Anti-Reaction Fund
Vital This Moment!

Two years ago it cost Commonwealth more than $800 for travel and communication alone to win a desperate battle for existence, pitting every resource against the organized, well financed legislative attack.

Today the imminent second assault upon academic freedom of Arkansas and the College is, in the enemy's own words, to be "redoubled." As this issue of the Fortnightly rolls off the press our planter-baited foe is already at the firing line: the state legislature which opened this week.

Even without this light on its hands, diverting time and energy from educational work, Commonwealth is beset by acute budget gains. Substantial support is also necessary to assure continued normal operation this quarter.

Now, because the cotton barons are as merciless as General Franco in timing their onslaught, we must be able overnight to put out fighting funds for postage, gasoline and telegrams. Unless we can maintain close contact with the press and the public—not to mention the legislators—a triumph for reaction is very likely.

Many of Commonwealth's generous friends have already come forward with splendid support—but where are the rest?

Every dollar rushed to our special "anti-reaction" fund will soon decide the outcome of this life-or-death struggle. Today may be your last chance to help!

To Rally Urgent Support
With Chain of Banquets

To rally urgently needed support for America's only resident labor training institutions—Commonwealth, Brookwood Labor College and Highlander Folk School—a novel chain of simultaneous banquets with a central radio broadcast is being arranged by the newly formed Committee for Resident Labor Colleges.

This spectacular move for defense of academic freedom and continuation of workers' education will probably occur late this month. Irene Thomar, executive secretary

YEARS OF STRUGGLE FOR ACADEMIC FREEDOM
Let No One String Barbed Wire Around Our Schools!

Gorman Pledges Aid

• "If there is anything I can do to combat the attack being made, let me know," wrote Francis J. Gorman, first vice-president of the United Textile Workers and a foremost progressive labor leader, to Commonwealth shortly after he consented to serve on the College Advisory Board of 22 prominent American liberals.

"I have watched with considerable interest the progress made at Commonwealth," he added, "and its great interest in preparing the students for work in the labor movement. The subjects of political economy, trade union problems, labor history, etc., should be a part of the curriculum of every educational institution. In the absence of this we must have colleges where the workers may gain such needed knowledge in order that they might be able to compete with the organized and educational opportunities of the employers."

Ask Unions Prepare
Support for School

External vigilance is the price of liberty" is the old saw that may well be used to enforce Commonwealth's warning to the people and organized workers of Arkansas: "Let no one string barbed wire around our school!"

Unionists need but glance elsewhere in this issue or look at their daily paper to realize that the same planter and employer forces of reaction which would gladly destroy workers' organization are today trying to destroy workers' education in this state.

If Arkansas labor loses its academic freedom, its civil liberty will disappear next, then its unions and immediately afterward its hard won gains. But if all organized workers and farmers of the state rally behind Commonwealth in the "test case" now being fought at the legislature in Little Rock

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COMMONWEALTH COLLEGE
FORTNIGHTLY

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YEARS OF STRUGGLE FOR ACADEMIC FREEDOM
Let No One String Barbed Wire Around Our Schools!

Almost two years ago, during February-March, 1935, certain reactionary forces in Arkansas attempted, through the bills presented in the general assembly, to effect the suppression of Commonwealth College, a training school for labor, because it was suspected of teaching communism and engaging in irreligious, immoral and illicit practices.

Sedition Bill Defeated

The first measure, known as the "sedition bill," appeared so monstrous, so comprehensive and so savage that the intelligence of the state was offended and promptly registered protest. Some of these responses came from prominent educators and editors who, discounting any interest in Commonwealth College, saw in the proposed measure a dangerous limitation of the political and intellectual liberty of every mind in the state.

Commonwealth College immediately organized a protest movement of international proportions against this threat to its academic freedom. Results stumped the legislators. Hundreds of protests from all over the country and even from Paris, France, and London, England, poured in upon the legislature. The house passed the bill precipitately and without granting any hearing upon it. The protests, however, caused its defeat in the senate.

Resorted To "Nuisance" Bill

Hardly before the sedition bill had "grown cold" another measure of more subtle and dangerous nature to the college was set into motion in the house. This "nuisance" bill provided that the local court of chancery would be empowered to close the school as a nuisance upon complaint of no more than five residents of its vicinity. Before the bill reached a final vote, however, public opinion forced its abandonment.

Legislative Investigation Ordered

To gather evidence in support of these measures, the legislature simultaneously dispatched a joint committee of investigation to inquire into the teachings at the
YEARS OF STRUGGLE (from p. 1)

College, as well as the religious beliefs and private conduct of its faculty, teachers and students.

