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Author

Furmanovsky, Michael

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“Cocktail Picket Party”

The Hollywood *Citizen—News* Strike,
The Newspaper Guild, and the Popularization of the
“Democratic Front” in Los Angeles

Michael Furmanovsky

The ten-week strike of Hollywood *Citizen-News* editorial workers in the spring and summer of 1938 left an indelible mark on the history of Los Angeles labor. Almost unmatched in the city's history for the large size and glamorous composition of its picket lines, the strike's transformation into a local “cause célèbre” owed much to the input of the Communist Party of Los Angeles (CPLA) and its widely diffused allies. While the Communists were not responsible for calling the walkout in May 1938, the subsequent development of the strike into a small-scale symbol of the potential inherent in liberal-labor-left unity was largely attributable to the CPLA's carefully planned strategy, which attempted to fulfill the goals set by the American Communist Party during the “Democratic Front” period (1938-39); namely, to mobilize the broadest possible network of pro-Roosevelt groups and individuals, integrated with the full complement of Party-led organizations. These would range during the *Citizen-News* strike from CIO unions and liberal assemblymen, to fellow-travelling Hollywood celebrities and Communist affiliated anti-fascist organizations.¹

The Hollywood *Citizen-News* strike was far from an unqualified success either for the strikers or for the broader political movement envisaged by the Communist Party in 1938-39, nevertheless it became a rallying point for those on the Communist and non-Communist left who looked to the New Deal and the CIO as the twin vehicles for a real political transformation and realignment in the United States. The nationwide “democratic

Michael Furmanovsky completed his M.A. at UCLA and is currently working on his Ph.D. dissertation at UCLA on the Communist Party of Los Angeles during the Depression.

front" coalition of New Deal Democrats, trade unions, farmers, anti-fascists, and enlightened middle-class elements proposed by the American Communist Party in March 1938, represented a broadening of the earlier "popular front" promulgated by the Communist International in 1935 as a response to the consolidation of fascism in Germany. The shift in emphasis also represented a recognition by the Communist Party of the United States (CPUSA) that it was "not yet possible to organize this broad mass movement into a new party." The more loosely structured democratic front was to be directed at three principal targets: first the growing domestic fascist movement represented by the "Radio Priest" Father Coughlin, the Silver Shirts, and the Nazi American Bund; second, the isolationist movement based primarily in the mid-western agricultural states; and third, the anti-Communist and implicitly anti-New Deal Special Committee on Un-American Activities, formed in Congress by the conservative Texas Democrat Martin Dies. Once these groups were defeated or neutralized, argued Clarence Hathaway of the Communist *Daily Worker*, "the obstacles that stand in the way of the People's Front, of a Farmer Labor Party," would be broken down.²

While the democratic front, as defined by the CPUSA, was never fully realized anywhere in the United States, broad-based coalitions, including public and non-public Communists, did meet with considerable success in several mid-western and western states, among them California. Emerging from the ruins of Upton Sinclair's "End Poverty in California" (EPIC) movement, the coalition achieved little in Los Angeles until the Communist Party, during the first years of the popular front (1935-1936), moved to discard its earlier sectarianism and dogmatism. During these transitory years, the Party found support in the mainstream of the American manufacturing industry, playing a major role in the organization of the first CIO unions in the city. Outside of heavy industry and maritime trades, its main concerns were the unemployed, the fragile agricultural unions, the WPA projects, and the newly-formed motion picture studio unions. These priorities and limited resources, however, precluded Party involvement in the organization of white collar and professional unions such as the Newspaper Guild, a craft union of newspaper editorial workers that emerged, after several false starts, in 1936.³

Working conditions and wages in Los Angeles' newspaper industry during the early years of the Depression were among the worst in the country. In addition to repeated layoffs, the Depression led publishers to institute several wage cuts for both white collar editorial, and blue collar typographical workers. In 1933, white collar reporters on the two local Hearst papers received three successive ten percent cuts. Blue collar unionized typographical employees, however, kept their reduction to only seven and a half percent, with those laid off receiving a week's pay for every six

months of service on the paper. On the Los Angeles *Record*, a number of experienced reporters, earning fifty to sixty dollars weekly, were fired and replaced by college students who were subsequently paid ten to fifteen dollars. Those remaining found themselves borrowing money towards payday from their blue collar colleagues--a sobering experience.⁴

Despite such desperate conditions, no serious attempt was made to form a local branch of the small New York-based American Newspaper Guild (ANG) until September 1936. Initial meetings of what became the Los Angeles Newspaper Guild (LANG) were held in the offices of the *United Progressive News*, a small radical offshoot of the EPIC movement, whose headquarters had become a meeting place for a variety of radicals, liberals, utopians, and political nonconformists. Groundwork for the practical organization of the union was laid by Bill Kaddish, a free-lance reporter associated with the *United Progressive News*, and Roger Johnson, a young employee of the liberal *Hollywood Citizen-News*, who became the Guild's first president. Secrecy during the early organization of the union was essential, according to Johnson, "because the Wagner Labor Relations Act . . . had not been tested. If we were to be fired for union activity it was not certain the federal law would afford protection."⁵

The early membership of the LANG was concentrated in the *Daily News* and *Evening News* (both owned by publisher Manchester Boddy), the *Hollywood Citizen-News*, the *United Progressive News*, and the WPA Writers Project. Its leading figures were liberal and left-wing Democrats, committed to unionism and to Roosevelt's 'second' New Deal.⁶ Emerging publicly in October 1936, the union adopted a policy of withholding the names of any Hearst and Chandler (*Los Angeles Time*) employees recruited; both publishers having openly opposed and red-baited the American Newspaper Guild since its formation in 1933.⁷ For its part, the ANG was reluctant to issue a charter to the LANG, fearing the power of the city's open shop tradition, and perhaps expecting the fragile union to collapse, as had earlier attempts in 1931 and 1935.⁸ In late October, however, the liberal publisher of the *Citizen-News*, Judge Harlan Palmer, gave permission to Johnson, a personal friend, to broadcast from his office desk, a statement on the aims of the union, over radio station KMTR. A week later the Guild issued a two-page mimeographed paper, the *Los Angeles Newspaper Guild News*, giving details of a meeting held with Howard Hill of the Northern California Guild, and Kenneth Thompson, president of the newly-formed Screen Actors' Guild.⁹

By December the Guild had signed up almost one hundred new members. It was probably this strength that prompted four of the city's five metropolitan dailies to announce pay increases for editorial workers. Although the increases included certain provisions designed to create dissension and competition by restricting raises to those with "five years

experience on Los Angeles Metropolitan dailies," the Guild continued to grow and on January 9, 1937, Johnson accepted a charter from ANG president Heywood Broun.¹⁰ Shortly thereafter Judge Palmer, following the lead of the Hearst and Boddy papers, agreed to meet with LANG representatives, and after expressing some sympathy with the union's grievances, announced wage increases of twenty to thirty percent.¹¹ Wages at the *Citizen-News* continued to lag behind those of the larger dailies, but this was attributed to the smaller circulation of the paper, which primarily catered to Hollywood's educated and liberal elite and generally shunned sensationalism.

