

# VANGUARD

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## War and the Labor Movement

Italy has opened hostilities against Ethiopia. This she has been enabled to do, thanks to the help of many countries—members of the League of Nations—thanks to that country which pretends to fight imperialism, and thanks to the workers who have produced war materials.

The same countries which now call for sanctions have helped Italy in her imperialist war preparations by granting loans, by supplying and transporting war materials. Capitalists have taken orders—workers have filled them. Communist Russia was no exception, for millions of dollars worth of goods have been delivered by her to Italy in the last few months. Mussolini and Fascism are responsible for the blood that is being shed in this war, but no less responsible are the “leaders” of the working class who instead of pointing out to the working men their moral duty thought only of the tactical advantages a defeat of Mussolini would bring with it.

In spite of the lessons of 1914-1918, the policy which raised socialism from “utopia” to “science” and placed it on the basis of “reality”, shows itself in 1935 for what it really is. Authoritarian socialism has lost all creative capacity and has become enmeshed in the maze of capitalist entanglements. The Second and Third Internationals with their mass organizations have come out in support of the League of Nations—the concentration of the greatest imperialist powers whose only purpose is that of maintaining the status quo in world domination. Such tactics cannot prevent war and much less destroy its causes. The laws underlying capitalist economy are not abolished when one pretends they do not exist. Nothing is attained by this ostrich policy but that one is compelled to take the side of the satisfied imperialist powers against the hungry ones. Nothing else but that soon millions will be sent to their death under the hypocritical slogan of the League of Nations War for the protection of international right and security.

There can be only one choice for the true socialists in such struggles. The enemy lies at home. Capitalism must be fought, production for war must be stopped. The position of the anarcho-syndicalists in France, Spain, Sweden, Holland and Norway calling for wide strikes against war productions by the workers in their own countries is the only logical stand that socialists can adopt. They must have no part in sanctions. Sanctions are a part of imperialist policy.

While the Italian Social-Democratic Party is behind the League of Nations, the emigre paper, *Giustizia e Liberta*, writes that the salvation of the Italian people lies solely in revolution, that fascism cannot be destroyed by English guns. This point of view is much more reasonable than that of many anti-fascists whose opinion that war can be destroyed by war was refuted by Simone Weil, the French Marxist. Her refutation ended with the words:

“... Thus appears clearly the absurdity of the anti-fascist action, that accepts war as a method. It means not only fighting a barbaric tyranny by subjecting the masses to the burden of a still more barbaric slaughter, but also the extension in another form of the system one is fighting against. It is childish to assert that a state apparatus, mighty through conquest, would mitigate the pressure exercised by an enemy state on its people. It would

be still more childish to believe that such a state would permit a social revolution and not smother it in blood . . . In general it seems as if history more and more compels a choice in every political struggle between an augmentation of the unbearable oppression which is exercised by every state apparatus, and a merciless fight against the state itself."

There is indeed only one way in our fight against fascism, against capitalism, against the prevailing order of things: An unconditional fight against every war and all war preparations. That means in the present situation: Stoppage of all production and transport to those waging war; stoppage of all production and transport on behalf of those countries which are preparing at present economically for the application of eventual military sanctions, such as England, France, etc., in so far as raw materials and articles are concerned of which one is sure they have been ordered with a view to eventual use for war purposes.

—I. A. C. PRESS SERVICE.

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## The A. F. of L. Convention

The convention of the A. F. of L. has met and adjourned. To the workers the proceedings meant nothing as far as future hopes were concerned. Labor organizations in other parts of the world are uniting against fascism and war. The A. F. of L. met, the interminable jurisdictional disputes and the felicitations of Hearst, Roosevelt and other leaders of American Babbitry took up most of the time. The character of the convention showed clearly that the A. F. of L., like the Kiwanis, Elks, and other orders, has become one of the solid institutions of capitalism. In order to defend capitalism against the "Reds", Green and Co. proposed a united front with the semi-fascist American Legion.

How effective the A. F. of L. will be in preventing war can be gathered from the patriotic declarations of the assembled bureaucrats. The problem of organizing the unemployed was disposed of by the pledge to fight for the revival of the N. R. A.

Although questions of adopting industrial unionism to parallel the structure of American industry, of organizing the vast masses of the unorganized and similar vital problems did come up before the convention, the manner of discussing them showed that the A. F. of L. cannot and will not solve these problems in the interests of the workers.

The "progressives" maintained that the basic industries—steel, rubber, cement, automobile, cannot be organized unless the A. F. of L. adopted industrial unionism. The entrenched bureaucracy, however, objected to giving up jurisdiction in these industries because they wanted to increase the power of their respective craft union rackets.

But no mere change in structure will make the A. F. of L. a real labor organization. Industrial unionism without revolutionary principles and tactics is just as easily adaptable to reactionary purposes. Some captains of industry declare that if the A. F. of L. were to adopt industrial unionism, it would make for more efficient cooperation between capital and labor. Industrial

unionism can be espoused by ambitious labor fakers like John L. Lewis who suddenly became a radical after a very lucrative career of strike breaking an red-bating. The slogan of industrial unionism is being used by the insincere and ambitious politicians for their own advancement.

The fact that there was an opposition at the convention is symptomatic of the growing unrest of the workers. In the process of making the A. F. of L. responsive to their needs the progressives will find out that they must build their own revolutionary industrial unions on the basis of the class struggle and the establishment of a Free Society.

S. W.

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### Where is Petrini?

Alfonso Petrini is an Italian anarchist, who, after the fascists came into power, emigrated to Russia. In the factory where he worked he advised a working woman who complained about the long hours, to object and not to work longer than she was able.

The woman followed his advice, with the result that both she and Petrini were dismissed. For this reason and because of Petrini's refusal to give up money for a compulsory loan, the amount was equal to a month's salary—he was regarded as a "disorganizer of the production." This made it impossible for him to get any other work. By administrative measure he was thereupon soon exiled to the Solovietzky Isle. A campaign waged on his behalf by the West-European and American workers brought about some improvement in his lot: he was transferred to Astrakan. The Soviet Government accused him of espionage on behalf of fascism, but never listened to Petrini's demand that he should be publicly tried. He was not allowed to leave the country either. As a result of the privations he underwent, he has become a consumptive. The most remarkable thing in connection with the accusation of espionage is that the Soviet Government offered him, via the GPU, a post in the Russian Secret Service. Some months ago the term of Petrini's exile in Astrakan expired. On June 9 he reported that he would be expelled from Russia. Now it appears that he has not been expelled, but in all probability extradited. From Italy comes the report: "Alfonso Petrini, after having passed three days in the prison of Ancona, has been transferred to the prison of Aquila." How did Petrini get to Italy? In view of the manner in which he was treated by the bolsheviks, it must not be considered impossible that this anti-fascist has been delivered via Odessa into the hands of the fascists. This would explain why nothing more has been heard from Petrini himself since June 9, in spite of his promise to write when he was free: probably he has never been free.

