

# WORKERS' FORUM

Write to us—tell us what's going on in your part of the labor movement—what are the workers thinking about?—tell us what the bosses are up to—and the G-men and the local cops—and the Stalinists—send us that story the capitalist press didn't print and that story they buried or distorted—our pages are open to you. Letters must carry name and address, but indicate if you do not want your name printed.

## How J. P. Morgan Fixed Things Up

Editor: Here's an interesting story about J. P. Morgan that didn't get in the papers, but in such an obscure way that nobody could understand what happened. J. P. Morgan found it advisable to change the form of his banking house from a partnership to a corporation—it meant avoiding payment of a lot of taxes. But when it came to incorporation, it turned out that a relatively small corporation is in existence which is named J. P. Morgan & Co., Inc. And New York State law very specifically provides that nobody can incorporate under a name already used by another corporation. So the Secretary of State of New York rejected the incorporation application filed by J. P. Morgan.

The logical thing to do then was to buy out the corporation already holding the name. Excuse me, that would be the logical thing for ordinary mortals to do. But not Morgan! He found it cheaper to have a law passed by the New York State legislature permitting him to do what nobody else had ever been permitted to do! Obligingly the legislature passed an amendment to the State Banking Act, providing that any banking partnership was thereby permitted to use its partnership name when incorporating and that any contradictory laws were thereby set aside for the bankers!

New York A. F.

## Asks Our Opinion of Quaker Pacifists

Editor: What is the extent and influence of the Quaker peace movement (especially in the student field)? The Quaker plan is to send a list of prospective conscientious war objectors to the proper authorities. When war is declared a trial is to be arranged (by the Quaker officials) at which the objector can defend his stand against registering for the draft. The objector may choose alternative service (some non-combatant or Quaker war relief work) or refuse all war service and face court martial. What do you think of this plan as a possible tactic? These Quakers seem to be sincere pacifists, some with democratic socialist leanings. I am contacting them (especially the young Quakers). Do you think it is worthwhile? Yonkers, N. Y. Robert Rae

In theory the Quaker peace movement includes all Quakers, pacifism being a tenet of the Quaker belief; in actuality, most Quakers supported the last war and will undoubtedly repeat that performance in the coming war. As early as the pre-Civil War period, the gap between Quaker beliefs and Quaker practices was already established; many Quakers were slave-holders. The development of capitalism transformed the Quakers from a sect

expressing the more radical aspirations of the lower middle class into one of the most wealthy groups, proportionally, in the country and predominantly Big Business in outlook. They frown upon the activities of the small group of Quakers who devote themselves to pacifist work.

Anyone sincerely opposed to war is worth trying to win to a revolutionary anti-war program. That can be done, however, only by sharp struggle against the "Quaker" program.

The Quaker pacifists might arrange the trial; but it would be the war-time government that would pass judgment on the objector. In a word, the Quaker proposal would mean, if we all agreed to it, to hand over to the government a complete list of all opposed to the war, and make it child's-play for the government to rid itself of all anti-war elements. We follow Lenin: we oppose war, not as a measure of self-expression, but as an integral part of our struggle for the overthrow of capitalism. Entering the army upon being drafted is necessary for our work.

We are against the imperialist war, but we are not pacifists. For we have a war which we believe in and in which we fight: the war of the working class against the imperialists. —Editor.

## New Orleans Dockers Still "Shape Up"

Editor: I come into port here and found the longshoremen still have one of the most vicious systems of old—the shape-up in a barroom and on the corner. And when I tried to join the longshoremen's local I was told that it was twenty bucks on the barrel head and that I would first have to get one of the foremen to get me a job. The foremen of course play favorites, take kick-backs, etc. I am going to do all in my power to see if that racket can't be broken up, and get the union hiring hall, like the seamen have on the West Coast, so that everybody in the union can get a crack at the jobs. If I stay in New Orleans, I think I will ship on S.I.U. (Seafarers International Union, AFL) ships, and I'm sure it is a very good field to sow some seeds. There are a lot of rotten tomatoes, but they can be thrown over the side. New Orleans, La. G.F.

## Want "Socialist Unity" With Thomas & Co.

Editor: At the beginning of the last several general election years I have written your party national headquarters urging a union of the several socialist groups in the coming election. Each succeeding year the capitalist system has given additional proof of its inability to provide for the general welfare of the people, falling deeper and deeper in permanent depression. And I feel that the continued division of the socialist

movement into groups at constant strife with each other can but add to the general confusion. The social, political and economic conditions have become deplorable, neither of the major parties being able to put men in office who are capable and willing to conduct an honest and efficient administration. And it seems to me that the threatened split in both these parties, and the general lack of confidence in them by our people, offers an excellent opportunity for a united socialist party to place men in some important offices with a good and honest administration should greatly advance the movement in the entire nation, and I suggest, recommend and urge that you appoint a committee of your members to meet with equal size committees of the other groups with the express purpose of launching state wide united socialist tickets in some of the key states in the coming election. Chas. Makinson Youngstown, Ohio

Editor: I would say that the position you people take, the tone you use, toward the Socialist party, the Lovestonites, and Socialist Unity in general, is unforgivable.

