

## The Negotiations In Auto

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Vol. XXII — No. 21

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# THE MILITANT

PUBLISHED WEEKLY IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE

NEW YORK, N.Y., MONDAY, MAY 26, 1958

Price 10c

# DICTATORSHIP THREATENS IN FRANCE

## 5 Branches Hit Bell in Socialist Expansion Fund

By Murry Weiss  
National Fund Drive Director

MAY 22 — Five Socialist Workers Party groups, with Denver and the South in the lead, have hit 100% of their quotas or over in the spring drive to raise a \$20,000 Socialist Expansion Fund. The three-month drive, which is the first of two projected fund campaigns for 1958, has less than two weeks to go. To date over \$16,000 has been collected. (See Scoreboard page 4.)

The question now before every branch of the party is: Will we finish the drive by the May 31 deadline **IN FULL AND ON TIME?** For many years the Socialist Workers Party prided itself on carrying through its fund campaigns with the precision of a railroad schedule. It took pride in doing a job well, leaving no loose ends, and getting on with the work for new goals. Thus a spirit of confidence and careful organization was instilled into all party activity.

We must admit that in recent years we slipped back a bit and were forced to extend the time limits of fund campaigns a number of times. But with the beginning of this campaign, the determination to return to our motto, "In full and on time," seemed to take hold in every section of the party. Despite the accumulated 8% lag, we think every branch of the party is as determined as ever to achieve this goal.

There is a growing conviction among militant socialists in the U.S. that we are heading into a new period of progress for both the labor and socialist movements. The new period will pose new challenges and opportunities for socialists and it is high time that we begin to pull out of the state of demoralization and atomization that has afflicted radicalism in the U.S. for so long.

The much-advertised myth of eternal capitalist prosperity has collapsed. Under the blows of depression and anti-labor reaction the American trade union movement will not long remain under the complete and unchallenged domination of its present class-collaboration policy and leadership.

At the same time a new situation is developing within the radical movement. For the first time in many years different groups in the socialist movement have come together to discuss differences and to begin to act together wherever they can make common cause.

We have been heartened in this Socialist Expansion Fund Drive by the many new and old friends who have rallied to our appeal and contributed generously to the cause. We have been inspired by the fact that the two newest areas to join our national fund-raising campaign, Denver and the South, are over the top and leading the way to success for the drive. We have been stirred by the grit and militancy of the branches which suffered the worst blows of the recession — Buffalo, Youngstown and Detroit — yet stayed at the very top of the Scoreboard all through the drive.

These are the things that should give us confidence (but not overconfidence) that by midnight, May 31, every dollar pledged to the Socialist Expansion Fund will be in and we will be able to hoist our victory flag.

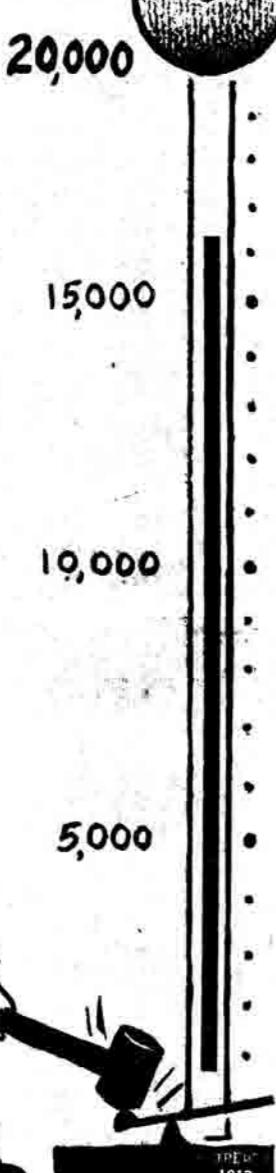
## J.P. Cannon Recovers From Eye Surgery

LOS ANGELES, May 19 — James P. Cannon, national chairman of the Socialist Workers Party, was back home today after undergoing a successful eye operation.

Comrade Cannon underwent surgery May 12 for removal of a cataract from his right eye. The operation on the right eye, to be followed by a similar operation on the left eye, was made difficult by complications, but the cataract removal was successful.

While the doctors report that it will be at least three months before a final evaluation of the outcome of the operation can be made, they are optimistic about the results so far.

Friends can communicate with Comrade Cannon by writing him in care of the Socialist Workers Party, 116 University Place, New York 3, N.Y.



## Tammany Chiefs Knife Adam Powell

By Harry Ring

NEW YORK, May 21 — There is no room in the Democratic party for a Negro political leader who isn't completely subservient to the machine. And that goes double if he makes a habit of putting the spotlight on Jim Crow. This is the meaning of the current gang-up on Adam Clayton Powell, Democratic Congressman from Harlem's 16th District.

Up for re-election this fall, Powell was read out of the Democratic party May 15 by Tammany Hall boss Carmine De Sario. A week previous Powell was indicted on a three-count income tax evasion charge carrying a possible sentence of five years and \$10,000 fine on each count. The alleged evasion is less than \$2,000. Powell pleaded not guilty. Credit for his indictment is claimed by the McCarthyite magazine, *National Review*, whose editor, William Buckley, has boasted publicly that it directly influenced the federal grand jury.

Powell's ouster from the Democratic party was effected by De Sario summoning the 16th district leaders to his office to vote for the expulsion on the ostensible ground that Powell had endorsed Eisenhower in 1956. The ouster, De Sario piously claimed, was strictly a decision of the Harlem leaders. (The expulsion meeting was delayed until one reluctant district leader who had pleaded illness was brought downtown to vote.)

De Sario is now seeking a reliable machine candidate to contest against Powell for Congress and has indicated his intention of trying to get a court order barring Powell from the Democratic primary, which the latter announced he would contest.

### WHITE BOSS IN HARLEM

De Sario's drive was accurately pegged by Powell when he declared: "I am being purged because obviously I am a Negro and a Negro should stay on the plantation." Branding the Tammany chief as a "Mississippi boss," Powell added, "The Negroes left Mississippi to get away from the white bosses but they found them in Harlem."

In his 14 years in Congress, Powell has frequently been a (Continued on Page 3)



## The Tax-Reduction Issue

By George Lavan

The AFL-CIO leadership has made an immediate tax cut the Number One demand in its anti-recession program. Labor leaders have made innumerable speeches all over the country demanding it. Thousands of resolutions to the same effect have been passed by union bodies. Union officials and delegations have done considerable lobbying for it in Washington. Yet nothing has happened in the Democratic-controlled Congress.

So little real influence does the labor movement have on the leaders of the Democratic Party that, in the very face of labor's tax-cut campaign, they made an open pact with the Eisenhower administration to keep the issue off the floor of Congress.

### BITTER PILL

This was a bitter pill not only for the labor leaders but also for the liberal Democrats to swallow. The latter have their eyes on the coming elections. If they could claim credit for a tax cut — even if it amounted to only \$50 or \$60 for the average worker — it would

considerably enhance their popularity. But Democratic leader of the Senate, Lyndon Johnson, and Democratic Speaker of the House, Sam Rayburn, so far have turned thumbs down.

If and when the Democratic Party is to support a tax cut will be decided not by the Northern liberals or the labor leaders but by the top Southern Democrats and the big-city machine czars — the real rulers of the Democratic Party.

In the meantime, any popular Democratic Congressman who tries to upset the Democratic-Republican tax-cutting committee will face the very tangible punishments which Johnson and Rayburn are in a position to dish out. The resounding smacking-down they gave Senator Paul Douglas (D-Ill.) on this issue, even before the bipartisan tax truce was concluded, serves as an object lesson.

Last week's article in the *Militant* described the ending of the special tax credit for wages and other earned income and its replacement with the special credits for income

from stock dividends, the split-income provision, the capital gains gimmick, the "depletion" allowances, and the "carry back — carry forward" racket. For the corporations and the rich the tax laws have as many holes as a Swiss cheese.