(EDIT. NOTE: The above is reprinted from the I. A. C. Press Service published in Holland. This piece of news is the most staggering of all the latest reports about the persecutions of political exiles in Russia. If this news is true—and we shall very soon find out—it means that the Stalinist government has almost passed the last border separating it from the fascist camp.

Whether this latest crime was perpetrated as an exchange gift for the war orders placed by Mussolini with Soviet Russia, or that this might have been the only way of silencing an indomitable rebel, such methods having the additional advantage from the G. P. U. point of view that it would enable them to assassinate our comrade politically as well by clapping on him the monstrous charge of political espionage, this crime will enter history as one of the most infamous betrayals of the right of exile.

We appeal to all revolutionists, progressives and liberals not to let this pass in silence. Enough of this condoning of overt fascist acts in the name of an alleged socialist expediency! Tear off the mask from those hypocritical defenders of united front against fascism who turn over the most tested fighter against fascism into the hands of the black shirts. Arrange meetings of protest, let your voice be heard in defense of the sacred right of exile, doubly sacred for anyone speaking in the name of a new social order.)

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## Counter-Revolution and the Soviet Union

Until recently it was held that the Great French Revolution of 1789-93 gave us a classical example of revolution and counter-revolution. Even now many are of the opinion that the period of the Jacobin rule was a revolutionary period, notwithstanding the series of counter-revolutionary measures adopted by the Convent, and that the fall of the Jacobins signified the beginning of the counter-revolution. Hence, it is inferred that there can be no counter-revolution as long as the party brought forward by the revolution is still in power. Counter-revolution sets in, we are told, with the downfall of the party and the class leading the revolution, with the triumph of a more moderate party, with the liquidation of the revolutionary conquests. And the latter is generally associated with the downfall of the ruling party such as the overthrow of the Jacobin rule.

This outdated yardstick is still being applied to the evaluation of the trends and tendencies of Russian life. The state socialists, the "learned" liberals professors and just plain "educated" people, though sharply opposed to bolshevism, hold that a revolution is still taking place in Soviet Russia. Thinking by mere analogy with the French Revolution, they do not want to admit the idea that a revolutionary party can be transformed into a counter-revolutionary one. They believe that the so-called "excesses of the bolshevik policies" are due to the difficulties incidental in the building up of socialism, that in the long run they may slow down the tempo of the revolution but not stop it altogether. It is this fallacy that is being exposed so rapidly by the march of events in Soviet Russia that very soon only very simple minded people will adhere to it.

For, what is a revolution? A revolution is the overthrow of the existing political and economic order based upon exploitation. It means the building up of a new order which raises to the highest level the welfare of the great masses of people, which gives the utmost extension of human rights and free-

dom, which substitutes for the master morality of the church and state one that is based upon freedom, equality and solidarity.

The Russian Revolution at its beginning was a revolution in that sense. In the year 1917-18 Russia was the freest country in the world. Freedom of speech, press, assembly, propaganda, freedom in the field of scientific research, education, individual self-assertion—there was unlimited freedom in almost every domain of life. Spontaneous activity and free initiative took the place of law; local self government flourished in the form of Soviets, the state as represented by appointed officialdom was vanishing like smoke.

Economic slavery was toppling down: capitalism was being destroyed, being gradually replaced by the organization of industry in the interests of consumers. Workers became active participants of the industrial process; economic life, represented by factory committees and similar organizations, was shaping itself along the line of free industrial federations, along the lines of a national commune of producers and consumers.

Such were the great undying conquests of that genuinely revolutionary period. But what is counter-revolution?

Is it just the attempt to bring the country back to the pre-revolutionary state, to restore the privileges of the old classes and parties? Such is the classical definition of counter-revolution, but it is not a *full* or *precise* definition since in Soviet Russia we have no revolution against revolution, no restoration of the power of former parties and classes. And nevertheless we have there a real counter-revolution.

In Soviet Russia all liberties have been wiped out. The defenders of freedom are being exiled, imprisoned and even executed. Local self-government has been done away with. The arbitrary rule of the "bureaucrat" is again restored to life. What of the passport system introduced by way of copying the old system of police rule and regimentation? What of the ban placed upon any sort of political activity digressing from "the general line" of the dictator, the dissolution of the Society of Old Bolsheviks, the imprisonment of outstanding members of the party for the slightest manifestation of independence of thought? Isn't that counter-revolution in the real sense of the word?

In no other country is the death penalty applied as widely as in Soviet Russia: larceny, embezzlement, graft, thuggery—ordinary crimes are punished with medieval cruelty. Even children are not exempt from the application of the highest penalty. Isn't that counter-revolution in its most naked form?

In Soviet Russia industrial democracy gave way to a hierarchy modelled on the type of capitalist organizations. A new privileged ruling class came to life—a bureaucracy which, not having property of its own, has the unchecked control of management in its hands.

All that is the very essence of counter-revolution, although it hardly fits the classical definition thereof. We have here a new feature: a revolutionary party crystallizing into a bureaucratic class. While paying lip service to revolutionary slogans, this newly formed class gradually entrenches its class functions, its rule and privileges.

All that is not just a mere incident in the march of the revolution. Such distortions of the revolution, producing as they did in Soviet Russia a vicious form of counter-revolution, are not rooted in "historic necessity", but in the

very concept of state socialism, and especially of dictatorial marxism. To uphold dictatorship is to be against revolution, against freedom, against human progress.

The process of disillusionment in respect to Soviet Russia, so much in evidence on the part of many an honest revolutionist, is but in its beginnings. Soon it will grow into a powerful tide directed toward new aims and objectives. Those will be the aims of libertarian communism, the aims of a new movement, reviving the hopes of the international proletariat and leading to a resolute struggle against dictatorships of all variety—red, black or brown—and for the fullest freedom based upon economic equality.

