

went into the factory. When they came out again every man carried a wrench or a piece of pipe which we'd have been arrested for, if we'd had on the picket line. We appealed again to the A. F. of L. representative who answered:

"*Oh, by the way, have you paid us any money?*"

"Edgewater was pulled out also at this time. 500 men in autos went to pull Dearborn out, but the A. F. of L. and the N.R.A. got together and said:

"Don't go with Detroit. Don't go with Dearborn, you will hurt your case,' but we said: 'Now is your time.' We held a meeting and 1,500 men were packed into the hall looking for membership. The A. F. of L. did nothing about it.

"I went to Washington to put our case up to headquarters. Milton J. Hamlin said our strike was 'ill-advised' and when we told how we had the cruelest thing happen

to us that can happen to workers, a lock-out, the Secretary of the A. F. of L., Morrison, replied, 'Sorry for you fellows. You industrial casualties.'

"Fellows," cried Hoffman, "don't fool yourselves! McGrady, Davis, Hamlin and Johnson will do nothing for you. The N.R.A. is powerless to force any of their rulings against any employer. Take a lesson from what we got. Only through your struggle will you get your right."

The experience of Chester Ford workers is a typical thing. This is what happens in the N.R.A. Here was a promising situation, damped down, muffled, destroyed.

The same thing has been happening to the vital movement among the auto workers in five towns, workers who have streamed into the A. F. of L. as they have into the M. E. S. A.

It is going to be difficult for the leaders back from Washington to explain to the

militant workers in Flint why the books will be open to a committee composed of employer, worker and the member of the N.R.A.

It is going to be very hard to make the workers at Pontiac, who were clamoring to go out on strike Monday, understand that the A. F. of L. in the eyes of the government has the same ranking as the company union.

It is going to be hard for the Detroit workers, waiting for the word to go, to swallow the agreement which even the conservative Washington papers call a defeat for labor.

At least one thing has been accomplished. The government's point of view about what the union is and what collective bargaining is, becomes clearer. At least, few workers are going to rely on General Johnson and the N.R.A. doing anything but cast the vote against labor.

A Letter from England

JOHN STRACHEY

LONDON.

THE one definite political event which has taken place in Great Britain during the past fortnight is the capture, for the first time, of a majority on the London County Council by the Labour Party. I should explain that London is governed very differently from New York. Suffice it to say that a majority on this body, the London County Council, gives effective control of the city government. It is as if, say the fusion ticket in the last New York election had captured all city offices and a majority on all committees.

The accession to power of Labour in London is unquestionably an event of importance. It is true that it will have a very limited importance for the workers of London so far as their daily lives are concerned. There is no more possibility that the Labour Party on the L.C.C. will be able to do anything substantial in the way of improving working class conditions, than it was able or willing to do when it formed the National Government at Westminster. This is not only, of course, because of the inherently rotten character of the Labour party itself; it is because the whole attempt to carry out even the beginnings of socialism within the framework of the capitalist state is, as has now been proved again and again, utterly impossible.

The London Labour Party is incomparably less socialistic, and its leaders are distinctly less able men than were the Austrian Social Democrats. And yet we know whither even left social democracy of the Austrian model led. There is no possibility of better results in London. Indeed I shall be considerably

surprised if the new Labour majority does anything as temporarily effective as were the Vienna housing schemes.

None the less it would be entirely incorrect to suppose that these election results are unimportant. It must be remembered that even in the heyday of the Labour Party's fortunes, in 1928 and 1929, it never succeeded in gaining a majority on the London County Council. Hence these election results indicate that the workers are turning towards what they believe to be socialism in far greater numbers than ever before. To this extent the results must undoubtedly be welcomed. Indeed it *would be* tragic if the bitterly anti-working class policy of the present Government had not driven the workers to the left. But it is tragic to reflect upon the character of the leadership to which the London workers have entrusted themselves.

