

The Labor Movement And Unemployment

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Vol. XXII - No. 3

THE MILITANT

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Laura Gray—Socialist And Militant Artist

By Art Preis

NEW YORK, Jan. 12 — One of the most heroic and beloved socialists of our time is no more. Laura Gray, greatest political and social cartoonist of our generation and Militant staff artist for almost 14 years, died Saturday at St. Luke's Hospital here after a two-day illness.

She was hospitalized on Friday with pneumonia. All the wonder drugs of modern medicine could not save her. Her physical frailty was in direct contrast to the strength of her noble spirit. For the last ten years of her life — years of her finest contributions to the emancipating struggle of the working class — she had breathed and lived and fought with only one lung. At 3:30 a.m. Saturday it failed her at last. She was buried yesterday afternoon after a simple ceremony attended by her

closest comrades, friends and relatives.

She had the second longest record of continuous years of service on the Militant staff.

Many of her Militant drawings and cartoons had been reproduced by labor and socialist publications in more than 20 countries.

Reviewing the milestones of this gentle, quiet-spoken, lovely woman's life, we can only feel appalled at the series of catastrophic blows she endured and overcame.

Laura was born on Nov. 17, 1909, in Pittsburgh, Pa. She was brought up in a fairly well-to-do middle-class family. Her family name was Slob. They moved to Chicago during Laura's early years and there she received most of her schooling. She was a bright student and graduated high school at the age of 16.

One activity dominated her life from girlhood on — art.

She was a born artist, with immense natural gifts. She entered the famous Chicago Art Institute at the age of 16, the youngest student in its history. While still a student her talents were recognized. She won a number of awards.

She was only 19 and scheduled for her first one-man show in a leading Chicago art gallery. Just before she was preparing to pack her paintings for shipment to the art gallery, her home burned down. Every work of art she had worked so hard and long and lovingly over was destroyed.

SHOWED HER STEEL

Then she first showed her steel. Struck down, she did not yield. She sprang to her feet. She painted new works and finally held her one-man show. She went on to exhibit in the shows of the Chicago Art Institute and out-of-town, winning more prizes and critical acclaim. It appeared that all roads were open to her.

At the age of 22, a brilliant, recognized artist, a second great blow fell. She was stricken with tuberculosis. In those days, there was only one treatment for this dread affliction of the lungs — bed-rest. She was bed-ridden for two years. Thereafter, her health was always fragile.

During the middle Thirties she turned to sculpture and achieved a national reputation in this field. She had a one-man show in 1938 at the Katherine Kuh gallery. She taught for periods

(Continued on page 2)

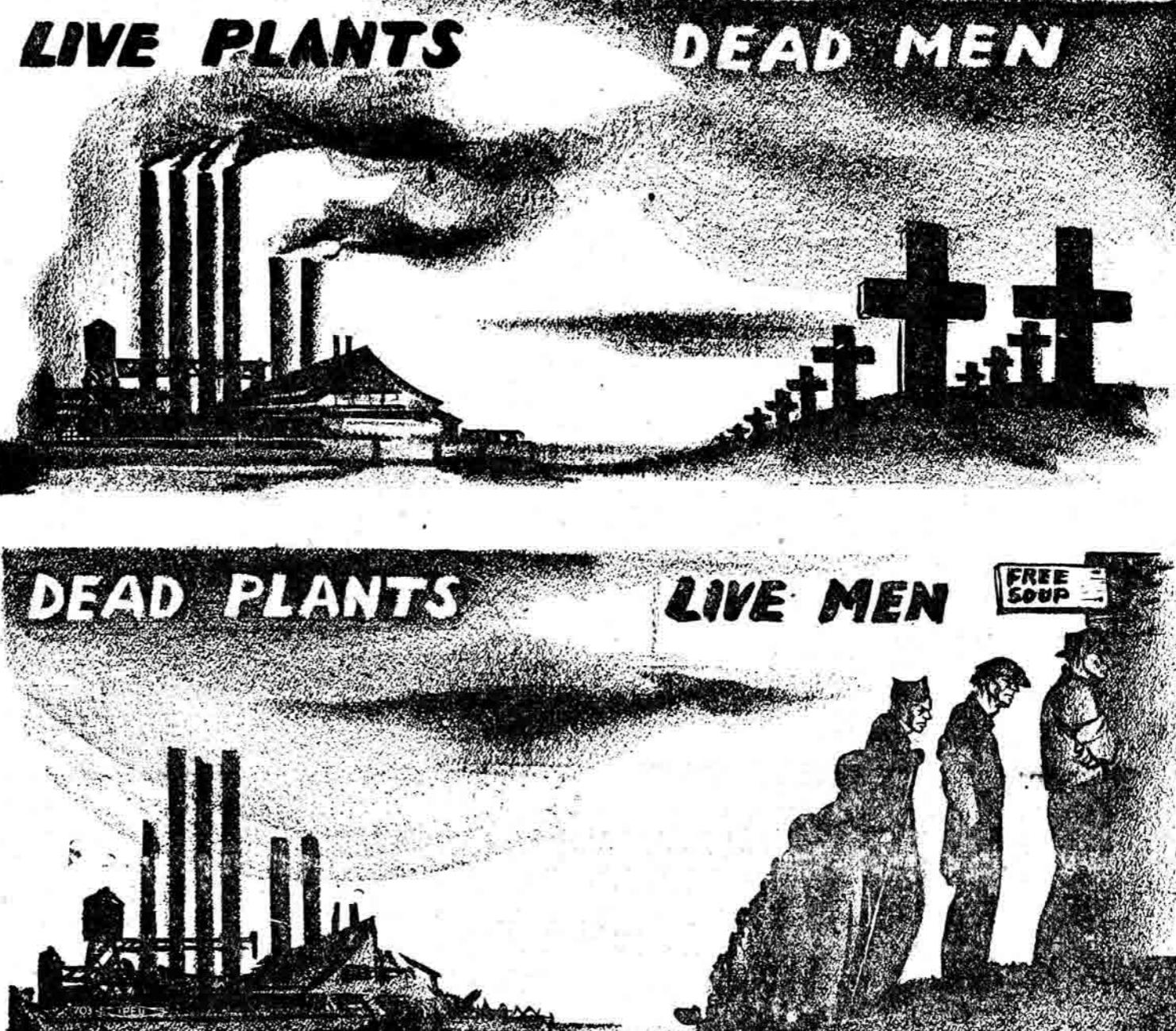


LAURA GRAY

(Nov. 17, 1909 — Jan. 11, 1958)

