

In the Trade Unions

By B. J. WIDICK

Two significant straws in the wind of the trends in the labor movement in relation to the coming world war were revealed last week.

From Buffalo, N. Y., came news that the S.W.O.C. had signed a contract with the J. H. Williams Steel Co. which included a clause guaranteeing continuation of seniority rights to employees drafted for conscription in war.

Now every unionist is in favor of observation of seniority rights under all circumstances. What is disturbing is the calm acceptance of the idea of conscription during war-time.

It remains to be seen if this is an official S.W.O.C. national policy or whether it was done purely on a local scale.

The steel company's acceptance of this clause was a clever maneuver to pacify the resentment still felt by workers from their experiences after the world war.

Thousands of soldiers returned to U. S. A. and found that their jobs had been taken permanently by those "who stayed behind," as they were called. This fact was the source of considerable agitation among the ex-service men.

Purge Aliens
A report from North Tarrytown, N. Y., indicates how far General Motors has gone with its policy of purging alien employees.

Whitewashing the Union
Anti-Stalinist forces had begun to crystallize in the college local after the publication in the Nation, December 17, last of James Wechsler's article "Twilight at Teachers College" and the subsequent exchange and publication in the Nation and the Post, of letters from John L. Childs and others on the Teachers College faculty and statements from the Executive Board and various officers of the College Teachers Union.

More recently, an article by Jerome Davis, national president of the A.F. of T., in the New Republic of March 15, with its flat denial of charges of Communist control, and its indignant reference to attacks on the Union from a "miscellaneous assortment of sharpshooters stretching from the Dies Committee all the way to John L. Childs," has provoked new response in the press, from Dr. Hartmann, who recently resigned the chair of the Columbia Chapter in protest against the Stalinist control of the Executive Board of the local.

In the New Republic of April 26, Dr. Hartmann, a Socialist, puts forth a series of specific proofs of Stalinism in the Union, which are denied in the same issue by Jerome Davis in a manner which may with some understatement be described as flimsy.

Announcements
WELCOME THE 14 EX-S.P.ERS into the S.W.P. at a social this Saturday at the home of Anne Russell, Apt. 19, 100 Norfolk St., N. Y. C., 9 p.m. Admission 20c. All welcome.

Teachers Propose Opposition Slate

College Teachers' Union Opposition Weakened By Vagueness of Program and by Individualism of Leaders

NEW YORK—With the writing of an opposition slate of officers and national convention delegates for the coming year, the Stalinist majority of the New York College Teachers' Branch of the American Federation of Teachers, Local 537, faces organized opposition for the first time since it was formed out of the college section of Local 5.

The meeting was marked, however, by virulent Stalinist attacks on the formation of an opposition and elaborate attempts at character assassination of the opposition leader, Dr. George Hartmann. In a milder moment, the chairman saw fit to characterize as "absurd" the recent letter in the New Republic written by Dr. Hartmann and offered for distribution to the membership. Obvious tricks to prevent the mailing of this letter to the members were resorted to, one member pointing out the absence of a union label (the New Republic has a union label but it does not appear on the reprint), while another wished to limit the size of the paper for the enclosure to one smaller than that of the reprint.

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Avoids Main Question
Dr. Davis, well-known crusader against Stalinism, dismisses the essential question of the relation between the Union and the C.P. with "In regard to alleged Communist control of the New York Unions, ask Ned Dearborn, Dean of the Division of General Education of New York University." The compelling logic of this reply must be apparent to the most skeptical. Dean Dearborn, incidentally, is the most recent of the prize lambs to walk blindfold into the pen: having joined the Union this March, and being too busy and too important to be an active member, he may be looked on as an authority on its affairs.

Stormy sessions of the local and the Columbia Chapter since December have revealed great nervousness on the part of the administration and its supporters. Although controlling a large majority vote on every motion except one made in the Columbia Chapter (insisting on retraction of charges of anti-labor bias against Professor Childs), the leadership resorts to every device to forestall genuine discussion of the dangerous questions.

On the other hand, the opposition group has been, until the past week, completely unorganized. Its attacks on the Stalinists coming individualistically, and in the public press for

Rents Rise as Housing Plans Are Forgotten

What has happened to the \$300,000,000 housing appropriation voted last year by the people of New York State? Various bills, five in all, designed in one form or another to implement the voters' decision, are up for consideration by the legislature. Why has no action been taken upon them?

That the problem is one that demands immediate and drastic action is once again proved—by recent reports of widespread profiteering by landlords in slum areas. This profiteering is of the most ruthless and meanest sort. Some 750 families on the Lower East Side have been ordered to vacate their premises by May 6 so as to clear the site needed for the new Corlears Hook building project. But these families have no place to go.

"Tenement owners," declared Emeric Kurtagh, Henry Street Settlement director, a few days ago, "are cashing in on the housing shortage. Landlords are offering them the families that have to clear out worse slums than they now live in—unheard of rentals."

Miss Jean Brand, executive secretary of the Tenant Union, asserted that rents have been raised as high as 50 per cent. "Owners of nearby tenements," she stated (N. Y. Post, April 26), "have not only set ridiculous figures on vacant apartments but have even boosted rentals in occupied units."

These 750 families cannot pay the increased rentals. What is to become of them? And how does it happen that the city authorities (don't forget, Mayor LaGuardia is the people's friend) permit profiteering at the expense of human misery?

