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The Popular Front
and the POUM

The upholders of Popular Frontism in Spain
proclaim that they are fighting for democracy—
not more than democracy, and not less.

They are not fighting capitalism, but only
fascism. They want to preserve from fascist
barbarism the democratic rights of the masses,
which include the right of organization and agi-
tation.

At least, so they say.

The trial of the leaders of the POUM which
is about to take place in Barcelona is a trans-
parent frame-up, based on the best models of
California and Moscow justice. Its purpose is
the physical extermination of this working-class
party, after it has already been legally suppressed
and outlawed. It is part and parcel of the coun-
ter-revolutionary work that the People's Front
has engaged in from the beginning, under in-
structions from its masters: the Stalinist bureau-
cracy and French and British imperialism.

That the Stalinists are the principal instiga-
tors of the frame-up goes without saying, for
these people, permeated through and through
with corruption and cynicism, are the vanguard
of reaction in the labor movement. The shib-
boleths of "democracy" are merely the pretty
words behind which they carry out the most
despicable totalitarian tasks.

But what about the "democratic socialists"?
They denounce the Stalinist frame-up system
in Spain but keep silent completely about the
fact that the system could not operate for a
minute without the sanction of the "socialist"
head and ministers of the Spanish People's
Front government.

And what about the anarchist "fighters for de-
mocracy"? They too talk a good deal about the
Stalinist frame-ups in Spain. But they have not
a word to say about the passivity of the anarcho-
syndicalist movement in Spain, which claims
2,000,000 members, which supports the reac-
tionary People's Front government, and which
could blow up the whole infamous Stalinist re-
gime in Spain if it were merely to back its empty
phrasemongering with actual deeds.

Popular Frontism — class collaboration—is
poison to the labor movement and any section
that supports it. Every honest voice in the work-
ing class must be raised against its crimes,
against the impending judicial massacre of the
Barcelona defendants. Deeds, not words, count
now.

The militants of the POUM must be saved
from the terror of the People's Front and its
Stalinist executioners.

Third Term for Roosevelt?

From every quarter, the groundswell of a
"Third Term for Roosevelt" movement is be-
ginning to be felt. The first open signs ap-
peared some months ago, at several of the trade
union conventions. In recent weeks these have
become more definite, with the petition handed
to Roosevelt at Pueblo, the resolution of the
C.I.O. officials in Ohio, and a number of Del-
phic remarks by various members of the Ad-
ministration.

It would be a profound error to imagine
that this movement is in any sense a "personal"
question, as many of the commentators now
try to make it out. It has nothing to do with
Roosevelt's own "power complex" or "over-
bearing egotism" which are the stock phrases
of the political columnists.

It can be said with confidence that, if his
health continues good (and it now seems ex-
cellent), Roosevelt will himself wish to run for
a third term provided he believes he has a
good chance of winning. Roosevelt is too adroit
and too ambitious a politician to worry too
much over breaking precedents.

The question will be decided not by Roose-
velt's personal preferences, but by the political
needs of United States capitalism.

Roosevelt's tour, together with the results of
the recent *Fortune* and Gallup polls, have shown
that his popularity continues in spite of dis-
satisfaction with Roosevelt's party and faction,
with many of Roosevelt's specific policies and—

British Repressions
Continue in Burma

For the past week, Burma, a
province of British India, has
been the scene of bloody strug-
gles between sections of the popu-
lation and the British army. It is
estimated that 100 have been
killed and many more hundreds
wounded.

Rioting, which apparently be-
gan over incidents provoked by
members of the pro-imperialist

Muslim League (a rapidly devel-
oping movement of Indian fas-
cism), led to the armed inter-
ference of the 5,000 troops perma-
nently stationed in Burma by
the British rulers. After firing
upon the crowds of demonstra-
tors, the military authorities set
up machine-gun outposts and
barred the streets to the people
of Rangoon, capital of Burma.
Martial law was declared and
armored cars patrolled the area.
The hoary British policy of "di-
vide and rule" was at work
again!

This latest and most violent in
a series of bloody incidents now
sweeping over India indicates
that the masses of people, suf-
fering under the "civilizing vir-
tues" of British imperialism for
250 years and now facing the
prospect of a rapidly approach-
ing new economic crisis, are be-
ginning to stir. We can confi-
dently predict greater struggles
in the immediate future. All the
more reason why our support
goes to these long-oppressed
people.

not unnaturally—with much of what is actually
going on.

