

LET THE BANKERS FIGHT ON THE MAGINOT LINE; LABOR'S FIGHT IS AT HOME ON THE PICKET LINE!

AGAINST THE ALLIES AND THE AXIS—FOR CAMP OF WORLD LABOR REVOLT!

The deep impression made upon the American people by the horrible bloodshed and destruction in the Netherlands, Belgium, and France is being used by those who want to send American youth to die in Europe as an occasion for new waves of pro-war propaganda in this country.

With the screaming newspaper headlines staring us in the face and the radio commentators working on our emotions, it is easy to be pushed off balance. Now, more than ever, is it necessary that the working people of this country think coolly and calmly. If we don't, we will be swept off our feet and plunged headlong into the blood-bath.

The lead role in the pro-war agitation is being played by the President. His speech before the American Scientific Congress and his messages to the rulers of Belgium and the Netherlands for the first time openly commit the United States to support of the Allies.

"We must help the Allies defeat Hitler now or he will come over here later", is the note struck by Roosevelt's speech and the main argument of the rest of the war-mongers.

"Of course," they all add, "there is no need of sending men to fight. We only need send material and the Allies will fight for us."

This position is either cowardly or dishonest, if not both. If justice is on the side of the Allies and they are fighting for us, why does not Roosevelt advocate our going to war to help them? Or is Roosevelt afraid that the majority of the people will oppose it? Then he is acting as a coward. Or is Roosevelt trying to get the nation into war step by step without the people knowing where they are headed? Then he is acting dishonestly.

Roosevelt is trying to scare us into war by pointing to the horrors of a Hitler victory. He could save his breath. The working people know what a Hitler victory would mean. Workers everywhere, including Germany, hate and despise Hitler and all he stands for—tyranny, misery, hunger, and war.

But why does not Roosevelt also tell us what the victory of Great Britain and France would mean?

He dare not, for no one would fight for the Allies once they knew this. The victory of the Allies, like the victory of Hitler, would leave Europe a heap of ruins.

The victory of the Allies, like the victory of Hitler, would mean world-wide unemployment, chaos, hunger, and misery such as the world has never seen.

The victory of the Allies, like the victory of Hitler, would mean that the people of Europe would live under dictatorships. France was a military dictatorship for more than a year before the war broke out. The wartime dictatorship in all the countries will become permanent.

The victory of the Allies, like the victory of Hitler, would mean a new division of the earth. The Allies disarmed Germany and saddled her with a tremendous war debt after the last war. If they win this time, they promise to carve up Germany and turn it into colonies of the victorious nations. This would mean a new world war within a few years.

If the victory of either side means ruins, hunger, misery, unemployment, dictatorship, and new wars, why should the working people support either side?

If this war ends with the victory of either imperialist camp—the London-Paris-Washington gang or the Rome-Berlin-Moscow gang—it will be a disaster for the human race.

But it is not a choice between them alone. There is a **THIRD CAMP** in the war. This is the camp of the revolution—the camp of the working-class and the oppressed peoples of the colonies.

The last war was brought to an end with revolutions in Russia, Germany, and Austria and mutinies in the Allied armies. This war must end the same way but more completely so. Neither imperialist gang must win! The war must end in the victory of the working people everywhere—in France and Germany, in England and Russia, in Italy and America, in India and Ethiopia. Only they can make a peace which will be permanent.

That is why the American working class must in every way possible help their brothers and comrades in the rest of the world. International labor solidarity is the workingman's answer to the nationalist hatreds of capitalist war.

Why should we, the working people of America, go to die on the Maginot Line? What concern is it of ours whether Hitler or a group of British bankers will rule on the heap of ruins that will be left in Europe?

What has a jobless man to fight for? Or an underpaid worker in a New York sweatshop—or a Negro living in fear of lynchings in Alabama—or a jobless youth in Chicago—or a sharecropper in Arkansas—or a migrant worker in California?

But there are some people to whom it will make a difference. The Wall Street bankers have investments which will be safer if the English and French win. A lot of other American capitalists expect to help the Allies win in order to collect by forcing them to give American capital business concessions in the British and French controlled areas.

But if the Wall Street bankers are so damned anxious to have the Allies win, why don't they go over and hang their guts on barbed wire in front of the Siegfried Line?

Our job is right here in America—fighting on the picket line. We want jobs, better wages, decent homes, not death in another man's war.

Let the bankers fight on the Maginot Line—we'll stay here and fight on the picket line!

U. S. Navy Moves Closer to Dutch East Indies As Roosevelt Gives Allies Open Support

USES NAZI ADVANCE TO STIR UP WAR SPIRIT

By DWIGHT MACDONALD

The Second World War began at dawn on Friday, May 10, 1940. After eight months of preliminary maneuvering and sideshows, the German Army crossed the Dutch frontier and rolled forward to meet the French and English armies in armed struggle for world power.

On the evening of that day, President Roosevelt opened a new—and probably final—stage in his war drive with a remarkably bold war-mongering speech to the American Scientific Congress meeting in Washington.

Snearing at the isolationist conception that "distance in itself gave us some form of mystic immunity" from attack, Roosevelt warned the scientists that "every single acre of the Americas, from the Arctic to the Antarctic" is open to foreign conquest. Almost lovingly, he dwelt on the fact that "today it is four or five hours of travel from the continent of Africa to the continent of South America."

WPA Drops Nearly Quarter Million During Month

WASHINGTON, D.C.—During the month of April, according to figures released by WPA authorities here, 229,000 workers were dropped from WPA. This brings the total WPA payroll down to slightly over 2,000,000. A further deep cut of 173,000 more WPA workers will have to be made during the month of May in order to keep within the appropriation.

What such cuts, originally proposed by President Roosevelt last spring, mean in human suffering is revealed by a survey just completed by the Federal Workers Agency of WPA. This survey covers the 800,000 families who were dumped off the WPA rolls last July and August.

Three months after they were cut from WPA, 94 out of every 100 of these families still had not found regular work.

Six months after the summer cuts, despite the outbreak of the war and the resulting war boom (the "boom" was in dividends mostly, not in jobs), almost half of the 800,000 ex-WPA workers were still without jobs.

And over three-fourths of these still unemployed families were "living" on less than \$5 a week. When Roosevelt said that private industry would "absorb" the hundreds of thousands dropped from WPA, he was lying. His figures showed him it was impossible. But he lied, and smiled, and cut still deeper. The 800,000 families won't forget. The echoes of July and August have by no means died out.

Arrest Negro for Answering Jury Call

ASHEVILLE, N.C.—The trial of Lawrence Signon in a local court gave dramatic proof of the difficulties of a Negro who seeks to fulfill his duties as a citizen in the South.

On June 3 of last year, Signon received a routine summons for service on the jury. The usually efficient court clerk had failed to weed his name out in dropping the Negroes from the list.

Signon took the summons at its face value and reported to the sheriff's office for instructions. He was taken into an elevator with several deputy sheriffs. The car was stopped between floors and Signon was severely beaten. He was then taken downstairs and arrested for disorderly conduct.

In the trial, which was recently completed, Signon was convicted and given a suspended sentence.

With the Third Camp

ARABIA

"Arab nationalists are smart. Their leaders have stopped throwing bombs, have decided to wait and see if white civilization will destroy itself. They want the war to last long enough for BOTH groups of whites to lose, they told an A.P. newsman last week." —Pittsburgh Courier, May 11



Both Boss Parties Got Money From Swindler

The financial support which both the Republican and Democratic parties receive from swindlers and shady financiers was once more revealed in the testimony of John H. McGlooin, controller of McKesson & Robbins, given before a Federal Court which is attempting to untangle the records of the late drug manufacturer, F. Musica, alias F. Donald Coster.

According to McGlooin, Musica contributed substantial amounts to both the Republican and Democratic campaign funds in 1936. The money was contributed in the name of one of his assistants, Ronald J. Platt.

The practice of large corporations in contributing to both capitalist parties in order to buy "protection" has often been revealed in the past, most notably in the investigation of the records of Samuel Insull following the crash of his mid-west public utilities empire.

Boston Worker Near Death After Slugging By Politician

CAMBRIDGE, Mass.—James Wilson, 44, of 412 Putnam Avenue, lies in the Cambridge City Hospital. His skull is fractured and he is dying. Wilson, who has a wife and young son, has been on relief for four years. He is dying because he objected to being exploited by a local politician, who forced him to repair cars for him—or else.

Local authorities have tried to cover up the story, because it threatens to blow the lid off rotten conditions in the city government. The name of the politician involved, whom local papers have either played down or suppressed altogether, is Hamilton—known as "Ratty" Hamilton to the neighborhood.

A Wilson Defense Committee has been formed, which will fight to expose and punish Hamilton and his associates. (Continued on page 2)

Shachtman Leaves on National Speaking Tour Against War

In an effort to make the voice of the Workers Party heard throughout the nation, Max Shachtman, national secretary, will make a coast-

to-coast speaking tour, beginning on May 16 in New Haven, Conn.

The tour will bring Shachtman before workingclass audiences in virtually every industrial center of the country. After New Haven his schedule will carry him to Boston, Lynn, and Worcester in Massachusetts, then across northern New York, through the Middle West, to San Francisco, Oakland, Berkeley, and Los Angeles on the West Coast and next through the Southwest to Austin and Houston, Texas, north to St. Louis, Mo., east to Louisville, Ky., and back to New York by way of the important cities of Pennsylvania.

Shachtman will speak on the new phase of the imperialist war now raging in Europe and its meaning for the labor movement of this country. He will deal with the efforts of Roosevelt to drag the country into the war and expose the moves being made in Congress to pave the way for America's entry.