Known as a "liberal" for his support of the New Deal, Palmer was in fact more of a traditional "Progressive" or "reformer," concerned above all with clean and efficient government. In 1911, while still a young man, he purchased the weekly *Hollywood Citizen*. Four years later he was elected a Justice of the Peace, a position he held until 1921 when his paper became a daily. In the early years of the Depression Palmer merged his paper with the *Hollywood News* to form the *Hollywood Citizen-News*, and, as editor, devoted many of his editorials to attacks on the corrupt city administration of Mayor Frank Shaw. The latter, he frequently asserted, gave protection to prostitution and gambling syndicates. The high moral tone of his editorials earned Palmer a reputation among his opponents as a "blue-nose" and "longhair," and in fact, he failed to win the approval of most liberal Democrats until his paper's general endorsement of the New Deal in 1936. In this year Palmer ran for district attorney and received the active support of the generally conservative "clean government" forces as well as a small number of liberals.¹² Following the primaries, however, he received additional organizational support from the EPIC movement, the Communist Party and certain left-wing trade unions, all of whom had good reason to oppose the reactionary anti-union incumbent Buron Fitts. While Fitts, with financial backing from the *Los Angeles Times*, was able to eventually defeat Palmer, the election did much to polarize the political landscape in Los Angeles and also helped elevate the *Citizen-News* editor to the position of a leading spokesman for the broad principles of the New Deal.¹³

Because the Guild expected few problems in future contract negotiations with Palmer, a decision was made in early 1937 to focus its growing strength on the two large Hearst papers in Los Angeles. This decision coincided with the new national policy of the ANG which increasingly identified Hearst as the arch enemy of newspaper unionism.¹⁴ Early organization on Hearst's Los Angeles *Examiner* and *Herald and Express* occurred as the CIO's militant brand of industrial unionism, and the concurrent entrance of the Communist Party entered into leadership positions in several of the new unions. The Party was particularly successful in the

ANG, and by the middle of the year had obtained effective control of the seven thousand member union. With their strength in the large New York locals, the Communists and their allies were able to launch a successful campaign to withdraw from the AFL and affiliate with the CIO. The decision to join the CIO and to begin organization of non-editorial employees, both supported by president Heywood Broun and other non-Communist leftists, was taken by a vote of two to one at the ANG national convention in June 1937. Resolutions on the need for independent political action and support for loyalist Spain, both favored by the Communist Party, won by almost identical margins.¹⁵

For several months in early and mid-1937, LANG sent delegates to both AFL and CIO labor councils in Los Angeles. A growing feeling of alienation with the AFL's conservatism gained momentum in March, when the AFL's machine-controlled Central Labor Council failed to support a CIO sitdown strike at the Douglas Aircraft plant, in which 342 strikers were arrested.¹⁶ In addition, the Communist Party of Los Angeles, now active in the new CIO unions, began to take a greater interest in the Guild, and in the following months successfully recruited a number of key union officials and activists.¹⁷ Although the Party group or "faction" in fact quietly supported president Johnson, he remained unaware of their growing influence. He continued, however, to hold at least formal control of the union, and in early 1937 played a major role in the secret and highly effective organization of Guild units on the two Hearst papers. By May 1937, when negotiations with the management of the *Herald* began, the Guild had secured an impressive one hundred percent organization of the paper's editorial employees. Negotiations were then suspended for two months while the ANG's executive board deliberated on a national policy for the entire Hearst press. However, following the convention decision to affiliate with the CIO and begin organization on industrial union lines, local units of the international were instructed to immediately sign up circulation, commercial and other non-editorial workers.¹⁸ Before negotiations with the *Herald* could resume, LANG, on instructions from AFL president William Green, was formally suspended from the city's Central Labor Council.¹⁹

Impressed with the growing determination and militancy of the Los Angeles local, and conscious of the role of the *Herald* as the largest circulation paper in the West, the ANG executive board instructed its experienced west coast director, Morgan Hull, to coordinate Guild negotiations with management.²⁰ Hull, a former Los Angeles journalist, had been fired from the Los Angeles *Record* in 1933. A year later he joined the Communist Party and became an organizer for the young ANG. In 1937 he was assigned to coordinate tactics in the Seattle *Post-Intelligencer* strike, the first newspaper strike in the West. Hull's influence in the

Herald negotiations, combined with his undoubted personal charisma and the intransigence of management, were important factors in radicalizing the paper's employees and other Guild activists. The most prominent of these was Philip "Slim" Connelly, generally regarded as the most promising rewrite man in the city. An imposing six feet two inches tall and three hundred pounds, Connelly was a practising Catholic who had been known to disparage radicals and unions while covering strikes for the paper. Although he subsequently became active in the organization of the *Herald* unit, Connelly strongly opposed affiliation with the CIO when it was first proposed in 1937. Later in the year, however, he underwent something of a political transformation, and in January 1938 he was elected president of the Guild. Sometime during this period, he was recruited by Hull into the Communist Party, emerging in mid-1938 as a leading spokesman for the CIO and the democratic front.²¹

Hull was aided in the lengthy negotiations with the *Herald* by a relatively experienced group of Guild members, and by the union's unpaid attorney, Carey McWilliams, a non-Communist supporter of the democratic front. A compromise agreement was finally reached on November 8, 1937, granting wage increases, a guaranteed five-day, forty-hour week, dismissal indemnity for employees with six months service, and a minimum salary of \$25 a week.²² Celebrations were tempered, however, by the news of a contract signed between the management of Hearst's *Examiner* and a new rival "AFL" union organized by Central Labor Council secretary, J. W. Buzzell. Buzzell, an old line AFL leader with a passionate hatred for the CIO, the Communist Party, and all those espousing industrial unionism, had organized the so-called American Federation of Newswriters and Reporters, Local 1, with the open support of the management. The AFL union, according to the LANG, had ordered *Examiner* employees to join the union or risk forfeiting their jobs. Largely because the management had made clear its unwillingness to recognize the Guild, Buzzell was able to persuade sufficient numbers of the paper's ninety employees to join what was virtually a company union, and to gain temporary certification of the union, despite the fact the LANG had, in September, claimed ninety percent affiliation to the Guild.²³

Buzzell's calculated attempt to split the LANG ultimately backfired, for as the Guild accurately pointed out, the AFL had never before shown any interest in newspaper workers. Buzzell's maneuver, according to Roger Johnson, "demonstrated to Guildsmen elsewhere that their strength lay with the Guild" and that the LANG clearly belonged in the CIO.²⁴ For the small but influential Communist unit in the Guild, the *Examiner* and *Herald* negotiations had also demonstrated the possibility of moving the rank and file of the Guild into the larger coalition of left-led liberals and

reformers which the Party now hoped would become the basis for a mass anti-fascist, labor oriented bloc within the state Democratic Party.

Like many new Communist recruits during this period, the Communists in the LANG faction consisted primarily of trade unionists who would never have considered joining the Party in an earlier era. For them the Party was simply the most militant and dedicated force in the fight for industrial unionism and against the city's powerful open shop organization. Thus, for example, Urcel Daniel, secretary of the Guild, joined the Party in mid-1937 because "it seemed to me that they were the hardest working members of unions, and at the time... they seemed to be the only ones who were doing anything to improve the conditions of people who were suffering from the Depression."²⁵

These new recruits differed too from most of the pre-popular front Communists in their social and ethnic backgrounds. Where many of the latter were first or second generation East European Jews, often with little higher education, the Communist unit of the LANG was made up of American born men and women from Protestant or Catholic backgrounds, several of them college educated, and possessing unaltered names such as Smith, Cullen, O'Connor and Killoran. Tom O'Connor, later a Guild president, was born in Idaho, moving to the retirement community of Long Beach with his family in the 1920s. An outstanding student, he graduated from Harvard, returning to Los Angeles in the middle of the Depression to work on the *Daily News*, one of two moderate-to-liberal papers owned by Manchester Boddy. In 1937 O'Connor became chairman of the *Daily News* unit of the LANG and a member of the Communist Party.²⁶ By the end of the year four other important editorial employees on the paper had joined both the Guild and the Party. According to Urcel Daniel, testifying in 1952 before the House Committee on Un-American Activities, the process of recruitment did not involve Party functionaries, but "was done by people who worked with other people . . . Most of those *Daily News* people were probably recruited by others on the *Daily News*."²⁷

During the McCarthy years, four former Communist Guild members agreed to testify as friendly witnesses before the House Committee on Un-American Activities. Yet despite their eager profession of anti-Communist credentials and willingness to name names, all denied that the Communist unit of the Guild pursued objectives at odds with the non-Communist membership. Indeed, the consensus was that the aims of the Communists in the union during the popular front period (1935-39) were essentially identical with those of the CIO. It was pointed out that most members of the Guild were unaware of the Communist affiliation of much of their leadership and if they did suspect the latter, this was only because the leftists demonstrated the well-known Communist proclivity to perform

routine work, to endure endless rounds of committee meetings, and to advocate support for Labor's Non Partisan League and Loyalist Spain. In addition, the left-wing Guild members, personified by the brilliant tactician and organizer "Slim" Connelly, exhibited an earthy, undeferential aggressiveness in negotiations with management that marked them off from earlier union leaders.²⁸

During the brief but climactic period of the democratic front (May 1938-August 1939), the blurring of the line between Communists and sympathetic Liberals was such the Party members themselves were sometimes unaware of the membership of their own "comrades." Despite the Party's attempt to project the image of an open organization, its very success in the trade union movement and in other "mass" organizations sometimes necessitated even more secrecy than was the case in the pre-democratic front period. Thus, for example, the official Communist Party paper, the *Western Worker*, which was published until 1937, frequently reported on Party affairs and published biographies of Communist electoral candidates who were not always functionaries. By contrast, its successor, the democratic front-labor oriented *People's World*, rarely discussed or reported internal matters, except major conventions, and attempted to maintain an even stricter separation between the Party and Party-led or "front" organizations.

