

# 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.

## Some Southern Negroes Learn What Stalinist "Discussions" Mean

Editor:

About two months ago, a Negro friend of mine came to me and asked for information concerning the Communist Party, and after a brief discussion, he informed me that he had been invited to a meeting which was to be held by the C.P. and asked me if I would not like to attend with him. Of course, I immediately accepted the invitation for it just so happened that this meeting was to be held in a district where we had previously been doing some work. It was decided that we would also ask some of our contacts to attend with us.

When we arrived at the hall where the meeting was to be, we found a small group of Negroes and one white fellow. On our arrival, the white fellow, who appeared to be one of the hotshots of the local C.P., was standing on the steps of the hall and his immediate suspicion of us caused his face to become as blank and cold as a statue of Stalin, and after about two minutes of staring back and forth, we turned away from him and started a conversation with the Negro workers, and after about fifteen minutes conversation, I noticed that this fellow with a poker face was still standing on the steps staring.

It was so evident that this fellow was in a terrific strain that I finally decided to put him at ease, so I informed him of the fact that we had not met before. He then introduced himself and asked how we had heard that there was to be a meeting and he wanted to know what we thought of the C.P. I answered that I believed in the teaching of Marx and Lenin, but that I didn't believe that the C.P. was following this revolutionary course, whereupon he began to assure us that the C. P. was still revolutionary and pointed in proof that only recently there had been revolutions in Latvia and Lithuania.

Another comrade then asked him why it was that we had never heard of these revolutions. He answered that the boss press wouldn't carry a story such as that. The comrade then informed him that the boss press was not able to keep the news from us when the workers took arms in Russia in 1917 and neither were

they able to withhold the news of the Spanish workers taking arms, so therefore, it wasn't possible that there could have been revolutions in these countries, as he news had never reached workers of other countries. I then asked him if he considered a change of system in those countries to be revolutionary when said change had been brought about under the rifles of Soviet troops and not by the workers of said countries. I told him that I couldn't believe that Lenin would ever have sanctioned such action, and of course, he never answered my question.

He then informed us that it would be better if we didn't attend the meeting, explaining that he thought that our purpose was to disrupt the meeting by asking questions, and that he was trying to organize a Ford club among workers who were not advanced, therefore he could not afford to be disrupted by political questions. We then asked him why he could not answer questions and what was he trying to hide. We assured him that we were not trying to obstruct any progressive action, but that there were workers at this meeting who wanted us present, and that there were many who would never attend his meeting when they knew that we had been refused admittance. He then told us that we were members of the S.W.P., and he just couldn't agree to our presence. One of the Negro workers, who had been present at one of our meetings when we had answered questions of a Stalinist and extended him an invitation to attend following meetings and ask all the questions that he wished, told this fellow that he could not see any reason why we should not be allowed to attend and said he had never been turned away from any meeting before. He also told him that we were holding meetings in his house and extended an invitation to attend these meetings.

After leaving the meeting place, we met a group of people on their way to the meeting. After a few minutes discussion with them, they decided that if we couldn't attend the meeting, neither would they. They said that they would pass the word around through the district as to what had happened, and they did.

The results were: A miserable failure for the Stalinists in the organization of a Ford club, and also their awakening to the fact that the Trotskyists have moved in.

Texas BILL GREEN

# "T.B.", Scourge Of The Poor, Kills 9 Workers For 1 Businessman

### You Can Kill A Man With A Tenement As Well As You Can With An Axe

By GRACE CARLSON  
(The author of this authoritative article on the ravages of tuberculosis among the workers is now starting a cross-country speaking tour. Among the subjects on which she will speak in 35 cities will be "The Right To Life," the workers' struggle for health and happiness. Watch the APPEAL for news of when Comrade Carlson will speak in your city.)



GRACE CARLSON

In their fight against low wages and bad working conditions, the trade unions are also fighting disease. Take, as one example, tuberculosis which kills 64,000 people in the United States annually. Three-fifths of these deaths occur among individuals from 15 to 45 years of age. Tuberculosis is caused by germs which are passed from sick to healthy people who in turn become sick from tuberculosis and infect others. Nevertheless, the individual who is in a run-down condition is more likely to break down from tuberculosis than the individual who has strong resistance.

