

crease of the city relief appropriations.

This week the union's fight will reach a critical stage. The retention of a seasoned staff in the relief bureaus and the protection of a union which has had the vision to see that the interests of its members are the interests of a million other New Yorkers is a compelling necessity for the community.

Prison Censorship

SAN QUENTIN is notorious throughout the world as the prison where California's millionaires lock up political dissidents. Its walls have caged Tom Mooney, J. B. McNamara, and others who have wanted their fellow-workers to have a better life. But California's rulers think that physical imprisonment is not enough for such "criminals." Minds as well as bodies are to be walled in. The San Quentin authorities decide what prisoners may and may not read.

This week, for example, we were notified that political prisoners may not receive copies of *THE NEW MASSES*. The decision specifically affects four prisoners: Martin Wilson (Box 57591); Reuel Stanfield (Box 58034); Pat Chambers (Box 57589) and Albert Hougardy (Box 57590). These men received *NEW MASSES* subscriptions from our readers who are participating in our Gift-to-the-Labor-Movement campaign.

There is no excuse for the attitude of the San Quentin authorities in forbidding prisoners to read publications of their own choice. But they will continue to take this attitude unless there is a strong protest against it. We urge our readers to write to San Quentin requesting that *THE NEW MASSES* be delivered to the four prisoners for whom subscriptions have been provided.

"Sad Misunderstanding"

RECENTLY Germany celebrated the 550th anniversary of the founding of Heidelberg University. Ernest Kriek, Nazi professor of philosophy—if that is not a contradiction in terms—set the tone for the gathering. Said Herr Kriek: "We do not know or recognize truth for truth's sake." This is not a new Nazi concept, of course, but Kriek's statement of it was succinct. Nevertheless, he might have condensed it just a bit further by saying simply: "We do not know or recognize truth." To which the rest of the world might reply: "We do not know or recognize Heidelberg."

It took 547 years of patient and laborious effort to build for Heidelberg its reputation as one of the foremost centers of world culture. The university suffered the savage plundering of bloody feudal nobles; it endured the iron hand of the church. These it sur-

vived, and by the middle of the nineteenth century the fame of its professors, laboratories, and collections, and its remarkable library of 600,000 volumes, annually drew eager students from all parts of the earth. In three short years Hitler has converted the whole thing into a glorified barracks run by the more academically minded Nazi hacks.

Today the magnificent Heidelberg library stands stripped of the greatest masterpieces of modern literature. The immortal works of Marx and Engels, Heine's lyrics, the novels of Gorky and Rolland—these and many other monumental achievements the new Heidelberg librarians have filed away in bonfires. The university that gave the world such titans of science as Helmholtz, Bunsen, and Kirchhoff now instructs booted and brown-shirted sadists in the divinity of the "Aryan" race and warns them of the perfidy of "Jewish science," such as Einstein's theory of relativity.

The greatest universities of the world spurned the invitations of the Heidelberg clowns. Their indignant refusal to take part in an orgy of academic perversion is described by the German press as a "sad misunderstanding which developed in negotiations with other universities." What the Berliner Tageblatt chooses to view as a "sad misunderstanding" looks to more normal persons like a good swift kick.

The Elephantine Touch

JIM FARLEY may be no great intellectual, but his sense of smell is keen. Many months ago genial Jim announced the approach of a "dirty campaign." Since then much has been made of the dignity of Alf M. Landon, of the clarity with which he would come to grips with the problems of America. The Republicans would leave mudslinging, slander, and the employment of red herrings to the rowdy Postmaster General. But as the campaign moves along, evidence piles up that the Farley nose, accustomed to its owner's technique, did not deceive him.

Hundreds of red-white-and-blue leaflets are streaming out of G.O.P. headquarters. Few of them are intelligent, fewer are honest, and many are shot through with slanderous innuendo. One

of them—called "Churches Next?"—warns that "among those who have his [Roosevelt's] ear are some who so admire Russia that they would not hesitate at the destruction of our churches provided that would give them more money to spend."

Therefore [warns the author] we must drive the Roosevelt party out of power if we are to retain our freedom of religion and our liberty. The churches have had a difficult time carrying on their work during this depression. Without them this country would be like Russia is today.

This introduction of the religious note is reinforced by the circulation of a reprint of a letter addressed to the President by Rev. Henry E. Lennon, a Milford (N. H.) minister. The Reverend Lennon's remarks were addressed to Roosevelt in reply to the Presi-

dent's request for clerical criticism of his administration. It concludes:

My dear Mr. Roosevelt, may I make bold to say that the frequent divorces and immediate marriages in the White House and the lawless conduct of your sons at Harvard have shocked the moral sense of the nation.

Your Excellency, I am making these last remarks as a Christian Minister, believing that those in high place and leaders in Israel are religiously bound to give good example to their fellow-men. Furthermore, I consider your wife's and eldest son's political activities, interference, and assumption of the duties of the presidency offensive to the ideas of those who look to the White House for presidential, rather than family-dynasty, leadership.