G. MAXIMOFF.

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## The Transitional Period

The nearer we approach the decisive moment of revolution, the more urgent becomes the task of working out the problems of the transitional period in the light of the basic principles of our ideal. In a period rich in possibilities of revolutionary explosion, such as we are going through now, the question of how far we can go in the direction of realizing the ideal of libertarian communism acquires supreme importance. The success of our coming struggles depends upon the measure in which we shall be able to evaluate soberly the objective limitations placed upon our attempts to realize our ideal during the next social upheaval.

That such limitations are inevitable is quite clear to anyone who has given some thought to this problem. It is only the hopeless utopians, escapists and sectarians in our midst that close their eyes to the inevitable concessions and compromises with which the realization of the ideal of libertarian communism will be hedged about. The very nature of our ideal is such as to preclude the possibility of its full and immediate realization in the initial period of revolutionary reconstruction. It can be brought about only in the process of evolutionary developments made possible by basic revolutionary changes in our social structure. To sketch beforehand the nature of such revolutionary changes as the indispensable minimum of any evolutionary development toward libertarian communism—such is the problem of the transitional period as envisaged by those who think of their ideal in terms of our own period and not that of a distant historic possibility.

Let us try to approach the problem by asking ourselves a very plain question. Given a major revolutionary upheaval within the next few years (will anyone question the possibility of such an upheaval?) have we any right to expect a one hundred percent realization of our ideal during, let's say, the first or second decade of revolutionary reconstruction following the inevitable period of civil war? And if not, what is the minimum that lies within the field of revolutionary possibility, something we can fight for with a reasonable amount of hope for success?

What are the basic features of the ideal of libertarian communism? Briefly stated they are: the full socialization of all the economic functions; taking the needs of the individual and not the measure of his contributions

as the guiding principle of distribution of the social product of economic activity; the integration of agriculture and industry into a higher type of economy based upon small, largely self-sufficient units; the leveling down of the most baneful form of inequality—the division into intellectual and physical labor rooted in the educational monopoly of the few. On the political side libertarian communism stands for: the enormous expansion of the province of free contract so as almost entirely to replace Law as a form of social regulation; the high development of social solidarity rendering compulsion unnecessary even in those fields of social control where free contract is inapplicable.

There is nothing utopian about this ideal when viewed in the perspective of a sufficiently long historic development. It was already proven by Kropotkin that both the political and economic aspects of libertarian communism lie along the major axes of the progressive development of humanity. And since the publication of Kropotkin's works a great deal of evidence has been accumulated by unbiased social scientists tending to corroborate this basic idea of Kropotkin's doctrine. Objective conditions are rapidly ripening for the realization of libertarian communism. Are they sufficiently ripe, though, to enable us to carry into life the main features of libertarian communism right now, at the present moment, which, as will be readily admitted by any intelligent observer, is fraught with revolutionary possibilities of a highly detonating nature?

Let us analyze in the light of this question each of the above referred to features of libertarian communism. The full socialization of economic activity would meet the difficulty of overcoming the backward forms of individualistic economy still abounding even in the most advanced countries. And unless we are prepared to extirpate those rudimentary forms by force—a policy utterly incompatible with the essential spirit of libertarian communism—we must allow a sufficiently long period, lasting one or two generations for a peaceful process of assimilation of those rudimentary forms into a socialized economy.

Nor would it be possible to apply the communist principle of distribution to every economic need. Our economy will have to be keyed up to a much higher level of productivity before it will be able to reach that abundance which is the prerequisite of communistic distribution. That such an abundance is quite within the reach of our technical possibilities has now become the conviction of every well-informed person, but it is also known to everyone who has given some thought to the problem that such possibilities can be brought out fully only after a certain period of reorganization. And that period cannot be measured in terms of only a few years: several decades will pass at least before such an abundance can be attained.

Can industry be decentralized with one stroke? Can the gap between agriculture and industry be filled up without a basic reshifting of the centers of distribution of energy, without a higher level of electrification? Can the relative self-sufficiency of communal economy be attained without stepping up the general agriculture productivity to the level of the most advanced economy? And can there be any doubt that with all the enormous acceleration in the growth of agricultural productivity, made possible by the revolution, several decades must pass at least before the level of the advanced agricultural economies becomes the prevailing form of general agriculture?



Similar allowances for some sort of a transitional period must be made in respect to the integration of physical and mental labor that can come about only as the result of a long process of refashioning the entire educational scheme, of fitting it closely into the mold of a reconstructed economy, of applying such a scheme to the education of a new generation. Without the application of the principles of an integral education along the lines laid down by Kropotkin to the bringing up of a new generation, division of labor remains an elementary necessity. The appalling, generally prevalent illiteracy in regard to scientific and technical matters, the distorted, one-sided education of today, top heavy on the intellectual side and almost totally deficient in respect of any training in manual trades, are too well known to leave any doubt that an instantaneous wiping away of division of labor would be somewhat in the nature of a social miracle.

The necessity of going through a certain transitional period of evolutionary development towards libertarian communism becomes even more manifest when we come to deal with the problem of realizing the political aspect thereof. The unavoidable period of civil wars, aggravated by the wide international scope of the coming revolution, will place the question of revolutionary self-defense in the foreground. And to escape altogether the grim demands imposed by this struggle is something no revolutionary has any right to hope for.

But even apart from the problems of revolutionary self-defense as those of an incidental nature, interfering but slightly with the work of revolutionary reconstruction, there remain much more basic difficulties in the way of an immediate abolition of all forms of authority and compulsion. The development of social solidarity will for a long time yet lag behind the need for coordination and unity required by a socialized economy. Far as we may go in the direction of functional and territorial decentralization of political and economic federalism, we cannot avoid a certain measure of unified control, representing the will of society as a whole. Contrary to the individualistic fallacies, this residual general will cannot be resolved into a system of individual contracts (even Proudhon had to admit it in his later writings). It does not have to rest necessarily upon compulsion, a spontaneous social solidarity being its most adequate expression. But the growth of such a solidarity after the revolution is possible in the process of evolutionary development, which means that it is only by degrees that we shall be able to eliminate the authoritarian and compulsory features from this unifying and coordinating function of the new society brought into life by the revolution.

