

**WORK FOR A WORKERS WORLD;
JOIN THE WORKERS PARTY!**

LABOR ACTION

NOVEMBER 1, 1948

A PAPER IN THE INTEREST OF SOCIALISM

FIVE CENTS

CP Exploits Workers' Grievances for Own Ends

Strikes Rack France

By HENRY JUDD

The present strike of France's 400,000 coal miners not only has created a deep political and social crisis in that chronically crisis-ridden land, but poses again for socialists—and this time perhaps in its clearest form to date—many difficult and delicate questions concerning Stalinism, etc. These problems are neither easy to answer nor simple to meet and we hardly pretend an ability to solve them with total satisfaction to all those interested. Yet, obviously, they cannot be ignored since they return to constantly plague us.

But, first, let us recapitulate the facts of the situation. For three weeks, 400,000 miners in France's coal industry have been on strike. The Stalinist-led, controlled and dominated CGT (General Confederation of Labor)—and it must be realized that this control is exercised with typical Stalinist "firmness"—launched the strike ostensibly as a militant trade union action to better the miner's condi-

tions of life. France's coal miners are not only hounded by the same inflationary wage-price spiral which affects the entire French working class, but they also live under far more miserable conditions than, for example, do the miners of America and England. Wages average about \$60 per MONTH and the miners' small towns are pitiful sights.

At the beginning of the strike, the anti-Stalinist CGT Workers Force and the Catholic miners' unions went along, but soon withdrew their support when other political factors became dominant in the situation. About 60 per cent of the miners belong to the Stalinist-led CGT, about 30 per cent (mostly Italian and Polish immigrant miners) belong to the Catholic unions and a negligible portion to the newly formed Workers Force of Leon Jouhaux.

STALINIST AIMS

The call of the two non-Stalinist unions to return to work meant little or nothing in practice since the bulk of the miners

are in the Stalinist CGT organization and, in any case, the others are hardly likely to attempt strike-breaking action against their fellow workers. Nor are they likely to buck aggressive Stalinist picket squads at the mine heads at the side of the police and troops. Thus the strike is, in effect, general and effective to the tune of three million tons of coal needed by France's basic industries.

The strike rapidly assumed its true and dominant character—a clear-cut political attack and adventure launched by French Stalinism at the orders of the Moscow ruling clique, with the openly avowed aim of striking a heavy blow at the Marshall Plan and French economic recovery. All this, of course, under the guise of satisfying the obviously legitimate needs and demands of the French miners.

For once the Stalinist leaders have not bothered to attempt to conceal their aims in a mass strike action but have openly announced (Cont. on p. 3 in World Pol. col.)

Green Says AFL Slated To Act on Political Party

Time to Stand Up!



AFL President Pledges Vote At Convention

Speaking to the press in Cincinnati on October 25, William Green, president of the AFL, declared that the AFL "definitely will do something about starting a third major United States political party in its national convention here November 15."

Going beyond any similar pledge made in recent months by a major union leader, Green said that "a resolution covering establishment of a national organized political structure will be submitted to delegates representing 8,000,000 AFL union members."

Green's statement will undoubtedly be read by workers everywhere in the country with enthusiastic interest. The frequent references by labor leaders to a new political party are evidence of universal rank and file pressure for an end to the alliance with the two big parties of capitalism.

Whether Green is fully aware of the significance of his pledge, or whether this is more than a last-minute "clever" campaign appeal for Truman, remains to be seen. If the AFL convention, after the elections, votes a resolution that bears little resemblance to the published versions of Green's promise, it will not be the first time that the AFL leadership has pulled back from its declarations. Workers are mindful, or should be, of Green's denunciations of Truman which have been followed by... an "unofficial" endorsement of Truman.

Thus Green's current statement, which on its face value deserves to be acclaimed, carries with it more than a slight suspicion that it was framed to bolster the Truman campaign in its last desperate days. It may be nothing more than tantalizing bait held out in payment for a vote for Truman now. If so, it is criminal tinkering with the rising sentiment in the ranks of the people for a break with the Democratic and Republican Parties.