### A LAW JUST FOR YOU

Briefly here are a few of the many other loopholes for the rich. If you have enough influence you can get Congress to pass a law just for yourself. The outstanding example of such special legislation was the 1951 amendment of the law to accommodate movie mogul Louis B. Mayer, who upon returning from Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, had concluded a \$2,750,000 settlement of his contract. Though the amendment didn't mention Mayer's name its provisions were so drawn as to be applicable only to him and one other movie executive.

Owners of business and executives can live luxuriously on money not counted as income. This explains the free-handed company spending on cars, yachts, hunting lodges, pent-

(Continued on Page 4)

## Working Class Sole Force That Can Halt Bid of DeGaulists

By John Thayer

The danger of dictatorship in France steadily grows despite the newspaper headlines about the present Pflimlin government winning votes of confidence in parliament. The ominous possibility of democratic rights of the French people being trampled under the military boots of de Gaulle and the insurgents in Algeria looms ever larger because the working class, the only force in French society capable of smashing a full-fledged de Gaulist drive to power, is not being mobilized for action by its leaders.

De Gaulle has considerable forces: (1) the top brass of the armed forces in Algeria and in France; (2) the semi-fascist paratroopers of Gen. Massu in Algeria, whose torture squads boast that they are more efficient than Hitler's Gestapo; (3) the racist majority of French settlers in Algeria; (4) predominant or entire control of the French police force which is honeycombed with ex-collaborationists and fascist groupings; (5) the remnants of the de Gaulist and Poujadist parties — both semi-fascist — which, however, have seriously declined in the past few years; (6) a half-dozen fascist, street-fighting organizations which though small are extremely vicious. What lends momentum to these forces is the determination of French Big Business to replace a parliamentary form of government, that is wracked by crisis before every major political decision, by a "strong" government.

### NO MATCH FOR WORKERS

Yet these forces would be no match against the mighty French working class in a stand-up battle. A determined mobilization of the workers would melt the control of the insurgents over the soldier masses doing conscript duty in Algeria and France and pit them against the professional killers, such as the paratroopers, who form but a fraction of the armed forces. (The paratroopers, who do the bulk of the actual fighting in Algeria number 20,000.)

Thus an attempt to set up a de Gaulle dictatorship by force would be a terrible gamble for the militarists. Only if they could be sure that the working class would not fight could they be certain of victory. And defeat would be more than loss of a coup d'état, it would be

(Continued on Page 2)

loss of a civil war and the end of capitalist rule in France.

De Gaulle and his backers therefore prefer that he come to power legally — being made Premier with exceptional, that is, dictatorial, powers. Under the cover of such powers they would then seek to cripple the workers' strength and build up their own in preparation for an eventual showdown with the working class.

### READY FOR STRUGGLE

There is every indication that the French working class is ready for militant struggle against de Gaulle. It has long expressed its distaste for the "dirty war" in Algeria; it has always opposed dictatorship. It is doubly opposed to a military

(Continued on Page 2)

ganizer. He was soon elected to various posts in the CP and then to the national executive committee of the CP youth organization. Before long he visited the Soviet Union with a French delegation bringing a machine gun as a gift to the Red Army. While in the USSR during 1930-31 he met Maurice Thorez for the first time and other top leaders of the French CP.

### TOURS USSR

"I toured the Soviet Union and saw the rising industries of the young workers state," he recalled. "I also saw much misery among the people and I resented the way they were treated by the bureaucrats. I think these sights brought my first doubts about the Stalinist theory of socialism-in-one-country. Upon my return I spoke critically within the French party but in public I always spoke positively in support of the Soviet Union. The party leaders tried to get me to write in blind praise of what I saw in the workers state. But I refused and to this day I have written nothing about that trip."

Lemoine was becoming quite dissatisfied with the conduct of the Stalinist bureaucrats so he returned to the mines and concentrated on union work in his native region. This was a time of Stalinist adventurism during (Continued on Page 2)



Charles Lemoine addressing a memorial meeting in 1952 for nine workers killed in a mine disaster. 20,000 miners from the region turned out and put an anti-capitalist stamp on the demonstration.

began. "My family had been pioneer unionists from the start of labor organization in the mine fields. Although my elders had distinct anarchist tendencies, they taught me much that was wholly sound in a Marxist sense. As rebels they didn't let religion get in the way of their class-struggle ideas and this helped to save me from confusion on that score. In fact I wasn't even baptized." He explained how older members of the family responded to the October 1917 revolution in Russia and joined the newly created Third International, taking him along into the movement despite his tender years. "My class struggle activities soon got me fired from the mines," he said, "and I then devoted my time to the building of a communist youth movement."

When the French imperial-

# ... Charles Lemoine, French Worker Militant

(Continued from Page 1) the notorious "Third Period." Red unions had been set up in opposition to the reformist-led mass organizations.

"Despite all the handicaps," Lemoine said, "we managed to raise the level of militancy among the miners generally. In those days CP leaders in the mass movement stood in the forefront of the workers' ranks when a battle was on. They didn't sit back and order others into action as they so often do now."

"In March 1933, during the great depression, we organized an unemployed march on the town hall at Valenciennes, the seat of the regional government. Two miles from town we were met by a strong force of police who tried to turn us back. Fortunately the road was under repair and many loose bricks were at hand. We fought our way every step of the last two miles and reached our goal."

## 'A Historic Class Defeat'

"But for all the class power we brought to bear, our bureaucratic leaders, up to their ears in class collaboration, got us nothing more than a 40-hour week and a few social benefits. Our minor wage gains were quickly eaten up by rising prices. We had the capitalist class paralyzed and with a good leadership could have taken the power. The bureaucrats talked us into going back to work, although we did so reluctantly, and in the end we actually lost ground."

"I now consider the 1936 outcome a historic class defeat," he added. "With a revolutionary policy we could have changed the course of events. There need not have been the fascist victory in Spain, the deal with Hitler at Munich and the second world war."

"In France itself we soon paid a heavy price. The capitalists took their revenge when the CP called another general strike in 1938. This time we got a real beating. Not only did the CP tide begin to ebb, but the workers as a whole suffered a grave blow to their morale. Even the miners grew tired, discouraged by the setbacks they had received."

Lemoine, though described the government attack launched against the militants in the mines. About 250 of the best fighters were framed in the capitalist courts. So many leaders were involved that at one

## In German Prison Camp

"From my studies of Lenin I concluded this would be wrong," he said, "no matter what criticisms one might have of the Soviet policy. So for want of a better idea walked out of the meeting without voting at all. I was simply trying to act like a principled revolutionist. But the CP bureaucrats were to use this episode against me later on."

As the war went on Thorez escaped to the Soviet Union. Lemoine was captured and locked up in a German prison camp. There he managed to do a little political work among the French prisoners and among the Germans. Mainly he fought against resolutions proposing to approve the Pétain government after the capitulation to Hitler. When freed in 1945 he returned to Neuville-sur-Escaut.

"When I got home I found a big change," he said. "Almost everybody was in the CP. The bureaucrats felt cocky and they gave me quite a reception. They published an article saying the 'traitor' has come back, giving their own distorted version of the dispute over the

After noting that a worker mobilization ended a fascist attempt to seize power in February 1934, Lemoine spoke of the CP shift toward the Popular Front policy which soon led to catastrophic defeats for the working class. He said Stalinist policy destroyed the revolutionary potential implicit in the reunification of the unions at that time and then described the 1936 general strike.

"During the whole three-week period of the sit-down strikes," he explained, "the cops kept pretty much out of sight. In some cases the workers held the bosses prisoners within the plants, teaching them what it was like to live on the strikers' fare, mainly bread and beer. The government did no more than politely ask the workers to let the managers go home, pleading personal hardship as the reason.



