

# WORKERS' FORUM

## Another View of the Roosevelt-Lewis Split

Editor:  
Comrade Mills, in his letter in the March 9 Appeal, reviewing the policy of the Appeal on the Roosevelt-Lewis split, in my opinion makes an important error. To attempt to determine the sentiment of the American working class towards Roosevelt on the basis of the feelings of an isolated section or even for that matter of a whole important strata is not to examine the question correctly. To counterbalance those sentiments that Comrade Mills sees, it is possible to pose other sections definitely swinging away from Roosevelt.

My own experience among production workers and even skilled machinists in New York (U. S. & M.) would seem to indicate this. However, as stated above this would not indicate a trend, but would not be a basic answer to the reason for the Roosevelt-Lewis split. Lewis, although unquestionably as bureaucratic as Green, still must be considered as one of America's shrewdest labor leaders. No doubt, Comrade Mills, the greatest percentage of the organized American workers, if asked today as to their sentiment toward Roosevelt, would answer in the affirmative.

Yet, as the Appeal correctly points out, you would get a negative answer from the AFL building trades workers, whose unions Roosevelt is attempting to smash; from the millions of the unemployed, from the New York transport workers, from the many workers who are discovering that to maintain, let alone extend, unionism, they can no longer depend on Roosevelt.

I believe, Comrade Mills, that if you would see the reaction of skilled machinists to the fact that they are too "old" or had the misfortune not to choose stable firms to work for, etc., you would easily recognize what Lewis has already recognized—the direction in which the American working class is moving. I have no doubt that if you do a little probing among your own steel workers, especially that section which works less than six months a year, you will discover the sentiment for Roosevelt to be very thin indeed.

Roosevelt is today heading towards war and at breakneck speed; a docile labor movement is a prerequisite. Roosevelt, you know, is also an astute politician; he recognizes that no labor bureaucracy can hold back the American workers from claiming their just demands in the event of expanding profits. He has learned that from the experience of '36-'37. He has also had the more recent experience of the first few weeks of the war in maritime, auto, etc. So Roosevelt has decided a smashed labor movement is a primary task for M-day. Every action of his and his colleagues—Arnold, Murphy, La Guardia, etc., points in this direction.

Lewis knows that if reaction will strike anywhere it will hit first and hardest—at the CIO, particularly his own ballwick, the miners, auto, steel, which are the very backbone of American industry. It is this pressure which Lewis is responding to.

I believe that it is beyond question that Lewis will not be able to control the movement he is now going along with. The next year may very well see a new '36, even at the outbreak of war. New York City Henry Addis

## Exposes Pro-Ally "Socialist" Group

Editor:  
The Socialist party (of Norman Thomas) is now holding elections for delegates to their national convention.

While I am no longer a member of that party, because among other things I do not agree with their attitude toward the Soviet Union, I still receive communications from them. I am sending you one of these communications because I believe you may be able to use it in some way.

I believe that these people who call themselves socialists, and claim to lead the working class in the name of Marx, and yet advocate a program such as enclosed in their communication, must be fought and exposed at every opportunity.

Gilbert Carpenter  
Springfield, Mass.

The communication to which Carpenter refers is a "Platform" which Alfred Baker Lewis, state secretary of the Socialist Party of Massachusetts, Albert Sprague Coolidge and six other prominent party members are sponsoring at the forthcoming national convention of the S. P.

It is brazenly pro-Ally. It says: "We favor granting full economic but not military aid to the Allies in their fight against Hitlerism as long as that is their purpose. We favor adoption by the United States of a general policy of giving economic aid by government as well as private measures to nations which are victims of aggression, and placing economic penalties by embargoes and boycotts, government as well as private, on governments guilty of aggression. For instance, we favor government embargoes on war materials for Russia, Japan and Germany."

War-mongers and enemies of the Soviet Union, these gentry—they number some of the biggest money-bags in the S. P.—are among the most prominent spokesmen of their party.—Editor.

## Class War Fighters In the Ozarks

Editor:  
The Ford strikers here are still proving that they are as militant as ever. They are still struggling in this heroic battle. They have been on strike since November, 1937 against the Ford plant in St. Louis.

Many of these Ford strikers

were forced by starvation back to their folks' homes in the rocky hills of the Ozarks, to scratch a bare existence from the rocky soil. But these workers will be ready when the call comes.

The Ozarks are full of class conscious workers who were driven out of cities and towns for their militant struggle. All you need to do is to pull into some hamlet in the Ozarks and tell two or three people you want to give them a socialist speech. They call it "a speaking." One of them will start out over one hill, the others will go over another hill, and in about two hours there will be several hundred people to listen to you.