But, the reader will ask us, granted the necessity of a transitional period, wherein will it differ from the dictatorship of the proletariat as defended by the authoritarian communist of the Marxist school? And if libertarian communism cannot be realized fully, what is the boundary beyond which a movement based upon the principles of libertarian communism cannot go in its inevitable concessions to the demands of a transitional period without impairing the libertarian spirit necessary to propel the newly born revolutionary society toward a full realization of the ideal of libertarian communism?

SENEX.

*(To be continued in the next issue.)*

## The United Front

The triumph of fascism in Germany, Italy, Bulgaria and the growing influence of the movement throughout the world, the threat of another catastrophic world war, have shocked millions of workers everywhere into the realization that their hope for a better future is at stake. The defeat of the workers in fascist countries has taught the workers the necessity for united action against the common danger. Therefore the question of the united front has become one of tremendous importance in the present crisis. What should be the aims of the united front? How to achieve these aims? Without a clear answer to these crucial questions all attempts at unity will fail. Fascism and war will be the direct consequences of such a failure.

It is obvious that fascism will not be exterminated by a set of pious resolutions but demands the most drastic action of aroused proletarian and peasant masses. Only a power great enough to uproot the military dictatorship, to expropriate the industries, annihilate everyone of the old entrenched institutions and props of the capitalist terror, will ever be able to extirpate the fascist menace. The regime of force will yield only to the superior force of the social revolution. To the counter-revolution must be opposed the gigantic powers which only the social revolution can generate. This must be the goal of the united front. All policies, every action undertaken must be orientated on the basis of preparing the ground for social revolution.

By failing to apply that standard the Second and Third Internationals have clearly demonstrated their complete bankruptcy in the face of the most crucial period in the history of the revolutionary movement. They are calling upon the masses to unite with their bourgeois-democratic masters in order to fight fascism. They are urging the workers to fight shoulder to shoulder with French Imperialist democracy. This slogan is based upon the stupid assumption that the bourgeois-democratic countries, owing to their democratic traditions, will not follow the example of Germany or Italy.

The liberties that were conquered by the masses in centuries of struggle must be preserved and extended. It is bourgeois democracy itself that is an obstacle in the way of fuller expansion of liberty in the economic and social life of mankind. That is why capitalist democracy has to be transcended by the socialist movement. Liberty, Equality and Fraternity have yet to be established by the social revolution.

Fascism is not an accidental phenomena; it is the form taken by a decaying capitalism desperately clinging to its power and therefore resorting to terror and dictatorship. It is a development that is taking place in all capitalist countries, the democratic ones included. Because they were the weakest links in the capitalist chain, Italy, Germany, Bulgaria, etc., capitulated first. The democratic countries are about to capitulate now and their democratic traditions are being swept away by the powerful current of fascist reaction.

France is ripe for fascism. The Croix du Feu and other fascist organizations, with the assistance of the government, await only a war to consolidate their power and establish the French variety of fascism. The government is beset with fascist influences. Many of the high army officials are fascist themselves. To call upon the workers and peasants to fight in a "Holy"

war against fascist countries with this semi-fascist apparatus is to call for the militarization of France.

The suicidal theory of the lesser Evil is based upon faith in capitalist democracy. The application of this theory in Germany was to a large extent responsible for fascism. The logic of the united front as it is being practiced in France is bound to lead to the same capitulation before the objective demands of a decaying capitalist economy.

In calling for the United Front, neither the communists nor the social-democrats are fulfilling any of the necessary prerequisites for genuine revolutionary action. They are neither ideologically nor tactically capable of leading the working class in the direction of militant and effective struggle. The principle of supporting bourgeois democracy is a negation of the class struggle and the social revolution. The class struggle means to our would-be leaders the struggle of political parties for State power. The masses, misled by the chimera of a peaceful coalition with the bourgeoisie, meaningless resolutions and parliamentary actions, have allowed their economic organizations to become footballs of the politicians. Robbed of their initiative, unschooled in revolutionary principles and tactics, the workers are rendered incapable of fighting fascism and preventing war. The united front of opportunism between the social patriots of 1914 and the new social patriots of 1935 is the kind of an united front which spells doom for the workers and certain victory for the fascist. Only in the process of struggle for clear cut revolutionary objectives, can the indispensable militancy and experience of the oppressed masses be developed and the necessary power generated for the supreme effort. To build the united front of workers' and peasants' organizations through militant revolutionary action, to struggle for the social revolution—permeated with the principles and spirit of libertarian communism—these are the tasks of the revolutionary movement.

S. WEINER

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## What Kind of Unionism?

Several articles that have previously appeared in the Vanguard have indicated more or less the road upon which the libertarian communists were proceeding. It was pointed out that a decentralized functional society was the means for attaining the eventual aims of libertarian communism. The unions had definite roles to perform in this transitional period—roles which dovetailed with the functions of other mass institutions. And quite naturally the success of such an undertaking depended upon the degree of preparation which the working class possessed in performing these tasks and its recognition of the responsibilities it held in the new society.

Unlike the communists to whom a union should be merely an "elementary form of organization" composed of workers "only capable of developing a trade union consciousness", the libertarians are intent upon creating mass organizations which have independent initiative and which are prepared to assume the major role in rebuilding society. With their idea of party leadership, monopoly and infallibility uppermost in mind, the communists, on the

other hand, prefer unions whose happy virtues are obedience and discipline, so that they may proceed unhampered in their godly mission of instituting the "dictatorship of the proletariat" in behalf of their less intelligent working class brethren.

Not being obsessed as the communists are, with the idea of having sole possession of "scientific" knowledge as interpreted by a few holy disciples of an infallible prophet, we, as libertarian communists, must earnestly do our part in preparing mass organizations for their singular role during the transitional period. It is essential for us to examine present day working class institutions with the view of determining their fitness or adaptability for the specific tasks that will confront them when the crucial moment arrives. What should be the essential characteristic of these institutions and what should be the role of libertarians in them?

Mass organizations, if they are to be considered of value for the reconstruction of society, must be based upon democracy. No organization of hierarchical structure can fulfill the requirements of a free institution suitable for the fullest participation of its members in the management of society. Without this full participation even our communists will be glad to permit their organizations to function "democratically", granting the membership the right to vote for selected lists of candidates and proposals.

Secondly: The mass organization must accept the class struggle as a reality, and perform its present day tasks as a revolutionary organization. It must accept the irreconcilable struggle between the classes and understand that the final solution can only be resolved through forceful means. It is by means of this struggle that the workers become trained for the final hour of revolution.