Lucien Koch, then director of Commonwealth, said upon the issuance of the investigation that there were people who felt that the college was investigating. He stated that Commonwealth would open its doors to the committee, but that the legislature should bring their evidences because, in any Commonwealth, teachers included, worked in community taxes.

Accompanied by the Polk County sheriff, the legislators spent several hours inspecting the campus, buildings and library, and interviewed students and teachers. The remainder of the inquiry took place in the county courthouse behind closed doors. Koch said that a reporter was not admitted to take notes for the College.

"No Ground For Action"

The matter of questioning witnesses was included as the majority of the inquiry did not require for such and otherwise. But several witnesses attending to the school were, in fact, to provide testimony that the testimony is not strange. Any institution of 39 years' standing has its prepared equipment. Regardless of adverse facts to the contrary, the favorable testimony was overwhelmingly predeterminant that the committee in its final report had to indicate to recommend any action whatever against the institution. There was no evidence warrants action against Commonwealth College.

Planner-Employers Behind Attack

In defense Commonwealth cited that this attack was inspired by an employer in the eastern Arkansas plaiters, who strange. Keeping the assistance given by the College to organization of tin miners, he said that Commonwealth would have to be notified. After the signature of the Letter, the letter was mailed to the President of the Board of Directors of Commonwealth College. The letter was addressed to the President of the Board of Directors of Commonwealth College.

Today the College is again under fire from its enemies. This second concerted attack comes when the Arkansas labor movement is gaining new strength, when the Southern Tenant Farmers Union is stirring every sort of terror and putting planters on the defensive by successful prosecuting an eastern Arkansas county city masthead, a well-known planter, on seven counts of libel.

Once again, in 1937, there is a threat of repressive legislation against Commonwealth College, Herman Horton, 22-year-old "baby solon" of the Jonesboro plan-

tion district, plans to introduce in the next session of the state a bill aimed directly at the school. One feature of the bill will be its inclusion of the hated "loyalty oath" to effect all teachers of the state.

Preaches Violent Sermons

But for weeks prior to this planned legal assault the college has suffered blistering, vile trades from Reverend L. D. Summers, a Baptist minister in Meno who came from eastern Arkansas. Reverend Summers repeatedly accuses the school of being "atheistic, godless, communist, socialistic, believing in free love, Negro equality," etc. A "citizen's committee" has been established in Meno, Arkansas, for the avowed purpose of outlawing Commonwealth College.

Virtually every Sunday sermon delivered by Reverend Summers within the past four months has sought to build up hatred against the College. Whenever attendance dwindled at his church because of boredom, he took to fiction the town folk back with anti-Commonwealth pamphlets of his own composition. He has frequently directed attacks against American Federation of Labor unions, the Southern Tenant Farmers Union, Farmers' Home Association, American Civil Liberties Union and other progressive organizations. He preaches hatred and has condemned the government aid to teachers, while denying conditions among sharecroppers in eastern Arkansas.

MacFadden Aids Enemy

Perhaps unexpected but effective aid came to this local enemy when Bernard MacFadden published in his "Liberty" magazine of December 19, 1936, a slanderous "expose" entitled "Rah, Rah, Russia!" written by Nolen Bulloch. The author was discovered and courteously removed from the campus within a few hours after he arrived in student disguise for a muckraking orgy. Dauntless, Bulloch then dug up a semi-literate deputy sheriff, one-time scab in a Mena merchant strike, also a farmer who was disgruntled over his heavy debt to the college store, and accepted their comments about Commonwealth as fact. He also drew information from a report of the 1935 investigation which had been "edited" and published by the Ku Klux Klan.

Substance of all the present attacks being made against the College was based directly upon the scandalously small amount of
"FOR THE HONOR OF ARKANSAS"

Today when masses of American workers and farmers are surging into unions to win for themselves security and decent living, a powerful handful of planters and employers opposes more bitterly than ever each forward step of the people.

These same few labor-haters hope to preserve such miserable but highly profitable conditions as exist in several parts of Arkansas by keeping the people from learning how to organize.

That is why Reverend L. D. Summers of Memm and Representative Herman Horton of Jonesboro, servants of these reactionary forces, seek to put a legal fence around Commonwealth College or even a legal padlock upon it. They have no real or honest reason for wanting to do so.

This labor school observes every written law and every unwritten moral. It violates only the will of planters and employers because it provides valuable education for workers and farmers, useful knowledge that helps them to improve their deplorable lives of poverty.