Reuther Seeks to Knife UAW Shorter-Week Bid

Capitalism in War and Peace



This is one of Laura Gray's most famous cartoons. It was first published in the Militant of Sept. 9, 1944. It has been reprinted in labor and socialist publications in more than a score of countries.

Cleveland T-H Defendants Win New Labor Backing

By Jean Simon

CLEVELAND, Jan. 13 — The Cleveland Taft-Hartley conspiracy case represents a "clear and present danger" to the labor movement. That is the main fact that emerges as the trial enters its sixth day, and the most alert unions are beginning to recognize their stake in the case and to sound the alarm.

The following union bodies have voted support for the Cleveland T-H defendants: Ford Local 600, United Auto Workers, Detroit; Amalgamated Meat Cutters and Butcher Workmen Local 500, Cleveland. National Local 72; Painters Local 867 and Amalgamated Meat Cutters and Butcher Workmen Local 500, Cleveland. District 1 and six locals of the Packinghouse Workers; Briggs UAW Local 212, Detroit; San Francisco Longshore Local 6; Ohio Machinists Lodge 2155 and the Ohio Brass Lodge in Mansfield; the Lake County Federation of Labor; Mechanics Education

Industrialist Urges Fight on Pay Hikes

A group of business men and bankers gathered at a Philadelphia luncheon Jan. 13 were urged by a top corporation executive to use the present economic situation in the country as the opportunity to crack down on the unions by refusing demands for wage raises. In a highly belligerent mood, Leland Hazard, vice president and general counsel of the Pittsburgh Plate Glass Company told the assembled tycoons: "We in management must begin to refuse wage increases even though we know our refusals will produce strikes. We have been too timid about strikes."

Year Long Calif. Fight On Speedup

MAYWOOD, CALIF., Jan. 10 — The failure of the United Auto Worker leadership's policy on speed-up in the auto industry is clearly revealed in Chrysler in Los Angeles. UAW Local 230 has been waging a militant struggle against speed-up in this plant for more than a year. Despite many unauthorized walkouts and an authorized strike that lasted five weeks, Chrysler has been able to continue its drive to bring its production standards up to the sweat-shop level of those in General Motors.

Chrysler started its intensified drive for speed-up when it began production of its 1957 models. Everyone remembers the "deal" on speed-up referred to by Chrysler Vice-President Frank W. Misch. Before these charges were made last March, a company-wide strike against the speed-up had been averted by a last-minute settlement between Chrysler officials and top officials of the UAW.

This settlement was of no value to the workers in the L.A. Chrysler plant. After a series of walkouts over speed-up, UAW 230 called its authorized strike. This strike coincided with the UAW convention last April and was granted substantial material support by the International only after the convention began.

The strike was settled with an agreement that the rate of production would remain frozen at 516 cars per day for the duration of the 1957 model. However, even this agreement gave Chrysler a large increase in its production standards as compared to 1956. But this increase was not enough for the defense. The trial opened the prosecution dropped charges against defendant Edward Chaka and admitted it did so for lack of evidence.

(Continued on page 4)

Congress Threatens to Up Ante On Eisenhower's War Budget

Big Business perspectives remain geared to war despite the growing popular desire for an end to international tensions. The Big Business outlook was presented to Congress by President Eisenhower both in his State of the Union message on Jan. 9 and in his budget message on Jan. 13.

The budget message proposes nearly \$1 billion hike in arms expenditures over last year's budget which already called for the highest peacetime mil-

itary outlay in the nation's history.

At the same time that Eisen-

hower announced his proposal for record military expenditures, he proposed cuts in domestic pro-

grams, many of them in the field of education, health and welfare. He thus gave effect to the "less butter, more guns" slogan put forward recently by Commerce Secretary Weeks. Both Republicans and Democrats in Congress are expected to resist the cuts. But all that will do is to raise rather than lower the budget seems probable.

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From Laura Gray's Graphic Record of Our Epoch

The Only Victor



Reprinted from the Militant, August 18, 1945

The Mighty Arm of Solidarity



Reprinted from the Militant, March 9, 1946

1951, Fall In!



Reprinted from the Militant, December 25, 1950

But Lots of Young Ones Do



Reprinted from the Militant, April 30, 1951

David and Goliath



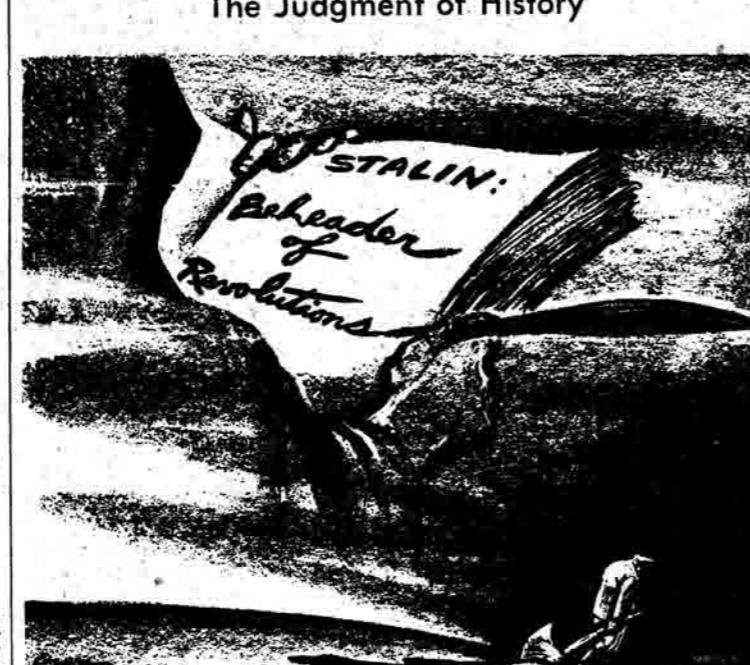
Reprinted from the Militant, October 11, 1954