Why is it not possible for anti-Stalinist radical groups to get together and sit down with each other at Institutes to discuss problems, like the capitalists do? Are we too dumb, too dishonest? New York City A Reader

Our party advocates uniting the labor movement on the political field in an independent Labor Party BASED ON THE TRADE UNIONS. We advocate a definite program for that Labor Party—it appears at the head of our editorial columns. But we would support that independent Labor Party, running its own candidates responsible to it, even if it did not adopt our program. Why? Because, constituted by the unions, it would represent the great historic step of breaking the workers as a class away from the capitalist parties. Naturally, within it, we would continue to fight for our program.

An entirely different criterion than that applied to the Labor Party must be applied to the various so-called "socialist" groups—Norman Thomas, the Lovestonites, the Social Democratic Federation. Unlike the Labor Party, they stand or fall by their program, for their sole possible justification would be that, as small propaganda groups, they are preparing a vanguard of worker to fight for a revolutionary program within the Labor Party. But what is their program? We have just witnessed a concrete test of their program—the war in Finland. All these groups came out for support of Finland against the Soviet Union, i.e., for the imperialist camp against a workers' state. Stalin's crimes cannot be used by these people to obscure the bald fact that they lined up with the imperialists against the Soviet Union.

Unity with these people? As well unite the capitalist class with the working class! For these "socialists" simply reflect within the labor movement the ideology of the capitalist class. The Social Democratic Federation is already a recruiting-sergeant for the Anglo-French-American imperialist bloc. The others will go the same road. If they succumbed to the test of Finland, we can predict with certainty that they will succumb when the capitalist class of America officially enters the war.

Naturally we welcome every opportunity to contrast our revolutionary program with their reformist program, whether in our press, in debates or in any other forum.—Editor.

## A Letter to Housewives

# What Socialism Will Mean to The Women Who Toil at Home

In our March 16 issue we published a letter from a worker whose sister-in-law, a housewife, wanted to know: "What will socialism do for us housewives?" Part of the answer to that important question is contained in the following letter written by comrade Antoinette Konikow, physician, mother and—above all—a revolutionist for over fifty years. We are glad to note that comrade Konikow promises other letters on this question. And let's have letters from our reader-housewives—we want to know what you think about comrade Konikow's letter.—Editor.

Editor: Are housewives paid for their work? I heard an amusing story on that problem. A woman collecting statistics visited a worker's family. No one was at home but a little boy. The woman inquired about father's wages, brother's and sister's. At last she asked about his mother's earnings. "Oh," said the little fellow very proudly, "My mother does not work."

"She does not work?" asked the woman. "But doesn't she cook and wash and iron and mend and clean? Is she not on her feet the whole day long always doing something? Don't you call that work?"

The little boy was a bit perplexed; then he said, "Yes, that is true, but you see that kind of work does not pay." The little boy was right. Work done by the housewife does not pay. In fact her work is not recognized as work at all, nor even respected. It is the old story; the more it is paid for, the more it is held in contempt and if you are not paid at all, well, all the drudgery you do is hardly recognized even by your own family.

This raises the question: why does a housewife get only board, room and clothing for her long hours of work? "She works for her children," is often the answer, Holy motherhood means continued sacrifice. But it seems strange that the glory of motherhood's sacrifice is only known to wives of workers or wives of the lower middle class. Mothers in well-to-do families don't mind losing the halo of holiness—by hiring help to do all the hard work of motherhood. And hard work it is! The readers of the "Ladies Home Journal" voted overwhelmingly that women having small children work harder than their husbands in the factory.

## THE WIFE WORKS FOR HER HUSBAND'S BOSS!

Is the wife of a worker really exploited by her children and her husband? My answer is "no." When the worker sells his "hands" to the boss, he sells at the same time the "hands" of his wife to the same boss, because only the

ary Marxism, of the October revolution.

For nearly a decade, up to the day of his untimely death, Leon Sedoff was editor and business manager of the Bulletin. This publication found its way wherever Russian workers lived and suffered. By devious routes it penetrates into the Soviet Union, it is read in the semi-fascist border states of Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia; it reaches Palestine, South Africa, it finds its way to Manchukuo, Alaska. . . .

Dear comrades, the aid extended by you to the Bulletin is but a fitting recognition of the important task carried on by Leon Sedoff and a mighty encouragement to the continuation of this work.

