

# Kulak Danger In Soviet Reappears

## New Tax Decree, Aimed at Wealthy Peasants, Reveals Grave Situation; Collectives Being Undermined

By J. G. WRIGHT

The Supreme Council of the Soviet Union, when in session in August, transacted what appears on the surface to have been a minor piece of business, which received little publicity in Russia and was given a routine paragraph in the world press. It issued a new tax.

Stalin found it indispensable to place a special tax on horses owned by peasants not members of the collective farms. In the territories of Great Russia, the Ukraine and White Russia this tax has been set at 500 roubles for the first horse, and 800 roubles for the second and third. In other regions the tax ranges from 400-700 roubles. The deadline for payment is October 15, but those peasants who enroll in the collectives prior to this date are exempt from payment of the tax.

### Decree of Sweeping Nature

The decree is so worded as to give the impression that this tax is aimed only at a section of those individual peasant proprietors who are still outside the collectives. It affects peasants who do not only possess horses but also hire them out to collective farms. There can be no doubt, however, regarding the sweeping nature of this decree because the long-standing shortage of horses following the mass slaughter of cattle by peasants during the period of enforced "wholesale" collectivization has made it necessary for the collectives to hire horses from individual peasant proprietors.

Moreover, the competition between the various collectives to assure themselves of the indispensable supply has made this hiring very lucrative. So widespread and important has the practice become that the press has from time to time made mention of "abuses" in this sphere, and directives have periodically been issued against "discriminative practices" in favor of the individual peasant proprietors. Translated into the language of economic reality it means that the individual peasant proprietors have been able to compete very successfully with the collectives, and grow at their expense. So successfully, in fact, that drastic measures, of which the tax decree is the first, have finally been resolved upon to cope with the growing danger.

The size of the tax itself, the brief period of less than sixty days set for its collection, as well as the "exemption" proviso indicate graphically the real import and intent of this decree. The kulak danger is abroad again.

For some time now references to "agents of the kulak" have dotted the Soviet press. Obviously, a grave situation exists in agriculture. The decree is an avowal of this fact. It is an avowal that the system of collective farms is being undermined by the automatic interplay of the contradictions in Russian economic life. While milder in form, it is nevertheless a resumption of the policy of enforced collectivization pursued so disastrously in the course of the first Five-Year Plan. Stalin proposes to save the collective farms by driving the peasants into them against their will.

The problem that Stalin has so confidently declared as resolved "forever" has confronted him again under new conditions and in far more aggravated form. Within the scope of this article it is impossible to deal with all the aspects of the new situation. There are two important factors of profound bearing on future developments that must be stressed.

### Differences in Collectives

The struggle against the kulak must be resumed at a time when within the collectives themselves a process of differentiation is occurring very swiftly. As against 118 collective farms with an income of over a million dollars annually in 1935, there were 561 such "millionaire" collectives in 1937. (Pravda, July 28, 1938). If this were a normal consequence of the growing prosperity of the collective system as a whole, there would be no need for artificial measures to force peasants into the collectives. They would have been automatically absorbed in the extension of the collectives.

But we are not witnessing any such process of healthy growth and expansion. Instead the collectives are being ripped apart internally, while being endangered from the outside by the stabilization and growth of the individual peasant proprietors. Within the collectives there is a growth of one pole of "prosperous" farmers (i. e. none other than the kulak himself) while at the other there is an expanding mass of collectivized peasants reduced to the status of agricultural laborers.

The second new factor is equally grave in its implications. One

of the reasons for Stalin's past "success" in temporarily resolving the problem of the kulak was the ability of Russian industry to absorb a vast army of raw agricultural labor. The peasants were driven not only into the collectives but also into the urban centers, where conditions, bad as they were, nevertheless provided by and large an "improvement" over the bestial and the predominantly feudal routine of rural existence. This safety valve no longer functions. In fact, the monstrous disproportions from which Soviet economy suffers—and which the regime instead of mitigating can only aggravate—have not only reduced the flow of man power from rural regions but have actually acted to reverse it.