Stalinists Ask Police To Nab Youth at Rally

CLEVELAND, O.—Members of the Workers Party here took advantage of the Stalinist "Mother's Day Peace Parade" to give out several thousand illustrated leaflets denouncing both war camps and calling for the workers in the "Third Camp" to fight the Roosevelt war drive.

The parade ended in a mass meeting of some 4,000 in Euclid Square. The crowd got a good idea of Stalinist methods during the speech of Michael J. Quill, head of the Transport Workers Union and prominent Stalinist stooge. While Quill was orating about civil liberties and democracy, a half dozen husky Stalinist youths began to rough up girls of the Workers Party who were giving out leaflets. A young man in the crowd, Henry Thurman, went to the rescue of the girls and was himself mauled and beaten. The Stalinists showed their revolutionary spirit by calling in the cops and having Thurman arrested for "creating a disturbance."

Members of the Workers Party, aided by individual members of the Socialist Workers Party and the Revolutionary Workers League then formed a phalanx around the leaflet distributors and marched through the crowd, defeating all efforts of the Stalinists to get at them, until all the remaining leaflets were given out.



For story on U.S. Navy cooperation with British in Western Hemisphere and the Pacific. See page 4.

pressed their will to keep out of the war abroad no matter what happens, Roosevelt's speech may seem a politically rash gesture.

Roosevelt Gambles on War

But Roosevelt is not a rash or careless politician. He is gambling on a swift and far-reaching reversal of public opinion as a result of the Nazi invasions. If he wins his gamble, it means a third term for himself and, for the country, speedy entry into the European inferno.

As we go to press, the new phase of the war is less than a week old. Already the war drive has shifted into high gear.

"Tightening of the New England coast defense" was announced by Army headquarters in Boston the day after Hitler struck.

A strong movement is under way in Congress to repeal or "modify" the Johnson Act and the Neutrality Laws so as to allow American credits to be extended to the Allies.

Chairman Vinson of the House Naval Affairs Committee says his committee will shortly consider plans for naval expansion which "will make your eyes pop out". Rear-Admiral Robinson, coordinator of ship construction, proposes a 24-hour, three-shift day in naval building and an extra \$300,000,000 fund to put speed-up plans into effect.

Chairman May of the House Military Affairs Committee says frankly, "We ought to do everything we can to help the Allies."

President Roosevelt, first reported to be about to ask Congress for another \$500,000,000 for "national defense", as we go to press has indicated that he will ask for "much more" than this sum. He is quoted as saying in effect: "Hang the expense. The nation must be prepared!"

The Congressional "isolationists"

(Continued on page 4)

LAUNCH \$3,000 PARTY-BUILDING DRIVE

Seek to Raise Entire Amount By June 15

With the establishment of Labor Action as its weekly organ and the first steps to carry out its "Program of Action", the Workers Party announced through its National Office the opening of a fund drive to raise \$3,000 to finance its work.

An appeal is being made to all members of the party and the Young Peoples Socialist League (Fourth International) and supporters of the two organizations to pledge themselves to raise the above amount by June 15. Several local sections of the party have already responded with the sum of \$746.90. New York has taken the lead by raising \$597.65 of the \$2,000 quota it has set itself. Philadelphia and Boston have likewise raised a large share of their quotas before the drive has reached full swing.

Albert Gates, business manager of Labor Action, pointed out in an appeal to readers of the paper that "its regular publication is absolutely necessary if the voice of the anti-war forces of the United States is to be heard."

Addressing himself directly to the party's supporters, Gates stated: "Readers of our press and sympathizers with our aims who wish to see Labor Action regularly set forth the message of opposition to the two imperialist war camps and support for the third camp of world labor, must give their wholehearted support immediately. The continued publication of Labor Action is directly dependent upon the success of the National fund drive. Checks and money orders are to be made out to Harry Allen, national organizational secretary of the Workers Party, and marked for the National Press Fund."

The quotas pledged and those paid by locals of the Workers Party are listed below:

City	Pledge	Paid
New York	\$2,000.00	\$597.65
Chicago	100.00	10.00
Los Angeles	75.00	5.00
Philadelphia	75.00	52.00
Boston	75.00	24.50
Akron	50.00	14.50
Cleveland	50.00	10.00
St. Louis	50.00	—
St. Louis County	50.00	—
San Francisco	50.00	—
New Haven	40.00	—
Washington, D.C.	25.00	5.00
Texas	25.00	—
Lynn, Mass.	25.00	—
Worcester	25.00	7.90
Newark	25.00	—
Youngstown	20.00	—
Columbus	20.00	—
Oakland	20.00	—
Gloversville, N.Y.	20.00	10.00
Streator, Ill.	10.00	5.35
Rochester	10.00	—
Pittsburgh	10.00	—
Louisville	10.00	—
Allentown, Pa.	5.00	—
Detroit	5.00	5.00
Ann Arbor, Mich.	5.00	—
Gardner, Mass.	5.00	—

Workers Party Well Received in L.A.

LOS ANGELES—Members of the newly formed branch of the Workers Party here were feeling just a little proud today, after the enthusiastic reception given the party by its friends and sympathizers last week.

Some seventy-five people attended the meeting Friday night at which the split in the "Trotskyist" movement was analyzed and explained. They showed keen interest in the well-prepared talk, engaged in a lively discussion afterward, and contributed financially to the party of the Third Camp.

After the meeting two new membership applications were received, bringing up to six the total received within the week. Statements made with the applications echoed those made on the floor during discussion, approving the healthy attitude of the new party in its determination to face the American scene and build an American movement.

The branch has already begun several classes, with others scheduled to start very soon.

By next week the following weekly classes will be meeting regularly: "Negro Problems," a Tuesday evening class, conducted on the south side of the city;

"Socialism and the American Worker," a Thursday evening class, meeting at the party headquarters;

"American Youth Faces War," a series of Wednesday evening classes, led by the Pasadena committee in that city.

In addition, several lectures on both timely and historical topics are being sponsored by the Y.P.S.L. at the Party headquarters.

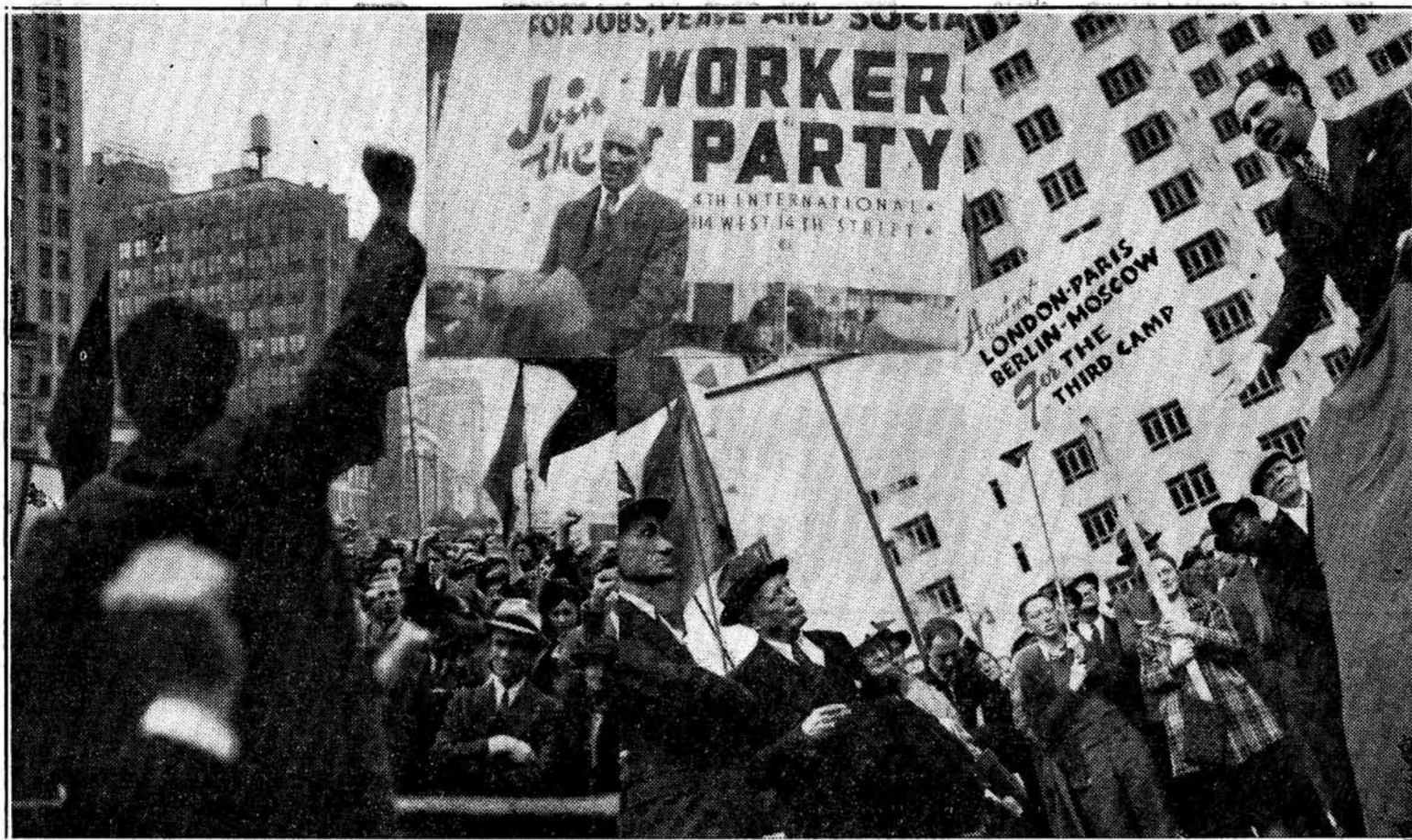
NEWARK IN ANTI-WAR RALLY

NEWARK, N. J.—Ernest Rice McKinney and Genevieve Noah will address an anti-war meeting called by the Newark district of the Workers Party on May 17 at Eagles Hall, 101 Montgomery St.