These people are quite up on their socialism, too. One old man, aged 78, had \$25 to his name. He planned on going to the county poor farm. So he thought, should he first spend his money, or what? So this old class war fighter decided that he would spend the only money he had in the world and go to the poor farm. Well, I suppose you are wondering what he did with his \$25. He bought that amount of subscriptions to a labor paper, and gave the people around there six months' subscriptions. And then over the hill to the poor farm for him.

I am not a writer, if I were, perhaps I could draw a picture of this old man and his devotion to a just cause, giving his last penny in the world, never to have another cent, then plodding along the rocky road to spend the rest of his life in a living hell. A young comrade meets him at the cross-road, he slaps the old man on the back, and says: "It was not in vain."

H. V. Romer  
St. Louis, Mo.

## What Will Socialism Do For Housewives?

Editor:  
The other day I handed an issue of the Socialist Appeal to my married sister. She had just gotten through a day when her children had been a lot of trouble. She wanted to know what socialism was going to do for housewives. I think I share the experience of more than one socialist when it comes to the matter of convincing members of our immediate family of the necessity of socialism. But to go on with the story. She noticed in our platform the slogan on the Appeal's back page about 30-hours, 30 dollars.

That's all right for the men who work, she said. Six hours and their day is through—but how about us? she wanted to know. We have to get up with our husbands, make the meals, clean up the house, take care of a couple of kids that almost sometimes drive one crazy. I'm always washing diapers, washing the kids. I hardly ever get a minute of peace. I work 12 hours a day and I can't even afford to buy myself a new dress. I want to know what you are going to do for us?

What my sister was expressing to me is not only her own feelings, but those of a lot of housewives. It would be appropriate for the Appeal to devote a little bit of space to this section of the workers.

E. W.  
University City, Mo.

For every comrade that goes to the trouble of writing in a letter posing the question of "Women Under Socialism," there must be hundreds who are confronted by the same problem.

Instead of referring comrade E. W. to such literature as exists on the subject, we take this opportunity to appeal to those comrades who have given long thought to this question, to utilize the pages of the Appeal to answer him and the many for whom he speaks. We shall gladly publish all letters and articles on this subject. In particular, we call upon comrade Antoinette Konikow to begin providing for publication her numerous notes on this question!—Editor.

# Stalinists in the C. I. O. -- After the Hitler-Stalin Pact

By E. R. FRANK

The signing of the Stalin-Hitler pact and the subsequent march into Poland caught the American Communist party off guard and unprepared.

Right up to the moment of the signing of the pact, the Stalinists kept up an incessant and uproarious din in the trade unions with thousands of resolutions and an equal number of speeches for "Collective Security"—an alliance of the United States and the other "democracies" with the Soviet Union, to "quarantine the aggressors"—Germany, Italy and Japan—and for full, enthusiastic and unconditional support for Roosevelt and his "peace program"—the cynical name for the construction of the largest peace-time military machine in American history.

They kept up this propaganda through the better part of 1939, in the period when Roosevelt signed the Woodrum Bill, which dumped three quarters of a million WPA workers out into the streets, destroyed the "prevailing wage-scale" principle hitherto observed on the WPA, slashed the wages of the remaining WPA workers and introduced the infamous "eighteen month" clause.

## South African Worker Raises A Question

Editor:  
I have just read your article on Trotsky's likely appearance before the Dies Committee. (Dec. 16, 1939.) I was surprised to hear that Trotsky was willing to testify before a committee which is regarded throughout the world as reactionary. The greater part of your remarks, however, justifying Trotsky's action in accepting the invitation, met with my sympathy. There is, however, one argument advanced by you which appears specious and unnecessary to the point of rationalization and wishful thinking. You add:

"Would we refuse to send representatives to Congress because we recognize Congress is a reactionary body?"

All revolutionaries accept without question the necessity for utilizing capitalist institutions. Congress, reactionary though it be, performs many functions; it legislates on matters affecting the daily lives of the workers; it also makes decisions on war and peace; and although workers' representatives may prove ineffectual through insufficient representation and the class nature of all bourgeois parliamentary institutions, yet nevertheless they are there to protest and demonstrate the character of capitalist class rule. Thereby they perform a valuable service to the working class.

