

Unemployment and the Workers

The Jobless "Self-Help" Fraud

by Will Herberg

It seems well-nigh inevitable that in a country like the United States, where the working class is so backward theoretically, where the labor movement, even in its best days, could not rise above the level of empirical rule of the thumb, where the decades of experience of the European working class are unknown and unassimilated, where the crudest bourgeois petty bourgeois absurdities can pass off as almost self-evident truths, in such a country it seems well-nigh inevitable that plans of unemployment "relief" should arise and gain currency which are no more than new and improved editions of outworn, discredited schemes which not only run counter to every intelligible principle of economics but which have been repeatedly tried with disastrous results.

Of these fly-by-night schemes, few are more shallow and unworkable (a relief plan) and yet at the same time more dangerous than the various "cooperative self-help" arrangements spreading through the country today. The so-called Tacoma and Seattle plans (the "State of Washington plans") are typical examples; attempts along essentially similar lines are being made elsewhere, frequently with government or philanthropic support. In Detroit an offshoot of the I.W.W., the General Labor Union, is trying to put over something of the same variety. In New York, groups of technicians, engineers and other professionals have bestowed a few plans upon the grateful unemployed (the Lyons plan etc.). The very obvious points of similarity of all these schemes are far more numerous and more fundamental than their points of difference and so a general analysis is possible.

The "Self-Help" Plans

The Preamble of the Constitution of the Detroit Unemployed Citizens League of Michigan reads:

"The necessities and comforts of life are, almost without exception, produced by the application of energy to the land and raw materials. Today, altho land, raw materials and machinery lie idle in abundance, millions are, by no fault of their own, denied the right of applying their energy even so far as is necessary to provide the things needed to maintain life. . . . The condition of the unemployed daily becomes more desperate. To relieve the hunger and suffering of ourselves and our children, we propose to apply our energy to such idle machinery and land as may be made available to us for the purpose of producing the things which we need.

"Neither do we intend to compete with trade or employed labor by placing goods on an already glutted market, the products of our energy being intended only for the use of ourselves and our dependents."

In the same vein runs the basic paragraph of the New York Lyons plan:

"It is estimated that something like 40% of the industrial equipment in New York City today is idle, or almost idle, while hundreds of thousands of workers are suffering because they cannot use this plant for productive purposes. It is the purpose of this effort to enable the unemployed men and women to return to the idle plants and produce things for themselves, barter these goods for such goods as they cannot themselves produce and thereby supply themselves with the necessities of life, and, in addition, many of the less essential but desirable goods and services."

This hopeful scheme of meeting the unemployment emergency without bothering the capitalist about it proposes, in other words, that the unemployed be organized into producing groups, that they be put to work in idle factories and plants, and on the land and in mines, so that they and their dependents consume the products of their own labor.

How is the use of the idle factories to be obtained? In general the idea seems to be for smaller industrialists and factory owners be approached and asked for the use of their idle plants on the usual understanding that the wear and tear and maintenance be paid for, very frequently, even, that the owners themselves come into the venture as foremen or directors. There is also the proposal that the government supply funds, or that money be raised from private philanthropic sources, for the purpose of renting or leasing of factories; sometimes the demand is even made that "present relief organizations . . . divert . . . money to the workers cooperatives . . ." (Lyons plan).

It is not clear that so far the only substantial relief extended is to the small industrialists whose idle plants are to be put into operation and who are even to get some sort of job for their "kindness"? It is important to understand at the outset that the plants likely to be obtained for such a venture are almost always certain to be the smallest, the least profitable, the least efficient, the least up-to-date and the least tolerable in the field, for such, of course, are the most available. Working conditions are likely to be bad and productivity at a low level. Another factor making for a low productivity is the inevitably bad organization of labor in such shops, considering the poorness of the superintendence and the heterogeneity of the workers (a printer, for example, may be set to

making shoes, for he certainly cannot "consume" his printing), and finally the makeshift character of the whole arrangement.

The problem of raw material arises next. They certainly cannot all be obtained from other producers groups of the unemployed. Whence will come the hide for the shoes, the grain for the bread, the cotton or wool for the cloth? It will evidently have to be bought—with money. Note that if products are bartered in the outside world for raw materials (that is, exchanged without money), the economic relation remains exactly the same as if a sale had taken place. The consequences of both of these courses will be examined below.

Or consider the organization of production. What will be produced will evidently depend upon what plants can be obtained for use. Suppose shoe plants and bakeries to be obtained and the members of the "self-help" groups distributed among them, what will they do for clothes? The New York Lyons plan permits the "barter of . . . goods (produced by the groups) for such goods as they cannot themselves produce." The Detroit plan, more "strict", forbids even barter and declares that "the products of our energy (are) intended for the use of ourselves and our dependents." Here again the alternative is: either private, semi-public or public donations or else the sale of things produced by the "self-help" groups!

We could push this economic analysis much further but the main point is now clear: either the "self-help" shops constitute a system of inefficient, poorly paying "corporation shops" producing partly or wholly, directly or indirectly, for the market or else they lose every vestige of their pretended economic character and rapidly degenerate into a parasitic growth, of no consequence or account unless supported at every point thru ordinary relief channels!

What can the workers employed in these little "corporation shops" or "relief adjuncts" get? It is clear from every viewpoint (the small size and inefficiency of plant, the poor organization of labor, the poor superintendence, etc., etc.) that these concerns cannot be very profitable, if at all. In other words, the "self-help" workers must work under bad conditions, for hardly more than a subsistence wage—because that is all these inefficient factories can give!

The champions of all of the "self-

help" schemes protest with vigor that they do not want to compete with employed labor, that they do not want to replace already employed workers. But intentions are nothing; facts are decisive. It is obvious that if the "self-help" groups produce partly or wholly for the market (either thru sale or thru barter), such must be the consequence in a contracting or, at best, stagnant market. Already employed labor is at least partly replaced; but note—it is replaced by labor at a much lower wage level, by labor working for subsistence, in fact!