McKinney has been prominent as a speaker on Negro and labor problems and is at present the national labor secretary of the Workers Party.

Preparations for the meeting include the distribution of a leaflet headed: "Negroes of Newark—This is Not Your War!"

AS THE WORKERS PARTY WENT INTO STREETS ON MAY FIRST



Scenes from Workers Party May Day demonstration in Columbus Circle, New York City. Top center: Ernest Rice McKinney, national labor secretary. Extreme right: Max Shachtman, national secretary.

STUDENT-WORKERS RESIST RED-BAITING IN UNION

BERKELEY, Calif.—An attempt to blacklist radical members of the Student Workers' Federation was decisively defeated at the last general meeting of the organization held here last week.

The S.W.F., organization of working students at the University of California, has advanced to a position of major importance on this campus during the past six months. As a result of its active participation in three strikes in cooperation with the Culinary Workers Union, the S.W.F. has won a tremendous increase in membership and prestige in Berkeley.

At the very end of the last general membership meeting, however, this unity was disrupted when Jack Palmer, Executive Secretary, addressed a vague "warning" to the membership against Trotskyite disruption in the labor movement and an admonition to "keep an eye on" members of the Young Peoples Socialist League in the S.W.F. Palmer brought no specific charges against any person in the organization.

Members Rebuke Palmer
Palmer's statement dumbered the membership, as the Y.P.S.L. members in the S.W.F. are generally known to be among the hardest working, most militant and most effective persons in the organization. Palmer's blacklist attempt was answered by Gordon Haskell, member of the Organizing Committee, who branded Palmer's general statement as a lie, and demanded specific charges and proof. Palmer said nothing. Haskell then moved that:

SHACHTMAN GIVEN OVATION IN PHILADELPHIA

PHILADELPHIA—Before an enthusiastic audience of almost one hundred party members and close sympathizers, Max Shachtman, National Secretary of the Workers Party, launched the Philadelphia local of the party with a stirring anti-war speech.

Comrade Shachtman received an ovation from the audience when he finished his speech and called on the sympathizers to take up the only self-respecting profession in the world today—the profession of revolution.

"The workers of the world can gain nothing from a victory of either side in the war," said Shachtman. "The Workers Party points to the Third Camp, the camp of world revolution."

On the day of the Shachtman meeting, four members of the Young Peoples Socialist League were inducted into the ranks of the Philadelphia section of the Workers Party. Sol Thomas, organizer of the Philadelphia local, welcomed these youths into the party and spoke on plans for future action.

NEW YORK ANTI-WAR RALLY

Local New York of the Workers Party has responded to the new spread of the war in Europe and the growth of pro-war propaganda in this country by calling a mass anti-war rally for Wednesday, May 15, at Labor Temple.

All preparations were reported complete as we went to press. Spokesmen for the local committee of the party were sure that the intense interest in the war would result in a successful meeting.

CLEVELAND—M. Hess, leading member of the Youngstown branch of the Workers Party, will speak here on May 17 on the subject of "The Soviet Union in the Second World War."

N.Y. Taxi Strike Solid in 4th Week

With the strike of more than 5,600 New York City taxi drivers against the Parmelee and Terminal Cab companies entering its fourth week, the company officials have again rejected the attempts of Local 100 of the Transport Workers Union to settle the dispute.

Last week, a letter was sent by Mayor LaGuardia to both the union and the cab companies, urging that they both negotiate an agreement with the assistance of State Mediator Arthur S. Meyer. Yesterday the company turned down this proposal, and the picket lines still remain firm around the company garages.

The strike started when the two companies refused repeatedly to negotiate with the Transport Workers Union because they claimed that the union did not represent the men. Officials of the T.W.U. point out, however, that in elections in 1937 and 1939, the men voted overwhelmingly for the C.I.O. union to represent the drivers answered the strike call sent them. Ninety-five per cent of the T.W.U. in the present conflict, according to the union's spokesmen.

The union is demanding an increase of 42 per cent in wages for those men who are paid on a percentage basis and a 10 per cent increase for the men who work on a weekly salary basis. In addition, the union is asking a closed shop and job security. The union is also demanding that the companies in full for accident insurance on the drivers.

Revamped UPWU Leads Jobless

By May Bennett

On May 9th the Unemployed and Project Workers' Union of New York City held demonstrations at all relief bureaus. Angered by increasingly difficult conditions the unemployed demonstrated about:

Increased and new red-tape procedures at bureaus.
Delay in handling of cases.
For a 40% increase in cash allowances.

Against voucher relief—against the Stamp Plan.

Increased clothing allowances (District Office 25 at E. 125th Street gives the largest clothing allowances in the city—10c per month!)

At Bureau 25, the Afro-American Association played an active part in the demonstration. Members of the U.P.W.U. carried posters calling up on "Negro and White" to "Unite and Fight". The demonstration continued throughout the day.

At the Bleecker Street Bureau 25 men were arrested. The police were cagey; they wouldn't arrest the women demonstrators but only the men. There were 75 people on the picket line around the bureau. The 25 arrested men were brought before Judge Ringel at the Second Avenue and 2nd Street court house. Although the Bureau pressed no charges the cops claimed violation of the city noise ordinance. (This despite the fact that the Bureau is in a factory, not a residential district.)

City Judge Makes Most Noise

When the arrested men were brought before Judge Ringel, he became terribly excited. Ignoring the fact that the Bureau didn't press any charges, he shouted and carried on, yelled at witnesses and threatened lawyers. (If any one at all, Judge Ringel should have been pulled in on violation of the noise ordinance.) Max Weinberg, a WPA worker and member of Local 22 of the U.P.W.U., who happened to be the speaker at the time of the arrest was sentenced to five days by Judge Ringel who was looking for someone to pin the whole thing on. Through the skillful efforts of De-

fense Counsel Zimmerman, the rest of the arrested men were given a suspended sentence.

These demonstrations at the local offices were preliminary to a mass demonstration to be held by all locals at City Hall very soon. The sympathetic response which the relief clients gave the pickets has led the leading members to make "the push-chair squatters at City Hall sit up, take notice, and do something."

U.P.W.U. Just Reorganized

In October, 1938, the Unemployed & Project Workers' Union broke from the Stalinist-controlled Workers' Alliance. At the founding convention the delegates elected a "Leader" to guide the U.P.W.U. Henry Rourke was the man they picked to be their "Leader". Rourke had been City Organizer and a member of the executive committee of the Workers Alliance. In the past he had done his work well. So he was elected President. Maybe they thought it would be easier this way. But they learned better.

At its convention held three weeks ago, the U.P.W.U. completely reorganized itself. The main point on the agenda of this second convention, so far as the rank and file were concerned, was Rourke—the object to get rid of him.

Rourke had been a capable fellow who knew his business. But they gave him a lot of power and he laid down on the job. The locals would ask for directives from the central office regarding some phase of their activity. Rourke didn't want to be bothered.

If a member got up at a meeting to protest against the inactivity of the central office, Rourke's answer was, "Shut up!"

So the members learned a bitter lesson. They learned that what they needed was not a "Leader" but a collective leadership, a leadership elected from the ranks and accountable to the ranks.

Freddie Drake, militant member of the Union, was one of the leaders in the fight against Rourke with the slogan, "Five Heads are Better than

Union Meets in 'Jungle'

BANGOR, MAINE — Prevented from obtaining a meeting place in the entire city of Bangor, Local M-230 of the International Wood Workers of America (C.I.O.) held its first regular meeting in the local "jungles".

The charter from the International office was presented and the following temporary officers were installed: president, Edward O'Brien; secretary-treasurer, James Burke; business agent, Jack Gregory; William Vaughn, publicity.

The response to the meeting was greater than anyone had expected, membership were being written out and in short order applications for on paper. A large number of the workers presented their complaints about working conditions.

Although many of the workers are young, they showed a wide knowledge of the traditions of the I.W.W. area years ago.

The program of action that was unanimously adopted lays plans for and timber worker in New England. The organization of every sawmill. The union will fight to end the "gyppo" speed-up system and win union hiring halls, workmens compensation, insurance, a closed shop, and wage increases. The union will also seek to end the racketeering system in the transportation of men to and from the camps.

One." Rourke had no defense and was completely routed. Stripped of his autocratic power, Rourke lost interest in the U.P.W.U. He is now running the W.P.A. Mechanics & Chauffeur's Union and has cut his connection with the U.P.W.U.

A system of democratic control was set up by the convention that is a model for rank and file representation. An administrative committee of five was elected to replace Rourke. The only standing officers elected were a secretary and a treasurer. They are to function at the central office all day to take care of members coming in.

Harry Sheppard, the new Unemployed Organizer, for years has been one of the most active members of Local 22. While in the Workers Alliance he was active in the progressive group. He is no mere mimeograph machine activist; he has been arrested more times than any one else in the unemployed movement. Workers Alliance Loses Locals to U.P.W.U.

At the convention a new local was welcomed, Local 3, a former Workers Alliance affiliate. This local meets in East Harlem. Under the forceful leadership of Jack O'Brien, the local has grown from a membership of 12 to 27 militant and active members.