Management, BULLETIN OF THE RUSSIAN OPPOSITION

unpaid labor of his wife makes it possible for him to live with his family on the wages paid to him. The wife thinks she slaves day and night for her husband and children—in reality she works for the same boss who exploits her husband. The housewife has a right, then, to ask the question: what of my work under socialism? What will I get out of it? To give a correct answer, one must first give an adequate explanation of what socialism really means. I hope to cover this problem another time more in detail. Socialism means the management of business and factories by the workers themselves, because the factories then will not belong to the bosses. Part of the income will go to the Workers' State to cover expenses of education, health and management, but each worker will get a larger income and at the same time will work shorter hours. A larger income for the worker will give him a chance to relieve the work of his wife. Laundry can be paid for, part of the meals can be eaten in cooperative lunch rooms; sewing can be done away with; and even some of the house cleaning can be paid for. A better income will naturally relieve women of many of the tasks which she undertakes now because she has no money to pay for them.

The October Revolution SHOWED THE WAY Let us see what was done for mothers in Soviet Russia before the Stalin bureaucracy stepped in. I was there in 1926 and was deeply impressed by the advantages which workers and their wives had secured. To lessen mother's work in Soviet Russia, nurseries were created for babies and smaller children. Almost every large factory had such nurseries under the management of reliable nurses.

The husband in the factory could buy a good dinner for a small sum in dining rooms connected with the factories or with his trade. His wife and children were allowed to have their dinners in the same dining room. Women workers expecting motherhood received two months vacation before and after delivery with full pay; also a layette for the baby and free milk for the baby or nursing mother. Working women nursing the baby could stop work every four hours to nurse the baby in the nursery. The workers had free medical care, free hospitals and a month's vacation with pay. In case of illness the worker received his full wages for a certain time and then half of the wages indefinitely.

All these rights which the workers achieved in Soviet Russia through the revolution were afterwards whittled away or reserved only for the Stalinist bureaucracy and its yes-men. The factory meals became so bad and expensive that workers stopped

patronizing factory dining rooms. The free medical care turned into poor service by overworked physicians who were afraid to testify to the illness of workers because they were blamed and persecuted by authorities for granting sick benefit rights too easily. The paid time for expectant mothers before and after delivery was reduced to one month. Women who had free time, instead of enjoying it, had to work in factories because their husbands' wages were inadequate, or had to spend their time standing in line to buy food or clothing. Thus the Stalinist bureaucrats took away from the workers the benefits which had begun to lighten the lot of the housewife. When the Russian workers overthrew the Stalinist bureaucracy, they will revive and expand these benefits. Along the same line we will go in this country.

HOW WE WOULD BEGIN IN THE UNITED STATES After attaining workers' power the first task to relieve women's life would be the creation of nurseries, kindergartens and playgrounds in a sufficient number—here in the United States their number is deplorably small. The next would be the organization of cooperative lunch rooms to relieve mothers of their kitchen drudgery. Even then mothers would still have plenty of work left: taking care of smaller meals, keeping the house in order, taking care of clothing, entertaining or supervising the children out of school and nurseries, nursing children with minor illnesses. Yes, even under socialism the mother will have her 6-8 hour day of work.

But then the husband, getting a better income, would be able to give her an "allowance," as men of the middle class call the money they give their wives. I think housewives would prefer to call it "pay for their work." In fact, I should like to discuss in another letter the possibility that under socialism motherhood should be considered a profession and be paid for by the state just like nurses and teachers today.

Antoinette Konikow Boston, Mass.

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## GEORGE RICHARDSON

The New York Foodworkers Branch of the Socialist Workers Party is deeply grieved to announce the death, on Tuesday, March 19, of Comrade George Richardson, a leading militant of Local 302, the Cafeteria Employees' Union. Comrade Richardson died, after a month's illness, of tubercular meningitis. The funeral took place on Saturday. The Progressive Group of Local 302 and the Socialist Workers Party sent floral wreaths. George Richardson was a Trotskyist only a short time—he was only 24 years old—was filled with militant struggle, first as a seaman and for the last four years as a cafeteria worker. From the first he took his place in the leading ranks of the Progressives, fighting first against the racketeers and then against the Stalinists, who had seized the Union machinery and dealt the rank-and-file militant one blow after another. He spent many months "on the bench," in the ranks of the unemployed, and it is believed that this played a contributing role in his fatal illness. George Richardson didn't have much time for study in his short life full of work and struggle. He learned about the class struggle the hard way, by feeling it in his bones and muscles. He came to the Socialist Workers Party after having seen and felt the blows of capitalism and the betrayal of Stalinism. The Foodworkers Branch and the Party as a whole will not easily make up for the loss of his sharp, critical mind.

