

SOCIALIST APPEAL

Vol. II—No. 34 Saturday, August 20, 1938

Published every week by the SOCIALIST APPEAL PUBLISHING ASS'N at 116 University Place, New York, N. Y. Telephone: National Office: ALgonquin 4-8547

Subscriptions: \$2.00 per year; \$1.00 for six months. Foreign: \$2.50 per year. Bundle order 3 cents per copy. Single copies 6 cents.

All checks and money orders should be made out to the Socialist Appeal.

Entered as second-class matter September 1, 1937, at the post office at New York, New York, under the Act of March 3, 1879.

MAX SHACHTMAN Editor

HAROLD ROBERTS GEORGE CLARKE Associate Editors S. STANLEY Business Manager

Reaction in the Northwest

On the extreme northwest horizon of the United States a serious threat against the rights of the working class is now showing. This threat is not yet receiving the national interest which it so profoundly deserves.

In the State of Oregon—and this will almost certainly occur also in Washington—there has been placed on the November ballot a measure which, if passed and enforced, would virtually destroy genuine trade unionism in that territory.

The proposed bill would require all unions to incorporate, would prohibit all "sympathy" strikes, would eliminate mass picketing, and hamstring union organization.

The problem of defeating the bill is one for the workers of the entire country. The decision must not be allowed to go locally by default.

It is, of course, the pressure of the crisis which is the general background for the attempt to put this bill across. The bosses, especially those in the hard-hit lumber and shipping industries which are the mainstays of Oregon and Washington, feel that they have got to smash unionism in order to keep up profits.

Two special factors, however, stimulated the appearance of the bill at this time. One is the C.I.O.-A. F. of L. split, which has led in these two states to incredibly bitter inter-union struggle, turning the workers against each other, weakening the workers in their struggle against the bosses, and driving away support from the middle classes which a strong and successful workers' united front would have held.

Second is the criminal political tactics followed in these States by the officials of both the C.I.O. and the A. F. of L. Not merely have the officials failed, as elsewhere, to advance independent working-class politics; they have played the game of the most corrupt and reactionary bourgeois political machines.

Emboldened by the divisions, weaknesses and often downright corruption in the camp of the workers, the bosses find the time ripe for a real onslaught.

No bureaucratic interests can be allowed to stand in the way of a united resistance. And it must above all be kept in mind that defeat of the bill in November is only a small and temporary step in the defense. The firm, organized strength of the workers in their every activity will alone guarantee the preservation of workers' rights.

Trotsky and Cardenas

Anxious to discredit, in the eyes of the American people, the bold act of the Cardenas government in expropriating the foreign-owned Mexican oil industry, reactionaries have hit upon the scheme of placing the responsibility for the expropriation on Leon Trotsky. (The budding American Nazis, by the way, are using this method to discredit Roosevelt. They are spreading the story that Roosevelt visited the South in order to confer with Trotsky.)

The New York Daily News, claiming to have a story from a person whose identity "we are not at liberty to reveal" asserts that "Cardenas is Trotsky's cat's paw for the furtherance of Trotsky's hoped-for World Communist Revolution." The Daily News obviously thinks the best method to prepare the American people for intervention in Mexico to protect the interests of the oil operators is to raise the bugaboo of a "Trotskyist-Communist neighbor on the southern border."

No intelligent American worker will believe such an absurd charge. There is a very clear difference between the role of Cardenas and that of Trotsky. The former is a progressive bourgeois democrat; the latter, a revolutionary Marxist.

Naturally, Trotsky, like every other revolutionary Socialist, sympathizes with and fully supports the Cardenas regime in depriving the American and British capitalists of an opportunity to exploit the Mexican people. But the responsibility and credit for expropriating the oil industry belongs to the Mexican people and not to Trotsky.

The answer of the American workers to the campaign of the reactionaries should be: 1) While it is immaterial who is responsible for the expropriation, the charge that Trotsky is behind it is false. 2) We, like Trotsky, will defend the right of the Mexican government to take the oil belonging to the Mexican people away from the British and American capitalists.

Sabotaging the Anti-Fascist Struggle

For the workers of Spain, for the workers of the whole world, there is nothing more important at the present moment than to defeat the Spanish, German and Italian fascists. For that not only is it necessary to have the utmost unity of the working class but also correct policies. There are those who do not see the overwhelming importance of correct policy but demand unity. We ask them to consider: who is responsible for breaking the unity of the working class in the face of fascist attack?