But you continue by saying: "And is there any difference between a Congressional investigating committee and Congress itself? If we had a representative of our party in Congress he would make a serious attempt to become a member of such a Committee in order to bring his own point of view into the investigations." Your comments are extremely surprising to me for it seems to me that the first duty of your representative in Congress should be to oppose the appointment of such a committee and secondly, to refuse nomination to it. I accept your remarks that although Congress is to be regarded as reactionary, yet we should attempt to make use of it in order to demonstrate its futility and to utilize it as a public forum for the advocacy of workers' policy. But Congress, by its very nature, will take steps of a reactionary character and one of these was the appointment of the Dies committee. Therefore the workers' delegate must abstain from associating with it.

They continued lining up the labor movement behind the Roosevelt machine, even when the conservative building trades unions were forced to answer the Roosevelt anti-union drive with a national strike on the WPA. They continued shouting for Roosevelt even when he openly announced his intention of smashing the WPA strike, and issued the arrogant dictum that "you cannot strike against the government," followed by the arrest and indictment of 162 Minneapolis WPA strikers on charges of conspiracy.

The cynical bureaucrats who run the Communist party were not even abashed when Roosevelt, through the FBI, began handing out dozens of indictments against union officials as part of the Thurman-Arnold anti-trust drive, the worst-union busting campaign undertaken by any U. S. President in the last two decades.

## THEY LOVED ROOSEVELT THOUGH HE SMOTE THEM

No! The Stalinists unconcernedly continued using their influence and strength to hog-tie the labor movement and to confuse and befuddle the minds of the union militants. The Stalinist-controlled Workers Alliance is-

Your identification of Congress with Congress committees is, therefore, false, especially in this particular instance. (In the case of Educational, Housing, Health committees, etc., workers' delegates would eagerly seek representation.)

As this is an important issue I would like to know as a reader of your paper and as a Fourth Internationalist whether your editorial is endorsed by the party. I would appreciate your further comments on this question.

J.M.  
Johnsburg, South Africa.

A Fourth Internationalist, if he sat in Congress, would cast his vote AGAINST establishing a Dies Committee, and AGAINST any appropriations for it. But then, if the Congressional majority establishes the committee, and provides it with funds, the problem of fighting against it assumes a new form. At that point abstentionism serves no revolutionary purpose.

Once the committee is to exist in spite of all that we can do, it becomes a class duty to prevent the committee from serving the reactionary ends for which it was conceived. That can be done primarily, of course, by mobilizing the workers against it, warning them what its purpose is and inoculating them against its red-baiting. That work can be supplemented by appearance of revolutionaries before it, utilizing it as a forum from which to defend proletarian policies against the policies of the Dies committee. A revolutionary Congressman on the committee could serve the same function. Naturally, the next time the question of continuing the committee would arise in Congress, our Congressman would vote AGAINST its continuance. There is no contradiction between being against the committee and utilizing it when it exists.—Editor.

## N. Y. Trade Unionists Meet Friday

An important meeting of all trade unionists of the SWP, Local New York, will be held Friday, March 15, 8:00 p.m., at Irving Plaza, Irving Place and 15th St. Farrel Dobbs will make the national trade union report.

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## PAY UP ON YOUR BUNDLE ACCOUNTS

Since publication in this column last week of the outstanding bundle debts of the branches there has been a slight improvement in payments. Los Angeles, Oakland, Calif., New Haven, Chicago, Whitewater, Kansas, Boston, Lynn, St. Louis, Newark, Akron and the Philadelphia YP SL have come through with bundle payments. This is a decided improvement over the previous week but unfortunately it did not come in sufficient sums to strike a body blow at our financial worries. What we said in our last column goes double for this week: the Appeal needs every dime it can get. Don't forget the suggestion: float loans for large sums and take up collections for small.

We unintentionally omitted reference to New York in our last column. (Because New York pays from week to week.) New York is paid up through the last issue. We only wish we could be as close to every party local so that this arrangement could become universal. Incidentally New York took a large number of Appeals last week in addition to their regular bundle for distribution among the transport workers. We are told they met with a n excellent response among the workers fighting LaGuardia's strikebreaking moves on the city's subways.

One more correction: Crystal, Mich. is incorrectly listed in the last Appeal as owing \$12.45. It should be 45 cents.

## SPECIAL SUBSCRIPTIONS

We hope you've read the announcement on the special sub offer in last week's Appeal. It's being repeated this week as well for those who missed it last time. Give it a try. You'll find it as good a proposal as has been made in some time. Even if we have to say so ourselves.

