Comments
On Life, Liberty and Pursuit of Happiness

By BILL REICH

Great Minds...

"If there were no aliens in this country there would be no unemployment problem," asserts Representative Dies who is forming an organization to be called "The Americans" for the purpose of carrying on a national campaign to deport 6,000,000 aliens. . . . "Russia has, to all intents and purposes, withdrawn a fertile and populous land of over eight million square miles in extent, with a population of 165,000,000 from the usual economic intercourse with the world. This has upset the delicate economic balance of Europe," proclaims Rear Admiral Yates Stirling, Jr., commandant of the Brooklyn Navy Yard, in the Hearst press. He advocates aligning ourselves with Nazi Germany "not only for laying forever the ghost of Bolshevism but for opening up the fertile lands of Russ'a to a crowded and industrially hungry Europe." . . .

Safety...

$150,000 was appropriated for machine guns, floodlights, electrical devices and tear gas for the defense of United States Mints. "Evidently you're looking for an attack by the regular army," remarked Chairman Buchanan of the Appropriations Committee. "You can't tell what sort of an attack will be made," replied W. C. Cram, technical advisor of the Treasury, "We might be attacked by a mob" . . . The New York City Police Dept. requested quotations on a new "electrical glove" to be worn in subduing strikers. The apparatus consists of a battery and induction coil carried on the hip with wires running to the glove. Voltages up to 5,000 can be obtained. . . . Twenty-five 12-year old New York boys were arrested, jailed, shown the electric chair and fingerprinted as part of their instruction in the suppression of crime. After finishing the course they were presented with badges bearing the slogan "Crime Can't Win" . . .

Blue Eagle...

The National Association of Cotton Manufacturers reports that mills continue to operate in compliance with NRA codes and that its policing unit has had practically nothing to do. One mill was reported to have increased hourly rates. . . . Textile mills in Macon, Ga., have gone back to the 50 hour week with no increase in pay (one back increases granted under the mill requiring employees to pay NRA); millinery manufacturers in Buffalo, N. Y., announce an increase in weekly hours from 35 to 40; workers of the Menzies Shoe Co. in Tennessee are on strike against increasing the shift from 8 to 10 hours; employees of the Ideal Hosiery Co. are striking against a 10 percent wage reduction; two men were killed by deputies in a dispute over wage cutting at the Monarch Textile Mill, Union, S. C. . . . Investigators for the Labor Department found "home work" rampant. Visiting 179 listed employees of the Rhode Island lace industry they found 279 other persons working on the same production, more than a sixth being children. In 75 percent of the cases weekly earnings were less than $10. . . . Anna Schlorer Smith, Philadelphia mayonnaise manufacturer and owner of Blue Eagle No. 13, slashed her throat when her employees struck in protest to an increase in hours to 50 and a cut in wages from $13 to $10 per week. . . .

Housing...

About one third of America's dwellings "are of a character to injure the health, endanger the safety and morals and interfere with the normal life of their inhabitants," reports Edith Wood of the PWA Housing Division after an extensive survey of homes in New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania. . . . "Housing, public works and other projects on which material costs are relatively high will have to take a secondary place," states the Advisory Committee on Allotments President Roosevelt's four billion dollar relief fund. . . .

Unemployment...

Two thousand hunger marchers from the Canadian west coast are coralled in a concentration camp at Regina, Saskatchewan, to prevent them from marching on Ottawa. Prime Minister Bennett stated to members of the group that there would be no recognition of "Soviet agitators and Soviet committees." "You don't want work," he continued. "You want adventure and hope this organization you are building may overawe the government and break down law and order." . . . FERA colonists at Manatuska, Alaska, complain that they have no houses to live in, food is exhorbitantly expensive, schools are not ready, and mosquitoes are unbearable. . . . President Roosevelt announces: "Harry Hopkins and I are considering offering a medal to the State Administrator who causes us the fewest headaches." . . .

A Survey of the Automobile Industry
Detroit and Toledo-Striking Contrast In Organization Methods

All is again quiet on the automobile front.