UNSER WORT Again an outstanding number of UNSER WORT, No. 2 for 1940 is just out and contains several important articles on the German situation and its perspectives. Oscar Fischer writes an excellent polemic against Schwarzschild, the bourgeois German emigre who is spokesman for the Allied plan for a post war Germany.

Another article deals with the reasons for Thyssen's emigration. There is also an article by Walter Held on Luxemburg and Liebknecht that should not be missed by anyone concerned with the theory of proletarian strategy. Order from Dale Edwards, P.O. Box 173, Station D, New York City. 10c per copy, 60c for the year.

Join the Socialist Workers Party

# Trade Union Notes

The Stalinists have just been decisively defeated in three UAW-CIO local union elections and they barely scraped through in a fourth local.

At Flint, Michigan, the C. P. leaders were blasted out of the important Buick local, their main stronghold. Among the also-rans were Berity, Halliday, and McGill, long time Stalinists big-wigs in Flint.

In the Flint Fisher Body local the Stalinists lost out completely, failing to win even one Executive Board post. The same thing occurred in the General Motors local at Los Angeles.

Anti-Stalinist militants swept these elections.

In Los Angeles, as an example, the militants won on a campaign for democratic rank and file control, the 30-hour week at 40-hours pay, an aggressive organization drive in Ford, and for the return of genuine job protection which was given away by Homer Martin, then CIO president, in the old supplementary agreement to the General Motors' contract. This supplement permitted the company to violate seniority and to fire union militants off the job for "insubordination."

In the Flint Chevrolet local the Stalinists nosed out the progressives by a very narrow margin.

The spark ignited by this decisive action on the part of the progressives in Flint and Los Angeles can lead, through an aggressive follow-up campaign, to the successful ferreting out of the last traces of Stalinist influences in these auto centers.

The long threatened AFL-CIO fight in the building trades industry is rapidly breaking into the open in New York City.

The CIO reports recruitment to date of 9,000 building trades workers in New York City's small building and alterations industries. The AFL disputes this figure.

The CIO scales are \$9.00 per day for skilled labor; \$6.00 per day for helpers; and \$5.00 per day for laborers; with a 5 day, 40 hour week.

AFL scales in the building trades crafts range from 75 5/8 cents per hour among unskilled workers, up to \$3.12 1/2 an hour among the most skilled workers. Hours range from 6 to 8 per day.

The CIO is organizing these building trades workers into one vertical union. The AFL has 25 trades with 125 subdivisions in this field.

The kick-back of a part of the wages to the boss—a known practice among a sizeable strata of building trades workers which has not been successfully combated in the past by the AFL unions—is now becoming a real problem to the AFL in this fight.

To combat this CIO threat the New York AFL building trades department and AFL International officials have tentatively adopted a plan to establish uniform wage rates and a uniform work

week for all crafts in the construction of one and two family homes.

These rates, approximating CIO schedules, would in general be below the standards of the present official AFL craft scales. This policy would not extend to the field of construction of large apartment houses, office buildings, etc., where present craft contracts would continue in force.

The AFL-CIO fight is thus fast becoming a grim reality to the uncompromising craft unionists of the AFL building trades department. Confronted with only a threat from the CIO, which has no real strength as yet in this field, they have already felt themselves compelled for the first time to partially abandon their traditional disdain towards the unorganized workers in the small construction industry.

Even the reactionary methods employed by John L. Lewis in this fight have, by giving just a glimmering of hope to these exploited workers, resulted in a vigorous rank and file response which has already succeeded in blasting the Hutchinson crew a few inches in a progressive direction. No clearer proof is needed of the bankruptcy of their organizational policies.

As usual, the AFL has already indicated that it will depend heavily on the support of the Teamsters in this fight with Lewis. The Teamsters, with Tobin advocating a united labor movement, may not take kindly to the idea of being used as choreboys by people who do anything but try to promote unity.

Latest victim of the phoney anti-war campaign of the Stalinists is a section of the New York Teamsters. A group of members and officers of Milk Drivers local 584, and others from General Truck Drivers local 807 and Bakery Drivers local 802 have hooked up with the fake "The Yanks are Not Coming Committee" to participate in the April 6 "Peace Day."

Progressives throughout the American labor movement are beginning to consider ways and means of exposing these Stalinist fake anti-war committees and to direct the efforts and energy of the labor movement in the direction of genuine anti-war activity.

NEGRO LABOR BODY FORMED IN MPLS. Negro trade unionists in Minneapolis have just initiated the formation of a Negro Joint Labor Council.

The Council will seek to enlist all Negro unionists in its ranks and aim to educate the Negro community in the value of trade unionism. A similar Council has been functioning in St. Paul for some months.

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