To jail the most valiant fighters against fascism, those who drove the fascists out of Barcelona in July, 1936; to accuse them of being fascist spies is to break the unity of the working masses, to bring demoralization into their ranks and to prepare the ground for the victory of the fascists.

That is what the Loyalist government, under the prodding of the Stalinists, has done. About three thousand of the most heroic fighters against fascism are in the jails of Barcelona—anarchists, left-wing socialists, members of the Party of Marxist Unification (P.O.U.M.).

Reports are current that leading members of the last-mentioned organization are to be placed on trial (or have they already been tried?). The Loyalist government has not seen fit to give the world definite information about the arrest and trial of these working-class fighters.

The failure of the Loyalist government to state when and where the defendants will be tried is a highly suspicious circumstance. It is, in fact, proof that the methods of the Moscow trials are being transferred to Spain. Otherwise the Loyalist government would reveal its intentions, and it would invite investigation on the part of working-class organizations.

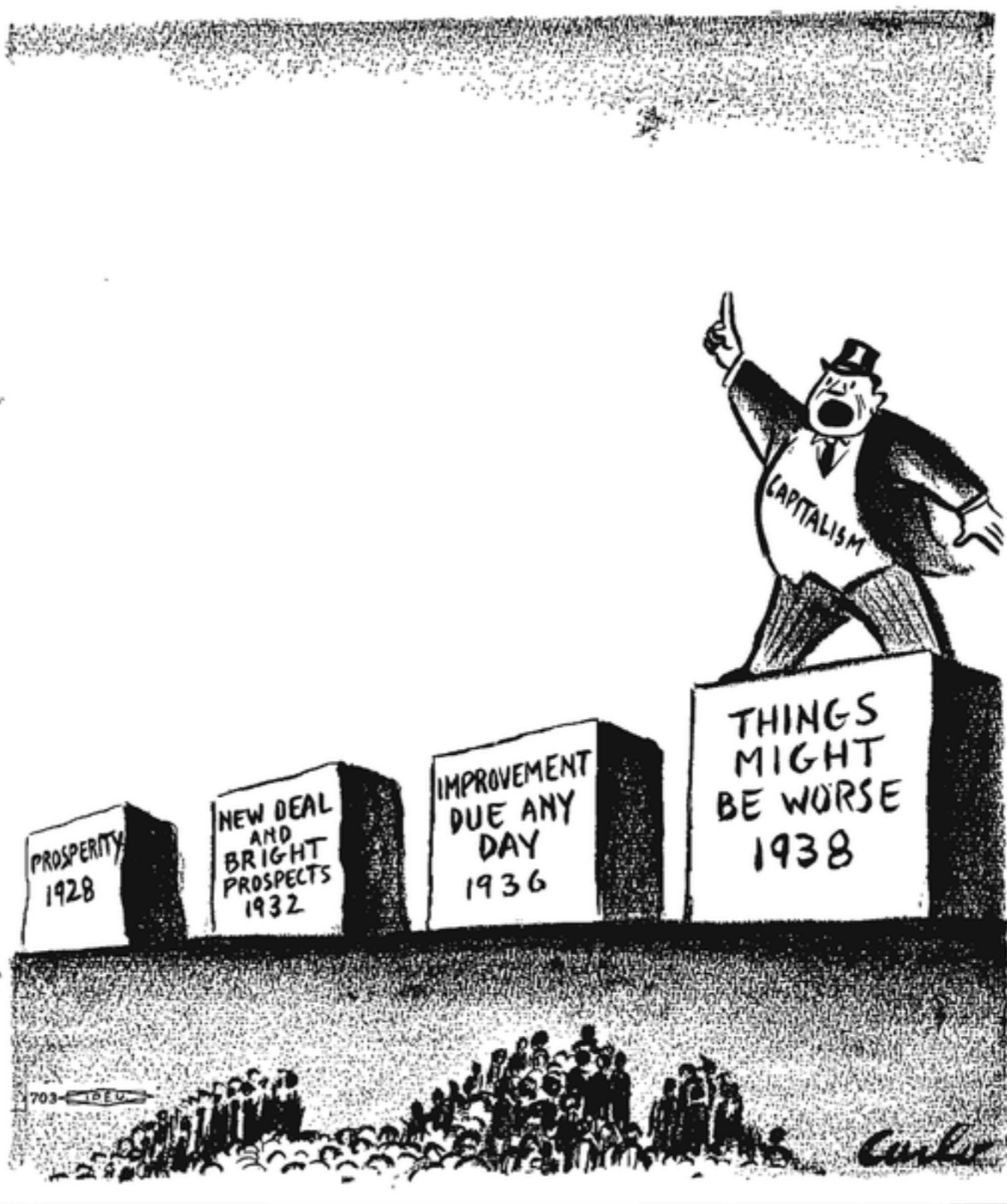
Every indication points to the conclusion that there will be (or was) a "Moscow trial" in Spain.

