Do You Know a Printer?

Commonwealth College needs a printer with experience in hand composition, make-up and press work. Applicant must be able to begin work by April 1.

Full maintenance and free tuition are offered in return for 20 hours work per week. Send references and application to the FORTNIGHTLY NOW!

Harness Now for Spring Plowing into Education

Prospective Commonweathers—all who look forward to getting their practical training in the labor and farm movements during the spring quarter—should register at once by writing for enrollment application blanks and returning them immediately.

Students should make application well beforehand to allow sufficient time for necessary details of registration. Every newcomer, for instance, is expected to secure at least two references, preferably from members of bona fide labor unions or farm organizations to which he may belong or hold acquaintance. These credentials—letters of endorsement—should be forwarded at approximately the time the student’s application is sent here.

March 29th—the opening date of next quarter—is so close at hand that all who definitely intend to come by then will do well to communicate right away with Charlotte Moskowitz, secretary-treasurer. She will reply immediately to any questions or furnish any desired information, including copies of Commonwealth’s new 1937 catalogue just off the press.

Phone Service Restored

Phone service, which has been sorely lacking since the severe January ice storm leveled several telephone poles, is now restored between Mena,ロック and the Commonwealth campus. Ray Koch and Vernon Stevens have completed repairs on the entire span between the college and Tafflin highway, restoring every joint for years to come and installing reliable sturdy poles. An extra phone has been put in the office building for time-saving convenience.

LIBERAL SOLONS SMASH GAG BILL 46-19 AS PROTESTS PAVE VICTORY!

ARKANSAS is going to keep its academic freedom intact! The overwhelming 46 to 19 defeat given the liberty-smashing “anti-education” bill by progressives in the state house of representatives was greeted with this explanation at Commonwealth.

Although the bill pretended to merely prohibit the study of communism, it was openly sponsored in a second reactionary drive to pave the way for avoiding labor training school. Friends of the school near and far, as well as students and teachers on the campus, recalled cheerfully that the first attempt at suppression, a hostile secret legislative inquiry, collapsed just two years ago toward the month. Ever since Bernard MacFadden’s fascistic “button” Liberty magazine viciously slandered Commonwealth last December because of the school’s consistent role in the southern progressive labor movement, sporadic opposition cropped out and finally developed into an unpopular campaign for this second ill-fated gag bill. Then liberal America became aroused.

Nationwide protest at once began to pour in upon the Little Rock capitol, defending academic freedom generally in Arkansas and the school particularly. Labor and liberal groups and leaders sent heaps of protests to the solons until the moment of decisive victory on February 19.

On that date several representatives attacked the bill in the house floor. Rep. A. E. Weir of our own Polk County described the bill as “ridiculous” and said that, in spite of attacks made by certain people in Polk County against the college, the Commonwealth people were “good neighbors and mind their own business.”

“I’ve had a bad taste in my mouth ever since Arkansas passed its anti-evolution law,” said Rep. W. H. Abington of White County, “and I’ll have another bad taste in my mouth if you pass this bill.” He scored those who raise the “red scare,” seeking to repress freedom of speech, and then declared that Communists had not “done their best to save the world, as though they were going to overthrow the government by violence.”

“If old King George had been familiar with the term (communism), don’t you think he would have called Thomas Jefferson a Communist?” asked one representative.

“I think so,” replied Abington, “President Roosevelt has been called one.”

Meanwhile “Friends of Commonwealth” committees in several cities and other staunch supporters of workers’ education helped the college fight the legislative attack embodied in House Bill 148. This dangerous measure was encouraged by page four
AND THIS IS WHAT THEY SAY

How do young workers and farmers “take” their courses at Commonwealth? What do they, in their own opinion, get out of their studies here? And what can they do with it when they return to the fields and factories? The following estimates are the personal and representative views of members of the Labor Journalism class:

Graphic Technique

Students in the Graphic Technique class are developing into good technicians as the quarter approaches its close. Mimeographing, stencil cutting, speedball lettering, linoleum block cutting have become familiar operations to several young farmers of the southwest.

Fingers accustomed to picking cotton have been taught to guide a stylus and a speedball pen. Rough hands used to gripping plow handles are able to construct a delicate mimeograph.

Instructor Bill Stenell has spent a good deal of time giving instruction on finer points of technique to individual students. He also makes it a point to acquaint the students with money-saving devices that greatly reduce the cost of issuing material.

Various methods of issuing shop papers and leaflets have been practiced in classes. These will all prove valuable to farm and labor organizational work when the students return to their homes.

— Morris J. Motz, New York

Labor History

History from the workers’ point of view is quite different from the stories about great battles, the aristocracy, eloquent statesmen and other great men who are said to have “made” history. The Labor History course at Commonwealth covers the record of man’s struggle against exploitation, oppression and his organized efforts to achieve his final goal—economic and political emancipation.