Shortly after the convention, the Workers Alliance lost another local to the U.P.W.U., this time its own local 1. This local was, as its number suggests, the first Workers Alliance local to be formed in the city, and had been given its charter by Big Boss Lasser himself. It is a large local made up of Italian-speaking members. Carone, leading member of the local, was chiefly responsible for bringing it into the U.P.W.U. For years he fought the "Popular Front" policies of the Workers Alliance, and its following of the Stalinist line of bootlicking the "New Deal" and calling off strikes. Finally, disgusted with what they called "Lasser and Company's scab policies", Carone and the rest of Local 1 applied for membership in the U.P.W.U.

Boston Slugging

(Continued from page 1)

gang, and to protect the interests of the Wilson family and the thousands of other Cambridge families on relief who have been living under the tyranny of a political gang.

James Wilson is an expert mechanic, who has been out of a job for four years. He and his family—a wife and a fourteen-year old son—have lived on \$10 a week from the Cambridge welfare bureau. Using his influence with the relief authorities as a club, "Ratty" Hamilton has been able to force Wilson to repair cars for him and his friends either for small sums or for nothing at all. Unprotected by any unemployed union, Wilson was absolutely at the mercy of this racketeering politician.

\$3 for a \$50 Job

Several weeks ago, "Ratty" asked—or rather ordered—Wilson to repair a badly damaged car for a friend of his. Wilson took the car apart and found that a piston rod was broken and the engine badly damaged. He phoned Hamilton's friend and told him the job would cost \$50.

"OK," said the friend.

After the car was repaired, Hamilton came around for it and offered Wilson—\$3. Wilson refused to take the money and held the car. A few days later the car-owner called at Wilson's place accompanied by Police Inspector Joseph O'Connor. He offered Wilson \$12. Intimidated by the presence of the cop, Wilson took the money and let them take the car.

"Wacky Will Punch Your Head Off"

When Mrs. Wilson went around to welfare headquarters the next day, she was told that her weekly \$10 check had been stopped. Hamilton had called up and told them that Wilson had just been paid \$44 for a repair job and so was no longer in need of relief.

Without any investigation, the Wilsons had been dropped from the rolls. When Wilson called up Hamilton to protest, "Ratty" told him to keep his mouth shut or "Wacky" Lauziere is a local tough who does "jobs" for Hamilton. He would have done it himself, he added, if it hadn't been for "that pug who was with you"—the "pug" being Wilson's boy. The Boston Herald of May 10 told the story of what happened next:

"Last Friday . . . five men arrived in two automobiles at the barn while Wilson was working on another car. Two of the men remained outside while Lauziere, the city official, (Hamilton—Ed.) and another man went in.

"The relatives said Wilson told them that he continued working on the machine while the three men tried to argue with him, and that Lauziere suddenly punched him while he was inspecting its motor, from behind, hitting him at the base of the skull. He was quoted as saying he fell on his back and that while he was down, Lauziere continued to punch him.

"The boy seized a file and dashed to his father's aid, but was held back by the city official, they said. When Wilson was nearly unconscious, the men left."

The Wilson Defense Committee is working to see to it that "Ratty" and "Wacky" and their gang get all that's coming to them. But more than that is necessary. Until the unemployed of Cambridge get together in their own unemployed organizations to protect their rights, they, like James Wilson, will be at the mercy of any grafting politician who chooses to exploit their labor.

BEER and BARBECUE (Dished up by Professionals!) The affair of the season. Dancing, dining, drinks, games—and would you know?—inspired dancing by a s-e-n-s-a-t-i-o-n-a-l young dancer. This affair is tendered by the FOOD WORKERS BRANCH of the WORKERS PARTY, Saturday nite, 9 p.m. May 25, 1940 at: DILLON'S STUDIO, 119 East 17th Street, N.Y.C.

SCHEDULE FOR SHACHTMAN TOUR

City	Date
NEW HAVEN	May 16
BOSTON	May 16, 17
LYNN	May 19
FITCHBURG	May 20
WORCESTER	May 21
GLOVERSVILLE	May 22
ROCHESTER	May 23, 24
PITTSBURGH	May 25
YOUNGSTOWN	May 26
AKRON	May 27
CLEVELAND	May 28, 29
ANN ARBOR	May 30
DETROIT	May 31
MADISON	June 1
CHICAGO AREA	June 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
SAN FRANCISCO AREA	June 13, 14, 15, 16, 17
LOS ANGELES AREA	June 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25
AUSTIN-HOUSTON	July 2, 3
ST. LOUIS	July 7, 8
STREATOR	July 9
CHICAGO	July 10, 11, 12
LOUISVILLE	July 13
COLUMBUS	July 14
AKRON	July 15
PITTSBURGH	July 16
WASHINGTON, D.C.	July 17
READING	July 18
ALLENTOWN	July 19
PHILADELPHIA	July 20

WITH THE THIRD CAMP FRANCE

"PARIS, Mar. 7 — Our comrades of the P.S.O.P., Rouaix, Jacquier, Preiss and Chapelain, as well as three young militants, who were arrested around the 9th of December, 1939, were tried last Friday, the 1st of March. The scene is worth recording: It is a military court; seven judges in uniform; the back of the hall is guarded by six soldiers, bayonets in their guns. In civil life the president is a multimillionaire pharmacist, lacking in intelligence, named James. Each time the court enters the room, the command: 'Present arms!' Everybody gets up. Nothing is lacking but the sound of the trumpet and the Marseillaise. Then the Court, before the assemblage, gives a military salute and a second command: 'Ground arms!' "The verdict: 5 years imprisonment, 1000 franc fine each, loss of civil and family rights. The two youngest are acquitted."

Independent News, Ap. 6, 1940

As you can see from this issue

LABOR ACTION

Weekly Organ of the Workers Party

is the only workers paper that carries on a genuine struggle against the imperialist war and for Socialism. This is the first regular issue. It will appear weekly featuring articles by

MAX SHACHTMAN, DWIGHT MACDONALD, JAMES BURNHAM, J. R. JOHNSON, B. J. WIDICK and others

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114 WEST 14th STREET, 3rd Floor
New York, N. Y.

Sparks in the News

Adjoining headlines in the "N.Y. Times" for May 7: "LITTLE AID IN WAR SEEN BY U.S. STEEL" "STEEL OPERATIONS BEST SINCE FEB. 26".

"No matter how distressing a case may be, you cannot defy the authorities. Actions such as this breed contempt for our government."

—Magistrate Klapp, of New York City, to a group of Workers Alliance members arrested for a sit-in demonstration to force action on an emergency case.

This fellow Klapp has a real gift for clear expression.

"Viking has just arranged for a shipment to England of 5,000 copies of 'The Bible of the World.' The books weigh just less than 12 tons and occupy 32 large shipping cases."

—Press release from Viking Press.

Who says the British rearmament program isn't forging ahead?

"WASHINGTON, May 4—The U.S. Wage-Hour Division has ordered Pinkerton's National Detective Agency to pay \$8,000 in back wages due 1,000 guards and watchmen under the Fair Labor Standards Act. Guards employed in Chicago worked as long as 84 hours a week for as little as 20 cents an hour, the division found. The company, after pay-

ing the back pay, agreed to pay 30 cents an hour."

—C.I.O. News, May 6.
We've heard of plenty of cases of non-union men getting a "free ride" to higher wages through the efforts of their unionized (and dues-paying) fellow-workers, but this is something special. These passengers, now getting a free ride, have done their best to tear up the tracks, derail the locomotive and shoot the engineer.

"It will be the same old story of financing war just as we did in the case of the World War. It starts by making commercial loans on short terms. These are extended to long-term loans. In the end, American dollars will finance the war."

—A. P. Giannini, head of the Bank of America, fourth biggest bank in the country, as quoted in N. Y. Times, May 7, 1940.

"If you were to skim the steaming cauldrons of hell and out of those skimmings create a creature, you could not create one viler than a man who would strip a decent woman naked in the streets in order that he could collect \$2 a month union dues from her."

—James A. Reed, ex-Senator from Missouri to the Smith Committee investigating the Labor Board. His topic: the organizing of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union.

Footnote: the I.L.G.W.U. several years ago tried to organize the Nelly Donnelly Garment Company of Kansas City. Nelly Donnelly is also known as Mrs. James A. Reed.

"Here in Washington you get no rest. I cannot step out on my front porch without being asked for assistance. People are always writing to you for assistance. Maybe they are about to lose their homes; maybe they are hungry and cannot get employment."

"Why there is no peace of mind for me even when I sit down to eat a meal. My thought turns to the pleas from those who are hungry and need help I cannot give."

—Matthew A. Dunn, congressman from Pennsylvania, explaining why he is not seeking re-election this year.

"ROBERT GOELETS CANNOT KEEP UP NEWPORT PACE. Ochre Court, one of the largest of Newport's lavish villas, will stand this summer shuttered and silent. Its owners, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Goelet, admit that they simply cannot afford to open the house, which has a dining room large enough to seat 100 and a ballroom which can accommodate 700. They will spend the season in Honolulu."

—N.Y. World-Telegram, May 10. We all have our troubles.

TOO POOR TO VOTE

The Story of The Poll Tax

Among the backward parts of the world where voters must pay a head or a poll tax before they can vote are Turkey, Iran, China—and eight of the Southern States of the United States. A bill (H.R. No. 7534) introduced into Congress in March by Representative Geyer of California as an amendment to the Hatch "No Politics" Bill, has as its purpose the complete abolition of the poll tax and returning the vote to millions of this country's most underpaid Negroes and whites.

