

SOCIALIST APPEAL

Vol. IV, No. 11 Saturday, March 16, 1940

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

Editors:
*ELIX MORROW MAX SHACHTMAN
General Manager:
GEORGE CLARKE

Subscriptions: \$2.00 per year; \$1.00 for six months.
Foreign: \$3.00 per year, \$1.50 for six months. Bundle
orders: 3 cents per copy in the United States; 4 cents
per copy in all foreign countries. Single copies: 5 cents.

*Reentered as second class matter December 4,
1939, at the post office at New York, N. Y., under the
Act of March 3, 1879.

**FIGHT WITH THE SOCIALIST
WORKERS PARTY FOR:**

1. A job and a decent living for every worker.
2. Open the idle factories—operate them under workers' control.
3. A Twenty-Billion dollar Federal public works and housing program.
4. Thirty-thirty—\$30-weekly minimum wage—30-hour weekly maximum for all workers on all jobs.
5. Thirty dollar weekly old-age and disability pension.
6. Expropriate the Sixty Families.
7. All war funds to the unemployed.
8. A people's referendum on any and all wars.
9. No secret diplomacy.
10. An Independent Labor Party.
11. Workers' Defense Guards against vigilante and Fascist attacks.
12. Full social, political and economic equality for the Negro people.

A Crucial Fight

The fight of the Transport Workers Union of New York against Mayor La Guardia and the bankers whom he represents is of profound importance for the entire labor movement of the country.

The main issue at stake is very simply stated: the rights of unionism for all workers engaged in industries and plants which are owned by any governmental body, national, state or city.

At this moment the workers on the subways, elevated lines and busses are working under closed-shop union contracts, which they wrested from the bosses after long and bitter struggle. All that the union is asking is that the present contracts continue in force.

But Mayor La Guardia declares that when the city takes over these transportation lines he will outlaw these contracts and any others proposed by the union. He declares that when these unionized workers become employees of the city, they will no longer have the right to strike, closed-shop or collective bargaining. Why? Because they are city employees, and the city, as a government, cannot permit its employees such rights.

This is as plain a case of union-busting as has ever been attempted. La Guardia takes his cue from Roosevelt's "You can't strike against the government" edict of last summer, when the president outlawed the national WPA strike of the building trades unions. City Magistrate Ford picks up the cue this week and sends thirteen unemployed workers to jail for the "crime" of picketing a "governmental agency"—i.e., a relief station.

The issue is clear. If the precedents set by Roosevelt and La Guardia are permitted to prevail, then we can say goodbye to unionism for the many millions of workers employed by the national, state and city administrations and their subdivisions, including construction workers, governmental-owned public utilities, etc.; and for the many millions of workers who are likely in the course of the next few years to be transferred from private to governmental employment on the railroads, public utilities, munitions plants, etc.

It means that there will be two categories of workers under American "democracy"—one formally holding the right to unionism and one deprived of that right, and with those deprived of this elementary democratic right constituting an ever-larger section of the working class.

The immediate task is to support the Transport Workers Union through thick and thin in this fight. But this fight also forcibly reminds us of other tasks. The man who leads the bankers' war against the transport workers is one who was elected mayor with the endorsement of the American Labor Party. That's what happens when the labor movement doesn't stand on its own feet in the political field but takes boss politicians as its standard-bearers. La Guardia's dirty role is brought home particularly to the transport workers, since Quill and the other leaders of their union were among the wildest supporters of La Guardia. This latest double-cross from a "friend of labor" serves to underline the desperate need for genuine independence, an Independent Labor Party with its own labor program.

Support the great fight of the Transport Workers Union!

Cattle Boats

The trip of the new super-liner, Queen Elizabeth, across the Atlantic to New York through the German mine, airplane, and submarine blockade, has aroused a good deal of speculation as to the real reason for this move by the British war government.

Some speculate that it is to find safe harbor for this ship during the Second World War. Others speculate that a deal was made with Hitler whereby the Bremen would not be attacked while running the British blockade if the Germans in turn would not attack the Queen Elizabeth while she made the run to the United States. If such a deal were made, why was it necessary to take the ship away from England?

One need not know the secret diplomatic commitments President Roosevelt has made to the Allies in order to give the real answer to this question.