Instead of pursing their expected duty of advancing public welfare, Messrs. Summers, Horton & Co. threaten the very basic interests of the people of Arkansas by promoting bills against academic freedom and civil liberty. If they and the planter-employer forces behind them succeed at the present legislature in thus strangling the school with loyalty oaths and gag laws, they will then proceed to destroy the free American mind of all Arkansans.

Arkansans, like people in all 47 other states, love and will fight for the precious liberties guaranteed them by the United States Constitution and common sense. They proved this two years ago when their mighty protests forced the legislature to abandon similar bills.

Organized workers and farmers, as well as the general public, also oppose any kind of attack upon American freedom.

Again all these progressive forces must tell the legislators, this time once and for all, to forget altogether about any suppressive laws which hit at both the people of Arkansas and their only labor school, Commonwealth College.

"scandal" extracted from prejudiced witnesses by the state investigator two years ago and which was not considered at that time a basis for any action against the school.

**College Asks Investigation**

Emphasizing the school's main concern with developing trade union organization and practice in the South; that the school is a firmly established, duly incorporated, non-profit institution, College officials recently requested the LaFollette Senatorial Committee on Civil Liberties to investigate threats of violence against students and teachers. The school feared that scattered enemies in various parts of the state might be rallied into a vigilante band by Reverend Summers' savage tirades, and the "citizens' committee" of which he is the chairman.

A College spokesman explained that the school draws its worker-students from all over the country; that it has won the lasting friendship and active support of progressive groups and individuals everywhere. It was stressed that the work of this co-operative institution for workers' and farmers' education must not be hampered by the prejudiced actions and attacks of narrow-minded reactionaries who not only oppose labor's basic right to organize, but also wish to destroy all progressive institutions and movements for improvement of working conditions; that Commonwealth College must be defended in constitutional right to operate.

The LaFollette Committee has stated its readiness to investigate on the spot if any overt action is taken against the constitutional rights of Commonwealth College.

Commonwealth has declared that Reverend Summers and Representative Horton are attacking it with indirectness at unionism in Arkansas. Following the lead of the Arkansas State Federation of Labor and the Arkansas State Federation of Teachers, which are already on record against repressive legislation, Commonwealth College affirms that it will combat all such measures. It urges all progressive and labor groups to stand ready to defend vigilantly American constitutional and democratic rights.

**Commonwealth, a Labor School**

Established 12 years ago, Commonwealth College is today the labor school of the southwest. It is steadfastly devoted to the progressive labor and farm movements and organizations. It aids the unions in these two most vital fields of American advancement by training students in the subjects they need for active service among workers and farmers throughout the land.

The courses taught include Labor Orientation, Labor History, Farm Problems, Political Economy, Current Events, Trade Union Problems and Tactics, World Imperialism, Graphic Arts, Typing, and Labor Journalism.

Support comes to the College treasury by check.
Winter Quarter Starts Off
In Strong Collective Spirit

COMMONWEALTH's winter quarter got
under way on scheduled time with a
strong spirit for collective study and work
animating students and teachers.

Years of hard work in factory, office and
on the farms have taught the eager group of
students the importance of a
strong labor movement. All want to learn how to
play a part in this growing movement, to
equip themselves with facts and theory.

Though the enrollment is smaller than
the average enrollment of forty, each class
has its necessary quota. The Orientation
course, from whose 'witness
for present day problems, is a class for
all the students. Each student chose a field
of work for his second course: Trade Union
Problems, Farm Organization, or Labor
Journalism. The third choice of course
might be theoretical or practical Political
Economy, Imperialism, or Public Speaking,
Graphic Arts. Each class has already elected
a class delegate to serve on a class-committee.
The duty of this committee is to present
student opinion for the improvement of teaching methods and curriculum.

Students Elect Officers

During the second week of school the
students elected officers and committees.
Cullen Ott of Louisiana is president for the
winter quarter, and Margarette Sloan of
Chicago is secretary. Committees were
elected for the following functions: to
govern discipline; to arrange forums; to plan
entertainment; to organize sports activities;
to organize support of the entire
campus body behind labor and progressive
organizations of the state and nation.

[CHAIN OF BANQUETS from p. 1]

of the committee, will soon announce
the date from headquarters at Room 1103, in
East 88th Street, New York City.

When Commonwealth became the target of
savage assault upon education for
workers, these alert sponsors backed up the Col­
lege with a strong telegraphic demand
for the La Follette senatorial committee on
civil liberty that it launch an immediate
federal inquiry. And because "an injury to
one" may well prove "an injury to all," the
committee is utilizing Commonwealth's
threatening situation to reinforce all three
schools. A sound, permanent financial basis
is what it seeks to establish for such institu­
tions. Funds are to be sought from educa­
tional endowments as well as from indi­
vidual or group donors.

