

new Masses

DECEMBER 17, 1935

For a Counter Olympics!

THE brutal cynicism of the Brundage-Sherrill-Walsh clique reduced the convention of the Amateur Athletic Union in New York last weekend to the moral level of a lynch jury. "We'll give the defendant a fair trial and then hang him!" compares favorably with Brundage's "Whatever you decide, an American team will go to the Berlin Olympics!" After three days of discussion by one faction and double-crossing by the other, the convention finally endorsed a cock-eyed resolution in which one eye leers toward Hitler while the other winks piously toward the side of the angels. The Kirby resolution makes no bones about what it thinks of Nazi Germany—how did *that* get by General Sherrill?—and it promptly goes on to deliver into Hitler's custody those "cherished ideals of democratic sport," the enunciation of which constitutes a crime when recited in the Third Reich. After calling on the Olympic Committee for two and a half years to study Nazi infractions of the Olympic code with a view to withdrawal from the Games and after obtaining in answer an unbroken silence, the A. A. U. once again calls on the American Olympic Committee and the International Olympic Committee to "study" the facts. This, after defeating by a margin of two percent the Steuer resolution which would have empowered the organization to arrange an adequate investigation of its own. If these contradictions appear mad, they nonetheless reflect the Brundage method. The formula—will it work in a receivership scandal?—is to acknowledge anything verbally but to drive on toward the objective as if no question as to what the objection is exists.

THE tactics employed in steam-rolling the convention leave no illusion of democratic procedure. Analysis of the vote on the various anti-Nazi resolutions indicated solid support by the basic athletic organizations, balked by manipulation of votes allowed to affiliate bodies and the bureaucracy of previous administrations.



Christmas, 1935

Oh, dear Lord our God, Thou Jesus of Palestine, a Jew, I wonder what Thou thinkest of Christmas, Thy birthday, today.

Thou hast found that in Germany today Thy people are slaves.

And Thou, who art a Jew, Thou who didst give us the ideal of peace on earth, good-will to men, Thou seest that the troops of Italy are conquering Ethiopia, the oldest Christian nation in the world.

Oh, my dear Lord God, Thou who art a Jew, I can hope for no great happiness for Thee, nor for us, this Christmas.

SINCLAIR LEWIS

In recognition of the futility of voting in an organization framed so that a minor influence can throttle 92 percent of the constituents, Judge Mahoney and the anti-Nazi faction abstained from the elections. The election of Brundage placed the whole realm of American sport as at present constituted within the shadow of the swastika.

MEANTIME the fundamental issue has not yet been faced. Regardless of the inadequacy of the Reich's pledges, the failure to observe them is kept beyond official ken. Judge Mahoney has adopted a course which leads in only one direction: a federation of American sportsmen must emerge from the shambles. It can con-

stitute itself as a democratic body representative of the spirit of sport which is so uniquely the domain of youth and the workers. It can take over what is worthwhile in the A.A.U. and gain the support of the A. F. of L. to expand its base by extending recognition. It can set standards of racial and religious tolerance which will drive Sherrill to retirement in an Alabama court. And it can proclaim Counter Olympics to take place in a country to be designated by anti-Nazi sportsmen of the world as a gigantic demonstration of the survival of the essential spirit of sport. The A. A. U. convention exhausted the last parliamentary remedy in the present structure of American sport. Judge Mahoney must either surrender in a minor campaign to boy-

cott the Nazi Olympics or he must take the leadership in a movement to remold American sports on a democratic basis.

The Socialists Clear Deck

THE Socialist Party of New York City has been trying to go two ways at once for several years. The Old Guard has been hanging on to the capitalist bandwagon with a frenzy that has allied it alternately with the New Deal and with Hearst. And the so-called "left-wingers," the progressive majority in the party, have been driving toward a more realistic, more socialistic position with reference to the American scene. The internal struggle within the framework of the Socialist Party has been growing steadily. First, the Young People's Socialist League became too "radical" and was expelled from the Party by the Old Guard bureaucracy, which although it had the support of only a minority of the membership, nevertheless managed to dominate the City Central Council. The Thomas-Browder debate at Madison Square brought matters to a head. The Old Guard decided to "reorganize" the New York Party, a reorganization which meant the expulsion of left wingers, including the national leader of the party, Norman Thomas, the suppression of The Socialist Call and the complete dictatorship for the Old Guard bureaucracy. The defenders of "democracy" threw democratic procedure out the window and went ahead without listening to objections.