The Southern Conference for Human Welfare, the organization sponsoring the bill, has brought to the attention of the House Judiciary Committee a collection of figures proving (1) that the least number of citizens vote where the tax exists, and (2) that through manipulation of the tax receipts, corrupt political machines have been built up and maintained, among them Long's regime in Louisiana and Hefflin's in Alabama.

In several instances, the tax is added up from date of birth. As a result, a farmer of 28, voting for the first time in Georgia, must pay \$15.50, and a citizen of Alabama at 35 years of age must pay \$21. Both the Democratic and Republican Parties have used this as an opportunity for "aiding" the local citizens by paying the tax for them—and giving them the receipts at voting time with the "proper instructions." Although this practise is illegal and many charges have been made, no convictions are secured.

Poll-tax States Cast Less Votes

The difference in the number of votes cast in states where the poll tax exists and those that are tax-free lead to obvious conclusions. In the 1936 Presidential election, the average percent of votes cast out of the total voting population in states which require the tax was less than 24%. Tennessee and Kentucky are almost equal in population; the former, a poll-tax state, cast 473,000 votes, while Kentucky cast 911,000, just about twice as many.

When leading citizens were asked in a survey conducted by the Montgomery Advertiser for their attitude towards the Geyer Bill, a mayor said, "The tax eliminates a vicious and ignorant vote." A probate judge said, "We've been apprehensive since the Negroes have been participating in the AAA elections. It gives them notions." The only official for the abolition of the tax was State Superintendent of Education Dr. Collins. Both he and the Parent-Teachers Association support the Geyer Bill in spite of the fact that those defending the tax claim that the money collected goes to support the schools.

In addition to sponsoring the bill, the Southern Committee for Human Welfare has instituted the case of Henry Pirtle vs. H. B. Brown et al. in order to bring the issue to the U.S. Supreme Court for a decision on whether it is constitutional for a state to impose a tax on the right to vote for Federal officers. Organizations supporting the bill include the A.F.L. and C.I.O., and Youth, Christian, and women's groups.

LABOR'S BOOK OF THE MONTH 'WHITE PAPER' REVEALS BRITISH ROLE IN LIFTING ARMS EMBARGO

By Dwight Macdonald
"Is there anything we can do to help?" Roosevelt cabled each of his ambassadors during the Munich crisis. The answers could all be summed up: "Not without making some commitment." But, as the authors of this book sadly comment: "In view of American public opinion, a commitment was quite impossible."

In spite of themselves, Alsop and Kintner have written a valuable book. They do their best to whitewash Roosevelt's foreign policy. But, as exceptionally well-informed newspaper men, they can't help constantly spotlighting the clash between Roosevelt's warmongering and the deep anti-war sentiments of the American masses. As the story unfolds, it becomes clear what a powerful brake on Roosevelt's war policies "public opinion" has been. How Roosevelt's mouth watered at the prospect of throwing American weight into the scales and dominating the world!

"But while he had the power," note the authors, "our people continued to lack the will. Clear though our interests seemed, the President dared not assert our influence, utter a threat or offer a commitment, for fear of the political consequences."
REVEALS FDR WAR MOVES
"American White Paper" is less exciting than its title suggests. There is not a great deal of important new material, considering the "pipe lines" Alsop and Kintner evidently have to the White House. But at least the story of Roosevelt's steady march towards war is told here in some detail, and with many revealing flashes. To run over the main items:

The Munich crisis, when "positive and realistic policy-making became unavoidable" for Roosevelt. (His policy was so "positive" as to frighten Chamberlain and Daladier. In the first half year after Munich, the axis of the anti-Hitler front ran through Washington and not through Paris and London.)
The recall of U.S. Ambassador Wilson from Berlin after the November pogroms in Germany. ("In the State Department, a strong faction favored a mere written expression of disapproval to Hitler. They were overruled by the President.")
The great French plane purchase scandal... "Our frontier is on the Rhine" statement... the penalty duties placed on German imports (on the excuse of "dumping") after Hitler took Czechoslovakia.

"American White Paper," by Joseph Alsop and Robert Kintner (Simon & Schuster, \$1).

Roosevelt's message to Hitler and Mussolini in April, 1939, asking them to guarantee the integrity of a long list of countries, beginning with Finland, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. (This message, in the light of later events, seems to have been sent to the wrong address.)
The backstage "chats" Hull and Roosevelt had with key senators try-

ing to line up enough votes to jam through repeal of the Arms Embargo. ("Unfortunately, most of Hull's pleading and the President's reasoning might as well have been addressed to the empty air," write the authors, meaning that Congressmen have to be much more sensitive to mass sentiment than presidents and state departments do.)

FDR-LIAR OR IGNORAMUS?

"When Roosevelt saw that one plan contemplated accumulation of reserves to equip a large expeditionary force for Europe, he put his foot down hard, declaring, 'You can base your calculations on an army of 750,000 men, for whatever happens, we won't send troops abroad. We need only think of defending this hemisphere.'"

An American White Paper, by J. Alsop and R. Kintner, p. 65.
"The new U. S. Army is a standing expeditionary force, designed for prompt conscription expansion into an expeditionary army of 750,000 active troops, 250,000 reserves... an outfit ready to be packed up and sent anywhere. The last place the Army expects to fight is on the U. S. mainland."

Time, April 15, 1940
"The railroads, working in conjunction with the U. S. Army, have made plans whereby large bodies of soldiers could be moved through the port of New York without congesting it in the event that an American expeditionary force should be sent abroad. This was revealed by accident during I.C.C. hearings yesterday in Brooklyn."

N. Y. Times, April 24, 1940

The secret conversations that summer between officials of the British

and the American governments, arranging the details about the future purchase of munitions over here by the Allies. ("The English government, hoping for repeal of the arms embargo, had sent Lord Riverdale over to study purchasing methods with the Treasury's procurement division during the summer.") This "hope" of His Majesty's Government was later realized, with the help of the White House.)

Once war actually broke out, the tempo of the war drive speeded up. A series of war preparations were made with feverish haste:

Roosevelt issued the decree of "limited national emergency," which gave him dictatorial powers when and if he chose to use them.

He set the G-men to tracking down enemy spies and aliens, with special attention to "reds."

He held up the sailing of the Bremen with the vain hope that the British fleet would be able to catch her outside New York.

He announced his famous 300-mile "safety zone" around North and South America, within which no belligerent submarine or warship could operate. (Originally, it was to be 100 miles wide, but "the President re-drew the map with the help of a ruler on his desk, widening the zone to an average of 300 miles and straightening its boundary." As easy as that! But the British didn't like the idea, and Roosevelt tactfully let it become a dead letter.)

HIDES REAL AIMS

He called the special session of Congress to repeal the Arms Embargo and opened it with a "curious message." ("It was curious because it did not once refer to the real aim behind the repeal drive, to permit the democracies to use the United States as their arsenal.")

All through the story, Roosevelt's foreign policy has this same "curious" character. As a shrewd politician, he is only too keenly aware of the anti-war temper of public opinion. He is therefore continually squirming and wriggling and maneuvering to smuggle his pro-war policies across disguised as anti-war policies. Alsop and Kintner give the whole show away when they write that Roosevelt has never "dared" to present the issues of American foreign policy squarely to the people... The fact is that from the Munich crisis through the spring of 1939, American policy was ingenious rather than forthright.

It could hardly be put any more plainly than that.

To See or Not To See

by Susan Green

You Ought to See THE GRAPES OF WRATH

This movie is an honest interpretation of Steinbeck's novel. It turns a powerful spotlight on democracy as it is practised in that foreign country called California. Newspapers have followed its lead with stories on the misery of the migrant workers and the tyranny of the fruit growers. The LaPollette Civil Liberties Committee is investigating the situation.

You can bet that the workers themselves are not going to let the fight rage over their prostrate bodies. If these migrant workers are anything like the character Tom Joad, they won't.

His face scarred for life by the club of California "law and order", Tom is bidding good-bye to his mother, perhaps forever. He tries to explain to her how he feels about life. He says:

"Wherever men are fighting to get food for their children, I want to be there. Wherever cops are beating up strikers, I want to be there. Wherever hungry children are laughing the kind of laugh they have when they are going to be fed, I want to be there. And when human beings are living in the houses they build, are eating the food they produce, I want to be there."

Tom has become a rebel. Ex-preacher Casey also becomes a rebel—a fighting rebel. He leads a strike and is killed by a company gangster.

The movie shows how Tom and Casey got that way. Tractors crash through homes, pushing sharecroppers off the land, leaving wrecks behind them. Homeless families trek across the country to the "land of promise", only to find wretched

camp full of emigres like themselves, without money, homes, jobs or hope. When they get a job they become the serfs of the fruit companies for the duration of the work, under the clubs and guns of the vicious tin-star deputies.

The realism of the picture has its effect on the audience. The writer heard a woman gasp to her husband: "It can't be true." He said it is true. A young girl whispered to her boy friend: "It must be propaganda." He answered that he read about it in the papers.

Don't Waste Your Money on VIRGINIA CITY

You have seen this one lots of times under other names. The hero, Errol Flynn, rides right off a cliff, down, down, down. His horse breaks its neck. Errol, unscratched and quite debonair, appears at a telegraph station which miraculously arises in the middle of the desert. Before this fall, he has already fallen in love with a Confederate spy Miriam Hopkins. You have guessed by now that the hero is a Union spy. Bandits, of course, hold up the stagecoach in which our lovers meet. Humphrey Bogart as the bandit chief dons a cute little mustache and an accent. The hero and the heroine are torn between love and duty. The girl goes to President Lincoln. He says some fine words and everything becomes all right.

