

SOCIALIST APPEAL

Vol. III, No. 80 Friday, October 20, 1939

Published Twice-Weekly by the SOCIALIST APPEAL PUBLISHING ASS'N. at 116 University Place, New York, N. Y.

Subscriptions: \$2.00 per year; \$1.00 for six months. For single copies per copy in the United States; 3 cents per copy in foreign countries. Single copies: 3 cents.

Editor: MAX SWITTMAN Associate Editor: EMANUEL GARRETT General Manager: MARTIN ABERN Assistant Manager: SHERMAN STANLEY

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.

For Frank Watson

The Socialist Appeal endorses enthusiastically the call of the American Labor Aid for a solidarity fund for Frank Watson, that model working class militant who so fearlessly spoke in Toronto against the imperialist murderers of labor.

Dies Committee

The letter written to the editor by Joseph Zack, printed elsewhere in this issue, affords us an opportunity to clarify our position towards the Dies Committee and those who have testified before it.

The question raised by Zack about what to do when served by such a committee with a subpoena, is not very difficult to answer. Revolutionists have not only appeared in the past, either voluntarily or under compulsion, before governmental bodies, but even in capitalist courts.

wards Stalinism than he would if he were a United States Senator speaking in Congress.

For example: In its day, the Communist International pointed out to the "anti-political" I.W.W. that its leader, William D. Haywood, had actually engaged in revolutionary political action when he made use of the platform offered him by the Industrial Relations Committee of Congress to testify on the labor situation and the position of the I.W.W., and when he demanded a Congressional Committee to investigate conditions in Lawrence, Mass.

Victor Berger, however, who was a Socialist Party member of the House of Representatives, spoke quite often on the floor of Congress, also speaking on labor problems and his attitude towards them.

Haywood, the "anti-political" I.W.W., remained a revolutionist before, during and after his testimony before the Committee.

Berger, the "political" Socialist, remained an incurable opportunist and social-patriot throughout his career, especially in his later years.

The "radicals" who have testified before the Dies Committee are, with perhaps one or two exceptions, ex-radicals, avowed turncoats. They do not testify as revolutionists. They testify as good Americans, good patriots. What else can anyone gather from the testimony of such people as Gitlow, Dubrowsky, Malkin? Disregarding for the moment our known political differences with Zack, we are ready to acknowledge that so far as the printed excerpts from his testimony are concerned, he did not act the Gitlowian penitent ex-revolutionist, and we were undoubtedly wrong a few weeks ago in bracketing him with Gitlow.

Billings Free

Just as the welcome news appeared that Warren K. Billings, together with Tom Mooney the most famous class-war prisoner in the United States, had been freed by action of California's Gov. Olson, the trial of eight WPA workers framed-up on a "conspiracy" charge by the Government in Minneapolis, entered into its third week.

For our professional "democrats," the two events have no connection. For one who looks below the veil and sees the hideous class realities in America, the two are inseparably connected.

A great victory for democracy, we are told, in connection with Billings' release, as we were told when Mooney was freed.

A murderous condemnation of your fake democracy, we reply.

Billings, like Mooney, was innocent of the crime charged against him, as virtually everybody now admits. He was framed up—framed by the merchants and manufacturers, by the bankers and traction interests, by the courts and the prosecutor, by the press and all the other pillars of society. He went to prison at the age of 22, an innocent man. He stayed in prison for 22 years, innocent all the time.

Isn't that a magnificent tribute to American democracy?

That same democracy is now trying to railroad to the penitentiary the Minneapolis WPA workers who committed the unforgivable crime of being surplus mouths for capitalism to feed. Thrown out of work by a decayed system that can no longer even feed the people, they were finally given a pittance on WPA jobs. When the government tried to cut their already low wages to a still lower point, they fought back, as they had a right and duty to fight, for themselves, for their families, for their human dignity and self-respect.

But you have no right to fight your "democratic" government. The only right you have is to keep your damned trap shut and let yourself be reduced to a coolie level without protest. And, say our democrats, who framed-up Mooney and Billings, who framed-up the Centralia I.W.W.'s, whose last prisoner, Ray Becker, was released only the other day after 20 horrible years in a dungeon—if you do protest, if you don't keep your trap shut, you'll be framed-up and railroaded to prison too.

