

Workers Age

A PAPER DEFENDING THE INTERESTS OF WORKERS AND FARMERS

Vol. 6, No. 39

NEW YORK, N. Y., WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 1937.

5 Cents a Copy

Drive Against Spanish Labor

Stalinists Demand New Terror Against Workers of POUM, CNT, UGT

A new drive in the reactionary crusade against the revolutionary sections of the Spanish labor movement was forecast in a statement issued last week by the Communist Party of Spain, the main force behind the Negrin-Prieto loyalist government. Masking their intentions behind a "unity" smokescreen, the Stalinist leaders issued a frantic demand that the militant sections of the labor movement, who cannot accept the self-defeating policy of the Negrin regime, should be suppressed by governmental force.

Even from the grossly biased report of Herbert L. Matthews in the New York Times of September 17, it is clear that the revolutionary forces are growing rapidly in power and influence in Spain to the dismay of the Stalinists and their liberal allies. The P.O.U.M. has been outlawed but not suppressed; it functions actively as an underground organization, with a widely circulated press and ever-increasing influence among the workers. In the C.N.T., the great anarcho-syndicalist trade union federation, resentment against the reactionary policy of the government has reached the acute point. Most significant, however, are developments in the U.G.T., the socialist trade union center. The Stalinists have made a desperate effort to capture it and, indeed, announced their "victory" to the world—somewhat in advance. As a matter of fact, the left socialists, headed by Largo Caballero, who is also the head of the U.G.T., have emerged triumphant. Recently a unity pact was entered into between the U.G.T. and the C.N.T., promising well for the future of the labor movement in Spain. Then the U.G.T. began to turn its attention to purifying its ranks from the petty bourgeois merchants and industrialists whom the Stalinists had smuggled into the U.G.T. wherever they could, especially in Catalonia. This work is still under way.

Feeling its position increasingly insecure, the Stalinist party is now renewing its campaign of repression. The fire is being turned on Largo Caballero, Luis Araquistain, Pascual Tomas and other left socialists who head the U.G.T. If the Stalinists are allowed to have their way, it will not be long before these trade union leaders are branded as "spies" and arrested as "agents of Franco"!

CIO CHARTERS WEST VIRGINIA COUNCIL

WASHINGTON (UNS) — A C.I.O. charter has been issued to the West Virginia Federation of Labor at the request of President John B. Easton, acting under the authority granted him by unanimous decision of the Federation's executive council, John Brophy, C.I.O. director, has announced.

The State body, representing 170,000 organized workers, will be chartered under the name of the West Virginia Industrial Union Council.

The C.I.O. has already chartered industrial union councils in Wisconsin and Montana, and has chartered a joint industrial union council for Arkansas and Oklahoma.

Can Japan's Imperialism Stand the War Strain?

By JIM CORK

(We publish below the first of a series of articles by Jim Cork dealing with aspects of Japanese imperialism.)

JAPANESE imperialism has never been really tested by a prolonged modern war. The wars against China in 1894 and Russia in 1904 were hardly severe tests of either her military prowess or the stability of her economic regime. If her present aggressive venture in China should turn out to be a necessarily prolonged siege, it is highly doubtful if she can come out of it unscathed. For, contrary to what is perhaps the general impression, the Japanese economy and social structure are weak and shaky, highly unstable in political control above and concealing potentially explosive material below.

Japanese Development Artificially Forced

For some six or seven decades now, Japan, under the impact of Western civilization, has been in the throes of a rapid capitalist development. This development was artificially forced at a terrific tempo and took place on a social base that still remains primarily agrarian and feudalistic. This has left Japanese economy as a whole definitely out of joint. As one witty Far-Eastern specialist has put it: "Japan was forced to run before she had time to learn to walk. It is not surprising that today she is so bandy-legged as to be almost a cripple."

Feudal forms, tradition, culture, maintain a powerful influence and, plus the feudal material base, have served to determine the specific nature of the structure of the Japanese state. This has remained primarily a military-feudal coalition, something akin to the Junker system of pre-war Germany, with the army dominant. The fear of Western invasion forced Japan rapidly along the road of militarism long before even the parallel drive of industry developed to the point that it has and so gave strength and power to the military caste formed out of her feudal nobility. The Emperor has been used as an important cog in the state machine.

