

## Militant Fund At 50% Mark But Still Lags

By George Lavan

\$1,379 was received by the Militant's 30th Anniversary Fund during the seven-day span ending Nov. 11. This puts our scoreboard at the half-way mark to the \$18,000 goal. But this still represents a lag in schedule of 14% or 12½ days. (See Scoreboard, page 2.)

Along with a payment from Newark, which since the beginning has occupied an on-or-ahead of schedule place on our scoreboard, comes a note from local fund director J. Skivar: "We had an election social last Saturday night . . . it was very successful. We had a few people more than usually and we made a few dollars. One dollar admission included fried chicken, garlic bread, salad and coffee. We plan to have a Militant social in a few weeks . . .".

Supporters of the Militant in Newark not only know how to pay like clockwork, but from the menu submitted have learned how to beat the high-cost-of-living. Militant readers in that area take note.

From St. Louis, which this week tops the scoreboard, comes a payment and letter saying: "We had an excellent meeting on Nov. 3 regarding regroupment and had a good attendance." Attending were people associated with the SWP, CP and Social-Democrats. Plans

were laid for a follow-up meeting.

As advertisements in this paper have announced, Los Angeles has its Militant Anniversary celebration Nov. 15. Also being planned in L.A. is a bazaar — date still to be announced. In New York, too, there is a great bustle and lugging-in of things for a forthcoming, super-duper bargain bazaar.

A gratifying number of contributions from individual readers has begun to come from such diverse places as Baltimore, Bangor, Maine, and Ottawa, Canada (\$10 plus a note: "Good luck. I wish this could be more"). For those who are collectors of interesting place names here are a few of the towns so far heard from: Tomah, Wisconsin; Vashon, Washington; Saugerties, N.Y.; Anaheim, Cal.; Granite Falls, Minnesota; Greensburg, Pennsylvania; Avondale, Georgia; Lloydminster, Alberta, Canada; Birmingham, Washington; Irwin, Cal.; Corning, N.Y.; Whittier, Cal.; Plentywood, Montana.

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## Kutcher Urges Parole For Winston and Green

A hearing on the applications for parole of Henry Winston and Gilbert Green, the last remaining Smith Act prisoners, was scheduled for Nov. 13. Numerous defenders of civil liberties have urged the parole board to act favorably on the applications of these two imprisoned Communist Party leaders.

Among those is James Kutcher, the legless veteran who successfully fought a ten-year battle against the witch hunters because of his avowed membership in the Socialist Workers Party. Kutcher recently addressed the following letter to the U.S. Board of Parole in Washington, D.C.:

"The government's contention that there are no political prisoners in federal jails indicates a desire to maintain in words, if not in fact, the basic American tradition of not imprisoning people for their political ideas or utterances. Favorable action by you on Winston's and Green's applications will be a step in the direction of what once was a proud claim of Americans — that no one in this country was put in prison for his or her political views.

"Continued imprisonment of Winston and Green would be all the more shocking in view of the recent Supreme Court decisions and the reversal by the Court of Appeals in the California Smith Act cases, August 4, 1958, whose legal dicta had they been operative at the Winston-Green trial, would have prevented their conviction.

"Mr. Green and Mr. Winston have now served over one-third of their eight-year sentences; their prison records show good behavior; they have offered more than adequate guarantees for fulfillment after release of parole conditions; their continued imprisonment would only prolong the tragic effect of separation.

(Continued on Page 2)

# Depression, Anti-Union Offensive Trounce GOP

## How Ohio Scab Bill Was Swamped

By Jean Simon  
CLEVELAND, Nov. 11—Don't underestimate the workers!

That was the major lesson of the Ohio election for the industrialists, the capitalist party politicians — and the labor bureaucrats.

Faced with a clear-cut class issue, a proposal to write the union-busting "right-to-work" amendment into the state constitution, Ohio workers closed ranks. They organized and led an independent political crusade that defeated the measure by a margin of almost a million votes.

### COMPARE THE MARGINS

Now but the workers can claim credit for the victory. The Democratic "landslide" was an incidental effect, not a cause of the defeat of RTW. Final election returns from the state's 12,960 polling places showed:

### Right-to-Work Amendment (Issue No. 2):

No ..... 2,007,291  
Yes ..... 1,080,266  
Margin ..... 927,025

### Governor:

DiSalle (D) .... 1,887,926  
O'Neill (R) .... 1,427,469  
Margin ..... 460,457

### U.S. Senator:

Young (D) .... 1,669,022  
Bricker (R) .... 1,504,197  
Margin ..... 164,825

Anthony J. Disantis, labor editor of the *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, the paper that spearheaded the drive of the "right-to-work" business interests, wrote in the Nov. 6 issue:

"Ohio voters rejected the 'right-to-work' proposal by the biggest margin ever recorded on an issue on the ballot in the state's history."

He pointed out that the vote for the measure was only 35% of the total cast and that "RTW carried only 18 of the state's 88 counties, all agricultural, and then only by slim margins." In industrial centers the measure "was swamped under a virtual tidal wave of votes churned up against the issue by organized labor and its friends."