## SUBS FOR TWO WEEKS

Subs continue to hover around the same low level. We are certain if the comrades would take advantage of the offer printed elsewhere subs would spurt upwards immediately. Here is the list:

|                |    |
|----------------|----|
| New York State | 3  |
| Chicago        | 3  |
| Minnesota      | 1  |
| Toledo         | 1  |
| Cleveland      | 1  |
| Youngstown     | 1  |
| California     | 2  |
| New Haven      | 2  |
| New York City  | 3  |
| St. Paul       | 1  |
| Los Angeles    | 4  |
| Total          | 22 |

## MISCELLANEOUS

Last week we broke into new territory in the State of Washington. Tacoma opened a bundle account. . . . Our St. Louis plugger, M. V. has come through again with money for a new order of Appeals. . . . Don't forget to fill out the Branch Sales Reports you will receive regularly and mail them in with cash. . . . Bound volumes of the 1939 Appeal and N.I. are one sale. Order your copies now.

say about the recent change in the party line than any outsider. The new line was handed down from the top, by decree. The basic aim and policy of the Stalinist party consists of this: that at every stage of the game, the influence and strength of the labor movement should be so maneuvered, directed and channeled to bolster up and support the foreign policy—not of the people of the Soviet Union—but of the corrupt, reactionary Stalin bureaucracy, that runs the government of the Soviet Union. This was true for the period before the signing of the Stalin-Hitler pact. It remains true today.

## THE FLIP-FLOP CAME OVERNIGHT

With the signing of the pact, the Stalinist policy changed overnight. Never before in recent history, has a political party executed such a fantastic, rapid fire, flip-flop. Everything that was black became white. Everything that was white became black. England and France, the "peace-loving democracies" became transformed into "war-mongering aggressors." "Peace-loving democratic" England was suddenly revealed by the Daily Worker to be "the age-old British imperialism, whose hands drip with blood." Germany, the "bad, war-mongering, fascist" suddenly changed roles and became a "peace lover." Roosevelt, who supposedly had been pursuing a "peace program" for the past four years, was discovered to be America's worst "war monger" intent upon hurling the U.S. into the imperialist blood-bath. "Collective Security," the "democracies against fascism," "quarantine the aggressors," "boycott Hitler Germany"—all disappeared with the snows of yesteryear.

## WHY STALINISTS NOW OPPOSE ROOSEVELT

Instead of Stalin making an alliance with the "democracies," as was envisaged in the period of the People's Front, Stalin confounded his parties all over the world, by making an alliance with Hitler, against England, France and the United States. If the United States enters the present war, as it is preparing to do, it will unquestionably put its power on the side of the Allied imperialists against the Hitler-Stalin alliance. On behalf of Stalin's alliance with Hitler, therefore, the U.S. must remain neutral at all costs. This is the explanation and the only explanation for the Stalinist change of policy.

The present foreign policy of Stalin demands of the American party that it line up the labor movement against Roosevelt and his war program. Shortly after the signing of the pact, the Stalinists went to work on a new campaign to put the "line" across. Mike Quin, an editor of the West Coast Stalinist paper, People's World wrote a pamphlet called "The Yanks are not Coming," which rolled off the printing press just in time to greet the delegates of the San Francisco CIO convention. The pamphlet, which gives the new line of the Stalinists in popular "trade union" style, was published under the auspices of the Stalinist-con-

trolled San Francisco district of the Maritime Federation of the Pacific and has since been circulated in systematic fashion by the Stalinists throughout the CIO and in numerous unions of the AFL.

Using the pamphlet as an opening wedge, the Stalinists have pushed through in many local unions endorsements as the preliminary step to the actual setting up of "peace committees" or "The Yanks are not Coming Committees." All of these committees which have been springing up in many local unions all over the country, have this in common: they are all inspired and organized by the Stalinists and all propagate the present line of the Stalinist party.

The Stalinists plan to eventually call a Congress or national conference of all of these phony "peace" groups in order to form a new national peace organization to agitate and work for the new line of the Stalinist party in this post Stalin-Hitler pact period.

## NEW LINE NO BETTER THAN THE OLD

In a sense, the new Stalinist line is the complete opposite of the previous "People's Front" program. But it has this similarity, or more correctly, identity: the new "anti-war" line, like the preceding one, is steered, planned and directed by the same gang of unscrupulous union wreckers that manipulated and pursued the old "People's Front" pro-Roosevelt, pro-war line. Unconcerned and uninterested in the actual needs and desires of the labor movement, they remain today as before intent only on exploiting the trade unions for the selfish interests of the Stalinist party, which is the American agency for the corrupt and savage bureaucracy who rule the Soviet Union. Their "anti-war" line is no better for the workers than their pro-war line of yesterday.

(The third article of this series will appear next week.)

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