This practice of secrecy, which developed over three years, seemed logical and indeed essential in 1938; for the Party, while increasingly influential in the CIO and many other organizations, had nevertheless failed during the Popular Front to alter the long standing and still powerful public antipathy towards "Communism" as an alien and un-American ideology. During the "Red Scare", provoked by the Nazi-Soviet pact, the CPUSA's inability to conquer the Communist stereotype would prove extremely costly as anti-Communist seized the opportunity to "expose" the Party's secret influence in a variety of unions and political organizations.²⁹

In 1936, a year before the emergence of the Los Angeles Communist Party as a significant factor within organized labor, the AFL had placed Judge Harlan Palmer on its unfair list for fostering a company union in his mechanical department.³⁰ Despite this, and a brief attempt to persuade Johnson and others to form a similar management sponsored editorial union, his overall political record and his personal treatment of his employees gave the Guild cause for cautious optimism when serious negotiations for a union contract were initiated in December 1937. This optimism was apparently shared by the Communist Party which made no mention of Palmer's company union in its press, perhaps considering his liberal and antifascist credentials sufficient to warrant a conciliatory approach.³¹

Negotiations with Palmer were initiated by a group of four (non-*Citizen-News*) LANG officials and eleven union observers. Although all four were in fact secret members or strong sympathizers of the Communist Party, they were seen by most Guild members as simply left-wing union activists. No objections to them were raised by the almost entirely non-Communist Guild unit of the paper.³² Dragging on for almost six months, the negotiations marked the beginning of the political transformation of Palmer from liberal democrat to anti-New Deal conservative. The impetus for this change was the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) citation of the publisher for fostering a company union. Following the citation Palmer engaged Willis Sargent, a well-known anti-union attorney, to plead his case at the Board's hearings in Washington, and to negotiate with the LANG.

Despite an alleged secret contract with advertisers to double their advertising in the event of "labor trouble," and a report by Palmer to the California Publishers' Association on how best to counteract the NLRB,³³ Palmer's opposition to any unionism in his own paper had become abundantly clear to the Guild and interested observers by March 1938, when the publisher turned over all negotiations to his attorney. On April 4, 1938, the *United Progressive News* reported rumors of an impending strike at the *Citizen-News*. It also pointed out that the paper was now the only completely open shop daily in the city besides the ultra conservative *Los Angeles Times*, and went on to list the Guild's demands. These included wages equal to other major dailies, a five-day week, and either a closed shop or unqualified severance pay for discharge. Palmer's position, that this might force him to reorganize all departments and reduce his work force, was not made public, presumably because he still had hopes of reaching an outwardly amicable agreement with the Guild that would preserve his liberal image and status.³⁴

Citizen-News Guild members were further radicalized by NLRB hearings held in early 1938 to determine the fate of Dolph Winebrenner, a prominent reporter and leftist on the *Daily News*, who had been fired by Manchester Boddy for attempting to organize the paper's commercial employees. Initial rejection of charges of unfair dismissal on the part of Dr. Towne Nylander, regional director of NLRB, were denounced and later appealed by the LANG, and at subsequent hearings, William Walsh, a NLRB attorney, stated that the Boddy papers, despite their apparent acceptance of the Guild, were in fact preparing a campaign to destroy it.³⁵ In spite of the growing mistrust fostered by the hearings, and reinforced by anti-NLRB editorials in the *Citizen-News*, a compromise between the Guild and the paper was eventually reached on May 13, subject to ratification by the employees, the union's executive committee and the ANG leadership. The agreement, in addition to higher wages, provided for

recognition of the Guild, a preferential shop, a five-day, forty-hour week, and twenty-six weeks severance pay.³⁶

The Guild unit had generally discounted Palmer's threats of layoffs as part of the bargaining process. Thus, their reaction was one of both horror and surprise when Palmer announced his decision, immediately after ratification, to fire three editorial and two advertising employees. That the three editorial employees, Roger Johnson, Mel Scott, and Elizabeth Yeaman, were also among the most active in the Guild, was clearly no coincidence and demonstrated Palmer's underlying opposition to LANG and indeed to the unionization of his employees, professional or otherwise.³⁷

Palmer's adamant refusal to reconsider his decision, on the grounds of the "publisher's right to dismissals," was a revelation to many Guild members long accustomed to thinking of him as a "liberal," and therefore by definition at least tolerant of unionism. Several of the paper's employees had established personal relationships with the publisher, perhaps the closest being Roger Johnson, who had once accepted a loan from Palmer and more recently had purchased stock in the *Citizen-News*. Most importantly, the paper had always been more than just a job for its editorial employees, functioning as it did, as an oasis of reason and taste in Los Angeles' cultural and political desert.³⁸ To avoid a strike, appeals were made to Palmer's closest friends and supporters such as the popular county supervisor John Anson Ford, writer and humorist Frank Scully, and Screen Actors' Guild president Robert Montgomery. A final futile appeal was made to the NLRB, but by the end of the weekend opinions had so hardened that the strike vote taken on May 14 proved virtually unanimous.

Although the immediate issues had become relatively clear cut for the Guild unit, the decision to begin picketing on May 17 was complicated by city politics. The *Citizen-News* had been, from the beginning, an outspoken supporter of the mayoral recall campaign launched by the self-styled Citizens Independent Vice Investigating Committee (CIVIC). The latter, made up primarily of middle-class reformers and church groups under the leadership of wealthy restaurateur Clifford Clinton, had, early in 1938, joined with several labor and liberal organizations to form the Federation for Civil Betterment (FCB).³⁹

The recall campaign was given considerable impetus by the dramatic murder trial of the police department's "Intelligence Squad" leader, Captain Earl Kynette. Kynette was accused and later convicted of the attempted murder of an investigator hired by CIVIC to uncover the connection between the city administration and the underworld. The trial, held during the spring of 1938, confirmed the veracity of many of the accusations of corruption hurled by liberals, reformers, and radicals at

Mayor Shaw and his associates, while also catapulting the recall forces to a new level of political respectability and credibility. For the democratic front elements in the FCB, the principal objective of the campaign, in addition to the recall of Shaw, was the ouster of the violently anti-CIO police chief, James Davis. This, in turn, would almost certainly result in the abolition of the "Red Squad," led since the early 1920s by Lieutenant "Red" Hynes. The Red Squad, a long established branch of the police department, had for fifteen years used open violence and intimidation in its campaigns against alleged "subversives." These now ranged, in its view, from the broad-based FCB to the Communist Party itself, both groups containing at all times at least one police informant.⁴⁰

The possibility of the removal or defection of Palmer and the *Citizen-News* from the recall campaign was admitted by the Communist Party in its reaction to the impending conflict. "The strike," it pointed out in its paper, "has its political repercussion as publisher Harlan Palmer is one of the leading spirits in the movement to recall Mayor Frank Shaw."⁴¹ The paper's rivals had long been irritated by the political defiance of the *Citizen-News* and were willing to help prolong the strike.⁴² Aware of these political repercussions, the *Citizen-News* strikers and their supporters did not allow them to detract from the central cause and issue of the strike--Palmer's refusal to accept an independent or non-company union in his paper, as demonstrated by his dismissals of three CIO Guild activists.