Watch That Blood Pressure



Reprinted from the Militant, July 9, 1951

The Judgment of History



Reprinted from the Militant, March 16, 1953



Reprinted from the Militant, April 25, 1952

In Honor of Laura Gray

By James P. Cannon

(We reprint the following homage to Laura Gray from the Militant of March 8, 1954. It was written on the occasion of her Tenth Anniversary as staff artist for the Militant. — Editor).

People who never talk themselves up don't always escape the encomiastic comments of others. This is happening right now in the case of Laura Gray, in whose honor the New York Local of the SWP is throwing a party on the occasion of her tenth anniversary as staff cartoonist of the Militant. This is really a nation-wide affair. The New York local is staging the celebration, but all the members of the party and all the readers of the Militant are present with you in spirit. And we are all saying, "Thank you, Laura; Laura, you're wonderful."

The proletarian movement takes great pride in its intellectuals and artists; all the more so since, under the present conditions of the struggle in this country, it can boast so few of them. There is a reason for this scarcity, but there is also a reason why we count on its remedy. The revolutionary workers and the artists need each other, and their union will be a certain consequence of new developments in the coming stages of our struggle for Socialist America.

ARTISTS NOT A SOCIAL POWER

In our present class society, the intellectuals and the artists don't get a fair chance. By themselves, they are weak. They are not a self-sufficient class, but rather a selection of exceptional people, who in seeking to realize themselves — which means, first of all, to be themselves — require the support of a class which represents a power.

Nearly all of them, at the present time, are consciously or unconsciously servants of the ruling power of the dominant class of exploiters, and depend on its patronage. But they pay a price for this allegiance which strikes at their very reason for being. Their inner compulsion is to portray reality, to tell the truth as they see it. But this inner compulsion runs up against the contradiction that the class society, which is founded on lies, has no use for the truth and savagely persecutes those who portray it.

This places the artist before a cruel dilemma. He needs freedom above everything — the freedom "to draw the thing as he sees it"; that is the artist's bread of life. The denial of this right turns the artist's bread into a stone. But there is nothing he can do about it by himself.

THE ARTIST'S NATURAL ALLY

The so-called "ivory tower" is not a place of refuge but of exile from the real world. The salvation of the artist is to ally himself with a power which will permit him to do this work —

"It is well that there is art in the world as well as politics. It is well that the potentialities of art are as inexhaustible as life itself. In a certain sense art is richer than life, for it can both overstate and understate, . . . can present the same object in all its varied facets and shed a variety of light upon it."

— Leon Trotsky, Fourth International, January, 1941.

Laura Gray — Socialist Artist

"She Left a Heritage So Rich..."

With deep pride and profound gratitude we of the Socialist Workers Party cherish the memory of our beloved comrade Gray. She was a great warrior. Time and again she lifted us up and gave fresh inspiration through her cartoons in the Militant. Subtle humor, savage irony, indignant protest, political clarity and class truth blended effectively in her images. She struck blow upon blow in support of the struggle for a socialist society.

Laura's work was appreciated by socialist fighters the world over. Her timely and timeless cartoons have been printed and reprinted in the press of many countries. She left a heritage so rich that a spontaneous movement has already begun to provide means for publishing a full collection of her material in book form.

A book of this kind would provide a vivid pictorial history of key political issues and events since World War II. It would be priceless as an educator of the socialist cadres. Young revolutionary cartoonists yet to appear would be taught by Laura Gray and inspired to carry on in her great tradition.

Young artists have even more to learn from her. Fame as a cartoonist left Laura unpretentious and undemanding in her relations with the movement. She was an organization woman, giving her talents to the socialist cause with selfless devotion, setting an example worthy of emulation. Her attitude caught the essential spirit of the relationship between the intellectuals and the workers necessary to the forging of a revolutionary socialist party.

Comrade Laura will live in the memory of all who knew her. She was a true socialist.

James P. Cannon
National Chairman
Farrell Dobbs,
National Secretary

at that meeting. It seemed everyone spoke except Laura. But when the call came for volunteers for a Militant distribution, hers was the first hand raised.

Although Laura was a distinguished artist when she came to our ranks, she neither expected nor accepted any special treatment. She came to serve. She would go out, this frail, sick woman, in zero weather, with snow a foot deep, before some plant gate or union hall to distribute Militants or SWP leaflets. She was really endangering her life, and we had to contrive pretexts to keep her from going out in icy weather and confined to indoor tasks.

Before going to Chicago, I had worked for a period on The Militant and knew the paper's lack of a good cartoonist. We require a completely different class outlook and a precision and exactness of political formulation that would automatically disqualify even the most artistically able of the capitalist press cartoonists.

The combination of class consciousness, moral courage, political acuteness and artistic capacity required for a Marxist cartoonist is a once-in-a-generation phenomenon. We were indeed lucky to find Laura.

Symbolically, her first venture in cartooning was in aid of a group of Chicago auto union militants in a struggle. I had been asked to assist in putting out a paper for a group of Chicago Studebaker unionists.

I recalled Laura's artistic skill, including a gift for satire I had seen in several of her works. I asked her if she would try her hand on a cartoon for the union paper. From that first cartoon, I knew Laura and the Militant were made for each other.

