

THE MILITANT

PUBLISHED WEEKLY IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE

Vol. XV - No. 40

NEW YORK, N. Y., MONDAY, OCTOBER 1, 1951

PRICE: FIVE CENTS

Why Attlee Has Issued Call for New Elections

By Paul G. Stevens

In what appeared in the U.S. press as a surprise move, Prime Minister Clement Attlee announced last Wednesday that general elections would be held in Great Britain on Oct. 25. In actual fact, a fall election was generally expected on the other side of the Atlantic. While an election was more or less taken for granted the exact date was not known. Choosing the election date is the prerogative (by constitutional tradition) of the Prime Minister and is kept secret for the purpose of giving

the party in power the advantage in mapping campaign strategy.

Why was an election expected this fall? According to British law, elections for Parliament must be held every five years. The Labor majority elected in February 1950 could have remained in power until 1955, even though Winston Churchill and the Tories clamored that the Labor government was not representative of the will of the people. They had the majority, slim as their margin was. That margin had proved sufficient to put through the bill nationalizing the steel industry last year against the bitter opposition of the capitalist class. The reason for Attlee's expected dissolution of Parliament and call for immediate elections lies in the mounting social crisis in Great Britain, and in the world political situation of which it is a part.

The Labor Party won by a landslide in 1945 when the masses, tired of war and of capitalist rule, overwhelmingly turned to socialism for a solution and swept Churchill's conservatives out of the seats of government. What the leadership of the Labor Party gave the working people in the course of the next five years was not socialism, to be sure, but a series of reform and nationalization measures which appeared to lay the groundwork for socialism.

The reformist policies of the Labor leadership could not long maintain on its side the large sections of the middle class which had been swept along in the landslide of 1945. These layers could see only the end result: continued "austerity" of the same type as during the war, which meant a permanent reduction in their living standards; the revival of the capitalist class, of its profits, of its political party; on the other hand, slight gains for the workers with whom they shared the general austerity. In short, a picture of irresolution rather than of a steady march toward the new social system they looked for.

As a consequence, the elections of February 1950 witnessed a large scale defection of the middle class layers who voted for the Conservative Party. Only a more powerful turnout than ever of the British workers, sensing in a Tory comeback a threat to their gains and to their future, saved the Labor government, giving it a slight edge in the House of Commons.

The sharpening of the world political situation, the warming

(Continued on Page 2)

M. Weiss Explains Socialist Program Over Ohio Radio

CLEVELAND, Sept. 23 — Preceding one of the most successful meetings of her current national speaking tour, Myra Tanner Weiss was interviewed in a public session broadcast on radio station WSRB here yesterday by Jean Simon, local correspondent of The Militant.

Mrs. Weiss criticized the policies of both the Stalinist and Trumanite administrations in Asia, and gave her views on what socialism would mean in America. She also announced that she would discuss in greater detail the lessons of the Korean War and the outlook for America, at a public meeting at the Socialist Workers Party headquarters, 10609 Superior Ave., that evening.

The evening meeting, the first in the new Cleveland SWP branch headquarters, was attended by a number of union militants new to socialist ideas and interested in learning more. The audience contributed generously in a collection to further the educational and other activities of the Socialist Workers Party, and many workers remained for refreshments and informal discussion for several hours after the adjournment of the meeting.

A considerable number of books and pamphlets was purchased, and a number of persons asked to be notified when a scheduled series of lectures on "The Truth About the First American Revolution, 1776," would begin.

Mrs. Weiss concluded her talk with an explanation of the differences between the demagogic phrase-mongering of the Truman administration about the "revolutionary principles of American democracy" — which actually aims at maintaining the status quo — and the truly revolutionary program of the Socialist Workers Party for a fundamental change from a class-divided society of war and insecurity to a classless socialist society of peace, security, and opportunity for all.

SWP COUNCIL CANDIDATE IN N.Y. RADIO INTERVIEW

By Harry Ring (Campaign Manager)

NEW YORK, Sept. 26 — Michael Bartell, Socialist Workers candidate for President of the N. Y. City Council, had his first interview today, and took the occasion to present the socialist answer to the problem of crime and corruption in the city government. This has become a sizzling issue in this campaign, as a result of the over-powering stench generated by the recent exposures of the tie-up of the underworld with the police and the entire city administration.