But even if that be true, the statement is nevertheless highly important and decidedly symptomatic. Coming from such a one as Green—who has always shied clear of any kind of independent political pronouncement, and whose normal attachments to the capitalist party system are deeply ingrained—it is a clear sign of the times. An independent political party which can speak for labor is definitely in the air, and even those labor leaders who are ideologically most backward have become sensitive to it.

PROPOSES LABOR BASE

In fact, Green's statement goes textually further than the statement made last summer by Walter Reuther, president of the CIO Auto Workers Union. It is more explicit in its reference to a new political party. Reuther's statement was broad and vague enough to be interpreted by him to mean the creation of a new alliance in the Democratic Party or "capturing" the (Continued on page 3 in edit. col.)

U. S. Imperialist Diplomats Launch Offensive Against Spanish People

By WILEBALDO SOLANO

PARIS, Oct. 15—General Marshall, American Secretary of State, after having conferred with President Truman, declared that the resolution adopted by the UNO in 1946 condemning the Franco regime "no longer corresponds to the present situation."

Marshall's cautious declaration is very eloquent in the current international and Spanish conjuncture. It is but one link in a chain of events. It comes after the recent interviews between Chan Gurney, head of the Senate Military Committee, and James Farley, one-time head of the Democratic Party, with General Franco. It comes as a continuation of the attempts by the American delegate to the UN, Lowet, to review once more the Spanish question before the General Assembly. And finally—and this is most significant—it comes after the announcement, released through the British Foreign Office, of the conclusion of an agreement between the Spanish Socialists and Monarchists.

In the light of Marshall's words, the meaning of the cynical declarations made by Farley and Gurney, and the maneuvers of the South American delegations, grouped around Peron's

WILEBALDO SOLANO

Active in the Spanish Civil War; fought on several fronts; forced to flee to France after the victory of Franco; interned by the French when the war broke out and then imprisoned by Petain during the war; life threatened by the Stalinists in prison; succeeded in escaping from prison and helped organize and lead one of the most militant groups in the revolutionary underground movement against the Nazis; one of the leaders of the left wing of the POUM (Spanish Workers Party of Marxist Unity) which triumphed over the conservative faction at the recent congress of the POUM; secretary of the POUM.

ment think the question calls for quick action. For both Spain is, above all, a bridgehead, an army of 700,000 men, an excellent combination of aerial and naval bases, a dictatorship which inflexibly maintains the capitalist order and knows how to neutralize with fire and blood, when it is necessary, all movements of opposition.

This policy is not precisely new. It is an open secret that considerable American capital has been pouring into Spain in the last four years, that American capitalists have technically and financially aided in the construction of airfields and the widening and improvements of those ports having military importance. It would be absurd to think that all this could have been carried out outside the framework of a well conceived plan. And it is scarcely adventurous to presume that this plan is the fruit of collaboration between the general staffs of the United States and Spain.

It was but a few months ago that the House of Representatives voted to include Franco Spain in the Marshall Plan, despite the preoccupation of the State Department with maintaining correct appearances for fear of exciting a vigorous reaction from the popular masses and liberal opinion in Europe. In April of this year the protest of these masses and those of this opinion compelled Washington to make a quick retreat. Under direct pressure from Truman himself, the Senate excluded Franco Spain from the Marshall Plan. Now the American imperialists are trying to frighten the peoples of Europe and America with the threat of war and have returned to the attack with renewed resolution and energy.

MUST BE OPPOSED

Does a sentiment of resistance similar to that which existed and which met such an attack exist today? Will the workers' movement and the popular masses of Europe and America raise a barrier to the pro-Franco policy of Washington? This is the main question.

Millions of people in Europe and the rest of the world understand with anguish that the imperialist rivalries, concretized in the Russia-American duel, can carry us to a Third World

War. This new conflagration would bring about the destruction of the human and material bases of society and the triumph of misery and totalitarian barbarism.

Millions of people in Europe and throughout the world want to escape a Third World War. For this very reason it is imperative to prevent the transformation of Spain into a bridgehead for American imperialism, to prevent Franco—yesterday Hitler's and Mussolini's supporter—from becoming one of the generals in the Western bloc. To prevent the consolidation of the Franco regime is to win a battle in the great struggle against the war which threatens us.

For its part, the Spanish people will never accept the fact that "the last bastion of fascism" is to be converted into a fortress of American imperialism.