The reason for this is that Roosevelt still re-
presents to the masses their hopes and needs.
Aided by his demagoguery, supplemented by the
treacherous propaganda of trade union bureau-
crats, Stalinists, reformists and liberals of all
types, they explain the difficulties and disap-
pointments as due to the sabotage of Wall
Street and the "Tories."

Roosevelt thus performs the work of a nec-
essary safety-valve, preventing the pressure of
mass discontent from turning against its true
enemy, the capitalist system itself and the capi-
talist state as a whole.

In the present period such a safety-valve is
essential to the maintenance of capitalism. The
majority of the masses, as is recognized even
by many of reactionary political spokesmen,
simply cannot be induced to turn back again to
old-line *laissez-faire* conservatism.

If the 1940 elections presented to the people
a conservative Republican candidate for Presi-
dent and a conservative or reactionary Demo-
crat against him, the old two-party system would
go up in smoke that very year.

Bitterly as Roosevelt is hated within as well
as without his own party by many of his fellow
bourgeois politicians, they know that he still re-
tains his mass support, and they know why he
retains it; and they know also that fundamen-
tally he is absolutely loyal to capitalism.

If he cannot be replaced with some one able
to perform the same function, therefore, they
know that he must be run for a third time; and
they are consequently preparing for that con-
tingency. A suitable alternative candidate—if
one could be found—or a renewed down-plunge
of economic crisis for which a scapegoat had to
be found, would, however, lead equally well to
Roosevelt's rapid shelving.

Meanwhile, the job for revolutionary social-
ists is to make clear to the workers that the
problem of a third term for Roosevelt is not
their problem, but a problem solely of bour-
geois politics. Roosevelt is an umbilical cord
tying the embryonic labor political movement to
capitalism. A first step in the growth to maturity
of that movement must be the sharp clean cut-
ting of that cord.

Rounding the Circle

Negotiations are being undertaken between
the Thomas socialists and the O'neal-Cahan So-
cial Democratic Federation ("Old Guard"),
looking towards the reunion of the two groups.
The old Socialist party, or rather its remnants,
is thus approaching the completion of a circle.

In 1934, vigorous and militant elements in
the Socialist Party, reacting against the hoary
reformism of the Old Guard leaders, ousted
the latter at the Detroit convention and adopted
a more radical program for the S. P. Swinging
out to the left, the S. P. began to attract the
more revolutionary elements in the country in
the measure that it completed the break with
the incorrigible right wingers of the Jewish
Daily Forward and the Rand School. At the
Cleveland convention, the final break occurred
and was followed, shortly, by the entry of the
Fourth Internationalists (Workers Party) in the
S. P.

These developments promised a healthy fu-
ture for the S. P. as an effective revolutionary
movement in the United States. However, it
soon proved impossible for the Thomas-Tyler
leadership of the S. P. to progress an inch be-
yond its vacillating and untenable middle-of-
the-road position. Fearful of the growing influ-
ence of the left wing, the party bureaucracy finally
decided upon a surgical operation, and arbi-
trarily expelled several hundred revolutionists in
a manner that aroused the envy and applause of
the totalitarian experts of the *Daily Worker*.

Since that time, the official S. P. has pro-
gressively deteriorated, shedding members and prin-
ciples like a snake sheds its skin. All that is
left of it today is a little centrist sect, to which
some revolutionary militants have remained af-
filiated in the vain hope that some day it might
become a revolutionary party.

These hopes have been given the final dagger
thrust by the announcement in the current
Socialist Call, organ of the S. P., of the anxiety
to appoint a committee to meet with the Old
Guard group to discuss re-unification. Thomas
and Co. are exhilarated by the prospect of re-
turning to the ancestral hearth and weeping
penitently upon the forgiving bosom of Abe
Cahan and Jim O'neal "without further waiting
for an official communication."

Thomas, Tyler and Zam could not live in the
same party with the revolutionary left wingers.
They are dying to get under the same roof with
the petrified representatives of reformism and
class collaboration. As in nature, water finds its
own level, so in politics, the centrists finally re-
turn to reformism. The circle is thereby com-
pleted.

What will now be said, and done, by the
militants remaining in the S. P., by those who,
four-five years ago, were earnest and purposeful
in launching the fight against the Old Guard
and the disastrous policies it stood for?

