

LABOR ACTION

Independent Socialist Weekly

FEBRUARY 12, 1951

FIVE CENTS

The ISL Sees the Justice Dept.
On 'Subversive' Listing

... page 7

Next Week:
Full Report on Debate
Between Max Shachtman
And Alexander Kerensky

THE RR STRIKE AND THE FREEZE

"The question now is not how much we are entitled to as individuals. The question is —er, is . . . is . . . how much can we now each contribute." No wonder Charles E. Wilson stumbled over his words at this point as he read his speech over the radio, appealing to the railroad strikers to capitulate.

War mobilizer Wilson knows it is a hypocritical falsehood.

Latest proof: the OPS last week exempted all goods "peculiar to military needs" from the controls. Why? Director DiSalle's announcement said the exemptions were "deemed necessary at the present time in order to insure that price control shall not interfere with the defense effort."

Why would price control on military goods interfere?

Could it be because the war industry profiteers would drag their feet on production in order to intimidate the controllers? Go on strike, in effect?

Doesn't Wilson or DiSalle think he could then make a speech on the radio denouncing the slackers as unpatriotic saboteurs who are doing more damage "than all the Communist armies in Korea put together," etc.?

The government yields to the profit-hungry bosses in advance, while it pours all the vials of patriotizing denunciation on the heads of a group of workers who have been given one of the rawest deals in the country.

Whose government is it?

Railroad Workers' Right to Strike Is Chief Issue in National Tieup

Why Not Speechify to RR Bosses, Mr. Wilson?

As LABOR ACTION goes to press, the operating railroad workers are still on strike over wide sections of the country. The radio address of war mobilizer Charles E. Wilson ordering the men back to work has had only a limited effect. Despite the newspaper headlines which are trying to give the impression that a back-to-work movement is in full swing, this does not seem to be the case as this is written. One spokesman for the railroad is quoted as follows: "Any idea that the show is over is completely erroneous. Wherever one group goes back there's another bunch that goes out."

Wilson's address to the workers was as cheap a piece of demagoguery as we have heard in a long time. The "reasoning" employed was exactly the same as that used by the press against the workers in every major strike, and particularly in every strike on the railroads. The railroad workers show good sense in ignoring it; and it is to be hoped that even those who may at first have been bowled over by the shabby patriotizing of the speech will see through it after further thought and discussion with their fellow workers.

Wilson appealed to the workers in the name of patriotism, and told them that "all of us have to put the national interest ahead of personal interest."

"The question," he added, "is not how much we are en-

(Continued on page 5)

By GORDON HASKELL

FEBRUARY 5—The rank and file of railroad labor, led by traditionally militant switchmen, are engaged in one of the most bitter and decisive battles in the history of the railroad labor movement. The outcome of this struggle will decide much more than the immediate issues of wages, hours and conditions.

It will decide for some time to come whether or not railroad workers have the same right to strike as their brothers in other industries. It will decide whether the shackles of the Railway Labor Act and the tradition of government "seizure" of the railroads, inaugurated in recent times by the Roosevelt administrations and carried on by Truman since 1944, can be broken by a determined and desperate fight, or whether railroad workers are indeed helpless before the formidable combination of the great corporations and the government.

The struggle started in earnest when switchmen in large numbers reported themselves sick and stayed away from work on the midnight shift starting at 12:01 on Tuesday, January 30 at Chicago, Detroit, St. Louis, Peoria (Ill.) and later at Washington, Philadelphia and Buffalo. Since then the men have been going out in terminal after terminal. The road brakemen, who belong to the same union as the switchmen, the Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen, have joined the move-

ment, and reports from many points have it that the traditionally more cautious locomotive firemen and engineers have been staying away from work in large numbers also.

MEN ARE BITTER

The movement started at so many points simultaneously and spread so rapidly that one must conclude that a fairly miraculous degree of spontaneity is involved. Yet even the capitalist press, which is attacking the unions and the workers viciously, has not been able to point to a shred of evidence that the strike was ordered by the union leaders. In fact, every available piece of evidence gives the appearance that the unions and their officers have been bending their efforts to get the men back to work.

Whatever the role of the leadership may have been to date, the strike has been growing with such vigor and tenacity for a week that it is clear the men are for it. No picket lines have been thrown up, as this would belie the legal contention that the men are sick. As far as can be determined, no regular strike machinery is being employed and no strike benefits are being paid. Yet the men have been out for a week as this is written, and back-to-work movements are noticeable by their lack of frequency.

All of this demonstrates the popularity of the strike among the (Turn to last page)

Will the Wage Freeze Dump UAW's Gains?

By BEN HALL

The wage-price control edict was denounced as an "outright fraud" by the International Executive Board of the United Auto Workers union. "The UAW-CIO gives notice," its statement reads, "that it will fight with all its resources against any attempts to set aside or modify its basic contract provisions," including the escalator clause, which prescribes automatic wage increases as prices rise, and the annual "improvement" factor, which provides for a 4 cent hourly increase every year.

But such plain talk meets only a dull response in the labor movement. It is only too clear that union officials have accepted the principle of wage freeze and confine their protests to feeble complaints over the technique and application of its secondary aspects. The CIO-PAC dances all around the question. In its regular weekly letter we learn only that "Basic

administration policy is beginning to show up in the control program as new regulations are added to the bare bones of the freeze order." Very enlightening. But whether the CIO opposes or supports this basic policy is left to the imagination.

"Labor protests over the first freeze orders stiffened the backs of policy makers who had been holding out for the 10 per cent above-June formula" for wage increases. But who are these "policy makers"? This remains in a haze of anonymity. Such seems to be the diplomatic double-talk

for announcing that CIO leaders would prefer to replace one type of wage freeze by another and somewhat modified version.

In due time, if a loud enough squawk is heard from labor leaders, the wage freeze may be relaxed to allow a 10 per cent rise over the June level. Such a move would make the freeze more palatable; it would take the edge off workers' resentment and allow them time to become reconciled to the wage squeeze; but as the months go by, inflation will take its toll. Meanwhile, the precedent of holding wages at the new level will be firmly established.

HOW IS IT ENFORCED?

"To win raises where the control formulas allow them, however," adds the PAC, "labor still will have to put the heat on employers. Controls can allow but not guarantee these adjustments." The main fight against the wage freeze is given up be-

fore it begins; the maneuvering takes place only in the narrow fringes permitted by the Wage Board.

Interesting, too, is the decisive difference between wages and prices. If price increases are authorized, they go into effect overnight. The owners simply scratch out the old prices and print up new labels. But if wage increases are permitted, the workers must FIGHT to put them into effect.

Sections of the working class which are powerfully organized will win what the government tolerates. But only after a certain delay. But unorganized or poorly organized workers will have to fight longer; some may never succeed. Thus, even the "fairest" wage-price freeze acts to the advantage of the employers.

Where controls are relaxed, the CIO will "put the heat" on employers. That's clear enough. But

what about those cases where controls are not relaxed? Who gets "the heat" then? No answer from the CIO, and the reason is simple. It will have to fight against the administration in Washington which imposed the controls in the first place.

But such truths must not be allowed to leak out. It might disturb the CIO's close friendship with Truman.

Two facts make labor's protests flat and lifeless: (1) the labor movement has not categorically come out for a price freeze but against a wage freeze; and (2) it is not willing to look its real opponents in the eye. It faces an alliance of industry and government. It sees only "employers."

FORGOTTEN PLAN

The UAW says it will fight. It demands a rollback of prices to the levels of June 1950. But what (Turn to last page)

He Showed It Can Be Done: Captain Hill's Courageous Stand Stops Witchhunt Ouster

By WALTER JASON

DETROIT, Feb. 4.—Hats off to the courageous stand of Captain Charles A. Hill Jr., Negro reservist in the air corps, for it not only brought him a real personal vindication against the air corps smear charges against him, but also gave a sharp and timely blow at the witchhunters riding high in America.

Expressing the "regret" over the "incident" which is now "closed," the army air command dropped its insidious accusations of "disloyalty" against Captain Hill, a member of the United Automobile Workers (CIO), who works as a metal finisher at the Chrysler De Soto plant.

The regret of the air force brass hats is genuine, not because they might have harmed Captain Hill's reputation, but because of what they have done to expose themselves and the whole technique of witchhunting in these days of "anti-red" hysteria. It takes a rather primitive cop's mentality to stoop lower than Senator McCarthy, but the air corps was able to do so. The "charges" against Captain Hill make rather incredible reading. The concept of guilt by relationship has been added to the infamous "guilt by association" in this case, and its absurdities were so great that even the New York Times found it necessary to cast doubts on the charges.

The reaction in Detroit to the case was immediate, and all in Captain Hill's favor. In the Negro community, a sense of outrage prevailed, for both Captain Hill and his father the Reverend Charles A. Hill, a very active Baptist minister and civil figure, are very well known.

IT DIDN'T WORK

In the UAW, the indignation among secondary leaders was great, and much support was immediately forthcoming. Ford Local 600 executive board not only endorsed Captain Hill's fight but gave his case widespread publicity over its radio programs.

