of the unity problem to a sharp point. He states that the AFL will absorb the CIO when the old greybeard presidents of the AFL, CIO, and United Mine Workers — William Green, Phillip Murray, and John L. Lewis, respectively — pass out of the picture either through retirement or death. Then the younger elments of all three unions will come to the forefront and unity will be achieved. So entrenched and unremovable has the labor bureaucracy become over the past decades that any union leader under 60 years of age is considered "young" and "up-and-coming."

Even more interesting is Lahey's prediction that with Phillip Murray vacating as head of the CIO, this union will be plunged into such a rivalry for power between the automobile and steel unions, within a matter of months it will fall apart and set the stage for returning to the bosom of the AFL.

In short, it is the **leaders** and the leaders alone who are preventing the merger of 14 million workers, according to Lahey. Like worn-out opera stars singing on their past reputations, Murray, Lewis, Green, Tobin (AFL Teamsters), Hutcheson (AFL Carpenters) and others like them continue to occupy the stage, while in the wings, the young (under 60) leaders such as Walter Reuther (CIO auto workers), James Carey (CIO Electrical), George Meany (AFL Secretary-Treasurer) and others strut about nervously, sounding their mi-mis, arrange and rearrange their costumes, and wait only for Father Time to give them the cue for their Grand Entrance.

BRAVO, BRAVISSIMO!

Bravo, bravissimo! Encore! Well done, Mr. Lahey! You have pointed up one very outstanding feature of the trade union movement in this country today, namely, that it is in the main a leadership movement, in which the great million-numbered rank and file are but pawns in the chess maneuvres of the "leaders." Had you been so inclined or so informed, you could have gone much further.

Wage policies, for example, are established by the top levels and dribble down into the local unions where the membership is called together to apply the rubber stamp. Strikes are called **when** the "leaders" decide they should be called. Strikes which do not meet the approval of the "big guns" are called "illegal" (note the use of capitalist terminology), and "wildcat," and are suppressed through firing the "instigators" or through ordering the men back into the jobs.

All sorts of conniving with political bosses of the Democratic and Republican Party go on in national and state capitals behind the backs of the rank and file who are permitted to pour millions of dollars into the coffers of the union treasuries for "political action."

We could go on endlessly to demonstrate how the unions are "led" in a hundred varied ways. It is only logical then that such a matter as the unification of 14 million workers should be left up to the "right" leaders, instead of the voice of organized workers.

LEADERSHIP SELF-IMPOSED

This leadership cult, we must add in all fairness, is not imposed on the rank and file. With a few exceptions (especially in AFL unions), the workers **ask** for this leadership. They even go so far as to denounce those among their fellow-workers who attack the "leaders" who "have done so much for us."

The search for leaders, for a Moses to lead them out of the wilderness of capitalist poverty and unemployment into the Promised Land of full employment and security has been bred into the marrow and bones of the American workers ever since they read their first primer, and there read that great men like Washington, Jefferson, Lincoln, and more recently Roosevelt, have made the country what it is today. The

workers have been taught—while the sham of decision and control by a majority vote has been taking place at every election—that only the "right" leaders will be able to solve the main issues confronting the workers. **This leadership worship, a necessary part of the capitalist ideology, has been transferred from the schoolroom into the union hall.**

The workers cannot do enough for their leaders. On the picket lines, at strike meetings, they sing, "Murray is our leader, we shall not be moved," changing the words, only as they change leaders. When Murray, Lewis, Green, or even Reuther addresses a meeting one would think the Messiah had returned, or that one was attending a meeting in Hitler Germany. Large blown-up pictures of the leaders cover the walls, big posters proclaim the virtues of the leaders. Strong-arm men circulate through the crowd to make sure no "disrupters" interfere, or pass out literature "unfavorable" to the leaders.

These leaders monopolize meetings and conventions, speaking for hours, explaining (but really debating) the issues, while the rank and file are given precious minutes or the meeting is adjourned before they can speak. The leaders control the conventions through a microphone controlled by the chairman (the president), by appointing all the committees, by calling on those more favorable to their views. Here again the rank and file are willing instruments of this leadership. At convention after convention they give their leaders more and more power, vote them higher and higher salaries. When it comes to deciding whether to strike or not, the workers gladly troop back into the shop, leaving the final decision in the hands of the "leaders."

All power to the leaders, from whom all blessings flow!

SOCIALIST ANTI-LEADERSHIP

Contrast this thinking with that of the socialists and the socialist movement on this matter of leadership. The socialist movement which depends for its final success on the understanding of the majority of the workers has no place for leaders. ** They are taboo. How can an educated, conscious majority tolerate a few men determining issues for them, such as is the case in the trade union movement today?

Contrariwise, how would a few men be able to make decisions by themselves in a movement in which everyone has understanding of what has to be done.

Thus it is not accidental that socialists in unions stand out in bold relief for their fight against the idea of leadership, of giving power to a few men, of paying them such high salaries as to make them closer in their views to the capitalist class than to the workers. It is not accidental that socialists everywhere strive to educate the workers as to the need of doing the job themselves, of being masters and not servants of their own situation, of replacing leaders with instructed representatives, of having representatives who respect the wishes of the rank and file, and not leaders worshipped by the rank and file.

In fighting this leadership cult in the unions, the socialists are at the same time helping to blast a lot of capitalist ideologies out of the heads of the workers. This alone will not bring socialism—much more is needed, above all, an understanding of the nature of capitalism and of the socialist society which is to replace it—but it cannot but help push the process along.

THE ECONOMIC ASPECT

Mr. Lahey states further that "a united labor movement will certainly address itself to the jobs at which a divided movement has not

**So accustomed are the workers to leaders and leadership that when they ask us who are our leaders, and we say we have none, they look upon us as either escaped lunatics or people from another planet.