Rudolph Halley, who is the candidate of Dubinsky's Liberal Party although proclaiming his loyalty to the Democratic Party, has seized on the publicity he got as chief counsel for the Kefauver committee (for the usual fat fee, of course) as a golden opportunity to ride into office on a "clean government" campaign. After all, if O'Dwyer, (one of the central figures in the whole scandal) and Dewey, (who, for some mysterious reason sprang Lucky Luciano), could achieve fame and fortune by this kind of fake gang-busting crusade, why not Halley?

In answer to the question of the interviewer as to how the Socialist Workers Party would tackle this problem, Bartell pointed out that "clean government" demagogues come and go — usually up the ladder of successful political careers for themselves — but crime and corruption remain, and will continue as long as the city is controlled by capitalist politicians, either of the Republican or Democratic variety, including so-called "independents." Bartell contended that the only way to clean up City Hall is by

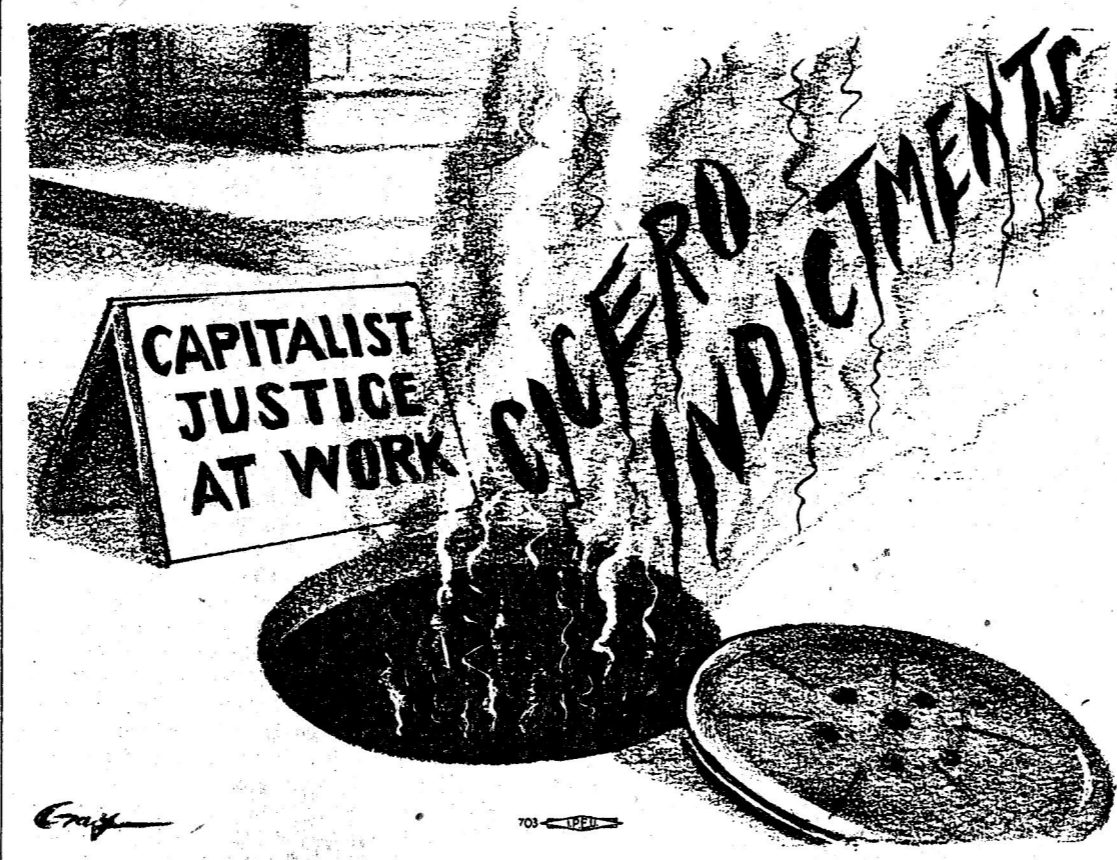
the election of a labor administration that would sweep out all the grafting, thieving politicians and their appointees, fire the whole crooked labor-baiting, Negro-hating command of the police force, and turn over the administration of city affairs and law enforcement to elected representatives of the labor unions and mass organizations of the Negro and Puerto Rican people.