Thirdly: The concept of control and management of society by the organizations themselves must be incorporated into the very principles of the institution. The idea that present day revolutionary working class organizations are the organs of future management must be understood by every worker. The mass organization must be structurally suited to cope with industrial conditions now and production later. That is, it must be built on industrial lines, rather than craft lines. This puts into concrete practice the principles of solidarity.

We have now the yardstick by which we can judge the fitness or adaptability of the unions existing today. If we apply the tests to the A. F. of L. we can easily see that it falls down on all three tests. The A. F. of L. has, instead of democracy, a bureaucracy as rotten as one could ever expect to find. Its cardinal principle is class collaboration and not class struggle. The concept of workers control is as foreign to it as it is to J. P. Morgan. Even industrial unionism conflicts with the principles upon which the A. F. of L. is based.

But can the A. F. of L. be changed? Can a progressive leadership seize the reins of the organization? Can it become a Revolutionary Industrial Union? This is a crucial question, for, upon its answer depends the fate of libertarian communists in the A. F. of L. For many years attempts have been made by progressives to wrest control away from the bureaucracy. They have all failed. The machine remains. The progressives who have won local elections are either digested by the apparatus or expelled. Those in the needle trades have remained in their very well paid jobs by cautiously criticizing only the top bureaucracy of the organization rather than their reactionary colleagues.

The A. F. of L. has within its separate international unions centralized personal machines which rule with iron discipline, and which are legally in a position to expel individuals, groups and even locals if these in any way jeopardize the power of the bureaucracy. There is no rank and file control of this highly paid machine. The fabulous salaries, coupled with the lack of democracy opened up the door to gangsterism in many cases. These officials haven't worked for years and are far removed from the rank and file. The growing ties between the government and the A. F. of L. foredoom any attempt to revolutionize the organization itself. The A. F. of L. is as much a part of the capitalist system as the state is. To believe that a new leadership with revolutionary principles can be instituted is merely to transfer the principle of parliamentary activity from the political field to the industrial. The result will be the same.

Then why remain in the A. F. of L.? Of what use can a revolutionary worker and libertarian communist be there if the organization cannot be reformed? The conscientious and intelligent worker must remain to radicalize the membership of the union. A great task remains of smashing the class collaborating unions when the workers have recognized their historic mission. The libertarian communist must win the confidence of these workers, must direct their efforts and attention toward a new revolutionary union whose nucleus should be set up. Only by actually providing at least the shell of a new organization, can the awakened workers, when a real movement starts, rally to the standard of this new union. Our workers must never be misled to think that they can win control of the A. F. of L. At this time when that organization is rapidly acquiring government connections and fascist lines, the task before revolutionaries becomes more pressing. The A. F. of L. cannot be reformed. The organization is an impediment to the further radicalization of the working class.

Thus, the immediate task that confronts the revolutionary libertarian in the A. F. of L. today is two-fold. He must work for the further radicalization of the workers, point out to them the limitations and reactionary character of the A. F. of L. and also swing his fellow unionists into the new revolutionary unions when the proper moment arrives.

ROMAN WEINREBE.

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## On the Class War Front

General Hugh S. Johnson has tried to make it very clear on a number of recent occasions that if the work relief program of the Federal government were suddenly stopped the result would be an unprecedented wave of discontent and open mass revolt. Although the General is very seldom accurate in his predictions, there is more than a grain of truth in this one. He knows that the very existence of home relief is in no small measure due to the discontent manifested by the unemployed even in the early stages of this crisis. Before Johnson took office as W. P. A. administrator in New York City, the unemployed had already forced many concessions from the government. It was now his job as strike breaker, *par excellence*, to help Roosevelt take these gains from the unemployed.

On August 1, the \$19 to \$94 per month "security" wage scale went into effect. Besides the drastic cut in wages which the workers had to suffer, the federal government rescinded their sick leave with pay, delayed payment of wages as much as three and four weeks and in numerous ways made the work relief administration even worse than it had been under local control. A fair sized minority of the workers, however, refused to take it on the chin. Their protests, in the form of demonstrations and stoppages caused the administration to change the so-called "statutory" wages rates. On September 1, a ten percent wage increase was given to most categories of workers and a few weeks later the building trades workers were given the prevailing hourly trade union rate.

It took quite a serious blow to their living standards for the W. P. A. workers in New York to wake up and protest in a somewhat more direct manner than before against intolerable working and living conditions. But they did act; and they did achieve some results. To many workers this was a revelation. The everyday knowledge that most people have concerning the efficacy of organized protest and strike action is insufficient to convince them of the value of such tactics. The concrete and effective use of direct action is one of the best teachers for beginners in the school of class struggle. In the past few months many workers in New York, both employed and unemployed, became aware for the first time of tremendous potential power which they possess—if they are organized.

Another surprise greeted General Johnson before he was in New York very long. The white-collar and professional workers (teachers, engineers, artists, psychologists, musicians, etc.) were beginning to see what their own interests were and to realize their identity with the rest of the working class. Such an attitude on the part of these workers was almost unheard of until the recent events in the W.P. A. in which they played such a prominent part.

When the C. W. A. was begun, almost two years ago, a small number of white collar workers were stimulated to form the "Associated Office and Professional Emergency Employees". This organization, a very loose federation of project locals, continued with little success until the advent of the W. P. A. The repressive measures of the federal administration gave impetus to the organization of the City Projects Council, made up of the A. O. P. E. E. and several other bodies having members on relief projects. The Council was the delegated body of the various project locals and unions. On August 10 it called a demonstration in front of the W. P. A. offices. Johnson refused to see a delegation. At a mass meeting called by the Council a few days later, 1500 projects workers voted almost unanimously for a half-day stoppage on August 21. Although the stoppage was poorly prepared and the C. P. C. not even a definitely constituted organization, the boldness of this stroke, coming, as it did, at the proper moment, was enough of a shock to the administration to frighten it into granting a number of concessions. While 1500 workers picketed the W. P. A. offices and several thousand more sent telegrams of protest, Johnson announced that a "gift" of thirteen dollars each would be given to all W. P. A. employees in order to relieve the hardships caused by delay in wage payments. This "gift" cost the government a million dollars. (The picket line has already gone down in local labor history as the "million dollar picket line".) Johnson saw the workers delegation, promised no punitive

action would be taken against any of the workers who walked out, promised to get back for them sick leave with pay and gave the C. P. C. a sort of recognition in the form of bi-weekly grievance conferences with C. P. C. delegates.