### Return to Village

The peasant no sooner acquaints himself with prevailing conditions in industry than he seeks to return to the village, even as an agricultural laborer. The trend is so marked that Pravda itself has had to publicize it. Thus, in commenting on the critical situation in the Donbas coal mining area, Pravda openly warned the management of the mines as follows: "Let them bear in mind that spring and summer are approaching—seasons when in past years, as a consequence of inattention to housing and living conditions of the workers, sections of them returned to the village to work in the fields." (Pravda, Feb. 8, 1938). It goes without saying that this phenomenon is not limited to the Donbas region.

Only the future will tell precisely what scope and form the struggle against the kulak will assume. But it is already apparent that the class struggle in the village will shortly enter into its sharpest and most open phase.

## LABOR SHOWS STRENGTH IN SOUTH

HOUSTON, Sept. 6. — Without disturbing the tranquillity of the slow South, labor has begun to move into offensive positions. The potent undercurrent could be felt as organized labor at Houston mobilized 14,000 rollocking, shouting Labor Day paraders and marched them down Main Street yesterday.

In some respects it was much like any other parade that has lounded city pavements in years past. There was a motorcycle escort, a few official cars, a dozen bands and a procession of marching men three miles long.

### A People's Parade

But there the similarity ended. There was nothing formal about these hatless, coatless, happy workers who were having a better time than the shouting, cheering onlookers. This was a people's parade and underneath was the humming power of organized labor in a city growing industrially by leaps and bounds.

In the ranks were youngsters carrying placards reading, "Trade Unionists of Tomorrow." Came a gap in the ranks as the marchers were standing back from an unclean object—a tall, gaunt, black-hooded and shrouded figure stalking, humping along and bearing a sign "Parker Uniforms Unfair."

A little further along a small but defiant band was causing applause whenever they hoisted into sight. It was the striking Coca-Cola employees.

### Negro Dockers March

But the most significant from the standpoint of the South were the 14 locals of the longshoremen's union. Approximately 5,000 strong of whom 4,000 were Negroes. All of them were dressed in their blue denim uniforms. The Negroes had three bands, a bible class, ball team and Ladies' Auxiliary.

The reactionary leaders, A. J. Bannon and George A. Wilson of the A. F. of L. Trades Council, turned thumbs down on an offer of the C.I.O. for a joint parade with a minimum of 5,000 C.I.O. workers marching. Bannon even refused permission to H. A. Rasmussen, S.W.O.C. organizer, to carry a sign showing C.I.O. support of the Coca-Cola strike.

Less than thirty miles away, however, in the Tri-Cities (Goosecreek, Pelly, Baytown) area, a very different attitude was apparent. There a joint parade of over 5,000 C.I.O. and A. F. of L. marchers was followed by a joint picnic where tons of free barbecue was distributed to a crowd of 10,000.

A rather unusual feature for the labor movement of the South was the militancy of some of the speeches. Every mention of rank-and-file unity brought loud applause from every quarter of the grounds reached by the loud-speakers.

## SEAMEN PICKET TRAINING SCHOOL

(Continued from page 1)  
That these men will be used to man the ships when the bona fide seamen strike is obvious to union marine workers.

N.M.U. "Cooperates"  
While the pickets, most of whom belong to West Coast unions, continue fighting against the government agencies bent on destroying all maritime unions, the National Maritime Union still follows its course of "cooperating" with the Maritime Commission. Picketing ships such as the Southern Cross works for the direct benefit of the N.M.U., for when the Commission is forced to call union men to fill crew vacancies, it is the N.M.U. hiring hall that is called. Yet the new officials persist in aiding the Maritime Commission by advocating the slogan "Pack the Fink Halls."

Militant rank-and-file seamen, disgusted with the Communist Party policy of "going along" with all government agencies, hoped that the election that swept the Stalinists from control of the N.M.U. would put the union alongside the West Coast unions in the fight against the fink halls. But in the fight against the Stalinists only succeeded in putting in a few new officers with the same fatal policy.

