

# Stalinists In The C.I.O. - A History Of Union-Wrecking And Corruption

By E. R. FRANK

Prior to the signing of the Stalin-Hitler pact, the Stalinists constituted a major force in the American trade union movement. Posing as the best union fighters, the true champions of honesty, militancy and democracy in the labor movement, supported by a well-organized national apparatus, a strong press, with huge funds at their disposal, the Stalinists fought the rising CIO movement of young unsuspecting workers completely unawares and easily wormed their way into control of numerous unions.

Once in the saddle, they showed the American labor bureaucrats how to really organize an autocratic, reactionary and corrupt machine. They signed agreements that disgraced the labor movement. They blandly united with racketeers, gangsters and any reactionary forces in the unions, in order to gain control. They systematically hounded, slandered and persecuted all genuine militants and progressives who dared to revolt against these high-handed practices.

It was the "Peoples Front" period of Stalinism. In this scheme, the unions constituted the most important battle grounds. The labor movement, suspecting nothing, was to find itself, according to the Stalinist plan, one fine day, lined up to a man behind the Roosevelt war machine and hell-bent on shoving through a "collective security" war alliance of America, England, France and Russia, against the "bad, war-making fascists."

## WERE ROOSEVELT'S MOST SERVICIOUS AGENTS IN UNIONS

To push through this infamous scheme, the Stalinists converted themselves into the most servile, belly-crawling supporters of Roosevelt's New Deal, picturing it as an almost suitable substitute for socialism itself. They hounded and slandered any worker who had the temerity to question this dishonest, reactionary policy. Thus, this crew of union wreckers, posing as the left wing of the unions, sidetracked the whole labor

## March Issue of "New International"

The March issue of the New International will be off the press soon.

It will feature a symposium on the "Russian Question." Vital articles by Leon Trotsky and by the Minority of the Political Committee of the Socialist Workers Party, forming the most important section of the pre-convention discussion in the S.W.P. will be published in the March Issue.

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the signing of wretched contracts, making outrageous deals with the employers, belly-crawling before any two by four politician or public official, and a distoyal, ruthless suppression of all opposition. The Stalinists left in their wake a trail of wrecked unions, honest union militants corrupted into cynical officials and thousands of disillusioned, disoriented rank and file workers.

**WAVE OF REVOLT AGAINST THE STALINISTS**  
The Stalinists were driven to be more cautious and diplomatic in the last period just preceding the signing of the Stalin-Hitler Pact, as great rank and file movements sprang up in union after union, challenging their autocratic rule and exposing the union-wrecking activities of the Stalinist gang.

In 1939, this rank and file revolt gained strength and swept through both CIO and AFL unions—in the Pocket Book makers, the Maritime unions on both the coasts and the Gulf, the Teachers Union, the West Coast Office Workers, the secession of important unions from the Los Angeles CIO Council, the New York Painters and Food Workers. This imposing rank and file revolt against the Stalinist machine was climaxed by the titanic struggle in the Auto Workers Union.

By 1939 the American trade unions presented a far different picture than at the beginning of the CIO movement. The unsuspecting, inexperienced union militants of 1934 and 1935 had undergone a profound transformation. The new officials of the new unions had become more cautious and more conservative both under the pressure of capitalist public opinion and because of their lack of class consciousness and working class philosophy.

The union movement represented to these officials, however, their life's career. They became therefore extremely suspicious of and antagonistic to the Stalinists who viewed the unions merely as a pawn and tool to realize the "Line" of the Stalinist Party. The union officials knew one thing for sure: that their importance and prestige, as well as their salaries, depended upon a strong, virile union and they were interested in preserving that.

Even more hostile to Stalinism were the rank and file leaders who were arising in different localities, veterans of the strike struggles of the CIO, hardened and toughened by their experiences. They had learned the hard way the meaning of Stalinism and the fact that it was the most reactionary force in the American labor movement. They were determined to destroy the Stalinist cancer, in order that the labor movement might advance and grow.

(A second article on the Stalinists in the CIO will appear next week.)