The SWP candidate pointed out in addition that the acceptance by the police of protection money from the bookies was far from being the most dastardly crime perpetrated by the New York cops. He stated that in his opinion the brutal assaults, the crippling and murder of innocent, unarmed people, especially in the Negro and Puerto Rican districts, by sadistic cops is a far more serious crime, for which not a single cop has ever been punished and a crime about which Halley has not a single word to say.

WOULD CURB COPS

A labor administration, Bartell explained, would fire every cop who ever laid a hand on a striker or an innocent Negro or Puerto Rican citizen, and transform the police department from an agency which employs terror against striking workers and members of racial minorities, into a power which protects the people against strikebreakers, racehaters and criminals.

United Action Is Urgent Need In Fight On Cicero Frameups



AFL Leadership Shows Its Political Bankruptcy

By Joseph Andrews

Sept. 26 — The AFL's 70th convention now drawing to a close in San Francisco, has raised all the important issues facing American labor — but has not come up with a single answer that fits the needs of the workers.

In a political resolution setting forth the aims of Labor's League for Political Education, the convention listed 19 Senators who must be defeated in 1952. These include five Southern Democrats and 14 Republicans who, the AFL says, were responsible for the Taft-Hartley Law. Why all the Senators and Congressmen who voted for Taft-Hartley are not included on the list was not explained.

In this political "plan," there is not a word said about how the labor movement is to defeat these Senators, or who the workers should put in their places.

THE "NEW POLICY"

This proposal is in line with the AFL's "new policy" following its withdrawal from the United Labor Policy Committee. The AFL hierarchy complain that the CIO was too closely tied to the Democratic Party machine. But instead of freeing themselves from these ties in order to pursue an independent political course, the AFL leadership has reaffirmed the old Gompers formula

of rewarding labor's "friends" and punishing enemies.

There is nothing in this program that offers the slightest chance of transforming the Big Business-controlled Congress.

Joseph D. Keenan, retiring head of the LLPE, said, "If we do our job right in 1952, our votes might even put in a liberal majority. However, I'm not bragging ahead of time." Such caution is well-advised. The program can only end in failure.

The convention also endorsed the outlook of the Executive Council on the selection of presidential candidates for 1952, by stating it would not "interfere" in the choice of candidates by Republicans or Democrats. After both parties have chosen candidates, the AFL will decide which to support.

The convention adopted a position on foreign affairs which gives unqualified support to every reactionary policy of the U.S. State Department. Here is a partial list of the AFL foreign policy program:

- 1. 100% endorsement of the Korean war, including the conduct of the truce negotiations, and of the U.S. demand that the place of the parleys be moved from Kaesong.
- 2. Endorse aid to Chiang for "organic unity."

"Functional unity," the convention resolution stated, "is no

Kai-shek and the strengthening of his forces on Formosa.

3. Endorses the Atlantic military alliance, which includes deals with Franco Spain and totalitarian Greece.

In short, the AFL leaders back all the U.S. imperialist plans for World War III, and its intervention against the colonial peoples fighting for their independence.

The question of unity between the AFL and CIO occupied a large part of the time of the convention. The AFL leadership, endorsed by the convention, repudiated the CIO's position for "functional unity" — that is, for united front actions on specific issues — in favor of a demand substitute (for organic unity) and cannot be accepted by the AFL."

Behind this refusal to continue the joint efforts of CIO and AFL in a set-up like the United Labor Policy Committee, is a threat to take advantage of the present numerical superiority of the AFL to raid the CIO.

It was recently announced that Harry Lundberg, President of the Seafarers International Union, AFL, and Dave Beck are planning a joint offensive against CIO unions on the West Coast.

