

Socialist Call

Saturday, September 3, 1938



AT THE FRONT with Norman Thomas

Hull Vs. Mexico

Given the prevailing capitalist standards, Secretary Hull's sharp note to Mexico is on the face of it reasonable. All that he asks is that Mexico make immediate arrangements for paying for American owned farm lands which she has taken, and that any disputed questions be submitted to arbitration according to treaty. But to judge the full effect of the note and its possible danger we must go beneath the surface.

It is commonly believed that in the matter of these farm lands Mr. Hull is really setting a precedent to apply to the expropriated British and American oil holdings. In these cases the oil companies had taken out of Mexico immense fortunes before they were expropriated because they could not or would not come to terms with labor. There is a fascist menace in Mexico, and I have heard advocates of collective security advance that menace as a reason for our uniting with Britain against Hitler.

In point of this fact the United States and Great Britain increase that fascist menace by the difficulties they put in the way of the Cardenas government, and by the boycott they have established against the sale of Mexican oil, except to fascist nations. It would be very easy to handle this Mexican situation in an outwardly self righteous manner so as to make Mexico another Spain. Against this all decent public opinion in America should be aroused.

stead Zack himself was charged with illegal entry to the United States on the ground that when he returned here in 1930 he stated falsely that he had been born here. He offered much testimony that he was born here and he alleges Communist pressure on his witnesses to change their testimony. This is the sort of thing which arouses suspicion and resentment of Communist tactics.

To Debate Hathaway

On Wednesday, August 31, over W. E. V. D. owned by the *Jewish Daily Forward*, I am to debate the subject of the A. L. P. coalition with old parties against the Communist, Clarence Hathaway. He will support the coalition policy, to which our Social Democratic friends, who left us because we were too friendly with the Communists, also, of necessity, give a more or less reluctant support. For Socialists, especially those who remember what the Communists used to say, comment is superfluous.

"White Supremacy"

In their fight against Roosevelt, Southern Democrats like Senator George and Smith are reviving the most vicious sort of white supremacy and Civil War propaganda. For that reason alone their defeat will mark the growth of tolerance and decency in the South. Unquestionably there is a new and better South

Youth Congress

The World Youth Congress, at Vassar, has come and gone without any profound immediate effect upon public opinion. It probably did genuine good in increasing friendship and understanding among the youth of the world, including the able representatives of the colonial peoples. Communist influence was considerable, but it was not dominant. Collective security influence, which is by no means wholly Communist, was dominant but its opponents, including our own Socialist representative, made an excellent case and got a good hearing.

Dies' Brothers

The NEW REPUBLIC is probably right in thinking that this Dies investigation will be just another in a long line of red-baiting investigations including the Fish and Dickstein inquiries. This Dickstein, by the way, is the same man who has been endorsed for Congress by the A. L. P. with Communist approval! The Dies Committee is less concerned about the facts of Communist and fascist propaganda than it is about smearing the C. I. O. and progressive legislation. To Socialists the most interesting fact about J. B. Matthews' testimony is that he tacitly admits that he was acting as a Communist stooge while still nominally a member of our Party.

The Zack Case

There are charges against the Communists which don't worry the Dies Committee but which ought to worry believers in Civil Liberty and fair play. I refer specifically now to Joseph Zack's definite charge that Communists have been cooperating with the United States Government to bring about his deportation in order to punish him because he left the Communist Party.

CALL readers will remember that Zack asked the Government to help him get his wife and family out of Russia where the Soviet Government held them. In-

ity. Jonnathan Daniels' very interesting book, **A Southerner Discovers the South** (Macmillan) is of itself proof of that fact.

The forces that must make the real new South, however, to a greater degree than even the liberal Mr. Daniels recognizes, must be the forces of workers, white and colored, in factory and on plantation. Governor Johnson of South Carolina who professes to champion the President's liberalism against Cotton Ed Smith, has a very bad record himself for the misuse of his authority, among other occasions during the textile strike of 1934.

Secret Communist

Socialists and other friends of the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union should be informed that President Butler of the Union, on the basis of documentary evidence, is bringing charges that Claude Williams, the head of Commonwealth College, has been secretly a member of the Communist Party and is cooperating with the Communists in Commonwealth College to "capture" the S. T. F. U. President Butler does not complain that Williams is a Communist—that he has a right to be. But no one has a right to deny that he is a Communist or accepts the Communist line, and to claim to be operating with a union administration, while in reality he is conspiring with Communists for the capture of power in that union.

Such a report as the National Emergency Committee has just issued on the South is an invaluable document and, by sound inference, a damning indictment of capitalism. Such reports do credit to the Roosevelt administration. The figures on cotton tenantry—are average of \$73 annually per person for a year's work—are appalling. They remind me of the way the administration tried at an earlier period to deny some of my charges, and play down the need for the Southern Tenant Farmers Union.