AMERICA'S PERMANENT DEPRESSION-II
New Deal Takes Care of Bankers First; Juggles Relief as Riot Insurance and for Political Machine

By ART PREIS

Some day the "New Deal" era
will be known as the "Years
of the Great Deception." Few po-
litical demagogues have demon-
strated so great a divergence be-
tween the word and the deed, the
promise and the fulfillment as
has Franklin Delano Roosevelt.

Borne into office on a tremen-
dous tide of popular protest
against the brutal indifference of
the Hoover regime, Roosevelt has
steered a course with such po-
litical adroitness that he has
maintained his popular hold upon
the masses of American people
despite the fact that his policies
have failed to effect a single fun-
damental change in our economic
and social order.

The "money changers" whom
Roosevelt stormed against in 1932
and vowed "to drive from our

Temple" are very much with us.
Indeed, his first political act, the
Bank Moratorium, served merely
to clean out the small independ-
ent banks and a host of small de-
positors. The major financial
groups were given a new lease
upon the country. Backed by gov-
ernment power and credit, fi-
nance capital consolidated its
power.

For those who point the finger
at Wall Street as the root of all
evil, and pin a halo to the scalp
of F.D.R., it is well to recall that
the genial Great White Father,
when he had the greatest oppor-
tunity ever presented to uproot
the choking weeds of Wall Street
by nationalizing the banking sys-
tem, chose rather to nurture their
growth.

Roosevelt, in his speeches,
championed the "little man," the

small independent producer. He
scored with fiery tongue the in-
dustrial monopolists. His new
"Magna Charta," the National
Recovery Act, as its one outstand-
ing achievement wiped out thou-
sands of the "little men" by vir-
tue of its price-fixing "codes of
fair business practice" and fur-
ther entrenched industrial mo-
nopoly. And, startling as it may
sound, while we have read of in-
numerable investigations under
the Anti-Trust laws, there has
been not one successful prosecu-
tion since Roosevelt took office.

'Subsidizing' Home Owners
and Destroying Crops

Much has been made of Roose-
velt's "social" legislation. Chief
among his "reform" acts have
been the Agricultural Adjustment

Act, the establishment of the
Home Owners Loan Corporation,
and the Wagner Labor Act.

The first was an attempt to
subsidize wholesale crop and live-
stock destruction, while a third
of the nation was in dire want,
and resulted in the ruin of tens
of thousands of small dirt-farm-
ers, tenant-farmers and share-
croppers. The rich landlord farm-
ers continued to collect their
rents and shares, and pocketed
the bounty of the government.

The H.O.L.C., instead of pro-
tecting the small home-owners,
has merely guaranteed interest
payments to the banks, mortgage
companies and insurance corpo-
rations. Thousands of small
home-owners, unable to meet in-
terest and amortization on gov-
ernment loans, have been fore-
closed, while the mortgage sharks
get good hard government cash
in place of shaky mortgages and
increasing property taxes.

Bargaining Rights Won
on Picket Line

Another diamond in the Roose-
velt crown has been the act de-
fining the rights of collective bar-
gaining for labor. Under this act,
and its defunct predecessor, Sec-
tion 7A of the N.R.A., organized
labor was presumably guaranteed
the rights of collective bargaining
free from coercion and restraint
by the employers. Yet, in every
single great test of these acts,
and there have been scores of
them in the past four years, labor
has won recognition for its bar-
gaining rights only by blood and
struggle.

The Maritime strikes, the Tex-
tile Strike (when Roosevelt
threatened to call out the Federal
troops against the strikers), the
Minneapolis Teamsters strike,
the Toledo Auto-Lite, the Mil-
waukee power, the Kohler, the
Little Steel, the General Motors,
the Rubber strikes, and thou-
sands of other bitter physical
struggles, testify to the fact that
Roosevelt had given the workers
merely the rights they always
possessed, the rights they have
always had to wrest from the
ruling class in life and death con-
flicts.

How F.D.R. 'Solved'
Unemployment

However, the greatest prob-
lem which faced Roosevelt when
he took office was that of un-
employment. There were 15 mil-
lion unemployed in the U.S. when
he became President. So far as
the elimination of mass unem-
ployment in this country is con-
cerned, Roosevelt's program has
accomplished exactly nothing.
There are 15 million unemployed
in the U.S. today.

The "reasonable" leader, the
liberal who seeks "good motives"
instead of sound accomplish-
ments, the "radical" who yearns
for the green pastures of "popu-
lar" causes, all chant in chorus,
"But Roosevelt has done more for
the unemployed than Hoover!"

