization of the discredited A.F.L. leaders. . . . In this period of rationalization and speed-up, of radicalization of the workers, the

NOTE ON BOSTON BRANCH

The Boston Branch of the Workers Party is now well established at 12 Hayward Place, situated in the heart of the city. These new headquarters, consisting of several rooms, are open every evening and on Sunday afternoons, with a party member in charge to welcome all those who care to come in.

The weekly meeting of the branch takes place on Thursday evenings. These meetings are divided into two parts: the first part given over to party business is closed; the second part which is devoted to education and current events is open to non-members. The branch membership has increased by over 30 percent.

Contest Note

Big Gains in Middle West Chicago, New York lagging Forging ahead this week are Cincinnati, Davenport and Youngstown all tying with a 40 percent score. Minneapolis comes next with no gains since last report. Louisville has achieved 20 percent in the first week.

Compared with these scores the 9 percent of New York and the 5 percent of Chicago do not stand up very well. More concentrated effort is needed in these cities which should be leading the way. Philadelphia is doing a bit better with a score of 16 percent, but even that needs improvement.

Plentywood has achieved 20 percent and Worcester 10 percent. Considering the difficulties involved these scores are not to be censured. But San Francisco, with only 15 percent certainly could do better. All other branches have a score of less than 15 percent. It is time that they get busy and put in some real intensive work on the drive. Especially should Toledo, St. Louis, Pittsburgh, Newark, Boston, Columbus and Los Angeles be able to make a better showing by next week.

There are still some branches from which we have had no subs at all. They are listed here as a reminder. This means that it is time for you to show some results: Akron, Biloxi, Buffalo, Charles-

ton, Cleveland, Dickson City, Fort Wayne, Mineola, Mt. Carmel, Oakland, Peterson, Salt Lake City, Springfield, Staunton, Throop, Washington, D.C., Winston Salem and Waukegan.

Comrades in branches are urged to take up the matter of the drive with their literature agents. See that the drive is put on the agenda of branch meetings and that definite plans are made for intensive work to achieve our goal. Send in reports. You are interested in the progress of other branches and they want to know what you are doing.

But don't wait for branch action. Go right out yourself among your friends and fellow workers. Get them to subscribe. Send your remittance directly or through your literature agent. If you send it yourself be sure to mention (a) your name, (b) your branch, if connected with the W.P., (c) that you want this sub credited in the drive, (d) full name and address of subscriber. Note that subs will not be credited unless this information accompanies the remittance.

Subs on combination offer will be credited only if remittance is payable directly to the New Militant.

And now—another week of effort! Let's get all the percentages up to—well over—the 50 percent mark by the 15th of this month! We can do it!

NEW MILITANT 2 West 15th St., New York City

Please enter my name for [] one year, \$1.00; [] 6 months, 65c.

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I am interested in joining the Workers Party of the U. S. []

we will quote W. Z. Foster's "Little Brothers of the Big Labor Fakers", 1931 (pp. 4-5-6): "The A. F. of L. is an employers' tool. . . . When unorganized workers undertake to organize and fight they cannot use the A. F. of L. . . . The A. F. of L. leaders will split the unions rather than let the workers capture and use them for fighting purposes". . . . This was declared in 1931 and culminated in the famous C. P. announcement (1934) that it is necessary to build an "independent federation".

The end of 1934 and the beginning of 1935 again brought a reversal of the Stalinist "policy" suddenly and without discussion. No loss and no more than the liquidation of the "necessary" independent unions. . . . At one time we stated at a leading fraction meeting of the building trades that the independent Alteration Painters Union must enter the A. F. of L. to strengthen the class struggle elements within the Painters Brotherhood (A. F. of L.) and we were branded "opportunists". . . . Now look at the speed with which the party leadership is "throwing" the Alteration Painters Union into the A. F. of L. Of course now there is nothing much left to "throw" in but the attempt is made, and in a manner that will only further discredit the former.

In one and the same year (1934) we are told: 1) to build an "independent federation" and 2) to liquidate independent unions and to "build and strengthen the A. F. of L.". . . . What does this latest zig-zag represent? . . . A sudden swing against further zigzags to the right or to the "left"? . . . To ask this question after what we have indicated above is, to say the very least, naive.

This leadership swings to the right or to the "left" but has no independent policy of its own. There can be no guarantee against further changes of policy by the centrist party leadership.