The case came to public attention last week when the air command wrote Captain Hill a letter giving him the alternative of resigning his commission or else facing charges of "disloyalty." In itself this procedure is vicious. It suggests to the intended victim that a quiet resignation is preferable to fighting serious accusations. The victim is supposed to be thankful that nothing is said publicly, and that he may cringe through life under a shadow, which may or may not catch up with him.

It didn't work on Captain Hill. A veteran of 4 years in World War II, with an air medal and two oak leaf clusters, who flew fifteen

combat missions, he was determined to fight for his personal reputation. The air corps made the error of forgetting they were dealing with a man.

Captain Hill made the charges public, and his replies very public. He poured it on, and he made a monkey out of his accusers, as a summary of the charges and replies will indicate.

THIS HAPPENED HERE

A letter from the headquarters of the continental air command, Mitchell Field, enumerated the charges against Hill as follows: that he had been observed reading the *Daily Worker*; that his father supports subversive organizations; that he assisted the minister's unsuccessful campaign for City Council, and that the captain's sister is sympathetic to the Communist Party.

Captain Hill promptly released this letter and his reply to the press and radio.

"I deny the charge of disloyalty. I deny that this so-called evidence, even if true, has any bearing

whatsoever upon my loyalty," Captain Hill stated.

CHARGE: You were observed on numerous occasions to read the *Daily Worker*, a news organ of the Communist Party.

REPLY: As far as I can recall I have never read the *Daily Worker*. But I would not consider it disloyal even if I had. My country stands for freedom of thought and inquiry, and the right to read the papers and books with which I disagree as well as those I approve.

[In a radio interview Captain Hill also said he was going to read a *Daily Worker* just to find out what was so terrible about it.]

CHARGE: On or about December 3 and 4, 1949 your father took an active part in the National Conference Against Deportation Hysteria sponsored by the American Committee for the Protection of the Foreign Born.

On or about Oct. 23, 1949 the Michigan edition of the *Worker*, Communist organ, listed your father as among those who spoke out in protest against the conviction of the 11 Communist leaders.

During a period unspecified, your father was a member of the Civil Rights Congress. The American Committee for the Protection of the Foreign Born and the Civil Rights Congress have been designated by the attorney general as Communist.

REPLY: You charge me with nothing. My sister, too, is an adult, an individual with a mind of her own.

I don't have the faintest idea what Roberta said or did at the time and place unspecified by your informant. You don't even claim I knew anything about it.

I have no reason to doubt Roberta's loyalty. Her husband is now fighting in Korea.

[Captain Hill's brother in law, Captain Roger Waldon, has been in Korea since two weeks after the fighting began. He is a career officer.]

CHARGE: You assisted your father in his campaign for election to the City Council; he was in turn actively supported by the Communist Party.

REPLY: I returned from overseas in October 1945. My father was in the midst of an election campaign. For the remaining week before the election I drove him around the city to his many meetings. I don't know whether the Communists supported him or not. All kinds of people supported him — Democrats, Republicans, white and Negro.

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Wage Freeze—Price Freeze—And Taxes Add to Frost

The Price Freeze

Food prices remain uncontrolled and out of control while prices in general continue to creep upward. It is announced that retail food prices reached a record high level in the first two weeks of January, with the story still to come in for the following period up to the freeze announcement.

Red tape begins to twine about the price board. It has no enforcement machinery; undoubtedly it lacks paper clips and filing cards, desks and stenographers. For the whole country (last census: 143,414,000 people) 110 enforcement officers are hired.

Naturally thousands of details pile up. After due delay, the board promises to get set up if given sufficient time. Of course, one legal snarl after another may delay action after the postponement is over. A knotty jurisdictional dispute has arisen between the price board and the Department of Justice: Who has the final responsibility for enforcing price controls? Until this is settled, nothing will be done. But it doesn't matter because no one is organized to catch offenders anyway.

Street's response was perhaps easiest to read. Investors jumped in to buy stocks. Nothing they've seen yet convinces them that inflation will even be greatly slowed down. They want stocks—not cash.

First and foremost, the wages-prices-taxes dilemma confronts the organized labor movement, the only force which is powerful enough to defend the interests of the common man.

The Wage Freeze

Employers show an amazing spirit of civic cooperation, and as good citizens quickly enforce the wage freeze. It is a very simple operation. Every shop, every establishment has at least one enforcement agent: the boss. He merely stops handing out wage increases and cuts off discussion with his employees or their unions on such a disgracefully improper subject. Of course many matters remain to be settled: pension plans, escalator clauses. But they will be settled . . . in time.

The wage board permits a few obviously necessary adjustments: if a worker is promoted to a more highly skilled job his boss is allowed to pay him at the regular (higher) rate for the job. The miners get their raise. Contracts which were signed before the freeze and which provide for increases in January are allowed to stand. Meanwhile wages are very nicely frozen, thank you.

Taxes on incomes, lower brackets included of course, were increased a few months ago. And now, preparations and plans are under way for new increases which will hit the wage worker even harder. Every policy, every plan on wages and prices, takes for granted one fact: taxes will cut away at the workers' standard of living. On February 3, *Business Week* reports: "Wall

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League for Mutual Aid Dinner To Mark 31 Years of Service

Thirty-one years of service in helping workers who face personal emergencies will be celebrated by the League for Mutual Aid at its annual dinner, to be held in the Hotel Brevoort, Fifth Avenue and Eighth Street, on Saturday, February 17, at 6:45 p.m.

The guest speaker is to be Leo Cherne, author, lecturer, and executive secretary of the Research Institute of America, who will discuss vital phases of the international situation. Among his books are *The Rest of Your Life*

and *How Private Is Private Enterprise?* Miss Pauli Murray, former deputy attorney general of California and author of the poem *Dark Testament* will preside.

National in scope, the League for Mutual Aid is non-political, non-partisan, and draws no line of color or creed in rendering service. It grants loans without interest or red tape, finds jobs without a fee, wangles essential overcoats and helps individuals in a great variety of economic difficulties.

Miss Adelaide Schulkind is executive secretary of the league, which has offices at 104 Fifth Avenue.

No solicitation of funds will be made at the dinner. Several tables will be occupied by charter members of the league.

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Read THE NEW INTERNATIONAL

REPLY: You "charge" my father. You "charge" me with nothing. My father has been a minister of the gospel for 30 years. His life is his own. I have no control over it.

What would you have me do? Give my father a loyalty test?

I believe that a son can be loyal to his father, whatever his social, economic or political views, and loyal to his country as well!

I believe that a son who has no feeling of loyalty to a good father can not be a good citizen!

CHARGE: You assisted your father in his campaign for election to the City Council; he was in turn actively supported by the Communist Party.

REPLY: I returned from overseas in October 1945. My father was in the midst of an election campaign. For the remaining week before the election I drove him around the city to his many meetings. I don't know whether the Communists supported him or not. All kinds of people supported him — Democrats, Republicans, white and Negro.

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CHARGE: Your sister, Roberta Hill, evinced an active and sympathetic interest in the principles and policies of the Communist Party.

REPLY: You charge me with nothing. My sister, too, is an adult, an individual with a mind of her own.

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I have no reason to doubt Roberta's loyalty. Her husband is now fighting in Korea.

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'Co-Determination' Victory in Germany Marks Historic Step

By HENRY JUDD

PARIS, Feb. 1.—Today had been the day set for the mass general strike voted by 96 per cent of West Germany's workers in the coal, iron and steel industries of the Ruhr industrial belt. But there will be no strike, at least for the time being. Because the German working class, by a simple display of its gigantic, renaissance power, had already won one of its most significant victories in many years.

It would be impossible to overestimate the significance of this victory, guaranteeing them a 50 per cent, equal participation in the management of the coal, iron and steel industries of the Ruhr. 750,000 heavy industry workers were involved in this action, which far transcended traditional economic and wage demands since, in effect, it challenged the basis of private industry and ownership itself.

As we shall see, this victory should not be underestimated, nor should the system of "co-management" (or "co-determination") be compared with the type of "labor-management committees" set up in wartime America to speed up production. It must be further noted that the German trade-union movement, by no means content with its present victory, is demanding its immediate enactment into law by the Bonn federal government and its extension to all branches and fields of German industrial life.

What, precisely, is involved in this demand for "co-management" of industry? This issue has a long history in Germany, dating back to the early days of the German labor movement. Immediately after the end of the war in 1945, and under the spur of new conditions created by the defeat of Germany, the reborn German labor movement again took up its historic demand, together with the Social-Democratic Party. The desperate economic condition of the country, plus the dispersal and chaotic condition of German "capitalism," gave new weight and urgency to this position.

The left wing of Adenauer's Christian Democratic Party likewise gave it support. In essence, the first formulation of the demand for "co-management" consisted in demanding the right of the workers and their organizations to participate on an equal basis with management in the running of all factories and industries.