We hail Warren Billings on his release from California's prison. We feel that we have the right to call, in his name, in the name of every great labor fighter who sacrificed for his class, for an unceasing struggle to free every class-war prisoner in this and all other countries, and to prevent the imprisonment of those victims of class rule—like the Minneapolis WPA workers—who are now on trial for their freedom.

Socialist Appeal 116 University Place New York City. I would like to get better acquainted with your paper, the Socialist Appeal. Please send me sample copies for the next few weeks. Name Address City

The Socialist Party Meets the Problem of the ALP's War-Mongering by--Saying Nothing

By FELIX MORROW

The Oct. 7 issue of The Call, official organ of the Thomas Socialists, proudly announced that "two well-known Socialists," Harry Laidler and Frank Crosswaith, had been nominated as New York City councilmanic candidates by the American Labor Party.

On Oct. 4, the state executive committee of the ALP adopted a "special resolution on the European conflict" which put the ALP on the side of Anglo-French imperialism and on the basis of this fundamental orientation drew two immediate corollaries: support of Roosevelt's proposals to aid Anglo-French imperialism by lifting the embargo on munitions; and denunciation of Stalin and the Stalinists for shifting from Anglo-French imperialism to Hitler.

The resolution was submitted to a city conference of ALP delegates on the night of Oct. 4, and, along with the war-mongering Louis Waldmans and assorted pro-Roosevelt labor spokesmen, the Norman Thomas socialists, led by Jack Altman, voted for the pro-war resolution.

Shortly afterward the press reported that the "well-known socialist," Frank Crosswaith, had "expressed unqualified approval for the resolution." The terms in which his fellow-socialist, Harry Laidler, accepted the resolution have not been published, but it was evidently satisfactory to the war-mongering ALP leadership. All this was, of course, in plain violation of the official stand of the Socialist Party.

THE CALL APPLIES GOBS OF WHITEWASH

One awaited with interest, therefore, the following issues of The Call. Would the Socialist Party adhere to its official anti-war position and consequently condemn Jack Altman, Frank Crosswaith and Harry Laidler, and place the Socialist Party in unequivocal opposition to the war-mongering resolution? Or would it, like the Lovestonete Workers Age, justify voting for the resolution?

These were the two horns of the dilemma which the national leaders of the Socialist Party faced. How would they meet the problem? They have met the problem so far, in the two weeks since Oct. 4, by a very simple method: water silence. The October 14 and 21 issues of The Call are out, and they carry not a single word on this important question! Nor have any statements been issued to the press—other than Crosswaith's "unqualified approval of the resolution."

The latest issues of The Call find room for many things, if not for material on the crucial ALP resolution. The main headline in the Oct. 14 issue is "AFL warns of war danger"—a thorough and—to use the more accurate term—servile whitewash of the AFL bureaucracy, which, far from really fighting against the war, railroaded through the convention support for what the Socialist Party has called the first giant step to war: Roosevelt's program to aid Anglo-French imperialism by lifting the embargo.

As if this were not enough, the Oct. 21 issue of The Call provided further whitewash: "There can be no question that the convention did plan and speak effectively for all labor in the matter of opposition not only to any involvement of the United States in war but as to the measures preparatory to war in terms of 'M' Day plans and war boards." Proof? The mealy-mouthed AFL resolution which proposed, as a solution for "war-time dictatorship"—that organized labor be represented on the war planning boards! In neither issue is there a single, solitary word about or against the convention's adherence to Roosevelt's program for lifting the embargo!

WHERE THE CALL FINDS ENCOURAGEMENT

The latest issues of The Call have room for many things. That of October 14 wrote: "An encouraging note was struck by the AFL convention here when it gave a tremendous ovation to Gerhart Seger, former member of the German Reichstag, who spoke to the delegates on behalf of the German labor delegation in America." Why is it "an encouraging note" that

Seger received a "tremendous ovation"? The Call does not say, nor does it accurately describe who he is. Gerhart Seger may speak on behalf of the 'German labor delegation' in America, but that means speaking on behalf of those who, having capitulated to Hitler without a struggle, now are making as much propaganda as they can for their present program which is: their return to Germany behind British and French—and American—bayonets. Seger is one of that despicable group of war-mongers who are providing "German" testimonials to the purity of the war aims of Anglo-French imperialism. That he receives a tremendous ovation from the AFL convention is an "encouraging note," says The Call. Encouraging to whom?