Granted! But these apologists
fail to add how much more, and
why Roosevelt's concessions to
the unemployed were made.

Roosevelt's aid to the unem-
ployed comes under two headings,
the Social Security Bill and the
work relief appropriations. Like
almost every New Deal conces-
sion, the Social Security Bill is a
bone with a string attached. Its
benefits apply to less than ten
per cent of the present unem-
ployed. Further, the conditions
under which a worker can re-
ceive any benefits are extremely
restricted, and then the benefits
last but a few weeks. The real
pay-off is that workers obtain-
ing unemployment insurance re-
ceive less, in most instances, than
they might on relief.

This "benevolent venture,"
adopted in most European coun-
tries years ago, is in reality a
clever scheme of government tax-
ation of the workers, whereby a
tremendous fund is being built
up, largely from deductions in
workers' wages. Thus, this gran-
diose scheme resolves itself into
a gigantic swindle, a deferred
payment of wages.

Riot Insurance and
Political Expediency

The history of relief and work
relief programs under Roosevelt
is one of constant mass struggle
by the workers for every slightest
concession and the skillful use
by Roosevelt of federal funds for
political maneuvers. Relief comes
under two headings on the
Roosevelt Budget—riot insurance
and political expediency.

It is significant to note that
the order in which Roosevelt ap-
plied himself to the national
problems when he took office
were first to safeguard the bank-
ers, next to entrench monopoly,
and finally to throw a few crumbs
to the unemployed, who in the
spring, summer and fall of 1933
were in mass ferment.

The Emergency Relief fund
which Roosevelt instituted in the
summer of 1933—after six months
as a class.

in office during the lowest point
of depression in American his-
tory—was literally wrested from
the "New Deal" regime by riots
and bloodshed, by storming of
food stores and warehouses, in
which literally hundreds of thou-
sands of desperate unemployed,
led mainly by such organizations
as the Unemployed Councils and
Unemployed Leagues, took part.

These funds provided only a
bare emergency relief in the
form of food orders, and because
of the necessity for state and lo-
cal governments declaring them-
selves in practical bankruptcy in
order to obtain these federal
grants, many state and local com-
munities refused to avail them-
selves of such funds. As a result
scarcely a third of the needy un-
employed received any of these
starvation benefits.

C.W.A. Stifles Mass
Jobless Revolt

As winter approached, and as
the first year of Roosevelt's ten-
ure came to a close, with the
promise of re-employment under
the N.R.A. program completely
fulfilled, Roosevelt instituted the
first federal work relief program,
the Civil Works Administration.
This was more than a humani-
tarian gesture. On the one hand
it was an attempt to stifle mass
revolt during the most bitter
months of winter; on the other,
it was the beginning of that pro-
gram of "pump priming" and
credit inflation into which Roose-
velt has been repeatedly forced
when all his other measures have
proved inadequate to solve the
economic crisis. Within three
months of its inception, the
C.W.A. folded up. The unem-
ployed went back to dandelion
greens.

It is interesting to note that
the wages paid under the C.W.A.
for common labor were \$15 per
week. The "mistake" of main-
taining such "high" wages has
never again been repeated by
Roosevelt. For as we shall note,
every future work program was
to mark a decline in the actual
and real wages paid federal work
relief employees.

The pump-priming of the
C.W.A., a mere 400 million dol-
lars failed to increase buying
power to an extent whereby in-
dustry and business might re-
vive. Roosevelt's "prosperity"
failed to materialize, and the un-
employed were again on a ram-
page. Demonstrations and hunger
marches swept the streets of ev-
ery city. City halls, state legisla-
tures and the federal capital were
invaded by militant masses de-
manding relief. The answer of
Roosevelt was the F.E.R.A. This
program provided funds for di-
rect and work relief.

FERA Wage Down
to Relief Level

Work relief under the F.E.R.A.
was initiated in September, 1934.
The full program was cleverly
built up to provide the maximum
of employment just prior to the
1934 and congressional elections.
Even so, at its peak, the F.E.R.A.
employed a million less workers
than the C.W.A., although the
need was just as great. Further,
the wages paid amounted to a
maximum of \$12 per week, which
in February, 1935, were cut to
the equivalent of each worker's
emergency relief budget. This
was a fancy scheme to exact
work for what amounted to di-
rect relief, and was followed
shortly by the rapid demobiliza-
tion of the work program.