At its formation congress in Munich (1946), the German Trade Union Federation broadened the scope of this demand by linking it up with the problem of a democratization of German economy. It must be recalled that under the Nazis, the economy of the nation was heavily centralized and subject to a total bureaucratization. For several years, nothing was done on the projects proposed by the labor movement, which met equal hostility from the Adenauer government and the military occupation authorities. But the labor movement had not forgotten the issue. On December 12, 1950 the Miners Federation meeting at Hannover decided unanimously to organize a referendum among the miners over this issue. This referendum was likewise held by the steel workers union, with results already mentioned above.

As the issue was presented during the referendum itself to the workers, what was involved was nothing less than the right of co-management and co-decision in all matters affecting industry by management and workers. A model bill drafted by the unions also proposed to extend this system to all companies with 300 or more employees. A similar form of organization was proposed for

concerns with between 20 and 300 workers.

In the period of decartelization of the Ruhr industries undertaken by the Allies, administrative committees formed on the basis of equal representation had been set up. But these committees had a limited role, particularly since all basic economic questions were decided by Allied decree. It lasted for four years. In the meantime, the well-known and remarkable revival of German economic life took place and the German bourgeoisie (particularly the Ruhr iron and steel magnates) regained much strength. Allied control and direction lost force and limitations on production were removed.

The industrial magnates, together with the Adenauer government, prepared to replace that form of "co-management" instituted by the Allies with a new system of "labor-industrial cooperation" in which the representation of the workers and personnel would be reduced from one half to one third. It was under these circumstances that the labor movement renewed its original demand, embodied in the form of a continuation and extension of the already existing situation.

In its new formulation, the trade-union project proposed the "full right of co-decision through the intermediary of administrative and economic organs including an equal number of representatives of labor and capital." This project, in the form of a law, was set before the Bonn parliament by the Social Democratic Party. Adenauer, again seeking to delay the enactment of a law which contained fundamental legal and social challenges to the basis of capitalist property relations, declared that a strike for

enactment of such a law would be "unconstitutional."

But the unions went right ahead with open and aggressive preparations for the strike. Therefore, on January 25, an agreement in principle was reached between the unions and the companies involved. It is this agreement which must now be set before the parliament and enacted into law.

What are the essential facts of the agreement?

First, a guarantee of 50 per cent participation in the management of the coal, iron and steel companies of the Ruhr (750,000 workers) by the trade unions. Thus, in principle, the demand of *Mitbestimmungsrecht* (co-determination

The ISL Program in Brief

The Independent Socialist League stands for socialist democracy and against the two systems of exploitation which now divide the world: capitalism and Stalinism.

Capitalism cannot be reformed or liberalized, by any Fair Deal or other deal, so as to give the people freedom, abundance, security or peace. It must be abolished and replaced by a new social system, in which the people own and control the basic sectors of the economy, democratically controlling their own economic and political destinies.

Stalinism, in Russia and wherever it has power, is a brutal totalitarianism—a new form of exploitation. Its agents in every country, the Communist Parties, are unrelenting enemies of socialism and have nothing in common with socialism—which cannot exist without effective democratic control by the people.

These two camps of capitalism and Stalinism are today at each other's throats in a world-wide imperialist rivalry for domination. This struggle can only lead to the most frightful war in history so long as the people leave the capitalist and Stalinist rulers in power. Independent Socialism stands for building and strengthening the Third Camp of the people against both war blocs.

The ISL, as a Marxist movement, looks to the working class and its ever-present struggle as the basic progressive force in society. The ISL is organized to spread the ideas of socialism in the labor movement and among all other sections of the people.

At the same time, Independent Socialists participate actively in every struggle to better the people's lot now—such as the fight for higher living standards, against Jim Crow and anti-Semitism, in defense of civil liberties and the trade-union movement. We seek to join together with all other militants in the labor movement as a left force working for the formation of an independent labor party and other progressive policies.

The fight for democracy and the fight for socialism are inseparable. There can be no lasting and genuine democracy without socialism, and there can be no socialism without democracy. To enroll under this banner, join the Independent Socialist League!

INTERESTED?

Get acquainted with the Independent Socialist League—

114 W. 14th Street
New York 11, N. Y.

I want more information about the ideas of Independent Socialism and the ISL.

I want to join the ISL.

Name
Address
City Zone
State Tel.

Not in the Headlines

Is Labor Ready?

W. E. McFetridge, president of the Building Service Employees International Union (AFL), addressing the convention of the California State Federation of Labor, last October 12:

"You know, we are heading very rapidly to a labor government. Some people think that that is socialistic or radical, but it isn't. We are headed toward a labor government, and it is going to be the responsibility of heads of labor organizations to take over, at least in part, very shortly the running of the government. And the only question in the minds of many, including my own, is: Are we ready to assume this great power and the responsibility that goes with it?"

"The entire government will depend upon what the men and women who work want in government. We are following, as history has shown we have always followed, the pattern set by Great Britain. Great Britain was goaded into politics by anti-labor legislation some twenty-five years ago, and for self-preservation and self-protection they organized into a political party; and, as you know now, they have had a labor government on and off for the past fifteen years. But we have to train our leaders, train our people, to assume this great responsibility. In many cases we are not willing, ready and able to assume this responsibility."

Getting Tough With Youth

A survey in the U. S. News & World Report for January 26 shows that Washington's plans for conscription are tougher than the draft laws in other countries:

"U. S. conscription plan [for universal military service] goes further than most systems abroad, including that of Russia. A look around the world shows: Where conscription operates, deferments often are liberal. There is a lag between registration and call-ups, time for recruits to get their affairs in order. Youths are not called up as young as U. S. Defense Department planners propose. They aren't kept as long either. . . .

"Most nations, in short, defer youths until they are 19 or 20. Liberal deferment opportunities are provided for college students, trade apprentices, other youth groups."

Washington's UMT program calls for 18-year-olds. In contrast, Britain calls at 18 years 3 months, Russia and France at 19, Italy at 21, Belgium, Holland, Portugal and Spain at 20; Canada and West Germany have no compulsory service (Hitler called them at 20); Mexico drafts only one-third of its 18-year-olds every year; etc. The magazine's survey also compares other features of the plans to the same effect.

Workers' Paradise

A letter published in the Moscow *Literaturnaya Gazeta* on December 7, 1950 unexpectedly reveals — or rather permits a glimpse at — the reward that awaited the war veterans on their return to the glories of civilian life under Stalin. It should be remembered that war veterans are presumably under the special care of "the party and the government":

"A man who has lost a leg in battle and who is bravely carrying on his work on a prosthesis has made the rounds of all the officials of the Karl Marx prosthetic-orthopedic factory in Moscow, but neither the director nor the chief physician nor the production manager nor any other member of the administrative personnel has been able to satisfy his modest request.

"The request concerns a special woolen sock worn between the body and the hard wooden artificial limb.

"According to a recent order by the deputy minister of social security of the RSFSR [the largest republic of the USSR] Comrade Alexashin, three such socks are to be issued for two years with each prosthetic limb, but only those persons are eligible who received their prosthesis after October 1, 1950.

"Is it not equally difficult for all disabled veterans to walk on a hard prosthesis without the special sock, for which there is no satisfactory home-made substitute?"

"A. POLIKANOV

"Fellow of the Potemkin Municipal Pedagogic Institute in Moscow."

Glad Tidings

We've just received a clipping from the San Francisco Chronicle of last June 13, which should have been reserved for Christmas judging by its lead:

"Be of good cheer. If an atom bomb hits San Francisco, there'll be no needless fuss and uncertainty about whether or not you should be hospitalized.

"Dr. Stafford Warren, dean of the Medical School at University of California at Los Angeles, supplied this note of relative optimism to yesterday's civilian defense conference lunch at Fairmont Hotel.

"He said that the next war will find citizens of target cities equipped with radiation indicators the size of dog tags. Citizens who are still alive after a hit is made on the target will be examined by technicians.

"The gadget will indicate how much radiation has passed its way. If there wasn't enough to destroy the bearer's bone marrow, he will be hospitalized. But if there was too much—well, why waste the time of overcrowded 'facilities'?"

"The bearer will be left there to die."

Reading from Left to Right

AN OPEN LETTER TO MEMBERS FROM THE CHAIRMAN, by G. D. H. Cole. (Fabian Journal, Oct. 1950)

This organ of England's Fabian Society first appeared in May 1950, and the above article was published in its second issue. It illustrates, from the right-wing reformist side, one of the glaring lacks of the British Labor Party: the absence of vital ideological groupings in its midst which organize the rank and file to affect the policy of the leadership.

What is urgently needed, of course, is a clear left-wing, Marxist group. Some of the elements which might compose such a force are in the Independent Labor Party (ILP), which unfortunately stands outside the movement.

The Fabian chairman's *Open Letter* fixes attention on a different side of that lack:

"We Fabians were economic and social planners long before the word 'planning' came into fashion; our first leaders, headed by Sidney Webb, made a point of getting their facts correct and of basing on study of the facts concrete proposals for action which they offered to anybody who was prepared to take them up. . . .

"In a democratic society there is need in addition to a Labor Party for some sort of society, not too deeply involved in the immediate business of vote-catching and electoral program-making, to look ahead and to blaze the trail for the movement as a whole to follow as and when the situation allows. . . .