### IT WAS DIFFERENT THIS TIME

In the course of the campaign labor was constantly needed by RTW advocates like the Plain Dealer editors with its two outstanding political defeats in recent years: its campaigns to beat Sen. Taft in 1950 and to expand the state unemployment insurance program by a referendum vote in 1955.

Political "experts" failed, however, to note the differences between those campaigns and the one just concluded. The campaign against Taft offered no alternative but a vote for Democrats, whom the workers do not trust either. The 1955 campaign was conducted by a

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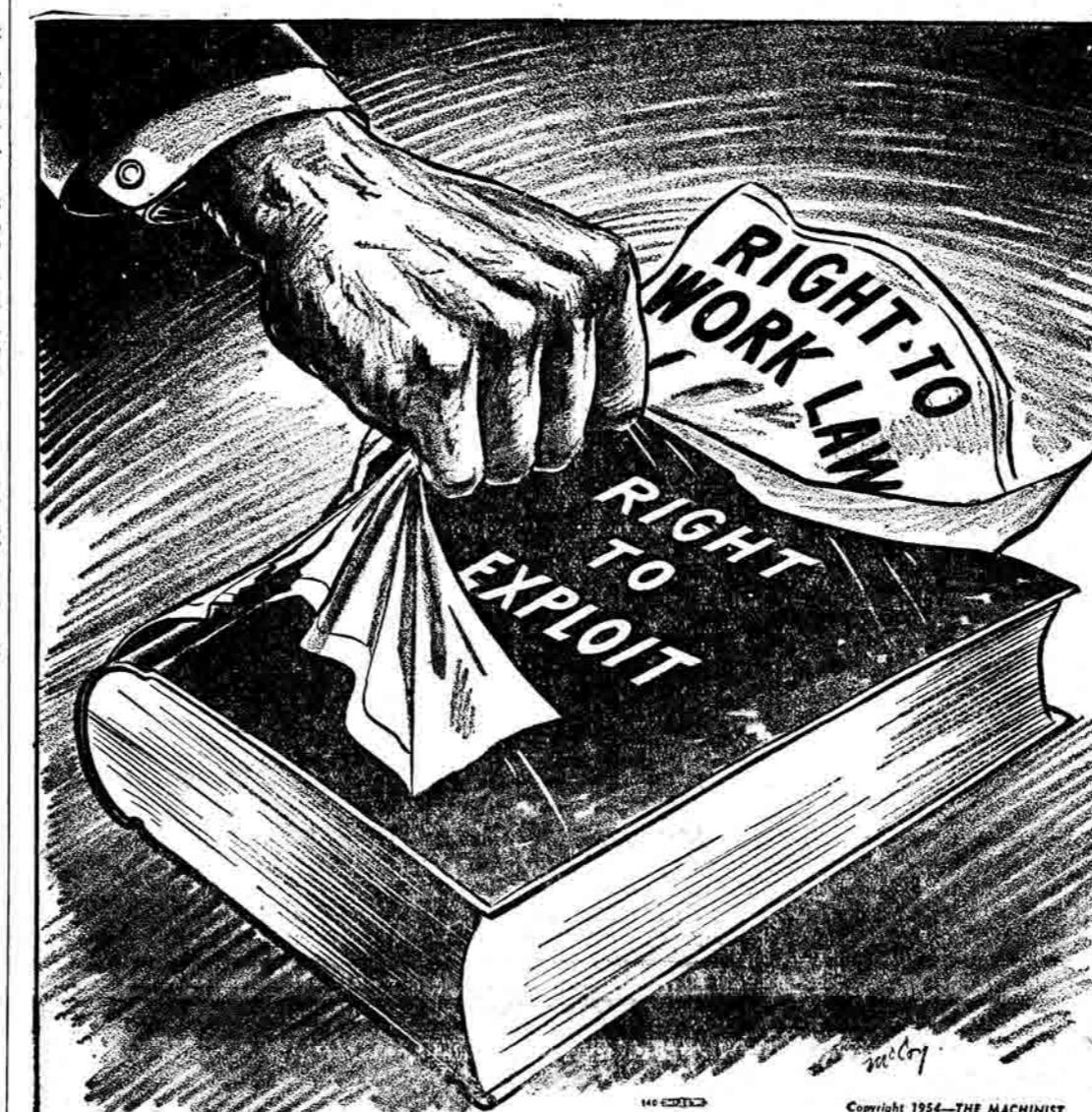
### Unions Register Gains In NLRB Elections

Workers have been voting for union representation in greater numbers than at any time in the last three years according to a recent government report. (N.Y. Times, Nov. 10.) Unions were favored in 68% of the elections conducted by the NLRB in the third quarter of this year. This is the biggest percentage of union victories since 1955, and reverses a three-year trend.

In 805 out of 1,192 elections held from July to September 1958 unions won the majority vote. 587 of these were unions affiliated with the AFL-CIO and 218 were independent. In 387 elections the majority voted for no union. A total of 78,039 workers voted for unions in that quarter.

In the same period a total of 2,840 unfair labor charges were filed, 75% more than in the same quarter of 1957.