Striking French postal workers rest on a pile of undelivered mail during the great wave of militant strikes that swept France in 1953. Workers fought for wage increases to combat the ravages of inflation. Today a further inflationary spiral has hit France.

workers in Paris the Stalinist ministers left the capitalist government. Party tactics changed but its basic policy remained the same.

"Stalinist policy had by this time made the mines hellholes," he continued, "with more workers than ever dying of silicosis. At the end of 1947 the miners went on a two-week strike which should have been spread throughout industry, but the bureaucrats made it a limited action. The workers occupied the pits and heavy detachments of riot police were sent to dislodge them. They threw the cops out instead.

## Cops Surround Mine Pit

"It is important to know," he stressed, "that the social democrat Robert Lacoste, was then Minister of Industry; the same Lacoste who is today siding French imperialism against the Algerian workers. Another social democrat, Jules Moch, was the governmental minister in charge of the police.

"Cops were heavily concentrated throughout the mine fields and in our area they were backed by a regiment of soldiers. A ring of 14 military tanks surrounded the pit where I was on strike. We could do no more than offer passive resistance, which we did. Hungry and desperate we finally saw we couldn't win so we went back to work as a body. It was a defeat from which the miners have not yet recovered. More than that, it was a betrayal of all the workers. The class relationship of forces was reversed in favor of the capitalists.

"This experience strengthened the conviction that my break with the CP must be a total one. It taught me a basic lesson. The miners' struggle can't be confined within the limits of the present bureaucratic control. Although they must remain within the existing unions, the miners can't hope to reform the bureaucrats at the top. They need to create their own committees of struggle, independent of and in opposition to the bureaucrats.

"The social democrats cer-

tainly dealt us a treacherous blow," he continued, "but the main responsibility for the defeat rests with the Stalinist bureaucrats. If they had loosened their grip a little, the rest of the French workers would have come to the support of the miners. But they acted to restrain the workers who wanted to broaden the strike nationally, claiming it would mean civil war and the American army would be brought in against the workers.

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"The party was a minority force in the working class and it followed a general policy of struggle. Its members were able to act as genuine worker leaders. The policies of Lenin and Trotsky were still deep in their consciousness. Despite the adventurism of the early Thirties,

they must take democratic control of the union into their own hands."

Lemoine described the running struggle with the bureaucrats after the 1948 defeat. In April 1951 he called a meeting, inviting the CP leaders to appear before the workers and explain their policies. The meeting proved a great success. Some papers reported it as the start of a movement to build an independent Communist Party. At this point he came in contact with the French revolutionary socialists generally known as Trotskyists.

"What kept the CP apparatus from breaking me," he said, "was my broad and close contact with the workers of this

whole region. Even when you are in a weak minority you can hold on if you follow a policy that squares with the workers' needs. An oppositionist shouldn't feel helpless just because he is in a minority and decide he must adapt himself to friendly relations with the bureaucracy. Just go out and act like a leader, basing yourself on class truth and the potential power of the workers. That is what I have tried to do."

"When the CP apparatus promoted a referendum in my pit on the question of my honesty, I simply sat out their slander campaign before the balloting. When the votes were counted 97% of the miners called me an honest man."



The militant French working class has been repeatedly compelled to defend itself against police attacks. Shown here is striking auto workers beating back a brutal assault.

## 1953 General Strike

In 1953 the French civil servants launched a general strike. The miners of Lemoine's region also walked out in an action generally independent of the union officials. A strike committee was created through direct election by the workers.

In a local demonstration 10,000 men and women swept through the offices of the area taking the white collar workers out onto the streets. The demonstrators demanded wage increases and shouted anti-government slogans.

"The memory of 1936 was clearly expressed by the workers in this action," Lemoine said, "but the bureaucrats gave no leadership. The strike started at a high political level and if it had been able to spread the whole national political situation could have been changed."

"Organization of strike action outside official channels was an important new development, but it was weakened due to the failure of the Parisian metal workers to add their power to the movement. I think the worker revolutionists of Paris made a mistake in failing to send a delegation of metal workers to ask the miners what they could do to help. They wouldn't have returned alone. Big delegations of miners would have gone back with them, to help call the Parisian workers into the battle.

"The 1953 struggle resulted in a new Stalinist betrayal," he added, "but this time the workers felt it more consciously. Alone after 18 days of struggle the miners had to go back into the pits. But there was a general mass turnout at the meeting where the decision was made and some unusual things happened. When the CP bureaucrats told them they must go back to work, the miners first took a vote as to whether they would even consider the official recommendation. They decided they wouldn't. Then they took a recess while their own strike

was a treacherous blow," he continued, "but the main responsibility for the defeat rests with the Stalinist bureaucrats. If they had loosened their grip a little, the rest of the French workers would have come to the support of the miners. But they acted to restrain the workers who wanted to broaden the strike nationally, claiming it would mean civil war and the American army would be brought in against the workers.

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"The party was a minority force in the working class and it followed a general policy of struggle. Its members were able to act as genuine worker leaders. The policies of Lenin and Trotsky were still deep in their consciousness. Despite the adventurism of the early Thirties,

the party militants were motivated essentially by the consciousness at each stage to push the masses further ahead in their struggles. In a large sense the lessons of October 1917 were embodied in this vanguard force.

"After the French-Russian pact was signed in 1934 the party apparatus began to distort the dynamism of the fighting cadres. The party became converted into a pressure force seeking to influence capitalist policy. Talk of the parliamentary road to socialism appeared and was to become even more marked after 1944. Stalinist policy after World War II inflicted a terrible defeat on the workers. The armed detachments created during the resistance to German occupation

were broken up. The workers were tied to the capitalist state and told it was their revolutionary duty to produce more in capitalist-owned industry.

"Despite everything," he added, "at least 60% of the miners still support the CP in parliamentary elections. They do so because they see no alternative to the CP, but that doesn't mean they still have faith in the Stalinist policy. Even though the CP holds formal control of the main union apparatus the party bureaucracy actually has little power over the workers. Once the party, as a minority force, could mobilize the workers generally in struggle. Today the whole bloated party apparatus can't do it with all its formal organizational control. This change is basic.

## For Revolutionary Regroupment

"The French mass movement as a whole is characterized by a lack of worker confidence in the official leadership. They want to struggle but the question is: How? Mass apathy is only a surface appearance. At the depths there is motion toward a new explosion. If the capitalists make a new attack on the miners there will be a big worker reaction. The best fighters will be able to take the leadership.

"Concerning the situation inside the Communist Party, he concluded, "but I have come to agree with many of the theoretical positions of the Trotskyists. Theory is of vital importance and I am rereading the Marxist literature to strengthen my understanding in this respect. But theory must be translated into action.

"In my opinion we need a revolutionary regroupment of all genuine class struggle fighters. Action by the strongest possible vanguard force through direct intervention in the class struggle is of vital importance. The masses of France want a

new 1936 but they don't want a carbon copy of the Popular Front of that day. They want a real showdown with the ruling class.

"Let me repeat that class struggle fighters need have no fear of being in a minority at the start. If they stick to the needs and will of the workers they can win in the end. But we are now at a new beginning and we need at the outset a revolutionary reunification as the first step toward united action by the working class."

Lemoine picked up a well-thumbed pamphlet, "The Communist Program," containing a speech made by Rosa Luxemburg in 1918. He explained that the police had overlooked it when they raided his home and confiscated his library. As a youth of 17 he had written on the flyleaf, "See if it is possible to realize some points of this program."

"Please tell the American workers," he said, "I still think

it can be done."

## ... French Workers Face Threat of Dictatorship

### The Paratroopers Of General Massu

(Continued from Page 1) dictatorship whose motive is continuance of the war in Algeria.

