Haven Perkins Elected to Chairmanship of Faculty

Courses Will Be Practical, Theoretical, Informational

Haven Perkins, recent addition to the Commonwealth College faculty who has had broad experience in the field of education and also practical organizational experience in the unemployed movement, was elected chairman of the faculty at a recent joint meeting of the faculty and Commonwealth College Association. The faculty chairman is responsible to the Association for the academic work of the school. He works in close conjunction with the director and teachers of the school.

At the meeting in which Perkins was elected chairman the Association and faculty also made final plans for the fall quarter. There are eleven courses falling into four general classifications as follows: Practical: Workers English, Typing, Graphic Methods of Propaganda, Public Speaking, Labor Reporting and Writing; Theoretical: Political Economy I, Political Economy II; Theoretical and Practical: Organization of the Unemployed, Farm Problems and Organization, Trade Union Problems and Organization; Informational: History of the American Labor Movement, and Current Events.

A four-day program, including one day for individual student conferences and registration, preceded the formal opening of classes. A number of lectures were given during this preliminary period to prepare the students for serious and concentrated study. There were talks on the History and Organization of Commonwealth and How to Study. Also talks on outstanding national issues - The War Danger, Trade Union Unity, The Sharecropper Union Movement, The 1936 Election Campaign.

Thirty students from factory and farm are enrolled for full term classes. An analysis showing the composition and geographical origin of the present student body will be carried in the coming issue of the Fortnightly.

We Fight for Peace and a Workers' World!

DICK WHITTEN RESIGNS AS COMMONWEALTH DIRECTOR; STATEMENT URGES AID FOR SCHOOL

Will Devote Full Time to Socialist Party Work

WHITTEN'S STATEMENT

In resigning as Director of Commonwealth College in order to do organizational work for the Socialist Party, I want to urge upon all of the friends and supporters of our school the necessity of increasing their financial and moral aid to the school. The South today is teeming with the indignation of its masses of workers and sharecroppers. Throughout the history of America their conditions have been uniformly worse than that of the workers of any other section. With the present crisis of capitalism in the United States their life has become unbearable.

This discontent is both an opportunity for those who are giving their all for a socialist America, and a danger. The low educational standards of the South and the presence of doubly exploited Negroes give

Andrew Overgaard Heads Course in Labor Problems

Andrew Overgaard, a member of the international Association of Machinists, Lodge 1551, Bridgeport, Connecticut, a veteran in America's trade-union movement and an experienced teacher, is heading the course in Trade Union Problems, and Organization at Commonwealth this fall.

Overgaard joined the International Association of Machinists in 1916 shortly after immigrating from Denmark to the United States. He was active in the formation of the Trade Union Educational League and its educational campaign for the industrial form of union organization. For a time Overgaard was a delegate to the Chicago Federation of Labor. He has been a national organizer among the metal workers. At various times in his active labor career Overgaard has taught workers' classes in the problems of trade unionism.

Skreberg Elected Acting Director by Association

Richard Bahn Whitten, young Socialist of New Orleans, who became Commonwealth's Director a year ago, has resigned from that position in order to give his full time to Socialist Party work. He left for New Orleans at the close of the Southern Anti-War Summer School. Departing with him were his wife, Barbara Whitten, and his wife's mother who had been visiting the Whittens at Commonwealth.

During the period of his directorship, Whitten helped the school to orientate its work toward the South. Last winter he made a tour of the East and North on behalf of the school, and in the spring and summer he attended a number of labor conventions, including the Labor Party conference called by Olson at Chicago, and the All-Southern WPA Conference at Chattanooga.

In saying good-bye to the Commonweathers, Whitten stated that he would continue to assist the school in any way that he could. He asked that the Fortnightly carry his statement, explaining the resignation, and thanking the many friends of the school for their assistance. He urges the friends of Commonwealth to increase their support, financially and otherwise. The South, he says, is teeming with indignation of its masses and offers a tremendous opportunity for workers education. Whitten also issued a farewell greeting in the columns of the Menas Star to the neighbors of Commonwealth.