(Continued on Page 2)



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## All Youngstown Labor Rallied Against 'Right-to-Work' Bill

By Moses Peterson

YOUNGSTOWN — Ohio was the decisive battleground for "Right-to-Work" legislation. Ohio is the second industrial state in the U.S. In cities like Cleveland, Cincinnati, Toledo, Columbus, Dayton, Akron, Canton and Youngstown there lies a truly massive industrial complex. Despite the great social weight of the industrial working class in Ohio, the political representation in the state has been reactionary. Consequently, the "Right-to-Work" supporters entered the Ohio battle supreme confident.

They had in back of them six months of anti-union agitation conducted by the McClellan Committee. After six months of corruption charges in screaming headlines, the employer forces felt that the brainwashing job was complete — to them the enthusiastic response of their

own number plus the constant drum beating by the press, radio and television had the appearance of a real mass movement. But they did not reckon with the effects of the depression — or at any rate, they incorrectly gauged them. The 1957-58 depression has in some way touched every working-class family in Ohio. Who did the workers blame for their troubles? The corporations or the unions? The outcome of the "Right-to-Work" fight would clearly provide the answer.

### POLITICAL CLASS BATTLE

However, long before election day, the hatred toward Ohio's governor, the GOP and the corporations began to make itself felt. As a result the sensitive political machines of the Catholic Church and of the Democratic Party aligned themselves with the workers and against "Right to Work." These outfitts wanted not only to re-

tain their influence in the labor movement but to avoid a political class struggle. But as the working people lined up solidly against RTW, such a struggle could not be avoided.

Here, in the steel city of Youngstown, active trade-unionists found their fellow workers deeply stirred by the "Right-to-Work" issue. Unemployed workers in angry outbursts pledged to vote "No." They added that they wanted to get off the compensation lines — a clear warning that they expected the unions to fight the depression.

Pensioners turned out in big numbers. At one precinct, an aged Negro woman hobbled painfully into the booth, clutching the union literature and loudly stating, "I want to vote No, that's all, just vote No." Even school children were affected and showed up in school (Continued on Page 4)

## London

By Farrell Dobbs

A bitter strike struggle going on at the Shell Mex building site in London forecasts a nation-wide employer offensive against British labor. Union militants, alert to the danger, are organizing a national rank-and-file conference to discuss defensive measures.

Both events are sowing panic among labor bureaucrats who have forgotten how to fight the bosses, just as they have largely forgotten what life is like for workers on the job.

The Shell Mex strikers are led by their job stewards. Arrayed against them are the McAlpine construction monopoly, police, capitalist newspapers and right-wing union officials.

**FIGHT VICTIMIZATIONS** Over a month ago McAlpine fired all 1,250 building trades workers on the Shell Mex site to weed out "troublemakers." This brutal act brought to a head a systematic policy of victimizing trade unionists. It was against this policy that the

stewards had been fighting. When top union officials gave no sign of acting in defense of the workers the stewards took the lead in picketing the job.

McAlpine's next action showed the "troublemakers" in question to be stewards. A rehiring policy was announced but reinstatement was refused to stewards on the site before the mass firing took place.

The strike continued and mounted police were called in to clear a path for scabs. Strikers resisting the attack on their picket lines were arrested. Some face the threat of jail terms.

In this situation top officials of the Amalgamated Union of Building Trade Workers ordered the strikers to "maintain and defend union agreements" — by scabbing on themselves. The union's executive council said "... there is no dispute at the Shell Mex house site ... there is no dispute members for employment."

### ULTIMATUM

Accusing the strikers of "usurping the functions of the

## But Democrats Won't Meet Workers' Needs

By Myra Tanner Weiss

The American labor movement won an important victory in the Nov. 4 national elections when it smashed Big Business attempts to pass anti-labor legislation under the guise of "right-to-work" propositions in five out of six states.

At the same time the Republican party suffered a serious defeat. Its losses exceeded most Republican fears. Almost all the Republicans whose names had been associated most closely with the witch hunt and hostility to labor were dumped into political limbo, including Presidential aspirant, Senate Republican leader, William Knowland.

In 1956 the Republican Party won the presidency with a majority of nine million. Within two years it was discarded like an old, smelly shoe. Four million unemployed, virtually ignored by the Republicans, plus anti-labor provocations ended six years of Republican power.

### 'Simply Disintegrated'

The Democrats will control the next Congress with a majority of 62-34 in the Senate and a majority of 281-153 in the House of Representatives. In addition Republicans were left with only 15 governors after reducing the Democrats to close to that number in 1952.

As the Wall Street Journal editors put it, Nov. 6, "There's no use in mincing words. The Republican party has simply disintegrated and the wreckage is strewn across three thousand miles of countryside."

The voters who went to the polls last week expressed clearly what they don't want. They don't want recessions and job insecurity. The Democratic Party's victory in large part was a manifestation of this protest vote.

New York apparently resisted the national trend. In actuality, however, it underlined the fact that issues, more than parties, were at stake. Long before Nov. 4 it was clear that billionaire Nelson Rockefeller, Republican candidate for governor, was challenging the Democrats on their own ground — with a concerted drive for support from labor. He out-New-Dealed the Democrats in his promises for better times ahead. He denounced the "right-to-work" propositions, promised stronger rent controls, more health protection, a fight against a subway fare increase, for "traveling" pensions, etc. Democratic Governor Averell Harriman could only stand on his miserable record.