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BY STUDENT AND TEACHER LABOR

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Add People's Enemies

- Representative S. A. Goess of
planter-infested Wynne, eastern Ar­
Kansas cotton center, has just crawled
into print again among other haters of
workers' education. This courrier of
King Cotton was the one who flopped
pitifully two years ago in his ef­
fort to join an infamous sedition bill
through the Arkansas legislature, aimed
directly at Commonwealth.

Now he says, "I did my best to close
that place in 1935, and I am going
toredoublemyefforts this year. I be­
lieve that school is a nuisance."

Goess declared he would throw in
with "Baby Solon" Horton in this
second attempt to destroy constitu­
tional rights.

[YEARS OF STRUGGLE from p. 3]

the $50 quarterly tuition fees, scholarships
furnished by unions, and donations from
progressive Americans anxious to see its
program of workers' education expanded.
It has no other source of income.

Gorman Added to Advisory Board

Moral backing is received from such
prominent citizens as these, who constitute
the College's Advisory Board: Osear Amer­
ing, Roger N. Baldwin, Hildur Bern­
stein, John Rosell, George S. Counts, Clin­
ton S. Golden, Francis J. Garman, Carl
Haessler, Alice Hanson, Florence Curtis
Hanson, J. R. S. Hardman, Len Harris,
Donald Henderson, Elizabeth Lawson, E.
C. Lindeman, Grace Lumpkin, Alexander
Micklejohn, Scott Nearing, E. F. Poultet,
Luther Ely Smith, Mark Starr, Odisc L.
Sweden.

The latest addition to this broadly com­
posed board is Francis J. Garman, first
vice-president of the United Textile Work­
ers of America. At the very time when
Commonwealth is obliged to reassert its
educational position and defend its academic
freedom, when reactionary planter and
employer interests in Arkansas threaten
its constitutional rights of existence and
teaching, Garman came forward to add his
strength as a foremost progressive leader
of organized labor to the cause of educa­
tion for workers.

Committee to Aid Labor Colleges

Recently a National Committee for Resi­
dent Labor Colleges was established with
offices in New York City to aid Common­
wealth and the other resident labor schools
-Brookwood College and Highlander Folk
School. Commonwealth also enjoys the ac­
tive support of many other liberal and pro­
gressive groups.

Those uninformcd or prejudiced individ­
uals who thoughtlessly or viciously attack
Commonwealth and seek its shutdown for

[ASK UNION SUPPORT from p. 1]

Rock to establish the right of a non-factional
labor training school to exist, then the
civil liberties needed or enjoyed by all will
be strengthened. And that means wider and
more powerful unions, which alone can im­
prove conditions.

Our right to help each other win trying
struggles for the betterment of labor is also
at stake. Commonwealth is determined to
continue its frequent assistance to Ar­
kansas workers.

Therefore it becomes the concern of
every organized worker, every union and
every local to be ready at the first appear­
ance of any repressive bill in the present
Arkansas legislature to storm that "body
of the people" with resolutions demanding
"hands off the people's constitutional
American rights of freedom to teach and orga­

ize!"

Such protests should be prepared at once
—your next meeting—for quick, effective
use whenever the crucial moment ar­

get that the United States is forging ahead
ward progressive unionism at unprece­
dented speed. They overlook also that the
South has as much part in this great move­
ment for a better America as any other
section. They fail to see that Common­
wealth College is a necessary and appreci­
ated part of such progress, for it supplies
the trained forces without which organized
labor cannot make those advances which
will raise the entire national economy and
welfare.

Defend Commonwealth!

Commonwealth College will carry on its
accepted function with greater fervor than
ever before, because the demand for educa­
tion of workers knows no bounds nor bar­
riers.

Commonwealth issues a warning in which
all progressives will join:

Let no one string barbed wire around our
educational institutions!

With your help we can defeat the attacks:

1. Support our request that the LaFol­
lette Committee investigate threats to aca­
demic freedom in Arkansas.

2. Send letters to the Chamber of Com­
merce in Mena, Arkansas, (with copies to
Reverend L. D. Summers) urging action to
stop Summers' violent attacks and the re­
sionary efforts of the "Citizens Commit­
te" to outlaw Commonwealth.

3. Send protests to "Baby Solon" Hor­
ton, Jonesboro, Arkansas, soliciting
him for his intention to introduce repres­
ive legislation aimed at killing academic
freedom in Arkansas.

4. Contribute to a Fund for the Defense
of Commonwealth College. Send donations
to Charlotte Moskowitz, Secretary-Treasu­
rer, Commonwealth College.

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