# WORKERS' FORUM

## WHY DID LEWIS SPLIT WITH ROOSEVELT?

I spent a good deal of time reviewing the Appeal's discussion of the Lewis-Roosevelt split, and after careful consideration, I have come to the conclusion that there is something faulty in the Appeal's analysis of this event. E. R. Frank's article in the February 3 issue refers to the Lewis-Roosevelt split as a reflection of mass feeling. Other articles in the Appeal are written in the same tone, and from all indications, this appears to be the official party view on the split.

However, neither Frank nor anyone else has presented any concrete evidence in support of his conclusion. Mass feeling is not something which we discover by instinct; it is a thing which soon expresses itself in outward signs. If there were opposition to Roosevelt from below, local unions, and even state organizations would have passed resolutions to that effect. Rank-and-file leaders would have spoken out this opposition long before Lewis would take such a bold step. But the Appeal refers to no such incidents; it merely takes them for granted.

My own observations among fellow workers seem to confirm my criticism of the Appeal. The workers in this area are still for Roosevelt. To them he is still the one president "who has done more for labor than any other man." They want to see Roosevelt run for a third term, and they are confident that if he runs he will win. Among the more militant workers, this feeling is almost unanimous.

Speaks of Steel Workers Of course, it may be that we are situated in an area which economically has fared better than other sections of the country. However, for the past five years, I have found the sentiment among workers in this area to be no different from that of the majority of the American workers. It seems to me that the faulty analysis of the Appeal flows

# Transport Workers Denounce LaGuardia

(Continued from Page 1)

and the Wall Street bankers, is driving through an anti-union program designed to eventually destroy the Transport Workers Union." The prophecy has been fulfilled even sooner than anyone expected.

## Long-Planned Scheme

The whole history of the "unification" deal reveals, clear as day, that Hizzoner, the great "friend of Labor" is a party to a deliberate conspiracy of the bankers and tycoons of Wall Street to completely destroy the union of the transport workers of New York.

A year ago, the City of New York took title to the Sixth Avenue elevated line of the Manhattan Railway Company. The road was closed on December 5, 1938 and the next day six hundred employees were thrown out into the streets without a job. La Guardia promised them all jobs, but these six hundred workers were never returned to work.

Several months ago, the La Guardia administration concluded its infamous unification deal with the bankers. Immediately, in order to raise all available cash to speed the "unification" along, they pushed proposals for the demolition of the Second and Ninth Avenue elevated lines, in order to raise eleven million dollars in cash from the increased assessments on the adjoining properties. This demolition program will put out into the streets an additional three thousand unionists for whom the city is not making any provision.

On March 4, union president Quill answered the letter of La Guardia and called attention to the shameful run-around which the union had received from La Guardia.

## The Run-Around

"Ever since the summer of 1938 we have repeatedly besought you to confer with us," Quill wrote, "with a view to the formulation of a plan which would, after unification, recognize the right of transit employees to organize and bargain collectively in respect to their wages, hours and working conditions through a bona fide union of their own choosing."

## Many Unions To Meet

In addition, a meeting of representatives of all New York unions, AFL, CIO and independent, has been called for Thursday evening at the Hotel Capitol, to consider action of the whole labor movement to answer the brazen union-busting challenge of the mayor.

All of these steps are excellent as preparatory steps to organizing the fight ahead. It is, however, absolutely necessary to have a bold, courageous fighting policy that realizes that the Mayor and the whole city administration, like any capitalist politicians, are lined up, to a man, with the bankers and the industrialists of this city, and are determined to smash one of the most strategic unions of New York, the Transport Workers Union.

This challenge of the bosses and their agents can be met in one way and one way only: a firm demand that the union contract be recognized at a certain date OR THE CALLING OF A STRIKE ON ALL LINES OF THE CITY-OWNED TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM. The membership of the TWU must put across this demand in the meetings of the union.

It is then up to the TWU leadership to call upon the whole labor movement of this city, composed as it is of more than a million union men and women, to back the TWU in its great fight against Mayor La Guardia.

## Join the Socialist Workers Party

SAVE SATURDAY Night, March 16th. A party with a new twist—entertainment, hamburgers, beer, dancing, folk dancing, games... all for 25c. 916 9th Avenue, Harlem Branch.

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## No Better Way to Top the Week!

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"We began to suspect what is now made clear by your letter—that it was your intention all along to reduce the transit workers of this city to individual helplessness by destroying the Transport Workers Union, the labor organization that they had finally built after thirty years of pitiless persecution and unceasing effort."