### A Disgusted Republican

A writer for the Wall Street Journal, Nov. 6, reported that Rockefeller had gone so far "to the left," that one disgusted New York Republican said, "I went into the voting booth and there was nothing on the ballot but three socialists—I voted for the one who was running on the Socialist ticket."

Election returns in the last decade have demonstrated clearly that the American voter is restless, shifting from one of the two capitalist parties to the other in a frustrating attempt to make his feelings known. In 1948 the Democrats won. But in 1952, with the Korean war raging, the voters put the Republicans in office. Two years later

(Continued on Page 2)

Newsletter happens to be the current scapegoat."

Opening The Newsletter's columns to rank-and-file unionists appears to have been welcomed by the British labor movement at other than official levels. Many workers are writing about their grievances, discussing issues of labor policy and helping to distribute this paper which they have some reason to feel is their own.

A Scottish worker reports employer attacks on working conditions, "including such questions as tea breaks," as speedup pressures increase.

**DEATH OF A CONSTRUCTION WORKER** From Kent comes the story of a steel erector who "slithered 60 feet to his death." When his fellow unionists stopped work after the tragedy they were denounced as "irresponsible." To this a worker replied, "Impudent bastards."

A local union of miners announces they look forward to "a mighty roar of disapproval" (Continued on Page 2)

Newsletter

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# How "Worker" Views the N.Y. Election Returns

By Harry Ring

According to the post-election editorial comment in the Nov. 8 Worker, it looks as though the Communist Party was left holding the bag with its New York gubernatorial choice, Averell Harriman. The Worker complains that the AFL-CIO failed to mount an active campaign for Harriman; he was "knifed" by the DeSapio machine; Dorothy Schiff, publisher of the N.Y. Post, yanked the rug from under him with a last-minute withdrawal of her paper's endorsement; and finally, on election eve, A. A. Berle of the Liberal Party declared it would be "no tragedy" whenever the election went.

It was "this stupidity and downright doublecross on the Democratic side," says the Worker, coupled with Rockefeller's strategem of running as a "liberal," that cost Harriman the election. And, it adds, "the division in the people's movement of N.Y. was made worse by the appearance of a newly-formed Independent Socialist Party that separated a sizable section of the left and influenced many away from the labor-liberal movement as a whole."

## DIFFERENT TUNE

This post-mortem on Harriman's defeat has little relation to what the Worker said prior to November 4. Then the big argument advanced by the CP leaders for refusing to support the ISP was that the Rockefeller-Harriman contest represented a struggle between the forces of monopoly and a "broad peoples" movement led by a labor-liberal coalition. In view of this claimed lineup, they argued, it was necessary to get into the Harriman "peoples" camp in order to influence the election.

The Worker also insisted that to present a socialist ticket in opposition to Harriman and Rockefeller would bring down the wrath of the ranks of labor and the Negro people who were depicted as concerned above all else with defeating Rockefeller.

What did the CP accomplish in the campaign? Its declared central objective was to inject the issues of jobs, peace and rights into the campaign. Since it campaigned in support of the Labor-Liberal coalition behind Harriman, it must be assumed that its efforts were directed

## ...Winston-Green Case

(Continued from Page 1) action upon their families and upon themselves.

"In view of the foregoing and of the commendable tradition of normally granting parole to first-offenders in federal prisons, the denial of parole to Winston and Green can only, and will only, be interpreted as a continuation of the political persecution which originally led to their indictment and imprisonment."

In addition to the campaign urging parole, there have been many appeals directed to President Eisenhower asking him to amnesty Winston and Green. A letter urging Presidential clemency was addressed to Eisenhower on Sept. 23 by 34 prominent figures including Norman Thomas, A. J. Muste, Alexander Meiklejohn, Reinhold Niebuhr, Dr. John Lapp, Rev. John Paul Jones, Joseph L. Rauh, Jr., Aubrey Williams, Howard Fast, Kermit Eby, Stanley Isaacs, Maynard Krueger and Rev. John Haynes Holmes.

## Calendar of Events

**NEW YORK**  
The Militant Labor Forum announces a lecture by Dr. Annette T. Rubinstein on "POETRY AND POLITICS — The Romantic Revolution in Literature — The French Revolution and the Romantic Writers" Sunday, Nov. 23, 8 P.M., 116 University Place. Contrib. \$1. Refreshments.

Dr. Annette T. Rubinstein announces two short pre-holiday courses.

## MONDAYS, 8-10 P.M.

Shakespeare's Political Themes Nov. 17: Authority & Responsibility. Nov. 24: Tudor "absolutism by consent." Dec. 1: Free Trade & Human Equality. Dec. 8: Dictatorship & Treason.

**CHICAGO**  
Thanksgiving Banquet and Militant 30th Anniversary Celebration. Dinner at 6 P.M., Sat. Nov. 22, 777 W. Adams St. Contri. \$2.00. Write for reservations or phone DE 2-9736.