Even on the pilot, the union's newspaper, the Stalinists have ridden the wave of revolt. The long-awaited house cleaning finds, out of a staff of three, two old Communist Party stooges, Corby Paxton, formerly business manager and now editor, edited the Voice of Labor, a C. P.-controlled sheet published in Honolulu, and is well known on the West Coast as a devoted follower of the "party line." Assistant Editor A. L. Hennessey is the only one connected with the defunct Rank and File Pilot.

Look Who's Here!  
Prize specimen on the staff is Managing Editor Jim O'Neil, one-time editor of the Voice of the Federation, organ of the Maritime Federation of the Pacific. Early in 1937 O'Neil was slipped into the Voice by the C. P. machine after a bitter factional fight that threatened to disrupt the Federation. After promising to keep the policy of the Voice non-partisan, within six weeks O'Neil trumpeted the C. P. line exclusively. The pages of the Federation's newspaper were open to publicity writers of every stooze organization of the C. P. from the International Workers Order to the League of American Writers, but union men attempting to protest against the ruinous policies of Bridges and Co. were denied a voice.

Under the direction of this "journalist" the Voice of the Federation declined from a fighting maritime newspaper with a national circulation to a Stalinist rag that not even members of the Federation would read. The paper has not yet got out of the financial hole into which it plunged under his editorship.

At the 1937 convention of the M.F.P.C. the delegates removed O'Neil from his job. Now the whole game is being played again on the East Coast, with O'Neil prepared once more to do the Stalinists' dirty work—with a fine air of impartiality.

S.U.P. Charter Delayed  
Meanwhile, issuance of a national charter to the S.U.P. by the A. F. of L. is being delayed. The discredited fakery of the old International Seamen's Union, who hold a charter but no union, have prevented the Executive Council from granting the charter as planned. These men, Scharrenberg, Hunter, Ross, etc., after crippling and betraying the seamen for years, now stand in the way of the militant S.U.P. These men, controlling a handful of seamen in the Gulf and on the Great Lakes, demand autonomy on a district basis. Encouraged by this, Chapdelaine is trying to retain control of the A. F. of L. Seamen's Union, operating under a federal charter for the East Coast.

The Sailors' Union of the Pacific has agreed to accept a charter only if they retain full autonomy on a national scale, and they have made clear that they intend to have nothing to do with the fakery of the I.S.U. At the coming national convention of the A. F. of L. the fight for a national charter will be pushed to a conclusion.

Just received for rental:

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**No Star Is Lost**

Reservations still being received on CELINE — *Death on the Installation Plan.*

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LABOR BOOK SHOP  
28 East 12th St. ST 9-0567  
Open 10 A. M. to 8 P. M.

## "In Stalin's Realm" "The Russian Workers' Own Story"

Reviewed by JOE HANSEN

(Continued from last issue)

In the very educational system the school teachers attempt to circumvent the systematic propaganda of Stalin. This is explained by a local secretary of the Communist Party—incidentally an ardent defender of Stalin: "You see even though Stalin's book on Leninism is to form a part of Lenin's work and is now made a compulsory possession of every library and a textbook in every school, very few grown-up intelligent people in Russia take Stalin as anything more than a joke so far as education is concerned."

### THE YOUTH KNOW

This is more concretely shown in a surprise visit paid by a high official—of course a Stalinite—to a class in which is taught the history of the Communist Party. The school teacher recounts the visit as follows:

The Stalinite official begins questioning one of the pupils: "Who organized the proletariat to overthrow Czarism and capitalism in the Soviet Union?"

"Various parties for the overthrow of Czarism; only the Bolshevik Party was against capitalism."

"Who was the leader of the Bolsheviks?"  
"Comrade Vladimir Ilyich Lenin."

"Who were his chief assistants?"  
"Many Bolsheviks. I can only name Comrades Krupskaya, Zinovieff, and Kameneff."

"What did the party do in 1905?"  
"It tried to organize armed risings, but succeeded only on a small scale."