This sort of thing may be mild in comparison with the scurrilous pamphleteering carried on against the "Jew Deal" by fanatic, openly fascist sects, but it must be remembered that the

Lennon letter is sent out by the national committee of a major party. And each reprint bears the notation: "Why has Mr. Roosevelt remained silent about this and other replies received from clergymen in response to his letter asking their advice? Have you seen them? No! And you won't!"

For the most part, the bogey of Republican literature is Communism. The purpose here is twofold: first, to scare conservative Democrats and even wavering liberals into the Landon camp, and second, to discredit Communism by tying it up with the obvious failures of the New Deal. Occasionally the Roosevelt Administration is indicted for fascism, but only when the accusation is linked up with the menace of Moscow. Thus "Mark Granite," a figment of the creative Republican mind, tells his colleagues of the Bucks County Stove Circle (probably those ol' farmhands Hearst, Morgan, du Pont, and Smith) that

The second great issue [of the campaign] is the carefully concealed but fixed determination of Franklin Roosevelt to turn this country into a fascist-communist state with a regimented people, government-controlled farming, commerce and industry—a New-Deal-Soviet-American Republic with six Commissioners: Tugwell, Wallace and Ickes, Roosevelt, Hopkins and Farley.

In a similar leaflet, Lee Meriwether, "an American first and a Democrat second," is quoted at great length on the Communist threat. "What is the difference," he asks rhetorically, "between a Russian peasant who is controlled by a Commissar of Agriculture in Moscow, and an American farmer who is controlled by a Secretary of Agriculture in Washington? Neither is a free man." Mr. Meriwether explains to the more simple-minded Republicans the theory of Communism, and it must be said that he does a marvelous piece of condensation:

The Russian Communist theory is that every citizen belongs to the state, and that his activities must be directed by a small, select group which somehow has managed to seize the seats of authority. . . . Secretary Wallace [to get back to the campaign] tried to do exactly the same thing here in the United States, and President Roosevelt backed him in his efforts.

So far Mr. Meriwether is more silly than sinister, but the wind shifts ominously when he explains:

Men who toil and save and accumulate property do not voluntarily allow their savings to be turned over to the state without compensation. That policy was not consummated in Russia until rivers of blood had been shed, until owners of shops and factories had been killed or exiled to Siberia.

Here is the authentic note of fascist violence, sounded through the courtesy of the Republican National Committee.

Never does the Republican campaign literature show the least sign of coming to grips with the immediate issues of the day. This would not be serious if it were not for the fact that as its mental poverty becomes more apparent, its viciousness must increase. With less and less to say, it must more and more cloak its barrenness with those same fascist wrappings that have already done service for Mussolini and for Hitler.

Every attempt will be made to brand as Communist the simplest principles of democracy, while both major parties, already given a good head start, may be expected to obscure the real issues with slander and abuse. THE NEW MASSES will treat this matter more fully as the campaign develops. In the meantime it is significant that while the Communist Party adopts the constructive and joyous slogan "Forward to a free, peaceful, prosperous and happy America!" the Republican high command can only croak: "Is it time to change the lines of 'America' to 'My country 'tis of thee; Foul land of tyranny'?"

The A.F. of L. Council Meets

THE conservative executive council of the American Federation of Labor has been considering all this past week how best to combat the Committee for Industrial Organization, leader of the great steel drive. The council is loaded down with champions of exclusive craft unionism, reactionary leaders who have allowed racketeering to flourish in certain sections of the trade-union movement and who have failed to organize the workers in the great basic industries. As a result of their policies, as John L. Lewis pointed out at the Atlantic City convention of the A.F. of L., only three million of the thirty-five million organizable workers of the United States have been brought into the ranks of the unions.

There has been much talk, within the executive council, of suspending the twelve industrial unions affiliated with the C.I.O. Such action may have been taken by the time we go to press, despite the fact that it would violate the

A.F. of L. constitution, which requires a two-thirds vote of the national convention for such a step.

It is important to note the motivating force of the move for suspension.

The chief proponent is William L. Hutcheson, reactionary president of the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners. Head of the Hoover Labor Committee in the 1932 campaign, Hutcheson is a supporter today of the anti-labor Hearst-Landon ticket and an avowed defender of the reactionary decision of the United States Supreme Court. With him is allied John P. Frey of the Metal Trades Department of the A.F. of L. and "National Civic Federation" Woll, both distinguished Red-baiters.

A storm of protests from city central bodies and local unions from all over the country has caused some wavering within the council. A minority of five has developed—not enamored of industrial unionism, but concerned at

the rising indignation within the labor movement against the splitting policies of the diehards. From every state in the Union these protests have poured into Washington, with such outstanding central bodies as those of Chicago, Philadelphia, Passaic, N. J., Tampa, Fla., and Columbus, O., demanding that there be no suspension of the C.I.O. unions. Even Green's hometown central body—out in Coshocton, O.—has unanimously backed the C.I.O.

Contrary to the shrill blasts of Mr. Frey, a split in the A.F. of L. is the last thing desired by any true progressive. A powerful, united American Federation of Labor is sorely needed at the present hour, and it was clearly called for by the Communist Party as long ago as last February. A strong Federation, however, can be assured only on the basis of industrial unionism for the basic industries. Any back-down by the conservative executive council is a gain toward that end.