Even where the "self-help" groups proceed on the basis of a closed system (i.e., no production for the market), substantially the same situation arises. Who will believe that these groups can establish their own little "non-profit, non-market" (socialist?) economies in a capitalist world without innumerable points of contact with the economic system as a whole? The food and clothing that (in the best of cases) they produce for themselves certainly replaces, at least in part, the food and clothing otherwise obtained thru public and private relief channels and produced, therefore, by regularly employed workers. The "self-help" producers do replace regularly employed workers even in this case, and, note again—replace them by labor working for subsistence, by labor working for subsistence. In addition to all this it must be remembered that these "non-market" schemes admittedly cannot maintain their existence for even a short period of time without external assistance, which means diversion of funds from direct relief.

The effect that the "self-help" plans have in replacing regularly employed labor by labor at a subsistence level is very serious for the whole working class. To the degree that these plans are successful, to that degree do they operate to permanently depress the general wage level—one of the great objectives of capitalist class strategy in periods of crisis!

The Political Meaning of "Self-Help"

But if these "cooperative production" schemes stand under such serious indictment economically, they must be condemned even more severely from a general social-political standpoint.

Broadly speaking, such methods of (Continued on Page 4)

What Is The Way Out For The Farmers?

THE MID-WEST FARMERS "STRIKE"

by Agricola

The "farmers holiday" movement, which has thrown the Middle West corn country into unprecedented turmoil, has directed general attention to the miserable plight of the farmers on the one hand, and, on the other, to the essential ineffectiveness and futility of their desperate outbursts of revolt as long as they remain "rebels without ideas." Farm revolts of the most various kinds are far from unknown in American history but the whole burden of the story, especially after the Civil War, is to emphasize the one great lesson; such revolts are futile, they lead only to defeat, disappointment and demoralization unless the farmers join in alliance with the workers, unless they become part of a general anti-capitalist movement led by the working class.

The Plight Of The Farmers

It is unnecessary to pile facts on figures to emphasize the positively ruinous situation in which the farmers of the United States find themselves today, with the world crisis coming upon the chronic agricultural crisis since 1920. Take the corn-belt farmers involved in the "holiday" movement, for example. In 1919, land in Iowa sold for an average of \$500 an acre; today there is plenty to be had for \$100. Farm buying power is down 50% of the pre-war average. The average 1929-1930 price of corn was \$0.69 a bushel—the average price today quoted at seven leading Iowa markets is \$0.25; of oats, \$0.37—\$0.13; of wheat, \$1.02—\$0.24; of hogs (100 lbs.), \$8.46—\$3.72; of chickens (lb.), \$0.18—\$0.12; of eggs (doz.), \$0.282—\$0.17. Indeed, the prices are so low that most of these commodities are sold far below the cost of production, not to speak of any "profit."

The steep rise in taxes, coupled with the fall in prices, has produced a situation in which a farmer's entire income is swallowed up in taxes. Farms are being taken over by mortgage-holders at an increasing rate and farmers are being dispossessed in tens of thousands. Renters are finding that this year's crops will not pay cash rent. Wages for farm-laborers, who are increasing in number because of the expropriations have sunk from \$60 to \$25 monthly, and even these wages cannot be paid because there simply is no cash. Consider the case of the farmer who is paying \$3 an acre tax. He averages thirty bushels of oats to an acre. At 10c a bushel, that just covers his taxes. His labor, food, seed and overhead are just "thrown in." Or take the case of the

farm-laborer who has worked since March for \$15 a month and has not been paid yet, but who is "glad to have the job." Falling prices, monopolies squeezing the life out of him from both directions, selling him his supplies and material and buying his products, high tariff, rising taxes, falling wages, foreclosures—these indicate the various phases of the plight of the American farmer in general and of the Mid-Western farmer in particular.

The "Selling Strike" Movement

The farmers "selling strike" movement was initiated by the Iowa Farmers Union, headed by the well known Milo Reno. This is an organization of middle and poor farmers, with pronounced Farmer-Labor sympathies and with a considerable following among the impoverished and increasingly desperate elements of the population. Early this Spring, the Iowa Farmers Union began to discuss plans for a "farmers holiday" during which no farmer would sell any of his produce. From Iowa this agitation spread to other Mid-Western States and was continued thru-out the Summer. Organizers toured the whole corn-belt, holding meetings and distributing pledge cards. Finally, on August 3, the Iowa strike was called. Originally it seems to have been planned that the "farmers holiday" should last one month, but in the manifesto adopted by farmers from Iowa, North and South Dakota, Illinois and Nebraska, at a meeting in Des Moines on August 15, the pledge reads:

" . . . We agree to keep all our products which can possibly be kept on the farms and hold same until the time shall have arrived when farm products shall bring a market price equal to the cost of production. We pledge ourselves to protect one another in the actual possession of our necessary homes, livestock and machinery as against all claimants."

The "cost of production", for which all farm products are to be held out according to this pledge, is computed as follows: Allow the farmer 5% on his investment in real estate, 7% on his investments in personal property and equipment and \$100 a month for his own labor. To obtain such a return on the average 160-acre farm, prices would have to rise by nearly 400% for corn, the same proportion for oats, 300% for wheat, 300% for hogs, and so on. It was clear that the farmers had quite a

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job ahead of them in putting over their "strike".

It is unnecessary here to recount the development of the movement as it arose and spread thru Iowa and neighboring States. The roads leading to the important market cities were filled with pickets to try to persuade recalcitrant farmers to give up the idea of getting their truckloads of produce into town. In many cases shipments by truck stopped altogether, altho shipment by rail was naturally not very seriously interfered with. In spite of the generally peaceful character of the farmers activities, it did not take long before the forces of "law and order" were mobilized, gas and tear-bomb attacks organized, hundreds arrested and a general campaign of intimidation launched. All the while the farmers were being told the doom of the "strike"; it was the inherent social and economic weaknesses of the movement that doomed it.