"What was Trotsky doing in 1905?"  
"You will excuse me, comrade inspector. Trotsky was not a member of the party at that time."

The government official questions the next boy. "What part did Comrade Stalin take in preparing the party for the October Revolution?"

"He was always a member of some committee and occasionally a secretary."

"Was his a leading part?"  
"It depended whether the part played by his committee was an important one."

"How did Comrade Stalin mainly distinguish himself as a leader?"

No answer was forthcoming. The official asked if any other member of the class could answer the question. A girl rose and said: "He always carried a book under his arm in order to show that he was a learned man."

"And was Comrade Stalin not a learned man?"  
"He must have been more learned than the workers of his time, because they did not even know how to read."

"What made you say that Comrade Stalin carried a book under his arm?"  
"I saw a photograph in the library."

The official questioned the class generally: "Who was Comrade Lenin's chief assistant in the October Revolution and civil wars?"

"Trotsky," came the loud answer.  
"And who else?"  
"The proletarian soldiers."

The official turned to the top girl: "Have you read any book by Comrade Stalin or have you ever been told about Leninism?"

"I have seen the book in the library, tried to read it, but could not make out what Leninism was."

"And how would you connect Lenin with Marx?"  
"In the same way as I would connect a great Shakespearean actor with Shakespeare—because Lenin first studied then acted Marx."

The class applauded the answer. The official left hastily, commenting that this wasn't the standard system of education in Russia, a remark which the school teacher took as a compliment.

That not even the writings of Trotsky have been completely suppressed in Russia is shown by the following incident: In one of the workers' libraries in the Ukraine, Silver noticed a student studying a book by Trotsky. The student happened to be the daughter of the secretary of the Communist Club. Silver asked if Trotsky's books weren't "illegal" in Russia. "No," came the answer, "they're not illegal; they've merely disappeared from Russian libraries."

### TELLS WHO SUPPORTS STALIN

Stalin's power rests upon a very unstable base. His followers are far from being so numerous as the one-ticket shot-gun elections would indicate. Grisha, the old Bolshevik friend of Silver, estimates the number of Stalin's supporters as follows:

"As a member of the party with unbroken service and a delegate to nearly all the conferences, I have had it driven home to me how the circus character of the conferences has been gradually and systematically developed, in the same tempo as the number of delegates of the Black Hundred and international crook type has increased at conference after conference; I don't think I'm wrong in estimating that 90 per

cent of the delegates represented 80 per cent of members of the same type as themselves. We can therefore assume that fully a million and a half members are supporters of Stalin.

"We will call that the 'dynamo.' The 'fly-wheel' is the G.P.U., three-quarters of a million of them well paid, strictly disciplined and ready to kill anyone but themselves, as long as they are given all the privileges that a subject of Stalin can get. The 'machine' is the three to four million bureaucrats. Add to these about a million young people who have never had a chance to look upon anything except through the eyes of very skillful propagandists, and a similar number of workers who believe that 'quack's pills are best' because they hear it and see it everywhere. Add all these together and you have the sum total of Stalin's supporters. The total may not be quite as big as the figures would indicate, for people are apt to discard pills when they find they don't give the results expected, and not all the bureaucrats are Stalin's supporters. Remember, in Czarist days we had many good socialists among the Czar's civil servants. Who is against? Nobody can tell that with any measure of certainty. That can only become more or less clear at a real crisis. But I am not far wrong when I say that in the south Stalin has very few admirers and is very little feared."

### "THEY'RE A NEW ARISTOCRACY"

Boris Silver's observations confirm entirely the reports of the Tchernavins, of Lyons, of Fred Beal, of Ciliga, etc., as to the inhuman repressions of the Stalin bureaucracy, its increasing strangulation of the productive forces, the tragic and farcical nature of the trials staged with no other intention but to tighten the grip of Stalin's gang upon the workers' state.

