

LABOR ACTION

Independent Socialist Weekly

APRIL 24, 1950

FIVE CENTS

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UAW Rejects Chrysler Scheme; Reuther Reinstates Demands

By WALTER JASON

DETROIT, Apr. 17.—Faced with the adamant insistence of the active United Auto Workers ranks that a sound pension plan, a health insurance program and a vastly improved contract must be the result of the 12-week Chrysler strike, the UAW leadership this week rejected another so-called "final" offer of the Chrysler Corporation, which dealt primarily with a pension plan.

As a matter of fact, the UAW ranks learned that Reuther had again returned to a demand for a minimum 10-cent package as the basis for settlement. Two weeks ago, Reuther made an offer to the company which was widely interpreted as scaling down the pension and insurance plan demands to far below the 10-cent package considered a minimum for settlement.

Chrysler has announced that it had offered one of three varieties of pension plans to settle the strike. It claimed that it offered a 40-year premium plan like that at Ford or like the U.S. Steel plan and the Bethlehem Steel plan.

The result of this company propaganda is to add some confusion in the minds of many workers, who do not know nor have they been taught the deficiencies in the other plans. To do so, the Reuther leadership would have had to explain the serious weaknesses in the Ford plan, or expose the major limitations of the pension settlements of CIO President Phillip

Murray, something Walter Reuther hardly thinks of doing.

SECRET DIPLOMACY

The Reuther leadership is also caught in other dilemmas. Last week it suggested opening the negotiations to a group of public-spirited citizens to see who was at fault. But it has agreed with the corporation to keep negotiations secret in the past and the Chrysler delegate conference has never been called together since the first week of the strike so that the UAW ranks could discuss the various offers Reuther and Norman Mathews made to Chrysler before they were presented in negotiations.

Unlike the General Motors negotiations in 1946, where Reuther insisted on releasing the daily record to the public as well as to the union, and where the ranks were always kept in touch with developments, the Chrysler strike negotiations have been maintained with almost Iron Curtain secrecy. Only one local union in the Chrysler strike has had weekly meetings to get reports on negotiations and most of these have been very vague.

Very disturbing also is the continual playing down of the importance of needed contract improvements in the Chrysler dispute. For the public record, Reuther may be stuck with his previous offer to arbitrate the contract, but any such move will find great resistance among the active unionists, who seem to grow more adamant as the strike stretches out.

Hill Boasts that Jim Crow Controls Democrats, Got FEPC Bottled Up

Dem Policy Leader's Speech

Following are the passages made public in the speech by Senator Lister Hill of Alabama, in which the Democratic leader pointed with pride to the record of the Democrats in bottling up civil-rights legislation, through the strength of the South (see story on this page):

"I tell you it is the power and influence of your senators and congressmen that has made possible defeat of FEPC and other so-called civil-rights bills. They hold this power and influence as members of the Democratic Party.

"The anti-poll-tax bill is bottled up today in a subcommittee of the Senate Rules Committee. Senator John C. Stennis (Democrat of Mississippi) is chairman of this subcommittee because of his membership in the Democratic Party. If he were a member of the Dixiecrat splinter party he could not be chairman [and] could have little influence in the fight against civil-rights bills.

"The general civil-rights bill (containing a combination of the controversial programs) is bottled up today in a subcommittee of the Senate Judiciary Committee. Senator Jim (James O.) Eastland (Democrat of Mississippi) is chairman of this committee. If he were not a Democrat, he could not be chairman of this or any other committee.

"As a Democrat, I hold a place on the Senate Committee on Labor and Public Welfare. I led the fight in committee against the FEPC bill, and the committee dropped it like a foundling on the Senate's doorstep—without a word in its favor (the committee reported the bill to the Senate calendar without recommendations.)

"If our group of Southern senators is to continue to defeat these civil-rights bills, we must keep the power and influence we hold as members of the Democratic Party. I also warn that the Republicans are committed to civil rights."

The Democratic Party has shelved FEPC and civil-rights legislation for Negroes and minorities. On this key issue of the Fair Deal in the eyes of many liberals, the Southern Democrats (not the Dixiecrats) have shown who controls the party which labor-liberals and others have set out to "reform."

This appears from the as yet unchallenged report of a speech made by Democratic leader Lister Hill, senator from Alabama, in which he boasted of the power of the South's reactionaries in the Fair Deal party.

There is a reason for the unusual frankness and open admissions of Hill's speech. The forthcoming Democratic primary in Alabama will see a decision between the regular Democrats and the Dixiecrats; the latter captured the apparatus in 1948 and want to hold it. Hill is trying to persuade his fellow Democrats that they can achieve their objections more effectively inside the Democratic Party than by operating independently of it.