She visited New York in January 1944. On March 4, 1944, her first cartoon appeared in our paper. From the first, her work added such a fresh, bright, satirical note to the paper that it was enthusiastically hailed by our readers everywhere.

Laura was the exact opposite of the temperamental individualist usually depicted as the characteristic artist. Laura worked as a member of the staff. The general theme and suggestions for pictorial treatment of cartoonists were discussed in staff meetings. Laura would take

these bare, rough suggestions and by the marvel of her art transform abstract, verbal political concepts into pictorial images that had tremendous power to shock, arouse, persuade, move the reader at a glance.

Laura did not just toss cartoons off. She concentrated all her consciousness on them. She thought deeply and profoundly on all her work. She brought to her political drawing sincerity, depth of feeling. She wasn't working for a buck to sell other men's ideas. She was working for cause that was her own. Her cartoons were not light, brittle, witty gags, although she was capable of devastatingly comic and satiric effect. They were profoundly symbolic representations of the world of struggle in which we live.

She summed up the most tragic and the most evil elements of our epoch. What words can depict the tragedy of the young in this period of capitalist decay and war more movingly than her bewildered little New Year baby, weighed down with helmet, uniform and gun, in her New Year 1951 cartoon at the height of the Korean war? What portrait

was ever more true than her figure of Gen. MacArthur, an evil histrionic demagogue, declaiming, "Old Soldier Never Die," amidst the endless crosses on the graves of young soldiers in the Korean war?

It would be not only a fitting tribute to Laura, but an invaluable service to the socialist movement to put out as soon as possible a collection of her cartoons over the past 14 years, from the second world war through the period of the preparations of the third world war. It would provide the most graphic — the most truthful — record of our times that could be brought between two covers.

Political cartoons are a phenomenon of the most profoundly political era man has ever known — the brief age of capitalism. Laura, under half-way normal conditions of life, would have lived out her years creating objects to beautify and enrich man's life and culture. The circumstances of her life, the conditions of the world imposed too great an obstacle to the fulfillment of her rich artistic gifts. The loss of what she might have done is tragic and I would not minimize it. But the loss of the world and the possibilities of mankind's survival would be infinitely more tragic. Laura used much of her meager strength of her last years to help the world to live.

We hear much in recent times from the mouths of capitalists, politicians and militarists of the "calculated risk." By that they mean the risk of war to the lives of other men and women, not their own. Laura, too, believed in the theory of the calculated risk — but for herself.

Ten years ago, in 1947, one of her lungs became so rotted with TB that it had to be entirely removed. No one could have blamed her if she had accepted the warnings of her physicians and lived the quiet, retiring life of semi-invalidism. She consciously chose the calculated risk — to continue with all her energies her contribution to the revolutionary struggle. And by some miracle of will she survived for ten more years and poured her whole being into her Militant cartoons. Let us think of that on this sad occasion.

We will never have another Laura. But somewhere in this land, right now, there are girls and boys, young women and men, who will come to hear of her and see the work she did. And her spark will light a flame in them. They will come forward with their talents and courage to take up the noble work to which our lovely Laura's life was dedicated.

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Monday, January 20, 1958

Labor and the Fight for Jobs

Unemployment in the United States is now estimated at about four million, a figure that tops the 1949, pre-Korean-war total for the same period. Add to this the shortened work-week with reduced paychecks and the size of the economic problem confronting the American labor movement becomes clear. As the Jan. issue of Steel Labor reports, there are some 125,000 unemployed steel workers and "another 200,000 are working only part time." The auto union has the same story to tell.

Is it necessary to point out that every man and woman in this country is entitled to a job? Each is entitled to security, to the certainty that a decent living can be earned by one's labor. No other right means much if the right to job security doesn't exist. And here we are dealing not with one man or woman denied employment, but with millions.

What do Meany, Reuther and others in the top brass of the labor movement propose to do about it? They seek a solution to growing unemployment through a bigger arms budget. The Jan. 11 AFL-CIO News blazed the following headline across its front page: "Meany Urges Government Launch Survival Offensive." The problem of bolstering the nation's economy was tied to a demand that the U.S. "rebuild its military strength." In effect, Meany wants labor to demand more guaranteed war-profits to Big Business, sky-rocketing inflation and staggering taxes for the American working people, for these are the consequences of the arms race.

REUTHER'S PROGRAM

Walter Reuther made headlines in the press when he announced he was deserting the fight for more jobs through a 30-hour week for 40-hour pay decided on at the last UAW convention. Reuther claims an entirely new situation exists since the launching of the Russian Sputniks that calls for mobilizing maximum economic resources for military needs.

While so-called labor "leaders" join a Big-Business clamor for more arms, who is going to guarantee that even fantastic increases in military spending are going to result in full employment? In the past year military expenditures were at a record peacetime high. Prices rose. But production dropped.

'Labour Review' Issue Excels

A wonderful and exciting experience awaits the reader of the November-December issue of Labour Review, the British Marxist theoretical journal. Contained in it is a speech made by Leon Trotsky in 1926 to the first All-Union Congress of the Society of Friends of Radio in the Soviet Union. This is the first time the speech has been translated into English. And this reviewer would like to be one of the many who will thank the translator, Leonard Hussey, and beg for more.

Those who are familiar with the history of the Left Opposition in the Bolshevik Party during the 1920's—the struggle against the rising power of the bureaucracy and Stalin—will see how Trotsky handled the principal issues of that struggle in a public speech (it was also broadcast). For everyone, a deeper insight into the problems of the young workers' state will be gained.