Johnson had to yield to the pressure of the aroused workers. But, as usual, he made promises with his tongue in his cheek. No sooner did he see that the workers were beginning to swallow his honeyed words than he exposed his concealed knife and the reaction set in. Eighty-five teachers were dismissed from Board of Education projects for participation in the stoppage. Johnson claimed that he could do nothing about it, alleging that jurisdiction in the case was in the hands of the Board of Education. (They forced their own reinstatement seven weeks later). Both direct intimidation and subtle bribery (in the form of a labor advisory job on the W. P. A. for the president of the Council—which the latter accepted and retained until he was used as a strikebreaker a few days after he was given the job) were employed by the General with telling effect.

The temporary victory gained by the C. P. C. was not consolidated, partly because of the vacillating policy of the leading elements who were themselves taken in by Johnson's subtle attack. The organization has now lost the partial recognition which the W. P. A. had given it. Although they are having an organization drive at present, they will remain stationary, as they are now, and may even lose ground, unless they cease vacillating, and make it plain to the workers that the employer is their enemy (as against what W. Morgan, Council president, told a reporter—he merely wants the government to be a decent employer). They must stop flirting with A. F. of L. policies and with the A. F. of L. itself.

Sentiment among white collar and professional workers is very strongly in favor of organization. But the C. P. C. has been unable as yet effectively to crystallize this sentiment and stabilize its organization on a permanent basis. And it will be unable to do so unless several things are changed. The workers in the organization must become more active in its control. The structure of the organization (the present constitution was adopted with indecent haste) must be changed from the artificial project-local set-up (modeled after the W. P. A. structure) to the industrial union type (the more natural form). They must be linked up organically with the organized workers in industry (wherever possible at present) and with the unemployed organizations. Finally, they must develop their class consciousness to the next higher step, that is, organizing with the manual workers. They must understand the help the manual workers can give them and be conscious of their own duties, as a more articulate group, to the manual workers.

The unemployed and those on work relief will be unable to fight effectively the much lower living standards which the government will surely try to impose when the W. P. A. funds give out, (according to a recent statement by Victor Ridder, Johnson's successor in the W. P. A., the funds for New York will not last beyond January 15, 1936) unless they learn from the mistakes they are making now and achieve a better understanding of the principles of working class solidarity.

S. MORRISON.

## **The Internationol Movement**

### **FRENCH TRADE UNIONS UNITE**

In September, 1921, a split took place in the French trade unions. In Christmas, 1921, the C. G. T. U. (Communist trade unions) was founded. In September, 1935, the old C. G. T. (reformist) united with the C. G. T. U.

Words can excite. Resolutions can call forth great enthusiasm. I have seen and heard the great joy of the Parisian workers, and especially the delegates to the trade union congresses. A joint united front meeting of both congresses was symbolic of the newly formed alliance. The delegates to the congress of the C. G. T. U. came to the C. G. T. and were received with songs and shouts of joy. When the communist delegate Racamond mounted the platform the assemblage rose to their feet and sang the "Internationale." However, the cautious speech of Leon Jouhaux, the old leader of the C. G. T., left no doubt that the right wing of the labor movement was in complete control of the united front.

The joint congress is over. What will the results be? The trade union congress adopted an economic program for recovery. But unions demanded the nationalization of banks and basic industries. Both asked for public works for the aid of the unemployed. There was no difference at all between the slogans of the C. G. T. and those of the C. G. T. U.

It will be worth while to examine the resolution dealing with the Italian-Ethiopian conflict. The congress declared that it was in full agreement with all steps taken by the League of Nations to uphold peace. It promised to assist in any economic boycott designed to prevent war. The congress un-animously opposed any armed intervention, no matter for what purpose or who was party to it.

Economic measures against war can bring good results, but if the work-  
ing class depends upon the League of Nations to carry out these measures,  
then the whole thing will end in failure. The working class must decide.  
The proletariat itself must take all measures to stop war, with or against the  
League. Either the workers will stop war and win, or go down to defeat.  
Such a defeat, at least, will be an honorable one—the result of a battle and  
not a capitulation.

A. SOUCHY, *Paris.*

EDITOR'S NOTE: As seen from comrade Souchy's report the congress on the whole reaffirmed the reformist orientation of the old C. G. T. (The General Confederation of Labor). Acting under express orders from Moscow, the communists (Unitary Confederation) gave up any attempt to formulate a policy of their own. The so-called economic plan of rehabilitation—a hodge-podge of palliatives patterned after Roosevelt's New Deal, the sacred union with the bourgeois-democratic forces and with . . . the general staff of the French army—has not a trace of any revolutionary influences in it.

There was no lack, however, of revolutionary protests at the congress. The Teachers Union was represented by revolutionary syndicalists who came out with a sharp attack against the policies of both reformist wings. Some delegates of the Railway and agricultural workers unions also gave a revolu-



tionary analysis of the trends of the present situation, all of which shows that the libertarian and revolutionary syndicalist movements are by no means dead. And taking into account the genuine revolutionary enthusiasm of the rank and file delegates, most of them under forty years of age, and the quite apparent discrepancy between their spirit and the capitulatory mood of the bureaucratic leadership of both old unions, one is inclined to think that the above mentioned revolutionary protests will soon find a much wider resonance than isolated unions and small minorities within the rest of the unions.

## THE SPANISH SITUATION

Events in Spain are moving fast. The country is split into a score of parties and groups, each claiming to possess the "correct" solution for the problems confronting the nation.

The fascist and semi-fascist parties are even more divided than the socialists (I include in this term the social democrats, communists, syndicalists and anarchists), and therefore no immediate danger is expected from the extreme right sector.

The Socialist Party which prided itself on being the best organized and disciplined political party in Spain is now hopelessly divided into three distinct groups. At the extreme left is Largo Caballero, the opportunist ex-counsellor of the Crown during the dictatorship of Primo de Rivera, ex-Labor Minister under the Republic, and who is now urging the Socialist Party to join the Third International. He talks like a communist and we shouldn't be surprised if we read in the very near future that Largo Caballero is the Secretary of the Spanish Communist Party. The Center group of the socialists is led by Prieto from his exile in Paris and he is trying to reconcile the other factions. Prof. Besteiro, former president of the Constituent Assembly is the leader of the conservative faction and from "La Democracia" he and his followers, "show" that Marx never wrote a line in favor of violent revolution, to which the "lefts" of Caballero answer from "Claridades" "showing" also that Marx did write in favor of the revolution. An idea of the tendency of this right wing faction may be gathered from a recent article by Saborit, editor of "La Democracia" in which he advocated the united front with the left wing of the bourgeois parties, but deprecated any such union with syndicalists and anarchists.