Hill's address, with candor (Turn to last page)

MAY DAY Celebration

"Ten Years of Independent Socialism"

Speaker:

Max Shachtman

Chairman: BEN HALL

and a representative of the
Socialist Youth League

Apr. 30, Sun., 8 p.m.

Adelphi Hall, 74 Fifth Av.
N. Y. C. (near 13th St.)

Protest Cold War on Democracy

By GORDON HASKELL

Three leaders in the fields of law, science and education this past week attacked the growing subversion of civil liberties in the United States.

Dr. Joel Hildebrand, dean of the University of California's College of Chemistry, predicted that if teachers at the university are forced to sign special loyalty oaths it would result eventually in a "critical situation" for the nation.

Hildebrand stated that "scholars of great distinction" at the university have said they would not sign the oath. "There are others," he said, "on the faculty who have stated that they will resign from the university if any professor is dismissed against whom no charges of disloyalty, communism or incompetence have been brought. There are others who will seek other positions rather than remain in a university whose regents take such a cynical and

dictatorial attitude toward their faculty."

Hildebrand has been a leader of the group at the University of California who have been willing to bar proven CPers from the faculty, but who do not wish to submit to dictatorial practices by the Board of Regents.

AGAINST SECRECY

During the same week Dr. Detlev W. Bronk, president of Johns Hopkins University, denounced the "growing trend toward secrecy in science" and reaffirmed the "universal right to know as a basic human right" in a speech in New York City.

Dr. Bronk leveled his attack at the growing restriction on scientists in all fields under the guise of protecting "secret" scientific information from disclosure to Russian spies.

At a luncheon of the Civil Rights Committee of the New York County Lawyers Association,

Nathaniel Phillips, chairman of the committee, referred to Senator McCarthy's charges against various and sundry State Department officials, as evidence of the danger to men who are unable to reply to attacks made under congressional immunity. He suggested that the immunity might be withdrawn from legislators who make unfounded charges against private citizens.

These may be the first notes in a swelling chorus of opposition to the procedures of the loyalty purge as they show themselves in different fields. Of course, none of the above gentlemen have put their fingers on the CAUSES of the witchhunt, nor have they suggested any serious remedy short of saying "you shouldn't do that."

In the case of Hildebrand we have an example of a man who has been willing to swallow the undemocratic and unscientific notion of guilt by association (when he says that all members of the

Stalinist party should be barred from teaching) while gagging at the arbitrary exercise of power by the Board of Regents over the faculty of the university at which he teaches.

EXPERIENCE HITS

But it is not to be expected that everyone will see the whole loyalty purge in all its aspects and understand just WHY it is going on and how it is connected with the decay of our whole social order.

The important thing is to note that the loyalty purge is beginning to produce its OWN REACTION. Men in different fields, with different interests and ideas, are discovering that the loyalty purge is not something which is happening merely to some "communists" or "subversives," but rather that something is happening to THEM. They are finding that fields of work which they held to be sacred, and of which they know

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Readers of Labor Action Take the Floor...

Claude Pepper, Dixie Politics, Innuendoes and Points South

To the Editor:

Coming up for air from the skeenteenth reading of that admirable juvenile classic, *Busy Timmy*, naturally I turned to my LABOR ACTION. I am moved to write the paper a comment or two on the Claude Pepper story in this week's LABOR ACTION, April 17.

In a letter, the individual Pepper can be disposed of promptly. (On the scene it apparently takes a bit of doing, either from the right or from the left.) Dr. Ralph Bunche sometime ago, in commenting upon the class to which Pepper belongs, said:

"The southern POLITICAL liberal, insofar as his attitude on the Negro question is concerned, must be judged only in terms of a less frequent and vigorous recourse to Negro baiting." Judge Waring or Lillian Smith has not yet taken to the hustings. Perhaps they will, since victory or defeat would not have a narrowly personal significance for them."

One of my objections to the article is perhaps less serious. In commenting on the extrovert-nepotism-thespian-celibacy Smather slander, the piece says: "That's the Southern cracker version of the more sophisticated methods of smear taught by the Truman administration's 'subversive lists.'"

I don't get it. This particular filth is innuendo for illiterates. Subversive lists are no kind of innuendo. I remember that there is a current novel in which the heroine gets in trouble with the FBI because she has a bust of Mozart on her piano, and suppose that the article's reference is to guilt by association. In which case the point still is that crackers bow to no one when it comes to filth. Florida is not Mississippi, and they must have libel laws there. Extrovert, etc., is a little adjustment to the locale. The comment in the article, in my opinion, is less than serious opposition to either demogogy or witchhunts.