Every worker is in duty bound to prevent a hideous frame-up against loyal proletarian revolutionists.

Demand a public trial for the accused! Demand the right to have an impartial commission present at the trial with an opportunity to examine defendants and witnesses.

To defeat the fascists we must fight for the liberation of the anti-fascists.

Still Spiegling...



Who Owns the Courts?

Spotlight on Capitalist Justice in Harlan

By ALBERT GOLDMAN

It would indeed have been surprising had the Federal government obtained a conviction in the case against the coal bosses of Harlan and their thugs charged with conspiracy to violate the rights of the miners under the Wagner Act. To those who fail to see the clever demagoguery of the Roosevelt regime, the case in itself is surprising. Starting from the correct premise that the Roosevelt government is a capitalist government, it seems peculiar that capitalists should be dragged into court for violating labor's rights.

At any rate the Harlan trial serves the purpose of proving that capitalist courts are not designed for convicting employers charged with violating the rights of employees. While under certain circumstances a conviction in such a case is not impossible, it is certainly highly improbable.

It Might Have Happened!

(Continued from page 1)

the French cop grinning with admiration while Mussolini's cut-throat band broke into the Ethiopian household and wrecked, killed and stole everything they could lay hands on. Then it was the turn of the British cop to hold the hands of the Spanish people while the sluggers of Franco and Hitler and Mussolini pounded them with every known weapon in their arsenals. And finally both the British and the French cops stood around and whistled a sad tune while Hitler kicked Austria in line.

By this time demoralization at any possible solution to war had spread so deep and far among the working class that the diplomats could knock the "collective security" ballyhoo into a cocked hat. The general assumption is that the masses have been fooled to a point where they believe that everything that could have been done for peace has been done, and now the best thing is to prepare for war—as if they hadn't been preparing for it all along! So they came out into the open with the alliances they had made in secret long ago. The British and French "democracies" began to criss-cross in their hook-ups with Hitlerite Germany and Fascist Italy.

And that is the peace-war racket in a nutshell. Big guns and floating coffins never made a war. You can build them for years, but the real building begins after the war starts. The important thing is to make the people believe that peace is a pipe-dream, that war is sure as the rising sun. Once this chloroform of resignation is shot through the peoples, the imperialist racketeers can put an army in the field and turn it loose to make a shambles out of Europe or Asia or the whole world and destroy itself in the process. That tragic mentality seemed near achievement when Hitler mobilized for war maneuvers.

We agree: peace is a pipe-dream—under capitalism. But peace will be a reality under socialism. That is why we will never cease crying aloud at those who are crushing the hopes and stringing of the peoples of the world for peace by knifing the struggle for socialism. They are the Judases of the Second and Third Internationals. The guilt of Germany and Austria and Spain and tomorrow of Czechoslovakia is heavily upon them. They are guilty as sin—and they do not cry out at the new war because they will do the dirty work for the General Staffs as they did in 1914.

Czechoslovakia is a last warning. And the warning is written clearly: the road to peace is the road of the relentless struggle for socialism. The Hitler and Chamberlains and Roosevelts dread this day. They will quake with fear when the masses throw off the drugs, tear up the maps and the secret treaties, and write their own peace in a free socialist world.

Pinning 'em Down

By JAMES CASEY

HOW TO BE AN HONEST LIBERAL

Paul Kern, head of New York's Civil Service Commission, reports with unconcealed satisfaction that most of the municipal employes have been freed from obligations to politicians of all shades and parties. The spoils system, says Mr. Kern, has been eliminated.

When one reflects how, for decades, the truckling to Democratic and Republican district leaders bred and encouraged graft, bribery and other forms of corruption in public office, the Commission's service in behalf of the city's employes may be considered a welcome and important reform. Inasmuch as Mr. Kern is of the belief that questionable political entanglements are harmful to those in the municipality's employ, we suggest that the rule applied to the rank and file be extended to embrace the higher-ups—and why not?

By that we mean that Mr. Kern should disassociate himself immediately and completely from the American League for Peace and Democracy.