The ten-week Hollywood *Citizen-News* strike brought to fruition many of the strategies and tactics developed in the previous two years by the CIO, the Communist Party and their allies. Although Roger Johnson and Elizabeth Yeaman, both non-Communists, were responsible for the initial contacts with the Hollywood celebrities who were to make the strike a nationally known event, it was the Communist Party branch in Hollywood that provided the long-term support from its forces in the Screen Actors' and Screen Writer's Guilds. The active participation on the picket line of well-known Hollywood figures, as well as state assemblymen, national and state CIO leaders, Spanish Civil War veterans, antifascist groups, Young Democrats and thousands of sympathizers, would not have been possible without the feverish and unceasing activity of non-public Communist Party members working in several political, cultural, and professional organizations and trade unions. These ranged from "Slim" Connelly, who was president of the Guild, to the foot soldiers of the American League for Peace and Democracy. The latter, a broad-based Communist led organization, distributed strike papers to passersby on Hollywood Boulevard and added their considerable vocal power and enthusiasm to the ranks of picketers. Thus, for the first time in Los Angeles, the Communist Party was able to mobilize its elaborate network

of members and sympathizers in a single struggle. By so doing they helped transform a unique but essentially minor strike into an a cause célèbre by which the basic principles of the "democratic front" were presented to the widest possible audience.⁴³

Until the strike was actually underway, the *People's World* had given only cautious and limited attention to Guild activities. It now began detailed and hard hitting coverage, regularly denouncing what it considered to be Palmer's hypocrisy and intransigence. For Roger Johnson, the extent and detail of this coverage, which closely paralleled that of the Guild's own *Hollywood Citizen-News Striker*, confirmed his suspicion that several leading Guild members were secret Communist Party members.⁴⁴ Attempts at red-baiting, however, were firmly opposed by the entire Guild, and formal support from open functionaries of the Communist Party was later accepted by the strikers. At the same time, the Communist Party, in line with its new policy of coalition politics and labor unity, sought through its trade union membership to win support for the strike from AFL unions. Unable to break through the bitter antagonisms between the CIO and AFL, the Party was encouraged by discussions held between the Guild and Local 174 of the International Typographical Union (AFL), the latter having long opposed the company union in the *Citizen-News* mechanical shop. Although the Typographical Union was ignored by the printers in the company union, it did succeed in persuading the theatrical daily, *Variety*, to withdraw its printing from the *Citizen-News* composing room. Further support came from assemblyman Jack Tenney's large left-led AFL Musicians' union and the rank and file of the Carpenters' union. Thus, while the hope of strong support from the AFL proved illusory, the appeal for labor unity demonstrated to some the reasonableness and potential of the Communist Party's democratic front platform.⁴⁵

The appearance on the picket line of Hollywood writers, actors and directors such as Dorothy Parker, Marie Wilson, Frank Capra, John Ford, Ring Lardner Jr., Philip Dunne, Lionel Stander and others, not only gave some national publicity to the strike, but also precluded the possibility of Red Squad attacks on the strikers. Indeed, for the first time in many years, "Red" Hynes and his men were to find themselves virtually impotent in the face of hundreds of middle-class picketers. Confronted with what often seemed like a sidewalk party, Hynes was reduced to the occasional arrest, each of which was turned into a major event by the Guild's strike paper and the *People's World*.⁴⁶

Within the first few days of the strike the Guild had established its basic organizational priorities. The most important of these, from a morale building and publicity point of view, was the strike paper. Ranging in size from two to four pages, and appearing once or twice weekly, the paper

allowed the strikers to propagate their views while continuing to exercise their job skills. Circulation of the *Hollywood Citizen-News Striker* averaged about ten thousand and soon became mandatory reading for many Hollywood liberals. In addition to reporting news and opinions of the strike, the paper became a mouthpiece for the CIO-Liberal-Left coalition, carrying notices of meetings of leftist groups such as the League of Women Shoppers, or greetings and pledges of support from other CIO and occasionally AFL unions. Supplementing the paper were a series of radio programs arranged by Mel Scott, in which several celebrities and political figures were invited to explain why and how they were supporting the strike.⁴⁷ A more painful but equally important priority was to reduce the circulation and advertising revenue of the *Citizen-News* itself, and thus place additional economic pressure on Palmer. Expressing a certain ambivalence over tactics designed to damage the paper, Roger Johnson, speaking for many of the strikers, admitted that many of them had "worked for the Judge as though it were our own paper." Now, however, it was necessary to put equal effort into the strike and to take advantage of the unexpected outpouring of public support.⁴⁸

While aware of the political contradictions inherent in the strike, in particular the inevitable damage to a liberal New Deal paper, the Guild at no time dissented from the view expressed by radicals, both inside and outside the union, that the picket line and later secondary boycott were crucial to ultimate success. While both agreed that a victory would require unqualified reinstatement of the strikers and a new contract, the Communists and their supporters saw the potential for much greater gains. This wider view of the strike was cogently expressed by "Slim" Connelly in an interview with Frank Scully, an important celebrity figure on the picket line. The conflict, Connelly claimed, had "become greater and wider than just a strike on the *Hollywood Citizen-News* by a number of editorial employees. We have become the spearhead of a movement to make real liberals out of Palmer and other hypocrites."⁴⁹

The notion of a "movement" to ensure the complete acceptance of unionism, including the CIO, by the liberal establishment may have gone beyond the narrower aspirations of many of the strikers. Such sentiment did not seem overly optimistic in the face of the unprecedented outpouring of support for the strike, and the impressive diversity, size, and loyalty of those on the picket line. Indeed, Connelly's rhetoric was soon matched by the liberal, pro-democratic front assemblyman, Sam Yorty, who, on June 2, declared that Palmer's intransigence had made the strike "a fight of democracy against industrial dictatorship . . . The right to discharge without cause is not a democratic right but one that destroys democracy." Yet for all the militancy and rhetoric of Connelly and others on the left, the Communists had very little impact on the *Citizen-News* strikers

themselves. Indeed they recruited only one or two members into the Party while earning only the disdain and ridicule of others, such as Mel Scott, a key figure in the strike, who while willing to accept the support of the Party, considered its new democratic front to be entirely hypocritical.⁵⁰

Although hardly a typical labor dispute, the strike was seen by many in the labor movement as simply one more battle, if an unusual one, against the city's resilient open shop tradition. For the left wing forces what distinguished the conflict was not merely the size and composition of the picket lines or the professional status of the strikers; rather, it was the potential of the strike as a potent and live symbol of an impending new political alignment. Neither entirely planned nor manipulated by the Communist Party, the strike soon occupied a central position in the local Party's press and propaganda. Indeed the Party made a concerted effort to widen the political dimension of the conflict, and to portray it as a manifestation of growing opposition to anti-union, unfair, and irresponsible business and its corrupt allies in government.

Attempts to link the conflict with other struggles in which the Party was engaged were most clearly evident on Saturday nights, when the picket lines were reinforced by a wide variety of sympathizers. On the first Saturday night, the strikers were joined by two busloads of San Pedro longshoremen, striking auto workers from Long Beach, the Women's Committee of the American League for Peace and Democracy, and the League of Women Shoppers (both close to the CP), several movie personalities, and representatives of almost every paper in the city. In later weeks support came from several other CIO and AFL unions and from the followers of Robert Noble, pension plan advocate and former Huey Long propagandist.⁵¹ However, where support from the latter could and did vary greatly during the course of the ten weeks, the participation of groups with close Party ties remained consistent, subject as it was to a self-imposed discipline unmatched by other organizations.

With the participation of so many celebrities on the picket line, opportunities for widespread publicity soon became evident, and, following the appointment of Frank Scully as head of the public relations committee, the sidewalk outside the paper's offices rapidly took on the appearance and atmosphere of a carnival. Among Scully's priorities was the widest possible distribution of the strike paper, with all Guild members participating in its sale. The first issue of the paper, in addition to giving the background to the conflict, immediately set the tone for the strike by printing Scully's own poem, later carried by Time magazine and even published in the *Citizen-News* itself.⁵²

Oh the *Citizen News*
Has liberal views

On everything but money
From German Jews
To Rupert Hughes
Their attitudes a honey
For the Citizen News
Has liberal views
On *everything* but money!