Thus, under cover of a demand for organic unity, the AFL threatens to further aggravate the division in labor's ranks by large-scale raiding.

INNOCENT ARE INDICTED, GUILTY GO SCOT-FREE

Try to imagine this: A striker is peacefully picketing his plant. A gang of strikebreakers come out, armed with clubs and blackjacks, and start to beat him up. A cop

standing by turns his head the other way until they have smashed their dirty work. Then he drags the striker off to jail on charges of "meeting to riot."

That is what the Cicero case is like. The police looked the other way while a mob, incited by racists, ran wild for several days and gutted the apartment rented by Harvey E. Clark Jr., Negro bus driver. Clark's attorney, George Leighton of the NAACP, then went to court and filed suit for \$200,000 damages and for a contempt citation against the Cicero police who had violated an injunction ordering them to protect Clark and his property.

A grand jury was called in Cook County to investigate the anti-Negro riot, which had aroused world-wide protest and condemnation. 117 persons had been arrested at the scene of the outrage, many of them in the act of burning and destroying parts of the building.

HOODLUMS EXONERATED

But the grand jury did not take any action against any of the 117. It also refused to take any action against the white supremacists, Joseph Beauharnais, leader of the White Circle League, who had openly incited the mob and distributed anti-Negro literature. Instead, the grand jury, which was lily-white in composition, handed down indictments against five people, all of whom were opposed to the riot and most of whom were not even present when it took place. They were:

NAACP attorney Leighton; Mrs. Camille DeRose, former owner of the property Clark had tried to move into; George C. Adams, her former attorney; Charles Edwards, rental agent of the property; and Norman Silverman, who allegedly distributed a Communist Party leaflet entitled "End Mob Rule in Cicero" several weeks after the riot.

The indictments against the five charged "conspiracy to injure property. . . by causing a depreciation in the real estate market price by renting to Negroes," conspiracy to damage property, and conspiracy to incite a riot.

HEAVY PENALTIES

If convicted, they could be sentenced to one to five years in prison and fined up to \$5,000.

In an attempt to pretend impartiality, the grand jury also indicted Police Chief Erwin Konovsky, who had assaulted Clark before the riot and ordered him to get out of town, and who had

Basic Rights Of the People Are at Stake

The Cicero indictments are a challenge to the labor movement, the Negro people and every American interested in preventing frameups and protesting injustices.

As Walter White of the NAACP has pointed out, if a lawyer can be indicted in Illinois for going into court to defend the rights of a Negro victim of mob violence, there is nothing to stop the spread of such practices to the South and other parts of the country.

If the capitalist class can get away with such a frameup of Negroes, it will be emboldened to attempt the same methods to intimidate the labor unions, opponents of war, inflation and the witch-hunt, and anyone else who fights the evils of capitalism.

That is why the challenge must be accepted. It's fight or run for labor, the Negro people and their allies. And running in this case will not remove the sword that is poised over them, ready to cut their democratic rights to shreds.

ASIA'S INTEREST

The Cicero case is explosive, not only because it directly concerns the liberties of the people of Cook County, Illinois, and the U.S. as a whole, but also because it is regarded as a test of Washington's "democratic" pretenses by millions of people in Asia, Africa and Europe. The N. Y. Times buried the story of the grand jury indictments in a few paragraphs on Page 22, without any indication that the five who were indicted for "conspiracy" were opponents rather than instigators of the riot. But in the Far East the story must have received entirely different treatment.

Reports of the riot were given front page headlines in Asia last July. Gov. Thomas E. Dewey, then in Singapore on his recent Far East junket, felt it necessary to publicly condemn the Asian newspapers for featuring the riot story so prominently. He assured the peoples of Asia that this was unwarranted because "the incident" was "both vigorously suppressed and prosecuted by public authorities."

This lie has now been exposed. The many millions who were indignant about the riot will not be silent about the whitewashing of the guilty and the persecution of the innocent. Their voices will be heard and felt in America as well as Asia.