(Translated by Abe Stein)

Wallace Proposes Occupation Swap

Fresh Twist in Foreign Policy by Progressive Party Candidate Holds New Horrors for Germans

By JACK BRAD

In the last minute torrent of election speeches some new pronouncements by Henry Wallace are getting lost, though they deserve some attention.

In some respects Wallace has given new slants to his foreign policy. In Paterson, N. J., last Monday, he gave a new twist to his previous proposal that, since the U.S. has already surrendered all rights to the area around Berlin, it now simply hand Berlin over to the Russian army.

He has now developed a program for all of Germany. Wallace proposes that "all interested" powers evacuate Germany and that those contiguous

nations such as Belgium, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and France as well as Czechoslovakia and Poland replace the troops of the U. S., Britain and Russia.

Wallace has often been falsely accused of being a dreamer—falsely because few things he has said or done have had any idealistic or ethereal qualities. And confusion is not dreamlike. But this proposal of a solution to the German question could only occur in a nightmare. It is difficult to determine the motivation involved.

WANTS NEW OCCUPATION

There is, of course, not a spark of idealism present. A democratic pro-

posal for Germany would have to begin with the demand for an end to all occupation, with its destruction of rights and its oppressive costs which weigh down recovery and doom Germany to more years of hunger.

Not for Wallace. He is for a new occupation with all the attendant horrors of evacuation and the entry of new troops of oppression.

What could possibly be achieved by the painful involvement of new tens of thousands of Europeans in oppressing Germany? The Benelux countries are part of the Western Union which is at present negotiating a new lend-lease arms alliance with the

U. S. Britain is already a part of the Western Union.

The only possibility of the Benelux countries and France raising sufficient armies for such an occupation would be through their access to American and British armaments. And has not Wallace himself accused Washington of dominating and "buying" the foreign policy of these countries? Would they not then follow the dictates of London and Washington? There would be no change in policy then and no possible advantage gained by anyone—on the surface, that is.

But this proposal does make sense on closer examination in the light of Russian policy. No other explanation casts any light on it.

AIDS RUSSIAN POLICY

First, France is the weakest link in the Marshall Plan chain. The Communist Party of France has over one million members and is a powerful social force. Also French policy favors continued dismantling of German factories; it favors a harsh military occupation and continued extensive reparations.

With the pressure the French CP could bring and the general inclinations of French foreign policy, especially its reactionary de Gaulist protagonists, the Russian program for Germany would have an easier road. Russia too favors continued dismantling and reparations. This would split the Western bloc on the German question and strengthen the Russian hand.

Of course, the creation of large Benelux armies would divert labor from economic activities to armaments and throw a monkey wrench into the industrial plans of those countries, nullifying the effects of the Marshall Plan. In fact, it would have the same effect as the present trend of the Marshall Plan itself which is (Continued on page 3)

Facts the Same, But Line Changes



GENERAL MARSHALL

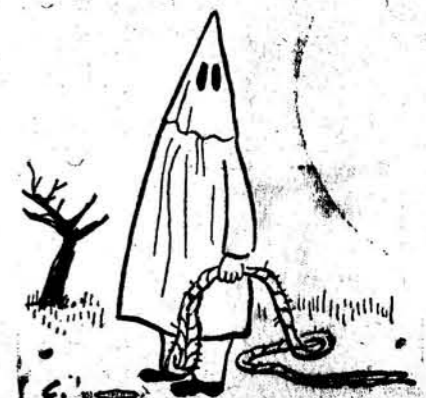
representatives, in the corridors of the UN are clear. It is equally clear how meaningless are the denials of the State Department concerning the pressure applied by the American Secretary of State on Bevin and Schumann to obtain a modification of the French and English attitude toward the Spanish question.

PART OF GRAND STRATEGY

Taking as their pretext the international tension created in large part by themselves, the American imperialists are ready to include Franco Spain in that strategic disposition of forces which has received the name of Western Europe. Both the American General Staff and the govern-

The Boss's Dictionary

Halloween:



Celebrating the Twentieth Anniversary of the U. S. Trotskyist Movement

1928 - TWENTY YEARS AFTER - 1948

By MAX SHACHTMAN

It does not seem to be so long! Yet we are celebrating the twentieth anniversary of the Trotskyist movement in the United States.