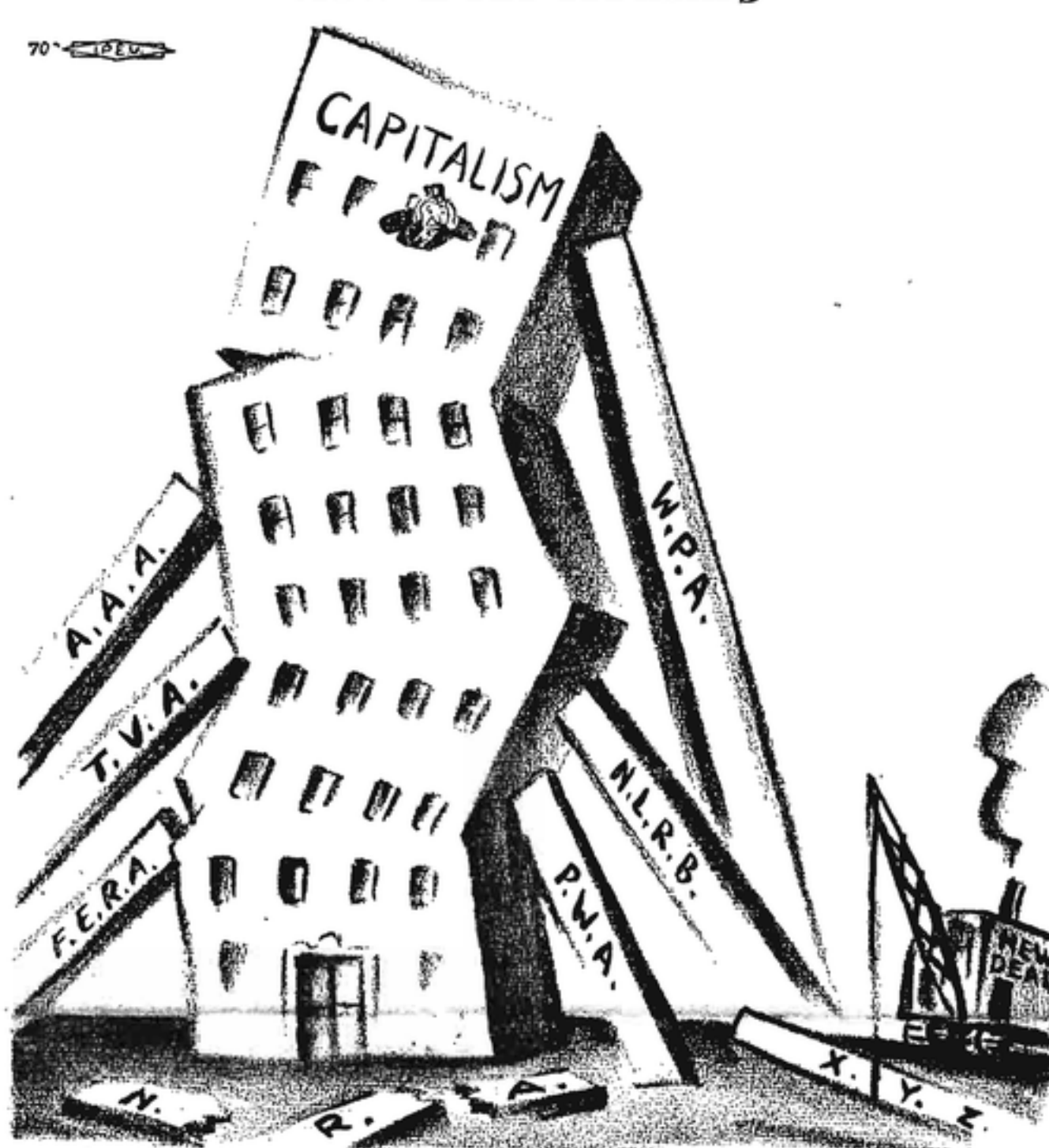
In June, 1935, the federal gov-
ernment ended the F.E.R.A.. At
one stroke, 5 1/2 million families
were left to starve, or to go back
to the tender charities of bank-
rupt local communities.

A recurrent pattern marks the
entire course of Roosevelt's
treatment of the unemployed. Un-
employment is considered tem-
porary. Periods of starvation re-
lief and jobs at coolie wages are
followed by periods of outright
starvation. This plan is calculated.
The administration is testing
how little it will take to satisfy
the unemployed. Further, it is
blindly hoping for a business
pick-up which will relieve the
problem. The pick-up fails. Dem-
onstrations, hunger marches, ri-
ots. Shortly after the ending of
the F.E.R.A. Roosevelt notes a
decline in his popularity. Too
many millions of workers have
had to jam Section 7A down em-
ployers' throats with their bare
fists. Production has registered
scarcely any rise. The unem-
ployed are fuming.