Comradely yours, ALFRED TERRY JACK TAYLOR

Progressives Suspended From ILG

The necessity for a unified progressive opposition in the I.L.G.W.U. is emphasized by the suspension of two progressive members of Cutters Union Local 10 by the Central Appeals Committee of the International. Oscar Signer and William Zweiborn, members of the Cutters' Welfare League, a Progressive group in Local 10, are the members suspended.

In an appeal to all members of the I.L.G.W.U., the Cutters Welfare League calls upon all progressives to "fight against violations of democratic rights".

The basis for suspension of Signer and Zweiborn, the appeal points out, was the calling of a meeting, by the Cutters Welfare League, of unemployed cutters, with the announced purpose of pushing the local into action on behalf of the unemployed. This was early last winter, when unemployment was at a critical stage. For this action, Zweiborn and Signer were charged with dual unionism and suspended. On appeal to the General Appeals Committee, the suspension was upheld after a nine months' delay. At the time of his suspension, Zweiborn was manager of the Union Defenders Committee of the Dress Joint Board.

MISERY STALKS FASCIST AUSTRIA

VIENNA.—The number of Austrian unemployed receiving public relief has risen to 337,333 during February of 1935. The monthly increase amounts to approximately 3,000 people. One-sixth of the population of the Austrian capital is dependent upon public relief. 51,000 households with a total of 130,000 family members report an income of 20 schillings a month.

Teachers Must Not Rest With Vanderwoude Decision

By a Teacher

A decision handed down by State Commissioner of Education Cole has compelled the New York City Board of Education to appoint some 1,700 qualified teachers to jobs in the city public school system. This decision, the commissioner's reply to a brief filed by one of the eligible teachers, Edith Vanderwoude, finally halts one of the most odious of the numerous "economy" practices of the board; namely, forcing teachers on eligible lists to serve in existing vacancies on a substitute basis.

These teachers had to work at a rate considerably lower than the schedules provided for by state law; moreover, they were deprived of the tenure, increment and pension privileges attached to regular appointment. This practice, the board's contribution to the "economy" program of the banker and realty interests, had been applied so extensively that in some of the largest high schools "substitutes" comprised fully 75 percent of the teaching staff. The effectiveness of this plan as a method of using one group of teachers to force another into submission is evident.

What the Vanderwoude decision, definitely establishing the impermissibility of compelling eligible workers as substitutes in existing vacancies, is a victory for the teachers. The labor press, in its jubilation, has failed to analyze the nature and consequence of the victory. Serious teachers must not be content solely with winning concessions. They must inquire: What is the result of this victory in terms of building a militant movement? For victories which do not at the same time result in building a movement can be washed away tomorrow.

Let us analyze the victory. 1,700 teachers are affected immediately, are assigned to jobs at the regular rates of pay. But several thousand similarly situated teachers are not actually nearer to getting jobs. Moreover, a number of teachers who were working at the substitute pay rates are now without work at all.

Purely Legal Fight

The fight was conducted on a purely legal basis. The Teachers Union of New York participated in it only to the extent of contributing \$50 to help defray legal expenses. It stood by passively, while another organization, the New York Association of Unappointed Teachers, pushed the issue to its conclusion. The union has about 2,000 in its ranks; the Unappointed about 60. The union has prestige and influence. The Unappointed is generally unknown and has very little influence.

Since the fight was won on a purely legal basis, the result must tend to strengthen the illusions of the teachers in the "just" charac-

ter of the capitalist state institutions. To teachers who do not understand what is involved, it must appear that an abuse was corrected by an appeal to the state! All that is required is a capable lawyer to draw up legal documents and justice will take its course. Then what is the necessity for a union? In this sense the victory can be construed as a rebuff to the union movement. This result might have been avoided and positive steps in the militant education of teachers taken, had the necessary legal fight been supported by mass and union pressure.

Role of the Union

Jointly responsible are the leadership of the union and the Progressive Group, one of its left-wing groups. The leadership of the union is right-wing Socialist in the main. Its support is in the higher salaried teachers. Its policy is limited to lobbying in Albany. It is not interested in the condition and needs of the unemployed and the partly employed. That is why it could ignore for years the needs of these teachers, and finally look on placidly while another organization conducted a struggle which the union was duty-bound to lead.