We date back to October 27, 1928. On that day, the Central Committee of the Communist Party, sitting in special inquisitorial session, pronounced three of its leading members guilty of the crime of holding and disseminating Trotskyist views and forthwith expelled them from the party. The expelled were Martin Abern, James P. Cannon and myself.



To James P. Cannon belongs the great distinction of founding our movement in this country. He was the representative of our group in the Communist Party's delegation to the Sixth World Congress of the Communist International in the middle of 1928. We had a small group of our own in the American party. It was held together by loose bonds, mainly by the unclear desire to find some way out of the unprincipled struggle for power between the two dominant factions, Posterites and Lovestonites, which was devitalizing the party. While we, like many other American Communists, were uneasy about the fight against Trotsky and the Left Opposition in the Russian party, we knew very little about it and took even less pains to learn about it. We were overwhelmingly preoccupied with the problem of the American party and we did not begin to understand its relationship to the crisis of the Russian Revolution and the Communist movement as a whole.

Smuggle Trotsky Document Out of Russia

At the Congress in Moscow, the essential meaninglessness and futility of our fight in the American party—its superficial character, at least—became clear to Cannon. The bulk of the American delegation, partisans of Foster or Lovestone, was concerned with only one thing: which faction would get the party turned over to it by the Russian leaders. Probably more as a gesture of contempt than anything else, the delegation assigned Cannon as one of its members on the Program Commission. That was our good fortune. In that capacity, Cannon received one of the highly secret and confidential copies of the criticism of the draft program which Trotsky had addressed to the Congress from his exile in Alma-Ata.

It was a revolutionary document in more than one sense. Its focus ring was all the more resonant in the hollowiness of the official Congress. The annihilation of the new Stalinist dogma—"socialism in a single country"—was shattering, and it had a profound effect upon Cannon. Together with Maurice Spector, the delegate from the Canadian party, who was later to falter and quit, Cannon decided to open up a fight for the revolutionary ideas of Trotsky upon his return home. Trotsky's document had to be brought back to the States as an indispensable weapon in the fight. An idea of what the Communist International was as far back as 1928 may be gained from the fact that a delegate to its Congress found himself forced to purloin a Congress document and to smuggle it out of the country. That is what Cannon and Spector did and, if it may be said without offending highly moral people, their "theft" proved to be a boon.

The atmosphere in the Communist Party at that time was such that upon his return Cannon could not venture at first beyond showing Trotsky's famous criticism to a very few comrades—his closest political and personal friends. It had the same revolutionizing effect upon them, and I can still testify to that personally. This tiny circle of comrades—Martin Abern, Rose Karsner, the late Tom O'Flaherty and I—were not long in rallying to Trotsky's position. We had a few illusions about the consequences of our decision, but not many. That it would not take long for us to be caught by the party's thought-control police and expelled, we knew; but we were firmly resolved to take up the defense of the hounded and defamed men and women whose historic struggle to preserve the Russian Revolution and the ideas of socialist internationalism we had for so long and so inexcusably neglected.

It is always hard to wrench yourself away from a movement to which you are tied by so many threads in order to launch an-

other, and it was not easy for any of us. Of the thousands with whom we had worked and fought to build the communist movement in this country, very few comrades rallied to our side after the expulsion. But they were precious, and what they selflessly contributed to holding together our isolated little movement was irreplaceable and unforgettable.

Communist League of America Is Formed

The Communist League of America, as the first Trotskyist organization was known, passed through many difficult years, and more than one internal upheaval. The problem of defending our meetings and our militants from the most brutal gangster attacks organized by the Stalinists was saddening but not too difficult and we seldom failed to give as good as we got. The problem of giving clear political shape and firmness to the movement was much more difficult, especially for a group like ours. By its very nature, it attracted militants who could not construe Marxian theory and politics except in a dry, dogmatic way, who suffered from a sort of organic leftism at all costs. Others who came to us were dilettantes, self-expressionists by profession, casual radicals of various kinds who looked upon the Trotskyist movement as a refuge from responsibility in the class struggle and an ideal sounding-board for their favorite nostrums. It required more than one long discussion and more than one sharp inner conflict to clarify the program and establish the political course of the movement—not only with regard to international questions (the Russian question before all) by which we always set great store, but also with regard to American political questions.