You Ought to See THE FIGHT FOR LIFE

Paul de Kruif's book is the basis for this story of the fight for the lives of slum mothers during childbirth. It affords an eye-filling of the grand and glorious American standard of living, dug out of the lowest depths. In face of the odds, what

a miracle that these men of medicine don't throw up the sponge. If one places their heroic struggle to save but one life, against the background of war in which even minor battles take hundreds of thousands of lives, the miracle of these men becomes even greater. Some statistics are presented in the course of the story. For instance, as many mothers die today in childbirth from preventable causes, as did twenty-five years ago.

You Could Take a Chance on YOUNG TOM EDISON

First you disregard the blurb about the typical story of a courageous American boy. It certainly is not typical, not even of Tom Edison. After that you may enjoy Mickey Rooney as he fights his way through the first stages of being a genius. His antics are amusing and some scenes are dramatic. The climax comes when he uses the whistle of a train to telegraph a message of danger to another train as it rushes on towards a washed out bridge.

Don't Miss OF MICE AND MEN

This is a story of bindle-stiffs from Steinbeck's novel. Bindle-stiffs, the writer understands, are migrant workers, loaders of grain, etc. The hunger of these lonely workers for a shack and patch of land of their own, gnaws its way out of the screen into the guts of the audience. But the emphasis in this story is on the unshakable friendship between George and Lenny. Lenny is a gentle-hearted half-wit whose uncontrolled physical strength brings George nothing but trouble, and finally tragedy. The story is gripping. Lon Chaney, Jr. does fine acting as Lenny.

Labor's Inquiring Reporter

The answers to the questions asked by our Inquiring Reporter are expressions of opinion by individual persons. This is NOT an attempt at a scientific sampling of public opinion.

QUESTION: The International Ladies Garment Workers Union is discussing affiliation to the C.I.O. A.F. of L., or remaining independent. Which do you favor and why?

PLACE: Garment manufacturing district, New York City.

Reporter: A. Roberts
Bertha Bendet
Brooklyn, N.Y.

All we want is a place in the labor movement. There shouldn't be any dispute. If both the C.I.O. and A.F.L. were combined the question would be easy. I would say we should enter this combined union. However, at present it makes no difference.

Isadore Miller, (Local 9)
Bronx, N.Y.

International members are in favor of C.I.O. The leaders however, aren't interested in democracy. Anything progressive they call red. In fact at Local 9 installation Dubinsky came out with the statement, "We're going to clean the reds out of the American Labor Party." The membership boomed him.

M.H.
Brooklyn, N.Y.

A.F.L. 99% of the members are for the A.F.L. I don't believe in splitting the labor movement. The C.I.O. is a splitter. Let's fight inside, not outside.

Emil Katz (Local 10)
Bronx, N.Y.

Independent. Because once there is a fight in the union, the worker is the loser. I don't want the

I.L.G.W.U. to get mixed up in the fight between the C.I.O. and A.F.L. We have 250,000 members. We are strong enough to fight our own battles.

Group of Dress Workers
Names and addresses refused.
We have nothing to say about the situation. Whatever those leaders of ours decide goes. We can't give you our names because we might be black-balled. However, unity is best for the workers.

Joseph Dworcen (Local 117)
Bronx, N.Y.

Once a start has been made towards affiliation with C.I.O. they should go through with it. Indirectly it will help the needle trades workers through organization by C.I.O. in small towns.

Esther Cohen (Local 22)
Brooklyn, N.Y.

C.I.O., because 'till now they tried to go forward and organized 4,000,000 workers and they are trying to increase the living standards and welfare of the workers, and keep the work from going out of town. They are also more democratic and in favor of the N.L.R.B. and the New Deal.

Sam Rosen
Brooklyn, N.Y.

Independent. They both smell. As long as there are factions and the leaders are only looking out for themselves, the workers suffer.

Louis Spivak
Bronx, N.Y.

Independent. If we remain independent, some day the rank and file might get a chance to have a say in the administration of union activities. The A.F.L. is too conservative, the C.I.O. is too left, though it is easier for the rank and file to have a say in the C.I.O. Some platform should be found to stop the fight between the C.I.O. and A.F.L. It would be much healthier for the workers.

B.F. Brooklyn, N.Y.

The opinion of the rank and file doesn't amount to anything. Did Dubinsky ask us about going into the C.I.O. or out of it? He uses his own judgment. If he would call a vote we would decide, but he doesn't.

R.S. Brooklyn, N.Y.

The C.I.O., because it is more active in labor fight. A.F.L. is old and backstanding. People want something new. C.I.O. organized so many millions. A.F.L. didn't do anything.

Mrs. R.M. (Local 48) Brooklyn, N.Y.

Everything is upside down now. I say down with the bosses and the union leaders. It makes no difference. All I know is that I need work and can't find it.

Mrs. M.S. Brooklyn, N.Y.

It makes no difference. So far as getting work is concerned it's the same thing. I don't want to discuss it. If the I.L.G.W.U. affiliates with one or the other it will be the same thing. They're all no good.

Mrs. F.A. New York City

It's up to the rank and file delegation at the convention. Rank and File groups were legal up to 3 months before the convention.

Now they're illegal. However, it depends on the delegation sent by these groups. Most of them I believe favor the C.I.O. Dubinsky originally broke with the C.I.O. because of conflict of his opportunism with that of Hillman. Of course we can't kid ourselves about his machine. He will have a majority at the convention. But we must continue our attempts to form an organized opposition.

CANNON—NOT BUTTER

By William Petersen

The first victim in a "war for democracy" is democracy. That victim has fallen. France has been ruled by decree since the very beginning of the war, and last week Britain moved to abolish at one swoop all the civil liberties that, surprisingly, have been maintained until now.

In a bill proposed by the government and certain to be passed, a prison sentence of seven years, or a \$500 fine, or both, would be imposed on persons or organizations concerned in the "systematic publication of matter calculated to foment opposition to the prosecution of the war." This is broad enough to include not only revolutionaries but pacifists and anti-militarists of every description.

Workers Tighten Belts

This restriction in the civil liberties of the people has been necessary to prevent them from protesting in an organized fashion against the ever-increasing hardships caused by the war. According to figures published by The Economist, London financial magazine, between September 1st and December 1st of last year, food prices in England rose as follows:

More than 40%: sugar, eggs.
Between 20 and 40%: bacon, fish, butter, salt.

Between 10 and 20%: cheap meat cuts (chilled beef, frozen mutton breast), cheese.

These figures are only for the first three months of the war, before the real pinch was felt, and yet they represent substantial increases in the price of most of what a workingman eats. The rise has not been restricted to foodstuffs. According to official figures, published by the Ministry of Labour, there was a rise in the cost of living (including food, rent and rates, clothing, fuel and light, and miscellaneous items) of 34.5% up to the first of this year.

The working class has also been made to feel the brunt of the war in the matter of housing. On September 8th of last year, only five days after the war started, the Ministry of Health ordered all slum clearance "deferred." The housing program, long postponed and urgently needed, was cut short. Even where clearance orders had already been given, those orders were revoked. The reason given was that the supply of lumber, over which the government has established a virtual monopoly, was insufficient for both general building and war purposes.

But the houses could have been made of substitute materials, of which there is a sufficient supply. According to the British trade journal, The Builder, "the supply of bricks, cement, asbestos-cement, glass, lime, pipes, sand and gravel, sanitary fire-clay, terra-cotta and tiles is far beyond the demand, and the capacity of these industries is more than sufficient to meet all requirements."

The abandonment of slum clearance is but part of the sharp curtailment of British building generally. The government policy is to push war construction and retard any other. The number of workers involved, as estimated by The Architects Journal, is more than two million, apart from twenty thousand architects and other professionals.

A whole industry, one of the most important industries of Britain, is completely wrecked. The workers live in slums, and can see no prospect for anything better. Most of the building workers are thrown out of work by the government policies. You Ain't Seen the Worst

But not until last week did the war really get under way. These are merely preparatory measures, which will be far surpassed by re-

WAR SMASHES WORKING CLASS LIVING STANDARDS IN ALL NATIONS

restrictions in the next few months. Recently, Robert S. Hudson, British Minister of Shipping, said that there would soon have to be a sharp reduction in the consumption of imported goods, "because at any time there might be a sudden demand for tonnage." Mr. Hudson did not bother to explain, what every English worker knows anyway, that "imported goods" includes practically everything he eats.

There is no limit to which the ruling class will not go. So says Sir John Simon, until last week Chancellor of the Exchequer—but let him speak for himself:

"If we found ourselves with our backs to the wall and in danger of being overrun and enslaved, there is no limit that we would not put on ourselves for obtaining liberty—compulsion in every form."

To get "our liberty," we would resort to "compulsion in every form." And the man who said this is now out of the Cabinet because he did not conduct the war forcefully enough!

England Bad, But Best

Not only in England but in all the belligerent countries, people are tightening their belts, while their rulers substitute guns for bread. French workers have had ration cards since February 29th. Bakery shops are closed three days a week. Restaurants are under government control. The use of alcohol and gasoline is severely limited. This is an extract from a letter from France:

"... Wages have fallen very far, in some instances by as much as 50%. Here is the case of a highly skilled worker, in one of the highest wage categories. He used to make 13 francs an hour; today he makes 10.50 francs an hour for 40 hours, but he has to work 60 to 70 hours. ... Also, he has to pay 18 francs

a day for food and lodging, whether or not he uses them. ..."