Strong bodily resistance is produced by good food, warm clothing, decent living conditions, adequate rest and freedom from worry. No trade union can feel that its wage scales are high enough so that its members can purchase all of these requisites for strong bodily resistance to disease. A good start has been made, however, and the fight must go on.

Evidence that poverty breeds tuberculosis has been accumulated by the National Tuberculosis Association. In a recent study, it was shown that nine unskilled workers died from tuberculosis to every professional or business man who died of this disease. The death rate from tuberculosis among skilled workers as well as office workers is three times as high as the rate for professional and business men. Tuberculosis is more common among poorly paid workers than among those who are well paid. Although a few occupations like mining, stone-cutting and grinding are a definite hazard for tuberculosis, the chief influence of occupation on tuberculosis is the wage level and the standard of living that goes with it.

Another study shows that the death rate from tuberculosis is five times as high among families paying \$10 to \$20 per month rent than among families paying \$55 and more per month. Poverty itself does not cause tuberculosis (only the tuberculosis germ can do that), but poor housing and the subsequent crowding make it easier for the germ to spread from person to person.

NEGROES PAY THIS PRICE OF POVERTY  
Because the Negroes are the most poorly paid, poorly housed and altogether most exploited section of the population, they suffer greatly from this terrible disease. Deaths from tuberculosis among Negroes are about three times as many as among whites. As a matter of fact, the death rate from tuberculosis among Negroes today is the same as it was among whites in 1910. It is clearly apparent that the progress of medical science, in cutting down the death rate from tuberculosis, has not aided the Negroes as it has the whites. This in a land of "equality!"

Tuberculosis could be wiped out if the conditions of poverty which breed tuberculosis could be eliminated and if every person with an active case of tuberculosis could be placed in a sanatorium for the "cure". The germs that cause tuberculosis grow in

the lung of the person who has the disease. These germs are very small so that thousands may be present in a tiny drop of sputum. They are passed from individual to individual by direct or indirect contact.

When tuberculosis germs attack the body, certain natural forces of the body fight back. These forces are called "resistance." Strong resistance withstands the attack of a few tuberculosis germs and the body may remain well. However, even strong resistance will not withstand the attack of many tuberculosis germs. Weak resistance, on the other hand, will give way to the attack of even a few tuberculosis germs and if many tuberculosis germs attack the body, a complete breakdown from tuberculosis is almost sure to follow.

### WHY WORKERS DON'T GET CURED

Because so many workers do break down with tuberculosis because of the conditions of poverty under which workers live, the individual worker should realize that he has probably been exposed to the disease from his many contacts with fellow workers. If a case of tuberculosis is discovered in an early stage, it is not difficult to cure the patient and restore him to productive life. It is very tragic that over 90 per cent of the patients admitted to the sanatoria of the country are in far advanced stages of the disease.

Anyone who is familiar with the problems of the working man can understand why a man continues at work for weeks and months after he shows signs of illness before he seeks medical advice and is sent to a sanatorium. Even where he is in a union, there is little sick leave allowed to the worker by his boss. Long periods of illness for the breadwinner of the family mean hunger, cold, worry, and undernourishment for the wife and children of the worker. Small wonder, then, that workers struggle along at their heavy jobs for long periods with the burden of coughing, indigestion, pain in the chest and other symptoms of tuberculosis rather than risk unemployment.

Tuberculosis will not be conquered until poverty is abolished from the face of the earth. Even

medical science cannot keep patients well if they must return to the terrible conditions of hunger, cold and over-crowding which prevail among large sections of the workers in the population.

### WAR PROGRAM EATS UP HEALTH FUNDS

In many parts of the country, especially in the south, the conditions for the treatment of the tubercular are extremely bad. The sanatoria are crowded to the doors, the technical equipment for the modern treatment of tuberculosis (collapse therapy) is lacking, out-patient clinics do not exist. However, even when tubercular patients are treated in well-equipped, modern sanatoria they must be discharged into a world of poverty and unemployment. The meager rations of relief budgets are not adequate to keep them in good physical condition.