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# Unemployment and the Nov. 4 Vote

By Daniel Roberts

The depression was the principal factor in the Democratic electoral tide on Nov. 4. Most analysts are agreed about that. The 1953-54 recession brought the first swing back from the Republicans' 1952 victory. The depression of 1957-58 brought a Democratic landslide.

One TV commentator I heard explained the huge Democratic plurality this year as follows: The working people were angry over unemployment, he said, after having acquired the habit of full employment over a number of years. This is accurate, I think. The prolonged boom permitted many working people to acquire a few comforts of life — home, automobile, and appliances — by going into debt. Payments were based on steady employment often including more than one member of the family working and including overtime. The workers' standard of life was thus geared to steady work with little margin to spare. Unemployment quickly brought foreclosure or repossession (or the threat of it), wiping out the gains of previous years.

**THE TOTAL PICTURE**  
The number of people affected by the depression was far greater than would be indicated by the five-and-a-half million peak unemployment officially admitted. Even if a more accurate estimate of seven million unemployed is used, this still does not tell the whole story. Last spring the U.S. Census Bureau said that "Our projection indicates unemployment will average 5,000,000 throughout 1958" but that will mean 20,000,000 seeking jobs at one time or another and getting sharp income cuts through no fault of their own."

On Aug. 12, Peter Edson, a nationally syndicated writer, reported that "There have been from 13 to 15 million Americans unemployed part time during the last ten months. About 11 million of them have been unemployed five weeks or more."

The Michigan University Center last summer revealed that one in four families suffered heavy economic loss through unemployment or shortened working hours from mid-1957 through mid-1958.

Those working people not themselves hit by the depression saw relatives, friends or neighbors go under. Hopes for

marriage were blighted. The crime rate increased, involving people who never had a police record before and who acted out of economic desperation. The racial minorities were severely afflicted by loss of jobs.

Unemployment compensation averaged \$31 nationally per week. An untold number of jobless exhausted their benefits. About one third of the unemployed were ineligible for compensation at any time and were forced on public assistance. Unemployed rehiring lagged behind the recovery, and unemployment remains heavy to this day.

All this fed the anger of the working people against the Republican Administration. But there was one more crucial factor. The working people, in my opinion, do not accept unemployment any longer as inevitable. They resent it most deeply because they believe the government can prevent it. They believe furthermore that it is the responsibility of the government to guarantee full employment. The source of this belief is the record of government intervention in economic affairs ("statism") that began with the New Deal and is most prominently associated in the workers' minds with the Democratic Party.

## VOTE IS MANDATE

The Republican Administration — the Big Business administration in the eyes of most working people — was blamed for callousness in the face of popular misery. It was denounced as unwilling to spend or otherwise act on behalf of the people's welfare. Working people voted for the Democrats with a mandate that they do something about jobs. In the case of Nelson Rockefeller in New York, many workers voted for him because his demagogic had impressed them with the idea that he would respond to the needs of the working man.

There is profound truth as well as illusion in the conviction of the American workers that the government can eliminate depression. Socialists must relate themselves to both the truth and the illusion. What is correct is that society can, through the workings of government, assure economic security and well-being. But it requires a socialist government

— a workers' government — to bring it about.

It may happen, of course,

that in coming months new

government spending of a few

billion dollars (not necessarily

all on armaments, either)

will

accelerate the economic recov-

ery trend. This would strength-

en the popular illusion that the

solution can be found within

the two-party system.

## CRISIS TENDENCIES

But capitalist economy is de-

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## Why So Meek and Mild?

The Nov. 4 elections resulted in overwhelming victory for labor-backed Democratic Party candidates, defeat for such notorious reactionaries as Knowland in California and Bricker in Ohio, and defeat of the misnamed Right-to-Work law in five of the six states where it was on the ballot.

Organized workers backed up their leaders on the issue of defending the unions against governmental restrictions. More than that, they mandated the labor leaders by the massiveness of their vote to get some pro-labor benefits from the politician "friends of labor" they elected.

The increase of liberal Democrats in Congress, and even a liberalizing of the Republican minority, gives labor a golden opportunity to insist upon the repeal of the Taft-Hartley Act. All unions in this country have been on record for that repeal since T-H was enacted in 1947.

Why then is the demand for the repeal of this most vicious, union-busting law nowhere in the 10-point legislative goal announced by AFL-CIO President George Meany since the elections? This mild 10-point program asks but one thing on Taft-Hartley — removal of the section permitting states to enact Right-to-Scab laws. Other sections such as those restricting labor's basic weapon — the right to strike and to picket — are not mentioned, let alone the demand for outright repeal of the whole law.

Another of the AFL-CIO legislative aims is passage of a "moderate" version of the Kennedy-Ives bill, which had Meany's endorsement in the last Congress where happily it failed to pass. A "moderate" version, the labor leaders hope, would curb racketeering without curbing legitimate rights of the unions. The labor bureaucrats know full well that any legislation giving the government a lever inside the unions is in itself a danger and that laws which may start

out ostensibly against labor-racketeers can end up being enforced by reactionaries for whom all union activities are "racketeering." This AFL-CIO proposal is offered as a compromise after passage of which the smear investigation of Senator McClellan's (D-Ark.) committee into unions would be called off.