In Germany the workers had less that could be taken from them. A recent report by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, written by Harry L. Franklin, who spent twelve years in Germany, estimates the pre-war standard of living as follows:

On the basis of official German data, according to the report, the 1937 diet of the workingclass family was at least 15% below the 1927 or 1914 level, and there are reasons to assume that the German diet declined further between 1937 and August, 1939. Such essentials as meats and edible oils and fats were particularly insufficient.

Immediately after the war started, the Reich Council of Defense issued a decree that wiped out all that remained of German social legislation. Special wartime wages were imposed. All extra pay for overtime, night work and Sunday work was abolished. Paid holidays were also done away with. All regulations dealing with the limitation of the hours of work were wiped out. The ten-hour day has become the rule, and eleven and twelve hours the "exception" that frequently has become the rule.

In the "democracies": Removal of all civil rights, longer working hours, higher cost of living, lower wages. More work, less food. Economic and political conditions that do not differ from Germany. All for what? To defend democracy? For the rights of small nations?

Not according to the frankest statement in recent weeks, that of Chairman Jerome E. Frank of the Securities and Exchange Commission. Said he:

"Whatever the nature of the war, I take it that its purpose will be to preserve our capitalistic or profit economy inside our democracy."

BRITISH INTERESTS GUARDED BY U.S. NAVY

The world crisis provoked by Hitler's invasion of the Low Countries laid bare, in its first few hours, the imperialist role that the United States is playing in the war.

In the Western Hemisphere, the Roosevelt Administration showed its solidarity with the Anglo-French war camp. When Allied forces occupied Iceland and the Dutch West Indies, the U.S. State Department promptly declared these seizures were not violations of the Monroe Doctrine.

In the Pacific, the entire U.S. battle fleet was kept "indefinitely" in mid-Pacific to protect the Dutch East Indies from Japan. This is worth more to the Allies, at the present time, than another A.E.F. in France.

American policies in two hemispheres in the last week have shown clearly (1) that Roosevelt understands correctly that the capitalist class he represents has world-wide imperialist interests, and (2) that these interests lie with the Allied camp in the present war.

THE FAR EAST —

Ever since the war began, the British and the American fleets have had a most sensible division of labor. The British fleet devotes its full strength to fighting Hitler in the Mediterranean, the North Sea and the Atlantic, while the American fleet thoughtfully watches over Anglo-American imperialist interests in the Pacific. That England is in the war and the United States is not, this is a mere technicality. For all practical purposes, the American fleet is the Pacific division of the British fleet.

At present the entire U.S. battle fleet is maneuvering somewhere in mid-Pacific between Hawaii and Japan. There are altogether in these waters some 140 American warships, manned by 42,000 officers and men and including every size of ship from three great aircraft carriers and eleven battleships all the way down to some sixty destroyers. This cord of fighting steel bars Japanese access to the riches of the Dutch East Indies.

According to the original schedules, the fleet was to have been back in home waters by this time. But on the day before Hitler's blitzkrieg broke over Holland, Admiral Richardson, commander-in-chief, issued a sudden and surprising order: the fleet would remain in mid-Pacific "indefinitely".

The Dutch East Indies — Bone of Contention

Admiral Richardson's order backed up with armed might, Secretary Hull's repeated warnings to Japan last week that the status quo in the Pacific must be maintained. There seems to be more chance right now that the United States will get into the war by the "back door", that is by fighting to protect American imperialist interests in the Pacific, than by the front door of directly taking part in the European struggle.

Hitler's invasion of Holland throws into the war Java, Sumatra, Borneo and the rest of the Dutch East Indies, with their riches of oil, rubber, sugar, etc. Like two dogs eyeing a tempting bone, American and Japanese imperialism are watching hungrily this unprotected colonial treasure-house. Each is for the status quo—at present. Each hopes to grab the prize at some favorable point in the war.

Roosevelt's "Policy of Alertness"

A month ago, just after the Nazi invasion of Norway, Arthur Krock, chief political writer of the N.Y. Times and a frequent mouthpiece for the State Department, wrote in his column about "a deliberate and secret design on the part of the aggressor nations to extinguish or take into their orbits all neutrals in both hemispheres who have not the force to resist."

"The pattern," continued Krock, "has been traced from Tokyo to Rome, to Berlin and to Moscow. When it was reported some time ago that a secret 'memorial' had been disclosed in Japan, aimed at the Far East territory of all the democracies, the then Attorney General, Mr. Murphy, presented to Mr. Roosevelt this theory of the dictators' pattern. He had heard much of it in the Far East when Governor General of the Philippines and it was supported by military intelligence officers. On the basis of this theory, the 'policy of alertness' was created, a part of which was the President's effort to arouse the United States to its own dangers if the design should be accomplished."

The invasion of Denmark and Norway, according to Krock, gave a big forward push to Roosevelt's "policy of alertness". The fighting in Holland and Belgium, with its effect on the world colonial situation, has already swept the policy to the stage of open preparation for armed intervention in the Pacific.

Our Readers Take the Floor...

WHAT THOMAS PREFERS

To the Editors:
In your May Day issue, you refer to Norman Thomas as the head (and body) of the Socialist Party. I wish you would explain further what you mean by body of the party. And when Comrade Thomas (prefers) the Allies, he prefers the little democracy that the workers have in England and France in preference to that of Germany and its potential allies, Italy and Russia. Will you kindly state your position on the above question publicly or to me personally. I would also like you to explain your position on remaining in the Fourth International when you differ on such a question as the Soviet Union and its alliance with the Nazis.

—Hyman Rifkin

Bronx, N.Y.

1. Our reference to Thomas as the "body" of the Socialist Party refers to the common knowledge that the public activities of Thomas are solely responsible for what life is still left in the shell of what was once the party of Debs.

2. We too prefer a little democracy to none at all. But support of British and French imperialism is the best way to destroy what democracy still remains in these countries. This is not a war between fascism and democracy. It is a war over colonies and profits—the only kind of war an imperialist government ever fights. We prefer the victory of neither imperialist camp. We prefer the victory of the Third Camp—the camp of world labor and the oppressed people of the colonies.

3. The 4th International remains the only world labor organization that is honestly fighting for the overthrow of capitalism. It is the duty of all revolutionists to support it. We, together with our co-thinkers in other sections of the International strive to win it for our views on the role of the Soviet Union in the war.

Editors

UNION DRESS SHOPS

Dear Friends:

There are few people who really know how bad things are in the dress factories. Even those that have a union aren't decent places to work in. And if you're a Negro it is still worse.

I work in a town in New Jersey as a presser, which is the only work a Negro can get in the dress houses. The I.L.G.W.U. (Local 150) came in and spoke to the boss. The boss told us we are all joining the union.

Union rates for a presser are \$2.75 per hundred for jackets and \$2.60 for cheaper ones, \$1.35 per hundred for skirts and \$1.10 for cheaper ones, and around \$3.85 per hundred for one-piece garments.

This sounds like a lot of money. But I earn about \$13 a week. I usually spend 35 hours or more every week hanging around the shop waiting for work. (And they don't pay you to hang around.)

Work is getting slower because jobs are being sent to the non-union places in Elizabeth. The union doesn't do much about it.

Our local only meets when the business agent has something to tell us. When he comes to our shop he speaks to the boss first and then tells us what's what.

If the workers would all stick together the union agent couldn't put this over on us.

A Union Presser

LAGUARDIA AND RELIEF

To the Editors:

LaGuardia's "liberal" administration has a new trick up its sleeve. And this tops them all. They've taken to pan-handling! There was a time when the Bureaus recognized emergency cases. A family would be dispossessed or someone would be locked out of a room. If the Bureau was pushed a little, it would finally admit the case was sort of an emergency and would take emergency measures to get relief. But not any more. Now, instead of sending for a check, the investigator goes around pan-handling from the friends and neighbors of the client. After all, is it not "more blessed to give than receive"? The relief investigators think the Bible only meant this for the poor people.

There was one girl that I know of who was locked out of her room three times. But the bureau wasn't convinced she rated an emergency check. Instead they went to the girl's friends—who were almost as poor as the girl herself—and asked for "Just another 50c, just another 50c." When asked if the girl ought to go on the streets to earn some money, the investigator shrugged her shoulders. But what else is there to do? If you're locked out, you have no address. If you have no address you don't get on relief. If you go to a flop-house where you get two meals a day—both coffee and beans—you're still considered as homeless and not eligible for relief. Where do you get money for a room? Did the investigator's shrug mean that she thought the streets were as good as any other place? Well, the unemployed don't think so and they know a way out.

We're learning the best way to get what we want and we're going to do it. That is by uniting in the Unemployed and Project Workers Union. The people are not asking for charity. That's begging and we're not beggars. We pay taxes on everything we buy and everything we do. We're only asking for what we're entitled to. We don't want to pan-handle. Nor do we want to die on the battlefields so that the million-

aires can make more millions. We want our rights. And through our own union, the Unemployed Project Workers Union, we're going to get them!

U.P.W.U. Member

THINKS IT'S GREAT

To the Editors:

The first issue of Labor Action is great! It's just what we've been waiting for.

M. Hess
Youngstown, Ohio

SIDNEY HILLMAN'S RECORD

To the Editors:—

A biography of Sidney Hillman has recently been written by George Soule. It would be more truthful to call it, as the workers of the A.C.W.A. do, "The Life and Career of a Labor Faker by a Literary Prostitute."

What a deliberate, distortion of the truth! If it wasn't so damn tragic it would be funny.