Even worse, it deprives the half-million French soldiers in Algeria of any legal basis for refusing to follow the orders of their commanding generals.

Thus while the generals are blessed with legality in their open moves to overthrow the French Republic, the rank-and-file soldiers are faced with court-martial, perhaps the firing squad, if they refuse to follow orders to destroy the Republic.

Furthermore, Pflimlin's government announced that it is sending the insurgent generals more troops and ammunition. Simultaneously it extended indefinitely the period of service for draftees so that troops in Algeria due for discharge will be kept there under the brass hats' discipline. The Paris government could precipitate a crisis for the insurgent generals by stopping the shipments of arms, gasoline, weapons, supplies and particularly the transfer of money for pay. But it prefers to do the very opposite, even appropriating on May 17 an extra and unsolicited \$190 million to the Algerian par-

liamentary early in 1956. They did it then to curry favor with the Mollet-Mendes-France government (Social-Democratic and liberal capitalist). When this overture for a Popular Front on its behalf, the CP stopped voting for the emergency laws as they came up regularly for renewal — at first abstaining, later voting "no."

These emergency laws, depriving the Algerian people of all their political and civil rights, served as the legal basis for the reign of terror by the French militarists and colonists against the Moslem majority in Algeria. These emergency laws permitted General Massu's paratroopers to engage freely in the torturing and killing of Algerians.

The Communist Party and Social-Democratic leaders are faithfully toeing the appeasement line laid down by Pflimlin and the other parliamentary morons even in the most stupid details. Thus on May 20 both parties joined the liberals, moderates, de Gaulists, Poujadists, and fascists in parliament in voting a unanimous resolution of national gratitude to the army and confidence in it.

Militant and united action against the threatening dictatorship is the crying need. On May 16 a Committee for the Defense of the Republic was formed in Paris by political tendencies ranging all the way from Mendes-France supporters on the right to the PCI (Trotskyists) on the left. Its great defect was that it excluded the Communist Party. Opposing the

exclusion of any group wanting to fight the de Gaulle danger, the PCI spokesmen are urging that CP representatives be invited.

These laws is Jules Moch, who in the same post during 1946-47 specialized in the brutal suppression of Communist Party demonstrations and strikes.

A realistic appraisal of the French situation appeared in the May 21 Wall Street Journal, whose correspondent in France wrote: "The whole tactic of the parliamentarians who now control the Paris government is to keep de Gaulle out while shaping their policies in forms which it is hoped will lure back the allegiance to the army and the French settlers in Algeria — which Pflimlin announced would be applied by General Salan."

One of the worst crimes on the record of the French CP leaders is that they supported these martial-law measures against the Algerian people when they were first introduced

## Local Directory

BOSTON	Workers Educational Center, Gainsborough Bldg., 295 Huntington Ave.
BUFFALO	Militant Forum, 831 Main St.
CHICAGO	Socialist Workers Party, 777 W. Adams, DE 2-9736.
CLEVELAND	Socialist Workers Party, 10609 Superior Ave., Room 301, SW 1-1818. Open Friday nights 7 to 9.
DETROIT	Eugene V. Debs Hall, 3737 Woodward.
LOS ANGELES	Forum Hall and Modern Book Shop, 1702 E. 4th St. AN 9-4953 and AN 3-1533. Book Shop open Mon. 7-9 P.M.; Wed. 8-10 P.M.; Sat. 12-5 P.M.
MILWAUKEE	150 East Juneau Ave.
MINNEAPOLIS	Socialist Workers Party, 322 Monroe.
ST. LOUIS	For information phone MO 4-7104.

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## THE MILITANT

Published Weekly in the Interests of the Working People  
THE MILITANT PUBLISHING ASSOCIATION  
116 University Pl., N.Y. 3, N.Y. Phone: AL 5-7460  
Editor: DANIEL ROBERTS  
Business Manager: BEATRICE ALLEN

Vol. XXII — No. 21

Monday, May 26, 1958

## Labor Party Move in Canada

Organized labor in Canada has taken an important step toward launching a labor party. The decision to move in this direction was taken by the Canadian Labor Congress which met in Winnipeg April 21-25. The Congress is composed of unions affiliated with the AFL-CIO.

With less than a dozen dissenting votes, the 1,500 delegates instructed the executive council of the congress to begin the work necessary for the formation of "an effective alternative political force based on the needs of workers, farmers and similar groups." The council is to report back to the next convention in 1960.

According to a report in Union News, voice of the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers Union, the two-year period is to be used to explore the prospects for winning support of other groups and provide for the tentative establishment of party organization and financial support. Regardless of the response from those outside the ranks of labor, the report continues, the council is under instructions to draft a constitution for a new party.

Thus, Canadian labor leaders have made the kind of progressive move that their United States counterparts have stubbornly resisted. Why did they do it? Two big factors undoubtedly helped

shape this decision. The recession has hit hard in Canada. One worker in ten is jobless and the toll is mounting. At the same time the Tory party just won a sweeping victory in the national elections. This heightens the prospects of an anti-labor offensive. In such a situation, preaching reliance on capitalist politicians is no easy job.

However, the fact of a near-unanimous decision does not mean that all of the Canadian union officials are now ready to go all-out to build the new party. There are undoubtedly those who hope that developments in the next two years will provide a reprieve from the projected action. But the developing crisis of Canadian capitalism coupled with a rising militancy in the working class gives every hope the movement will not be scuttled. The decision of the Congress can provide the framework for a giant step forward by Canadian labor.

An important by-product of this is the highly progressive effect that it can have on unionists in this country. Despite the greater size and strength of the AFL-CIO in the U.S., the ruling bureaucracy has insisted that we have no choice but to remain captives of the Big Business parties. Canadian labor can help educate the ranks of U.S. labor to the fact that this just isn't so.

## Investigate the FBI

Few things would do this country as much good as a thorough public airing of the activities of the FBI. The cause of freedom would be well served by the destruction, once and for all, of the myth that these federal cops are all-powerful, all-wise and all-just. J. Edgar Hoover and his snooping squads have come to believe that myth themselves. They have violated laws — and gotten away with it. They have ignored traditional civil liberties — and gotten away with it. They have done more to destroy freedom in this country than any other single agency.

A contribution to the much-needed exposure of this political police was made by the Cleveland industrialist, Cyrus Eaton. Eaton is a capitalist, a believer in the profit system, but he has his own ideas and obviously isn't easily intimidated by cops.

On a national television broadcast he blasted the FBI for its work "in investigating, in snooping, in informing, in creeping up on people." He charged that Hitler with his Gestapo "never had such spy organizations as we have in this country today."

As if to prove just how right Cyrus Eaton was, the House Un-American Activities Committee announced in an answering television broadcast that he would be subpoenaed to appear before it to explain his attack, as if he had no right to speak his mind. Undoubtedly, this move was calculated to warn anyone else in this country who might think it permissible to criticize the FBI.

Sen. Hennings (D-Mo.) suggested that the Committee should also subpoena J. Edgar Hoover to ask him to explain "what statutory authority" the FBI has to tap 90 phone lines across the country. Hoover admitted to that number in a recent statement. Hennings further promised, and we hope he keeps that promise, "A Senate Committee on Constitutional Rights, which is studying wiretapping and the Bill of Rights, intends to invite both Cyrus Eaton and J. Edgar Hoover to test-

tify at the same time."

Mr. Eaton may have exaggerated the power of the FBI when he likened it to the Gestapo. The FBI only aspires, as yet, to wield that much power. But Mr. Eaton did not exaggerate the crimes that have been committed by J. Edgar Hoover's department. He understated them.

It would be bad enough if the FBI were guilty only of snooping and spying on people. But a closer study of some of its handiwork in recent years yields strong evidence that the FBI has committed far graver crimes.