Any Communist Party "fraction worker" could inform the Commissioner that the league favors only a special kind of "peace" while, with veiled phrases, it advocates a special kind of war. The "democracy" part of the league's program, the same "worker" could enlighten Mr. Kern, is to countenance terrorism against Stalinist opponents and give uncritical approval to the wholesale murders of internationally known labor leaders.

In short, Commissioner Kern cannot honestly style himself a liberal—as one opposed to political skulduggery—so long as he is entangled, even slightly with an affiliate of the Stalin lynch and frame-up machine.

HIZZONER IS BUSY...

Mayor LaGuardia spends much of his time, almost every day, greeting Hollywood screen stars, transatlantic fliers, Barbara Huttons and other celebrities of native and foreign make. He also lops off hours from his executive duties to attend ball games at the Yankee Stadium, in Philadelphia and other places.

The other day a group of crippled children from one of the city's institutions were taken to City Hall to meet the "Little Flower." The children came in buses and managed to struggle into the old massive, grey structure. Lined up inside the building, their little hearts beat faster from anticipation of being received by the executive of the nation's greatest metropolis. At last they were to meet, face to face, Fiorello LaGuardia, "the poor man's friend," of whom they had heard and read so much.

They were told the Mayor had arrived in his office. In fact a few of the unfortunate invalids actually saw His Honor as he marched by them and into his magic sanctum. The great moment had arrived! And then, the great disappointment! One of the Mayor's secretaries strutted out of the office to tell the crippled youngsters, all pent up with excitement, that the Mayor was busy—too busy to see them.

Quietly the children were sent packing—back into the buses that brought them to City Hall for the thrill of a lifetime.

Election time—that period in a politician's life when he goes about kissing the cheeks of little children—is still some weeks away.

ON THE "INNOCENTS" LIST

Charles Krumbine, New York State secretary of the Communist Party, has an article in a recent issue of Party Organizer, official Stalinist organ, on the functions of activists. In his dissertation, Krumbine takes pains to stress directives for "fraction work" by Stalinists in "the American Labor Party and other mass organizations." Thus the Labor Party is now openly referred to in the Stalinist organ as just another mass organization of the C.P.

That being the case, are Dubinsky, Antonini, Hillman, Rose et al aware of what became of the Anti-Imperialist League, the League of Struggle for Negro Rights, the Workers' Ex-Servicemen's League, the Workers' International Relief, the United Front Supporters and a dozen other C.P. mass organizations, whose names we now barely remember?

FEDERAL CHATTELS AND FIRESIDE CHATS

Postmaster General James A. Farley reveals in the current issue of The American Magazine that the Roosevelt administration is preparing to start an unemployment crisis, all its own. Federal employes in the lower and higher brackets are to be fired by the hundreds and thousands. If Farley is to be believed, they will be replaced by 100 per cent "yes men" of the Rooseveltian New Deal. Being Chairman of the Democratic National Committee as well as chief dispenser of Federal patronage, he certainly must know whereof he speaks.

This disclosure lends weighted significance to Roosevelt's perverted appeals to the populace to vote "for my friends," said friends being those Senators and Representatives who have demonstrated their complete moral and intellectual surrender to the man in the saddle.

With a Congress in a state of abject servility, with thousands of executives taking commands from a little clique in the White House roost and passing on the orders to more thousands of subordinates in addition to droves of Federal job dispensers scattered throughout the nation, Roosevelt would enjoy a centralization of power surpassed not too much by the established trio of dictators.

Though the golden-voiced radio artist highlights his talks with shafts against Tories and economic royalists, by his program he would outdo his kinsmen, the duPonts and their partners, the Morgans and Hearsts. They have set up dynasties in two or three States and have monopolized a general assortment of industries. Roosevelt seems to be on the rampage to gobble up the whole works and prove to his Republican rivals that "It Can Happen Here."

judicial procedure that makes it easy to get a conviction against workers and well-nigh impossible to convict employers. The capitalist courts are integral parts of the social system and the prevailing relationships and attitudes are transferred to the courts, concealed by the hypocritical cloak of impartiality and "equality before the law."

The capitalist judicial system cannot readily be perverted, so that capitalists are convicted for insisting on their inalienable right to exploit labor. The function of capitalist courts is altogether different. It must protect private property and in that is included the prosecution of workers for violating the rights of employers.