The communists continue the policy of vilification, antagonizing everybody. The chasm between the communists and the anarchists seems to be widening. Their exaggerated claims, some of them utterly preposterous, such as that they were the only ones who made the revolution in Asturias, caused the socialist and anarchist prisoners in the Cijon Jail to send a joint protest to their respective press against the statement of the communists.

It is now a year since the ill-fated revolution in Asturias was drowned in blood. Despite the present reign of terror of the monarchists and clericals (now masked as republicans) the spirit of the Asturian workers has not been crushed. For, with jails filled to capacity and every old public building, unoccupied monastery, and "casas del pueblo" (labor union buildings) turned

into prisons where our comrades—35,000 in number—are subjected to the most inhuman treatment, and with sentences of life imprisonment and death handed out in a wholesale manner by the military tribunals, those workers in that heroic province who have remained alive or out of jail have had the courage to declare and enforce a general strike in protest against the death sentence recently imposed on a half score of workers in Turon.

The State of War recently declared in Catalonia, with the alleged purpose of stopping the sabotage of the workers, has fallen short of accomplishing the aims sought by the theatrical Gil Robles and the Minister of the Interior. Burning of tramways and busses of the Barcelona Tramways Co., is as much a daily occurrence as it was before the declaration of the State of War.

When people are fired with such idealism as the workers in Asturias who, with the province under martial law, dare to declare a general strike against the death sentences of their comrades; or the Barcelona workers who refuse to admit defeat after striking for nearly two years and laugh at the bayonets and the bullets of the soldiers and the stiff sentences meted out to them when caught alive (following the attacks on the tramways), it is hard to believe that fascism will have a lasting chance in Spain. I will not say that it is impossible for fascism to come, but if it does come it will not ride in as easily as it did in Germany.

ONOFRE DALLAS

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## From Our Mail Box

(EDIT. NOTE: *We have received many questions from our readers on the principles of libertarian communism. Lack of space prevents us from answering all of them, so we answer those we consider most important. In future issues we intend to devote more space to this column. If you have any questions concerning our principles, policies and methods, don't hesitate to send them in.*)

QUESTION:—Don't you think libertarian communism is a contradiction in terms? How can liberty be reconciled with a social order that goes the furthest in breaking down the most valid defense of the individual against the encroachments of the social herd, that is, private property?

ANSWER:—The link between libertarian struggles and private property is of a historical but not logical nature. In the past the struggles for liberty centered around private property because of the large place held by individual labor in the production of wealth. The drive for self-assertion on the part of the individual had to find its expression in building up a system of rights based upon private property because the latter meant largely, all the distortions notwithstanding, the most elementary right from the point of view of individual development—and that is the right to dispose freely of one's labor.

It is clear, however, that in measure that individual labor shrinks in importance as compared with the accumulated capital of society, the mere control of one's labor does not insure the necessary amount of freedom. Along with

that must go the expansion of the right to share in the social capital. That means that the center of gravity of weaving a system of protective individual rights must be transferred from private ownership to the participation of the individual in the control of the rapidly accumulating social capital. In other words, communism is the only economic order in which the further preservation and the expansion of human liberty becomes possible.

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## Book Review

**“THE PRINCIPLES OF ANARCHISM” by Dr. J. A. Maryson**

(1935—10 cents)

Taken at its face value, Dr. Maryson’s newly published pamphlet “The Principles of Anarchism” is a sincere attempt to present in simple, popular language the basic principles of anarchism as embodied in the doctrines of its two outstanding schools—those of Proudhon and Kropotkin. The author foreswears any biased approach in the treatment of those two schools, his claim being that a broader, more inclusive view of the anarchist doctrine can be obtained by singling out and harmonizing the features common to both of them.

However, like in many other similar attempts to rise above the fundamental irreconcilable differences of those schools\* in the name of a specious synthesis, this professed objectivity is observed in the breach rather than in performance. The author is forced to take sides, and he does it in a manner that shows clearly where his sympathies lie. His caviling attitude toward Kropotkin’s doctrine, his non-critical acceptance of some of Proudhon’s views as the very essence of anarchism create with the reader a definite impression of a certain rating applied to both doctrines.

And that Kropotkin’s doctrine is relegated to an inferior place in this rating is shown by the author’s very approach to the problem of laying down the basic determinations of anarchism. For anarchism, according to our author, is not only the left wing of socialism, supplementing the economic program of the latter with a political program of its own. It differs radically from socialism also on its economic side, the underlying anarchistic concept of individual liberty militating against socialized property. It stands to reason, then, that Kropotkin’s program of social ownership vested in the commune is considered as being somewhat out of tune with the general spirit of the anarchist philosophy. “Kropotkin’s position on property”, says our author, “appears to be more socialistic than anarchistic” and “. . . the Proudhonian view (criticizing Kropotkin’s view that the community should own all property) is nearer to anarchism”. The reader then is left to judge for himself how well

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\*As it will be pointed out, Proudhon’s ideas are not the same as those of the “Proudhonians”. Proudhon’s ideas lend themselves to a synthesis with those of Kropotkin, while the abstracted version of Proudhon’s views passing in anarchist circles for Proudhonism is irreconcilable with the system of views held by Kropotkin.

qualified from the anarchist point of view is a doctrine that leaves the alleged anarchist criterion out of consideration in its solution of the most important problem of human life—the problem of economic relationships.

But how does our author fare with those problems? Surely in a pamphlet written for a general public, presumably interested in concrete solutions rather than in abstract formulas, the problem of how to apply the pure anarchist formula, one that is not contaminated by any trace of socialism, to the economic realities of the day should occupy the most prominent place. How, for instance, can individual ownership be applied to the solution of the problem of natural monopolies such as railroads, canals, public utilities, electric power, mining industries, or to the gigantic industries rapidly growing into the position of natural monopolies? What about the inevitable competition growing out of the "voluntary economy" upheld by our author as the only one compatible with anarchistic philosophy? And how can any form of equitable property be based upon individual labor if the latter is rapidly becoming integrated into a process of social activity that does not admit of division?