Again the astute Magician of
the White House pulls a trick
rabbit from his hat. This time it
is pump-priming on a larger
scale, a super-super works pro-
gram. The W.P.A. gets slowly un-
der way in the fall of 1935.

(This is the second of a series
of articles on unemployment.
The next article will continue
the story of "The New Deal and
the Unemployed," covering the
Roosevelt unemployed program
from the winter of 1935 up to
the present.)

New Deal Housing

Old Party Lines Break Down
In Round of Primary Voting

The country is witnessing this summer a set of primary
campaigns exceeding in bitterness and in social significance any
comparable struggles during the past several decades. Outstanding in
this development is the irrepressible tendency of profound social
conflicts, driven by depression and crisis, to break through the sur-
face of ordinary party-machine electioneering.

In the normal times of a past now dead and gone forever,
primaries were almost always cut and dried affairs. Serious contests
were rare exceptions. Candidates were agreed upon, after suitable
haggling, by the party bosses; and participation in the primary elec-
tions themselves was confined for the most part to faithful hacks
and ward heelers, with only a small fraction of the "enrolled mem-
bership" marching to the polls.

This year, however, there is
hardly a State in the Union
which is exempt from bitter
struggles. In nearly every elec-
tion which has so far taken
place, the voting turnout has
come within a few per cent of
the total registered voters.

In a number of States the con-
tests are still, it is true, pri-
marily of the old machine type:
a State patronage machine ver-
sus the Federal patronage ma-
chine; a local city boss against
a governor wanting to cut in on
the local graft; etc.

Clash of Social Forces
But in the majority of cases,
the primary campaigns are re-
flecting, in however distorted a
manner, the discontent, uncer-
tainties and strivings of vast so-
cial groups which remained pas-
sive and inarticulate in the days
of "normalcy." The mighty clash
of the awakening labor move-
ment with the social system that
tries to strangle it in birth, the
restlessness of the middle class,
the battle of C.I.O. and A.F. of L.,
the cleavage between Roosevelt
and the old guard Democrats, the
complaints of the farmers, all
are finding their symbols in the
competing candidates for Con-
gress and State House and Leg-
islature.

Outstanding from the point of
view of the labor movement was
the campaign in Pennsylvania,
where the workers girded them-
selves as a class behind Tom
Kennedy's attempt to place him-
self at the head of the Demo-
cratic ticket. Vain and futile as
the effort was, it was neverthe-
less the most "organized and

featuring anti-Semitism, adver-
tising the notorious "Protocols of
Zion," and combine this with a
violent brand of "anti-Papism,"
familiar in the history of Ameri-
can politics.

In California, through the popu-
lar initiative, there has been
placed on the ballot a new form
of the Townsend old-age pension
scheme which has swept behind it
the former followers of Epic,
Utopian Society, the Townsend
movement, Share-the-Wealth, and
the hundred and one local Cali-
fornia cults.

Party Labels Inadequate
All of these phenomena, to-
gether with the running fight in
a dozen States between the
Roosevelt and anti-Roosevelt
camps of the Democratic Party,
unite in emphasizing the growing
inadequacy of the old party la-
bels and the old party frame-
work.

This inadequacy has been
marked even more strikingly by
the entry of the bulk of Republi-
can voters of Minnesota into
the Farmer-Labor primary
against Benson, and by the coal-
ition now being formed with both
Democrats and Republicans by
the American Labor Party in
New York.

For workers there is in these
primaries of this year a lesson
of the first and last importance.

In a thousand places throughout
the country, the workers, in the
primaries, are trying to go for-
ward as workers. Relying on the
advice and promises of bureau-
crats and unstable liberals whose
interests at bottom are the di-
rect opposite of the interests of
the working class, they are try-
ing to make themselves felt
through the old parties. And the
result is uniformly that the class
aims of the workers become
cra's paws for one or the other
of the bourgeois forces.

These primaries must be made
to teach that politically, as eco-
nomically, the workers can de-
fend and advance their aims only
when they shake off the whole
structure piled on them by the
bourgeois tradition, and strike
out freshly, independently, boldly,