With a growing class of monopolist financiers and industrialists appearing upon the scene, this governmental system has become an unsuitable superstructure for the base of economic and social relations. Fundamentally, the big bourgeoisie as a relative late-comer on the scene has not been able to refashion the economic and political fabric completely in its own image. Sixty years of general development of parliamentarism, for instance, have hardly given Japan a bourgeois democratic political system. The Japanese Diet can neither make laws nor enforce them. The government's life does not depend upon a majority in the Diet. The ministers are responsible to the Emperor. Any "suggestions" for laws made by the Diet must have the approval of the Emperor, who has the veto power. The Emperor also has the power to rule by decrees, which become law. The Emperor, of course, is an instrument in the hands of the military-feudal clique. The inherent contradictions resulting because of this

political set-up facing the advancing bourgeoisie have led to periodic explosions at the top (fall of ministries, change of ministers, assassinations, compromises, etc.).

This does not mean that there is any basic conflict between the army and the industrialists. The latter do not want to overturn the existing state. It would be too dangerous. It is rather an attempt on their part to "muscle in"—to get a larger share in the spoils. As to foreign policy, the difference between the two concerns means rather than ends, differences in regard to tempo of expansion rather than expansion itself.

The Drive For Expansion

Japan's aggressive drive for expansion is inevitable, it grows out of the very nature of its economy. Backward feudal agriculture resulting in a limited food supply and high prices for food, impoverishment of the masses and therefore a contracting home market, lack of basic raw materials even for heavy industry, population pressure—all force Japanese capitalism to look beyond its own shores. The Manchurian venture,

(Continued on Page 3)

WHAT ARE THE POUM'S 'CRIMES'?

THE world Stalinist press justifies the crusade of repression against the revolutionary socialists of Spain, especially the P.O.U.M., on the ground that they are "spies," "agents of Franco" and the like. It is therefore interesting to note what kind of questions were put to Julian Gorkin and other arrested P.O.U.M. leaders at their examination on July 23.

1. What do you think of Stalin?—of Trotsky? Do you believe Trotsky is more or less revolutionary than Stalin?
2. What do you think of the Soviet government?
3. What do you think of the present Spanish government?
4. What was your part in the May events?
5. Do you think the previous (Cabalero) government preferable to the present (Negrin) government?

These were ALL the questions asked. Are these the kind of questions addressed to "spies," "agents of Franco," etc., or to people being persecuted for their political views?

Japan Aided By U.S. Ban

President's Order Against Arms Shipments Blow To Chinese People

A big step towards invoking the Neutrality Act was taken last week when President Roosevelt forbade all government-owned vessels to carry arms or munitions of war to either China or Japan and warned private shippers that they were proceeding "at their own risk." Although the President's direct ban applied only to vessels owned by the government, it was expected that his order would greatly curtail trade in war materials with the Far East.

A few days later, British insurance men announced that standard rates would no longer be quoted on ships carrying arms to China or Japan. This action, unofficial though it was, will undoubtedly have the same effect as the Roosevelt embargo.

Chinese spokesmen expressed great dismay at the actions of the United States and Great Britain, following so closely upon each other. It was openly declared that the Roosevelt embargo together with the British insurance ban constituted a direct blow to China and an immense advantage to the Japanese invaders. Not only has Japan the advantage in supplies of war materials as well as in industrial facilities but its greatly superior sea-power enables it to obtain what it lacks in its own ships and thus avoid the brunt of the embargo. China, on the other hand, is largely dependent on what it can import from such countries as the United States and Great Britain so that the Anglo-American action constitutes a serious menace to it in the present war.

Naturally, Japanese official circles are jubilant, welcoming the recent steps taken by Washington to curtail arms exports to the East. The newspaper mouthpiece of the Tokyo Foreign Office went so far as to declare that it would "strike a fatal blow at China."

As the Sino-Japanese conflict continues, the thoroughly reactionary character of the so-called "neutrality" legislation becomes ever clearer. The American workers, whose sympathy and interest align them on the side of the Chinese people in their struggle against Japanese imperialism, must do everything in their power to block the State Department in its tortuous, reactionary policy in the Far East. The workers must demand the removal of all restrictions upon supplying China with what it needs to fight the Japanese invader. At the same time, organized labor must use its economic and trade union power to prevent Japan from getting any supplies or munitions in this country. Action must be taken immediately—before it is too late!