Skreberg Acting Director

Arthur Skreberg, industrial manager of the school and instructor of farm courses, has been elected by the Commonwealth College Association as temporary acting director. The Association plans to fill the vacancy created by Whitten's resignation in the near future. The school is now negotiating with progressive people prominent in the American labor and trade union movements, seeking a person especially qualified to lead and represent a non-partisan southern labor school.
Let Bosses Fight in Bosses' War, Workers Want Peace!

Industrial Mobilization Plan is Threat to Labor

Isn't there something phoney about a government sending out flocks of doves carrying messages of peace, and at the same time preparing for the conception of workers during the war? Under the Industrial Mobilization Plan, which has already been prepared by our War Department, labor will be forced to produce material on the "Home Front" for big business, or else to move down fellow workers at the battle front. Let the workers, say in the textile industry, go on strike for higher wages and it will be a simple matter to ship the strikers to the front and put guns in their hands.

War calls for patriotic sacrifices. Old age pensions and workmen's compensation will probably go by the board, and big business will eagerly furnish its services without "too much cost" to the government. For years labor has carried on a bitter struggle to get on its feet; now with one stroke of the pen all the gains won at the cost of untold sacrifice will be canceled.

The Industrial Mobilization Plan is a threat to labor in the North and labor in the South. It is a threat to union organization and the practice of real collective bargaining. Labor in the South must be organized now, so that the workers will have means of defending their living standards, and so that they can oppose the scheme of the war-makers.

PRETTY BOY. By William Cunningham. The Vanguard Press. $2.00

The Communists are scrambling for an early chance to read Bill's (William Cunningham's) latest book, PRETTY BOY. The book is a social interpretation of the conditions which started the Oklahoma Farm Boy, Pretty Boy Floyd, on the road to lynchidity. It's, at the same time, an exciting adventure story which undoubtedly temp Hollywood producers.

Because Bill's name enters the stories that are told of the "old days" at Commonwealth, and because he helped to train generations of Commonwealth students for journalism and writing, the Commoners today feel a personal interest in his latest book. No are we disappointed after reading PRETTY BOY.

Bill knows his Oklahoma. He knows the conditions which caused the Oklahoma farm boy to revolt against the "system." Though the revolt took on a primitive expression and solved no one's problems, yet it is symptomatic of a wide spread unrest. The social awareness of the author has prevented the book from being "just another thriller." Bill, the Commoners are awaiting your next. R. K.

The Farmer and War

BY FOUR FARMER-STUDENTS

Unlike the workers of industry, the farmers did have a greater real income during the war. This was the result of the movement of farm people to the industrial cities and the army, causing a shortage of labor and products and bringing a rise in price of farm goods which overstretched the rise in the cost of living. Then too, the farm was as yet comparatively unmechanized. The farmer, however, made the mistake of considering this era of farm prosperity a permanent one. He bought a car, improved his home, bred better and more productive stock, demanded and got better schools and roads. Naturally these things increased his taxes and the cost of day to day living.

When the war ended he found that the price of his farm products began to decline, but on the other hand his taxes remained the same. As the years rolled along the production of the farms was increased by mechanization and the developing of better stock until it caught up with the demands of industry, which placed the farmer in the same position as we in War time workers. A few of these trends were reflected in the national income of farmers and the value of their land. In 1919 the total farm property of the nation had been valued at $78,000,000,000. In 1932 this value was $44,000,000,000. In 1919 the total farm income was $15,000,000,000; by 1932 it was only $5,200,000,000. In 1932 farm commodity prices were at 52 5/10 of the pre-war level, and the things the farmer bought were priced at 110 per cent of the pre-war level. And don't forget that his taxes were increased by all the improvements during the war; in fact, in 1931 taxes absorbed eleven per cent of the total farm income as compared with four per cent in the pre-war years. Is it any wonder we have misery and want, sharecroppers and tenant farmers, in our agricultural regions?