The labor leaders are not asking for more after the great liberal Democratic election sweep because they know the real nature of those who have been elected. The mildness of the AFL-CIO legislative program is an adaptation to the incoming liberal Congress. It speaks volumes about the true nature of the "friends of labor" so loudly touted by the union chieftains.

Consider a few of them: Senator Kennedy (D-Mass.) was a member of the McClellan investigating committee and drew up the bill which labor now wants "moderated." Clair Engle, newly elected Democratic Senator from California, while in the House voted for the Taft-Hartley law as well as other anti-labor legislation. Democratic governors-elect, Edmund P. Brown of California and Michael V. DiSalle of Ohio, both made it plain during their campaigns that while they were against the "Right-to-Work" laws on the ballots in their states they were in favor of some other type of legislation dealing with unions.

The meager list of labor's aims submitted by AFL-CIO President Meany is certainly not a reflection of the massive sentiment displayed at the polls by the working people. That sentiment deserves better than it got and than it will get from Congress and the state officials elected. That sentiment could truly be served by the unions taking steps to found a Labor Party which would put in office representatives directly responsible to the labor movement and to its unwatered-down program.

## Workers' Democracy in Unions

The Big Business conspiracy to "sell" the American public the idea that unionism and racketeering are synonymous reached a crescendo this past year. Involved in the carefully coordinated campaign were 99% of the "free" press of this country, Senator McClellan's investigating committee, the NAM, Chamber of Commerce and Right-to-Work propaganda outfits.

But the organized workers realized that the Right-to-Work laws, despite the propaganda about undemocratic unions and corruption, were aimed at unionism itself. Some middle-class people and farmers were taken in by the Big Business propaganda but the workers overwhelmingly knew what the score was and voted accordingly.

This doesn't mean that workers are unconcerned about lack of democracy and corruption in their unions. On the contrary they feel very keenly about it. The revelations of bare-faced swindling, stealing, rigged elections, denial of rights, sweetheart agreements, and other sell-outs angered all good union men, and

made them ashamed at the public disgrace American labor was being subjected to.

But as their votes against "Right-to-Work" showed, they did not fall for farming out to the employers' organizations and the politicians the job of democratizing and cleaning up the unions. That is a job for labor's rank-and-file to do.

Corruption is not the half of it. For corruption to thrive in a union, democratic control by the members must have previously been lost. Sell-outs are possible only where the ranks have lost power to reject contracts.

The anti-labor chorus will continue its deafening noise. McClellan will be back at his old stand. The Right-to-Work outfits announce renewed campaign for this coming year. And the Big Business press is always with us.

Out of self-protection unionists must democratize and clean up their unions. Furthermore, this will give them reinvigorated, militant organizations, responsive to the membership's desires for the full benefits of unionism.

## The Hardening Lines

Arthur J. Goldberg, Special Counsel of the AFL-CIO, in a recent speech at the University of Wisconsin declared that the attitudes of labor and management are hardening into patterns of hostility to each other. He pointed to the growing number of charges of unfair practices brought before the NLRB, and the bitter recriminations of the recent election campaign as evidence of this. "Politically, legally, philosophically, labor and management stand today apart, and the degree of polarization of view points in these areas is far greater than in collective bargaining," he said.

This labor spokesman said he did not know the cause of this estrangement, but did not believe it was economic. He scoffed at those businessmen who charge that labor is determined to socialize America, and also at those workers who accuse Big Business of seeking a fascist dictatorship.

His solution to class hostility is to set up a Labor-Management Assembly patterned on the UN. Here union and business representatives "must be drawn together under circumstances in which they will have no alternative but to talk; and when they are through talking, they should talk some more."

Any worker who has sat at a bargaining table or voted on a contract that would dispute Goldberg's contention that economics is not at the root of labor-man-

## Interview With Ceylonese Trotskyist MP

## An Asian Revolutionist

[Robert Gunawardena, a member of the Central Committee of the Lanka Sama Samaja Party (Trotskyist) of Ceylon and a member of Parliament, recently passed through New York returning from the Inter-Parliamentary Conference, held this year in Brazil. He was part of the delegation representing the Parliament of Ceylon, Thomas Kerr, Organization Secretary of the Socialist Workers Party, used the opportunity to get the following interview from Comrade Gunawardena.]

Q. What is the character of the present government in Ceylon? Is it by a single party or a coalition?

A. It is a coalition with hardly any political program. It represents capitalist interests — and very reactionary ones.

Q. Reactionary in what sense?

A. Reactionary in the communal sense. And special anti-working class legislation has been brought up at times to curb strikes.

Q. Have they used considerable violence in the curbing of strikes by workers?

A. They are trying. But as yet the government has failed on that front, except once against the middle-class employees of the government. That is the white-collar sections — they are the elite. Temporarily, for a few days, till we intervened, they were doomed.