TRANSPORT UNION TO HOLD MEET

NEW YORK (UNS)—The Transport Workers of America, four-month-old C.I.O. union, will open its first national convention with a mass meeting at Madison Square Garden, New York City, on October 4. John L. Lewis, C.I.O. chairman, is scheduled to make the main address.

The union's membership has increased from 14,000 to 87,800 since it was taken into the C.I.O. on May 10.

UNITY CLIQUE WARS ON U.A.W. DECISIONS

By FREDERICK J. ARNOLD

Detroit, Mich.

Despite protestations of unity and pledges to abide by decisions of the Milwaukee convention of the United Auto Workers Union, the Communist Party members and their so-called socialist allies have reopened and intensified the war against the Martin-Frankenstein administration. This became clear this week upon the appearance of the Flint edition of the United Automobile Worker edited by a supporter of the opposition.

On the first page of this paper appears a cut showing the six officers which the "Unity" group had proposed for reelection. The caption "Officers of the United U.A.W." is intended to create the impression, according to supporters of President Martin, that the "Unity" slate had been completed endorsed. Martin supporters point out further that the cut itself is the one used in the faction documents of the "Unity" group prior to the convention and the picture of Vice-President Wells is not included in this cut.

NEXT WEEK

A Special Issue of WORKERS AGE

will contain, in full,

AUGUST THALHEIMER'S lecture on "Realignment in the International Labor Movement," delivered at the I.L.P. Summer School.

ANDRES NIN'S last thesis on the "Situation in Spain."

JACOBIN DEFENSE IN THE SPANISH WAR

By WILL HERBERG

(Concluded from Last Week)

Let us turn nearer home. In the American Civil War, the North was fighting a progressive war, essentially a bourgeois revolutionary struggle against the slaveholding South. But at the helm in Washington was a conservative administration, headed by Lincoln, which did its best to curb, conceal and reduce to a minimum the revolutionary character of the war. The whole struggle, Lincoln maintained, was not really over slavery at all but over the Constitution—just as the Stalinists today maintain that the Spanish civil war has nothing to do with socialism but is really a battle over the type of regime ("democracy vs. fascism"). The Lincoln conservatives refused to take any radical social measures, such as the emancipation of the slaves and the arming of the Negroes, even tho such measures were obviously necessary to win the war. The slavery question—administration spokesmen declared—could not possibly be considered before military victory had been achieved. In their letters, Marx and Engels repeatedly pointed out the suicidal character of the Lincoln policy and emphasized that, unless revolutionary measures were taken, the Union cause would be in a very bad way indeed.* In this Marx agreed with a group of Republican radicals and abolitionists who carried their hostility to the Lincoln administration to the point of open break. Fortunately, radical pressure proved effective; the policy of the administration underwent a marked change and the war was won.

Were Marx and Engels, were the Republican radicals and abolitionists, "agents of the slave-power" because they combined unqualified support of the Union side in the Civil War with implacable political struggle against the Lincoln administration which, mind you, was officially conducting the war against the Confederacy? Of course not—they represented the best interests of the American people in the crusade against slavery!

Kerensky And The Bolsheviks In Russia

In August-September 1917, republican Russia was ruled by a "People's Front" regime, headed by Kerensky. In true People's Front style, Kerensky had just outlawed the Bolshevik party, suppressed its papers, arrested its leaders, driven Lenin in hiding with a price on his head. But now Kerensky was menaced from the right; a clique of monarchist generals, led by Kornilov, were making ready to oust him and take things over themselves. Early in September, Kornilov struck and the counter-revolutionary insurrection was launched. The parallel to the Spanish situation is so striking that it surely needs no elaboration.

What was the policy of the Bolsheviks in this critical situation? Did they say: Kerensky is now being attacked by Kornilov who is making a bid for power—therefore we must give up our opposition to Kerensky regime and come out in its support? No—the policy of the Bolsheviks was quite different. Of course, we fight against Kornilov to the bitter end—said Lenin—but we do not sup-

port Kerensky. We continue our political opposition to him and point out that his policies opened the way for Kornilov in the first place and today make impossible any effective struggle against the Kornilovist adventure.