The Perspectives Of The Movement

In the very nature of the case, the "strike" could not succeed; indeed, in many ways, it essentially defeated its own aims. To stop shipments by rail was pretty much the end of the question but unless this was done the whole gesture was futile. As a matter of fact thru-out the whole period of the strike, farm shipments into important centers did not materially decrease, nor did the prices rise. Actually they kept falling continually. Even if the "strike" could have been made nearly complete, it could not have permanently influenced prices. In the case of eggs and perishable vegetables, which are today being lost during the strike (they have given away milk and other such supplies to hospitals and to the jobless), prices increases would be extremely temporary; the price fall would begin as soon as the "holiday" was over. With non-perishable vegetables the results would be even worse, for at the end of the strike they would all be dumped on the local market at once, depressing prices for the time being more than ever. For products with national or international prices, any "holiday" action is bound to be completely futile. It is indeed a counsel of desperation.

But what happens where "holiday strikers" win? Who bears the expense of even of the partial rise in prices? In the Sioux City milk fight the farmers did effect a small gain. They have been receiving only 2c a quart for milk which retailed at 8c, the new agreement allows them 3.6c and will force consumers, who are largely workers and poor people, to pay 9c a quart, if not more! In other words, what slight gains the farmers do achieve by "selling strike" action, are made at the expense of the working people of the cities, for the middleman and wholesaler are today in a position to shift this burden on to the shoulders of those who are already collapsing under the weight of the crisis. In its very nature, the attempt to force prices up permanently thru a "farmers holiday" is not only futile in the long run but is bound to accomplish a great deal of mischief by pitting the impoverished farmers against the starving workers, thus dividing the farmers leagues and farm-laborers unions, to a close political alliance with the industrial workers in an independent party of the toilers, to a struggle for immediate objectives which would serve greatly to relieve the condition of the farmer: the removal of the protective tariff on what the farmer buys from the city, a moratorium on all debts and mortgages, tax exemption of all poor working farmers, and the nationalization of the big agricultural machinery and marketing trusts in whose claws the farmer is today such a helpless victim.

At least one aspect of the "holiday" movement offers some perspective. In the manifesto quoted above it will be noticed that there is a clause in which the farmers pledge to protect each other against foreclosures of any sort. It is not unlikely that this part of the pledge may, in the long run, turn out to be more important than the whole "strike" movement. Organization to resist foreclosure is economically practicable and very valuable, as the experience of the farmers in many parts of Europe has shown. It is the type of struggle in the course of which the embattled farmers begin to lose their hereditary social blindness, begin to form connections with the industrial workers in the cities, begin to tread the path of effective revolt.

The Great Struggle for the Youth

World Youth Council Meets

by Edward Marshall

Los Angeles, Calif.

Since the Olympic games, held in Southern California, were supposedly guided by a spirit of international "friendship" and "cooperation", it was desirable for the purposes of the powers that be to round out the various and strength physical contests of skill and strength with an outlet for mental gymnastics in the form of a conference of youth to develop an international "understanding" and "outlook". And with this aim in mind, despite the lofty phrases of most and the sincere beliefs of a few, this World Council of Youth was called in Pasadena, California, immediately at the close of the Olympic games in order to complete the above picture. . . .

What was the content of the conference? It was entirely a youth affair with real youth delegate representation from organizations from Japan, China, Germany, the Philippines and the United States. A host of other nationalities were represented by individuals, who nevertheless portrayed the outlook and approach of their various countries: Koreans, Mexicans, Hindus from India, American Negroes, etc. And the significant feature was that practically all of the 125 delegates of the Council were students. However, it was interesting to note how superior the foreign delegations were as compared to the American students in respect to political consciousness and understanding. It was both tragic and amusing to see.

From the very beginning the leadership of the Council, the Y.M.C.A. type, sought to extend their influence and dominate the Conference. So the pleas for "understanding" on the basis of spiritual education, love, and brotherhood, and the rest of that tripe. So the calls for "unprecedented broad-mindedness and an absolute absence of propaganda" accompanied with a condemnation of "class thinking" as "fallacious".

Getting In On The Ground Floor

Having spoken at an Inter-Racial Forum in Pasadena, I was approached there by several individuals, who were instrumental in organizing the Council, to assume the chairmanship of one of the Commissions, of which there were four altogether: Economics, Education, Religion and Philosophy, and International Politics. I accepted and asked for the last commission, knowing that most work could be done in that particular field in germinating a few "new" ideas.

Four objectives were to be accomplished at the Council, if possible: first, to counteract the Y.M.C.A. leadership and influence; second, and most important, to get the message of Communism across to the delegates and to the populace outside of the Conference; third, to secure contacts to be utilized in the follow-up work that would have to be done after the Conference; and fourth, to secure leadership of the Council itself, which, at the outset, seemed impossible. Strange to say, believe it or not, every single objective was successfully accomplished—and this because of the correct application of our correct Communist tactics.

The smashing of the Y.M.C.A. influence and the introduction of the Communist viewpoint had to be done simultaneously. In the Politics Commission I, as chairman, presented a Leninist analysis of imperialism concentrating on three immediate problems: (1) the developing revolutionary colonial movements for independence and the necessity for our support, which at once won the backing of the Philippine, Indian, and Chinese delegates; (2) the existence of Soviet Russia and the necessity of recognition and cooperation with a workers government; (3) the war danger and the corresponding tasks of the youth of each country to fight the capitalist class of their own country. This was done without any waving of the Red flag or "third period" phraseology and with corresponding greater effect. The report was adopted as the basis of the commission findings—a Leninist analysis adopted at a conference called by a Y.M.C.A. leadership! Every problem that was raised, the Manchurian situation, India, the Philippines, armaments and war, Soviet Russia, religion and the missionary movement, education and propaganda, unemployment, tariffs etc., we succeeded in tracing back its source: the economic structure of society; and the emphasis was so repeated and so unanswerable that at a public meeting one of the heads of the Religion and Philosophy Commission openly declared: "It seems that the only solution to our problems is to change our economic system."

Swinging The Conference

In the meantime we gained contact after contact, especially with the foreign delegates of China, Japan, India, the Philippines, and among the American students as well. Without

delay the heads of the Conference began their expected attack against the adopted findings of my commission, which played right into our hands, because we were thus able to reach practically every member of the Council with a copy of the Communist resolution. When they tried to stifle expression by refusing to allow to participate freely in the discussion, the issue of free speech supposedly guaranteed at this Council, was raised and delegate after delegate was aligned with us against the leadership.