It is well-known that the FBI has been protected by a virtual conspiracy of the press and all other agencies of public information. Few criticisms of the FBI get reported. And all propaganda aimed at enhancing the power of the FBI gets big publicity.

It is inevitable under such circumstances that these police agents come to believe they are above and beyond the law. Supposedly, as an arm of the Department of Justice, the duty of the FBI is to protect the innocent and to apprehend the guilty. However, in its real function as a political police the FBI persecutes individuals whether they are guilty of criminal conduct or not.

We and many others believe a thorough study of the case of Alger Hiss, who served a five-year sentence in prison, reveals that he was framed up. We believe the Rosenbergs, who were executed in 1953, and Morton Sobell, now serving a 30-year sentence in prison, were also framed up.

There is ample evidence in both these cases that the FBI willfully obstructed justice, concealed evidence, encouraged perjury and intimidated witnesses.

It may be too much to hope that now the FBI will be investigated. But one day such an investigation will be made. When it is, J. Edgar Hoover will lose his red, white and blue halo and take his proper place as public enemy No. 1 of justice and freedom.

## 'Nothing's Too Good...'

In America, so the fable runs, there are no classes and everybody gets equal treatment. The trouble with the rest of the world is that it doesn't follow this example. So we have to keep a big army to defend our way of life. This army is itself a model of what we're out to defend. Take the example of the new law giving everybody in the armed forces a raise. This extra money was divvied up in strict keeping with the democratic principles that prevail in the military establishment and is identical with the pattern of democratic American industry. In fact the new pay-scale plan was drafted by a group headed by the chairman of the board of General Electric which is well known for its democratic methods of dispensing money to its employees.

The military pay raises aren't based on any abstract concept of equality but on the democratic basis of need. For example, Generals who were trying to get by on \$1,200 to \$1,700 a month were awarded a 33% hike, or an average increase of \$424. It was probably recognized

that this amount (about \$400 a week average) isn't really enough for a General to live on. But then you have to remember it costs us more to take care of Generals since they need to have better food, lodging and recreation facilities so they can do a job defending democracy.

But the government really let its heart run away with its head when it came to the enlisted men. For example, previously buck privates were knocking down from \$78 to \$108 a month. Now — whether they need it or not — each and every one is going to get an additional \$1 a month. This means that some of them will be drawing as much as \$25 a week.

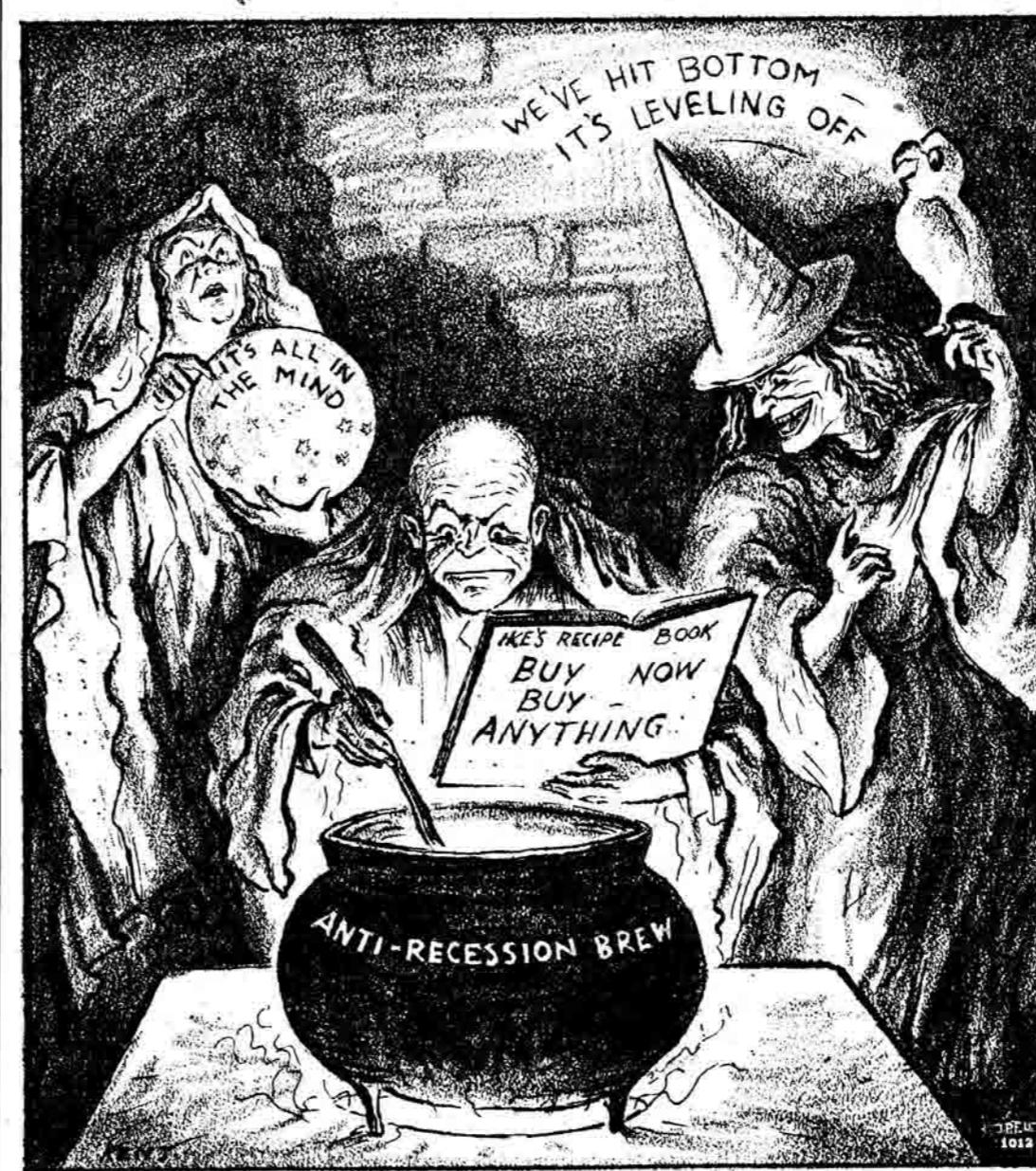
The enlisted men should get theirs like everyone else. But they already enjoy a lot of privileges denied officers. Instead of a lonely existence in private quarters, they share large cooperative barracks and latrines. They enjoy long hikes and other exercises in the fresh air denied to generals. And when a shooting war breaks out, they get to go right up front where everything is going on. Do they really need that buck a month?

Relating some of his own experiences as an active socialist, Dunne discussed key issues of the day including the Soviet Union and the question of nuclear tests, presenting the SWP analysis of these various problems.

The joking and laughter that filled the hall before the lecture began made it evident that the young people present were not on the somber side. But

Signed articles by contributors do not necessarily represent the *Militant's* policies. These are expressed in its editorials.

"Entered as second class matter March 7, 1944 at the Post Office at New York, N.Y., under the act of March 3, 1879."



## ...Knife Adam C. Powell

(Continued from Page 1)

thorn in the sides of both Democrats and Republicans. He has introduced many civil rights bills that have served to put both parties on the spot. A shrewd, vote-conscious politician, Powell was quick to sense rising Negro militancy during the past several years and stepped up his introduction of civil rights measures accordingly. He evoked the special wrath of Eisenhower in 1955 and 1956 by tacking anti-segregation "riders" to Administration-supported military reserve and school construction bills.

The 1956 school-construction bill rider brought a public tirade from Eisenhower that was soon followed by a Justice Department investigation of Powell's income tax returns.

A grand jury was impaneled in December 1956 and former Assistant U.S. Attorney Thomas Bolan assigned to the case. Bolan's political outlook is indicated by the fact that after he left the Justice Department he became a law partner of the late Senator McCarthy's notorious aide, Roy Cohn.