Lying side by side with the Queen Elizabeth are the largest liners in the world, the British Queen Mary and the Normandie, and the French Ile de France.

If these ships are intended to remain in a peace-time New York harbor for the duration of the war, why have they been painted a camouflage gray? In order to blend against the background of warehouses and skyscrapers where they now lie at anchor?

As in the last war, such super-liners are built for a special purpose: to transport American doughboys to the battlefields of Europe.

These four Allied lines alone can transport in one trip and less than a week a huge army to the Western Front. Like enormous cattle boats they are waiting in New York harbor for the flesh which they will haul to the bombs, torpedoes, tanks, machine guns, barbed wire, and cannon of the Second World War.

Like the super-liners of the last war they will either be sent to the bottom when they are crammed with tens of thousands of human beings on their way across the Atlantic or they will return with the tens of thousands of coffins of those who made the supreme sacrifice for the sake of Wall Street's profits.

That's what the Queen Elizabeth came here for.

Anti-Labor G-Men

Last Thursday in New York City some members of Local 807 of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters started an unauthorized stoppage. The union quickly intervened and all trucks were operating again in a few hours. As is usual in such instances, the union accepted responsibility for the situation, announcing it was ready to provide the employers involved with all guarantees established under their contracts with the union. Those involved in the stoppage, the union has announced, will be tried by the union under established procedure. The incident was over.

But it wasn't. For no sooner had it begun, then a horde of G-men from the Federal Bureau of Investigation descended upon the scene, summoned fifty union members to appear before a Federal grand jury for an investigation of "molesting trucks engaged in interstate commerce," and proceeded to issue newspaper statements claiming credit for ending the strike.

Union officers politely called the G-men liars and raised the very pertinent question what business the FBI had in interfering in a very common incident which it was solely the province of the union to settle. But the grand jury investigation is to take place, nevertheless.

Apparently that crew of G-men were sitting around twiddling their thumbs, waiting for a labor "incident" in which to step into. The speed with which they appeared on the scene makes that more than likely. Apparently, as multiplying incidents testify—the FBI's role as disguised strikers (*agents-provocateur* is the ugly French word for it) in the Minneapolis WPA strike, their eighteen-month preparation of a "damaged truck" case against the Sioux City and Omaha drivers' unions, their gum-shoe work in the hundreds of "anti-trust" prosecutions against the building trades unions, etc.—the FBI has become an anti-labor force, a political police. That hasn't happened in this country since the notorious post-war Palmer raids.

Last time they did it after the war. This time the anti-labor federal police force is operating before the war—just before. The role of the G-men is clear enough: to domesticate the unions, to turn them into lap-dogs and break those that won't be house-broken, in order to provide the bosses with docile employees during the coming war.

Keep your snouts out of our unions—that is the only answer that the labor movement can give to these G-men and their chief, Roosevelt.

In the World of Labor

By Paul G. Stevens

Victor Alter Executed by Stalinists in Eastern Poland

According to the New York Jewish Daily Forward of March 6, Victor Alter, a leader of the "Bund" (Jewish Socialist Federation), has been executed by the Stalinists at Kovel, Soviet Poland, after a flight from Nazi-occupied territory.

What lends this report particular weight are repeated dispatches in the press for several months giving eye-witness accounts, by socialist refugees who managed to escape abroad, of round-ups of radicals in Soviet-occupied Poland. The Appeal recently carried such an account in a letter from Polish Fourth Internationalists who escaped. In the New York Times of February 7, we read in a wire from Paris:

"After a short initial period of tolerance, Soviet authorities ordered a clean-up of Socialist Labor Federation leaders in the occupied area and members of the Jewish Socialist Party 'Bund' were treated even worse, he (a leader who escaped from Eastern Galicia) said.

"Hundreds of the rank and file were deported to Russia, the leaders having been arrested immediately when the Russians occupied East Polish provinces, it was said. Bund members were compelled to repudiate the organization or be deported or imprisoned.

"The Bund in Poland was known for its Leftist tendencies. The Bolsheviks (read: Stalinists) accuse its members of Trotskyist sympathies, regarded as the worst crime in Stalinist Russia."