The organizer, and, in fact, the undisputed boss of the London Labour Party is a certain Mr. Herbert Morrison. (Minister for Transport in the last Labour government.) It may not be amiss to say a few words about this personality, as he may easily play a considerable role in future British politics. Morrison comes from the extreme left of the British Labour Party. He was during the War a member of the British Socialist Party, which was one of the bodies which formed the British Communist Party. Before that time, however, Morrison had already begun what they call in France, "his pilgrimage to the right." By 1924 he had become one of the most anti-Communist and anti-left wing fighters in the Labour Party hierarchy. It was, in fact, by outbidding the Labour leaders

in purging the party of Red elements that Morrison won the special confidence of MacDonald, whose favored protege he was.

*Morrison is a man of undoubted ability, but ability of the narrowest and most strictly administrative kind. He is fascinated by the intricacies of the administrative problems of the great capitalist trusts. He became, while Minister of Transport, a great friend of Lord Ashfield, the head of the great London traffic trust, the London General Omnibus Company, as it then was. Together Ashfield and Morrison devised the London Passenger Transport Bill, which has subsequently been enacted by the present National Government. In this bill, Morrison fully revealed what the word socialism had come to mean to him. It meant, in fact, the most developed form of monopolistic capitalism, the fullest protection and guarantee for the rights of the shareholders in the great monopolies, and State participation in their enterprises so that they may not be challenged by new competitors.

I should imagine that Morrison was genuinely incapable of seeing any distinction between such state-protected, profit-making monopolies and the administrative organs of a working class socialist community. For as Marx said long ago of a German economist, "his practical mind is devoid of the capacity of comprehension." In any case, whether Morrison could or could not, if he liked, understand the difference between the most bitterly anti-working forms of monopoly capital-

* During the 1931 crisis Morrison had a painful moment of indecision on the question of whether or not he should follow MacDonald into the "National" government.

ism, and socialism, he certainly will not let himself do so. For it is only by pretending that no such difference exists that he can pursue his policy of "coördinating," as he would put it, the interests of Lord Ashfield and the other great London capitalists, and the London workers. Morrison and these modern minded capitalists will, if they have the chance, between them create a system of great efficiency. A system of great efficiency for maximizing profits, that is to say. There will be plenty of "planning," but it will all be planning for profit. The consequences of this very efficiency upon the workers will be even more devastating than are the consequences of a competitive unplanned capitalism. The very efficiency of the great monopolistic organizations, such as the London Passenger Transport Board, which Morrison and Ashfield have created, throws hundreds of thousands of workers out of employment, and imposes grinding conditions of "speed up" on those workers whom they do retain.

It is credibly reported that it has been decided that Morrison shall become the next leader of the National Labour Party, and consequently, in all probability, after the next election, the next Prime Minister of Great Britain. Thus the personality and character of Morrison assumes a national, and indeed international, importance.

In general, it may be said of him, that he approximates much more closely than do most British Labour leaders, to the continental, and particularly German, social democratic type. In other words, he is less of a sentimental liberal and more of a frankly reactionary bureaucrat than we are used to in the British

Labour movement. He is the ideal man for the Labour Party's next function, which is, no doubt, to assist the British capitalists in the creation of a systematized, monopolistic structure, comparable to the German, and for that matter, the American cartels.

If Great Britain could be considered as a separate unit, cut off from the events of the rest of the world, we should be compelled to recognize that she is entering, for a brief time, a new period of social compromise. The "revival," microscopic and indeed non-existent from the point of view of the workers, is quite substantial from the point of view of the British bourgeoisie. There has been a considerable rise in the value of their stock exchange securities, and indeed in their receipts from dividends. There is a budget surplus, and with it a prospect of remissions in taxation. One section of the British governing class wishes to devour exclusively the whole of this and to keep the workers and petty bourgeoisie on the starvation rations to which they were reduced by the economy cuts of 1931. Another section, however, evidently believes that this would be to overdo things. There is a perceptible revival of liberalism, viz., the view that it is unwise to reduce the income tax of millionaires while the children of the unemployed are actually starving.