FIGHT CAN BE WON

Some frameups are hard to fight because the facts relating to them are unknown or in doubt. But it is not like that with the Cicero case. The facts are so well known, the nauseating stench of the frameup is so strong, that it will not be difficult to arouse a tremendous storm of protest.

This means that the Cicero frame-ups can be smashed if the labor, Negro and liberal movements apply themselves vigorously to the job that has to be done.

The ruling class must be shown that the American people will not tolerate this frameup and that they will fight it energetically until the day that the victims of the grand jury have been exonerated and the instigators of the riot punished.

The grand jury showed that it does not pay to rely on the capitalist authorities to assure that justice is done. The people have to rely on themselves, on mass meetings, picket lines, demonstrations of independent strength, mass action. Nothing less will do the job. A serious campaign of united action will do it well.

Is Redbaiting Losing Its Effectiveness?

By George Breitman

Redbaiting, although there is no letup in its use by the witch-hunters, appears to be losing some of its effectiveness. Whether or not this is the beginning of a definite reversal of previous political trends, when almost any crime against civil liberties has been condoned in the name of "anti-communism," recent events point to the rise of new views and new moods on this question among important sections of the population.

The most significant of these was the Sept. 14 NLRB election at the huge General Electric plant in Schenectady, N. Y., where over 16,000 out of the plant's 19,000 employees went to the polls and where redbaiting received a spectacular and decisive rebuff.

When the CIO expelled the Stalinist-dominated United Electrical Workers two years ago and set up a rival union in this in-

dustry, the new organization had the confidence of a majority of the unionized electrical workers, who wanted to remain within the mainstream of the labor movement and who expected that the new IUE-CIO would make good on its promise to win better conditions than the UE had done.

MAIN KEYNOTE

But after the IUE-CIO had brought a majority of the members within its fold, it became clear that the new leadership is essentially the same as the Stalinists so far as ability to secure improved wage and working conditions is concerned. This halted the pro-IUE pattern; the answer of the Carey leadership of the IUE was greater and greater reliance on pure and simple redbaiting as the chief instrument for replacing the UE in the important shops it still represented.

Redbaiting was the main keynote of the IUE campaign at the

Schenectady plant. A lot of money and a lot of organizers were thrown into this campaign, which Carey and the other CIO leaders were exultantly positive they would win. They got an important assist from the government on the eve of the election in the form of indictments of UE leaders and threats of investigations by the House Un-American Committee.

But it didn't work. The IUE was beaten, and beaten badly — by a vote of 11,542 for UE to 4,852 for IUE. The GE workers at Schenectady evidently have had their fill of witch-hunting smears; at any rate, they do not see any reason to join a union merely because it waves the flag and promises to deliver them from the grip of Stalin.

What accounts for this? For one thing, the repeated attacks on the State Department as "communist-dominated" have made many people more hesitant

to credit such charges in general. When Acheson is denounced as a communist on grounds that are patently false and for reasons that are plainly reactionary, a considerable section of the population gets an education in the real purpose of redbaiting. While the specter of communism has been inflated in the press and on the air, for many (if not most) workers their unions are still predominantly bread-and-butter, and not political, institutions.

OTHER SIGNS

Other signs indicating that redbaiting may already have reached the peak of its effectiveness are:

The public recognition by some anti-Stalinist union leaders (notably national CIO vice-president Frank Rosenblum) that the witch-hunt is a threat to the labor movement; the greater boldness with which certain U.S. Senators (Benton, Lehman, etc.) are objecting to the practices of Mc-

Carthy and McCarran (until recently, few Senators felt it was safe to even mention them); and even the increasing frequency with which Truman tries to dissociate himself from some of the worst excesses of the witch-hunt he started (which may mean that Truman, who is a shrewd politician, senses a growing rejection of the whole business among the American people).

These are still only straws in the wind; they don't mean the end of the witch-hunt, which its directors and beneficiaries intend to continue until they meet widespread and active resistance. But while caution is called for in appraising their exact significance and weight, these developments can only have a heartening and encouraging effect on the forces opposing the witch-hunt. For they foreshadow the coming mass struggle to prevent the totalitarianization of the United States.