The first part of the speech, of course, deals with science, its methodology and its relation to society. Here are some exciting anticipations of the problems that plague the world today. "The phenomena of radio-activity," Trotsky points out, "are leading us to the problem of releasing intra-atomic energy. The atom contains within itself a mighty hidden energy, and the greatest task of physics consists in pumping out this energy, pulling out the cork so that this hidden energy may burst forth in a fountain. Then the possibility will be opened up of replacing coal and oil by atomic energy, which will also become the basic motive power. This is not at all a hopeless

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Monday, January 20, 1958

Layoffs Hit Auto Centers Hard

Cleveland Relief Rolls Take Jump

By Bob Kingsley

CLEVELAND, Jan. 13—Layoffs in this city are "bonfire that could become a conflagration," says the County Welfare Director who reports a big jump in relief application by people whose unemployment checks have run out. The industries hardest hit are auto, aircraft and steel.

Chevrolet is the only large auto plant in the city still hiring. Last month it added 500 to the work force. All the others are laying off. Ford alone laid off 700 last month.

The Bureau of Unemployment Compensation estimates 24,000 jobless, the highest number in eight years. These figures are based on unemployment compensation claims. The actual number of unemployed is much closer to 25,000.

Midland Steel has reduced its work force from 1,800 to 800. Foote-Burt, a shop that hasn't laid off in eleven years, last week dropped 115 workers. The layoffs in steel, however, would be far more widespread if it weren't for the fact that most of the industry is now on a 32-hour week.

Last week the Cleveland Industrial Union Council finally became alarmed over the seriousness of the problem. It set up a committee to set plans for a March 4 Civic Rally to "spark a state-wide campaign against unemployment, low jobless insurance benefits, and the 'Right To-Work-Law' forces."

Illinois Jobless Told: Take Downgrading or Lose Benefits

CHICAGO—Unemployed auto workers in Illinois report that a new ruling is being attempted by the Illinois State Unemployment Compensation Board. If a laid-off employee refuses to accept a

downgrading in skill and rate of pay—"even to the sweater's code"—he will be refused both unemployment compensation and Supplementary Unemployment Benefits. The unemployed hope all local unions in the Chicago area will take a strong stand against this.

The Local 719 News, organ of the United Auto Workers local at the GM Diesel Plant in La Grange, Ill., reports that the company is making it as tough as possible for workers to get SUB. "No information is given [by GM] concerning the laid-off employee's rights under SUB," says the paper, "on top of this the company causes the employee additional grief by making him hold his State unemployment check and if he doesn't then he is disqualified for SUB." Twelve hundred La Grange Diesel workers have been laid off recently with 400 more slated for the ax this month.

The Ford Jet plant at Great Cicero, Ill., where 4,000 workers have been dropped since last August, has announced that it will shut down completely, wiping out jobs for 8,000 more UAW members. A mass meeting of the Ford Jet local in November demanded that SUB

be used as severance pay to be turned over in a lump sum to those laid off. UAW members in Region 4 are hard hit by layoffs, according to Regional Director Robert Johnston. Caterpillar Tractor alone laid off 7,200 in the last two months in its Peoria, Joliet and Decatur plants. In Milwaukee, Wis., Region 10 director Harvey Kitzman said layoffs in UAW-organized plants in that city were running about 25% of their work force.

Out of some twenty-five plants in Chicago's Amalgamated UAW Local 435, only two or three are working full shifts.

Workers in this local report that it is a waste of time and money to continue looking for jobs because there are none. Of about 4,000 members in Local 435, some 1,400 are unemployed.

Unemployment in the Chicago area is now about equal to that of the 1954 recession, and still going up. But in summing up the 1957 labor-management peace record, W. A. Lee, president of the Chicago Federation of Labor and a leading advocate of keeping labor tied to the Democratic Party, said according to the Jan. 2 Chicago Tribune: "In this community wages and the conditions of workers were improved considerably without a major stoppage in production [the police labor detail had done a wonderful job.]

Los Angeles Aircraft, Auto Plants Cut Back

By Della Rossa

LOS ANGELES, Jan. 15—A garage in the San Fernando Valley needed a tire changer and 40 men applied for the job. Lockheed Aircraft is located there, and it has laid off 11,000 men.

With unemployment rising

swiftly throughout the Los Angeles area, members of the United Auto Workers Union employed in manufacture of both cars and aircraft are being particularly hard hit. Every ninth worker in Los Angeles depends on aircraft production for his job. Ninety percent of the entire industry is in Southern California, 75% of it in Los Angeles itself. Layoffs are already widespread with more coming.

A year ago there were 34,000 workers at Lockheed. Since then thousands have been laid off and it is expected that by next July the plant will be down to 17,000.

The magazine, U.S. News and

World Report, has estimated

that 300,000 to 400,000 work-

ers now engaged in aircraft

plants will be out of their jobs

when the coming shakeout is over."

BOSSES PUSH SPEED-UP

Company executives of course

are determined to use the sit-

uation to push for more speed-

up. In the Nov. 28 issue of

Reporter magazine, Paul Jacobs

quoted a local representative of

the Aircraft Industries Associa-

tion who told him, "The tim-

ing of these layoffs may be un-

fortunate for some few people

but on the whole it will be

good for the economy after it

gets shaken down. Production

will go up and what goofing

off there is will stop for a

while, anyway."

In auto the situation is simi-

lar. At General Motor's South

Gate plant there was an 11%

layoff last November. Of the re-

maining 3,600 employed there,

30% are expected to get their

layoff notices at the end of this

week. More speed-up, more

disciplinary actions and a short-

er work week are on the order

of the day there.

The Ford plant in Wilming-

ton is now on a four-day week

and beginning to lay off be-

sides. At the new and vastly

expanded Lincoln-Mercury plant

about a hundred cars a day are

being produced and the shop is

on a short work week.

The 40 men who applied for

the tire changer's job in San

Fernando Valley symbolizes the

problem of the auto and air-

craft workers. Their efforts co-

incide with a general drop in

employment, leaving ever less

places for them to go for new

jobs. Unemployment increased in

California from September to

October for the first time in

12 years. At the same time so

many new people are moving

to the Los Angeles area that

the state unemployment service

estimates that 100,000 new jobs

are needed yearly just to keep

pace with the population growth.