Things went to the point that they demanded that I speak at the public mass meeting at the close of the Conference. To avoid this the leadership appointed me to speak over the radio on the World Council of Youth, thinking that the subject was sufficiently harmless to prevent me from doing any damage. I jumped at the chance and so I spoke over Station K.H.J., the second largest station on the Pacific Coast, on the Forum hour of that citadel of reaction, the Los Angeles Times, devoting one minute to the World Council of Youth and the other to a call for support of the colonial anti-imperialist movements, recognition of Soviet Russia, and a call upon youth to fight against capitalist war. And I wasn't cut off the air, since we had persons listening in view of precisely such a situation, and they heard every word.

Finally, after swinging the Conference away from the reactionary influence of its leadership, after presenting the Communist position thru every possible medium, after securing numerous important contacts, we were able, by uniting with the more radical and more intelligent elements of the Council, who were not frightened by labels and name-calling, to oust the conservative elements from leadership and take it over ourselves, with my being placed in the key position of Program Chairman.

And The Y. C. L.?

And what was the Young Communist League doing about this Conference? Not a damned thing! They knew about the Conference. They knew that foreign countries were to be represented. They knew that the delegates were all members of the youth. Why their inactivity? Why their total failure to raise a finger in their periodic field fertile for Communist activity? Perhaps it was their aversion for working in an organization in which a "renegade" was to be found. Perhaps it was their "proletarian" contempt for a student "intellectual" conference. Perhaps it was their absolute stupidity altogether. But certainly it showed their lack of understanding of the elementary principles of Communism in failing to perceive obvious opportunities for activity, let alone a conception of correct tactics when once engaged in actual work. This was illustrated by the fact that the League finally broke its heart and condescended to send in one of its members on the next to last day of the Conference! Is it any wonder then that one of the ritual points of League and Party self-criticism in their periodical "confessionals" is that of "lagging behind the masses"? And how long will the Party and League membership tolerate a leadership that insists upon beating its breast and doing perpetual monk-like penance instead of participation in day to day elementary activity?

Perspectives Of The World Youth Council

What is the perspective as to the utility of the World Council of Youth after its ten-day conference? It has a basis for growth and that basis is the development of a student movement. As to whether it will grow or not, time alone can tell, altho the outlook is favorable. If sufficient forces could be sent in and a correct policy pursued, it might be destroyed as a bourgeois organization a militant student organization could be built up from its present nucleus. For it has connections and means, especially insofar as the medium of publicity is concerned, which can be of tremendous value in broadcasting the message of Communism to the student youth of America. And this alone is sufficient reason to justify Communist activity within the World Council of Youth.

What has been the significance of participation in this World Council?

Three lessons can be profitably learned. First, the value of fighting on a minimum program, could never have been more clearly revealed, for only by such means were the achievements pointed out made possible. Second concrete results can be secured not by verbal fireworks or by revolutionary phrases but by constant and persistent work. Third, the field and opportunities for activity among the student youth are tremendous and are continually increasing. For it is no longer necessary to provoke a condition of discontent, since the sources of dissatisfaction, particularly in the developing student awakening, are just waiting to be tapped. All that is required is an intelligent utilization of all the resources at our disposal in accord with a correct Communist policy. And this can be done not by an attitude of sectarian isolation, not by an approach of political snobbery, not by ravings and rantings prompted by blind stupidity, but only by a clear-headed, clear-sighted, and clear-seeing common sense line of tactics based upon a sound understanding of Leninist strategy.

The Economic Crisis In Indiana

LIBERTY PARTY AND UNEMPLOYED

by Harry H. Conner

Fort Wayne, Ind.

Numerous are the attempts that middle-class politicians have made to utilize the unemployment situation for their own benefit. One of them was Father Cox's "unemployed party", or "blue shirts" as it is now called. Attempts have been made to link this party up with the Liberty party headed by "Coin" Harvey, and the they seem unsuccessful, but may be of interest to those who are today in a position to see into the relations between this same Liberty party and the unemployed organization in Fort Wayne, the biggest one of its kind in the Union. This will also be of benefit for our readers in that town, inasmuch as there have been plenty of rumors running around about secret deals between the leaders of the unemployed and those of the L. P. It will be well worth while to state the facts about these matters.

As has been already mentioned, there are some members of the L.P. active in the building of the Unemployed Council, or Association as it has now decided to call itself. These workers were rank and file members; they worked in the council to better their condition and not to try to link it up with their party. In fact, most of them were rather disgusted with their party, looking for something stronger and more militant. It was only when the council grew to be a real force in the city that the leaders of the L. P. turned their eyes to it. And the attitude they took was that of the professional politician grabbing for votes; it was not that of representatives of the toilers, seeing it as their duty to work in any organization that may advance the cause of the workers.

Today, as has been mentioned before, this party is split in two groups. One is dominated by the Ku-Kluxers; the other one wants none of them. This is the real reason for the split. There are, of course, also personal differences between ambitious leaders but that is the case in any party (sad but true, also in the Communist Party!) and it does not necessarily lead to splits. There are also some other political differences between the two factions, but they are of minor significance. The anti-Klan wing is by far the stronger one and it has the advantage of being chartered, having the legal right to the name "Liberty party". Its main stronghold is the Southern part of the state, in and around Fort Wayne, the Klan has the upper hand. But then again, the Klan wing has no right to the party name and may be hit thru the court by its rival.

The Klan wing pretends to be the

most radical one. It was willing to furnish speakers at the meetings of the council and these leaders have agreed to confine themselves to the general political and economic situation, without mentioning their candidates or platforms. Soon the other wing learned sorrowfully about the popularity of their rivals and they decided to get their slice of the pie. Ward Hiner, their candidate for Governor, and big shot in the trucking business of Indianapolis, requested a conference with some of the unemployed leaders. So A. Holman, then Secretary, now President, and the writer, Vice-President, went down to the capital. Hiner made us some promises, among other things to furnish a radio car for a State organizer from our council to tour the State and set up councils in all the noteworthy cities. In return, he asked for the council to send a large delegation to the mass convention of his party on August 1. This the council could not agree to. It could not take steps that were equivalent to the endorsement of Hiner's party. So the outcome was that the council agreed to give members of Hiner's party a chance to mention the convention at the meetings of the council and council headquarters were to serve as a rallying point for all that wanted to go. Hiner in return promised a good meal to all who came from Fort Wayne. This the council leaders agreed to, not because they wanted to boost the L. P. but in order to get a chance to organize the State and because of the prevailing sentiment among the members.