"Socialist policies used indeed, until the ILP made the cardinal point of seceding into impotence, to pass through three stages on their way to the common mind of the Labor movement. More than any other agency, the Fabian Society used to provide, not so much the ideas, as the realistic expression of them in positive plans capable of being enacted by Parliament. The ILP used to take up these plans, rephrase them in simpler and more forthright language, and make them familiar to the key workers in the local Labor Parties, trade unions and other working-class bodies. . . . Thus the decline of the ILP left a gap, which has remained ever since for the most part unfilled."

It is obvious that the Fabians' conception is still that of a mere division of labor with the BLP politicians on the basis of the same reformist program, but his appeal indicates the broad room which exists for a left wing which does concern itself with the development of a genuinely socialist political line. Even more the following:

"What then ought a good local Fabian Society to be? In the first place, it ought to look mainly outward, not inward upon itself. It ought to make itself useful to the Labor Party on the local council. . . . It ought to be in close contact with the local Labor and Cooperative Parties and with the trades council and the powerful trades unions, ready to provide well-

informed speakers on socialist issues or to help in running study groups, or weekend schools, as well as to play its part in elections and general propaganda."

The Fabian Society itself has in recent years declined both in numbers and influence. In spite of its chairman's appeal, it is not likely that it will be the "idea group" which the Laborites will turn to.

GERMAN REPARATIONS IN THE SOVIET EMPIRE, by Peter Nettl. (Foreign Affairs, January)

An informative, highly factual article on Russia's large-scale looting of German industry:

"By June 1945 the organized collection of reparations (by the Russians) was getting under way. The chief targets at first were coal-mine-installations, railway repair shops and highly developed technical plants like Zeiss at Jena, Ohrenstein and Koppel (locomotives) at Potsdam and the great electrical works of AEG and Siemens-Halske. Power stations were another favorite target. This was the richest period of the harvest. . . .

"Gradually the process of dismantling became more selective. After spring of 1946 Soviet reparations had to be confined to the Soviet zone of occupation. . . . In autumn 1946 the rate of dismantling decreased. . . . Thereafter dismantling served only to supplement other forms of reparation. . . .

"The total value of dismantled plants has been estimated at about 1.6 billion dollars (pre-war value); . . . Up to June 1948 some 1,225 plants were totally or partially dismantled, a few of them repeatedly. This is almost one-third of the total value of movable industrial capacity in the Soviet zone in 1939; in view of wartime damage and increased post-war investment costs, the dismantled value would be almost twice as high in terms of present prices, and the proportion of dismantled to total capacity would be 20 per cent higher. . . .

"The Russians have had to make political sacrifices for their reparations. They have sacrificed Allied good will, they have sacrificed the German Communist Party, and they have alienated German public opinion. For four years economic objectives have dominated politics in the Soviet zone, and only now that reparations have greatly diminished can the Russians cast their eyes on Western Germany and pursue a policy which has any chance of furthering Russian influence there."

The German people have seen their country despoiled by both sides of the cold war (for Allied dismantling, see LABOR ACTION for May 22 and 29, June 5 and 12). They have no reason to be enthusiastic about the victory of either bloc. P. C.

Readers Take the Floor . . .

To the Editor:

I think Comrade Carl Darton's interesting "You and Science" column for January 29 glossed over the gimmick used by Erich Fromm in his book *Psychoanalysis and Religion*; and there is no reason to do that even if Fromm also made some excellent points about "authoritarian religion." Darton can include me among the "some who will take exception to a broad definition of religion which includes all of man's striving for a better world through the realization of his ideals."

This definition is obviously central to Fromm's book; and if I add that the book is still well worth reading for the reasons Darton gave, it may serve to delimit the point I want to make.

The point is not simply terminological, even though it arises from the definition which Fromm chooses to give to religion. It is true that an author has a right to make his own definitions ("write his own dictionary"), and use terms with a meaning which he has explicitly assigned; but the right can be abused. Its exercise in a given case can also be questioned. A man who decided to define a horse in a way which, to others, would define a bird. . . . would have to show a reason for inviting confusion.

Fromm's definition of religion — "any system of thought and action shared by a group which gives the individual a frame of orientation and an object of de-

votion"—together with the use which he makes of it, obviously means that the term religion could include: the scientific method, a materialist view of the world, socialism, democracy, schools of art, etc. The purpose of grouping disparate phenomena under a single definition should be to aid and clarify thinking, not to obfuscate it. I would say that Fromm's terminological proposal can only be a hindrance to clear thinking.

If he were merely interested in finding a term which would put a common roof over "any system, etc.," and did not find any existing term adequate, it would have been in order for him to coin a term. To take over an existing term which has a different and conflicting meaning in the same area of discourse is guaranteed to muddle.

I do not think, myself, that this was simply an error of judgment on Fromm's part, terminologically speaking. If that were so, it would be hardly worth mentioning. I think it pervades the whole central tendency of Fromm's book. I think, further, that it is related to the current trend in some quarters of the field (visible by naked eye to Trend-Spotters) toward conciliation between religion and psychoanalysis.

Fromm exemplifies this trend, and it is a view that can be intelligently argued. I do not think it helps to introduce a gimmick definition. The definition would seem to

say: "Religion in itself is a good thing, from the scientific point of view as from any other; the only thing to be disputed is the kind of religion." The argument is shifted from the scientific validity of the religious concept of the universe—in which respect religion has a bad time of it—to the social desirability of one kind or another.

There is, to be sure, a distinction between more or less authoritarian religions and more or less humanistic ones, and the distinction is important and useful; but it is also necessary to recognize that the more humanistic a religion is, the more attenuated it is as a religion (like Unitarianism). A religion which scraps the personal God in favor of a more attenuated deity, or which is reduced merely to faith in a mystic Something without other definite attributes, has certainly de-emphasized the supernatural element; but has not effected a reconciliation between science and reason, on the one hand, as a guide to knowledge, as against faith (in anything), on the other, as an equally good or better guide to knowledge. The rock-bottom mark of religion is the latter.

Fromm's tricky definition may be motivated by the laudable aim to overcome the prejudices of religious people to psychoanalysis. We can sympathize with the aim. It is achieved at too high a price if it means getting muddled oneself. Philip COBEN

Why Not, Mr. Wilson? --

(Continued from page 1)

titled to as individuals. The question is how much can we now each contribute."

From the above a sensible person might conclude that Wilson was denouncing the railroad owners. For this strike is a result precisely of the fact that a few hundred or thousand railroad owners have for decades put their personal interest above the people's interest, and above the interests of over a million railroad workers.

These owners have run the railroads with only one guiding principle: to get as much as they can get as individuals, and to contribute as little as possible to the interest of the nation's people and of their workers. That is what is meant by the profit motive under capitalism.

That is what has led them to refuse the forty-hour week to the workers in two years of negotiations. That is the real reason the railroads are tied up today.

But of course Wilson was not directing his speech to these greedy owners of capital. He was denouncing their victims, the workers.

And how could it be otherwise? Wilson is himself a big capitalist and has been on the owners' side of the fence for years. Now he is speaking as a representative of the government.

And the fact that he could make such a speech, and be praised for it in almost every newspaper in the country (except for those newspapers which are complaining because his speech and the government's actions aren't tough enough) simply demonstrates once more that the government and the press represent not "all the people" but the tiny handful of willful men who own and control the productive capital of the nation.

The "Impartial" Bystander

As is customary when an attempt is being made to incite the nation against a group of striking workers, Wilson's speech tried to give the impression that he and the administration in Washington are "impartial" on the merits of the dispute between the workers and the owners.

"Railroad workers and all other workers are entitled to fair wages and working conditions," he said. "Moreover they are entitled to use every legitimate means to get what they think is fair. But a strike against the whole nation, especially in a time of great peril, is not a legitimate means."

"The present dispute has been a long one and a tough one, and the men on both sides might have something to be angry about. But no matter how mad they are with each other, or with anyone else, they can't take it out on their country at a time like this."

The last paragraph quoted is downright outrageous. On the one side are hundreds of thousands of men who have been working for years at forty-eight and fifty-six hours a week at straight time. During these years the men on the other side have been coining millions of dollars which should rightfully have gone to the workers in overtime pay. Now the workers are determined to get their rights, to equalize their conditions in this respect with the conditions of the vast majority of workers in the country.

Yes, the men on both sides do have something to be angry about. The workers are angry because two years of negotiations have failed to get them their rights. The owners are angry because they see that they may now at long last be forced to conform to the practices which most of the rest of American industry has accepted long ago.

But Wilson is "above" all these petty details. He is like a man who is observing a robbery: for once the victim refuses to hold still for the robber and strikes back. In steps our observer to keep the peace:

"Both of you fellows no doubt have something to be mad about," he says, "but in the interest of public order and good fellowship I urge you, poor victim, to stop struggling and submit peacefully, otherwise bystanders are likely to get hurt."