Scully's greatest contribution to publicity was his skillful use of the celebrity-filled picket lines to attract the mass media. Among his most effective stunts was an invitation to five hundred movie stars, directors, and screen writers, asking them to appear in front of the paper's offices on June 3 for a "cocktail picket party." With most of the celebrities who had walked the picket lines present, and dressed in costume, the event naturally attracted the attention of the national press. Shortly thereafter a jubilant Scully announced his own candidacy as a liberal democrat for the state assembly.⁵³

The resilience of Palmer in the face of this negative publicity surprised many of the strikers. Indeed, as the publisher later pointed out, the paper did not miss an issue, despite losing almost the entire editorial staff. In his first major editorial on the strike on June 6, Palmer attempted to play on some of the legitimate doubts of the strikers:

I have walked through your picket lines each working day for three weeks now and I haven't seen a sign of happiness on your faces. . . . The Communist supporters have tried their best to cheer and encourage you but they haven't made you happy.

The three fired editorial employees, he pointed out, were all in a position to find work elsewhere, and yet the strikers were prepared to jeopardize the livelihoods of hundreds of others much less well equipped. Palmer's use of the Communist issue was generally subtle. None of the strikers, he suggested, were "in sympathy with the purpose of the Communists who have cheered you while you march," for several of the former had invested savings in the paper's stock and "expected the management to earn six percent dividends." Finally, Palmer, in asserting his own strength, asked rhetorically how the strikers hoped to "destroy a newspaper when 95 percent of its readers and advertisers do not sympathize with your strike?"⁵⁴

Although the strike paper gave a rebuttal to Palmer's claims, the apparent strength of the *Citizen-News* and the Guild's failure to win the support of the commercial and typographical workers necessitated the use

of new tactics, including the controversial secondary boycott. Early in the strike the League of Women Shoppers had set up a "telephone brigade" to persuade advertisers to withdraw from the *Citizen-News*. In a letter to the strike paper president Connelly pointed out that in several other cities the Newspaper Guild had found it necessary to carry out a campaign of secondary picketing, and that while this might prove unnecessary in this case, "we are assured of ample forces to carry it out."⁵⁵

The decision to begin secondary picketing, strongly supported by the Communist Party, was readily accepted by the Guild despite the legal uncertainty of such action in Los Angeles. The risk of disruption by the "Red Squad" was minimized, however, by the number of secondary pickets. Divided into four groups and numbering nearly one thousand, the picketers marched on Saturday in front of the downtown Thrifty, Schwab's and Sontag stores, merging in a mass parade watched by thousands of spectators. Two days later Schwab's clothing store withdrew its advertising when the Journeymen Tailors, a local of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, refused to cross the picket lines.⁵⁶

The use of secondary picketing in a city still dominated by upholders of the traditional open shop demonstrated to the Communist Party the increased willingness of the strikers, despite their professional status, to go beyond the usual boundaries of strike action. Such militancy, coming at a time of growing momentum in the city and state for the election of a liberal administration in California, again pointed to the potential power of a more fully developed democratic front coalition.⁵⁷

The movement of the Communist Party toward outright support for Roosevelt on nearly all domestic issues, combined with its own reputation as the most militant antifascist force in the United States, gave the Party a respectability unthinkable two years earlier. Paradoxically, the open image of the Party as demonstrated by the patriotic slogans of the democratic front, served only to obscure the secret identity of hundreds of its members holding important positions in trade unions and a wide variety of political, fraternal, cultural and other organizations. Thus, although the Guild openly accepted the aid of Emil Freed, a Communist functionary in Hollywood (who was accused by Palmer of running the strike), such support was little more than perfunctory in comparison with the direct contributions made by such left-led groups as the American League for Peace and Democracy, the League of Women Shoppers, and the non-public Communists within the union itself.⁵⁸

The influence of the latter was illustrated by the fact that the two union delegates to the ANG national convention held in Toronto in mid-June 1938 were both secret Communists. At the convention, delegates Connelly and Daniel showed a film of the picket lines and appealed for support. Meetings were then held with president Heywood Broun and

ANG officers (and secret Communist Party members) Jonathan Eddy, Morgan Hull, and Abraham Isserman. During these discussions Isserman, the ANG's legal counsel, suggested several tactics to be adopted in the event of an injunction against secondary picketing. These ranged from the use of a sound truck to a mass campaign of defiance against the court ruling.⁵⁹

The ANG convention gave a boost to the LANG by electing Connelly as an international vice-president, voting a one dollar symbolic contribution from every delegate, and instructing Morgan Hull to participate in the direction of the strike. To active opponents of the strike the left-controlled convention only increased their suspicion of the role played by the Communists in the Guild, with a resultant intensification of red-baiting by Palmer and others. The strike leadership responded to this attempted red scare by openly accepting Communist support, and in mid-June the strike committee invited Emil Freed to read a statement in answer to Palmer's editorial on his alleged dictation of the strike. The statement, printed in the strike paper, was a particularly clear example of the Party's new style of appeal to its potential democratic front constituency:

When Harlan G. Palmer contested the office of District Attorney, we Communists considered his wish to sweep graft and vice from office a genuine one, and we offered him our help. For this we were warmly thanked by Palmer's aides during his campaign. Are Communists progressive when they help Mr. Palmer and not when they help his workers?⁶⁰

Morgan Hull's arrival in late June coincided with a temporary blanket injunction against secondary picketing on Hollywood Boulevard. The injunction was issued by "Injunction" Judge Emmett Wilson, a long-time foe of trade unionism in Los Angeles. The reaction of the strikers to this development was symptomatic of recent major changes in the city's labor relations. Encouraged by the recent conviction of Kynette, the growing momentum of the recall campaign, and the decision of the CIO to throw its full support to the strikers, the Guild, with the help of Morgan Hull, launched a series of actions designed to nullify the effect of the injunction.

The strikers responded to the injunction with a sound truck and a special issue of the strike paper devoted to "the Strike Committee's fight for civil rights as affecting all organized labor in Los Angeles." The sound truck proved an effective tactic, since it attracted publicity while remaining within the letter of the law. At the same time, it focused attention on the use by the courts of the strike injunction and seemingly confirmed the Communist Party's oft-repeated criticism of the latter as a weapon used by reactionary open shop forces such as the Merchants and Manufacturers,

the Chamber of Commerce, and their "front" groups, the Southern Californians Inc., the Neutral Thousands, and others.⁶¹

When the frustrated "Red Squad" arrested the three strike leaders for passing out strike handbills, apparently in violation of a city ordinance, Hull, Connelly and Johnson received maximum publicity for this struggle against the injunction. A recent decision by the Supreme Court legalizing the distribution of handbills allowed the Guild to turn the arrest into a symbol of "Red Squad" lawlessness. Although the three men were released on their own recognizance within two hours, the union made the most of the incident, printing a photograph of the union leaders behind bars on the front page of the strike paper. "We insist on testing this thing," Connelly announced. "We want to know whether in Los Angeles we still have constitutional rights or not."⁶²

Fear that a drawn out strike could prove ruinously expensive, and anxious to maintain momentum, the strikers continued to hold regular picket line functions for celebrities and emphasized in their internal bulletins the importance of regular attendance on the picket line. At the same time, having demonstrated their militancy and strength, the Guild, in July, turned increasingly to the courts for vindication--an emphasis encouraged by the Communists and the CIO, both of whom were anxious to consolidate and preserve their hard-earned public respectability for the impending city and state elections.