Learning this, the leaders of the Klan wing started abusing their privilege of speaking at the council meetings. Craig, their candidate for Governor, ex-member of the I.W.W., ex-organizer of the Non-Partisan Farmer-Labor League, gave a talk at an outdoor meeting, attended by some thousand members of the council. As soon as he was thru, some of his followers started a demonstration of the kind that occurs at the conventions of the two old parties. Some of them even pushed the President away from the platform, trying to get control of the meeting. They were easily disposed of by their own methods whereupon they started whispering to the effect that the writer had been paid a thousand dollars by Ward Hiner to keep them from campaigning.

Immediately following this, the above-named convention took place. Some thousand members of the council went down. They arrived at the business session, and were

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The Communist Opposition and the Communist International

Resolution of the International Conference

(Concluded from the last issue)

3. The I. C. O. rejects the attempt to look upon the theory of "socialism in one country" (concretely, the affirmation of the possibility of building up socialism in the Soviet Union before the victory of the proletarian revolution in other countries) as the source of the ultra-left course in the C. I. It rejects, likewise, the attempt to find this source in a necessary contradiction between the interests of the Soviet Union and those of the international proletariat; on the contrary, it is of the opinion that the interests of the first country in which the working class rules and in which socialism is being built, coincide fundamentally and are in complete harmony with the interests of the struggle for the emancipation of the working class and the other sections of the toiling people in the rest of the world. It is the duty of every Communist to defend against all attacks of the counter-revolution the Soviet Union as a workers state upon a socialist foundation, as the bulwark of the proletarian revolution.

Also the interests of the Soviet Union and those of the world revolution coincide fundamentally, it is nevertheless quite possible that methods and forms of struggle in countries in which the working class has not yet achieved power should not coincide with those in which this has already been accomplished. The application of the fundamentals and aims of Communism as well as of tactical and organizational fundamentals must be adapted to the concrete relations of the class struggle in the various countries.

The real basic source of the ultra-left course is seen by the I. C. O. in the false transference of the methods and forms of struggle, corresponding to a country in which the working class has already triumphed and in which socialism is being built, to the Communist Parties of those countries in which the majority of the working class has still to be won and the prerequisites for taking up the struggle for power have still to be created. This false transference is accompanied by the destruction of the possibility of properly evaluating and turning to account the experiences of the Communist Parties outside the Soviet Union. A further cause is the mechanical transference of the factional struggles within the C.P.S.U. to the Comintern and its sections.

The basis of all this is the monopoly of leadership of the C.P.S.U. in the Comintern. Until Lenin's death, this was still a positive factor; it has now, however, become outlived because the gap between the tasks of the C. P. S. U. (tasks of socialist construction) and the tasks of the other sections of the Comintern (the tasks of the preparation and the carrying thru of the struggle for power), has been continually growing, especially in recent years in view of much greater tempo of socialist construction in the U. S. S. R. as compared with the advance of the revolution in the capitalist countries. For these reasons the monopoly of leadership must be abolished and there must be created a collective leadership for the Communist International which will direct the forces of the revolution of the whole world (the victorious workers of the Soviet Union and the still oppressed workers of the rest of the world) according to uniform fundamentals but with consideration for the special conditions of their activity.

The I. C. O. therefore, sees in the ultra-left tactics of the Comintern, not the inevitable and permanent effect of an alleged contradiction between the interests of the Soviet Union and of the proletarian revolution in other countries, but rather the effect of a temporary but serious failure, on the part of the leadership of the C. P. S. U., to understand the tactical necessities of the Communist movement outside of the Soviet Union.

4. The I. C. O. and its sections did not separate voluntarily from the C. I. and its sections but were expelled in violation of democratic centralism and inner-Party democracy because they refused to surrender their Communist right of criticizing the ultra-left course.

The I. C. O. fights for the rehabilitation of the C. I. and of its sections. The basic condition for this is the reestablishment of inner-Party democracy and of democratic centralism in the individual sections of the C. I. and in the Comintern as a whole.

The I. C. O. recognizes that the reestablishment of inner-Party democracy and of democratic centralism (as they are given in the demands of the March 1930 Open Letter of the C.P.G.-O.) is only a part of the liquidation of the ultra-left course. It, however, regards the reestablishment of normal Party life as sufficient to allow it to work, within the C. P. and in the limits

of Communist discipline, for the complete and open liquidation of the ultra-left course—which would make this liquidation possible at minimum cost and damage to the Party and would stimulate the quickest and most extensive reestablishment of the confidence of the working class in the Party, today so badly damaged by the ultra-left course and the leadership responsible for it.

The rehabilitation of the Communist International demands, from a positive viewpoint, that the leadership of the Comintern develop its activities within the following limits:

- (a) To assure the maintenance of Communist fundamentals in the Comintern and in all its sections.
- (b) To organize international actions and campaigns.
- (c) To coordinate the activities of the various sections.

In the working out of specific questions in the individual countries the important and most decisive role must fall to the parties of those countries themselves. However, the highest and final decision in these questions belongs to the leadership of the Communist International. It must take care that, in the settlement of these questions, the Communist fundamentals and the tactical principles are maintained. But on the other hand, the leadership of the Comintern must not replace the leaderships of the individual sections.

6. The I. C. O. and its affiliated organizations reject the maneuvers of the leading bodies of the C. I. and of its sections, having for their object to play off individual national organizations of the I. C. O., local groups and single members against each other by calling upon them to rejoin the Party. With such maneuvers the Party leaders show that they do not themselves take seriously their accusations against the Communist Opposition and recognize that the latter has not left the basis of Communist principles.