This year only 50,000 such

jobs were added.

GATES



GATES

tled and pointedly declared: ". . . some Party leaders are bamboozled by what they regard as a danger of split in the party. . . ."

So far as the Northern California party is concerned, Lima said, "We will not be deterred by name-calling. . . . We state that we will carry on a determined struggle against name-calling as a continuation of a dogmatic and bureaucratic method of work. . . . We feel that, if we are to guarantee debate and discussion enabling us to arrive at majority decisions on important questions, that the national leadership should declare war on the poisonous atmosphere which exists in New York and surrounds the national center and even involves some members of this national committee."

Opposition to Foster's efforts to re-establish the party as an echo of the Kremlin line is also contained in declarations favoring discussion and united action with other radical tendencies—a policy opposed by Foster. Among those opposing him on this is the New England District Committee which says: ". . . the CP of N.E. should cooperate and participate where possible in Socialist Forums and joint activities with all Left groups."

This stand reflects a growing recognition that refusal to participate in discussion with other socialist currents can only lead to still further isolation of the party. Such recognition is expressed in a statement by Carl Ross entitled, "Attitude Toward Trotskyism in Minne-

sota."

Ross disavows any political sympathy for the Trotskyist viewpoint. In fact his statement includes a Stalinist-type slander that the SWP is "exploiting" and impairing Minnesota defense activity on behalf of Morton Sobell. At the same time, however, he says, "Certainly it is wrong to boycott a useful campaign because it may be led by Trotskyists."

The Northern California resolution states: "We are deeply disturbed at a current in the National Committee . . . which looks upon every attempt to discuss something new as a departure from Marxism-Leninism, and which hails every erroneous estimate of our convention by Communists abroad as gospel. This has paralyzed our party into inaction, and this paralysis is itself liquidating the party before our very eyes."

Speaking on this resolution, Northern California Chairman Mickie Lima repeated the charge that discussion was being throttled.

Pointing out that "old attitudes" toward the Trotskyists are no longer effective, Ross observes that the Trotskyist stand for independent labor politics is being shared by others in the radical movement. This means, he says, "we must of necessity participate and meet on ideological grounds the Trotskyist views. . . ."

Such an approach is also nec-

essary, he continues, because

many CP members now consider

the old party statute forbidding

association with Trotskyists "as

insulting to their intelligence."

New York

Dr. Otto Nathan

Noted economist and executor of Einstein estate speaks on

"War and Peace in the

Atomic Age"

Sat., Feb. 1-8 P.M.

Militant Labor Forum,

116 University Place

Donation 50 cents.

The Five Percenters

By William Bundy

I went to Plainfield, N. J. last week to get a story on the walkout at the Mack Truck Engine plant there. One of the Mack workers I spoke to, a member of United Auto Workers Local 343, told me the following story, reported here substantially in his own words:

"We walked out because the company laid off 400 men in one unit, without regard to seniority and without giving anyone a chance to bump into other jobs as provided in the contract. The company says that this is only a temporary layoff caused by a shortage of parts and it can't be bothered with fooling around with the seniority provisions of the contract in such a little matter."

MEN STICK TOGETHER

"Well, we don't think this is such a little matter. We think this is part of a drive that has been going on for some time, to break down the pretty good conditions we've managed to build and hang onto in this plant. This is one place where the boys have stuck together pretty well over the years, and where we had the management trained so that they didn't go running up and down the line waving their stop watches like we were afraid of them."

"But recently, they got a new set of experts that have come in here with all kinds of stories about how we're not supposed to work like human beings because at some GM plant or another they work like horses."

"These experts come from Studebaker and they are the same bunch that worked that famous shell game at Studebaker a few years back. Well, it just so happens that we know that the speed-up and wage cuts didn't save any jobs at Studebaker. This plant doesn't make a product that's in competition with GM anyway."

"And then the company has been trying to push us around too much lately. A while back, the management started having the plant guards take down the badge numbers of anyone who went to the toilet during working hours. They

said that some of the workers, those on a bonus system, were taking too much time for personal needs. The experts figured this interfered with the bosses making out a case for lowering the bonus rate and raising the quota."

"Well, it's bad enough that they put the washroom on a stage with an open stairway leading to it so they can watch you come and go, without having some company cop check up on you inside. It's humiliating. There were a lot of complaints about this, but it didn't stop."

HUMILIATION

"I don't know how other people feel about this, but as far as I'm concerned, a man has got to have some pride. So one morning, I made up my mind that I just wasn't going to be subjected to this humiliation any more, even if I had to stay away from the washroom until lunch time. But by 11:30 I knew I was beaten."

"I swallowed my pride, threw down my tools, and without getting a replacement, made a bee-line for the ladder leading to the washroom."

"But I wasn't the only one. In fact, 400 men—the whole department—were just behind me. The guards had an awful time trying to take down all the badge numbers."

ALL HAD SAME IDEA

"It seems that everybody else had also decided not to humiliate themselves any more, and then had been forced by nature to swallow their pride at 11:30 sharp."

"After that, the company got together with the local union leaders and agreed to stop the toilet tally provided the local official would give all us naughty children a lecture."

"We had a meeting and the union officials told us that the management experts in charge of these matters had it all figured out that there shouldn't be more than five percent of the workers taking care of personal needs at any one time. So now everyone is going around calling everyone else a five percenter."

... Record of Speed-Up

(Continued from page 1)

These standards are comparable to those of the same jobs at Ford and GM. . . . That is, Chrysler was to be speeded up to Ford and GM standards.

In October, 1956, Walter Reuther addressed the Chrysler conference as follows: "On the question of production standards, the leadership in the Chrysler plants must face this problem practically and realistically. We know that the Chrysler corporation has many problems, many of them of their own making, but they are frightened because of the competition coming from Ford and GM."