A few stray shots are still being fired on the field of battle, but barring the possibility of the tool and dye makers repeating their spectacular strike struggles of two years ago, the real battle will not begin again until the fall. Factory schedules are sharply tapering off and the mass lay-offs have started the great exodus out of Detroit and the other automobile centers. Obviously this is the time for the trade union militants to consolidate their position, to entrench themselves moro firmly inside the existing unions and to prepare for the inevitable struggles of the near future.

To do this effectively, the militants must have a clear perspective.

The Toledo strike demonstrated again the surprising vitality of the auto worker; his devotion and class solidarity when he engages in battle. The strike also revealed the present weakness of the federal unions: the fact that even in so progressive a local as 18384 of Toledo, the machine of the unscrupulous bureaucracy was powerful enough to push through the agreement that ended the strike. The machine succeeded in isolating the strike and prevented the Buick workers at Flint from joining Toledo in solidarity.

Detroit Doesn't Budge

The bureaucracy succeeded in keeping the Flint Buick workers at work throughout the Toledo strike, but only after a hard and bitter battle. The bureaucrats had to threaten and plead and cajole the men into submission. In Detroit, however, the Dillon office faced no problem at all. None of the federal locals there insisted on striking in solidarity with their Toledo brothers. The flying squadron sent up from Toledo to picket the Chevrolet Gear and Axle plant at Detroit did not even produce a ripple. The pickets were arrested by the efficient Hamtramck police, and the plant continued work as usual.

Observers all ask the question: How is it that this strike in Toledo, which has aroused auto-workers in almost every automobile city in the country, produced no effect at all in Detroit? Doesn't that prove that it will be many long years before the auto workers actually begin to move?

What actually **happened** to Detroit a city which seethed with revolt only a year ago, where 100,000 men were ready to man the picket lines at a moment's notice, and today not even a corporals' guard could be found to strike in sympathy with Toledo?

The truth of the matter is that Detroit has to this day not recovered from the shock of March 25, 1934. The shameful sell-out, signed by the A. F. of L. leadership, legalizing the company union and creating the Automobile Labor Board, broke the back of the nascent trade union movement in the automobile industry. In the Toledo Chevrolet strike, the shameful, traitorous role of Dillon but spurred the workers forward to greater efforts and more thorough unionization of the plants. It deepened their understanding of the difficulties of the tasks ahead of them and the necessity, in order to ensure victory to prepare to carry the battle forward on three different fronts: against the government mediators, the bosses and the bureaucrats of the American Federation of Labor.

In Detroit, however, the shameful role of Collins produced a directly opposite result: huge bon-fires were built with the union membership cards. They left the federal unions in disgust, by the hundreds and by the thousands, vowing never to return again.

Toledo and Detroit—a Contrast

Why is it that in one case the traitorous role of the A. F. of L. leadership was but a signal for more thorough preparation and heightened enthusiasm and in the other it produced complete demoralization and pulverized the whole movement? Are the Toledo workers, by any chance, more intelligent than the workers of Detroit?

No! As a matter of fact, they are much the same type, with more or less similar habits and background. The difference is to be explained and can only be explained on the basis of the presence in Toledo of a revolutionary group who understood the game of Dillon and the government mediators, who knew the moves of the chessboard ahead of time, and prepared and armed the men against Dillon and his agents, as far as possible in the short period of time at their command.

After the shameful speech of Dillon on the fateful Monday night which settled the strike, this group convinced the union militants that it was their job to go back into the union, build it up more strongly, expand their progressive group and drive out of the union all the henchmen of Dillon and what they stand for, that only thus could they build a genuine democratic union to protect their interests, etc.

Role of the C. P.

In Detroit, on the contrary, the suicidal policy of the Communist Party and their ill-fated Auto Workers Union, left the green, untrained auto workers at the mercy of the "labor lieutenants," completely disarmed. At the crucial moment the "left wing" was nowhere to be found. When the blow came, the men were simply bewildered and stunned. Nobody was on the spot to give them the necessary advice and point the road. The auto-workers protested in the only way they knew how—with their feet.