More things of the same kidney find room in the issues of The Call which keep silent about the ALP resolution. The Call had printed a message from the "German Independent Labor Party," ostensibly as an anti-war document. Not being anti-war, Alfred Baker Lewis, state secretary of the Socialist Party of Massachusetts, writes a communication in The Call, October 14, "I think it is only fair to your readers to state that the message from the German Independent Labor Party... also included a statement from the Society of Sudeten Germans which reads: 'Hitler's defeat is an aim common to all those loving peace, liberty and humanity. We are in accord with the British and French peoples who stand up for the freedom of the world.' It would be a mistake to leave the impression that our courageous German comrades regard the outcome of the war with indifference on the ground that it is only a clash between rival imperialisms." (Mr. Lewis writes in the same pro-Ally vein in The Nation and elsewhere, but that is all right in the Socialist Party where only left wingers must

AMERICAN LABOR AID LAUNCHES DRIVE FOR DEFENSE OF WATSON

(Continued from Page 1)

It is a call to arms in the defense of civil rights during the difficult period ahead.

"Every worker, every sympathizer of the workers' cause has a direct stake in this case. Rally to the defense of Frank Watson. Rush funds at once to the Watson Defense Fund of the American Labor Aid, 125 W. 33rd St., New York City."

Cannon Statement

James P. Cannon, National Secretary of the Socialist Workers Party, greeted the creation of the Watson Defense Fund as the most important act of international solidarity initiated here since the outbreak of the war.

"The decision of the American Labor Aid," Comrade Cannon said, "to undertake a campaign of support in behalf of Frank Watson, persecuted Canadian anti-war militant, and the Canadian section of the Fourth International for which he spoke, is not just an ordinary action in defense of civil rights. It is in the truest sense of the word a first step in a

"OBEY DISCIPLINE." THESE GENTLEMEN DO NOT DENOUNCE

The Call, issue after issue, prints reams from Devere Allen, national executive committee member, now in Brussels, who cannot find warm-enough words with which to praise the Catholic-Socialist coalition government of Belgium (and the Congo) which is operating, he says, "with a spirit of poise and sincerity which must evoke the admiration of the world." As, for example—Mr. Allen doesn't mention it—the Belgian government's recent arrest of Walter Dauge, leader of the Revolutionary Socialist Party (Fourth International) for issuing a manifesto calling for struggle against the war.

"It is not for us to denounce the immediate choices of our European comrades in their present terrible dilemma," wrote the Socialist Party in its "Declaration Against the War" (The Call, September 23). It is in the same strain, no doubt, that The Call feels that it is not for it to denounce the immediate choice of its American comrades in their present terrible dilemma in the American Labor Party.

To vote against the pro-war resolution—why that would mean a break with the Dubinsky and Hillmans and all the other bureaucrats in the needle trades; would mean that the Jack Altmans would no longer be welcome in the corridors of the union officialdom; it would mean to put their much-touted principles above the interests of the Crosswaiths and other retainers of the union bureaucracy. As for the very thought of disciplinary action against the war-mongers in the party like Crosswaith, Jack Altman, Alfred Baker Lewis et. al.—expulsions and such weapons are for the Altmans to employ against the left wingers in the party, never against such "leaders." For that's the Socialist Party of Norman Thom-

Their Government By James Burnham

Since the beginning of the war, the Isolationist Congressmen, especially the group of Senators headed by Borah, LaFollette, Nye and Vandenberg, have attempted to pose before the country as "the peace bloc," the aim of which is "to keep the country out of war." Several weeks of the Special Session provide us with new evidence upon which to judge their claim.

The isolationists continue their opposition to repeal of the arms embargo. On this particular point the Socialist Workers Party agrees with them. Nevertheless, agreement here or on any other single point does not in the least imply the slightest similarity in general policy toward the war. We must always ask what motivates the position taken on any given point that boils down to a "yes or no" question; and ask how this position is related to the whole policy pursued by any group or party.

The Nazi Bund and, today, the Stalinists also oppose repeal of the arms embargo. They do so for a clear and simple reason: because they favor the victory of Hitler, and, under the immediate circumstances, opposition to repeal happens to favor Hitler as against the Anglo-French coalition.