"... Where production standards are too loose the Union has the responsibility of making fair adjustments. Everybody ought to carry their share of a fair day's work. We cannot allow any group to ride the gravy train at the expense of the other workers in a plant."

By March 8, 1957, the lid blew off in the city of Detroit, when the three daily newspapers carried headlines such as "The Story Behind Chrysler's Spur," and "No Job Deal Both Sides Say, But Profits Soar With Fewer Employees."

WHAT MISCH REVEALED

These stories were inspired by a speech by Chrysler vice-president F. W. Misch before the Society of Financial Analysts in New York City. The labor writer for the March 8 Detroit Free Press commented "Misch's speech unlocked one of the worst-kept 'secrets' in the auto industry... The speech gave the impression, to some people, at least, that the UAW had worked hand in hand with Chrysler in instituting new work standards and quieting worker discontent."

A special Chrysler edition of Spotlight was published by the top union officialdom which declared that Misch's statements were false and that newspaper reports of 20,000 Chrysler workers being eliminated through speed-up were misrepresentations. The cause for the elimination, said Spotlight, was automation and improved methods.

For all the frenzy of the top union leadership in trying to talk their way out of this perplexing situation, the fact remained that the company did speed-up and was boasting about it.

Throughout, the Chrysler rank-and-file indicated their willingness to fight back to the best of their ability and against all odds. On the heels of the Misch revelations an unprecedented number of strike authorizations in the Chrysler plants were made by the UAW Executive Board.



REUTHER

ness to fight back to the best of their ability and against all odds. On the heels of the Misch revelations an unprecedented number of strike authorizations in the Chrysler plants were made by the UAW Executive Board.

RECENT EVENTS

An article in the Oct. 5, 1957 Local 3 Dodge Main News gives us a glimpse of what has taken place in the shop in the recent period. "It has been reported that the Dodge plant management has plans to eliminate 135 employees of our department and still keep up the same production as on the old model. Last year the Dodge management eliminated 800 workers in our department with the explanation that a new assembly system was put in effect. . . .

"When the workers lose their jobs due to automation, it is understandable, but when 800 workers lose their jobs due to changes of assembly system not by automation but by the muscles of the workers, then something should be done to stop it."

Another writer in the Nov. 30 issue said: "Ten Chrysler plants have taken strike votes on problems of speed-up and working conditions; the ABD plant (formerly Briggs) was poised for a strike last week, but a settlement was made at the last minute. This week finds Chrysler Engine Plant out on strike, leaving eight more plants of the Chrysler Corporation still with strike votes pending. . . . When speed-ups are attempted at ten different plants at one time, Chrysler Corporation is showing contempt for the contract; between them and our union; therefore, the contract is no longer binding, and we should close all plants until

Calendar Of Events

New York

MILITANT LABOR FORUM CLASSES. Sundays, 5:30 P.M. through Feb. 16, "The Road to Socialism," Instructor, Daniel Roberts. Sundays, 7:15 P.M., "The Negro Struggle for Equality," Instructor, George Lavan. Mondays, 7 P.M. through Feb. 17, "The Soviet Union," Instructor, Murry Weiss. Mondays, 8:45 P.M., "Historical Materialism," Instructor, Vincent Copeland. All classes at 116 University Place.

Saturday, Jan. 25, 8:30 P.M. A Mid-Winter Party at 116 University Place sponsored by the Socialist Workers Party. Contribution 50¢.

New York Youth

Symposium and discussion on "Israel and the Middle East," Arie Perberg, Israeli student; Shane Mage, editorial board, Young Socialist; Adel Akel, Arab student; Dan Leon, member of Hashomer Hatzair. (Organizations listed for identification only). Friday, Jan. 24, 8 P.M. Adelphi Hall, 74 Fifth Avenue. Contribution 50 cents. Sponsored by Young Socialist Alliance.

Militant Labor School

Winter 1958 Classes

(1) "The Road to Socialism," Lectures by Daniel Roberts. Six Sundays from 5:30 to 7 P.M., beginning Jan. 12.

(2) "The Negro Struggle for Equality," Lectures by George Lavan. Five Sundays from 7:15 to 8:45 P.M. beginning Jan. 12.

(3) "The Soviet Union from 1917 to the Present," Lectures by Murry Weiss. Six Mondays from 7 to 8:30 P.M. beginning Jan. 13.

(4) "Historical Materialism — The Origins of the Capitalist System," Lectures by Vincent Copeland. Six Mondays from 8:45 to 10:15.

Fees: Six-week course — \$2.50; Five-week course — \$2.00; Single lectures — \$5.00.

To register write to Militant Labor School, 116 University Place, New York 3, N.Y. or phone Algonquin 5-7852.

THE MILITANT

VOLUME XXII

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NUMBER 3

SWP Begins Ballot Drive In Michigan

DETROIT, Jan. 13—A drive to collect 30,000 signatures to put a socialist ticket on the ballot in Michigan in 1958 was announced today by Rita Shaw, state secretary of the Socialist Workers Party.

State law requires the submission of 15,814 signatures by registered voters.

"But we're not taking any chances," Mrs. Shaw explained. "In 1956, we turned in 4,000 more names than the law required, and were ruled off the ballot anyway. This year we're out to double the legal quota because we're determined that the people of Michigan shall have a real choice at the ballot in 1958."

The 30,000 goal can be met, Mrs. Shaw maintained, because "a leftward political trend is being generated by four factors: (1) Growing unemployment and growing fear of unemployment. (2) Mounting criticism and doubt about the dead end in which U.S. foreign policy is culminating. (3) The continuing refusal of both major parties to grant civil rights legislation and enforcement to the Negro people. (4) The continuing isolation of McCarthyism."

Mrs. Shaw asked for help in collecting the signatures not only from socialists, but from all who think that the voters should have something to choose besides the two old parties and who think it would be a public service for socialist ideas to be heard in the 1958 political marketplace.