THE issue became clear: the majority must either buckle down and accept dictatorship of the Socialist Party by allies of Hearst or break with the corrupt leadership, taking over control of the Socialist Party into their own hands. Hence the "split." In reality the "split" consists of the Socialist Party sloughing off those elements which blocked all attempts of the Party to stand for socialism. And the "bolt-ers," led by Norman Thomas, appear to have brought with them the bulk of the active Party members. The final break has thrown consternation into the Old Guard camp. The arch-Red-baiter, Abraham Cahan, tried to consider the withdrawal of the militant elements as "a good-riddance." But the remainder of the Old Guard realize that the loss of membership is leaving them leaders without anyone to lead. They are trying to conciliate the progressives,

to reach an "understanding," to patch things up. But the Old Guard remains anti-Socialist, anti-Soviet Union, anti-militant, anti-everything that the Socialist Party ostensibly stands for. The progressives not only receive support from the New York City locals but from State Socialist locals and the national organization. Plans for a meeting in Utica late in December bring promises of attendance from the National office of the Party. The Socialist Party situation has become clearer: the progressives move to the Left, with the rank and file favoring a United Front. The leaders of the progressives still refuse to commit themselves. But having made the initial step toward forming an active Socialist Party, the next step is into the United Front, into realistic and effective fight against war and fascism with all other elements and parties in America pledged to a similar platform.

The Pirates' Ultimatum

AN English king of the Dutch royal house from which President Roosevelt probably traces his dynastic descent once said, speaking of the rising power of the merchants organized in the Hanseatic League: "Give them an inch and they will take an ell." One cannot, of course, expect that a person ignorant of history can learn the lessons of history. Ordinary caution, however, would dictate some reservations in the relations with the group of unashamed buccaneers who hold this country. There are a lot of people, including most of the liberal advisers of the Roosevelt administration, who think that it is possible to kid the piratical crew that runs steel, oil, metal machinery and electrical apparatus manufacturing, metal mining and smelting, etc. Nobody can kid these gentlemen. They want to run the country their way—and they are going to do it if there is not a powerful labor movement to stop them. They think that they are the real rulers of the United States, its national resources and its people. It is impossible to convince them otherwise. You have to lick them. These hardboiled spokesmen for monopoly capital spit in Roosevelt's face the other day during the session of the Manufacturers' Association—although this meeting by no means represents big capital in this country. These were just the smaller boys speaking—but they had their piece written for them.

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT some time ago announced a "breathing spell" for business, that is, for the overlords of industry growing restive under the mildest kind of government restriction on their lucrative activities. This was a gesture in the grand manner. But why should the persons who own the country accept such a slight concession? Just a few days later Secretary Roper announced that the "breathing spell" was permanent. The American Iron and Steel Institute, the National Association of Manufacturers, the Durable Goods Industries have all rejected, with contumely, the good offices of the Roosevelt administration, as reported with considerable glee in the metropolitan press. These people intend to run this country with a government which they control and order around down to the last detail of social relationships. It is, therefore, of the greatest service to working people to make the comparison—and only Communists are doing this today—between the Roosevelt administration and the pre-fascist Bruening government which, with the aid of Social-Democratic leaders, smoothed the way for Hitler. The main political fact in the United States today is that the acknowledged leaders of monopoly capital, having recovered somewhat from fears of a revolt brought on by the crisis, the monopolists whose idea of labor relations was set forth succinctly by R. B. Mellon speaking to a Congressional Committee: "You can't run a coal mine without machine guns," are demanding an unrestricted mandate for government and industry. They are out to get all there is to be got—to run this country and rule its people—"without let or hindrance."