On the other hand, however, the I. C. O. greets the increasingly frequent honest desires of the members of the sections of the C. I. for the readmission of the Opposition; it emphasizes the necessity for the members who honestly desire this to take a stand for it in the C. I. and the C. P. The Communist Opposition, which has carried on a four year struggle for the liquidation of the ultra-left course, is conscious of the fact that it has rendered the Communist movement an indispensable service. It declares that its criticism and action, carried out in bitter struggle and under greatest difficulties, have already had and are now having deep-going and wholesome effects in the C. P. and the C. I., as well as in the labor movement generally. It declares that its estimation of the effects of the ultra-left course has been fully justified by the facts and, in a number of cases, has even been recognized by the leading committees, even if these latter have hitherto been either unwilling or unable to recognize the ultra-left course as the cause of the trouble and to remove this cause. On the basis of these facts the Communist Opposition is confident that it will finally overcome all difficulties and emerge victorious. But this victory can only be achieved thru the active intervention of the Party members who will draw the necessary lessons from the negative experiences. It is for this cooperation that the Communist Opposition appeals above all.

7. The Communist Opposition declares to the leadership of the C. I. that, in face of the extremely acute danger of a Fascist seizure of power in Germany as well as of an intervention war against the Soviet Union, no time must be lost in giving up completely and openly the ultra-left course, thereby creating the decisive and indispensable prerequisite for the C. I. and the C. P. winning leadership of the working class for the overthrow of Fascism, for the achievement of the revolutionary way out of the crisis, and for the defense of the Soviet Union and thereby also bringing about a revival of the declining labor movement outside of the Soviet Union, a consequence of the ultra-left course.

In order to achieve the aim of Communism, the consolidation of the working class of the whole world for the overthrow of the bourgeois State, for the destruction of the capitalist system, and for the construction of a socialist order of society, the organizations of the I. C. O. have always been and are now ready to stretch out a hand to reestablish the unity of the Communist movement under the above mentioned indispensable conditions, which alone assure the elaboration of correct Communist tactics on the basis of the collective experience and the collaboration of all sections of the C. I. and which alone provides for the rapid correction of the tactical mistakes thru the participation of the membership.

BOOKS

THE CHINABERRY TREE. A Novel of American Life, by Jessie Fauset. Frederick A. Stokes Company, New York, 1931.

This novel by one of the more prominent of the younger Negro novelists offers a full length portrait of an upper middle class Negro community in a small New Jersey town. As such it throws a revealing light upon one of the least known (by many doubtless thought non-existent) sections of Negro society. It will widen the horizons of those of us for whom Harlem and the South exhaust the specific types of Negro community in the United States.

The broad general theme of the book, with minor offshoots of plot and characterization, is concerned with the social ostracism visited by the Negro community upon a family where the father, now dead, was white. The spiritual sufferings this entails for the sensitive daughter of the union is the pivot around which the story revolves and forms itself. Racial purity is evidently an article of faith among the members of this Negro community. The swift and merciless punishment dealt out to one breaking the rules of the game reminds one of nothing so much as the reaction of "respectable" white opinion in similar matters. As a matter of fact, to all intents and purposes, it might be a similar portion of white society that has been painted, so thoroly has this Negro community taken on the protective coloration of white bourgeois values, their respectability, their puritanic morality.

Dealing as it does with material which is rarely come in for treatment at such length, this book has aroused wide discussion in the Negro press. The reaction of a certain section of Negro intellectual opinion has been quite characteristic. "See," they say in effect, "we also have our upper crust, our aristocrats. We also can be 'respectable.' We are not only a race of pagan vagrants and nondescript workers." These intellectuals applaud their complete subordination to bourgeois values. The subtle compromise with racial restriction and even the inverted capitulation to them is here quite explicit. It is no wonder that the oppression of the Negro masses finds not even the faintest protest in the breast of this Negro community. It is a case where class interests cut clear across racial ties. Technically the book is excellent. Miss Fauset has a mastery over words. Her characters acquire flesh and blood reality. One would like to see such excellent craftsmanship applied to a greater theme.

Jim Cook.

direct relief to fall into the background, if not to be lost entirely. Here again, nothing could be more satisfactory from the capitalist viewpoint. Finally, from a political viewpoint, it is clear that activity along the channels of "self-help" certainly does not tend to mobilize the jobless workers, side by side with the employed, in a class front against the capitalists and their government, as does the struggle for unemployment insurance and for direct relief; on the contrary, it tends to turn the attention of the workers away from their class enemy altogether—the capitalists stand to one side utterly uninvolved, with nothing to do except to smile benevolently and extend a helping hand once in a while! No wonder the New York Lyons plan modestly recommends itself to the master class in the following words: "It is better next winter to have the unemployed busily working for themselves . . . than throwing stones thru windows . . ." Certainly, for the capitalists, it is far better that the workers should concentrate their energy upon futile attempts to lift themselves up by their bootstraps than that they should organize in militant action demanding government insurance and relief.

The Only Way Out

All "self-help" schemes suffer from one radical and fatal fault: They try to overcome the loss of control of the producer over his means of production, so characteristic of the capitalist system, within the framework of the capitalist economy—an attempt which is futile, utopian, and thoroly reactionary in tendency. Petty bourgeois Socialists of all stripes and varieties, in all parts of the world, have toiled vainly in this direction for decades, and there is no reason why the American working class must be made the subject of these discredited and dangerous experiments once again.

For compulsory Federal unemployment insurance—for adequate direct unemployment relief! these are the slogans of the wide-awake militant workers. And to them must be added: Away with the vicious and insane capitalist system which makes unemployment and misery not only possible but inevitable!

Gets You Coming And Going—"Nothing for business to fear."—Barney Baruch on Candidate Roosevelt.

"Safe and sound."—Calvin Coolidge on Candidate Hoover.

It's a case of "Heads I win—tails you lose" for Big Business.

When the forgotten man stops forgetting he won't be forgotten.

Rev. Dr. Samuel Tregler says what Hoover needs is solitude. "Would it not be a fine thing if for at least three months each year the White House, with its chief executive in it, might be isolated on a lonely island."