Sinister Note

Wilson and all the editorial writers in the capitalist press are covering their denunciation of the workers with pious talk to the effect that, of course, the workers are entitled to "fair wages and working conditions." They are entitled to them, but they are not entitled to fight for them. What sense does that make? Will Wilson guarantee the workers the forty-hour week without a reduction in take-home pay? Of course not. He just wants them to go back and negotiate for another two years or ten years while the employers fatten off them. Isn't it perfectly clear that the workers have been driven to the wall and that they are now using the only weapon they have left against the adamant, arrogant and greedy stand of the employers?

Perhaps the most sinister note struck by the president of General Electric (with the government-issue mask of Defense Mobilization Director over his face) was his appeal to anti-Communist hysteria, in words which broadly implied that the railroad strikers were (unwittingly) fifth-col-

umnists. His actual words were calculated to a fine point—calculated to be formally unexceptionable in language while provocative in implication.

"I know you don't realize it, but the fact is that what you are doing now can very soon hurt the United States more than all the Communist armies in Korea put together," he said.

"The Communists could not hope to be this effective if they started a full-scale campaign of sabotage," he said.

You see, he is not accusing the railroad workers of being "Communists." He is not accusing them of willfully aiding the Kremlin. He is mild, sweet, reasonable, understanding—"I know you don't realize it. . . ." he tells them. (One can imagine how the speech would read if the union involved were not such a notoriously conservative one. . . .)

First Refuge of a Wilson

But by bracketing a workers' strike for gains to which they are clearly entitled, and out of which they have been bilked by profit-hungry owners in alliance with the government, with aid and comfort to the Stalinist imperialists, Wilson is tuning up a fiddle which will reach more screeching notes as the war situation heats up. "Objectively" you are sabotaging the war effort and you are an enemy of the state, Wilson conveys—we must crush you for our own protection—the protection of capital and its war-making government.

It is for labor to consider how it is going to defend its standards and its rights in the face of this kind of attack, whether it will curl up its toes—or fight back.

We finally come to the appeal to patriotism which is, as is well known, the last refuge of . . . all kinds of people. Charles E. Wilson, formerly head of General Electric Corporation, devoted a large portion of his speech to telling the railroad workers how seriously their strike is affecting the war in Korea, the rearmament program and the economy generally. We note that the editorial writers in the daily press are chewing over this information with the sage manner and intelligence of so many cows chewing their cud.

The last people who need the "information" on this score contained in Wilson's speech are the railroad workers.

They have not been sitting in plush offices and conferring with boards of directors all their lives. Every working day for years they have been handling and transporting the steel, the machinery, the food and the coal and the million other products carried by the railroads. They know exactly how many loads of steel are produced by a given plant each day, because they go into the plant and take out the cars for themselves. They have a much more direct relation to these things than Wilson has or ever will have, because it is their job to do the work and not to count the profits.

Where to Put the Heat
If a railroad strike did not tie up the country and the profits of the railroad with it, it would not be an effective weapon of struggle. That is true of a strike whether it be an automobile strike or a strike against a manufacturer of paper dollies, for that matter. The only difference is that the effects of a railroad strike are so much more immediate, drastic and widespread.

That makes it tough on the workers because they have to withstand tremendous pressure whenever they go on strike. But if one is really interested in settling railroad disputes without strikes, or of ending strikes when they are forced on the workers, there is only one way it can be done with justice. Put the heat on those who are responsible for the strike: the railroad owners! Make them, for once, yield their greed for profits to the rightful demands of the workers, and promptly.

We do not expect Charles E. Wilson or the Truman administration to force the railroad owners to yield. In fact, we expect them to do pretty much what they are doing, as that is their nature; that is consistent with their role as a government which represents the capitalists above all.

But we do expect the labor movement to rally to the support and defense of the railroad workers. We expect them to see through the shoddy "logic" of Wilson's speech without difficulty. We expect them to recognize the fact that the struggle of the railroad workers is their own struggle and that the enemies of the railroad workers are their enemies.

If they do this, the railroad workers will win their demands despite the ranting of Wilson, the acts of repression which have been started and will be intensified by the government, and the howlings of the jackals of the press.

For living Marxism—read THE NEW INTERNATIONAL

The Marshall Plan vs. Switzerland

Swiss Reject Marshallization in the Name of . . . Free Enterprise

By HAL DRAPER

The case of the U. S. v. Switzerland is one of the least publicized imbriclos of American foreign policy—partly, justifiably, because the little country and its conflict with the American giant does not really cut very much ice, and partly because the nature and roots of the conflict are such that Washington and the U. S. press would not be very happy in talking about it. Our own interest in it is likewise not based on the intrinsic importance of the conflict—it does not have much in terms of affecting world policy—but on the light it casts backward on this country's international machinations and on the interesting subject of what is happening to world capitalism.

But it is worthwhile mentioning, to begin with, a glaring inconsistency of U. S. press propaganda. Every move of the British Labor government which was, or could possibly be construed as, inconvenient for U. S. interests and aims has been violently jumped on in the U. S.—in the name, naturally, of international collaboration of the "free world." The same goes for the West Germans and for that matter to a lesser degree for the other countries of Western Europe.

But the one country of Western Europe which has most consistently and stubbornly stood aside from the "concert of free nations"—most conspicuously in regard to the Marshall Plan, and the Atlantic Pact—is not Germany or England but Switzerland.

Paradox

Whereas the government and the main body of the press have been freed from their denunciation, deploring, demands and petulant, sharp-tongued criticisms and peremptory advice to any country which has seemed to "drag its feet" at any point in the organization of the capitalist world under U. S. might, the very naughty example being set by the Swiss is muted in discreet silence.

The U. S. views European tendencies toward "neutrality" as being only one step short of complete collaboration with the Kremlin, and in any case aid and comfort to the enemy. The country whose official policies and declarations are most thoroughly "neutralist" is Switzerland.

The reason for the difference in attitude is clear enough. The Swiss line is not based on political considerations and does not represent a political demarcation from Western capitalism in any way. The Swiss line of neutrality is a 100-per-cent dollars-and-cents (or Swiss francs) affair, and the men in Washington have no difficulty in understanding their motives in wanting to make an honest franc out of the world crisis—and sympathizing with it. They are dealing with their own kind of people in the fullest sense, and are not interested in treating it as more than a family affair.

But the relations between this country and Switzerland represent a crying paradox on the surface. It can be summarized this way:

Switzerland, virtually the only prosperous capitalism in Europe, and to the same degree the only country outside of the U. S. itself where capitalism still looks red-checked and robust, the "Oasis of Free Enterprise," has been pliantly defending its "free enterprise" anti-planning policies against pressure and attack from none other than the very Citadel of Free Enterprise itself, the United States, and its Marshall Plan.

Basis of Swiss Neutrality

"Switzerland: Oasis of Free Enterprise" is the title of the research article in the January 15 Reports of the Foreign Policy Association, by Blair Bolles, the association's Washington Bureau director. "On a continent," writes Bolles, "where the foreign policies of most countries are marked by state regulation of external commerce and where government planning commonly characterizes domestic policy, Switzerland is an oasis where restrictions on private enterprise are still comparatively mild. The advocates of planned economy receive little attention there."

The reason Switzerland is an exception in the European picture is well-enough known.

Because of its geographical position primarily, the cantonal confederation has been able to avoid involvement in all of the devastating imperialist wars that have raged around it during the life of modern capitalism, from the Franco-Prussian war through World War I and II. It has profited from its neutrality, becoming the broker (by common consent) of the warring powers—a convenience for both sides, for a suitable price. In a real sense, its present prosperity is due to the same reasons which prostrated its neighbors. It has prospered from their misery. That is no moral judgment but an objective explanation which the Swiss realize better than any. (It probably does not stop their publicists from pointing with pride to their well-being as evidence of the wonders of capitalism, as the NAM does here.)

And Switzerland intends firmly to pursue the game through World War III.

As its President Petitpierre declared: "Our neutrality permanently limits our possibilities of political action in periods of peace. It proscribes every act that might lead our country to war. Switzerland cannot take

part in any alliance. It must stand aside from all political blocs and likewise from every organization where the rights attached to neutrality will not be scrupulously respected." (October 1948.)

A statement like that by a responsible leader of any other country in Europe would be (1) impossible, and (2) the occasion for an outburst by the U. S. press as violent as any directed against the calling of a mine strike by John L. Lewis. It was made, to be sure, before Petitpierre became president, but it is the going policy of Switzerland.

Won't Be Planned by U. S.

Therefore the conflict between the Swiss and the Marshall Plan. Switzerland is trying to resist "Marshallization." It has stayed out of the Atlantic Pact, and has not even sought membership in the United Nations "for fear that it might be called on to violate its traditional neutrality" (Bolles). It goes without saying that the thoroughly bourgeois leadership of the Swiss have no truck with the "third force" idea in any form nor any other idealistic motivation for this neutralism. It is simply that any other course would threaten their favored position in the capitalist world and dip into their pockets.

While Switzerland had no doubts about staying out of the Atlantic Pact or the UN, it has flirted with the Marshall Plan. This was different: it looked as if there might be gold in them thar hills of Marshall money. There was of course, but with strings attached.