The great success of the Hunger March, the wide working class support which, in spite of the Labour Party's ban, the marchers obtained, their disciplined bearing in London and the working class activity which they have stimulated, have all strengthened the hands of this liberal element in the governing class. It seems extremely probable that quite per-

ceptible concessions will be made to the unemployed in the budget. This, if it takes place, will mark a very real achievement on the part of the Communist Party and the other revolutionary groups which undertook the organization of the great movement of working class protest which culminated in the Hunger March. Stimulated by this protest, the section of social compromisers amongst the governing class is certainly gaining ground. Bishops and archbishops write almost daily to the newspapers on the theme that it may just possibly be a Christian's duty to provide sufficient nourishment for the children of the unemployed rather than to reduce his own income tax. The old British governing class tradition that it is well to pay some insurance premiums against the revolution is once more to the fore. Having swallowed the loot of half the world, the British governing class is considering whether it will make a dole of 3 shillings—instead of 2 shillings—a week to the children of the unemployed. In so doing, it stands, like Warren Hastings, "astounded at its own moderation."

It is extremely doubtful, however, whether this revival of liberalism and social compromise in Great Britain has any prospect of continuance. Its whole basis, after all, is a budget surplus and a revival of profits generally. The condition of the world is not such that one can possibly foresee any new period of comparative capitalist stabilization such as the period from 1924 to 1929. It is far more likely that the European crisis will drive on to war during the next few years, and that the real prospect in Britain also is of an open capitalist dictatorship.

Correspondence

Not a Personal Statement

TO THE NEW MASSES:

The Pitts article seems very important to me; chiefly because it is not just a personal statement. Its attitude is becoming a reality, I know. It marks a change from the faulty, amateurish radicalism that many of us know too much about, to something genuine and indestructible. The fact that you published this piece makes me think highly of you. The young generation that you as radical leaders must lead, demand this kind of wisdom as well as courage and doctrine.

GENEVIEVE TAGGARD.

Bennington College, Bennington, Vt.

The Use of Words

TO THE NEW MASSES:

I liked Rebecca Pitts' article in the March 13th issue just received. It is very interesting and very timely. However, I rather think her phrase about "perception of meaning of destiny in the world" is misleading. The working class, we say, is destined to do away with capitalism, but this is not because of something pre-ordained, but because of the social forces inherent in capitalism which create "its own grave digger." It is true that we have faith in our cause, and that without faith we are weak, and that we visualize our goal, socialism, communism,

the classless future; but we conceive of our goals as ideals to achieve, and not as things already existent beckoning us on. We must always be careful in our use of the words destiny, fate. Of course it may be my own obtuseness which fails to interpret that word right in Comrade Pitts' article. I repeat it is interesting, timely, and well-written. I'd be delighted to see more from her capable pen.

Tucson, Ariz.

GEORGE HENRY WEISS.

A Greeting

TO THE NEW MASSES:

Greetings to the weekly NEW MASSES. May it rally all that is best in America's intellectual life to the proletarian revolution.

SECRETARIAT COMMUNIST PARTY OF IRELAND.

What Magazines Want

TO THE NEW MASSES:

The other day I was called into the editorial sanctum of one of the country's best known middle-class intellectual magazines to discuss a couple of my stories. The stories were rejected, but I garnered the following general observations about fiction which may be of interest to your readers:

The struggling, starving, dying miners are "fascinating."

Their struggles and life—it seems they live a life

quite apart from ours—offer fine opportunities for thrilling, exciting stories. Scraps among the miners themselves over their conflicting unions are excellent material. Miners ambushing each other, etc.

Illiterate mill workers run the "fascinating" miners a close second. It seems they really live very poorly and this is interesting. Sometimes they develop fiery leaders who get shot to death, usually needlessly, let it be remarked. This is good stuff, too.

Generally speaking, most depression or proletarian fiction (it is almost the same thing) is too gloomy, too depressing, too realistic without any point. Or it has no action to relieve it. (Screaming Jesus, I thought, can there be more than one kind of action that will "relieve" it?)

Yes, of course the editors try to keep up with what is going on toward the Left. They had lunch recently with Mr. Lovestone, and they've had some contacts with the American Worker's Party. (No mention of the straight Communist Party, THE party of the Left.) And as a result, their heads are in such a whirl with all this sectarianism, this mutual villification, that they are inclined to chuck the whole business, at least temporarily.

People of our own class (the editor's and the author's) who have been ruined or declassed by the depression, are very poor material for modern fiction compared to such venerable and classic ma-