Naive people reading the laws and not observing their actual application come to the conclusion that there is no discrimination between classes and individuals. But it should not be difficult to see that even where there is a formal conviction of capitalists, their actual punishment is nothing in comparison to the punishment meted out to workers who are convicted.

Penalties Compared In a recent anti-monopoly case prosecuted by the Federal government in Madison, Wis., the judge found the defendants, oil corporations and their officers, guilty of violating the anti-trust act. Fines of five to ten thousand dollars were imposed.

Not far from Madison, in Waukegan, Illinois, workers who were on strike were sentenced to as high as six months in jail and were fined up to a thousand dollars for violating an injunction against picketing.

How easy for the oil companies and their officers to pay the small fines. For the average worker a \$500.00 fine means a jail sentence for the simple reason that it is impossible for him to raise such a sum of money.

We shall assume (a violent assumption, I admit) that in both the case in Wisconsin and the case in Waukegan the judges were scrupulously honest and followed the law. But what a difference in the actual punishment of the two sets of defendants!

For a worker to recognize that the courts are not intended to aid him in his struggle for better conditions is part of wisdom. Does that mean that the courts should never be used by workers against capitalists or against racketeers in the union? Not at all. There is no principle involved in using or not using the capitalist courts. But if, under exceptional circumstances, it is found necessary for workers, in their struggle against the bosses, to use the capitalist courts, their limitations should be clearly recognized and at all times should be considered as auxiliary to the chief method of struggle, which must always be the unity and militancy of the workers.

FROM THE LABOR PRESS

We reprint below excerpts from the minutes of the June 30 meeting of the executive board of Local 802, New York local of the American Federation of Musicians, first published in the union's official journal of August.

The report deals with the fiasco staged by the Workers Alliance last June when a "demonstration" was put on "against" wage cuts on W.P.A. projects—cuts instituted by the darling of the Stalinists, the Roosevelt administration. The reactions of the Musicians Union to the gyrations of the Stalinist leaders of the Workers Alliance, who turned a protest demonstration into an election rally for Roosevelt, reveal the disgust of all real union men when confronted with the results of Stalinist policy.—Ed.

Bro. Sterne reported on their trip to Washington on June 27, 1938, when 47 musicians, three officers and two rank and file members went on instructions of the Executive Board to join a demonstration which was scheduled to take place then in order to protest against any W.P.A. cuts in salaries. Prior to the demonstration, a delegation of four members of Local 77, Philadelphia, contacted our committee and objected to the composition of the delegates which came to Washington under the auspices of the Workers Alliance, claiming that they were immature and did not serve as a representative body. The

Washington newspapers that morning contained a statement by Aubrey Williams announcing the new rules and regulations which would apply.

Before the conference opened Mr. Lasser of the Workers Alliance reported to our committee that conditions had been changed and that they had therefore decided that the meeting would be a victory celebration instead of a protest demonstration against cuts. Our members objected to changing the nature of the demonstration because they felt it was not a complete victory, but since the Workers Alliance assumed complete sponsorship of the meeting, they had no alternative but to participate in the same under conditions set forth. Therefore the meeting was declared a victory celebration and David Lasser was elected Chairman, who addressed the delegation in that vein.

Delegates Slurred Mr. Sterne was then introduced as representing the "super-individualists of all organized workers," and although he did not expect to be called on, nor did he anticipate such an introduction, he competently answered that point and described the thorough cooperation which the Local had given in the campaign against wage cuts on W.P.A. Several speakers followed and there were a few A.F. of L. Locals represented, with the exception of Local 77, 802 and

Equity. They introduced a speaker from the Furriers' Union whom our committee felt should not be represented on a W.P.A. Arts Project program.

An announcement was made that Aubrey Williams would address the meeting and when Mr. Williams did appear, instead of using the occasion to ascertain why even a small cut was made, the meeting degenerated into a political rally in which Mr. Williams solicited votes and commended the Workers Alliance, David Lasser, Willis Morgan and Mr. Benjamin for their fine efforts. No mention was made as to what can be done in the future to rescind the small remaining cut and Williams did not explain why it was made at all.

The youth movement present gave Williams a terrific ovation and when the recess was called, Bro. Sterne told the musicians that they should leave the meeting and board their train.

Unions Part Ignored On arriving in New York it was learned that the Sunday Daily Worker contained an article under the date line, Washington, June 29, 1938, and entitled "Alliance Wins WPA Pay Cut Fight" with no mention of Local 802's activities. All of the newspaper publicity gave credit to the Workers Alliance and no credit to other organizations was reported.