On Stalin's course as a whole a school teacher comments: "Stalin is also responsible for the discovery that Socialism is possible in one country alone and that permanent revolution means permanent dictatorship of the proletariat. It didn't take genius to discover such absurdities which are both meaningless and contradictory, because ever whom would a dictatorship rule if socialism turned everybody into proletarians? And if the present unprecedented advertising boost of him as the great leader succeeds, we may yet see for the first time mediocrity destroying the work of genius, unless, of course, there are still enough people left in Russia able to form a party such as Lenin had in his mind at an historical moment when Stalin and his bureaucracy are at death grips either with ambitious rivals or ambitious foreign powers."

As for the intensity of feeling against the bureaucracy this is ably expressed by an old worker—a boot maker. "They are our masters; they make us work! They're a new aristocracy! . . . There will never be equality in Russia until every one of these new aristocrats is strangled."

### HOW OPPRESSION WILL END

A class-mate of Silver's in the days before 1905 outlined his idea of how Stalin will be overthrown: "Today leadership, political as well as military, has gradually come to mean personal power over the workers and peasants; membership of the Communist Party is now just a sound investment in a gigantic commercial trust, and even the Red Army is becoming more and more saturated with snobbishness and other petty bourgeois motives. Take it from me, Stalin will not only have his stuck-up proletarian generals like Voroshiloff and Budyenny; he may also have means to corrupt men as capable as Tukhachevsky and Egorov, and to purge the army of all true Socialists who cannot possibly accept him as they accepted Lenin and Trotsky."

"It will, of course, take a very long time to convert the Red Army into a national army, because the reserve is still international and so too ready to fight tyranny at home as well as abroad. There is only one comfort—Russia can never be wholly conquered, it is too vast for that, and the Russian people had tasted freedom for nearly ten years before Stalin succeeded in becoming a tyrant. They will make good use of a war situation to get rid of their oppressors at home first, and afterwards of the invaders by teaching their soldiers how to get rid of their oppressors."

"That's the way I—a lifelong Socialist—and very many like me—feel about it."

Boris Silver leaves Russia not as an embittered pessimist ready to review the fundamentals of a Marxism he never understood—but as one hopeful for the future, convinced that Stalin and his bureaucracy are a temporary phenomenon.

This book is worthy of a place in the library of every one interested in knowing what is happening in the U.S.S.R.

**THE RUSSIAN WORKERS' OWN STORY**, By Boris Silver, 251 pp. London, George Allen & Unwin, Ltd. 7s. 6d. 1938.

## BOSS OFFENSIVE MET BY LABOR

(Continued from page 1)  
lashed until scabs can "peacefully" pass the lines.

In preliminary negotiations the union representatives gave up demands for the 35-hour week and store-wide seniority and, although they demanded them again when the strike was called, already they have agreed to drop the demands. But the owners are adamant in their determination to control absolutely the hiring and firing of all employees. It is seniority rights that the clerks are most insistent on obtaining, for the constant turnover and layoffs in the retail trade makes impossible any security for the workers. Yet this is the very question that the negotiators seem willing to bargain away.

Major Anti-Union Offensive  
It is clear to San Francisco's union movement, 100,000 strong, that the employers have launched

a major offensive against the unions, and that the lockout of the 3,000 warehousemen and the forcing of the strike of the retail clerks is part and parcel of a planned campaign. If the employers were counting on the split in labor's ranks, caused by the disruptive actions of Harry Bridges, West Coast director of the C.I.O., the response of the unions to the clerks' strike should give them pause.

Spikes Bridges' Slander  
On the waterfront, where re-entertainment against Bridges' union-busting tactics is highest, the S.U.P. made clear in a published statement that the seamen stood firmly behind the longshoremen and warehousemen. Declaring that the statement only reiterated the long-standing policy of the S.U.P., Lundeberg said, implication of the statement at this time because "the comrat-controlled slander machine is busily circulating rumors and filthy lies among the longshoremen-warehousemen that the Sailors' Union of the Pacific will not

back up these men in their disputes with their employers."  
Thus Lundeberg and the S.U.P. spiked the lies of the Communist Party, who attempted to cover the disgraceful role of Bridges by accusing the S.U.P. of being a shipowners' tool, and served notice on the bosses that, regardless of the fight against the Stalinist union-busters, a fighting unity would meet the open-shop drive on the waterfront.