Many patients become disgusted with the terrible life on relief and return to jobs which are too heavy for the person with an "arrested" case of tuberculosis. Large numbers of patients break down again because of these conditions and must return to the sanatorium—many times to die.

American capitalism pays lip-service to the fight against tuberculosis in the yearly Christmas seal campaign. Throughout the rest of the year the "one-third of the nation" continues its losing fight against tuberculosis, the great scourge of the poor. Moreover, American capitalism is finding it necessary to withdraw benefits from the workers rather than to add to a social security program. Public health officials will be instructed to concern themselves primarily with the health of the prospective conscripts. Thus money allotted for public health work will be turned over to the armament program.

Today the fight for health, for decent living conditions, for even a minimum of social security becomes a fight against the basic structure of American capitalism itself. There is no longer a "middle way". The worker must take a stand either for the preservation of capitalism which denies workers and their families the necessities of life, or he must accept the revolutionary socialist position and work for the establishment of a society of peace and plenty.

# TRADE UNION NOTES

by Farrell Dobbs

### ATT. GEN. ARNOLD SHOWS HIS HAND

Assistant Attorney General Thurman Arnold, who has been prosecuting the so-called "anti-trust" cases against the trade unions, arguing before the United States Supreme Court, stated that "labor... should not be permitted to destroy itself by factional war." This statement was made in connection with Arnold's attempt to prosecute the officials of the AFL Carpenters Union as the result of a jurisdictional strike against the AFL Machinists in the Anheuser-Busch brewery at St. Louis.

When asked by Justice Frankfurter whether his argument would apply to a similar dispute between the AFL and the CIO, Arnold replied that it would. If the UAW-CIO were to strike Ford and the Ford company-union claimed that the CIO was striking against its "jurisdiction," which it probably would, then, according to Arnold's "logic," this too would be a jurisdictional strike in which he, the great crusader, would step in to save labor from "destroying itself by factional war."

"The power to suppress competition," says Arnold, "is far more dangerous than the power to fix prices." Arnold refers here not to the competition between business establishments, but to the competition among the workers for jobs. When he attacks the "power to suppress competition" in this case, what he is referring to is the right of the legitimate trade unions to act as the exclusive bargaining agency for the workers.

Having camouflaged his real aim during the early stages of his anti-labor campaign by confining himself mainly to the jurisdictional disputes in the AFL, Arnold is now preparing his second and more brazen line of attack—"anti-trust" prosecution in disputes between the AFL and CIO. The final stage will be a direct assault upon the established principles of union recognition.

Arnold is fighting to maintain

the anti-union "open shop" in industry. It is well to remind the workers and the "labor statesmen" that he is a subordinate of a member of Roosevelt's cabinet.

### ANTI-LABOR BILLS SECRETLY PREPARED

A Washington correspondent of the New York Post reports that bills giving state and local authorities unprecedented powers in anti-labor activity have been secretly prepared in Washington. They are designed for submission next month to nearly all state legislatures.

One bill provides a ten year jail sentence and \$10,000 fine for anyone who "intentionally... interferes" with property to "hinder, delay or interfere with national defense." Another section provides a similar punishment for anyone who "intentionally" is responsible for any defect in an article which is "intended to be used in connection with national defense."

Virtually everything from common pins to cannon can be construed as "used in national defense." Therefore, this bill could and would in almost every instance be applied against the trade unions. The word "intentionally" would be used as a convenient pretext in preparing frame-ups against the workers.

A second bill would provide each state with what amounts to an official vigilante organization, the members of which would be free from arrest for almost anything except "treason or felony." In the business of strike-breaking it is considered neither treason nor a felony to club down the striking workers on a picket line. This becomes a matter of "civic duty."

These bills will be introduced in the state legislatures behind a smoke-screen of hysterical agitation against "subversive activities," "sabotage," and "espionage."



# Cafeteria Workers' United Front Makes Clean Sweep In Elections

(Continued from Page 1)  
dependent Hellenic Club, Chefs and Cooks Committee, Polish-Ukrainian Committee, Committee of Miscellaneous Workers, and Women's Committee.