"We will fight, we are fighting against Kornilov," wrote Lenin in a letter to the Bolshevik central committee on August 31, 1917, "but we do not support Kerensky. On the contrary, we expose his weakness. There is the difference. It is a rather subtle difference but it is highly essential and one must not forget it."

Was Lenin, were the Bolsheviks, "monarchist agents" because they combined a vigorous struggle against Kornilov with implacable political hostility to the Kerensky government which, mind you, was officially conducting the war against the reactionary insurrection? Of course not—the Bolsheviks proved the salvation of the Russian people?

Is it really necessary to multiply examples? Did the most wholehearted support of Ethiopian resistance to Italian imperialism preclude a revolutionary-democratic program in opposition to the feudal regime of the Emperor Haile Selassie? Or does resistance to Japanese imperialism in China today imply political support to the bloody, treacherous and, in the long run, defeatist regime of Chiang Kai-shek? No—in both cases, Jacobin defense is the only kind of defense that is really effective, the only kind of defense in consonance with the immediate and long-range interests of the masses of the people!

Revolution And War In Spain

The application of all this to the Spanish situation is plain on the face of it. Only a determined revolutionary policy can win the war against Franco. The policy of the Negrin-Prieto-Stalinist regime can lead only to defeat and disaster. The best interests of the Spanish people, therefore, demand a double struggle: the most determined prosecution of the war against Franco at the front and, at the same time, an unremitting political effort to bring about a change of regime and policy at home! Everything against Franco—but no political support of Negrin, no confidence in his regime!

To those, then, who protest that we give material and financial aid to the Negrin government whose reactionary character is so notorious, we reply: Did not the Jacobins support the war against the monarchist coalition despite the fact that the Girondist regime was conducting it? Did not the Bolsheviks throw themselves into the struggle against Kornilov despite the fact that Kerensky was at the head of the government, the same Kerensky upon whose orders their party and press had been outlawed and their leaders arrested? Did not all of us do everything in our power to assist Ethiopia to beat back the legions of Mussolini, even tho at its head stood Haile Selassie and his clique of feudal chieftains? The P.O.U.M.ists and other revolutionists in Spain are the very front-line fighters in the war against Franco; for us in this country, support of this war expresses itself in practical form primarily in material and financial aid to the anti-fascist forces in Spain.

To those, on the other hand, who reproach the P.O.U.M. for opposing the Negrin government in the face of the fascist insurrection, we reply: The P.O.U.M. is but following in the glorious footsteps of the Jacobins who opposed the Girondin regime in the face of the attack of monarchist Europe—of the radicals

* See Marx's letters to Engels, dated August 7, 1862 and August 9, 1862. Marx even suggested that it might have to come to "revolution" in North if the Union cause was to be saved. Just imagine—a revolution against Lincoln, right in the midst of the Civil War. Obviously, Marx was in the service of the then "Fifth Column"!

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1. New Problems of Soviet Dictatorship.
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—Instructor: JIM CORK
(Courses 1 and 2 will be given on Mondays at 7:00 and 8:30 P. M. respectively)
3. American Labor and Political Issues Today.
—Instructor: M. S. MAUTNER
4. New Problems of Trade Unionism.
—Instructor: I. BRILL
(Courses 3 and 4 will be given on Tuesdays at 7:00 and 8:30 P. M. respectively)
5. Communism: What It Is and What It Is Not.
—Instructor: D. BENJAMIN
6. Law of Revolution: The Central Problems of Marxist Strategy.
—Instructor: B. D. WOLFE
(Courses 5 and 6 will be given on Fridays at 7:00 and 8:30 P. M. respectively)

Registrations are now open. The fee for each course is \$1.75.

A special rate of \$3.00 is being offered to trade unionists for a combination of courses 3 and 4.

The catalogue, containing a full description of all courses may be had on request by writing to:

NEW WORKERS SCHOOL

131 West 33rd Street
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ICLL Holds Labor School In New York

The week-end Labor Institute of the New York district of the I.C.L.L. was successfully held Sept. 11th and 12th.