However, within a few months, it is reported, the government decided to suspend the investigation. Rumor had it that this was in return for Powell's 1956 endorsement of Eisenhower. But the fact that the grand jury was established after the election might indicate that the case was suspended for lack of evidence.

### NATIONAL REVIEW

The issue was revived with publication of an "inside dope" article in *National Review* Dec. 14, 1957. Entitled, "The Wheels of Justice Stop for Adam Clayton Powell, Jr." its detailed contents strongly suggest a pipeline to the prosecutor's office — perhaps to Bolan himself.

The reactionary weekly then took the unusual step of direct approach to the grand jury. The grand jury is the conscience of the community," Kaufman intoned. "Many are

inspired into activity because of newspapers."

With Powell under this kind of fire the Democrats are moving ahead to try to rid themselves of a civil-rights maverick even though it means deepening the ire of the many in Harlem who are fed up with the machine and its "Uncle Tom" lieutenants in the area.

### TALKS MILITANT

The gaping holes in Powell's record in terms of backing up militant talk with action is well known to Harlem voters. Yet they have regularly returned him to office by huge pluralities. The strength of his machine is based in good measure on the fact that, compared to the local Tammany stooges, he looks like a real independent.

A dramatic manifestation of the anti-Tammany mood in Harlem was provided at the NAACP rally May 17 on the fourth anniversary of the Supreme Court school desegregation decision. Powell, who utilized the meeting for a slashing attack on his political opponents, was greeted with strong applause. In sharp contrast, Borough President Hulan Jack, top Negro figure in the Wagner administration, and associated with Wagner's sell-out of civil rights, was booed so roundly by the large crowd that it was impossible for him to speak more than a few sentences.

The anti-Tammany sentiment appears so deep that some of those who want to help eliminate Powell feel it necessary to talk out of both sides of their mouths. After Powell's speech at the NAACP rally, national secretary Roy Wilkins issued a statement attacking him for allegedly inciting "racialism."

But at the same time he felt moved to point out: "It may very well be . . . that his income tax troubles stem from his consistent and vigorous championing of civil rights for his people. . . . As for his support of Mr. Eisenhower in 1956, we know of other Democrats elsewhere in the nation who did not support the Democratic party in that election and who have not been dropped by the party."

### LOSES CHAIRMAN POST

The dual standard of the Democratic high command is more glaring than the statement indicates. In 1956 Powell was stripped of his seniority by the Democratic House leadership, again on the claimed ground of his endorsement of Eisenhower, but actually to prevent the possibility of his becoming chairman of the Labor and Education Committee. On the other hand, no action was taken against Mississippi Congressman John Williams who campaigned for State's Righter T. Coleman Andrews against Stevenson.

A letter received from the chairman of the club thanked Dunne for his presentation and said, "I think you created a lot of interest, and even though our political beliefs are opposite to yours, it was a healthy situation for both systems to be discussed."

## Vincent Dunne Speaks On Socialism at YMCA

MINNEAPOLIS — A group of young people at the YMCA early this month heard a lecture on socialism by V. R. Dunne, veteran trade unionist and chairman of the Minnesota Socialist Workers Party. The SWP had been invited to provide a speaker by the Erling Y's Men's Club. Most of those who filled the hall were under 35, either in, or training for various professional fields. They are obviously giving serious thought to the problem of future security for themselves and their families.

Relating some of his own experiences as an active socialist, Dunne discussed key issues of the day including the Soviet Union and the question of nuclear tests, presenting the SWP analysis of these various problems.

The joking and laughter that filled the hall before the lecture began made it evident that the young people present were not on the somber side. But

they listened attentively to what Dunne had to say. During the question period they posed a whole series of questions, ranging from the virtues that some of them saw in capitalism, to the meaning of Roosevelt's New Deal and to the current developments in the Soviet Union.

After an hour of vigorous discussion, the chairman reluctantly adjourned the meeting. As Dunne was leaving the hall he was thanked by individual members for providing a highly stimulating discussion. Several told Dunne that while they did not agree with his views they felt that such an exchange of ideas was extremely valuable.

A letter received from the chairman of the club thanked Dunne for his presentation and said, "I think you created a lot of interest, and even though our political beliefs are opposite to yours, it was a healthy situation for both systems to be discussed."

## Calif. Socialists And Democratic Primary Race

LOS ANGELES, May 16 — The Socialist Party-Social Democratic Federation at its California state convention last month endorsed Fritjof Thygeson as its candidate for U.S. Senator. Thygeson had filed for the post on both the Democratic and Prohibition party primary ballots under the state's election code which permits a candidate of one party to "cross file" in the others.

The SP-SDF also planned to file in the Republican party but were unable to raise the additional \$450 required or to obtain 65 Republican sponsors for a place on the GOP ballot. In the end, Thygeson also failed to qualify for the Prohibition party ticket because he lacked one signature for the necessary 65 sponsors. He will thus run solely on the Democratic party ballot.

The SP-SDF decided to run their candidate for U.S. Senator instead of for Governor, California's "hottest" election race. The decision was based on a desire not to challenge Pat Brown, the Democratic politician supported by the top labor officialdom against Republican Senator Knowland. Brown is supposedly against Knowland's "right-to-work-law" campaign and is therefore favored by the labor leadership as a "lesser of two evils." On the other hand, though officially endorsed by the CIO, there is no real labor push behind Claire Engel, the Democratic nominee for U.S. Senator.

The SP-SDF decision not to challenge Brown is in line with the party-federation's policy to go along with the top officialdom of the labor movement in its support to capitalist politicians. This was spelled out in a January 1957 speech by Louis Goldberg, late vice-president of the SP-SDF at the merger convention of the SP and SDF. "Carrying out our document on political action," he said, "we will not nominate for public office candidates in opposition to those endorsed by the legitimate labor movement."

Another violation of political independence involved in the Thygeson campaign is his running under the banner of a capitalist party even though Thygeson intends to advertise himself as a socialist.

The SP-SDF claims it chose this particular method of participating in the elections because of the severe restrictions that the California ballot laws place on minority parties. The California SP-SDF just lost a legal fight carried to the U.S. Supreme Court against the prohibitive qualifications. In contesting for elementary ballot rights, the organization was fighting not only for the rights of minority socialist parties but for the right of the labor movement to engage in independent political action. Their legal fight, therefore, deserved the support of every radical worker.

However, the SP-SDF is doing a disservice by running on the capitalist party ballots as a means of "getting" around the election laws. An all-important goal the socialist movement and the unions must set themselves is to carry through a break with the capitalist parties and to challenge the capitalist candidates with candidates of their own. The way to further the goal is for socialists to act on it — namely, to run independently wherever possible and to advocate similar action by the labor movement.

## Independent Avenues Open

Although it is extremely difficult for socialists to do this in California because of the restrictive election laws, there are several avenues open to them even with their present smallness of numbers. For example, if the SP-SDF had really wanted to place a candidate on the ballot in such a way as not to be identified with any of the capitalist parties, it could have run for any one of a number of non-partisan offices open for election in the primaries.

The SP-SDF notion that it can counteract being on the Democratic ballot by explaining that their candidate is really a socialist and favors independence from the Democrats is false and illusory. For one thing, to consistently carry out plans for a "socialist protest" vote in the Democratic primary, the SP-SDF would have to call on all socialist-minded workers to register Democratic. Thus no matter how strongly the SP-SDF candidate might advocate socialism and independent political action this would be completely overshadowed by his actions in an opposite direction.

The effect of such a contradictory tactic is to bolster the dangerous illusion fostered by the official labor leadership that the best way to advance labor's political interests is to stay in the Democratic Party and contest for program and candidates there in an attempt to reform it in labor's direction.

## Calendar of Events

### CHICAGO

Election Campaign Social, Thursday, May 22, 9 P.M. Forum Hall, 777 W. Adams St.