After that betrayal, the A. F. of L. bureaucrats left the auto workers to the tender mercies of the Automobile Labor Board. When after some nine months meditation, Dr. Wolman at last got around to holding "elections" in the automobile plants and the results showed some 4 percent for the A. F. of L., Green and Dillon got terribly indignant belligerent. They threatened retribution. Fearing that the ground was just slipping underneath their feet they promised to start a giant organization drive to organize the whole automobile industry.

Dillon Blocks the Road

The organization drive, if it can be honored with that name, just evaporated into thin air. Because the auto workers wouldn't respond? The direct opposite is true. Every "spontaneous" outburst of the auto workers at Murray Body, at Hupp, Kelsey Wheel, the wet sanders in Lansing, was sidetracked by Dillon and referred to some governmental agency. Everyone in Detroit acquainted with the situation knew that the Dillon office feared to organize the men and was deliberately sabotaging all attempts.

The influx of thousands of new young workers of the basic industries in the the A. F. of L. and the growth of mighty organizations in the nerve centers of American industry did not signify the corresponding growth and importance of the present leadership, but, on the contrary, heralded their downfall and disappearance from the trade union scene. Apparently the bureaucrats know this very well, and that is why they so assiduously and carefully sabotage every step of the locals themselves.

Good Opportunities Missed

After a year and a half of such experience, the period of easy unionization is definitely ended. Now, something more than small initiation fees and dues are necessary to attract the automobile worker. Still 1935 was an excellent year to start a serious organization drive. For one, 1935 was a "boom" year. More men employed in the industry than at any time since 1929. Undoubtedly the A. F. of L. would have regained major positions in the industry, had it seriously proceeded with its promised campaign.

A triple alliance would have been formed of auto, rubber and steel. The confidence, such a move would have inspired, would have been immense. The men would have returned to the firing line, and a serious offensive could have been launched against the company unions.

These are all the things that might have been done, were the present A. F. of L. leadership seriously concerned about organizing the automobile workers. Instead it did nothing—and when the workers here and there timidly attempted to start organization on their own account, they were ruthlessly and brutally squelched.

That is why trade unionism is at low ebb in Detroit today. These are the "objective conditions" which made it so difficult to stir up the Detroit Chevrolet workers and interest them in the strike in Toledo. After a year of such sterling labor "activity," the A. F. of L. federal locals might have lost all standing in the industry, had another center of attraction existed. At first that seemed to be the direction.

M.E.S.A. Stagnates

The Mechanics Educational Society, which organized the key men of the industry, the tool and dye makers, led brilliant, spectacular battles in almost every plant in Detroit and apparently were destined to sweep the whole field. But after the sell-out of March 25, 1934, instead of pushing on and taking over the leadership in a great organization campaign, it began stagnating. No serious attempts were made to get in production men, its membership slumped and the union was torn by an internal cancer of factional struggle between the various cliques, which paralyzed its activity and rendered it helpless. Unless the M.E.S.A. can cleanse itself—and that in short order, and begin an earnest drive for the production men—it will cease to be an important factor in the industry. All indications point at the present time to the fact that for the immediate future, the A. F. of L. federal unions are destined to be the shell within which the auto workers will organize.

We have spoken previously and we are ready to repeat again the story of the perfidy of the A. F. of L. bureaucracy. We can even add: Dillon and Green are deliberately delaying the formation of an International in the automobile industry, for fear that they cannot yet control it; they intend moreover to exclude from such an International the tool and dye makers, the maintenance men and other workers claimed by the various International unions. All this is true, but axiomatic to a revolutionist engaged in trade union work. If we wish, however, to do more than just "expose" the bureaucracy, if we would actually do battle with it and destroy it, we must do more than propagandize; we must extend our organizational base in the auto industry because events have proved, we in the W. P. are the only ones who can do the job. We must fuse our ideas with the workers inside the federal unions, to help them "arm" themselves against their enemies and to organize "pressure" for the calling of a democratically controlled convention to establish an International union and to begin an organization drive by September in preparation for a general strike.

Workers Must Prepare to Strike

All the elemental forces of the industry are again turned loose full force, and are inexorably driving the men onward towards the path of unionism. Bitterness and resentment are accumulating so rapidly, that when the explosion occurs, the Toledo strike will look like a tea-party in comparison.