The studied avoidance of those problems in this pamphlet designed for popular consumption is in itself quite in line with the general nature of writing emanating from the so-called individualistic school with which Dr. Maryson identifies himself, although in a camouflaged fashion. Like all the other writers of that school (with the exception of Proudhon himself) he fell prisoner to the abstract formula of free individual contract as the only equitable basis of social life. Those formulas could never be applied to life in all its fullness. They only resulted in doctrinaire, lifeless schemes devoid of any taint of reality. It was only Proudhon himself—the author of those formulas—that transcended their limitations. To him those ideas represented but certain aspects of the true nature of social relationships, which he conceived as a series of contradictions and which therefore could not be employed by one, all inclusive formula. In his later works, "Le Principe Federatif" and "La Capacité Politique des Classes Ouvrières", revealing much more fully the constructive genius of Proudhon than "The Idea of the Revolution in the Nineteenth Century", he tried to supplement the one sided idea developed in the latter book by other principles, the synthesis of which gave a much more profound and realistic approach to the realities of social life. And it is one of the ironies of the fate of this great thinker that doctrinaire ideas representing but abstract moments in the dialectical development of his system were seized upon as the only ones fully expressing his teachings.

In this respect Dr. Maryson follows the beaten track of all the other "individualistic" popularizers of Proudhon. With all the unpleasant things that Dr. Maryson has to say about Tucker, it is the Tuckerized version of Proudhon that he follows in his pamphlet. Like Tucker he completely ignores the most important aspect of Proudhon's ideas: his remarkable attempt to synthesize, or as he preferred to say, to reconcile the contradiction of the free individual contract with political institutions representing the general will of society as a whole (in his later works Proudhon came to recognize the validity of such); individual property modified into mere possession—with a necessary form of collective control and individual liberty with organized social action.

And had Dr. Maryson given us more of this real Proudhon, there would hardly be any need of the specious synthesis by which he tries to reconcile the two schools and for the purpose of which he had to take all vigor out of Kropotkin's social program by reducing it to the petty scheme of "voluntary communism". "Voluntary communism" does no more solve the basic problems with which Proudhon and Kropotkin grappled than Tucker's competitive economy. Both contribute toward the building up of the libertarian movement only in a negative way—by pointing out clearly to the blind alley toward which the schematized, one-track development of the abstract idea of individual contracts may lead.

SENEX.

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## Class War Prisoners

After nineteen years of unremitting effort, the case of Tom Mooney is to have another hearing. Billings, who was sentenced with Mooney to life imprisonment in 1916 after having been convicted of aiding and abetting him in the San Francisco Preparedness Day bombing, is to be his chief witness. The defense will endeavor to prove in the court of law that the evidence which convicted both of them was perjured, showing that this perjury was instigated by the prosecution.

While radicals of every color have known that the conviction of these men was the result of a monumental frame-up, the case hitherto has received little attention from the common press. The political ambition of the debonair Jimmy Walker gave it some favorable publicity in this city's newspapers, but when California as good as told Walker to mind his own business, the case ceased to be of news value. Upton Sinclair also found it useful in his gubernatorial platform in the State of California. Now it again finds a place in the back pages of our journals.

In the state penitentiary at Frankfort Kentucky, seven miners are serving a life sentence for having the courage to defend their picket line during a strike in the Harlan coal region. The miners had been putting up a great fight, harassing the scabs and strike-breaking agents by militant picketing and carrying on in the face of hunger and want. The mine operators were forced to extremes. They hired Chicago gangsters whom the local sheriff deputised and "sicked" on the miners. The heroic strikers promptly gave them a dose of their own medicine. Having killed some of these plug uglies and wounded several others in self-defense and in defense of their homes and their right to live, the miners were arrested and held for murder. Of forty arrested all but seven were released. The seven were convicted.

The general Defense Committee of the I. W. W. is now pressing the present governor of Kentucky for a pardon, realizing that they stand little

chance of receiving it from governor-elect Chandler, a puppet of the Harlan operators.

Ferrero and Sallitto, two Italian workers, are still being held in bail for deportation on the charge of being anarchists, and the united front committee organized for their defense has not as yet been able to break the charges. Though voluntary departure could probably be won for them, what country will accept these two men under those charges? Sallitto, already granted voluntary departure, was refused a visa by the Italian consulate. His case has now been transferred from San Francisco to New York.

These are only three of the many living outstanding examples of social injustice.

The history of the working class is the history of proletarians who have given up their lives in the struggle for the emancipation of their class. Those suffering today are still battling for the rights that should belong to the proletariat. Our responsibilities in their defense and support should never be forgotten. Contribute heavily toward labor defense. It is your battle!

J. GARCIA.

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## For Your Immediate Attention

We have received numerous enthusiastic letters about the Vanguard, the general opinion being that it is one of the most interesting radical magazines published. It can be made better, however, if our friends and comrades would take the task of support more seriously. Once again we have been delayed in publishing. Despite numerous appeals the response is still not large enough to secure the Vanguard's growth and regular appearance. At the present time the situation is critical. *More funds are needed at once!*

We have previously appealed to groups and individuals to take upon themselves the task of distributing and supporting the magazine. We want to repeat again that it is our wish to have the Vanguard be the representative of the movement and not merely the organ of a single group. Though we have assumed the responsibility of publishing this magazine, we cannot shoulder the burden of financing it alone. This magazine is the only libertarian communist journal in America. It should be the chief concern of all libertarians, it should get their unqualified support at all times.

*But now money must be sent in immediately.* A campaign of subscriptions and collections should be started by comrades in all cities. Speed the organization of groups for the support of the Vanguard. Enable the magazine to come regularly. *Do something now!*

Send all funds to: "VANGUARD", 45 W. 17th St. New York City.

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## Financial Statement

AUGUST 16 TO OCT. 30, 1935

Total Income .....	\$103.12
Total Expenditures .....	92.61
	<hr/>
Balance .....	\$10.51

### Recapitulation:

Deficit August 16, 1935 .....	\$14.07
Balance for period .....	10.51
	<hr/>

Deficit as of Oct. 30, 1935 .....\$3.56

NOTE: This statement does not include the expenditures for printing and mailing the present issue of Vanguard.

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