What role will the farmer play in the next war? Already the militarists of America have established the machinery which, when set into motion by legislative action during war hysteria, will wreak all organized labor in the agricultural South and place the farmer and his sons, along with his products, in the hands of the war-makers. The machinery referred to is the Industrial Mobilization Plan. This plan, through its drafting into the army all male citizens between the ages of 18 and 45, would effectively liquidate all farm workers' unions by making any member, particularly any leader, subject to court martial and treasurist if he "fails or neglects fully to perform any duty required of him." The leaders also would be subject to removal to another locality at the will of the "brass hats." Since the plan would place control of all food-stuffs in the hands of the military, any strike could be effectively broken by cutting off the food allowance of all strikers.

It is easy to see that in the next war the farmer will not even have a temporary prosperity, but will on the other hand be pressed even further down the scale of civil- ization as a voiceless slave of capital. It be- hoves us all to get into the drive against war and forestall such a catastrophe.

Fascism Means War, D-extend American Democracy!
Peace Questionnaire Given to Anti-War School Students

Are some questions which were posed to a group of students at the Workers Anti-War Summer School at Commonwealth. Ask them of your friends and start a good discussion going.

Do you think that war is inevitable under capitalism?

Will the abolition of war require a fundamental change in our social and economic system?

Would you refuse to bear arms for the United States under all circumstances?

Would you refuse to bear arms in the case that continental United States is invaded by a foreign power?

Would you bear arms in a war to defend the rights and properties of American citizens abroad?

Would you bear arms if a majority of the people in the United States considered the war just?

Would you bear arms in a war conducted by an oppressed nation for national liberation?

Do you favor the application of collective sanctions against an aggressor nation, through the League of Nations, as a means of preventing war?

Would you support a general industrial strike to halt the participation of the United States in an imperialist war?

Perhaps you would like to know how the students reacted to these questions? Here is some indication of their sentiment. There were nine in the class. All believed that the abolition of war requires a fundamental change in the social and economic system. All were in favor of a general industrial strike to stop imperialist war. Seven were definitely in favor of collective sanctions against an aggressor nation—two were undecided. Eight of the nine stated they would, however, fight in a war to prevent fascism from overturning a democratic government. Five said they would bear arms in a war conducted by an oppressed nation for national liberation. All were opposed to bearing arms in a war to defend the rights and properties of American citizens abroad, in this way definitely showing their united opposition to imperialist excuses for war.

And When I Die Don't Bury Me At All,
Just Hang a Gold Star on the Kitchen Wall

Peace Campaign Trains Workers in War Resistance; Students Write Fortnightly

Challenge
by Bessie Master

Good God, Man, Get Up!
Together show us
Your brawn is mixed with brains.
Wake Up!
Shake the lead from your skull;
Join your bulky arms
With keen awareness,
Show us you mean to live,
Not just exist—
That you'll win a world
Meant for your own.

Forces for Peace
by Monica Williams and Mary Hayes

Mobile is the second largest port on the Gulf. It is a commercial and industrial center and is connected with all parts of the South by rail and water. Paper and lumber mills, cotton and garment factories and other small industries are located at Mobile.

Even with these economic advantages there are a great number of unemployed—about 3,700 persons in Mobile County alone. So far there has been no organized anti-war activity, but the field is ripe for anti-war propaganda. There is a promising organization of the unemployed—the Workers Alliance. Much could be done in this organization by setting up a committee for anti-war education. How this could be done is illustrated by the following comparison: While many unemployed are starving, existing on the average monthly relief of $4.00, the government of the United States appropriates one billion dollars to build battleships and for armament. How much better for the workers were this money spent for a real housing program!

Through the Workers Alliance other labor groups can be reached. The Parent-Teachers Association offers a good field for anti-war activity. Through this organization the homes in each neighborhood could be reached.

The Farmers Union in Baldwin County can also be contacted and, since it is a very active organization, much good work could be done there which could be spread all over the state into the rural sections.

There are still other organizations in Mobile which could be rallied to an anti-war movement, such as the Socialist Party, the Y.W.C.A., the Y.M.C.A., some churches, and the surrounding C.C.C. camps. There is plenty of work to be done!