It was the duty of the group which claimed to be progressive to conduct a struggle in the union against this leadership; to have the union take up this fight. But it was not its duty to build an organization of union members and teachers eligible for union membership outside the union, and make this organization the "leader" of the fight for appointments.

Yet this is precisely what the Progressive Group did. In the fall of 1931 it set up and has led ever since the New York Association of Unappointed Teachers. The union is now reaping the fruits of this policy.

Struggle Within the Union

So will the Progressive Group. In the union it wages a struggle with the right-wing Socialist leadership. And strange as it may seem, the axis of the struggle according to its own analysis is precisely the question of the leadership's line of limiting its efforts almost exclusively to lobbying and legal fights, versus the real progressive's line of mass pressure to back up the lobbying and legal fights. Yet the victory which the offspring of the Progressive Group claims all for itself must strengthen the reformist leadership against the Progressive Group. Such is the result of the Progressive Group policy, essentially factional.

Teachers should repudiate such policies. They should demand that the union fight for the interests of the teachers; and by fight, we do not mean legal fights alone, we mean primarily mass pressure by the teachers and the labor movement to strengthen the illusions of the teachers in the "just" charac-

Administration Getting Ready for Large Scale Wage Cutting Drive Against Unions

By ARNE SWABECK

The rift between the Roosevelt administration and the A. F. of L. leadership has widened, all indications to the contrary notwithstanding. First President Roosevelt, despite the vehement objections from the A. F. of L. officialdom, extended the automobile agreement of last year, which legalized the company union, and extended the life of the Kollman and had been consulted prior to the extension of the agreement, but the opinions of Bill Green were not solicited. And except for the subsequent "gracious" reception given at the White House, permitting Bill Green to introduce by name to the President each one of the members of the Executive Council, nothing was done to mend the rift, not to speak of dealing with the real grievances of the automobile workers.

President Roosevelt next announced the tobacco code with its 40-hour week regulation and the 25 to 40 cents an hour minimum wage, and again over the objections of the A. F. of L. official leadership. To the impassioned criticism made by the latter of S. Clay Williams as chairman of the National Industrial Recovery Board President Roosevelt answered in his "Dear Bill" letter to Green informing him that the former chairman of the notorious open shop R. J. Reynolds tobacco company was a devoted public servant. However soothing this may have appeared to Bill Green, it could mean only another kick in the face in so far as the administration's attitude to the issue of union organization is concerned.

Finally, the insistence of the Roosevelt administration upon a \$50 per month maximum wage for workers on relief projects will unquestionably receive the unstinted support of all the magnates of finance and industry. With that will go an effort to squelch the so-called labor lobby in Congress.

A number of other measures are pending before Congress which will, if anything, tend to widen further the present open rift. There is, for example, the 30-hour week bill. On numerous occasions the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and the Manufacturers Association have voiced their determined opposition to this bill. It is a well-known fact that the Roosevelt administration sees eye to eye with them and the hopes pinned by these labor leaders upon the government for support in return for their miserable failure of union organization are due for another blast. Thus, there need be no doubt that the rift is brought about by the initiative of President Roosevelt. That is why there is something real about it.

Serious Problems Ahead

These issues which stand out in the recent events in Washington foreshadow the serious problems that the trade union movement will henceforth have to face. In fact, the breach between Roosevelt and the labor leaders is merely the prelude to a wage-cutting campaign on a large scale that is now in preparation. It is signaled by the proposed \$50 monthly maximum wage for workers on relief projects. But the issues go even deeper. They will raise the very question of life or death to the trade union movement.

Of course, the labor leaders are correct when they insist that two wage levels, a higher for private industry and a lower for government relief work, cannot be maintained. The higher rate will be forced down to the lower rate. At first the unemployed workers who are dependent upon relief will be compelled to work for the low rate. Economic experts will next get busy and manipulate statistics to show that workers on relief projects get by on the \$50 monthly maximum wage, that they can keep on producing on that wage rate. That the family budget can be shaved down to that level and that there is, therefore, no valid reason for paying more in private industry. Wage reductions will be on the order of the day in every industry and it stands to reason that one of its inescapable accompaniments will be in the first instance well-prepared and deliberate efforts to chain the trade union movement to a system of compulsory arbitration in which strikes are outlawed. Failing in that, there will be sure to follow the most fierce campaign

yet witnessed to exterminate the trade union movement.