A total of eighty workers, comprising members and trade union sympathizers of the organization, spent two full days listening to and discussing lectures on Russia, Spain, Labor Politics, Social Legislation, Government and Trade Unions, and Problems of the C.I.O. The courses, chosen so as to deal with the most vital problems facing the advanced sections of the American labor movement, were commented on enthusiastically by the workers participating.

The excellent attendance and response to this new venture in the educational activities of the I.C.L.L. makes it probable that the Labor Institute may become a permanent feature on a semi-annual basis.

and abolitionists who opposed Lincoln in the face of the "slaveholders insurrection"—of the Bolsheviks who opposed Kerensky in the face of the Kornilov revolt! "Class struggle and resistance to invasion," we may learn from Rosa Luxemburg, "are not opposed to each other, as the official legend would have us believe, but the former is the means and expression of the latter. The fearless prosecution of the class struggle has always proven the most effective weapon against foreign invasion." Precisely because victory in the war against Franco is the first and prime consideration, is it necessary never to falter in the political struggle against the reactionary and defeatist Negrin regime!

TEACHERS MEET AND THE CIO QUESTION

(Continued from Page 3)

solidarity, nationally and internationally, as against sole reliance on so-called "peace" pacts formulated by "peace-loving" nations.

The Socialist Call, in its September 4 issue, falsely states in bold print that, "save for the socialists there was no opposition to the attempt to make the labor movement the tail to a rehabilitated Democratic party, nor to com-

Union Incorporation

(Continued from Page 3)

agents. To destroy honest unionism, to destroy their effectiveness as bargaining agents of the workers, employers sent their underworld henchmen into the unions. In other cases, certain trade union leaders, facing insurgent movements designed to end their corruption and sell-outs, brought in racketeers to bolster their regime. The overwhelming majority of these instances occurred during the last great prosperity period and not only did big business maintain a deadly silence about the evil but it ever actively aided it because it was cheaper to buy off the alliance of corrupt trade union officials and thugs than it was to meet the legitimate demands of honest trade unions.

There are ample remedies, both of a criminal and of a civil nature for the elimination of racketeering. If such racketeering affects interstate commerce, it may be prosecuted by the federal authorities under an anti-racketeering statute enacted after a Senate investigation in 1933 into racketeering in general, including labor racketeering. It may be prosecuted under the Sherman Anti-Trust Act and under general statutes penalizing coercion, extortion and conspiracy. It may be indirectly prosecuted under the Federal Income Tax Law.

But employers have never invoked these laws against the labor

plete reliance on collective security and sanctions as a preventative against war." I must indicate that it was a leading member of the Progressive Group who raised these points of opposition.

A Progressive Movement Needed

One lesson must be learned from this convention. In order to defeat the class collaboration policy ("People's Frontism") of the C.P. forces and the timid, vacillating and conservative policy of some of the "old-timers," it is most urgent for genuine progressives to unite nationally into a progressive group. It is to be hoped that the S.P., locally and nationally, will cooperate in building such a national progressive tendency in the A.F.T. so that, at the next convention, the teachers will be spared "People's Frontism," on the one side, and the dead-hand of conservatism, on the other.

racketeers; they have, however, invoked some of these laws against honest, legitimate trade unions, in attempts to wipe them out. It was and is the employers who have maintained the institution of labor racketeering. After all, it is the employers and their henchmen who have controlled the political and judicial machinery of the country and they never used it or attempted to use it to end genuine labor racketeering. What blatant hypocrisy is this new employer passion against labor racketeering? Would incorporation end labor racketeering? Nonsense, it is just as easy for the labor racketeers to set up paper corporations and dummy officers as it is for the racketeers of high finance, pardon us, "the captain of industry."

The same holds true in regard to the alleged employer concern over democratic control within unions, which they contend incorporation would guarantee. It is more pertinent to inquire whether incorporation has invested the business enterprises with that "democracy" they would impose on others. Do the majority of the stockholders of a corporation actually determine the policies of that corporation? The incorporation law entitles them to control. Yes, the law does but the select groups of financial magnates exercise exclusive dictatorship nonetheless. Thru the notorious proxy system, power is shorn from the majority of stockholders and abrogated by tiny minorities.

(Concluded next week)

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