OUTSTANDING INTEREST  
Most significant individual contest of the election was the race of Larry Phillips, for six years a bitter and outspoken opponent of the reactionaries and racketeers, against William Kinchele, chief spokesman for the United Rights, or "Crashshooters" as they are known to the food workers.

The election of Phillips marks the first time that a present member of the United Progressive Club, for years the most consistent opposition to the reactionary machine, and the initiators of the united front election proposal, has been named to one of the four key posts of Local 302.

Kinchele, who had been attached formerly to the United Progressive Club and was expelled some time ago for pursuing reactionary policies in the union, made a bloc in this election, together with his followers, with William Mesevich, leader of the racketeers. His attacks on Phillips and the United Progressives went the limit in slanderous red-baiting.

Phillips' election was undoubtedly the bitterest dose which the United Rights had to swallow. It was he who single-handedly at the AFL state convention in August challenged the program of collaboration with the boss political machines advocated by the AFL chiefs and who proposed the initiation of an independent labor political party. He met combined assault of Willkieites and Rooseveltians alike. Although a number of Stalinists were delegates at that convention, none took the floor in defense of Phillips' proposal. Phillips' AFL convention speech led to the split between Kinchele and the United Progressives.

Phillips has been a member of

the union six years. He came in with the organization of the Foltis-Fisher cafeteria chain in 1934. From the first he distinguished himself as a militant unionist and a particularly aggressive fighter against the racketeers. He was elected to the executive board in December, 1935, and served a year and a half term. In August, 1936, he was a delegate to the international convention of his union. He has also served on two contract negotiation committees.

In the local elections of 1938 and 1939, Phillips ran unsuccessfully against Kramberg for the secretary-treasurer. Kramberg at that time had formed a joint slate with Mesevich.

Among the United Progressive members elected to office are John Bilsbury, Branch "A" organizer; Joseph Fox, Branch "A" business agent; Sidney Moraski, Harry Feller and Martha Ballan, Branch "A" executive board members; Sam Roth, vice-president of Branch "A"; Gus Sosa and Christ Cordista, general council members; Victor Gregerson, Branch "B" executive board member; James Gordon, delegate to the Central Trades and Labor Assembly. These, together with Phillips, have been the special targets of the reactionaries for years.

Fox was a leader of the Square Deal group, the first to challenge the rule of the racketeers. The racketeers expelled him for this in 1935; but he was reinstated by the membership in 1937.

Sam Roth is the editor of *The Spotlight*, publication of the United Progressives which has been mercilessly pillorying the right-wing.

never to permit him at any cost to win office in the union. As a leader of the New York Amalgamated Hotel Strike in 1934, James Gordon emerged as an outstanding union fighter. He was General Organizer of Local 110 before its merger with Local 302 in 1936. As the original organizer of the United Progressive Club, Gordon has the satisfaction at last of witnessing the program for which he has fought so long become realizable.

During the campaign, it became apparent that there were no more active and vigorous groups than the United Progressives and United Spanish Workers Club. A great deal of credit goes to these groups for their indefatigable labors in rallying the membership to the United Union ticket.

This program of the United Union Committee, which was published in full in the December 21 issue of the *Socialist Appeal*, includes a general organization drive in which the entire membership will participate; the abolition of separate branches and the elimination of wage differentials; a vigorous fight for the miscellaneous and women workers, whose conditions are the worst in the industry; general wage increases and the improvement of working conditions throughout the industry; against any form of discrimination on the job or in the union on the grounds of race, creed, color, nationality or political belief; protection of the jobs and seniority rights of conscripted members; full measures to safeguard the unemployed members and to secure more jobs; democratic administration of the union, with the right of full and free discussion on all issues, and no appointments to union posts from above.

### GORDON BEGAN THE JOB

The election of James Gordon marks the first real recognition by Local 302 of the worker who has borne the blows of the racketeers longest. Gordon is undoubtedly more hated and feared by the reactionaries than any other man. They had openly vowed

### ARBITRATION ISSUE

Of vital importance for the future is the question of the adjustment or arbitration board. The united front program, thanks to the insistence of the United Pro-

gressives and the Spanish Workers Club, includes a pledge to put the adjustment board before the membership for a referendum vote. The Progressives and Spanish Workers contend that the adjustment board is a backward step leading to compulsory arbitration, and one which provides the union conservatives and reactionaries, as well as the bosses, with a weapon to hold up and sidetrack militant action.