The workers have had a year's experience with the Auto Labor Board. Some 200,000 of them partipicated in the A. L. B.'s "elections" and while it was a bitter pill that Green and Collins forced them to swallow we say with confidence: it was not in vain! They have learned more in these last few months of "collective bargaining" than the previous five years put together. In plant after plant, members of the bargaining agencies have clashed with the management and have found that beyond getting a light bulb replaced or a water bubbler repaired—their power did not extend. If their demands were not acceded to, they of course had the opportunity of appealing to Dr. Wolman! Now, their only recourse is . . . strike, and for that they must have an organization.

So, having passed through the glorious run around of Roosevelt, Wolman, Green, Collins and Dillon, they are back at the starting point, more experienced, more steeled and better prepared for the battle.

It is now the duty of the conscious revolutionists not to lag behind, but to be prepared to guide the workers and help them in their coming struggle. This task, of organizing this key industry, the "nerve center" of American economy is the most important and significant one since post-war days, ganizing the key industries, the opening up a completely new phase in American unionism and the labor movement of this country. If we succeed, our position in the American labor movement is secure and we shall be prepared to lead the workers forward to victory.

Tobin's Union-Busting Drive Against 574—and their Reply

MINNEAPOLIS, Minn.—The Central Labor Union committee has returned from Indianapolis bearing a set of written demands from D. J. Tobin which outline the basis on which General Drivers Local 574 can be reinstated in the Drivers International. These demands bear witness to the ruthless tactics to which Tobin will stoop in his burning desire to get revenge for an imaginary grievance. Here are his demands:

1. That all inside workers be denied membership in the union.
2. That no worker who does not devote at least 51 percent of his time to driving or other actual work on a truck be permitted to be a member.
3. That the ice drivers be in a separate union. That the coal drivers be in a separate union.
4. That the taxi drivers be in a separate union.
5. That all independent truck owners be denied membership in any union.
6. That a new charter be issued on the following basis:
   a. All present officers and active members in Local 574 be denied membership under the new charter.
   b. All applications for membership be subject to the approval of Tobin. (This would mean that any worker who is even suspected of having taken an active part in the union would be unable to remain a member.)
   c. That the Teamsters Joint Council reorganize the local under the direct supervision of a special representative of Tobin.
   d. That all actions of the union be subject to the approval of Tobin.
7. That Tobin receive the delinquent per capita tax of Local 574, the amount to be determined by the General Executive Board and to be not less than 50 percent of what Tobin estimates the local owes. (Tobin's estimate, by the way, is almost double the actual amount involved.)

Tobin Program Worse than Bosses

This program was planned deliberately to cut the union up into small helpless units and to strip it of its fighting ability. Tobin does not want a union in his International which has the power of 574. A few unions like 574 and it would be impossible for him to maintain his bureaucratic control which constantly strangles unionization of the truck drivers of the nation.

In this desperate attempt to protect his pie-card, Tobin is putting forward the same program which the Citizens Alliance put forward last summer. Once again he plays into the hands of the employers as he did through his editorial writing during the 1934 strikes. In fact he attempts to go even further than the bosses did. Not only does he deny that the inside workers have a right to belong to the union, but he attempts to confine the membership of the General Drivers to workers who spend at least 51 percent of their time on trucks, and then they can be members only if the truck is used to haul certain Tobin-approved commodities.

After reading the Tobin manifesto to the assembly, Jean Speilman, spokesman for the C.L.U. committee, moved that the report be referred to the Teamsters Joint Council for action.

Slander Used in Election Campaign

At this point several delegates took the floor demanding to know why and how intimate details regarding the Local 574 charter fight had come into the hands of the candidate opposing William S. Brown in the aldermanic race in the third ward. Brown, the president of 574, played a militant role in the 1934 strikes and, in keeping with his fighting ability and instincts, waged a splendid and clean fight in the election campaign. But despite this fine record he was not invited to speak to the assembly on this issue which is of such vital importance to his union.

Moe Hork, a member of the 574 executive board, was denied the floor when he attempted to speak on the tactics employed against Brown in the campaign.