The Labor Division of the Emergency Peace Campaign is sold on the idea that workers' education is an effective way to approach the war question," said Victor Reuther, teacher at the Southern Workers Anti-War Summer School at Commonwealth and national organizer for the Labor Division of the Emergency Peace Campaign, interviewed for the Fortnightly.

"This is the first time in history an attempt has been made to train workers from the docks, factories, and farms, in the methods of war resistance," he said.

The three week Anti-War Summer School at Commonwealth closed on September 19th. The students have gone back to their jobs newly aware of the great danger of war, and alert with an understanding of how to go about fighting war. Before they left, the students wrote the inside pages of this Fortnightly.

Reuther stated that the series of anti-war schools held throughout the country this summer did not contain, in themselves, their significance. Equally significant is the fact that the national office of the Labor Division of the Emergency Peace Campaign will keep in touch with every student from these schools. Every student becomes in this way a contact man in the field to assist with the anti-war drive.

Reuther said he was impressed with the type of student at the Commonwealth Anti-War School, and was pleased that they came from strategic southern war industries—shipping, textile, and farming. Because of its geographic location, Reuther said, a southern school had to forego the advantage, possible in the North, of hearing outstanding peace speakers. Reuther expressed hope that the program could be continued another year.

Be Men—Not Cannon fodder!

Hot Springs Student Stresses Use of Personal Propaganda

George Schardt, anti-war student from Hot Springs, Ark., says, "Times are going to be very, very serious, believe it or not. Some of us can see, and others could if some one would help them."

In the fight against war, Schardt stresses the importance of personal propaganda, and getting people to read. He says, "Get a group of comrades to help furnish pamphlets, papers, magazines of working-class interest. Stamp them and start a circulating library. Keep in touch with your readers. Question them as to what they think about the articles, increase your nucleus as fast as you can."
Henry Black, Commonwealth librarian, who has been directing the compilation of bibliographies that will help the labor student, reports that several projects are nearing completion. Labor library circles of the country are cooperating on some of the projects. Marvin Sanford, assistant to Black, made a 5,000 mile trip locating source material in order to complete one of the bibliographies.

A list of materials titled "A Contribution to a Bibliography of Source Material Pertaining to the Split in the Socialist Party and the Founding of the Communist Party 1917-1924," has just been completed by Sanford. The list includes articles in various Communist and Socialist papers. It covers original documents, theses, criticisms, biographies, and is the first list of its kind. Widely scattered material, located in the larger libraries and in private hands, is included. There are 600 items covering between 50 and 90 typewritten pages.

The list, Black says, will probably be published by photographic films, which is a new process cheaper for smaller editions. There are tentative plans to place copies in eight or ten of the larger libraries in key cities. There will be two or three copies to loan for those who are without film projectors. The list will probably be filmed by Science Service in Washington, D.C.

Sanford did the work over a period of a year. His specialized knowledge in the field of labor journalism and his intimate acquaintance with the period covered by the list, especially qualified him for the work to be done.

Another bibliography under way will cover The Radical Approach to the Negro Problem. The student of the Negro question will have the benefit of a fairly complete list of material written by racial parties. The list will be ready by the end of this year, Black says. Also a check list of American Socialist, Communist, and Foulsham papers would be available by the end of the year.

Ten people over the country are at present cooperating with the Commonwealth Library on a project to compile a bibliography on Marxian which it is intended shall be available sometime in the spring of 1937. The bibliography will cover primarily the economic material, some relating to Marxian philosophy, some on criticism of art and literature. Material in English, French, German and other languages will be included, covering books, pamphlets and magazine articles. This will be an original contribution since at present no such lists are available in English.

Henry Black, Commonwealth's librarian, will be glad to answer any inquiries regarding the various projects now in the process of completion.