Here we have perhaps the clearest explanation of the ferocity with which the persecution of labor radicals in Soviet Poland is being carried on. In spite of all the previous blood-purges, in spite of repeated "liquidation," the hydra-headed threat of "Trotskyism"—so often declared exterminated—continues to plague the Stalinist bureaucracy like a nightmare. Even such outspoken opponents of the Fourth International as Victor Alter and Heinrich Ehrlich become victims of the Kremlin for no other reason than that at one time or another they tolerated the expression of Trotskyist views within the Bund.

But all the heinous crimes of the Kremlin oligarchy will not protect it from its impending doom. The defense of the Soviet Union from imperialist attack, which is now on the order of the day, requires revolutionary initiative on the part of the masses of workers for its success. In fighting to preserve the conquests of October against the imperialist foe, the workers and peasants of the USSR will learn not only the necessity but the possibility of blowing to smithereens the shackles of bureaucracy. When that hour comes, the labor victims of Stalin's bloody terror will be adequately avenged.

Purgers Purged in Mexican Communist Party

Several weeks ago, this column commented on the coming extraordinary convention of the Mexican Communist Party and its "Theses." We said then that it was evident that a number of scapegoats in the leadership were to be sacrificed for the "People's Front" line which that party was in the process of abandoning. Our estimate, we now find, was much too modest. Not only have the few scapegoats mentioned then—Vicenta Guerra, Arturo Ramirez, and Manuel Lobato—been disposed of. The priests who were to make the sacrifice have themselves been added to the list of goats.

Thus the New York Times of February 27 re-

ports from Mexico City:

"Purgers were purged in the Mexican Communist party today when Hernan Laborde and Valentin Campa, respectively president and secretary of that party, were expelled by a committee that they themselves had appointed some weeks ago to purge their organization of all members whose allegiance to Moscow was considered in any way doubtful."

Just as Guerra, Ramirez and Lobato were previously liquidated for "harboring Trotskyists and free masons" so now Laborde and Campa are being liquidated for harboring the purgers. Apparently not even the most flexible spine can save a Stalinist functionary from destruction once Moscow is bent on wholesale purges. Hernan Laborde was the completely hand-picked satrap for Mexico for the past ten years. He occupied his position thanks to the same readiness to respond to a wink from the Kremlin which Earl Browder has shown in this country. How long before Browder will meet a similar fate? One thing is sure: that depends as little upon what Browder does or thinks as it did in the case of Laborde.

A Concentration of G.P.U. Agents Directs Operations

According to reliable information that has arrived here the purge of the Mexican Stalinists is being conducted by an international concentration of G.P.U. agents. Among them are the following notorious characters:

D. Manulski, Russian, prominent Comintern figure, having held at one time or another in the past the posts both of president and secretary in that organization. Reported executed in the course of the purges, Manulski arrived in Mexico on the steamer Mayakovski in January.

Dombal, Russian, former head of the "Krestintern" (international Stalinist peasants' organization), who arrived there with Manulski.

These two were accompanied by a third G.P.U. agent, whose identity has not as yet been established, but is said to be either Haikis, former Soviet ambassador to Spain or Pestkovsky, former Soviet minister to Mexico.

James W. Ford, prominent Negro leader of the American Communist Party, who arrived in Mexico about six weeks ago.

George Mink, American Stalinist, notorious for his G.P.U. activity during the civil war in Spain, who now operates under another name.

Tina Modotti, Italian Stalinist, suspected of implication in the murder of Ignace Reiss. She was held in this connection by Swiss police for some time, but later released. She was secretary of the Stalinist "International Red Aid" during the Spanish civil war and came to Mexico from Paris as a Spanish refugee.

Sormenti, internationally known G.P.U. agent, once prominent in the Italian federation of the American Communist Party, who now operates under the name Carlos Contreras. Sormenti arrived in Mexico three months ago and is said to have been involved in previous Mexican political killings.

This imposing line-up of G.P.U. agents is indicative not only of the serious trouble that the Stalinists are faced with in connection with the purge, but of plans for shady work that extend far beyond the confines of inner-party politics in Mexico. Their activities will bear watching on the part of working class militants all over the Western Hemisphere.

Stalin's Methods Have Alienated Sympathy Of World's Workers

(Continued from Page 1)

stone—destroy the Soviet Union and their German imperialist rival.

Nor is the possibility excluded of an agreement being arrived at by the imperialist nations for an attack on the Soviet Union by Hitler, or by all of the imperialists combined. Obviously, this is the aim of the Pope, of Roosevelt, and of other influential groups among the imperialists.