Not a word on how the Amalgamated Clothing Workers has degenerated to the point where it is indistinguishable from the United Garment Workers from which we had seceded.

Nothing said of the steady barrage of wage cuts. The slashing of the wages is presented to the workers as a "victory." "Just think," says the business agent, "they wanted a reduction of 25% and we settled for 12 1/2%."

Not a word of the rotten speed-up systems introduced by the Hillman machine, that shortens the seasons and brings unemployment and virtual starvation in its wake.

Not a word said of the "pogroms" of the late twenties, as the workers called it. The *Daily News Record* of August 1, 1929 explained the criminal attack on the rank and file opposition this way:

"The policy of expulsion adopted by the A.C.W.A. against ring-leaders and chronic trouble fomenters at least cured most of them of the attacks of violence to which they were subject, reducing some to the status of peaceful union members and removing others entirely from the industrial sphere."

Union members who would not keep quiet while everything they had won, by their blood and their class consciousness, was given back to the bosses by Hillman's regime were beaten and clubbed. No mercy was shown until every bit of opposition was expelled but local unions also. The locals led by the rank and file leaving the militants out in the file were suspended and "re-organized, blacklisted." "What's the use of fighting," the remaining members said, "the union is for the bosses. We'll keep our mouths shut and maybe later, on . . ." So Brother Hillman and his machine emerged victorious with the congratulations of the bosses as befits a "class" defender.

The book is nothing more or less than a defense of class collaboration and conciliation, impartial chairmen and all the other methods of the fine art of selling out the workers.

To top it all, a copy of this book with Brother Hillman's autograph was presented to those manufacturers who have contracts with the Amalgamated, so that they can appreciate what a great defender of private profits he is.

Does the spectre of a militant union controlled by the workers haunt you? Well it should, brother, the future belongs to us.

Fraternally yours,

J. H.
Philadelphia

Ten Commandments Of Soviet Atheists Support Hitler

The growth of pro-Nazi ideas in the Soviet Union since the Hitler-Stalin Pact was revealed in the following amazing "ten commandments" published in Moscow in the recent issue of *Bezbozhnik* (The Godless), organ of the Soviet atheist movement and reported by the Jewish Telegraphic Agency release of May 6:

- (1) Whoever opposes Soviet-German cooperation is an enemy of the Soviet Government and of Communism;
- (2) Germany and the Soviet are unitedly fighting against capitalism, against religion and for a new social order;
- (3) The German nation, like the Soviet people, are against religion and for Socialism;
- (4) The German-Soviet Pact killed the war campaign conducted by the Church;
- (5) Stalin and Hitler are against religion and capitalism;
- (6) The pact with Germany resulted in creation of new political positions for the Soviet in northern and eastern Europe;
- (7) The political and economic structure of the Soviet and Germany are not yet the same;
- (8) It is already clear that after the war Germany will have to continue on the road to real Socialism;
- (9) owing to the cooperation with Germany, it has been made possible for Communism to penetrate into other countries;
- (10) Stalin requires loyalty to Communism, world revolution, and atheism.

THEIR FIRST STRIKE

a short story by Martin Lechner

The panic-stricken men and women milled about in the strike headquarters above the beer tavern. They were too excited to sit in any of the chairs or benches which were scattered through the hall. Everyone was seeking the ear of a sympathetic fellow-worker.

"Christ, Joe, what am I going to do with no pay check next Saturday? And the Saturday after. And, maybe—hell, no! The strike has got to be over by then."

"Listen, Larry, I got troubles of my own. My wife's time is about up. The grocer will carry you along when you're working, but when you're out of a job or on strike . . ."

Joe let the sentence die in his throat when he noticed that Larry wasn't even listening and began moving away in search of someone who might listen without spilling his own tale of woe.

The strikers, about two hundred of them, were men and women who had been lured from the farms and small towns by the rumors of big wages in the city. "They say you can make \$12, \$15, and even \$20 a week up in St. Louis" was the word that passed around. No one said anything about slack seasons and lay-offs.

Why Did We Leave Home?

But a year or two in the city made the more philosophical ones muse that "grass is always greener on the other side of the fence," while the less philosophical just cursed the day they left their old home. True, they never earned "\$12, \$15 and even \$20" in the lead mines of southern Missouri or on a "farm" in the Ozarks, but they never had to shell out 12c cash for a quart of milk, either. And paying across the counter for a pound of ham was a lot different from going out to the smoke house and taking it down from the hook.

No matter how hard one worked or how long the hours on the farm, one always felt compensated when one put away a hearty meal and then went out on a summer evening to roll on one's back in the grass until complete darkness in the western sky indicated that it was time for bed. However, riding for nearly an hour on a stuffy, foul-smelling trolley car to walk through dirty streets and into a smoke-begrimed building called a "home" left you neither an appetite for food nor the peace of mind for sleep.

Why not go back home? How many times didn't that question pop into one's head? But no sooner did one think of it than a host of other questions came up. "What will Morton say, that good-for-nothing gossip? And after I told that young snob Pennypacker that when I came back I would build a house that would make his old man's look like a tourist cabin. And won't the gang down at Reilly's rib me? Hell no, I've got to get a break one of these days."

The Strike Begins

But as time went by, more and more got the idea that you never got anywhere waiting—you had to make your own "breaks". The result was the organization of a spontaneous strike. The 200 employees of the Hamlin Casket Co. walked out to the last man—and woman. The spirit was high. "What the hell is the boss going to do without us?"

But the boss was in no hurry. He shut down for a few days. The picket line in front of the plant grew smaller and more disorganized. The enthusiasm of the first day gave way to the complete panic voiced by Larry and Joe. There were no committees on food or publicity. There was no tie-up with any other union organization.

"Deacon" Warren, whose nick-name was the result of having told the boys in the plant that he had been a church deacon back home, tried to get some order and unity of action by advocating a meeting to decide what to do. On the third day, the strikers met. After discussing this

and that and hearing a lot of whimpering about going back, young Healey, the truck driver at the plant, suggested applying for relief. He said he knew a "guy" that belongs to an unemployed organization and "knows the ropes about getting on relief."

Enter Jimmie Higgins

The meeting adjourned while Healey went out and got his fried. We will save him embarrassment by calling him Jimmie Higgins. Jimmie asked a few questions and sized up the situation in five minutes. He set to work organizing a strike committee, a kitchen detail, a food committee, picket captains, and other details known to every experienced labor organizer.

The appearance of Jimmie turned the tide. Enthusiasm bounded upward again. The picket line shouted the slogans and sang the songs that Jimmie taught them. Attempts to open the plant with scab labor were blocked. The strike was on its way to success when, one day, an explosion took place in the strikers' ranks.

"Deacon" Warren got up and accused Jimmie of being a "Commune-ist", as he pronounced it. The meeting went into an uproar. Some said they didn't give a damn what he was. Others said they would not follow a "Commune-ist", no matter how well he could organize. They pointed to the fact that Jimmie had worked for nothing and said, "He's no fool, he's in this for something." Jimmie's closest co-workers in the strike committee defended him by saying he was only a Socialist.

The meeting defeated a motion to remove Jimmie from the strike committee by a narrow margin. But the fatal breach had been made. The grumbling about the "Commune-ist" leader continued. Jimmie felt that his presence would ruin the strike and resigned after making a fervent plea for unity.

"We Want You Back!"

One evening, four days later, Jimmie answered a knock at his door. He noticed a group of men in the darkness of the hallway. "We came to ask you back, Jimmie. The picket line is falling apart. Some thugs went through with scabs today. Look at my eye. Some of our people want to go back. I am sorry I ever said anything about you being a radical. I don't give a damn whether you're a Commune-ist or Socialist or Spiritualist or even a Papist. Just as long as you help us give it to those scabs tomorrow."

It was "Deacon" Warren speaking. He stood at the head of the picket line right next to Jimmie on the following day. They closed up the plant as tight as a drum. The "Deacon" stood by Jimmie on line week after week. The strike was in its 51st day when the "Deacon" introduced Jimmie to a cheering strike meeting which voted to accept a contract which was a complete union victory.

It is now two years since that day. All the strikers are now good union people and proud of their part in the first strike. And the "Deacon" is proudest of all. It was my running into him at a street corner meeting the other day that prompted me to write this story. The "Deacon" wrung my hand and said: "There was a time when I used to spit when I passed one of these radical meetings. I wished God would send fire and brimstone down and destroy them as he did the wicked of old. Remember how I ranted during the strike? But that taught me a lesson. I thought we were being led by a Socialist or Commune-ist. Had I known I was following a Trotskyite, I would have burst a blood vessel. If you guys can do the same in any more strikes, the working people will have to open up their eyes and see who their real friends are, just as I did."

(Since the above is based on a true story, characters portrayed above are not fictitious, and resemblance to persons living or dead is not accidental.)

Roosevelt And War—

(Continued from page 1)

are showing their real colors (red, white and blue) in the crisis. Senator Vandenberg now talks about his "determination to stay out—unless the war comes to the New World". (The isolationists generally are thus accepting the main line of Roosevelt's war speech: we must be prepared to repel a Nazi invasion of this hemisphere.)

The State Department has announced that the U.S. "will be glad" to join Uruguay and nineteen other American "republics" in a formal protest against the German invasion of the low countries.

Such are the milestones added this week along the Road to War.

To rally the masses behind its war plans, the Roosevelt Administration does all it can to foster two great illusions. One is that we can give "all aid short of war" to the Allies without ourselves being drawn into the war. The experience of 1914-1917 gives the lie to that. Modern war is "total", and once a nation gets into the highroad there are no detours or cutbacks until the final battlefield is reached.

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