Representatives of the United Progressive Club and the United Spanish Workers have declared that the task ahead for the new officers is to prove to the membership that they really intend to carry out the program which the membership endorsed in the election. As one leader of the Progressive declared, "Our job has just begun! This will be a real victory for the union members only when the program for which they voted is carried out. Every officer is now on the spot. The members are saying 'Produce, or else...'"

The test will come this spring, when the contracts run out. A big fight with the bosses is in the offing. Only militant labor action will get results, as most of the members realize. They have put their hopes in the new leadership to be the fighting spearhead of such action. And they will be satisfied only with results.

### In Los Angeles Buy the APPEAL at

- Lazerus Candy Store 2109 Brooklyn Ave.
- Book Store E. 1st St. & Rowan Ave.
- Sam Smith's Newsstand 5th & Main St.

We've been forced to the conclusion that we threw overboard a good thing when we dropped the heading "APPEAL ARMY" for this department. Today the title "APPEAL ARMY" describes, better than anything we can think of, the well-organized bodies of comrades who cover the nation's important industrial areas each week with increasingly larger bundles of the "SOCIALIST APPEAL". So we revive the title "APPEAL ARMY."

### FRONT RANKS FOR CHICAGO!!

Stepping into ranks previously monopolized by Minneapolis and Newark—and exceeded only by New York—Chicago has leaped into the front ranks of the Appeal Army with a doubling of its bundle order. For a full month now, the Chicago branch has been taking 1,000 copies of the APPEAL each week—and getting to new layers of the working-class with them.

Comrade H. J., now serving as Chicago literature agent writes: "Our work is going forward full speed. We are covering two unions, a portion of the Negro area, and house-to-house work on Sundays. Our comrades here are taking a very serious attitude toward regular work with the press."

"Rain or shine our papers are going out at the regular time, and we will double our order every time there is the slightest excuse."

### THE FAMOUS FLINT BATTALION...

No words of ours need be added to the following inspiring letter, received last week from a leading Flint comrade:

"...It's quite a commentary on all other so-called radical parties that none of them dare to distribute their papers at the plants, or in any way to individual workers except through the mails. By means of regular week-in and week-out plant distribution THE labor paper has been made THE labor paper here. No other paper is so well known as ours. The workers have come to expect us at the plant gates; if we miss a week they wonder why, where were we... we are a sort of institution.

"With every crisis in events, the Appeal is looked for with

great interest by these workers, who look for our interpretation; they may be skeptical, they may be more pessimistic about the revolution than we, but they want to know what we have to say. And at the right period, when their experiences have taught them many things they today do not know, they will remember how right we were all along. In that sense, our paper today is laying the ground work among hundreds of militants for great organizational expansion in the future. It will be to us, they turn, because we have pounded away week after week, we have been there with our program and our criticism of all the stupidities of their inadequate leadership, and our exposure of all the lies of the bosses. They will remember our consistency; they will be ashamed of their former indifference, or their former failure to understand. When this time comes, and it is coming fast, we will reap the harvest of what may seem now to many comrades a painful task, or a thankless one. In this way our paper, and our consistent distribution of our paper, plays a most important role in establishing us as a leading force among workers. Branches which fail to do this, are only making their future work more difficult.

"In Flint we have had all extremes in the reception of the Appeal at the plants. There have been times when we had to face not merely indifference, but actual physical assault from mistaken workers. On one occasion I remember I had a regular picket squad of unionists surround me and forbid me to sell the papers. On the other hand, I have had them stand in line and wait to get a paper... this is only a process of political development which always seethes in workers minds.

"Other parties don't risk going to the workers in periods of reaction. We find our way to them at all times. We understand them, and we 'patiently explain.' We are stubborn people. The workers will learn to respect us for that quality. They know we mean business, and that we are not merely 'fair weather friends.'"

Join the Socialist Workers Party