### MINNEAPOLIS

Socialist Rally: Hear Rev. Jos. P. King, candidate for Congress, 2nd Cong. District, Chicago, Ill., speak for a united socialist ticket! Saturday, June 7, 322 Hennepin, Rm. 205.

### Socialist

#### Election Policy In 1958

By James P. Cannon

National Chairman

Socialist Workers Party

10 cents

PIONEER PUBLISHERS

116 University Place

New York 3, N.Y.

### NEW YORK

Hawaiian Luau — a Feast!

June 7, 6 P.M. 116 University Place, Auspices: Socialist Workers Party

## At Six and Seven

By Theodore Kovalesky

"I'm a tool and die maker," Ken said. The man didn't sneer. He was too bored to sneer. "Tool and die makers are a dime a dozen. Are you looking for work?"

Ken knew it wasn't really a question. It was a sort of password, and he gave the answer, "Yes."

"Sign here."

It was his sixth unemployment insurance check, and it resembled a paycheck only in the way that a gaunt man resembles a fat man.

First he had tried machine shops, the smaller ones. The big factories would be a waste of time, he knew. But even the small places had nothing. At most shops they said, "Look, we're laying off our own men. We haven't got a thing for you." One little machine shop owner laughed at him. "Are you kidding?" he asked. Ken smiled too. Later he wondered why either of them had smiled.

Then one day, on his usual search through the classified ads, he read that the Wilson Machine Co. wanted a grinder.

The man at Wilson's was skeptical. "But I can run any machine," Ken told him. "I've had plenty of experience on grinders."

"I don't doubt you can run it," the man said, "but we want a man who will stay. You toolmakers are all the same. You don't want to stick on a job like this."

"Why I'd like nothing better than a chance to build up seniority at a place like Wilson's," Ken lied.

"The reason we've got an open job here," the man continued, "is that the last man on the job died. He worked on that job," he said reverently, "and died on it."

Ken was about to volunteer to die on the grinder's job, himself, but the man told him briskly that he didn't think he would do, so Ken left.

Finally, certain that all machine shop possibilities had been exhausted, Ken began to try other places.

At the dairy he tried to stifle his disgust at the sweet-sour odor that permeated the building. "Yes," he told the man with hearty enthusiasm, "I've decided that machine shops aren't really my line of work. What I'd really like is to work in a dairy."

The boss was unmoved. Nobody could fool him. "If you were a dairy man," he said, "if you were really a dairy man, you would of never wasted all those years in machine shops."

"Well," Ken realized he was floundering a little, "I didn't realize it until lately. I thought all out, I took stock of myself . . ."

"Once a dairy man," the boss said sternly, "always a dairy man. You would have known. I knew when I was a kid."

Ken momentarily toyed with the notion of telling him a cruel uncle had forced him

to be a toolmaker instead of a dairy man, and that the uncle had recently died, freeing him to seek the life he loved, the life of a true dairy man; but he sensed that the boss would scorn him for not having defied—or even killed—the imaginary uncle who stood between him and his true vocation. Rather than secure him the job, this story would merely lower him in the foreman's esteem.

Next he spent some of his slender finances on a chauffeur's license and started making the rounds of the trucking concerns.

His first encounter was prophetic of the rest. "You ain't no truck driver," the hiring boss told Ken. "You're a toolmaker."

"Sure I was a toolmaker," Ken admitted, almost with shame, "but I want to get away from it. I want a job out in the open air . . ."

"The Hercules Trucking Co. ain't no outdoor health cure," the boss said sanctimoniously and added in an accusing tone, "Anyhow, you're a toolmaker."

How do you like that! Ken thought, here there's a caste system just like in India, and he had never realized it before. Of course, being in the tool and die maker's caste would be better than say a dishwasher's caste, but when there was no work for toolmakers, it wasn't so good. Besides, when his checks ran out, he'd be mighty glad to get a pearl-diving job.

Finally in desperation he decided to answer one of those terrible, cheery ads that say, "Salesmen, pleasant work, opportunity to make \$200 a week etc., etc."

Approaching the door of the Stecuco Sales Company (Steel Cutlery Co., finest stainless steel dinnerware), he was surprised to hear a dolorous, rhythmic chant. Ken stopped, listened, then shrugged his shoulders and opened the office door.

There in two tiers against the far wall stood a group of men clad in jackets and mackinaws, holding in their right hands shiny imitation leather sample cases. Judging from their appearance they were former steel workers and auto workers. Not one looked like a salesman is generally expected to look. And following the lead of a sinister, jolly, cigar chewing, plump sales manager, they were intoning miserably, in chorus:

"We're lucky guys, we make good dough. We're glad we work for Stecuco!"

Ken listened in unbelieving horror, then quietly closed the door and went home.

The next day he stood in line once again. In seven days' time the man's boredom had doubled. Flatly he gave the incantation, "Looking for work?"

Ken obliged with the correct response: "Yes."

"Sign here."

Check number seven.

## ... Tax-Reduction Issue

(Continued from Page 1) house and hotel apartments, fancy restaurant and night-club parties, call girls, as a highly-publicized New York prostitution trial involving General Electric showed last year, etc., etc.

Cited by the February issue of *Labor's Economic Review* (AFL-CIO) is the case of a Pennsylvania dairy owner and his wife who spent five months on a trip to Europe and an African safari and put the bill down as operating expenses of the dairy. When the item was challenged, the Tax Court held that because they had taken moving pictures, the trip was "an ordinary and necessary" business expense.

The AFL-CIO proposal to raise the basic individual exemption from the present \$600 to \$700 would mean a tax reduction of \$20 a year for each worker and an additional \$20 for each dependent. Of course, this would not help a worker unemployed for the whole year who, having no income, has no income tax to pay. The AFL-CIO leaders believe that it would benefit him indirectly through the effect on employment of the increased spending by workers who would have that much more money to spend.

However that may be, such a reduction would benefit all fully employed workers and many partially employed workers. The \$700 basic exemption would mean that a family of four with an income of \$3,100 or less would pay no income tax. Since the Department of Labor figures, brought up to date with today's prices, show that a family of four needs \$4,472 a year just to maintain a minimum, decent standard of living, the demand is extremely modest.

It is possible there will be a tax cut in this Congress. This is not because the Democratic leaders of Congress are giving in to the demands of the AFL-CIO, but because the Chamber of Commerce, the National Association of Manufacturers and other Big Business groups have decided for a cut. But this means that the lion's share of the cut will go to the upper brackets and only a few crumbs to working people. The truce between the Democratic Congressional leaders and the administration on tax legislation thus is not only to facilitate joint agreement on the if and when of any new tax law but also on who-gets-what.

**LACKS POWER**

The reason the present tax laws swindle the workers and favor the rich, and that any tax cut coming out of this Congress will do the same, is that labor is almost impotent politically. And the cause for this is that the unions haven't built their own political party but try to exert influence through the two capitalist parties.

Once labor breaks out of the vicious circle in which it has been politically trapped, then with real possibility of success it could push for a drastic overhaul of the tax setup. Such a revision should include doing away with all sales taxes and abolition of income tax for those earning \$7,500 a year or less.

(Second of two articles)

### URGE END TO JIM-CROW

The student senate at the University of Miami, an all-white school recently voted a resolution 14-11 urging the university administration to end segregation because of race or color.

**Rosenberg-Sobell Trial Record Again Available**

By Myra Tanner Weiss

MAY 21 — The Committee to Secure Justice for Morton Sobell announced today the third printing of the record in the 1951 trial of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg and Morton Sobell. The boxed set of eight paper-bound volumes with 1715 pages will be released June 2 for sale at \$6.00.

It can be purchased from the Committee to Secure Justice for Morton Sobell, 940 Broadway, New York 10, N. Y.