L. A. Unions Pledge Aid  
In Los Angeles, too, where five major C.I.O. unions left the Bridges-controlled Industrial Council in protest against the disruption of the Communist Party stooges, the bosses' threat met united ranks. In a letter to all maritime unions the newly-formed Trade Union Conference pledged support to all maritime unions, regardless of affiliation, in their approaching struggle with the employers.

The West Coast labor movement, plagued as it is by the Stalinists, in time of danger is still capable of closing its ranks, ready to do battle against the employers.

## The Crisis in the Auto Workers Union Today

(Continued from page 1)  
by the Stalinists in the U.A.W. has placed all groups before the acid test. Fine speeches and wordy resolutions could not remove the unavoidable necessity of taking a stand. A combination of circumstances made the Socialist Party an influential force in the union. Throughout they have performed a wretched role—the shadow of the Stalinists.

Left to their own, they fumbled the ball consistently. But the intensity of the fight did not permit them this luxury for long. The cowardliness of the party leaders and shabbiness of the party program made them an easy prey for the cynical and unprincipled careerist, Walter Reuther. His personal ambitions dominated the party policy. Norman Thomas fumed and even made public declarations but Walter Reuther continued to put the party through the paces. With Reuther at the helm, the difference between the C. P. and S. P. was not decisive. The S. P. whined and even protested but in the end it always tagged along behind the Stalinists. Undoubtedly, Reuther will repay the S. P. one of these days for their tolerant treatment, just as David Lasser of the Workers Alliance did—by leaving the party when he is done with it and kicking it in the face on the way out. That is of little importance, however, to American workers who are having demonstrated for them once again in the U.A.W. the utter bankruptcy of the Socialist Party as a force for progressive unionism.

### Martin Fights the C. P.

Only a blind man or a fool would deny that Homer Martin has waged a persistent and courageous struggle against the union busters. He has refused to make any rotten compromise with the Stalinists, resisted their blackmail and spurned their repeated attempts to buy him off. Where countless C.I.O. leaders from Lewis down have taken the easy road and become fronts for the Communist Party in the unions, it is to Martin's credit that he refused to sell out.

But good intentions never made a good fighter. Especially in a political fight are skill and principles of paramount importance. Martin's skill in the struggle against the Stalinists has always at best been questionable, and the principles of the administration group allied with him have been open to serious criticism by progressive unionists. Under these conditions, the Stalinist game was tremendously facilitated. As long as Martin fought them with bureaucratic weapons, they could shout "democracy" to the high heaven although secretly they planned a dictatorship. As long as Martin allied himself with reactionaries, the Stalinists could pose as "progressives" although their real policies differed not an iota from those of Martin's right-wing allies. The auto workers rightly jealous of their democratic rights and desiring a progressive union fell victim to the Stalinist demagog.

### A Record of Blunders

Let us cite the record to make the point clear:  
1. Martin's chief lieutenants are men like Fred Pieper and Loren Houser. Notorious for their incompetence, they liberally indulge in red-baiting of the good old-fashioned variety. Hatred for them and their like turned considerable sections of the auto workers against Martin.

2. Martin's appointments of organizers, whose only quality is their loyalty to the machine and the payroll, alienated progressive workers in nearly all the auto centers. Militant workers, who had grown suspicious and distrustful of Stalinist organizers, were held in line when Martin replaced the Stalinists by arrogant chair-warmers.

3. Martin's campaign against unauthorized strikes very often had a demoralizing effect on the union and weakened his support among the militant elements. In enforcing the agreement, fighting hostile foremen and management and beating down provocations, the workers in the plant were forced to resort to a sudden sit-down or slow-down. Some of the unauthorized actions were undoubtedly the work of company agents, but most of them were clearly a manner of settling legitimate grievances on the part of the workers. Instead of Martin pursuing an aggressive policy towards the motor companies for the enforcement of the agreement, he granted General Motors a letter giving them the right to discipline union men engaged in unauthorized actions. This did not help the union in negotiations, it did not discipline the union, it did not help Martin with the militants.