Q. How much representation does the Lanka Sama Samaja Party have in Parliament?

A. We have 14 party members represented in the Opposition.

Q. What is the total membership of Parliament?

A. Ninety-five elected, six nominated [i.e. appointed] by the government. That is 101 in Parliament.

## TRADE UNION STRENGTH

Q. Does the LSSP have much strength in the trade union movement in Ceylon?

A. The LSSP at present leads the major part of the working class in Ceylon, except in the plantations. Particularly in the government sector [of the economy], which is organized under a special federation — the Government Workers Federation — the leadership is exercised by the LSSP, our party. Because in every union in the government sector a large number of party comrades

are in leadership, and in the private sector — smaller commercial firms, and factories, textile, oil installations — we have quite a large number of trade unions. They are in the Ceylon Federation of Labor, which is led by our party.

Q. What about agricultural workers?

A. About 350,000. The majority are in the communal unions on the plantations.

Q. The relationship of forces, then, so far as actual numerical strength is concerned, is with the plantation workers?

A. Yes.

## LACK INDUSTRY

Q. You do not have any large industries?

A. Except for the plantation industries, tea and rubber, no.

Q. What about the dock workers?

A. The dock workers are completely organized now under our party leadership, in an organization known as the United Port Workers Union, in which we have quite a large number of comrades working in the dock section.

## TROTSKYIST PARTY

Q. Now the LSSP is known as the Trotskyist Party of Ceylon, is it not?

A. Yes.

Q. There have recently been articles in the N.Y. Times and other American newspapers about Ceylon, speaking of Philip Gunawardena, who I understand is the Minister of Agriculture in the present government, describing him as a Trotskyist. Is it true that Philip Gunawardena represents the Trotskyist position in Ceylon?

A. Philip Gunawardena does not represent the Trotskyist position in Ceylon. Since 1951 he has betrayed the revolutionary movement and crossed over to the capitalist government. He joined the reactionary government of Mr. Bandaranaike.

Q. What then is the basis for these newspaper designations of him as a Trotskyist?

A. He was one of the founding members of the LSSP. But during the unification of the Trotskyist group — the LSSP and the Bolsheviks — in this party, he opposed the unification and left the party. That was in 1951. Since then he has played an independent role, describing himself as a Trotskyist organization and fighting the LSSP. He has a small group . . . on chauvinist lines, particularly on the language question. He took a policy of Sinhalese only. That brought him a certain percentage of back-

ward peasants on whom he has to lean in his present position.

## LANGUAGE POLICY

Q. The government's policy, you say, is to make Sinhalese the only official language in the country?

A. Yes.

Q. Is that the main cause of the communal riots in Ceylon which we have been reading about recently in the American press?

A. That is the main cause.

Q. How do you explain the government policy in this connection?

A. When the government saw that the working class was getting strengthened under the leadership of the LSSP, they thought that this was the only way of breaking that solidarity among the working classes and peasantry by whipping up communal Sinhalese against the Tamil minority.

Q. To divide the workers?

A. Yes. But I am happy to state that our party has been so strong and our organizations so well fitted, both in the unions and then in the youth organization — about 40,000 in 678 branches — all over the country, that they remained intact throughout the communal riots. They were able in many places to prevent any flaring up of this communal rioting.

## THE COMMUNIST PARTY

Q. What is the strength of the Communist Party in Ceylon?

A. The CP is a small group. They have three members in Parliament.

Q. As the main Opposition party, do you have the support of the Communist Party delegates in Parliament? What is their position in relation to the government?

A. At times they support the Opposition, but there are many occasions where they have been neutral, more or less siding with the government. In fact, the CP tried to enter the government, but the government had not accepted them as yet.

Q. I understand that Ceylon was among the first to break down the embargo against trade with China. What part did the LSSP play in this?

A. Even earlier, before we embarked on the trade agreement with China, the LSSP has for years been agitating the Parliament to have trade with the governments of the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia and the rest. The pressure we brought to bear was so tremendous, both from outside and inside Parliament, that the government acceded.

## FIGHT TO REMOVE BRITISH NAVAL BASE

Q. I understand one of the big questions in Ceylon was that of eliminating the big British naval base. What role did the LSSP play in this?

A. The LSSP from the very start wanted the removal of British power from these bases and this year we fully succeeded in getting rid of them — of their entire navy. Both from Trincomalee and the airport Katunayake.

Q. And you feel it is primarily due to the agitation of the LSSP that the British bases have been removed from Ceylon?

A. Yes. Right through, the LSSP has been in the forefront of the fight to remove these bases. Through all working-class organizations that agitation was developed by us. In the peasant areas where the party held meetings it was taken up.

Q. What is the position of the LSSP on the communal issue?

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## So. Africa Women Fight Jim Crow Rules

By John Black

A new wave of struggle against Apartheid, the racial-segregation system of the Union of South Africa, has culminated in the arrest of thousands of African women. A fight against the discriminatory pass books, obligatory for all Africans under the Jim-Crow law of South Africa, was provoked by a campaign of arbitrary arrests of women entering the city of Johannesburg on the way to their places of employment. Although the law has been on the books for years, it had not been applied to women for fear of depriving white Johannesburg of domestic and other employees.

On Oct. 30, some 133 women went on trial on the charge of congregating at the pass office and failing to disperse when ordered to do so. This gathering was a protest against the arrests. Police witnesses reported that the women "shouted and cheered and refused to leave" when warned they would be arrested. "When vehicles arrived to take them away, they boarded them with eagerness and a display of pleasure." The police quoted the women as shouting: "We don't want your pass books — we want freedom."