So the Swiss finally decided to stay out—"for the Swiss are convinced that Washington is encouraging their western and southern neighbors to foster national planning in return for financial aid" (Bolles). The real rub, naturally, was that the Swiss were also convinced that said planning was planning for Washington's benefit and that it conflicted with their own business role.

("The United States has given very great impetus to the national planning of economic development. . . . It is the influence which this country is exercising on Western European countries. The Marshall Plan has forced these countries. . . . to decide what commodities to produce at home and in what quantities and on what overseas resources to rely for the balance of their needs."—Sir Herbert Bradley, deputy director of the UN's FAO.)

The ECA's sweet appeal for European "integration" (which entails planning—under Washington's hegemony) has the same effect on the Swiss money-changers as the big bad wolf's sugared tones outside the third pig's door. They want to live on, not be integrated with, the misery of the rest of the capitalist world.

Not Tempted

They consider that "for Switzerland the Marshall Plan presents more disadvantages than advantages. In conversation and in the press the Swiss contend that the plan can encourage exaggerated investments in recipient countries, thus creating overproduction which might endanger traditional outlets for existing Swiss industries manufacturing the same products. Marshall aid recipients discriminate in their trade against 'non-essentials,' which make up half the Swiss exports; and countries receiving aid are now in a position to obtain from other sources goods which they normally purchased in Switzerland. So the plan might reduce the flow of Switzerland's traditional exports and thus its purchasing power abroad." (Bolles.)

Switzerland participated in the UN's trade conference at Havana (November 1947 to March 1948) and signed the protocol of the Charter of the International Trade Organization drafted there. But it made it plain that it could not adhere to the charter without safeguards against discrimination by soft-currency countries, stating that at best the charter would endanger Swiss economic equilibrium and perhaps even lead to "catastrophe" for it.

The Swiss joined the Organization for European Economic Cooperation (OEEC) set up by the conference of the Marshall Plan countries in 1948, but they declined to sign the resolution of the OEEC establishing a committee to study proposals for the creation of a European customs union. Switzerland is unique in being the only member of the OEEC which has not accepted Marshall Plan money—and the restrictions which go with the money.

It refused to sign a bilateral Marshall Plan agreement with the U. S. Washington dangled the cash before it and conversations on it began. But—

"The Federal Council in Berne looked forward uneasily to American exercise of the authority to intervene in Swiss affairs which the agreement promised to grant Washington. The Swiss particularly did not want to surrender their commercial independence by agreeing to abide by Article 117 of the [U. S.] Foreign Assistance Act. This act implies that Marshall Plan countries may not export to Eastern Europe articles which the United States, for national security reasons, refuses to export to that area."

The talks ended nowhere.

The Kettle IS Black

It would appear from U. S. sources that the charge that the Marshall Plan trespasses on the independence of the recipients and aims to subordinate their policies to U. S. needs is only an invention of the Kremlin liars, transparently false to anyone who knows that Washington's intent is really 99-44/100 per cent pure; and that non-Stalinists in Europe repeat this canard (as they do) only under the impress of that devilishly clever CP propaganda. The Kremlin liars are, to be sure, liars; but

they are also clever enough to make use of all available truths for their own imperialist purposes, as do the propagandists for U. S. imperialism. When the pot calls the kettle black, it is telling the truth, by previous assumption. The Swiss, at any rate, have no doubt about the meaning of Marshallization on their own economic (and therefore political) independence.

Switzerland therefore insisted on being included out, for all of its tenuous ties with fringes of the U. S. structure built around the UN and the Marshall Plan. But it could not avoid coming into open conflict with the U. S. on secondary matters, with the accusation that Washington was seeking to infringe upon its sovereignty.

The conflict came in connection with a vital point for Swiss operations under the flag of lucrative neutrality. This is the aforementioned Swiss role as banker and broker for belligerent powers.

To aid this characteristically Swiss industry, the country's law contains a series of acts respecting financial operations, highly attractive to non-Swiss capital and capitalists. Included is a law guaranteeing secrecy of bank accounts, which can be kept by number instead of name, with criminal penalties for any banker who identifies the name behind the number.

U. S.-Swiss Dispute

In 1945 the U. S. government made the modest proposal to the sovereign Swiss government that it repeal or suspend the bank secrecy law in order that the U. S. might ferret out German properties consigned to Swiss custody. The Swiss refused, but, under pressure, agreed to a compromise: it took its own confidential census of German properties, which of course proved to be extensive, and then capitulated to the U. S. demand to the extent of negotiating a collective reparations agreement on the basis of the total. (So far, however, it appears that the agreement has in large part not been carried out by the canny Swiss because of a dispute over the rate of Swiss-German exchange.)

Another dispute also raged over the attempt by the U. S. to barge through the Swiss secrecy laws in order to uncover German assets in the U. S. under Swiss names. The main bone of contention was a subsidiary of I. G. Farben, I. G. Chemie of Basle, now reorganized as the Swiss firm Interhandel. I. G. Chemie (now Interhandel) controls the General Aniline and Film Corporation of the U. S., which was seized by Washington, and the Swiss government is demanding that General Aniline be returned.

So the Swiss resist integration and Marshallization, for reasons as moral and noble as any which ever animated a free-enterpriser of the profit system, but there are signs that they are fighting a rear-guard action against the overwhelming pressure of the Western Hemisphere colossus of capitalism.

That does not mean that the U. S. need ever insist on, or indeed be capable of, reducing its Swiss brethren to the same status as the other European poor relations. Washington, however, requires only adequate obedience, not total submission.

For one thing the Swiss economy depends greatly upon exports and is therefore highly vulnerable to whatever happens in the world market—which, needless to say, is not under the control of the Swiss. One third of Swiss manufactures is sold abroad (1946). And the Swiss buy more than they sell. This trade balance is offset by (1) tourists; (2) transit traffic on the Rhine and the Swiss railroads, including re-export commerce from the West to the Iron Curtain countries; (3) foreign insurance and re-insurance; (4) the merchant marine, based on Italian ports; and (5) overseas investments.

If the U. S. wants to twist Petitpierre's arm behind him, the grips are indicated.

For that matter, since the war the U. S. itself has become "the most important economic area" for the Swiss, as a leading Swiss industrialist has said.

Struggling in the Net

Swiss economic activity has declined from the peak reached in 1948. The biggest Swiss machinery firm (Brown, Boveri) noted in its annual report of June 1949 that a "steady fall" in favorable business probably lies ahead. The government had earlier expressed the opinion that 1948 would remain the peak.

"Moreover, Switzerland suffers from overliquidity, in the form of ever-increasing bank deposits of idle money, which threatens the country with inflation and can increase Swiss interest in the possibility of investment in neighboring countries through special Marshall Plan arrangements," writes Bolles hopefully.

Already the government has yielded ground on its cherished neutrality (and sovereignty):

"In response to a request by Secretary of State Dean Acheson on November 17, 1949, Switzerland joined some 30 other governments in protesting against the treatment of the U. S. consular staff at Mukden in Communist China. The Swiss government has halted transshipment from Swiss points to Eastern Europe of goods which the U. S. considers war material. It has also denied licenses to Swiss exporters for shipment to Eastern Europe of goods made in Switzerland when the goods fit Washington's definition of war material." (Bolles.)

For that matter, this "Oasis of Free Enterprise" would seem also to be browning around the edge. In 1947 a referendum amended the constitution to give permanent authorization to the federal government to intervene in private economy. The federal government has also taken to distributing ever-increasing subsidies to bolster the

(Continued bottom of next page)

The ISL Sees the Justice Department

Report of Interview at Attorney General's Office on "Subversive" Listing

By ALBERT GATES

On January 25, Max Shachtman and Albert Gates, national chairman and secretary respectively of the Independent Socialist League, and Rowland Watts, secretary of the Workers Defense League, as counsel, appeared before attorneys of the Department of Justice to request the removal of the ISL from the attorney general's list of "subversive organizations."

The meeting was the culmination of a correspondence between the attorney general's office and the ISL which began more than two years ago, when the Workers Party was still in existence. This correspondence is known to our readers since it was published in the columns of LABOR ACTION.

Under the president's Executive Order 9835, the attorney general was instructed to set up a list of "subversive organizations" for use by government departments in determining the "loyalty" of its employees and to serve as an index for employment. Such a list was drawn up by the attorney general's office. The organizations listed were never advised by that office that they were under examination, nor were they ever given prior or official notice of their placement upon such an index.

A public announcement of the organizations listed was the only way in which the "indicted" were informed that they had been listed. No hearings were held, no examinations took place, no evidence was produced against the organizations, nor was any cross-examination of the evidence or individuals permitted by the at-

Request for Hearing Renewed

A communication was received from Alex M. Campbell, successor to Quinn, in reply to the above, in which the invitation for a meeting was confirmed but which said among other things:

"The department, however, does not contemplate holding a formal hearing in the matter, since the Executive Order contains no provision therefor, nor can there be at the time disclosure of the evidence upon which the designation was based."