Nominating petitions may be obtained from campaign headquarters at 3737 Woodward, Detroit 1.

At 1957 Auto Convention



Delegates from Flint area locals at United Auto Workers 16th constitutional convention last April. Signs express opposition to dues increase proposed by Reuther. Debate on this question really centered on the speed-up issue, with dues-hike opponents demanding that top union officers pursue a more militant course.

... Los Angeles Chrysler

(Continued from page 1)

Corporation. Management began chiseling on the terms of the strike settlement by eliminating manpower.

By the time the 1958 model was put into production, the company had already embarked on another all-out drive for more speed-up. In addition, the company was flagrantly disregarding the seniority provisions of the contract with respect to the recall of its laid-off employees.

On Oct. 30 the situation reached the boiling point. The swing shift staged a walkout in protest. Chrysler immediately retaliated by discharging the chairman of the bargaining committee, Joe Price, and three chief shop stewards.

The officers of UAW 230 asked the members to return to work on the basis that another vote would be taken asking the International for strike authorization. The motion to strike was carried with 96% in favor.

But the company continued its policy of further reprisals against the union. Chrysler discharged 67 more for their part in the walkout; 148 were given three to five-day disciplinary layoffs; and approximately 800 employees were given warnings or reprimands. The bargaining committee of Local 230 is now engaged in processing more than a thousand grievances.

The Corporation has issued threats of more reprisals to come if UAW 230 takes strike action. Local President Tom Smith has been given warning that he will be discharged if another walkout occurs.

To date, the International has not given Local 230 strike authorization.

While the UAW's press has remained silent about the victimizations, reprisals and threats against the officers and members of this local, and the International has stalled for two months on giving a strike authorization, the economic picture has changed.

Since the strike vote, short work-weeks have become common. Today, Chrysler laid off more than 900 employees. This is a 26% reduction in the work force.

BLOW TO MORALE

The courageous leaders of UAW 230 are in a dilemma. Not only are they confronted with the problems of the speed-up, but the morale of the workers is now shaken by the failure of the UAW's top officials to cope with the problems and the unemployment situation.

As the Militant pointed out last May 13: "The UAW's leadership has extended its one-at-a-time strategy to the point where it now proposes that the speed-up and other problems which exist throughout the entire auto industry are to be combated on a local union level. . . .

"Individual locals like UAW 230," the Militant said, "are forced to strike in an effort to change management policies which are formulated on a corporation and industry-wide level. But unequal contests of this kind can only lead to the disipation of the energy and militancy of the workers in a series of ineffective and isolated actions. . . ."

As the events in L.A. Chrysler since that time have conclusively demonstrated, the top officialdom of the UAW is still following a policy that promotes more of these unequal contests.

... Reuther Seeks to Knife UA W Demand

to amount. Reuther presents figures to show that if auto workers' wages had kept up with national productivity since 1940 they would be at least 65 cents higher. But he does not demand a 65-cent an hour increase, nor even half that amount. Why not?

According to the "profit-sharing" scheme, the money the workers might have coming as their "share" of profits would not simply be given to them in a lump sum, but might be used as a fund from which wage and fringe improvements would come. Does Reuther mean that a good part of the "basic economic demands" will really be tied to the end-of-year "profit-sharing" scheme? The wording is, at least, open to question.

AN INCENTIVE PLAN

The "profit-sharing" proposal is, in itself, nothing more than a glorified incentive plan basically little different from those advanced by Big Business many times in the past to counter union demands. In analyzing Reuther's proposal in its Jan. 15 issue, that authoritative Big Business newspaper, the New York Times, has this to say about "profit-sharing": "Its basic aim is to establish a sense of partnership that will give the workers more incentive for stepping up productivity and helping the company prosper."

During the last set of negotiations in 1955, the Ford Motor Company proposed its own "profit-sharing" plan. (The company letter containing this plan was reprinted in the Jan. 4, 1958 issue of Ford Facts, Local 600's newspaper.)

The plan would require a corporation to "share" with the workers one-fourth of its profits in excess of 10%. This is a very handsome profit rate under conditions where the employing class in general considers a 6% return quite gratifying.

Furthermore, these payments would come at the end of the year, so that a worker would never know what his wages actually were while he was working. Only GM and Ford have consistently shown profit figures above 10%, so that workers for other corporations can expect little or no benefits even on the face of this scheme.

Scientific economics has established that all profits really represent unpaid wages, since labor creates the total value of the products. What counts then in advancing bargaining demands is whether labor shall claim an ever greater share of what it alone has created. The 30-for-40 proposal, demands for substantial wage increases, a rollback of the speed-up—these, if won, would in one form or another reduce the amount the employers appropriate out of the workers' labor and correspondingly increase the workers' share. But Reuther's "profit-sharing" proposals are based on first upholding the employers' take, with "improvements" for the workers then made dependent on how successfully they were exploited during the year.

BOOKS AND PAMPHLETS

by JAMES P. CANNON
On Problems of Socialism in America

America's Road to Socialism 80pp \$3.50

Socialism on Trial 111pp \$5.00

American Stalinism and Anti-Stalinism \$1.15

The Struggle for a Proletarian Party 302 pp

Cloth \$2.75

Paper \$2.00

The History of American Trotskyism 268pp

Cloth \$2.75

Paper \$2.00

The IWW — The Great Anticipation 44pp \$2.25

Eugene V. Debs 40pp \$2.25

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support in his campaign. One brother said enthusiastically: "This is the most forward step this union has taken in years."

Another said: "Jack, I don't believe in your political philosophy, but I think unions are better off when they tolerate all political views and I'm going to vote for you because you're a good union man and you've got some sound planks in your platform."

Wright is the delegate from his union to the Central Labor Council, the State Metal Trades Council and the AFL-CIO political action group, COPE.