Why the S.W.P. Opposes Repeal

The Socialist Workers Party stands for the defeat of both sides in the war, of Hitler and of Britain-France. The S.W.P. is opposed to repeal of the arms embargo because the SWP is against the war, and because Roosevelt's proposal to lift the embargo is a war act. This can be most obviously seen in the following two ways:

(1) Repeal of the embargo is a unilateral intervention by United States imperialism in the war, on the side of one of the belligerents. This is understood by everyone, and has been brought into the open during the Senate debates. Repeal will turn part of US industry into an armory for Britain-France. This intervention is necessarily a step, and a very important step, toward further involvement which must lead in the end to military entry.

(2) Even more important, however, is the fact that repeal of the embargo is a key part of the direct war preparations of the US military machine. The orders from Britain-France will enable the US armament industry to increase its plant and facilities and raise its capacity to war levels before formal declaration of war. From this point of view, opposition to repeal follows in exactly the same way as opposition to any and all military appropriations by the US or any other imperialist government.

At the same time, the SWP does not regard the embargo issue as decisive for war or peace. It refuses to delude itself or the workers. Retention of the embargo would prove only a minor bump in the path of the war machine.

Why do the Isolationists Oppose Repeal?

A study of the conduct of the isolationists—not, of course, from the point of view of their psychological motives or moral ideals, but of the political meaning and function of their acts—proves that their opposition to repeal of the embargo has nothing in common with that of the SWP and of the militant anti-war fighters in general. On the contrary, their opposition can be correctly understood only as a demagogic exploitation of the anti-war sentiments of the people, and as a pacifist cover for the war preparations of US imperialism. Far from helping in the fight against the war, they are most dangerous—because deceptive—enemies of the anti-war fight, and allies of the war-mongers.

This judgment will sound harsh to sentimentalists, but no other conclusion is possible. Consider:

Not a single isolationist in the Congressional debate has called for the peoples' referendum on war. If the isolationists are sincere, if they really are against the war, if they really want the will of the people to be done, how can they possibly fail to make the referendum a central issue in their fight?

Not a single isolationist has had one word to say against the colossal armament expenditures of the government. Quite the contrary: many of them have been loudest in demanding great increases in armament expenditures. The only possible purpose for this mighty war machine is military entry into the war.

Not a single isolationist criticized Roosevelt's declaration that the armed forces of the United States would defend Canada—one of the belligerent nations. This declaration was itself an intervention in the war.

Not a single isolationist has even mildly criticized the Declaration of Panama which in actuality places the United States in the forefront even now of the world imperialist struggle for the re-division of the earth.

In other words and in general: on all major fronts the isolationists are in the vanguard of those who are pushing forward the aggressive war plans of US imperialism.

Jumping the Gun

In fact, the isolationists are often well in advance of their "opponents." For example: it is on the initiative of the isolationists—specifically, Borah—that the present bill is now being amended to "relax the restrictions on shipping." As drawn up by the administration, all shipments in US vessels to ports of belligerents were to be prohibited. The amendments will prohibit shipments only to "belligerent zones," which will include only Europe, and will exclude the entire East—Australia, New Zealand, India, Hong Kong, Indo-China, etc.

But this is exactly the major strategy of US imperialism, which, stretching out from a stronghold on Latin America has as its next immediate aim dominance of the East.

And it was the isolationist Shipstead who a few days ago gave more of the show away by openly proposing in the Senate that the United States take over Canada and the European possessions in this hemisphere.

Borah, let us remember, not merely voted for the declaration of war in 1917, but made the most rabid of all the speeches supporting it.

LIVING THOUGHTS OF MARX presented by LEON TROTSKY

Single copies \$1.00 (less 10% cash discount) Special rates in bundles of 5 or more. This new book is a condensation of Marx's CAPITAL by Otto Ruehli with a brilliant 93 page introduction by Leon Trotsky, dealing in the main with the American scene.

By special arrangement with the publisher (Longmans, Green & Co.) we are able to offer this new book in combination with the paper cover FASCISM AND BIG BUSINESS AT:

Single Combination (1 book each) \$1.50
Combination of 3 (3 books each) 3.75
Combination of 5 (5 books each) 6.25

RUSH YOUR ORDERS

PIONEER PUBLISHERS

116 UNIVERSITY PLACE New York City