The danger threatening the Soviet Union is not over by far. No matter where the attack comes from—from the Allied imperialists or from Hitler, or from all of them—the advanced workers will take the position our party adopted in the Finnish-Soviet war: defend the Soviet Union against the capitalists and, at the same time, continue the irreconcilable struggle for the overthrow of the Stalinist bureaucracy.

Forgotten by all and now apparently relegated to the background is Otto Kuusinen, the head of the puppet "People's Government" of Finland. The creation and the program of the Kuusinen government by Stalin showed that Stalin was obviously aiming to supplement the invasion of Finland by a civil war. What happened in the territories occupied by the Red Army is not yet known. It is certain, however, that the Finnish landlords and capitalists will be expropriated in the ceded areas, as was the case after the occupation of the Polish Ukraine, and that the workers and poor peasants will heartily support such expropriations and participate in carrying them out.

Widespread civil war in Finland of the workers and poor peasants against the landlords and capitalists was implicit in the situation. The puppet Kuusinen government was intended to stimulate such a civil war. It did not develop only because peace was concluded before the army of Mannerheim, which held the exploited population in an iron vise, was annihilated by the Red Army. The Stalinist bureaucrats will, of course, follow the expropriation of the landlords and capitalists in the ceded territory by suppressing the rights of the workers and peasants, as in the Polish territory annexed to the Soviet Union.

We remain unalterably opposed to Stalin's reactionary policies in peace as in war. At the same time, we remain on our basic position of unconditional defense of the Soviet Union in any conflict with a capitalist country.

The peace treaty is undoubtedly a defeat for Allied-American imperialism and a temporary set-back to their design to destroy the conquests of October. But a secure victory for the masses of the Soviet Union and of the whole world can come only through the revolutionary overthrow of the capitalist system. In the course of the development of this revolutionary struggle the masses will also settle accounts with the perfidious Stalinist bureaucracy.

CONGRESS AFTER WAGNER ACT

(Continued from Page 1)
of the union, and perhaps smile—that's all.

Unless, of course, the workers will speak a language that he will understand and listen to. **Militant Workers Outlawed**
The Supreme Court went out of its way to misinterpret the Wagner Act so as to refuse its protection to sit-down strikers. One of the proposed amendments specifically provides that the Board should have no right to reinstate any employee found guilty of violence or unlawful activities.

By such general phrases it is certain that a militant worker will lose any rights that he might have under the Wagner Act. Nor will back pay be granted for longer than a period of six months.

To make sure that the purpose of the amendments should not be misunderstood, it is proposed to strike out that section of the Wagner Act which states that it is the policy of the United States to encourage collective bargaining—thereby giving the courts a further opportunity to interpret the act strictly against the workers.

Factors that aid the reactionaries in trying to put their amendments over are the supine attitude of the AFL leaders who would rather see the Wagner Act destroyed than the CIO succeed in organizing the unorganized, and the reliance of the CIO leaders on the liberal congressmen.

Without any illusions about the limited usefulness of the Wagner Act in organizing the unorganized, militant workers must do their best to organize a campaign against the proposed amendments sponsored by the National Manufacturers' Association, amendments which will not only destroy whatever value the Act has for organized labor, but which will in reality transform it into a weapon for the bosses.

Lovestone Weeps With Pity for The Bankers

By JOSEPH HANSEN

Not the least vociferous among Stalin's attorneys up until the time the Dewey Commission investigated the Moscow Trials were the Lovestoneites. They defended Stalin's hideous frame-ups. They defended Stalin's murder of the entire generation that led the October revolution. The only thing about Stalinism they didn't defend was the refusal of the rotten and corrupt Comintern to reinstate them as members.

After an embarrassed silence following the hearings of the Dewey Commission, they finally spoke of the Moscow Trials as frame-ups and sanctimoniously raised their eyes heavenward at the crimes of Stalinism. But Jay Lovestone and his cohorts never offered anyone the slightest explanation for this sudden repentance from supporting Stalinist morality.

This background sheds a grim light upon the article entitled "Trotskyites Put Forward Own Super-Ham-and-Eggs Plan," printed in the March 2 issue of their official organ, the Workers Age.