Painfully and painstakingly, the movement began to make its way. By its seriousness, its dignity, its tenacious devotion to principle, its ability to combat Stalinism without in any way compromising the struggle against capitalism, it gained the respect of every honest opponent in the labor movement and attracted to its ranks scores and then hundreds of the best militants in the labor movement and the finest representatives of the socialist youth. Many fell away, but more and better ones replaced them. Despite the stringent limitations imposed upon such a group, it showed on more than one occasion—some of them very dramatic, too—that it was no less qualified to set the example in the class struggle, in the field of working-class action, than in the field of theoretical and political discussion.

But without minimizing its other achievements, I think the outstanding one was the assembling of the finest group of politically-educated socialist militants this country had seen for a long, long time. Practically every one of them was so schooled and trained that he was able to perform far greater tasks than were actually offered him. For this achievement, far and away the greatest share of the credit goes to the great revolutionary teacher we had, Leon Trotsky, whose death struck us all such a cruel and heavy blow. His contributions to our education and to the shaping of our movement were not equalled and could not be. A new generation of Marxists was brought up on the rich and sturdy food with which his luminous intellect supplied us so lavishly. His articles, his pamphlets and books, on which we spent so much worthwhile energy to make available in English, were our political mainstay and they remain the classics of the Marxian movement today—classics, not Holy Scriptures, but classics. In addition, our press, the old Militant and The New Internationalist, set a new standard for socialist and labor publications, and outside our movement they were rarely equalled and never surpassed. This is an appraisal not held by us alone.

Two Basic Tendencies Emerge

Midway in its existence the Trotskyist movement underwent its severest crisis. It did not survive it intact. Every organization, even the most radical, develops its own conservatism—in program, in thought, in mode of existence. Within limits, this is as it should be, for without the element of conservatism (strictly understood as conserving what has been confidently acquired) political continuity is rendered impossible and the organization loses its distinctiveness, integrity and therefore its power of attraction because its views are changed every other Sunday. But if the organization is lacking in the element of resiliency, if its steering gear is frozen fast in the accumulated ice of dogma, then,

especially in times of abrupt turns and changes such as ours, it runs the risk of driving off unscheduled curves to disaster.

Faced with the outbreak of the Second World War and the outbreak—this one unforeseen—of Stalinist imperialism in the war, the Trotskyist movement, after its bitterest internal struggle, split in two. To this day the split has not only not been healed but has widened, in the United States and almost everywhere else in the world. In the United States it resulted in the formation of our Workers Party. The separation between party comrades of yesterday and especially our break with so deeply respected a teacher as Trotsky was even more painful than is usual in such cases. Evil intentions were not enough to cause the split; good intentions were not enough to prevent it. We had to hold to our revolutionary convictions as our opponents to theirs. It was impossible for us to reconcile the duties of socialist internationalism with the Trotskyist position of defense of Stalinist Russia in the war which the others maintained out of wooden traditionalism. It was likewise impossible for us to remain silent about our views out of purely formal

every new political situation, rigidly ecclesiastical in their worship of a Marx and a Trotsky that never existed, intolerant, vulgarly boastful and bureaucratic, and perfectly sterilized against the possibility of exerting the least political influence upon any movement that seeks a way out of the proletarian dilemma of our time—right-wing socialism or Stalinism.

All of them have this in common: their political course is determined for them, willy-nilly, by the political course of Stalinism. They are tied to it by their theory that reactionary, totalitarian Stalinist Russia is still some kind of workers' state, by their base-policy that this state must be defended in every struggle with a capitalist state, by their theory-policy that the totalitarian Stalinist parties everywhere are workers' parties on a par with other workers' parties. They have been unable to detach themselves from this organic and fatal tie with the new barbarism that Stalinism represents. Once the revolutionary socialist opposition to Stalinism, official Trotskyism is today reduced to a mere democratic critic of Stalinism.