### WEAK with G. M.

4. Negotiations with General Motors were handled in a very timid and conservative manner. Lacking boldness and decision, Martin lost opportunity after opportunity to wrest concessions from the corporation, then he lost the moment to maintain the status quo and finally when de-

pression struck with full force, he was forced to retreat. Then he bungled all over again by signing the agreement without consulting the membership. The Stalinists, originators of this type of high-handed action, unscrupulously exploited Martin's bureaucratic action and lined up the membership against him.

5. For months Martin sailed along with no program whatever, at least with none visible. C. P. demagogues about militancy and democracy found ready listeners in this period. Their demagoguery went up in smoke when Martin championed and carried the 20-point program at the Executive Board last May. But the program was carried out in the most dilatory fashion. The membership remained uninformed about the union busters. Then Martin started the entire union by his suspension of five of the leading officers. This terrible mistake consisted not in the innocence of the careerist and stooge officers. No! Their crimes were heavy enough to warrant expulsion ten times over. But no educational campaign had prepared the membership for these disciplinary measures. The bureaucratic suspension put the Stalinists back on the map of the auto union and gave them their strongest talking point. Martin has never fully recovered from the irresponsible manner in which he carried out the suspensions.

### Stays Among Friends

6. With no other road open Martin finally began an open campaign. While the campaign lacked the effectiveness it would have had before the suspensions, it was a step in the right direction. Instead of going into hostile territory to convince opposition locals of the correctness of his action, Martin remained among his friends and kept repeating his story to locals already lined up for him.

Despite all his blunders, Martin's record—as the head of the most democratic of C.I.O. unions, of the union which had gained most for its membership through militant action, of the union which had organized unemployed workers on an unprecedented scale—gave every reason to expect that the fight could be taken into the camp of the enemy and the Stalinist opposition smashed. But Martin missed his boat once again. And now lines are drawn hard and fast to a point where at least for the present it is impossible to change anybody's mind. Events in the auto union are dramatic proof on a large scale that there is only one way to defeat the Stalinists. Harry Lundeberg and the West Coast Sailors gave the Stalinists the trouncing of their life because they fought the C. P. bureaucrats as champions of democracy; they fought the C. P. reactionaries not as conservatives but as progressive militant unionists. Democracy and militancy are the only weapons against Stalinist reaction and dictatorship. These methods are dictated not by expediency but by the needs of the unions, by the true relation of forces and the real role of the C. P.

### The Compromise Proposals

The Socialist Appeal has already pointed out the hypocritical nature of the Lewis "peace plan." The plan is a clear attempt to destroy the autonomy of the union and to saddle the union with a Stalinist regime. Wiseacres have termed the plan a "compromise." Yes, something like the compromise Mussolini made with Haile Selassie! There is no other course for progressives but to fight the Lewis-Stalinist plan with every ounce of strength at their disposal.

Yet the danger of a split remains an imminent possibility. With union forces almost equally divided between Martin and the Stalinists, a split would create untold damage. The rival unions would be thrown into immediate and bitter conflict. Between court actions and physical violence among workers, the manufacturers would have an open field for wrecking both organizations and re-establishing the open shop.

To avoid the eventuality of such a split, it is necessary that some compromise be made. The compromise cannot and must not surrender the union to the Communist Party, as Lewis proposes. But it must find some formula for composing the differences, at least temporarily. Naturally, no one need have any illusions that peace will be achieved by any compromise whatever. The Stalinists will not lose a minute after the compromise is signed to resume their attempts to capture the union.

Peace within the auto union will come only after the union-wreckers are decisively defeated and discredited in the eyes of the membership. That is the job for the progressives who must now organize as an independent force and carry the campaign to the rank and file—the only guarantee that the United Automobile Workers will be saved from the cancer of Stalinism and pursue a militant and progressive policy.