Many delegates took the floor to speak of the great gains which the General Drivers have brought to the entire labor movement. Specific instances were cited, such as the New England construction job where the truck drivers threw their strength into a fight which had begun to appear quite hopeless to the building trades unions.

Travesty on Union Democracy

At this point in the debate, which had by now become very heated, a substitute motion was made to throw the Tobin demands in the waste basket. **This motion was later ruled out of order on the grounds that it was a negative motion and could not be voted on.**

Delegate Wachter pointed out clearly and completely what a travesty of trade union democracy Tobin's policies represent. He pictured how the overwhelming majority of the delegates were in complete sympathy with Local 574 and showed that the differences of opinon in the matter lay principally in the relative courage of the delegates in determining a course of action. Questioning sharply Tobin's right to the dictatorial powers which he assumes, Wachter proposed that the Central Labor Union appeal Tobin's decision to the convention of the Drivers International and that in the meantime the whole matter be left pending with complete recognition of 574. Wachter was unable to obtain a vote on his proposal.

Threaten Charter Revocations

Speaking for his motion to refer Tobin's demands to the Teamsters Joint Council for action, Speilman told the assembly that, while he was in Tobin's office, Tobin had held a telephone conversation with Green in Washington and that Green had promised full co-operation to Tobin. Speilman then carefully explained that this would mean that if the C.L.U. or any union attempted to defend 574 that their charter would be immedately revoked. He then predicted that if his motion was not passed the C.L.U. charter would be revoked at once. He stated further that the present officers of Local 574 should be willing to step aside as Tobin demands.

Attempting to get the floor to answer Speilman's statements, Farrell Dobbs, secretary-treasurer of Local 574, was denied that privilege, and the Speilman motion was railroaded through.

An analysis of Tobin's demands shows that the voluntary withdrawal of the present leaders of 574 will not satisfy the lust of D. J. Tobin. He clearly states that he will be satisfied with nothing short of the complete disorganization of the local, the sacrifice of all the gains for which Henry Ness and Jack Belor died, and the expulsion of scores of militant members from the union. Tobin demands more than the heads of the leaders—he demands the complete strangulation of the union.

Reactionaries Meet Defeat

With the matter now in their hands, the Teamsters Joint Council will attempt to carry out the Tobin program. But despite the action railroaded through the assembly, the reactionary bureaucracy was badly defeated.

The issues in the fight are clearly defined, and the progressive thinking delegates are well informed as to the real meaning of this program to the movement. Their sympathies are completely with 574, and they will carry their opinions back to their unions with a recommendation that they continue to support the drivers. The standing of Local 574 will continue to be very high among union men.

Delegate Crowl, business agent of the iron workers, told the assembly that on the armory job, and every other union construction job where the ironworkers are employed, if any union refuses to demand that 574 men deliver their materials, the ironworkers will tie up the job.

Local 574 will not give up the gains it has made through the bitter struggles of 1934. The sacrifices made were too great to permit Tobin to so lightly cast aside everything that Local 574 stands for. The membership of the General Drivers is up in arms over this outrage. They recognize the Tobin demands as a twin sister to the vicious propaganda of the bosses.

Local 574 will fight Tobin on every front and defeat his Citizens Alliance program.

Every union, every liberal and radical organization must take a clear cut position in this fight. The workers of Minneapolis must respond in the same splendid manner that they did last summer in the struggle with the Citizens Alliance.

Smash all union-smashers!

Make Minneapolis a union town!

A Letter the Daily Worker Dared Not Print

To the Editor of Daily Worker,
50 East 13th Street,
New York City

Gentlemen:

In a Daily Worker editorial of June 17, 1935, we read:

"Joseph Zack and Jack Taylor, the two choice morsels which the Trotskyites fished out of the garbage discarded by the C. P., have been expelled and are now publishing a paper of their own. . . . Any honest worker may be forgiven if he holds his nose" . . .

This section of the above dated Daily Worker editorial runs true to Stalinist form and method of "discarding garbage" in the form of Daily Worker editorials for the consumption of "honest workers" who "hold their nose". . . .

You hold it is the policy of the Daily Worker to give the "honest workers" the truth and nothing but the truth—yet you deliberately print a trumped up account of my "expulsion" from the Workers Party of the U. S.