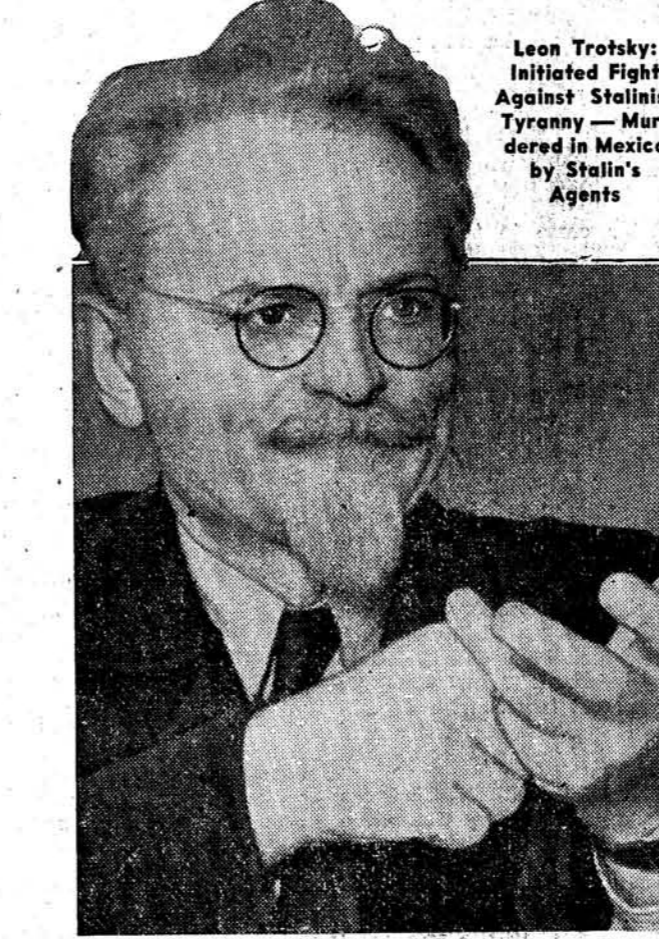
In the Tradition of Marx and Lenin

The other tendency is most clearly represented, I think, by our Workers Party. In the more than eight years of its independent existence, it has assembled and trained a group of socialist militants on the basis of principles, a program and a perspective collectively elaborated and clarified in such a way that it is recognized everywhere in the labor and socialist movements of ALL countries as a distinctive revolutionary socialist current. We do not pretend to a strength which we know must first be conquered in struggle. We know only too well our weakness, and the weakness of the Marxian movement throughout the world. But we do lay claim to a program which, while not "finished," has yet to be successfully refuted by any opponent.

Our party, alone among all others, has made a systematic analysis of the social and historical significance of Stalinism—the society of bureaucratic collectivism in Russia, the parties of totalitarian collectivism in the capitalist countries. No other party has pointed out and followed a course of implacable struggle against Stalinism in strict independence of capitalism and capitalist politics. No other party but ours has proved able to combat the capitalist influence of reformism in the labor movement without giving aid and comfort to the Stalinist sappers. The sectarians have divorced socialism from democracy and the reformists have divorced democracy from socialism—with fatal results to both. Our party has distinguished itself, in the great tradition of Marx and Lenin, by the way in which it has restored, for our own times, the inseparable relationship of the struggle for democracy and the struggle for socialism.

Where official Trotskyism still seeks to play the role of a wing of Stalinism, we see the role of the present-day Marxists as that of the loyal left wing of the authentic labor movement, the labor movement as it is, with all its defects and shortcomings. Where the reformist sects and parties see socialism lying beyond the road of defending American imperialism in the monstrous conflagration now being prepared, and the Trotskyist sects see socialism lying beyond the road of defending the totalitarian Stalinist state in the next war as in the last one, our party works unremittingly to build a workers' movement that is fully independent of Washington and Moscow, of decaying capitalism and Stalinist barbarism, that raises the banner of democracy and socialism, and fights to victory beneath it.

The twentieth anniversary of the formation of the Trotskyist movement in the United States is a day for us to celebrate. We do it not simply by reiterating now what we said twenty years ago. We pay deserved respects to the militants who did not hold back when it was necessary to lay new foundation stones and launch a new movement, and thereby added their names to the host of other exemplars of socialist idealism, conviction and resolution. Where they erred, where they put forward ideas which did not withstand the severe tests of life, we have not followed them and we need not. But much of what we said, much of what we worked for and fought for in the early days of the Trotskyist movement, did prove to be durable or proved to be the necessary basis on which to build what is durable. It is ours today.