Upon receipt of this letter, the Workers Party decided that such an informal meeting would avail the organization little, and thereupon held the matter in abeyance. However, after the dissolution of the WP and the establishment of the Independent Socialist League in April of 1949, the new organization advised the attorney general's office of this change. No acknowledgment was received from the Department of Justice. Yet several months later, the Independent Socialist League

through unofficial and indirect channels learned that it too was placed on the attorney general's list.

In Form DD98a, published February 1, 1950, the list was made public. On it, the Workers Party and the Socialist Youth League are listed under three categories as follows: "Communist" (under which are included all the Stalinist and Stalinoid organizations); "subversive"; and "organizations which seek to alter the form of government of the United States by unconstitutional means." The Socialist Workers Party, including the American Committee for European Workers Relief, is similarly listed. In a later list the name of the Independent Socialist League was added.

Upon receipt of this information the ISL, in consultation with the Workers Defense League, decided to renew its request for a hearing from the attorney general's office that in making this request the ISL, in the name of the WP and SYL also, would prepare a statement of its views to be presented at any hearing granted by the attorney general. A reply was subsequently received from the assistant attorney general, James M. McInerney, requesting a copy of the statement, or petition for hearing, prior to any meeting. On November 2, 1950, such a petition was transmitted to the attorney general's office.

The petition itself was divided into three sections. The first section dealt with the wholly undemocratic manner in which the attorney general's list was drawn up. Neither the Workers Party nor its successor organization, the ISL, was advised of the listing nor ever directly informed of the action taken under Executive Order 9835. The organizations were never given an opportunity to see the evidence allegedly existing against them or to examine or confront informants and witnesses presumed to have given testimony to the attorney general's office; nor to see the files which led to the determination made by the attorney general.

This procedure, the petition argued, was a violation of the democratic rights of the WP, SYL and ISL.

The second section dealt with the theoretical and political positions of Marxism as they relate to the road to socialism and the struggle for democracy. It also incorporated the general program of the ISL for the United States.

The third section concerned several pieces of evidence to sustain the general position of the league. Among these was the case of a former employee of the Department of Commerce who was

brought up on charges by his department under the president's Executive Order for being in association with the Workers Party, a listed organization. After a hearing by the loyalty board of the Department of Commerce, at which time Max Shachtman was permitted to give lengthy testimony in its behalf, the case against the employee was dropped and he was re-employed even though it was acknowledged that he was a sympathizer of the Workers Party, had attended its public meetings and had even contributed money to it. (See LABOR ACTION, March 21, 1949.)

Appended to this section was a whole series of exhibits dealing with the programs of the Workers Party and the Independent Socialist League in order to establish that the designations made by the attorney general's office were erroneous.

Also appended as an exhibit was a leaflet in Chinese entitled "Stalinism Is Not Socialism" and signed by the ISL, the Socialist Party and the Social Democratic Federation. The text of this leaflet was the joint statement, so titled, which had been printed in LABOR ACTION of October 17, 1949. After its publication it was learned that 100,000 copies of this leaflet were dropped over Shanghai and Canton by bombers in the summer of 1950.

The petition then took up the placement of the WP and ISL under the designation "Communist," and showed that no intelligent consideration of the views of the aforementioned could have possibly produced this kind of conclusion by the attorney general. It pointed out that from the very beginning of their existence the WP and ISL had been opponents of Stalinism in all of its manifestations. This was true, the petition stated, not only prior to the entry of the United States into the Second World War and its subsequent war alliance with Stalinist Russia, but during and after the war as well.

In the conclusion, the petition reiterated the request for a hearing and declared that the action of the attorney general in placing

the WP, ISL, and SYL under the categories mentioned was false in all respects and that they should be removed from the lists.

In reply, McInerney advised the ISL that it could have a hearing before Raymond P. Whearty, first assistant in the Criminal Division of the Department of Justice. The delegation mentioned above thereupon met with Whearty and his assistant, Mr. Foley, at the office of the attorney general.

Whearty advised the ISL representatives that he had read the petition of the ISL, examined its exhibits and reinvestigated the files of the WP and ISL. He then made a statement explaining the manner in which the attorney general's office had proceeded to execute the president's order 9835, the explanation being a partial reply to the petition. In the Executive Order, no definition had been made of the terms "subversive" or "totalitarian." The attorneys of the department, he said, had to take into consideration their generally accepted meanings. The Executive Order likewise did not allow for public hearings, examination of witnesses or cross-examination of witnesses by any organization listed. The list itself, he asserted, is for use primarily in the government service to determine who shall or shall not be employed. The attorney general, he concluded, had to operate under the limitations imposed by the Executive Order itself.

ISL Reps Take up the Arguments

Whearty then informed the delegation that he had been a member of the subcommittee which drew up the final list and he was familiar with the material relating to the WP and ISL and the reasons for listing them.

The procedure was uniform for all organizations, he added, and therefore the WP and ISL were not "discriminated" against in their placement on the list! This, however, did not meet the point raised in the petition. The petition took issue with the total procedure of the attorney general and raised no question of specific discrimination against the WP and ISL. It did, however, pose the question of democratic rights and due legal process.

The significance of this point in the petition was not wholly lost on the attorney general's office, for Whearty emphasized that the action taken by them was not lightly considered. They had leaned over backward, he stated, so far as humanly possible, not to make mistakes, and in all the organizations listed, the department was certain that they had prima facie cases which could be successfully defended in any court. Further, the evidence by which they made their determinations was fully competent evidence before any court of law. He reiterated this claim several times during the meeting.

The delegation did not hesitate to point out to him, however, that no simple test of this fact was possible under the circumstances

created by the Executive Order, since the decree could be challenged only by the most costly and circuitous legal procedure.

What kind of evidence did the attorney general have? We were advised that their files contained documents and information from informants and that these would be admissible as evidence in a judicial proceeding. A good deal of the material was from direct, available witnesses other than direct informants. But, unfortunately, none of it could be disclosed, nor could these witnesses be cross-examined.

As to this point, the delegation replied that this was preposterous, since the activities of the WP and ISL were wholly public and even their "internal" discussion bulletins were sold publicly. Under these circumstances the secrecy of the department in the collection of its material was, somewhat ludicrous. Worst of all,

Thomas concluded that in his opinion the listing of the ISL was an error and that the organization be removed from the attorney general's list. This letter had not yet reached Whearty's files. He proceeded to read it carefully enough, but then commented that it served merely as a "character reference."

Comrade Shachtman then took up the question of Stalinism and the long struggle that the ISL and its predecessor, the WP, had carried on against it. This was also true even before the split with the Socialist Workers Party when the movement of that time had, jointly with Leon Trotsky,

(Turn to last page)

none of the material was subject to examination or challenge. This meant that under the Executive Order and the procedure of the attorney general, refutation of their findings were barred by administrative decision.

Following a preliminary statement by Rowland Watts for the ISL, a long discussion took place on the various points raised by the petition. It was pointed out to Whearty that despite his statement that the list was only an index for government employment, it had long since become a universal guide in private industry, state and local civil service, precisely because the attorney general had established the list in the first place and then made it public.

We cited as an example the passage of the Feinberg Law in New York State where the organizations listed for the Board of Regents public hearings were the same as those listed by the attorney general. More recently, the armed forces have been employing the same list in demanding a declaration of organizational affiliation by recruits.

Thomas' Letter

To these statements Whearty could only say that such a situation was unfortunate, but this widespread usage of the list was not the intent of the attorney general's office. Exactly how such a condition was to be avoided, once the attorney general had made the list widely known, he did not attempt to explain.

At this point in the proceedings, the delegation handed to Whearty a copy of a letter written to the attorney general on January 23 by Norman Thomas, requesting that the ISL be given a full hearing. The letter read in part:

"I understand that on your list of subversive organizations, the Workers Party (now the Independent Socialist League) has a place.

"Between that organization and myself and the Socialist Party USA there is at many points a sharp conflict. Nevertheless I want to protest the inclusion of the Workers Party in your list. . . .

"Now to my knowledge, the Independent Socialist League in its present form, and in its older form, the Workers Party, was a sharp critic of Stalinist totalitarianism and Stalin's methods. It was engaged in promulgating its own ideas without resort to conspiracy and deceit. I believe this fact can be established in a fair hearing, as I earnestly hope that the Workers Party, like some others, may be removed from your list."

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RR Workers' Right to Strike --

(Continued from page 1)
men, their deep bitterness and determination to win.

Railroad workers, unlike the miners, are unaccustomed to strikes. Further, they are much more exposed as a group and as individuals to public pressure than are almost any other group of workers. They work in small crews scattered over thousands of miles of track. They cannot feel the solidarity of men who live in a mining town or an automobile center. To them seniority is as important as wages and conditions, and its loss through dismissal is a major disaster to the older workers.

Because their industry is strategic to the whole economy, and because a stoppage on the railroads is felt much more immediately and acutely by the nation than one in almost any other industry, they are subjected to tremendous public pressure from the moment they go on strike.

RESENTED CONDITIONS

What has led to this critical battle?

The present struggle has been brewing for decades—no less. Ever since the Railway Labor Act was put into effect in 1926 railroad workers have been separated from the rest of the labor movement, both organizationally and in relation to the law. When the 40-hour week was made law in interstate commerce by the Wages and Hours Act in the thirties, the railroad workers were specifically exempted from its provisions.