The Rosenbergs were executed in 1953 despite worldwide protests. Morton Sobell was sentenced to 30 years in prison.

Still, these savage sentences settled nothing. As Look magazine last October pointed out, "But now — four years after the execution — the clever propaganda of the Communists has so confused many loyal citizens that they are asking themselves: Were the Rosenbergs really guilty?"

The record of the trial at the height of the witch-hunt hysteria can hardly be called "Communist" propaganda. But it is precisely the record that has done more than any other book to cause people to shout "frame-up."

Dr. Harold C. Urey, atomic scientist and Nobel Prize winner, commented, "Until the time I was half-way through the record, I was convinced that the defendants were completely guilty. But as I read on I was shocked by what had taken place. It was plainly obvious that there was outright perjury.

I was astounded at how little there was about Morton Sobell in the trial. You cannot tell what he is even supposed to have done."

### "OVERT ACTS"

Indeed, the first indictment of the "conspirators" by the Grand Jury, Aug. 17, 1950, after "full" confessions of the government witnesses, made no mention at all of Morton Sobell. Eleven "overt acts" were charged. Sobell was not mentioned in any of them. Two superseding indictments added the name of Sobell and a twelfth "overt act," which also failed to deal with any act committed by Sobell.

Despite the fact that Elitcher faced prosecution by the FBI on at least a perjury charge and by his testimony escaped punishment, the jury believed Elitcher. Sobell was sentenced to 30 years in prison — a virtual life sentence for a man in his early thirties.

The trial record makes quite clear, however, that though Sobell was tried and punished as a part of a "conspiracy" to steal atom secrets, the government never linked him with any of the overt acts in that alleged conspiracy.

## THE MILITANT

VOLUME XXII

MONDAY, MAY 26, 1958

NUMBER 21

## Auto Workers Face Arrogant Corporations

By Fred Halsheid

Close to half of the 650,000 members of the UAW in the auto industry are unemployed. Because of loss of overtime and inflation, the rest have taken an average cut in real wages of over 10% since February, 1957. (U.S. News and World Report, May 23.) This cut has occurred in spite of automatic wage increases received over the past year under present union contracts. An increase of at least 25¢ an hour would be necessary to bring weekly buying power of the employed auto worker up to last year's level.

The three major auto corporations, whose contracts with the United Auto Workers Union expire at the end of this month, are still holding to their demand that the present contracts be renewed for two years without change.

The auto bosses, in news releases designed for wide public consumption, claim that the union's demands would cost the companies up to 73¢ an hour. But management journals are much more candid. "The company-union differences in economic demands," says the May 1 Wall Street Journal, "are not very far apart in their essentials. The really important union demand, for a general wage increase, comes to 10 cents an hour and the companies say they have already offered seven." (Renewal of the present contract would grant six to nine cents annually in automatic increases.)

Delegates to the 1957 UAW convention opposed Reuther's dues hike plan in large part on the ground that the union officialdom was not effectively combating the steady increase of speed-up in the plants. Since the recession the speed-up problem has grown even more acute.

production blackout" this summer. Shutdowns for model changes will begin one to three months earlier than usual, says Ward's, and are expected to continue until the stock-pile is depleted.

Most auto workers now em- ployed, therefore, face layoffs soon. A strike now would make them ineligible for unemploy- ment compensation.

UAW leaders have repeatedly

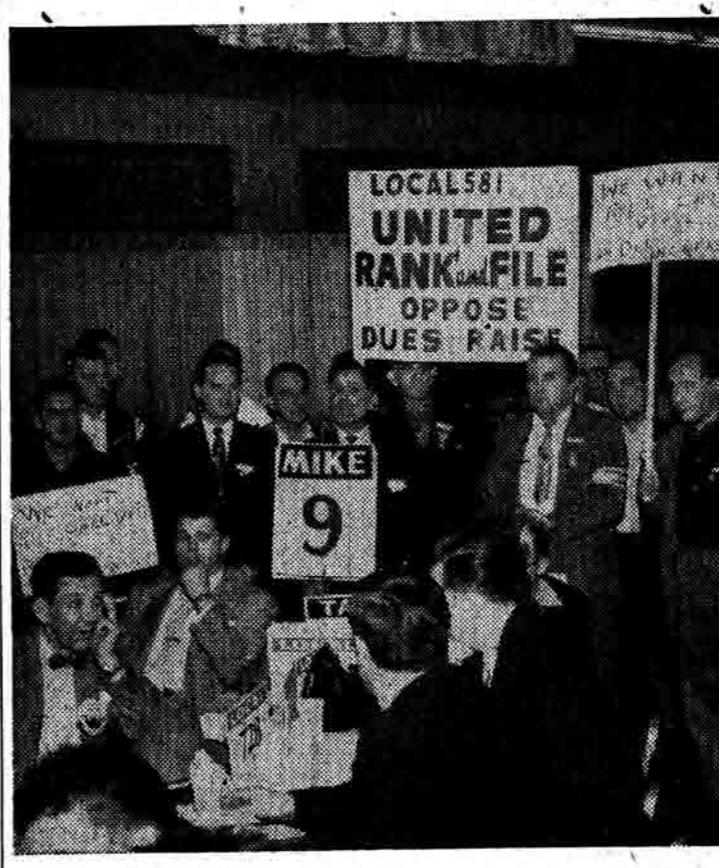
announced that they will not

be forced into a strike now, and

have instructed local unions to

prepare to operate without con- tracts. Similar instructions for

Chrysler workers are expected.



strike — a walkout with as little active rank-and-file participation as possible — would not substantially hurt the corporations right now. But the UAW was built against greater odds than those now prevailing. Serious preparations by the union for militant mass action — of the calibre of the sit down strikes, for instance — would make the bosses stop and think.

### PIPE DREAMS

But that kind of mature, responsible and practical policy is virtually excluded — for the present. Reuther and his staff have been too busy with their pipe dreams about progress under capitalism to prepare the ranks of the union to struggle in their own behalf. And Reuther juked the demand for a shorter work week that could have rallied support from both unemployed and employed and from the country's entire working class.

One reason the auto bosses

are so arrogant now is because

they know the morale of the

ranks has been impaired, at

least temporarily. "If there

were real strike issues this

year," observes the May 10

Business Week, "such discon-

tention would be quickly for-

gotten in solid support."

Ever since 1947 Reuther has

been riding the boom, counting

on getting concessions without

a real struggle. This policy cost

the workers dearly, particularly

in increased speed-up. But while

the boom lasted, certain gains

were made — partly because

of traditional UAW rank-and-

file militancy that was not

easily suppressed, and partly

because of the sheer weight of

the union in a period of relative

labor shortage.

But the gains would have been

much greater had a more re-

sponsible — that is a class-

struggle — policy been follow-

ed throughout. The ranks of the

union felt this almost instinc-



REUTHER

tively. It was this feeling — that they were not getting what was coming to them — that led the workers to seek special channels for getting improvements. That was the basic driving force behind the revolt of the skilled trades after the 1955 contract was signed. In that case, much of the healthy militancy and energy which a class-struggle policy would have channeled into union building, was thwarted and gave rise to futile splinter movements.

Now that the boom is over, Reuther is in full retreat. He dumped the shorter work-week demand, not because it is not suited to the time — any child knows it is — but because he knew the corporations would not grant it without a fight. Now the corporations are not granting anything without a fight. Any settlement less than 25¢ an hour will involve a cut in living standards for the employed auto worker, and the unemployed will still be out on the street. Mark down another experience — and this time a very wide-spread and deep-going one — with Reuther's class-collaborationist policies.

## FUND SCOREBOARD

City	Quota	Paid	Percent
DENVER	\$40	\$66.00	165
SOUTH	200	215.00	108
ALLENTOWN	11		