In this course we get a realistic picture of such events as the Homestead steel strike, the Ludlow massacre in Colorado, the Sacco-Vanzetti frame-up and their significance in the labor movement. The history and background of such organizations as the American Federation of Labor and the old Knights of Labor are given careful attention by the instructor, Martin Sanford.

We discover that the building of “our America” was accomplished in a large part under forced labor, low wages, and long working hours. The open shop was the order of the day and attempts at organization often laid the workers open to brutal and violent attacks. We, as American workers, realize that we have great traditions which must be carried on.

— Fred Rehmer, Colorado

Public Speaking

Public Speaking is one of the most interesting courses offered at Commonwealth College. Arcus Redlich is the instructor.

At the beginning of the quarter, after the class was given the essentials of public speaking, each member was allowed five minutes for talking. The speaker was allowed to choose any topic he pleased.

For quite a while some of us were very shy and nervous when our time would come for speaking, but we soon overcame this obstacle and progress was gained.

Our length of time for speaking grew until now, toward the end of the quarter, we are capable of delivering 30 minute talks on many phases of the labor movement.

The essentials of public speaking are the presentation, content, posture of the body and the easiness with which a talk should be given.

The class feels that public speaking is an essential factor in the progress of the labor movement.

In trade union meetings and public gatherings a person capable of delivering a talk freely, forcefully for progress, can accomplish a great deal.

— Cullen Ott, Louisiana

Labor Journalism

Labor publicity is the core of the Journalism course taught at Commonwealth College. Arthur McEwen, journalism instructor, has written for labor papers several years and is quite familiar with the methods used.

Students practice various techniques of writing for effective publicity work in all phases of the labor movement. While a story might not be accepted by one newspaper it would be printed by another because labor papers have different requirements than those of the capitalist press.

In the closing weeks of the quarter the students are going to do actual newspaper work. “The Scoop” will be written, edited and published as a campus paper by the young journalists in direct cooperation with the graphic arts class.

—Hillquilt Lynch, Arkansas

Typing

The Typing class at Commonwealth College is instructed by Charlotte Moskowitz and based upon the new Rational Touch System. The people of today are demanding that writing be in type, for longhand takes too much time and effort to decipher. All correspondence for newspapers must be typed or written or will be discarded.

Some of us are typing 20 words a minute with two months practice. Of course, typing is very monotonous to learn, but when you once learn the keyboard, speed comes by continuous practice.

Most of the students expect to do a great deal of correspondence with the labor press and, therefore, we must be able to type our material with perfect legibility.

After a person learns to type well, he can organize his writing better and do it faster.

Typing should be of value to everyone in or around the labor movement.

— Cullen Ott, Louisiana

Imperialism

How does the humble banana dominate the life of the Central American peoples? What part does rubber play in the establishment of colonial empires? Does the scramble for control of the oil supply of the world lead to war? These are some of the problems analyzed by the class in Imperialism this quarter.

Taught by Winifred Chappell, nationally known Methodist social worker, the class has covered a tremendous amount of material on the history and the reasons for the development of imperialistic tendencies on the part of the major nations of the world.

Huge financial and industrial interests have the controlling voice in the economic affairs of the masses of the people. Colonial governments are but puppets in the hands of the imperialists. The struggle between imperialist groups for new markets leads to physical combat. All of these are points forcefully brought to the attention of the...
A Beatitude for Commonwealth

The Following Editorial Appeared in the St. Louis Post-Dispatch of Tuesday, February 16, 1937, Under the Above Title

O N SECOND thought, Commonwealth College, which plugged along for 11 years at a formidable task without anybody taking much notice of it, may find grounds for self-congratulation in attacks made on it in the last two years and coming to a head now in the Arkansas legislature. The House Committee on Education has approved a bill to provide one to five years in prison for anyone teaching "communism" (with "violence," of course) or "free love."

Neither appears in the Commonwealth curriculum. A legislative committee in 1935 was unable to find any "advocacy of violence." Neither violence nor "free love" is a plausible element in the function of a pioneer labor college. That is the infusing of a leaven in the workers' movement with fundamental information to place in fair perspective the bread-and-butter facts which most workers know too well. It is an objective compared to the modern imperialist state. The course is given in a series of lectures in which a number of instructors participate, each in their specific field, under direction of Haven Perkins.

FARM PROBLEMS

The course in Farm Problems at Commonwealth College has human interest. Students come from all parts of the country to study it. Some who come from large eastern cities to study in other fields soon realize the value of this class.

Art Skreberg, the instructor, does research work for study material. He uses farm papers, magazines, and pamphlets for most of the course, and this makes it a current study of farm life. A close observation is maintained of the tenant farmers and sharecroppers in the South. One purpose of the class is to learn how to remedy the deplorable conditions among these small tillers of the soil.

The farm problems outlined stress the organization of farm unions as a basic point for study. It includes the origin, membership, structure, and leadership of farm union organizations today.