Likewise, I do not think that the problem of Southern politics is so simple as labor party or no labor party. Nor could it be so simple as pressure or no pressure. The Florida senatorial primary is one of a whole group of contests this spring which are basically similar from state to state. They are basically similar, despite variation, distortion, and even when Truman is hid away in a closet, and a native voice speaks "to the people of Alabama," promising to hold back the tide, presumably with Listerine. If the Florida race is more blurred than for instance in the primary in North Carolina where Dr. Frank Graham will run, or more blurred in another way than in the "Loyalist"-Dixiecrat contest in Alabama, that is because Florida politics is more blurred. If blurred, it is becoming clearer, and this in spite of the overbearing of Pepper's retreat from his pose as the liberal of the hour.

Classic Quote

William F. Clark of Wilkes-Barre died at the end of March. You don't know his name but he figured in labor history.

It was during the bitter miners' strike of 1902 that Clark wrote a letter to the leader of the mine operators' front, President George F. Baer of the Philadelphia & Reading Railroad, urging a peaceful settlement. Baer wrote back:

"The rights and interests of the laboring man will be protected and cared for—not by the labor agitators, but by the Christian men to whom God, in his infinite wisdom, has given the control of the property interests of the country."

That statement, released by Clark, brought nation-wide sympathy for the miners' case and helped their victory.

Pressure upon Pepper from the right has been more influential than pressure from the left, no doubt for bad but sufficient reasons. Peppers are Peppers because it is not yet possible for the little people to intervene in the political life of the South. In the South disfranchisement is the habit, with or without benefit of poll tax.

The primary contests in the South, all of which will elect government officials, shape up as struggles for hegemony within the Democratic Party between groupings that can be differentiated without too much trouble. This is true whether the difference is expressed as liberal versus conservative, or merely as Loyalist versus Dixiecrat. This is true also for Florida, "the state of every man for himself." That there are two nominees, instead of the five or more customary for Florida, shows this division.

We can also count on Representative Smathers to demonstrate this division. For example, the Herald Tribune on March 28 published some of his campaign publicity, under the byline of that lily in the field, David Lawrence. The headline reads, "CIO REPORTED BUYING NEGRO VOTE IN FLORIDA TO ELECT PEPPER SUPPORTER OF FEPC." Two lies in 13 words. The body of the article is some more shameless extroverted thespian politics by innuendo. It is an echo of the Dixiecrat squeal at the handwriting appearing on the wall. It reveals nothing so clearly as the Southern reactionary's familiarity through long practice with venality and propaganda muck.

To quote, with emphasis not mine: "Many Republicans are registering in the Democratic primary because they don't like the FACT that the CIO is bringing a lot of money into the state and BUYING THE VOTES OF NEGROES IN SUPPORT OF PEPPER WHO FAVORS THE PROPOSAL FOR A FEPC."

"With \$1 assessments collected from workers in NORTHERN states—called VOLUNTARY but actually obtained through INTIMIDATING PROCESSES—big campaign chests are accumulated by the CIO for use in a state like Florida."

"The Tampa Tribune which is one of the best morning newspapers and has been crusading against all forms of RACKETS hereabouts, has described the CIO activities in detail. Reports from some large Negro centers say registrants are being offered \$2 for their vote, \$1 when they register and turn over their registration cards, with the promise of another \$1 when they go to the polls. Other reports tell of a promised lottery with numbers on registration certificates as tickets to the drawing. Free movies, ice cream, soft drinks [how the South progresses] and other TREATS for Negro registrants are being offered elsewhere."

I can only comment that the estimates coming from a Smathers seem quite low—he must have some dim understanding that there is a deal of sentiment for FEPC, and against Taft-Hartley, sentiment that need not be bought, and could not be pro-Smathers.

To quote more pure innuendo:

Protest --

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From their own experience that freedom is essential to progress, are being invaded and violated by the rough hand of the purge.

The same experience of a personal kind is going to hit thousands and tens of thousands of ordinary people as well as profes-

sors and university presidents. As that takes place the reaction to the loyalty purge, led by the workers who will be its most numerous and most harried victims in the long run, will rise in force. Only such a reaction can guarantee the existence of civil liberties in America. And it will come.