It is true that their unions were partially responsible for this. Their ultra-conservative leadership, which reflects the wishes of the men with highest seniority only, thought they had good reason to keep the 40-hour week off the railroads.

But during the last war railroad workers were galled when they had to work seven days a week at straight time while their brothers in other industries got overtime pay after 40 or 48 hours. They were infuriated at the fact that there were for them no vacations with pay, no paid holidays, no bonus pay for afternoon and night shifts, no compensation for expenses when away from home.

Whenever the railroad unions made demands which sought to bring them close to the conditions of other industries, they were told that the war effort came first, and that this was no time to strike.

STARTED 2 YEARS AGO

Since the war, the railroad unions have been making rapid strides to catch up to the conditions of the rest of labor. Yet men accustomed to working six and seven days a week, and to

basing their income on that many days of labor, were often slow to see the fact that until they got the 40-hour week they could never expect to get hourly wages equivalent to those in other industries.

But gradually the truth of this proposition has spread among them. They have now become determined that they will have the 40-hour week and live like human beings instead of beasts of burden, and that their take-home pay will not suffer for it. They feel that they are not demanding some fantastic innovation. They feel rather that they are demanding something which should have been theirs by right years ago.

The negotiations which led to this strike started almost two years ago. That is typical under the Railway Labor Act. After plodding through the red tape for about two years, after calling a strike (which is permitted at a certain stage by the Railway Labor Act) and having their "friend" Harry Truman issue one of his phony "seizure" orders, railroad workers started getting sick in large numbers last December 13.

On the 15th of December the government got restraining orders against the union from courts in three cities, and these were followed by injunctions a short while afterward. Under the threat of extensive fines and prison sentences for union leaders, the men went back to work.

AGREEMENT REJECTED

On December 21, the union leaders and the employer representatives initiated an agreement "settling" the controversy. As is their custom, the railroads had served counter-demands on the unions which would have wiped out a large number of their most vital conditions. The Washington agreement, reached under the greatest government pressure on the labor leaders, withdrew most of these counter-demands, granted only some of the union demands, and left other proposals of the employers up to further negotiation and final arbitration in the event no agreement could be reached.

The tentative agreement of December 21 was a major defeat for the workers. Although they gained some wage increases, the yard switchmen and enginemen did not gain the 40-hour week. This was agreed to "in principle," but its application was deferred for a year because of the "labor shortage," with the prospect that it would be delayed indefinitely if the "manpower situation" had not improved by that time.

So rotten was the agreement that from all press reports most of the brotherhood leaders did not even put up a fight for it when it was presented to their boards of

general chairmen for ratification.

These general chairmen are the top officialdom of the brotherhoods, as each one directs the union on a whole railroad. They are traditionally conservative, and almost invariably see eye to eye with the brotherhood presidents. But they turned down the Washington agreement flat.

LAST STRAW

The rejection by a competent union body of an agreement signed by its leaders is not unprecedented in labor history. In the most democratic unions all contracts are subject to ratification by the membership as a whole. In the railroad brotherhoods this democratic right is denied to the membership, but is reserved to the Association of General Chairmen. Thus it is clear that both the government representatives and the railroad officials in charge of negotiations knew that the Washington agreement was not binding until ratified.

When ratification was denied, however, the government and the railroad officers pretended that they had been double-crossed. President Truman came out with one of his typically statesmanlike pronouncements that there was "bad faith" on the part of the union leaders. The arrogant employers, who know that the government has stood behind them and still sat behind them in such matters, pretended and continue to pretend that they consider the Washington agreement "binding" and began to inform the workers that its provisions would be put into effect immediately.

It appears that this provocation was the last straw for the workers. They are well aware of the

fact that the "manpower shortage" will not improve for years to come. They are faced with the certainty that unless they can win the 40-hour week and their other demands now they will be working for years without end at straight time 48 hours a week in a country where the 40-hour week has been established in most of industry for over a decade.

It is this thought which has made so many of them sick at the same time. But an even deeper cause for their mass illness is the feeling that unless they assert themselves now they can give up the idea that they are free men—at least as free as the rest of American labor.

NEED AID

Since the last government seizure of the railroads even the conservative oldsters who preside over the railroad unions have recognized that collective bargaining is in danger of becoming a thing of the past in their industry. They have told their membership in no uncertain terms that they are helpless before the combination of government and employers, and that the employers are taking ruthless advantage of their helplessness.

So the men have decided to fight—with the only effective weapon they have. The courts have enjoined them against striking and are threatening their treasuries and their officers. What further action they may take, and what action the administration in Washington may take to drive the men back to work, remains to be seen.

The men are fighting courageously, but they are in grave danger. Any strike which does not have the backing of the official machinery of the unions is most

difficult to win. It is no easy matter to create a whole new organizational structure for a strike spontaneously, especially when legal restrictions prevent the creation of any such machinery.

Further, this strike is being conducted in a semi-war situation. Measures of repression which the government would be reluctant to use in "normal" times may get a degree of popular approval, or at least strong congressional approval in times like these. If the men stay out much longer, the rest of the labor movement must come to their aid if they are to win.

Yet such are the legal difficulties that the railroad workers cannot officially appeal for aid from the rest of the labor movement. Such aid must be given, if it is to be given at all, without any official request. In these circumstances, when the railroad workers are enjoined against striking or picketing, scabs can be kept away from their jobs most effectively by workers who have been thrown out of work by the strike but who are not "sick" themselves.

The strike may very well come to a climax one way or the other before this issue of LABOR ACTION can be distributed. But if the railroad workers are still holding out with the magnificent spirit they have shown this far, every conscious trade-unionist should seek ways and means whereby their struggle can be assisted. They are not fighting only for wages and conditions. They are fighting to free a million workers in the railroad industry from the government-employer combination which has deprived them of their right to collective bargaining—of one of their basic rights as American workers.

UAW and Freeze --

(Continued from page 1)

will it fight for and what will it fight against? The International Board makes clear that it will fight for the preservation of its UAW contracts; it demands an effective enforcement of price controls before any attempt to stabilize wages.

Its contracts are in danger. The Wage Board still puzzles over the escalator clause. It has no policy. Will the wage adjustment due on March 1st be permitted? It doesn't say yes and it doesn't say no. But at least Chairman Ching grants one concession: he is thinking it over.

The annual improvement-clauses, on the other hand, are completely ignored. On June 1, 1951 some UAW contracts call for an automatic 4 cent hourly wage increase, regardless of price levels. Will the board allow it? So far, no one has even conceded that the matter is being seriously considered. It remains the forgotten plan.

Let us hope the UAW wins its fight. The defense of the whole labor movement is tied to the defense of the UAW contracts. It would be a victory. But even with this victory and even if we conceive of the impossible—an effective lid on prices—where would the UAW and the labor movement stand?

THREE FACTS

Not one union reports an out-and-out opposition to wage freeze. Not even the UAW. It demands price control first: it demands the enforcement of its escalator clause and improvement factor. But it expresses its willingness, under such conditions, to accept a wage freeze, euphemistically termed "wage stabilization."

Fact No. 1: The vast majority of workers are not protected by such clauses.

Fact No. 2: No contractual clauses protect workers against

tax rises which in the last war took close to 20 per cent of their income and which are already mounting.

Fact No. 3: Workers would remain unprotected against the thousand and one subtle hidden price rises and concealed inflation.

Stock prices rise . . . Dividend payments will pile up . . . War profiteers get ready . . . Million-

aires will be made . . . Black market . . . Long hours of labor . . . Speedup . . . Every union-hating employer will mouth sanctimonious phrases . . . There is only one defense for a workingman: his union. To be loyal to the interests of its members, every union must keep its hands free to carry on the fight. Today that means: Roll back prices—Fight the wage freeze!

ISL SEES JUSTICE DEPARTMENT

(Continued from page 7)

carried on a continuous theoretical and political campaign against Stalinism. That struggle was intensified, Shachtman said, after the split with Trotsky and the SWP over the "Russian question." For the WP and the ISL the fight against Stalinism was even more imperative when they adopted the position that Russia is a totalitarian, anti-working-class, anti-socialist state, a new class society which it termed, "bureaucratic collectivism." To list the WP and the ISL under

the category "Communist," said Shachtman, is not only an injustice but is a false and misleading characterization which does harm to the interests and activities of the ISL.

In explanation of the designation, Whearty said that the attorney general had in mind the "generic" meaning of the word communism, and that being listed under the category "Communist" did not necessarily mean Communist Party. Thereupon Watts stated that if the attorney general made the list on such a basis there were dozens of Christian sects who might have been added to the list. Obviously, he added, in the public mind the designation "Communist" meant Communist Party or Stalinism.

Whearty then asked: Would you be satisfied if you were listed under the designation "socialist"? The reply was that while the latter is a more accurate and meaningful description of the ISL in the present political situation, the ISL would be satisfied only if it were removed entirely from the list and its various designations.

(Concluded next week.)

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