-Hillquit Lynch, Arkansas

POLITICAL ECONOMY

Political Economy is one course which practically all students at Commonwealth study. Its special appeal lies in treatment of basic economic causes and effects which daily shape our lives to such a great degree.

Ingrained in all of us is the desire to get to the root of events which bewilder us and play havoc with our lives.

Thus we are greatly interested to learn that the cause of social change is not determined by exploring the eternal laws of "truth" and "justice," but by a careful study of the manner in which man makes his living. Also, we observe existence as a constant process of change and growth. We study concrete things through their birth, growth, and decline. We further learn that material conditions and not the change of ideas determine social institutions of man.

What is value? What type of production are present day commodities produced under? What is the correct definition of a machine? A tool? We are sure that our answers would interest you tremendously.

Henry Black instructs the class.

-Fred Rehmer, Colorado

BOOKS NEEDED BY LIBRARY

Eyes on Japan, by V. A. Yakhtontoff.
A World I Never Made, by James T. Farrell.
The Future of Liberty, by George Soule.
Days of Wrath, by Andre Malraux.
History of the Haymarket Affair, by Henry David.
From Hegel to Marx, by Sidney Hook.
Theory and Practice of Socialism, by John Strachey.
Sit-Down

A great deal is being spoken and written lately about the “sit-down” strike. The employers, especially those representing monopoly and traditionally open-shop capitalism, are shocked at this new “impo
dence” of their wage slaves. They describe the sit-down as a threat to the pillars of society (meaning a threat to private property and the right of the employer to run his business as he chooses). Spokesmen for the workers have answered this indictment pointing out that “pri
date property” (more correctly, “corporate property”) has an obligation to its tens of thousands of workers, and that the rights of the employer are necessarily restricted by the fundamental right of workers to life, liberty and security for their families.

Why do the workers use the sit-down strike? Simply because they must to cope successfully with modern corporate capitalism and to win those elementary human rights necessary for a self-respecting human being. Simply because if they didn’t “fight to win” in their struggle with the modern heartless corporation, they and their fami
lies would become broken, soulless wretches and unfit citizens of a democratic nation.

At a time when the various “capitalist dynasties” are raising the question of the legality of the sit-down, it would be well for progressive citizens to remember that the sit-down is merely a form of picketing and a safer and saner method of picketing than lining up at the factory gates to become the convenient victims of police and vigilante brutality. Also the workers are in a good position to see that the employer does no damage to plant and machinery, as is the employers’ custom when desiring to frame strikers.

It is important for progressives to re
member that in a capitalist heaven strikes would also be illegal, and all picketing, and boycotts; and unions themselves would be declared “conspiracies in restraint of trade.”

It is even more important to remember that the right of workers to organize, to strike, to picket are elementary human rights which no civic body can deprive of. Neither militarist states nor fascist states have been successful in destroying the trade union movement. Those demo
cratic countries which recognize collective bargaining must reconsider also all con
structive means necessary for the workers to enforce union conditions. The sit-down has proven to be such a constructive weapon which will enable the workers to street union conditions from corporate industry.

Speaking of illegality, this would be an appropriate time for all labor and all pro
gressives to raise the question of the “le
gality” on the part of employers in con
structing their factories into armed fortresses. What is the purpose of all the armaments: black jacks, gas bombs, machine guns, steel

doors, electrically charged barbed wire
fences—now considered “necessary indus
trial equipment” by the largest employers?

It is not an insult to the manhood of every worker—intimidation of the worst sort! Should not these very employers be ar
ranged in court on charges of “threaten
ning to murder” their employees, and for “usurping the police powers” of the state? The sit-down strikers are well justified in raising these questions for the considera
tion of the LaFollette Committee on Civil Liberties.

—RAY KUCI

[Liberal Solons Smash Bill from p. 1]

The Joe Jones Mural

ART WITH EVERY MEAL—Detail of the Joe Jones mural of Life in the South which graces an alcove of the Commons, a campus combination of dining hall and auditorium.

As the college sent appreciative letters to the 36 for their effective part in a crowning
victorious advance for academic freedom, civil liberty and workers’ education in the South, the following official statement was made by Charlotte Moskowitz:

“This is what Arkansans needs more than anything else in 1937.

The splendid protest voiced against the bill by the state and nation should show those forces of reaction, which would keep the people ignorant and unorganized, that progress is on the march, that Commonwealth is a valuable institution and that Arkan
sas is to remain a healthy democratic state.”

Active support of the splendid progressive kind that defeated the anti-sedition bill—surged from all quarters for passage of these two bills now pending in the Ar
kansas legislature.

The Coleman-Coats bill to repeal the anti-evolution law which now forbids teaching in the state’s public schools the principles of man’s scientifically-established origin from lower animals.

S. 8. No. 206: To repeal the poll tax law whereby every Arkansas citizen is still re
quired to pay $1 yearly for his right to vote.