"How differently you treated the Morgans and Rockefellers! You did not seem to be able to give them enough of your time and the people's money," Quill continued.

The union letter implies that a strike will be called in all of the subway lines, unless the Mayor confers immediately with the union officials and recognizes the contracts which the union holds at the present time with the transport companies.

Austin Hogan, recently re-elected President of Local 100 of the Transport Workers Union, stated that the union did not intend to remain passive, while their union rights were "taken away by some bankers' puppet."

How different this sounds from the speeches of TWU officials two years and even one year ago. So ends the honeymoon with the Little White Flower, New York edition of the "great friend of labor."

Once again it is proven right down to the bottom that labor will always be double crossed and betrayed by all of its "friends." Labor can only rely on its own strength, its own organizations, its own political party.

The TWU is holding mass meetings throughout the city of its membership to present the situation to the membership concerning the serious crisis of the union. "The scandalous conduct of Mayor La Guardia and other administration officials in connection with unification will be exposed," Austin Hogan announced.

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The financial difficulties—to use a mild word—of the Socialist Appeal are due directly to the failure of branches to meet bundle order payments. The figures published below are only a pale reflection of the Appeal's troubles. In simple terms, these figures show the following:

City	Debt
Los Angeles	\$2.03
San Pedro	2.70
San Diego	3.87
Berkeley	6.35
Pasadena	3.75
Fresno	1.50
Oakland	17.65
San Francisco	29.00
Denver	1.75
Hartford	.40
New Haven	5.85
Washington, D. C.	5.99
Chicago	31.04
Streator, Ill.	2.85
E. Chicago, Ind.	.70
Evansville, Ind.	10.26
South Bend	4.00
Hutchinson, Kan.	1.15
Whitewater, Kan.	1.32
Baltimore (c)	7.85
Boston	16.25
Fitchburg, Mass.	2.60
Gardner, Mass.	6.64
Lynn	7.05
Worcester	1.17
Worcester	1.90
Cambridge	3.75
Flynt	32.15
Crystal, Mich.	12.45
Detroit	18.45
Ann Arbor, Mich.	13.40
St. Paul	67.50
(incl. 3000 sp. ed. for Mar. 12)	
Minneapolis	28.00
St. Louis	3.51
Univ.'s City, Mo.	5.75
Kansas City, Mo.	3.75
Laconia, N.H.	1.20
Newark	0.00
Paterson	3.85
New Br'nsw'k, N.J.	4.02
Ithaca, N. Y.	3.25
Rochester	8.55
Jamaica, L. I.	1.95
Gloversville, N.Y. (c)	0.43
Fargo, N.D. (c)	1.60
Toledo	20.65
Akron	32.20
Columbus	17.70
Hudson, O.	6.35
Cleveland	25.65
Youngstown	66.63
Portland, Ore.	3.15
Quakertown, Pa.	2.70
Phila. YPSL	14.85
Phila.	15.40
Allentown, Pa.	5.85
Reading, Pa.	5.66
New Castle, Pa.	5.33
Houston, Tex.	0.30
Madison, Wisc.	8.50
Total	\$588.44
(c)—Credit	

# Teamsters Map Fight Against Boss Attack

(Continued from Page 1)

were sentenced to four years in the South Dakota penitentiary. The conviction was appealed to the state Supreme Court.

Pressure to prevent bondsmen from dealing with these union cases and sudden cancellations of bonds have been only one among many incidental ways and means by which the union has been hampered in its fight against these frameups.

## Many Bosses Involved

Trucking companies are not the only group behind this union-busting campaign. The Union Pacific and Northwestern railroads are vitally interested in preventing the spread of unionization in the area. The Sioux City Businessmen's Association is financing an "independent union" drive. The big packing-house companies are also interested. For unionization of the teamsters has meant here, as in Minneapolis after 1934, the inspiration of unionism in every field.

## The Latest Frameup

Now comes this latest arrest of Fouts, Johnson and Cunningham, the talk of death by hanging, refusal of bond, etc. Immediately upon their arrest, the bonds for Johnson and Fouts in the South Dakota case was cancelled, giving the newspapers another angle—they announced

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