After the opening day of the trial, tear gas and clubs were used on the crowd of African men and women outside the court house. This political violence, which led to injuries took place when the crowd cheered and gave the salute of the African liberation movement, the uplifted thumb. At another court 300 more women were on trial and the movement to abolish the hated pass system is still gaining momentum.

## MASS TRIAL

The South African government's latest assault on the status of the African population comes hard on the heels of a setback sustained by Prime Minister Verwoerd's regime, the collapse of the mass trial of anti-Apartheid leaders. On Oct. 13, the government was forced to drop the indictment in this two-year-old trial.

Goldberg's thesis reflects the fears of the Meany's and Reuthers that the harsh realities of the class struggle will disturb them in their bureaucratic sinecures. They want to plead with Big Business to be more reasonable.

What labor needs is not a leadership that will try to talk the capitalists out of their hostility to the working class, but leaders who will organize and steel the workers to meet the offensive of Big Business on the picket line and in the political arena.

## A Hero's Welcome

By Ethel Bloch

Maurice Ruddick and six of his workmates were entombed for eight and a half days in the Cumberland mine in Nova Scotia. Trapped in the total darkness and dampness, a mile beneath the earth's surface, Mr. Ruddick, a remarkable man, lifted the spirits of his companions by singing throughout the whole ordeal, in spite of parched lips and swollen tongue. For 17 years he has been known to the miners as a singing man, for each day as he was lowered into the darkness and again at the end of the day's work his song could be heard.

Bruce West, a reporter for the Toronto Globe and Mail, says of Ruddick, "Talking to him it was impossible to imagine that he had suffered so much. There is always a temptation to attribute extra heroic qualities to people who have borne so much, but Mr. Ruddick appears to be a truly remarkable man. It is easy to understand how his strong spirit must have brought extra strength to the men who shared his peril."

The world rejoiced when Ruddick and his fellow miners were dramatically rescued, after being given up for dead. It is at times like these — when a catastrophe strikes and there are days of painful suspense and then, as in this case, a triumphant rescue — that the whole human race is drawn together and united with

## Dodge Plant Workers Refuse To Pass Jobless Picket Line

DETROIT, Nov. 10 — Workers scheduled for overtime Saturday at the Dodge plant in Hamtramck refused to cross a picket line set up by their fellow workers who had been laid off. As a result the factory did not operate. The demonstration was called to protest compulsory overtime for some while others are laid off completely.

The turnout of the unemployed members of Dodge Local 3, UAW, for the demonstration was impressive. The action was decided on the previous night by a meeting of about 250. Yet, with no means of communication aside from word-of-mouth, 400 showed up for the picket-line at 5:30 A.M. The turnout was even more significant in view of the widely circulated company threat to fire any worker, unemployed or employed, participating in such a demonstration.

### SOLIDARITY

The handful who had entered the plant and were sent out by supervision were greeted with hoots and catcalls by those who refused to cross the line. No action could better demonstrate the class solidarity and basic human warmth between the 8,500 local members now back at work and the 9,500 still jobless after months despite seniority of as much as 12 years.

A delegation of the unem-

ployed, including Edith Fox, secretary of Dodge Local 3 Unemployed Committee, is slated to appear before a meeting tomorrow of Chrysler local union presidents at Solidarity House. The delegation favors establishing unemployed committees in all Chrysler locals to provide the basis for united action by all Dodge-Chrysler employees.

The problem of overtime for some in the teeth of unemployment for others is not confined to the Chrysler workers. Both Ford and General Motors announced this week that they would go on daily and Saturday overtime. Yet, according to state figures, 230,000, or 15% of the Detroit work force is jobless. This figure is understated, because it does not include the thousands who have exhausted their unemployment benefits.

The company preference for overtime rather than calling unemployed back is based on straight money saving. Those who would be called back would be certain to be laid off again and this would mean added Supplementary Unemployment Benefit costs for the corporations. The present setup also means a saving on unemployment compensation for them.

The jobless figures indicate that while such actions as the Dodge overtime demonstration are good, the fight against un-

employment must become broader in aim and scope. It is estimated that the Chrysler Corporation, which employed 140,000 nationally in 1955, is now at the 70,000 level and is unlikely to go above 90,000 even if the firm has a good year.

At Ford, there are now about 106,000 employed as compared to 134,000 at the start of the '58 models. GM is employing 25,000 less than last fall. Of the state's current total of 420,000 laid off, 150,000 are considered permanently jobless. The cause is generally recognized as a combination of speed-up, automation and a shrinking market for high-priced cars.

Delegates to the Ford Local 600 General Council meeting today presented a variety of proposals for action. These included a demand for a special UAW convention to act on the problem.

Pressure on successful labor-endorsed Congressional candidates for legislation was also proposed. They would be asked to push laws providing for a 30-hour week with no reduction in pay as well as legislation banning compulsory overtime.

The need for action before the 1961 contract expiration was underscored by the report that the Dearborn Engine plant of the Ford River Rouge complex is about to start another layoff.

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