PARTY NEWS

ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The annual conference of the World Socialist Party was held in Detroit at the national headquarters on September 1st and 2nd.

Pending the report to be published in the next issue of THE WESTERN SOCIALIST, it may be reported that the meetings were both serious and lively.

In attendance were visitors from Vancouver and Bermuda and greetings to the conference were read from many parts of the country.

Items of principle were discussed, organizational matters considered and plans for improving both the contents and circulation of THE WESTERN SOCIALIST were debated.

In reviewing the events of the past year, noting the apathy toward socialism that remains widespread throughout the world, the comrades assembled were resolute as to the task that lies ahead: to continue educating for the need of getting rid of the money-profits-wages system.

FOREIGN NOTES

Eire recently provided one more example of Tweedledum replacing Tweedledee (or was it vice-versa?) in political power. The **Irish Times** in fact went so far as to use the Tweedledum-Tweedledee analogy in summing-up the opposing groups' policies in an editorial. (This frank admission by a capitalist newspaper of the essential sameness of the contesting political groups may have been due to the fact that the "I.T." ardently desires political stability here to safeguard the British Empire's Northern Ireland outpost, and so would favor an all-Party "National" Government in Eire. Or it may have been due to the fact that the "I.T." caters to the more politically discerning and liberal elements of the populace, and therefore could not dare see a distinction where there was an obvious likeness. Possibly, both were causes.) The Fianna Fail party (DeValera's), with the support of some "Independents", ousted the Coalition Government from office when Parliament assembled in June, after the General Election. Since then, milk, butter and electricity prices have increased, to mention but some major commodities. And now the Nationalized Transport authority are expected to increase fares soon. As for foodstuffs, wearing apparel, and articles of use in general, well one can never be sure of their price from day to day. If something costs you a shilling to-day its no safe bet that it will be a shilling to-morrow. An excellent illustration of this was given by a Dublin newspaper columnist recently. To quote the column: "I dropped into the local chemist's the other day to get a packet of stuff. It has gone up threepence since the last time I bought it a month or so ago. I asked my old friend why. 'The question shows that you're out of touch," said he. 'For your information there have been 1,226 changes in the prices of articles sold in this establishment since January of this year. Of these changes, 92.25% have been increases.'!" And Eire, not to be out of the fashion, has its "price stabilization" machinery, too. There exists here a Gov't. body known as the Prices Advisory Council to which all Irish firms, applications for price increases must first be referred. To which, of course, must be added the fact that in so far as this body has not — as yet, anyway! — turned down any such application, one of its functions clearly is **not to decrease prices.** But then it was so blatant a piece of window-dressing by the last Government — a face-saving project sponsored by the Labor Party section of that Government — that even the worker whose favorite expression is "I've no time for politics" easily saw through it and was quite angered. It is rumored that it may soon go—probably to reappear under a new Government with a new title. Present or not, though, and under any other name, the workers will still find prices rising quicker than wages. And some up-to-date proof of this lies in an amazingly candid statement of the present Minister of Industry and Commerce, Mr. Lemass, made in Parliament on July 12th last. Said he: **"I want it to be clearly understood that I do not regard control of prices as meaning that prices will not rise"** — which was the precise effect of the last Government "price-control"! Tweedledum? Tweedledee?

CHRIS. WALSH
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Party activity is rather quiet here, there are more jobs than people by far, and most seem to be apathetic regarding political matters, although perturbed by the ever-

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MORALS AND ETHICS

Great alarm and pessimistic predictions are being exhibited along editorial, business, educational, and poltical fronts anent the present status of our moral and ethical codes. We are warned that unless something is done, and done soon, a collapse is imminent, and our prized institutions of family, business, and government are headed for the bargain basement.

During the past year investigating committees, led by Senators Kefauver and Fulbright, have examined the process of criminal and political corruption, arriving at the gloomy conclusion that the fear market in the field of pollution has pulled us down well below sea level and refuses to erupt. The Dow-Jones graph of the ethical arena reveals an erratic descent to disagreeable depths.

The distinguished investigators lament the lessening of the great moral values which constitute our heritage from the past. They would like to roll them back, and freeze them at some point in American history. Just where that point might be they have not stated, and we look in vain through the pages of our history to find any period where the functions of government have been exercised on behalf of the majority of the American people.

If the scrutinizing Senators would only look beyond their noses they would find ample precedent for the situation they claim to be uprooting today.

Only a generation ago we had the Harding scandal, with the Ohio gang looting the national resources and dividing the proceeds in accordance with a sliding scale of predatory merit. Prior to that we had the Reconstruction gangsters of Grant's regime. Still further back Andy Jackson was hurling a verbal barrage at the financial pirates who were scuttling the ship of state. The intervening eras were loaded with political debauchery, and periodic investigations were countenanced when the combustible material got out of hand and blazed into the open.

In fact it can be stated as an axiom that graft and corruption in class society are just as natural as loopholes in law, or seeds in grapes. Messrs. Kefauver and Fulbright merely popularized the proceedings. Now, every commentator, reviewer, and editor is revealing the evidence. Even the preachers, whose rhetorical blasts were previously confined to "Original Sin," not wishing to offend any of the transgressors who often are liberal contributors to the holy cause, are becoming broad-minded enough to concede that there may be sin in the concrete as well as in the abstract. It is safe to talk now.

BASIS OF MORALS

In common usage our morals and ethics deal with our duty and conduct, or how we behave toward each other both as individuals and groups.