The New York Times gives "all the news that's fit to print" providing they do their own "fitting"; the Daily Worker prints a "fitting" account of Jack Taylor's "expulsion" . . .

Need I say that this "expulsion" is the brain child of the Daily Worker editor? . . . Need it be said that Stalinist brain fever (perhaps clairvoyancy with Stalinism as the medium) has produced a picture of Jack Taylor "expelled" from the Workers' Party of the U.S.A. and publishing his own paper? . . .

For the "honest workers" who "hold their nose" against the Stalinist stench known as Daily Worker editorials, let me say the following:

Jack Taylor has not been expelled from the Workers Party of the U. S. and he is not publishing or helping to publish an independent paper.

Finally let me remind you—although you cannot have forgotten this fact—my resignation from the Communist Party was published in the Militant **two months** prior to my being "discarded" by the C. P. bureaucrats.

Stalinism has now been "discarding" what you call "garbage" for years. Thousands of "discarded" revolutionaries are exiled to Siberia and others held in Stalin's jails. This "garbage" is composed of those Marxists who can see the difference between the Menshevism of Stalin and the Bolshevism of Lenin and Trotsky.

This, gentlemen, is the truth—but to get the truth it is necessary to discard the Daily Worker and to read the **New Militant,** organ of the Workers Party of the U.S.

—JACK TAYLOR

Plenum of N.C. of W. P. Spikes False Rumors

The June Plenum of the National Committee of the W. P. took note of rumors to the effect that there are leaders and members of the W. P. who advocate that the W. P. should join or merge with the Socialist Party. **Occasionally it is necessary to take account of rumor and gossip, no matter how absurd and irresponsible it may be, simply because it is so persistent. Solely on this ground, the Plenum hereby states that all such reports are absolutely without foundation, that no leaders or members of the W. P. advocate or have advocated any such program.**

The position of the W. P. on the Socialist Party and the Second International has been clearly and explicitly set forth in the Declaration of Principles adopted at the merger convention last December of the former Communist League of America and the American Workers Party. We repeat it here both because of the intrinsic soundness of the analysis there set forth and because it is the best and simplest way to indicate how incompatible with the basic Declaration of the W. P. is advocacy of a proposal that it should join or merge with a party of reformism and pacifism:

"The Socialist Party is not a party of revolution but of reform and pacifism. The fundamental error of all wings of the party is their false conception of the nature of the state and of the colonial question. From this flow its parliamentary illusions, its notion that the workers can achieve power within the framework of existing state forms, its fetishism of capitalist democracy, its policies of class collaboration, and betrayal of colonial revolts and revolutions. It is affiliated and gives allegiance to the bankrupt Second International, which bears the responsibility for supporting the last imperialist war, and whose leading section, the German Social-Democracy, openly aided the capitalists to suppress revolutionary uprisings of the workers and made possible the triumph of Fascism in Germany. The Socialist Party conducts no struggle against the reactionaries in the trade union movement and important sections of the Party are directly associated with these elements. **Though now, as at other periods in its history, the Party** contains many militant and leftward moving workers, the powerful right wing elements in the Party openly spurn and combat all revolutionary tendencies. The radical phrases of the centrist wing represented by the 'Militant' leaders serve as a cover for an essentially reformist attitude and a policy of capitulation to the right wing. The Party and the Second International with which it is affiliated therefore serve the purpose of hindering the consistent development of the workers to a revolutionary position. The genuinely revolutionary workers in the Socialist Party can carry out the implications of their position only when they break with the reformists and social patriots and unite with the Workers Party and the New International."

The merger of the former A.W.P. and C.L.A., after more than a decade of splits and disintegration in the revolutionary movement, was in our opinion an historic turning point. The founding of the new party on the basis of the Declaration of Principles was the one possible step toward revolutionary unity. We believe that in ever increasing numbers the vanguard workers who are today in other parties and groups or have no political allegiance will realize with us the crucial importance of breaking with reformism and centrism and unifying the revolutionary forces on the basis of revolutionary internationalism and under the banner of the Fourth International.

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