In early July the NLRB, acting on Guild charges of unfair dismissals by Palmer, arranged for public hearings. These provided an excellent forum for the Guild, with dramatic testimony detailing Palmer's intimidation of editorial employees and on-going struggle against the Board itself. Questioned by Guild attorney Carey McWilliams, Palmer admitted that he had delivered a report at a convention of the California Publishers Association suggesting a variety of tactics to be used against the NLRB. Palmer was followed by Roger Johnson who produced a copy of a *Citizen-News* office bulletin posted by the publisher on May 14, in which the Judge stated his willingness to incur costs of up to \$10,000 in order to fight the earlier company union charge brought by the NLRB--this despite his continual cry of poverty during the negotiations with the Guild, and his claims of financial losses during the recent recession.⁶³

Palmer's behavior, wrote the *People's World* in a carefully worded editorial, was like that of many American businessmen:

They are law abiding, hard working, honest in their dealings [but]... they look upon their business as something personal, something entirely their own, and they take great satisfaction in it. They cannot brook the notion that in the larger sense their business has an essential relationship to a complex social

structure. The appearance of unions . . . the knowledge that the national government may interest itself in their relations with their employees cause them great discomfort.⁶⁴

Despite their success in discrediting Palmer, few among the strikers could take much satisfaction in damaging the reputation of their paper. "Palmer could have been America's outstanding progressive journalist," wrote Roger Johnson, "if he had traveled with the tide of union growth instead of attempting to battle the inevitable. It is no pleasure to tear down an institution."⁶⁵ In late July, when the Los Angeles municipal court ruled the city's handbill ordinance unconstitutional,⁶⁶ the Guild announced its willingness to respond to written and oral commitments to settle the dispute made by Palmer and his attorney on July 19. Low in funds and clearly anxious to salvage their jobs, the strikers nevertheless determined to seize the opportunity for a favorable settlement by a show of strength. With the financially lucrative *Citizen-News* Dollar Day approaching, when certain stores reduced many prices to one dollar and advertised their discounts in the *Citizen News*, the union, on Saturday, July 29, mounted the largest picketing demonstration in the city's history. Participants included five visiting international vice-presidents of the international Ladies Garment Workers Union, four Spanish Civil War veterans, as well as the entire cast of the nationally successful labor play "Pins and Needles." During the demonstration, the union announced that it expected ten thousand or more of its supporters to picket those stores on Hollywood Boulevard which displayed the *Citizen-News* Dollar Day sale emblem.⁶⁷

Although later strongly denied by Palmer, the strikers maintained that the threatened massive Dollar Day demonstration was the impetus for Palmer's agreement to settle the strike on July 30. Under the settlement the publisher agreed to reinstate the dismissed employees and to sign the contract previously negotiated. The strikers were also to be granted two weeks immediate paid vacation while the NLRB determined the extent of back pay. Finally, Palmer, in addition to recognizing the Guild, agreed to make no discharges for reasons of economy until January 1, 1939.⁶⁸

Despite these concessions, Palmer remained publicly defiant, declaring in an editorial that the strikers "return to meet the bitterness of 225 employees who remained loyal to the paper while they, other labor organizations, and Communists sought to destroy the business that provides the jobs."⁶⁹ In the weeks following their return to work the strikers experienced the practical effects of Palmer's own bitterness. Described in great detail some months later by Roger Johnson, these included the rearrangement of duties amounting to demotion for almost all of the strikers. Editorial writer Mel Scott, one of the three originally fired

by Palmer, was given "minor reportorial duties usually handled by novice reporters," while Johnson himself was given virtually no assignments at all. In addition, several union members were immediately served with contempt citations relating to the secondary picketing injunction, despite a management promise to move for dismissal of all pending court action. Formal complaints by the Guild, as well as a dramatic protest visit to the *Citizen-News* office by Harry Bridges and his entourage during the state CIO convention in mid-August, proved fruitless, and in subsequent months the work environment deteriorated further as Palmer's political shift to the right gained momentum.⁷⁰

Under such circumstances, any assessment of the significance of the strike must consider the differing goals of the diverse organizations and individuals participating in it. The immediate tangible benefits for the strikers themselves were few. Indeed they had won little that had not already been conceded before the dismissals. Reinstatement of the five dismissed employees was clearly a victory, although their final status remained dependent on the NLRB complaint filed prior to the calling of the strike. While the Board did eventually decide in favor of the Guild, the decision proved largely academic, three of the five having already left the paper by the end of the year.⁷¹

If the gains of the strikers were at best ambiguous, the larger democratic front coalition considered the strike a qualified success which demonstrated wide support for organized labor at a critical time. The final weeks of the strike coincided with an intensification of the drive to recall Mayor Shaw, and to defeat an antipicketing ordinance, Proposition I, successfully placed on the ballot by the open shop organizations. The Communist Party in its literature had often stressed the importance of unity within the democratic front coalition in the face of an inevitable counterattack from the right. It had also warned of the possibility of a backlash by traditionally anti-union middle-class elements and labor bureaucrats confronted with a display of concerted labor militancy. The danger of such a reaction was illustrated by the AFL's defiant endorsement of Mayor Shaw and its renewed campaign of red-baiting in the fall, both of which were a direct product of its rivalry with the CIO. Among those capitalizing on this backlash was Harry Chandler of the *Los Angeles Times*, who, on July 29, accused the Guild of working to damage the general community in order to punish Palmer.

The continuing power of the open shop forces in Los Angeles, as demonstrated by the petitions placing Proposition I on the ballot, was in some sense a reflection of the national shift to the right in late 1938. With the New Deal itself under attack, the left now sought an extension of the local coalition that had come together during the strike. Thus only one week after the settlement, representatives of the coalition, after

considerable internal debate, agreed to accept the decision of the clean government forces in support of the mayoralty candidacy of the moderate reformer, Judge Fletcher Bowron.⁷² This important decision, made with the agreement of the Communists in the coalition, who had initially favored the (then) left wing assemblyman Sam Yorty, was followed by the first statewide CIO convention in which "Slim" Connelly was overwhelmingly elected state president of the CIO. At the convention, in which the Communists played a crucial role, the CIO resolved to defeat Proposition 1 at the local elections, and to work for the victory of all "progressive" New Deal democrats in the national and state elections. Recognizing the achievement of the strikers the convention pledged its "active support to its affiliate union, the Los Angeles Newspaper Guild, in its determination to take immediate steps to see that the *Citizen-News* Guild unit members are returned to the positions they formerly held."⁷³

Bolstered by their growing strength in the CIO and the larger liberal community, and exhilarated by the support given the strike by Hollywood celebrities, many of whom had drawn closer to the left in recent months, the local Communist Party tended to overlook the almost certain loss, in Harlan Palmer, of a respected and influential pro-New Deal voice in southern California. Also downplayed was the limited and fleeting nature of the support given the strike by the AFL. Any support from the conservative and machine-controlled AFL Central Labor Council was to be appreciated in view of the bitter antagonisms between the two national organizations, but it could not hide the continuing failure to reach unity even on issues unrelated to the split itself. A measure of AFL support was gratefully received during the strike, although it did not prevent the Teamsters Union, among others, from breaking the picket lines, or the Central Labor Council from endorsing Shaw during the recall campaign. This action by the AFL could not prevent the left-labor-liberal coalition in its successful effort to help elect Judge Bowron, a victory that led to the disbanding of the Red Squad and a further crack in the open shop. It did split the labor vote and contribute to the passage of the anti-union Proposition 1.⁷⁴

The *Citizen-News* strike, despite these qualifications, was a considerable boost to those active in the creation of a left-labor-liberal coalition along the lines of the "democratic front." The coalition, although weakened from the beginning by the opposition of the AFL, successfully altered the face of California politics and labor relations in the years 1937-39 by organizing and focusing the protest of those dispossessed, poor, and working people who had cast one million votes for Upton Sinclair's EPIC in 1934. Indeed among those on the *Citizen-News* picket lines were several democratic assemblymen originally elected on the EPIC platform, as well as elderly supporters of the "\$30 Every Thursday" (later

Ham and Eggs) pension plan. These groups were now joined by antifascist organizations, by representatives of recently formed industrial unions such as the International Longshoremen and Warehousemen's Union, the auto and rubber workers, and finally by newly radicalized Hollywood and entertainment figures. Mobilizing and holding together this broad, if incomplete, coalition, were Communists, both open and secret, and their supporters in the participating organizations of the "democratic front."⁷⁵

In addition to consolidating the coalition, the *Citizen-News* strike accelerated the increasing waive of red-baiting emanating nationally from the Dies Committee and locally from right-wing, open shop organizations. The latter were now joined by an increasingly conservative Harlan Palmer. In August 1938, such groups seemed to many on the left to be on the defensive, faced as they were by a militant state CIO, a growing antifascist movement, and the likely election of a New Deal oriented democratic governor-the first in forty years of republican rule. Meanwhile membership in the Communist Party during this two year period became a viable choice for many pro-union liberals and New Dealers who only three years earlier might have considered the Party's revolutionary ideology, rhetoric and style to be entirely alien to the traditions and needs of the American working class. Without the influx of these American-born leftists from ordinary working and middle-class backgrounds, the Communist Party of Los Angeles could never have won effective leadership of the Los Angeles Newspaper Guild and the local CIO council. Nor indeed could it and its counterparts have achieved the remarkable degree of influence within the California Democratic Party and the liberal Democratic administration of Governor Culbert L. Olson that it reached during the heyday of the "democratic front." While many of these gains would be lost during the break up of the "democratic front" in 1940-41, the underlying strength and political progressivism of LANG and the entire CIO would remain essentially intact for another decade.