"The Tampa Tribune also publishes the CIO score sheet being used by PAID organizers who MAKE NO SECRET OF THEIR ACTIVITIES. It gives for each of the 67 counties the total eligibles, the number registered in 1948, and the goals for 1950. Presumably the organizers will be REWARDED on the basis of the quotas reached, as in any other drive." Or "The big unions have gone into politics intensively as a means of getting control of Senators and Congressmen so as to be able to force the labor legislation they want. They will at the same time be able to put the power of national unions behind the effort to MANIPULATE the Negro vote for ANY political purpose. SMALL WONDER that Democratic Senators from the South are fighting vehemently against SCHEMES which will seek to regulate employment practices, thus enabling big unions to say WHICH NEGROES SHALL BE HIRED — a most powerful tool for political use."

Whitewash

To the Editor:

A curious item has appeared in the Socialist Workers Party's paper, *The Militant*: an unconditional political defense of F. O. Matthiessen, the Stalinoid Harvard professor who recently committed suicide and left a statement implying that his act was motivated by depression over world affairs.

The *Militant* headline reads: "Matthiessen Commits Suicide Over Cold War." This, it may be suggested, is somewhat disingenuous: a great many people are just as concerned about the cold war as was Matthiessen; yet they do not commit suicide. As *The Militant* editors might discover by looking into a psychiatry text (or

are they "against" psychiatry?), suicide, particularly when not undertaken in conditions of extreme physical duress, is usually caused by motives more intimate than political pessimism.

However, what is most interesting in *The Militant* item is that in the midst of its eulogy of Matthiessen, whom it calls "not a Stalinist," but a "Socialist and Christian, with great love for his fellowman," it never so much as refers to Matthiessen's recent book on Europe or his activities at the Stalinist "Waldorf peace conference." It says not a word about the fact that Matthiessen wrote in his book that if he were in France he would be a member of the Communist Party or about his nauseating whitewash of the Czech Stalinists and of the Stalinist stooge in the Social-Democratic Party, Fierlinger, who acted as a fingerman against the Czech Trotskyists. Nor does it feel the need to mention that Matthiessen spoke at the Waldorf conference on the same platform with the GPU culture commissars and said nothing against their blatant defense of Stalinism.

The *Militant* praises Matthiessen for his civil-rights work, for his willingness to defend the Minneapolis Trotskyists. For that, indeed, he deserves every honor—every honor, that is, except the willful and deceitful obliteration of his shameful record as a Stalinoid. I. H.

Hill Boasts --

(Continued from page 1)

unparalleled in recent times out of the mouths of Democratic stalwarts, was made over the radio on April 12. He is a member of the Democratic Policy Committee, which shapes the legislative program of the Fair Deal. This body decided early last week on shelving a showdown on FEPC, by giving priority to foreign-aid programs. What he said is boxed on this page.

The only reply Senator Hill has made to inquiries on this speech is: "I was speaking to the people of Alabama." The idea is perfectly clear: Truman and his Fair Deal spokesmen can make THEIR speeches to the conventions of labor, the Negro people and Americans for Democratic Action, promising and pledging anything they choose. These people are not supposed to listen in when Hill speaks more truthfully to his own state. It makes for crossed wires.

In the light of this, Hendrickson's blowing against Hill offers a laboratory specimen of the pot calling the kettle black.

FEPC legislation is by no means the MOST difficult job for a reform-capitalist movement to put across, in view of the pressures of the cold war. Yet even on this field the Democratic Party has offered little hope for its left-of-center Fair Dealers who look on it as the hope of progress. In 1948 ADA delegates at the Democratic Party convention won a "famous victory" when they put more advanced civil-rights language into the party platform. That is where the language has remained.

The Dixiecrat strategy of putting pressure on the administration from the right by organizing independently obviously has its strength! Hill's speech and the Fair Deal abandonment of the fight against segregation is one of their victories. Hill can claim, quite truly, that this was due to the entrenchment of lily-white Democrats in the party. But pressing behind the Hill Jim Crowers is the Dixiecrat threat from the outside.

The worker or liberal who wants to fight against Jim Crow does not have to stop to weigh the demagoguery of which Hendrickson accuses the Democrats against the demagoguery of the Democrats. The most effective road to getting what he wants is through the independent organization of labor's forces in politics, a labor party.

It's even the most effective road to pressuring the Democrats into doing their utmost to implement their own promises on civil rights,

It would be hard to choose between the disgusting hypocrisy of this GOP handyman and the hypocrisy of the administration. The fact is that if the Hill-Truman forces are lining up the pro-White House section of the white-supremacy Democrats in the South, it is the Republicans who are trying to make way with their even more embittered opponents, the Dixiecrats themselves.

It was Republican Chairman Guy Gabrielson who has said publicly that he has been keeping touch with the Dixiecrat leaders