Valuable Bibliographies Will Be Available Soon

Repairs Being Made for Fall Quarter

Under the able direction of Ralph Field and Matt Mackie much needed construction and repair is making Commonwealth shipsshape for the fall quarter. A combination water-tower-dormitory-cooling-room is nearing completion. Roofs, porches, stoves are being placed in conditions for winter weather.

The four-story water tower, Ralph Field's pet project now under construction, is the marvel of all new arrivals and its growth is watched enthusiastically by every resident. The base walls, built of boulders, are two feet thick—twelve feet on a side. The ground floor room contains a large tank and two cold water vats. This is the cooling room. The next two stories provide ample living quarters. The third contains a galvanized tank, capacity 1600 gallons. There are plans to deepen the well ten feet, after which, it is thought, Commonwealth will have an abundant supply of good water. The total cost of the water tower and tank came to $180; but since two additional living quarters are provided, this is considered very reasonable.

Other jobs of fall repair include laying a new kitchen floor and installing a newly purchased kitchen range; installing six heaters to replace those which are worn out; purchasing roofing tar and applying it to weak places on the roofs; removing the rotten floor boards from dormitory porches and replacing them with pine lumber; overhauling the class room furnace.

Ralph Field and Matt Mackie are considered invaluable for their work of keeping college buildings and equipment in repair and for new construction. Both have been at the school about two years. Both received their training for work in a school which considered durability more important than haste. They are not only interested in good work, but also in cutting down cash expenditure. Tools are well cared for. It is estimated many dollars have been saved because of their careful guardianship of materials.

"Women In Steel"—First Ladies Auxiliary Bulletin

The steel organizing campaign is rolling up like a mighty wave—a wave which is destined to smash the tyranny of the capitalist. The campaigns in various states are gathering new forces. A late and significant new weapon has been added to the arsenal of the Cudahy District campaign. It is the four-page bulletin published by the Women's Auxiliary of the Amalgamated Association of Iron, Steel, and Tin Workers—the first ladies auxiliary bulletin in the steel drive.

The bulletin, Women In Steel, is interesting to read from the first to the last page. It tells the women in steel that theirs is the task of getting their husbands into the union—"with or without rolling pins," preferably without.

Anyone wishing to know about how to organize a women's auxiliary can write to any union hall of the Amalgamated Association of Iron, Steel, and Tin Workers—or to Mrs. Minnie Ingersoll, Steel Workers Organizing Committee, Union Hall Bank Building, 3701 Main Street, Indiana Harbor, Indiana.

Workers of the World,
Don't Fight Your Brothers!

PRINTED AT COMMONWEALTH BY STUDENT AND TEACHERS LABOR
Published twice a month at Mena, Arkansas, by Commonwealth College. Subscription one dollar a year. Entered as second class matter January 30, 1920, at the post office at Mena, Arkansas, under the act of August 24, 1912.

[WHITTEN from page one] the fascist trends a fertile field upon which to implant their hideous movement. The long movement, with its Gerald K. Smith carrying on, Scottsboro, Tampa, Herndon Talmadge, are the danger signals. With the ascendency of the progressive forces in the American labor movement lies our hope. The Committee for Industrial Organization must extend its work into the South. With the rise of the Southern Tenant Farmers Union and the Sharecroppers Union, there too lies our hope.

It is with these latter forces that Commonwealth College is working. Giving training to those who desperately need it to improve their work in spreading unionism. In the last year we have given twelve scholarships to members of the sharecroppers' unions. This must be expanded to include the oil workers of Texas and Oklahoma, the steel workers of Alabama, the coal miners of Arkansas, and the maritime workers of the Gulf. It requires money.

During the past year we have immensurably improved the physical plant of Commonwealth College. The morale is higher among the student body than ever before. The more that we penetrate the solid ranks of the southern workers the more serious is their problem.

In leaving, Barbara and I want to express our deep appreciation of the aid that you have all given to Commonwealth College and to us personally. We want to pay tribute to the staff of Commonwealth College, to its devotion, its competency and the fine spirit with which it carries on its work in the workers' education for those who need it most the workers and sharecroppers of the South.

Richard Baird Whitten

October 1, 1936

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