De la Rocque's Mistake

IT WAS no slouch of a bright idea that the Laval-LaRocque team hit upon Dec. 6 when they put up the fascist Ybarnegaray to propose to the unsuspecting Chamber the disarmament of the white guards, on condition, of course, that the Communist and Socialist militants disarm also. It was a noble gesture, calculated to boost the political stock of both the government and the fascists. Unfortunately for them, the Front Populaire deputies quickly recovered from their surprise, with the result that the would-be trappers were caught in their own trap. Laval, who, unlike his silent partner, is no fool, is well aware that his government is

a pawn in the hands of the Left majority, which can and will bring him down the day it chooses to do so. He is very reluctant to quit, but if he must go he would like to pick the moment and the issue of his exit. He knows, too, that while the parties composing the Front Populaire have so far failed to agree on forming a ministry of their own, they are solidly and resolutely united upon ending the menace of civil war by depriving the leagues which foment it of their weapons. Now, a Left government, were the majority driven to constitute one, would not stop at any half measures. It would smash the Croix de Feu and the other gangs beyond all hope of revival. And this, with the country aroused as it has been since the Limoges shootings, might happen any day. It was therefore prudent not to let it come to that. A politician who was forced to resign power on an issue like that would never be able to stage a comeback. Laval prefers to fall, since fall he must, over the question of rapprochement with

Germany, and then blame the Left for having blocked his efforts at the pacification of Europe. He forgets, or he thinks the country has forgotten, that it was a Left foreign minister, Briand, who for ten years labored unceasingly to bring about a Franco-German understanding, until Laval's friends and their reactionary allies across the frontier, by hoisting Hitler to the Chancellorship, made a peaceful solution of the age-old feud between the two countries a forlorn hope.

DE LA ROCQUE, for his part, has at last had it brought home to his slow intelligence that it was none other than he who by his posturings and provocations and the murderous activities of his little boys has united the country behind the Front Populaire and made himself the most hated man in France. Thereupon in what he erroneously calls his mind there germinated an idea. If the Left parties could get together because he talked civil war, why shouldn't they fall apart

again if he held out the olive branch? His skull is too thick for him to see that with the C.G.T. and the C.G.T.U. (the Socialist and Communist trade unions) welded into one, and the vast majority of the Radical Socialists sitting around the table with the extreme Left working out a common program, and the mass of the nation calling for an end to the financial feudalism of the two hundred families, it is just a little too late for him to undo the good work he so unintentionally began on February 6, 1934. He judged the intelligence of the opposition by his own; and he convinced himself that not only would the formidable common front which he had brought into existence collapse at his offer, but that the other fascist groups, of whom he is jealous, would be disarmed, whilst his own followers who, he pretends, possess no arms, would emerge as the sole hope of "the nationalist awakening."

BUT his calculations somehow went awry. The Left, instead of walking into the trap, demanded and obtained that the Chamber amend the proposed law in such a way that the disarmament of the leagues becomes a real and effective thing instead of the farce Laval and LaRocque intended to make. Small wonder that the Count-Colonel now rages with disappointment at the proposal of his own tool Ybarnegaray. Meanwhile the bill has gone to the Senate, where the Left has more than a safe majority. La Rocque is now driven to threatening that if the measure is adopted he will loose his armed hordes upon the country. If he tries it, he will find a united nation ready for him. And if he is not bluffing as usual, the Front Populaire may yet decide to take the power at once and, with the authority of the Republic in its grasp, smash the fascist menace once and for all.

"Hail Ye Heroes, Heav'n Born Band"

"Money isn't everything,"
Says the giant business king.
"I know just how many seeds
Are enough for workers' needs."

"Ruling isn't all in all,"
Says the boss of Capital.
"I'm the ruler who can rule you;
Shut your mouth, you God damn fool, you!"

FRANKLIN P. ADAMS.

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