NOTES

¹ Brief accounts of the Hollywood *Citizen-News* strike can be found in Walter B. Wentz, "History of the Los Angeles Newspaper Guild" (Unpublished M.A., Claremont, 1958), 83-96; Louis B. Perry and Richard S. Perry, *A History of the Los Angeles Labor Movement, 1911-1941* (Los Angeles, 1963), 476-479; Nancy Lynn Schwartz, *The Hollywood Writers' Wars* (New York, 1982), 120-121. Only Wentz touches on the role of the Communists in the Guild. I am indebted to Roger Johnson for use of his unique collection of Guild materials, and to Tom Cullen for his insightful criticisms and suggestions.

² "Draft Convention Resolutions," *Communist* 17 (April 1938), 351-355; Clarence Hathaway, "Building the Democratic Front," *Communist* 17 (May 1938), 404-409. For differing views on the efficacy of the Democratic Front see Harvey Klehr, *The Heyday of American Communism: The Depression Decade* (New York, 1984), 207-222 and Kenneth Waltzer, "The Party and the Polling

Place: American Communism and an American Labor Party in the 1930's," *Radical History Review* 23 (Spring 1980), 104-129.

³ See Donald David Ranstead, "District 13: A History of the Activities of the California Communist Party, 1929-1940" (Unpublished M.A., University of California, Berkeley, 1963) for the early trade union work of the Party in the state; Roger Johnson, "How a Guild is Born: LANG nears Silver Anniversary--It All Started 25 Years Ago," *Page One Magazine*, July 1961, 4.

⁴ *People's World*, 3 June 1939.

⁵ Author's interview with Roger Johnson, 8 January 1983 (hereafter cited as Johnson interview); Author's interview with Ellenore Bogigian Hittelman (former Guild member), (Hereafter cited as Hittelman interview.) 4 June 1982; Johnson, "How a Guild is Born," 1.

⁶ Johnson, "How a Guild is Born," 1; "Membership Roll: Los Angeles Newspaper Guild" (Unpublished document in possession of Roger Johnson). Roosevelt's so-called Second New Deal of 1935-37 saw the passage of social security legislation, the National Labor Relations Act, and the attempt to "pack" the Supreme Court.

⁷ *Daily Variety*, 21 October 1936; Wentz, "History of the LANG," 47.

⁸ Johnson, "How a Guild is Born," 16.

⁹ *Daily Variety*, 30 October 1936; *Los Angeles Newspaper Guild News*, 7 November 1936; *United Progressive News*, 2 November 1936.

¹⁰ Johnson, "How a Guild is Born," 16; *Epic News*, 21 December 1936.

¹¹ Wentz, "History of the LANG," 61; Roger Johnson, "Statement for Immediate Release to the Guild Reporter," December, 1936. (Unpublished document in possession of Roger Johnson).

¹² Johnson interview, "How a Guild is Born," 16; Robert Kenny, *Forty Years in California Politics* (Oral History Program, UCLA, 1964), 107; Robert Gottlieb and Irene Wolt, *Thinking Big: The Story of the Los Angeles Times: Its Publishers and Their Influence on Southern California* (New York, 1977), 219-225.

¹³ For a detailed account of the district attorney's race of 1936 in which Palmer did very little actual campaigning, see June E. Hallberg, "The Fitts-Palmer Campaign for District Attorney in Los Angeles, 1936" (M.A., UCLA, 1940).

¹⁴ *100th Anniversary of the Los Angeles Typographical Union No. 174*, (Los Angeles, 1975); Wentz, "History of the LANG," 54-56; Rodney P. Carlisle, *Hearst and the New Deal: The Progressive as Reactionary* (New York, 1979), 131-141.

¹⁵ Daniel J. Leab, *A Union of Individuals: the formation of the American Newspaper Guild, 1933-36* (New York, 1970), 266-268; Wentz, "History of the LANG," 63; Johnson, "How a Guild is Born," 16.

¹⁶ Johnson interview; Johnson, "How a Guild is Born," 16; *LANG Bulletin*, 10 March 1937; *Los Angeles Times*, 26 February 1937.

¹⁷ United States Congress, House of Representatives, Committee on Un-American Activities, 82nd Congress, 2nd session, May 1952, *Communist Activities Among Professional Groups in the Los Angeles Area--Part 2*, (Washington, D.C., 1952), vol. 4, 3585.

¹⁸ Johnson interview; Johnson, "How a Guild is Born," 16; *Los Angeles Newspaper Guild Bulletin*, 23 April, 14 May 1937; Wentz, "History of the LANG," 55-59; *LANG Bulletin*, 14 May 1937; *Pacific Reporter*, 20 May 1937. At the ANG convention, Johnson and two other LANG delegates avoided identification with either the New York "progressive majority" or the less radical Washington minority groups, but did vote for CIO affiliation. "Report on the St. Louis Convention," in possession of Roger Johnson.

¹⁹ *Los Angeles Daily News*, 28 August 1937; Johnson, "How a Guild is Born," 16.

²⁰ *LANG Bulletin*, August 1937; Leab, *A Union of Individuals*, 261; Wentz, "History of the LANG," 59.

²¹ Author's interview with Dorothy Healey, 5 April 1983; U.S. Congress, Committee on Un-American Activities, 82nd Congress, 2nd session May 1952, vol. 4, part 2, 3580; Johnson interview; Johnson, "How a Guild is Born," 25; *People's World*, 11 January 1938; *Daily Variety*, 25 January 1938; Author's interview with Tom Cullen, 28 June 1982.

²² *LANG Bulletin*, August 1937; *Editor and Publisher*, 13 November 1937, 11; Wentz, "History of the LANG," 62.

²³ Letter from J.W. Buzzell, secretary, Los Angeles Central Labor Council to Frank Barham, publisher, Los Angeles *Herald and Express*, 22 September 1937, in possession of Roger Johnson; *LANG Bulletin*, September, October 1937; *Daily Variety*, 15 October 1937; *CIO Industrial Unionist*, 15 October 1937; Letter from Roger Johnson to George Young, publisher, Los Angeles Examiner, 21 September 1937; Wentz, "History of the LANG," 70-74. Buzzell failed in a similar attempt at the *Herald and Express*, *LANG Bulletin*, October 1937.

²⁴ Johnson, "How a Guild is Born," 25.

²⁵ Testimony of Urcel Daniel in United States Congress, Committee on Un-American Activities, 82nd Congress, 2nd session, May 1952, vol. 4, 3577.

²⁶ *Ibid*; Author's interview with Eugene Bradford (member of LANG), 18 March 1983. (Hereafter cited as Bradford interview.)

²⁷ California, Senate, *Report [of the] Joint Fact-Finding Committee on Un-American Activities in California*, [First Report], 55th session (1943), 152-155; United States Congress, Committee on Un-American Activities 82nd Congress, 2nd session, May 1952, vol. 4, 3585-3586.

²⁸ *Ibid*; 3575-3596; United States Congress, House of Representatives, Committee on Un-American Activities, 82nd Congress, 2nd session, January 1952, vol. 3, part 1, 2631-2652.

²⁹ "Exposure" of alleged Communists in the State Relief Administration was the original purpose of renegade liberal Samuel Yorty's State Assembly Investigating Committee set up in 1940. It was replaced in 1941 by the broader anti-Communist California Senate Committee on Un-American Activities, known as the Tenney Committee.

³⁰ *Los Angeles Citizen*, 14 August 1936.

³¹ "Statement by Roger Johnson concerning *Hollywood Citizen-News*," in possession of Roger Johnson.