Leon Trotsky: Initiated Fight Against Stalinist Tyranny—Murdered in Mexico by Stalin's Agents

considerations of discipline, especially when it was not always loyally imposed upon us. The issue in the dispute was too great in importance and in the responsibilities we had to discharge.

With the advantage now given us by hindsight, it is perfectly clear that the war-split of the Trotskyist movement marked a decisive turning point in its history. At this point, two basic tendencies emerged from it and have since moved in divergent directions. One of them is represented by the Socialist Workers Party and the groups like it which are part of the Fourth International—a name maintained as if to make up for an unimposing existence by an imposing title.

What they have done to discredit the good name of Trotskyism is part of the gloomy history of our time. Almost all of them are tiny sects, opportunistic to the core, as petrified in their political thinking as the most wooden De Leonist, helplessly bewildered in

TIMED TO COINCIDE WITH RUSSIAN "EVACUATION" OF NORTH

Koreans Revolt Against U. S. Puppet Regime

By JACK BRAD

The "Independent" Republic of South Korea was torn by the eruption of civil war last week. The revolt continues, though isolated in the agrarian southern province of Cholla Namdo. For a brief moment the Asiatic spotlight was shifted from the disastrous avalanche which is engulfing China to the barely-known country to the North which was for many years known as the "Hermit Kingdom."

The revolt was timed to coincide with the announcement by the Russians occupying North Korea above the 38th parallel, that Russian troops were beginning evacuation. This is the greatest propaganda political weapon of the Stalinists in Korea for the will to be free of all foreign armies is universal except for a small group of reactionaries at the head of the American-sponsored regime in the South. There can be little doubt that the revolt at least involves the Stalinists, if it was not planned and initiated by them. Nevertheless it would be an error to assume that this is exclusively a Stalinist plot. Famine, land hunger, inflation, oppression by usurious landlordism and political tyranny are the daily conditions of life from which this revolt, and others to come, arose.

News from Korea, especially from so remote an area as the Southern provinces, is seldom exact or complete. Aside from the technical difficulties, there is the more important political one. The government of Syngman Rhee is a rightist dictatorship which long ago condemned all opponents as "communists" and under this general, indiscriminate label has instituted police terror against them.

HAVE POPULAR SUPPORT

The revolt began in a military garrison in the port town of Yosu. Reports as to the number of troops involved vary from 40 to 13,000. It is clear, however, that the Yosu rebel garrison was strong enough to capture the local arsenal, to win over much of the constabulary and to

speedily extend itself to an area of seventy miles to the North. Also, almost one week after the revolt, the Government attempted to retake Yosu with a marine landing party but was thrown back.

There is little doubt that the rebels have popular support. Reports indicate that the initial band has been augmented considerably by recruits from the countryside. Reports "of large-scale executions of anti-communists in the area recaptured" probably means the execution not only of Government supporters but also of the big landlords and the hated usurers and former Japanese collaborators; that is, these executions are of a social character aimed at winning over the peasantry.

While the rebels are reported to be flying the flag of the Stalinist North Korean Republic, it is unlikely that the northern Stalinists will be able to give much assistance of any kind, but will concentrate instead upon making the maximum political capital out of the revolt and its suppression. For while the revolt contains Stalinist elements it also was given a social character which will be exploited to the hilt by Stalinism. The suppression which is already under way, is instituting a white terror against the entire population of Cholla Namdo which will deepen popular hatred for the government.

CAUSES OBSCURE

The rebelling troops, it is reported, were under orders to be shipped to mountain areas to battle Stalinist guerrillas and this was the immediate cause of the revolt. The immediate circumstances will remain obscure for a long time. However, there are guerilla bands of peasants, under Stalinist leadership in the mountains. It is likely that the present revolt will never be completely crushed but will also take to the hills, there to enlarge the growing army of discontent, and probably contribute a rallying point for Stalinism in South Korea.

It is unlikely that the revolt was ever intended as any more than a

demonstration to coincide with the Russian declaration of evacuation. It is a warning on the basis of which the Northern regime will assert that its claim of jurisdiction over all Korea is justified and that the people desire the American evacuation. In this sense, Stalinism has manipulated an armed adventure which is doomed to bloody repression in order to underscore its own propaganda.