We go further. We'd give the President solitary for life. And Dr. Tregler to preach to him perpetually.

BETWEEN HAMMER AND ANVIL

Our Disappearing Liberty

Have you noticed the disappearance of Liberty from the face of our coins? The fair goddess no longer adorns our nickel having been replaced by an Indian head, nor our quarter, which bears the face of Washington. She left the penny long ago; soon Liberty will be no more on America's money. Of course, even when she was on the coins, we didn't see much of her, but we lament her passing just the same. The "bull" on the back of the nickel, the Fascist emblem on the dime, and what Franklin called "the thievish rapacious and lousy bird of prey" on the quarter, are the symbolic adornments of the new era.

Jimmie Wants Vindication

Poor Jimmie Walker just had to get a little help on the side. His salary as Mayor was only \$111 a day. (No, reader, that's not three but one hundred-eleven.) \$111 a day; \$777 a week! There are millions of families in the United States that get less for an entire year.

One family could live fifty years according to the famous "American standard" of the Southern and New England factory towns on what "Jimmie" earned in one. Anyone who gets paid like that naturally knows her worth more—and he took it. No wonder Jimmie wants to vindicate himself!

When Is A Crisis?

The papers tell us there's a crisis in the Soviet Union. In a way there is. They're growing so darn fast that they can't keep up with themselves. Now they run out of one thing and now of another. But nobody ever heard of their having too much wheat to let people eat it or too much iron to keep the blast furnaces going, or too many farmers and workers so that it's necessary to starve them out of existence! Crisis? It's growing pains! But what Old Man Capitalism is suffering from is rheumatism coupled with creeping paralysis.

Economic Science

"The depression began," says Professor Fritch, "when the State of New York granted the charter to the American Association for the Advancement of Atheism."

Thistles Grow On Fig Trees

Kellogg Pact, Hoover Pact, Macdonald Plan, Washington, Locarno, London, Geneva, Lausanne and again Geneva—how disarming the statesmen are:

1925	\$3,497,000,000
1926	\$3,557,000,000
1927	\$3,673,000,000
1928	\$3,950,000,000
1929	\$4,107,000,000
1930	\$4,128,000,000

The annual rise in expenditures for war preparations. Such are the achievements of the conference and pacts. Bigger and bigger grows the bubble! 1933 . . . ? Hold your ears!

Make Him Prove He's Qualified

In Germany the Nazis demand the withdrawal of Presidential Candidate Duesterberg from Stahlhelm leadership because his grandfather was a Jew. In New York State Senator Hofstadter "is to have a place on the Republican ticket as an appeal to the Jewish voters" and prominent Jews demand the nomination of Lehman on the democratic ticket.

The logic of Jewish nationalist and National-Socialist is identical. Both hold circumscription the essential test of qualification for office.

Fruits Of The New Line!

From July 14, 1932 issue of International Correspondence, official organ of the Communist International, we take the following illuminating paragraphs, dealing with the Communist Party of South Africa, word for word:

"By taking the path of organizing and leading the mass struggle against imperialist slave oppression, and in the main having overcome the influence of the renegade groups of Bunting, our Party has grown into a big political force.

"This is the tremendous significance of the change which has taken place in the Party in the last two or three years. But on this path, a number of mistakes have been discovered, arising from the limited experience of our Party and the newness of the path.

"The situation in our Party is extremely serious. To a greater extent we begin to feel the danger of the Party being isolated from the masses of workers and toilers. The Party understands that if this isolation is not rapidly overcome, the Party will be converted into a small sectarian organization estranged from the broad masses.

"The isolation of the Party from the masses is expressed in the decrease in the membership of the Party from 4 or 5,000 to not more than 300 at the present time, and a reduction in the number of organized supporters of the Party. The trade unions in the African Federation of Trade Unions have greatly declined and have not yet emerged from the zone of decline. In the Red Aid and the Friends of Soviet Russia, almost only Party members remain.

"The operation was successful but the patient died! B. D. W.

FOR A UNITED LABOR TICKET IN NEW YORK!

THE sensational resignation of Mayor Walker, while under fire at the Governor's investigation in Albany, has driven to the fore a number of grave political questions that win added significance because they occur in a Presidential year of unusual importance. It is not necessary for us to delve into the mire of dirty clique politics, into the swamps of Tammany corruption, to fish out the devious factors that led to the resignation of the Mayor or that will determine the Tiger's attitude to the coming emergency elections and to Walker's expressed ambition to seek "vindication" in them. Certainly, it is no more than ridiculous self-deception which deceives nobody to insist, as does the "Daily Worker", that it was the "pressure of the masses" that forced the resignation. Whatever else may have been the case, it is unfortunately quite obvious that the whole scandalous story of corruption and misuse of office did not arouse any very great or very active resentment among the large masses of the New York working men. It is certainly a sign of their political backwardness, of their lack of reaction to vital social questions, but it is a fact and it does no good to shut one's eyes to it; rather it is necessary for the class-conscious sections of the working class to find the most suitable way of arousing the workers and of leading them to take the first independent steps in political action.

Whatever may be the final decision of the machine, to support Walker or to cast him aside, it is clear that the municipal ballots this November will be headed by a Tammany candidate, whose job it will be to defend the system and regime of which Big Boss Curry, Ex-Mayor Walker and Ex-Sheriff Farley are the fine flowers and the "little tin box", the "thirty-three McQuades", and the "beneficent friends", the chosen symbols. The Republicans will probably not run a straight ticket but will make some attempt to go in for fusion with the "reform crowd" among the Democrats. But the differences between the two candidates, the fusion and the straight Tammany, will be far more apparent than real. Both will stand forward as the champions of that economic and social system of which all civic corruption is the inevitable outgrowth. Both will strongly defend those intimate relations between big business and city politics, from which flow all rackets, big and small, from the Mayor with his unexplained millions down to the vice-squad cops framing girls for a few dollars. New York has seen these "reform sweeps" come and go, one after the other, cause some flurry for a while, but finally leave things as they were before, or even worse. Unless the giant racket, capitalism, is smashed, the other rackets, in the city government and out, cannot be touched.