What Is Being Done?

The most serious questions now arise before every active trade unionist. What is the leadership of the movement doing to defend and to maintain its right of existence? What are the organizations doing to prepare for a serious battle?

To the A. F. of L. Executive Council is credited a powerful lobby in Congress. Its success to date cannot be said to have been very startling and certainly it holds out much less prospects for the future. So long that it serves merely as a shield for the actual failure of organization and struggle it can only have fatal consequences to the movement. In reality that is all this lobby is today.

The Executive Council has decided that it will not now undertake to organize the steel industry. It is too busy with the automobile industry. William Green has even made a tour of the automobile centers and in his public addresses assured the manufacturers that the A. F. of L. does not intend to strike the plants. All it asks is a fair deal. Such a message does not sound very inspiring to the automobile workers. After all, they have also had their experiences and very likely learned by this time that nothing can be gained unless they fight for it. Consequently the meetings of Bill Green were not very enthusiastically attended. In Detroit less than two thousand workers showed up, which compares very poorly with the great overflow meetings held by A. F. of L. leaders last year. But that was before the sell-out agreement had been signed by them. Now the automobile workers' unions show a serious drop in membership despite the fact that there have been many indications of a sentiment for organization amongst the workers provided they are shown how to organize and how to get somewhere. The A. F. of L. campaign of organization does not meet with great response. The automobile manufacturers are, of course, opposed to it. The Wollman Board tells the workers that if they join the A. F. of L. it cannot help them. The A. F. of L. leaders offer nothing except its replacement by the National Industrial Relations Board*. The inducements for joining the union under these conditions are slim indeed.

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WHAT TO ATTEND

Minneapolis, Minn.

March 23, Saturday at 8 P.M.—Card Party and Entertainment to welcome the return of the Branch delegation to the Pittsburgh conference. To be held at the Branch headquarters, 631 3rd Ave. S. Admission 25c. Refreshments included.

Philadelphia, Pa.

Regular Sunday evening forums at Branch headquarters.

New York City

Thursday, March 21, 8 P.M.—A. J. Muste will speak on "The Meaning of the Recent Developments in the S.P." Auspices Bronx Branch.

Friday, March 22, 8 P.M.—A. J. Muste on "Impending Strike Struggles in the Basic Industries". Auspices East Side Branch, Grand Central Palace, 86 Clinton St.

Sunday, March 24, 8 P.M.—Canon Mass Meeting, Irving Plaza. "The Class Struggle in the West". Speaker: James P. Cannon. See ad.

Monday evening, March 25—Theatre Party, "The Black Pit", Clivie Repertory Theatre. Lillian Bord, New York district office, in charge of tickets.

mobile workers to a campaign of organization cannot be expected until the unions break off completely from the sell-out tradition established by the reactionary leadership. It may take a few more kicks in the face from the Roosevelt administration to do it, but we may rest assured that such kicks will not be lacking. What must follow next must be an aggressive policy of organization. The very life and existence of the trade-union movement depends upon that.

*The Executive Council has decided that the automobile workers are to have a separate charter for an international union, but it is not to include the tool and die makers or the maintenance men, nor is it to take effect until June, that is, not until after this season is over. This alone should verify that the strike vote now conducted by the automobile workers federal unions, with the actual call for a strike, however, left to Wm. Green, can have no serious meaning. But it is only one of the straws in the wind indicating that the Executive Council is determined to resist any move for industrial unionism. At its recent meeting the Mill, Mine and Smelter Workers Union appealed against a decision to split up the workers in the Butte copper mines among craft unions, leaving in the main only semi-skilled and unskilled workers to the mine union. John Frey of the Metal Trades Department, supported by Arthur Wharton of the machinists and by other craft union chiefs, succeeded in thwarting any attempt of industrial union jurisdiction.

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Sunday, 8 p.m., March 24th -- Irving Plaza JAMES P. CANNON On His Return from a Coast to Coast Tour WITH Speak On The Class Struggle in the West The Aftermath of the San Francisco General Strike Criminal Syndicalism and the Sacramento Case A Visit to Tom Mooney Agricultural Strikers and Vigilantes Epic Planners and Utopians The Rise of the Workers Party of the U. S. Tickets in Advance 15 cents, 2 West 15th Street (3rd floor)

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