That non-Stalinist soldiers and police and peasants joined them should surprise no one. Economic conditions in the American zone are extremely harsh and politically there exists a police dictatorship supported by American bayonets. Soldiers' pay is very small and the new army is still very close to the peasantry socially. Pay of the police is considerably less than what is earned by a servant in the palace of a man of wealth and is normally supplemented by the ubiquitous Oriental graft.

RHEE HEADS REACTION

The Rhee government in the American zone took office on August 15, 1948 on the basis of its victory in the UN-sponsored elections. These elections were conducted in an atmosphere of political intimidation. Even the UN supervisory committee was split on the possibility of holding a "free" election and Dr. Menon, the Indian delegate, openly expressed doubt as to the validity of the elections. The report of the UN Committee contains several pages of violations of the set electoral rules. Police, right terrorists, and the infamous Dai Dong Youth Corps. Rhee's political terrorist group, dominated the election machinery. They forced people to vote, prevented protests from reaching the UN Commission and assured Rhee his ninety-per-cent victory.

Rhee heads the extremely reactionary landlord party. He has been the man of the American State Department and of Chiang Kai-shek. His resistance to any kind of agrarian reform forced the U. S. military government to intervene in May to pro-

mulgate a moderate land-distribution program which has not been carried out, however, since its machinery is under landlord control.

Rhee alone, in Korean politics, took a separatist position even before the elections. All other groups favored continued efforts toward national unification. He alone forced the elections at the time, all other groups opposing them as undemocratic under existing conditions.

Even before the elections one pro-American observer wrote: "The real tragedy in the south is that the middle-roads have been driven underground with the Communists. I know of many men whose only crime has been criticism of the grafting, dictatorial government who have been denounced as Communists, imprisoned and tortured—or simply assassinated." (UN World, May 1948.)

In a report to the Institute of Pacific Relations in September, 1947, George McCune wrote: "... the extreme rightists had entrenched themselves firmly in South Korea, operating within the framework of the American democratic system. Their political parties were well organized, their economic control secure and they had at their backs a moderate-sized military force composed of police and constabulary, plus a young men's league."

RIPE FOR UPHEAVAL

Since the inauguration of the "elected" Rhee regime, moderates and liberals continued to be silenced by imprisonment and intimidation. Recently "Inspection Committees" were formed directly responsible to President Rhee. These committees are empowered to "investigate the conduct of public officials" and have all the characteristics of a secret political police. An officially-controlled labor organization has been formed which resembles a "labor front." The cabinet of the Rhee government contains members of his party alone.

This is South Korea under the American flag, where hunger, inflation and political despotism rule. Con-

ditions are ripe for social upheaval. In this social climate the Stalinists are functioning. From their substantial base in the North, backed by full Russian power, they are able to intervene actively. They have developed a powerful attraction through their program for re-unification and the evacuation of all foreign troops. The American-sponsored regime with its anti-popular policies cannot cope with these forces except, as Rhee openly proclaimed, by the continued occupation which becomes daily less tolerable.

The North is cut off at the 38th parallel and exists in a new "hermitage," sealed off from all penetration and influence as are all Stalinist areas. The Stalinist regime has a substantial army and secret police of its own. It is a completely puppet regime. It has, however, distributed "some land. But this reform has not won it as great support as might have been expected because land acquisition by the peasantry was hedged by all manner of special conditions, such as no right to re-sell.

Refugees from the North report that the August 25 "election" was completely in the hands of the police. Also, there is a rumor, which is probably true, because it fits the Russian pattern elsewhere, that the Russians, before evacuation, are establishing majority control over all the industrial enterprises such as petroleum, transportation, and shipping. Reports have it that there is considerable disillusionment with northern "communism." But the Rhee regime offers no alternative to it.

The whole fate of Korea is now tied to the great conflict between the imperialist giants for Asia. The revolt indicates the inability of the U. S. to cope with Stalinism in Asia. The American occupation and the policy of American imperialism are utter failures. They cannot begin to bring democracy to Asia—China or Korea. They cannot resolve the crucial agrarian crisis because everywhere the U. S. is the ally of landlord-compradorism.

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MAX SHACHTMAN

National Secretary of the Workers Party
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QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION

Auspices: Workers Party and Socialist Youth League