The job of the labor movement in this situation is clear: to unite all its forces and all its organizations in support of a UNITED LABOR TICKET standing foursquare for the interests of labor and determined and able to make a clean sweep of the whole dirty mess. Only labor can measure up to this job for basically only labor has no finger in the pie of capitalism, only labor is not tied to it in a fundamental sense.

A UNITED LABOR TICKET is the slogan of the hour for labor. For this reason, the rumored attempts of the Socialist party, especially of the Thomas wing, to strike some sort of bargain with the bourgeois reformers and altogether submerge the independent role of labor, must be sharply condemned as not only a surrender of the interests of the workers but even as a bad blow to the very struggle against municipal corruption. On the other hand, the action of the official Communist Party, in refusing to take the initiative to form or even participate in a united labor front in the elections merely facilitates the pro-capitalist policies of the Socialist leaders and intensifies the disunity, demoralization and passivity in the ranks of labor.

The opportunity presented in the municipal elections this year is great indeed. Will the Communist forces prove equal to it?

THE NEW MINERS UNION IN ILLINOIS

THE mine workers of America, unemployed and starving, terribly exploited by the operators, betrayed by their leaders, their ranks divided, are being offered a way out in the form of another new union in Illinois, the recently organized Progressive Miners of America. This new union was born directly out of the revolt of thousands of Illinois miners against the sell-out of the Lewis-Walker clique, which accepted a big wage slash even tho two referendums of the miners voted it down by overwhelming majorities.

The militant mood of the Illinois miners and their readiness to struggle are of huge significance. Properly utilized this militancy can become the starting point for a real drive against the misleaders, not only in the U. M. W. A. but in the entire labor movement. But does the formation of a new union serve this purpose? We think not! The miners have had their experiences with new unions in Illinois, in the Anthracite, in Canada, with the National Miners Union, with the Walker split. What has been the result? Only greater demoralization and chaos. The formation of dual unions has dissipated the energy of the miners, separated the more advanced from the backward elements, and has, in general, played into the hands of the Lewis machine.

What is needed now is not a new union but the organization of a powerful force inside the U. M. W. A. to drive Lewis out and to unify the forces of the miners into a powerful union capable of defeating the offensive of the operators. Any idea that by uniting the anti-Lewis group OUTSIDE the U. M. W. A. (National Miners Union, Progressive Miners, West Virginia Mine Workers, etc.), without the workers inside the U. M. W. A., Lewis or the operators can be defeated, is an illusion. Should such a new union be formed even on a national scale, it would only share the fate of the National Miners Union.

Not more unions, not dual unions, not struggle from without, but a united union and a militant persistent struggle inside the U.M.W.A. for the interests of the miners—this is the road, the rank and file must travel.

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LIBERTY PARTY AND UNEMPLOYED

(Continued from Page 3)

supposed to be fed, and then hear the program of the party. However, somehow Hiner did not remember the first part of the program. On the other hand, the unemployed were hungry and penniless and refused to be fed with political promises only. Hiner did not exactly become popular thru this; in fact only swift interference by the leaders of the unemployed saved him from violence. The writer then took the floor, exposing Hiner as a tricky misleader and betrayer, and finally forced him to reconsider the feeding proposition. Unfortunately for him, the unemployed felt in no mood to hear the platform of his party and we returned to Fort Wayne.

Throughout all these happenings, the council leaders acted upon the basis that the problem of unemployment is nation-wide and must be tackled not only thru charity but also politically. Therefore, the council should be given a chance to hear political leaders and their solutions to the problem. But the council, or no occasion, endorsed any of the factions of the L. P. or any other political organization. Such endorsement can only be given when the members have been given a thorough education as to the parties that are in the field. While the tendency now is to disregard politics entirely, this is a wrong attitude in the opinion of the writer. Being rather well acquainted with the L. P. by now, the council should give a hearing to other parties, particularly to those that

claim to stand 100% with the working class.

This pertains to State and national parties. As far as local politics are concerned, the council is no doubt strong enough to go into politics on its own hook. However, it will then have to seek the support of sympathetic elements, of other organizations that stand for the welfare of the workers. Foremost among such organizations are the trade unions, but there are also some veterans organizations that should be interested, notably the ex-soldiers league. A labor party should be formed by these organizations and, of course, if one or both factions of the Liberty party want to line up, they could do so. The new party should work out a program having for its sole purpose the welfare of the workers, those who are unemployed and must list on the county, and those who are still at work and are experiencing wage slashes, the stagger system, and what not.

It is still time for such a party to get on the ballot in the county elections and in the city elections next Spring it may also be of immense service to the workers. It is due time for the workers to understand, that at the ballot box they should vote for their own trusted men, those who, by daily participation in the struggles of the workers and the building of their organizations, have shown that they have the interests of the toiling masses at heart. The workers should have learned by now that the meal-ticket politicians, talking to catch votes but willing to do nothing, are no good.

THE JOBLESS "SELF-HELP" FRAUD

(Continued from Page 3)

"meeting", the unemployment emergency win the full approval of the capitalist class, for they are essentially attempts to solve this emergency not at the expense of the capitalist class but at the expense of the working class. They are the answer of the capitalist class to the demand of the unemployed worker for jobless relief and insurance: "Help yourself! Why bother us!" For the workers to "help themselves" in this manner means to absolve the employers of all responsibility for and excuse them from all participation in the direct relief of the unemployed.

It is obvious that wherever "self-help" plans are inaugurated, they immediately tend to replace all existing agencies of unemployment relief and this tendency is irresistible since the former are far preferable from the viewpoint of the capitalists. Available funds are diverted to them and then begin to grow continually less, thus to the satisfaction of the wealthy elements of the community. In other words, "self-help" schemes are, quite apart from the wishes of their champions, schemes for systematically diminishing the semi-public and public relief to the unemployed.

The same effect is brought about from another direction. Attracted by the glittering possibilities (really fantasies) of "self-help", the unemployed workers involved allow the struggle for unemployment insurance and for the increase and improvement of