"The policy of both the Stalinists and the Trotskyists of supporting the Ham-and-Eggs movement in California," declares this article, "has nothing in common with socialism. It only indicates that again and once again the Stalinists and Trotskyists have something in common—an unprincipled and demagogic appeal to the backwardness and illusions of the masses."

Naturally the Workers Age fails to mention the actual circumstances which dictated our critical support of "Ham and Eggs." There was a mass movement in California for social security, actually mobilizing hundreds upon hundreds of thousands of desperate, poverty-stricken people. The Workers Age didn't mention that the demands of these masses were entirely justified and reasonable. It didn't mention that the inability of capitalism to feed and clothe and shelter these people gave their demands a revolutionary significance. It didn't mention that a revolutionary party has the duty to support such demands of the masses—although sharply criticizing the unrealistic means proposed to attain them—in order to direct these demands toward their only real means of achievement—socialism. It didn't mention that above all a revolutionary party stays with the masses and goes through their experiences with them, precisely in order to hasten their development toward socialism.

Attacks Our "Transitional" Program

Lovestone's organ however does not stop at these distortions. Something weightier is needed to "prove" that Trotskyism is but another manifestation of Stalinism. To this end the Workers Age points to the first thing on the first page of the Socialist Appeal: the program which the Socialist Workers Party proposes Congress should enact as EMERGENCY legislation for the relief of those in dire need—\$10,000,000,000 for the unemployed, a 30 hour week at minimum pay of \$30, disability and old age pensions of \$30 a week, and \$3,000,000,000 for the youth.

This program is attacked by arguments that Calvin Coolidge would have heartily seconded. They add up to this: our program is economically impossible, and therefore "unprincipled and demagogic."

With the aid of an adding machine the Workers Age proceeds to "prove" this: the Roosevelt administration doesn't get enough income from its system of taxation; the national income is too low under capitalism in its death agony; hence, it concludes, there is not enough money available at present to foot the costs of our program.

In addition to reading us this adding machine tape, the Workers Age appeals to the truth expounded in the labor movement ever since the Communist Manifesto was written almost a hundred years ago, that "only through the establishment of a socialist society is it possible to bring about any substantial and lasting improvement in the conditions of the masses." We agree with this truth one hundred per cent. It is precisely the aim expressed in this truth which motivates every word written in the Socialist Appeal.

What Is the Road to Socialism?

But that doesn't happen to be the question at issue. What is at issue and what must be answered by whoever would lead the revolutionary movement in the United States is: How achieve this end?

Inasmuch as we could not find a single slogan in the Lovestone organ calling for armed insurrection in the United States or even so much as a polite bid for revolutionary terror against Ford, Rockefeller, Morgan, and the rest of the Sixty Families who dominate American industry, we take it that the Lovestoneites do not believe the American working class has yet been convinced that revolution is the only way out of the capitalist system of war, hunger, and fascism.

Can the workers be convinced of the necessity of revolution by calling for armed insurrection tomorrow? The Lovestoneite article seems to imply that anything less than that is an "unprincipled and demagogic appeal to the backwardness and illusions of the masses." Then out of their own mouths the Lovestoneites are proved demagogic and unprincipled, for in that very article they include the main plank of the Lovestone Ham-and-Eggs program: "Keep America Out of War." Is this program realizable under capitalism? Can America be kept out of war so long as the capitalist system endures? We say no, and we do not have to appeal to an adding machine to prove our contention—today's headlines are demonstrating it. Our slogans, on the contrary, such as turning all war funds over to the unemployed, would destroy capitalism. But there is a world of difference between being for these demands without labelling them impossible of complete achievement under capitalism, and the Lovestone-Norman Thomas propaganda that it is possible to have peace under capitalism. Their "Keep America Out of War" commitments thus directly propagate a harmful lie, while our campaigning for the popular referendum on war specifically refrains from promising that it will keep America out of war. The distinction between us and Lovestone-Thomas on this question is the distinction between reformism and revolutionary Marxism.

The crime which the Lovestoneites commit in creating illusions about peace under capitalism is the one they accuse us of in advocating our economic demands. But we are not at all guilty of their crime. Nowhere do we promise that these demands are compatible with capitalism. We create no such illusions. These demands are, indeed, a "transition," a bridge, to a full socialist program.

(A second article on this question will appear next week.)