Action Needed
The Corlears Hook problem is not an isolated one. The same problem has occurred before and is bound to occur frequently in the future. It is a clear indication that the question of slum clearance and erection of low-rental homes cannot be handled piecemeal. Comprehensive plans must be laid and executed at once if the existing evil is to be corrected.

The people of this state have endorsed the expenditure of \$300,000,000 to meet this need. The legislature remains inactive.

Unless some action is taken quickly, there is every likelihood that the whole matter of housing will be scuttled. Evidently this is the legislators' plan. It is also the plan of the profiteering landlords whose interests the "people's representatives" are so eager to serve.

Favorable to Boss
Among the Walsh amendments those which the C.I.O. has denounced as especially favorable to bosses are:
1. Wiping out the present personnel of the National Labor Relations Board and empowering a new "Federal Labor Board" to permit employers to initiate elections to determine whether a union has the majority in a given plant. Under the Wagner Act, only unions may initiate such elections. Green emphasized that it would be merely "discretionary" under the Walsh amendments whether the Federal Board would order such an election in any specific case, but the proposal, as the C.I.O. contends, would provide bosses with an opportunity to attack unions at their lowest ebb and to reopen the question of union recognition whenever it suited the employer.

Two daughters in the Stevens family, Mildred, 16, and Muriel, 14, were attacked by rats in the middle of the night. Both girls were bitten on the forehead; Muriel in addition was gnawed on the arm.

World's Fair Bars Jobs for Negroes

Committee Organizes Picket Line against Jim Crow Policy of New York World's Fair Corporation

More than 500 persons picketed the New York World's Fair on opening day to protest the discriminatory practices used in the employment of Negroes by Grover Whalen and his World's Fair Corporation. Although the Fair is now employing thousands of people, only 391 jobs have been given to Negroes. Not only have fewer jobs been given to persons of the colored race, but these jobs have been only the most menial ones. Of the 391 jobs that have been given to the Negroes, 191 of them are "sanitary attendants." The term "sanitary attendant" is a high-sounding title for toilet cleaners.

Most all other Negroes hired are employed as porters. No white collar jobs or skilled labor has been given to colored people. Whalen has assigned only the most lowly and low paid position to the Negro. Qualified persons who have applied for employment in every other category of work have been turned down because they are Negroes.

Committee Organizes Fight
The Greater New York Coordinating Committee for Employment has been fighting Grover Whalen's anti-Negro policy. This committee, which represents 207 trade union, church, and fraternal organizations in New York City says that "Democracy means Democracy for all, Negro and white alike." The sham of "democracy" where no rights are given to Negroes is no democracy at all.

De Valera Cancels U.S. Trip
As Masses Balk at War Plans
Premier Eamon de Valera announced last week to the startled members of the Daily Eirann that he had cancelled his much publicized trip to America.

Behind this sudden change of plans on the part of the Irish premier lies the dramatic story of Ireland's renewed fight for freedom and her deadly enmity to the war preparations of the British Empire.

It is well known, in Irish circles in America, that De Valera planned to enlist the support of President Roosevelt in an ambitious scheme. De Valera was to convince Roosevelt to use his influence and authority with the British rulers to abolish partition and allow the uniting of north Ireland with the Free State.

In return, De Valera was to guarantee Ireland's unconditional support to the British war plans and cheerfully to provide air L-ses for the British air fleet off the western Irish coast.

More People Bitten by Rats in Minneapolis
(Minneapolis, Minn., April 27)—Four more Minneapolis residents who have been compelled to live in vermin infested districts because of poverty have been bitten by rats during the past few days.

Three of them are children of Mr. and Mrs. Harris J. Stevens, the fourth, Mr. Stevens himself.

APPEAL ARMY

Please find enclosed a money order for \$3.00 for a year's subscription to the Appeal. The paper is for a friend of mine.

"I will try to get new subscriptions among my friends. The single copy I have been getting has a circulation of 5 or more. The people that read it find it very fine indeed."—A friend in Habana, Cuba.

ON THE WAY TO THE TRENCHES

Germany on April 26 made three demands on Lithuania: (1) to increase trade turnover with Germany by 25 per cent; (2) to revise commercial treaties with Great Britain and other countries to give certain privileges to Germany; (3) to establish a trade agency in Kaunas, capital of Lithuania, for buying foodstuffs in the open market.

Poland is bracing its border defenses in answer to Hitler's Reichstag speech. British war fliers will be trained in Canada according to an agreement reached between the two governments.

Troops which would ordinarily not enter their training period until next fall have been called to service by the Danish government. 9,000 troops will proceed to garrisons on the South Jutland German frontier.

Secretary of War Woodring will ask Congress in a few days for legislation to remove from the army's officer rolls the aged and physically unfit. The purpose is to give the War Department the power to apply to the army's officer personnel the same rigorous vitalization which is now taking place in its organization and armament.

Passport Case Goes to Jury
(Minneapolis, Minn., April 27)—Four more Minneapolis residents who have been compelled to live in vermin infested districts because of poverty have been bitten by rats during the past few days.

National Coal Tie-Up Delayed
(WASHINGTON, D. C.—Extension of the Anthracite coal agreement covering 100,000 members of the United Mine Workers of America for another week temporarily averted a nation-wide coal industry shutdown.

Defense Lauds Prosecution
Edelstein began his summation with a eulogy of American justice and American ideals, lauding the conduct of the government prosecution as "exemplary." Edelstein's praise of the prosecution is understandable when it is recalled that not once during the trial did it use any evidence pointing to the G.P.U. affiliations of the defendants.

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