³² "Minutes of Executive Board [of the LANG]," 15 December 1937, in possession of Roger Johnson; Wentz, "History of the LANG," 83-84. "Slim" Connelly also developed a tactical plan for negotiations with management under which he would take an aggressive, accusative stance, while another member of the negotiating team played the role of conciliator and pacifier. Bradford interview.

³³ Wentz, "History of the LANG," 85; *United Progressive News*, 4 April 1938; *People's World*, 27 May, 9, 13, 14 July 1938.

³⁴ Wentz, "History of the LANG," 85.

³⁵ "Report of the Executive Secretary [of the LANG], December 9 to December 15 [1937]," in possession of Roger Johnson; *People's World*, 6, 8, 11, April 1938.

³⁶ *Hollywood Citizen-News*, 4 May 1938; *People's World*, 16 May 1938; Wentz, "History of the LANG," 85.

³⁷ Hollywood *Citizen-News*, 17, 18, May 1938; *People's World*, 16 May 1938; Johnson. "How a Guild is Born," 25.

³⁸ Wentz. "History of the LANG," 86; Johnson interview; "Additional Statement by Roger Johnson concerning Hollywood *Citizen-News*," in possession of Roger Johnson.

³⁹ Johnson, "How a Guild is Born," 36; Frank Scully, *This Gay Knight* (Philadelphia & New York, 1962), 155-156; *People's World*, 16 May 1938; Wentz, "History of the LANG," 86; Hollywood *Citizen-News Striker*, 17 May 1938.

⁴⁰ See Guy W. Finney, *Angel City in Turmoil* (Los Angeles, 1945); Clinton J. Taft, *Fifteen Years on Freedoms Front* (Los Angeles, 1939); and Clinton J. Taft, "City of Fallen Angels," *Forum and Century* 94, no. 5 (May 1938) for the differing roles of Davis, Kynette and Hynes; Hittelman interview.

⁴¹ *People's World*, 18 May 1938.

⁴² This point is made by Schwartz, *The Hollywood Writers' Wars*, 120. The *Los Angeles Times* gave the strike only light coverage, although it did note that AFL and independent mechanical employees on the *Citizen-News* had "voted the strike's picket line illegal." *Los Angeles Times*, 19 May 1938.

⁴³ Author's interview with Roger Johnson; see also Larry Ceplaire and Steve Englund's *The Inquisition in Hollywood: Politics in the Film Community, 1930-1960* (New York, 1980), chapters 3-4.

⁴⁴ Author's interview with Roger Johnson.

⁴⁵ *Los Angeles Citizen*, 12 June 1938; the AFL's weekly paper generally confined its comment on the strike to a denunciation of company union in the *Citizen-News* mechanical shop; *People's World*, 19 May 1938. Mel Scott, editorial writer for the *Citizen-News*, defying the objections of union officials, spoke before a meeting at the AFL Carpenters' union and won the union's support for the strike; Johnson interview.

⁴⁶ *People's World*, 19, 20 May 1938; Hollywood *Citizen-News Striker*, 20 May 1938; Schwartz, *The Hollywood Writers' Wars*, 120.

⁴⁷ *Hollywood Citizen-News Striker*, May-July 1938. Dorothy Parker was one of the several celebrities who appeared on the Guild's radio program; Johnson interview.

⁴⁸ *People's World*, 19 May 1938. The Guild later claimed to have effected a 25-35 percent reduction in circulation, and 50 percent drop in advertising revenue. See Wentz, "History of the LANG," 87.

⁴⁹ *People's World*, 23 May 1938.

⁵⁰ *People's World*, 3 June 1938. Both the Neutral Thousands and the Merchants and Manufacturers opposed the strike and gave verbal support to the *Citizen-News*. See United States Congress, Senate, Subcommittee of the Committee on Education and Labor, *Hearings on S. Res. 266, violations of Free Speech and Rights of Labor*, 74th Congress, 3rd session (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1940), part 63, exhibit 9832, 23214-23215. Mel Scott, an experienced political commentator, remembers playfully taunting the Communist functionary Emil Freed on the picket line about Soviet human rights abuse; Johnson interview.

⁵¹ *People's World* coverage of the strike far exceeded that of even the liberal Boddy press; *People's World*, 20, 21, 23, 25, 26, 30 May 1938; Hollywood *Citizen-News Striker*, 1 June 1938.

⁵² Hollywood *Citizen-News Striker*, 20 May 1938; *People's World*, 18 May 1938; *Time*, 6 June 1938; Hollywood *Citizen-News*, 18 May.

⁵³ *People's World*, 25 May 1938; *Time*, 6 June 1938; Scully, *This Gay Knight*, 157.

⁵⁴ Wentz, "History of the LANG," 86; *Hollywood Citizen-News*, 6 June 1938. The strikers responded to the editorial with a picture of the Guild unit "grinning from ear to ear," *Guild Reporter*, 13 June 1938.

⁵⁵ *Citizen-News Strike Bulletin*, 26 May 1938, in the Philip Connelly Papers, box 3, file 3, Research Library, special Collections, UCLA; *People's World*, 27 May 1938; *Hollywood Citizen-News Striker*, 26 May 1938.

⁵⁶ *People's World*, 6, 8 June 1938.

⁵⁷ See the *People's World* for June 1938 for descriptions of the developing democratic front.

⁵⁸ "Minutes of the Hollywood *Citizen-News* Strike Committee," 12 June 1938, in possession of Roger Johnson; *Hollywood Citizen-News Striker*, 15 June 1938; Author's interview with Emil Freed, 21 September 1983.

⁵⁹ *People's World*, 15 June 1938; "Minutes of the Hollywood *Citizen-News* Strike committee," 19 June 1938.

⁶⁰ *People's World*, 15 June 1938; *Hollywood Citizen-News Striker*, 15 June 1938.

⁶¹ *People's World*, 27 June 1938; "Minutes of the Hollywood *Citizen-News* Striker," 20 June 1938. The strikers filed a civil suit against police chief Davis and the Red Squad demanding an injunction to prohibit them from enforcing an unconstitutional law, *People's World*, 2 July 1938.

⁶² *People's World*, 23, 25, 27 June 1938; *Hollywood Citizen-News Striker*, 22, 30 June 1938.

⁶³ "Minutes of the Hollywood *Citizen-News* Strike Committee," 13, 14, July 1938; *People's World*, 6, 7, 9, 13, 14 July 1938; *Los Angeles Times*, 12, July 1938.

⁶⁴ *People's World*, 14 July 1938.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 12 July 1938.

⁶⁶ *Hollywood Citizen-News Striker*, 23 July 1938.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 23, 29 July 1938; *People's World*, 1 August 1938.

⁶⁸ Wentz, "History of the LANG," 87; *People's World*, 1 August 1938.

⁶⁹ *People's World*, 3 August 1938.

⁷⁰ "Statement of Roger Johnson," January 1939, in possession of Roger Johnson; *People's World*, 22 August 1938. Palmer's rightward shift began during the strike when he supplied information on the union's secondary picketing to the Southern Californians Inc., United States Congress, Senate, *Hearing on S. Res. 266, Violations of Free Speech and Rights of Labor*, part 57, 21154-21155.

⁷¹ Wentz, "History of the LANG," 94; *People's World*, 5 October 1938.

⁷² *People's World*, 30 July, 10, 18 August 1938; *Los Angeles Examiner*, 9 August 1938; the *Communist*, November 1938, 1020-1023.

⁷³ "Proceedings of the First State CIO Convention, Los Angeles, 20-21 August 1938," in the Dorothy Healey Papers, Box 41, California State University at Long Beach; *People's World*, 23 August 1938.

⁷⁴ Bradford interview; Fred W. Viehe, "The Recall of Mayor Frank L. Shaw: A Revision," *California History* 59 (Winter 1980/81); United States Congress, Senate, *Hearings on S. Res. 266, Violations of Free Speech and Rights of Labor*, part 63, 23214; *People's World*, 21 September 1938.

⁷⁵ See Max Gordon, "The Communist Party of the Nineteen-Thirties and the New Left," and reply by James Weinstein, in *Socialist Revolution* 6 (January-March 1976), 11-66.